

CHAPTER 1: NAPLES-SICILY: HOLLOW CROWNS

« ... comme on va le dire, la fin du XIVE verra les femmes faire l'histoire ... »¹

Any study of the Houses of Anjou and France during the Hundred Years War must include an examination of the kingdom of Naples-Sicily. In our examination of the Italian Angevins we will allude to their powerful Angevin cousins in Hungary so that the full context of Angevin action and interaction may be seen.

As our analysis progresses, the sequence of victory, loss, diplomacy, adoption and marital alliances will arise repeatedly, particularly in relation to Naples. This too will set the pattern for Angevin involvement in the recovery of France and the consolidation of Angevin territories. Naples, Sicily, Provence, the kingdoms of France and Aragon are entwined in this vast epic and must be discussed if we are to attempt to understand the motivations and activities of Yolande d'Aragon.

The purpose of this chapter is to offer an enriched perspective so that the *gestes* as well as the *animus* of the Houses of Anjou are presented in the context of how the various members of this family acted and reacted in their lives and times. It seemed that to simply commence our study of Yolande d'Aragon with either her birth, marriage or her widowhood would have been to isolate ourselves from both her situation and her challenging responsibilities.

Christine de Pizan in her *Le livre de trois vertus* insists that the Baron's wife must "avoir cuer d'omme" in order to fulfil her obligations in the absence of her lord, to administer his property, defend his territory and guard his fortresses.² Christine's ideas in this regard are of particular interest as she was a close contemporary of Yolande and had been in residence at the Court of Charles V when Yolande's mother Violant spent time

¹ This observation is made by Emile-Guillaume Léonard in *Les Angevins de Naples*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1954, p. 469. We will extend this to encompass the first half of the fifteenth century and include France as well as Naples-Sicily.

² Laigle, Mathilde. *Le Livre de trois vertus de Christine de Pisan et son milieu historique et littéraire*, Paris, Champion, 1912, p. 151.

there as a young girl.³ Yolande's grandson Louis XI echoed Christine's reflections when describing Yolande d'Aragon at her funerary rites, saying that she had been possessed of a man's heart in a woman's body.⁴

Joanna I of Naples perhaps had an even greater burden to carry than either Yolande or her mother-in-law Marie of Brittany as she was Queen of Naples and Jerusalem in her own right. In this chapter, while examining the political situation in Naples-Sicily immediately prior to the second House of Anjou's direct involvement in the peninsular kingdom, we will shall consider Joanna's successes and failures and witness the extreme impediments she faced in the exercise of her regal authority.

Philippe Contamine's method has been appropriated for the purposes of this first chapter: «*Cet exposé, résultat de recherches attentives mais souvent de seconde main, ne prétend pas renouveler la question ... mais simplement faire le point et poser en passant quelques questions ...*».⁵

We must acknowledge two fundamental perspectives if we are to comprehend the huge canvas of almost three centuries of Angevin enterprise in European political and religious affairs. It is essential that we recognize both the chronological and dynastic implications, as well as the geographical and territorial imperatives of the Angevin princes that will form the second perspective of our examination.⁶

Christof Ohnesorge, in his examination of the second House of Anjou, expresses the difficulties under which the princes of Anjou toiled in these terms: «*Les ambitions et l'échec de cette seconde maison d'Anjou s'expliquent partiellement par l'ampleur et la diversité des territoires qu'elle contrôlait ou sur lesquels elle avait hérité ou acquis des droits.*»⁷ The

³ Violant of Aragon, originally Yolande of Bar was the granddaughter of Charles V.

⁴ See below, p. 383.

⁵ Contamine, Philippe, « À l'ombre des fleurs de lis. Les rapports entre les rois de France Valois et les Angevins de Naples et de Provence (1320-1382) », p. 117, in *Les Princes Angevins du XIIIe au XVe siècle, Un Destin Européen, actes des journées d'étude des 15 & 16 juin 2001, organisées par l'Université d'Angers et les Archives départementales de Maine-et-Loire*, Tonnere, Noël-Yves & Verry, Elisabeth, (eds.), Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2003, to be referred to subsequently as *Les Princes Angevins*.

⁶ A point well made by Elisabeth Verry in her introduction to *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 20

⁷ Ohnesorge, Christof, « Les ambitions et l'échec de la seconde maison d'Anjou », in *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 265.

importance of the geographical dispersal of Angevin holdings, their size, the political and cultural diversity of these territories as well as the early deaths of successive male heirs, so characteristic of this period of Angevin enterprise, cannot be underestimated, particularly when assessing the ultimate non-fulfilment of early Angevin promise.

While the first House of Anjou was not so greatly disadvantaged by distance in relation to its domains, the other difficulties listed above did weigh heavily upon its enterprise. The Great Schism played an enormous rôle in the outcome of the efforts of the first House to consolidate and retain its authority. The rôle of the Church and the Schism will be examined in discussion of the closing stages of Joanna I's reign, for the Angevins used the phenomenon of the Schism to considerable effect. Nevertheless, from time to time they found themselves on the wrong side of the divide. It was a pope who offered Joanna a chance to succeed and the favourable circumstances in which to develop her personal authority. Paradoxically, a subsequent pope allowed a situation to evolve that ensured she would be forced to fight for her authority, while a third pope condemned her to the ambitions of her closest blood relative.

The succession of the two Houses of Anjou had distinct identities: the first originated with Charles I d'Anjou, brother of St. Louis (Louis IX of France). In 1246, Charles received the rights or prerogative over Anjou and Maine. 1246 was also the year he married Béatrice, heiress of Provence, and acquired rights over the county of Provence. The second succession arose from the line of Louis I, son of Jean le Bon, invested with Anjou and Maine in 1356. In spite of their distinct identities, both Houses had much in common: it was Charles II, son of Charles I, who eventually returned Anjou-Maine to the Crown of France as part of his daughter Marguerite's dowry when she married Charles of Valois, the king's brother. Their son, Philippe VI, was the father of Jean le Bon, himself the father of Louis I, to whom would be restored the privilege of Anjou and Maine.⁸

While the Angevins put much energy into asserting their independence from the French Crown, they also needed the political and financial backing they would periodically receive from it. For its part, the Crown sometimes chose to leave them short of resources and political support, and from time to time went so far as to cast covetous eyes over

⁸ *Les Princes Angevins*, Verry, E., p. 20. See our Appendix 2, genealogical tables, p. XLVIII

Angevin holdings. Notwithstanding these complexities, Anjou-Sicily, originating from Charles I, and Anjou-Valois, originating from Louis I, could claim indisputable blood ties to one another and both benefited from an unequalled propinquity to the French Crown.⁹

To complicate further the ties that bound these two Houses, we must add the facts of election and legal right. In two instances at least adoption, because of a lack of male heirs and protectors or the workings of multiple allegiances and loyalties, muddied the waters of succession. Joanna I of Naples, the granddaughter-heiress of Robert the Wise, (grandson of Charles I), was compelled by the fact that her hold on her kingdom was evaporating to choose a protector from a pool of likely yet sometimes slippery princely contenders. Her gaze eventually fell upon Louis I d'Anjou, a prince who for some ten years had demonstrated his valour in the defence of Languedoc (as its governor) against English invasion. Decades later, Joanna II of Naples (Joanna I's niece), descended from the secondary branch of the Duras or Durazzo dynasty, it too an issue of Charles I's line, would replicate her aunt's choice in electing Louis III, grandson of Louis I d'Anjou, as her anointed champion and heir. When this Louis unexpectedly died in 1434, his brother René was adopted in his place, in keeping with Louis's statement in his will¹⁰ that Joanna II consider adopting his brother in the event that he, Louis III, predecease her.

In 1266, the first House of Anjou moved to establish its independence from the French Crown. Charles I sought to be a king in his own right and needed a kingdom to fulfil his ambition. Charles's Sicilian conquest was a first sally designed to separate his House from the fortunes of the senior branch of royalty. Louis IX had the crusades to occupy his attention, and their mother Blanche of Castile to oversee the family firm. Sicily was just

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ In the document of investiture established by Pope Martin V on 4th December 1419, Louis III and his younger brothers René d'Anjou and Charles d'Anjou are all named as successors to the kingdom should Louis III leave no surviving male heirs, A.N., J. 513, n°39. The document also appears to remove the right of female succession, the usual resort of the both the Neapolitan and Hungarian Angevins in the absence of male heirs, introducing an apparently more Gallic interpretation of the rights of succession. It is doubtful that the intention to remove female succession would have been the over-riding objective (particularly if we consider Yolande's own extant claims to succession in Aragon). It seems far more likely that Yolande d'Aragon and her advisors, in preparing for her son Louis III's departure for Naples-Sicily and no doubt aware of the fiscal burden this would entail, actively sought to ensure that the succession remained in the (Angevin) family and ensured that Martin V included the succession clause in the investiture document. This is in keeping with the will of Louis I d'Anjou (see chapter 2 below). We must not forget that at the time of Louis III's investiture, Yolande was struggling to keep her Aragonese relatives from asserting their sovereignty over the peninsular kingdom.

one of the offshore territories that would merge with and recede from Angevin dominion over the next two and a half centuries. In 1282, because of a bloody rebellion known as the Sicilian Vespers, island Sicily would be the first territory to fall away from Angevin control.¹¹ The throne of Hungary, whose Árpáadian dynasty was succeeded by Charles-Robert, grandson of Charles II of Naples, would fade from Angevin hegemony at the beginning of the fifteenth century.¹² Naples was a particular obsession of succeeding generations of Angevins and one which would elude the aspirations of René d'Anjou, defeated by Alfonse of Aragon in 1442, the year of René's mother, Yolande d'Aragon's death. Yolande devoted most of her adult life and the best part of her resources¹³ to the retention of Naples by Anjou, only to have the kingdom merge back into her own natal royal house of Aragon in the very year of her death. With the deaths of René in 1480, and that of his brother, Charles du Maine, in 1481, the final possessions of the Second House of Anjou (Anjou, Maine and Provence), were subsumed to the Crown by Yolande's grandson Louis XI, *l'universelle araigne*. By that time, Bar and Lorraine had already passed into the possession of the Lorraine-Vaudémont as a result of René's defeat by Anthoine de Vaudémont at Bulgnéville in 1431. When René's daughter Yolande married into the victor's family, Bar and Lorraine definitively passed into the hands of the Lorraine-Vaudémont in about 1445.¹⁴

Were we to take this summation of political realities as the only judgement on this dynasty's performance, it would look thin indeed. The perennial instability of their power base and the ultimate fragility of many of their meticulously constructed alliances would seem to have rendered their adventure futile in the extreme. However, in order to achieve a more balanced perspective, we should not discount their efforts wholesale, but rather examine aspects of them and try to determine if they had an influence upon the wider politics of the period. The Angevin saga should not be judged upon their founding ancestor's desire to find a kingdom worthy of his aspirations beyond the confines of France - a kingdom based upon the exploitation of contemporaneous political opportunities and on sovereignty accepted from the goodwill of a pope. The entire edifice was bound to be compromised by the premature death of male heirs, and the

¹¹ See Appendix 1, n. 1.

¹² The successive deaths of Marie and of Hedwige, surviving daughters of Louis the Great (1342-1382) at the beginning of the fifteenth century brought the Hungarian Angevin dynasty to a close. See also Appendix 1, n. 2 and Appendix 2, genealogical tables, p. XLVIII.

¹³ See Yolande's testament below p. 382.

¹⁴ *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 21. See below, p. 356.

succession of women, the majority of whom through no fault of their own, were either at the mercy of their male relatives;¹⁵ or the failure of constructed alliances resulting from the unstable political and ecclesiastical climate of their times.

As stated above the Angevin enterprise, particularly in relation to Naples-Sicily, must not be judged solely upon the basis of its political successes and setbacks. The influence it had upon the politics, the government, and the administration of France and those of other nations, the part it played in the events of the Schism as well as its influence upon the transmission and development of art, scholarship and literature¹⁶ should be the criteria employed in making any evaluation.

In the past, studies have analyzed the Angevin experience in terms of its dynastic, political, cultural and artistic expansionism.¹⁷ The rôle of Angevin women has been for the most part unexamined in scholarly studies.¹⁸ It will be the aim of the present study to concern itself with this particular aspect. The central figure of this examination will be Yolande d'Aragon but before turning our attention to Yolande, her female predecessors in the struggle for Naples-Sicily must be acknowledged.¹⁹

¹⁵ Léonard cites an exclamation made by Joanna in correspondence towards the end of her troubled reign: «Je ne regrette qu'une chose, que le Créateur n'ait pas fait de moi un homme.» *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 469.

¹⁶ While we will not examine Angevin contribution to art, scholarship and literature here, excellent studies exist, for example:

- Le Conseil Général de Maine-et-Loire, «*L'Europe des Anjou: Aventure des princes Angevins du XIIIe au XVe siècle*», Somogy Editions d'Art, Paris, 2001.
- Giry, Arthur, «*Notes sur l'influence artistique du roi René*», Paris, 1875.
- Le Coy de la Marche, Albert, «*Le Roi René, sa vie, son administration, ses travaux artistiques et littéraires d'après les documents inédits des archives de France et d'Italie*», Paris, Firmin-Didot Frères et Cie, 1875.
- Mérimodol, Christian de, «*Le Roi René et la seconde maison d'Anjou: emblématique, art, histoire*», Paris, Le Léopard d'Or, 1987.
- Quatrebarbes, Comte Théodore de, «*Cœuvres complètes du roi René*», Angers, Imprimerie de Cosnier et Lachèse, 1844-1846
- Robin, Françoise, «*La Cour Anjou-Provence, la vie artistique sous le règne de René*», Paris, Picard, 1985.

¹⁷ Léonard, Emile, *Les Angevins de Naples*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1954. Cf., Collection de l'École Française de Rome, *L'État Angevin, Pouvoir, Culture et Société entre les XIIIe et XIVe siècles*, Ecole Française de Rome – 245, Rome 1998.
Aceto, Francesco & Le Goff, Guy, *L'Europe des Anjou, Aventure des Princes Angevins du XIIIe au XVe Siècle*, Paris, Somogy Editions d'Art, 2001.
Les Princes Angevins du XIIIe au XVe Siècle, un destin européen, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2003.

¹⁸ See our introduction.

¹⁹ In the concluding stages of this study, we will also mention some of her more notable Angevin female successors.

The first of these women is Joanna I of Naples. In order that we understand the actions of her successors, the rest of this chapter is devoted to her long and eventful reign.

Joanna was just sixteen years of age when she ascended the throne of Naples in 1343. Her grandfather, Robert the Wise, had left a very specific testament to protect her succession. Joanna had inherited the totality of the Angevin heritage, including their persistent claims over the island kingdom of Sicily. Had the Neapolitan court employed the “laws” of succession applied to the French Crown,²⁰ Louis the Great of Hungary would have succeeded Robert in Joanna’s place. It would appear that Robert was not unconscious of this fact, as before his death he had taken care to ensure that Joanna would marry André, the younger brother of Louis of Hungary.

Joanna inherited her grandfather’s onerous legacy at an age when she had barely emerged from childhood. The terms of Robert’s will expressly deprived Joanna of pontifical guardianship in favour of a council of regents, composed of senior servants of the Crown. In spite of the fact that Joanna held Naples in fief from the papacy, Clement VI agreed to abide by the terms of Robert’s testament and he extended considerable benevolence and forbearance to his youthful vassal.²¹ Unfortunately, Robert the Wise’s experiment soon showed itself dysfunctional in practice. The juvenile court surrounding the fledgling monarch was unanimous in its will to rid itself of the mentors assured it by Robert in the terms of his will. Two distinct factions quickly developed: the Duras and the Tarente.

Once a unified political force in the time of Robert the Wise, the Neapolitan Angevins now found themselves in disarray. By contrast, on the other side of the Adriatic, the Hungarians had an Angevin sovereign whom they would come to hold as the most exceptional of their kings. Louis the Great was the embodiment of the king-knight who, in spite of his impetuous and unpredictable early youth, seemed endowed with a great deal of political intelligence. His contemporary biographer, János Ápród Tótsolymosi

²⁰ See appendix 1, n. 3, & C.f. Taylor, Craig, “The Salic Law and the Valois Succession to the French Crown”, in *French History*, vol. 15, n° 4, Oxford, OUP, (2001), pp. 358-377.

²¹ Léonard gives a detailed account of the pontiff’s efforts to stabilize the Neapolitan court in the best interests of Joanna’s reign. He cites a great deal of correspondence between Naples and the curia as evidence to support this assertion. Cf. his study of Joanna, Léonard, Emile-Guillaume, « *Histoire de Jeanne I^{er}, reine de Naples, comtesse de Provence* » Paris, A. Picard, 1932-1936.

said of him: «Dieu met nécessairement au comble de la puissance des princes pacifiques dans le gouvernement mais glorieusement vainqueurs à la guerre.»²²

In the face of André of Hungary's murder in the presence of his wife Joanna, the threat of a Hungarian invasion obliged the Neapolitans to comply with the pope's calls for cooperation. The risk of open revolt forced Joanna to hand over the defence of her kingdom to her brothers-in-law Charles of Duras and Robert of Tarente. Charles also received guardianship of young Charles-Martel, son of Joanna and André. He in turn was swiftly engaged to one of Charles of Duras's daughters. In order to compensate the Tarente faction for their loyalty, Joanna agreed to marry Louis of Tarente. Joanna was an inexperienced and isolated monarch playing a dangerous game of chance, wagering upon the suspect loyalties of three ambitious and covetous young men. She surrendered the defence of her realm and the care of her son to one, her finances and the captain-generalcy of her realm to the second and, herself to the third. Each of these men would play the game to his best advantage,²³ leaving Joanna clinging to her tenuous authority.

Neapolitan court outrages and Naples's diminution on the international political scene allowed adherents of the fiction of a golden age under the reign of Robert the Wise the opportunity to wallow in dazzling denial. In spite of the fact that he had been the principal architect of their troubles, Robert remained their hero. Disorientated by

²² Tótsolymosi, János Ápród, (Küküllei, János), *Johannes de Kikullewet & Anonymus Minorita, Chronica gestis Ludovici regis* [Latinból fordította Garéb, Laszlo. A brevezetés írta Trencsényi-Waldapfel, Imre. A fordítást – ellenőrizte Juhász, Laszlo], Budapest, Magyar Helikon, 1960. Tótsolymosi was chancellor and chief secretary to Louis the Great from 1350, filling various parish positions and numerous secular positions of influence and advancement. He held the canons of Zagreb, Székesfehérvár and Erderly and was Dean of Küküllei. In the 1360s Tótsolymosi settled in Visegrad and wrote twenty-five chapters of a chronicle describing his king's Neapolitan campaigns. At the death of his patron-king in 1382, he wrote his thirty chapter chronicle of Louis's virtuous life and rule. The version consulted for this study is a later edition than that cited by Léonard, E., *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 349, (he does not give his exact reference). We have chosen to use Léonard's paraphrasing here for its economy of expression. Cf. Pór, Antal, *Nagy Lajos: 1326-1382 írta Pór, Antal*, Budapest, Franklin Társulatkönyvynomája, 1892. Cf., Thuróczy, János, *A magyarok krónikákája*, [The Chronicle of the Hungarians], tr. by János Horváth, ed. by János Horváth & Iván Boronkai, Budapest, Magyar Helikon, 1978, Thuróczy, János, *Chronica Hungarorum. I., Textus*, Budapest, Akadémiai kiadó, 1985, Thuróczy, János, *Chronica Hungarorum II., Commentarii*, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988, Thuróczy, János, *Chronicle of the Hungarians*, Bloomington, Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1991 Dercsényi, Deszö (ed.), West, Alick (trans.), *The Hungarian Illuminated Chronicle. Chronica de gestis Hungarorum*, Budapest, Corvina Press, 1969. Horváth, ed. by János Horváth & Iván Boronkai, Budapest, Magyar Helikon, 1978, and for a more modern political perspective and context of the deeds and contributions of Louis the Great see Vardy, S.B., Grosschmid, Géza, & Domonkos, Leslie S., *Louis the Great: King of Hungary and Poland*, New York, East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1986.

²³ *Les Angevins de Naples, passim.*

political turmoil and the loss of their former greatness, many dreamt of messianic salvation to restore their country.²⁴ In the absence of unifying and stabilizing forces, patriotism, apocalyptic spirituality and humanism would obsess fevered Italian imaginations for a decade: there would be no Joan of Arc or Yolande d'Aragon for the lost people of Naples.

The invading Hungarians won the day without firing a single arrow. Both the capital and its neighbouring towns demanded nothing but to surrender quickly to this glorious descendent of Charles I. They hoped that this Angevin could restore them to their former position of greatness and prosperity. Louis upset his chances by taking precipitous action; the day after the Hungarian victory, he arrested and decapitated the queen's brother-in-law, Charles of Duras.

Joanna fled to Provence. She arrived in Marseille at the end of January 1348. On 29th January, she pledged to respect the privileges of the city and in return received Marseille's promise of loyalty. Marseille, however, was not Provence, and Provence had suffered from the exactions of the Neapolitans. Naples had gouged Provence with unreasonable taxes and had refused to respect the principle of the State's rights, an issue fundamental to the hearts of the Provençal nobility. In return for their allegiance, they demanded that all Crown officers in Provence would henceforth be appointed from within their own ranks rather than being imposed upon them from outside.

Joanna had had a particularly difficult time leading up to this period of her reign. Her grandfather had left her an almost impossible task to achieve and an unstable kingdom to rule. Her youth, her apparent lack of training and her inexperience had meant that many had sought to usurp her power and influence her actions. She had to struggle to hold on to any authority she had, and her first two husbands had been of little use. The first had pushed the claims of Hungary over Naples and the second had aspired to carve out a realm of his own; yet neither of these men seems to have been equal to his ambition. Rather than stepping in and taking control, they merely muddied the political situation and caused instability. It might well have been better for all concerned had they allowed Joanna to rule in her own right with guidance from a pontiff who appeared to

²⁴ Ibid., p. 353.

have Naples's best interests at heart. From time to time even Clement VI had to admit defeat when confronted with the factionalism of the Neapolitans and Joanna's own actions and complicity in destabilizing the council of regents. Short of both funds and reliable allies, Joanna determined to seek an audience with Clement in Avignon; and the long suffering pontiff duly accorded his vassal's request.

Unexpectedly, after a great deal of to-ing and fro-ing, a proposition first mooted in April 1348 bore fruit at the beginning of June: the sale of the city of Avignon to the papacy. The sale was recorded by Joanna's officials as a *vente maudite*,²⁵ and it would take the citizens of Avignon at least ten years to come to terms with the sale of their city. The sale of Avignon seems to have caused Joanna discomfort, for she was at some pains to have the pope promise to restore the city to her once she had raised enough money to buy it back from him at the sale price.²⁶ The discomfort might have been great but funds raised by the sale allowed the fugitive queen to return to her kingdom.

Once back in Naples the earlier pattern repeated itself. Joanna was eager to assert her personal authority and her husband Louis of Tarente was keen to suppress it. Turmoil at court was the net result. Joanna had the support of her favourites, the high nobility of Naples and the people of both Provence and Naples. Chancellor Acciaiuoli supported Louis of Tarente, and between them they subjected Joanna to three years of court intrigue only relieved by skirmishes with their Magyar relatives.

Naples's defeat by the Hungarians played into the hands of Louis of Tarente. The fact that all the great feudal lords had decamped to the area between Aversa and Naples to protect (unsuccessfully) the region from the invaders meant that most of Joanna's powerful partisans had perished, leaving her friendless and isolated. Louis of Tarente, having seized both authority and the royal title, sealed his primacy by informing Provence that all future acts of government would carry his name as well as that of the queen.²⁷

²⁵ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 359.

²⁶ Léonard, *Histoire de Jeanne 1^{re}*, t. II, Pièces justificatives, n^os LXXI & LXXII. Cf. Léonard, *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 359, n. 2.

²⁷ Loc. cit.

Eventually, after years of conflict, a new papal legate concluded a treaty between Naples and Hungary. Louis of Hungary gratefully embraced the offer of an honourable withdrawal. The terms of the treaty insisted that both sovereign adversaries quit the kingdom and await judgement on the circumstances of André's murder. If Joanna were found guilty of involvement in the death of her first husband, her rights over Naples and her estates would be forfeited to the King of Hungary. Pronounced innocent, she would recover lands and estates captured by Louis of Hungary and receive an indemnity of 300,000 florins. Louis the Great departed Aversa and returned to Hungary via Rome.

Joanna was temporarily liberated from her second husband's primacy by the actions of the papal legate Ceccano. Ships arrived from Provence to take Joanna away from Naples. Provence and Naples recognized her authority over Louis of Tarente and he capitulated in fear of his life. Acciaiuoli however remained at large serving his master's interests.²⁸

Chancellor Acciaiuoli managed to use the long machinations between Joanna, the pope and Marseille to ambush her interests and place Louis of Tarente once more in the ascendancy. She soon found herself subject to another protracted series of humiliations at the hands of her husband. Acciaiuoli had not only returned power to Louis of Tarente, he had also in the event managed to re-establish the kingdom's Italian heritage. Louis of Tarente was crowned alongside Joanna on 27th May 1352. The succession was still held by her sister Marie of Anjou should Joanna leave no surviving heirs.

The recovery of Naples had two distinct authors: Nicola Acciaiuoli and Clement VI.²⁹ This is most interesting, as the former was firmly allied with his master, Louis of Tarente, and the latter with Joanna, whose welfare and that of her kingdom was Clement's prime motivating concern. On 6th December 1352, the Neapolitans and Joanna lost a rare protector in Clement VI. His successor, Innocent VI was as sour and dismissive towards Joanna and her subjects as Clement had been benevolent and attentive. Fortunately for the Neapolitans, they still had Acciaiuoli. Whatever his motivations at the time, Acciaiuoli had managed to stabilize the throne of Naples and subsequently turned his attention to ensuring Naples's influence in greater Italy.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 360-363.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 366.

His activity will not be studied in detail here, yet one or two things will be emphasized regarding Neapolitan-Angevin mentality as characterized by the activities of Acciaiuoli. In particular we draw attention to the principles underlying the statutes of the Order of the Holy Spirit to note how distinctive Franciscan sentiments were married with values of chivalry. These distinctive characteristics appear to underscore the mindset of both the second House of Anjou³⁰ and its Neapolitan predecessor. Léonard quotes from the statute articles of the Order of the Holy Spirit, established by Acciaiuoli for his master Louis of Tarente, to suggest how they exemplify the Neapolitan ideal: «[Even], ... *si un chevalier de la compagnie, travaillant à achever le droit désir et à chercher les aventures, était tombé de ce fait en pauvreté. Achever le droit désir, chercher les aventures, tels sont les devoirs essentiels des chevaliers...*»³¹ The realization of virtuous desire, the quest for noble adventure regardless of its consequences, were intrinsic obligations of the members of the Order of the Holy Spirit. It is to this template of knightly behaviour that the Angevin court adhered, and it copied and absorbed it into its many illuminated manuscripts.³²

The idea of the attainment of noble desire seems to have been hard-wired into Angevin mentality. Tilting at windmills to the point of financial and dynastic ruin could well be a working definition of the long and largely fruitless struggle of the second House of Anjou to (re)assert itself in Naples and Sicily. This idea rings no more clearly and more forcefully than from the pages of Yolande d'Aragon's final testament;³³ while historian Desmond Seward described her son René d'Anjou as "one of the most spectacular royal losers of the fifteenth century outside of England".³⁴

Another factor very characteristic of the Angevin mentality was their loyalty and devotion to spiritual Franciscans. Under the reigns of both Charles II and Robert the Wise (c. 1285-1343) the Neapolitan court had been a haven for spiritual Franciscans. A letter composed by Acciaiuoli, in the name of Louis of Tarente, destined for new members of the Order of the Holy Spirit enjoined the following: «*Recevant au nom du Saint-Esprit ce noeud qui réunit moralement en un corps tous ceux qui font profession de cet*

³⁰ Such ideas and philosophies were perhaps most avidly taken up and absorbed by René d'Anjou. See below, .n. 36.

³¹ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 370.

³² Cf. For the works, piety and preoccupations of René d'Anjou, Quatrebarbes, *Compte Théodore de, Œuvres complètes du roi René...*, Angers, Imprimerie de Cosnier et Lachèse, 1844-1846 and publications listed in footnotes 16 & 17 above.

³³ AN P 1334/17, f° 52, p. 8.

³⁴ Seward, Desmond, *The Wars of the Roses*, New York, Penguin, 1995, p. 51.

Ordre comme il réunit figurativement toutes ses parties, embrasse le noeud de charité qui t'incombe pour développer ton courage dans la foi et pour raffermir ta marche de vertu en vertu en sorte que tu obtiennes l'accroissement d'une plus grande renommé ... afin que tu puisses marcher plus courageusement par l'appui septiforme du Saint-Esprit ... et que Celui qui, renouvelant la face de la terre, créera toutes choses nouvelles, efface toute trace des ténèbres antérieures.»³⁵

This quotation is infused with sober piety, and a sense of stoicism and would seem to indicate a call to perfection and sanctification through the workings of the Holy Spirit, the creation of a new heaven and earth, a theme that would reach its apogee with René d'Anjou.³⁶ The long shadow of the Crusades, hangs heavily over the sentiments expressed by Acciaiuoli. It is vital to recall that the Neapolitan Angevins and their heirs the Valois Angevins styled themselves as kings and queens of Jerusalem.³⁷ The reconquest of that most illustrious yet fictive kingdom was a renewed obsession of the Neapolitan Angevins, having just emerged relatively unscathed from their struggles with their Hungarian cousins.

While the ideology of the Order was laudable, the actual situation at the Neapolitan court was a different matter entirely. It was all very well for Acciaiuoli to encourage aspirations to greatness; the reality was that his master Louis of Tarente, whom Boccaccio criticized mildly (when compared to his peers) as a child without judgement and a

³⁵ *Les Angevins de Naples*, pp. 370-371.

³⁶ René d'Anjou personally established *L'Ordre du Croissant*, a religious and military order. The *Croissant's* statutes were established on 11th August 1448, in the wake of René's routing from Naples-Sicily by Alfonso V. He seems to have nourished his idea of a personal princely order for some time and appears to have borrowed both his ideas and the order's structure from *L'Ordre du Navire* founded by Charles I d'Anjou and his brother St. Louis (A French king with a marked preference for spiritual Franciscanism). Both orders appear to have been nostalgic reminiscences of the Levant, commemorating the crusading ideals and chivalry of the thirteenth century, ones with which René, in particular, was obsessed. Lecoy de la Marche, Albert, *Le roi René, sa vie, son administration, ses travaux artistiques et littéraires*, 2 vols, Geneva, Slatkin Reprints, 1969, t. I, pp. 330-331 & cf., Reynolds, Michael T., "René d'Anjou, King of Sicily and the Order of the *Croissant*", in *Journal of Medieval History*, vol. 19, 1-2, 1993, pp. 125-161. Like his Angevin predecessors in Naples, René was titular sovereign of both Sicily and Jerusalem. We must bear in mind his pronounced Franciscan sentiments (cf. Montagnes, Bernard, "Le roi René et les ordres mendiants", in *Les annales universitaires, Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines*, Spec. N°, 1-2, (1986), pp. 142-145) and those of both St. Louis and Charles I d'Anjou.

³⁷ Harking back to the times of the Counts of Anjou, particularly Geoffrey V, who married Empress Maud and produced a son Henry, eventually King Henry II of England, husband of Aliénor of Aquitaine. Their son Richard, like Saint Louis of France, was obsessed with the crusading ideal. Fulk V, Geoffrey's father, was himself King of Jerusalem. See also Appendix 1, n. 3.

coward, did not live up to this ideal.³⁸ While his chancellor was both talented and ambitious, Louis of Tarente proved to be one of the least capable monarchs of his time. His inability to govern, coupled with a perversity of nature, exacerbated quarrels at court. It took all Acciaiuoli's skill to restore authority to the queen. He achieved this in spite of the fact that it was he himself who had been the principal architect of Joanna's downfall. Little by little, Joanna found her power and privileges restored. After some ten years as queen, Joanna was back where she had started.

In accordance with her grandfather Robert's testament, the grand Neapolitan adventure involved the recovery of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, once Sicily had been assured; but Sicily was a nominal possession of the Crown of Aragon. The Aragonese would play an important rôle in the next phase of Joanna's and Neapolitan Angevin destiny. Since the beginning of Joanna's reign, the Neapolitans had opposed Clement VI's efforts to establish a treaty between the two states. Notwithstanding its earlier position in the wake of André's murder and the problems this had caused with Hungary, Naples was obliged to come to terms with Sicily in July 1346. Following the death of Pierre II of Sicily, Acciaiuoli seized an opportunity to negotiate with his widow Elisabeth, the head of the Latin faction of the Sicilian court, against the interests of the other faction led by her brother-in-law and regent, John of Sicily-Aragon.

Talks were organized and Acciaiuoli prevailed, soon afterwards taking possession of the island. However, destructive forces were once more at work in Naples and no support was forthcoming. He had requested that reinforcements be sent before the Aragonese could send their own. In spite of the insistence of his envoys, Naples remained unmoved and Acciaiuoli returned to court in August 1354. He was obliged to abandon his hopes for re-conquest in spite of the fact that he had been able to achieve far greater results in Sicily than had Charles I, Charles II or Robert the Wise; only the most northern part of Sicily had resisted Acciaiuoli.

Acciaiuoli tried again in 1356 and this time he held sway over most of the island for some eight months. He had ensured that he was accompanied by a convoy of flour and

³⁸ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 372 .

provisions³⁹ to relieve Messina, which had been ravaged by civil strife. In October, Louis of Tarente made an unofficial visit. Joanna, Louis and their entire court made their royal procession into Messina on Christmas Eve 1356, installing themselves on the island with great solemnity. The Angevins of Naples took possession of Sicily, the island kingdom from which they had been routed some seventy-five years previously as a result of the Sicilian Vespers.⁴⁰

The conquest, however, was not to prove durable, and after about eight months Catalan rebels unceremoniously expelled the Angevin monarchs from the island. This humiliating defeat drove them back to Naples, where news of problems in Provence occupied their immediate attention. The Duras had once again begun to rebel openly.

Not only was Naples burdened with Duras ambitions, it now also had to deal with the unwelcome attentions of the French Crown. Towards the end of 1356, the Dauphin Charles (future Charles V), turned up in Metz at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles IV. The rumour at the time was that the dauphin had taken possession of Provence on behalf of the Crown.⁴¹ Whatever the case, it gave the dauphin an ideal opportunity to meet with Tallyrand of Périgord (the Duras uncle).

Léonard points out that it is entirely feasible that Louis of Tarente himself provided the ideal opportunity for French intervention in the affairs of Provence. At the time, Jean II le Bon, King of France, was a prisoner of the English in London. He had shared his captivity with a Nîmois who had been released in the autumn of 1357.⁴² The prisoner from Nîmes was urged to send a note to his own wife, once he had regained Europe. It contained the following message: *«Le roi Louis a envoyé un chevalier de Naples nommé Jehan Fachapecora et un chevalier d'Arles nommé Rosillan, et ils ont fait des ambassades du roi Louis auprès du roi d'Angleterre. Le roi Louis doit envoyer les gens de Provence et d'autres gens sur les terres du pape et puis après passer le Rhône et venir sur la sénéchaussée de Beaucaire.»*⁴³

³⁹ The same tactic was employed by Yolande d'Aragon, to lift the morale and ensure the loyalty of the besieged, when troops were sent to relieve the siege of Orléans some seventy years later. While not an original strategy, it proved a very effective one. Cf. the relief of Montargis in 1427, below pp. 229-230.

⁴⁰ See above, p. 5.

⁴¹ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 380.

⁴² Loc. cit.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

Whether or not France used this as an excuse to intervene openly in Provence is not certain, what is certain; however, is that France had been waiting for an opportunity to do so for some time. Contamine reminds us that the terms of Robert's will, written just four days before his death in January 1343, did not just stipulate that Naples would pass to his granddaughter Joanna rather than Louis of Hungary.⁴⁴ At the insistence of Philippe d'Orléans the testament further stated that Joanna's younger sister, Marie of Anjou, be engaged to either the elder (future Charles V) or the younger (future Philippe le Hardi of Burgundy) son of Jean, Duke of Normandy.⁴⁵ For Robert the Wise this caveat was probably not an attempt to move closer to the French Crown, but rather an effort to remove the possibility of succession from the hands of either the Duras or the Tarente.⁴⁶ Right up to the end of his reign, Philippe VI of Valois⁴⁷ had hoped to be able to purchase Provence and the county of Forcalquier from Joanna, just as he had eventually bought the Dauphiné from Humbert II. After all, the pope had managed to buy Avignon from the financially compromised Joanna in June of 1348.⁴⁸

These conflicting political scenarios were to have an important impact upon both the holdings and the future of the Neapolitan Angevins, their heirs and successors. The extended Angevin families of Hungary and Naples, the French Crown, as well as the Crown of Aragon, all eyed Naples-Sicily-Provence with covetous and ambitious eyes, for these territories represented effective geo-political control over the entirety of the western Mediterranean. The papacy had an interest in protecting its sovereign territory of Naples and Sicily and the Schism only complicated whom it would choose as its vassals most likely to further the pretensions of respective popes.⁴⁹

While these various scuffles continued and Joanna slowly clawed back her authority with the help of Acciaiuoli, there had been conflict in Provence backed by the French

⁴⁴ Contamine op. cit., p. 121

⁴⁵ Later Jean II of France.

⁴⁶ It would seem that Joanna and Marie managed to override their grandfather Robert's attempts to safeguard their heritage and both of them felt the consequences of their respective actions during the decade following Robert's death.

⁴⁷ Father of Jean II le Bon.

⁴⁸ See above, p. 10.

⁴⁹ At the end of her reign, Joanna first supported Urban VI for strategic reasons; at the time Italy was mired in conflict. Once this had been resolved to a certain degree, she returned her obedience to her spiritual mentor and protector in Avignon, Clement VII. Urban VI retaliated by leaving the door open to Charles III of Duras to conquer and claim Naples-Provence. Duras eventually had Joanna killed. Clement VII did everything in his power to save her but the forces of Louis I d'Anjou arrived too late to prevent her assassination. See below.

Crown in the person of the Dauphin Charles. Arnaud of Cervole, also known as the *Archiprêtre* (so named because he had fulfilled this function in Vézines near Périgueux), was captain of a band of men in the service of the dauphin. With the help of allies, most notably the nobles of Baux, he initiated concurrent insurgencies into Provence, having received orders from the dauphin in March 1357. Philippe of Tarente was unable to halt their progress as they descended into Provence. Scenes of the worst imaginable violence resulted. Innocent VI had tried in vain to forestall the battle by pleading with the dauphin, who responded by stating that he had nothing whatever to do with the incursions into Provence or with the behaviour of the lords of Baux.⁵⁰

We can clearly see from the above the nature and the depth of the challenges faced by Joanna, who did not have the additional geographical difficulties that would confront her successors, the second House of Anjou. Joanna's immediate concerns centred upon Naples-Sicily and Provence. She did not carry the added burden of responsibility entailed by Maine-Anjou and later Touraine as well as their attendant direct political ties and interests with the kingdom of France, obligations which would be borne by Marie of Brittany and Yolande d'Aragon. The terms of Joanna's grandfather's will, her inability to rule independently, her lack of political and diplomatic deftness and her unfortunate choice of husbands combined to ensure she would be thwarted at almost every turn. She was a vulnerable monarch in exceedingly hostile and vicious circumstances. Nevertheless, there were a few victories in her long reign.

In Provence, Philippe of Tarente and Foulque d'Agout, the seneschal of Provence, having received no ready assistance from Naples, were occupied with their own local difficulties. Local loyalism and an instinct for survival enabled places such as Marseille to take active measures for their own defence as they refused to come to terms with the invaders. An agreement concluded between the nobles of Savoy and Provence in the spring of 1357 had allowed the Savoyards to dominate in the Piedmont. This stopped the Savoy princes from coming to terms with the French in the summer of 1357. Having come to this agreement with the Savoyards, Philippe of Tarente and Foulque d'Agout managed to form an important alliance with Jean I of Armagnac. Notwithstanding this,

⁵⁰ *Les Angevins de Naples*, pp. 380-381. In his note on p. 381, Léonard states that the involvement of the French Crown in the expedition of Arnaud de Cervole seems certain in spite of claims to the contrary by earlier scholars. He particularly draws attention to Chérest, Aimé, *L'Archiprêtre. Episodes de la guerre de cent ans du XIVe siècle.*, A. Claudin, Paris 1879, to support this claim.

they were still in very difficult circumstances and resolved that Provence could only be saved by a massive patriotic effort, given the reluctance of Naples to help them.⁵¹ This hope was fulfilled. Marseille resolved to aid Aix in the name of Joanna and Louis of Tarente. Jean de Revest sent a contingent «... *pour l'honneur de Dieu, l'exaltation des couronnes de Jérusalem et de Sicile, en considération et pour l'amour de la cité d'Aix.*»⁵² Léonard points out that the seemingly impossible was achieved through local patriotism, and that the union between patriotism, loyalism and energy made life impossible for the invaders. The enemy had already withdrawn from Provence before Etienne Marcel's activities in Paris forced the dauphin to return to court.

Having chosen not to assist Provence against the aspirations of the Dauphin Charles, Louis of Tarente was once again embroiled in conflict with the papacy in the shape of Innocent VI, as well as with his old adversary Louis of Duras. He could not call upon the aid of Provence and had to rely upon the talents of Acciaiuoli, who was able to assist by enlisting their Magyar allies. At this stage, having no children of his own, Louis of Hungary intended to pass succession to his cousins in Naples.⁵³ He requested that Louis of Tarente send his two brothers and their wives to the Hungarian court. Louis of Tarente declined, but in spite of his refusal to accommodate the King of Hungary, his adversary Louis of Duras soon found himself besieged without hope of relief and surrendered in humiliating circumstances.

This situation resolved, Acciaiuoli determined to make a final attempt to regain Sicily for Naples. The King of Aragon openly supported the ascendant faction on Sicily, which seemed to be on the point of unifying the island, when the Neapolitans arrived in late 1361 or early 1362. Acciaiuoli, though not having strength of numbers behind him, yet having staunch allies in Sicily, infiltrated Messina, setting aside Manfredi di Chiaramonte, who had held Messina for the dominant Sicilian faction. He forced di Chiaramonte to go to Naples and submit to Joanna and Louis of Tarente while he stayed in Messina, working upon reform and «... *d'autres vaines espérances de tractions tendant soit à la guerre soit à une paix pleine d'honneur ...*».⁵⁴ Léonard stresses that proof of

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 382.

⁵² Ibid., p. 383.

⁵³ Logical when we consider that his branch originated from Charles II of Sicily and his wife Marie of Hungary, see our Appendix 2, genealogical tables, p. XLVIII.

⁵⁴ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 396.

Acciaiuoli's success is rendered by the fact that, prudently, Pedro IV of Aragon, not wanting to support a lost cause, having once supported the Sicilian faction, responded to his former ally's pleas for help by demanding that Frederick III cede Sicily directly to the Crown of Aragon should he die without surviving children.⁵⁵

With the public capitulation of Manfredi di Chiaramonte, the Neapolitans might have felt they had written an important page in the history of Naples. The capture of Louis of Duras, who had worked for fifteen years to wrestle the throne from Joanna, must have been a moment of unexpected tranquillity in her troubled reign. A new era of peace and stability was anticipated, judging from a general assembly called in April 1362, which sought to prepare for a renaissance in the fortunes of the kingdom of Naples.⁵⁶ Some of the measures included fiscal improvements, an amnesty and the re-establishment of justice and security. The principal malefactors were expelled from court and Louis of Duras was imprisoned in the Chateau de l'Oeuf and subjected to an ecclesiastical trial convened to protect Naples from heretical influences.

At the height of this great triumph, Louis of Tarente succumbed to a recurring illness, dying on 24th May 1362. It seemed that Joanna was free at last to rule in her own name over a realm newly stabilized and burgeoning with hope. Life was not so simple for Joanna and it would take all of her strength to circumvent the aspirations of her cousins, Robert and Philippe of Tarente and more particularly the latter's wife, her sister, Marie of Anjou. For some twenty years, Marie had actively sought to usurp the throne for herself. Prudently, Joanna kept the death of her husband Louis secret for several days to allow her to make the necessary arrangements for her return to full authority. She had Louis's remains removed to the neighbouring church of Saint Pedro under cover of darkness and barricaded herself in the Chateau Neuf. Joanna then sent word of the death of Louis, to whom she referred as «... *un tel époux*», to Innocent VI and informed him of her «... *situation peut-être imparfaitement protégée d'intentions perverses...*».⁵⁷ Louis's remains were then moved to a more appropriate and final resting place, next to those of his

⁵⁵ This mention of the King of Aragon (who in 1362 was the long reigning Pedro IV, the Ceremonious, grandfather to Yolande d'Aragon) is of importance to our later study. It serves to underline the fact that the Angevins, the Aragonese and the French had linked destinies particularly in relation to Naples-Sicily as well as to the affairs of France in the dying days of the Hundred Years War.

⁵⁶ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 398.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

mother. Acciaiuoli thought it wise to return to Naples, leaving Messina in the hands of his own son, the Count of Malta.

Joanna soon found herself prey to the aspirations of marriageable and ambitious princes. The Visconti of Milan as well as Jean II of France sent emissaries to Naples. Joanna guarded her authority jealously and was reluctant to revisit a similar situation to that which had characterized her relationship with Louis of Tarente. The Archbishop of Naples wrote of her: «*La reine se délecte à gouverner. Elle veut tout faire, parce qu'elle a attendu longtemps ce moment.*».⁵⁸ Joanna diplomatically declined the French proposal, citing consanguinity as well as her «*stérilité en plein temps de la fécondité*» and the premature deaths of her children which found her without direct heirs and consequently at the mercy of «*... les vœux différents des grands et du peuple, des séditions, des invasions, des mutilations pitoyables imposées aux personnes, des rançons innombrables, une foule de calamités et d'autres maux affreux difficiles à raconter.*».⁵⁹ She had determined never again to marry close cousins, claiming she would rather shut herself up in a monastery or become a hermit. In all other circumstances, she would remain entirely at the disposal of the King of France, whom she respected as a father, and looked forward to the time when she could comply with his wishes.⁶⁰

To place into context the next moves made by Joanna, we should recall that at this point Naples was struggling against the ascendancy of Aragon in Sicily. Jacques III of Mallorca⁶¹ had escaped the gaol where his uncle Pedro IV of Aragon had imprisoned him in an iron cage. It seems as though Naples had indeed played a part in Jacques's escape and that Joanna, while continuing to keep lines of communication open with France, had secretly written to Urban V (the still unenthroned successor to Innocent VI) for permission to marry the King of Aragon's wayward nephew. Urban V granted his assent on 7th November, the day after his enthronement, sending two missives, one permitting Joanna to marry in the third or fourth degree of consanguinity and another blessing the union of Joanna and Jacques III of Mallorca.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 402.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 403.

⁶⁰ Loc. cit.

⁶¹ See Appendix 1, n. 4.

France however did not give up on its expectations of a union with Naples. From Avignon Jean II sought the new pontiff's approval for an alliance between Joanna and his son, Philippe of Touraine. If we are to believe Matteo Villani,⁶² the wily pope sought to have a wager both ways and agreed in principle to Jean II's proposal on the condition that the bridegroom would reside in Naples and that Joanna herself agreed with the union. Having discharged his obligations in relation to France, Urban V sent a missive to Joanna stressing the advantages of a union with France and the danger she might encounter in the face of an outright refusal: «... *ce qui pourrait se révéler par la suite nuisible pour [votre] personne et pour le royaume de Sicile.*».⁶³ Joanna swiftly responded citing the inherent dangers of consanguinity. Joanna's own voice can clearly be heard, once the biblical references to Tamar and Amon are stripped away. She pleads that she should be free to marry whomever she wished: «*Je ne vois pas pourquoi ils [mariages] devraient cesser de l'être au detriment de ma liberté, (cum siquidem matrimonia sint libera, non video quare in derogationem libertatis meae naturam mutare debeant).*».⁶⁴ Joanna countered the French position that she would be passing on her heritage to another state, holding that in marrying Jacques III she was not surrendering her heritage to a foreign power since Jacques was linked to the House of Castile through his mother Constance of Aragon, daughter of Eléonore of Castile, and that the blood of Castile flowed strongly through the veins of the sovereigns of France by virtue of Blanche of Castile, mother of Saint Louis.⁶⁵

Joanna seemed convinced that she had made a most propitious choice in forming an alliance against the Crown of Aragon with a member of the House of Aragon. Jacques III, she possibly believed, was young enough not to be a problem for her. The door to Sicily was still very much open to her, thanks to the efforts of Acciaiuoli. The stage must have seemed set for a new Johannic era when she married Jacques III of Mallorca by proxy around 14th December 1362. He arrived in Naples on 16th February 1363.

Notwithstanding this latest development, each of her avid and ambitious Neapolitan relatives had particular designs upon her newly regained authority. The court was once

⁶² Cited by Léonard, *Les Angevins de Naples*, loc. cit., cf. his note 4, p. 403.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 404.

⁶⁴ Loc. cit., Léonard's translation.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

again divided into opposing factions, each competing with another for ascendancy; and this was not to be Joanna's only problem.

Shortly after the newly-weds' shared life had begun, Joanna began to suspect that all was not well with Jacques. She had married a sick man whose health had been compromised by his long imprisonment, who was possessed of vicious morals and who, having accepted the terms of the marital contract refusing him the right to meddle in affairs of state, claimed that he would be obliging his wife by involving himself with the government of her realm. Given the degree of intermarriage, it is hardly surprising that the autumn of the Middle Ages was thick with mad kings and potentates. Léonard points to the constant stream of correspondence between the Archbishop of Naples, Joanna and the pope as a testament to the degree of Jacques's mania.⁶⁶

Initially Pierre Amiel, the Archbishop of Naples, wrote to the pope in confidential terms regarding Joanna's consort: «... Elle craint le roi comme mari et le redoute comme le diable, car non seulement son long emprisonnement lui a enlevé le discernement, mais il est, d'après les médecins, extravagant par disposition naturelle, et comme fou, ce que ses paroles et ses actes ne montrent, hélas! que trop, et ce serait pis s'il venait boire du vin.»⁶⁷ Not only did Jacques suffer from his impulses and his madness, he was by all accounts, a slave to bad counsel. He harboured a continual desire to take control of government and the Marquis of Montferrat⁶⁸ urged him to seek an alliance with the English, who were terrorizing parts of Italy. The pope intervened, exhorting Jacques to lay aside his ambitions and rid himself of misleading counsel. This crisis averted, Jacques fell prey to his mad urgings, making life unbearable for Joanna and her court. Léonard has included a very long and desperate missive sent by Joanna to the pope begging his assistance. Léonard cites this in full, judging it the most extraordinary of documents. For our study however, it is only necessary to concentrate upon a few lines to understand the depths of her misery: «Huit jours après que, par la permission de Dieu, je me suis unie en mariage avec mon époux, du consentement de Votre Sainteté et à la faveur de la dispense nécessaire, il commença à se livrer à des insanités, dont je m'inquiétai à peine, supposant qu'elles étaient un effet de sa jeunesse et des saletés d'une longue détention, qui avait pu émousser sa sensualité. Mais après plusieurs autres jours, tombant dans une crise de fièvre, il y ajouta des actes encore plus insensés, ... tous les mois,

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 405.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 406.

⁶⁸ Probably his brother-in-law John II Margrave of Montferrat, married to his sister Isabelle.

... il avait un accès de folie avec, entre temps des moments lucides ... Se lançant impétueusement contre moi ... Il se tourna vers moi et s'abandonna à des insultes diffamatoires pour ma renommée, disant à haute voix que j'avais tué mon mari, ... Finalement on décida ... que mon seigneur mari et moi ne nous rencontrerions point seuls dans un lit ou une chambre ...».⁶⁹

Urban V's response was to reply with lengthy advice and to send the governing head of the Provincial Dominicans to re-establish peace in the marriage. This came to nothing and soon the Archbishop was once again obliged to write to the pope on Joanna's behalf.

Joanna found that her dream of producing heirs with the young Count of Mallorca was for the moment unlikely to be fulfilled. She needed to prepare for the possibility that her sister Marie or one of her three daughters from her marriage to Charles of Duras, would succeed her.

The queen's third marriage deteriorated further and, at the end of January 1366, her husband Jacques decamped from Naples and embarked for Spain to assist the illegitimate Henry of Transtamara in a struggle against his half-brother, Pedro I of Castile.

With Jacques temporarily out of the way and yet another papal legate having departed in despair, Joanna set herself the task of resolving her heir designate's marriage question. Having agreed to accept Louis of Navarre as husband following her rejection of Frederic III of Sicily, Joanna of Duras was duly married in November 1365.⁷⁰ The marriage was blocked by cardinals in Avignon, where it was believed that Joanna the younger was being forced into an alliance with Louis of Navarre. Avignon denied its dispensation for consanguinity. Joanna the elder ignored the curia and invited Louis of Navarre to Naples. He arrived with three galleys on 18th June 1366, marrying her niece Joanna of Duras the following day and consummating the marriage that very evening.⁷¹ Urban V was incensed by this affront to his authority, railed against the couple naming them

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 407-408.

⁷⁰ As Léonard tells us on p. 418: «*Du moins est-ce le 23 novembre 1365 que Jeanne donna son assentiment au mariage conclu par ses représentants «sur le conseil de la reine Jeanne, notre tante, et de l'impératrice de Constantinople Marie, notre mère.*»

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 418.

party to «*ce concubinage plus que scélérat et incestueux.*»⁷² He handed out severe ecclesiastical punishments to the guilty, conforming to the customary practice of papal rhetoric and regal defiance. The problem was later resolved, both Queen Joanna and Urban V having more pressing matters on their minds.

To add to her preoccupations Joanna soon learned that her husband Jacques had been captured by a partisan of his ally Henry of Transtamara, who in turn intended to surrender Jacques to his great enemies, the Aragonese.⁷³ The pope sent letters to his captors, urging them to release Jacques, and to Joanna, compelling her to work for her husband's liberation, i.e. pay his ransom. Joanna and Urban V came to terms, and she travelled to Rome to cement their close ties in March of 1368.

The Neapolitans would soon need all the support the papacy could extend them. After a period of relative calm in Provence, an invasion was once again a possibility. At the initiative of Urban V, an alliance was quickly established between the Church, Provence, the Dauphiné⁷⁴ and Savoy to organize the defence of the left bank of the Rhône. Other favourable measures continued to be underwritten by Joanna in Provence. As a result, the region was the recipient of several years' respite from earlier conflict. What is so very surprising is that the papacy maintained such a benign and disinterested attitude towards its subjects in Naples for most of Joanna's reign.

In spite of precautions taken by Urban V, Provence soon found itself open to the designs of the forces of the formidable Bertrand Duguesclin, ably seconded by Louis I d'Anjou, brother of the King of France and his lieutenant-general in the Languedoc. It would seem that Louis had been interested in Provence for some time but had lacked a sufficiently able general. Once Duguesclin became available, Louis decided to take up where the *Archiprêtre*, Arnaud of Cervole, had left off. Aix managed to save itself but Tarascon fell to the invaders. Various skirmishes occurred without Louis being able to claim a definitive victory. For a second time in Joanna's reign, her French cousins were threatening Provence. Urban V involved himself, dispatching a letter to Louis's brother Charles V expressing his outrage and emphasizing the scandal occasioned by such an

⁷² Loc. cit.

⁷³ Henry Transtamara had allied himself with Aragon and Louis I, d'Anjou to defeat Pedro I, the Cruel of Castile. It would have served Louis I d'Anjou well to have Jacques III out of the picture in Naples.

⁷⁴ By now a possession of the French Crown.

unprovoked attack upon the people of Provence. There had been no motivation, no pretext and no declaration of war. He exhorted the Provençaux to remain firm and stated that he had written to Emperor Charles IV who, as he reminded Charles V, had backed up Provence in the past. He then excommunicated Duguesclin and his supporters. Duguesclin abandoned the campaign, recalled by Charles V to assist in an enterprise across the Pyrenees. Louis I d'Anjou signed a treaty stipulating the restitution of captured territory. As a result of this treaty Provence recovered Tarascon. It took two years to conclude the affair but Provence had been rescued. Once gain, the unreserved support of the pope as well as the loyalism and exertions of the Provençaux themselves had won the day and Louis d'Anjou was left to find another way to gain control over Provence.

While the abovementioned trials suffered by Joanna and her turbulent kingdom would seem to suggest that her reign was characterized by calamity, she did in fact experience a short golden age. The period 1370-1374 seems to have been her apogee. Once again, she had her good relations with the papacy to thank for this rare tranquil period, as positive relations were to continue with Gregory XI. In writing to Joanna on the passing of Urban V, the Sacred College referred to her: « *Sérénité que ce pontife chérissait d'un amour sincère*»,⁷⁵ expressing the unfeigned affection Urban V had felt towards her.

In discussing this small peak in Joanna's reign we should not imagine that conflict was absent from this period, but rather that it was localized and easily contained. Brigands were still infiltrating Provence, and Louis d'Anjou had not decided to let his Provençal ambitions rest. He persisted with his claims over the fortress of Tarascon, eventually ceding these in a treaty signed in 1371. This treaty achieved, Provence found itself threatened with an Aragonese invasion. Jacques of Mallorca, who had been freed in early 1371, once Naples had agreed to pay his ransom, turned up in Avignon to organize another expedition against Aragon. His uncle, Pedro IV, was stunned by this development and Pope Gregory XI stepped in, asking Nicola Spinelli, the seneschal of Provence, to amass a plenipotentiary force to block Jacques's plans.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 428, note 2, no Latin version is given by Léonard.

In Naples, the old rivalries appeared to have melted away. Joanna's sister and great rival Marie died between 1366 and 1368.⁷⁶ Joanna's quarrel with her Magyar cousins had dissipated some years before, largely due to the activities of Acciaiuoli. Ending the protracted family feud made a good deal of political sense given that, at this stage of proceedings, neither Louis of Hungary nor Joanna of Naples had produced any surviving heirs. At the very least they must have reached a position of mutual understanding.

The papacy stepped in to help secure their respective successions. In 1370, two marriages were proposed with the aim of uniting the two Angevin courts. For some time it had been assumed that Louis of Hungary's natural successor would be his niece Elizabeth, daughter of his late brother Stephen. However, once young Charles of Duras arrived in Buda from Naples, Louis began to treat him as his heir-apparent, bestowing upon him the title of Prince of Croatia and Slavonia. An ally of Emperor Charles IV, Louis wanted to marry Elizabeth to Charles's son, Wencelas, King of Bohemia. He also tried to marry Charles of Duras to Anne of Luxembourg, the Emperor's daughter. The alliance with the emperor fell apart and Louis decided instead to secure the succession of Naples for his heir-apparent, Charles, to the detriment of Joanna's nieces.

The line of succession in Naples was complex, and it was probably this that had precipitated Louis's convoluted reflections, ones which did not sit easily with Joanna's own speculations. Agnès, one of Joanna's younger nieces, had surrendered her rights of succession by marrying Cansignorio della Scala. Further, the pope had not yet recognized Joanna of Duras's marriage. Expectation rested upon the youngest, Marguerite. Queen Joanna held out the hope that Marguerite could be married to Frederick III of Sicily, previously rejected by her elder niece Joanna. The pope withheld his permission. Louis of Hungary was convinced that Marguerite should marry the emperor of the Greeks, Jean Paléologue. He had a very strong double motivation for pushing this proposal; he wanted the friendship of his powerful imperial neighbour and, secondly, the marriage would conveniently have removed Marguerite from Naples. In the end, Louis asked for the hand of Marguerite on behalf of Charles of Duras.⁷⁷ Joanna

⁷⁶ Zurita gives the date of Marie's death as 1368: "*madama María murió de su muerte natural en Nápoles en al año de 1368*", op. cit., t. IV, X, xxxii, p. 681.

⁷⁷ Pór, Antal, op. cit. *passim*.

was unimpressed by this matrimonial project despite the fact that Louis pledged that no difficulties would arise from such an alliance for as long as he lived. For his part, Urban V was greatly inspired by this proposal. He gave his consent and the couple was married in Naples on 24th January 1370.

Philippe of Tarente was married to Elizabeth, Louis the Great's niece in 1371. Again, Joanna's correspondence shows her to have been unimpressed by this development. This is understandable, given the problems that both the Duras and the Tarente had caused her in the past. The pope, however, was again enthusiastic. It seems that Joanna might have been right all along, for Philippe of Tarente, supported by the Hungarians, soon laid claim to numerous Neapolitan holdings. Gregory XI blocked these claims and sought to excommunicate the prince if he disobeyed his will. Philippe attempted to assert his authority and failed, his alliances having dissolved into quarrels.

In 1370, Joanna of Duras's marriage to Louis of Navarre finally received papal recognition. Joanna the elder formed ties with the Greek emperor, Jean Paléologue, who had converted to Catholicism and now sought aid from the pope against the Turks. Joanna's star was in the ascendancy. In Naples, she received Brigitte of Sweden, who had visions concerning her, recording them in her *Revelations*. Brigitte reproached Joanna for her love of luxury and had this vision of her: «*Ô femme lionne, je t'apporte du sang, prends-le et répands-le*» and «*Je t'apporte ce vase plein de feu, prends-le, toi qui as la nature du feu.*».⁷⁸ This Franciscan vision of a Joanna-Semiramis might well have reflected Joanna's own Franciscan sensibilities.⁷⁹ Robert the Wise, whose brother, the Franciscan family saint Louis d'Anjou (St. Louis de Toulouse) had given up the throne to him to follow the teachings of Saint Francis, had been a firm adherent to the Franciscan ideal. The importance of this Franciscan bond will reappear when discussing the actions of Yolande d' Aragon and the epic of Joan of Arc.

The most firm proof that Joanna experienced the peak of her authority and prestige during the period 1370-1374 as well as an improvement in the internal affairs of Naples is that the Neapolitan court finally made a definitive decision regarding Sicily during this period. In so doing, Naples reconstituted its Angevin holdings, particularly Angevin

⁷⁸ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 432.

⁷⁹ Loc. cit.

Piedmont, and regained its position as defender of the Church in its struggles against the Visconti.⁸⁰

Internal struggles on the island meant that Sicily was no longer the problem it had been for Naples. A weakened Sicily did however attract the attentions of third parties such as Aragon and the Visconti of Milan. The tyrant of Milan, Bernabo Visconti, had already made overtures to the Sicilians, offering his daughter Antonia as a bride to Frederick III. The degradation of the Church in Sicily pushed Gregory XI to become further involved in the affairs of the island state. He forbade the marriage of Antonia Visconti to Frederick III and suggested Antoinette of Baux,⁸¹ a cousin of Joanna's, in exchange for his assent. Gregory XI continued his exertions by forcefully intervening to stop the King of Aragon from sending an expedition to Sicily. The pope rounded off his activities by instructing the Archbishop of Naples to work out a settlement between Naples and Sicily. A new agreement was reached at the beginning of 1372.⁸² Gregory refused it, however, as it did not meet with his objectives regarding papal authority. However, a later draft proved successful.

Having set sail for Sardinia, the Aragonese were once again in the area. Elionor, Queen of Aragon,⁸³ third wife of Pedro IV, was promoting her claims over Sicily and urging Aragon to support her pretensions with force. Gregory XI, conscious that the Sicilian solution was slipping from his grasp, quickly put together a proposition and an accompanying bull. It was accepted with great ceremony at Aversa on 31st March 1373. The marriage of Frederick III and Antoinette of Baux was celebrated at Messina on 26th November of that year.

Frederick III and his line held the island kingdom in fief from the papacy (Gregory's main modification to the pact) and as vassal of the sovereign of Sicily, Joanna, resident in Naples. Gregory XI had achieved the impossible with his actions in 1373: he had created a new state and liberated the Angevins and the Church from the ruinous struggle for Sicily. He had also blocked the aspirations of the Visconti. He hoped for a new ally in the

⁸⁰ A full discussion regarding the details of the Sicilian decision is contained in *Les Angevins de Naples*, pp. 433-439.

⁸¹ Daughter of Marguerite of Tarente and François des Baux.

⁸² *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 433.

⁸³ Born Elionor of Sicily and grandmother of Frederic III of Sicily, she was also the grandmother of Yolande d'Aragon, mother of Yolande's father Juan I, King of Aragon.

King of Aragon. The little kingdom of Sicily became a protectorate of Naples, and Church and pope were given time to prepare their defences against another attack from Milan.

Gregory XI, having established an anti-Milanese confederacy, now dreamed of a crusade against the Turks supported by all of Christendom. A niece of Robert the Wise, Joanna of Tarente, had been Queen of Little Armenia. Her daughter Marie was forced to capitulate in the face of a Turkish invasion. Gregory XI rallied the Faithful to her cause. He commended her to Joanna of Naples, citing their family ties. In Gregory's eyes, Marie was a defenceless widow and he cast about for a suitable spouse for her, one who would be willing to defend the Armenian cause. His gaze fell upon «*notre cher fils noble homme Othon, duc de Brunswick, de la race impériale des Othon de Saxe, cousin de notre cher fils noble homme Jean, marquis de Montferrat,*⁸⁴ *dont il a dirigé et dirige énergétiquement les guerres, également cousin des princes de Chypre ... universellement réputé comme au plus haut point prud'homme, magnifique et plein de valeur, capable, bien qu'il ne soit pas puissant par lui-même, de rassembler, par sa prudence et sa sollicitude, les secours étrangers.*».⁸⁵ He appeared to be the sort of man Joanna had hoped to find in Jacques of Mallorca.

The alliance established from the earliest days of Joanna's reign with the papacy had produced much gain and very little pain for the personal government of Joanna I. Angevin dominion had been re-established in Italy and Provence, and the Church for its part had engineered a situation that put it at the head of most Italian principalities.

Nevertheless, the primacy of the papacy and its affiliation with the Italians, most notably with allies of the Visconti, who had agreed to toe the Church's line, was a fragile one. The pope's only solid ally was Naples. Others, such as Savoy, which had agreed to take up arms against the Visconti, soon forgot their pledges and allowed the Milanese to threaten Piedmont. Léonard quotes F. Cognasso's statement regarding Amadeus VI of Savoy: «*Beaucoup de paroles, beaucoup de manœuvres et de marches, mais aucune bataille; aucune conquête de terre lombarde*».⁸⁶ Little wonder therefore that the papacy treasured such faithful defenders of the Church as Joanna; but her cousins in Hungary and in

⁸⁴ Brother-in-law (and misleading counsel), of Joanna's third husband, Jacques III of Mallorca, see above p. 22.

⁸⁵ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 439.

⁸⁶ Cognasso, Francesco., *Il Conte Verde*, Turin, 1926, p. 213, quoted and translated by Léonard, p. 440.

France soon put Joanna's succession into question. This was a tangled political web, but for the interests of our later study we must attempt to unravel it for a greater understanding of the importance of Naples-Sicily-Provence to forces beyond its frontiers.

Naples had gouged back its authority slowly and painfully. At the same time, its Angevin cousins in Hungary had been carving out an empire for themselves in Central Europe. Louis of Hungary had brought vast tracts of Central Europe, the Adriatic, and the northern Black Sea under his personal authority as well as several other strategic regions besides. This project of expansionism had put Louis at odds with his neighbour, the Emperor of Austria, which in turn had pushed Louis to strengthen his relationship with his Angevin cousins in Naples. Unexpectedly however, he managed to engineer a strategic marriage between the son of the Austrian emperor and the illegitimate daughter of his maternal uncle, the aging King of Poland, Casimir. The formidable mother of Louis the Great was Casimir's sister, Elizabeth of Poland. She was the same Elizabeth who had caused so much discomfort during Joanna's years of marriage to Louis's younger brother, André. Elizabeth was a masterly woman in every respect and her son Louis frequently made use of her administrative talents to great advantage. Casimir of Poland had no direct surviving legitimate heirs, and named Louis of Hungary his rightful heir. On Casimir's death, it was Elizabeth of Poland, dowager Queen of Hungary, who personally governed the kingdom of Poland in her son's name. In fact, since the start of her son's remarkable reign, she had assumed authority during Louis's extended absences on military campaigns and as such was the obvious choice to govern Poland, with the help of her faithful advisors, evidence of yet another Angevin princess talented enough to assume full and far-reaching authority in the absence of the male ruler.

After seventeen barren years of marriage Louis's wife, Elizabeth of Bosnia produced three daughters in quick succession, at a time when Louis effectively held control over the three kingdoms of Hungary, Poland and Sicily. He needed to ensure that the three realms stayed in the family.

The agreements reached in 1370 appear to have assured that Marguerite of Tarente (Joanna's niece) and Charles III of Duras⁸⁷ would succeed Joanna of Naples. In the event, once Louis had produced heirs of his own, the situation changed to the detriment of young Duras in Naples as well as in Hungary. Louis decided that his elder daughters would receive Hungary and Poland and he needed a substantial holding to pass on to the third princess. His gaze fell upon Naples. The scene was again set for instability and factionalism for Naples, a crown that was not only proving itself hollow but porous as well. Louis started to put about the idea that Joanna was not only tyrannizing Naples but that she had usurped it as well.⁸⁸ Louis of Hungary had a further advantage; his French cousins favoured his interpretation of the nature of Joanna's authority.

The success that had been so recently enjoyed by Charles V over his adversaries the English had given him the confidence to cast covetous eyes over Naples.⁸⁹ His earlier forays into Provence had met with defeat, so Charles the Wise decided it was time to nourish the ambitions of his younger brother Louis I d'Anjou,⁹⁰ with a view to advantaging his own offspring at some point in the future. Léonard examines Louis I d'Anjou's activities from about 1374 onwards, demonstrating the way in which France was headed in relation to Provence, the papacy and a durable foothold in Italy. He quotes Valois to underscore the point that France was very much in the business of expansionism despite its troubles with the English: *«Le duc d'Anjou, qui, en 1374 et 1375, séjourna de façon presque stable à la cour d'Avignon, s'est déjà mis à la disposition du pape pour la lutte contre les Visconti. Dans ses projets se succèdent le royaume de Majorque, le comté de Provence, le royaume de Naples et même le royaume de Lombardie sous la protection du pape, comme on en avait projeté un cinquante ans auparavant. A Gênes, agitée par les discords, commence la propagande en faveur d'une seigneurie française.»*⁹¹

The enormous backdrop of France's general and Louis I d'Anjou's particular ambitions is described above. Like his predecessor Charles I, Louis d'Anjou moved to seek his fortune under southern skies. France, in the person of Louis's elder brother Charles V,

⁸⁷ See page 26-27 above.

⁸⁸ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 445.

⁸⁹ Cf. Valois, Noël, « Le projet de mariage entre Louis de France et Catherine de Hongrie et le voyage de l'Empereur Charles IV à Paris », in *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 1893, seconde partie t. 30, pp. 216-217.

⁹⁰ *Les Angevins de Naples*, loc. cit.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 445.

was more than willing to encourage his ambitions. Charles V supported Louis's move into Provence but wanted the rights over Naples and Provence to devolve to his own younger son (and nephew of Louis I) Louis d'Orléans. He sought to claim his rights over Naples-Provence by tracing back down the branches of the family tree. Charles V asserted the legitimacy of his pretensions, (and those of his brother Louis d'Anjou), citing a double dynastic connection, first from Marguerite, the daughter of Charles II of Anjou and secondly, her husband Charles of Valois, earlier issue of the reigning dynasty of France.⁹²

The French and Hungarian cousins had found a common interest: relieving Joanna of her authority and succession. They reached a mutual agreement in 1374, one that would cost them nothing and ruin Joanna in the process. More than ever Joanna needed the powerful support of Gregory XI, but Gregory was once again having problems with recalcitrant Florentines who had decided to throw in their lot with the Visconti of Milan.

Gregory wanted to avoid direct involvement in any violence and Joanna once more came to his assistance. The fact that she had also been a traditional ally of Florence was not without importance. Once the conflict had ignited, she did everything within her power to dampen down the effects of the struggle and mediate the hostilities. Joanna sent envoys to Florence to assure them of the pope's good intentions towards them - his fight was with the tyrant of Milan. From the earliest days of her personal reign, Joanna had been a faithful papal ally; yet the Queen of Naples was in deep trouble: negotiations continued between Buda and Paris to ensure that their alliance would be as effective as possible against her. In spite of the to-ing and fro-ing from the Seine to the Danube, Joanna remained loyal to Gregory, continuing to send missives of peace and reconciliation to the Florentines and offering herself as mediator. She did not, however, dare to take up arms against her "allies" the Florentines. Joanna needed support in Naples from a consistent and powerful champion, but she was still married to the estranged and peculiar Jacques III of Mallorca.

Since his ransoming, Jacques had been much occupied, first fighting against the Visconti with the Savoyards and later spending the best part of 1373 and 1374 in France in

⁹² Ibid., p. 446.

preparation for another expedition against his Aragonese relatives. In February 1375 Jacques succumbed to illness before he had had a chance to confront his uncle Pedro IV of Aragon,⁹³ freeing Joanna to search for a potential loyal defender.

Gregory XI and Nicola Spinelli secured Joanna a likely warrior, the aforementioned Othon of Brunswick. He was the younger son of a secondary branch of a princely German family. He was past his prime, but then so was Joanna, at the time nearing the age of fifty. Some thirty years before, Othon had distinguished himself at the battle of Gamenario and in the defence of Asti. He had all the credentials necessary for a brave defender of the Queen, Naples and the Church, and Gregory knew him personally.⁹⁴ Othon furthermore had a reputation as an able administrator, having participated for some time in the government of the Marquis of Montferrat.⁹⁵ The proposed union conformed to the wishes of the pope, who granted his approval for it to proceed without delay. Othon was excluded from the *dignité royale* as well as the line of succession. He did however receive from Joanna the principality of Tarente. The reassurance that Joanna had chosen her fourth husband for herself by herself can be read in the pontiff's letter of approval.⁹⁶ Gregory XI commended Othon to the people of Naples and urged them to receive her new husband «avec joie» and honour him as the «vrai mari»⁹⁷ of their queen.

This piece of pontifical brinksmanship seems to have produced positive short-term gains if we are to judge by events that swiftly followed it. Disgruntled Florentines clamoured to complain of it to the Hungarians, stressing Joanna's dishonour, for in their view she had humiliated the Angevin noble line by linking it to a detested race of German princes.⁹⁸ The French could not express their displeasure in the same terms, being connected to the Germans by marriage (the king's mother was a Brandenburg). Instead, Charles V sent a missive to Joanna urging her to adhere to the principles of succession decided upon by himself and the King of Hungary. He cautioned that it would be

⁹³ After having deliberately antagonized Jacques II (according to Léonard's appellation, or Jacques III according to Chaytor's), of Mallorca, King Pedro IV of Aragon reincorporated the kingdom of Mallorca back into the realms of Aragon in 1343.

⁹⁴ See above, p. 29.

⁹⁵ Mentioned above on p. 22, in his capacity as an "advisor" to Jacques III of Mallorca.

⁹⁶ Cerasoli, no. CLXXXIV, cited by Léonard in *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 450.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ *Les Angevins de Naples*, op. cit.

unwise for her new husband to launch a conflict against two such powerful entities as her cousins France and Hungary.

In the interim, Gregory had decided to return to Rome to assure his dominion over Italy. He made his entry into Rome on 17th January 1377 surrounded by the armies of his nephew Raymond of Turenne⁹⁹ and the great nobles of the Neapolitan court.

On 12th October 1377, Gregory wrote a moving letter to Joanna suffused with his confidence in her. This missive should serve as supporting evidence when we judge the effectiveness of her as a loyal servant of the Church and a worthy sovereign of a troubled kingdom. In this letter, Gregory is in a state of anguish, citing the treachery and greed of those around him, emphasizing the fact that: «*Nous ne savons vers qui nous tourner sinon vers toi*» and he thanks Joanna for: «*le trésor de compassion de l’immense charité royale à notre égard*». ¹⁰⁰

In the event, Florence was abandoned by its allies the Visconti and was disposed to come to terms with Gregory XI. This was achieved only after a veritable international congress had been called to resolve the impasse. The Florentines managed to escape papal demands, this in spite of their treachery with the Milanese against the pope.

We will not enter into an examination here of the machinations of the two popes following the death of Gregory XI. Instead, we will move on to an analysis of how Louis I d’ Anjou became Joanna’s “son” and rightful heir.

Much had occurred following the death of Gregory and the election of the two popes who struggled to succeed him. The Throne of Peter was both crowded and besieged by the hopes and aspirations of competing princes of the various empires, kingdoms and states that constituted the one true Church. Joanna declared for both popes, first for

⁹⁹ See below, pp. 67-68.

¹⁰⁰ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 453.

Clement VII and later, reluctantly, for Urban VI.¹⁰¹ She had been rendered powerless by successive defeats in the struggle between the competing popes. Joanna was obliged to submit to the latter, while the former fled to the relative safety of Avignon.

Léonard points out that this was just a feint, orchestrated to buy some breathing space to enable Othon of Brunswick to appear with fresh troops. As soon as this was achieved, Joanna renounced her obedience to Urban VI and submitted to the authority of Clement VII. No longer able to count upon Joanna for support, Urban alleged papal offences of schism and heresy against her and her closest advisors. He effectively stripped her of all her papal dependencies, calling her: «*Jeanne, autrefois reine de Jérusalem et de Sicile, nouvelle Athalie par son atrocité, nouvelle Jézabel et comble d'impiété.*».¹⁰² Once Joanna had withdrawn her obedience from him, Urban needed new and more reliable allies, finding them in Louis of Hungary and Charles III of Duras.

France was an ally of Clement VII and had hoped to persuade Hungary to be likewise. Charles V failed to persuade the ally who for many years had intrigued with him to dispossess Joanna of Naples and Provence. In June 1379, Louis of Hungary made public his alliance with Wencelas of Bohemia, King of the Romans. They declared themselves supporters of Urban VI. This declaration was facilitated by the death of Louis's daughter Catherine the year before,¹⁰³ since he no longer needed the third kingdom, Naples, to ensure the future prospects of his three daughters. He only needed Hungary and Poland, and resurrected his former plans for the succession of Charles III of Duras, striving to have Joanna recognize him as her natural and legitimate heir.

Charles of Duras had been absent from court, fighting on various fronts in the interests of Louis the Great.¹⁰⁴ News of his successes reached the court of Urban VI, who made Charles of Duras an offer. In the autumn of 1379, Charles of Duras was in Venice at the head of a great Hungarian army numbering some ten thousand men, supported by an able general and a distinguished diplomat, and Urban VI offered him the Kingdom of

¹⁰¹ Marie of Brittany (widow of Joanna's adopted son and designated heir, Louis I d'Anjou) would later find herself in the same position. The phenomenon of the Great Schism caused problems as well as extending ready political solutions for the Angevins. See below, p. 68 for the subtraction of obedience from the Avignon papacy forced upon Marie of Brittany in the closing stages of her lieutenant-generalcy for her son Louis II.

¹⁰² *Les Angevins de Naples*, op. cit., p. 459.

¹⁰³ Valois, Noël, «Le Projet de mariage entre Louis de France et Catherine de Hongrie », pp. 213-214.

¹⁰⁴ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 460 for the detailed account.

Naples for the conquering. This conformed perfectly to the Magyar desire for revenge, so long deferred, and to Louis's plans to keep Charles of Duras away from the heritage of the Hungarian princesses by placing him on the throne of Naples. For Joanna, Urban's appeal to Charles of Duras had transformed him from a potential heir into her certain adversary. She needed a new champion to defend her interests. At Clement's urging, Joanna looked to France and considered the possibility presented by Louis I d'Anjou, Charles V's governor in the Languedoc and her one-time enemy in the days of Duguesclin.

Louis I d'Anjou had in the interim drawn profit from the insecurity of Clement VII. On the eve of Clement's departure for the sanctuary of Naples, Louis had had himself invested with the Kingdom of Adria, which covered the northern and central territories of the papacy, and ensured that a bull was issued to this effect.¹⁰⁵ He would hold his new state in fief from the Church, against a rent and with the expectation that he would receive the Kingdom of Sicily in return for his support. These two kingdoms had never before been united under one vassal of the Church. Louis I was given two years to conquer his kingdom.

The news of Urban VI's offer to Charles of Duras had forced Clement to make this new agreement with the ambitious younger brother of the King of France. Louis I d'Anjou and Clement VII met in Avignon in January 1380. Another bull was issued on 1st February 1380 to the effect that Joanna would adopt Louis I d'Anjou as her son and her successor. In return, Louis would put four galleys at the disposal of the Neapolitans, open his treasury, and promise his "mother" effective aid against all adversaries of Naples-Provence. He did not insist upon immediate possession of Joanna's realm apart from selected strategic positions. He pledged to respect the authority and the dignity of Joanna and that of her husband Othon of Brunswick. In reality, the Church met most of the expedition costs and Clement VII went further still, emphasizing Louis's possession of Adria. It seems that the pope was so desperate for support that he was willing to place the Church in a weakened geo-political position by surrendering most of its vast territorial holdings to its new "protector".¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Dated 17th April, 1379.

¹⁰⁶ *Les Angevins de Naples*, pp. 461-462.

Joanna was circumspect regarding the nomination of Louis I as her heir and seemed to have little enthusiasm for this “French project” as Léonard puts it.¹⁰⁷ Her branch of the Angevin tree had sought for generations to distance itself from its French heritage. Both Joanna and Othon of Brunswick regarded the situation as a good deal less desperate than did Clement VII. She was calm enough to decline the offer of mediation put to her by the Duke of Bavaria, who had offered to try to sort out a solution between Naples, Urban VI, Louis of Hungary and Charles of Duras. Joanna placed her faith in her husband Othon of Brunswick, a decision perhaps not in the best interests of herself or indeed her kingdom. It would appear that she adopted a sanguine attitude regarding Charles III of Duras because his wife and children were resident in Naples where they had been sent by Charles’s powerful protector Louis of Hungary to assure a Duras presence in the kingdom. However, they managed to slip out of Naples and Joanna soon capitulated, sending letters confirming the adoption decision on 29th June, ratified by Clement VII in bulls dated 22nd and 23rd July 1380. She bestowed the title and accompanying rights of Duke of Calabria upon Louis I d’Anjou, an appellation normally reserved for heirs-apparent to the Kingdom Sicily-Naples.

By 12th July, Charles III of Duras was on the march towards Naples. Louis I d’Anjou was Joanna’s last hope and he had promised his “mother” rapid and efficacious support; but fate intervened. His brother Charles V died in September 1380 and Louis became regent for his nephew, the young Charles VI. He took control of government and, in the words of G. Romano: *«Ne paraissait pas disposé le moins du monde à renoncer aux satisfactions présentes du pouvoir pour courir les aléas d’une entreprise incertaine, difficile et pleine de périls. L’inaction injustifiable du prince français était pour la reine Jeanne un coup terrible.»*¹⁰⁸

Louis I was engaged in a serious power struggle with his other brothers Jean, Duke of Berry and the powerful Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, and as such Naples had slipped from his immediate priorities. Joanna’s Naples is best characterized by Romano’s observations: *«...[dans] un pays où couvaient tant de germes de mécontentements, où le conflit des intérêts et des passions politiques et religieuses était si âpre, où les classes inférieures étaient habituées depuis les siècles à suivre les vicissitudes de la fortune et où une noblesse remuante et*

¹⁰⁷ Op. cit. p., 462.

¹⁰⁸ Paraphrased in *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 463.

*ambitieuse n'entendait pas d'autre voix que celle de son égoïsme, les conditions fondamentales manquaient pour résister à une invasion étrangère.»*¹⁰⁹

Romano's description of the disunity of the Neapolitan situation can be equally applied to France's circumstances during the closing stages of the Hundred Years War. In fact Naples provides an excellent example of how not to promote the stability and prosperity of a kingdom. It was a microcosm of what was to follow in France and it will be interesting to discover what steps if any were taken to ensure that some of the grave errors committed in relation to Naples were not duplicated in France. Was it possible to redress errors of the past and facilitate unity? If so, how was this done and by whom?

For the moment, we will return to Naples to see how the drama eventually played out, since Naples would have a huge effect upon the fortunes of the second House of Anjou. We will discover that Naples was to prove a *cadeau empoisonné*.

Charles of Duras had completed his preparations for a march upon Naples. On 1st June 1381, Urban VI invested him with the Crown of Sicily. On 4th July, Joanna promulgated an act entrusting Louis d'Anjou with her authority, officially announcing his adoption and promising to do him homage once he entered the kingdom.

On 28th June, Charles of Duras crossed the Neapolitan frontier, and by the first of July he had reached Nola. With the assistance of the inhabitants of Naples, he entered the city on 16th July. It was said that the Queen was in the company of five hundred armed supporters, including two cardinals and high officers of the Neapolitan court. Charles of Duras's two sisters-in-law, Joanna and Agnès, were secured in the most powerful Neapolitan fortress, the Château-Neuf. Joanna I had sent to her husband Othon of Brunswick and her loyal subjects in Provence for reinforcements.¹¹⁰ Charles of Duras was aware of the dangers of procrastination and actively pushed the siege. He did not want to face Othon and his forces, intending to end the conflict before his arrival. Food shortages and the possibility of disease ensured that Joanna negotiated with her

¹⁰⁹ Loc. cit.

¹¹⁰ The level of Joanna's desperation is underscored in a letter sent by her to the people of Marseille. See Appendix 1, n. 5.

besieger, promising to surrender within five days of 20th August if help did not arrive. Othon arrived in Naples on 24th August and was captured the next day.

Joanna had a meeting with Charles that lasted into the evening of 26th August. She agreed to terms of surrender demanded by him. A written agreement was drafted and she capitulated, raising her vanquisher's banner above her castle walls as a sign of her abdication of authority. Léonard believes that Charles of Duras had agreed to recognize her as titular sovereign but that he would have held actual power.¹¹¹ He suggests however that the evidence that Charles held to such a pledge is thin. Whatever the case, the following week he took her prisoner and had her taken to the Château de l'Oeuf, moving into the royal palace himself. Apart from Othon's late arrival, no help for Joanna had come from Provence. Clement VII seemed unable to save her and Louis I d'Anjou had either misjudged the situation or because of his regency in France had neglected his sovereign duty towards Joanna. Charles of Duras had taken the precaution of ensuring that Joanna was held apart from her husband Othon of Brunswick, who was held in the Château Neuf along with Nicola Spinelli, grand seneschal of Provence.

Joanna's situation gradually worsened. Though she may have expected help from her "son", it was not forthcoming. His ambitions appear to have been greater than his ability to fulfil them. In any case, there was probably little he could have done by this late stage, having wasted time and squandered any advantage that he could have drawn from the Neapolitan situation.

By the end of July, Louis I d'Anjou had resolved to depart for Naples immediately, but the news of the situation there convinced him to stay put. At the beginning of January 1382, he again resolved to leave for Naples, meaning to arrive there no later than May 1st. The 22nd of February saw him in Avignon, where Clement VII officially styled him Duke of Calabria. He needed four months in Provence to detach the *Durazzists* from the *ligue d'Aix* and put together an army funded by the pope and the French Crown, of which he was at the time regent. He managed to attract the support of the Visconti by hinting that Lucia, daughter of Barnabo, might wish to marry his elder son, the future Louis II

¹¹¹ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 465.

d'Anjou.¹¹² On his way through Lyon, to ensure the support of Savoy, he made over his rights to Angevin Piedmont to Amadeus VI. On 29th May, Clement VII renewed Louis's investiture as legitimate heir to the Kingdom of Sicily. By 13th June, Louis I d'Anjou was at the head of an immense expeditionary force. Amadeus VI joined him in Turin and once in Milan Louis gave flesh to the hint by concluding a marriage agreement with Barnabo Visconti. He continued to collect men and arms as he progressed towards his "kingdom". By the beginning of September 1382, he was just twenty five leagues from Rome. Clement VII held out the hope that this vast army would move against his great rival Urban VI, who had found himself without defences. However Louis pressed on to Naples.

By this time, Joanna was dead, having been assassinated some two months previously, on or around 27th July 1382. This is the date given in a letter written by Charles of Duras to inform Italians of the death of his captive. He assured them that the queen had died of natural causes. It seems that she had managed to survive up until the moment when her "son" and saviour had approached the borders of Naples. Both Louis I d'Anjou and Clement VII cried foul and they were backed up by contemporary chronicles¹¹³ which all speak of the violent death of Joanna, Queen of Naples. This seems reasonable, since Charles of Duras must have understood that Joanna had to die before Louis reached her. While ever she lived, he was no more than a usurping tyrant, and Louis her loyal son and defender of her sovereign authority. With Joanna out of the way, Charles could claim succession by virtue of his close blood ties to her. He was her "natural" heir. Louis was nothing more than an ambitious foreigner armed with paper testaments and the recommendations of the anti-pope, Clement VII. Indeed, Louis and Clement claimed that Joanna still lived long after most of Italy had been informed of her death. Louis did not receive his coronation as King of Naples until some thirteen months after her death, on 30th August 1383. His "subjects" in Provence would not recognize him as their sovereign for a further two years, by which time he himself had been dead for many months.

¹¹² See our discussion below, pp. 73-74, regarding the search for effective marital alliances undertaken by both Louis I and Marie of Brittany for their sons Louis II and Charles.

¹¹³ See Léonard's introduction to his *Histoire de Jeanne 1^{re} ...* and Capasso, Bartolommeo, *Le fonti della storia delle provincie Napolitane dal 568 al 1500 di Bartolommeo Capasso. Con note ed un copioso indice di E. Oresto Mastrojanni*, Naples, R. Marghieri, 1902 & De Bartholomaeis, Vincenzo, *Poesie provenzai ; Storiche relative alla'Italia, a cura di Vincenzo De Bartholomaeis*, (2 vols), Rome Istituto Storico del Medio Evo, 1969 [microfiche of 1931 printed version].

Despite claims to the contrary made by Charles of Duras, Joanna died faithful to her pope Clement VII. Clement believed Joanna to be another Judith, but in her case Holofernes had triumphed. In fact, he seems to have given her a sort of quasi-canonization: «*Entre toutes les femmes illustres de ce monde, Jeanne, rose brillante et odorante parmi les épines, nous pénétrait, ainsi que toute l'Eglise Romaine et tous ses sujets, d'un parfum admirable de suavité ... Elle est passée de la misère de ce monde à la beauté du royaume de Dieu où elle jouit et où elle règne, où, méprisant ses adversaires et se riant d'eux, elle recouvre le sceptre qui lui avait été enlevé et reçoit la couronne dans le cercle des saints martyrs.*».¹¹⁴

This appreciation of Joanna is surely excessive. What is certain however is that despite her shortcomings, Joanna remained a devoted vassal and a defender of the papacy. An anonymous Sicilian poet called her, «*Jeanne, reine douloureuse*».¹¹⁵ This is probably closest to the truth. Joanna was constantly hampered in her authority and deprived in her happiness. Little wonder that she expressed the regret that she had not been born a man. Léonard, in his evaluation of Joanna's reign, points out that women who played determinant rôles in the politics of their realms during the fourteenth century did so because of the phenomenon of the knight-king, often absent from his kingdom, generally dying prematurely, leaving minor or no surviving male heirs. Not proto-feminists, such women must be studied in the context of their lives and times, and their abilities must be evaluated on a case by case basis.

One of Joanna's later successors in the uneasy post of queen regnant, Elizabeth Tudor, was another woman highly sought after in the European marriage stakes and one who showed no great enthusiasm for the married state in spite of the fact that she was the last of her line. Unlike Joanna, Elizabeth I seemed to understand instinctively that the marriage of a reigning queen was a complex proposition and one which could very easily prove detrimental for her realm. Like the widows Marie of Brittany and Yolande d' Aragon who will form the next phase of our study, Elizabeth was a woman possessed of deft political skills and strong personal character. Joanna unfortunately seems not to have had these advantages. While Elizabeth's activities ensured that her reign was one of the most institutionally, geo-politically, artistically and culturally significant in British

¹¹⁴ Loc. cit.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 469.

history,¹¹⁶ Joanna's was marked by tragedy and loss and she was no *Gloriana*. While Yolande d'Aragon, her mother Violant, and her mother-in-law Marie of Brittany were not queens regnant, we will discover that they managed to make significant contributions to their periods of history.

We will now examine the remarkable Angevin princess, Marie of Brittany, wife of Louis I d'Anjou, King of Naples, in the context of his death in Naples and her onerous responsibilities in the wake of his passing. She was Yolande d'Aragon's mother-in-law and as such the preparations made by Marie of Brittany are of the utmost interest to this study.

¹¹⁶ Cf. McNalty, Arthur Salisbury, *Elizabeth Tudor: The Lonely Queen*, London, Christopher Johnson, 1971.

CHAPTER 2: *VELIS ET REMIS*: THE ŒUVRE OF MARIE OF BRITTANY

« ...on ne pensera communement qu'a la despouiller et fouler et chascun emportera sa pièce...divers plais et de demandes de plusieurs gens en fait de debts ou de chalenges de terre ou de rentes. »¹

The previous chapter examined the case of the elusive kingdom of Naples-Sicily and the efforts of its *reine douloureuse*, Joanna I to fulfil her onerous responsibilities. After her death, her “son” Louis I d’Anjou determined to take the hollow crowns by force and style himself King of Jerusalem, Naples and Sicily. This chapter will suggest that his exertions would best be described by borrowing Horace’s caustic remark from his *Ars Poetica*: «parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus».²

Louis might have failed spectacularly in his enterprise to conquer his kingdoms, but his wife Marie of Brittany (Blois-Penthièvre)³ was to prove a formidable princess. Succeeding against all odds, she managed to claw back the inheritance of her sons Louis II and Charles by virtue of her skill and ingenuity in dealing with the various outside interests seeking to deprive them of their livelihood and inherited rights.⁴ She battled with the help of the Church in Avignon to subdue rival factions in Provence, outwitting the French Crown and those in positions of power around the throne. She achieved the impossible and in the event bequeathed to her son Louis II a healthy legacy with which to fund his future aspirations.

Before examining her achievements, we must review the dénouement of her husband Louis I’s campaign in Italy.

¹ Christine de Pizan on the trials of widowhood from her *Livre des trois vertus*, Laigle, Mathilde, *Le livre des trois vertus de Christine de Pisan et son milieu historique et littéraire*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1912, pp. 330-331.

² Horace, (ed. Blakeney, Edward Henry), *Ars Poetica*, London, Scholartis Press, 1928, l.139. Louis I’s enterprise failed to live up to his own expectations and perhaps condemned his descendants to a similar fate.

³ Marie of Brittany (Blois-Penthièvre) was born in 1343 and died on 12th November 1404. See Appendix 1, n. 6.

⁴ She was by no means alone in this regard. See above our opening quotation from Christine de Pizan.

Michel Pintoin, monk of Saint-Denis, chronicled the departure of Louis I of Anjou in 1382 in these terms: «*Conformément aux avis du souverain pontife, le duc d'Anjou se disposa à partir pour la Sicile avec une forte armée de gens de guerre, afin de prendre possession de la couronne de ce pays.*».⁵ He describes the sumptuous nature of Louis's train and the strength of arms accompanying him. For the French Crown at least, it seemed that Louis's claim over Sicily-Naples was a legitimate one.⁶ Michel Pintoin relates the pious nature of Louis's quest, noting his stop at Saint-Denis to pray for God's protection and the success of his undertaking. Once in Avignon, the Duke of Anjou was welcomed with great solemnity by pope Clement VII who «*...l'institua roi de Sicile au nom du Saint-Siège, et l'investit publiquement des droits et dépendances du royaume, avec l'approbation de tous les cardinaux qui se trouvaient là.*».⁷

The French perspective, therefore, seems to have been that Louis's enterprise and claim were legitimate but that he had arrived too late to save his "mother", Joanna I from her fate at the hands of her closest blood relative, Charles of Duras. From the Avignon Church's standpoint,⁸ Louis I represented its salvation «*... nous vous constituons donc principal défenseur de l'Eglise, votre mère et notre épouse, vous recommandant de soutenir sa*

⁵ *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys, publiée en latin et traduite par Bellaguet, M.L., Paris, Editions du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1994, vol. I, l. III, p. 159.* Hereafter to be referred to as the *Religieux*. We have made a deliberate decision in deciding to make great use of the *Religieux* for this part of our study for, as Bernard Guenée attests, Michel Pintoin was indeed "le principal témoin du règne [of Charles VI]". In recent years, Guenée has made a detailed study of the *Religieux* and among other things he records that «*Michel Pintoin a été, à l'abbaye de Saint-Denis, un important personnage. Il a exercé des fonctions administratives...Il a surtout été un historien considérable qui a, entre autres, écrit cette "Chronique de Charles VI"...Pendant quarante ans, la chronique, très homogène, nous livre un témoignage continu sur les heurs et malheurs du royaume, sur ceux de l'Église, et sur les destins mêlés de l'un et de l'autre.*» That is not to say that clichés and omissions do not appear in the *Chronique du Religieux*. Pintoin clearly borrows expressions and forms of words used in earlier erudite works. Our reading of the *Religieux* must therefore be prudent at all times, for it seems that the chronicler was required from time to time to adapt an historian's convictions for reasons of political necessity. His silences often speak volumes, yet notwithstanding our caution, in Guenée's words, we find in the *Religieux* "une masse énorme de renseignements exacts" and that the *Chronique* «*peut être lu comme l'histoire des rapports, au fil des événements, entre le roi, la cour et les "gens sages" vue du point de vue des "gens sages". L'œuvre de Michel Pintoin est une chronique d'information. C'est aussi une chronique d'opinion.*» At the time of the writing of the chronicle, the Abbey of St. Denis was closely aligned to the Crown and this must be borne in mind. Cf. the excellent collection of papers by Bernard Guenée published for the Institut de France on aspects of the work of Michel Pintoin and his ties to Charles VI from which the above has been taken, Guenée, Bernard, *Un roi et son historien, vingt études sur le règne de Charles VI et la "Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, Paris, Boccard, 1999, pp. 19-29 & p. 24.

⁶ We must not to forget that in 1382, Louis of Anjou was regent for the kingdom of France.

⁷ *Religieux*, vol. I, l. III, p. 160.

⁸ From the point of view of the Avignon pontificate, Louis I was its natural protector, having been himself adopted by its faithful daughter, Joanna I of Naples. Rome held a very different point of view.

cause de toute votre puissance.».⁹ This was in keeping with the rôle Joanna had fulfilled for the Church throughout her reign.¹⁰

After a convincing victory in Provence, described in considerable detail by Michel Pintoin,¹¹ and contradicted by Louis's chancellor, Jean Le Fèvre,¹² the Duke of Anjou pushed on to Naples. Crossing the Alps in 1382, Louis lost men and a large portion of his treasure due to incursions by locals who attacked both the forward party and the rearguard of his army. He nevertheless managed to overcome these difficulties and as he approached the frontier of the kingdom of Naples he sent word to Charles III of Duras to fix a date for combat. The *Religieux* tells us that Charles of Duras had determined not to triumph over the Angevin pretender by force of arms but rather by treachery. He resolved to rob the French army of its leader. The scheme however fell apart. Charles of Duras then moved to deprive Louis's armies of provisions by ordering his towns to refuse supply to the invader.¹³ Further, Louis was not permitted to cross Italian territory unhindered, nor was his currency to be recognized. The French were exposed to the probability of famine and the certainty of stalemate. Louis I was not the first nor indeed the last Angevin to find himself cooling his heels with an army at the frontier of his kingdom.

In spite of the glowing terms with which the monk commences his recollection of Louis I, he does not withhold that: «*Mais ses brillantes qualités, qui pouvaient lui assurer un renom immortel, furent ternies par une cupidité sans bornes.*¹⁴ *On lui rapprochait d'avoir foulé et pressuré les peuples par exactions injustes et tellement exorbitantes qu'elles dépassaient leurs revenus; aussi ne craignait-on pas de l'accabler hautement de malédictions ... non content avec les riches provinces de l'Anjou et du Maine, et de la réputation qu'il s'était déjà acquise par ses exploits, il avait voulu porter la gloire de son nom dans les contrées inconnues, et s'était flatté de*

⁹ *Religieux*, vol. I, l. III, p. 163.

¹⁰ See above chapter 1, pp. 40-41.

¹¹ The monk recounts how Louis I's treasury rivalled that of Croesus and that his army was the biggest in living memory to have crossed the Alps.

¹² See below, pp. 54-55. Cf. Xhayet, Geneviève, "Partisans et adversaires de Louis d'Anjou pendant la guerre de l'Union d'Aix", in *Provence historique*, vol. 40, n° 161, (1990), pp. 403-427. This paper describes the opposing parties in the war between Louis I d'Anjou and Charles of Duras over the Neapolitan succession, based on a diary kept by Chancellor Le Fèvre.

¹³ *Religieux*, vol. I, l. III, p. 169.

¹⁴ Dante, who detested the Angevins, railed against such greed: «Oh cieca cupidigia e ira folle che sì ci sproni ne La vita Corta, / e ne l'eterna poi sì mal c'immolle!», Alighieri, Dante, ed. Flamini, Francesco, *Il Canto XII del Purgatorio*, Firenze, G.C. Sansoni 1904, lines 49-51,

*trouver une occasion de nombreux triomphes dans la conquête du royaume de Sicile, que lui avait transmis à titre d'adoption la très illustre reine madame Jeanne. Mais dès qu'il eut franchi les frontières de France, la fortune lui prépara, ainsi qu'aux siens, des malheurs inévitables.»*¹⁵

Here the monk conveys a penetrating insight into the fortunes of the Angevins and not just those who accompanied Louis I on his Italian campaign. Pintoin's observation seems to reflect the point made in the previous chapter regarding the achievement of *droit désir*.¹⁶ We might intuit from his words the exact nature of the legacy Louis I was to bequeath to his heirs and successors.¹⁷ It mirrors the order of the burdensome inheritance left to Joanna I by her grandfather Robert the Wise: here is your ephemeral kingdom, go forth and conquer, defend and re-conquer it, regardless of the cost or sacrifice of male heirs. We will continue to observe during the course of this study that the brunt of this burden would not only be carried by the men who sought to triumph but also by the Angevin women charged with the task of ensuring and underwriting every aspect of Angevin enterprise.

Deprived of supply, Louis's army stole from the people and devastated their possessions. To defend them from such alien outrage, the Neapolitans called upon indigenous nobles whom Louis defeated decisively, but not without suffering losses of his own. He sent a herald to inform Charles of Duras both of his victory and his intention to honour the terms of his adoption. Charles was angered by these pretensions, firing back the response: «*S'il réclame pour lui le droit d'adoption, qu'il sache que, quand il s'agit d'un trône, le droit de succession doit prévaloir.*»¹⁸ As mentioned above, in spite of the strength of his forces, Charles preferred not to engage in combat but rather sought to

¹⁵ *Religieux*, v. I., l. V, p. 331. Georges Le Brusque gives us some interesting insights into the various chroniclers of the Hundred Years War. He has this to say in relation to what he terms "Clerical Chroniclers", men such as Michel Pintoin, Pierre Cochon, parish priest and apostolical notary, and the Bourgeois de Paris who was in fact a cleric from the University of Paris: "...they did not consider the Hundred Years War as a grand and epic time but as a dark period of suffering and tribulation...[and they] did not hesitate to castigate the nobility in very forthright terms... Nothing in the [clerical] chronicles seems to indicate that the knights behaved better than the common soldiers. In fact, most of the chroniclers' rancour is directed against the knights." Le Brusque, Georges, "Chronicling the Hundred Years War in Burgundy and France in the Fifteenth Century", in *Writing War: Medieval Literary Responses to Warfare*, Saunders, Corinne, Le Saux, Françoise & Thomas, Neil, (eds.), Cambridge, D.S. Brewer, 2004, p. 82.

¹⁶ Above, p. 12.

¹⁷ See above, p. 43, note 2.

¹⁸ *Religieux*, vol. 1, l. V, p. 333.

better his opponent by resorting to ruse. He intended to stall for as long as possible. The net result of this strategy was that Louis I was obliged to march his massive and hungry army up hill and down dale in an attempt to provision them and to keep up the advance. His vast treasury was soon depleted, forcing him to pawn his nuptial coronet, which he had carried with him from France, intending to don it once he had conquered his kingdom.¹⁹ The Angevin army was dangerously under-provisioned and Louis's great ally Amadeus VI, Count of Savoy, soon succumbed to an epidemic.²⁰ Louis lamented his unhappy fate with his closest familiars. Ever audacious, Louis is on record as having sent at least ten *lettres du défi* to Charles of Duras citing his rival's cowardice in refusing to meet him in open combat.²¹

In a bid to rescue his project, ²² Louis sent his trusted cousin Pierre de Craon back to Angers to collect additional funds carefully garnered by Marie of Brittany, a woman uncommonly efficacious at amassing funds destined to relieve her husband's misery and bolster her House's prestige.²³ Marie took Pierre de Craon at his word and handed over the vast sums she had accumulated.²⁴ On his return journey, Pierre stopped over in Venice, where he revelled in luxury for many days before receiving news of Louis's death. Apparently, Louis had contracted a chill while attempting to prevent his own forces from pillaging the city of Bisceglia. His illness degenerated into gangrenous tonsillitis from which he did not recover.²⁵ Pierre de Craon later appeared in Paris in the midst of a sumptuous escort. Louis's brother, Jean, Duke of Berry took extreme umbrage and confronted the apostate with Louis's death saying, «*c'est toi qui as fait mourrir notre bien aimé frère.*».²⁶ Notwithstanding Berry's reaction, at that time, Pierre de Craon was not arrested nor was anyone punished.²⁷

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 335, see above, p. 45, note 11.

²⁰ Loc. cit.

²¹ Ibid., p. 337

²² By this stage of his campaign, Louis and his men were reduced to begging along the route : «*Ainsi ses hommes, qui étaient arrivés, la bourse pleine d'or, avec des vêtements couverts de pierreries, sur des chevaux richement caparaçonnés, s'en retournèrent à pied, un bâton à la main, n'ayant qu'une seule cotte d'armes, et mendiant sur leur route. Ils apprenaient à leurs dépens qu'il n'y a point de bonheur durable dans les pompes de ce monde.*», *Religieux*, vol. I, l. V, p. 339.

²³ As we shall see below.

²⁴ Loc. cit.

²⁵ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 473.

²⁶ *Religieux*, vol. I, l. V, p. 341.

²⁷ Below we will discuss that in the complicated web of Angevin finances, Pierre de Craon was, with many others, just another of Louis I's creditors. In spite of the very complicated relationship between the Angevins and Pierre de Craon, Froissart records that by 1395 action had been taken

Louis I had obtained a bull of investiture from Clement VII in 1382.²⁸ Apart from his primary rôle as regent of France and his aspirations to become King of Naples, Louis intended to re-establish the ancient kingdom of Mallorca to his profit.²⁹ In part, this might well have been a residual ambition stemming from marital negotiations on his behalf with the Crown of Aragon in about 1351. Louis's father Jean II of France sought to establish a marital alliance between the kingdoms of France and Aragon to secure Montpellier and theoretically, Mallorca as well.³⁰ As we know, Louis I eventually married Marie of Brittany instead of the *Infanta* Juana.³¹ Taking into consideration the importance of Provence, the objectives of Naples-Sicily (which included Jerusalem-Mallorca) clearly point to his aspiration to dominate the Western Mediterranean:³² the groundwork for strategic trans-Mediterranean supremacy existed long before the marriage of his elder son Louis II to Yolande d'Aragon, daughter of King Juan I of

against the disreputable Pierre: « *De la sentence et arrest de parlement qui fut prononchié pour la roinne de Napples er de Jherusalem, duchesse d'Anjou contre messire Pierre de Craon* ». Marie of Brittany sought restitution of territories and the reimbursement of funds mis-used by Craon, destined for Louis I d'Anjou's campaign (see above). Pierre de Craon's attempted assassination of the Constable Clisson was once again brought to light. According to Froissart, his property was confiscated and he was imprisoned primarily due to the complaint brought against him by Marie of Brittany. Froissart, Jean, *Chroniques, livres III et IV*, Ainsworth, Peter & Varvaro, Alberto, (eds.), Paris, Librairie Générale Française, 2004, ch. 49, pp. 540-544. See below pp. 103-104, n. 8.

²⁸ Valois rightly clarifies the fact that on 1st March 1382, Louis I received the title not of King of Sicily but rather that of Duke of Calabria, reserved for the heir-presumptive to the throne of Sicily (t. II, pp. 19-20) Joanna I still being alive at the time of his investiture. It was not until 30th August 1383 that Louis I styled himself King of Sicily following his victories and the death of Joanna I (t. II, pp. 62-63). Valois cites chancellor Jean Le Fèvre as his source. Valois, Noël, *La France et le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, Hildesheim, Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1967. See above, pp. 39-41.

²⁹ Ohnesorge, Christof, « Les ambitions et l'échec de la seconde maison d'Anjou », in *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 268.

³⁰ Zurita, Jeronimo, Lopez, Angel Canellas, (ed.), *Anales de la Corona de Aragón*, Zaragoza, Institución « Fernando el Católico » (C.S.I.C.) 9 vols, 1977-1988, t. IV, l. IX, pp. 197-198. Jerónimo Zurita y Castro was born in 1512 in Zaragoza and studied under the Hellenist Hernan Nufiez. His father Miguel was court physician to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and this helped Jerónimo to rise rapidly through the ranks of court officers to the position of assistant-secretary to the Inquisition; he was later appointed secretary to the council of the Inquisition by Philip II. By 1548 he was in the post of official chronicler to the Crown of Aragon and he eventually resigned all official posts in 1571 to concentrate solely on the composition of his *Anales*. An avid bibliophile and collector, his authority on matters pertaining to Crown activities is unimpeachable. Not contenting himself with merely the Crown archives in Aragon, he broadened his research to include documents held in Rome, Naples and Sicily and as such he was a trail blazing Historiographer. He is held to be the father of Spanish historiography. He died on 3rd November, 1580.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-304.

³² We will discuss below that the King of Aragon, Pedro IV the Ceremonious, shared Louis's ambition to dominate the western Mediterranean for Aragon. This was a constant point of conflict and the marriage of Yolande d'Aragon to Louis II d'Anjou in December 1400 was expressly designed to end their protracted struggle for supremacy.

Aragon, in 1400. Provence had long been the linchpin of Angevin power and influence.³³ As noted in the previous chapter, it first passed into Angevin dominion with the marriage of Charles I to Béatrice of Provence.

Jean-Paul Boyer notes that the entirety of the Angevin adventure as it related to dominance of the Mediterranean and Central Europe reposed upon Charles I's installation in Provence.³⁴ Dante Alighieri, stridently anti-Angevin and anti-French in his world view, believed that the establishment of Angevin Provence should not merely be regarded as a staging point for Angevin and Capetian expansionism but rather from a more complex geo-political perspective. The conquest of the kingdom of Sicily and the resulting domination over Italy achieved by Charles I in 1266 resulted from his seizure of Provence: «*Mentre che la gran dota provenzale al sangue mio non tolse la vergogna, poco valeda, ma pur non facea male. Li comincio con forza e con menzonga la sua rapina; e poscia, per ammenda, Ponti e Normandia pres e Guascogna.*».³⁵ In the above citation from the XXth canto of *Purgatorio*, wherein the spirit of Hugues Capet denounces the Whip of Covetousness, lamenting the crimes of the Capetians, Dante proposes a geo-political reading of the history of Provence, inviting us to consider the primordial nature of Provence in the construction and maintenance of Angevin authority.³⁶

Following the death of Louis I, Louis II d'Anjou was promptly proclaimed King of Sicily in his father's place.³⁷ With the death of Louis I, defection became rife in the army, which had in any case diminished in the interim. After several skirmishes, some of which he won, Enguerrand de Coucy³⁸ headed home to France at the end of November.³⁹

³³ Cf. Valois, Noël, « Le projet de mariage entre Louis de France et Catherine de Hongrie », pp. 216-217.

³⁴ Boyer, Jean-Paul, « De force ou de gré, La Provence et ses rois de Sicile (milieu XIIIe siècle-milieu XIVe siècle) », in *Les Princes Angevins*, pp. 23-24.

³⁵ Dante, op. cit, canto XX, vv. 61-66. Dante bore a deep-seated grudge against Charles of Anjou, whose victory at Cremona had precipitated Dante's exile: «Carlo venne in Italia e per ammenda,/ vittima fé di Currandino; /e poi ripinse al ciel Tommaso, per ammenda.», *Ibid.*, vv. 67-69.

³⁶ *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 24.

³⁷ On 20th September 1384, Louis I dictated the final codicil to his testament. His principal preoccupation was his interrupted victory. He urged his pope Clement VII, the Avignon cardinals, Charles VI, his brothers Berry and Burgundy and his other French connections to do all that was necessary to achieve a decisive victory in Italy. He instructed his wife Marie of Brittany to send their elder son Louis II to Naples as soon as possible and to constitute a provisional government of thirteen regents. Enguerrand de Coucy was to become Louis II's lieutenant upon the young king's arrival in Naples. Louis I died on the following night. *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 473.

³⁸ Louis I's young nephew Charles VI of France had sent him an army under the command of Enguerrand de Coucy, but it arrived rather too late to be of direct assistance to Louis I.

The death of Louis I and the subsequent disbanding of his army, assured Charles III of Duras trouble-free possession of the kingdom of Naples. Marie of Brittany, preoccupied with grave difficulties in Provence, with massive debt and with power struggles at the French court,⁴⁰ was unable to take up her husband's fight immediately following his death and at seven years of age Louis II was too young to rise to the occasion in his own name.

Though his territories were dispersed, Louis I had not lacked coherent policy.⁴¹ He managed to consolidate his territorial acquisitions by employing his rights and prerogatives. Territory was all-important and his widow Marie of Brittany, as well as subsequent Angevin princes and their wives, would prove as determined as Louis I to defend, consolidate and expand dynastic holdings.⁴²

Despite Louis I's multi-layered political aspirations, the princes and the princesses of his House were not lacking in political realism. For all the instability of the wider political situation, they managed for the most part to secure Anjou, Maine and Provence. The turbulence occasioned by civil strife and the war with the English did not prevent them from consolidating their varied appurtenances and little by little they managed to integrate these into the administrations of Anjou and Maine. As a result of their careful policy of stabilization they managed to ride out the worst ravages of the Anglo-French conflict.

Both Louis I and Louis II were blessed in their enterprise, having chosen for wives exceptional women who proved to be both politically astute and highly capable. Both Marie of Brittany and Yolande d'Aragon were at the very heart of Angevin political strategy. While this was the theoretical preference of most kings and princes, in the case

³⁹ Léonard notes (*Les Angevins de Naples*, loc. cit.) that before returning to France, Enguerrand de Coucy sold his victories to the Florentines on the condition that they never come to the assistance of Charles III of Duras.

⁴⁰ Charles VI was sixteen years of age in 1384. Louis I had been his regent but the relationship had never been tranquil among the king's uncles. With Louis I out of the way, the young king asserted his prerogatives and his powerful uncles Burgundy and Berry struggled to hang onto their own authority.

⁴¹ See Appendix 1, n. 7.

⁴² Reynaud, Marcelle-Renée, *Le Temps des Princes Louis II & Louis III d'Anjou-Provence 1384-1434*, Lyon, Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 2000, p. 26.

of the second House of Anjou it was to prove the undisputed reality. It was in a princess's best interest to reconcile inter/intra family conflict, neutralize adversaries and ensure effective alliances for members of her family. The future of her offspring depended upon this simple fact. Princely couples had to strive to redress defeat, recover lost territory and ensure financial stability without compromising the bulk of their territorial holdings. This was the duty and the burden Marie of Brittany was obliged to shoulder following the premature death of her husband Louis I.

Marie of Brittany's prolonged widowhood meant that she was required to act as head of the Angevin state during both the minority, and later the absence on campaign, of her son Louis II. Yolande d'Aragon would likewise take on these dual responsibilities and furthermore she would use the authority of her position and the sheer force of her personality to influence the wider politics of the kingdom during the closing stages of the Hundred Years War. Jean Le Fèvre, Marie of Brittany's and Louis II's chancellor, held that Marie was his eternal and admirable "*Madame*" who directed the Angevin consolidation of Provence and rallied the Provençaux to the Angevin cause.⁴³

The «*ligue d'Aix*», a loose coalition of Provençal and French nobles, who had opportunistically taken the side of Charles III of Duras, had been largely subdued in the spring of 1383 by the efforts of Louis I and those in his employ. Nonetheless, it continued to cause difficulties for Marie of Brittany, to the extent that Clement VII decided to starve the rebels of revenue. Once their overlord Louis I had died, opposing factions perceived a viable window of opportunity to further their cause. Marie of Brittany, accompanied by the eight-year old Louis II, was obliged to go to Provence in April of 1385. She was however, unable to force nobles faithful to the *ligue d'Aix* to hand over chateaux to her in Louis's name. The members of the *ligue* petitioned the Crown for help and arbitration. The court believed that it could arrive at a solution for the conflict between Charles III and the claims of Louis II relating to the possession of the kingdom of Naples, with the cost of its arbitration being French dominion over Provence. Berry blocked this plan, seeking to impose his personal authority from his vantage point in the Languedoc, by attempting to win Clement VII over to his point of view. Clement repelled Berry's overtures and remained loyal to Marie of Brittany, who was naturally alarmed by all the

⁴³ Ibid., p. 34

opposing claims over her late husband's legacy. The *Durazzists* eventually made it abundantly clear that they would not recognize the biased arbitration of Charles VI. In the end, Clement's fidelity and Marie of Brittany's sang-froid won through. French forces opposing Marie of Brittany departed Provence against the payment of an indemnity.⁴⁴

In the event, Marie of Brittany managed to hold on to the fragile inheritance of Provence. To ensure Provençal loyalty, she was obliged to neglect her territories in Anjou and Maine for a short time. As stated above, Provence was crucial to Angevin authority and influence. This would continue to be the case not only for Marie of Brittany and her son Louis II but also for Louis's spouse, Yolande d'Aragon.⁴⁵ Both these widowed mothers found it necessary to reinstate and reinforce Angevin influence and dominion over Provence in order that the overall family enterprise prospered.⁴⁶ In spite of ties that bound the second House of Anjou to France and to the French Crown, Provence was to remain at the forefront of their actions and concerns.⁴⁷

While Marie of Brittany struggled with her Angevin legacy, to the east, Hungarian Angevins were having troubles of their own. Louis the Great had died shortly after his great nemesis Joanna I had been murdered at the hands of her closest relative and his protégé, Charles III. He had left his two great kingdoms of Hungary and Poland to his daughter Marie and to her fiancé, Sigismond of Luxemburg. Marie received St Stephen's crown on 17th September 1382. Nevertheless, it was the dowager queen of Hungary, Elizabeth of Bosnia, Louis's widow who actually held authority. Against his final wishes she gave Poland to her other daughter Hedwige, who received the Crown of Poland on 15th October 1384. Hedwige was hostile towards her sister's fiancé and attempted to replace Sigismond with the French prince, Louis d'Orléans.⁴⁸ Marie married Sigismond by procuracy in April of 1385. This match only served to stir up trouble in the kingdom

⁴⁴ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 474.

⁴⁵ Later still, Yolande's own formidable daughter-in-law, Isabelle of Lorraine would be required to do likewise. Below, pp. 369-372.

⁴⁶ See Yolande's decision to base herself in Provence 1419-1423 below pp. 186-189.

⁴⁷ See Appendix 1, n. 8.

⁴⁸ The younger brother of King Charles VI of France. Cf. Valois, Noël, « Le projet de mariage entre Louis de France et Catherine de Hongrie », loc. cit.

of Hungary, with one faction supporting the union with Luxemburg, the other a union with France.⁴⁹

Internal instability in the Kingdom of Hungary resulting from the power vacuum itself created by a lack of adult male heirs invited external interference from neighbouring kingdoms such as Bosnia. The dowager Queen of Hungary was Elizabeth of Bosnia. Sigismond of Luxemburg arrived at the head of a vast army in August 1385 and seized his rights. The marriage was solemnized by the Bishop of Esztergom, but this did not stop Charles III of Duras appearing at Zagreb shortly afterwards, on 23rd October. Sigismond, unsure of support from within his new kingdom, returned to Bohemia to garner troops and resources. Charles III, arrived unhindered in Buda and ordered that Marie renounce the Crown of St Stephen to him immediately. She capitulated on 31st December 1385. He apparently tried to govern to the satisfaction of all parties, but could not overcome the hostility of the queens and their favourites.⁵⁰

Not merely content with the possession of the kingdom of Naples, Charles III had sought to subjugate to his advantage the kingdom of his former tutor and protector, Louis the Great of Hungary. The dowager queen Elizabeth's great favourite, Nicolas of Gara, with the encouragement of the other aspiring queens, plotted to murder Charles III, and succeeded on 7th February 1386. The great usurper Charles III was ambushed in the queen's apartments and mortally injured in the queen's presence. He was removed to Visegrad castle where he died on 24th February. He was buried without honour or religious ceremony near the church of Saint André. As Léonard points out, in avenging themselves, the Hungarian queens had also avenged the death of Joanna I of Naples⁵¹ and in the event potentially cleared the throne of Naples for Louis II d'Anjou.

With both Louis I and his great enemy Charles III dead, insubordination, opportunism and disobedience increased in both Angevin states, their surviving heirs being still in their minority. Charles of Duras's son Ladislas was only about ten years of age and his

⁴⁹ The example cited here illustrates that from time to time certain Angevin women possessed the audacity required to act against the wishes of the testament of a male relative. In Chapter 1 above, we saw that the marriage of Marie of Anjou, Joanna I's sister, directly contradicted the testament of their grandfather Robert the Wise. By marrying into the Duras clan, Marie d'Anjou flew in the face of her grandfather's desire to keep the Duras off the throne of Naples. See above, p. 16.

⁵⁰ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 476.

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

mother Marguerite moved to secure power in Naples in his name. Ancient partisans of Louis I soon rose up against the queen-dowager's rule, seizing her authority and occupying Naples in June 1387. Neither party managed to land the decisive blow, as neither prince was of an age to rule in his own name. The situation suited one of the popes, however, and Urban VI attempted to profit from the discord. Added to this was that the King of Sicily, Frederick III, having died in 1377, left a young daughter Marie also unable to rule in her own right. The Visconti wanted Marie to marry one of their own but the King of Aragon, Pedro IV, bristling against the possibility that Sicily would slip from the control of his family, sent a flotilla in 1379 to defend the island against the Milanese. Marie was despatched to Aragon and three years later married his grandson, Martin the Younger.⁵² In the interim, anarchy reigned over the island kingdom of Sicily until Martin arrived to rule in Aragon's name.

Urban VI again attempted to draw advantage from the situation but was not able to do so. His successor Boniface IX dropped all of his predecessor's plans for conquest and instead sent Charles III's young heir Ladislas to Gaeta for coronation in May of 1390. The new King of Naples had only just begun to take up his authority when his challenger Louis II arrived with a huge flotilla of Provençal origin, seconded by his mother and regent Marie of Brittany and defended by Clement VII's legate, Pierre of Thury.⁵³

From 1384 to 1390 Marie of Brittany had been concerned with the consolidation of her son's inheritance in Provence. As discussed above, she had been obliged to abandon Anjou-Maine to the care of her loyal servants and counsellors in order that this be achieved. Provence had been sufficiently stabilized by Louis I to enable his departure upon his Italian venture. The usually reliable *Religieux* tells us that it took seven months and a messy war on the left bank of the Rhône to pacify his opponents. His victory was definitive, but it had left the region devastated. Louis I had managed to capture many fortresses reputed to be impregnable. Yet, Valois puts forward another scenario: that intense diplomatic effort rather than fierce fighting had conquered Provence.⁵⁴ He draws attention to the meticulous notes and minutes kept by Louis I's chancellor, Jean Le Fèvre. The chancellor recorded that for some six months, from 1st February to 26th July 1382,

⁵² See Appendix 1, n. 9.

⁵³ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 478.

⁵⁴ Valois, Noël, *La France et le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, Hildesheim, George Olms Verlagbuchhandlung, 1967, 4 vols, t. II, p. 20.

Louis did not leave Avignon and was in fact engaged in ceaseless negotiation with the Provençaux, assisted by Clement VII and Charles VI through the offices of the latter's chancellor. They called for all forces to fall back behind the left bank of the Rhône, while making vague promises and granting actual favours to Marseille. Louis I promised Marseille that he would visit its sanctuaries, and spoke of conferring the care of his wife and young sons to the city for the duration of his absence on his Italian campaign. Regardless of the methods employed, military or diplomatic, Marseille fell in behind the authority of Louis I. Envoys appeared to pledge the city's loyalty on the understanding that Louis I would depart for Italy immediately to «*rescourre la roynne de prison*».⁵⁵ Marseille's recognition of Louis's authority led most of Provence to capitulate. The only concern remaining was the question of Aix, whose attitude had become more and more threatening.⁵⁶ However, Louis I could not delay further his departure for Italy and was obliged to leave the task of subduing Aix to his brother Berry and Clement VII. They promised to do what they could, and no wars broke out in Provence prior to Louis's departure. The fact that he held the left bank of the Rhône may have encouraged his departure.

From the above we should be able to discern that the discord simmering beneath the surface of a newly subdued Provence was ready to erupt upon the death of Louis I. While he could claim to have subjugated the larger part of Provence to his authority, problems existed which would plague Marie of Brittany in the first stages of her widowhood and prolonged regency for her minor sons. Louis I achieved his objective of controlling Provence but created smouldering discontent by sidelining the prestige of the city of Aix, traditionally the seat of political power in Provence, to the advantage of the city of Marseille, which he needed for its strategic geo-political value. This would be the source of much anguish for his widow, for upon his death in Italy she would have to come to terms with and pacify the opposing aspirations of these two powerful cities.

In the wake of the death of Louis I, Marie of Brittany faced the political aspirations of her husband's many creditors and supporters. She had had little time to mourn his passing

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁵⁶ Aix was to remain a concern and would be granted additional grace and favours during the reigns of Louis II and Yolande d'Aragon. In 1409, at the instigation of Louis II and Yolande, Aix was accorded the prestige of the creation of a new university. Cf. Fournier, Marcel, *Les statuts et privilèges des Universités françaises depuis leur fondation jusqu'en 1789*, Paris, L. Larose et Forcel, 4 vols, 1890-1894, t. III, pp. 1-3.

when in 1385, her “brother”, Jean, Duke of Berry confronted her with his plan to exchange Tarente, ceded to him by his brother Louis I in 1382, for the rich inheritance of the Count of Etampes, who had also made pledges to Louis I. In spite of her best efforts, Marie of Brittany was obliged to grant Berry’s request on the advice of Clement VII, who urged her to end the matter.⁵⁷ Berry took possession of Etampes, Doudan, Gien and Lunel and returned Tarente to her. It was an unequal exchange and later her daughter-in-law Yolande d’Aragon would recover Lunel in 1423, accorded the rights over it and the title of Lady of Lunel by her son-in-law Charles VII.

Marie of Brittany had an almost impossible task to accomplish. She was widowed, surrounded by enemies, creditors and doubtful allies. Her task was to (re)subdue Provence and hold together the disparate “kingdom” willed to her care by her husband, whose legacy was both debt ridden and complex, for Naples was encumbered by the alliances Joanna I had established during her reign as well as the crushing debt left by Louis I.

Many of Marie’s principal creditors were the most powerful princes and lords of France and other key states. For example, Pierre de Capoue, Count of Geneva and brother of Clement VII, laid claim to the Island of Martigues. Her chancellor, Jean Le Fèvre details the demands of her creditors, painting a vivid tableau of the dismantling of Angevin territory resulting from the fiscal fragility of Louis I’s legacy. Pierre de Capoue held the gems entrusted to him as security by Louis I. His ambassadors demanded that Marie discharge the debt or lose the jewels. In fact, Pierre really sought to keep both the jewels and recover the money. In the end, Marie managed to dissolve the debt and hold Tarente for her younger son Charles who was eventually invested with the title Prince of Tarente. Another of her principal creditors was Louis I’s cousin, Pierre de Craon.⁵⁸ To rid herself of these debts she was obliged to sell off chatellanies in Maine, such as Sablé in 1390.

⁵⁷ See above p. 51 for Berry’s bellicose stance towards Marie of Brittany from his position as lieutenant for Charles VI in Languedoc. He would lose his position there following a visit by Charles VI (in 1389-1390) who had been advised by his ministers the “*Marmousets*” to check on Berry’s stewardship of the province. Berry was eventually reinstated once Charles VI fell prey to his frequent bouts of madness at a time when he and his brother Burgundy regained their ascendancy on the royal council.

⁵⁸ Mentioned above, p. 47 in relation to the misery and death of Louis I on campaign in Italy.

In addition her vassals the Bueil family held claims over the legacy of Louis I. In his testament of 1383, Louis left Mirabeau to Jean de Bueil in recognition of the fact that the latter had generously advanced him money. Pierre de Bueil, to whom nothing had been left, cast his eyes over the rich domain of Provence and selected for himself the Island of Martigues, also claimed by Pierre de Capoue.⁵⁹

Neapolitan creditors were not in short supply either. Othon of Brunswick, fourth husband of Joanna I of Naples and captain-general for two years in Naples, was apparently another creditor with whom Marie of Brittany was obliged to negotiate. In October 1386, he received the promise of the restitution of Tarente «*ou recompensacion equivalent, quant Naples sera conquise, ou la plus grant partie du demainne*».⁶⁰ Months earlier in January 1386, the Cardinal of Consenza requested that Marie of Brittany pay Othon his portion of the 500 franc monthly provision granted to him by the pope. For his part, Balthazar de Spinolis sought nothing less than the seneschalsy of Provence. In alarm, the Marseillais wrote to Marie of Brittany citing this Balthazar as their «*ennemi capital*», urging her to block his ambitions. She was obliged to cede the *castrum* of Brégançon to him, which in turn enraged Raymond d'Agoult, who held that particular fortress. In the event another servant-vassal, George de Marle, received the *dapiférat* and the sale of Brégançon was revoked in January 1388.

These were but minor skirmishes in a greater struggle when we consider the much more pressing concern, the claim of the Count of Savoy over the entirety of Provence. In spite of his big scale ambition, he was just another of Marie of Brittany's creditors. Amadeus VI, Louis I's great ally on his trans-alpine mission had died in Italy in February 1383. To guarantee his support, Louis I had been forced to hand over the rights of Angevin Piedmont to him in 1382. In May 1386, Boniface de Challan, Amadeus VII's marshal, and his finance minister for war, Pierre Voisin, appeared in Provence to call in her late husband's debt. The Count of Savoy had in his possession four pieces of Louis I's coronet, left as surety by his envoy, the ubiquitous Pierre de Craon. The Savoyard emissaries requested that «*Madame les prenist et paiast l'argent ou consentit que le conte les*

⁵⁹ We are greatly indebted here to the meticulous documentary research of Marcelle-Renée Reynaud in her study, *Le Temps des Princes*.

⁶⁰ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 52.

vendist». ⁶¹ As late as 1409, an estimate undertaken by Louis II of Angevin territory lost to Savoy would compel him to offer the Savoyards 120,000 florins to expunge the debt and regain his territory. In response Amadeus VIII would demand 164,000 gold florins to clear the debt owed to his grandfather. It is certainly the case that the Count-Dukes of Savoy would not have intended to return lands to the Angevins; they wanted both the territory and the money. Marie of Brittany paid dearly for her successes in Provence, and to make matters worse a vigorous struggle for ascendancy erupted between her and the Count of Savoy. In the years leading up to the forfeiture of Nice in 1388, she was obliged to reward factions within the Grimaldi clan and a series of other lords and barons to ensure their continued loyalty to the House of Anjou in the face of pugnacious Savoyard aspirations. ⁶²

Debt burden was only one part of Marie of Brittany's task; another was the need to purchase the loyalty of her clients and protégés. She made it her business to constitute an administration of loyal servants, something she was obliged to do almost from the ground up. That is not to say that she did not inherit trusted counsellors put in place by Louis I, but rather that he had been obliged to operate in the confusion occasioned by the conflict in Provence. She needed appropriately loyal vassals and servants to address her new situation. She determined to take up an offensive position and confronted the counties of Provence and Forcalquier, integrating the men of these prerogatives, as well as powerful outsiders, into her inner circle of familiars. Marie of Brittany paid a high price for this strategy and her activities were repeatedly threatened by the *ligue d'Aix*.

Her strategy was a simple one. She created small teams of faithful servants, charging them with the responsibility of rallying the opposition to her cause, either by force of arms, monetary incentive and/or the granting of pardons and privileges. The loyal were motivated by the success of the overall enterprise which would allow them to put their hands on the assets of the more tenacious rebels, or, at the very least, grant them a place in the sun of a newly consolidated Provence. While simple and potentially yielding great gains, Marie of Brittany's approach was an inherently dangerous one. Her servants were often torn between their personal appetites and aspirations, and obedience and loyalty to

⁶¹ Loc. cit.

⁶² Ibid., p. 53

Madame. Her method was effective, yet flawed because it engendered excess and cupidity.

Her chancellor Jean Le Fèvre provides an account of both her successes and her excesses in employing her method. As loyal a servant as he was he did not restrain himself from recording his disagreement on several occasions. For instance, in September 1385, Le Fèvre reports an unexpected windfall when the assets of eight rebels fell into the hands of *Madame's* protégé, Gautier d'Olmet in these terms: «*Mal preu li face, trop il y en a.*»⁶³, expressing his belief that the benefaction afforded to her protégé had voided the actual gain accrued to her House. Le Fèvre also rules as excessive the donation of the assets of an Aixois rebel to secretaries Guillaume Le Tort, Olivier Dussolier, Jean Charle and Antoine Henri with no net gain to her cause.⁶⁴ The chancellor did not, it seems, condone squander, incoherent policy or inconsistent action, especially when it did not enhance Angevin authority in Provence.

Marie of Brittany did, however, have some short periods of respite from her busy activity of shoring up the family enterprise. For almost two years, between September 1385 and August 1387, she was able to speculate upon the confiscation of rebels' assets and donations to prospective adherents to her cause. This circumstance allowed her to act without compromising her familial domains, which actually increased from time to time during this short interval. However, the situation was not to prove durable, with opposing forces reunifying into the *ligue*, and conflict soon erupting between it and her administration. Members of a clan could simultaneously be both the despoilers and the despoiled. Interfamilial conflicts were a reflection of the wider discord burdening the counties of Provence and Forcalquier. The equilibrium of confiscation and donation enjoyed during the period of 1385-1386 fell apart in 1387 as the dénouement of the broader conflict played itself out.⁶⁵

Once this window of respite had been closed, Marie was forced once more to fall back on her own financial and territorial resources. With her armoury of territory, capital and assets, she relinquished rights pertaining to *dominium majus* in relation to territory, and

⁶³ Ibid., p. 54.

⁶⁴ Loc. cit.

⁶⁵ Loc. cit

mortgaged her income and assets by making multiple concessions. This policy found a ready critic in the shape of her chancellor, who judged as «*bien excessives les donations de Madame*»⁶⁶ to individuals such as the Lord of Cotignac, allowing them donations «*en toute sa terre*», of all jurisdictions and appellations in the first and second degrees. Reynaud makes the point that at a time when kings and princes were actively seeking to ensure that they and no others could preside over supreme justice, Marie seems to have sown the privilege “*merum [et] mixtum imperium*” far and wide.⁶⁷

If this policy aimed at ensuring the loyalty of Provence was alarming enough to Le Fèvre, it would have been less concerning than the practice of distributing heavy tax concessions on salt and other essential goods as well as tolls, the main sources of revenue earned in Provence. Marie of Brittany bestowed privileges and rights over the mining and distribution of salt. Her methods were so varied and widely dispersed that it would have been difficult to account effectively for revenues, particularly as they were in large part hypothetical. Transport and the supply were at the mercy of a multiplicity of variables, without even taking into account the effectiveness and honesty of officers charged with the collection of revenues.

Ecclesiastics who had tied their destinies to the Avignon papacy were a ready-made source of support for Angevin endeavour for they too were always on the lookout for beneficial policies in their struggle against Rome. In spite of, or perhaps because of their support, Marie felt it necessary to make donations to assure herself of their loyalty and her salvation.

Guaranteeing the support of urban communities demanded more capital than the support of rural territories. After lengthy negotiations, each urban community obtained confirmation of its privileges and franchises, the restitution of its assets and other concessions. In these dealings, the reference to and an emphasis upon a return to the *statu quo ante*, to the days of the reign of Joanna I, was a constant theme of her policy of consolidation.⁶⁸ Urban communities proved to be the biggest headache for Marie of Brittany, they being the most opposed to Angevin ascendancy in Provence.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 55

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 57.

Notwithstanding this, in October 1387 Marie and her son Louis II, the young King of Sicily, were able to make their formal entry into Aix. Little by little, from 1385 onwards, most urban communities started to drop their opposition to the Angevins.

Marseille was a special case. On 22nd August 1385, the general council of Marseille agreed to send representatives who would receive pledges from Louis II in return for its fidelity. On 24th August, Marie of Brittany and Louis II held a formal audience where the freedoms and franchises established during the reign of Charles I and Beatrice of Provence between the sovereigns and the citizens of Marseille were read. Following the practice of their predecessors, the pact was ratified with a reciprocal pledge. Louis II swore upon the Gospels to uphold the conventions pledged in the past. Marie of Brittany, his legal guardian, swore that when he came of age he would pledge again in his own name. The ceremony concluded with the Marseillais affirming that they had done nothing that contradicted the wishes of Joanna, should she still be alive, speculation about which had been the topic of persistent rumour.

The Marseillais seemed to view this pact with near religious veneration, having a very particular perception of the concept of princely power which demanded a dialogue with subjects and its exercise in the interests of public good. The pact was of such strategic and political importance that for at least the first part of Louis II's reign, along with Aix Marseille was understood to be the joint capital of Provence.

Pledges were made with Avignon, and Louis II and his mother were urged not to make peace with the «*ennemi capital*», Charles III of Duras. This was designed to strengthen the new dynasty and preserve the rights of Louis II's younger brother Charles. On paper at least, Marie seems to have conceded a great deal to secure the loyalty of Provence.

Many of the beneficiaries of Angevin largesse were not able to retain their concessions. Divided families were obliged to relinquish them as well as those unfortunate enough to find themselves in economic difficulty. Periodically, it was possible for Marie to repurchase conceded territory, thanks both to Angevin ingenuity and the goodwill of her bankers. Marie of Brittany's much vaunted tenacity allowed her to repossess Sablé from

the Duke of Brittany (who had earlier bought it from Pierre de Craon) and Chantoceaux from Olivier de Clisson.⁶⁹

The struggle to underwrite loyalty was a primary concern for Marie of Brittany but it was not the only motive for her intense activity. She needed to impose the Angevin image, their *gloire*, in order to mobilize the fidelity of her servants and her familiars. The quest for loyalty coupled with the need to impress Provence with the prestige of the Angevin dynasty was a front-line strategy in her endeavour to crush those loyal to the *ligue d'Aix* and conquer Provence. The practice of exacting formal homages was a public display of loyalty to Angevin dominion. Reynaud explains that the itineraries followed by Marie of Brittany and her son Louis II during 1385-1387 testify to this fact.⁷⁰ In 1385 they managed to extract more than one hundred homages, in 1386 they received ninety three, with a record being set on 8th June 1385 in Avignon where they received thirty one loyal subjects of high rank in a single day. From March to July of 1386, they received forty-four homages. This intensity was rarely to be achieved in the future. In addition, they managed to make seven solemn entries during the same two-year period. Each homage took place in the presence of a mini-court assembled expressly for this purpose.⁷¹ The Angevin court was intensely nomadic at this stage when Marie of Brittany's primary goal was the conquest of Provence.

In addition to her preoccupations in Provence, Marie of Brittany encountered difficulties in her home provinces of Anjou and Maine, where borders were ill-defined and often evanescent in nature. Among her diverse vassals were numbered Bretons, Normans, Poitevins and Tourangeux. Furthermore, she needed to confirm the support of powerful neighbours, such as the House of Alençon, who held numerous counties, as well as the junior branch of the House of Bourbon,⁷² who were her vassals for the county of Vendôme. Olivier de Clisson held the chatellany of Montfaucon and a life-chatellany

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 61.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 64

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 64. Cf. Guenée, Bernard & Lehoux, Françoise, *Les entrées royales françaises de 1328 à 1515*, Paris, Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968 for details of the way in which ceremony and ostentation were essential elements in the emphasis of authority. The importance of the pomp attached to solemn entries as a necessary instrument by which to emphasize/impose authority over loyal and/or newly subdued territories should never be overlooked.

⁷² House of Bourbon-la-Marche - Jacques II, Count of La Marche (1370-1438), later King of Naples (1415-1419). House of Bourbon-Vendôme - Louis (his younger sibling) founder of this branch of Bourbons, Count of Vendôme (1376-1446).

over La Roche-sur-Yon.⁷³ The barony of Craon, in the hands of Isabelle de Craon in 1388, dominated surrounding counties. The Laval clan held assorted baronies in Maine and Anjou.⁷⁴

Marie of Brittany, greatly concerned with the need to legitimize the new dynasty, ensured that on 23rd June 1385, Avignon recognized Louis II as its legitimate sovereign by virtue of his father's adoption by Joanna I of Naples. In return for Forcalquier's immunity, Avignon paid homage and pledged loyalty to Louis II.⁷⁵ Avignon, city of the popes, would have been a powerful ally for Marie of Brittany and she was at great pains to laud its attitude towards Angevin authority to other cities in her struggle to extract loyalty from Provence. Ultimately, the recalcitrant few fell in behind the will of the many, but it would be up to Louis II, in his majority, to confirm Provence's loyalty by virtue of his own merits and actions.

The fledgling dynasty was eventually accepted and a new Angevin "state" came into being; yet victory was not to prove trouble-free. The rivalry for ascendancy between Marseille and Aix continued to seethe beneath the surface. In the final pact agreed to by the rebels it was understood that Aix would be returned to the position of administrative capital of Angevin Provence. Louis I had transferred this honour to Marseille, and later his widow Marie of Brittany had confirmed the transfer. In the conflict between the two cities, Marseille was eventually sacrificed, and later sought to escape the dictates of Aix, seeking compensation for the loss of its status in the form of privileges. The new reign of Louis II had opted for Aixois supremacy; Aix would become the political capital of Provence with Marseille retaining its importance as a staging point for Angevin Neapolitan ambitions.⁷⁶

The expression of the princely authority held by the House of Anjou was another obsession of Marie of Brittany. She sought the advice of her brother-in-law, Jean *le*

⁷³ This eventually devolved back to the Angevins, becoming part of the territorial holdings of Yolande d'Aragon's youngest son, Charles.

⁷⁴ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 72. See below for the links between the Laval, the Boubons and Alençon and Yolande d'Aragon.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86. The homage paid by Avignon is interesting as the Avignon papacy had purchased the city from Joanna I decades earlier. The Kingdom of Naples-Sicily was held in fief from the pope. There seems therefore to be a fairly fluid and ambiguous lord-vassal relationship in this case.

⁷⁶ *Loc. cit.* See above, p. 55, n. 56, for the establishment of the University of Aix by Louis II in 1409, emphasizing Aix's prestige and importance to Angevin endeavour.

Magnifique, Duke of Berry on the subject of royal seals. In spite of the fact that Louis I had received the title of King of Sicily and Jerusalem upon the death of Joanna, and had so styled himself from August 1383, he had had no time to confect either a princely seal or a standard bearing the royal arms. By the time of the coronation of Louis II in 1389, the arms of Sicily and Jerusalem had moved to centre stage. Reynaud states that these arms occupied: «*la place d'honneur comme dans l'écu de la reine Jeanne*»,⁷⁷ leaving the ancient and contemporary arms of Anjou in secondary place.

As well as accoutrements such as seals, shields and standards, royal entries were another means of expressing and stage-managing kingship and princely authority. At the very first opportunity, immediately following her long awaited and hard fought conquest of Provence, Marie of Brittany brought Louis II to Paris in June 1388 to make their solemn entry into the capital, as part of his preparation for departure to his “kingdom”.⁷⁸

Froissart chronicles their arrival in these terms, giving us a firm indication of the diplomatic skill of Marie of Brittany in soliciting the wiser counsel of her “brothers” Berry and Burgundy and receiving a pledge in return of their support for Louis II’s Italian ambitions: «*Avant que la dame entrât dans Paris, elle signifia à ses frères, les ducs de Berry et de Bourgogne, qu’elle venoit à Paris et amenoit son jeune filz en sa compagnie ... si vouloit savoir si il entreroit à Paris qui est cité si authentique et chef du royaume de France, en état comme roi ou simplement comme Louis d’Anjou. Les deux ducs lui remandèrent, eux bien avisés et conseillés, qu’ils vouloient qu’il entrât comme roi de Naples, de Sicile et de Hierusalem; et quoique pour le présent il n’en fût pas en possession, ils lui aideroient, et feroient le roi de France aider, tant et si avant qu’il auroit et tiendrait la seigneurie et possession paisible des terres dont il avoit pris le titre, car ainsi l’avoient-ils juré en France à leur frère, le roi Louis.*»⁷⁹

The fact that the House of Anjou was not in possession of Naples (let alone Sicily), nor indeed Jerusalem, seemed to be of less in importance than rights held. Once again, the

⁷⁷ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 106. Cf., Mérindol, Christian de, *Le Roi René et la seconde Maison d’Anjou : Emblématique*, Art Histoire, Paris, Le Léopard d’Or, 1987.

⁷⁸ See above, Cf. Mérindol, Christian de, « Entrées royales et princières à la fin de l’époque médiévale : jeux de taxinomie, d’emblématique et de symbolique », extract from *Les Entrées : gloire et déclin d’un cérémonial*, colloque des 10 et 11 mai 1996, Château de Pau, Biarritz, J. & D., 1997, pp. 27-47.

⁷⁹ Froissart, J. & Buchon, J.A.C, (ed.), «*Les Chroniques de Sire Jean Froissart*», Paris, Société du Panthéon Littérature, 3 vols, t .II, l. iii, ch. cxi, pp-698-700. The more extensive Buchon version of Froissart has been consulted here rather than some of the more modern editions, most of which are severely abridged, entirely neglecting to include this episode in full if at all.

emphasis was upon their *legitimacy* to claim the title. The young king Louis II entered the capital mounted upon a white horse, and little by little during the difficult years in Provence, the arms of Sicily and of Jerusalem had appeared on his dress and on the livery of his horses, first the red of royalty, then the arms themselves.⁸⁰

Once the tension occasioned by the conquest and consolidation of Provence had dissipated, and outstanding debts were largely cleared, first cousins Louis II and Charles VI found themselves united at the heart of court ceremonials. In Avignon on All Saints 1389 Louis II received his crown and his sanctification. This ceremony could only have occurred after his mother's victory in Provence and her reconciliation with her brothers-in-law. The coronation was also an indispensable prelude to young Louis II's departure for Naples. The ceremony itself largely adhered to the form established by Robert the Wise in 1309: homage by the king to the papacy, pledge, then anointment with sacred unction, sealed by coronation. The "sacrament" both legitimized Angevin authority and testified to its dependence upon the papacy.

The intense diplomatic activity that had brought about the adoption of Louis I by Joanna I of Naples, meant that not only Louis I but also his "race" could claim rights over the hollow crowns of Naples-Sicily and Jerusalem. The funeral oration for Louis I given by the Count of Potenza at Angers in December 1384 emphasized the theme of adoption, magnifying, exalting it and urging Louis II to action.⁸¹ The fact of the adoption was the foundation of Louis's kingship. The testament of Robert the Wise was set aside by Joanna's actions in adopting Louis I as her heir. It had furthermore stripped the Duras of their legitimacy, in spite of the fact that Charles III of Duras had been Joanna's closest blood relative, and that Robert himself had specified that the Crown of Naples pass to the line of Marie of Anjou,⁸² Joanna's sister, in the event that Joanna had no surviving heirs of her own. Any recollection of Louis I's raids into Provence at a time when he still held the lieutenant-generalcy of the Languedoc was discretely buried with him.

⁸⁰ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 107. See Appendix 1, n. 10.

⁸¹ See Appendix nn. 11a and 11b

⁸² Robert the Wise did however go to great lengths to ensure that the Crown stayed out of the hands of the Duras. When Marie d'Anjou, Robert's other granddaughter (and Joanna I's younger sister and heir) married into the Duras clan, she herself had already usurped the intentions of Robert's testament. See above Chapter 1.

The adoption allowed the second House of Anjou to restyle itself, thanks to the inheritance of the kingdom of Sicily and the county of Provence. Along with tangible political and territorial advantages came the prestigious appellation, King of Jerusalem and Sicily. The reality of the situation was that Sicily, or rather Naples was still to be conquered, and Provence was divided between Angevin supporters and adherents of the Duras, with a few French troublemakers thrown in for good measure.

Louis I's legitimacy reposed upon the diplomatic fact of his adoption by Joanna I, papal support from Avignon, the recognition of his powerful brothers, Berry and Burgundy, and by extension that of Charles VI, his young nephew and King of France, rather than any concrete and durable victory achieved in Naples-Sicily. In his will, Louis I styles himself irrevocably "King of Sicily".⁸³

The arrival of her elder son Louis in Naples fulfilled the codicil of Marie's late husband's will instructing her to send him there as soon as possible to ensure that the kingdom did not fall away from Angevin dominion. This had taken her six years to achieve. In spite of the delay, at the time of his arrival in Naples in 1390 Louis II was barely thirteen years of age.

One of the undeniable successes of the second House of Anjou was its sovereignty over Provence; indeed its loyalty was so durable (thanks to the untiring efforts of Marie of Brittany, Yolande d'Aragon and Isabelle of Lorraine) that it was to be where René d'Anjou retired once he had been definitively expelled from his kingdom by the Aragonese and his final possessions pillaged by the Vaudémont and Louis XI. The Angevins were obsessed with Naples-Sicily, and their periodic and sometimes prolonged absence from their French territories bears this out. They were obliged time and again to set out for their "kingdom". Provence was the symbol of their kingly authority, their staging point and their prime resource to ensure their trans-Mediterranean venture. Marie of Brittany was the leading architect of Angevin success in Provence. Marie's political acumen, her skilled diplomacy as well as her recalcitrance and intransigence in the face of adversity enabled her to rally opponents to her cause in the crucial period 1385-1388, in the event gaining Provençal territory abutting the Holy

⁸³ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 20.

Roman Empire. The Angevin Counts of Provence actually proved to be the Avignon Church's masters, rather than the inverse. Nevertheless, Marie paid a relatively heavy price for breaking up the *ligue d'Aix*, losing Nice to the powerful Counts of Savoy, whose sovereignty over Nice she could not bring herself to recognize. Her daughter-in-law, Yolande d'Aragon, would eventually do so in 1419, a pragmatic and unavoidable measure in the light of Louis III's preparations for his Italian campaign.

Marie of Brittany died in 1404. Her presence was less evident in the latter part of her life, after her hard fought triumph against all odds. From the research undertaken by Reynaud, it would seem that she spent most of her time in Provence or Avignon, from time to time venturing north to Angers and Paris. No doubt the outbreak of hostilities initiated by Raymond de Turenne, nephew of Pope Gregory XI, supporter of Joanna I of Naples,⁸⁴ in the decade following the consolidation of loyalty in Provence, must have caused her a great deal of concern, particularly as Louis II spent most of this period in Italy.

Joanna I of Naples had ceded, or more likely had sold, the domains of Pertuis⁸⁵ and Meynargues to Guillaume Roger de Beauford, the father of Raymond de Turenne. Upon her death in 1382, Joanna's heir Louis I made the pragmatic decision to annul the numerous concessions and property transfers made by her during the course of her troubled reign. Raymond de Turenne found himself dispossessed of his fiefdoms and entered into a protracted period of conflict with the rulers of Provence: Marie of Brittany, Louis II, and by extension with the Avignon papacy. Up until the time of his death in 1398, Raymond de Turenne was one of the worst ravagers Provence had ever known. To plague his enemies the French Angevins, Raymond set about destroying their properties one by one. His strategy was very effective and his exactions covered a vast geographical area between the Rhône and the Durance, extending north to Montélimar, touching Aixois territory, stretching east to the Gapençais and the upper Verdon. In 1385, a price was put on his head; the pope excommunicated him and sent troops to confront him, eventually sending the papal marshal, Jean Le Meingre-Boucicaut to attempt a negotiated settlement. To no avail, and Raymond de Turenne continued his ravages. In response, Marie of Brittany mounted an expeditionary force led by her younger son

⁸⁴ See above, p. 34.

⁸⁵ See above, p. 10 regarding Joanna's forced sale of Avignon.

Charles, Prince of Tarente. Confronted by this force, Turenne ceded his position and signed a treaty with Provence in 1391 and one with the papacy in 1392. This was merely a feint, and as soon as he was able he broke his engagements to both parties and returned to his pillaging and destruction. He was not stopped until 1398 when he drowned in the Rhône, attempting to cross to Tarascon, pursued by the joint peace-keeping forces of the Angevins and the Avignon papacy.⁸⁶

The end of this conflict coincided with the crisis precipitated by the subtraction of obedience from the Avignon papacy. Louis II was faced with the devastating effects of this policy upon his return from Italy in 1399. His mother would have had little choice but to fall into line with the decision of the French Crown and its policy of *via cessionis*.⁸⁷ This policy demanded that both popes resign simultaneously to resolve the Schism. Marie of Brittany would have been brought into conflict with her powerful brothers-in-law, Berry and Burgundy had she chosen to do otherwise.

Despite the effects of the Schism, political discord in Provence and the debt-burden bequeathed to her by her husband Louis I, Marie of Brittany left a healthy legacy for her son Louis II to build upon. She also managed to marry him to the formidable Yolande d'Aragon, who would contribute to the stability of his personal reign from 1400-1417. Marie had been obliged to make a prolonged all-out effort to achieve her objective. Almost literally, she could be said to have fulfilled her duty with sails and oars, *velis et remis*, with all the power and all the means at her disposal. She was a worthy rôle-model for Yolande d'Aragon, the princess who would follow her.

While initially Yolande's responsibilities would not include debt consolidation, she was obliged at all times to ensure that Provence remained a loyal constituency of Angevin authority. As well as the responsibilities entailed by regency and the guardianship of her

⁸⁶ Olivier-Elliot, Patrick, *Pays de Lure, Forcalquier, Manosque, Aix-en-Provence*, Editions Edisud 2001. See also Valois, *Le Grand Schisme....* t. III, pp. 9, 10, 13, 17, 158, 205, 206, 390, 595, t. IV, pp. 520, 521.

⁸⁷ The French Crown decided in 1398 to withdraw its obedience from and support for the Avignon pope. This decision was accepted by the Council of Paris in 1398 as an attempt to bring the Great Schism to a close, with the Universities of Toulouse and Avignon dissenting. This must have been an uncomfortable development for the Angevins, as they owed their legitimacy as Kings and Queens of Sicily and Jerusalem in part to the Avignon pope, who had presided over Louis II's coronation in 1389. In May 1403, an edict was published restituting obedience to the Avignon pope Benedict XIII. Louis d'Orléans was the protagonist of this volte-face. It is interesting to note that Benedict XIII (the Aragonese Pierre de Luna), was a connection of Yolande d'Aragon; her uncle's (King Martin I the Humane of Aragon) first wife was María de Luna.

own minor children, Yolande would have an even greater duty to shoulder from April 1417: the added responsibility for the well-being and survival of her son-in-law, by then dauphin, the future Charles VII. Added to these weighty concerns, her northern domains would be the focus of sustained incursions from the English invaders.

Despite the pressing concerns waiting in the wings of her destiny, Yolande d'Aragon was a fortunate princess indeed, for both her mother Violant and her aunt by marriage María de Luna, had provided excellent rôle-models on how to discharge their duties as queen-regent or lieutenant in the absence or indisposition of their respective husband-kings. We have witnessed in Chapter 1 the pitfalls of unpreparedness for rule in the case of the unfortunate Joanna I of Naples, and in this chapter we discussed the efforts of Marie of Brittany to stabilize her House's authority in her newly acquired southern domains. We will now turn our attention to and the origins of our subject Yolande d'Aragon.

CHAPTER 3: AUCUNE FEMME NE MÉRITAIT DE LUI ÊTRE COMPARÉE

«Politics, war and administration seemed to be the natural vocations of women in her family»¹

In Chapter 2 we explored the achievements of Marie of Brittany, who was obliged to struggle *velis et remis* to retain the inheritance of her husband, Louis I of Anjou. After a six-year battle, she fulfilled the instructions of his will, finally sending thirteen-year-old Louis II to fight for his kingdom of Naples-Sicily in 1390.

We have noted the problems arising from a lack of adult male heirs and the effects this phenomenon had upon three Houses of Angevin connection, Anjou-Maine-Provence, the Hungarian Capetian House of Anjou-Sicily and the Angevins of Naples (as well as their later successors the Duras).² In the case of Naples, three successors offered themselves in 1386 to assume, or to challenge for, the inheritance of the usurper, Charles III of Duras: his ten-year-old son and natural heir, Ladislaus, who was unable to rule in his own name, his mother Marguerite, dowager queen and aspiring regent, and, Louis II d'Anjou, heir to Louis I, adopted son of the dead legitimate queen, Joanna I of Naples, himself also in his minority. In the absence of Louis II or any powerful authority to rule in his name Marguerite proclaimed herself regent for her son Ladislaus. Naples, however, soon bridled under her authority and stripped her of her rule in June 1387. The leaders of the French faction, Tommaso Sanseverino and the ubiquitous Othon of Brunswick (who had returned to the cause of his late wife's adopted son) then occupied the kingdom.³ The dowager Marguerite was obliged to withdraw to Gaeta with her children.

The situation stagnated, with none of the pretenders able to claim decisive authority due to the minority status of the claimants; and this situation mirrored the one in insular

¹ Bagley, J.J, *Margaret of Anjou, Queen of England*, London, Herbert Jenkins, 1948, p. 26.

² See above, p. 52. Cf. Contamine, Philippe, "Exposé Introductif", in *La noblesse dans les territoires angevins à la fin du Moyen-âge, Actes du colloque international organisé par l'Université d'Angers Angers-Saumur, 3-6 juin 1998*, Coulet, Noël & Matz, Jean-Michel, (eds.), Rome, Ecole Française de Rome, 2000, pp. 6-7. Cf. Mérindol, Christian de, « Entre la France, la Hongrie et Naples : les Anjou. », in *Veröffentlichungen des Innsbrucker Stadarchivs, neue Folge, Band 18*, 1988, Thaur, Thaurdruck Giesriegl, 1989, pp. 145-170.

³ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 477.

Sicily.⁴ It seemed that no one could profit, except the Roman pope Urban VI, who, encouraged by the impasse, perceived an opportunity to seize authority over both Italian kingdoms simultaneously. He was obliged however to abandon his ambitions, returning to Rome, where he died in October 1389, reputedly one of the most pernicious pontiffs in the history of the Church.

His successor, Boniface IX, dropped Urban VI's plan for Italian hegemony and instead resolved to crown Ladislaus King of Naples, in Gaeta in May of 1390. The young Neapolitan sovereign's competitor Louis II arrived in Naples in mid-August of that year, at the head of an impressive flotilla of Provençal origin, under the guardianship of his mother Marie of Brittany and Clement VII's legate, Pierre de Thury. Château Neuf, until then loyal to the Durazzists, opened its gates to the Angevins.⁵

Much diplomacy had occurred in the interim to ensure Louis II's positive reception in Naples. Papal, Angevin and French Crown envoys had all descended upon Aragon to establish, according to Zurita, a marital accord between "*la infanta doña Violante y el rey Luis*" and at the same time⁶ Aragon locked in another marriage treaty, this time on behalf of "*la reina doña María de Sicilia y el conde de Ejérica hijo del infante don Martín*".⁷ This would seem to suggest a diplomatic carving up of peninsular Naples-Sicily and insular Sicily between the Houses of Anjou and Aragon to the disadvantage of young Ladislaus, resident in Naples. Zurita goes on to describe « *la manera que recibieron al duque de Anjous en Nápoles* ». He confirms that Louis II had indeed « *impresa del reino con buena armada ; y según parece en algunos anales, entró en Nápoles por el mes de diciembre deste año y fue recibido como rey con gran solemnidad y fiesta.* »⁸

The skilful government of Pierre de Thury, combined with a decisive victory achieved in the Pouilles in April 1392, (where Alberico de Barbiano and Othon of Brunswick, who had once again switched allegiances, were taken prisoner), the conquests of Amalfi and Ravello, as well as the submission of a large number of Calabrian barons, assured victory to the young Louis II. This conquest must have made quite an impression at the time, for

⁴ See above, pp. 52-53.

⁵ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 478.

⁶ On 18th May, 1390.

⁷ Zurita, *op. cit.*, t. IV, X.xlv, p. 742.

⁸ *Ibid.*

soon after it the Duke of Bourbon, maternal uncle of Charles VI, announced his intention to come personally to the aid of Louis II at the head of a considerable expeditionary force.⁹

This ambitious project was never to be realized in spite of the intense efforts of Clement VII, who died on 16th September 1394. His successor, the Aragonese Pierre de Luna, pope Benedict XIII, was less passionate in his support of Louis II, in spite of the fact that his own great adversary, the Roman pope Boniface IX was actively reinforcing his support of Ladislaus of Duras at that time. The tables were suddenly turned upon Louis II and his hard won victory soured into bitter defeat. Louis found himself more or less under siege in his Neapolitan kingdom. Departing for the Pouilles to put down a revolt, he soon learned that a large number of his adherents, led by his former champions the Sanseverino, had transferred their loyalty to Ladislaus in his absence. Ladislaus made his entrance into Naples on 10th July 1399 and a discouraged Louis II abandoned his kingdom and returned to Provence.¹⁰

This pattern of victory followed by abandonment is one which we will encounter again below.¹¹ For some sixteen years, from the time of his father's death in 1384, Louis II, seconded by his mother, had endeavoured to realize the Angevin project of expansion and sovereignty in Italy. He needed to salvage something from the wreckage of his ambitions. To keep the flame of his trans-Mediterranean ambitions alive and maintain a presence in Italy, he sent his cousin Jacques de Bourbon, Count of la Marche, to Naples.¹² In 1399 Louis II was twenty-two years of age and his mother, Marie, was in her fifty-ninth year. He had refused to consider a Duras marriage as a viable option and therefore needed to finalize a marriage with a princess linked to potentially powerful alliances, one which would be capable of sustaining the diverse politics and ambitions of his House.

⁹ *Les Angevins de Naples*, loc. cit.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 478. See also Appendix 1, n. 12.

¹¹ The Neapolitan "disease" would not die out with the passing of René d'Anjou in July 1480. As late as 1494, Yolande d'Aragon and Louis II d'Anjou's great-grandson Charles VIII of France, son of Louis XI, dreamt of victory in Naples-Sicily. Having freed himself of his sister Anne's measured guardianship, Charles marched on Italy, expelling its incumbent monarch Alfons II in February 1495. Yet, conforming to a well-established pattern, by the summer of 1495 Charles was ejected from Naples, his allies having turned against him. The ill-considered campaign left a crushing debt and France slid into penury and disarray as a result of Charles's unrealistic ambitions.

¹² See Appendix 1, n. 12.

In common with all princely houses and royalty in general, marital alliances were of primordial political, strategic and economic concern to the house of Anjou, and therefore much thought and energy went into ensuring that the best possible marriages were forged.

Louis I had explored numerous political marital alliances for both his sons, and the marriage of his elder son was much contemplated in the context of his Italian aspirations. Having been adopted by Joanna I of Naples, Louis I had been urged by Clement to neutralize his potential rivals by strategically marrying Louis II to block their advance.¹³

In November 1381, Louis I had contemplated marrying his two sons to two daughters of Juan, Duke of Gerona, elder son of Pedro IV the Ceremonious, King of Aragon.¹⁴ Louis I had aspirations regarding the greater kingdom of Naples, and Sicily was under the authority of Aragon. The possibility of allying himself with Aragon by marriage would have been a far more attractive option to Louis I than tackling the Aragonese head-on in armed combat for absolute sovereignty over Naples-Sicily. By February of 1382 the project had been modified, with the young king Charles VI of France¹⁵ (in place of Louis II), and the younger son of Louis I, Charles, put forward as possible husbands for two daughters of the Duke of Gerona. Louis I's chancellor, Jean Le Fèvre recorded an aspect of their co-operation in these terms: «... *par si que le navire que ceulx d'Arragon appareillent pour conquerer l'ile de Sezille fust au service monseigneur d'Anjou pour Naples, et monseigneur d'Anjou aidast, apres son fait, de genz d'armes pour conquerer l'isle; et a cause du mariage, monseigneur d'Anjou eust une somme d'argent...*»¹⁶

That Louis I had a rôle to play in Aragon's trans-Mediterranean ambitions is striking indeed and highlights his strategy to ensure an alliance with Aragon to further his own personal ambitions in Naples-Sicily. Marital negotiations between Anjou and the Aragon

¹³ See Appendix 1, n. 13.

¹⁴ Pere III of Catalonia was also known as Pedro IV, "the Ceremonious" of Aragon. We have decided to refer to him as Pedro IV. Specialist Iberian scholars sometimes refer to him as "Pere III".

¹⁵ Louis I at the time was regent for Charles VI, still in his minority. Louis I was also engaged in a bitter struggle for power at the French court with his equally ambitious younger brothers Berry and Burgundy.

¹⁶ *Le Temps des Princes*, Reynaud cites J. Le Fèvre, p. 34. This aspect is elaborated upon by Zurita, op. cit., t. IV, X, xxxii, pp. 680-681.

meandered somewhat until about 1387, the year the Duke of Gerona ascended the throne of Aragon as Juan I. At the urgings of Louis II's uncles (Berry and Burgundy) Robert de Dreux and Olivier Dussolier were sent as envoys to Aragon in an attempt to re-negotiate an alliance with Juan I's daughter Yolande. Letters were exchanged between Aragon and Anjou in Avignon. On 1st March 1388 in Le Mans, chancellor Le Fèvre handed over two letters (with appropriate seals affixed), to the ambassadors charged with concluding the alliance on behalf of the Angevins. The letters represented two levels of authority, one being absolute and the other requiring the consent of the king of France as well as those of Berry and Burgundy before validation could proceed. This was no doubt designed to ensure that the French Crown kept a hand in negotiations for its own strategic and fiscal interests. Le Fèvre records that on 26th May 1388, the King of France, i.e. Berry and Burgundy, replied to «*Madame*» that the offers made by Juan I seemed paltry and that his demands appeared excessive. Nevertheless, if Juan I agreed to apportion 200,000 francs to his daughter Yolande, then the marriage could proceed.¹⁷ Despite the fact that Louis II would not return from his Italian expedition until 1399, Yolande d'Aragon did indeed become his wife in 1400.

Louis benefited greatly from the intervention and assistance occasionally forthcoming from his betrothed's father Juan I of Aragon as well as his younger brother Martin, Duke of Momblanc and ruler of island Sicily. For example, we find in Zurita testimony of concrete assistance forthcoming to bolster Louis's Italian venture in early 1393: "*El rey de Sicilia [Martin] socorre al de Nápoles con cuatro galeras bien armadas; y lo que el de Aragón resolvió e hizo. En este año, estando las cosas de Sicilia en harta necesidad, enviaron el duque de Momblanc y el rey don Martín de Sicilia en socorro del rey Luis de Nápoles cuatro galeras muy bien armadas...*"¹⁸

¹⁷ J. Le Fèvre, op. cit, pp. 345, 453 & 511. It seems that this sum was never fully realized, leaving a door open for Yolande d'Aragon to claim rights over the throne of Aragon for herself and her descendants. The document of renunciation was established on 12th October 1400, just prior to Yolande's departure for her coronation and marriage ceremonies in Arles on 1st & 2nd December 1400 and later ignored on the grounds of the non-payment of the dowry. Vendrell Gallostra, Francisca, *Violante de Bar y el Compromiso de Caspe*, Barcelona, Real Academia de Buenas Letras, 1992, p. 72 and *passim*, cf. Zurita, op. cit., t. IV, x, lxxii, p. 858, where details of the final financial settlement in exchange for the renunciation of the succession are given.

¹⁸ Zurita, op. cit., t. IV, X, lii, p. 772.

With the events leading to the 1398 French subtraction of obedience from the Avignon Church discussed at the end of Chapter 2,¹⁹ the fluid geo-political situation in the Western Mediterranean and the fact that Aragonese royal policy was no longer pro-French as it had been during the rule of Juan I and Violant of Bar, the House of Anjou found itself in increasingly fragile political circumstances. This shift in circumstances presented a potential stumbling block to the long anticipated marriage, one which the Angevins needed to secure if they were to have a hope of regaining their Italian inheritance. Louis's envoys were dispatched to Aragon to ensure that the marriage would proceed now that Aragon had a new king in Martin I. For her part, young Yolande d'Aragon had decided that she had no intention of honouring a betrothal agreement ratified when she was only eleven years of age; moreover she insisted that she had no intention of shackling herself to the enemy of her kingdom. Whether this had been her initiative or that of her uncle Martin is unclear.²⁰

It would appear that Yolande d'Aragon had been much prized, not only by the French, but by Richard II of England, who had also sought her hand. Françoise Autrand claims that: «*Et pour l'intérêt diplomatique, l'Angleterre cherchait une alliance qui renforcerait ses positions contre la France. Aussi une ambassade anglaise part-elle en mars 1395²¹ demander la main de Yolande d'Aragon, fille unique²² du roi Jean ... Pour l'heure, on parlait d'elle comme future reine d'Angleterre. Un rapprochement avec l'Aragon aurait gêné les Angevins en Méditerranée et fait pièce à l'alliance étroite entre la France et la Castille. Paris réagit et proposa Isabelle.*»²³ Isabelle was the six-year old daughter of Charles VI. It seems that rather than standing idly by while Aragon signed an agreement with England, Charles VI probably

¹⁹ There had been many embassies between the courts of France and Aragon in the years since the election of the Aragonese Benedict XIII, replacing the French Clement VII. For *via cessionis* see above p. 68.

²⁰ This incident is reported by Lecoy de la Marche, who cites a relatively forgotten document as his source. Lecoy de la Marche, *Le roi René*, t. I, pp. 24-25. The document he cites is BNF, Lorraine 26, n°8. See also Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, *La vida y epistolario de Violant de Bar (1365-1431) duquessa de Gerona y reina de Aragón*, unpublished translation notes, p. 12.

²¹ This at a time when negotiations in favour of Louis II had been on-going for some time.

²² Yolande d'Aragon had an elder half sister Juana (from her father's marriage to Martha of Armagnac), married to Mathieu, Count of Foix.

²³ Autrand, F., *Charles VI, la folie du roi*, Paris Fayard, 1986, p. 339. Cf. Zurita, op. cit., t.IV, X, lv, p. 790. Violant of Bar seems to have put the English off by stating that she needed to seek the consent of her French cousin, i.e. the Crown, before she could contemplate considering such a request. The French Crown responded in no uncertain terms that Violant should under no circumstances contemplate the procurement of such an alliance, given that England was their (France's) enemy. Cf. Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, "Pawn or Player?: Violant of Bar and the Game of Matrimonial Politics in the Crown of Aragon (1380-1396)", in *Love, Sex and Marriage in Medieval Iberia*, Lacarra, María, Eugenia, (ed.), New York, Garland, 2002, pp. 71-72.

thought it prudent to leap-frog a potentially damaging alliance between and England and Aragon by putting forward his own daughter Isabelle as bride for Richard and thereby probably hoping to kill several birds with the one stone.

Yolande d’Aragon seems to have been a singular individual; her contemporaries lauded her beauty and she would prove herself intelligent, dedicated both to the causes of her family, and later, to those of France, upon whose fortunes hers depended. The account below, by Michel Pintoin, describes the first impact she had upon her French contemporaries: *«Au mois de janvier, Louis roi de Sicile épousa dans la ville d’Arles madame Yolande, âgée environ vingt ans, fille du feu roi d’Aragon et de la fille de l’illustre duc de Bar. Cette princesse captivait tous les regards par sa rare beauté, par les charmes de son visage et par l’air de dignité répandu sur toute sa personne. C’était en un mot un véritable trésor des grâces. Au dire des gens sages, la nature avait pris plaisir à la former et l’avait comblée de toutes les perfections; il ne lui manquait que d’être immortelle. Je n’essaierai point de décrire ici ses attraits; il me suffira de dire qu’aucune femme ne méritait de lui être comparée.»*²⁴

Born in Zaragoza on 11th August 1381, Yolande d’Aragon was the eldest child of Juan I, King of Aragon²⁵ (son of Pedro IV the Ceremonious), and Violant of Bar, (daughter of Robert I of Bar and Marie of France, granddaughter of Jean II le Bon of France and niece of Charles V of France). Of her early life and education, we know little;²⁶ of her public persona we will learn more as this study progresses. Nevertheless, we will attempt to piece together her early life by uncovering what is known about the court of Aragon, its systems of administration, its religious and spiritual affiliations, as well as the careers and personalities of her father Juan I and her mother Violant of Bar.

There had been many changes in the way in which the administration of power functioned under the Crown of Aragon from the early thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth

²⁴ *Religieux*, t. I, l. XXI, p. 773. They were actually married on 2nd December 1400.

²⁵ Juana was born in 1375, the only surviving child of Juan’s first marriage to Marie d’Armagnac. He had no other surviving children. We should note that Violant had an extremely close relationship with Juana and “their warm relations were mutual if we are to judge by their correspondence” (Dawn Bratsch-Prince. “A Queen’s Task: Violant de Bar and the Experience of Royal Motherhood in Fourteenth Century Aragon”, in *La Corònica* 27. 1, 1998, p. 26). This being the case her daughter Yolande perhaps remained close to her half sister and by extension to the House of Foix.

²⁶ It would be very instructive to conduct a future detailed examination of Violant’s copious extant correspondence (addressed to her household officers and servants) and thereby tease out details of Yolande’s upbringing and education. Unfortunately, this was not possible to achieve in the context of this current research.

centuries. These changes resulted directly from a clear policy of expansionism, particularly during the reigns of James I the Conqueror (1213-1276) and Pedro IV the Ceremonious (1336-1387). Both of these ambitious monarchs were forced to maximize the effectiveness of their administrations in order that their aspirations be realized and retained. These powerful rulers, in pursuit of multiple sovereignties, expanded their domains from Aragon into Catalonia, seizing control over small portions of southern France, which allowed them to annex Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Sicily, southern Italy, Corsica and areas of Murcia.²⁷ Such dramatic territorial expansion across the Mediterranean basin demanded reformation of their administrative structures from a transitory and *ad hoc* system to a semi-professional organized hierarchy of advisors and court officials. According to Marta VanLandingham, the climax of this transformation occurred during the busy and authoritarian reign of Pedro IV the Ceremonious. He realized very early in his reign that if the court structure was to support his ambitions for Aragon, orally transmitted understandings of the boundaries of office could no longer be tolerated. He codified instructions, and the responsibilities and duties of his servants and advisors were fixed in written policy documents.²⁸ Aragonese bureaucracy was born, giving ever more control to rulers who exploited their sovereign authority to codify binding statutes governing the actions of court officers.

The administration of the papal curia, itself based upon the Roman model, might have served as an extremely effective template for the centralization of an efficient and successful bureaucracy. Further, the Kingdom of Sicily, which would play an important rôle in expanding Aragonese domains, was an anomaly when compared to other western administrations of the period, for it already enjoyed a highly structured political and fiscal administration. Roger II, the Norman king of Sicily (1130-1154), governed his dominions from his capital Palermo with the help of a highly efficient and centralized system of bureaucracy, a form he had adapted from his Muslim predecessors.²⁹ Later, in the thirteenth century, Frederick II found that of all his empire, his rule was far more effective in Sicily than elsewhere. In 1282, Sicily was annexed to Aragon, the dynasty's claim arising from the 1262 marriage of King Pedro III the Great³⁰ to Constanza of

²⁷ VanLandingham, Marta, *Transforming the State, King, Court and Political Culture in the Realms of Aragon (1213-1387)*. Leiden, Boston, Köln, Brill, 2002, pp. 6-7.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

³⁰ Yolande d'Aragon's paternal great-great-grandfather.

Hohenstaufen, Frederick II's granddaughter and nominal heiress to Sicily, a claim not recognized by the papacy.³¹

Constanza's pretensions to her Sicilian inheritance (then in the hands of Charles I of Anjou, himself the papal nominee) was a serendipitous development in Aragon's policy of trans-Mediterranean expansionism. Well aware that he would need an efficient system in place to consolidate his future holdings and fund his expansionist dreams, Pedro III reinforced his authority at home and strengthened his financial resources. By 1282 he had achieved the desired effect, relieving Charles of Anjou of his island kingdom, having first conspired with his enemies in the surrounding region.³² Ever defiant, having defeated a papal crusade launched against him, Pedro III divided his domains amongst his sons at the time of his death in 1285. The mainland territories and Mallorca were left to his eldest son, Alfons the Liberal, while the kingdom of Sicily devolved to his second son Jaume. When Alfons died in 1291 Jaume returned to the Aragon mainland, leaving his younger brother Frederick to rule Sicily as his vice-roy. Aragon's relationship with the papacy over the question of Sicily continued to deteriorate, with Jaume attempting to restore sovereignty over Sicily to the papacy in return for peace, Corsica and Sardinia. His brother Frederick opposed this initiative and his Sicilian subjects rejected the move. Frederick's branch of the Aragon-Catalan dynasty retained Sicily throughout the fourteenth century despite the fact that southern Italy had been reconsolidated under Angevin rule.³³

In common with his great adversaries the Angevins, Pedro the Great and his sons would find their newly established trans-Mediterranean territories difficult to retain. He understood the need to consolidate his powerbase and assure regional loyalty in all of his domains. Pedro III needed an efficient and highly evolved form of authority to ensure that financial and military might were controlled from a central administrative capital.³⁴ As VanLandingham explains, "Sicily embodied the very model of mediæval centralization and bureaucracy and the power they could proffer."³⁵ Sicily was the

³¹ VanLandingham, pp. 8-9.

³² The Sicilian Vespers discussed above in chapter 1.

³³ VanLandingham, p. 9.

³⁴ See below, pp. 377-381, Charles VII's decree of 1439, one which Yolande helped to dictate. It was her last great public contribution to France's recovery and one which reflects the contents of a missive sent to her which will be discussed below in Chapter 7.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

jumping-off point for Pedro's "global" ambitions and it further provided him with a ready-made template for governing his fledgling empire. Sicily fulfilled the same function for the Aragonese as Provence would for the Angevins. Exiles from Angevin rule in Sicily, able jurists and other specialists, helped Pedro and Constanza convert treasury procedures to the Sicilian model as well as implementing other important innovations.

Not only were administrative reforms necessary to hold together the diverse federation of states which the kingdom of Aragon would become, strong dynastic continuity also had a vital rôle to play. In Chapter 2 we discussed the importance of assuring strong male succession to underpin the successes of this or other princely houses, as well as the possible consequences should strong male succession falter. Dynastic potency, with the help of a highly organized system of administration, was really the only way to unite territories that had little in common apart from the identity of their ruler. Like the second branch of Angevins, the Anjou-Valois (originating with Louis I of Anjou) of Anjou-Maine-Provence-Naples, Aragonese monarchs believed that their sovereignty reposed in part upon the idea of lordship over territories devolved from individual inheritances and conquests, reinforced by strong marital alliances. In the case of the Angevins, the testament of Louis II named as heir to Naples-Provence-Anjou his eldest son Louis III, who received «*l'honor principal*», along with undivided patrimonial territory. His second son René received the lands and baronies of Guise, Chailly, Longjumeau and Aymeries. Bar and Lorraine would devolve to him through the offices of his mother Yolande d'Aragon. His youngest son Charles inherited the lordship of La Roche-sur-Yon, eventually receiving the rights over Maine. In the case of Louis II therefore, one son was entrusted with Angevin aspirations to the north abutting the hereditary lands of Marie of Brittany, another with eastern Angevin expansion. The principal heir had the patrimonial territory, Anjou, Provence and the hypothetical kingdom of Jerusalem-Naples-Sicily.³⁶ The Crown of Aragon functioned in much the same manner: Jaume I left the island of Mallorca and Montpellier, Roussillon and Cerdagne in southern France to his younger son Jaume, with Alfons his heir receiving the mainland states. The mainland monarchs, the senior members of the royal family, tried to impose their personal authority over the inheritances of their younger siblings and relations from time to time

³⁶ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 29.

and Pedro IV, the Ceremonious, would eventually depose his cousin Jacques II of Mallorca.³⁷

The same obstacles that were to confront Marie of Brittany in her efforts to conquer Provence and centralize Angevin authority in that region³⁸ also caused concerns for the Crown of Aragon. Recalcitrant, powerful local nobles and wealthy urban communities jealously guarded lucrative franchises and generous privileges, particularly in the Catalan region. The urban communities had to be addressed one by one and brought into line, and a system of micro-management and mountains of documentation were generated in an attempt to ensure the legality and durability of treaties, alliances and agreements. With the explosion of documentation, reform was instigated following the Sicilian model discussed above, a necessary adjunct to enduring authority. With the expansion of territory, came additional problems of control and management. Added to this was the fact that the business of government was becoming too complex to remain the sole responsibility of the king. Advisors were summoned, and councils formed to deal with the weighty issues of the day. These assemblies included responsibilities relating to the administration of justice for the king's subjects, an obsession of mediæval court propagandists, who emphasized that this was the sovereign's primary rôle.

VanLandingham³⁹ concisely articulates the idea that, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Aragon-Catalan dynasty consciously adapted and manipulated precepts of Roman law, imported Sicilian administrative innovations⁴⁰ and incorporated contemporary political ideas to increase the effectiveness and the degree of their authority. They understood that by rationalizing the ways in which their courts functioned they could accumulate resources and strategically deploy them to further their expansionist vision. Their innovative arsenal was both progressive and pragmatic: they created or imported new executive positions, codified and ameliorated their

³⁷ This Jacques was the father of Jacques III of Mallorca, who would eventually marry Joanna I of Naples. See above pp. 20-23 and Appendix p. n.14

³⁸ See above, chapter 2.

³⁹ VanLandingham, *op. cit.* pp. 195-197.

⁴⁰ Cf. Silleras-Fernández, Núria, « Negocios Familiares : Relaciones E Intercambios Entre Las Cortes De Sicilia y Aragón (1392-1410) », in *La Mediterrània de la Corona d'Aragó Siegles XIII-XIV & VII Centenari de la Sentencia Arbitral de Torrellás. XVIII Congrés Internacional d'Història de la Corona d'Aragó*, Valencia, 2004, pp. 511-522 for a detailed discussion of the relationship and links between Sicily's *cortes* and those of Aragon during Martin of Aragon's vice-regency of Sicily for his brother Juan I and later during his reign as successor to his brother Juan's rule.

administrative procedures, professionalized their staff and promoted the legitimacy of their kingship in chronicles, policies of conduct and sumptuous ceremony. Despite all these transformations, the Kings of Aragon and their counsel were not reticent in manipulating highly conservative aspects of privilege and tradition. All these activities combined to strengthen their prestige and power. Religious observance at court served to signal to those with more worldly ambitions that kingship resided upon spiritual belief and an unswerving faith in God, reinforcing the idea of the divine right of kings. This interpretation of kingship did not depend upon the personality and exigencies of the individual sovereign, whose public and private self was understood to be inseparable.⁴¹

This was the administrative and bureaucratic environment in which Yolande d'Aragon grew to maturity. The aspects and characteristics outlined above would seem to have been, either consciously or unconsciously, integrated into her personal style of rulership during her regency and lieutenant-generalcies. She also employed many of the ceremonial traditions of her native land to enhance the prestige of her son-in-law Charles VII as he struggled to regain both his throne and his regal prestige after the disastrous fall-out from the Treaty of Troyes. Charles's personal flaws therefore were of little interest; his *Bonne mère* chose instead to emphasize his positive qualities and gloss over his flaws in keeping with the view stated above that the public and private selves of the king were inseparable.

Before turning to the identities and actions of Yolande d'Aragon's parents, the importance of Franciscan involvement in the realms of Aragon must be understood, for Franciscans of all three orders, as well as an increasingly marked preference for *Observant* spirituality and practice, would be likewise very visible in Yolande d'Aragon's tenure. Once again, she had the templates, in this case religious, of the spiritual practices and preferences of her mother and perhaps more cogently still those of her aunt María de Luna and her uncle, Martin I, who ruled Aragon during her crucial teenage years.⁴²

⁴¹ Which is just as well when we consider the short-falls and failings of monarchs such as Charles VI, his son Charles VII while dauphin and Henry VI of England, just to name three.

⁴² Cf. the paper by Núria Silleras-Fernández « La connexió franciscana: Franciscanisme i monarquia a la Corona d'Aragó en temps de Martí I (1396-1410) », in *Vos Sou Sant Senyor Déu Unic Franciscainisme I Islam Journades D'Estudis Franciscans 2001*, Facultata de Teologia de Catalunya, Barcelona, 2001. Of particular interest is her analysis of certain Franciscan counsellors to Kings Pedro IV, Juan I and Martin I. One particular Franciscan, Francesc Eiximenis, recorded the virtues that had adorned the

During his lifetime, Francis of Assisi covered much territory and impressed many; Aragon was no exception. The Poor Man of Assisi's visit to Spain in the early part of the thirteenth century marked a turning point in the astonishing growth of his order. The fact that both the Crown and the burgeoning merchant class quickly accepted the Order of the Friars Minor allowed it to implant itself in all major urban communities. Webster's study *Els Menorets*⁴³ reconstructs the early years of the Franciscans in Aragon. More importantly here, she emphasizes the fact of their rapid rise as trusted emissaries, ambassadors, spiritual advisors and cultural leaders. That they interacted with all levels of society and all creeds: Jews, Muslims and Christians, allowed them to make sense of and navigate through an increasingly complex world.

For the people of the mediæval period, spirituality was an integral part of daily existence, and religion was intimately bound to politics. When states flourished, so did religious orders, and the larger mendicant orders such as the Franciscans and the Dominicans firmly took hold in the realms of Aragon during the prosperous reigns from

person of María de Luna, Yolande d'Aragon's aunt and queen after the death of her father Juan I. Eiximenis describes María as: "...reina que exemplificarà perfectament l'ideal eiximinià de dona cristiana, bona regent, censellera epòs, piadosa i liberal." (pp. 168-169). Silleras-Fernández continues her examination stating that by the end of the fourteenth-century the Franciscans, given their close ties to the Crown of Aragon, were able to prioritize the reform of their order and that "*Francesc Eiximenis contribueix a impulsar el moviment d'observància franciscana que buscava tornar al rigor primitiu de Sant Francesc i a l'estricta compliment en austeriat de la Reglia.*" p. 171. Eiximenis is worth noting here for not only did he serve all three Aragonese monarchs under discussion, he furthermore maintained cordial relations with their wives, including Yolande d'Aragon's mother Violant of Bar: "*La relació que mantingué amb els tres monarques als que servi, Pere el Ceremoniós i els seus fills Joan I i Martí I, al igual que les seves respectives esposes, fou molt cordial.*" The preference for Observance is not the only point raised by Silleras-Fernández which bears upon the spiritual leanings of the adult Yolande d'Aragon but also the fact that Martin and María included particular Franciscans as their most trusted political counsellors: « *En deïnitava, el rei Martí I Humanà i Eclesiàtic i reina María de Luna tingueren gustos i afeccions comunes i els uní una inqüestionable devoció i estimació pels franciscans en els que trobaren consell ajut i insiració. Pel que fa als tres mestres en teologia esmentats...figures indiscutibles del seu temps, anaren més enllà la seva funció religiosa i espiritual transformant se en valuosos consellers polítics.* » p. 178. This practice might have impressed the young Yolande to a considerable degree, particularly when we consider the fact that Louis II d'Anjou had pronounced Franciscan leanings influenced both by his mother Marie of Brittany, whose own father Charles of Blois was a beatified Franciscan, and his father Louis I, who championed the cause of his father-in-law's beatification. Louis II's god-mother was yet another distinguished (and eventually beatified) Franciscan tertiary Jeanne-Marie de Maillé with close ties to Marie of Brittany and a woman whom we will discuss in greater detail below. Yolande d'Aragon's mother Violant had much contact with Franciscan advisors and counsellors, particularly (though not exclusively) in her machinations during the succession debate upon the death of Martin I in 1410. Cf. Vendrell Gallostra, *Francisca, Violant de Bar y el Compromiso de Caspe*, Barcelona, Real Academia de Buenas Letras, 1992.

⁴³ Webster, Jill R., *Els Menorets; The Franciscans in the Realms of Aragon From St Francis to the Black Death*, Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1993, Cf. for the situation in France the thought-provoking collection of papers in *Mouvements franciscains et société française XIIIe - XXe siècles, études présentées à la table ronde du CNRS 23 octobre 1982, réunies par André Vauchez*, Paris, Beauchesne, 1984.

James I to Pedro III. The friars of these orders, and later those of the Carmelites and Augustinians, took to the roads and were seen everywhere, travelling in pairs and preaching.⁴⁴ The fact that the Friars Minor journeyed so extensively seems not to have escaped the attention of their kings. Mendicant missionaries soon found themselves instruments of royal policy. As we have discussed and will continue to acknowledge, in spite of undeniable prosperity, life in the realms of Aragon, particularly during the reigns of Pedro III and Pedro IV and their successors, was an intricate pattern of victory over lesser states underscored by social conflict. Social discord provided a backdrop against which the mendicants could preach their message of social harmony, and very quickly the friars became not only propagators of the faith, but also promulgators of royal policy.

The mobility and discretion of the mendicants allowed them to travel unhindered between states, bearing messages between family members, keeping indispensable lines of communication open between Christian royal Houses. In times of deepening conflict, they were frequently the only messengers to get through. Apart from bearing tidings or dealing with secret business on the sovereign's behalf, the Franciscans, in particular, fulfilled another important function: they were passive propagandists for kingship without ever threatening the sovereignty of the monarch. They gave the spiritual seal of approval to royal policy; in Aragon they stressed the religious nature of the re-conquest, the defeat of the Moors, and therefore endorsed Aragonese policies of territorial expansion.⁴⁵ We must absorb this fact and remind ourselves that Yolande d'Aragon received her earliest education in diplomacy and leadership in Aragon. She too would employ Franciscan networks in much the same manner as those we will discuss here.

Webster takes her investigation further by developing the idea that individual friars were closely associated with the king and his policies. In some cases, such as on the Valencian frontier, friars such as Friar Il.luminat and Friar Peter were given land on the Ruzafa border road to establish a house, ensuring that the Valenica frontier remained in Christian hands.⁴⁶ This was perfectly consistent with the mission of the mendicants. In

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 81. See below Yolande d'Aragon's practice of sponsoring Franciscan houses and the fact that her inner circle of important female followers did the same. This is not to suggest that this practice was limited to the Houses of Anjou, Laval, Brittany and Bourbon as the wife of Jean sans Peur,

other cases, friars were charged with more worldly tasks, and Webster asserts that in the majority of instances these friars had two necessary qualifications to act as king's envoys: the personal attributes with which they were endowed and their family connections. Special messengers had to be loyal and beyond reproach as they were often apprized of the contents of the missives they carried and/or the secret negotiations that were being undertaken between the king and his correspondent. A case cited is that of the king's sister, Queen Isabel of Portugal whose messenger, a Friar Minor named Domingo, was robbed of a letter from Isabel to King James II. The recipient requested that the friar verbally recount the contents of the intercepted letter.⁴⁷ Queen Isabel was known as the Peacemaker and was later canonized Saint Isabel of Portugal by Urban VIII in 1625. In the tradition of Saint Clare, she worked with the poor and the sick and once widowed she became a Franciscan tertiary, retiring to a monastery of Poor Clares, established by her at Coimbra, again underscoring the relationship between royal Houses and the Franciscans.

Occasionally, Franciscans in the service of the king were obliged to travel vast distances, as was the case with negotiations between Aragon and King Robert of Sicily in 1314 and 1315. James II of Aragon sent Friar Pons Carbonell to Sicily, and it seems that this friar frequently carried out embassies for his king. Another Franciscan, Friar Domingo de Jaca must have been very able, for James II elected him to the post of provincial ambassador in the 1290s.

One other factor that ensured the spread of the Franciscan mission was that the friars managed to relate not only to the poor but also to the proliferating mercantile class in urban communities. Franciscans fulfilled a political function in that they warranted royal policy and cared for the spiritual needs of a class who depended upon the successful implementation of sovereign authority and endeavour. A relatively stable political climate contributed to a productive economic environment. The mendicant orders were the direct beneficiaries of bourgeois prosperity and influence, attaining for themselves

Marguerite of Bavaria, and her daughter Agnès, Duchess of Bourbon, also showed a preference for Franciscan spiritualism. It is rather more that Yolande d'Aragon's apparent skill at utilizing Franciscan networks for diplomatic and political purposes and that will form the basis of our later discussion in chapters 6 & 7.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 82. Webster cites Isabel (Elisabet) of Portugal as the sister of Pedro III, the Great, She was actually the daughter of Pedro III and the sister of James II of Aragon and she was married to Denis (Diniz), King of Portugal, *Rei Lavrador*.

unprecedented authority and stability by the end of the thirteenth century. During the reign of Alfons III in 1328, having received a dispensation from the minister-general of the Franciscans, the monarch was free to second friars to undertake diplomatic missions. Alfons dispatched Friar Aparicio of Zaragoza on an unspecified commission bearing a letter of safe conduct protecting Friar Aparicio and his companion from violent attacks and harm, some of which may have been orchestrated by the established clergy.⁴⁸ It seems that Alfons was at pains to make it abundantly clear that he would have regarded any attacks upon his envoys as being directed against both his royal person and the larger House of Aragon.⁴⁹

These few examples, clearly illustrate the importance of the Franciscans to the Crown of Aragon. It is worth noting that when Crown or princely territory was geographically and culturally dispersed, trustworthy and discrete brokers such as Franciscan friars were an indispensable adjunct to the armoury of royal endeavour. Webster makes the point that the existence of such a plethora of documentation signals just how heavily the Crown of Aragon relied upon religious orders to undertake tasks only tenuously connected to the orders' spiritual mission. Reliable and able emissaries were of primordial importance to princes who had re-conquered territory from Muslims and who needed to enhance their contact with diverse regions such as Sicily, Sardinia and Mallorca.⁵⁰ Traditional secular ambassadors could not have fulfilled this need. Envoys were required who appeared, by the very nature of their spiritual mission, to be disinterested politically and materially from the monarch. Mobility and discretion were necessary to guarantee that messages were relayed confidentially and swiftly. In times of conflict this was an absolute necessity, as we will come to understand in following chapters from the situation of France during the closing stages of the Hundred Years War. When kingdoms fractured, nobles divided into self-interested factions and clans, which were by their very nature fleeting and unreliable. In stark contrast, Franciscans had no territorial aspirations, they could not trade, and they were by their rule forbidden personal wealth, titles or goods. The mendicants were an available pool of loyal royal servants, no threat to sovereign

⁴⁸ Cf. Silleras-Fernández, Núria, « La connexió franciscana : Franciscanisme i monarquia a la Corona d'Aragó en temps de Martí I (1396-1410) », in *Vós sou sant, senyor Déu únic. Franciscanisme I Islam. Jornades d'Estudis Franciscans 2001*, Duran i Boada, Jacint, (ed.), Barcelona, Facultat de Teologia de Catalunya, 2001, p. 158.

⁴⁹ Cited in Webster, p. 165. See below, p. 87 for a discussion regarding conflict between Franciscans and the clergy.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.

authority, theoretically willing to undertake missions with no thought of individual personal gain.

The final idea to be explored in the context of Franciscan political and spiritual involvement in both the Crown of Aragon and in wider Christendom is the place of the Third Franciscan order.

Franciscan tertiaries were lay members who did not enter the monastic life of the order. By the end of the thirteenth century, much debate had arisen regarding the need to adhere to Francis's teachings in relation to the possession of personal property. Some friars thought it legitimate to possess books, religious vestments and other items, debating against the notion of absolute poverty. Others were strident in their conviction of the dangers of materialism, seeking to adhere to the ideal of pure poverty as preached by their founder. In 1323, John XXII published a bull, *Cum inter nonnullos*, dogmatically affirming that it was contrary to biblical evidence and therefore heretical to deny Christ and his apostles the right to lawfully possess worldly goods. In the light of this proclamation the minister-general of the Friars Minor, Michael of Cesena, made a deposition that before Franciscans could publish anything on the subject, they must seek approval from their general chapter or from the deputies of the minister. He was obliged to flee in the face of controversy and Louis of Bavaria's opportunistic march against the pope. A multitude of treatises followed, either defending the doctrine of absolute poverty or adhering to the position of the pope condemning absolute poverty as unlawful and heretical. The question of the doctrine of absolute poverty had particular resonance for tertiaries, drawn as they were from the ranks of lay followers. It would have been difficult enough to conform to a literal interpretation of the rule of absolute poverty within the cloister; how much more complex would this question of faith have been for those still within the world, many of whom were members of royal houses or drawn from the trade and mercantile classes.

In the midst of the factional conflict that had arisen in the wake of the founder's death in 1226, the Third Franciscan Order, like the Poor Clares, struggled to find a place in accordance with his founder's vision. They finally received their individual rule in 1289, with the publication of a bull, *Supra montem*, by Nicholas IV. It stressed the link between tertiaries and the Friars Minor. The Friars Minor would have the responsibility of

advising and directing members of the Third Order as well as nominating their visitors and ministers. In 1319, John XXII decreed that the Third Order existed “under the care and teaching of the Order of the Friars Minor”.⁵¹ These papal decrees are important to our discussion of the Order of the Friars Minor, the Third Franciscan Order and Joan of Arc below. Saint Louis of France, Louis IX, is often declared to have been a member of the Third Order and we have discussed in the first chapter of this study, the importance of his great-nephew Saint Louis of Anjou to the Neapolitan Angevins.⁵² Webster asserts that by 1348, in the realms of the Crown of Aragon, disciples of Saint Francis were not only found in the Friars Minor, the Poor Clares and the Third Order, but also in charitable and trade guilds. This phenomenon served to bind the Franciscans ever closer to the economy of Aragon, thanks to their close links to the merchant and trade classes. They were the single most effective instrument for kings in their quest to consolidate and enshrine their authority. Economically, politically and philosophically, the mendicant orders were indispensable to the success of royal enterprise, for they preached the need to consolidate alliances between classes and states, and underscored and assured their political endeavour in a variety of ways.

They did not however enjoy the approbation of the parish clergy, who were constrained by episcopal jurisdiction.⁵³ Many in the clergy resented the instant popularity of the mendicant orders as they freely made their progress throughout the realms of Aragon.

⁵¹ Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

⁵² And indeed to their cousins, the Anjou-Valois and the Hungarian Angevins as well, cf. Paul, Jacques, « Saint Louis d’Anjou, franciscain et évêque de Toulouse (1274-1297) », in Vicaire, Marie-Humbert, (ed.) *Les évêques, les clercs et le roi (1250-1300)*, 7^{ème} Colloque de Fanjeux, 1971, Toulouse, E. Privat, 1972, pp. 59-90 ; Paul, Jacques, « L’évangélisme et franciscanisme chez Louis d’Anjou », in Vicaire, Marie-Humbert, *Les mendiants en pays d’Oc au XIII^e siècle*, 8^{ème} Colloque de Fanjeux, 1972, Toulouse, E. Privat, 1973, pp. 375-401 ; Paul, Jacques, « Le ‘Liber miraculorum’ de Saint Louis d’Anjou », in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, vol. 69 :1-2, (1976) ; and Boureau, Alain, “Franciscan piety and veracity : uses and strategems in the hagiographic pamphlet”, in Chartier, Roger, (ed.), *The Culture of Print. Power and uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Polity, 1989, pp. 15-58 ; for the Hungarian branch: Klaniczay, Gábor, « La noblesse et le culte des saints dynastiques sous les rois angevins” ; and De Cevins, Marie-Madeleine & Koszta, László, « Noblesse et ordres religieux en Hongrie sous les rois angevins (vers 1323-vers 1382), both papers in *La Noblesse dans les territoires angevins à la fin du Moyen-âge*, pp. 511-526 & 585-606 respectively. It is interesting to note furthermore that the Crown of Aragon also had some interest in Saint Louis of Anjou, for in 1423 Alfonse V, King of Aragon removed the relics of Saint Louis from Marseille and placed them in his cathedral in Valence, where they are still to be found. Yolande d’Aragon and Louis II d’Anjou named their eldest son Louis not for Saint Louis of France but rather to honour the name of his great-nephew, Saint Louis of Anjou.

⁵³ A fact to be recalled when discussing the spirituality of Joan of Arc and her occasional preference for mendicants as confessors rather than her parish priest. The princes of the Established Church, who were at odds with the concept of individual, unmediated spirituality, made much of this at her trial of condemnation in Rouen.

The fact that Franciscans were often far better educated than the established clergy (William of Ockam and Duns Scotus just to name two of their luminaries)⁵⁴ allowed the friars to reach and preach to the people more effectively. Simply stated, their sermons were more moving and exegetic.⁵⁵ Franciscans were granted land and funding to establish their houses and bishoprics. They had the support of powerful royal patrons, but also could count upon the support of wealthy aristocrats and drew postulants from this class as well as from the financially well-endowed merchant classes.⁵⁶ While they were forbidden to gain individually from their connections, the order itself prospered, to the discontent of the established clergy.

The fact that their houses began to proliferate within the realms of Aragon and elsewhere in Christendom, particularly in France, meant that the physical infrastructure they provided could be employed for lay purposes. The retinues of kings and nobles lodged there, while the Poor Clares provided sanctuary and accommodation for women of noble families. Tertiaries and confraternities formed residential communities and friars, who were able to participate in all walks of life, achieving an unprecedented level of prominence, not all of which was rooted in religious devotion.⁵⁷ They were fortunate in the protection of kings such as James I and his heirs, who realized the potential for a centralized economy founded upon a partnership with the mercantile and trading classes, which balanced and in some cases neutralized the aspirations of the Aragonese nobility.⁵⁸ Franciscans were a complementary adjunct to the ambitions of the rulers of Aragon, allowing them to draw advantage from the existence of an internationally recognized group, uninterested in worldly advantage but one that basked in the prestige of papal respect.

The Franciscans were never to remain a destitute and disparate group. By observance of Francis's spiritual mission, those who followed him attained political and educational prominence, increasing in numbers beyond his expectations. Notions of poverty and asceticism were adjusted to conform to contemporary demands and it could be argued

⁵⁴ Webster details the extent of Franciscan erudition and systems of education throughout her study, particularly p. 263.

⁵⁵ This might well have been the source of their attraction for the young Joan of Arc. It would be the Franciscans themselves who would establish and promulgate her legend.

⁵⁶ See below, chapter 6 our discussion regarding Colette of Corbie and Yolande's personal spiritual interests.

⁵⁷ Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

that they may have gambled upon Francis's spiritual integrity to firmly establish their teachings throughout Christendom. Whatever the case, at the very least in Aragon Franciscans were accepted as skilful intermediaries, devoted to the king and all his subjects, in both temporal and spiritual endeavours. As Webster concludes, they managed to carve out a permanent position for themselves on the Iberian Peninsula.⁵⁹ We will argue that they achieved this far beyond the frontiers of Iberia.

Having examined the circumstances and influences of the period immediately prior to Yolande d'Aragn's youth and education, we will now turn our attention to the personal reign of her father Juan I, and his consort, Yolande's mother, Violant of Bar, in order to examine one of the primary formative influences upon her personality.

Juan I, whose reign Bisson asserts was half over even before it had officially begun,⁶⁰ succeeded his father Pedro IV, the Ceremonious, in 1387. Juan I was born in Perpignan in 1350 and was named Duke of Gerona in his childhood by a relieved father who had despaired of ever producing a healthy male heir. By the age of thirteen he was his father's lieutenant-general and at the age of fourteen he was obliged in this capacity to oversee the trial and execution of his tutor, Bernat de Cabrera. As Juan approached his majority, Pedro IV soon found it difficult to control his self-sufficient son. Their difficult father-son relationship would have been exacerbated by Juan's periodic involvement in the war between his father Pedro IV and Pedro I the Cruel of Castile.⁶¹ Once he became king at the age of thirty-six he took much less interest in affairs of state than his father had done. Bisson contends that Juan I was very well educated in the fashionably courtly mould that perfectly suited his personality and inclinations. Yolande d'Aragn's father learned to read and write fluently in several languages from a very early age and he practised the art of the hunt to an elite level.

Juan had first been betrothed to Jeanne de Valois,⁶² who died in Béziers on the way to her wedding in 1371. The marriage had been negotiated in France by Juan's advisors, with the full assent of his father Pedro IV. He later married Martha d'Armagnac in

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 299.

⁶⁰ Bisson T.N., *The Medieval Crown of Aragon - A Short History*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991, p. 121.

⁶¹ See Appendix 1, n. 15.

⁶² Jeanne de Valois was the daughter of King Philippe VI of France and his second wife Blanche of Navarre; her half brother was Jean II le Bon, King of France.

Barcelona in 1373. The couple had five children, four of whom died in infancy. Only Juana, born in 1375, survived and married Mathieu, Count of Foix.⁶³ When Martha d'Armagnac died in 1378, Juan found himself in an identical situation to that of his father at the time of his own birth, fast approaching middle age with no male heir. His remarriage therefore became a veritable affair of State.⁶⁴

At this point, Pedro imagined a scheme to marry Juan to Maria of Sicily and therefore secure Aragon's authority over the strife-torn island. Juan, however had other ideas and welcomed overtures from Charles V of France and Pope Clement VII, whom Juan favoured over Urban VI.⁶⁵ Having resisted every form of coercion and threat short of brute force from his father Pedro and stepmother Queen Sibil.la, Juan married Violant of Bar as she was to be known, with great ceremony at Perpignan in the spring of 1379.

At the time of her marriage, Violant of Bar was just fifteen and the polar opposite of Juan's first wife, Martha d'Armagnac. She was pampered, vivacious and ambitious, soon threatening the prestige of her stepmother-in-law, Sibil.la. Violant, with the full assent of her francophile husband Juan, established a princely court *à la française*, introducing sumptuous dress, jewellery, banquets and balls.⁶⁶ The duchy of Gerona became an apanage in the mode of those in her native France. Violant of Bar had no greater success than her predecessor had had in the area of childbearing; she too was unable to produce a surviving male heir for the throne of Aragon. Only her eldest child, christened Violant but later known as Yolande d' Aragon, survived.

Juan I did not seem to share the unsettled and ambitious character of Pedro IV, who had been forever intriguing to further his aspirations in Spain and abroad. Juan's health was compromised and Bisson suggests that his fragile health, perhaps due to epilepsy, persisted into his personal reign.⁶⁷ There was a constant stream of physicians and

⁶³ Mathieu of Foix-Castelbon was succeeded by his sister Isabelle's son Jean I in 1398. Isabelle acted as his regent until 1412. Jean I would play an important rôle on Charles VII's council. He was nephew-by-marriage to Yolande d' Aragon and ally of Richemont. Notwithstanding these connections, the Count of Foix occasionally fell out with the Constable.

⁶⁴ Bisson, loc. cit.

⁶⁵ Juan was put off the Sicilian/Urbanist option both by his problematic relationship with his father, Pedro IV and his dislike and disgust for his stepmother, the ambitious *arriviste* Queen Sibil.la de Fortià who had first been Pedro's mistress.

⁶⁶ Bisson, op. cit., p. 122.

⁶⁷ Bisson, op. cit., p. 122.

learned doctors to the court of Juan I, including Moors, Jews, and experts from Paris and Avignon, in an attempt to ameliorate his condition. For a time, Queen Violant renounced her lavish existence while Juan struggled up to a priory in Montserrat to commend himself to the Blessed Virgin.⁶⁸ In view of his fragile health and her renunciation of splendour, reaction to Juan's rule in the wake of Pedro IV's demise in 1387 was relatively conciliatory. Dawn Bratsch-Prince has studied an impressive portion of the massive archive of Violant's correspondence still extant in the Aragon Crown Archives (ACA) and states that: "Joan's [Juan's] illnesses are a constant theme in Violant's missives" and that "Judging from the scope of their [Juan's and Violant's] correspondence, it appears that Joan allowed his wife a substantial role in his government and charged her with his business during his absences. Violant's active participation in political matters was not solely the whim of a weak ruler; rather, it was the likely result of Joan's sickly constitution and frequent illnesses or "accidents"..."⁶⁹

At first, Juan I acted swiftly to establish his claim; he pledged to defend Catalanian franchises and received homages in Barcelona in March 1387. He convoked the great *Corts* at Monzón in November 1388, the first and the last of his personal rule. The urban deputies who participated pressed for such exigent administrative reform that Juan I had to reserve his judgement in order to formulate a careful political response. In the end, Juan I was unable to give a determination and soon found himself in a situation where new uprisings in Sardinia and a threatened incursion into Roussillon by Bernard VII of Armagnac constrained him to loiter in attendance of a *Corts* resolved to reorganize the royal household and reform the judicial system. It would be facile to infer that the defiant stand of the *Corts* was merely a reaction to his father's violent and authoritarian reign. This was not the only motivation for the attitude of the *Corts* as there had already been considerable dissent expressed regarding Juan's devotion to hunting and personal extravagance. Rather than displaying his sovereign anger, which at least would have been a sign of the strength of his resolve, Juan I merely vented his impatience and threatened to dissolve the assembly. This only served to unify the dissatisfied. In the event, his young queen, Violant, put forward compromise proposals on judicial reform and managed to head off political chaos. The impasse dragged on for several months

⁶⁸ Loc. cit.

⁶⁹ Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, *La vida y epistolario de Violant de Bar (1365-1431) duquesa de Gerona y reina de Aragón*, p.9, unpublished translation notes generously made available to us by the author herself.

and by December 1389, all that Juan I had managed to prove was that he had not inherited his father's parliamentary ability.⁷⁰

Juan I's idea of kingship reposed upon his intention to ensure peace and harmony in order that he might be free to pursue his ambition to transform the Aragonese court into a centre of intellectual and cultural refinement, recalling the time of the troubadours of southern France some one hundred and fifty years earlier. He inaugurated a court of unparalleled splendour and refinement never before seen in the annals of his kingdom. Despite his compromised state of health, he adored hunting of every description, frequently being referred to as Juan I the Hunter, in records of his reign. The Cambridge historian H.J. Chaytor attests that Juan I, having no interest in diplomacy, often left the details of government to his queen, Violant, a woman both energetic and authoritarian.⁷¹ Many historians have been unkind in their judgements of Violant's activities as queen-consort, with perhaps the most cutting observations having been made by Rafael Tasis i Marca,⁷² who for the most part seems not to approve of Violant's assertive style while at the same time acknowledging Juan's inability to govern fully in his own name. A striking example of Tasis i Marca's disposition to have a wager each way where Violant is concerned, is his discussion of the crisis at the *Corts* discussed above.⁷³ On the other hand Josep Roca in his biography of Juan I seems to better understand the pressures under which Violant was obliged to labour, as well as her rights to regal authority.⁷⁴

When, in 1387, the Crown of Aragon passed to Juan I and Violant, the court and household they had inherited was prosperous and efficient. This was thanks to the rising tide of commercial prosperity which led to an influx of art and industry from distant

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 123.

⁷¹ Chaytor, Henry John, *A History of Aragon and Catalonia*, London, Methuen, 1933, p. 194.

⁷² Tasis i Marca, Rafael, *Pere el Cerimoniós i els seus fills*, Barcelona, Editorial Vincens Vives, *Història de Catalunya. Biografies Catalanes. Volum 7*, 1980, pp. 154-155, pp. 165-166.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 170-171. Cf. Bratsch-Prince, Dawn's discussion regarding depictions of Violant, specifically touching upon Tasis i Marca, "A Queen's Task: Violant de Bar and the Experience of Royal Motherhood in Fourteenth-Century Aragon", in *La corònica*, Vol. 27, n°1, (1998), p. 24. The earlier work of Jeanne Vielliard on the subject of Violant in particular (though there is a marked tendency to sentimentalism and romanticization of her subject) and more generally the Aragon Crown Archives must be acknowledged: Vielliard, Jeanne, "Yolande de Bar, Reine d'Aragon" in *Revue des Questions Historiques*, Vol. 122, (1935), p. 39-55; Vielliard, Jeanne, "Nouveaux documents sur la culture catalane au Moyen Age", in *Estudis Universitaris Catalans*, Vol. 15, (1930), pp. 21-40; Vielliard, Jeanne & Mirot, L., *Inventaire des lettres des rois d'Aragon à Charles VI et à la cour de France, conservées aux archives de la couronne d'Aragon à Barcelone...Extrait de la Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartres, t. CIII, 1942*, Paris, Nogent-le-Rotrou, 1942.

⁷⁴ Bratsch-Prince, "A Queen's Task...", p. 25, Bratsch-Prince cites Roca, Josep M., *Johan I d'Aragó*, Barcelona, Institució Patxot, 1929, p. 141.

realms and the demanding fastidiousness of Pedro IV's rule. During the reign of Juan I and Violant, the court and household reached an apex of pomp and refinement. As explained above, they also inherited a good deal of dissatisfaction, which they only managed to aggravate with their courtly lifestyle.

Notwithstanding his difficulties with great *Corts* in 1388-89, Juan I was not without diplomacy or leadership qualities. His father had had great plans for trans-Mediterranean hegemony. Juan I had a different sense of Mediterranean symmetry, possibly far more pragmatic in its understanding of the political situation.⁷⁵ Given his French connections, it was perhaps more realistic for him to aspire to an alliance with France, rather than with Castile, particularly when we consider the consequences of his father's actions in Castile. The failure of Bernard d'Armagnac's pretensions to the inheritance of Mallorca was probably due to the fact that it made no more sense to the French than it did to the Catalans. Nevertheless, it must be recorded that Juan I acted decisively by sending his brother Martin in command of a defensive force to head off Armagnac's Gascons, who quietly withdrew. Juan I was also obliged to confront the problem of the Schism from the earliest days of his rule, immersing himself in the counsel of jurists and theologians before pronouncing in favour of the Avignon pontiff Clement VII. He calmed the frontier dispute with Navarre, signing a treaty in 1388 and, most importantly for our study, reconciled his domains with the aspirations of the second House of Anjou in relation to Naples, by negotiating through the pontifical court of Avignon. The settlement was ratified by the betrothal of his daughter, the *infanta* Violant, to Louis II d'Anjou.

In the wake of his father's ruinous conflict with Castile, Juan I did little or nothing to resolve the problems with Castile, nor did he defend Valencia against Granada's intentions. He upheld his father's policy towards Sicily, ensuring that his nephew Martin married Marie of Sicily. Defending her political inheritance was another matter entirely.

One of the deepest concerns of his reign was an outbreak of violence against the Jews. It started in Castile in 1392, progressing to Valencia, with massacres soon after in Mallorca and Barcelona. Jews were generally tolerated by kings, Franciscans, the higher clergy

⁷⁵ See below, p. 160-161 for Yolande and trans-Mediterranean expansionism and above p. 48 for Louis I's projects.

and the aristocracy but there was a divide between the attitude of the highest echelons of society and the lower orders, often massively in debt, destitute and searching for someone to blame for their troubles. Juan I, in common with his predecessors, protected the Jews and drew upon their services as required. From Zaragoza he denounced the slaughter and ordered that Jews everywhere be protected. Here again, Violant of Bar was approached and entered into mediation between the king and his subjects.⁷⁶

Juan I may have endured fragile health and a shaky political climate, but his mind was active. A noted bibliophile, and an avid collector of rare and unusual art, Juan had no contemporary peer save Violant's great-uncle Jean *le Magnifique*, Duke of Berry. The court of Juan I and Violant was one of the most intellectually rich of the period.⁷⁷ Amongst other commissions, the king ordered that translations be made of classical and contemporary works, and it was in this rich intellectual and cultural environment that Yolande d'Aragon grew into the formidable princess she was to become.⁷⁸

In the closing stages of his reign, troubles increased for Juan I. The passing of Clement VII brought about the election of the Aragonese Pedro de Luna in Avignon. He took the name Benedict XIII and although his election was not initially problematic for Juan I, foreign complications soon arose from it. The French were soon looking for a way out, given that an Aragonese noble with connections to the throne of Aragon had replaced the French protégé Clement VII.⁷⁹ The French urged Juan I to comply with their initiative to subtract their obedience from Avignon. Furthermore, Juan I was continually harried by claims of misgovernment, alleging that court favourites were mismanaging castles and royal revenues, with both Barcelona and Valencia believing their franchises

⁷⁶ Cf. Tasis i Marca, op. cit, pp. 181-184, Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, *La vida y espistolario...*, p. 11, Silleras-Fernández, Núria, « Reginalitat a l'Edat Mitjana hispànica: concepte historiogràfic per una realitat històrica, pp. 140-141 & Silleras-Fernández, Núria, "Widowhood and Deception: Ambiguities of Queenship in Late Medieval Crown of Aragon" in Crane, Mark, Raiswell, Richard & Reeves, Margaret, *Shell Games: Studies in Scams, Frauds and Deceits (1300-1650)*, Toronto, Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2004, pp. 188-189.

⁷⁷ Tasis i Marca, op. cit. pp. 174-179.

⁷⁸ For the education and cultural and political pursuits of noble Iberian women and girls cf. Graña Cid, Maria del Mar, *Las Sabias Mujeres: Educacion, Saber y Autoria (Siglios III-XVII)*, Asociación Cultural Al-Mudayna, 1995, particularly a paper focusing upon the library of Yolande's mother Violant, Riquier, Isabelle de, "Los Libros de Violante de Bar", pp. 161-173 where much is made of the fact that as well as being a book owner, Violant loaned and borrowed books to and from members of royal and princely houses including her own in France. This might have contributed to goodwill between the parties and probably kept lines of communication open and relatively amicable during times of difficulty and conflict.

⁷⁹ See above, p. 68 regarding *via cessionis*.

had been undermined. Juan I sank into debt but shied away from confronting the hostile *Corts* for assistance. In May 1396, he fell from his horse and could not be revived. While this version of Juan's passing was accepted at the time, it has recently been questioned, owing to the context in which it occurred. At the time of his unexpected death, the city counsellors of Barcelona had accused certain members of Juan and Violant's households of hiring mercenaries to launch a strike against Catalonia. Their households having been the subject of numerous complaints and allegations throughout their reign, Juan and Violant chose to ignore the protests of Barcelona. As Núria Silleras-Fernández evinces "[the allegations] were irrefutably confirmed on 17th May 1396, when news arrived that these troops were massing near Avignon. With this news, the magnitude of the crisis facing the Crown became dramatically apparent – two days later, Juan was dead. The official story was that he fell from his horse, while pursuing a deer through thick forest during a hunt. There were no witnesses present and the dying king did not receive extreme unction."⁸⁰

Few of Juan I's contemporaries appear to have had much sympathy for his leanings to art and refinement; he was often accused of living an idle and carefree life, leaving the business of government to his women.

Notwithstanding such judgements, Juan's character emerges with clarity from his voluminous correspondence, much of it addressed to his queen. Violant appears to have shared his passions and preoccupations, including his mania for hunting. Though his early political career as his father's lieutenant-general was full and proactive, his personal reign was largely reactive. He seemed not to be aware, or did not care, that change was in the air, particularly in relation to the *Corts*, which had formulated a new conception of public order and the sovereign's authority and duty. He was too devoted to the royal estate and his cultural pursuits to grasp the incompatibility of his lifestyle and the new aspirations of his subjects. He lost touch and became vulnerable because he frequently mistook criticism for disloyalty.

⁸⁰ Silleras-Fernández, Núria, « Widowhood and Deception... » pp. 189-190. She cites Martí de Riquer as proposing an alternative version of Juan's death, Riquer, Martí de, *Historia de la literatura catalana*, Vol. 2, Barcelona, Ariel, 1964, p. 398.

Bisson explains that during the proscription in the wake of Juan's death, his secretary Bernat Metge was gaoled along with others loyal to the late king.⁸¹ Metge's opus, *Lo Somni* written in 1399 during his incarceration is both a work of literary art and a masterly political defence of the author's loyalty to the late king rendered in allegorical style. It not only emphasizes Juan's culture but also his humanity.

Juan had inherited a problematic federation of domains and dependencies from Pedro IV. His ambition and rule was not that of his father. Juan I resolved to secure the Pyreneean frontiers of his realm, and appears to have ignored the rest of his domains. In this, it might be asserted⁸² that he never outgrew his duchy of Gerona, having failed to understand the real problems of his realm, rising above the ordinary only in his love for culture and erudition.

Violant, the dowager queen, was reluctant to cede her authority upon the sudden death of Juan I. It is recorded that she insisted she was pregnant for some time after his death.⁸³ Her sister-in-law, María de Luna, was confronted with the dilemma of a dowager queen refusing to hand over authority to a new monarch. Juan I's successor, Martin I (Martin II of Sicily), was delayed in Sicily where he had governed on behalf of his brother Juan I. He could not leave the island until he had handed over its government to his son, Martin III. Violant eventually stood aside.⁸⁴ She was to live through the reigns of Martin I, the Humane, Ferdinand the Just and Alfonse V. She would witness and from time-to-time intervene in the bitter rivalry between Alfonse V and her grandson Louis III of Anjou in the struggle for Naples-Sicily⁸⁵. She died in 1431.

Martin I was king at the time of Yolande d'Aragon's marriage to Louis II of Anjou in 1400. Unlike his brother, he proved more responsive to the changing climate of his rule. Like his brother, his health was unreliable and like his brother, he was fortunate in his choice of consort, María de Luna being capable, energetic, and able to deal with persisting factional disputes. He was more quietly pious than his brother or father,

⁸¹ Bisson op. cit., p. 122

⁸² As Bisson does, loc. cit.

⁸³ Silleras-Fernández, Núria, "Widowhood and Deception...", pp. 190-194, cf. Zurita, op. cit., t. IV, X.lvi, pp. 791-794 & X. lvii, pp. 796-797.

⁸⁴ See Appendix 1, n. 16

⁸⁵ For her correspondence regarding Louis III see Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, *La vida y epistolario de Violant de Bar...*(unpublished translation notes), pp. 17-18.

deeply devoted to the teachings of Vincent Ferrer⁸⁶ and an avowed defender of churches as well as of the pope. Bisson cautions us not to regard Martin I merely as a crowned monk. He was far more complex in his devotion, his piety having a political and humanist edge, enabling him like few before him to inspire his people. He understood how to honour specific groups of subjects without alienating the others. His political successes were diluted by the need to balance baronial and oligarchic privilege. Bisson concludes his appreciation with the comment that Martin I's worst failure was to die the last of his dynastic line.⁸⁷

As well as being beautiful, refined and gracious, Yolande d'Aragon grew to maturity in the rich intellectual, spiritual and cultural refinement of her parents' and her uncle's courts. Her mother Violant was politically active, having had a strong hand in the government of the kingdom of Aragon, while her father might have been more content to occupy himself with cultural and sporting pursuits. Her uncle, Martin I, was perhaps a more impressive king than her father had been, but he too had to rely upon the talents and energy of his consort María de Luna due to his absences and ill health.

Yolande d'Aragon did not leave her native Spain until she was almost twenty, quite a mature age for a princess of her time. Not only would she have absorbed valuable lessons from her mother Violant, she would have had more than adequate time to observe her aunt María de Luna's model of queenship, perhaps reading or hearing stories of her paternal grandmother, Elionor of Sicily,⁸⁸ a woman who seems to have greatly influenced the comportment of María de Luna.⁸⁹ Elionor and María were both key players in the governments of their respective husbands and had managed to escape

⁸⁶ Violant's confessor, see Appendix 1, n. 17.

⁸⁷ Bisson, op. cit. pp. 139-140. See below for succession dispute, pp. 159-161.

⁸⁸ Yolande d'Aragon's grandfather Pedro IV commissioned a chronicle of his life (for some time, Pedro himself was mistakenly thought to be the actual chronicler due to the existence of an alleged autograph copy of the manuscript) recorded by his trusted secretary, Bernart Dezcoll, who worked closely with Pedro on the project and under his detailed instructions and revisions. Elionor and her activities are included in this work and it is perhaps reasonable to suggest that the young Yolande would have had access to this documented "life" of her grandfather and indeed her grandmother Elionor. Cf. Dezcoll, Bernart, *Chronique catalane de Pierre IV d'Aragon, III de Catalogne, dit le Ceremonieux ou del Punyalet (par Bernart Dezcoll) édité par Amédée Pagès*, Toulouse, E. Privat, Paris, H. Didier, 1942. For Elionor of Sicily, *terca muller del rey Pere IV d'Aragó*, consult pages 285,317,319,360-361,377,399,403-404 & 406. Yolande d'Aragon and Violant of Bar are both mentioned on p. 405 in an appendix to the chronicle: "Yolant [Violant of Bar], de la qual procrea molt fills, mas no li .n visqué sinó una filla appellada Yolant."

⁸⁹ Silleras-Fernández, Núria, "Spirit and Force: Politics, Public and Private in the Reign of Maria de Luna (1396-1406)", in Earenfight, Theresa, *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, p. 80.

strident criticism, unlike Violant, who might have been less diplomatic in her dealings.⁹⁰ As our examination of Yolande d'Aragon progresses, we will come to understand that Yolande managed to synthesize the examples of all three kinswomen to great effect and in the end create her own individual model of non-regnant queenship.

By the time of her marriage, Yolande d'Aragon had had much exposure to the business of government and the phenomenon of reluctant or absent kings, unable or disinclined to involve themselves in the larger political issues of their rule. Ill or incapable, they needed the involvement of their queens in order to reign effectively. Yolande had been well primed for the next phase of her life.

⁹⁰ The researcher acknowledges her gratitude for correspondence with and access to recent research from Núria Silleras-Fernández of the University of California, Santa Cruz on the subject of María de Luna and her possible links with her niece Yolande as well as extended contact with Professor Dawn Bratsch-Prince of the University of Iowa on matters pertaining to Yolande d'Aragon's mother, Violant of Bar.

**CHAPTER 4: MALAISE AU PALAIS:
AN ALIENATED KINGDOM, A MONARCHY UNDER SIEGE**

« *La histoire fait foi que les maux de toute sorte viennent souvent frapper les grands de la terre...il [Charles VI] commença ...à se livrer à des extravagances tout-à-fait indignes de la majesté royale.* »¹

In the previous chapter we observed that Yolande d’Aragon had been well primed for her rôle of consort to the young king of Jerusalem-Naples, Louis II d’Anjou. What she might not have been prepared for was the phenomenon of an intermittently mad sovereign ruler. In this chapter we will discuss the ways in which the “absences” of Charles VI of France both opened doors to power for the House of Anjou and complicated its multi-layered aspirations for actual sovereignty over Naples-Sicily. We have learned that her marriage to Louis II d’Anjou had been long in the planning and that it represented an important political coup for the Angevins. We will now pause briefly to examine an account of the marriage itself, emphasizing its importance to future Angevin enterprise.

First and foremost we will turn our attention to the account of contemporary and probable eye-witness Bertran Boysset,² who describes Yolande d’Aragon’s crowning and reception in Arles at the Cathedral of Saint-Trophime on 1st December 1400, followed by her marriage ceremony the next day:

“La reyna intra en Arles [fol.35v.]

L’an M IIIIc lo jorn permier de desembre, [fol.36] la regina davant dicha intret en la sicutat d’Arle e fon reseupuda en gran honor e intret per lo portal de la cavalaria.

¹ *Religieux*, vol. I, l. xiv, ch. V, p. 87.

² Bertran Boysset was a master surveyor based in Arles who from about 1392 onwards jotted down not only his financial accounts and professional dealings but also business touching upon his family’s business, properties and daily lives and more importantly anything of interest that occurred in Arles and indeed in greater Provence and beyond. He also recalls important events that came to pass during his youth such as the coronation of Charles VI, a time before he started to keep a journal, as well as the enthronements of successive popes and anti-popes etc. Cf. Novati, F., “ Le Livre de Raisons de B. Boysset d’après le Ms. Des Trinitaires d’Arles actuellement conservé à Gênes » in *Romania*, t. XXI, 1892 , Geneva, Slatkin Reprints, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1974, pp. 528-556.

Item davant que la reyna intres en Arle la sicutat, la regina deisendit d'un mul que cavalcava e si retrac en una maison que a deforas la vila et acqui las damairelas l'adoberon mot honerablement.

Item quant fon parada et encoronada coma regina, lo prinse de Taranta [Charles] frayre del rey Lois, el conte de Pradas del regne d'Aragon e parent de la dicha regina novela, la preron cascun per una man e l'ameneron tot a pe fayre la revevensia a las relquias que li avien aportadas deforas la sicutat an mot granda prosesion e i fon perfar l'ufici l'avesque de Marselha, revestit coma avesque, laqual si fay apeler per son mons. Guilhem lo Tort.

Item facha que le regina ac reverensia a las santas relegias lo prince et loc conte devant dig la retorneron areire justa l'ostal on l'abien parada, et aqui la monteron sus corsier parat mot noblamens e s'en intreron en la sicutat d'Arle an mot granda honor. Lo pobol que i fon era ses nombre.

[fol. 36v.] *Item tantost con fon montada sus son corsier li son mes desus la testa I bel pali drap d'aur, laqual pali era parat al biron de las armas del rey Lois e de la reina novela, e de las armas de la sicutat d'Arle, quar Arle lo davant dig pali avie pagat e lo doneron a la regina novela...*

[fol.37] *Item la regina novela quant vi sa suogra madama regina la vielha, li fes mot granda revevencia, e madama la regina vielha la reseup an mot granda honor e vay si abrasar e baisar e aprep fes mot bel aculhement a totz aqual que an la regina novela eran vengutz.*

[...] de lad. Reina

L'an MIIIIc lo jorn segon de desembre lo rey Lois esposet madama Violant sa molher [fol.37v.] la regina novela, en l'agleisa de sant Trofeme d'Arle, e los donet lo cardenal d'Albana, lo camarlenc del papa present, e motos avesques e prelatz e contes e grans senhos presens aqui foron.»³

Boysset continues his description with details regarding the *festas* that continued for some thirteen days, highlighting the mass of important personages from all three estates who attended and the sumptuous gifts they presented to the *regina novela madama Violant*. The extracts cited above give us a very clear impression of the importance of stage-managed ritual to this long anticipated event: Yolande arrived on a mule, wearing the crown of a queen, to pay homage to holy relics presented to her by the Bishop of Marseille. Perhaps these might have been the relics of Saint Louis of Anjou,⁴ or more

³ BNF, Ms. Fr. 5728, ff 35-37.

⁴ His relics were housed at that time in the Church of the Cordeliers, Marseille. When Alfonse V (III of Valencia) King of Aragon sacked Marseille in 1423, he removed the relics to the Cathedral of Valence. Cf. Bonnot, Isabelle, (ed. & dir.), *Marseille et ses Rois de Naples. La diagonale angevine 1265-1382*, Aix-en-Provence, Edisud, 1988, particularly the documents section, *Marseille-Naples : la diagonale de l'histoire*, « Une ville et ses rois : Marseille se construit (1292-1342), *Saint-Louis d'Anjou* », pp. 130-133 & « Un culte royale : Saint-Louis d'Anjou (1382-1362), pp. 134-138 & Klaniczay, Gábor, « La noblesse et le culte des saints dynastiques sous les rois angevins », in Coulet, Noël & Matz,

probably those of Saint-Trophime; Boysset is silent on this subject. She was accompanied by Louis II's brother Charles, the Duke of Calabria, or in Boysset's words, the Prince of Tarente, and her uncle Martin's envoy James, Count of Prades (later Constable of Aragon and trusted ambassador-at-large in the service of Martin I). Having paid her spiritual homage, Yolande left the cathedral mounted on a charger, the humble mule having been discarded in favour of a nobler steed, beneath a golden canopy embellished with the royal arms of Jerusalem-Naples and those of the duchy of Anjou as well as the royal arms of Aragon and the arms of the city of Arles. She was greeted with more choreographed ceremony at the newly refurbished royal palace at Tarascon by her mother-in-law Marie of Brittany, the *regina la viellha*, to whom Yolande accorded full reverence and who in turn embraced her warmly and ostentatiously, thereby according her great honour in return. After the *festas*, James of Prades took his leave from young King Louis II of Jerusalem-Naples to visit the pope in Avignon and Charles VI in "France".

Two other detailed chronicles describe the events surrounding the marriage of Louis II d'Anjou to Yolande d'Aragon. One is contained in the *Histoire de Provence par messire Jean-François de Gaufridi* and the other in the *Hystoire agrégative des annalles et croniques d'Anjou recueillies et mises en forme par le noble et discret messire Jehan de Bourdigné*.⁵

Jean-Michel (eds.), *La noblesse dans les territoires angevins à la fin du Moyen Âge . Actes du colloque international organisé par l'Université d'Angers, Angers-Saumur, 3-6 juin, 1998*, Rome, Ecole Française de Rome, 2000, pp.511-526.

⁵ The BNF catalogue biographical description gives no date of birth or death for Gaufridi, but it might be possible that Gaufridi worked with a copy of Boysset at hand. Paul Meyer states that a copy of Boysset's manuscript belonged first to a Gaufridi (he believes this to be Jacques de Gaufridi, died 1684, *président au parlement d'Aix* or possibly to his son Jean-François de Gaufridi [our chronicler] and that it later moved into the possession of the *Président de Mazaugues*. Meyer gives the date of death of Gaufridi as 1689. Meyer, Paul, "Les manuscrits de Bertran Boysset", in *Romania*, t. XXI, 1892, Geneva, Slatkin Reprints, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1974, p. 573 (& pp. 557-580). Cf. Meyer, Paul, "Les manuscrits de Bertran Boysset (Fin)" in *Romania*, t. XXII, 1893, Paris, Emile Bouillon, pp. 87-126. Multiple copies of the Gaufridi history are held by the BNF with a publication date of 1694. As for Jean de Bourdigné, the BNF record states that he was born in the fifteenth century (no exact date is given) and that he died on or around 19th April 1547. The catalogue information given by the BNF states that the publishing date of the chronicle was 1529. BNF Notice Numéro: FRBNF 12511985). This is the edition consulted. Gaufridi, Jean-François de, *Histoire de Provence, par messire Jean-François de Gaufridi*, Aix, Imprimerie de feu C. David, 1694, 2 vols., Boudigné, Jean de, *Hystoire agrégative des annalles et croniques d'Anjou contenant le commencement et origine avecques partie de chevalerisieux et marciaux gestes des magnagnimes princes consulz-contes et ducz d'Anjou : et pareilsment plusieurs faictz dignes de mémoire advenez tant en France, Italie, Espagne, Angleterre, Hierusalem et autres royaulmes tant chrestiens que sarrazins depuis le temps du déluge jusques à présent tres breffe proffitable et recreative a tous nobles et verteux espritz/ recueillies et mises en forme par noble et discret messire Jehan de Bourdigne...*, Paris, A. Couteau, 1529.

Given the time gap between the Gaufridi and Bourdigné chronicles and the events they describe, we must mention both accounts “*cum grano salis*”. Notwithstanding this, they are of interest as they emphasize the importance, even well after the event, of this Angevin-Aragonese alliance. As we have discussed, there had been a great deal of lengthy negotiation leading to the ceremony held in Arles on 2nd December 1400, an event charged with political significance.

The wedding was an occasion for much rejoicing between the Angevin princes and their subjects. According to all three chroniclers, dignity, harmony and joy were the order of the day, with Reynaud making the point that Louis II was never to find himself in such trouble-free and sympathetic circumstances again.⁶

⁶ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 36. The issue of Yolande’s dowry seems (above p. 74), however, to have remained unresolved. There are no documents extant relative to this question but a later official act dated 4th August 1417, some four months after the death of Louis II, would seem to clarify the question of the dowry. The Cardinal of Saint-Marc, Guy de Laval, and Nicolas Perregaut were sent by Yolande d’Aragon as ambassadors to the court of the *infante* of Castile, later King of Aragon, Alfonse V. Their objective was to demand partial restitution of the still outstanding dower pledge of 160,000 Aragonese florins and to guarantee the fulfilment to make good the promise made to the defunct Louis II to pay an additional 150,000 florins. Zurita records the renunciation and the first of the concessions made as compensation : “*Quién fue don Jaime de Prades; y cómo le envió el rey la empresa de la Correa; y qué renunciación hizl la reina doña Violante antes de la partirse, y el dote que se le dio. [...] Pero antes que la reina doña Violante partiese de Barcelona hizo reconocimiento al rey en que renunciaba en su favor qualquiere pretensión y derecho que le podía pertenecer por razón de las sustituciones y sucesiones y derechos de legitima y legados de los testamentos del rey don Juan su padre y de los otros reyes, o por cualesquiere donaciones o por otra qualquiere causa en que tuviese derecho y acción a los reinos de Aragón, Valencia, Mallorca, Cerdeña y Córcega y en los condados de Rosellón y Cerdania y en otros bienes. Esto se ortorgó en Barcelona a 12 del mes de octubre desto año, con voluntad y consentimiento de la reina doña Violante su madre; y diéronsele en doto ciento y sesenta mil florines.*” Op. cit, t. IV, x, lxxii, p. 858.

Reynaud suggests that the later pledge of payment directly to Louis II may have been designed as an *ex gratia* recompense for the ceding of Yolande’s (and her descendants’) rights of succession over the Aragonese throne: the Catalan dynasty of Aragon having died out with the passing of Yolande’s uncle Martin I (*Le Temps des Princes*, loc.cit.). The dower portion of the sum in question seems to have agreed with the exigences of Charles VI at the time of the matrimonial negotiations as well as an *ex gratia* compensation pay out for Yolande’s renunciation of her place in the Aragonese line of succession (see above, p. 74), but it seems that only a small portion of this sum had been forthcoming by the time of Louis II’s death. This might indicate that with the financial settlement still unpaid, Yolande still held rights over the throne of Aragon in 1417. If we add to this observation the existence of a letter written by Louis XI (Yolande’s grandson), for his mother the Queen of France, Marie of Anjou (Yolande’s daughter), while still dauphin on 31st March 1447 (Yolande having died in November 1442) requesting the recovery of «... *certaines terres, seigneuries et paiement de certaines sommes de deniers qui luy appartiennent és roiaumes d’Arragon, Valence, Cathaloigne et autres seigneuries de très hault et puissant prince nostre très chier et très amé cousin le roy d’Arragon tant par droit de succession que à cause de certain transport à elle fait par feue nostre très chiere mere et ayeule Yolant, royne de Secile, sa mere, que Dieu assoille ...*». [*Lettres de Louis XI, Roi de France*, Publiées d’après les originaux pour la Société de l’Histoire de France, Vaeson, Joseph et Charavay, Etienne, Tome X-Lettres de Louis XI 1482-1483 et Supplément J. Vaeson et de Mandrot, B., Paris, Librairie Renouard, 1908] it seems that Yolande’s position at the time of her death was that her October 1400 renunciation was null and void due to non-payment of the agreed sum of compensation. This is borne out by the fact that she signed over her Spanish territories to her daughter Marie before her death. (Cf. *Lettres de Louis XI...* loc. cit.)

To understand the political turmoil waiting in the wings of the destinies of the two newlyweds, we should assess the political and ecclesiastical realities facing France from the time of Yolande d'Aragon's marriage to Louis II d'Anjou in 1400 to the time of the latter's death in 1417. Louis's activities will be studied in the context of these realities and we will attempt to ascertain the degree to which Yolande might have acted independently to ensure the success of the family enterprise.

In 1399, Henry of Lancaster seized the throne of England and proclaimed himself Henry IV. He deposed his cousin, Richard II, and threw him into prison where he was later murdered, the first casualty of the gathering storm between the houses of York and Lancaster.⁷ Henry IV's son Henry of Monmouth, later Henry V, would cause much harm to the interests of France upon his ascent to the throne of England in 1413.

In France misfortunes had been multiplying. Previous chapters have highlighted that Jean, Duke of Berry and Phillip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, the uncles of the French king Charles VI, had been jockeying for political ascendancy over the young king's senior uncle and regent, Louis I d'Anjou. Upon the death of the regent in 1384, conflict between the remaining uncles only intensified, with Phillip of Burgundy becoming ever more powerful. Burgundy's policies and love of ostentation sucked the royal treasury dry, leading to popular uprisings in both France and Flanders. By 1388, the twenty-year old Charles VI had managed to sideline the pair, and hopes were high for a brilliant reign that would fill the void left by the death of his father. He recalled the trusted circle of advisors (known by their detractors as the *Marmousets*) bequeathed to him by his father and made his younger brother, Louis, Duke of Orleans, one of his closest advisors.

By the summer of 1392, while pursuing the fugitive Pierre de Craon, who had attempted to assassinate the Constable of France, Olivier de Clisson,⁸ Charles VI had suffered the

⁷ See above, pp. 75-76 regarding mooted marriage negotiations between Aragon and England.

⁸ See above, p. 47, and p. 48, note 27 regarding Pierre de Craon's earlier dealings with the Valois-Angevins during Louis I d'Anjou's Neapolitan campaign. As described earlier, Froissart chronicles a charge brought against Pierre de Craon by Marie of Brittany, a woman he describes as being "*une dame de moult grant dilligence*" in chapter 49, book iv, pp. 540-544, headed "De la sentence et arrest de parlement qui fut prononchié pour la roinne de Napples et de Jherusalem, ducesse d'Anjou, contre Pierre de Craon". The charges sought the restitution of territories and the re-payment 100,000 francs. Froissart tells of the hunt for Pierre de Craon and Charles VI's first episode of madness in chapter

first bout of the madness that would plague him and his kingdom for the entirety of his reign. His insanity was recurrent and intense, forcing him to absent himself from government for extended periods during his long reign. This was the perfect opportunity for Phillip of Burgundy (who had returned to his duchies in 1388 when Charles began his personal rule) to re-enter active political life at court and once again claim dominion over Charles VI's subjects and possessions. Nevertheless, he now had to reckon with an active challenger to his power base: the king's younger brother, the bellicose and equally ambitious Louis d'Orléans. Initially, the charismatic and attractive Louis was popular and became the chief impediment to Burgundy's aspirations. With the death of Phillip in 1404, his son Jean, Duke of Nevers, known as the Fearless, succeeded to the title and continued the quarrel his father had initiated with the Duke of Orleans.

Jean of Burgundy soon ingratiated himself with the king's subjects by styling himself as an advocate for administrative reform. His dispute with Louis d'Orléans eventually degenerated into an open struggle for ascendancy over Charles VI, his subjects and the royal treasury. Louis's initial favour foundered because of his perceived extravagance, and after much unresolved conflict the Duke of Burgundy seized the initiative by having Louis murdered in 1407.⁹ Shocked by his actions, and fearing reprisals, his cousin Louis II d'Anjou and his aging uncle Berry forced Burgundy to vacate his seat on the royal council and leave Paris. Nevertheless, he was too powerful and too ambitious to stay away from court indefinitely. Burgundy formulated a long *apologia*, delivered by his partisan theologian Jean Petit, defending his actions in arranging the assassination of the king's brother, justifying it on the grounds that Louis d'Orléans had been a tyrant and a heretic and that by arranging his removal Burgundy had performed a public service. Sensing the danger of civil disturbance, Charles VI and his council accepted the argument in spite of the voices of protest raised against it. The reality of the situation was that the king was more often than not "absent" and, on those occasions when he was in possession of his wits, was too easily manipulated by the presence of the all-powerful Burgundy and his allies. Alliances were not clearly defined and were in any

46, book iv, pp. 524-525. Froissart, Jean, *Chroniques. Livres III et IV*, Ainsworth, Peter & Varvano, Alberto, (eds.), Paris, Librairie Générale Française, 2004.

⁹ For a detailed analysis of the implications and circumstances of this assassination and the one which followed it in 1419, see Guenée, Bernard, *Un Meurtre, une société, l'assassinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407*, Paris, Gallimard, 1992.

case often mutable. Louis II d'Anjou typified this, having concerns of his own to address in Provence, Anjou-Maine and in his titular kingdom of Naples, his great rival Ladislaus of Duras, the King of Naples by right of possession, occupying Rome and forcing Pope Gregory XII to surrender the city to him.

Rivalry continued between Burgundy and the supporters of the Orleanist party¹⁰ now headed by the young Duke of Orleans, Charles, who had succeeded his murdered father. After a short-lived truce between the two factions in 1410, by 1411 the conflict had degenerated into open civil war, only adding to the problems of a France already burdened by a frequently deranged monarch and the continuing struggle against the English. Charles d'Orléans's intemperate and martial father-in-law, Bernard VII of Armagnac, gained prominence within the faction after the marriage of his daughter Bonne to Charles in 1410. In November 1411, the Armagnacs tried to take Paris but were defeated at St-Cloud by Burgundy with the aid of English mercenaries. Henry IV of England was only too ready to consider alliances with either side in the civil conflict to further his own political ends and by May 1412 had formed an alliance with the Armagnacs. In August of the same year the Armagnacs called a truce with the Burgundians. This did not prove durable and by the end of January 1413 the Estates for northern France refused to grant taxes, demanding instead governmental reforms. The call for reform spread southwards and the opportunistic Duke of Burgundy, reborn as the standard-bearer for governmental and political reform, allied himself with the butchers and guildsmen of Paris.

Following Estates convoked on 28th April 1413, the Cabochians, a popular faction composed largely of small trades-people and members of the butchers' and skimmers' guilds opposed to ruinous government fiscal practices and court extravagance, led by Simon Lecoustellier, known as Caboché, rioted in Paris and seized the Bastille. They had the undeclared support of the powerful Duke of Burgundy as well as that of adventurers and opportunists such as Elyon de Jacquerville and members of the University of Paris such as Pierre de Cauchon¹¹ and merchants such as Jean de Troyes. Caboché whipped the Parisian mob into frenzy and they rebelled, storming the royal residence of the

¹⁰ Later to be known as the Armagnac faction.

¹¹ Pierre de Cauchon features in many important events such as the drafting of the Treaty of Troyes, the Council of Constance and as chief prosecutor (and persecutor) of Joan of Arc at her Rouen Trial of Condemnation.

dauphin and seizing control of the city. On 11th and 12th of May prisoners were taken, including the queen's brother, Louis of Bavaria. A government-sponsored commission had been working on reforms for several months, the objective being to ensure a flow of revenue back to the king's treasury and to prohibit future erosion of royal resources. A royal ordinance dated 25th May 1413, later to be known as the *Ordonnance Cabochienne*, provoked a reign of terror, during which Caboché styled himself bailiff of Paris. At the request of the rebels, Charles VI convened a *lit de justice* in *parlement* on 26th and 27th May, where an incomplete draft of governmental reforms was published. Caboché exerted all his authority to prevent conciliation between the two opposing political factions. The rebels were soon out of control and a simple instinct for self-preservation on the part of the people of Paris, coupled with the king's willingness to negotiate with the Armagnacs, allowed them to rid themselves of the revolutionaries they had originally supported. So completely out of control were the rebels that the University withdrew its support for the radical reform agenda.¹²

Jean Juvénal des Ursins, at that time a rising star in the field of advocacy and gifted speaker in *parlement*,¹³ suggested to Burgundy that he judiciously withdraw his support from the rebels. The Duke refused to surrender the potential advancement afforded by being allied to what he perceived to be the winning side. This was a remarkable decision on the part of Jean sans Peur as the king, the queen, her brother, the dauphin and connections of Burgundy's own family were under siege. Burgundy, avid for power, but lacking the tact and diplomatic skill of his father in dealing with his political enemies, sought to be King of France in all but name. His refusal to agree to Juvénal's proposal was to prove a grave miscalculation: the dauphin was able to free the prisoners by the

¹² Colville, Alfred, *Les Cabochiens et l'ordonnance de 1413*. Paris, Hachette, 1888. Famiglietti, Richard C. *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI 1392-1420*. New York, AMS, 1986.

¹³ He would prove to be one of the most intellectually gifted of all the archbishops of his period, a renowned lawyer and talented diplomat. When the Burgundians sacked Paris and slaughtered the Armagnacs and their sympathizers in 1418, Jean Juvénal des Ursins chose to support the cause of the exiled dauphin, later Charles VII. He would become and remain one of his most trusted advisors. Cf. Desportes, Pierre, *Fastie ecclesiae gallicane: répertoire prosopographie des évêques, dignitaires et chanoines des diocèses de France de 1200 à 1500, Tome III, Diocèse de Reims*, Turnhout, Brepols, 1998 ; Dunbabin, Jean, (reviewer), « Fastie Ecclesiae Gallicane. Répertoire prosopographie des évêques, dignitaires et chanoines des diocèses de France de 1200 à 1500, Tome III, Diocèse de Reims by Pierre Desportes », in *English Historical Review*, vol. 115, n° 460, February 2000, pp. 185-186 ; Lewis, Peter Shervey, « L'Hôtel des Ursins », in *Finances, pouvoirs et mémoires, mélanges offerts à Jean Favier*, Poitiers, Fayard, 1999, pp. 127-135 ; Lewis, Peter Shervey, *Ecrits politiques de Jean Juvénal des Ursins, t. III, la vie et l'œuvre*, Paris, Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1992 ; and a recent re-issue of Abbé Pierre-Louis Péchenard's 1876 doctoral thesis, Péchenard, Pierre-Louis, *Jean Juvénal des Ursins : Historien de Charles VI, évêque de Beauvais et de Laon, archevêque-duc de Reims. Etude sur sa vie et ses œuvres*, Boston, Adament Media Corporation, 2003.

early spring because of the turning of the tide of support outlined above. By 4th August the Armagnacs had regained control of Paris and the retribution had begun. Burgundy could no longer be guaranteed his personal safety, even within the confines of his private residence. At court his peers refused to sanction his participation in government and he was forced to flee the city, fearing reprisals from the dauphin.¹⁴ The reputation he had so meticulously re-established after the assassination of his cousin, Louis d'Orléans, was once again tarnished by his involvement with Caboché's rebels. The Armagnacs were in the ascendancy but the political conflict with their Burgundian cousins continued to plague the kingdom.

By May 1414, a determined Duke of Burgundy had formed a solid yet covert alliance with Henry V of England, with the Armagnacs conducting the defence of France against the aspirations of the English. The civil war in France became the subplot to the increasingly greater conflict with England. The Armagnacs attacked Burgundy in August 1414, and by 23rd February 1415 he had agreed to a truce. In August 1415 Henry V, having assured the acquiescence of Burgundy, seized the opportunity afforded by the continuing civil conflict and made his long anticipated invasion of northern France. In September, Harfleur fell to Henry V. In October 1415, France suffered devastating losses at the battle of Agincourt.

The flower of French nobility was in disarray, its leaders had either been massacred or captured and taken to London to be held for exorbitant ransom, including Charles d'Orléans and Arthur de Richemont. Certain of the impact he had made in the achievement of his objectives, Henry withdrew to England in November 1415, where he would remain until 1st August 1417 when he invaded Normandy. With the head of the Orleanist faction a prisoner in London, leadership fell to his intemperate father-in-law, Bernard of Armagnac.

¹⁴ Famiglietti, op. cit.

The other great event influencing the activities of Louis II d'Anjou and Yolande d'Aragon during the seventeen years of their marriage was the Great Schism of the Western Church.

The Schism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was not of the same order of magnitude as the Eastern Schism that lasted nine centuries, but more a grave misunderstanding, lasting some forty years. It was nourished by the politics and aspirations of its protagonists and was eventually brought to a close by the Councils of Pisa and Constance.

Pope Gregory XI had left Avignon for Rome where he died on 27th March 1378, and all attention was focused upon the nomination of his successor. Since the beginning of the century, the popes had based themselves in Avignon rather than in Rome. The Romans sought a pope of their own or at the very least an Italian pope. The Archbishop of Bari was their favoured choice and he was duly enthroned, taking the name Urban VI.¹⁵ They wrote to the six Avignon cardinals, who recognized their nomination, and later to Emperor Charles IV of Luxembourg and other Catholic sovereigns. Robert of Geneva, later pope Clement VII of Avignon wrote to Charles V of France and to the Count of Flanders. The Aragonese Pedro de Luna, the future Benedict XIII, wrote to the Spanish bishops informing them of the decision of the Sacred College.

Above are introduced most of the protagonists not just of the earliest days of the Schism, but also two personalities who would play important parts in its closing stages. Barely a voice was raised against the election of the Archbishop of Bari as Pope Urban VI. It would seem however that Urban VI soon forgot the promises extracted from him during his nomination and was held to be aloof, distrustful and mercurial in his rapport with the cardinals. The unease and dissatisfaction of the Sacred College worsened and, citing the unhealthy atmosphere of Rome, the cardinals withdrew first to Anagni and later to Fondi under the protection of Joanna I of Naples.¹⁶ The cardinals began a whispering

¹⁵ There were one or two dissenting voices with Cardinal Orsini abstaining from the vote. Cf. Valois, N, op. cit t. II, pp. 42-49.

¹⁶ Joanna had initially supported the election of the Neapolitan Bartolomeo Prignano but soon realized that her best interests would be served by ensuring that Count Robert of Geneva would be elected pope. See above p. 35, for the unwavering support Joanna would receive from Clement VII. Cf. Valois, Noël, *La France et le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, t. I, pp. 29-83, for a detailed discussion

campaign which gradually developed into outright rebellion, forcing a second election. On 20th November 1378, they elected Robert of Geneva as their new pontiff, Clement VII.

Clement VII was related to or allied with many of the great families of Europe. He was a consummate politician, influential and erudite, and the Church found itself divided into two equally determined factions. Not only were the lay faithful confused but also the great ecclesiastical players (later saints) of the age. Catherine of Siena, Catherine of Sweden, Peter of Aragon, Ursulina of Parma, Philippe d'Alençon and Gerard de Groote allied themselves with Urban VI while Vincent Ferrer, Peter of Luxembourg and Colette of Corbie stood firm behind the pontificate of Clement VII. The University of Paris, including Jean Gerson, supported Clement VII while German theologians and scholars championed Urban VI. The majority of Italian and German states and England and Flanders held for the Roman pope while France, Spain, Scotland and states neighbouring France backed Avignon. Charles V of France suggested to the cardinals that they convoke a general council, an idea they rejected: the popes then set about excommunicating one another. They created new cardinals to fill gaps within their ranks and sent them out into the community of the faithful to defend their respective rights and to influence and win adherents. While this situation unfolded, Boniface IX succeeded Urban VI, and Benedict XIII was elected to the throne of Avignon left vacant by the death of Clement VII.

The arrival of Benedict XIII was met with a cooling of attitude towards Avignon by Charles VI and his uncles, the French subtracting their obedience from Benedict in 1398.¹⁷ Geoffrey of Boucicaut then besieged Avignon with limited success. The siege was lifted in 1403 but Benedict was no more conciliatory than he had been previously. Innocent VII replaced Boniface IX in Rome, and was succeeded two years later by Gregory XII. Gregory was not up to the task and a council assembled at Pisa elected a third pope in 1409. Finally, the Council of Constance ousted the chary John XXIII, gratefully accepted the abdication of the gentle and self-effacing Gregory XII, and

regarding the election of Urban VI, Joanna I Naples and the repercussions of the determination of the Sacred College to elect an Italian pope.

¹⁷ See above p. 68, regarding the French Crown's policy of *via cessionis*.

deposed the intractable Benedict XIII.¹⁸ On 11th November 1417, Odo of Colonna was elected by the council. He took the name Martin V.¹⁹

The unity of the Church had never been fully appreciated until it had been lost. Like the government of France during the reign of Charles VI, the Church had no head precisely because it had so many aspiring to leadership. The bicephalous and sometimes tricephalous nature of the Church and the Kingdom of France weakened the structure of both institutions and allowed stronger more unified forces to draw advantage from their respective circumstances, sometimes simultaneously. The protagonists of both predicaments were unable to emerge from the conflict exactly because they were unable to unify disinterestedly and bring about an enduring solution. The central players of the present study were likewise embroiled until the decision to act in the best interests of the Church and State was taken. This outcome could not eventuate until key players came to the realization that the best interests of both structures would also benefit the personal fortunes of the individuals concerned. It will be argued that this was precisely the motivation of Louis II and more particularly of his wife Yolande d' Aragon.

The early part of the Angevin-Aragonese marriage was preoccupied with the consolidation of their holdings and the re-establishment of alliances with the Church and the Crown in the wake of Louis's spectacular defeat in Naples in 1399. As discussed above, immediately post-defeat Louis II sent his cousin Jacques II, Count of la Marche, from the junior branch of the Bourbons, to secure and consolidate what he could for Angevin interests in Italy, planning for the day when Louis II could himself attempt another sally to regain his kingdom.²⁰ Once back in Provence and France, Louis had to deal with the negative effects arising from his mother's subtraction of obedience from the Avignon papacy in 1398.

¹⁸ The current Catholic hierarchy does not acknowledge the last two Avignonese pontiffs, Clement VII or Benedict XIII, or the schismatic popes, Alexander V and John XXIII. This is why when the next pope to take the name of John was enthroned (in the twentieth century) he was known as John XXIII.

¹⁹ Farley, John, Cardinal Archbishop of New York, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, v. XIII, New York, Robert Appleton Company, 1912. See below for Yolande's embassies to Constance in 1417.

²⁰ Jacques de Bourbon would in the end betray the interests of Louis II by marrying Ladislaus's sister, Joanna II and styling himself King of Naples rather than Prince of Tarente, the legitimate title carried by the consort of the Queen of Naples.

The ordinance established by Marie of Brittany in Louis's name was based upon the decree first formulated by his cousin Charles VI. She published it at Tarascon on 30th November 1398, when she declared that she had followed the example of the King of France, and exhorted her cardinals to respect the decree.²¹ She had apparently been threatened with the displeasure of the Crown by Robert Cordelier and Tristan du Bos should she choose not to subtract her obedience from Avignon.²² The Provençaux for their part seem spontaneously to have restored their obedience to Avignon around May 1401. The atmosphere in Provence became once again troubled and the situation confused, with the various sides seeking to stake their respective claims. At roughly the same time there seems to have been a tentative *rapprochement* between the Dukes of Orleans and Burgundy, one having earlier taken up the cause of Avignon and the other of Rome. What is clear, however, was that Provence sought to re-establish its support for the Avignon pontiff, the Provençaux Estates approaching Louis II with a plea for restitution on 25th April 1401.²³ It should be borne in mind that the vote instigated by the Council of Paris in 1398 was supposed to have ended the Schism by a simultaneous abdication of both popes, precipitated by a subtraction of obedience. In their request to Louis II, his Estates pointed out that this action had failed as neither pontiff had stood aside, and that much negative fallout had occurred in the wake of the 1398 initiative.²⁴

From the time of his return from Italy to Provence, Louis II had consciously adopted an inscrutable air of neutrality on the issue of the 1398 ordinance. Though absent in Italy at the time of its implementation, his silence on the issue associated him with his mother's actions, and supporters of the Avignon papacy read in his defeat a judgement from above. The treachery of his great ally, San Severino, the loss of the Tarente (his younger brother's inheritance), the conquest of his kingdom by his great enemy Ladislas of Duras, all came together for some as chastisement from God. Aragon and Avignon offered their assistance, yet Louis II remained steadfastly non committal. Nevertheless,

²¹ Valois, op. cit. t. III, p. 238, Cf. Hébert, Michel, (ed.), *Regeste des Etats de Provence 1347-1480*, Paris, Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 2007, p. 171 and his citation of Reynaud, Marcelle-Renée, « La politique de la Maison d'Anjou et la soustraction d'obédience en Provence », in *Cahiers d'Histoire*, v. 24, (1979), pp. 45-57.

²² Valois, op. cit, loc. cit., n. 4 for Valois's reasoning on this point.

²³ Gouiran, Gérard, & Hébert, Michel, (eds.), *Le Livre de « Potentia » des états de Provence 1391-1523*, Paris, Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, 1997, p. 209, 22, 27a, XXII, Hébert, *Regeste...*, p. 178.

²⁴ Valois, op. cit., p. 239, note 1.

his marriage to Yolande d'Aragon and the position of Provence must in the end have inclined him to support Benedict XIII.

By September 1401, he needed to inform Avignon of his intention to grant the plea made to him by the Estates. He sent his younger brother Charles to Benedict²⁵ in November 1401 to smooth the way for a restitution of obedience to Avignon. Louis II visited the Palace of the Popes on 27th August 1402, staying overnight. He then offered his services, paid homage and was once again invested with the Crown of Naples-Sicily.²⁶ However, as Valois explains, this *rapprochement* was not untainted, but rather had been preceded by much unedifying haggling, reminiscent of Louis's father, Louis I. In addition, post-subtraction, neither Marie of Brittany nor Louis had forborne to take possession of various papal holdings and use them to their profit. Louis even went so far as to dare to ask for repayment of sums loaned by his father to both Gregory IX and Clement VII, requesting some 100,000 francs from Benedict XIII. This was in spite of the fact that the papacy had already given him, at the very least, five times that sum to fund his Italian adventures, without specifying what the payments had represented. The bargaining continued right up until the day before Louis's arrival in Avignon. He would receive 8,000 gold francs immediately, with another 12,000 to follow before April.²⁷

Once news of the restitution had reached Paris, Burgundy and Berry did not hesitate to make their chagrin known. Phillip of Burgundy dispatched two eminent messengers to an assembly of the people of Avignon declaring that the King of Sicily had behaved with unconscionable levity and that his example would not be followed either by the King of France or the King of Castile. Louis II countered by instructing a counsellor to respond that he had acted in good faith, having awaited the attention of Charles VI for some eighteen months *a propos* the matter.²⁸ Whatever the case, the actions of Louis II had left the way open for his younger royal cousin, Louis d'Orléans, to work to re-establish the Crown's obedience to Avignon. Louis II's mother, Marie of Brittany, doubtless found herself in difficult circumstances. Her son had restored allegiance to Avignon, nullifying her previous stand, and in so doing had called into question the position of the French

²⁵ Cf. the recent publication cited above, under the editorship of Michel Hébert for details of this strategy, Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...* particularly pp. 174-179.

²⁶ Valois, *op. cit.* p. 273.

²⁷ *Loc. cit.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 274, note 1.

Crown.²⁹ His motivation was certainly multi-layered: he needed the financial and ecclesiastical support of Avignon were he to achieve his goal of conquest in Italy; his subjects in Provence favoured the resident pontiff, and the incumbent pope in Avignon was a close relative of María de Luna, Queen of Aragon and consort of Yolande's uncle Martin I. Louis II might well also have believed that, given Charles VI's incapacity to rule independently by reason of mental instability, his younger brother Louis d'Orléans, who favoured Benedict, would increasingly find himself in the ascendancy. After all, the uncles Berry and Burgundy were getting on in years and could not live forever. Taken as a whole, perhaps these circumstances informed an expedient restoration of obedience to Avignon.

Any alliance with Louis d'Orléans would have been a delicate proposition for Louis II d'Anjou. Both princes had Italian interests which they sought to exploit to their own advantage, and these interests were not always complementary. In marrying Valentine Visconti, Louis d'Orléans came into possession of Asti. This ambitious junior royal had cast his eye more than once over the southern kingdom of Naples, inherited by Louis II from Louis I.³⁰ Louis d'Orléans had only visited Italy on one occasion, in February and March 1391, while Louis II was on his own campaign in Naples, himself still in his teens. In 1393-1394, Clement VII had mooted a project to grant Louis d'Orléans feudal rights over the kingdom of Adria, the central Italian papal states. This would have been a very interesting geo-political prospect indeed for the Angevins, given the situation of the lands that had been held by them in the Piedmont,³¹ which abutted both the dower lands of the Visconti and the kingdom of Adria to the south. Further south lay the kingdom of Naples. This scenario however remains purely hypothetical, as the Adria project was never realized. In 1401 and 1402, as Louis II prepared to restore obedience to the Avignon papacy, Louis d'Orléans was struggling to control royal policy in the "absence" of his brother Charles VI. The conflict between him and his uncle Burgundy climaxed in 1401, a truce being organized between the two by January 1402. It was not to hold, however, and by 1403 Louis d'Orléans resolved to depart for Lombardy, to put down a crisis that had arisen in Milan. It has been suggested by Valois and others that he was trying to smooth the way for Benedict XIII's return to Rome, the understanding being

²⁹ We must bear in mind however that Marie of Brittany subtracted her obedience from Avignon quite unwillingly. See above, pp. 67-68.

³⁰ Cf. Valois, N., "Le projet de mariage..." loc. cit and see our earlier discussion above.

³¹ By this stage much of which was a possession of Savoy. See above, p.47.

that the Avignonese pontiff would invest him with the crown of the Holy Roman Empire. Both parties to the plan, however, decided to abandon the project while Louis d'Orléans was in Avignon in 1404.³² Perhaps, in light of these machinations, the fact of his marital connections, the position of his Provençaux subjects, and his Italian aspirations, Louis II felt it prudent to restore obedience to Avignon and in the event ally himself with the ambitious younger brother of an incapacitated king.

The conflict at court arising from the Burgundian desire to maintain loyalty to Rome and an equally ardent desire on the part of Louis d'Orléans to restore obedience to Avignon continued to add fuel to the power struggle already deeply established between the two powerful princes. By the time that Phillip the Bold died in April 1404, their mutual hatred was visceral. The death of Burgundy not only removed the most politically astute of the royal uncles, it also neutralized the most effective opponent of Benedict XIII.³³ The Duke of Orleans's influence at court intensified and would probably have known no limit had it not been for the fact that the Burgundian feud was bequeathed to his avid and bitter cousin, Burgundy's heir, Jean sans Peur.

Restitution of obedience was officially achieved with letters and proclamations published in June 1404, and *parlement* registered the policy on 19th June, confirming its adherence to Avignon just as it had so docilely reinforced the doctrine of subtraction from Avignon on 29th December 1403. In light of this, and with his increasing political involvement and influence as a mediator of conflicts at court, Louis II d'Anjou might well have believed that his political star was inevitably in the ascendancy, welcome respite to a prince who had been obliged to walk away in defeat from his titular realm in 1399.

In spite of the proclamations recorded in 1404, the Schism itself was no closer to resolution. Various embassies to Rome had not managed to shift the position of the Roman pretender to the throne of Peter, Boniface IX. The position of Benedict XIII remained fragile and illusory in spite of the promises made by France. As Valois explains, it was the destiny of the Avignon papacy to count upon armed propaganda

³² Kibler, William W., Zinn, Grover A. (eds.), *Medieval France, An Encyclopaedia*, New York, Garland Publishing, 1995, pp. 564-565.

³³ Valois, Noël, *La France et le Grand Schisme...*, t. III, p. 367.

and the cooperation of the royal house of France, only to be frequently disappointed at the eleventh hour. Louis d'Orléans accommodated Benedict XIII but often found his plans thwarted by his brother Charles VI's sporadic returns to sanity, and the influence of his ambitious cousin Burgundy. Having arranged for the venerable royal uncle, the Duke of Bourbon, to march upon Italy in 1405 to support Benedict's intention to bring about an end to the Schism in his papacy's favour, the Duke of Orleans was forced to back down, Charles VI having decreed that he could ill-afford to countenance the prolonged absence of his maternal uncle Bourbon from the royal council. Louis II was nominated to proceed in place of Bourbon with a respectable force of arms, but at the last moment, he too was recalled to court at the instigation of either Ysabeau of Bavaria or Louis d'Orléans in the name of the king. The motivation for this recall would most likely have been the worsening dissent between the powerful princes, the new Duke of Burgundy and the king's brother. Louis II was probably recalled in his capacity as objective mediator to sort out yet another conflict between the two. This pattern would be repeated, leaving Benedict XIII along with the entire kingdom of France caught in the middle of the Valois power struggle, fragile and easy prey for any potential adventurer.³⁴

From the above brief outline we can discern the many challenges facing both the Angevins and indeed the entire French kingdom. The specifics of these many trials and what they actually meant for the House of Anjou should now be examined more closely.

1405 was an extremely trying year for the people of France. Charles VI's intermittent madness had destabilized the kingdom, allowing the ambitions and excesses of his closest relatives to boil over. The *Religieux* asserts that abuse of power and privilege was undermining the political edifice. In Chapter 7 of Book XXVI the monk of Saint-Denis describes an admonition delivered by an Augustinian friar, Jacques Legrand, made in the presence of Charles VI and Ysabeau of Bavaria, pleading for the reform of the morals and the behaviour of those at court. They were urged to look to their responsibilities rather than to their desires. The queen was singled out, with much criticism being

³⁴ Valois, op. cit., p. 409, note 1 : there is an autograph note extant to support this supposition dated 25th August 1405, from the Duke of Orleans to Louis II, King of Sicily, requesting that he return immediately with all haste to Melun, without passing through Paris en route. A letter dated the same day was also sent to the King of Castile by Olivier de Mauny. Benedict XIII seems to have been left out of this communication loop, as on 29th August, he was still anticipating the imminent arrival of Louis II.

directed at her and the behaviour of the dauphin and his uncles, Orléans and Burgundy. The king was apparently heartened by the oration, and perhaps even felt vindicated by the admonition directed at members of his household and court. Part of the oration stated that: «... *si tant de méfaits duraient encore, il craignait que Dieu, qui dispose à son gré de la couronne des rois, ne transportât bientôt le sceptre à des étrangers, ou ne permît que le royaume fût divisé en lui-même, par l'effet de la mauvaise conduite des princes ... [il] présenta éloquemment d'autres considérations en faveur de la réforme des mœurs ...*»³⁵

Charles VI resolved to put an end to the more palpable excesses of the court; however by July he had once again slipped into a prolonged delirium and the conflict and the prodigality of the court continued unabated. The *Religieux* testifies that: «*Le duc d'Orléans ... donnait un plus libre cours à son ambition, voulut sans consulter personne et de son propre mouvement s'approprier le gouvernement et les revenus du duché de Normandie. Les gens sages trouvèrent cette prétention étrange et injuste, et les habitants du royaume en murmurèrent.*»³⁶

The ambitions of the king's closest blood relative did not go unnoticed by other princes and loyal lords, the *Religieux* stating that in the wake of Orléans's appropriation of the duchy of Normandy the king in his lucid moments was urged by his courtiers to play a greater rôle in the government of his realm and to assure that policy was well founded and implemented with wisdom rather than avidity. He states: «... *En effet la reine et le duc d'Orléans, qui en vertu des droits qu'ils avaient comme les plus proches parents du roi, s'arrogeaient l'autorité suprême toutes les fois que le roi perdait l'usage de la raison, décidaient beaucoup de choses de leur propre mouvement, sans consulter les oncles et les cousins du roi ni les autres membres du conseil.*»³⁷

Furthermore the pair imposed unjust taxation upon the king's subjects to enrich their own treasuries. This was all grist to the busy mill of an ambitious Jean sans Peur who was lying in wait to ambush his great political nemesis, Louis d'Orleans. There was even a suggestion that the queen was neglecting her primary responsibility, the care of the royal children. The king was greatly irritated by this intelligence and resolved to redress the situation by convoking a royal council to discuss the matter. The *Religieux* tells us

³⁵ *Religieux*, vol. II, l. XXVI, ch. vii. p. 273.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

that the principal members of this council were Louis II, King of Sicily, Charles III, King of Navarre,³⁸ the Dukes of Orleans, Berry and Bourbon.

This council would have taken place at the time that Louis II was so hastily recalled from the mission organized to assist Benedict XIII with his Italian predicament. Burgundy had also been summoned by Charles VI to attend. He begged the king's indulgence, stating that he was labouring in his own domains assisted by his brothers and his heir, the young Duke of Nevers. When Burgundy did eventually appear in Paris, he did so at the head of an enormous entourage. The *Religieux* records that he arrived with a considerable show of force, in the company of his feudal barons, the Bishop of Liège and an army of some six thousand men-at-arms.³⁹ This show of force shocked those who were ignorant of what had been decided upon by the other princes. Alerted to Burgundy's imminent arrival and the size of his army, the Duke of Orleans and the queen hastily departed Paris. The next day, at the express command of the queen, the dauphin and his brothers, as well as Burgundy's daughter Marguerite, were to be covertly brought to Melun, where she and Orléans had established themselves.

Burgundy, once informed of what had occurred, gave chase, finally overtaking the dauphin's party and convincing him that he must return to Paris. The queen feared Burgundy's reaction to her manoeuvre. Nearing Paris with his precious charges, Burgundy was met by the Kings of Sicily and Navarre as well as the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon, armed for confrontation as had been decided. They escorted the dauphin to the Louvre where he was placed under guard for his own safety. The political situation was about to erupt into an open struggle for ascendancy between Burgundy and Orléans.

The fluid and delicate alliance that had brought together Louis II and his cousin the Duke of Orleans has been mentioned. The situation of the House of Anjou was to become ever more complicated as Louis II sought a way to mediate between the two ambitious princes, Orléans and Burgundy. It should be remembered that he still supported Benedict XIII, making him an ally of Orléans. However Orléans was fast

³⁸ Charles III, the Good, King of Navarre, was the first Count of Evreux, son of Charles II, the Bad, great rival of France. Charles III became known as "the Good" after he resolved conflict he had inherited between Navarre and France, later trying to negotiate between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians. His reign, (1404-1425), was both peaceful and beneficent. His daughter, Blanche of Navarre, married Juan II of Aragon and they ruled Navarre from 1425-1479.

³⁹ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXVI, ch. xiii, pp. 296-297.

becoming a political renegade, while Burgundy busily continued in his efforts to recast himself as a disinterested supporter of governmental reform.

The day after his return to Paris, Burgundy assembled the council to detail the deep insult occasioned to his princely dignity by the Duke of Orleans. Paris was cordoned off with metal chains, and Orléans had started amassing troops from all parts of the kingdom in the name of his brother Charles VI. Burgundy reinforced his own army. Berry fortified his residence and Burgundy sealed the streets surrounding his palace with wooden doors. Five hundred men were recruited by Burgundy to ensure that the streets and battlements of Paris were patrolled night and day. The merchants and people of Paris, much alarmed by these fortifications and the looming crisis in the government of the realm, approached Berry, who arranged for the dauphin to be appointed captain of Paris.⁴⁰

The royal council turned away from Orléans. Bourbon resolved to pacify his nephew with conciliatory words and assurances, pointing out that he should pledge not to raise an army that would prejudice the security of the kingdom, and should allow the queen to return to Paris. Bourbon was to have no success in his diplomatic effort to bring the warring cousins together. Orléans and Burgundy sought vengeance and both were avid for the authority and the prestige of a throne more often than not left vacant by a compromised king. The other princes were caught in the middle of the struggle, trying to second guess which way the wind would ultimately blow. France was the battleground and its subjects were the unwitting casualties of civil conflict triggered by a family feud, leaving the way clear for the English invader, a man just as ambitious and opportunistic as his French cousins. Bourbon was exhorted by the council to try again for the sake of the kingdom. He was again rebuffed. While many feared that diplomacy would not serve their purpose, influential others petitioned to have new delegations sent to the Duke of Orleans. Louis II offered to make another attempt to arrive at a peaceful solution, accompanied by the previous envoys. Many believed that the prestige of his title, King of Sicily, might enable him to succeed where others had failed.⁴¹ Since returning in defeat from Naples in 1399, Louis II had carefully worked to re-establish his

⁴⁰ The dauphin was Louis, Duke of Guyenne (1398-1415) aged about seven at the time, betrothed in 1404 to Marguerite of Burgundy (1390-1441), the Duke of Burgundy's eldest daughter. The dauphin died in 1415 and Marguerite was later married to Arthur III de Richemont, see below.

⁴¹ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXVI, ch. xvi, p. 313.

personal prestige and his family's honour. The University of Paris supported this latest initiative, and once they had received word that the new embassy had been favourably received they dispatched their own representatives to meet with the Duke of Orleans. The University mission failed; the queen refused to listen to their petition, while Orléans mocked them, refuting their argumentation and Burgundy's quasi-legal proclamation against him point by point. He terminated the audience by stating that both he and the queen had been deeply injured by the manner in which the dauphin had been returned to Paris and that they had the support of people likewise insulted by the precipitous actions of the Duke of Burgundy.⁴²

While Orléans had been repelling the overtures of the University, Louis II had himself met with very little success in his attempt to reconcile the two princes. In desperation, he wrote to Berry urging him to join him in Melun. His hope was that as the most venerable and senior royal uncle, Berry might break through where others had failed. Berry agreed to try, and set out in September, immediately after the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin. He spoke in support of the actions of Burgundy, who he claimed had acted with the full support of the other princes in returning the dauphin to Paris. He terminated his exhortation to his errant nephew by stating that if Orléans refused to bend to the will of the royal council, laying down his arms and returning the queen to Paris, «... *tous les princes des fleurs de lis vous tiendront pour l'ennemi de l'Etat.*» Orléans's response to this ultimatum was, «*Qui a pour soi le bon droit, le garde bien.*»⁴³

The situation spiralled into dangerous stalemate. Spies from both factions were everywhere, adding to an atmosphere already rife with suspicion and mistrust. The mutual hatred between the protagonists escalated. Rumours spread, Burgundy's partisans claiming that Orléans had forced open the royal treasury and was helping himself to the proceeds, using these resources to bribe gatekeepers in order to re-enter Paris in secret and carry away treasure from his own residence to underwrite his future projects. The queen's own household was in disarray as she exacted revenge upon those whom she believed guilty of disloyalty. Armed men invaded Berry's residence and Burgundy hurried to his defence with some five hundred knights, chasing away the offenders and calming the people of the quarter. More chains were added to those

⁴² Ibid., pp. 313-315. The *Religieux* records the refutation given by Orléans.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 317.

already sealing off parts of Paris, this time across the river. An atmosphere of imminent doom descended upon all estates of society. The conflict was no longer a spat between ambitious princes; it had become dangerous and threatening to the structure of government and to the survival of the kingdom. Foreign and regional troops were added to both sides and Paris was menaced by looting, particularly by Orleanist loyalists. Yet, with uncharacteristic moderation,⁴⁴ Burgundy counselled not to arrest the men-at-arms. He was no doubt still polishing up his public persona as a loyal subject of an incapacitated monarch, moderate and reform-intentioned, while at the same time casting Orléans in the rôle of an avaricious and immoderate renegade, caring little for his sovereign brother's beleaguered state and even less about the kingdom, whose suffering he was only intensifying. The reality nonetheless was that Burgundy was planning an equally determined grab for the power afforded by a vacant throne. What, then, was the King of Sicily's place in this struggle for ascendancy?

As discussed above, since his return from Italy Louis II had played his hand very cautiously indeed. He had married a prominent princess who would one day perhaps enable him to re-conquer his Italian territories by virtue of who and what she was. He had played the ecclesiastical card equally fastidiously, and this strategy too was designed to underpin his future aspirations. He had cast himself as sage negotiator and mediator, one who tried to keep the channels of communication open between all parties.⁴⁵ He acknowledged his venerable uncles Berry and Bourbon, but soon moved to side with the stronger faction, that of Burgundy. By October 1407, Louis II's elder son, the four-year old Louis III was betrothed to Burgundy's daughter, fifteen-year old Catherine.⁴⁶ With the king's authority compromised by his mental condition, and Orléans in exile from the inner circle of power, Burgundy's star was on the rise. He was

⁴⁴ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XVI, ch. xix, pp. 331-339.

⁴⁵ Cf. Beaucourt, Gaston Du Fresne de, *Histoire de Charles VII, par G. Du Fresne de Beaucourt*, Paris, Librairie de la Société Bibliographique, A. Picard, 1881-1891. On page 15 of tome 1, Beaucourt states that: «... *Le duc d'Anjou ... était resté étranger aux factions qui partageaient la Cour, Jean sans Peur rechercha son alliance, et, par un traité ... du 22 octobre 1407, Catherine de Bourgogne fut promise au fils de Louis ...*»

⁴⁶ There seems to be some dissent concerning the unfortunate Catherine of Burgundy's date of birth, Richard Vaughan giving her year of birth as 1399, others generally agreeing on 1391-1392. The distinguished historian Bernard Guenée very clearly states that at the time of Catherine's betrothal to Louis III d'Anjou she was fifteen years old to his four years. Vaughan, Richard, *John the Fearless*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2002, pp. 245 & 247 & Guenée, Bernard, *Un Meurtre, une société. L'Assassinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407*, Paris, Gallimard, 1992, p. 266 and position number 36 on the genealogical table given at the end of the volume. If we consider this age gap between the two betrothed, it is hardly a surprise (notwithstanding the politics of 1413) that she was eventually repudiated in favour of the much younger Isabeau of Brittany.

the power broker and Louis II was the respected mediator working for a just cause. The aged uncles gave their nephews the prestige that they needed to further their own particular projects.

Louis II had absented himself from Provence and Anjou-Maine, leaving Yolande d'Aragon in control of their joint territories.⁴⁷ At this stage of his personal reign, Louis's best option to strengthen the political authority of his House was to position himself between his two avid cousins. The illness of Charles VI had opened doors of opportunity to many interested parties. Had Charles been the effective and sane monarch his father had been, and as had been presaged by his own early reign prior to his first episode of madness, his cousins and uncles would have been obliged for the most part to retire to their respective kingdoms, duchies and counties and tend their own gardens. For the politically ambitious the madness of King Charles VI was a dream come true.

Both factions continued to build up their troop numbers from wherever they could to ensure support, should new opportunities arise. From September 1405, five thousand men-at-arms and mercenaries in the service of the Duke of Orleans ravaged regions of Champagne, Beauce and the Gâtinais, (the vast region between the Seine and the Loire), pillaging and denuding the region of livestock and supplies. The *Religieux* records that Louis II added five hundred of his own men to these troops, only magnifying the level of excess already carried out by the Orleanists. This might be read as the action of an individual who had no conscience as to whom he chose to support. The reality was far more complex.

Anjou-Maine was in the heart of a region being jeopardized by the actions of the Orleans faction. Louis II may have believed that it would be in the best interest of his duchy and county to have some sort of presence on the attacking side, if only to steer them away from his own territories into those of other landholders. Yolande stayed in their north-western holdings during the period of these troubles, with no assemblies (in the

⁴⁷ Louis II was present in Tarascon in 1404 then presided over Estates held in Aix-en-Provence in December 1404 which discussed the "*Récupération du château de Brégançon*" which had originally been given to Balthazar de Spinola by Marie of Brittany, the gift later revoked in 1388. He was again present at his Provençal Estates in July 1406, held in Aix-en-Provence which discussed preparations and aid for a planned Neapolitan expedition. Hébert, Michel (ed.), *Regeste...*, pp. 181-194 & 194-197. The register gives an indication of his preoccupations and the difficulties and disappointments he must have faced when the politics at the court of France kept him from his own aspirations and responsibilities.

presence of either Louis or Yolande who generally presided over such meetings) recorded in Provence at the time. With their second child barely a year old, Louis had more reason to direct the pillagers' interest away from Angers. Louis needed to remain close to the action in spite of and because of the insurgencies threatening their duchy.⁴⁸ The Duke of Lorraine, Charles II le Hardi, arrived with two hundred men to join the Duke of Orleans. The Lorrainais, the worst of the pillagers according to the *Religieux*, were routed by the much smaller numbers of the Duke of Burgundy. The net result of the pillaging and civil conflict was that the region was left utterly devastated and the Orleanists, having ravaged the territory, sought entry into Meaux. The duke was refused entry, causing him to consider a back-down. Both armies were ordered by the royal council to disband and each to reduce its forces to five hundred men. The king ordered that both divisions come under his control and that they cease attacking one another. Burgundy refused the conditions of the treaty, stating that he could not trust Orléans to keep his word once Burgundy's men had returned to their regions, adding that the Orleanists were based much closer to Paris. War was fast becoming a more realistic outcome to the civil conflict than either peace or unity.⁴⁹

Burgundy's next move was to rally the support of the burghers and merchants of Paris to his cause of reform and unity. While Louis d'Orléans had wit, charm and influence at court, his rival Jean sans Peur had no peer in his ability to gauge the political temperature of the ecclesiastics, the University and the bourgeoisie. The third estate, the financial powerhouse of the kingdom, acknowledged Burgundy's call to protect the realm, but refused to consider unilaterally taking up arms in support of his faction. Notwithstanding this, they stated that should the dauphin himself solicit their support, they would arm themselves and fight to the death for the rights of the king and his heir. Burgundy was placated by this response and hurried to the royal council, promising that the dauphin would be armed and paraded on horseback through Paris, and calling citizens to take up arms in his name.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Louis's mother Marie of Brittany died in Angers on 2nd June 1404. Her service of remembrance or "*cantar*" was held in Arles on 21st September 1405. Cf. *Le Temps de Princes*, p. 167. Louis and Yolande seem to have been definitely back in the capital and Angers by October 1405. However, by July 1406, Louis II was once again in his county of Provence: The Journal de la Chambre des Comptes d'Angers shows: «*Celui jour et an [19th July 1406] se parti la Royne Yolans du chastel d'Angiers pour aler en Provence devers le Roy Loys. Et ala au giste à Beaufort ... Et demourerent oudit chastel messeigneurs Loys et sa seur enfans desdiz Roy et Royne ...*» AN, P 1334/4, f^o. 85.

⁴⁹ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXVI, ch. xix, pp. 336-339.

⁵⁰ The dauphin would have been roughly eight years of age at the time.

Forces surrounding Paris had effectively blockaded the city; supplies could only be brought in with an armed escort. Orléans and the queen finally relented, deciding to return to the royal residence at Vincennes to work more closely with the other princes to find a solution to the conflict between them. Burgundy, either intentionally or having made a grave miscalculation, rode out to meet them in the company of an impressive force of arms. The queen was alerted and turned her entourage around, making for Corbeil on the advice of Orléans. The Burgundians responded by ravaging the surrounding countryside. They threatened to escalate their outrages and the other princes were forced to act decisively to save the kingdom. The wisest, according to the *Religieux*, believed that the disagreement between the two sides would split the kingdom in two. The King of Navarre and the Duke of Bourbon sought out Orléans and the queen as new ambassadors of peace. Orléans and the queen agreed to return to Vincennes and the news of a union between the princes of France was published. In the presence of Berry and the queen, the princes exchanged the kiss of peace and the men-at-arms were disbanded.⁵¹

The *Religieux* reports that in the wake of this reconciliation the consensus position was that all sides should work together to safeguard the situation of their fragile monarch rather than seek to draw personal advantage from it. Jean Gerson, chancellor of both Notre Dame de Paris and the University, addressed an assembly in the presence of the Kings of Navarre and Sicily, the Dukes of Berry, Orleans, Burgundy and Bourbon, exhorting the powerful to work towards administrative reform.⁵² The theme of his address was *vivat rex*, and his message was that the well-being of both king and kingdom depended upon the perfection of three fundamentals: earthly existence, political existence and spiritual existence. Gerson emphasized the fact that all had a responsibility to work together to restore the physical and mental health of the king, because the prosperity of the kingdom depended upon his recovery. Political existence had to be re-established by correcting the vices of the court and addressing the deep political disorder of the kingdom. Both moral decay and political disorder had to be confronted and dealt with. Finally, he appealed to the princes to work towards re-establishing union within the Church, working with the University to bring about a

⁵¹ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXVI, ch. xxi, p. 345.

⁵² See Appendix 1, nn. 18 & 19.

lasting solution to the Schism. Jean de Montreuil, distinguished thinker, writer and scholar,⁵³ pledged to work upon these fundamental principles on behalf of the king and those present. The trigger for Gerson's comments is clear; as Charles VI's mental stability tumbled out of control it had become habitual for the besieged monarch to issue conflicting decrees within several days of one another, depending upon which faction or prince had the upper hand on the royal council at the time.

By October 1405, successive Dukes of Burgundy had not been able to neutralize the authority of Orléans, in spite of having gained increasing popular support by casting themselves as arbiters for reform and raising considerable military might against the king's younger brother. Orléans still had the loyalty of the majority of the royal council and the great officers of the Crown. Notwithstanding the success of Burgundy's attempts, Orléans had managed, with the help of the royal council, to stay in control of the king's finances and found himself in the happy position of being able to direct funds to himself while cutting off those to Burgundy.⁵⁴ Orléans, perhaps with the support of Louis II, contrived to reduce by half royal funding destined for Burgundy: the *Religieux* reports that Burgundy, having been forced to pull out of a military campaign in Flanders, cited lack of financial support as the reason for his reverse: «... *le retour si subit et si imprévu du duc de Bourgogne causa un étonnement général; mais ce prince s'en justifia*

⁵³ Cf. For Jean de Montreuil and his intellectual pursuits and connections: Daly, Kathleen, & Giesey, Ralph E., "Noël de Fribois et la loi salique", in *Rulership in France, 15th-17th Centuries*, Giesey, Ralph E., (ed.), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2004, pp. 5-36, Gilli, Patrick, "L'humanisme français au temps du concile de Constance", in *Humanisme et culture géographique à l'époque du Concile de Constance autour de Guillaume Fillastre : Actes du Colloque de l'Université de Reims, 18-19 novembre 1999*, Marcotte, Didier, Turnhout, Brepols, 2002, pp. 41-62, Ornato, Enzo, « L'intertextualité dans la pratique littéraire des premiers humanistes français : le cas de Jean de Montreuil », in *Auctor et auctoritas : Invention et conformisme dans l'écriture médiévale. Actes du colloque tenu à l'Université de Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (14-16 juin 1999)*, Zimmermann, Michel, (ed.), Paris, Ecole de Chartes, 2001, pp. 231-244, Hanley, Sarah, « Identity Politics and Rulership in France : Female Political Place and the Fraudulent Salic Law in Christine de Pizan and Jean de Montreuil », in *Changing Modern Identities in Early Modern France*, Wolfe, Michael, (ed.), Durham (North Carolina), Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 78-94, Ouy, Gilbert, « Humanism and Nationalism in France at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century », in *The Birth of Identities. Denmark and Europe in the Middle Ages*, McGuire, Brian Patrick, (ed.), København, Reitzel, 1996, pp. 107-125, Pons, Nicole, "Un exemple de l'utilisation des écrits politiques de Jean de Montreuil: un memorandum diplomatique rédigé sous Charles VII", in *Préludes à la Renaissance : Aspects de la vie intellectuelle en France au XVe siècle*, Bozzolo, Carla & Ornato, Ezio, (eds.), Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1992, pp. 243-264, Pons, Nicole, « La Guerre de Cent Ans vue par quelques polémistes français du XVe siècle », in *Guerre et Société en France, en Angleterre et en Bourgogne, XIVe-XVe siècles*, Contamine, Philippe, Giry-Deloison, Charles & Keen, Maurice, (eds.), Villeneuve d'Ascq, Université de Charles de Gaulle (Lille III), Centre d'Histoire de la Région du Nord et de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest, 1991, pp. 143-169, just to name a select few.

⁵⁴ Bell, John, *Olivier de Clisson and Political Society in France under Charles V and Charles VI*, Philadelphia, Henneman, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996, p. 187.

*devant le roi et en imputa publiquement la faute au roi de Sicile Louis, qui avait refusé de laisser recueillir dans ses domaines de l'Anjou et du Maine l'imposition destinée à la solde de l'armée en Picardie; il ajouta que ce refus lui avait été d'autant plus préjudiciable, qu'il lui avait fallu y suppléer de ses propres deniers.».*⁵⁵

In November 1406 the problem of the Schism was once again addressed by Charles VI and the idea of subtraction of obedience from Avignon was revisited in a royal audience presided over by Louis II, King of Sicily, in the absence of the king.⁵⁶ The audience was held in the presence of the dauphin, Berry, the other princes, ably assisted by Queen Ysabeau's confessor and Franciscan doctor of theology, Pierre-aux-Boeufs. The latter dealt with subtraction in conformity with the instructions he had received, stating in conclusion that the distinguished gathering should follow the advice of the University. The following day Jean Petit demonstrated that subtraction was both just and reasonable.

In the end, the king published a decree removing the right of the Roman pontiff to confer ecclesiastical positions involving both income and holdings within the kingdom of France and the Dauphiné. It effectively removed French ecclesiastical obedience to Rome on the subject of appointments and financial matters within dioceses (principally those which related to the raising of revenues within France destined for Rome), an important victory for Orléans in his drive to re-establish obedience to Avignon, yet one that did little to further the cause of Benedict XIII. It left the position of both popes unresolved and ambiguous. The rôle that Louis II played in this declaration, (his name appears directly after that of Charles VI on the declaration, before those of the dauphin, the king's brother Orléans and the senior uncles Berry and Bourbon), coupled with his struggle to appear neutral in an increasingly dangerous political and ecclesiastical game of chance, must have been a difficult equilibrium to maintain.⁵⁷

The death of Innocent VII in Rome on 6th November 1406 gave some hope to the resolution of disunity within the Church, and the well-intentioned on both sides started

⁵⁵ *Religieux*, vol. II, liv. XXVII, ch. xiv, p. 451.

⁵⁶ According to the Provençal Estates registers, in July 1406 Louis II had convoked Estates in Aix-en-Provence to discuss preparations for a new Neapolitan campaign. Avignon's continued support would have been a useful auxiliary in the achievement of his Italian aspirations. Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...*, pp. 194-197 & see above p. 121, note 47.

⁵⁷ See Appendix 1, n. 20 for an extract of the declaration.

to work towards achieving this end. The idea was to cease elections within the cardinalate until the situation was stabilized; but in the event a new pope was elected. The new Roman pontiff, Angelo Corrario, who took the name Gregory XII, wrote to Benedict XIII offering wise and sage reconciliation, which greatly impressed many in France. Many believed that they should defer to Rome should Benedict refuse to agree to Gregory's suggestions for peaceful reconciliation, resigning in the best interests of the universal Church. The princes started to waive in the face of Gregory's counsel. Benedict composed an artful response to his Roman peer, agreeing that the Schism must be brought to a lasting conclusion through a frank and fair exchange of views between the two pontifical sees. He did not unilaterally agree however to step down from the throne of Peter, first insisting that they meet on neutral territory.⁵⁸ Once all the measures outlined for the sake of the unity of the Church had been realized, he, Benedict XIII, would abdicate. The king, dukes, lords, scholars and clergy all judged Benedict's response encouraging and the court and the Gallican Church dispatched ambassadors to both pontiffs.⁵⁹ Most believed that the only resolution lay in convincing both popes to step down. Earlier popes had agreed to this proposition, yet it seemed that circumstance, or indeed a paucity of good faith, forbade them to act upon these intentions; planned meetings were cancelled and venues and times could not be agreed upon. If kings and princes could not sit in judgement and God seemed disinclined to involve Himself with either faction, perhaps the only viable alternative rested in bringing together all representatives of the Church militant to judge the matter. This was precisely what the conflict was slowly grinding towards: the establishment of such a council. A major obstacle to this however still remained: it was the sole prerogative of a pope to convoke a general council of the Church.

With the two major French players Burgundy and Orléans still in circulation, the impasse, for France at least, seemed insoluble. Added to this was the reluctance of both pontiffs to stand aside to resolve the issue. The same cardinals who had so welcomed Gregory's counsel now urged the princes to support the position outlined by Benedict XIII.⁶⁰ Upon his return from Guyenne, Louis d'Orléans found his influence much diminished; his name appears alongside those of the King of Sicily, Bourbon and

⁵⁸ *Religieux*, v. II, book XXVII, chapter XXI, pp. 505-511, Valois, op. cit. t. III, pp. 482-543.

⁵⁹ *Religieux*, v. II, pp. 511-521 and Valois, loc. cit.

⁶⁰ Valois, op. cit., t. III, p. 494.

Burgundy on decrees dated 18th February 1407 eroding the authority of Benedict XIII.⁶¹ Nevertheless, he was soon finding ways to counteract the implementation of these decrees. The *Religieux* tells us that of all the princes, the Duke of Orleans was the most loyal to Benedict XIII. Orléans agreed that a meeting between the two popes was indispensable but observed that, while positive overtures were emanating from Rome, they must at all costs second and defer to the efforts of Avignon. Orléans had put aside his earlier aspirations of conquest in Italy supported by Avignon and acted in his own political interest, which now could only be best served by the unity of the Church. In this his approach reflected that of Louis II of Anjou, the need to appear conciliatory and neutral for the sake of both Church and State. The net result of interpontifical negotiations was that neither pope could agree to the terms and conditions imposed by the other on the subject of mutual abdication, and the stalemate dragged on, punctuated with threats, promises and increased fortification of the city of Avignon.

Gregory XII soon found himself threatened by Ladislaus of Duras, King of Sicily by right of possession and therefore great nemesis of Louis II d'Anjou, also styled King of Sicily. Ladislaus believed that Gregory had betrayed him by negotiating so closely with France to bring an end to the Schism. Should the proposed meeting go ahead between the popes with French acquiescence, he asserted that this would threaten his sovereignty over the Kingdom of Naples and that Louis II would benefit from a pope elected with the participation of the French.⁶² The political situation was as complex as that of the divided Church. This fact coupled with the inherent ambiguity regarding allegiances soon ensured that conflict would once again degenerate into pillorying and violence between the two rival factions in France.⁶³ Nothing had been resolved either ecclesiastically or politically: Church unity sought by Charles VI was soon forgotten as the rivalry between Burgundy and Orléans descended to new levels of mutual loathing. The Schism was just another excuse for Orléans and Burgundy to line up against one

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 497.

⁶² Valois, op. cit. t. III, p. 523. Further, the *Religieux* speaks of Ladislaus's reaction in these terms: «... Ces cardinaux leur apprirent d'abord que Ladislaus serait près de Grégoire dans Rome pour l'obliger à lui confirmer la possession du royaume de Naples, ce qui pouvait retarder l'union; qu'on avait écrit de Paris à Grégoire de se tenir sur ces gardes, de ne point sortir de Rome, ni se fier aux étrangers.» v. II, XXVIII, p. 645. Later still the Patriarch of Alexandria urged Benedict not to tempt fate by seeking the assistance of third parties to buttress the position of his papacy: «... il ne compromettrait pas plus l'honneur de son obédience, que monseigneur Benoît croirait compromettre le sien en acceptant les galères du roi d'Hongrie ou celles de Ladislaus ...» *Religieux*, v. II, l.XVIII, ch. xxi, p. 675.

⁶³ Valois, op. cit., t. III, p. 487.

another. Louis d'Orléans would not cede his authority as senior prince of the realm, in spite of the fact that discontent against his activities was on the increase. Burgundy, avid for control over the fortunes of the beleaguered king and his subjects, quite deliberately set about styling himself as the righteous opponent to the excesses of Orléans. The King of Sicily, Louis II d'Anjou, was gaining prestige as a fair broker yet all the while keeping his eye on which outcome would be of greatest benefit to his House, while the ageing Dukes of Berry and Bourbon strove to head off imminent disaster.

The public woes of France had become intensely private and personal as clearer heads tried unsuccessfully to bring about an end to infighting which threatened to destroy the House of France and its subjects. The stage was set for calamity and only one of the parties would emerge from the rubble strengthened, the other willing itself to regroup against all odds.

The tensions that had accumulated between the rival Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans during the first part of Louis II's independent reign from 1400 to 1407 had taken a murderous turn for the worse by November 1407. Having cobbled together an uneasy truce in early 1406, both dukes departed in September on separate military campaigns, Orléans to Guyenne and Burgundy to lay siege to Calais. The remaining members of the royal council set their minds to the task of governmental reform, precipitated in part by Orléans's 1403 decision to restore obedience to Avignon. This volte-face had had deleterious effects upon the kingdom as a whole, and as a result the balance of power could not be maintained indefinitely.

In the wake of the departure of the warring dukes, Berry and Bourbon appointed nine members to a general commission to reform the administration of the kingdom. While this initiative could be read as having been the result of Burgundy's own reform agenda, the domination of it by two Orléans loyalists, the Montaigu brothers, one of whom Jean, was the grand master of the king's household, soon made it a threat to Burgundy. He was recalled to Paris from Calais on 25th November and never forgave Orléans for depriving him of his imminent victory there. To add insult to perceived injury,

Burgundy suffered another strategic setback as the new Duke of Brittany, Jean V, concluded an alliance with the Duke of Orleans.⁶⁴

This run of good fortune was not however to last for Orléans. Ill and humiliated by his defeat in Guyenne, he returned to Paris on 18th February 1407. To add insult to the disastrous débâcle in Guyenne, he was unable to block the decision taken by the royal council to withdraw once again its obedience from Avignon. He was, however, able to ensure that the ordinance was not immediately executed. Months of turmoil ensued, culminating on 28th April 1407, when another royal ordinance reduced the numbers of members on the royal council, leaving Burgundy without allies. The following day the officers administering the royal treasury were decreased, again ousting partisans of Burgundy. This was both a tactical setback and a deep insult to the prestige of Jean sans Peur.⁶⁵

Burgundy was well aware that he had been outmanœuvred by the younger brother of the king. Rather than resorting to ruinous armed conflict as he had in the past, he decided upon more thrifty means by which to eliminate his great rival: the campaign to betray Orléans seems to have been initiated very soon after the ordinance of 28th April 1407. While Burgundy and Orléans played at demonstrating their feelings of tribal solidarity, Raoul d'Auquetonville, an officer of Jean sans Peur's, methodically put together a project that would lead to the assassination of Orléans on 23rd November 1407.⁶⁶

Between April 1407 and the murder of Orléans in November of that year, Louis II had been much occupied with trying to mediate between the princes, while striving to draw as much advantage as possible for his own aspirations, particularly those which touched upon the re-conquest of his Neapolitan inheritance. As discussed above, Angevin Italian dreaming was both a ruinous financial undertaking and a political and diplomatic labyrinth. In spite of the fact that Marie of Brittany had managed to leave Angevin finances in far better shape than she had found them, Louis II was constantly required to chase funding and political alliances to underwrite his Italian ambitions. The richest

⁶⁴ Guenée, Bernard, *Un Meurtre, une société, l'assassinat du duc d'Orléans 23 novembre 1407*, Paris, Editions Gallimard, 1992, p. 177.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁶⁶ See Appendix 1, n. 20.

prince of the realm was his ambitious cousin Burgundy. Bluntly put, Louis II needed venture capital and Burgundy needed as many influential allies as possible on the royal council. The King of Sicily, by virtue of his “kingship” and his position as mediator-at-large, was custom-made for Burgundy, who needed a big powerful friend at court. A marriage alliance was attractive to both parties as it would assure ready liquid assets for Louis II and strategic influence at court for a frequently out of favour Burgundy.

Eight weeks before the Duke of Burgundy moved decisively to rid himself of Orléans on 23rd November 1407, the office of the Provost of Paris drew up a betrothal deed of mutual undertaking between the Dukes of Anjou and Burgundy for the proposed marriage between four-year old Louis III and fifteen-year old Catherine, the daughter of Burgundy and Marguerite of Bavaria.⁶⁷ The agreement was apparently negotiated by Berry, and «*L’assemblée et solempnacion [of the said marriage would take place] dedens la fin de may prochainement venant.*»⁶⁸ The infant Louis III would receive the domains and title of Count of Guise as a result of the alliance, adding to his previous appellation of Duke of Calabria. The generous financial windfall to Louis II resulting from the alliance was destined to underwrite future Neapolitan campaigns.

The King of Sicily must have been satisfied with the immediate and potential fiscal advantages this betrothal brought to his House. Notwithstanding the considerable age difference between the young betrothed, Burgundy might have equally been persuaded that he had assured the loyalty of a powerful member of the royal council. One obstacle remained for Burgundy however: his intractable and potent cousin Orléans. With Louis II hypothetically in his pocket, Burgundy moved against the king’s brother, the only remaining impediment between himself and the throne, so often left vacant by the “absence” of the king. Burgundy’s next act was to be decisive, and its consequences far reaching: «*Le meurtre de Louis [d’Orléans] fut la cause ou le point de départ auquel se rattachent, comme des effets et des conséquences, la plupart des faits historiques qui se produisirent ultérieurement.*»⁶⁹

⁶⁷ See above p. 120, note 46.

⁶⁸ *Le Temps des Princes*, pp. 29 and 37. Cf. pp. 37-38 for a detailed description of the financial terms of the 1407 agreement and the *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXXI, ch. iv, p. 315.

⁶⁹ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII roi de France et de son époque 1403-1461*, Paris, J. Renouard, 1862, t. I, p. 7. Viriville elaborates further in his *récit circonstancié* in the *Magasin de Librairie*, 25th November 1859, p. 241+.

Despite the audacity of the crime, the murder itself seems to have fulfilled Burgundy's objectives. Having fled the capital immediately in the wake of the assassination, he was once again in the ascendant position by the spring of 1408. Let us examine how this could have occurred, and the actions of the other princes of the blood, particularly those of the King of Sicily, Louis II of Anjou.

In the immediate aftermath of the assassination, the actions of Burgundy and his supporters were widely condemned. The distressed widow of Orleans, Valentine Visconti, journeyed to Paris in the company of two strategically selected children from those in her care, chosen for maximum impact in a calculated performance to plead for justice, urging her brother-in-law the king to seek out and punish the perpetrators of the crime.⁷⁰ Burgundy outplayed her initiative by taking up an offensive rather than a defensive position, dispatching a theologian and professor of the University of Paris, Jehan Petit or Le Petit⁷¹ to deliver a long justification for his actions on 8th March 1408. Burgundy astonished all concerned by arriving in Paris in the company of an impressive force of arms as if preparing to conquer the kingdom itself.⁷² Burgundy's exculpation was delivered to a distinguished audience including the dauphin, the King of Sicily, the Dukes of Berry, Bar, Brittany and Lorraine, the rector of the University of Paris and numerous barons, counts and citizens. The queen and the king's closest family members tried to prevent this allocution but were unable to stop it. In the wake of Burgundy's offensive stand the queen departed Paris for Melun in the company of the Dauphin Louis: *«Trois jours après cette étrange apologie du meurtre du duc d'Orléans, la reine quitta tout à coup Paris avec son fils monseigneur le duc de Guienne, et se retira à Melun. Comme si elle eût craint quelque coup de main de la part de ses ennemis, elle fit réparer la ville et la citadelle, les munit de vivres, et ordonna que les gens d'armes en gardassent les portes jour et nuit. Elle avait aussi résolu de rassembler de tous côtés des gens de guerre ...»*.⁷³

⁷⁰ Cf. *Religieux*, I, XXVIII, ch. XXXIII. The two children in question were her youngest son, Jean, Count of Angoulême, roughly three years of age at the time, and the new Duchess of Orleans, Isabelle of France, the king's own eighteen-year old daughter, already once widowed by the murder of her first husband Richard II of England. Her second husband, Charles d'Orléans, Duke of Orleans following the death of his father Louis, was about fifteen at the time of the assassination. Vallet de Viriville, « Assasinat du duc d'Orléans par Jean sans Peur, duc de Bourgogne », in *Le Magasin de Librairie*, 25th November 1859, p. 263.

⁷¹ See Appendix 1, n. 21.

⁷² *Religieux*, t.II, I, XXVIII, ch. xxxiv, pp. 753+.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 767.

Burgundy was whom she feared. The *Religieux* goes on to relate how the king, having temporarily recovered his wits, fetched her back; and within a few days he had pardoned Burgundy, issuing letters of remission. He warned the Duke to be wary of those who would seek to entrap him and exact punitive justice. Burgundy replied that he feared no one as he now had the protection of the king's royal majesty. So flattered was the king by his cousin's response that he removed the position of Admiral of France from Clignet de Brabant, one of Orléans most zealous partisans, bestowing the position instead upon Burgundian loyalist Charles de Châtillon, Lord of Dampierre.⁷⁴

What was the reaction of Louis II d'Anjou? According to the *Religieux* his initial response had been one of deep shock and sincere distress for both the fate of Orléans and the future of his cousin Burgundy and the Kingdom of France.⁷⁵ Initially, the husband of Mariette d'Enghien, Robert de Chauny,⁷⁶ was suspected of the crime, his wife having been seduced by Louis d'Orléans.⁷⁷ The royal princes had already decided in council to pursue and arrest Robert. The *Religieux* claims that it was this fact that caused Burgundy to confess his crime, not wanting that: «... *la punition en retombât sur des innocents, et [Burgundy ...] poussé par un repentir tardif, se leva, prit à part le roi de Sicile, Louis et le duc de Berri, et leur avoua sans détour qu'il était l'auteur de cet affreux attentat, qu'il l'avait fait commettre par des mains étrangères, à l'instigation du diable. Cet aveu les fit trembler et frémir d'horreur. Ils gardèrent quelque temps un morne silence, qu'ils n'interrompirent que par profonds soupirs ...*».⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Loc. cit.

⁷⁵ Half an hour after the news of the assassination had been circulated, a distressed Louis II convoked an emergency great council in his princely residence on rue de la Tisseranderie. All the princes including Burgundy, the Constable and the Chancellor of France attended. On 25th November the council reconvened and deliberated, stating that no effort would be spared to bring the guilty to justice. All princely residences would be opened and searched, whereupon Burgundy took the King of Sicily aside and admitted his part in the crime à *l'instigation du diable*. Louis II discreetly informed Berry of this development and the meeting was adjourned. Burgundy slipped away largely unnoticed. On 26th November the assembly was once more reconvened and it is here that Burgundy made his defiant stand upon being refused entry, before departing for his own domains. *Histoire de Charles VII*, loc. cit.

⁷⁶ To whom Monstrelet refers as Aubert de Chauny.

⁷⁷ She had borne Orléans a son, Jean the Bastard of Orleans, later to be created Count of Dunois. Orléans recognized his son and Jean was brought up in the household of the Duchess of Orleans, Valentine Visconti, along with her legitimate children. He was to grow to maturity in Yolande's household in the company of Charles VII, Louis III and René d'Anjou. In 1413 a few days after Charles was betrothed to Marie d'Anjou, Jean was affianced to Marie, daughter of Jean Louvet, president of Provence. Vale, Malcolm, «*Charles VII*» Methuen, London, 1974, pp. 23-24.

⁷⁸ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXVIII, ch. xxxi, pp. 741+.

By the next day Burgundy was confident enough to present himself to *parlement*, where other members of the royal family refused him entry. Rather than melting away, Burgundy vented his irritation and vowed to re-enter *parlement* one day in spite of his detractors. He decamped to Flanders shortly afterwards, with many condemning him as a criminal deserving of the full and combined wrath of God and man. Given the political reality of Burgundy's position, devising suitable punishment would have been a complex issue. He was the doyen of the royal peers of France, the richest lord of the realm and his daughter Marguerite was betrothed to the dauphin. The princes offered Burgundy a chance to clear himself in the form of a public audience without prejudice, should he agree to hand over the perpetrators of the crime. He flatly refused the offer and Louis II and Berry were dispatched by the king to Amiens in an attempt to negotiate with him. Bourbon was also instructed to take part in the mission, but petitioned the king to allow him to return to his own domains, having lost heart, so affected was he by the murder of one royal nephew by another. The *Religieux* attests that: «... *La mort ignominieuse de son bien aimé neveu était pour lui un coup terrible, et il répéta, dit-on, plusieurs fois qu'il ne pourrait jamais supporter la vue de l'auteur d'une si noire trahison...*».⁷⁹

After some ten days of polite negotiation and mutual courtesy, Louis II and Berry managed to convince Burgundy to appear in Paris on the king's orders to expose publicly his motivations for the crime. Notwithstanding the desires of his sovereign both before and after the crime, Burgundy had refused to emerge from his stronghold without an accompanying force of arms. He eventually agreed to return to Paris on the condition that: «... *les portes de Paris ne fussent pas gardées par les gens de guerre, afin que lui et ses gens pussent y entrer en liberté; car il voulait y paraître non comme ennemi de la ville ou du roi, mais comme un ami qui souhaitait la paix.*»⁸⁰

While we shall not go into the details of Jean sans Peur's *apologia*, it is worth noting the *Religieux's* description of Burgundy's arrival hard on the heels of the Duchess of Orleans's plea for justice. After having halted at Saint-Denis to render his devotions, Burgundy: «... *arriva à Paris et y fit son entrée en appareil de guerre, au grand étonnement de*

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 743.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 744-745.

tous, comme s'il venait de remporter quelque victoire sur les ennemis du royaume ... Les bourgeois le reçurent avec honneur et empressement.»⁸¹

The detail regarding the bourgeoisie is very pertinent. We must not forget that Burgundy had consistently worked at re-styling himself as a champion of reform and the darling of the third Estate. He would continue to polish and refine this image right up until the time of his own ignominious death in 1419. It was all part of a campaign to demonstrate that he had performed a public service in eliminating the brother of the king, Burgundy holding that Louis d'Orléans had been an avaricious and heretical tyrant sapping the resources of the kingdom for his own ends. His campaign to win the hearts and minds of the people was to prove astonishingly successful and the Duchess of Orleans's pleas were swept aside once Burgundy's *apologia* had been delivered.⁸²

The *Religieux*, in chapter XXXV, the ultimate chapter of book XXVIII, ends with Ysabeau's flight to Melun with the dauphin three days after the *apologia*. The first chapter of book XXIX, commencing on the first day of the year, 15th April 1408 (o.s.) relates the birth of an *enfant monstrueux* in the diocese of Le Mans, deep in Angevin territory. She was born without arms or legs and the chronicler notes that: «... *Les gens de savoir et d'expérience regardèrent ce prodige comme le présage de grands malheurs.*»⁸³

1408 would certainly prove a year of *grands malheurs* for Louis II, the Church and for France. Given all that had occurred in the short interval from the date of the betrothal deed between Burgundy and himself the previous October, the *solempnacion* of the marriage originally set for May 1408 was postponed. The contract however was not cancelled in spite of the enormity of Burgundy's crime. At this stage Louis II was doubtless reluctant to cede the rich assets resulting from the betrothal agreement. Given the unprecedented events in the wake of Burgundy's *apologie de tyrannicide*⁸⁴ and the fact of the king's pardoning of Burgundy, the King of Sicily would have been wise to adopt a

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 754-755.

⁸² See Ysabeau's reaction to the *apologia* on p. 131 above.

⁸³ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXIX, ch. i, p. 3. Deformities in children were generally regarded as a judgement from above: «... *Et si tesmoigne l'Escripture/ Que homs de membre contrefais/ Et en sa pensée meffais/ plains de pectiez et plains de vices.*» Deschamps, Eustache Morel dit, *Ceuvres complètes*, Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1878-1903, t. IX, p. 81.

⁸⁴ *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 40.

waiting brief. As it turned out, Burgundy managed for a short period to insinuate himself back into the ascendant position on the royal council.

The Schism continued to grind on, and France was still divided both ecclesiastically and politically. In 1408, Benedict XIII occupied his time by publishing bulls which were soon condemned by the other side, with France publicizing its neutral position in the extended conflict. The king's daughter Marie of France took the veil and departed for the royal convent of Poissy.⁸⁵ In September 1408, a discourse was pronounced against Burgundy's *apologia* and the tide started to turn slowly against him. The discourse was sponsored by Ysabeau and the dauphin at the express request of the Duchess of Orleans.⁸⁶ Present at the allocution given by the royal advocate Jean Juvénal des Ursins were the Dukes of Berry, Bourbon and Brittany. Juvénal stated that the reins of government should be conferred upon Ysabeau and the dauphin during the king's "absences", citing Blanche of Castile, mother of Saint Louis as an example to be followed. At the end of his discourse, Valentine Visconti and her children threw themselves to the ground demanding justice for the murder of her husband and an opportunity to refute publicly the assertions made by Burgundy in his *apologia*. This was granted and the refutation was undertaken by the Benedictine Abbot of Saint-Fiacre, Master Serisy. His oration achieved, the dauphin's advocate stepped forward to insist that his father-in-law Burgundy humbly approach the Duchess of Orleans, in the presence of the king, the dauphin and his peers to beg her forgiveness for the crime he had initiated and that he be subjected to an appropriate sanction, paying reparation to the widow and orphaned children of Orléans.⁸⁷

Many royal councils were convened after this event, presided over by Ysabeau, the Kings of Sicily and of Navarre and all those princes of the blood who nurtured an implacable resentment against Burgundy and his actions. They moved to isolate the duke: «... *Sans avoir égard aux lettres royales de réconciliation et de pardon qui lui avait été accordées, on résolut de mander de tous côtés des gens de guerre pour lui courir sus comme*

⁸⁵ In the company of Christine de Pizan's daughter, also named Marie, who had equally determined to enter religious life. Cf. Laigle, Mathilde, *Le livre des trois vertus de Christine de Pisan et son milieu historique et littéraire*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1912.

⁸⁶ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXIX, ch.xvii, p. 91.

⁸⁷ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXIX, ch. XVII, pp. 93-129.

*ennemi de l'Etat ... Cet état de choses inaccoutumé inspirait beaucoup de terreur et d'épouvante aux bourgeois.»*⁸⁸

This decision did little to calm troubled political waters, and by the middle of October 1408, the queen was taking measures to fortify her position and to punish disloyalty. If we are to believe the *Religieux* and indeed his own household accounts, Louis II was once again urging both parties to calm themselves while simultaneously attempting to broker a stay in hostilities. He was to have little success however, as Burgundy set himself the task of subjugating several of the king's northern domains. Civil strife ensued, the Duchess of Orleans dying on 4th December 1408, exhausted by her struggle against Burgundy. As news of Burgundy's victories reached Paris the queen, the Kings of Sicily and Navarre, and the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon resolved to take the necessary initiatives to pull the best possible solution out of the miserable circumstances afforded to them. Numerous secret councils were held and the queen herself tried to reassure the bourgeoisie of the king's great devotion to his subjects and his need to be certain of their loyalty. When this was met with a tepid reception, the king was transported in secret from Paris to Tours. It was widely held that this had been an initiative of the princes who had wished to avoid an audience between Burgundy and the king, afraid that the king would greet his cousin favourably. By this stage Burgundy was making for Paris and was «*justement irrité*» by this pre-emptive manoeuvre against him by his closest relatives. He sent his brother-in-law, the Count of Hainaut, to Tours to attempt mediation on his behalf with Charles, the adolescent Duke of Orleans.⁸⁹

The King of Sicily had long striven to arrive at some sort of peaceful equilibrium between the Orleanists and Burgundy, while keeping a watchful eye upon the personal fortunes and aspirations of his own House. The Treaty of Chartres was looked to as a solution to the ruinous civil conflict now threatening again to tear France apart. It was largely the work of the royal council which, as stated above, had met in secret, Burgundy suspecting that its deliberations had been inspired by the master of the king's household and *grand tresorier* of France, Jean de Montaigu. He thenceforth harboured an intense hatred of Montaigu, claiming that he was both the author of discord between the princes and the removal of the king from his, Burgundy's, access. He refused to grant Montaigu

⁸⁸ Ibid., ch. xix, p. 137.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 185.

an audience when he formed part of the king's mission to discuss the terms of the proposed treaty. Burgundy eventually relented, only to visit a tirade of his grievances upon Montaigu, concluding that he would be justified in seeking his death. He nevertheless stated that he would be generous and pardon Montaigu's actions against him. Montaigu, while not believing in Burgundy's statement of forbearance and good will, fell to his knees in gratitude. The *Religieux* records that Montaigu's first impulse was to flee with his family to a well-fortified and inaccessible castle in the mountainous region of the Auvergne.⁹⁰ Notwithstanding his well-founded fears, he returned to the king, the queen and the royal princes, confirming that the mission had been successful and that Burgundy had accepted the terms of the agreement.⁹¹ Burgundy re-entered Paris at the head of a full force of arms, demanding the king's return to the capital. The treaty between the warring Dukes of Burgundy and Orleans was signed in the Cathedral of Chartres in the presence of the king, the queen and the great and good of the realm. Louis II was present at the conclusion of this latest pact designed to consolidate a peace plan brokered in the hope that it might both find agreement between the hostile dukes and force all the princes formally to pledge loyalty to their king. The treaty was executed on 9th March 1409.

Some form of accommodation having been achieved, by July 1409 Louis II was making plans to leave for Italy, first addressing the uncomfortable proposition of negotiations with Amedée VIII regarding territories in Provence, disputes left over from the time of Louis I.⁹²

However, duty to his monarch had first to be served, and in the wake of the Treaty of Chartres Burgundy's boldness re-emerged, best characterized by Montaigu's eventual show-trial and execution. The princes decided that rather than challenge Burgundy openly, France (and their personal interests) would be best served if they all worked towards state reform. They all assembled in royal council in the presence of the king on

⁹⁰ *Religieux*, vol. II, l. XXIX, ch. xxiv, p. 185.

⁹¹ See Appendix 1, n. 22.

⁹² Above, p. 56 for the discussion regarding Savoyard claims over strategic territories in Provence. This dispute would bleed on into Yolande's regency after the death of Louis II. She would once and for all bring the dilemma to a conclusion during her stay in Provence from 1419-1423. It would not however be a satisfactory solution from her point of view, merely a necessary expedient to allow her eldest son Louis III to depart on his mission of conquest to Italy. See below pp. 186-187.

1st December 1409.⁹³ Charles VI then convoked a general assembly of his barons to take place in Paris to advise him on the best ways to reform the State, thereby ensuring the re-establishment of public order, the tranquillity of his subjects and the prosperity of the kingdom.⁹⁴

The queen and the dauphin were fetched back to Paris by the Kings of Sicily and Navarre, the princes and a dozen counts, to hear the barons speak; and the following Tuesday the king himself returned to Paris. The barons chose as their spokesman their most senior peer, the Count of Tancarville, who put forward the view that, given that the queen had managed to prolong a treaty from year to year with the English, her regency in the absence of the king ought to be extended. He added that, should the king's potential "absences" become protracted, she should continue both as regent and guardian of the dauphin with the assistance and guidance of the other princes of the blood. The allocution complete, Berry rose and pledged his worldly possessions and his loyalty to the good of the king, and the other princes followed his example. Berry confirmed that the dauphin should govern in place of his absent father with the guidance of the queen and whichever of the princes she chose to nominate as her closest advisors. The king agreed to this, several days later asking who should be entrusted with the guardianship of the dauphin during his "absences". Berry excused himself, citing his advanced years, at the same delivering praise in favour of Burgundy's candidature for the post of most senior guardian of the dauphin after the queen.

The *Religieux* notes that the dauphin accepted this proposition with rather too much alacrity. Berry declared that the dauphin need only summon him or the other princes and they would immediately assist. Once sidelined however, Berry was soon to find that the Dukes of Burgundy and Brabant had been negotiating in secret with the King of Navarre. Berry soon fell out with his nephews Burgundy and the King of Navarre, fearing that they were plotting against him.⁹⁵

⁹³ According to the *Religieux*, the assembled witnessed that the king, having recovered his senses: «... l'étonnèrent fort en lui apprenant que le grand maître de sa maison, messire Jean de Montaigu, qu'il avait toujours regardé comme le plus fidèle de ses servoiteurs, avait été décapité en punition de tous ses méfaits.» *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXX, ch. xvii, p. 283

⁹⁴ Loc. cit.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 286-289.

By the time news of his great rival Ladislaus's defeat at the hands of a force led by his loyal servant Tanneguy du Châtel had reached the King of Sicily by Easter week of March 1410, Louis II must have been impatient to head personally his campaign against his Neapolitan nemesis. Châtel was directed by Louis II to situate himself outside Rome to secure safe passage for Pope Alexander V, ensuring that he would be received in pacific circumstances. In the wake of the Council of Pisa and the election of Alexander V, Louis II departed for Pisa to make certain he was once again invested with the kingdom of Naples.⁹⁶ Châtel had amassed a great show of force, taking the battle right up to Ladislaus, whom he had defeated and forced to flee. The pope was free to enter Rome and was urged to do so without undue delay.⁹⁷ Louis II had in the interim arrived on the peninsula, but by 3rd September 1409, following a revolt in Genoa at the same time as successes in papal states, having imposed his authority over the district of Saint Peter in Rome itself, he departed for Provence to amass further forces and the money with which to finance his campaign.⁹⁸ Alexander V died on 3rd May 1410, replaced by John XXIII,⁹⁹ elected with the support of Louis II, who had returned to Italy and Florence on 25th May 1410. John supported Louis II against the pretensions of Ladislaus right up until the time that Louis abandoned his victories in 1411.

The period 1410-1411 was extremely troubled for France, and very exacting personally for Louis II. As discussed, hard on the heels of the Treaty of Chartres Louis brought his Italian project to fruition. He tasted victory and then defeat and by September 1409 he was once more in Provence and then in France. On 31st January 1410, letters had been exchanged between him and Burgundy fixing another date for the marriage of their children deferred by the events of 1407. He needed to confirm continued financial support from his cousin to allow him to push on with his Italian venture. New dates

⁹⁶ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 480. See Appendix 1, n. 23.

⁹⁷ *Religieux*, vol. II, l. XXXI, ch.i, p. 311.

⁹⁸ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 481, cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...*, pp. 204-205.

⁹⁹ The Neapolitan cardinal, Baldassare Cossa, whose brother Gaspard headed the flotilla of Louis II in 1410. Ohnesorge, Christof, *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 268. As stated above, John had been elected with the support of Louis II. In April 1411 he advanced with Louis II to Rome and participated in the war the King of Sicily successfully prosecuted against Ladislaus of Duras, routing the rival's forces at the Battle of Roccasecca on 19th May 1411. It would seem on the surface that Louis II inexplicably turned his back upon this victory, so long anticipated and returned to France. As a result John opened negotiations with the vanquished Ladislaus, whom he had earlier excommunicated for his support of Gregory XII. Ladislaus abandoned Gregory and proclaimed John the true pope. In return John conferred the rights over Naples and consented to a move against Sicily, making him standard-bearer of the Church and furnishing the financial resources required to continue his military campaigns.

were set for the ceremony and new financial clauses added to strengthen the agreement. These specified that the marriage would take place on the Tuesday after Easter, with Burgundy paying a further 40,000 écus, due on the day of the ceremony, but payable in four instalments.¹⁰⁰ The journal of the Chamber of Accounts in Angers records: «*Le lundi IIIe jour de mars MCCCCIX [1410 n.s.] furent rendues et baillées à Jean Benoin, secrétaire du roi de Sicile en deux lettres soubz les seaulx de Chastellet Paris, en laz de soye et cire verte, faisans mencion et contenans le traictié du mariage dentre monseigneur messire Loys, filz dudit seigneur et de madame Katerine, fille de monseigneur de Bourgogne ...*». ¹⁰¹ In return Burgundy rewarded Louis II for his show of loyalty by ensuring that he received the required financial subsidy from the royal treasury to fund the Italian mission. It was an alliance that fulfilled both the aspirations of the Angevins and those of Burgundy.

A crown decorated with precious stones was handed over to Louis II by Burgundy on 19th March 1410 at the time of their meeting in Gien-sur-Loire, where Catherine was delivered to the Angevins in preparation for the actual ceremony.¹⁰² The wedding should have taken place at Angers.¹⁰³ We should also note that after 31st May, during the busy year 1410, Louis III was being mooted as a possible successor to the throne of Aragon in the wake of the death of Martin I the Humane.¹⁰⁴ While all this occupied the attention of Louis II, his uncle Berry and his cousin Burgundy were in conflict over the guardianship of the dauphin and the stewardship of the kingdom during the king's insufficiencies. On 18th April 1410 the engagement of Bonne d'Armagnac¹⁰⁵ and Charles

¹⁰⁰ See Appendix 1, n. 24.

¹⁰¹ *Le Temps de Princes*, p. 40.

¹⁰² The Angevins later denied the validity of the contract. The crown later passed to the hands of Louis's banker, the Florentine merchant Michel de Pazzi, based in Paris.

¹⁰³ Valois asserts that the marriage did take place on 1st May 1410. He cites sources D. Plancher, *Histoire générale de Bourgogne*, t. III, pp. 285, 582-583, CCLXVIII, E. Petit, *Itinéraires de Philippe le Hardi ...*, p. 595 & Monstrelet, t. II, p. 64. Valois, op. cit. t. IV, p. 127.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Ohnesorge, op. cit., p. 268. A further interesting insight regarding Yolande's rights over the crown is examined by Jeanne Vieillard in *Revue des Questions Historiques* January 1935 referring to the correspondence of the dowager Queen of Aragon, Violant of Bar. See p. 159 below. We will continue to argue in this study that Yolande's accession rights were never extinguished, cf. below pp. 159-161, Appendix 1, n. 25 & Appendix 2, doc. 1. and Vendrell Gallostra, Francisca, *Violante de Bar y el Compromiso de Caspe*, Barcelona, Real Academia de Buenas Letras, 1992.

¹⁰⁵ Bonne d'Armagnac was the granddaughter of Jean, Duke of Berry, at this time in open conflict with his nephew Burgundy. It must have been a very busy time in March-April of 1410 with the engagements of both Anjou-Burgundy and Orléans-Armagnac being celebrated during the same period.

d'Orléans was also celebrated at Gien. Bonne's father Bernard VII of Armagnac later became the leader of the Orleanist faction.¹⁰⁶

In spite of these distractions, Louis II did manage to return to Italy, scoring a decisive victory over Ladislaus during Easter 1411.¹⁰⁷ The *Religieux* reports this event, joyously heaping praise upon Louis II, the illustrious King of Sicily, noting that the cardinals unanimously conferred the title of «*principal champion et protecteur de la sainte Eglise*» once he had escorted John XXIII to Rome. The pope presented him with the standard of the Church, urging Louis to bring the battle right up to Ladislaus. As noted previously, this he achieved at the battle of Roccasecca, sending Ladislaus's captured standards to the pope in Rome as proof of his great victory. Rome proclaimed: «*Vive le souverain pontife et le victorieux Louis, roi de Sicile!*»¹⁰⁸

Louis could have taken possession of his entire kingdom had he chosen to exploit the victory at Roccasecca. Instead he seemed disinclined to push on, the troubles in France, the ill health of his men, his own deteriorating health, the scarcity of money and supplies and the increasingly strident demands of his captains allowing Ladislaus the time he needed to regroup and reinforce his own troops.¹⁰⁹ Disillusioned, Louis II departed Italy and regained Provence in August 1411. The *Religieux* baldly states that while most claimed that the King of Sicily had only returned to Paris on 11th January 1412 to raise funds to relieve his debts, many rejoiced at his return in the hope that he might be able to

¹⁰⁶ Valois gives us some insights as to what occurred at Gien on 18th April 1410, when the *Ligue* of Gien was formed to unite against the power and ambitions of Burgundy and consisted of the Dukes of Berry, Orleans, Brittany and the Counts of Alençon, Clermont and Armagnac. The looming war that had long been foreshadowed was temporarily delayed by the Peace of Bicêtre established on 2nd November 1410. It nevertheless broke out during the summer of 1411, shortly before the return of the King of Sicily (to Provence) in the autumn of that same year. Both parties covered themselves in dishonour that summer, the Armagnacs by forming an alliance with the ever opportunistic English and the Burgundians by their bloody exactions in Paris. Valois, op. cit. t. IV, p. 153.

¹⁰⁷ Easter and therefore the New Year fell on 12th April 1411.

¹⁰⁸ *Religieux*, vol. II, l. xxxii, ch. i, p. 397.

¹⁰⁹ *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 481. While Léonard makes the point that with this stunning victory over Ladislaus, Louis II was at long last in a position to claim his kingdom in its entirety yet unaccountably gave time for the vanquished to re-group, we do not hold with his conclusion that it was Louis II's personality which prevented him from exploiting the Roccasecca victory. Rather it seems that too many circumstances mitigated against his pushing on, particularly the ruinous financial cost of the Italian campaign and the physical toll it exacted upon the French Angevins in general and Louis II in particular, so far from home. Add to this observation the fact that the political situation in France was once again out of control, with Charles d'Orléans, Berry, Burgundy and now Armagnac at continual loggerheads and no relief in sight. Burgundy had approached the English for aid in his struggle against Orléans and the situation showed no signs of improvement. Cf. *Religieux* for details of this period of civil conflict, vol. II, l. XXXII, ch. xxi, pp. 475+ for the return of Louis II in book XXXII, ch. xl, p. 591.

mediate and broker some form of accommodation between Orléans and Burgundy.¹¹⁰ Louis II was not to attempt a further expedition to Naples. He turned his attention to his domains in France and the conflict between his uncles and his cousins to see if something positive could be salvaged from the wreckage of the kingdom. In February, Louis II had concluded an agreement of mutual understanding with the Orleans faction at Angers, reiterating their mutual support and loyalty to the king and dauphin and pledging reciprocal support for one another should their respective territories be threatened by invaders.¹¹¹

On the advice of Burgundy, Charles VI moved against his uncles Berry and Bourbon and his cousin Alençon, deposing the Constable of France, Charles I d'Albret. Louis II joined the fight during the siege of Bourges on the king's (and Burgundy's) side in the company of the new constable of France, the Count of St-Pôl, an ally of Burgundy. Louis had joined the fight on what he probably perceived to be the winning side. In the wake of the siege many tried to mediate a peaceful settlement between the two sides for the good of the kingdom. Negotiations proved successful and the Auxerre treaty was ratified by the dauphin, in the absence of his father, on 22nd August 1412, with Louis II, King of Sicily seated by his side on the dais.¹¹² The other princes of the blood, including Burgundy and the king's uncles and parties to the pact were seated in hierarchical order below the dauphin and Louis II. The treaty had doubtless been formulated in the interests of the King of Sicily whose domains in Anjou-Maine had been threatened by an invasion by the Duke of Clarence in 1412. Orléans would have needed Louis II's support on the royal council.

By March 1413, Louis appeared to be contemplating a fall-back position were he to withdraw his support from the increasingly powerful and ambitious Burgundy who, during the course of 1412, had married his eldest daughter Marguerite to the Dauphin Louis. Louis II therefore agreed to an interview at Angers with Burgundy's rivals the Dukes of Brittany and Orleans, with whom he had already formed certain agreements as well as with Alençon, all three fearful that in meeting together they would jeopardize the conditions laid down in the Treaty of Auxerre. So conscious were they of this possibility

¹¹⁰ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXXII, ch. xl, p. 591.

¹¹¹ *Les Princes Angevins*, p. 168.

¹¹² *Religieux*, op. cit., v. II, l. XXXIII, ch. xxi, p. 709.

that by the end of March, Orléans's chancellor was sent to inform Charles VI that although his master had every intention of preserving the peace established at Auxerre, he wished to request that he be able to access and utilize the fiscal resources of his duchy and that the king consider returning his domains of Coucy and others taken from him during the conflict. He needed these resources to ransom his brother. The dauphin preferred to postpone his response until his father had recovered, but Constable St-Pôl refused to render the Coucy fortress unless Orléans paid a vast sum of money in exchange for its return. St-Pôl then set about degrading the facilities of the fortress. At the end of March 1413, Henry IV of England succumbed to leprosy leaving the way open for his ambitious heir Henry V to invade France.¹¹³

In the wake of Auxerre, the Orleanists became increasingly restless and the Burgundians ever bolder and self-assured. Louis II was obliged to traverse a political mine-field, having regained his position on the royal council since his return from Italy and cementing his alliance with Burgundy. He seems to have been caught in the middle of new simmering hostilities between the two factions, trying to act as honest broker for both sides.

The political climate once again changed however in the wake of the Cabochian rebellion, with the Orleanists finding themselves in the ascendancy by early August 1413. On 8th August 1413 Charles VI issued a telling edict entitled "*Littera accordii dominorum de francia de prosapia Regia*",¹¹⁴ an agreement between the great princes of the realm directing them to unite in the interests of the kingdom. It was promulgated at a time when the *Ordonnance Cabochienne* had been set aside by both the University and other seekers of governmental reform in the wake of the terror occasioned by the insurgents, many of whom were partisans of Burgundy. It mentions all the great princes, with the King of Sicily repeatedly named as principal and most loyal advisor to the king while Berry and Burgundy are urged to unify behind the king's cause. This forms an interesting snapshot of the political moment in early August just as the rebellion was falling apart and the Orleanists had retaken Paris, eager to exact retribution from the Burgundians. Another instructive document of the period, taken from the same collection is «*Des actes des cabochiens contre la famille royale*» published in letters patent

¹¹³ *Religieux*, v. II, l. XXXIII, ch. xxxiii and xxxiv, pp. 769-771.

¹¹⁴ Archives Départementales de l'Hérault, série A1, folios 329 v°-334v°.

dated 18th September 1413. This document details the crimes of lese-majesty committed against members of the royal family and goes into minute detail of the actions of the rebels and their supporters. It records the names of principal members of the royal family and of the accused, but nowhere in this entire document is the name of the Duke of Burgundy mentioned. He may have been too powerful to name in connection with such heinous activity, or perhaps the royal family was attempting to protect one of their own, the father-in-law of the dauphin. Burgundy withdrew in disgrace to his domains and the Armagnacs took control of government and of Paris.¹¹⁵

The actions of Louis II post-Caboche were to have far-reaching consequences for the future of his House and firmly established the Angevins as the Crown's most loyal ally. By November 1413, Louis's choice was crystal clear: the Angevins's future lay with France and their allegiance would be to the monarchy, not Burgundy.¹¹⁶ Louis's rupture with Burgundy was as multi-layered in its motivations as had been his original alliance with him. The *Religieux* makes a point of recording, in the heat of the Cabochien rebellion, that: «Ils [princes of the blood] se plaignent en outre qu'on ait arrêté monseigneur le duc de Bar [Yolande's maternal uncle] cousin germain du roi, et qu'on le retienne encore prisonnier, au mépris des droits de tous les seigneurs de la maison royale ...; ce qui afflige singulièrement lesdits princes, et en particulier le roi et la reine de Sicile qui demandent et requièrent instamment sa délivrance et celle de monseigneur de Bavière, frère de la reine, leur très redoutée dame ...»¹¹⁷

According to the *Religieux*, Burgundy decamped from Paris *précipitamment* on 23rd August, having received authorization (not without difficulty) to do so. Ever conscious of his prestige, he wrote to the University without delay outlining the reasons for his brusque departure, adding that he would approve of any measures the other princes might choose to adopt in his absence. The Parisians for their part were surprised by the suddenness of his departure, and the *Religieux* notes that he did not even remain to

¹¹⁵ See below the *Religieux's* version of the nature of Burgundy's departure and the fact that he pledged to the University that he would go along with any decision made by the other princes in the wake of the Cabochian rebellion. See also the similar evasion of justice in the wake of 1407, above pp. 131-135.

¹¹⁶ This will be argued in following chapters in the light of the totality of Angevin actions and despite the absence of Louis III in Italy for the most part from 1419-1434. It was not he who would support the Crown but his mother, regent for his French and Provençal interests, and his siblings.

¹¹⁷ *Religieux*, v. III, bk. XXXIV, ch. xxvii, p. 105.

participate in celebrations scheduled for the end of the month, when the other princes planned to make their entry into Paris.¹¹⁸

Having obtained a proclamation from the king regarding the guilt of the principal rebels, the Orleanist faction and the King of Sicily (who at that stage was still at pains to appear neutral) set about restoring their partisans to high offices vacated by supporters of Burgundy.¹¹⁹ The Duke of Brittany threatened to leave Paris, having not been accorded due respect by Orléans's men. At the last moment, the King of Sicily intervened to calm the situation.¹²⁰ Here again we witness Louis II seeking to calm the royal council and appear as neutral mediator in the affairs of state. However, far from calming the princes he was about to set a cat amongst the pigeons with an act he would regret until the end of his days. In planning a reception to pacify Brittany and Orléans, he made the decision to split with Burgundy. Here is how the *Religieux* records Louis II's actions: «... *Sur ces entrefaites, ce même roi [Louis II], au grand étonnement de tous, consentit au mariage de son fils avec la fille du duc de Bretagne, malgré l'engagement qu'il avait pris antérieurement avec le duc de Bourgogne, et renvoya audit duc sa fille qui demeurait depuis trois ans avec son fiancé. Ce manque de parole, qui eût paru blâmable aux yeux mêmes de l'homme le plus insensible et le plus grossier, alluma entre eux une haine implacable.*».¹²¹

This occurred in late September, once the Orleanists had regained control of both the royal council and the capital. Burgundy had retired to his territories, having apparently narrowly escaped a charge of lese-majesty (if we read between the lines of *Les actes des cabochiens contre la famille royale*¹²² and the account found in the *Religieux*¹²³ outlined above and below). Louis II, having for the moment, put his Italian aspirations to one side, no longer needed the funding Burgundy had pledged him. Added to this was the

¹¹⁸ Ibid., ch. xxxiv, p. 149. It is interesting to note that the *Religieux* records in the following chapter that Burgundy was exonerated of involvement in the rebellion and that the rebels were found to have been acting alone: «... *Sa royale majesté... s'est convaincue que certaines gens, égarés par l'esprit de rébellion, se sont rendus coupables de lèse-majesté ... qu'il ne faut sans doute attribuer ni aux suggestions ni aux conseils de monseigneur le duc de Bourgogne ou de tout autre prince du sang, puisque la honte en eût rejailli principalement sur eux ...*» ch.XXXV, p. 153. Nevertheless, Burgundy lost control of the council and of the capital in the wake of the rebellion.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 159.

¹²⁰ This would have been on or around the publication of letters patent *les actes cabochiens contre la famille royale*, proclaimed 18th September 1413.

¹²¹ *Religieux*, v. III, l. XXXIV, ch.xxxv, p. 161.

¹²² Where his name is nowhere to be seen among the list of the guilty, yet his involvement was common knowledge to his contemporaries.

¹²³ Where he is specifically singled out for mention as not having advised the rebels.

possibility that given the circumstances, Louis might have perceived Burgundy as a spent force.

In October 1413, according to her household accounts, Yolande d'Aragon requisitioned funds from her treasury in preparation for a journey to Paris.¹²⁴ It would seem that with the King of Sicily dominating the council, in the light of the rupture of the betrothal agreement with Burgundy in favour of one with his new ally Brittany, Yolande, Queen of Sicily journeyed to Paris to attend the unfolding of events.

By 16th November, the Duke of Burgundy had complained to the king, according to the *Religieux*, of «*plusieurs griefs frivoles et imaginaires*», but his letters had achieved nothing in their attempt to «*... diminuer l'animosité des princes contre lui; mais ce qui mit le comble à son déplaisir, c'est qu'après avoir destitué tous ceux qu'il avait pourvus d'offices à la cour, on ôta à messire de Dampierre, son vassal, la charge d'amiral de France à laquelle il avait été promu par élection, et qu'on mit à sa place messire Clignet de Brabant.*».¹²⁵

On 20th November 1413, the by then twenty-one year old Catherine of Burgundy¹²⁶ was ceremoniously escorted back to her father by the King of Sicily's men as far as the city of Beauvais. There she was met and conducted back to Lille. She was welcomed by her father, who, according to Monstrelet: «*... de ce grandement fut trouble, et conçut pour cette cause grand'haine à l'encontre dudit roi de Sicile, laquelle dura toute leur vie.*»¹²⁷ There seemed to be one rule for Burgundy and another for everyone else, for Burgundy seems to have selectively glossed over the fact that he too had committed a similar breach of promise,¹²⁸ while still Duke of Nevers. He had been originally betrothed to Catherine de

¹²⁴ KK 242 f^o. 13.

¹²⁵ *Religieux*, v. III, l. XXXIV, ch.xliiii , pp. 211 & 221.

¹²⁶ Her young fiancé Louis III was by then still only ten-years old.

¹²⁷ *Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'Histoire de France: Chroniques d'Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, ed. Buchon, J.A.C., Paris, A. Desrez, 1836, p. 302. It is on the heels of Catherine's banishment from Angers that Monstrelet records Burgundy's letters of complaint to the king. The *Religieux* records the events in the reverse order. The letters may have been dated 16th November, but Catherine was not sent home until 20th November. Regardless of the chronology, Louis II had by November and indeed by late September, the time of his talks with Brittany, decided to break the betrothal agreement with Burgundy either as a result of his involvement with Caboche or the fact that he no longer needed him as an ally, dangerous and intemperate as he had shown himself to be since his arrival at court in 1404.

¹²⁸ Given that Jean sans Peur was roughly fourteen-years of age at the time of his ruptured betrothal and that the time for the consumation of the marriage was fast approaching, it might well have been his father Phillip who broke the engagement, just as Louis II was to do in 1413 when Louis III was about ten- years of age and Catherine of Burgundy was in her twenty-first year. Despite the political

Valois, daughter of Charles V. In about 1385, he had broken his engagement to the King of France¹²⁹ to marry Catherine, instead marrying Marguerite of Bavaria-Straußing, thereby consolidating his political and strategic position in the Low Countries.

The Angevins had moved to forge an alliance with Brittany, who would be an asset at court and whose lands formed a western buffer to theirs in the event of a serious English invasion, long anticipated and now more likely with the accession of Henry V. Alençon was brought back into the fold post-Caboche, and his county formed an additional buffer to the north of Anjou-Maine.¹³⁰ They then moved to cement relations with the House of France; and it was for this express purpose that Yolande had been waiting at Marcoussis on the outskirts of Paris, in the company of Louis II. The *Religieux* records that on 18th December 1413, while the king was once more at the mercy of his illness, the youngest surviving son of France, Charles of Ponthieu, was affianced to Marie, elder daughter of the King and Queen of Sicily. The betrothal took place at the Louvre in the presence of Ysabeau, Louis, King of Sicily, and Yolande, Queen of Sicily, the Dukes of Guyenne (the dauphin) and Orleans and the Counts of Vertus, of Eu and of Armagnac.¹³¹

The date of the commencement of these betrothal negotiations is very interesting¹³² as are the locations where the meetings were held. Lecoy de la Marche insists that the negotiations between the two queens opened at Marcoussis (a residence owned by Ysabeau's brother, Louis of Bavaria) on 21st October 1413, one month before Catherine was sent back to her father.

At the time of his betrothal, Charles de Ponthieu was third in line to the throne. Despite the fact that his two elder brothers had married into the Burgundian faction, they had not at that stage produced any heirs. Whatever the long term strategy, Ysabeau's household accounts show that she received Yolande with great pomp and that the two queens worked out the terms of the agreement together. As soon as possible after the

aspect of the alliance, by the time that Louis III was of an appropriate age to consummate the marriage, Catherine would have been approaching her late twenties.

¹²⁹ At that time the king was his young cousin Charles VI, still in his minority.

¹³⁰ Louis II had earlier led a successful military campaign in the king's name against Alençon who had revolted against the authority of the Crown.

¹³¹ *Religieux*, v. III, l. XXXIV, ch. xlvi, p. 231. Cf. KK 242 f° 13.

¹³² Lecoy de la Marche, *Le Roi René...* t.I, pp.29-31.

solemnization of the betrothal, weighed down with gifts from Ysabeau, Yolande departed Paris for Marcoussis and then for Angers in the company of the young Count and Countess of Ponthieu.¹³³

The Duke of Burgundy, again on the march and threatening to enter Paris with a force of arms, was met with determined defence by his cousins and uncles in the name of the king. By 13th February 1414, the king had published an edict against Burgundy drawing attention to the crimes he had committed since the death of Louis d'Orléans.¹³⁴ Burgundy laid siege to Compiègne, but was eventually pushed back as far as Arras. On 6th August 1414, Louis II's great rival Ladislaus died, leaving his sister Joanna II in the company of Louis II's vassal Jacques de Bourbon, Count of Marche (whom she later married) to ascend the throne so long coveted by Louis II. The *Religieux* makes the observation that at the time Louis II was too ill to intervene in the politics of Naples. Notwithstanding this, Valois cites evidence to the fact that, despite his illness and/or inability to act directly, Louis II nevertheless arranged from the autumn of 1414 to allow Pierre Bonhomme a free hand to continue to pursue Angevin benefit in Italy.¹³⁵ Even if Louis II had for the moment lost immediate interest in Italy, he might well have thought it prudent to keep his hopes alive should his health and the political situation in France improve. Louis furthermore had the Council of Constance to consider, for which he needed to prepare an embassy,¹³⁶ and by this time the royal council was once again moving towards establishing some form of peace with Burgundy. An accord was signed on 16th October 1414.¹³⁷

France had other troubles looming on the horizon. The ambitious and determined Henry V of England was preparing to invade France, at the same time offering peacefully to

¹³³ KK 243 f° 13. They were referred to as such in Yolande's household accounts in spite of their young age.

¹³⁴ Cf. *Religieux*, v. III, l. XXXIV, ch. xlix, pp. 249-271.

¹³⁵ Valois op. cit. t. IV, p. 252, cf. his footnote 6 which cites a deliberation recorded at the chapter of Notre-Dame in Paris dated 15th October 1414 which commences: "*Pro parte domini regis Ludovici, qui super hoc scripsit capitulo litteras credencie per dominum de Cucé, militem, ejus cambellanum et magistrum Johannem Belardi, decanum Cenomanensem requisti sunt domini dare licenciam domino Cantori Parisiensi, nuper recepto, pro vacando negociis ipsius regis erga dominum nostrum Papam et in Ytalie, ubi dictus rex habet multum negociari propter mortem Landislai, sui adversarii novissime deffuncti ...*" Valois goes on to relate that in spite of the fact that the Paris chapter may have been opposed to an Angevin mission they did not however prevent Pierre Bonhomme from remaining in the service of Louis II, pp. 252-253. Cf. Monstrelet op. cit. p. 349.

¹³⁶ See Appendix 1, n. 26.

¹³⁷ Valois op. cit. t. IV pp. 383 and 399. Jean d'Alençon was created Duke during the first week of January 1415 (1414 o. s.) in recognition of his loyalty to the Crown, p. 399.

clear the path to his “inheritance” of France by marrying Catherine, the daughter of Charles VI.¹³⁸ During the disputes between the warring princes, he had been courted successively by both sides in the civil conflict. In their lack of unity, the princes made France easy prey to a bright young English king with initiative and political deftness. Henry sent his chief herald to the court of France on 7th April 1415 with a proposition to unite the two kingdoms by marriage rather than by force of arms, and requested the restitution of the rights he held by virtue of his lineage. He would have taken a very keen interest in the political landscape in France from the time of his ascent to the throne in 1413, and with the Orleanists and the Burgundians in constant conflict from the time of the murder of the Duke of Orleans, the English king probably determined that, in the face of Burgundy’s active neutrality to the threat of an English invasion, the spring of 1415 was the ideal opportunity to launch an attempt to seize the Crown of France. The phoney war and its attendant negotiations continued into the summer of 1415, with the respective embassies moving to and fro between London and Paris. Finally, patience exhausted, Henry V demanded the hand of Catherine and his rights over the Crown of France.¹³⁹ The French stood their ground, Henry invaded Normandy and the real war for succession began. This might have been expected to sweep aside the petty aspirations of the home-grown princes, but it did not. Burgundy remained aloof (but still raised a considerable force of arms in Burgundy, Savoy and Lorraine),¹⁴⁰ no doubt with an eye to ally himself with the potential victor just as he had done during the Cabochian rebellion. Louis II increasingly fell victim to the illness which would carry him off in less than two years; however he travelled to his county of Provence, where Yolande and the Count and Countess of Ponthieu had been keeping court, the importance of which to the Angevin enterprise has been discussed above.¹⁴¹ He and Yolande returned north with their children by about September 1415 to await the outcome of the threatened English

¹³⁸ The Hundred Years War had its origins in the claim made by Edward III in 1337 that he was a direct descendant of Philippe IV le Bel through his mother Isabelle of France (daughter of Philippe IV). At the time, Edward had used this as a reason to refuse to do homage for Guyenne to Philippe VI (the first Valois monarch, whose legitimacy to rule Edward questioned). Cf. Taylor, Craig, (ed.), *Debating the Hundred Years War : Pour ce que plusieurs (La Loy Salique) and the declaracion of the trew and dewe title of Henrie VIII*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, Vale, Malcolm, Graham, Allan, *The Origins of the Hundred Years War: the Angevin Legacy 1250-1340*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1996.

¹³⁹ *Religieux*, vol. III, l. XXXVI, ch. iv, p. 523.

¹⁴⁰ The king, or rather the royal council, had refused his overtures of cooperation. In the light of previous events perhaps this was hardly surprising, particularly as the Orleanist faction had regained control of the royal council.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...*, pp. 209-219.

invasion, passing through Orleans on their way to Anjou-Maine.¹⁴² Both Charles of Ponthieu and his father-in-law Louis II attended the emergency royal council convoked by the king in Rouen on 20th October 1415.¹⁴³ This was the future Charles VII's first formal involvement in the world of politics and government: he was twelve years of age. He would have witnessed the spectacle of a monarchy in turmoil and a kingdom in crisis. The battle of Agincourt took place on 25th October.

In the wake of Agincourt, with nothing to lose and much to gain, Burgundy ravaged the kingdom.¹⁴⁴ Burgundy refused to discipline his troops, despite the king's orders to do so. The princes of the blood and their king re-entered Paris on 25th November. With them was the young Charles de Ponthieu, who had been accorded the title Captain of the fortress of Vincennes. Politically speaking, this was an important appointment, as the fortified chateau served as a royal residence for both the king and the queen.¹⁴⁵ Bernard VII of Armagnac was created Constable and the bloodshed intensified. Monstrelet records that Burgundy soon assembled a great army to enter Paris. He states that Louis II, ill and in bad odour with Burgundy over the incident of the ruptured betrothal, departed Paris for Angers, only pausing to warn the Council of his cousin's malign intentions towards the Crown.¹⁴⁶ Charles de Ponthieu had preceded Louis II to Angers.¹⁴⁷

Burgundy's son-in-law the dauphin fell ill with dysentery and died on 18th December 1415 without issue, bringing Charles de Ponthieu one step closer to the throne. The new Dauphin Jean, Duke of Touraine, married to the daughter of Burgundy's great ally the Count of Hainaut, was recalled to the capital to assist in the government of the realm.¹⁴⁸ The Count of Hainaut, who exercised effective guardianship over the new dauphin,

¹⁴² KK 243 f° 45 v° & f° 46.

¹⁴³ Vallet de Viriville op.cit. t. I, p. 18.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Monstrelet's account of Agincourt, op. cit. pp. 374-381.

¹⁴⁵ Monstrelet, *La chronique d'Enguerran de Monstrelet en deux livres, avec les pièces justificatives: 1400-1444*, ed. L. Douët-d'Arq, Paris, J. Renouard, 1857-1862. t. III, p. 126. Cf. Contamine, Philippe, « Vincennes et Charles VII », in Chapelot, Jean & Lalou, Elisabeth, (eds.), *Vincennes aux origines de l'état moderne. Actes du colloque scientifique sur « Les Capétiens et Vincennes au Moyen Age »*, Paris, Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure, 1996, pp. 305-317 ; Guénée, Bernard, « Vincennes et la mise en place de l'état moderne au XIV siècle », in op. cit. supra, pp. 357-362 ; & Chapelot, Jean, « De la « maison » au « château » : les qualificatifs de Vincennes dans les sources écrites au XIIIe-XIVe siècles », in Paviot, Jacques & Verger, Jacques, *Guerre, pouvoir et noblesse au Moyen Age : Mélanges en l'honneur de Philippe Contamine*, Paris, Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2000, pp. 147-158.

¹⁴⁶ Monstrelet, op. cit., pp. 382-383.

¹⁴⁷ KK 243, f° 47. He arrived on 1st December and the King of Sicily on 20th December.

¹⁴⁸ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. I, p. 19.

declared that he would not be returned to the capital unless Burgundy too was welcomed back. Events accelerated for the ailing King of Sicily in 1416 when his uncle Berry died on 15th June. He was forced to re-enter the political arena for two reasons: the changing status of his son-in-law Ponthieu, who was created captain-general of Paris, (a post left vacant by Berry's death) and Burgundy's potential re-admittance to the royal council and therefore into the ascendancy through the offices of his brother-in-law Hainaut. Charles de Ponthieu was still only thirteen years of age and in need of a firm political guardian and mentor. The King of Sicily was the obvious candidate for the post.

*«Le Roy, la Royne, Monseigneur de Guise [Louis III], Monseigneur René, se partirent d'Angers pour aller a Paris de ... au dudit lieu d'Angers. Monseigneur et Madame de Ponthieu, Monseigneur Charles et Madame Yoland avec plusieurs gens et serviteurs ... du Roy et de la Royne ...».*¹⁴⁹ This extract from the household accounts allows us to witness the House of Anjou descending upon the capital with a full retinue. Charles de Ponthieu's political career was being launched at the age of thirteen. With the death of Berry and with Burgundy still in the political wilderness, the King of Sicily was about to take an even more important place on the Council with his royal protégé. On 15th July 1416, Charles was created Duke of Touraine and with this honour came the responsibility of becoming one of the dozen royal peers of France.¹⁵⁰

Ysabeau was still legally in control of government, with the Constable Armagnac for the moment keeping Burgundy at bay. The queen attempted to assure the loyalty of the Constable and the Provost of Paris, Tanneguy du Châtel, a retainer of the King of Sicily, with gifts and pensions. At the same time she was playing a clandestine double game, making overtures to the Duke of Burgundy. This would have been natural in the circumstances, as he had active control over the dauphin *via* his ally Guillaume of Bavaria, Count of Hainaut, who was himself a cousin of the queen. Emboldened, Burgundy increasingly gave encouragement to Henry V's plans for continued invasion while his own men ravaged the north of the kingdom.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ KK 243, f° 47.

¹⁵⁰ «... il est porté par eprés, que les Rois de France pour la conservation de l'honneur de leur Couronne, conseil et ayde de la chose publique, ont institué les douze pairs.» Coquille, Guy, *Les Œuvres de Maistre Guy Coquille, sieur de Romenay, contenant plusieurs traitez touchant les libertez de l'église gallicane, l'histoire de France et le droicte français, entre lesquels plusieurs n'ont point encore esté imprimez...*, Bordeaux, Claude Labottière, 1703.

¹⁵¹ Vallet de Viriville, *op. cit.*, t. I, p. 20.

The Dauphin Jean was forced to wait for the best part of a year before commencing his journey to Paris in November 1416. The members of the royal council had consistently repulsed Burgundy's attempts to re-enter the capital and take his place on the Council. According to Vallet de Viriville, the King of Sicily exercised unquestioned full public authority during this difficult period, which allowed him to exert preponderant influence in the affairs of both Paris and the wider kingdom. He chaired meetings of the royal council for the king with his youthful son-in-law by his side, occupying the place of the dauphin, his elder sibling Jean being kept at bay outside the capital.¹⁵²

Finally on 25th December 1416 the Count of Hainaut gave in to his cousin Ysabeau's pleadings and agreed to return the dauphin to Paris. The dauphin never made it to the capital however, dying in Compiègne on 5th April 1417 from an aural fistula. He too had died without issue. The usual rumours of poisoning were circulated but rapidly discounted.¹⁵³ Charles de Ponthieu, Duke of Touraine, became dauphin on 13th April 1417¹⁵⁴ and the House of Anjou was dealt both a political/dynastic trump card and a grave responsibility to fulfil. The kingdom could not have been in a worse possible state of misery: the king was mad, the queen was incapable, the government was divided and the heir to the throne was fourteen years of age.

By the time Charles became dauphin, Louis II was terminally ill. He returned to his chateau in Angers, well resourced by Charles VI, intending to mount an offensive against Burgundy in the interests of the Crown. The civil strife between Armagnac and Burgundy had deepened and the threat of another English invasion was imminent. The Crown sought help from all corners of the realm, while at the same time Burgundy continued to attract loyalty from many of the kingdom's cities and towns. While Brittany had been in negotiation with Burgundy and Hainhaut since January 1417, at the express command of the king, who had temporarily regained control of his wits and his government, civil strife descended into a battleground of opposing outlaws and

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 22, cf. Félbien, Michel, *Histoire de Paris*, t. III, p. 545, *Ordonnances des rois de France*, t. X, pp. 382 & 385.

¹⁵³ *Religieux*, vol. III, l. XXXVII, chapter xi, pp. 59-61. Cf. Monstrelet (abridged edition) p. 396 for the probable source of the poisoning rumour.

¹⁵⁴ *Ordonnances des rois de France*, t. X, p. 404.

highwaymen. This is the climate in which Henry V seized the opportunity for further conquest.

Charles was living with his mother Ysabeau in the fortified castle of Vincennes at the time he became dauphin. The king, having returned to his senses, was taken to Vincennes by the provost Tanneguy du Châtel, whence he and the dauphin were sent back to Paris by this Angevin loyalist. By 17th April the queen, alone and isolated, wrote to the King and Queen of Sicily seeking their protection. Louis II however was dying. The next day Ysabeau was conducted to Blois by order of Châtel, issued in the name of the king. From there she was sent to Tours and into exile, from where in desperation she would seek assistance from and guarantee the return of the perfidious Burgundy.

Louis II, King of Jerusalem-Sicily-Naples, Duke of Anjou-Maine and Count of Provence and Forcalquier died in Angers on 29th April 1417. He might well have slipped away with a deep sigh of relief, given that his cousin Burgundy was about to mount an open offensive against him, the last remaining effective impediment between Burgundy and the throne. According to the *Religieux*, the King of Sicily died leaving a vast fortune and largely unfinished political business to his widow and heirs.¹⁵⁵

Louis II's relatively short life was characterized by interminable political struggle. He had constantly needed to survey and subdue potential discontent in Provence to enable him to fund and stage his Italian campaigns. During his final visit to Provence he decreed that the county should remain independent from the French Crown, creating a *parlement* based in Aix on 14th August 1415. Yet he had had to court the political support of his uncles and cousins in France.¹⁵⁶ Further, he needed to assure the loyalty of successive popes and antipopes. Anjou and Maine were frequently under attack by the English, forcing him to forge strong dynastic ties with other princes of the blood.

After Agincourt, with the political landscape denuded of many of its former protagonists, Louis II had become a key figure on the royal council, mediating and attempting to chart troubled political waters. With the death of Berry in 1416, Louis had found himself effectively cast into the rôle of King of France as well as King of Sicily,

¹⁵⁵ *Religieux*, vol. III, l. XXXVIII, ch. iv, p. 77.

¹⁵⁶ *Le Temps des Princes*, op. cit. p. 170.

often in residence at royal palaces haunted by the phantom presence of Charles VI. It was he who escorted Sigismund, the Emperor of the Romans, to Saint-Denis at the time of his official visit in March 1416.¹⁵⁷ He was enough of a threat to Burgundy that in April 1416 a plot against him, Yolande and Berry was uncovered and thwarted by Tanneguy du Châtel.

His authority and his true potential for political greatness reached its zenith in the final years of his personal reign, despite Burgundy's best attempts to bring him down or assassinate him. Though he retired from his final Italian campaign victorious yet disillusioned, he never forsook his titular kingdom. He was obliged to curb his personal aspirations, and it must have been hard for him not to have been able personally to draw advantage from the death of Ladislaus of Duras in 1414. With the rupture of the betrothal deed in 1413, Louis II made an implacable enemy in his cousin Burgundy, choosing instead to ally himself with Brittany and the Crown. He was one of the more conscientious of the princes of the blood, one who realized that the best future for his dynasty lay in the ultimate survival of the Kingdom of France.

During the totality of Louis's extended absences from their holdings, whether they were in Provence or indeed assisting the court in its various dealings with Burgundy and the other princes, Yolande d'Aragon had been obliged to take over the administration of their far-flung properties and assets. With Louis's departure for Italy in the wake of the Treaty of Chartres her lieutenant-generalcy and vice-regal authority acquired an official and legal status.¹⁵⁸

From the time of their highly orchestrated nuptials in the royal city of Arles in 1400, their partnership had been an alliance of two political equals, not just of a man and a woman.¹⁵⁹ Reynaud illustrates that this was affirmed only a few years later when Louis II officially confirmed Yolande as vice-regent, since she was "Lady" of their joint domains by virtue of the double-coronation that had occurred at the time of their wedding on 2nd December 1400.¹⁶⁰ This is confirmed by Bertran Boysset who recorded: «*L'an M IIIc lo jorn segon de desembre lo rey Lois esposet madama Violant sa molher* [fol. 37v]

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 168.

¹⁵⁸ Below, p. 155.

¹⁵⁹ Above, pp. 99-101.

¹⁶⁰ *Le Temps de Princes*, p. 111.

la regina novela en l'agleisa de sant Trofeme d'Arle, e los donet lo cardenal d'Albana, lo camarlenc del papa present e motos avesques e prelatz e contes e grans senhos presens aqui foron. »¹⁶¹

Yolande was henceforth *la regina novela*, fulfilling the rôle up to that point vouchsafed for Louis II by his mother Marie of Brittany *la regina vielha*.¹⁶² Reynaud draws our attention to the fact that the double-coronation form was the one used by Robert the Wise when he married the devout Franciscan tertiary Sancia of Mallorca.¹⁶³ Just as the marriage of Robert the Wise to Sancia of Mallorca-Sicily-Aragon was an attempt to unite his Naples to her Sicily, so had Louis II engineered his marriage to Yolande d'Aragon to keep his options open for a later attempt to re-conquer his titular kingdom of Jerusalem-Naples-Sicily.

Accordingly, when Louis II decided that the time was right once more to endeavour to regain sovereignty over Naples, everything was in place to hand over the reigns of power to his vice-regent Yolande in letters patent written from Angers and dated 14th February 1410: *«tres amée compaigne la royne desdiz royaume, duchesse et comtesse des duchié et comtez dessusdiz, la ministration générale ... tant en fait de justice comme des finances ... avecques plaine puissance et autorité de remettre et pardonner touz crimes, deliz et malefices ... donner tous benefices appartenans a nostre colacion ... de mettre et instituer touz officiers en noz diz pays ... de quiconque estat auctorité ou puissance qu'ilz soient et de destituer oster et desappointer ceulx qui y sont et les remettre et instituer ou autrement ordonner selon bon plaisir ... et aussi ... pouvoir et auctorité de faire assembler les gens de troys estas de noz diz pays ... de vendre engager aliener et transporter de noz baronnies, chasteaulx, terres et possessions telles et tant et tout ainsi en la forme et maniere que bon lui semblera ...»*.¹⁶⁴

The authority delegated to Yolande in the absence of Louis II was far-reaching and specific (his heir, Louis III would confer similar powers upon her during his prolonged absence in Italy from 1423 onwards).¹⁶⁵ Yolande did not only exercise titular authority in her husband's name. In 1410, while Louis II was traversing northern Italy on his way south to Naples, Yolande was obliged to quit Angers and hasten to Aix to quell a

¹⁶¹ BNF Ms. Fr. 5728, f°37-37v.

¹⁶² BNF Ms. Fr. 5728, f° 37.

¹⁶³ *Le Temps des Princes*, loc. cit. & see our Appendix 1, n. 27.

¹⁶⁴ Archives Départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône, B9, pp. 184-185 and A.N. P1334/1, pp. 45-46 all cited by Reynaud in *Le Temps des Princes*, loc. cit.

¹⁶⁵ See chapter 6 below.

rebellion by indigenous nobles who had sought to draw an advantage from the absence of their sovereign lord and lady.

Politically astute, diplomatically sensitive and remarkably intelligent, Yolande d'Aragon at the age of thirty-six was about to commence her personal reign.¹⁶⁶ Though well prepared by the comportment and political activity of her mother in the realms of Aragon and her own active partnership in the affairs of Anjou-Maine-Provence and those of France and Jerusalem-Naples-Sicily, the newly widowed Yolande was about to endure a baptism of fire.

¹⁶⁶ In fact if not in name, for she was named regent and guardian for her minor children and the young dauphin in her care.

CHAPTER 5: *MATER NOSTRA*,¹ *POTESTAS*,² *YOLANS REGINA SICILIE*

*Seulete sui et seulete vueil estre ;
Seulete m'a mon doulx ami laissée,
Seulette sui, sanz compaignon ne maistre,
Seulette sui dolente et courroussiée.*³

In the previous chapter we discussed and analyzed the acute dysfunction which characterized the unhappy royal House of Valois during the period of Louis II d'Anjou's personal reign. The madness of King Charles VI combined with the intractable ambition of his closest blood relatives, the inability of Ysabeau of Bavaria to govern intelligently in his name and the implacable hatred of Burgundy⁴ towards Orléans, and indeed any person who did not serve his personal interests, all ensured that unity within France's royal House would not be an easy outcome to achieve. This odious political situation was the one Yolande d'Aragon inherited in 1417, one she was required to circumvent to maintain the prosperity of her House and the future and survival of her son-in-law, the Dauphin Charles.

When Louis II died in April 1417 after years of chronic illness Yolande, unlike her mother and Christine de Pizan, was well-prepared for widowhood. The *Religieux* reports that as early as 1414, following the death of Louis II's great rival, Ladislaus of Duras, on 6th August 1414, the Duke of Anjou was unable to seize the day to assure the throne of Naples: «... car le roi Louis, à qui l'Eglise avait naguère concédé le royaume, était gravement

¹ This is the form by which Charles VII refers to Yolande in many of his official acts and letters, both in his early years as dauphin, and in later years up until the time of her death in 1442 and beyond. *Ordonnances des Rois de France de la Troisième Race*, Vilevault & de Bréquigny, Imprimerie Royale, Paris 1782, t. X-XIII.

² Her son Louis III, in according her the vice-royalty, refers to her as *potestas*, see below this chapter.

³ Christine de Pizan, *Seulete sui*, the 11th ballad, from *Cent Ballades*. Christine was raised at the court of Charles V and was a contemporary of Yolande's mother, Yolande of Bar (later Violant, Queen of Aragon), likewise raised at the court of Charles V (Charles was her cousin; their grandfather was Jean II le Bon). Pisan, Christine de, Varty, Kenneth, (ed.), *Christine de Pisan's Ballades, Rondeaux and Virelais. An Anthology.*, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1965, p. 7. Her son Jean Castel was Charles VII's secretary and notary.

⁴ Jean, Duke of Burgundy seems not only to have inherited his father Phillippe's quarrel with Louis d'Orléans but also his personal style. L'abbé Claude Villaret cites Jean I Juvénal des Ursin's feelings regarding Phillip of Burgundy in speaking of him to Noviant in 1392: "*Je connais le duc de Bourgogne, [...] il est implacable dans sa haine.*", Velley, Paul-François, Villaret, Claude, Garnier, Jean-Jacques, *Histoire de France, depuis l'établissement de la monarchie jusqu'au règne de Louis XIV* [tt. 1-7 par P.-F. Velley, tt. 8-17 par C. Villaret & tt. 18-30 par J-J Garnier], (30 vols.), Paris, Desaint et Nyon, 1767-1769, t. XII, p. 130 & cf. Péchard, P-L, op .cit., pp. 29-31.

*malade et hors l'état de soutenir ses prétentions.»*⁵ This combined with the worries of leading the government in the absence of the king, his struggles with Burgundy, English incursions into his northern domains, years of campaigning in Italy as well as his unrealized Neapolitan aspirations, probably all contributed to his early death at the age of forty in 1417.

Yolande had become accustomed to exercising ducal and princely authority during her husband's absences and illnesses. We have mentioned above that Louis officially conferred the lieutenant-generalcy upon Yolande in February 1410 and headed south, leaving Yolande in control of their joint holdings.⁶ She must have been more than adequate to the task, for in the official letters conferring the lieutenant-generalcy upon her Louis cites [her] «*sens ...[her] bonne discrecion, [her] tres grant loyaulté, obeissance et parfaite armour [and her capacity to] garder noz diz pays doppressions [and] a tenir noz diz sugiez en bonne et vraye obeissance»*.⁷ Yolande exercised all these qualities during Louis's absence in Italy, being forced to defend Provence against incursions firstly by the Genoese, and later by her Aragonese relatives. In the case of the Genoese, arriving to attack the coast of Toulon, Yolande organized a naval offensive, which sank many invading vessels in Hyères harbour. The Aragonese intended to invade Provence on the pretext of supporting the besieged anti-pope, Benedict XIII, resident in Avignon. To thwart this attempt, Yolande dispatched her seneschal, Pierre d'Acigné, Viscount of Reillane, who managed to surprise the Aragonese landing force not far from Port de Bouc, taking many of them prisoner.⁸ During this period, she was required to subdue Provençal nobles, (remnants of the *ligue d'Aix*),⁹ who sought to profit from Louis II's absence.

⁵ *Religieux*, volume 3, book XXIV, p. 383. See above, p. 149.

⁶ “*Die XIIe mensis marcii MCCCC°IX [old style] Ludovicus, rex Sicilie, dux Andegavie ... recessit ab ecclesia beati Mauricii Andegavensis, pro eundo apud Romam et Ytaliam, Et illa die erat festum beati Gregorii; et dictus dominus rex, unacum consorte sua Yolenda, pergerunt apud Salmurium ...*” A.N., P 1334/4, f° 107 v°. Cf. Lecoy de la Marche, *op. cit.* t. I. p. 28.

⁷ Archives Departementales des Bouches-du-Rhône, B 9 (Registre Armorum), pp. 184-185. Cited in Reynaud, *Le Temps de Princes*, p. 173. Cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regeste*, « Aix-en Provence, juillet 1410 », pp. 205-207.

⁸ Camau, Emile, *La Provence à travers les siècles*, Paris, Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1930, p. 112.

⁹ The pacification of Provence would prove to be a work in progress for Yolande as it had been for her predecessors Marie of Brittany and Louis II. It would require a representative of the House of Anjou to appear in person from time to time in the county; any departure from this policy of direct contact inevitably led to dissent in Provence. See below, pp. 204-205.

Furthermore, Yolande was much occupied with the question of succession to the throne of Aragon in the wake of her uncle Martin I's death on 31st May 1410.¹⁰ Lecoy de la Marche states that Yolande, having calmed the *liguistes*, crossed the Pyrenees to assume her rights over the succession.¹¹ His observations are confirmed in *Les Annales de la corona d'Aragón* where it is clearly stated that on 7th February 1411, at a time when the Aragonese *parlamento* had been attempting to negotiate a treaty with Catalonia (which had become destabilized in the wake of Martin I's death), Yolande intended to enter the province, not only with her own retinue of ambassadors but also with those of Charles VI of France, demonstrating that the royal council supported her pretensions over Aragon:

*"... Esto se concluyó a 7 del mes de febrero; y porque en esta sazón se afirmaba que la reina doña Violante de Sicilia venía a Cataluña y esto se había dicho públicamente en el parlamento por los embajadores del rey de Francia, le enviaron a suplicar y requerir que si acordaba venir a Cataluña tuviese por bien de consultárselo y esperar su respuesta y avisalles de lo que pensaba, hacer guardando la costumbre que se usaba entre los príncipes."*¹²

In the second part of the quotation above Yolande is urged not to act upon her pretensions before hearing from the Aragonese *parlamento*. It instructs her to advise *parlamento* of her intentions and to respect customs generally practised among princes. This suggests that Aragon took her pretensions seriously at the time of her intended appearance in Catalonia and feared for the stability of the kingdom should she decide to mobilize support from the province (or from France) to reinforce her claims over the throne. Her mother, *la reina doña Violante de Aragón*, was very active in her support of Yolande,¹³ for in the paragraph immediately following the quotation given above, is an *Amonestación a la reina de Aragón y al conde de Urgel y jura del parlamento*. Both she and Jaime, Count of Urgel, seem to have been so vigilant in promoting their respective claims over the vacant throne that their activities were beginning to spill over into actual or perceived sedition:

¹⁰ See Appendix 2, Documents, doc. 1 dated 26th April 1410 for a transcription of a letter sent to Yolande by her mother, the dowager Queen of Aragon. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of Dawn Bratsch-Prince, Professor of Spanish and Chair, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa U.S.A. for the advice, insights and information she has made available to us.

¹¹ Lecoy de la Marche, loc. cit.

¹² *Anales de la corona de Aragón*, Zurita, Jeronimo, vol. 5, ch. XI.xxv, p. 79.

¹³ Cf. Vendrell-Gallostra, op. cit.

“Con esta ocasión, por excusar algunas sospechas que en tal tiempo causaba el estado de las cosas, enviaron a aconsejar y amonestar la reina doña Violante de Aragón y al conde de Urgel que se apartasen de Barcelona por distancia de una jornada o más, y acordaron de recibir juramento a todos los del parlamento que bien y fielmente aconsejarían en las cosas que se propusiesen y de no revelar lo que en él se tratase. Y deliberaron de no admitir a ninguno que no quisiese hacer este juramento.”¹⁴

From the above quotation it seems clear that Violant strove mightily against all adversaries and in all ways and means possible (to the point of exasperating the *parlamento*) to place her grandson Louis III on the throne of Aragon, for she, like her daughter Yolande and Louis II, would have undeniably understood that it was not merely the throne of Aragon (Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia) that was at stake, but also rights over the Kingdom of Mallorca (the Balearic Islands: Mallorca, Minorca, Ibiza, Formentera), Sardinia and Sicily (including Malta).¹⁵ Sovereignty over the western Mediterranean was the objective, and one worth fighting for, particularly given the Angevins’ strategic possession of Provence and their pretensions over Naples, where at

¹⁴ Loc. cit. Upon the death of all his legitimate children (his heir Martin died in 1409), Martin I appointed Jaime, Count of Urgel, the most direct legitimate agnate (his first cousin’s son), to the royal House of Aragon, as lieutenant-governor over all the realms of Aragon. This title was by tradition held by the heir-presumptive. According to Claire Ponsich, Martin married Jaime to his half-sister, Isabel in 1405, but by 1409, despite having appointed Jaime his lieutenant-governor, Jaime was out of favour with Martin, who could not decide between legitimizing his bastard grandson, Frederic of Sicily, or nominating as his heir his legitimate grand-nephew Louis III, Duke of Calabria, son of Yolande d’Aragon. He might have been reticent in legitimizing his bastard grandchildren, for Violant sent money to both Frederic and his half sister Yolande of Sicily to ensure that they did not sink into penury, Violant’s actions causing discomfiture to their grandfather Martin I. A letter from Martin dated 26th May 1407 states that: «Un Miquel au service de Don Frederic et Dona Yolande (...) est allé à la reine Yolande [Violant] et par les moyens qu’il a voulu a obtenu de l’argent allegiant (...) qu’il en avait besoin pour leur approvisionnement, laquelle chose a été fort honteuse pour nous [Martin I].» A.C.A., reg. 2250, f^o, cat., Letter from Martin I. Ponsich, Claire, «Violant de Bar (1365-1431), Ses Liens et Réseaux de Relations par le Sang et l’Alliance », in *Reines et Princesses au Moyen-Age, Actes du cinquième colloque international de Montpellier, Université Paul-Valéry (24-27 novembre 1999)*. Volume 1, Cahiers du C.R.I.S.I.M.A., n^o 5, 2001, p. 261, n^o 3 & p. 267, n^o 3. Perhaps his reluctance to recognize Frederic, or indeed his unease in helping him out financially, might lead us to suppose that he looked more favourably upon Yolande’s rights of succession than those of Frederic or Urgel. We will never know Martin’s feelings on the matter of his succession, and his inaction in naming an heir left his throne vacant for some two years while his *parlamento* tried to sort through the competing claims. See also Appendix 1, n. 28.

¹⁵ Lecoy de la Marche, A., *Le Roi René: sa vie, son administration, ses travaux artistiques et littéraires, d’après les documents inédits des Archives de France et d’Italie*. Paris, Librairie de Firmin-Dodot Frères, Fils et Cie. 1875, t. I, p. 29. He relates that Yolande preserved many domains in Spain, inherited from her mother, which she later passed on to her own daughter, Marie d’Anjou, in recognition of her obedience and daughterly tenderness: *castra et loca de Borgia et de Magallono, in regno Aragonie situa ...* A.N. J 880, n^o 32. Alfonso V took possession of these and Charles VII sought to reclaim them in 1451. His request was ignored (A.N. J 917, n^o 1).

that time Louis II had managed some impressive victories. It looked likely for the first time in a very long while that he might actually take possession of his titular realm. Had Yolande secured the western Mediterranean for their eldest son Louis III, the Angevins would have possessed a massive and powerful kingdom and a strategic empire stretching from their northern French duchies, into their counties of Provence-Forcalquier and beyond to Iberia/Italy. Control of the Mediterranean would have enabled them to contemplate an attempt to fulfil their aspirations to become kings and queens of Jerusalem in more than just name.¹⁶

In this enterprise Yolande had a great deal of assistance from her mother, Violant, the dowager Queen of Aragon. It was probably a result of Violant's tenacity both in Barcelona and in Catalonia that *parlamento* sent missives to Yolande, urging her to behave according to princely practice and not stir further dissent by arriving precipitously in Catalonia.

Though Yolande, her mother and Charles VI's ambassadors seriously strove to achieve this ambitious project, the attempt to gain the throne of Aragon ended in failure. The Caspe Compromise, directed by Vincent Ferrer, found in favour of Ferdinand, *infante* of Castile, the younger son of Martin's sister Eleanor of Aragon, and Juan I of Castile. Ferdinand ascended the throne in 1412.

While the question of succession in Aragon demanded much of Yolande's attention, her real concerns were her husband's Italian venture, Provence, the malaise within the Kingdom of France and the English threat to their northern Angevin domains.

That Yolande and not merely Louis II was of concern to the ambitious Burgundy is without question. He would have assessed her capacities and have quickly come to the conclusion that she in no way resembled the unpredictable, yet potentially malleable Ysabeau of Bavaria. With Ysabeau, accommodation on his terms was a feasible outcome. While Ysabeau was not endowed with Yolande's political acumen, she held the regency, and despite her many shortcomings she was a seasoned political opportunist. Burgundy no doubt recognized a fellow traveller, but this did not mean that he had not from time

¹⁶ See above, pp. 48-49 regarding Louis I's ambitions for trans-Mediterranean supremacy.

to time considered eliminating her. She was included in a plot to assassinate both Yolande and Louis II in 1416, at a time when Burgundy was shut out of government.

Emperor Sigismond arrived in Paris prior to Holy Week 1416, where he was received by the king, Berry and Louis, Cardinal-Duke of Bar, Armagnac and many others in *moult noble estat* [at the Louvre] and «... *en aucuns jours après fist exposer au roy et à son conseil la cause de sa venue; c'est assavoir, pour l'union de Nostre Mère Saint Eglise. Et après, il se offrit moult au roy à faire ce qu'il pourroit pour luy et pour son royaulme. Et, depuis, y ot ung docteur en théologie, nommé maistre Ghérart Machet* [by that time already in the service of the Dauphin Charles¹⁷], *qui proposa devant luy moult prudemment, de par le roy, dont il fut très contens; et estoit le roy en assez bonne santé ... Et fut son partement, le merquedy devant les Pasques; et de là fut conveyé jusques à Saint-Denis par le roy Loys, le duc de Berry et le cardinal de Bar. Et estoit, en la compaignie de l'empereur, le duc de Milan [Filippo Maria Visconti], oncle du duc d'Orléans [Charles, prisoner of the English since Agincourt] ...».¹⁸*

During Holy Week of 1416, following the departure of Sigismond, an intrigue was uncovered:¹⁹

«... *de ceulx qui gouvernoient le Roy, c'est assavoir la Royne [Ysabeau], le Roy de Cécile, le duc de Berry et aucuns autres. Pour laquelle le peuple, et par espécial ceulx de Paris qui estoient*

¹⁷ Gérard Machet was a doctor in theology, principal of the college of Navarre, vice-chancellor of the University of Paris, who enjoyed the esteem of his peers particularly for his erudition, his knowledge and for his deep piety. He entered the service of Charles of Ponthieu in 1412 at a time when Louis II d'Anjou was playing an ever important and visible rôle on the royal council. Machet became Charles's confessor in 1421. Gaussin, Pierre-Roger, « Les conseillers de Charles VII (1418-1461). Essai de politologie historique », in *Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte*, vol. 10 for 1982 (1983), p. 120.

¹⁸ *Chronique de Jean le Févre, Seigneur de Saint-Remy*, Morand, François, Paris, Librairie Renouard, 1876, t. I, pp. 277-278. Jean Le Févre, Lord of Saint-Remy, soldier in the entourage of the Duke of Burgundy and from 1430, *roi des armes* for the Order of the Golden Fleece created by Philippe of Burgundy, was a key negotiator for his duke and an expert in questions of chivalry, heraldry and the art of the tournament. His chronicle closely follows that of another Burgundian chronicler Enguerrand de Monstrelet. It is however original for the crucial years 1428-1436, a period when Le Févre, unlike Monstrelet, was active in the service of Burgundy, both soldiering and negotiating rather than passively recording events. While his chronicle is considerably more concise than Monstrelet's version, it is just as partial to his master the Duke of Burgundy. Violant's correspondence with her cousin Sigismond, probably facilitated Yolande's later correspondence with her mother's cousin and her own son René's future overlord for Bar-Lorraine. Cf. Ponsich, Claire, « Trois Princesses et la renommée d'une lignée - les trois Yolande (1325-1442) », in *Bulletin de la Société Agricole, Scientifique, et Littéraire de Pyrénées-orientales.* Vol. CIX, Perpignan, 2002 pp. 270-272.

¹⁹ From Paris Sigismond proceeded to London, where he sided with Henry V against the French. This occurred at a time when the royal council led by Louis II was also trying to come to a negotiated peace treaty with England. Cf. Vallet de Viriville, A. (ed.), *Chronique de la Pucelle ou Chronique de Cousinot, suivie de la Chronique normande de P. Cochon*, Paris, Adolphe Delahays, 1859, pp. 160-161.

favorables au duc de Bourgogne furent fort troublez contre les seigneurs ... Et avoient entencion que le jour du grand vendredi [29th March 1416], après disner, tous ensemble prendroient ceulx qui estoient à eulx contrairies et premièrement le prévost de Paris, et s'il n'estoit à eulx consentant comme juge, ilz l'occiroient. Et sans mercy prendroient le Roy et le mectroient en chartre. Après ilz mectroient à mort la Roynes, le chancelier de France et autres sans nombre, avecques la Roynes de Cécile. En oultre, ilz vestiroient de vielz et honteux habitz le Roy de Cécile et le duc de Berry, et leur feroient rère leurs testes et mener par la ville de Paris sur deulx ors tumbereaulx, et après ce les feroient à mourir. Toutefois ce fut atargé à faire à ce jour, par aucuns d'iceleulx, disans que plusieurs adonc pourroient eschaper estans en leurs dévocians par dehors et dedans Paris, et plusieurs seroient ès coléges ce jour pour cause de confession, et autres seroient en pélerinages, et aussi à ce jour on ne les pourroit pas trouver en leurs maisons, mais mieulx vouldroit ce faire le jour de pasques, après disner. Lesquelz tous ensemble promirent à ce faire le jour de Pasques, sans faulte ...».²⁰

An almost identical version exists in the *Chronique de Jean le Fèvre, Seigneur de Saint-Remy*.²¹ It differs in a small detail, a distinction that highlights the importance of Yolande in the political climate of 1416, and the thorn in the side that she must have been for Burgundy. Louis II had been ill for some time, Burgundy would have been certain that he would not survive for very much longer. Berry was about eighty-five years old, Yolande was obliged to play an increasingly visible part in the affairs of Anjou-Maine-Provence-Naples and those of France. Le Fèvre's version furthermore attests to the direct implication of Burgundy in the plot. Here is an extract:

«Après le partement de l'empereur de la ville de Paris, ceulx qui gouveroient le roy, c'est assavoir, le roy Loys, le duc de Berry et aucuns aultres, tindrent conseil, auquel fut ordonné que on mecteroit une taille sus, pour les affaires du roy et du royaulme ... Iceulx Parisiens, pour accomplir leur intencion, envoyèrent devers le duc de Bourgoingne, affin qu'il envoyast

²⁰ Monstrelet, t. III, pp. 139-140. As mentioned in note 18 above, Enguerrand de Monstrelet was a Burgundian chronicler who continued the work of Froissart during the period 1400-1444. Monstrelet's chronicles are valuable as they integrate a considerable quantity of documentation and reported speech which is probably authentic. Monstrelet ostentatiously pleads his impartiality in the recording of events, but this is often negated by his obvious preference for his masters, the Dukes of Burgundy. While Monstrelet's chronicles are ponderous in style and lack the narrative appeal of Froissart's they give a more comprehensive view, despite their obvious Burgundian bias.

²¹ Le Fèvre faithfully follows much of Monstrelet yet he occasionally fills in details of events omitted by him, see above, n. 18.

secrètement de ses gens à Paris, faingnant que ce fust pour ses affaires; ausquelz iceulz Parisiens eussent conseil et confort. Sy leur accorda le duc de Bourgoingne, et leur envoya messire Jennet de Poix, Jacques de Fosseux, le seigneur de Saint-Légier et Binet d'Auffleu; lesquelz portèrent plusieurs lettres de créance, signées de la main du duc de Bourgoingne, adressans à Paris, à ceulx à qu'ilz avoient fiance ... le jour de grant vendredy, après disner, ilz mectroient sus, en armes, pour prendre tous ceulx qui leurs estoient contraires; et, premier, le prévost de Paris [Tanneguy du Châtel] lequel ilz occiroient; et en après, mectroient à mort la royne de Zécille [Yolande] et si prendroient le roy de Sézille, et le duc de Berry et les feroient vestir de honteux habis, leur feroient rère les tests, comme folz, et les feroient mener sur deux beneaulx avant la ville de Paris, après les feroient morir; qui eust esté une grant cruaulté, s'il estoit vray ...».²²

In Le Févre's version above, no mention is made of of Ysabeau or the king, just the Angevins and Berry. With both Louis II and Berry terminally ill or extremely elderly, death was not far off. The proactive du Châtel had long been an obstacle to Burgundy and increasingly Yolande herself was developing into a real threat to Burgundy's ambitions: both, therefore, had to be eliminated. It is worth noting that Burgundian chroniclers (Monstrelet and Le Févre) highlight Burgundy's influence or direct implication in the conspiracy and the importance of Yolande's elimination in the scheme of things.

The plot was discovered in time and the plotters punished.²³ Its very existence underscores the desperation of the Burgundian faction at this point. In spite of their subtle differences, both versions demonstrate that with the elimination of Louis II, Berry, Yolande and their officers, Burgundy's path to the throne would have been cleared. Though at the time Charles of Ponthieu was not yet dauphin, he was enjoying increased status thanks to the efforts of Louis II and the royal council to keep both the Dauphin Jean and Burgundy out of Paris and away from the king. While the intention was immediately to kill Ysabeau, Yolande and their officers, the conspirators had resolved

²² *Chronique de Jean le Févre, Seigneur de Saint-Remy*, t. I, pp. 286-290.

²³ Cf. Tuetey, Alexandre, *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris 1405-1449*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1881, p. 384, Juvénal des Ursins, Jean II, *Histoire de Charles VI par Jean Juvénal Des Ursins*, Godefroy, Denys (ed.), Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1653, p. 332, *Trésor de Chartres*, Registre JJ 169, pièce 217, & *passim*.

first to humiliate publicly both Louis II and Berry before putting them to death as retribution for the personal humiliation Burgundy believed he had suffered at the hands of Louis II in 1413 as well as his anger at being exiled from the seat of power when Berry had increasingly sided with Louis II to isolate him effectively from government. All to no avail; Burgundy's exile became more entrenched in the wake of Easter 1416 and with the death of Berry several months later on 15th June 1416 Louis II held the king's authority in all but name. Yet Louis was acutely ill, with less than a year to live and onerous aspirations and responsibilities to fulfil. Burgundy amassed an expeditionary force directed at unseating Anjou from his position of authority, and attracted towns to his cause, determined to reclaim his place on the royal council. Charles VI ordered and financed a defensive army under the control of Louis II to thwart Burgundy's plans. However, Louis II died before the anticipated confrontation with his cousin Burgundy could take place.²⁴

The Duke of Anjou's final wishes and testament exhorted Yolande to protect the joint-inheritance of their children and to work towards a lasting rapprochement with Jean V, Duke of Brittany, who, he believed, held the key to a lasting peace between the princes. Louis II was convinced that once unified the princes would drive the English out of France. To his children and his son-in-law he commended a policy of reconciliation and unity. His testament explicitly names Yolande his universal and principal executor, tutor and guardian to their children, directing Louis III and his siblings to obey Yolande in all things and to honour her until their deaths.²⁵

At the time of Louis's death, Charles of Ponthieu had only just officially claimed the title of dauphin and government over the Dauphiné.²⁶ In the weeks leading to his death, Louis II continued to counsel his son-in-law and direct his affairs. The Angevin clan, including the dauphin, gathered at Louis's bedside, where it is reported that he embraced his young son-in-law several times before expiring, exhorting him never to trust the

²⁴ See above, p. 153.

²⁵ See Appendix 1, n. 29 for an extract of AN P.1334/17

²⁶ Charles of Ponthieu was named Dauphin on 13th April 1417. Louis II of Anjou died on 29th April 1417.

Duke of Burgundy but nonetheless to devote all his energies and means to ensuring that he remained on good terms with him. He forgave Burgundy for his actions against him and expressed the wish that he would reciprocate.²⁷

The fourteen-year old heir to the uneasy kingdom of France held authority as lieutenant-general in the “absences” of his father. His position was fragile and fraught with danger, Monstrelet, the Burgundian chronicler noted that: «*Pour la mort duquel [Louis II] celui dauphin fut fort affoibli de conseil et d'aide.*»²⁸ Yolande was left alone to guide the destiny of her son-in-law and that of her House. Her husband was dead, the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon were prisoners of the English, and Bernard VII of Armagnac, Constable of France, would be dead in a little over a year. She had the contested Kingdom of Naples – Sicily to consider as well as duchies and counties in northern and southern France, themselves under constant threat from both ongoing civil turbulence and the Anglo-French conflict. Like Louis, Yolande realized that to protect her children’s heritage and their futures, her only hope was to ally herself to the French cause. She needed to emphasize the authority and prestige of the dauphin and come to an agreement with Brittany to broker a lasting peace with Burgundy, working to expel the English from France in general and her domains of Anjou-Maine in particular.

The task ahead of her was massive. Yolande needed to administer all their northern territories and the outlying counties of Provence and Forcalquier. She had to emphasize her elder son’s claim over Naples, writing to her second cousin the Emperor Sigismund to reiterate Louis’s rights over the kingdom in the immediate aftermath of Louis II’s death.²⁹

²⁷ “*Ceterum dictus dominus testator, in quantum potest, consulit et advertit concordiam fieri cum duce Burgundie. Cui dictus dominus testator, in quantam sibi per dictum ducem foret forefactum, indulget. Et eciam quod placeat eidem duci Burgundie indulgere predicto domino testatori, si quid erga ipsum forefecit.*” Louis also forgave his former lieutenant and cousin, Jacques de la Marche: “[*torvis malivolencie et rancoris*] *materia deposita. Idem et pari modo dictus dominus testator indulget comiti Marchis quod sibi fore fecit hoc tamen quo ad [] sed non quo ad jus quod pro se et suis liberis pretendit habere et sibi competere in regno Sicilie permemorato.*” AN., P.1344/17.

²⁸ Monstrelet, I, I, ch. CLXXVII, p. 403.

²⁹ Appendix 1, n. 30 regarding the correspondence established between Violant, Yolande and Sigismund. Cf. Ponisch, op. cit., pp. 136-138. Furthermore, Yolande sent ambassadors to Sigismund, including members of the Laval family, who will be discussed below in more detail. Cf. Reynaud, Marcelle-Renée, « Noblesse et pouvoir dans la principauté d’Anjou-Provence sous Louis II et Louis III (1384-1434) », in Coulet, Noël & Matz, Jean-Michel, (eds.), *La Noblesse dans les territoires angevins à la fin du Moyen Age*, Paris, Ecole Française de Rome, 2000, p. 306.

Yolande started by reforming her House. With the death of Louis, his household was effectively dissolved; his courtiers were no longer provided with a living, instead becoming retainers of the regent and her household. Expenses were cut to an absolute minimum and severe accounting standards imposed. Accounts held by the master of the *chambre aux deniers*, Jean Porcher or Porchier, were regularly recorded and audited, and many survive.³⁰ Meanwhile, Yolande's mother Violant started a legal proceeding with the *Parlement de Paris*, against her [Violant's] younger brother Louis, the Cardinal-Duke of Bar, to reclaim a portion of her Barrois inheritance.³¹

In Provence collections were made and ambassadors arrived in Anjou-Maine to express their good wishes to the new sovereign, Louis III, and his regent.³² Yolande received delegates from her Provençal Estates, including representatives from the Estates in Angers, on 25th August 1417. She granted their requests, confirmed their existing liberties and franchises and pledged a revision and reform of taxes and charges relating to death duties, which had for years forced inheritors unable to pay crippling imposts to abandon their legacies.³³ Longstanding privileges were restored and new ones inaugurated. She paid particular attention to the exercise of justice, creating the post of *juge-mage*, re-established seneschalcies, lowered taxes, suppressed the practice of bribery and fiscal coercion, and forbade foreigners (non-Provençaux) from occupying posts of administrative responsibility. She was much occupied with the situation of the poor and the well-being of her southern subjects and to this end prevented the *dardanarii* from profiting from food shortages. They had attempted to buy grain in considerable quantities at low cost and resell it high, far and wide during times of scarcity (in part brought about by their own speculation).³⁴ With these pragmatic measures, ever conscious of the need to appease Provence in order to ensure the success of the family enterprise, Yolande won the hearts and the minds of the Provençaux and assured, at least for the moment, a peaceful atmosphere in her southern counties.

³⁰ A.N., KK 243 and KK 244.

³¹ See below, pp. 183-185.

³² The city of Tarascon presented Louis III with a silver gilt cup, weighing *quatre marcs*, embellished with Yolande's coat of arms and two measures of wine: «...*l'une de blanc, l'autre de claret, pour le joyeux avènement de Louis III.*» (Meyer, *Inven. des Archives de Tarascon*, BB. 6. Cited in Lecoy de la Marche p. 37). Lecoy de la Marche also suggests we further consult Papon, *Histoire de Provence*, III, p. 321. Cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regestes*, « Aix-en-Provence, juin 1417 », pp.220-231.

³³ Papon, III, p. 320. & cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regestes*, « Aix-en-Provence, octobre 1417 », pp. 232-234, for the ambassadors' report to the Estates.

³⁴ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, B 271 & B 272.

Yolande was not merely content to calm and appease her southern subjects, but also added territory to her county. She appended the considerable barony of Baux to her holdings following the death of the final titular owner, Alix. She repurchased Berre from Nicolas Ruffi, Count of Cotrone and Catanzaro, in 1419, along with his other dependencies of Alanson, Istre and Martiques. Lunel, annexed and ceded by Louis I, was left to her by its final overlord Arnaud Baile (dependant on the approval of the king), also in 1419.³⁵ Despite her successes, she was obliged after protracted and bitter negotiation, to cede Nice to Amadeus VIII, Count of Savoy.³⁶ Following the death of Louis II, Amadeus VIII (following the example of his predecessors) believed he could capitalize upon Yolande's feminine inadequacies and Louis III's minority status. This was a grave misinterpretation of her capacities; as most accounts of her career agree, she was undoubtedly a «*maîtresse femme*», her grandson Louis XI, later affirming that she possessed a «*cuier d'homme en corps de femme*».³⁷ Until her final capitulation, she was able skilfully to engineer extensions to treaties from Amadeus, allowing her to buy time and delay the inevitable.³⁸ An interminable correspondence emerges from this period,³⁹ including an exchange of memoranda, and an exhaustive debate pertaining to the legitimacy of arguments raised by the two sides, José affirming that at times it was a «*véritable duel entre deux avocats rivalisant d'arguties et d'arguments plus ou moins spécieux*».⁴⁰ Double objectives of this exchange were: to fix Savoy's rights over Nice without unduly prejudicing the House of Anjou and to repay the debt owed by the Angevins to the Savoyards dating from the time of Louis I and Amadeus VI.

Her actions in the wake of Louis's death almost precisely mirror those of her predecessor Marie of Brittany, excepting that she did not have her mother-in-law's additional crushing burden of debt to carry. When Yolande and Louis II had been forced by both

³⁵ A.N, P 1351, n°s 668 & 669.

³⁶ A.N, J 847, n°14 and below. C.f. the collection of conference papers, 1388, *La dédition de Nice à la Savoie. Actes du colloque international de Nice (septembre 1988)*, (no editor given), Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990.

³⁷ This affirmation from Louis XI (never a noted champion of the capacities of women), was delivered by him in a funerary oration at the time of Yolande's death in November 1442. Cf. Orliac, op. cit., & José, Marie, *La Maison de Savoie, Amedée VIII le Duc qui devint Pape*, Paris, Editions Albin Michel, 1962, pp. 216-218.

³⁸ Cf. Reynaud, Marcelle-Renée, « La Maison d'Anjou-Provence et la perte de Nice (1380-1419) », in *1388, La dédition de Nice...*, p. 263.

³⁹ A.N, J 291.

⁴⁰ José, op. cit. pp. 216-217.

the political climate in France and the imminent English invasion of Normandy abruptly in 1415 to leave Provence in the care of their loyal servants and administrators, there was still much unfinished Provençal business to be addressed. Yolande and Louis III had to wait until the autumn of 1419 before again making a personal appearance in their southern territories.

After the death of Louis II, the Dauphin Charles made a brief visit to Paris to be invested with the duchy of Berry and the county of Poitou which had passed to him with the death of his elder brother, the Dauphin Jean. Yolande joined him, later returning him to Anjou. She must have felt it necessary to remove him both from the influence of Bernard d'Armagnac (who, whilst an ally, was violent, unstable and often irresponsibly precipitous in his actions) as well as that of his mother Ysabeau, whose company she seems not to have considered beneficial for the adolescent dauphin, nor indeed for her own interests.⁴¹ With Louis II no longer a stabilizing influence upon members of the royal council, the mercurial Bernard d'Armagnac immediately took advantage of the largely unchecked power that had fallen to him. As stated above, he and Tanneguy du Châtel had exiled Ysabeau from court and as a result she became increasingly embittered with the royal council, which she held responsible for her isolation and fall from power. Burgundy continued to force obedience in the north and in north-western territories abutting Yolande's domains. The Queen of Jerusalem and Sicily needed a northern ally to act as a buffer, an intermediary and a potential mentor for the young and untried dauphin in her keeping. Her gaze fell upon Jean V, Duke of Brittany.

Jean V's relations and allegiances were complex and multi-layered. He was married to one of the daughters of Charles VI, Jeanne de Valois,⁴² and was a nephew of Burgundy. His mother's second husband was Henry IV, King of England, and Henry V was therefore his step-brother. His potential loyalties lay with France, Burgundy and England, where his mother resided as dowager queen and where his younger brother Arthur de Richemont had been captive since Agincourt. A more complicated set of political attachments and potential loyalties could hardly be imagined and his duchy abutted Anjou-Maine. It is hardly surprising that Brittany oscillated between all parties,

⁴¹ See below, pp. 181-182.

⁴² The dauphin's sister.

attempting to draw advantage, or at the very least safety, from all of them at one time or another.

For Yolande he must have held out the prospect of an alliance that would serve to protect her domains and ensure that her son-in-law could ascend the throne of France. Brittany provided a potential western buffer to the English who had made successful incursions into the northern parts of Maine. With his contacts in England and with powerful Burgundy his uncle, it was imperative to accommodate Jean V in order to find a way into the minds of her adversaries: on the one hand a foreign invader with designs upon Anjou-Maine and on the other, her implacable and vengeful enemy Burgundy, who would have liked nothing better than to destroy her and her House as compensation for past conflicts and imagined insults. Given that Brittany and Yolande had an established correspondence, and the fact that he had attended memorial services and offices for Louis II, he must have seemed almost purpose-built as a potential mentor and political guardian for the interests of the teenage dauphin.⁴³

If we consult the Archives de Bretagne, *Lettres et mandements de Jean V, duc de Bretagne*, we can construct a very clear picture of his movements and shifting allegiances, as well as his close contact with Yolande d'Aragon. On 18th February 1417, a treaty of alliance was drawn up between Brittany and Burgundy. The treaty states that both parties would uphold the interests of the king and dauphin, and hints that any alliance with the English would be counter to the Crown's best interests. At the time of this treaty Burgundy was locked out of Paris and removed from the seat of power, the royal council:

«... C'est assavoir que nous jurons et promettons estre bon, vray et loyal à nostred. Frère de Bourgoigne, et le secourrons et aiderons, à toute puissance, envers tous et contre tous qui puent vivre et mourir, excepté Mgr le Roy, Madame la Royne et monsieur le daulphin son ainsné filz, [at that time, the Dauphin Jean of Touraine was effectively exiled in Compiègne], à la tuicion, garde et deffense de ses terres ... Item promettons et jurons de non entreprendre fait de guerre ou deffense aucune ou royaulme de France, sanz le faire savoir à nostred. Frère; ainçois serons doresenavant et demourrons frères tant en armes, en honneurs, en prerogatives comme en

⁴³ See above pp. 145-146 regarding the unratified agreement to marry Louis III to Isabeau of Brittany, established post-Caboche. See below, p. 213 for its ratification.

prouffiz; et se nous nous trouvons, ou toutesfoiz que nous serons devers mond. Sgr. Le Roy ou mond. Sgr. Le daulphin, nostredit. Frère Bourgoigne absent, ... Item, promettons et jurons à ne prendre alliances avecques personne quelconque à l'encontre dud. Beau frère de Bourgoigne, excepté les dessusd ...»⁴⁴

By the beginning of July, after the death of Louis II, Jean V visited Angers to pay his respects to Yolande, and two important treaties were established at this time. The first was signed on 2nd July 1417. It was a treaty between Jean V, his brother Arthur (still a prisoner of the English) in whose name he had negotiated, and the Dauphin Charles (aged fourteen), *«lieutenant general du roi et le conseil estant à Angers»*.

The following day in the same place, *au château d'Angers*, the second treaty, a marriage agreement between: *«Loys, duc d'Anjou, filz ainsné et heritier universal de feu mon très redoubté sgr. prince de noble mémoire Loys [and] et de nostre très chiere et très amée fille et cousine Ysabel, ainsée fille de nous Jehan, duc de Bretagne»* was signed by Brittany and *«Yoland, par la grace de Dieu royne de Jerusalem et de Sicile, duchesse d'Anjou, contesse etc.»*. It not only solidified in some measure a political alliance, long hoped for by the Angevins, but also brought Yolande considerable financial advantage once duly proclaimed. In addition to the dowry promised by Brittany: *«Le roi de France ayant promis 40.000 fr. En faveur du present mariage, les parties contractantes s'engagent à en poursuivre le recouvrement»*.⁴⁵ Yolande must have felt she had achieved an important part of the pledge made by her to Louis II: to work towards a durable alliance with Brittany in order to facilitate an eventual rapprochement with Burgundy.

It is important to recall that on 10th November 1417, in a rare moment of lucidity, Charles VI signed letters authorizing Yolande to negotiate with Henry V to protect her northern domains from English invasion. While Brittany acted as her principal intermediary, Yolande's officers played a direct rôle in the successful denouement of negotiations. This is evident from records compiled by Thomas Rymer.⁴⁶ Safe conducts were issued by

⁴⁴ Blanchard, René, *Archives de Bretagne. Recueil des actes, de chroniques et de documents historiques rares ou inédits publié par la Société des Bibliophiles Bretons et d'Histoire de Bretagne, tt. IV-VIII, Lettres et mandements de Jean V, Duc de Bretagne*, Nantes, Société des Bibliophiles de Bretagne, 1889-1895, t. V, 1890, pp. 211-212. We will refer to this work as *Lettres et mandements...*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, t. V, pp. 216-217.

⁴⁶ Thomas Rymer (1641-1713) was an English literary critic, lawyer and historiographer. He was educated at the University of Cambridge (Sydney Sussex College) but never took his degree. He was

Henry for Brittany on 10th and 16th November. Letters proclaiming talks and a treaty were drawn up in Brittany's name on 27th October and 16th November. A «*De Treugis, cum Regina Jerusalem, ad Infantiam & in persona Ducis Britanniaë, concordatis*» is dated 17th November from the royal castle of Alençon in Normandy. This treaty was to hold «*ad Festum beati Michaelis Archangeli*⁴⁷ (*proxima futurum*)». In the treaty, Yolande is respectfully referred to as: «*præclarissima[e] Domina[e], Yolande, Jerusalem Cecillæ & Regina[e]*.»

Safe conducts were issued «*pro Gentibus Reginaë Jerusalem*» dated 22nd November along with those «*pro Gentibus Ducis Britanniaë*». A further «*Conveniendo Cum Nunciis Yolandaë Reginaë Jerosolyme*» was also accorded on 7th March 1418 from Bayeux with a «*Pro Reformatione Treugarum cum Regina Ceciliar*» dated 20th May 1418 from Caen (*cadomo*), demonstrating that while Brittany acted as her representative to Henry's court, Yolande wisely dispatched her own negotiators to ensure the best possible outcome for her interests.⁴⁸

In December 1417, Brittany wrote to the «... *très hault et très puissant prince mon très redoubté sgr. le roy d'Engleterre ... Comme puis les treves prinses entre vous et moy ...*»,⁴⁹ requesting the return of the vessels *Katherine* and *Christophe* and the release of Breton pilgrims arrested returning by sea from Saint-Jacques en Galice. This contact with England, asking for the return of these vessels, comes only about a fortnight after he and Yolande had successfully negotiated the above treaties dated 16th and 17th November to

a member of Gray's Inn and was called to the Bar on 16th June, 1673. He was nominated historiographer royal in 1692 and in 1693 he began to edit a vast collection of documents relating to England's relations with other kingdoms and states from 1066-1654. His overriding concern was to publish all records of alliances and other transactions in which England was implicated with foreign powers. Cf. Rymer, Thomas, Zimansky, Curt A., (ed.), *The Critical Works of Thomas Rymer*, New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1956, & Hallam, Elizabeth M., Condon, Margaret M., "Government printing of the public records in the eighteenth century. *Fœdera, Rotuli Parliamentorum and Domesday Book*", in *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, vol. 7, n° 6, (1984), pp. 348-388.

⁴⁷ 29th September 1418.

⁴⁸ Brittany re-negotiated his agreements with Henry in the summer of 1418 and once more Yolande's officers were directly implicated with letters «*pro secretario Reginaë Ceciliaë*» issued on 14th October 1418 from Rouen (*Rothomagen*) and again on 15th December 1418. Rymer, Thomas, «*Fœdera, conventiones, literæ et cujuscunque generis acta publica inter reges Angliæ...*», London, J. Tonson, 1727-1729, t. IXpp. 506, 511-516, 550, 588-589, 614, 624, 659.

⁴⁹ *Lettres et mandements*, t. V, pp. 225-226.

safeguard her territories. Brittany signed his requests to Henry V: «*Vostre frère le duc de Bretagne, conte de Montfort et de Richemont-JEHAN*». ⁵⁰

In 1417, Brittany dispatched three letters to Vincent Ferrier, «*par lesquelles il le priaît de daigner venir en Bretagne pour l'instruire, lui et le peuple de sa patrie, dans la foi catholique*». This is of significance to us because in 1415 Ferrier met with Colette of Corbie⁵¹ in Besançon. The Council of Constance had been sitting since 1414 and Colette was impatient to receive news that the rule she had been granted by Benedict XIII had been confirmed by the Council. This was eventually confirmed, yet in 1417 Ferrier and Colette went one step further, dispatching a joint letter delivered to the Council by the Archbishop of Besançon urging that the Schism be brought to an immediate conclusion.⁵² In highlighting those who worked hardest to bring an end to the Schism, Valois states in his conclusion that the names of Colette Boelett and Vincent Ferrier (with that of Pierre de Luxembourg) must be emphasized.⁵³ Colette played an important part both in bringing about an end to the Schism and in the recovery of France; her Franciscan spirituality and political/spiritual mission will be emphasized in the following chapter. It is highly probable that it was Vincent Ferrier, the Aragonese Dominican, confessor to Yolande's mother Violant of Aragon, who brought Yolande and Colette together.⁵⁴

Brittany's missives were delivered to Ferrier in le Puy-en-Velay (January 1417), Bourges (the beginning of December 1417), and finally in Tours (late December 1417). When the

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 227

⁵¹ Later, Saint Colette of Corbie, renowned and dedicated disciple of Saints Francis and Clare. Nicolette Boillet or Boelett was born on 13th January 1381 at the Abbey of Corbie, where her father was master carpenter. Her avowed mission was to reform the Clarissan order. Her mission was both evangelical and highly political and she will be discussed below in relation to the mission of Joan of Arc. Cf. Bradley Warren, Nancy, "Monastic Politics: St. Colette of Corbie, Franciscan Reform and the House of Burgundy", in *New Medieval Literatures 5*, Copeland, Rita, Lawton, David, & Scase, Wendy, (eds.), Oxford, OUP, 2003, pp. 203-228; Lopez, Elisabeth, *Culture et sainteté. Colette de Corbie (1381-1447)*, Saint-Etienne, Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 1994 ; & Lopez, Elisabeth, *Petite vie de sainte Colette*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1998.

⁵² Forceville, Philippe de, *Sainte Colette de Corbie et son alliance avec Yolande d'Anjou «Reine des quatre Royaumes»*, Paris, Editions A. et J. Picard et Cie, 1958, p. 26.

⁵³ Valois, N., *La France et le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, t. IV, p. 509 & *passim*.

⁵⁴ Forceville, op. cit. p. 27. See below for Ferrier resident in Angers in January 1418. It is important to note that through the offices of the Duchess of Burgundy, Marguerite of Bavaria, Colette formed a spiritual and political relationship with Marie de Berry (daughter of Jean *le Magnifique*, Duke of Berry) Duchess of Bourbon, whose husband Jean I had been taken prisoner along with Charles d'Orléans at Agincourt. We will see below that Yolande d'Aragon had a very close and fruitful relationship with various branches of the House of Bourbon.

first letter was dispatched Louis II was still alive and by the time of the receipt of the final letter in early January 1418, some eight months after his death, Vincent Ferrier was resident in Angers.⁵⁵ All of the cities mentioned above were located within Yolande's or the Dauphin Charles's territories and responsibilities. At the time the missives were sent Ferrier was criss-crossing their domains: Le Puy in the Languedoc, where Charles was lieutenant-general for his father Charles VI, abutting Provence, and Bourges (where by the time of the letter's arrival Charles was dauphin) in Berry, one of his prerogatives.⁵⁶

Ferrier agreed to Brittany's petitions, arriving in his duchy in February 1418. He proceeded to traverse Brittany on the back of a donkey, first preaching in Nantes and later in Pontivy, Quimperlé, Saint-Pol de Léon and Morlaix. Everywhere he appeared, crowds were so dense that public spaces had to be found to accommodate people eager to hear him preach. Albert Le Grand testifies that Vincent Ferrier spoke in his native tongue, Catalan: «*Néanmoins, tous bas-bretons l'entendaient aussi bien que s'il eût parlé à chacun d'eux en son propre langage*». His journey ended in Vannes, where he fell gravely ill. Jeanne de Valois, Duchess of Brittany, rushed to his bedside. He died on 5th April 1419 and his body was inhumed in the cathedral, where his relics are still venerated.⁵⁷

Things appeared relatively stable on the treaty front between Brittany, the Dauphin Charles, Yolande and Burgundy, until 1418 when Burgundy usurped power and upset the balance of authority on the royal council previously held by the Armagnac-Angevin alliance. From Louis's death on 29th April 1417 until Burgundy's sacking of Paris on 29th May 1418, Yolande had managed to hold the line for her own interests and those of her son-in-law the dauphin.

Notwithstanding Yolande's efforts in the wake of Louis's death, Burgundy ravaged the kingdom and continued to attract towns to his cause. The royal council placed Paris under a state of alert and fortified important Norman cities in preparation for the arrival

⁵⁵ *Lettres et mandements...*, t. V, p. 227, note 1. See above Ferrier's association with Colette of Corbie.

⁵⁶ Cf. Fages, P.-H.-O. (O.P, Le P.), *Histoire de St. Vincent Ferrier, apôtre de l'Europe* v. II, Paris, Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1894. In October-November 1417, Yolande sent her own embassy to Constance both to mediate issues surrounding the Schism and to emphasize Louis III's pretensions over Naples. Cf. Valois, op.cit. t. IV, pp. 436-437.

⁵⁷ Source: The Catholic Diocese of Quimper and Léon: <http://catholiquequimper.cef.fr/saintbreton.vincent.html>. Catalonia was part of Yolande's native Kingdom of Aragon and Albert Le Grand, along with Lobineau, was one of the earlier biographers of Vincent Ferrier. See Appendix 1, n. 31.

of the Burgundians and their English allies. Rouen braced itself for attack, strengthened by the presence of Raoul de Gaucourt, whom the king had created bailiff of Rouen. Rouen's inhabitants, fearful of Burgundian reprisal once the city was taken, betrayed both Gaucourt and his defensive preparations. To save the city from complete devastation, the king's counsellors, that is to say Armagnac, Brittany, Châtel and allies of the defunct Louis II, placed the fourteen-year old dauphin at the head of an army. This measure seems to have worked, with the *Religieux* reporting that:

«Monseigneur le dauphin, fils aîné du roi, partit après avoir ainsi apaisé les troubles par sa présence, et pardonné, sur les insistances de ses seigneurs, à ceux qui avaient inquiété par de fréquentes attaques les gens du roi préposés à la garde de la place, et il laissa dans la ville une garnison de quatre cents hommes d'armes, sous la conduite du maréchal de Rieux et de messire Charles de Montfort, que les habitants, bon gré mal gré, furent obligés de recevoir.»⁵⁸

Add to this, the recollections contained in *La chronique de la Pucelle*:

«En celui an [1417] vint à Paris la royne de Sicile, qui tant fist que à Angiers mena le Dauphin que sa fille ot espousée et tost après s'esmut le commun de Rouen qui par la nuit occistrent le bailli et le procureur avec aucuns autres officiers royaulx. Si vint en Anjou avec grand puissance devant Rouen, Monseigneur le Daulphin, qui la cité assiègea et la fist fort bastre; et en la fin, à la prière des barons les receipt en sa merci et leur pardonna de grâce l'offense et à tant s'en retourna à Paris Monseigneur le Daulphin. Et guères ne demoura que contre Monseigneur le Daulphin se retournèrent ceux de Rouen, qui en l'obéissance du duc de Bourgoigne se misrent.»⁵⁹

Gilles Le Bouvier, the Berry Herald, recorded the events in this way:

⁵⁸ *Religieux*, vol. III, book XXXVIII, ch. X, pp. 95-97.

⁵⁹ Vallet de Viriville, Auguste, (ed.), *Chronique de la Pucelle, ou Chronique de Cousinot, suivie de la Chronique Normande de P. Cochon, relatives aux règnes de Charles VI et de Charles VII, restituées à leurs auteurs et publiées pour la première fois intégralement à partir de l'an 1403, d'après les manuscrits, avec notes et éclaircissements par M. Vallet de Viriville*, Paris Delahays, 1859, p. 164. Charles's entry into Rouen occurred on 29th July 1417. While Vallet de Viriville held that the author of the *Chronique de la Pucelle* was Guillaume Cousinot de Montreuil who corrected a version of the chronicle originally penned by his uncle, chancellor Guillaume I Montreuil, since the work of René Planchenault in the 1930s the scholarly consensus has been that the author of the work attributed to Cousinot by Vallet de Viriville was in fact Jean II Juvénal des Ursins. Cf. Planchenault, René, "La Chronique de la Pucelle", in *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole de Chartes*, XCIII, (1932), pp. 55-104.

«En l'an mil CCCC. & dix sept monseigneur le daulphin Charles, qui par avant estoit conte de Ponthieu, se partit de Paris, et s'en alla en la ville d'Angiers, pour estre à l'obsequie du pere de sa feme le Roy de Cecille ... Et aussi luy estant à Angiers, ot des nouvelles que ceulx de la cité de Rouem si s'estoient rebellez, et avoient mis le siege devant le chastel de ladite cité, [fol. 14r^o] et tué le bailly qui estoit dedans ledit chastel nommé messire Raoul de Gaucourt en ladicte ville ... En quant ceulx de Rouen virent la puissance que monseigneur le daulphin avoit devant la cité, ilz se mistrent en son obeissance et se excuserent en disant que par les grans extorcions que leur avoient faites les gens d'armes du Roy ... ilz estoient rebellez ... Le Roy leur pardonna ...».⁶⁰

The Berry Herald goes on to relate that, following this action, the dauphin had to decide whether to stay in Rouen and make a stand against the English, about to pour into Normandy, or to return instead to assist Paris, besieged by the arrival of Burgundians, who had gathered together a considerable force in order to push their way into the capital and topple the Armagnac ascendancy.⁶¹

In addition to his martial activities, Burgundy was much occupied charming the exiled Ysabeau to his cause. As stated above, Armagnac and Châtel had exiled her to Tours, and Burgundy perceived an opportunity ripe for exploitation, and started making overtures to Ysabeau, who hitherto had harboured animosity towards the assassin of Louis d'Orléans.

The Berry Herald records that:

⁶⁰ Le Bouvier (Gilles-Jacques) dit Berry, *Les Chroniques du Roy Charles VII par Gilles Le Bouvier dit le Hérault Berry*, Courteault, Henri, Celier, Léonce & Jullien de Pommerol, Marie-Henriette, (eds.), Paris, Librairie C. Klincksiek, 1979, pp. 77-79. *Les Chroniques du Roy Charles VII* is certainly a panegyric, recorded for posterity by a member of Charles VII's household writing for his master. Notwithstanding this bias, the Berry Herald is generally well informed and gives us a well considered and coherent narrative account of the lives and times of Charles VII. The chronicles contain a history of Charles VII first attributed in error to the secretary-diplomat-poet Alain Chartier who played an important rôle as Charles's trusted amabassador-at-large during the closing phases of the Hundred Years War and the ongoing civil conflict between the princes of the realm. In 1420, Charles VII named Gilles-Jacques Le Bouvier his herald and later created him "roi des armes de Berry". In 1425, Le Bouvier served as an intermediary between the courts of France and Brittany, assisting in preparations for talks leading to the Treaty of Saumur (see below pp. 221-222). The editors of our edition of the Berry Herald cite the Herald's « ton délibérément impersonal et neutre. L'auteur tient le parti de Charles VII, sans doute, mais sans passion. Il se fait son défenseur, son porte-parole, mais il passera sous silence, sans commentaires, ni allusions, ce qui ne lui paraît franchement à l'honneur du souverain. » (p. xli). While not an historian in the modern sense, the Berry Herald leaves us a realistic and vibrant portrait of a troubled period of France's history and, for the purposes of the current study, provides us with an interesting counterpoint to the the other chroniclers we have consulted for this period, such as the Burgundians Le Févre and Monstrelet. We shall refer to his work as The Berry Herald from hereon.

⁶¹ Loc. cit.

«En cel an [1417] le second jour de novembre arriva le duc de Bourgoingne à l'abaye de Meremoustier pres de Tours, lequel estoit venu de Chartres jour et nuit, et dedans ledit moustier trouva la Royne, laquelle l'avoit mandé ; car elle s'en vouloit aller avecques lui pour le desplaisir que le conte d'Armignac et aucuns autres officiers du Roy et de monseigneur le daulphin lui avoient fait. ... Et avoit esté contempte ladite Royne ... Et par le vouloir de ceulx de la cité de Tours, lui baillerent l'obeissance de la ville ... Le Duc de Bourgoingne laissa grosse garnison a Tours, a Rochecorbon, au Boys, a Cormeri, a Pressigny et Asay sur Indre, et enmena la Royne a Chartres. Et pou de temps après se partit de Chartres et print son chemin droit à Juingny et enmena la Royne avecques lui et madame Katherine, fille du Roy et de la Royne.»⁶²

The Berry Herald continues his account, detailing the capture of the “*conte d'Armignac et le president de prouence, nommé messire Jehan Louvet*” amongst others, accused by Ysabeau and Burgundy of having helped themselves to the royal treasury.⁶³

Burgundy had finally found a way back after years in the political wilderness. With the death of Louis II and with the dauphin still in his minority, he was free to exploit the insecurities of the queen and the obtuseness of Armagnac. By exiling and disaffecting Ysabeau, Armagnac had left the door open to Burgundy to strike a decisive blow for authority. Little wonder Yolande had been making concerted overtures to Brittany on behalf of his brother-in-law, the Dauphin Charles.

The Berry Herald gives a vivid description of events leading to the overthrow of the Armagnac/Orleans ascendancy. He relates how the dauphin fled to Melun in the company of Châtel, his men-at-arms, Jean Louvet, President of Provence, Robert le Maçon and *moult autres gens de grand état* who had smuggled him out of Paris, leaving behind Yolande's daughter, the Dauphine Marie. Loyal forces were gathered around Charles, with Pierre de Rieux, marshal of France, and with Barbazon and other captains joining him. Fifteen-year old Charles was moved to Bourges.⁶⁴ Other individuals had been caught up in the expulsion of the Armagnac party ; in the words of the Burgundian Monstrelet: «*Pareillement fut pris les cardinaux de Bar [Yolande's maternal uncle] et de Saint-Marc, l'archevêque de Rheims [Regnault de Chartres] et tous leurs chevaux; mais par la*

⁶² The Berry Herald, op. cit. pp. 82-83.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 82.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 86-88.

*prière de l'évêque de Paris, pource qu'ils avoient conseillé la paix, ils furent mis au délivre, et il leur fut rendu toutes leurs bagues.»*⁶⁵

Monstrelet describes the actions of the expelled faction to regain control of Paris:

*«Or est ainsi que le mercredi ensuivant la dite prise de Paris, du matin, le maréchal de Rieux, le sire de Barbazan et Tanneguy du Châtel atout seize cents combattants d'élite, entrèrent dedans Paris par la porte Saint-Antoine, en intention de subjuguier et reconquerre la dite ville de Paris; et l'une des parties alla à l'hôtel du roi, à Saint-Pol, par derrière, le cuidant trouver, pour le prendre et l'emmener avec eux.»*⁶⁶ The day before however, the king had been moved to more fortified quarters in the Louvre. A skirmish broke out and: *«... Barbazan⁶⁷ et Tanneguy du Châtel, voyant leur perte de plus en plus se multiplier, mirent certain nombre de gens dedans ladite Bastille [Saint-Antoine]; et après s'en allèrent, les uns à Meaux en Brie, les autres à Corbeil, à Melun et ès autres lieux à eux obéissants.»*⁶⁸

The aim of the counter-offensive was to gain possession of the king, and if circumstances allowed, to retake Paris. It was not a rescue operation designed to liberate the dauphine. Yolande may have felt that her daughter was secure enough, or perhaps she might have had to make a decision to prioritize: the safety of the dauphin and the custody of the king in order to neutralize Burgundy and Ysabeau, leaving them politically empty-handed. We first turn to the Berry Herald and then to Monstrelet for details of the dauphine's condition and eventual return:

*«Et la femme de monseigneur le daulphin fille du roy de Cecille, se mist en l'ostel de Bourbon, ayant grant paour des maulx qui ce faisoient parmi icelle ville ...»*⁶⁹

During the time of Marie's captivity, the dauphin was involved in various initiatives, including a siege before Sully, Georges de La Trémoille having captured the Bishop of Clermont during his flight from Paris and Tours. At that time La Trémoille, along with

⁶⁵ Monstrelet, livre premier, chapitre CXCVI, p. 433.

⁶⁶ Loc. cit.

⁶⁷ Barbazan's express mission was never to desert the dauphin and to remain his constant guardian. See below note 128 for the bribery attempt made by Burgundy to coerce Barbazan to leave the service of the dauphin. Both Barbazan and Châtel had originated from the House of Orleans, later passing into the service of the House of Anjou.

⁶⁸ Monstrelet op. cit. p. 434.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 88.

Pierre de Giac, was one of Ysabeau's favourites. Burgundy moved the king, the queen and Catherine of France to Troyes. On 29th June 1418, Charles declared himself lieutenant-general to defend the kingdom against Burgundy in the "absence" of his father. Two weeks later, in a letter to the councillors of Lyon, Jean Caille, *élu* of Lyon, informed them that Charles had resolved to prevent the internal conflicts which the Burgundian and English menaces had brought about, but before making his next move he awaited the counsel of Yolande, her children, the dukes of Brittany, Savoy and Alençon and the count of Foix *et al*, "to put an end to this painful conflict".⁷⁰

By this time, Brittany was very involved with all parties:

«En ce temps le duc de Bretagne vint à Paris par devers le duc de Bourgoingne, qui estoit fort son amy, et fist tant envers lui qu'il delivra madame la daulphine, et la mena par devers son mary à Saumur.⁷¹ Monseigneur le daulphin print la ville de Tours et s'en alla le cappitaine en Bretagne lui et ses gens et ceulx de la ville demourerent en leurs hostelz sans riens perdre.»⁷²

Yolande had secured Brittany as her intermediary, *qui estoit fort son* [Burgundy's] *amy*, to effect the release of her daughter. Here is Monstrelet's version:

«En ce même temps [autumn 1418], par le consentement du roi de France, de la reine et du duc de Bourgogne, fut renvoyée honorablement jusqu'en Anjou, la femme du dauphin, qui avoit été trouvée à Paris à la prise, et lui furent déliorées à son partement toutes ses bagues, afin que ledit dauphin fût plus enclin de venir à paix et retourner avec le roi son père, mais ce rien n'y valut car ceux qui le gouvernoient ne l'eussent jamais souffert, parce qu'ils savoient que s'il y retournoit, seroient destitués de leurs états et gouvernements ...»⁷³

Charles did not return to Paris and in the autumn of 1418, upon the return of Marie d'Anjou, in his capacity as dauphin and *Lieutenant du Roy son père*, he set up an alternative government, a *Parlement de Paris* in exile, based in the city of Poitiers, by letters dated 21st September 1418, citing Burgundy's treachery in the 1418 uprising: «...

⁷⁰ Vale, *op. cit.* pp. 26-27. See Appendix 1, n. 32

⁷¹ « *La dauphine dut arriver à Saumur vers le 10 octobre.* » [cf.] Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. I, pp. 109-111, editor's note 2, *The Berry Herald*, p. 89.

⁷² *The Berry Herald* p. 89.

⁷³ Monstrelet, *livre premier, chapitre CCVI*, p. 444.

*que sous ombre dudit Traicté [Treaty of Saint-Maure-des-Fossés dated 16th September 1418, after the return of Marie d'Anjou] pendant icelui, plusieurs serviteurs & complices dudict duc de Bourgogne en grand nombre, armez de armes invasibles le XXIX. Jour du mois de Mai dernièrement passé, entrèrent de nuict & par trahison en la Ville de Paris en laquelle ils prindrent mondit Seigneur & plusieurs des Seigneurs de son Sang & Lignage & de nous, lesquels ils menerent & enfermerent ou Chastel du Louvre; et aussi s'efforcerent de nous prendre, & avec ce prindrent & emprisonnerent les Connestable & Chancelier de France ...».*⁷⁴ The dauphin also instituted a *chambre des comptes* in Bourges.

In spite of Burgundy's best efforts to annihilate the Dauphinist party, it had managed to evade him and set up a rival government in Poitiers. Burgundy countered on 13th November 1418, issuing letters in the king's name, confirming the Treaty of Saint-Maure-des-Fossés, revoking Charles's authority as lieutenant-general for his father and citing Robert le Maçon, Jean Louvet and Ramon Raguier as suspect counsellors to the dauphin's cause. All three were loyal servants of the House of Anjou at one time or another; le Maçon (or le Masson) was counsellor to Louis II in 1407, passing into the service of Ysabeau as chancellor in 1416 and then into the service of Charles/Yolande, where he stayed; Jean Louvet, was known as the president of the *Parlement d'Aix*⁷⁵ established by Louis II in Provence in 1415⁷⁶ and counsellor to Louis II; and Ramon Raguier was notary and secretary to Charles VI, master of the king's *chambre des deniers*, master of *requêtes*, *préposé à l'administration des finances* for the king, queen and the Duke of Aquitaine (the Dauphin Louis), moving into the service of the Angevins between 1415-1418. Burgundy tried hard to unseat powerful Angevin counsellors in general and in particular to neutralize Yolande's influence over Charles. Raguier was attractive as a target, having controlled royal finances during the period when Burgundy's access to the royal treasury had been stymied by Louis II post-Caboche.

Vaughan makes the point that while Burgundy appeared to be in the ascendant position post-May 1418, having seized Paris and control over the king and the entire administrative and fiscal structure of the Crown, benefiting from access to vast financial resources and exercising unlimited theoretical power through his ability to issue letters

⁷⁴ *Ordonnances des Rois ...* t. X, p. 477.

⁷⁵ Louvet actually held the position of "*président de la cour de la Chambre des comptes*" in 1415.

⁷⁶ Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...*, pp. 209-219, especially Hébert's illuminating remarks, p. 219.

and ordinances in the king's name, he was not without rivals.⁷⁷ His rivals were the dauphin, who had managed to evade him, and Henry V, who was claiming the Crown by right of inheritance. Between 1418-1419, the three contenders actively grappled for political and military power, Burgundy acting through the court and Crown structures he had captured, the dauphin through his own self-proclaimed authority as regent and lieutenant-general for his father and Henry V, by virtue of his possession of Normandy and stated intention to marry Catherine of France, thereby seizing his rightful inheritance over the kingdom of France.

Jehanne d'Orliac, biographer of Yolande, quotes a curious *lettre du défi* that seems to fit with both the content and the context of Monstrelet's observations and the sequence of letters found in the *Ordonnances* for the period, and the fact of the English invasion of greater Normandy:

«A femme pourvue d'amant, point n'est besoin d'enfant. N'ay point nourri et élevé iceluy jusques icy, pour que le laissiez trépasser comme ses frères ou le rendiez fol comme son père, à moins que le faissiez Anglois comme vous. Le garde mien, venez le prendre si l'osez.»⁷⁸

The likelihood that this letter from Yolande to Ysabeau was written at this point is high if we remember that Yolande had already requested and received from Charles VI on 10th November 1417 (the preceding year) permission to negotiate a treaty with the English, protecting Maine and Anjou from invasion. As earlier discussed, the treaty itself was signed on 16th November 1417 and her intermediary and ambassador-at-large had been Brittany.⁷⁹ The fact that Ysabeau had gone over to Burgundy, who had stood by as Henry V overran northern France, was perhaps the context of her charge: «... à moins que le faissez Anglois comme vous ...»⁸⁰

The incapacitated king and his son the dauphin not only represented the idea of kingship, they were its physical embodiment and its source of authority, irrespective of

⁷⁷ Vaughan, Richard, *John the Fearless*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2005, p. 263.

⁷⁸ Orliac, op. cit., p. 56. She cites Bourdigné as her source.

⁷⁹ Above, pp. 171-172.

⁸⁰ Burgundy's passive acceptance of (or rather, active neutrality towards) Henry V's invasion of Normandy allowed Henry to push ahead with his plans.

their personal capacities and abilities to govern.⁸¹ Both factions needed their physical presence within their respective circles to legitimize their pretensions to regal authority. Ysabeau would have called for the dauphin's return both on Burgundy's instructions and also because she herself understood the mystique and authority of kingship. Yolande was determined to keep the dauphin, not only because she had raised him from the age of about ten and feared for his well-being, not only because he was betrothed to her daughter Marie, not only because she wanted to assure the survival of the Kingdom of France, but clearly also because without him, in all probability, her faction would have ceased to exist. Should Yolande have lost control of the dauphin, the future of the House of Anjou would have been at risk. Charles was the trump card in the pack for both parties.

For the moment however, Burgundy was back in authority where it mattered: on the royal council and in Paris. He held sway over the body and the mind of the king regnant, and the queen had put both her faith and fate (and that of her daughter Catherine) in the hands of Jean sans Peur. Where did this leave the Duke of Brittany?

On 18th September 1418, three days before the rival *parlement* was officially established at Poitiers, a treaty of alliance between Brittany and Burgundy was signed at Saint-Maure-des-Fossés, not far from Paris. If we look back however to 24th August 1418, Jean V was writing to Henry V from Beaugency in the County of Blois, geographically closer to Yolande and the dauphin than to Burgundy and Ysabeau. Closer examination of the Breton archives show that by 12th October 1418, Jean V was in Saumur, Yolande's other principal (and her preferred) residence. He was in Angers, Yolande's northern capital on 12th October 1418 bestowing the powers of seneschal of Moncontour upon Jean Doguet.⁸² On 4th November Jean V was in Nantes giving the monks of Mont-St.-Michel the right to «... 100 mines de froment et 200 pipes de vin». Still in Brittany, from Quimperlé on 4th December he issued an authorization for payment to Jehan Periou his *garderobier* and his valet Pierre Hoynart for rich fabrics destined as presents for unspecified parties in Navarre and in Spain.⁸³ Brittany was in his own territories for Christmas 1418. Charles,

⁸¹ Cf. Nicole Pons's excellent discussion regarding « *le pere et le filz sont tout un* », (op. cit, below p. 196, n. 134 with Laidlaw), pp. 55-56.

⁸² *Lettres et mandements*, t. V, pp. 242-243, documents 1318 and 1319.

⁸³ The King of Navarre was Charles III the Noble or the Good (1361-1425). He was the maternal uncle of Jean V of Brittany. Charles III of Navarre was with Louis II, one of peacemakers on Charles VI's

with the support of southern France, (and Navarre) declared himself regent of France on 26th December 1418.

With the dauphin self-declared regent, an alternative *parlement* spearheaded by her allies and retainers established in Poitiers, the English invasion for the moment more or less held at bay, Yolande made ready for her departure south. Provence had been too long deprived of the presence of its countess, and its young count, Louis III, was impatient to depart for Italy.

Before devoting her energies entirely to the aspirations of Louis, Yolande persuaded her maternal uncle Louis, Cardinal-Duke of Bar to adopt as his heir her younger son, ten-year old René, deprived as he was of his father's influence. A treaty was established in Foug to this effect on 20th March 1419. On the same day, young René was affianced to Isabelle, sole heiress to Charles II Duke of Lorraine. On 13th August 1419, Louis of Bar settled fiscalities and accorded René the marquisate of Pont-à-Mousson. This was a dynastic masterstroke on Yolande's part, further evidence of her increasingly visible political genius. As well as reclaiming a part of her maternal House's heritage, she had successfully manoeuvred to place an obstacle in the path of her great political nemesis Burgundy and his allies, who had cast their eyes over Bar and whose ally in the region was Charles II le Hardi, Duke of Lorraine.⁸⁴ The news of the conclusion of the treaty of Foug, implying Bar's adhesion to the dauphin's cause, would have been greeted nowhere with greater joy and relief than in the village of Domremy, which held for the King of France and the Duke of Bar, in spite of the Burgundian sympathies of its overlord Henri d'Ogéville, chamberlain and *maître d'hôtel* to the Duke of Lorraine. In 1419, Domremy was a fragile island in an Anglo-Burgundian sea.⁸⁵

Louis of Bar was not particularly decisive or strong, preferring to consecrate his time to religious devotion and other more worldly distractions. He had long allied himself with the Houses of Orleans and Anjou, this alliance mutating into support for the Dauphin

royal council. He was King of Navarre from 1387-1425, Count of Evreux 1387-1404, Duke of Nemours 1404-1425.

⁸⁴ Ysabeau named Charles II of Lorraine Constable of France in 1418 in the wake of the Parisian riots which saw the Armagnacs overthrown. He was not keen to take up the posting, however, soon decamping to his duchy.

⁸⁵ Luce, Siméon, *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy, Recherches critiques sur les origines de la mission de la Pucelle*, Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1887, p. 58.

Charles's faction. That he shied away from conflict is certain, for in the wake of the murder of Montereau⁸⁶ he quickly allied himself with Philippe of Burgundy and Henry V against the interests of the dauphin and his own niece Yolande. It was doubtless this mutability of character that had allowed both Violant and Yolande to put pressure upon him to achieve their respective objectives.

The result of their mutual siege campaign of Louis of Bar was that René was named his chosen heir to avoid:

«... ladicte détestable division desdictes seigneuries, laquelle pouroit estre ruyne et désolacion d'icelle et perdicion du nom et armes de Bar ... destruction de noz bons, vrays et loyaulx sujets ... en resgart à la grant proximité de lignaige dont nous attient tant de par père que de par mère, nostre très chier et très amé nepveu messire René, conte de Guise, second filz de feu nostre très chier et très amé seigneur et cousin, le roy de Sicile, et de nostre très chiere et très amée dame et niepce, la royne de Sicile, jadis sa femme, lequel messire René est descendu en droite ligne de feu nostre tres chier seigneur et père, Monseigneur Robert, duc de Bar, dont Dieu ait l'âme, par le moyen de nostre très chiere et très amée dame et seur aisnée, la royne d'Arragon, sa grant mère, et est yssu du hault sang et lignaige des couronnes de France, de Sicile, d'Arragon, voire de deux costés du sang et lignaige impérial, et est encor alié par affinité à nostre très redoubté seigneur, Monseigneur le daulphin seul filz de mon très redoubté seigneur, Monseigneur le roy de France, lequel a espousée Madame Marie d'Anjou seur dudict messire René; par lequel messire René nostre nepveu, se devra vraysement et pourra ledict duchié entièrement entretenir et deffendre, au plaisir de Nostre Seigneur, contre l'entreprinse ou puissance des seigneurs voisins et tous autres qui sur icelui duchié voudroient aucune chose entreprendre, mieulx selon raison que par nulz des autres noz prochains parens dessus nommez tendans à nostre succession; considérans aussi qu'il descend de nostredicte très chièrre et très amée dame, nostre aisnée seur, dame d'Arragon, laquelle, se elle feust masle, nous eust précédé en la succession pour raison du droit de primogéniture, lequel, selon toute raison divine, naturele et politicque, se doit en royaulme, duchiés et grans seigneuries, pour la conservation d'icelle considérer et attendre et préférer à tous autres, mesmement que nostredicte dame et suer n'a point eu de partaige en terre ne en argent comme ont heu tous et toutes noz autres seurs, frère et nepveu dessusdictz.

⁸⁶ See below, pp.193-200.

*Pour considération desquelles choses dessusdictes et plusieurs autres grans causes justes et raisonnables ad ce nous mouvans, ay icelui nostre nepveu, messire René, conte de Guise, avons cédé, transporté, baillié, délaissé, en la présence des gens des Estatz de nostredict duchié aujourduy ensemblés pour ceste cause en ceste nostre ville de Saint-Mihiel, donnans, cédon, transportons, baillons et délaissons de nostre certaine science dès maintenant la propriété dudict duchié de Bar avec toutes ses appartenances et appandances excepté les villes et chasteaulx cy dessoubz nommez ...».*⁸⁷

From the above we see that mother and daughter achieved total victory over Louis of Bar. Violant had started to put pressure on the largely ineffectual Louis of Bar in 1417, her only surviving brother post-Agincourt and one with whom she had had indifferent relations in the past.⁸⁸ Bratsch-Prince states that Violant based her challenge upon her rights over the duchy as the first born of the family.⁸⁹ She claimed a financial benefit⁹⁰ and her daughter Yolande assumed control of the duchy of Bar in her son's name by right of inheritance based upon Violant's claims, thereby assuring a future strong voice in the duchy of Lorraine through René's marriage to Isabelle of Lorraine. The betrothal of René to Isabelle of Lorraine put an end to the secular rivalries which had for so long plagued Bar and was probably welcomed by Charles II of Lorraine, uneasy that Isabelle's rights over Lorraine might be contested if she did not have a consort capable of defending them.⁹¹ Lorraine was potentially threatened not only by the pretensions of Isabelle's cousin Antoine de Vaudémont, but also by those of Ysabeau of Bavaria's cousin, Louis of Bavaria and Henry V's brother, the Duke of Bedford. Though nominally master of Bar in his own right until he moved under the protection of his father-in-law Charles II in October 1420, René remained under the guardianship of Yolande for his county of Guise until January 1424.⁹²

⁸⁷ «Cession du Duché de Bar à René d'Anjou par le Cardinal duc Louis», in *Annuaire de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de la Lorraine*, t. XXXIX, Metz, Les Arts Graphiques, 1930, pp. 4-6.

⁸⁸ See above this chapter.

⁸⁹ Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, *La vida y espistolario de Violant de Bar (1365-1431) duquesa de Gerona y reina de Aragón* (unpublished translation notes), p. 15.

⁹⁰ Violant's rights were recognized, and Louis of Bar was obliged to pay her an annual rent of 1500 *livres tournois*, up until the time of her death. Bratsch-Prince, loc. cit.

⁹¹ This observation was made by Robert Parisot, in a paper given at the *Faculté des lettres de Nancy* in 1921, cited in *Annuaire de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de la Lorraine*, Metz, Les Arts Graphiques, 1930, t. XXXIX, p. 2.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

The skilful political manoeuvre negotiated between Yolande, Louis of Bar and Charles II was designed therefore both to guarantee the succession and tranquillity of the duchies of Bar and Lorraine and to give the Angevins a presence in the east of France, abutting the Empire. It would later cause René serious difficulties, for Charles II had not reckoned sufficiently upon the determination of his ambitious nephew Antoine de Vaudémont.

These matters for the time being settled, the next task was to dispatch Louis III to the peninsular kingdom of Naples-Sicily. The timing of his departure seems to have been informed by several external factors, the first of which was the retreat of Jacques de la Marche from Naples, where he had occupied the throne as consort of Joanna II since 1415 in conflict with his cousin Louis II's pretensions over the realm.

Upon the death of his rival Ladislaus in 1414, Louis II had been unable to act upon his claim due to chronic ill health and a withdrawal of promised financial and military aid, successfully argued against at the royal council by his uncle Berry. While this had been a disappointing set-back to his unrealized ambitions, Louis II must have judged the actions of his cousin Jacques in 1415 as an overt act of betrayal.⁹³ Upon ascending her brother's vacant throne, Joanna II, widowed for some eight years, made public her search for a potential prince. Jacques de la Marche was chosen and, while he was accorded only the title Prince of Tarente, he styled himself King of Naples to the anger of his Angevin relatives. According to Lecoy de la Marche, Louis II had left Jacques de la Marche as his advocate and representative in the peninsular kingdom and the city of Tarente had pledged Louis homage and loyalty via the offices of this Bourbon proxy. Louis II forgave Jacques in his final testament but stated that this pardon was without prejudice to the rights of Louis III and his successors.⁹⁴ After four years of marital disharmony and the ire of the local nobility, Jacques de la Marche was chased out of Naples in 1419 on the eve of Louis III's departure from Provence.

The other external factor influencing the timing of Yolande's departure south was the ceding of Nice to Amadeus VIII, Duke of Savoy, both in payment for the aid his House had assured Louis I on his Italian campaign and to bring to a conclusion a drawn out

⁹³ See above, chapter 4 and below, chapter 7.

⁹⁴ Lecoy de la Marche, t. I, p. 34. Cf. above, p. 166, note 27.

political situation that had been hanging over the question of Nice since 1388.⁹⁵ Yolande needed his goodwill and influence to smooth the way for Louis III's Italian campaign. We will discover below just how prescient the decision to cement ties with Savoy would prove to be for the House of Anjou, effectively cut-off as it was from overt and direct negotiation with the House of Burgundy.

Amadeus VIII was created Duke of Savoy by Sigismond in 1416. Yolande needed all the support she could muster at the Emperor's court to assure Louis III's venture, yet another reason why it was crucial to remain in good odour with Amadeus.⁹⁶ In yielding Nice to Savoy, she took the most pragmatic option available to her, accommodating Savoy for the greater good. The "*dédiction*" of Nice was definitively resolved with her Estates after her arrival in Provence in the autumn of 1419.

What of the English threat to her territories in Anjou-Maine? Did she, as is sometimes claimed, flee her northern duchy in the face of imminent English invasion?⁹⁷

While Henry V was actively pursuing his ambition of the conquest of France, it would seem that from about 1415-1420⁹⁸ his focus was clearly upon Normandy and the need to seize a series of fortified positions in western Normandy to guard against a potential French counter-attack (should the princes ever effectively unify). If Henry held this line he could force western Normandy to his obedience and secure a firm stronghold from which to stage further attacks, pushing forward first to Rouen and later to Paris. This strategy would have served as an incentive to nudge Anjou into a state of enforced neutrality. It is probably for this reason that he had agreed to accommodate Yolande and stay out of Anjou for the time-being, evidenced by the treaty negotiated in November 1417.⁹⁹ Brittany, who had negotiated the tripartite agreement, ensured that Anjou-Maine and Brittany were preserved from the worst ravages of the war and that the English

⁹⁵ See above, chapter 2 and Appendix 1, n. 33.

⁹⁶ His wife was the sister of Burgundy, Mary of Burgundy.

⁹⁷ For example, Reynaud, *Le Temps de Princes, passim* & Reynaud, « La Maison d'Anjou-Provence et la perte de Nice (1380-1419) », in Université de Paris I – Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1388. *La Dédiction de Nice à Savoie, actes du colloque international de Nice (septembre 1988)*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990, p. 263 where she states: « Elle [Yolande] abandonne momentanément le royaume de France pour se réfugier à partir de mai 1419 en Provence. ». We will demonstrate below that this was patently not the case.

⁹⁸ The Treaty of Troyes was signed in 1420 and changed circumstances decidedly in his favour. See below.

⁹⁹ See above, p. 171.

occupation of Normandy stopped at a line drawn through Bellême, Alençon, Argentan and Domfront, heavily fortified by English garrisons scattered about in numerous châteaux along the northern edges of Maine. None of this is to suggest that Maine was quarantined from English assault. Undisciplined troops, motivated by potential gain, made numerous incursions over the line of demarcation into areas such as Fresnay, Sillé-le-Guillaume and Thorigné, ten kilometres south of Sainte-Suzanne. Border areas were continually pillaged and the invader made attempts from 1417 onwards to take Le Mans by surprise attack.¹⁰⁰

It would seem however that the bulk of northern Angevin domains remained relatively trouble-free, in spite of the English infestation of Normandy. Perhaps the following will illuminate why Yolande felt it relatively safe to leave Anjou-Maine in 1419. If we refer again to Rymer, we discover that on 1st January 1419 letters were issued by Henry V «*Pro ambassiatoribus Dauphini*» (Dauphin Charles) followed by letter dated 3rd January «*Pro ambassiatoribus Reginae Siciliae*» both from Reims. Brittany, too, was negotiating at the time with his «brother» Henry.¹⁰¹ Safe conducts were issued on 26th January «*Pro Servientibus Comitibus de Vendome*» and «*Pro Consiliariis Reginae Siciliae*» and again «*Pro Ambassiatoribus Dalphini*» on 31st January. On 15th February we again find letters «*Pro Consilarii Reginae Ceciliae*» all of which dovetails on 16th February with «*De Treugis cum Regina Siciliae proclamandis*» and «*De Proclamationibus Treugarum cum Dalfino*».¹⁰² Yolande was clearly getting her house in order in preparation for her journey south to Provence.

More evidence of this fortification activity is to be found in Rymer. Just two months before her departure, both Yolande and Brittany were again in contact with Henry:

«*De Salvo Conductu pro Ambassiatoribus Reginae Ceciliae*» dated 4th April 1419 bore fruit in the form of «*De Tractando cum Reginae Siciliae*» dated 27th April 1419, doubtless reinforced by Jean V, «*De Salvo Conductu pro Duce Britanniae*» issued on 16th April, enabling Brittany's voice to be heard.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Bouton, André, *Le Maine, histoire économique et sociale, XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles*, Le Mans 1970, p. 44. He quotes as sources: Archives Sarthe G 664; *Cartulaire de Saint-Pierre-de-la-Cour*, n° CLI (1418-1419), d'Elbenne, Deni & Menjot, Le Mans 1910, and *Une forteresse du Maine pendant l'occupation anglaise. Fresnay-le-Vicomte de 1417 à 1450*, Triger, Robert, Mamers 1886.

¹⁰¹ Cf., Rymer loc. cit below.

¹⁰² Note the ordering of the proclamations.

¹⁰³ Rymer op. cit. t. IX, pp. 662, 675-676, 690, 692-694, 728-730, 740.

The above is completely at odds with Reynaud's repeated assertion that Yolande fled Anjou-Maine in the autumn of 1419 to escape the English invasion.¹⁰⁴ Had this been Yolande's purpose, she would have certainly stayed in Provence during the period 1424-1428, when the English threat to her territories was far greater, the regent Bedford officially creating himself Duke of Anjou in 1424 in the wake of his victory against the French at Verneuil on 17th August 1424.¹⁰⁵ In fact, Yolande returned to Anjou-Maine in the early summer 1423, prior to the birth of her grandson, the future Louis XI, on 3rd July 1423, and became ever more deeply involved in the politics and warfare of a king and a kingdom under siege.

Whatever the primary concern, diverse factors came together in the spring and summer of 1419 to precipitate her departure for Provence. Yolande had corresponded with the Emperor, if not to guarantee open support for Louis III, then at the very least to request that he not be obstructed. Yolande's household accounts record that: «... *au dernier jour de juing en lan mil cccc xix ou ladite dame estoit A bourges, faisoit son chemin en son paie de prouvence ...*»¹⁰⁶ Having established René in Bar, she left Charles and Marie, dauphin and dauphine, in Bourges, in the company of trusted servants and counsellors (some worthy, some not). She took with her Louis III, now sixteen-years of age, and her youngest children Charles and Yolande, adding the wise precaution of leaving her «*ame et feal*» counsellor and «*maistre de nostre chambre aux deniers*» Jehan Porchier in Anjou-Maine to take charge of her finances for the duration of her absence in Provence.¹⁰⁷

Yolande and Louis III arrived in Provence in September 1419 and their first action was to convoke their Estates, where they jointly reaffirmed the confirmation of communal franchises established in Angers in August 1417.¹⁰⁸ Having achieved this satisfactory outcome, the Estates granted Louis III 30,000 florins in recognition of his succession as their sovereign lord. It was also at this time that the solution to the question of Nice, so long the subject of protracted discussion and negotiation, was ratified. Yolande and Louis accepted the *fait accompli*, abandoning Nice and territory situated along the left

¹⁰⁴ Reynaud, *op.cit. passim*.

¹⁰⁵ See below. Her primary purpose was to reinforce and reinstate (where necessary) Angevin authority in Provence. See above, pp. 51-52 for Marie of Brittany's activity in this vein.

¹⁰⁶ KK 243, f° 60.

¹⁰⁷ KK 243 attachment to f° 66.

¹⁰⁸ See above, pp. 166-167. Cf. Gouiran & Hébert, *Le livre de Potentia...*, pièce 23, Aix-en-Provence, 4 septembre 1419, pp. 212-227 & Hébert, *Regeste...Aix-en-Provence*, septembre 1419, pp. 234-239.

bank of the Var to the House of Savoy.¹⁰⁹ Yolande concluded the Savoyard affair with her Estates in October 1419. On 5th October 1419, the long anticipated treaty was finally signed. Yolande and Louis III ceded significant rights over the region of Nice to Savoy, and Amadeus renounced the debt owed to him, receiving 15,000 gold florins from the pope as compensation. Yolande ratified the treaty on 26th October 1419 (but Louis III, attaining his majority in 1423, tried in vain not to recognize it).¹¹⁰

Both parties to the final agreement made respective arrangements regarding frontier and maritime security. Amadeus modified his pecuniary claims and Yolande accepted and ratified the loss of Nice, Vintimille and Barcelonette.¹¹¹ As a result of this decision, the Genoese and the Provençaux forgot their old mutual rivalry, united and promised to block their enemies from gaining access to their respective ports. The Genoese further pledged six galleys to the cause of Louis III in return for permission to obtain flour, wine and other supplies from Provence, supplies which in the past had been denied them by the Provençaux. All of this was conceived to hasten Louis's departure for Italy. In doing this, Yolande and Louis III were following the example earlier set by Louis I and Louis II in their Italian campaigns.¹¹²

Yolande feared reprisals and interference from her Aragonese relatives. That she had put aside Angevin aspirations for the insular part of the Kingdom of Sicily, ruled by Aragon, is evidenced by treaties signed with the Republic of Genoa in 1417. Two years later, on 12th October 1419, Yolande and Louis sent their ambassadors to Genoa to negotiate a firm peace. The doge of Campofregoso, Filippo-Maria Visconti, himself apprehensive about Aragon, signed a pact with the Angevins on 20th November. Visconti pledged to preserve Provençal liberties and those of the other Angevin subjects, demanding in exchange that, in the event of an attack upon Genoa, the Angevins promise to protect his domains from Livorno to Monaco. Free trade was sanctioned between the two parties, according to established customs and rights. With these agreements in place, Louis III's route to Italy and his peninsular realm was opened to him both by sea and across the alpine duchy of Savoy.

¹⁰⁹ Reynaud, Marcelle-Renée, « La Maison d'Anjou-Provence ... », pp. 263-264.

¹¹⁰ José, op. cit. p. 217.

¹¹¹ Reynaud loc. cit.

¹¹² Camau, Emile, op .cit. p. 114.

Other factors were at work to ensure his dream would be shortly realized. While Joanna II was still on the throne in Naples, her immoral conduct and reprehensible rule had led to a revolt against her by her husband Jacques de la Marche, who was eventually chased from the kingdom by her favourites. Further, Pope Martin V was so incensed by her delinquent sovereignty that he had resolved to combat her with all the authority and power at his disposal. He summoned Louis III to Rome with the firm intention of investing him with the peninsular kingdom of Naples-Sicily.¹¹³ To the overtures of Martin V were added those of Neapolitan nobles, but money was required and vast quantities of it, before Louis III could act upon these favourable circumstances.

Yolande once more approached her Provençal Estates, convoking them in Arles on 25th February 1420. The 100,000 florins that were put at her disposal expressly for the benefit of Louis's campaign were harvested from taxes principally levied on merchandise and produce.¹¹⁴ Fortified by this subsidy and the Genoese galleys Louis set sail for his kingdom via the papal court in Rome:

*«... En ce temps la royne de Sézille, vefve du roy Loys de bonne mémoire, donna congé à son filz aîné pour aller à Romme, affin que de la main de nostre saint père le pape, il feust couronné roy de Napples, et le bailla aux Florentiens et Gèneuois sur leur léaulté; lesquelz estoient ancrez a tout XV gallées d'armes au port de marcelles qui estoit de la terre de ladicte royne. Mais elle retint en hostaige, pour son filz, viij des plus notables barrons du royaume de Napples. Et ce firent par la hayne qu'ilz avoient à leur royne, femme de messire Jacques de Bourbon, conte de la Marche; laquelle tenoit pour lors son mary prisonnier pour discorde qu'elle avoit eu en luy et à ses gouverneurs. Or, s'en va le josne prince Loys, nagant par mer ès gallées dessusdictes, et entra en Romme, et, là, receut sollempnellement sondit royaume par la main du pape, jà soit ce que lors ne fût pas couronné; et fut, de ce jour en avant, nommé le roy Loys, comme avoit esté, par avant, son feu père ...».*¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Lecoy de la Marche, *Le Roy René*, t. I, p.50.

¹¹⁴ Papon, op. cit. t. III, p. 326, cf. Hébert, *Regeste...*, pp. 239-241.

¹¹⁵ *Chronique de Jean le Févre, Seigneur de St-Rémy*, t. II, pp. 16-17. The editor Morand makes the point that the chronicler, usually so faithful to Monstrelet's version of events, suppresses the comment regarding Yolande's maternal solicitude: «*non pas sans souspirer du cuer*». Morand further notes that Chastellain in his version also adds the observation that Yolande sent Louis on his way: «*à larmes et soupirs, comme mères font*», with Wavrin following Le Févre's lead in firmly treading the objective path in relation to Yolande's supposed maternal solicitude.

Louis III arrived outside the capital Naples, a city still presided over by Joanna II, on 15th August 1420. He had already sought and received the aid of Sforza de Tennebello, Grand Constable of Naples and *Gonfalonier* of the Church, naming him his viceroy and constable in Naples.¹¹⁶ Joanna, sensing that the tide had turned against her, petitioned the help of Alfonse V of Aragon,¹¹⁷ promising to adopt him as her heir if he defended her against the Angevins. The stage was set for a reprise of Louis I's Italian campaign. The mention of Aragon brings to mind one of the major events of Violant, dowager queen of Aragon's later years; her voyage to Provence in 1420. Far from withdrawing from politics, Yolande's mother had remained both an avid spectator and active participant. On the pretext of visiting her widowed daughter and grandchildren, she departed Aragon in the company of Mossèn Galceran de Santmenat (one time "*camerlench*" of her late brother-in-law, Martin I), journeying through Blanes to Provence on 1st June 1420. Bratsch-Prince evinces that Violant "... had worked excessively hard to bring this trip about, writing numerous letters to her officials and kin in the hope of gathering sufficient funds for the journey... while in Provence she is drawn – or more likely, willingly immerses herself – into the political turmoil surrounding the claims of both Alfonso V of Aragon and Louis III d'Anjou to the kingdom of Naples."¹¹⁸ Back in Barcelona by 3rd May 1421¹¹⁹, "her political nerve reactivated",¹²⁰ Violant tried in vain to convince Alfonse V and his queen Maria of Castile of the legitimacy of the Angevin claim.

While Yolande, in the company of her mother Violant, had been making meticulous preparations for the departure of Louis III and consolidating her authority in Provence, her son-in-law the Dauphin Charles had become embroiled in the assassination of their mutual antagonist, the Duke of Burgundy.

From the moment he had regained control over Paris in May 1418, Burgundy tried without success to woo the dauphin back to Paris and subjugate him to his influence. Burgundy issued numerous letters in Charles VI's name citing the dauphin's principal

¹¹⁶ Muzio Attendolo (b. 1369 – d. 1424), (*Sforza* was an acquired appellation) founder of the Sforza dynasty.

¹¹⁷ Alfonse spent most of his reign on the island of Sicily. Cf. Earenfight, Theresa, *Queenship, Politics and Government in the Medieval Crown of Aragon*... Doctoral Dissertation, for a detailed study of Maria of Castile's lieutenant-generalcy during the prolonged absences of Alfonse.

¹¹⁸ Bratsch-Prince, Dawn, op. cit, p. 17.

¹¹⁹ See Appendix 2, doc. 2 for the letter to Maria of Castile.

¹²⁰ Bratsch-Prince, loc. cit.

counsellors and protectors as being injurious to the cause of France and a negative influence over him. The Treaty of Saint-Maure-des-Fossés proclaimed on 19th September 1418 and its accompanying letters, whilst paying homage to the counsel of «*nostre Filz de Bretaigne, de nostre tres-chère & très-amée Cousine la Royne de Sicile, Duchesse d'Anjou, nostre Nepveu & Cousin les Duc d'Alençon & Conte de Vertuz*», specifically mentions the dauphin's chancellor Robert le Maçon, Jehan Louvet «*soy portant President de Prouvence*», Ramon Raguier [notary and secretary to Charles] and «*aucuns autres de petite extraction qui sont en petit nombre entour nostre Filz*». ¹²¹ The terms of the treaty were, from the dauphin's point of view, utterly unacceptable in their implementation. They sought to remove his person from the influence of his counsellors, individuals «*de petite extraction*» and bring him under the tutelage of Burgundy once he had been reinstated with his parents the king and queen at court. Charles rejected the pact almost immediately it was proclaimed and sought out an alliance with Henry V.¹²²

The St-Maure treaty was no peace solution: it merely reinforced the authority held by Burgundy over both the king and Paris.¹²³ As such it led to a deadlock between the rival *parlements* and resurgent conflict in the affairs of France. Burgundy tried time and again to gain control over the dauphin, even considering the possibility of negotiated peace when threats failed to deliver the desired outcome. Though he clearly feared personal attack, Burgundy consented to another personal interview with Charles, to take place after elaborate preparation at Montereau-Faut-Yonne, some seventy-two kilometres south-east of Paris. Something had to give. After months of procrastination, peregrination, charm-offensives, double-dealing and threats exchanged by both sides, on 10th September 1419, on a bridge in the town of Montereau, Burgundy was hacked down by the dauphin's men.

Vale points out that from the day of the assassination, there has been a great deal of speculation regarding the dauphin's complicity in the deed.¹²⁴ On the balance of probabilities, it would seem that it was carried out with the dauphin's willing consent, if not with his active involvement, by men loyal to the defunct Louis d'Orléans and

¹²¹ *Ordonnances*, t. X, pp. 473-492.

¹²² Vaughan, op. cit. p. 263. Cf. Rymer, op. cit. t. IX pp. 773, 776, 779. Yolande was involved in this as well. Cf. Rymer, op. cit. p. 773.

¹²³ Vale, M.G.A., *Charles VII*, London, Eyre Methuan, 1974, p. 28. See also above this chapter regarding the treaty.

¹²⁴ Loc. cit.

servants of the House of Anjou. Vale shows that the only surviving testimony of the dauphin's behaviour immediately preceding the murder is an account given by Jean de Poitiers, Bishop of Valence, in support of Charles's chancellor, Robert le Maçon. It was notarized on 18th July 1426. With all its inherent problems, this document is perhaps the nearest thing to an independent witness statement, as at the time of the incident the bishop was not firmly allied to either faction and had been in Montereau in September 1419 on unrelated business. He had come to seek out Charles on the subject of a contested grant of the county of Valentinois made by one of his brothers to Charles¹²⁵ and to visit another of his brothers, the Bishop of Langres, who was with Burgundy's entourage. The testimony of Jean de Poitiers is worthy of consideration both for the reason that, while he had connections within both factions, he had still not sworn personal allegiance to either, and for the fact that, once he did attach himself to a faction, it was to the dauphin's.¹²⁶ His 1426 testimony reveals the probable complicity of his master in the murder of Burgundy, rather than effacing any guilt Charles might have carried.

On Sunday, 10th September, both Robert le Maçon and Jean de Poitiers (who were friends), participated at an audience where Burgundian lords received the oaths of the dauphin and his entourage. After oaths were exchanged:

«... Le Roy lors regent vouloit partir à aler sur la place, il apella ledit seigneur de Treves, lui dist qu'il alast avecques lui, et parla bien peu et court à lui à part. Et veismes bien, aux manieres dudit seigneur de Treves, qu'il cuidoit empescher le Roy, et [sic] parler avec lui longuement, et, comme il nous povoit sembler, contrestroit aux paroles du Roy. Et alors le Roy se parti assez rudement, et fist appeller ledit seigneur de Treves deux ou trois foiz à aler apres lui, et autres plusieurs, des noms desquelx ne sommes recors. Et veismes que si tost que le Roy lors regent fut parti ledit seigneur de Treves se laissa cheoir adens sur ung lit; et nous approchames de lui demandames qu'il avoit: lequel seigneur de Treves nous repondi et dit ces parolles: «Pleust à Dieu, monseigneur de Valence, que je fusse à Jherusalem, sans denier ne sans maille, et que jamais je

¹²⁵ Cf. Gaussin, P-R, op. cit., p. 123.

¹²⁶ Vallet de Viriville differs regarding Jean de Poitiers' neutrality. By November 1419, he has Jean de Poitiers as a counsellor of the dauphin. Perhaps he moved into the service of Charles post-Montereau, influenced by his friend Robert le Maçon. He also has Jacques de Bourbon, Count de la Marche, entering into Charles's service on or around 11th July 1419 (A.N., K 2499). Vallet de Viriville, *Auguste, Charles VII, roi de France et ses conseillers*, Paris, 1859.

n'eusse veu se seigneur ycy, car j'ay grant doubte qu'il ne soit mauvoisement conseillié, et qu'il ne face aujourduy chose de quoy cest royaume et lui soient perduz.».¹²⁷

The distressed and dissenting chancellor called for horses and rode to the gates of Montereau, which were firmly shut. Opening them with difficulty, he and his companions heard "*le hu et le bruit de la mort de mondit seigneur de Bourgoigne*".¹²⁸

Many have interpreted this murder as a revenge killing for Burgundy's sponsoring of the assassination of Louis d'Orléans in 1407. It is worth pointing out here that 1407 was not the only account to be settled. It might also be read as long-delayed retribution for the various plots attempted by Jean sans Peur to unseat Angevin authority in 1413, 1416, 1417 and 1418 whereby he had systematically tried to eliminate Louis II, Yolande and their various retainers and allies, as well as attempts to bribe and recruit their loyal servants.¹²⁹ The inertia resulting from the Saint-Maure impasse was perhaps a tailor-made opportunity for vengeance and account-settling.¹³⁰ Vaughan makes the observation that in the end, one of Burgundy's own favoured strategies, political assassination, was the method employed to remove him.¹³¹

Jean Le Févre reports that after the dauphin had remonstrated with Burgundy for having: «... *mal tenu sa promesse de ce qu'il n'avoit pas fait guerre aux Angloys, ne fait wider ses gens hors de garnisons, ainsi que promis l'avoit. ... [Robert de Loire/Lairé] le prist par le brace dextre, et luy dist: «Levés vous, vous n'estes que trop honnourable». Le duc de Bourgoingne, qui estoit à ung genoul, comme dit est, avoit son espée chainte, laquelle estoit selon vouloir trop demourée derrière. Quant il se agenoilla, il y mist sa main pour le remectre plus devant; et lors ledit messire Robert de Loire luy dist: «Mectez-vous la main à vostre espée en la*

¹²⁷ Beaucourt, *Charles VII...*, t. I, pp. 656-657.

¹²⁸ Loc. cit. Robert Le Maçon, Lord of Trèves, was an Angevin of modest origins. He was enobled in 1401 and was later appointed master of requests and later chancellor to Louis II d'Anjou. He then served Queen Ysabeau for a period, passing into the service of Charles de Ponthieu (later Charles VII) in 1416. He was universally held to be a "*bien prudent et sage cleric*". Gaussin, P.-R., op. cit. p. 120.

¹²⁹ Vale cites an incident involving the revered Gascon knight Barbazon, (Arnaud Guilhem), who, refusing a bribe of 500 *moutons d'or*, offered to him by Jean sans Peur, declared that he would never accept payment, except from those masters whom he served. Op. cit., p. 28 (B.N.F. Ms. Fr. 5061, f.°16, v.°). Cf. Guinée, Bernard, *Un meurtre, une société...*, p. 236.

¹³⁰ See above, regarding the events for years 1413-1418, and in particular pp. 161-164 this chapter, Le Févre's account: «... *pour prendre tous ceulx qui leurs [Burgundians'] estoient contraires; et en premier, le provost de Paris ... mectroient à mort la royne de Zécille ... etc.*»

¹³¹ Vaughan, op. cit.

*présence de monseigneur le daulphin ?» En ses paroles s'approcha messire Tanneguy qui, comme on dist, fist ung signe, et en disant: «Il est temps ...».*¹³²

There are various versions of this seminal event in the dauphin's early career and the shock waves it sent through both factions. Most seem to agree that the mortal blows were struck by Guillaume Bataille, Robert de Lairé and the Viscount of Narbonne. For his part, Tanneguy du Châtel seems to have played his usual rôle of removing Charles to a safe place, once the signal had been given.¹³³ The deadlock might have been broken, but to whose advantage?

The situation immediately following was unclear on all sides. Everyone, including Henry V, who had long been waiting in the wings (particularly since the failure of matrimonial negotiations between himself, Ysabeau, the dauphin's ambassadors and the now defunct Burgundy at Melun during the period 30th May to 30th June 1419)¹³⁴ sought to draw advantage from this stunning new development. A call for calm came from the dauphin, delivered to the new Duke of Burgundy by Régnier Pot, chamberlain and counsellor to successive dukes of Burgundy (Philippe le Hardi, Jean sans Peur and now Philippe le Bon) upon his return from Montereau. It is not a cringing apology from the regent but rather a call to unity in the face of the wrongs occasioned to France and the Crown by the previous Duke of Burgundy. It details events from Charles's standpoint, including the strongest accusations against Jean sans Peur. In closing his account, the dauphin, *seul filz du roy* exhorts his cousin Burgundy to resist an alliance with the English and remain a good and faithful Frenchman:

«... Sy vueille mondit seigneur de Bourgongne bien penser à ces choses, et les peser fort avant que aucune chose faire, pensant que en ce gist le fait du roy, du royaume et de la seigneurie, et tout le bien ou tout le mal qui jamais peut advenir à mondit seigneur de Bourgongne de toute sa vie, laquelle il peut pour ce mettre en infinis perilz ou en surté, et en face savoir de brief son bon vouloir à mon dit seigneur le regent qui lui veult et desire du tout complaire et pour l'amour de lui et de son honneur s'est deporté de plus avant proceder à la publication des choses dessus touchiés et autres bien merueilleux esclandres qui lui sont possibles à remonstrer clerement,

¹³² Jean Le Févre, t. I, p. 375.

¹³³ Cf. Guinée, Bernard, op. cit. p. 278.

¹³⁴ Cf. Vaughan, pp. 270-273. Henry V left Melun empty handed and frustrated in his attempts to marry Catherine and thereby control France, which had been on-going since 1413. See Appendix 1, n. 34.

*lesquelles il taist; et sa dicte voulement sçeue, mon dit seigneur fera tousjours à son povoir le bien du roy et de sa seigneurie, qui après le roy lui doit appartenir, et ce qui sera au bien de mondit seigneur de Bourgongne, se en lui ne tient.»*¹³⁵

Given Henry's determination to profit from the assassination as well as Philippe le Bon's desire both to avenge his father and find a way to increase his own holdings by drawing political capital from the changed circumstances, it is unlikely that the dauphin could have realistically expected to win over Burgundy to his cause. Where did the ever-fluid situation of Brittany fit into the new order?

Post-Montereau, Jean V was in Brittany, where from Nantes were sent: *lettres de décharge du paiement fait «à Bertrand de Dinan, mareschal de Bretagne, à Jacques de Dinan, son frère, et aux chevaliers, capitaines, et gens d'armes...»* These documents are dated 22nd October 1419, six weeks after the assassination of Burgundy. The content is most interesting: «... de leurs gages d'un demi moys ... lesquieulx capitaines furent payez à Nantes le viii septembre MCCCCXIX, et furent leurs montres à la Guyerche le 11 octobre ensuivant, en attente d'aller avec Mgr. Richard, en France, devers le roy, Mgr. le dauphin et le duc de Bourgoingne [Phillip the Good] »,¹³⁶ as it demonstrates that rather than closing off ties with Charles in the wake of the murder of Montereau, Brittany continued to negotiate with all parties. On the same day a *mandement* was issued: «... d'envoyer 700 florins d'or à maître Guillaume Breillet, son procureur en cour en Rome, pour faire retirer les bulles obtenues du pape, tant sur des affaires qui regardaient la conscience du duc et de ses enfants, que sur ce qui touchait la ville de St.-Malo.» These documents taken together would appear to indicate that Brittany was seeking to keep all channels of communication open in the wake of Montereau. He dispatched representatives and men-at-arms to Paris and Troyes to seek out Burgundy and the king and equally to Anjou-Maine, Berry and Touraine to seek out the dauphin and Yolande's advisors and counsellors. The English were jockeying for ascendancy as Montereau had given them the ideal trigger to force the disinheritance of Charles by his father and finalize the long anticipated marriage between Henry V and Charles's sister,

¹³⁵ Beaucourt, G. du Fresne de, *Le Meurtre de Montereau*, Paris, Victor Palmé, 1868, p. 43. Consult op. cit for full transcript pp. 38-43, cf. Guenée, Bernard, op. cit. pp. 285-286 & Laidlaw, James, "Alain Chartier and the Art of Crisis Management", in Allmand, Christopher, *War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2000, pp. 37-53, Pons, Nicole, "Intellectual Patterns and Affective Reactions in Defence of the Dauphin Charles, 1419-1422, in Allmand, (ed.), *War, Government and Power...*, pp. 54-69.

¹³⁶ *Lettres et mandements*, t. V, document 1373, p. 259.

Catherine.¹³⁷ Ysabeau for her part, invited the wolf into their House by dispatching a missive dated 20th October from Troyes: « *A très hault et puissant Prince nostre cousin Henry, par la grace de Dieu roy d' Angletterre [from] Ysabel, par icelle meisme grace royne de France, [with] paix et affection de parfaite concorde et union*». ¹³⁸

The way the wind was blowing must have been evident to Brittany, for a treaty of alliance between Brittany and Burgundy dated 29th October was sealed *en nostre chastel de Jugon* with a further treaty finalized on 9th December 1419 at Vannes. Document 1382, immediately following the alliance treaty and also dated 9th December, gives further testimony to the traffic between the various courts: «*Mandement portent décharge de 300 l. payees «à messier Guillaume de Champdivers, pour luy aider à supporter les missions qu'il a sousteneues en Bretaigne, dempuix la mort du duc de Bourgoingne, son maistre.*»»¹³⁹ For the moment, Montereau had determined Brittany to fall in behind Philippe le Bon and Henry V. Charles II of Lorraine, having consistently avoided the issue of swearing fealty to the English, was obliged to do so in order to maintain his fealty to Burgundy, whose supporter he had long been. Louis of Bar was “invited” to the wedding festivities of Henry V and Catherine of France (held immediately after the establishment of the Treaty).¹⁴⁰ We know nothing of his response to this summons to attend.¹⁴¹

René d'Anjou's seemingly pacific situation, arranged by his mother Yolande and his grandmother Violant, had been turned on its head: he was now officially an ally of the English and an adversary, in theory at least, of both the dauphin, his childhood companion, and by association, his own mother. Yolande was either unwilling or unable to become directly involved in the political affairs of her son-in-law post-Montereau in the immediate aftermath of the murder. The existence of the Treaty of Troyes had rendered any realistic attempt at a *rapprochement* with Burgundy inconceivable for the time being and in any case, Louis III was about to depart for Italy. Yet, how legitimate was the infamous Treaty of Troyes?

¹³⁷ Cf. *Jean Le Févre*, t. I, pp. 59-60.

¹³⁸ Beaucourt op. cit. p. 40.

¹³⁹ *Lettres et mandements*, loc. cit., document 1382, p. 262..

¹⁴⁰ They were married at Troyes on Trinity Sunday 2nd June 1420.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Luce, Siméon, *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy*, Hachette, Paris 1887, p. 58.

Two extant documents established well after the proclamation of the Treaty, one a letter from Pope Martin V to Charles VII in 1422 upon the death of his father Charles VI, and the other a legal opinion on the validity of the Treaty of Troyes sought by Philippe le Bon in 1435 from the faculty of law at Bologna University, on the eve of the Treaty of Arras,¹⁴² shed some light upon contemporary or near contemporary views of the situation post-Montereau: that the Treaty was illegal and so regarded by most right thinking individuals apart from its direct beneficiaries and their supporters i.e. Philippe le Bon and Henry V. Nicole Pons quotes Jean Favier by stating that: “it is clear that the policies of Queen Isabeau, Philip the Good and Henry V were formulated on the understanding that the dauphin, Charles, should ‘disappear from circulation’.”¹⁴³ Both Burgundy and Henry, unabashed political realists and practised opportunists, had aspirations that went far beyond mere vengeance and outrage over a political assassination, which, in the words of Jean Petit, defending Burgundy’s murder of Louis d’Orléans in 1408, ought to be read in the light of the apophthegm: “*radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas*”.¹⁴⁴ In his 1408 justification, Jean Petit enumerated «... *toutes les criminelles intrigues par lesquelles le duc [d’Orléans], dévoté d’une insatiable ambition, avait cherché à s’emparer du trône ...*»¹⁴⁵ These charges against Orléans’s actions from 1404-1407 were equally sustainable in 1419 in relation to Burgundy’s activities in the years since 1407. We have noted above that it was just this position that the dauphin adopted in his letter to the new Duke of Burgundy. Whatever the rights and wrongs of Burgundy’s assassination, the fact remains that it was the catalyst that entrenched Henry V’s presence in French affairs and consolidated the power of the House of Burgundy, leaving the dauphin and his party effectively isolated from the throne and seat of authority in Paris.¹⁴⁶

The process of the dauphin’s disinheritance was a political act, and a formal ceremony, a *lit-de-justice*, convoked in Charles VI’s name on 23rd December 1420, sealed its consequences. Henry V shared the King’s Bench and was officially styled “heir and

¹⁴² Vale, op. cit. p. 32. Cf. The paper by Nicole Pons, “Intellectual Patterns and Affective Reactions in Defence of the Dauphin Charles 1419-1422”, in Allmand, Christopher, (ed.), *War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2000, pp. 54-69.

¹⁴³ Pons, Nicole, op. cit., p. 59.

¹⁴⁴ Ad Timotheum I, 6:10, *Biblia Sacra Vulgata: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, Stuttgart, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994, p. 1836. See above p. 131, and Appendix 1, n. 21.

¹⁴⁵ *Religieux*, vol. 2, book XXVIII, ch. XXXIV, pp. 754-755.

¹⁴⁶ And effectively ruled out any continuing contact between Yolande and Henry established by her intermediary Brittany. See above pp. 171-173 and p. 187. Cf. Pons, Nicole, op. cit. esp. pp. 57-64.

regent of France".¹⁴⁷ The dauphin was seventeen years of age, his dauphine sixteen; he had been betrayed by his mother Ysabeau in the interests of political expediency, a pension and personal security and by his cousin, Burgundy for vengeance and political opportunism.

The events are described by the Berry Herald:

«Et quant le filz du duc de Bourgoingne sceut la mort de son pere, et aussi ceulx de Paris qui tenoient les offices du royaume, de paour qu'ilz ne les perdissent et craignant la fureur de monseigneur le daulphin, conseillerent au jeune duc que il se alliait au roy d'Angleterre et si fit il, car il lui mist en ses mains le Roy Charles et la Royne. Et print le roy d'Angleterre la fille du Roy seur de monseigneur le daulphin a femme et en outre mist en obeissance et lui bailla la ville de Paris et toutes les autres citez, villes, portes, chastiaux qui estoient nuement au Roy ou pais de France...[etc.]»¹⁴⁸

The Berry Herald goes on to detail that by the time of the nuptials in Troyes, Charles had departed for the Languedoc, bordering the territories of the Dauphiné and Provence, (where Yolande was in residence) to force the Languedoc to his obedience. This he achieved, eventually driving the Count of Foix (his former governor) out of the territory with the assistance of Jean IV, Count of Armagnac, as well as «... plusieurs autres grans seigneurs du royaume et aussi des Escossois qui estoient nouvellement venuz en France ... Puis s'en retourna mondit seigneur le daulphin en ses pays de Berry et de Touraine et y laissa le gouverneur messire Charles de Bourbon [Count of Clermont], qui assiegea et print Besiers. ».¹⁴⁹

The proximity of the Languedoc to Provence is worthy of particular mention, as at this time Yolande was based in her southern county preparing the way for Louis III's campaign.¹⁵⁰ It would not therefore be unreasonable to suggest that there could have been a meeting between the dauphin and his *bonne mère*, particularly if we note the

¹⁴⁷ Vale, op. cit. p. 31.

¹⁴⁸ The Berry Herald, p. 93.

¹⁴⁹ Loc. cit..

¹⁵⁰ Ably assisted in her enterprises by her mother Violant, as we have seen, a seasoned political campaigner. See above p. 192 and Appendix 2, doc. 2 for Violant's letter to Maria of Castile explaining to her the rôle of a queen, and soliciting her help in establishing peace between Aragon and Anjou over the matter of Naples.

presence of Scottish forces newly arrived on his behalf in southern France and Henry V's reaction to this development. The Berry Herald again:

*«En l'an mil CCCC et XX, partit le roy d'Angleterre de la ville de Troyes et le duc de Bourgoingne, et amenerent avecques eulx le roy d'Escoce, lequel estoit prisonnier du roy d'Angleterre, et l'amenerent en entencion que les Escossois qui estoient avecques monseigneur le daulphin, se tournassent de leur parte ou au moins qu'ilz ne se armassent point contre lui ; mais pour leur Roy n'en firent riens, ains servirent grandement mondit seigneur le daulphin, comme il appera cy après ...».*¹⁵¹

What happened shortly afterwards at Baugé, in Yolande's county of Anjou, with the active participation of the Scots troops, testifies to her collaboration with Scotland to assist both her own interests and those of her son-in-law, to whose interest Angevin aspirations were by now irrevocably linked. This victory halted effective progress of the English invasion into greater Anjou. The Berry Herald gives us the names of protagonists and details of the Baugé victory (and a rare triumph it would prove to be until the drought was broken with the lifting of the siege of Orleans in 1429):¹⁵²

«En l'an mil CCCC XXI, le duc de Clarence, et plusieurs autre[s] grans seigneurs d'Angleterre, partirent de Normandie, et vindrent ou país d'Anjou et presenterent la bataille devant Angiers, et de la s'en allerent logez a Beaufort en Vallee. Si se assemblerent les François et les Escossois en ung village nommé Baugy. Les Englois prindrent quatre Escossois en allant en ferraige, lesquieulx ilz menerent devers le duc de Clarence, frere du roy d'Angleterre, et si estoit chief de l'armee ; si leur demanda des nouvelles en englois, et lui dirent que le conte de Boucan, et de Victon, et le sire d'Ernelle du pays d'Escoce, avecques grant nombre d'Escossois, estoient logiez a Baugy ; et des François y estoient le viconte de Nerbonne, le mareschal de la Fayecte, le sire de Fontaines et aultres seigneurs françois. Et incontinent ces nouvelles oyes, se leva de table le duc de Clarence, en disant : « Alon leur corre sus ! Ilz sont nostres ! et que il ne viengne avecques nous que les hommes d'armes » ... Et cependent les François et Escossois qui estoient au Grant Baugy le sceurent et se mistrent en ordonnance ... Le duc de Clerence... fut le premier tué, et aussi fut le conte de Can [Kent] qui estoit ung vaillant chevalier, pareillement le sire de Gray, le

¹⁵¹ The Berry Herald, pp. 94-95.

¹⁵² While this did not quarantine Anjou from English raiding parties, the damage was controllable. Maine however was not to find itself in such fortunate circumstances, as we will discover below. Cf. Duchein, Michel, "L'Ecosse dans la guerre de Cent Ans", in Kerhervé, Jean & Rigaudière, Albert, (eds.), *Finances, pouvoirs et mémoires. Mélanges offerts à Jean Favier.*, Brest, Fayard, 1999, pp. 279-300.

*seigneur de Ros et plusieurs autres grans seigneurs et gens d'armes jusques au nombre de XIII a XV c[ents] furent mors en la place. Et furent prins les contes de Sonbricet, son frere messire Thomas de Beaufort et plusieurs autres ... Et fut celle bataille la veille de Pasques les Grans. Monseigneur le dauphin fut a Poitiers, lequel le lundi ensuivant sceut ces nouvelles, dont il fut moult joyeux.»*¹⁵³

It is clear from the Berry Herald's account of the Baugé victory that the dauphin himself did not participate: it was a victory achieved by the combined Angevin-Manceaux-Scots force, able and well-positioned to capitalize upon the precipitate actions of the Duke of Clarence. For the dauphin's party it was a morale-booster, organized by Yolande and conforming to her well-established and continuing practice of intervention in the affairs of France, particularly when it defended or enhanced Angevin possessions. Reynaud herself asserts that notwithstanding Yolande's absence from her northern domains, she was not out of touch with events, citing the case that she was well-informed of the captain of Baugé's refusal to pay homage to John of Beaufort in 1420. She was well-served and could rely upon the loyalty of her officers in the *Chambre des comptes d'Angers* as well as her Angevin and Manceaux knights, victorious at Baugé. At all times, Yolande managed to divide her attention in order to address all aspects of family endeavour. This assertion will be reinforced as our study progresses.

Immediately post-Baugé, Charles decamped for Tours, where he received the victorious John Stewart, Count of Buchan, the Scots commander, creating him Constable of France, a post left vacant by his faction since the demise of Bernard VII d'Armagnac in 1418.¹⁵⁴ The dauphin and his new Constable departed for Le Mans to lay siege to the castle of Montmirail and the town of Galardon, liberating them from the Burgundians, retiring to Amboise once this had been achieved.¹⁵⁵ Vale tells us that it was not only the dauphin who was heartened by the Baugé victory: Charles d'Orléans, captive of Henry V in England since Agincourt, sent Guillaume Cousinot I, his chancellor, from Blois to Tours in the hope that "one could have some of the English prisoners taken lately by the Scots lords at the battle of Baugé in exchange for his own liberty."¹⁵⁶ Charles d'Orléans had

¹⁵³ The Berry Herald, op. cit. pp. 99-102.

¹⁵⁴ Ysabeau had elevated the reluctant Charles II le Hardi, Duke of Lorraine to the post of Constable in 1418. See above, p. 183, n. 83.

¹⁵⁵ The Berry Herald, *ibid.* p. 102.

¹⁵⁶ Vale, op. cit. p. 33, who cites as his source British Museum, Add. Ch. 3588.

retained a personal guard made up of Scots archers, under John Stewart Darnley since 1418. As we move into the epoch of Joan of Arc, we will encounter the name of the Duke of Orleans, in connection with her mission and instances of combined Angevin-Orleanist diplomacy.

Between the victory at Baugé in March 1421 and the capitulation of Meaux¹⁵⁷ in early May 1422, the Dauphin Charles and Marie d'Anjou were quietly married. Around the same time, important papers and letters arrived at Yolande's *Chambre des comptes* in Angers dispatched by her secretary Jean Micaël from Provence:

«Premièrement un grant blanc scellé des sceaulx de la Royne de Sicile et du Roy son filz. Item trois autres blans scellés du seel de la dite Dame, Item, une lettre de ladite Dame confirmatoire du mariage du dit Roy et de Ysabeau fille du duc de Bretagne. Item une autre lettre du dit Roy contenant ratification et aprobatation du dit mariage. Item une autre lettre scellé des sceaulx des dits Dame et Roy son filz contenant puissance à messires de leur conseil de bailler en gaiges des chasteaux, fortresses des pais d'Anjou et du Maine pour en employer les deniers à la conquete du Royaume de Sicile.»¹⁵⁸

This testimony is important as it highlights the fact that Yolande, regardless of Troyes and the Anglo-Burgundian-Breton pact, had not given up on the Angevin-Breton alliance she had so painstakingly forged in 1417. She was still much preoccupied with raising finance, Louis III having returned from his visit to Rome in 1420. Louis was in Tarascon on 31st January 1421 and again in Aix by 22nd February 1422. Reynaud asserts that whilst Yolande did not have frequent contact with her *Chambre de comptes* in Angers, in February 1422 the Sire of Fontaines arrived with letters from Yolande naming him lieutenant-general for Anjou-Maine in matters pertaining to the ongoing war in those territories.¹⁵⁹ This Sire of Fontaines was the same Angevin knight who had so distinguished himself at Baugé the preceding year and he had obviously voyaged south to her court in the interim. Although absent, she was not isolated from the affairs of her northern domains and of the dauphin, both in the guardianship of her officers. All she could do realistically was protect her interests and those of her children until the

¹⁵⁷ According to Monstrelet, Henry V besieged Meaux on 6th October 1421.

¹⁵⁸ AN, P 1334/4, p. 145, v^o cited in Reynaud, *Le Temps des Princes...*, p. 174.

¹⁵⁹ AN, P 1334/4, p. 144, v^o loc. cit.

situation in France yielded an opportunity for her to re-enter the larger political sphere. Yolande needed patience however, for on 4th April 1423 the tripartite alliance between England, Burgundy and Brittany was renewed in Arras and reinforced with betrothals: John, Duke of Bedford married Anne of Burgundy and Arthur de Richemont, recently liberated from the English in whose hands he had languished since Agincourt, wedded her sister Marguerite, widow of the former dauphin, Louis de Guyenne.¹⁶⁰ The Angevins once more found themselves out-married and for the moment out in the cold, particularly where Brittany was concerned.

Just when circumstances appeared to have definitively conspired against Yolande and her son-in-law's progress to the throne, Fate intervened in a spectacular fashion. On 31st August 1422, Henry V died, leaving his nine-month old son Henry sole heir to his double-kingdom, and on 21st October 1422, the hapless Charles VI followed him to the crypt. The heirs to the kingdom of France therefore were the dispossessed Dauphin Charles and his nephew the infant Henry VI of England, not yet a year old. Given that Charles's firstborn would greet the world on 3rd July 1423, at the time of Charles VI's death an Angevin-Valois heir to the throne was conceivably on the way.

Although with more than enough to occupy her attention in Provence, notably Louis III's Italian campaign and the maintenance of loyalty of her Provençal nobles (who tended to become restless whenever their sovereigns absented themselves), the Queen of

¹⁶⁰ Richemont married Marguerite de Bourgogne (daughter of Jean sans Peur) on 10th October 1423. *Chronique de la Pucelle ...*, pp. 190-191. In 1420 Richemont had been released on "parole" by his step-brother Henry V, his gaoler since Agincourt and Henry had been so pleased by the efforts of Richemont to coerce his brother Brittany to sign the Treaty of Troyes he rewarded him with the County of Ivry. Like his brother Brittany, Richemont had complicated ties which bound him to Burgundy, England and France. With the death of their father Jean IV in 1399, Richemont aged six, and his brother Jean V aged ten, were subject to the guardianship of Philippe the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, father of Jean sans Peur. Pre-Agincourt, Richemont sided with the Armagnacs but once released from captivity, having given undertakings to his step-brother Henry V in order to procure his liberty, he joined the cause of the Anglo-Burgundians. Like his brother Jean he was obliged to navigate delicate familial and political alliances to draw the best advantage for Brittany from volatile circumstances. Notwithstanding this, Richemont firmly allied with Yolande d'Aragon once she had him created Constable for Charles VII and we will argue that he remained loyal to her and to Charles right up to the time of her death and, at the very least, beyond it to 1449. Vale and others would argue that Richemont's allegiances were far from solid and in fact only reflected a desire to bolster his own standing and well-being. Cf. Vale, op. cit. pp. 53-54 & 119; Warner, Marina, *Joan of Arc. The Image of Female Heroism*, London, Vintage, 1981, pp. 38-39. Warner seems to base her position regarding Richemont solely upon claims contained in the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, 1405-1449*, Tuetey, Alexandre (ed.), Paris, 1881. Her page references for the edition she cites are incorrect and she seems not to take into account the position and prejudices of the cleric who assembled the *Journal*. More on this below as Richemont enters Yolande d'Aragon's service.

Jerusalem-Sicily resolved to answer a distress call from her son-in-law Charles. In January 1423, just three months after the death of Charles VI, Yolande convoked Estates in Aix-en-Provence, the *motifs de la convocation* being: “ Suite à l’entente entre Louis III et le duc de Milan [Filippo Maria Visconti], préparation du retour de Yolande en France.” The letter of convocation clearly states that “...lo rey de Fransa moss. nos a scrit et effectuosament pregat que, per ben e pacifficacion de son rialme, nos vulham anar devers el, laqual causa avem intencion de fayre...”¹⁶¹ Charles had recalled her to to ensure the “ben et pacifficacion” of his kingdom, a kingdom that was once more within his reach due to the deaths in quick succession of his rival Henry V and his father Charles VI. Louis III had reached an accommodation with the Visconti in Italy and Yolande made sure that during his absence in Italy and hers in France, an Angevin presence, however youthful, would be maintained in Provence. She created her nine-year old son Charles d’Anjou her lieutenant-general in her absence and further Estates were soon convoked by Charles d’Anjou: “...per mandament del glorios et illustre senhor Karle, monsenhor frayre german del dich rey senhor nostre, et vice-rey en los contas sobredicz, en l’absencia de la serenissima illustra principissa dama nostra Yolant, per la gracia de Dieu reyna, duchessa et comptessa del[s] realmes...”¹⁶² Charles d’Anjou was to remain the symbol of Angevin authority and its sovereignty over Provence,¹⁶³ covering for the “illustra principissa” Yolande in her absence as she headed north to assist her son-in-law Charles VII. Yolande departed Provence on 26th June 1423¹⁶⁴ and from Rome on 1st July 1423, en route to Naples and Aversa, Louis III conferred the vice-royalty upon her. By all accounts, this was the very first time that a vice-royalty had been accorded a queen, to a woman who already had shouldered the burdens of lieutenant-generalcy for her husband in 1410. In reality, the powers she would hold from 1423 were identical to those she had held in 1410; only the appellation had changed. The act ratifying the investiture was presented as a logical progression from the «gouvernement et bail finiz qu’elle avoit paravant». Louis III had attained his majority in 1421 (his sixteenth year) and his investiture of Yolande lauded her virtues, reminding all of her long experience in affairs of state, of *potestas* during the lifetime of his father, noting her skilled management of their affairs since the death of Louis II. Louis III emphasized the benefits she had accorded him since adolescence, conferring

¹⁶¹ Hébert, *Regeste...*, pp. 268-269.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 279.

¹⁶³ He was, after all, only about nine-years of age in 1423. Trusted officer Pierre de Beauvau was to keep a steady hand on the tiller in her absence. Her chancellor Laugier Sapor acted to protect Angevin interests as well. Cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...*, loc. cit.

¹⁶⁴ Reynaud, *Le Temps des Princes...*, p. 175.

upon Yolande absolute authority to rule in his name as she had done during and since his father's reign.¹⁶⁵

Yolande arrived in Angers, first stopping at Bourges, where her daughter Marie was about to deliver an Angevin-Valois heir to the throne of France. From the extant documents of the time we note that there was born: «*le samedy IIIe jour de juillet lan mil cccxxiii environ iii heures Loys premier filz de Charles Roy de France et de Marie Roine, fille de Loys de bonne mémoire jadis Roy de Sicile et duc d'Anjou et de Yolande sa femme. Et fust nommé sur fons par le duc Jehan d'Alençon et la comtesse de Tonnerre*».¹⁶⁶

The joy of the birth of her first grandson was short-lived; the English were still menacing the frontiers of her duchy and Charles's army was shredded outside Cravant on 31st July 1423. Yolande was active in the organization of military initiatives in 1423: shortly after her return to Angers in the summer of 1423, she directed troops to confront the Duke of Suffolk, entrenched in Segré, later returning to sit on a royal council, held at Selles in Berry in March 1424:

«*Le jeudi XXVIe jour d'aoust m cccc xxiii, Yolend, royne de Jherusalem et de Sicile, duchesse d'Anjou, arriva à Angiers en venant de Provence et de Bourges*»¹⁶⁷ «*Le jeudi ix^e jour de mars m cccc xxiii, [o.s.] la royne Yolend se parti d'Angiers pour aller à Selles devers le Roy au grant conseil*»¹⁶⁸

France was not however Yolande's only preoccupation at this time. By 20th November 1423, in the absence of both Louis III and Yolande from Provence, their great competitor in the struggle for domination over the kingdom of Naples, Alfonse V of Aragon, invaded and sacked Marseille, a disaster of immense proportions. The city was almost completely annihilated in retribution for its Angevin loyalties, Alfonse having been excluded from Naples by the actions of Louis III and Joanna II, supported by the papacy.¹⁶⁹ His main grievance was that Joanna II had revoked her adoption of him (for

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 176, cf. A.N. P 1334/1, pp. 45-46.

¹⁶⁶ A.N. P. 1334/4, f° 149.

¹⁶⁷ A.N. P. 1334/4, f° 149.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., f° 150. Both are quoted by Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit. t. I, pp. 42-43.

¹⁶⁹ See Appendix 1, n. 35.

his ingratitude and rebellion), in favour of Louis III who presented himself to her on 14th September 1423 in Aversa.¹⁷⁰

Around the time of Alfonse's offensive against Marseille, Yolande was personally pleading Charles's cause to Brittany in Nantes. Beaucourt affirms that she was simultaneously negotiating with Burgundy via her embassies.¹⁷¹ Cosneau draws our attention to the fact that, shortly after these activities initiated by Yolande in November 1423, by February 1424 Brittany was allowing the disembarkation of fresh Scots troops in his ports, destined for the service of Charles VII. He further elaborates upon this theme, by stating that at the same moment Richard of Brittany entered into an alliance concluded between the Kings of France, Castile and Scotland, the Dukes of Milan and Savoy and many of the higher French nobility.¹⁷²

Cosneau cites as his source Vallet de Viriville, who states that the conclusion of the alliance defined above was Charles VII's first great diplomatic coup; yet if we study the protagonists closely we find the names of Louis III included with that of Charles d'Orléans. The act arising from negotiations with the Duke of Milan¹⁷³ undertaken by the abbot of St.-Antoine-de-Viennois on Charles's behalf, established on 26th February 1424, stipulates that the agreement concerns both offensive and defensive measures for the mutual protection of all concerned: Filippo-Maria Visconti, Charles VII, James I of Scotland (by his regent), Juan II of Castile, Louis III of Sicily, Charles d'Orléans, the Count of Angoulême, the Duke of Bourbon and his son, the Duke of Alençon, René d'Anjou and Charles of Maine, Jean d'Armagnac, Richard of Brittany, Charles II, Sire of Albret, Joanna II of Naples (adoptive mother of Louis III), Amadeus VIII (since 1419, reconciled with Yolande and her House over the subject of Nice and unpaid debts), Jean-Jacques, Marquis of Montferrat, the doge of Venice Francesco Foscari, Nicolas III,

¹⁷⁰ Archives de Naples, *Pergamene regie camere*, I, 29, supporting documentation, n° 5, cited by Lecoy de la Marche, op.cit. t. I, p. 50, n. 1. Cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regeste...*, pp. 270-278, Estates convoked in Aix-en-Provence, 21st August 1423 for the « *Ratification de l'adoption de Louis III par Jeanne de Naples et armement de huit galères contre le roi d'Aragon* ». It is quite clear from this that Provence was bracing itself against the ire of the « disinherited » Alfonse V and was attempting to prepare a naval defensive in anticipation of his arrival. On pp. 278-288 of the *Regeste* we read of the aftermath of Alfonse's sacking of Marseille, Estates convoked for 12th December 1423 in Aix-en-Provence to discuss the « *levée d'une armée pour la défense des côtes, à la suite du sac de Marseille par les Aragonais* ».

¹⁷¹ Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 353, cf. his note 1.

¹⁷² Cosneau, E., *Le Connétable de Richemont*, Librairie Hachette, Paris 1886, p. 76.

¹⁷³ Louis III and Yolande (prior to her departure from Provence in June 1423) had established an accord with the Duke of Milan. See above p. 205 & Hébert, *Regeste...*, pp. 268-269.

Marquis d'Est, and the Marquis of Mantova.¹⁷⁴ If we study these names closely we will find that most of them have already been mentioned by us in connection with Yolande's furious diplomatic activity in the wake of Louis II's death. It is difficult to believe that Charles VII (given his inertia and the self-interest of his familiars at that time still in the ascendancy) undertook these negotiations independently and autonomously. This is even more unlikely given that Louis III, René d'Anjou (technically an Anglo-Burgundian ally) and the young Charles d'Anjou (later Charles of Maine) are specifically named as party to the league.

Upon her return from Provence, Yolande had immediately and openly relaunched negotiations with Brittany.¹⁷⁵ She personally appeared in Nantes with the chancellor of France, Martin Gouges de Charpaigne, Bishop of Clermont,¹⁷⁶ as well as other members of Charles's embassy, to negotiate what would become known as the Treaty of Nantes. Her efforts were reinforced by the timely intervention and supplementary mediation of her appeased opponent and former creditor, Amadeus VIII of Savoy. Both Brittany and Savoy had strong marital and family ties with the House of Burgundy. The Treaty of Nantes, drafted on 18th May 1424, though never ratified, is nonetheless a compelling piece of testimony supporting the efforts of Yolande to establish a lasting accord between France and Burgundy and deserves further study in comparison with the Treaty of Arras of 1435.¹⁷⁷ Amadeus VIII from this point forward appears to have styled himself as honest broker in matters of political and ecclesiastical impasse. The objective of Nantes was to try to organize some form of accommodation between Charles VII and Burgundy. Item XII of the Treaty is of particular interest to our current examination:

«Item, pour tenir en firmité et seurté les chouses dessusd. Et aultres qui pour le moyen de lad. paiz seroient adviséez, a esté touché et advisé que Messeigneurs et dame la royne de Secile et le

¹⁷⁴ Vallet de Viriville gives as his sources Ms. Harley, n° 211 ff°19+, Ms. Fr. 5053, ff° 132, 135, 137. Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. I, pp. 392-393.

¹⁷⁵ Beaucourt makes the point that she did not merely rely upon Brittany, for she secretly re-opened talks with Burgundy herself in June 1423. (Beaucourt, op. cit. t. II., p. 353). This is how she had operated in 1417-1419 in negotiations with Henry V. See above, p. 170. See Appendix 1, n. 36, regarding secret contact with Burgundy.

¹⁷⁶ Cosneau states that Charles's chancellor, the Bishop of Clermont (one time chancellor of the Duke of Berry and of the Duke of Guyenne) had already been sent to Brittany in 1420, p. 77 op. cit.

¹⁷⁷ The document known as the «Traictié de Nantes» was first brought to light by Beaucourt and discussed by him in his *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, pp. 353-356. It was discovered in non-French sources, the Turin Archives, themselves constituted in part from earlier archives originally held by the Dukes of Savoy.

*duc de Bretagne, qui sont mediateurs de lad. pais, et le duc de Savoye ou deulx d'eulx seront conserveurs d'icelle, du consentement des partiez; Et se pour le temps en voloit dire que aucun ou aucuns eussent enfraint lad. paiz. Lesd. Conserveurs ou leurs commis en pourroient cognoistre; decider et declarer l'infractement, en pugnissans les culpablez, ne pour ce ne sera reputée lad. paiz rompre, et pourront aider, en oultre leur puissance, de la puissance qu cy après sera touchée ...».*¹⁷⁸

Once again we witness the mutual involvement of, in concert with the newly minted «*conserveur de lad. paiz*» Amadeus VIII, Yolande and Jean V of Brittany. Those who were to co-swear the Treaty articles are equally worth noting:

*«Item, sera semblablement fait jurer par les seigneurs du sanc du roy estans avecques lui, c'est assavoir: Mgr. d'Alençon, Charles Mgr. de Bourbon, Mgr. Richard de Bretagne, messire d'Aumale, et aussi les sgrs. estans avecques led. Duc de Bourgogne, c'est assavoir: Mgr. de Brebant, Mgr. de Richemont, Mgr. de St. Paul, par tous les seroitteurs des sgrs., tant d'une part que l'autre, et par tous lez estatz du royaume, tant gens d'eglise, nobles comme bonnez villes, qui jureront garder lad. paiz estraictement sans enfreindre, et d'estre aidans à obeir ausd. conserveurs pour la fere garder et tenir, et fere pugnir, ce mestier est, ceulx qui la vouldroient enfreindre ... Item, et sera lad. paiz auctorisée et discernée par nostre saint père le pape [Martin V], avecques apposition de painnes et de serement, et d'escomunement et interdiz comme l'on sera faire et avisé. Item, et ou cas que lesd. mediateurs [Yolande and Jean V], seroient en descours, en tout ou en partie, nostre saint le père le pape sera mediateur ou ung legat de par lui, tel qu'il plaira ordonner ...».*¹⁷⁹

Familiar Angevin protagonists are raised in Item XVII:

*«XVII. ... Et pour parvenir à la perfection de lad. seurté, est d'espedient que messire Tanguéguy du Chastel et le president de Provence ou l'ung d'eulx, vienne devers le duc de Bretagne pour parler à lui ...»*¹⁸⁰

Finally, a task is proposed expressly for Charles VII by representatives of the Duke of Brittany:

¹⁷⁸ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, p. 128.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

¹⁸⁰ *Loc. cit.*

«Item et en oultre, Mgr. de Bretagne supplie et requier au roy que pour mectre paix generale par tout son royaume, son plaisir soit de fere telles offrez aux Anglois que selon Dieu et rayson, ilz en doient estre contens. A quoy ont respondu les ambaxeurs du roy que d'entrer en ceste matiere n'ont point de puissance de present, mais très volentiers le rapporteront au roy.»¹⁸¹

Had this ambitious project, one involving all parties as well as the pope, been realized (even partially), civil conflict might well have ended as early as 1424. There would have been no call for a Joan of Arc, and France could have anticipated an end to hostilities well in advance of the Treaty of Arras in 1435. In the event, the failure of Nantes and the subsequent debacle in August at Verneuil put paid to any short-term aspirations to end the troubles of France. Why did the ambitious Nantes agreement fail to deliver?

About a month after the drafting of the *Traictié de Nantes*, on 21st June 1424, Bedford (at the instigation of Burgundy, who sought to ruin his rival Anjou at no cost to himself) officially styled himself Duke of Anjou and Maine in the name of his nephew, the three-year old Henry VI:

«Henry par la grâce de Dieu, roy de France et d'Angleterre, savoir faisons à tous presens et d'advenir que nostre très-cher et amé oncle Philippe, duc de Bourgogne, conte de Flandres, d'Artois et de Bourgogne, et plusiurs preslats, chevalires et autres notables gens de nostre grant conseil en France, considerant la prouchaineté de lignage que nous actient nostre très cher et très amé oncle Jehan, Regent de nostre royaume de France duc de Bedford, ... et actendu que icellui seigneur nostre oncle tient de nous en nostredit royaume de France certaines terres et seigneuries, Nous ont conseillé et averty que, pour tousjours encliner de plus en plus nostredit oncle à deffendre, soustenir et amer nostredit royaume ... aux conseil et avertissement de nostredit oncle et cousin le duc de Bourgogne, qui est per de France et doien desdits pers et nostre bon et loyal parent et vassal, et aussy de nosdicts gens de nostre conseil en France, à nostredit oncle Jehan, Regent de nostredit royaume de France, ... donnons cedans transportons et delaissons, ... les duchiés d'Anjou et le conté du Mayne, avec toutes les cités, chasteaulx, chastellenies, terres, justices [etc] ... et appartenir ensemble tous droiz de confiscations ... comme leur propre chefe, et iceulx duchié et conté tiendront de nous en foy et hommaige ... pourveu toute [fois] que nostredit

¹⁸¹ Loc. cit.

oncle le Regent les conquerra et mettra en nostre obeissance et subjection, et sera tenu aux charges diceulx duchié et conté ...»¹⁸²

From this document it seems clear that the Duke of Burgundy was not yet ready to agree to a negotiated peace with his cousin Charles VII. Instead he appears to have been hedging his bets with the winning side, i.e. Bedford, while still seeking to exact some form of vengeance upon those guilty of the crime at Montereau. He might indeed have believed that he had arrived at a thrifty solution to the problem of neutralizing the Angevins and their support for Charles. Burgundy's alliance with the English and his probable unease with the revitalized influence of Anjou, best characterized by the Angevin-Mançaux-Scots victory at Baugé in 1421, Yolande's return from Provence in 1423 at her son-in-law's summons to ensure the "*ben et pacifficacion*" of his kingdom¹⁸³ and her attempt to ratify the Treaty of Nantes in May 1424, would probably have led to Philippe's decision to manoeuvre the formidable figure of Bedford into a position where he could most effectively challenge her authority and legitimacy. Styling himself Duke of Anjou and Count of Maine, and ensuring that he had his nephew Henry's authority to conquer and subdue the duchy and county, was undeniably Bedford's response (ably seconded by Burgundy) to Yolande's move to establish the Nantes agreement.

The threat to Yolande and her domains by the June 1424 development was very real and present, with Bedford victorious at Verneuil in August 1424 and, later that year, master of Maine.¹⁸⁴ Yolande did not however flinch and flee south to Provence in the face of English invasion as Reynaud would have us believe she had done in 1419 when such a threat was not of the same magnitude. Rather, Yolande resolved to stay and fight for her territories, but to do this she needed vast sums of money, strong and powerful allies with impeccable connections and above all access to Burgundy. She started to impose higher taxes upon her loyal Angevin subjects to pay for the repair of damage caused by English raiding parties. She created conditions favourable to an increase in commercial activity in Anjou, augmenting the three existing faculties at the University of Angers.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² AN, JJ 172, n° 518.

¹⁸³ See above, pp. 204-206.

¹⁸⁴ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit. t. I, p. 40.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 41. These were confirmed and augmented by Charles VII from Ambroise in May 1433. See «*Ordonnances des Rois de France...*» t. XIII, pp. 186-187: «... *quam dilectissima Mater nostra Yolans Regina Sicilie [etc]...*» Cf. Fournier, Marcel, *Les statuts et privilèges des universités françaises depuis leur*

Yolande attended to the commercial, academic/scholarly health and reputation of her duchy so that it remained dynamic and prestigious, delivering an uninterrupted source of revenue to defend against the aspirations of the invader. She then initiated what was to prove to be a *coup de maître* of diplomacy and conciliation.

Yolande summoned her son-in-law Charles to Angers, where he was received with all the dignity and ceremony due his position as monarch, on 16th October 1424. There she arranged a meeting between Charles and Arthur de Richemont, younger brother of Jean V, Duke of Brittany. Richemont's allegiance towards his former ally England and his brother-in-law Burgundy had recently cooled, and Yolande would have learned this from her mutable ally and erstwhile champion, Brittany.¹⁸⁶ The detail of this breakthrough in Angevin-Breton relations is fortunately still available to us:

«Le jeudi XIX jour d'ottobre M CCCC XXIII, entra Charles, roy de France filz de feu Charles le Bel à Angiers, par la porte Saint-Aubin ...»¹⁸⁷

«Item, le vendredi ensuivant, XXe jour dudit mois, l'an dessusdit, le conte de Richemont, frère du duc de Bretagne, entra à Angiers, à grant compaignie de gens d'armes; et alèrent au devant lui plusieurs granz seigneurs de la compaignie du Roy et autres en grant nombre; et ala devers le Roy tout ainsi qu'il arriva avecques sa compaignie, à Saint-Aubin, ou le Roy estoit logé ... Et, le samedi ensuivant XXIe jour dudit mois d'ottobre, au soir, s'en ala le Roy au giste au Pont-de-Sée, et illec séjourna jusques au XXVe jour dudit mois ensuivant.»

«Item, le dimenche XXIIe jour dudit mois d'ottobre, ... disna ledit conte de Richemont ou chastel d'Angiers avecques la royne Yolend, et fut l'assiete du hault bout de la grant table ledit conte de Richemont, la royne ou milieu, le conte de Vendosme après, et lempres le viconte de Thouars ...»

«Et pourchace ledit conte de Richemont le fait de la paix entre le Roy et le duc de Bourgongne, par le moyen de la Royne de Sicile et du duc des Brettons; et ne scet l'en pas encore qu'il en sera. Plaise à Dieu que bien soit pour ce royaume.»¹⁸⁸

fondation jusqu'en 1789, (4 vols.), Paris, L. Larose et Forcel, 1890-1894, t. I (1890), pp. 377-385, pp. 385-386, pp. 390-399.

¹⁸⁶ See above, p. 204, n. 160 for Richemont's allegiances pre and post-Agincourt.

¹⁸⁷ See Appendix 1, n. 37. AN, P 1334/4, f° 150 v°.

¹⁸⁸ AN, P 1334/4, f° 150 v°.

From the above it is clear that Charles and his familiars had little if anything to do with either the negotiations with Brittany, or indeed with the achievement or celebration of Richemont's detachment from Burgundy. Charles arrived with ceremony for a discussion with his *Bonne-mère* on the Thursday, met with Richemont on Friday and departed for Angers on Saturday, after having first made concessions in favour of Brittany regarding payments, agreeing to cede Touraine to Yolande in lieu of such payments¹⁸⁹ and leaving it to Yolande to fête their new acquisition on Sunday in the company of her trusted allies, the Counts of Vendôme and Thouars. Hope for peace with Burgundy ran high as a result of this re-energized mediation of Brittany and Yolande. Less than a month later, on 13th November 1424, an accord was established at Vannes to ratify the betrothal of Louis III and Isabeau of Brittany, wherein Charles handed over full use and control of the duchy of Touraine to Yolande excepting «... *la ville et la châtelainie de Chinon* ...»¹⁹⁰ A further very welcome financial settlement in favour of the Angevins was established by Jean V the following day.¹⁹¹

On paper at least, Yolande had managed to snatch a timely victory from the jaws of a soul-destroying set-back: she had re-allied her House with Brittany, and purchased for herself proven military muscle (Richemont), underwriting the bargain with the promise of the duchy of Touraine extracted from her son-in-law Charles, sealing the accord with an Angevin-Breton betrothal. This was one of the most decisive actions undertaken by Yolande during this period. But had this been achieved without first seeking at the very least, informal approval from Burgundy for Richemont to approach Charles? Surely the ever-cautious Brittany would have first arrived at some level of agreement with his powerful ally Burgundy? The answer perhaps is to be found in the *Chronique de la Pucelle*:

¹⁸⁹ This is mentioned in *Lettres et mandements...* in a document entitled "Quittance de Jean V touchant le mariage de sa fille Isabelle avec le duc d'Anjou" «... *est contenu en appointment pris et aresté en la presence de mond. sgr. le roy à Angiers, entre nostred. Dame et suer [Yolande] et nous [Jean V], le XXIe jour d'ottobre l'an mil quatre cens vint et quatre ...*», t. VI, p. 137.

¹⁹⁰ The ceding of Touraine in lieu of payment: «*Mgr. le roy, ... voulu et consenti que le duché de Touraine et ses appartenances, avecques les rentes et revenues du domaine d'icelui, soit et demeure en gaigne en la main de nostred. Dame et suer, pour et ou nom de sond. fils et nostre de Sicile, Jusques à ce que icelle somme par Mgr. le roy soit entièrement payée.*» t. VI. P. 137. The betrothal was first mentioned in 1413. See above, p. 146. Chinon was held by Richemont's wife, Marguerite of Burgundy, Duchess of Guyenne. See below.

¹⁹¹ *Lettres et mandements ...*, t. VI, pp. 134-135. See above, previous page.

«... le Roy envoya vers le duc de Bretagne Messire Tanneguy de Chastel, qui estoit natif du pays de Bretagne, et lequel on disoit estre luy et ses parens bien aymez du Duc; et luy fit prier et requérir qu'il le voulust ayder et secourir ...» Yolande accompanied Châtel and they were informed that in order to obtain any assistance, Louvet in particular was to be removed from Charles's entourage. At the same time, «... le Roy envoya ... vers le Duc de Savoye, pour sçavoir si le duc de Bourgongne ne voudroit point ayder au roy: lequel respondit qu'il scavoit bien que le duc de Bourgongne n'entendroit à aucun traité, sinon que préalablement le roy mit hors d'avec luy ceux qui avoient esté consentans de la mort du feu duc de Bourgongne son père et ce fait, aussi que le duc de Savoye ayderoit volontiers au roy de ce qu'il pourroit ...».¹⁹²

The Montereau conspirators represented a loose end, a stumbling block to further negotiations between the parties. Yolande therefore busied herself tying off this loose end in order to bring her larger plan to fruition. The Breton Estates were convoked and, though divided, the "French" faction prevailed, deciding that Richemont could approach Charles VII if Burgundy did not disapprove. Raoul Gruel and Philibert de Vaudrey were quickly dispatched to Burgundy, to request that Richemont be granted leave to present himself to Charles to work towards establishing durable peace. Burgundy consented, both because he had become increasingly irritated by the actions of Gloucester, and because for some time he had in any case been testing the waters with Charles through the mediation of Amadeus VIII and via secret correspondence established by Yolande.¹⁹³

Charles and Richemont met in Angers on 20th October 1424,¹⁹⁴ and by 15th December 1424, at the occasion of the new Duchess of Burgundy's (Bonne d'Artois) entry into the ducal capital of Dijon, Richemont and his wife Marguerite of Burgundy were back in Burgundy participating in the official ceremony. On this occasion, Richemont met with his brother-in-law, and as a result further negotiation for peace between Burgundy and France continued, with the involvement of Savoy. Richemont was authorized to accept the sword of Constable of France.¹⁹⁵ As mentioned above, this development was probably facilitated by the fact that Burgundy had had a falling-out with the English

¹⁹² *Chronique de la Pucelle ...* pp. 229-230.

¹⁹³ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 84. For details of this secret contact see above, p. 208, n. 175 and Appendix 1, n. 36.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85 & pp. 500-501.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

(due to Gloucester's activities, which were in conflict with his own interests, and the possibility that the English might have been plotting to assassinate him).

In 1427 Guillaume Benoît, one Suffolk's secretaries, confessed to having fabricated documents and letters between Bedford, Gloucester and the Counts of Suffolk and Salisbury which spoke of the possibility of entrapping and murdering Burgundy. M.A. Desplanque, a nineteenth-century archivist, made an exhaustive study of these documents and came to the conclusion that, while it was likely that the documents themselves were concocted, the facts of the case were undeniably probable: that Gloucester, Bedford, Salisbury and Suffolk «ont médité durant deux ans et plus, la perte de Bourguignon».¹⁹⁶ In the light of Desplanque's observation, Cosneau suggests that Guillaume Benoît might well have been an agent in the service of Richemont all along, and that in 1426 Benoît, privy to many of Suffolk's secrets, met with a guardian of the Franciscains, a certain Guillaume Fortin.¹⁹⁷ It would seem from the above that, despite external appearances, Burgundy's need to avenge the death of his father was a secondary concern and that his alliance with the English had begun to fracture as early as 1424. This is not to suggest that he did not seek to make life uncomfortable for Yolande or for Charles whenever it furthered his own interests,¹⁹⁸ only that he might well have been receptive to the possibility of an eventual accommodation with the French faction.

In spite of Charles's inaction and his favourites' resistance, together Yolande and Richemont managed to supplant his more controversial and nefarious familiars. On 7th March 1425, an imposing ceremony unfolded on a meadow in Chinon. The king, surrounded by his entire court and in particular by Louis de Bourbon, Count of Vendôme (one of Yolande's most trusted vassals),¹⁹⁹ the chancellor, Martin Gouge de Charpaigne, Bishop of Clermont, the Archbishops of Reims and of Sens, the Bishop of Angers, the Marshal of Sévérac and Savoyard envoys, presented Richemont with the

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 502.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 501-503. Suffolk's secretary Guillaume Benoît was based in Rouen. See below, Jean V and his attempts in 1426 to convince Burgundy that his "friends" the English were plotting to kill him. Cf. Rutherford, C., "The Forgeries of Guillaume Benoît", in *The English Historical Review*, vol. XXX, (April 1915), pp. 216-233.

¹⁹⁸ See above regarding Bedford and the duchy of Anjou-Maine, pp. 210-211.

¹⁹⁹ Prisoner of the English post-Agincourt from 1415-1425. He would marry Jeanne de Laval, daughter of Guy de Laval XIII, in 1428.

sword and title of Constable of France.²⁰⁰ Richemont's authority was now second only to the king's and in matters pertaining to war, nothing could be decided without first seeking his advice. He was a pivotal member of the «... *plus étroit et secret conseil du roi.*»²⁰¹ In choosing Richemont, Yolande had considered carefully all the advantages he would bring to her and Charles: Richemont was well born and well connected, having close family ties with numerous royal Houses, Savoy, Burgundy, Orleans, Alençon, Bourbon as well as her own. Through Richemont she could count upon the frequent support and influence of Jean V and above all, the loyalty of the Breton-French faction.

From the time of his appointment, Richemont set a pattern of activity that he would follow until his withdrawal from Charles's active service in about 1450: he worked to reorganize the army, pursued the war against the English, kept channels of communication open between the Dukes of Brittany, Burgundy and Savoy and strove to thwart the intrigues of Charles's changing procession of favourites, resisting wherever possible their offensives against him, trying to remove the king from their influence, reminding Charles of his duties and responsibilities, placing him wherever possible at the head of his troops and fortifying his authority at every opportunity. In effect, it seems that Richemont saw his rôle as that of a prime-minister, rather than merely the head of Charles's armed forces.²⁰² Apart from the active military aspect this is exactly the work Yolande had undertaken in Charles's interests since the time of Louis II's death.

Richemont's task was not to prove an easy one. While he was occupied with raising capital and troops in Brittany, and pushing Brittany to negotiate with Burgundy, Charles's favourites laboured to unseat him. Emboldened by his position within Charles's entourage, Louvet challenged not only the authority of Richemont but that of

²⁰⁰ Cosneau, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

²⁰¹ Daniel, Gabriel, R. Père, *Histoire de la milice française...jusqu'à la fin du règne de Louis le Grand*, (2 vols.), Paris, Vve. Saugrain et P. Prault, 1728, t. I, p. 173, cited by Cosneau, p. 96.

²⁰² Cosneau, *op. cit.*, p. 97. See above p. 204, n. 160 for opposing points of view regarding Richemont's loyalty. Cosneau (*op. cit.* 394-403) speaks of Richemont's cooling allegiance to Charles and his intransigence towards the English in 1449, some seven years after the death of Yolande. Cf. Stevenson, J., *Letters and Papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry VI*, (2 vols.), Rolls Series, London, 1861-1864, t. I, pp. 251,261, 350-351. Up until that time, it seems difficult to sustain the argument that Richemont's loyalty to the French Crown, once Yolande had recruited him to Charles's cause, wavered to any great extent. He was exiled by La Trémoille and by Charles post-Montargis in 1428, the excuse for which was the "betrayal" of the Crown by Jean V, Richemont's brother. Richemont's understandable frustration at his sidelining ought not to be construed as a change in allegiance following his banishment from court, as does Vale, *op. cit.* pp. 53-54. We will discuss Richemont's activities in exile below.

Yolande as well. By March 1425 he had audaciously sidelined counsellors such as the Bishop of Clermont (Chancellor of France), Jean de Comborn, Lord of Treignac, Bernard d'Armagnac²⁰³ and Jean of Torsay who were working with Richemont towards a settlement with Burgundy. Louvet appointed the Archbishop of Reims, Regnault de Chartres, Charles's chancellor and Pierre Frotier, seneschal of Poitou, as master of crossbowmen, in place of Jean of Torsay. Louvet then accused Richemont as the enemy of the king and an obstacle to peace, and initiated talks with Bedford, whom Richemont had been endeavouring to sideline from French politics. Louvet enticed mobs of foreign mercenaries to Poitiers, raised taxes, enriched his personal resources and forced Charles to revolt against his own Constable. This is born out by letters from Jean V and Richemont to the loyal city of Lyon.²⁰⁴

Upon his return from Brittany to Angers, Richemont met with his exiled friends, the «*traîtres*», the Bishop of Clermont and Jean de Comborn.²⁰⁵ Yolande and Richemont reacted swiftly and decisively. By the second half of April 1425, Yolande had installed herself at Charles's side in Poitiers.²⁰⁶ Richemont marched on Bourges, Louvet having managed to slip away to Poitiers. Richemont wrote to the people of Bourges, explaining that it was his stated will to «*débouter le mauvais traître, président de Provence, de la compaignie et conversacion du roi*». He wrote to other loyal places, to people of all estates exhorting them to support his struggle for the good of the kingdom and its king. Brittany and Richemont's «*haulte et puissante princesse, nostre tres chiere et honnouree dame la Roynne de Jherusalem et de Secile*», wrote similar letters as did Regnault of Chartres. This concerted campaign against Louvet was a resounding triumph; not only did Bourges, Tours and Lyon fall in behind Richemont but it mobilized the nobility from Poitou, Berry, Auvergne and from Brittany in the person of Richard, Count of Etampes, who held for his brother Richemont against individuals «*de bas et petit lieu*» surrounding Charles.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ This Bernard (Count of Pardiac) was the second son of Bernard VII of Armagnac, defunct Constable of France. The Bishop of Clermont and Jean de Comborn were particular friends and allies of Richemont. (Vallet de Viriville, op. cit. t. I, p. 442.)

²⁰⁴ Cosneau, op. cit. p. 100. See Appendix 2, docs. 3 & 4.

²⁰⁵ Cucherat, l'Abbé F., «*Lettres inédites du Connétable de Richemont et autres grands personnages, aux conseillers et habitants de la ville de Lyon, (1)*», in *Revue de Lyonnais*, 1859, p. 328.

²⁰⁶ Beaucourt, op. cit. t. II, p. 92, n° 4.

²⁰⁷ Cosneau, op. cit. p. 101. Cucherat, op. cit., pp. 327-334. See Appendix 2, docs. 5 & 6. This concerted campaign of letter-writing to remove Louvet seems to be at odds with Reynaud's brave assertion that «*...le roi de France y est toujours souverain. Il peut faire pression, comme Charles VII l'a fait sur sa belle-mère Yolande d'Aragon, pour destituer un officier.*» Reynaud, Marcelle-Renée, «*La noblesse pouvoir*

On 30th May 1425, the Council of the City of Tours decided that its citizens «obéiront à la royne de Sicile, duchesse de Touraine [their duchess since October 1424],²⁰⁸ et, par consequent, à Mgr. le connestable ...». On 28th June, Yolande informed the people of Lyon that she had seen the letters addressed by them to the king, herself and the Chancellor of France (Regnault de Chartres) pleading the cause of Richemont.²⁰⁹ Yolande worked to support her Constable and Brittany prepared to mobilize his troops to assist his brother. All three employed the force of public opinion (as well as the threat of military reprisal), exhorting loyal towns to continue their resistance against Louvet's faction. Yolande wrote several times to Tours to instruct them not to open their gates to the king's officers nor indeed to the king himself whilst Louvet continued to enjoy his protection.²¹⁰

As a result of this concerted and unified campaign, one of the more self-aware of Charles's favourites broke ranks: Châtel approached Yolande and Richemont and stated that he did not wish to undermine negotiations with Burgundy by his continued presence in Charles's entourage: «*que ja [à] Dieu ne pleut que pour luy ne laissast à faire ung si grant bien comme le bien de paix entre le Roy et monseigneur de Bourgogne, et si aida à mettre dehors ceulx qui s'en devoit aller; et fist tuer à ses archiers devant luy ung capitaine lequel faisoit trop de maulx et ne vouloit obeir. Puis s'en alla le dit du Chastel à Beaucaire*». ²¹¹ In spite of Louvet's presence, Châtel facilitated Yolande's access to Charles and convinced the other recalcitrant favourites to leave Charles's court. His dignity intact, he withdrew to

dans la principauté d'Anjou-Provence sous Louis II et Louis III (1384-1434), in *La noblesse dans les territoires angevins à la fin du moyen-âge*, Coulet, Noël & Matz, Jean-Michel, (eds.), Paris, Ecole Française de Rome, 2000, p.310. It is difficult to see why Yolande should need to be forced to remove her officer Louvet from Charles's circle as it was he who was blocking her access to Charles at that time. Cf. The Berry Herald regarding Yolande and her president Louvet's fall from grace. From the Herald's account it does not appear that Charles VII was forcing his "Bonne-mère" to sideline Louvet: «*Et quant ledit president vit que la royne de Cecille, mere de la royne de France, n'estoit pas contente que ledit president governast ne qui volast si haulte aille, et aussi voiant que il ne pouoit resister et que toutes les bonnes villes de ce royaume estoient contre lui, par quoy obeissance et finances lui falloient pour resister contre le dessusdiz, fut comptent de s'en aller et que le bastart d'Orleans, qui sa fille avoit pour femme, le vousist conduire jusques en Advignon, qui estoit ledit bastart d l 'aliance des autres ; mais il se floyt plus en lui que en nul autre. Et ainsi se partit de court ne puis n'y entra. Et se fist l'acord du Roy, du connestable et de la royne de Cecille, pourveu que le sire de Giac demorrait au gouvernement du Roy en la place du president.* » The Berry Herald, op. cit., pp. 121-122 & see below.

²⁰⁸ See above, p. 213, n. 189.

²⁰⁹ Cucherat, op. cit., pp. 332-334 & our Appendix 2, docs. 5 & 6.

²¹⁰ See note 206 above.

²¹¹ Gruel, Guillaume, *Chronique d'Arthur de Richemeont, Connétable de France, Duc de Bretagne (1393-1458)*, Levasseur, Achille, (ed.), Paris, Renouard, 1890, pp. 38-39.

Provence, taking the post of seneschal of Beaucaire, a position he would occupy until his death.²¹²

In Poitiers, on 12th July 1425, a *Littera revocationis contra dominum de Mirandol* [Louvet] dated 5th July expelling him and Charles's other favourites, was published in *parlement*. It specifically brings Charles to heel, emphasizing the ascendancy of Yolande and by extension that of Richemont over him:

«... et, sur ce, demandé le bon avis et conseil de nostre très chière et très amée mère, la royne de Jehrusalem et de Secile, et d'autres aussi de nostre grant conseil et de ceulx de nostre court de parlement, afin de trouver remèdes souffisans et convenables pour remédier aux dessusdiz inconvéniens et aux grans fraudes et déceptions que ledit président, de la voullenté duquel ne sommes pas acerteniez, pourroit, quant à ce commectre, ... Donné à Poitiers ... Ainsi signé par le Roy en son conseil, ouquel la royne de Secile, le maréchal de La Fayette, le grant maistre d'ostel, l'amiral, le premier président et plusieurs autres du parlement estoit ...».²¹³

Throughout the month of July 1425, Charles, Yolande, Richemont, his brother (Richard, Count d'Etampes) and his brother-in-law (the Count of Clermont) held important council meetings. Charles wrote to his loyal subjects between 25th July and 1st August informing them of latest developments and assuring them all that while all was «*en bonne union et concorde*», he needed the presence of the princes of the blood and other counsellors, «*preudommes et loyaux.*»²¹⁴

On 30th July 1425, Richemont again wrote to Lyon:

«... Très chiers et bien amez, il a pleu à monseigneur le roy mander pardevers lui madame la royne de Secile, nous et plusieurs autres seigneurs de son sang et lignage, et autres barons et seigneurs de son royaume, en très grant nombre, par l'avis et délibération desquelx mondit seigneur le roy à ordonné, pour faire cesser les pilleries et roberies qui à présent sont sur ses

²¹² At the time of Charles's death in July 1461, the loyal Châtel occupied the dignities of «*premier escuier de corps et maistre d'escuierie*» see «*Extraits du compte des obsèques de Charles VII*», in *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, TII, (1864), p. 178.

²¹³ AN X/1a, f^o 76 – V^o 77. Included by Cosneau, op. cit. in his appendices, pp. 507-509.

²¹⁴ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 105.

*subgez, toutes gens d'armes et de trait estans sur les champs estre mis et tirés ès pais de frontière et, avec ce, certaines autres grans provisions, pour le fait de sa guerre et recouvrement de sa seigneurie, et mander et assembler les gens, des trois estas de son obéissance, tant de Languedoil que le Languedoc, estre pardevers lui, le premier jour d'octobre prouchain venant, en la ville de Poitiers ...».*²¹⁵

For the time being, Yolande and Richemont had rid themselves of troublemakers and it would appear from the above that they had resolved to unify all three estates in support of an offensive against the multiple ills of the kingdom. In fact, from 26th July they had resolved to unite the Estates of the Languedoil and the Languedoc in Poitiers. Richemont set to raising funds to cover their immediate needs, exorting prompt payment of imposts, according to Beaucourt, projecting a sum of some 260,000 livres.²¹⁶

While the Estates were convoked and the funds collected, Yolande and Brittany continued their negotiations for a peace settlement with Burgundy, dispatching their respective embassies to Savoy in the wake of those earlier sent by Richemont.²¹⁷

The war with the English continued unabated, with funds more than troops being in shortest supply. Bedford, since the English victory at Verneuil, had been obsessed with possession of Maine and Anjou and it was to these Angevin domains that he directed his best captains and the bulk of their resources. Salisbury, Suffolk, Fastolf and Lord Scales were joined by Willoughby, Oldhall, Glasdale and others. Their plan was to surround Maine strategically, maintain a watch over Brittany and keep lines of communication between Rouen and Paris open and clear.²¹⁸ Yolande, Richemont and Brittany had wasted valuable time in their campaign to rid themselves of Louvet and as a result they were unable to react quickly enough when Salisbury laid siege to Le Mans in July 1425.²¹⁹ The troops they did manage to assemble were put to use in garrisons sprinkled along the borders of Anjou, but not having been paid they proved to be of little use.

²¹⁵ Archives de la ville de Lyon, AA 77.

²¹⁶ Beaucourt, op. cit. t. II, p. 584.

²¹⁷ *Revue de Lyonnais*, p. 334.

²¹⁸ AN, JJ 173 ff^o, 130 v^o, 190 v^o & 192.

²¹⁹ « *Et par ce debat et division se perdit le Mans...* », *The Berry Herald*, p. 122.

Richemont soon realized that he was presiding over imminent defeat and pressed his brother Jean V to declare for Charles VII. Yolande exhorted Brittany to ally himself officially with her faction, urging him with the argument that he could not stand idly by while his daughter's marital heritage fell into English hands. To back up his mother's initiative, Louis III sent an order from Naples to Jehan de Craon, Lord of la Suze, to act as his proxy and conclude his marriage to Isabeau of Brittany.²²⁰ Charles acted to reassure Jean V that Brittany's enemies the Penthièvre had been chased from the Duke's territories, sending Robert le Maçon and René de Laval, brother of Gilles de Rais, to Brittany for this express mission and to remind Jean V of his duty towards him according to their established agreement.²²¹ Brittany eventually surrendered to his brother's entreaties in the face of this unified campaign. His Estates in Nantes urged him at least to do homage to Charles, and Brittany subsequently requested a meeting. On 25th September, Richemont appeared before Charles in Poitiers, persuading him to travel as far as Saumur. On 30th September, the most impressive court of Charles's reign to date was assembled in Saumur. On his way to Saumur, Brittany had first stopped at Angers, where Yolande and her court joined the procession. On 7th October a treaty was signed:

*«... Jehan ... A tous ... salut ... comme pour les neccessitez de nostre très redoubté sgr. Mgr. le roy, à nous faictes savoir par ses lettres et ambaxadeurs, se confians en nous comme à son plus prouche ... lui aions conseillé se mectre en son devoir pour reduire et ralier à soy ceulx de son sang, et entres autres principalement beau-frère le duc de Bourgoigne ...».*²²²

In this treaty Jean V not only stresses the need for a *rapprochement* with princes of the blood and most particularly with Burgundy, but also the need to arrive at an accommodation with the English, compensating them should they agree to leave French territory. To achieve this Jean V suggested he receive the government and control of finances of the Languedoil, so that he could put them to best use in the interests of the king and his kingdom (and against his own particular enemies the Penthièvres: Olivier and Jean de Blois). In return, Charles promised to follow the counsel of Brittany and observe all of the treaty articles prepared by the Queen of Sicily, the Dukes of Savoy and Brittany, articles to which he had already consented from Chinon. With this document,

²²⁰ Archives de la Loire-Inférieure, cass. 4, E.10.

²²¹ See above and Cosneau, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

²²² *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, p. 160.

Charles effectively abdicated authority to Richemont and Brittany. The Constable by this act had assumed a heavy burden and he was still very short of fiscal resources with which to realize his task. He did manage to access certain subsidies voted to him, the Languedoil Estates granting him a much needed boost of 800,000 livres, but much of the payment was delayed by the kingdom's impecunious state.²²³

While Richemont and Brittany continued to make their peace overtures to Burgundy, the English overran Maine. Despite Philippe le Bon's conflict with his ally Gloucester in Holland, he had not yet decided to break with the English.²²⁴ He did however permit the Duke of Savoy to extend his treaty with Charles until the 2nd December 1425 (it was further renewed three times in 1426). At the end of 1425, Charles's secretary Alain Chartier and Georges de La Trémoille were sent to Bruges to consult with Burgundy.²²⁵ Burgundy, however, seems to have preferred to negotiate through the mediation of Savoy and Brittany.

With things becoming increasingly desperate in France as well as in Anjou-Maine and in the wake of a general call to arms addressed to his loyal vassals by Charles VII, Yolande wrote to Louis III²²⁶ on 18th February 1426 to recall him from Naples:

«Comme pour résister aux graves entreprinses de nos anciens enemmis et adversaires les angloys et autres nos rebelles et désobeissans et icieulx à l'aide de Dieu extirper de ce royaume dont is ont occuppé partie, soyons déliberez nous mettres sus ceste saison nouvelle, à grant puissance et faire venir pardevers nous ...»²²⁷

We can only speculate upon the reaction of Louis III in the face of this summons. Having made a triumphal entry into Naples supported by Joanna's forces, he was in possession of Calabria and, notwithstanding Joanna's vagaries, making an increasingly vital contribution to the government of his titular kingdom. Louis III wrote to his mother, instructing her that he needed her to raise capital to finance his return to France:

²²³ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 112.

²²⁴ See Appendix 1, n. 38.

²²⁵ Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 373.

²²⁶ While Charles wrote to his *généraux de finances* in Languedoc on the same day. Vallet de Viriville, Auguste, « Notices et extraits de chartes et de manuscrits appartenant au British Museum de Londres », *Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartes*, t. III, 2^e série, (1846), 1425, février 18 (1426 n.s.), *Lettres de Charles VII aux généraux des finances de Languedoc* – Add. Chart. 3592 ; Jours 3390, pp. 141-142,

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, & BNF, *Pièces originales*, t. 699, entry *Châteauneuf*, cf. Cosneau, op. cit. p. 117.

«... Comme pour nostre retour du païs d'Italie en France, auquel pour obéir aux commandemens de mon très-redoubté seigneur monseigneur le Roy, nous sommes du tout disposez et déterminez, c'est assavoir à le faire le plus briefment que nous sera possible, nous soit besoing de recouvrer grans finances, etc. ...»²²⁸

1426 was to prove a year of set-backs and defensive operations both politically and militarily for Yolande and Richemont. As well as the recall of Louis III, ambassadors were dispatched to Castile requesting that King Juan II, «*le premier et le plus principal allié*» of Charles send help in the form of 2000 men-at-arms or at the very least a force of 500-600 men to be paid by France for a period of six-months.²²⁹ That Castile was important to Charles is of little doubt. In his ordonnances there are multiple references to «*nostre très-cher et très-amé Frère et alié le Roy de Castelle et de Léon*», establishing, confirming and proroguing «... *l'exemption de tous impôts accordée aux marchands Castillians trafiquans dans le Royaume [and giving them] le pouvoir d'établir un ou plusieurs Procureurs pour gérer leurs affaires ...*», up to and beyond 1435.²³⁰

Estates were convoked in Angers «*pour le bien du roy et de ce pais ... [signed by] ... le conte de Vendosme, l'évesque d'Angiers, les seigneurs de Maillé et de Montjehan*²³¹ *et les gens du conseil de la royne et du roy de Secile estans à Angiers*»,²³² and assembled in Montluçon on 13th April 1426, to approve a tallage of 250,000 *livres tournois*. Further Estates were convoked to Saumur on 1st May to consult with Richemont, the meetings lasting three days. The Municipal Archive of the City of Tours reveals that, in spite of the fact that they had not received a letter of convocation to Saumur, on 1st May the Tourangeux resolved «... *d'envoyer promptement et hastivement à Saumur, pour les trois estats assemblez et mandez à aujourd'hui par Mgr. de Richemont ...*»²³³. Troops were immediately assembled at Sablé and at Craon to defend Maine, Anjou and Brittany. Yolande, sensing that her subjects could no longer be expected to underwrite the crippling outlays associated with the defence of their joint territories in the form of yet heavier taxes, suggested that to

²²⁸ AN, P 1354/2, n° 859. It is included by Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit. t. I, p. 50. This letter is dated from Aversa on 17th December 1426, giving some idea of the timing of his imminent return to France.

²²⁹ Cosneau, op. cit. p. 122.

²³⁰ *Ordonnances des rois de France de la troisième race*, t. XIII, p. 209.

²³¹ Both Angevin noblemen.

²³² AN, X 2a/21 ff° 47 v°, 48.

²³³ Archives municipales de Tours, Registre des délibérations, t. III, f°s 84-85, cf. Cosneau, loc. cit.

defray costs Charles, Richemont and the Counts of Clermont and of Foix withdraw donations made to Charles's rapacious favourites. She was unable however, to ensure that this policy held.²³⁴ Despite these efforts, and the support of the Estates, the English appeared determined to achieve a conquest of Anjou-Maine, making life extremely uncomfortable both for Yolande and Brittany. Richemont seized the fortress of Galerande, occupying Fougères and Pontorson, and reinforced Saint-James-de-Beuvron to establish a well-protected stronghold.

Taking advantage of the fact that his lieutenants were holding the English advance at bay, Richemont hurried to Brittany to calm his brother's well-justified fears and to inflame his passion against Bedford. Cosneau contends that Richemont's argumentation emphasized the idea that the English would attempt to make peace with Brittany in order to sideline Burgundy, kill Philippe le Bon, and then return to overrun Brittany.²³⁵ No doubt it was at this time that Richemont formally tabled the "evidence" of English treachery against Burgundy, testimony that had originated with Suffolk's secretary, Guillaume Benoît.²³⁶ The evidence for this is to be found in Jean V's correspondence from the time. From September to December 1426, he sent instructions to various parties stating that:

«... Mond. Sgr. de Bretagne a sceu de nouvel la maniere et trayson que les Anglois, de longtemps a, pourchassent à l'encontre dud. Mgr. de Bourgoigne et des siens ... ainsi que bien à plain le pourra savoir et veoir par les lettres du conte de Suffolk, signées de sa main, et oyr par aucune creance et memoire qu'il avait baillée à Guillaume Benoit qui mesmes, pour acertener mond. Sgr. De Bourgoigne, va par devers lui – item, et pour qu'il soit vraysemblable et de l'yamiginacion, que lesd. Anglois ont eu et ont à la destruction et mort dud. Mgr. de Bourgoinge ...»

«... mauvais vouloir des Anglais contre le duc de Bourgogne, - nécessité pour lui de se rapprocher sans plus tarder du roi de France qui donnera toutes garanties nécessaires, - désir général de la paix ... En outre, a envoyé mond. sgr. de Bretagne devers Mgr. De Savoye, Mgrs. les ducs de Breban, de Bard [René d'Anjou] et de Lorraine [Charles II, René's father-in-law], afin que

²³⁴ BNF, Mss. Fr. 21405, 4491, AN., X1a/8604, f° 83 & AN, P 1372/2 cotes 2069 & 2103.

²³⁵ Cosneau, op. cit. p., 123.

²³⁶ See above, pp. 214-215.

*pareillement ils envoient devers mond. sgr. de Bourgogne pour dire que lesdits sgrs. le conseillent, le prient et requierent de y entendre ...».*²³⁷

Here again are indications of concerted teamwork between Yolande, Richemont and Brittany, involving military defenses, fiscal proceedings and a continued effort to drag Burgundy to the negotiating table and out of the English camp. The final extract of correspondence cited above and dated December 1426, clearly implicates René, Duke of Bar and his father-in-law Charles II, Duke of Lorraine in a campaign to destabilize Burgundy's alliance with Bedford. There is little doubt that this would have had Yolande's active support and full complicity. She would have been very keen indeed to detach René from alliances which had been forced upon him as a result of Troyes in 1422.²³⁸

While the triumvirate established by Yolande was striving to redress the political situation and defend their joint territories against the English, Charles had fallen under the influence of Pierre de Giac, who had risen to the position of favourite since the removal of Louvet. Giac threw Robert le Maçon into prison to remove his influence over Charles. It was Robert le Maçon who had been largely responsible for convincing Brittany to look favourably upon Charles. Yolande and Richemont's intense efforts to bring about lasting concord between the princes of the blood were again jeopardized by the actions of another court favourite.²³⁹ Giac opposed plans for a peace settlement with Burgundy. He was soon dealt with, with the full agreement of Yolande and the Counts of Clermont and Foix. The plan was conceived and carried out with the utmost secrecy and the possible complicity of the victim's wife Catherine. Giac, comfortable in his primacy, suspected nothing:²⁴⁰

“ ... Ou moys de janvier enssuivant, a ung point de jour, monseigneur le connestable, les sires de La Tremouille et de Labreit [La Trémoille's younger step-brother] vindren[t] en la ville d'Issodun, en l'ostel ou le sire de Giac estoit couché avecques sa femme et dormoit. Si hurterent l'uis et entrerent en sa chamber, et de fait le prindrent, & enmenerent sans estre chaussé ne vestu, sinon d'un mantel et d'unnes botes... Si s'en allerent ensemble et le menerent a Bourges, et de la a

²³⁷ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, pp. 190-196.

²³⁸ See above, p. 198.

²³⁹ Cf. Cosneau, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-127 for proofs in the form of letters addressed by Richemont to Lyon.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

*Dung le Roy que tenoit ledit connestable, et tost après le firent noyer. Et après sa mort le sire de la Tremouille, qui avoit esté cause de le faire noyer, espousa sa femme nommee Katherine, Dame de Lisle Bouchart...".*²⁴¹

We include this testimony as it conforms to a pattern of entrenched behaviour established by Yolande and Richemont. Yolande, with the help of Richemont, continually sought to surround Charles with advisors likely to move her plans forward. Occasionally some of their choices were unlucky ones, but more often than not it was the case that cunning individuals who curried favour with Charles attempted to sublimate Yolande's will in order to enrich themselves from Charles's treasury and exploit his authority to grant them favours and prestige. Frequently, Richemont was obliged to take firm, often ruthless, measures to redress the situation, this in addition to his heavy martial responsibilities, coupled with his sustained efforts to turn his brother Brittany away from England and urge Burgundy to negotiate with them. The Berry Herald's account emphasizes the name of Georges de La Trémoille and the fact that he later married Giac's wealthy widow. Below we will learn just how adept La Trémoille would prove at isolating Yolande and exiling Richemont in order to seize power for himself. As far as adversaries within their own camp went, he was to prove one of the most durable and recalcitrant of them all, the greatest irony being that they themselves placed him in a position of authority.²⁴² It would take a near miracle to dilute his hold over Charles, and Yolande's direct involvement to remove him.

Richemont continued his military campaign, defending Pontorson, where the English had been laying siege. He *«le print et fist abatre et mectre a desolacion»*.²⁴³ This victory was Richemont's first major conquest in his position as Constable. Suffolk and his brother next *«vindrent mectre le siege devant la ville et chastel de Montargis»*, later to be joined by Warwick, who held the siege *«par l'espace de III mois»*.²⁴⁴ This siege-making by the English was expressly designed to destabilize Brittany's support for Charles, Bedford earlier having placated Burgundy to bring him back into the English faction. According

²⁴¹ The Berry Herald, p. 124. Catherine, the daughter and sole heiress of Jean, Sire of Isle-Bouchard killed at Agincourt and Jeanne de Bueil.

²⁴² Vale makes the point that Richemont and Yolande probably held that La Tremoille would prove "a valuable instrument of reconciliation" between Charles and Burgundy. Vale, op. cit. p. 39.

²⁴³ In February 1426 (o.s.), The Berry Herald, p. 125.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

to English correspondence at the time, Richemont managed to resist their efforts to a considerable degree. In letters wherein Bedford names Suffolk his captain-general for Vendôme, Beauce, Chartres and the Gâtinais (the area surrounding Montargis) we learn that Richemont held many cities and fortresses in these areas and that his hold over them was increasing daily as reinforcements appeared to defend strategic sites abutting Orleans and the Touraine.²⁴⁵ Cosneau reveals details of a claimed conspiracy against the English in Rouen, with Richemont's troops positioned near Evreux to take strategic advantage of the situation should this project have borne fruit. Though the conspiracy did not succeed, Charles's armies were at the time engaged in Normandy, the Ile-de-France, Maine and Anjou, and while their offensives may have been precipitous rather than meticulously planned, they were finally able to offer active and effective resistance against the English onslaught.²⁴⁶

Richemont was recalled by Yolande for "housekeeping" duties to rid Charles of yet another odious favourite: *«ung escuier nommée le Camus de Beaulieu du pais d'Auvergne, lequel avoit grant gouvernement devers le Roy plus que a lui ne appartenoit, et pour ce fu il tué...»*²⁴⁷ Charles witnessed the murder of his familiar from apartments overlooking a meadow where the deed was done. Charles had never personally taken to Richemont and he now conceived a visceral dislike for his Constable, which, in spite of Richemont's undisputed utility to his cause and Yolande's support of him, he was never able fully to surmount. It had already taken a Herculean effort on the part of Yolande and Richemont's allies to placate Charles in the wake of Giac's drowning. With the disappearance of Camus, Charles's resentment grew.

Having rid Yolande of Camus, her Constable overplayed his hand. Richemont suggested that Charles needed a favourite who would allow him (Richemont) to continue his military projects and ensure that Yolande's political diplomacy could progress relatively unhindered by court intrigues. Richemont supported the appointment of La Trémoille, long an acquaintance of his and one who had recently seconded him in the Giac affair. He was convinced of La Trémoille's loyalty to their cause and emphasized that La Trémoille's brother Jean was well-positioned in Burgundy's court to assist in their

²⁴⁵ BNF, Ms. Fr. 26049, n° 724.

²⁴⁶ Cosneau, op. cit, pp. 138-139.

²⁴⁷ Loc. cit. *« Si en estoit la Roynne de la Cecille et tous les seigneurs mal contens ; pour ce en fist le mareschal de Bossac la raison ; car il le fist tuer. »* Gruel, op. cit. p. 53.

ongoing negotiations. What Richemont did not take into consideration was La Trémoille's well-established pattern of shifting allegiances²⁴⁸ and his singular ambition to carve out an unassailable position of prestige and influence, commensurate with his great wealth.

For once it was Charles himself rather than his «bonne-mère» who urged caution and sensed the danger of this new appointment. As captain of Vincennes and dauphin-in-waiting, Charles would have had occasion to observe La Trémoille at close quarters in his mother Ysabeau's entourage post-Agincourt. Gruel affirms that Charles expressly warned Richemont about La Trémoille: «*Beau cousin, vous me le baillés, mais vous en repentirés, car je le cognois mieulx que vous*».²⁴⁹ Gruel elaborates upon Charles's statement : «*Et sur tant demoura La Trimouille, qui ne fist pas le Roy menteur ; car il fist le pis qu'il peut à monseigneur le connestable.* »²⁵⁰

La Trémoille actively exploited Charles's animosity towards Richemont. He then moved decisively to destabilize Yolande's influence over her son-in-law. Brittany, who had long attempted to arrive at a pacific solution with the English, finally came to terms with Bedford. On 3rd July the English concluded terms with Jean V and on 12th July, the Count of Huntington received Yvry, confiscated from Richemont for his disobedience and rebellion against the English Crown. Brittany's capitulation further eroded the Constable's position within Charles's royal council, a development keenly exploited by La Trémoille. The Treaty of Saumur was now in utter disarray, the Breton alliance in tatters and the English continued to besiege Montargis, attempting a naval offensive against La Rochelle.²⁵¹

Richemont lost the government of Berry to La Trémoille and a civil war between the two opposing protagonists erupted in the midst of the continuing English invasion. Charles's court split into two irreconcilable factions. Richemont had the support of Yolande, the Counts of Clermont, La Marche, Armagnac, Pardiac and others, but La Trémoille had the

²⁴⁸ See Appendix 1, n. 39. See also Vale's comments regarding La Trémoille, Richemont and Yolande and above p. 226, n. 242.

²⁴⁹ Gruel, op. cit., p. 54.

²⁵⁰ Loc. cit.

²⁵¹ Vallet de Viriville, *Charles VII*, t. II, p. 24.

king, and as discussed above, whoever had the king in their camp, held real authority. La Trémoille quickly attracted keen allies such as the chancellor Regnault de Chartres and his own step-brother Guillaume d'Albret and Raoul de Gaucourt.²⁵² The Constable found himself cast into the rôle of rebel both by his king and the English, with whom his brother Brittany was once more allied.

Bedford continued his campaign for Montargis, for its capture would have opened the whole of the Loire to him. Richemont therefore needed to save Montargis at any price. If he could not save Montargis, Orleans and Anjou-Maine would fall to Bedford. Richemont summoned every soldier and captain he could find to Gien and Jargeau. He managed to gather together John Stewart Darnley, Constable of Scotland, Jean, Bastard of Orleans,²⁵³ Etienne de Vignoles known as La Hire, Poton de Xaintrilles, the sires of Gaucourt and of Guitry, Giraud de la Pallière, Alain Giron, Guillaume d'Albret, the Lords of Orval, Graville, Brangonnet, Arpajohn and others.²⁵⁴ They could not advance, however, as their men had not been paid. Richemont was obliged to sell a coronet to keep up the advance on Montargis. He placed the Bastard and La Hire in charge of the expedition. What follows is of utmost interest to us, as the later liberation of Orleans in 1429 mirrors Montargis 1427 almost completely. Both the Bastard and La Hire took the English besiegers by surprise, slipping into Montargis with a convoy of supplies and livestock destined for the starving inhabitants: «*Sy se mist sus le conte de Richemont, connestable de France, et chevaucha, toute une nuyt, bien xx lieues, avec luy messire Charles de Bourbon, Le Bastard d'Alençon [d'Orléans] et plusieurs aultres. Et vindrent soudainement envoyr le moindre siège et le desconfirent incontinent, et puis l'aultre siège; et furent occis desdis deulx sièges plus de vij m[ille] hommes ...*».²⁵⁵ The besieged bravely seconded the efforts of their liberators. On 5th September 1427, the English were routed from Montargis, losing many men, abandoning supplies, equipment and artillery: «*... Dont y ot grant occision et plusieurs en y ot prins. Furent arses toutes leurs tantes et leur charroi et du siege s'en partirent hastivement les contes de Warvic et de Suffort.*»²⁵⁶ In 1429 Joan of Arc would arrive at Orleans also at the head of a convoy of supplies and livestock, also “miraculously”

²⁵² Cosneau, op. cit., p. 145.

²⁵³ Jean, Bastard of Orleans, grew to maturity in Yolande's household having been betrothed to Louvet's daughter in 1413. With the banishment of Louvet, the Bastard followed his father-in-law to Provence, sharing in his disgrace. He re-appeared at Richemont's insistence soon afterwards. See above, p. 217-219, & n. 207. Cf. Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. I, p. 236.

²⁵⁴ *La Chronique de la Pucelle*, pp. 244-245.

²⁵⁵ *Jean Le Févre*, t. II, p. 131.

²⁵⁶ *La Chronique de la Pucelle...*, p. 202.

slipping unchallenged into the besieged city, to rout the English who in their disorderly flight also left supplies and artillery behind.

The forced retreat from Montargis appears to have discomfited Bedford, at least in relation to his agreement with Brittany ratified in July. Brittany had never been a firm ally of the English and Bedford was doubtless aware that it would not take very much for Jean V to re-ally himself with Charles, particularly with Yolande and Richemont pressing him to come back into the fold. Bedford must have worked upon Brittany's insecurities for on 8th September 1427, three days after the English retreat from Montargis, Jean issued a promise to observe the peace treaty between France and England:

«... Jehan ... A touz ... salut. Savoir faisons que pour le bien de paix et demourer en la bienveillance et obbeissance de Mgr. le roy de France et d'Angleterre, Nous avons renoncé et renonçons par ces presentes à toutes aliances par nous faictes ou prejudice de mond. Sgr. le roy ... et promettons ... observer les appointemens et traictié de paix final des deux royaumes de France et d'Angleterre ...»²⁵⁷

Bedford might have demanded and received this attestation from Jean V but it would seem that this did not stop Brittany from continuing to work with Yolande's faction, itself more or less allied with the interests of Charles d'Orléans, captive of the English since Agincourt. The Breton archives contain various seemingly innocuous documents backing up this claim. For example, in September 1427, at roughly the same time as the issue of his letter supporting the Franco-English peace treaty, Brittany issued an edict authorizing a levy to be charged, to be put towards ransoming his nephew the Duke of Alençon, taken captive at Verneuil.²⁵⁸ Immediately following this edict is a mandate for payment in favour of Hamonnet Raguier, «*tresorier des guerres du roy*». On 24th October 1427, Brittany issued another mandate for payment, this time to «*messire Jehan Stuart, connestable des Escoczays, pour luy aider à faire son veaige en Escoce et pour autres causes, cinq cens liv.*»²⁵⁹ This mention of John Stewart Darnley, Scots Constable is worthy of note, for if we recall our discussion above, Vale states that John Stewart Darnley was in command

²⁵⁷ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, p. 210.

²⁵⁸ Jean II d'Alençon was married to Jeanne, the only daughter of Charles d'Orléans and Isabelle of France. *Ibid.*, document 1770, p. 212.

²⁵⁹ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, p. 213.

of Charles d'Orléans's personal body guard of Scots archers from about 1418. We therefore must seriously consider that the «*autres causes*» referred to by Jean V in his mandate, might have involved personal communication between the Scots Constable and Charles d'Orléans. These documents do not paint a portrait of a firm friend of the English. While Brittany continued to pay lip service to Bedford to protect his territories, he was without doubt aiding the cause of Charles VII and making plans with Charles d'Orléans, prisoner of the English but still very much involved in French affairs.

As always, Brittany's stance was entirely defensive and pragmatic. Following the Montargis victory, with optimism running high, other French victories were realized. On 9th September this winning streak was bolstered at Mont-Saint-Michel by its captain Louis d'Estouteville, who managed to hold the fortress, with the English losing some 2000 men. At the same time, other sieges were also relieved by the French in various places.²⁶⁰ Richemont set to, fortifying garrisons, while on 22nd September Bedford ordered four massive cannons be sent from Harfleur to Paris without delay, to buttress the offensive against Montargis. They did not, however, appear soon enough and were much lamented, «*à cause de la grant multitude qui en a esté rompue aux sièges qui ont esté mis pour le recouvrement des places occupées par les ennemis de la Normandie, la France, l'Anjou, le Maine et autre part*».²⁶¹ Richemont was successful during this period as he sought to relieve sieges and hamper English progress towards Orleans and greater Anjou. He was unable, however, to concentrate either his attention or indeed his efforts, as the conflict with La Trémoille, who had taken advantage of Brittany's "alliance" with Bedford, deepened. La Trémoille argued to Charles that given they had the services of the Bastard of Orleans, hero of Montargis, they no longer required Richemont, especially as the Treaty of Saumur had been broken by the actions of Richemont's brother, Jean V.²⁶² La Trémoille had without doubt taken further advantage of the fact that Yolande herself was absent from the royal council from 31st July, when she was obliged to depart and journey to Provence.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Cf. *Le Chronique de la Pucelle...*, pp. 248-249.

²⁶¹ BNF, Ms. Fr. 26050, n° 771, included by Cosneau in his *Appendices*, pp. 531-532.

²⁶² Cf. Cosneau op. cit., regarding Brittany and the English, p. 148.

²⁶³ She was back again by July 1428. Vallet de Viriville, *Charles VII, Roi de France (1403-1461) et ses conseillers*, Paris 1859, juillet-sept 1427 – juillet-sept 1428. We have emphasized above *passim*, the importance of Provence to all aspects of Angevin enterprise.

Richemont continued his struggle against the English and the change in his fortunes on the royal council and by the end of September had departed to assist the Count of Laval, passing through Craon and Angers to Loudon to meet with the Counts of Clermont and La Marche, firm allies of his and of Yolande, and avowed adversaries of La Trémoille. The two had previously decamped to Châtellerauld and had left word that the Constable join them there to discuss ways in which they might attempt to remove La Trémoille. La Trémoille was informed of their plans and redoubled his efforts to rid himself of Richemont, persuading Charles that the Constable and his allies were rebels and ought to be treated as such. He adopted much the same approach used by Richemont in 1425-1426 to rid himself of Louvet *et al*: « *Et incontinent il fist defendre de par le Roy que homme ne fust si hardi de les mettre en ville ne chasteau, ne de leur faire ouverture en nulle place que ce fust.*»²⁶⁴ In all probability, La Trémoille would not have ventured this far had Yolande not been absent in Provence at the time.²⁶⁵

Richemont kept his rendez-vous with La Marche and Clermont, and along with the Maréchal de Boussac and other captains and «*gens de grand estate*», entered Chinon and sought out Marguerite of Burgundy, Richemont's wife, who still held Chinon as a donation from Charles VII.

La Trémoille, hearing of these developments, informed Richemont that his conduct was endangering the stability of the kingdom. Richemont sent his ambassadors to the king

²⁶⁴ Gruel, *op. cit.* p.61.

²⁶⁵ Her absence is testified to in her household accounts held in the A.N. KK 243, f° 63°, «... *Dudit mois de juillet mil CCCCXXVII [dépense] ... pour le voyage de ladite dame [Yolande] en ses pais de prouence ...*», cf. A.N. K 62, n° 36. We can but attempt to formulate a possible motive for her departure south at this critical juncture for Charles VII by referring to the surviving record of her Estates, where we recall that in June 1423, she departed Provence and left her youngest son Charles d'Anjou as her largely symbolic presence in her southern counties, and at the time he was only about nine-years of age (see above pp. 204-206). By 1428, Charles d'Anjou was just about fourteen-years of age and Yolande's cousins the Aragonese were once more belligerently threatening the coast of Provence. While Charles d'Anjou was under the active guardianship of Yolande's most trusted officials, Yolande might have been recalled to add weight to the call for the formation of a "*ligue*" to defend Provence against Aragon. Cf. Hébert, Michel, *Regestes...* Estates convoked for February 1427 in Aix-en-Provence & in June 1427, again in Aix, where it was decided that they should write to Yolande to sollicite her personal intervention (p. 301). There seems to be some indication that the Estates were convoked by her youngest son in a state of panic, as proper procedure had not been entirely respected (p. 304). These were followed by further Estates convoked in Salerno by the King of Sicily, Yolande's eldest son Louis III, in October 1427 to receive ambassadors from the Aixoise Estates held in the preceding June, (p. 307). More Estates were held in Aix-en-Provence in June 1428 to hear reports from the ambassadors returning from Salerno. (p. 317). The ambassadors had once again requested confirmation of Provençal privileges; this would seem to indicate that some shoring up of loyalty and mutual support was once again required. This would seem to conform to an established pattern and might well have been the main motive for Yolande's presence in Provence in 1428.

but La Trémoille refused them an audience. The result of this episode was a return to armed conflict. Despite the fact that the Constable had the support of the great Houses of Anjou, Bourbon, Orleans, Armagnac, the Scots Constable John Stewart Darnley, Marshal Boussac and most of the high nobility, he could not openly attack La Trémoille without appearing to be in overt rebellion against Charles. The English after all were waiting for Richemont to drop his guard and allow them a free hand to achieve their long-desired conquest of Anjou-Maine, particularly with its viceroy Yolande absent in Provence. Unable to bring the fight to La Trémoille and in the absence of his protectrix, Richemont effectively found himself exiled from court, deprived of his pension and unable to fulfil the duties of his office. Leaving his wife Marguerite, the Duchess of Guyenne, in Chinon under the protection of Guillaume Bélier, Richemont withdrew to take possession of his domain at Parthenay.²⁶⁶

From his exile, the Constable continued his negotiations with Savoy, Brittany and Burgundy, with Savoy moving to renew his treaty with Charles and Burgundy on 26th November 1427. La Trémoille was not content to allow Richemont to depart the scene with dignity, rather pursuing him with all the means at his disposal. Richemont attempted to parley with Charles through his personal intermediaries. Jean V acted on his brother's behalf, sending Richemont their younger brother Richard, Count of Etampes, to explain why he had been obliged to agree to a treaty with the English and to discuss ways in which they might together plan an offensive against La Trémoille. Though Richemont welcomed Richard, he was greatly vexed by his elder brother, whose actions had been the catalyst for his fall from grace. The Constable maintained frequent contact with his allies Yolande, La Marche, Clermont, Armagnac and Pardiac, who had gathered troops at Chinon in December to resist further offensives against their interests from La Trémoille.²⁶⁷ In January 1428, Richemont joined his wife Marguerite at Chinon, her court adjoining Charles's own, the duchess therefore being well-positioned to assist her banished husband.²⁶⁸

Richemont relaunched his 1425 strategy, one so effectively used against him by La Trémoille. With the support of his allies Clermont and Pardiac, he addressed a detailed

²⁶⁶ Gruel, p. 62.

²⁶⁷ Beaucourt, t. II, pp. 159-160.

²⁶⁸ Cosneau, pp. 153-155.

manifest to *parlement* at Poitiers and loyal cities and garrisons. In it they pledged to remove La Trémoille from his position of influence to remediate the kingdom's woes.²⁶⁹ They demanded the support of *parlement* and loyal places in this venture. Poitiers did not respond.²⁷⁰ Lyons, until the problems with La Trémoille steadfastly loyal to the Constable, later stated that they could only obey the orders of the king.²⁷¹ Tours, whose Duchess Yolande was absent, received orders to admit neither Richemont nor his allies.²⁷² Richemont turned to Jean V for assistance, but he, fearful of English reprisals, would only send troops to defend against incursions from his own enemy, Jean de Blois. Finally, Richemont and his allies sought out Yolande, newly returned from Provence, who, given their subsequent actions, may have advised that they wait for a more opportune moment to present itself before moving against La Trémoille.²⁷³ Richemont pulled back to Parthenay in February 1428.

La Trémoille worked to fortify his position against retribution by Richemont and the intervention of the Queen of Sicily. He sought to isolate them as far as possible from direct contact and influence over Charles. La Trémoille won the malleable and self-interested loyalty of powerful allies at court such as Raoul de Gaucourt (whom he dispatched to Poitou to occupy Richemont's military attention), Jean II, Duke of Alençon (in desperate financial straits, because of the crippling ransom that had had to be raised to secure his release from the English), the Count of Foix and the ever opportunistic Regnault of Chartres, Archbishop of Reims.

The Duchess of Guyenne's favourable vantage point in Chinon did not escape the attention of La Trémoille. Extant documents attest to its three important castles and fortified inner residential areas.²⁷⁴ Chinon was strategically important and Richemont's wife held dominion over it. Immediately in the wake of Richemont's exile to Parthenay, La Trémoille, accompanied by the king, Regnault of Chartres, Guillaume d'Albret, Robert le Maçon²⁷⁵ and other powerful lords, presented himself in Chinon with the express purpose of applying pressure to the duchess in order to isolate further the

²⁶⁹ BNF, Ms. Fr. 21302, dated 14th January 1427 (o.s.).

²⁷⁰ Beaucourt, t. II, pp. 156-157.

²⁷¹ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 155.

²⁷² Beaucourt, t. II, p. 157, cf. pp. 159-160.

²⁷³ Cosneau, p. 156.

²⁷⁴ AN, JJ 167, f° 173.

²⁷⁵ Yolande's steadfast Angevin officer on the Royal Council, possibly playing along with the favourite if only to maintain a presence on the royal-council.

Constable.²⁷⁶ She would be permitted to remain in Chinon should she promise to have no further contact with Richemont. As expected she refused²⁷⁷ and withdrew from her strategic position in Chinon to Parthenay under the protection of Scottish forces, her itinerary including a sojourn in Saumur,²⁷⁸ Yolande's secondary residence.

Richemont did not react to this latest insult, preferring to comply with Yolande's counsel that they wait for more propitious circumstances before launching an offensive against La Trémoille. He continued nonetheless to work towards a peaceful settlement with Burgundy through the mediation of Savoy and Clermont. Burgundy consented to an extension of the pre-existing agreement until 1st November 1428 and later agreed to an additional three year prolongation.²⁷⁹ Despite his fall from grace, Richemont and his supporters continued to look for ways in which to regain Charles's favour. Notwithstanding his influence over the king, La Trémoille was immensely unpopular. The exiles sought to capitalize upon this by convoking general Estates, assemblies of which had been continuously postponed by Charles and La Trémoille. Richemont found the ideal trigger for such a move with the news that Bedford had ordered Salisbury from England with fresh troops in preparation for a siege planned for Orleans. Bedford had originally anticipated a definitive push into Anjou-Maine but his project had been overruled by his own *parliament*, believing that Orleans was of more strategic importance in their struggle to win dominion over the entirety of France. This decision would have represented only momentary respite for Yolande: for should Orleans fall, Anjou-Maine would be overrun by Bedford. Princely unity was the theme of the Estates and Cosneau claims that Richemont was galvanized into action by Yolande in the understanding that the time had come to make a concerted effort to shake off the shackles of La Trémoille's influence.²⁸⁰ Richemont and his supporters addressed a solemn memorandum to Charles, pleading that he re-establish concord among the princes and their officers as a matter of urgency to bring an end to civil strife. They put forward a scheme to invest Yolande with the necessary executive power to safeguard the security of the kingdom and its subjects. They demanded that Estates be immediately called in Poitiers, so that all

²⁷⁶ March 1427 (o.s.) Easter fell on 20th April 1428.

²⁷⁷ Saying, «... *que jamais ne voudroit demourer en place où elle ne peust veoir monseigneur son mari ...*» Gruel, op. cit., p.64.

²⁷⁸ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 157.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 157-158.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 158.

would have the opportunity to speak freely and be guaranteed freedom from oppression and violence:

«... Item, semble expédiant que le seigneur de La Trémoille, le seigneur de Trèves [Robert le Maçon]²⁸¹ et tous autres du conseil et hostel du roy soient réconciliez avec lesdiz seigneurs [Richemont, Clermont & Pardiac], en déposant leurs ires ou malveillances vers les dessusdiz, à l'onneur de Dieu, du roy, en compassion du poivre peuple et au grant prouffit de la chose publique, ainsi faisans honnorant le roy en révérence, eulx mesmes en la vertu d'obéissance ... Item, quant au fait du conseil des trois estas, semblent nécessaires les manières de seurtez qui s'ensuivent: seurté de le tenir, seurté des chemins, pour venir oudit conseil, jour et lieu; seurté contre toute oppression et violence, durant lediz conseil, avec toute liberté à ung chacun de dire tout que bon lui semblera, à laffin que dessusdite; seurté de garder, tenir et observer inviolablement ce que dit et conclue sera par le roy, et par lesdiz trois estas ...

... Quant à la seurté de tenir, garder et observer, au moins pour le temps que advisé sera, inviolablement, ce que advisé et conclud sera par le roy et les dis trois estas, et, s'il plaist au roy, il commectra dès maintenant la pratique de la dite seurté à la reine de Secille, sa mère, et à ceulx que ladite reyne voudra appeler à la conseiller du conseil du roy, de son propre conseil, des conseils des seigneurs et d'ailleurs ... si la conclusion faite par leur déliberacion, advis et conseil n'estoit fidèlement gardée, pour le temps qu'il sera advisé par le bon plaisir du roy, considérant le temps de la présente extrême nécessité, semble que le roy, de sa grâce et humaine justice, deveroit, dès maintenant, bailler ses lettres quant à l'observacion inviolable de la dite seurté, le dit temps durant, et après que la dite seurté sera pratiquée particulièrement par la dicte dame, avec le conseil des dessus dis, la confermer et approuver expressément, pour le dit temps affin que, dès maintenant, les puissances du roy et des seigneurs, puissent estre exploictées par la volenté et ordonnance du roy, d'un commun accord, au bien de sa seigneurie et de la chose publique ...».²⁸²

Naturally, La Trémoille would never had allowed such a project to advance, particularly as it would have placed Yolande in the ascendant position. He would have been fully aware that it was Yolande who provided the intellectual dexterity and patience to plan such offensives and that her lieutenant Richemont provided the military muscle and supplementary political/dynastic connections necessary to advance her interests. To

²⁸¹ See n. 275, p. 234 above regarding le Maçon's loyalties.

²⁸² AN, P 1388/3, n° 114 bis. Cited by Cosneau, op. cit., cf. pp. 534-537 for commentary and context.

occupy Richemont's attention, La Trémoille ensured that Gaucourt continued to keep hostilities alive in Poitou. Such was the prestige of the Queen of Sicily, however, that Charles was obliged to convoke the General Estates for 18th July 1428. Yet notwithstanding her personal authority and influence over him, he did nothing to ensure that the assembly went ahead. Charles, like La Trémoille, would have been fully aware that should the Estates assemble, he would cede his sovereignty in all but name to Yolande and Richemont.

With the postponement of the Estates, Richemont and his faction decided to take the initiative and seize control of Bourges. Le Trémoille tumbled to their intentions and sent letters in Charles's name to Bourges, ordering that entry be refused to Richemont and his supporters. Regardless of the fact that Bourges had agreed to conform to these instructions, when Clermont and Pardiac appeared, royal officers opened the city to them. The counts assembled representatives of the three estates and outlined their purpose and intention to work for the good of the king and his subjects.²⁸³ Apart from the Lords of Prye and La Borde, Clermont and Pardiac achieved majority support for their plan. They quickly summoned Richemont. La Trémoille, realizing the threat to his position by this latest development (a campaign supported by all estates including the Counts of La Marche and of Armagnac), hastily assembled troops and arrived at Bourges with the king in tow. Richemont was delayed by Gaucourt's offensives in Poitou and had to take a lengthy detour in order to make his way to Bourges. La Trémoille took advantage of the delay by negotiating with Clermont and Pardiac, arguing that without the assistance of Richemont they would be besieged by the forces of the king. He even went as far as to point out that their actions were playing into the hands of the English, who were preparing to besiege Orleans.²⁸⁴ The Counts agreed to halt their actions, and

²⁸³ Cosneau, *op. cit.* p. 159. Vale contends that Richemont's activities at this time, his "rebellion", are arguably "more a product of the dispute which had raged between between the families of Montfort and Penthièvre over their claims to Brittany than a result of Charles's 'mismanagement' of the kingdom [and] that it was yet another instance of the constable's pursuit of self-interest under the cloak of the 'public weal'." *Op. cit.*, pp. 53-54. If that were indeed the case, Yolande would have not allowed herself to be associated with Richemont's family feud to the detriment of Charles's and her own House's best interests. While she did support Jean V and his duchy in their conflicts with the Penthièvres from time to time, it was only ever to ensure that her own projects moved forward. Vale, furthermore, is unusual for he takes the position that, in any case, France's situation in 1428 was not so terribly dire. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55. We support the contrary position as our discussion below will reveal.

²⁸⁴ BNF, Ms. Fr. 4488, f° 209.

were granted (along with Richemont), letters of remission dated 17th July 1428.²⁸⁵ On 22nd July, Charles re-convoked the General Estates, *toutes excusations cessantes*,²⁸⁶ this time to be assembled in Tours, (Yolande's duchy²⁸⁷), on 10th September. Given that the Estates were to meet in Tours, that they were expressly convoked to discuss the pressing affairs of the realm and that: «*il est bien entendu que chacun aura franche liberté de dire tout ce que bon lui semblera*»,²⁸⁸ it would seem that Yolande's faction, having been overruled on the subject of the proposed Poitiers Estates, achieved the desired outcome with the convoking of Estates to her loyal city of Tours. The letters patent were ratified with the express involvement of the Duke of Alençon, (son-in-law of Charles d'Orléans), Clermont, Pardiac and a host of other notables drawn from Yolande's faction. The Bourges tentative therefore yielded some concrete results, perhaps indicating that La Trémoille was not in fact as powerful as he believed himself to be. In the context of the English advance and a depleted treasury, even La Trémoille must have been convinced that it was time to call the Estates together.

Despite this timely political victory, all was not well in Yolande's domains. The English captured Laval²⁸⁹ and re-captured Le Mans,²⁹⁰ from where the newly arrived Salisbury commenced his campaign for Orleans, seizing surrounding towns and villages. The *Chronique de la Pucelle* reports that before Salisbury's departure from England, the objective of his mission «... *venue à la cognoissance du duc d'Orléans prisonnier en Angleterre, il [Charles d'Orléans] pria audit comte [Salisbury] qu'il ne voulust faire aucune guerre en ses terres, ny à ses subjects, veu qu'il estoit prisonnier et qu'il ne se pouvoit deffendre; et dit-on qu'il luy promit et octroya sa requeste ...*». ²⁹¹ Burgundy's ally, Jean de Luxembourg drawing advantage from English victories and French disunity, captured Champagne.

²⁸⁵ AN, P 1358/2, n° 574, cf. Cosneau, p. 161.

²⁸⁶ Cosneau, loc. cit.

²⁸⁷ In 1424 Charles ceded Touraine and Loudon to Yolande and his «*belle-famille*», He stated that: «*Nous ayans consideracion a la proximité du lignaige en quoy nous attint nostre dit frere [Louis III] et aux bons et agreables services que nostre tres chiere et tres amée mère la Royne de Sicile et nostre dit frere son filz nous ont faiz et aussi les grans aides et soutenances que nous avons eues en noz necessitez pour le soustenement de nostre seigneurie et que encore avons par chascun jour continuelement deulx et de leur pais et subjez a grant charge deulx ...*» AN, P 1340, f.° 468, AN, P 1342, f.° 546. Bedford created himself Duke of Anjou and Maine during the same period. See above, p. 213

²⁸⁸ Cosneau, op. cit. p. 161. Cf. Picot, op. cit. t. I, p. 312.

²⁸⁹ Situated on the threshold of Brittany and on the borders of Normandy and Anjou.

²⁹⁰ *La Chronique de la Pucelle ...*, op. cit. pp. 251-252.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 256, cf. Vallet de Viriville, « Documents inédits pour servir à la biographie de Jean, bâtard d'Orléans, comte de Dunois et de Longueville », in *Le Cabinet Historique*, Paris, Bureau de Cabinet Historique, July 1857, p. 108.

While the Estates had been summoned to Tours, they eventually moved to Chinon, both a strategically safer venue for La Trémoille than Tours, whose loyalty to Yolande was absolute, and a necessity, given that the English had taken Meung and Beaugency, therefore endangering the security of Tours. These Estates were truly representative and finally unified in the common desire to repel the English invaders. They voted a subsidy of 400,000 *livres*, stipulating that the aid was specifically accorded to «résister aux Anglois» and defend Orleans from English capture in the absence of its lord.²⁹² There were however some notable absences from the Estates (Richemont, Clermont, Pardiac *et al*), and as a result the Estates summoned the absentees to unify «en cette extrémité, autour de la bannière royale».²⁹³ They also called for political, fiscal and judicial reform arising from disarray in Charles's court presided over by La Trémoille. They specifically addressed their concerns to Charles himself on 11th November 1428. Much as Yolande and Richemont had earlier done, the deputies implored that he gather around him all the princes and lords of his blood «par toutes les voyes et moyens possibles», make peace with Burgundy «par tous les bons moyens possibles ... et trouver manière de le rejoindre et unir à sa seigneurie» and to «... attirer par-devers lui en bon amour et obéissance et en son service monseigneur le connestable et, pour ce faire, lui plaise continuer les ambaxades et traictiés qui ont esté commencés».²⁹⁴ Parlement had earlier written to Richemont, Pardiac and Clermont on 2nd November 1428, seeking their help to defend Orleans.²⁹⁵

Public opinion was therefore still on the side of Yolande, Richemont and their disciples. The Constable had not been inactive since Salisbury laid siege to Orleans on 12th October 1428. While the Estates gathered in Chinon, he paid a visit to his brother Brittany. From Redon, on 14th October Richemont made his will and prepared to make himself available to serve his king.²⁹⁶ La Trémoille however kept up hostilities in Poitou in an effort to delay the Constable's re-appearance. Richemont was obliged to watch from the sidelines as his nephew Jean d'Alençon, his brother-in-law Clermont, Scots Constable John Stewart Darnley, Boussac, Culant, the Bastard of Orleans and La Hire were ordered to defend Orleans. The French were defeated by Fastolf at Rouvray²⁹⁷ on 12th February 1429

²⁹² Picot, *op. cit.* p. 313.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ BNF, Ms. Latin 9177, f^os 268, 271, 272, v^o, 273 & the extract from the *Archives de l'hôtel de ville de Montpellier*, cited by Cosneau, *op. cit.* p. 537.

²⁹⁵ BNF, Ms. Fr. 21302.

²⁹⁶ Archives de la Loire-Inférieure, E. 24.

²⁹⁷ This defeat came to be known as the *Journée des Harens*, JJ 177, f^o 78, v^o.

and as a result an utterly dispirited Charles had determined to withdraw either to the Dauphiné or into exile in Spain or Scotland.

France was in disarray, its monarch had lost hope and a miracle would be required to unify the kingdom and repel the English. With her Constable effectively neutralized, Yolande d'Aragon, Queen of Jerusalem and Sicily was about to occupy herself with its realization.

CHAPTER 6: PALLAS-ATHENE¹ FRANCISCAINE: FRANCISCAN WARRIOR-MAIDEN

Puellæ terrificatos²

«Comment la royne Panthasillee entra dedans
Troyes a tout sa noble compaignie. Comment
les Troyens avoient recouvre force et couraige par
la vaillance de la royne Panthasillee.»³

In concluding the previous chapter we made the observation that by the end of 1428 Yolande d’Aragon and indeed the unhappy kingdom of France had just about exhausted all options open to them. The Constable was in exile, La Trémoille was comfortably ensconced in self-interested ascendancy over the king, and Charles VII was in despair, contemplating a future in exile. In this chapter we will argue that Yolande d’Aragon and her network of familial/spiritual/political connections in no small measure facilitated the Joan of Arc phenomenon, and we will examine the probable relationship and likely synergies between these two strong-willed women which underscored the contribution the Maid’s mission made to the ultimate recovery of the kingdom of France.

Whole forests have been sacrificed to the enigma and *gestes* of the Maid. Much has been written about her exploits and her motivations, the recorded “what” and the perceived “why” of her epic, little of which sheds light upon the actual “how” of her mission.

In truth the Maid’s progress is rendered more compelling by its omissions and impenetrable conundrums than by its received “facts”. Shakespeare refers to her as both *pucelle* (maiden) and *puzzel/pussel* (slut) in *I Henry VI*⁴ and in his portrayal Joan remains a puzzle until the fifth act when all is revealed. We will attempt to examine her origins and

¹ Pallas-Athène was the virgin goddess of wisdom and defensive warfare (she was incidentally the patron of weaving, spinning and needlework, agricultural tools and invention). She sprang from the head of her father Zeus a fully formed young woman (though some accounts of her deny her a womb), clothed in armour. If we read between the lines of Pius II’s memories, some believed that Joan sprang from someone’s head, likewise fully formed.

² Taken from an *Edit contre les capitaines et soldats anglais qui refusaient de passer en France par crainte de La Pucelle*, dated 3rd May 1430. Rymer t. X, p. 459. Cf. Quicherat, *Procès*, t. V, pp. 162 – 164. Joan would be captured just twenty days after the publishing of Humphrey of Gloucester’s edict.

³ Champion, Pierre, *Cronique Martiniane ...*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 1907, p. XLVI.

⁴ *The First Part of King Henry the Sixth.*, I, iv, l. 107.

connections and how (or by what intermediary), she came to lead the armies of Charles VII.

By the time of Joan's felicitous arrival at Chinon hope was exhausted. The English were poised to overrun loyalist France, and Charles's nobles were tearing each other apart over petty disputes. Charles himself was considering exile either to Spain or to Scotland and he no longer rode at the head of his troops with the archangel Michael at his shoulder as he had early in his "*dauphinage*". His most loyal and effective generals including Jean, Bastard of Orleans, were under siege in Orleans, and his commander-in-chief Richemont was in disgrace, waiting for an opportune moment to re-enter the fray. La Trémoille seemed disinclined to rally troops to Charles's cause, instead occupying himself with court intrigues and the enlargement of his considerable fortune.

In his *Commentarii* Pius II⁵ records French disarray at the time of Joan's appearance:

*«Alors que la situation était des plus désespérées, les Anglais ayant mis le siège devant Orléans [in October of 1428], une jeune fille de seize ans prénommée Jeanne, ... fut touchée par le souffle de l'Esprit-Saint. ... Qu'elle fût une œuvre divine ou une invention humaine je trancherais difficilement».*⁶

His final appreciation regarding Joan should be borne in mind, for it seems to indicate that even her contemporaries (some occupying the highest echelons of Church hierarchy), could not be certain of the authenticity of her saintly mentors. Pius goes on:

«Certains ont une autre version : alors que les nobles de France (quand les événements tournaient à souhait en faveur des Anglais) étaient divisés et que personne n'était jugé digne par un autre de commander, quelqu'un de plus sage imagina cette ruse d'affirmer que la jeune fille était envoyée par Dieu et qu'il fallait lui confier le commandement. On ne trouve personne, en effet,

⁵ See Appendix 1, n. 40.

⁶ Pie II (Piccolomini, Enea, Silvio), *Mémoires d'un pape de la Renaissance, Les Commentarii de Pie II*, Minischetti, Vito, Castiglione, Clouas, Ivan, Tallandier, Paris 2001, pp. 263–273. The Latin version : *« Interea desperatis paene Francorum rebus, puella sedecim annos nata, nomine Iohanna,...divino afflata spiritu sicutres eius gestae demonstrant...Divinium opus an humanum inventum fuerit difficile affirmaverim. »*Piccolomini, Enea, Silvio (Papa Pio II), *I Commentarii*. Edizione A Cura di Luigi Totario, (2 vols.), Totario, Luigi, (ed.), Milan, Adelphi Edizioni, 1984, pp. 1088-1110.

*pour récuser Dieu comme commandant. Et c'est ainsi que la conduite de la guerre et le commandement des armées furent confiés à la jeune fille.»*⁷

Pius's reflections will be our point of departure for this chapter and as our discussion progresses we will try to resolve the following questions: Was the Maid's mission exclusively divine in nature or was it rather the result of human intervention and agency? And, who had most to gain by favouring Joan's mission? We have no definitive primary evidence to assist us in this investigation apart from the trial transcripts, and both trials were tainted by political bias and expediency; some contemporary and near contemporary chronicles; memoirs and assorted letters and reports. Most of this extant documentation was expressly designed to serve a particular master or rationale.

To attempt to arrive at an informed analysis, we must therefore first address specific political realities and France's situation both at the time of Joan's appearance and at the time of her capture and execution. We will try to form a reasoned judgement based upon the balance of probabilities and strong circumstantial evidence derived from the context as well as the content of surviving documents. We will not follow Régine Pernoud's method, which insisted that documentation is the only instrument by which one might reach an informed conclusion. This cannot be the sole technique to be employed to investigate Joan's mission precisely because she herself took pains to camouflage her testimony and hold back information from her Rouen inquisitors. Pernoud's methodology is flawed because it refuses to address inconsistencies, unanswered (frequently unasked) questions and inconvenient dilemmas and puzzles, which in her Johannic treatises remain more often than not ignored or dismissed with sweeping generalizations rather than analyzed in any meaningful and objective sense.⁸ She seems

⁷ Loc. cit., p. 273. Pius adds the appreciation that: «*Ce n'était pas difficile à croire en France, où l'on tient pour certaines les choses que l'on a entendu dire ...*». The Latin version: "*Nonnulli existimant cum Franciae proceres, prospere succedentibus Anglorum rebus, inter se dissident, nec alter alterius ducatem ferre dignaretur, ab aliquo qui plus saperet hoc vframentum excogitatum, ut virginem divinitus sissam assererent, ducatumque petenti committerent; neque enim hominem esse qui Deum ducem recuset; atque in hunc modum rem bellicam puellae creditam et amorum imperium datum.*" And the critical appreciation made by Pius regarding French credulity: "*Neque id apud Gallos difficile, qui res auditas pro compertis habent.*" Piccolomini, Enea, Silvio (Papa Pio II), op. cit., p.1110.

⁸ Pernoud (though undeniably a respected archivist and popular historian of a range of subjects relating to the Middle Ages) seems to have developed a blind spot in relation to Joan of Arc. The best examples of her strident reaction to the views of others (whose ideas she referred to as heterodox and unworthy of consideration) on the issue of the Maid are to be found in her *Jeanne devant les Cauchons*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1970. Furthermore, Pernoud's "Commentaires", following each chapter in *Jeanne d'Arc par elle-même et ses témoins*, Manchecourt, Editions du Seuil,

not to take into account the activities, connections, contacts and whereabouts of secondary and peripheral (but crucial), actors in the Maid's epic. Network analysis was not one of Pernoud's preferred methodological tools. We will however, attempt to employ this technique to arrive at an informed conclusion as to the "how" of Joan's epic.⁹

The same observation could be applied to Pierre Tisset, who lumps together (in the manner favoured by Pernoud) both conspiracy theories and reasonable reflections, without pausing to analyze the latter, citing a lack of concrete documentation. As a professor of law, he must have been aware of the importance of compelling circumstantial evidence where hard primary evidence is unavailable.¹⁰ In the introduction (tome III) to the *Procès* documents, he poses the dilemma: «*Comment cette fille inconnue venant des confins du royaume et du lointain Barrois a-t-elle trouvé accès auprès du roi?*» He dismisses attempts to respond to this conundrum by stating: «*Quelques-uns ont tenté de la résoudre en faisant de Jeanne une fille de France, une bâtarde d'Orléans [admittedly an unorthodox thesis, and in any case we would argue that the circumstances of her birth are largely irrelevant]; d'autres ont voulu y voir une créature des Ordres Mendians; d'autres un agent de la reine de Sicile, Yolande d'Aragon*» While we might not go so far as to suggest that Joan was a «*créature des Ordres Mendians*» or an «*agent de la reine de Sicile*» we would maintain that there is a case to answer in relation to Joan's connections with the Franciscans and in her dealings with Yolande. Tisset confidently concludes that: «*Toutes ces tentatives d'explication sont ruineuses. Jeanne a défendu son secret contre ses juges et c'est pour cela qu'elle n'a pas accepté de prêter serment de*

1996, are very revealing, as she puts forward both objective and subjective appreciations of her subject and the work undertaken by others in this field. In this work Pernoud is confident in her assertion that: «*il est inadmissible du point de vue de la méthode historique – car l'Histoire, ne l'oublions pas, est une science exacte régie par les méthodes scientifiques – d'accepter une supposition que n'étaye aucun document.*» p. 27. We would argue that merely to rely upon often flawed and biased documentation and ignore surrounding circumstances and outside issues is to commit a grave error in the study of history. Furthermore, in *Jeanne d'Arc*, co-authored with her disciple Marie-Véronique Clin (who at one time worked as a curator for the *Centre Jeanne d'Arc*, established by Pernoud in Orléans), Paris, Le Grand Livre du Mois, 1986, Pernoud reveals her thinking. Much of Pernoud's work has been used as the basis for later analyses of Joan's life and mission. In some cases, her view has been accepted without sufficient objective and critical analysis. While respectful of Pernoud's erudition, we will attempt to address some omissions in her work.

⁹ See our introduction pp. xii-xiii regarding network analysis.

¹⁰ Pierre Tisset (1898–1968), worked on the excellent new version of the trials of Joan of Arc with Yvonne Lahners. Though not a mediæval historian per se, he was Professor of Law at the University of Montpellier, *agrégé* in the history of law and Roman law and a noted Latinist.

dire toute la vérité sans réserves». ¹¹ He is in accord with Pernoud in his absolute refusal to consider compelling circumstantial evidence in the absence of documented proof. We will attempt to redress this situation.

In the previous chapter we saw that by the closing stages of 1428 France's situation and that of its beleaguered monarch was as desperate as it possibly could be. For Yolande the situation was equally serious, if not more pressing, for had the English overrun Orleans, Anjou would have been lost. She needed to regain her influence over Charles and ensure that the army and loyal territories unified behind his banner. With Richemont effectively outlawed by La Trémoille, and Charles temporarily out of her reach, a shock tactic was required.

Yolande must have been very aware of Charles's state of mind and nocturnal spiritual exhortations for salvation, her daughter Marie being his wife. If the image sketched out by the sixteenth century Burgundian chronicler, Guillaume Paradin, cited by Beaucourt, is to be believed, Charles himself felt that there was only one way out of darkness:

«Et ne se faut esbahir si Dieu eust pitié de ce pouvre Roy affligé, auquel la grande vexation et tentation avoit tellement enlevé l'esprit en Dieu que se trouvant en ceste destresse, l'on le voyait la nuit se lever de son lict en chemise, et se mettre à genoux, priant Dieu, les larmes aux yeux, reconnoissant que le secours et ayde ne luy pouvoit venir d'ailleurs que du Dieu fort et du Seigneur des armées qui exalte les humbles et humilie les orgueilleux». ¹²

France was in political darkness and the spiritual aspect of its condition was always bubbling just below the surface. Transcendent lambency was what Charles longed for, a guiding light from above, one that would redeem him from the political morass in which he found himself. France needed, in the words of Paradin, *«secours et ayde ... [which would come] d'ailleurs que du Dieu fort et du Seigneur des armées qui exalte les humbles et humilie les orgueilleux ...»*, and it materialized in the most humble form of all, a pious country maiden from the most eastern reaches of the realm: *«... arriva devers le daulphin*

¹¹ Both citations of Tisset are taken from Tisset, Pierre, *Procès de Condamnation de Jeanne d'Arc*, t. III, C. Klincksieck, Paris 1971, pp. 103 – 104, Tisset's emphasis.

¹² Beaucourt, « Le Caractère de Charles VII », in *Revue des Questions Historiques*, vol. IX, livraison 1^{er} juillet 1870, n. 2, p. 383. Cf. Paradin, Guillaume, *Annales de Bourgogne* par Guillaume Paradin de Cuyseaulx, Lyon, A. Gryphius, 1566, p. 703.

une josne fille née en Lorraine ... fille d'un poure laboureur ... Jenette la Pucelle et avoit gardé les brébis ou village dont elle estoit née, laquelle Pucelle estoit en parole et en contenance moulte innocente ... elle fait entendant que par divine inspiracion elle devoit faire mettre ledit daulphin en possession de son royaume de France ... et le faire par tout obéir ...»¹³

In the period leading up to the close of 1428, Yolande had deployed all the political and diplomatic weapons in her arsenal with varying degrees of success. When hope was extinguished, she called forth a miracle of biblical proportions. Layers of serendipity brought Joan and Yolande together.

Siméon Luce sums up the psychological condition of a beleaguered France immediately prior to Joan's appearance in these terms:

«Quand on n'attend plus rien de la terre, on est moins prompt à dédaigner un secours annoncé au nom du ciel ...»¹⁴

France's misery warranted Joan's acceptance. Let us review her origins and connections.

Lorraine? Champenoise? Or Barroise? Joan was each of these by birth or by connection. Was she the daughter of a simple peasant-labourer of modest means, or rather the issue of a yeoman-farmer of comfortable means and elevated social status? Available evidence would seem to point to the latter. Did she absorb all her religious convictions and fervour at the feet of her mother and parish curate? Or were there other outside (including broader familial) influences formative to her spirituality and understanding of the Church? Was the location and political situation of Domremy a factor in her mission and ready acceptance by Charles? Was she actively sponsored by Yolande and the House of Anjou?

Joan's family name appears to have originated from the village of Arc, situated in Champagne. There are extant records citing several members of the Arc family. In 1353 a Simon d'Arc is named as chaplain to the chapel of Notre-Dame, within the royal castle of

¹³ Quicherat, Jules, « Supplément aux témoignages contemporains sur Jeanne d'Arc et 'La Chronique des Cordeliers de Paris' », in *La Revue Historique*, t. XIX, mai – août 1882, p. 72.

¹⁴ Luce, Siméon, *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy*, Librairie Hachette, Paris 1887, p. 199.

Chaumont; in 1390, Canon Pierre d'Arc is mentioned in relation to Troyes; in 1404 Michel d'Arc is designated curate of Bar-sur-Seine (in the diocese of Langres). The names of other members of the d'Arc extended family are recorded, not all of them ecclesiastics; some were drapers and farmers. Towards 1375, mention is made of Jacques d'Arc (Joan's father), in the village of Ceffonds, a dependency of the prestigious abbey of Montiérendier.¹⁵ In general, the people of this region were fiercely loyal to the Crown, which in return assisted them in their struggles against the more unreasonable exactions of the monks of Montiérendier. The third estate had established confraternities based upon mutual assistance and religious belief, all the better to present a unified front and effectively lobby the Crown.¹⁶

The Abbey tended to support the cause of Burgundy, while Ceffonds in particular remained loyal to the king, first as represented by the Duke of Orleans and later, the Dauphin Charles. Given Joan's father's native attachment to the House of Orleans, it is perhaps unsurprising that she later manifested a particular preoccupation with the interests of Charles d'Orléans.¹⁷

In 1612 Charles du Lis published his *Traité sommaire tant au nom et des armes que de la naissance et parenté de la Pucelle d'Orléans*. This work rests upon a variety of titles, deeds and contracts, which at the time of his writing were apparently conserved in Saint-Dizier. Luce tried without success to unearth these documents in the mid-nineteenth century, (in the event only identifying one extant document of consequence). He nonetheless stresses that as Du Lis's claims are made so formally and with such conviction, they ought not to be dismissed for want of extant supporting documentation.¹⁸ Du Lis gives this account of the origins and the circumstances of Joan of Arc:

«... Cette Pucelle donc, non seulement née et baptisée à Dompremy, paroisse de Greux en France, du diocèse de Toul en ce qui est en France, a été appelée la Pucelle de France; mais encore est originaire de France par ses ancestres, provenus du village de Sefonds, près de Montirandel, en

¹⁵ Luce, Siméon, op .cit. pp. 25 – 27. A Jeannin d'Arc is mentioned at Radonvilliers. Between 1390 and 1392 he was in the service of Jean Guespin, close confidant of both the Constable Olivier Clisson and Jean de la Barre, personal valet of Jean, Duke of Berry.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁸ Loc. cit.

*Champagne, où nasquit Jacques d'Arc son père, de bonne riche et ancienne famille du dit lieu, comme il se void par plusieurs tittres et contracts du pays qui se trouvent en la ville de Saint-Disier ...»*¹⁹

Luce puts forward a possible scenario based upon research into a register held in the *Chambre des Comptes de Bar* as to how Jacques «*de bonne riche et ancienne famille*», came to settle on the banks of the Meuse. Luce uncovered that, from 1385–1387, a Simon de Montiérendier figures as prosecutor for the Duke of Bar in the region of *Bassigny champenois* (the region including the village of Domremy). Luce postulates that during his youth, Jacques d'Arc might have been attracted to the region to serve his compatriot Simon de Montiérendier.²⁰ This could explain Jacques's later elevation to the position of doyen of Domremy and his activities in that rôle, most notably in the sphere of advocacy on behalf of his fellow citizens.

The connections and activities of the family of Joan's mother, Isabelle de Vouthon-Romée, are better documented than those of her father's. Her family took its name from the village of Vouthon, bordering on the western and southern limits of Domremy. If Joan was Champenoise by her father's origins, she was Barroise by her mother's.

Isabelle's father Jean de Vouthon is mentioned in judicial registers of the provostship of Gondrecourt in 1385, and one of her brothers, also called Jean de Vouthon is named as a roofer «... *Jehan de Vouthon , recouvreur en son vivant ...*»²¹ In 1416, Jean *fils* left Vouthon to establish himself in Sermaize.²²

Like the Arcs, the Vouthons had their share of family ecclesiastics. Henri de Vouthon, Isabelle's brother, was curate of the important diocese of Sermaize and it was perhaps

¹⁹ Du Lis, Charles, *Traité sommaire tant du nom et des armes que de la naissance et parenté de la Pucelle d'Orléans ... auquel traité sont ajoutées des lettres patentes du roi obtenues par maîtres Charles et Luc du Lis frères descendus en droite ligne d'un des frères de ladite Pucelle d'Orléans pour avoir permission de reprendre et porter les armoiries de ladite Pucelle tout entières*, Paris, E. Martin, 1633, pp. 27 and 28. Cited by Luce, loc. cit. Charles du Lis was born around 1559 and was a descendant in the fifth degree of one of the brothers of Joan of Arc enobled by Charles VII. He was a well-known magistrate and collected all manner of documents relative to his family's history, particularly in relation to his illustrious ancestor Joan of Arc. Cf. the interesting editorial piece published during the height of the First World War "Jeanne d'Arc's relics kept near Rheims", *New York Times*, Sunday August 27, 1916, p. E3 (Editorial Section).

²⁰ Luce, op. cit. pp. 32 – 33.

²¹ Bouteiller, Ernest de, Baux, G. de, *Nouvelles recherches sur la famille de Jeanne d'Arc, enquêtes inédites, généalogie*, Paris, Claudin, 1879, p. 21.

²² Luce, op. cit. pp. 34 – 35. Cf. *Nouvelles recherches*, loc.cit.

this connection that informed his brother Jean's decision to leave Vouthon for Sermaize.²³ One of Jean's sons, Nicolas,²⁴ entered the Abbey of Cheminon²⁵ with the blessing of the curate of Sermaize, his uncle, Henri de Vouthon. Henri de Vouthon appears to have had a great influence upon his sister Isabelle's ardent practice of religion, testified to by her pilgrimages to Rome and to Le Puy. It is not unreasonable to suggest that both mother and uncle must have had an influence upon the burgeoning spirituality of the juvenile Joan.

The Sermaize-Vouthons maintained close relations with the Arcs of Domremy. In 1476, another Henri de Vouthon, this one a son of Perrinet de Vouthon, made a deposition to the effect that, while young, he, his father and his siblings had frequently visited their cousins in Domremy, where they were welcomed with warmth and affection:

«... Dict en outre et afferme le dit depposant que de son jeune aage, il a esté avecque et en la compagnie du dit Perrinet ... en la ville du dit Dompremy sur Meuse en laquelle ilz furent receuz en l'hostel de feu un nommée Jacquot d'Ars, comme il luy semble, et d'Ysabelot sa femme, père et mère de la dicte Jehanne la Pucelle, qui pour lors estoit jeune fille, et leur firent bonne chère et les tenoit et repputoit, tinrent et repputèrent icieulx d'Arc et Ysabelot cousins et linagers bien prochains ...»²⁶

He also confirmed that these visits were reciprocated by the Arcs:

«... Ysabelot, mère de Jehanne la Pucelle, sœur d'un nommé messire Pierre du Lys, ... et de Jehan du Lys son frère, lesquelz du Lys frères et la dicte Jehanne leur sœur sont venuz plusieurs foyz au dit Sermaize, ... et faire en icelluy bonne chère».²⁷

Having touched upon the ecclesiastical connections of the Arc-Vouthons, what can we propose regarding the actual material situation of the Arc family?

²³ In the company of his children Poiresson, Perrinet, Nicolas and Mengotte.

²⁴ Nicolas de Vouthon was a first cousin of Joan of Arc, and once her mission was established he was granted leave from the abbey to join her household as chaplain. Luce, op. cit. p. 37. Further, *«Jehanne la Pucelle rescrivit ou du moins manda à reverend père en Dieu feu damp Thomas, pour lors abbé du dit Chemynon, qu'il octroyast et donnast congé et licence au dit damp Nicolas de Vouthon ..., d'estre chappellain de la dicte Jehanne la pucelle sa cousine pour aller avecques elle où bon lui sembleroit, ce que luy accorda le dit lors abbé. Alla icelluy damp Nicolas et l'accompagna et suivit en tous les faitz d'armes qu'elle fist pour lors».* *Nouvelles recherches*, pp. 9 – 10. Cited by Luce p. 35

²⁵ A reformed order of white Benedictines.

²⁶ *Nouvelles recherches*, p. 10. Cf. Luce, pp. 37-38.

²⁷ Ibid.

It would seem that far from being poor but honest peasants Joan's parents, while not seriously wealthy, did in fact own substantial holdings and assets, and occupied a respected position in Domremy society. Between the close of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, an Abbot Mandré, curate of Damvilliers sent a memorandum to his nephew a certain Villaume, father of a Johannic historian,²⁸ detailing the joint holdings of Jacques and Isabelle. Abbot Mandré's memorandum states that Jacques and Isabelle owned some twenty acres of land, twelve of which was open land, four acres of pasture and four acres of wooded forest, some of it *bois chesnu*. They owned their home, their furniture and had a cash reserve of two or three hundred francs for the express purpose of financing a departure to Neufchâteau should hostilities deem this necessary. Their estimated yearly income was between four and five thousand francs, allowing them to distribute alms to those in need and to extend hospitality to mendicant friars and other pilgrims who frequently passed by their door.²⁹ This estimate of their relatively comfortable situation is supported not by immediate contemporary documentation but rather from an entry transcribed from the Domremy parish register in 1490 which clearly states that Jacques [Jacquelot] d'Arc and his wife, Ysabelot, had endowed an annual pension to the benefit of the curate of Domremy (Jean Colin) who in return would celebrate obituary and birthday masses twice yearly in their names.³⁰

As for the social standing of Jacques d'Arc, two acts testify to his position and his connections. The first of these documents, established at Maxy-sur-Meuse on 7th October 1423, names Joan's father as doyen of Domremy, a position subordinate only to that of mayor or alderman-magistrate. It was the doyen's duty to convoke the mayor, aldermen and magistrates to their ordinary and extraordinary assemblies, to summon the bourgeois to electoral and plaintiff assemblies, to publish and circulate municipal decisions and ordinances, to keep the watch and to stand guard over prisoners. The doyen was generally exempt from the payment of deniers and, in some instances the doyen enjoyed the same territorial advantages as a *clerc juré*.³¹ In addition, the doyen was responsible for the collection of rents, charges and taxes, the regulation and oversight of the production of wine, bread and other commodities as well as the

²⁸ Villaume, Nicolas., *Histoire de Jeanne d'Arc, et réfutations des diverses erreurs publiées jusqu'à ce jour*, Paris, 1863.

²⁹ Luce, p. 39.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ An accredited clerk.

verification of accuracies of weights and measures.³² Jacques therefore held a position of responsibility that touched upon almost every aspect of town and rural life.

The second act is even more revealing. It is dated 31st March 1427 from the garrison-town of Vaucouleurs. Jacques is named as advocate (or most likely public prosecutor) on behalf of the people of Domremy in an important trial, presided over by the captain of Vaucouleurs, Robert de Baudricourt. This document underscores that at the very least, in his capacity as promoter of the interests of Domremy, from 1427 Jacques d'Arc had direct personal contact with Robert de Baudricourt.³³

Was Domremy, as is often supposed, a forgotten back-water, an island of *dauphinist* steadfastness on the isolated eastern reaches of the kingdom, or was it rather the crossroads of major pilgrim and mercantile routes fanning out in all directions?

According to the *Dictionnaire topographique du département de la Meuse*,³⁴ the major thoroughfare traversing Domremy followed a much frequented ancient Roman route between Langres and Verdun, passing through not only Domremy but also Neufchâteau, Vaucouleurs, Void, Commercy and Saint-Mihiel. Furthermore, from the time of the marriage of Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, to Marguerite de Male, Flanders and Artois were incorporated under Burgundian rule. Following the ancient Roman thoroughfare, Burgundian wines were moved north to Flanders and beyond. From Flanders, textiles originating from Ypres and Gand were sent south to Burgundy back along the same busy trade route. Many travellers would have made use of this well-established highway, including pilgrims of all estates, most notably Colette of Corbie, the great Franciscan reformer, as she journeyed between her Clarissan houses in Flanders and those she established in Burgundy. Luce makes the point that, given the location of the Arc property, much of this traffic would have passed by their very doorstep. He elaborates his point by asserting that at the time, given that most news was

³² Luce, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 42. It is worth noting that Jacques's name disappears from an act of the process in question (commenced by his delegation on 31st March 1428), dated 6th February 1429 at about the same time that Joan was in and around Vaucouleurs-Nancy. He was replaced by a Jean Leclerc. It is perhaps reasonable to suggest that given the circumstances of Joan's departure, Jacques might have believed it politic to exercise discretion and stay away from Vaucouleurs or rather that in his position as public prosecutor/advocate for Domremy, he might have been obliged to step aside. Cf. Boucher, Molandon, de, *Jacques d'Arc, père de la Pucelle*, Orléans, H. Herluison, 1885, pp. 25 - 28 & Luce, *op. cit.*, pp. 193 - 194.

³⁴ Léonard, Felix, *Dictionnaire topographique du département de la Meuse: comprenant le nom des lieux anciens et modernes*, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1872, p. x.

transmitted by word of mouth and the fact that the Arc residence was situated along one of the most frequented thoroughfares in the east of the kingdom, the Arcs would have been remarkably well-informed of happenings in every sphere of life far beyond the confines of Domremy.³⁵

Joan's family was neither excessively rich nor destitute, and this allowed them to stay in contact with both the prosperous and the needy. Through their various connections and relatively elevated social position the Arcs had contact with individuals of every estate and were well-informed as to the progress of the war and France's misery. Joan seems to have benefited from a relatively comfortable childhood, informed by piety in the Franciscan tradition, absorbed through the influence of her mother and her mother's connections. The IV Lateran Council³⁶ had issued the capital decree *Utriusque sexus*, which demanded that all the faithful, having attained the age of discretion, were obliged to participate in the sacrament of penitence at least once a year. Confession was a way in which to prolong the effects of this important duty. From the trial testimonies it seems clear that for Joan the acts of confession, penitence and Holy Communion were regular spiritual nourishments, not merely periodic obligations. This inclination for confession and frequent communion is very characteristic of Franciscan piety. During the Nullification trial it was revealed by Bertrand de Poulagny that every Sabbath, the day of the week given over to the Virgin, Joan would visit the tiny wooded Franciscan sanctuary of *Ste-Marie-de-Bermont* (in Greux, just to the north of Domremy) to revere Mary.³⁷ We have mentioned the visionary Saint Colette's passage through Domremy and its environs as she travelled from her northern Clares to her houses in the south. We will now examine the phenomena of Joan's earliest visions and what if any further Franciscan influences might have informed the genesis of Joan's great undertaking.

Joan witnessed the first of her apparitions, those of Saint-Michel, in the summer of 1425, at a time when Yolande and Richemont had just managed to regain their influence over Charles. The timing of Joan's first vision coincided with an impressive victory at Mont-St-Michel. The importance of this rare French victory must not be underestimated, as news of it was greeted with much the same level of rejoicing throughout loyalist France

³⁵ Luce, op. cit., pp. 47 – 48.

³⁶ Convened in November 1215.

³⁷ "Audioit enim dici quod ipsa Iohanna in sua iuveneli etate erat bona filia, bone conversacionis. Ibatque libenter ad ecclesiam et quasi quolibet die sabbati ibat ad heremum beate Marie de Bermont; et portabat candelas." Doncoeur & Lanhers, *Documents et Recherches Relatifs à Jeanne La Pucelle*, (v), p. 150.

as would be the lifting of the siege of Orleans by Joan in 1429. Had the English taken Mont-St-Michel it would not only have crowned their conquest of Normandy, it would have completely demoralized Charles's supporters. We have noted that Yolande was distinguished by strong Franciscan sympathies and spirituality.³⁸ Her personal Franciscan chaplain, frère Raphaël, greatly influenced the development of the Cult of St-Michel in the wake of the victory over the English beseigers at Mont-St-Michel. Furthermore, he would participate in the examining body at Chinon and Poitiers organized to investigate Joan's credentials in 1429.³⁹

Why did Saint-Michel, rather than Saint-Denis for example, choose to appear to Joan?⁴⁰ To answer this, we must first recall that Domremy's inhabitants were staunch adherents to the cause of Charles VII, whose personal patron and guardian saint was Saint-Michel. From the second half of the Hundred Years War, Saint-Michel had been adopted by the Valois as their personal patron and protector, as much a political symbol as a religious one. Saint-Michel was commander of the celestial militia and the French Crown was at war with the English, themselves partisans of the militant dragon-slayer, Saint George. From the end of the fourteenth century, pilgrimages to Mont-St-Michel had steadily grown in prestige and importance.⁴¹ Furthermore, since the English had taken possession of St-Denis, its royal abbey and the *oriflamme* in 1419, Charles had increasingly directed his prayers for salvation to his chosen celestial intermediary Saint-Michel, painting the image of the archangel on his standards. This is confirmed by his household accounts for 1419 and 1421:

«Sur les dits étendards, il y a un saint Michel tout armé qui tient une épée et fait manière de tuer un serpent qui est devant lui, et est le dit étendard semé du mot que porte monseigneur».

³⁸ Piponnier records that black, russet and grey were the most popular colours of dress at the court of Anjou. These are the preferred sombre tones of Franciscan dress. Piponnier, Françoise, *Costume et Vie Sociale, la cour d'Anjou, XIVe-XVe siècles*, Paris, La Hague, Mouton et Cie, 1970 pp. 212-213, cited by Vale, op. cit. p.94.

³⁹ Vauchez, André, « Influences Franciscaines et Réseaux Aristocratiques dans le val de Loire, Autour de la Bienheureuse Jeanne-Marie de Maillé (1331 1414) », in *Revue de l'Eglise de France*, n°70, (1984), p. 102.

⁴⁰ A question put to Joan by her Rouen judges.

⁴¹ Cf. Bédos-Rezak, Brigitte, « Idéologie royale, ambitions princières et rivalités politiques d'après le témoignage des sceaux (France, 1380-1461) » in *La France Anglaise au Moyen Age*, Paris, Editions du C.T.H.S, 1998, pp. 506-507.

«... d'un étendard sur tiercelin de trois couleurs à la devise de mon dit seigneur, c'est assavoir un saint Michel armé». ⁴²

A further motivation for Charles's increasingly ardent devotion to his archangelic champion can be dated to October 1422 during a sojourn in La Rochelle when Charles was miraculously spared from catastrophe when the storey where he was presiding collapsed into the ground floor of the building. The majority of the assembled were killed or cruelly maimed, but Charles was pulled from the rubble relatively unharmed. A miracle was proclaimed and Charles decreed that a mass be celebrated each 11th October at Mont-St-Michel in gratitude for his miraculous survival. The miracle of La Rochelle quickly gained acceptance and Charles became the idol of his loyal subjects. ⁴³ News of this would have reached Domremy by early 1423, (a place where Saint-Michel was already the object of passionate devotion since the earliest days of Christianity, when Michel replaced his predecessor the pagan deity Belenus). ⁴⁴ Taking the above into consideration, it is hardly surprising that Saint-Michel materialized to the adolescent Joan as her primary guide and mentor. But why did Saint-Michel appear to Joan in the summer of 1425 at a time of relative optimism in greater France? Perhaps an explanation lies in the musings of Quicherat:

«Tout me porte à croire, qu'elle y [Joan's first vision] fut préparée par quelque chose d'extraordinaire survenu dans le pays qu'elle habitait.» ⁴⁵

Luce details an event of local importance, ⁴⁶ where the entirety of livestock held by Domremy-Greux was misappropriated by the captain of an Anglo-Burgundian raiding party, only to be restored to the inhabitants of Domremy-Greux following the intervention of their sovereign lady, Jeanne de Joinville, who petitioned Vaudémont for its immediate return. ⁴⁷

⁴² Both household accounts cited by Luce, op. cit., pp. 92 –93.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 96. Furthermore, when Charles made his long-anticipated ceremonial entry into Paris in 1437, one of his equerries riding directly behind Dunois, held aloft a standard, bearing the image of St-Michel on a field of gold stars, Guenée, B, Lehoux, F «*Les Entrées Royales Françaises de 1328 à 1515*», Paris, Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968, pp. 75-79. Cited by Vale, op. cit., p. 199.

⁴⁴ Belenus was the Gaulish/Celtic version of Apollo, a deity of light, known as the “Shining One”. He was charged with the welfare of sheep and cattle and his spouse was Belisame, later associated with Minerva/Athena.

⁴⁵ Quicherat, Jules-Etienne, *Aperçus nouveaux sur l'histoire de Jeanne d'Arc*, J. Renouard et Cie, Paris 1950, p. 1.

⁴⁶ Luce, op. cit., pp. 75 – 84.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 145.

Joan's first vision seems to have occurred at the time of this great loss and restoration and was preceded by a marvel, according to Perceval de Boullainvilliers, counsellor and chamberlain to Charles VII. His recorded account of Joan's first vision is preserved in a letter from him to the Duke of Milan, Filippo-Maria Visconti,⁴⁸ dated 21st June 1429. Quicherat paraphrases de Boullainvilliers's report in these terms:

*«Jeanne jouait à courir dans la prairie avec plusieurs de ses compagnes; à chaque épreuve, elle prenait tant d'avance sur les autres, que celles-ci, frappées de surprise, la croyaient voir voler et le lui disaient. Enfin, ravie et comme hors «de sens», elle s'arrêta pour reprendre haleine, et dans ce moment entendit une voix qui lui disait d'aller au logis, parce que sa mère avait besoin d'elle; mais ce n'était qu'un subterfuge pour l'éloigner des autres enfants. Quand elle fut de retour à la maison et seule, la voix s'exprima à découvert en lui disant les desseins que Dieu avait formés sur elle.»*⁴⁹

Luce makes the point that we should not dismiss this account, as it echoes responses made by Joan at Poitiers three months before the writing of the letter to Milan and is supported by local anecdotes collected in Domremy by Franciscan friars, charged with the task of amassing details on Joan's early life.⁵⁰

Boullainvilliers's missive to Visconti, with its heavy Franciscan pastoral overtones and love of anecdote, includes the claim that:

*«Pendant tout le temps que la Pucelle fut préposée à la garde des troupeaux, jamais la plus petite brebiette ne manqua au bercail, et aussi longtemps qu'elle résida sous le toit paternel, aucun des siens n'eut rien à souffrir ni des embûches ni de la rapacité des brigands ni des violences des hommes d'armes ennemis.»*⁵¹

It is undeniable that even in a time of intense piety the adolescent Joan was exceptionally devoted to her Saviour and His Mother. Throughout her trials (and in particular the

⁴⁸ Filippo-Maria Visconti was the brother of Valentine Visconti, spouse of Louis d'Orléans assassinated in 1407. He was therefore the maternal uncle of Charles d'Orléans. Boullainvilliers himself was an important member of Charles's entourage as counsellor-chamberlain and Senechal of Berry. He was married to the daughter of Perceval de Gournai, governor of Asti for Charles d'Orléans.

⁴⁹ Quicherat, *Aperçus nouveaux*, pp. 48 – 49. Cf. *Procès*, t. V, pp. 116 – 117.

⁵⁰ Luce, *op. cit.*, pp. 146 – 147.

⁵¹ Quicherat *loc. cit. supra*; Joan however strenuously denied that she had been a shepherdess (except on rare occasions when it was her turn to herd stock to safety). «... elle a répondu ... depuis qu'elle a esté grande et qu'elle a eu entendement, ne les gardoit pas, mais aidait bien a les conduire es prez en ung chastel nommé l'Isle, pour doubte des gens des armes; mais de son jeune aage, si elle les gardoit ou non, n'en a pas memoire ...» Tisset, Pierre & Lanhers, Yvonne, *Procès de Condamnation de Jeanne d'Arc*, C. Klincksieck, Paris 1960, t. I, p. 65.

Nullification trial), depositions from her fellow villagers emphasize that Joan needed to be at prayer almost constantly, at any hour and in any situation she found herself. Her home was separated from the village church only by a small strip of garden adjoining the cemetery and she was often to be found prostrate at the altar or gazing heavenwards, her complexion ablaze with emotion and bathed in tears with the ardour of her devotions. Yet her intense spirituality was not passive and disconnected; it was active and inclusive. She sought out the impoverished and sick, spent her allowance on candles and flowers for her devotions, food for the hungry, and gave her best garments to those whose need was greater than hers. When pilgrims passed by the Arc threshold, she begged her parents for permission to give up her own bed to ease the tiredness of the travellers, while she herself slept at the hearth.⁵² Though she adored pastoral life, Joan usually assisted her mother in household tasks, specifically with spinning and weaving, at which she excelled. In all these situations she would make time to pray. Such observations regarding Joan's character and piety sit well with the idea of a Franciscan influence upon Joan's formative years. Given that the practice and outward expression of her spirituality seems to have been textbook Franciscan, do we have any evidence of contact between Joan and Franciscans? When would this most likely have occurred, taking into account that mendicant friars during the course of their travels passed through Domremy?

For about two and a half years, from the summer of 1425 until the close of 1427, Joan's voices maintained a relatively unhurried discourse with her, urging her to be a good, obedient and devout daughter, and to prepare herself in this way to serve her Creator and loyalist France.⁵³ This period of measured seraphic guidance coincided with a period of comparable calm beyond Domremy. In Joan's part of the world the continuing war of succession over the duchies of Bar and Lorraine had reached a period of tranquil stalemate. On 13th January 1425, Charles II, Duke of Lorraine, reaffirmed his intentions to name his daughter Isabelle and her husband René d'Anjou his universal heirs,

⁵² «*Et faciebat hospitare pauperes et volebat jacere in focario, et quod pauperes cubarent in suo lecto,*» Quicherat, Jules-Etienne, *Procès de condamnation et de réhabilitation de Jeanne d'Arc, dite la Pucelle, publiés pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale, suivis de tous les documents historiques qu'on a pu réunir, et accompagnés de notes et d'éclaircissements*, J. Renouard, Paris 1841-1849, t. II, pp. 421 & 428. Cf. Lopez, Elisabeth, *Culture et sainteté Colette de Corbie (1381-1447)*, Saint-Etienne, Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 1994, pp. 30-32 for the many parallels underscoring the childhoods and adolescences of Colette of Corbie and Joan of Arc. Cf. also Lopez, Elisabeth, *Petite vie de saint Colette*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1998, p. 14 for specific mention of Joan of Arc and the similarities in her early life and spiritual preferences to those of Colette.

⁵³ Tisset & Lanhers, loc. cit.

disabusing his nephew Antoine of Lorraine, Count of Vaudémont and Sire of Joinville,⁵⁴ of any remaining illusions he may have held concerning his expectations. The following April, Charles added insult to injury by inviting Vaudémont to renounce officially his claims over succession to Lorraine.⁵⁵ This was met with a lukewarm and ambiguous response on the part of Vaudémont, and as a result Duke Charles wrote to him in more pressing terms. Vaudémont continued to play for time, stating that he could make no definitive declaration until he could send his uncle's demands «à ses seigneurs et amis, pour avoir leur conseil».⁵⁶ The implied threat in this response would have been palpable as his *seigneurs* and *amis* were none other than Burgundy and Bedford. This was not a simple bluff, for on 24th September 1425, Bedford presented his «*féal cousin*» Vaudémont with confiscated territory in Picardy in recognition of his loyalty and for services rendered.⁵⁷

Charles le Hardi did not take this threat lightly and sent his nephew a third missive, at the same time giving his army the order to make ready for hostilities. René d'Anjou laid siege to Vaudémont's most important possession, Vézelize. It was during this period in particular that Robert de Baudricourt became a companion-in-arms and friend of René d'Anjou. Both men supported one another during their various campaigns. From this time onwards the pair entered into a perpetual exchange not only of their equipment and troops but also of officers attached to their respective garrisons. Baudricourt's men, including Aubert d'Ourches, Jean de Roncourt, Jean de Metz, Guillaume de Sampigny and Jean de Nancey, entered into the service of René and also that of his uncle, Louis, Cardinal-Duke of Bar. René and Baudricourt considered any attack on one as a personal attack upon the other and reacted accordingly.⁵⁸ Here we see another connection developing between the genesis of Joan's mission and Yolande. We have already noted the link between Jacques d'Arc and Baudricourt and here is yet another, perhaps still more important, between Yolande's second son René and Baudricourt, captain of Vaucouleurs, the man who would eventually dispatch Joan to Chinon and into Yolande's welcoming embrace.

⁵⁴ And by his marriage to Marie d'Harcourt in 1416, Count of Aumale and Baron of Elbeuf.

⁵⁵ Luce, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁵⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

By the middle of 1427, Charles VII had lost almost all of his territory north of the Loire. In the east, he could only claim the loyalty of Tournay and a number of little centres, the main ones being Vaucouleurs, Passavant, la Neuville-sur-Meuse, Beaumont en Argonne and Mouzon. On 22nd August 1427 Bedford named Antoine de Vergy⁵⁹ captain of Champagne and Brie, as well as of the diocese of Langres (which included Domremy-Greux). Vergy's specific order was to force Vaucouleurs, Passavant, Beaumont and Mouzon to English obedience without delay. The following January, more troops were organized and Jean de Luxembourg was charged with their command. By October 1428, when one of his brigade leaders, Eustache de Warnécourt, found himself besieged by the combined forces of René d'Anjou and Cardinal Louis of Bar, he was obliged to pay them 5,000 gold crowns for his freedom.⁶⁰

Antoine de Vergy prepared to turn his full attention upon Vaucouleurs. The Vergy were personal adversaries of Baudricourt, who had lost Blaise to them in 1424 when Bedford gave over the confiscated territory to Jean de Vergy, a nephew of Antoine. Almost the entirety of the second half of 1427 was taken up with continual incursions between the Vergy and Baudricourt. Charles VII's loyal villages and towns on the right bank of the Meuse suffered so terribly during these skirmishes that he sent a letter of complaint to Burgundy, citing that the operations of the Vergy had breached their mutual treaty, one prorogued only the previous November. Burgundy refused to intervene.⁶¹ Vergy's raids were only the prelude to a concerted campaign. Dark clouds started to gather on Joan's horizon and on the one far beyond Domremy-Greux.

As the situation worsened at home and in Orleans, Joan's voices started to become ever more insistent and strident. Their instructions developed a precision hitherto not experienced by the young visionary. They instructed her specifically to seek out Robert de Baudricourt, René d'Anjou's comrade-in-arms, and demand that Baudricourt organize an armed escort to accompany her to Charles in order to raise an army in his defence and place him firmly on the throne of France. The persistence of her voices, by this stage appearing at her side two or three times per week, coupled with Vergy's determination to take Vaucouleurs and with it surrounding islands of loyalist partisans

⁵⁹ Antoine de Vergy (1375-1439), Lord of Champlitte, Count of Dammartin. He was a Marshal of France under Bedford and Governor of Burgundy and later of Champagne. It was Vergy who caused Joan's family to flee Domremy and seek refuge in Neufchâteau in the summer of 1428.

⁶⁰ Luce, *op. cit.*, pp. 155 - 165.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

such as Domremy-Greux, forced Joan to resort to covert means by which to put her plans into action. She sought the help of an elder cousin by marriage, Durand Lassois, who lived in Burey-le-Petit, a tiny village close to the garrison of Vaucouleurs.

Lassois was married to Joan's cousin Jeanne de Vauseul, daughter of Jean de Vauseul and Aveline de Vouthon (Isabelle's sister). At that time, Jeanne de Vauseul was pregnant and Joan begged her parents' permission to leave Domremy to pay her a visit. This was perhaps a ruse to place herself closer to Baudricourt, for towards the end of her two-week stay she approached Lassois and told him of her intentions, begging him to take her to Vaucouleurs. In his deposition at the 1456 Nullification trial, Lassois stated that he had hesitated to accede to her exhortations but she refused to be denied, arguing that «*N'est-il pas dit, que la France, qui a été perdue par une femme, devra son salut à une vierge [etc.]*». Swayed by her extortions, Lassois took her to Vaucouleurs towards 13th May 1428, less than a year after Jacques d'Arc had advocated Domremy's interests personally to Baudricourt.⁶²

Testimony of the first encounter between Baudricourt and Joan comes to us from eye-witness Bertrand de Poulangy's account given during the Rehabilitation, by which time he had been elevated to the post of royal equerry.⁶³ Testimonies agree that a bemused Baudricourt thought Joan deluded, suggesting that Lassois take her home to her father (a man known to Baudricourt personally) with instructions to chastize her for good measure. Poulangy is worth remembering as he was a close companion of Baudricourt and, like the captain of Vaucouleurs, a comrade-in-arms of René d'Anjou.⁶⁴ Furthermore, he had close ties to Gobert Thiébauly, grand equerry of the king's stables, who in turn was a close confidant of the king's confessor Gérard Machet.⁶⁵ His testimony given in 1456 regarding Joan and connections to her family is intriguing, for he stated that:

⁶² Ibid., p. 168.

⁶³ Quicherat, *Procès*, t. II, pp. 454, 456 and 457.

⁶⁴ Bouteiller, E. de, et Braux, G. de, *Nouvelle recherches*, p. XXVII.

⁶⁵ Gérard Machet was born in Blois in about 1380; he was a student of Chancellor Jean Gerson, who appointed him his vice-chancellor at the University of Paris. During Gerson's prolonged absence at the Council of Constance, Machet acted as chancellor. It was in his capacity as acting chancellor that he welcomed Emperor Sigismund to Paris along with Louis II and Yolande d'Aragon in Easter week 1416. See above Chapter 5, pp 162-165. Machet was a close ally of Yolande's. He died on July 17th 1448 in Tours and is buried in the basilica of Saint-Martin de Tours. Cf. Féret, Pierre, *La faculté de théologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres*, (4 vols.), Paris A. Picard et fils, 1894-1897, vol. 4, pp. 297-303.

«J'ignore le nom de sa mère, mais j'ai été souvent [pluries] dans leur maison.»⁶⁶

Pernoud would have us believe that, naturally [*il est bien normal*], these visits could have only occurred «...après son [Poulangy's] *étonnante chevauchée avec Jeanne, revenue dans ses pays*, [when] *il soit allé* «plusieurs fois» *rendre visite à ses parents*».⁶⁷ If that were the case, why did he not know Isabelle's name? Given that Joan died on 30th May 1431 and that Jacques himself died sometime within that year, it would be hard to believe that it was merely after Joan's mission that Bertrand had been able to visit the Arc home «*pluries*». It certainly could not have been to pay his respects to Jacques's widow, a woman whose name he did not know. The only other possibility therefore is that he had pre-existing connections with Jacques, and therefore probably knew of Joan before her arrival at Vaucouleurs. This is further supported by details he gave regarding Joan's early religious practice, stating that when young, she was "*bona filia, bone conversacionis*".⁶⁸ It is worth remembering that Poulangy's master Baudricourt was a companion-in-arms of René d'Anjou, both prior to and following Joan's epoch.⁶⁹

Here again we note connections and networks involving the Arcs, Baudricourt, René d'Anjou, Charles's court officials, his confessor and now Poulangy. At the time of Joan's first appearance, Baudricourt could allow himself a little levity in dismissing her so summarily:⁷⁰ Vaucouleurs, was for the moment, safe from Jean de Luxembourg, who had turned his full attention upon Beaumont-en-Argonne. Money was also short on the Anglo-Burgundian side, so they could ill afford to spread themselves too thinly. Several days before Joan's interview Baudricourt had left troops, including the equerry Jean de Roncourt, in the service of René d'Anjou.⁷¹

Sent home from Vaucouleurs, Joan's subterfuge was revealed to her parents. Jacques seems to have reacted swiftly, keeping Joan near home and under close watch; he brokered a betrothal between Joan and a young man from Toul, further revealing to

⁶⁶ Pernoud, Régine, *Jeanne d'Arc par elle-même et par ses témoins*, Editions de Seuil, Manchecourt, 1996, pp. 45 - 47.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ See above, p. 252 and particularly p. 252, n. 37 regarding Joan's visits to the Hermitage of Our Lady of Bermont.

⁶⁹ See below, p. 266, n. 94.

⁷⁰ «... *Lesquelles choses Messire Robert réputa à une moquerie et dérision, s'imaginant que c'estoit un songe ou fantaisie; et luy sembla qu'elle seroit bonne pour ses gens, à eux esbattre en pesché; et y eut aucuns qui avoient volonté d'y essayer; mais aussi tost qu'ils la voyoient, ils estoient refroidis et ne leur en prenoit volonté*». Vallet de Viriville, *Chronique de la Pucelle*, p. 272.

⁷¹ Luce, op. cit., pp. 172 - 173.

Isabelle that he had been plagued with nightmares of Joan leaving them to follow the army. This is born out by Joan's testimony at Rouen:

«Interroguee qui la meut de faire citer ung homme a Tou [1] en cause de mariage: Respond: Je ne le feis pas citer, mais ce [fust] il qui me fist citer; et la jura devant un juge dire verité; et enfin qu'elle ne luy avoit fait de promesse ...

Interroguee des songes de son pere:

Respond que, quant elle estoit encore avec ses pere et mere, luy fut dit plusieurs foys par sa mere que son pere disoit qu'il avoit songé que avec les gens d'armes s'en iroit la dicte Jehanne sa fille ...

Item dit qu'elle a ouy dire a sa mere que son pere disoit a ses freres: Se je cuidoye que la choses advensist que j'ay songié d'elle, je vouldroye que la noyessiés; et se vous ne le faisiés, je la noieroye moi mesmes ...».⁷²

We have mentioned above that the Arcs had taken the precaution of putting aside a sum of money to be used in the event of a precipitous flight to Neufchâteau should hostilities increase around Domremy.⁷³ It is clear that at the time of their flight to Neufchâteau,⁷⁴ Joan was becoming increasingly excited by the prospect of travelling to France to legitimize her «*gentil Dauphin*» before the year was out.⁷⁵ During Lorraine inquiries made at the Rehabilitation, the testimony of Michael Le Buin, agricultural labourer, records Joan's burgeoning exhilaration and inability to maintain her silence regarding her mission:

“‘Item inquiratur, etc.’ requisitus, dixit se nichil scire, excepto quod semel ipsa Johanna dixit sibi testi, in vigilia beati Johannis Baptiste, quod erat una puella inter [Couxeyum] et Vallis Colorem⁷⁶ que, antequam esset annus, ipsa faceret consecrare regem Francie; dixitque quod in anno tunc adveniente, rex fut consecratus Remis. Nec aluid scit.⁷⁷

⁷² Tisset, Pierre, Lahners, Yvonne, *Procès de Condamnation de Jeanne d'Arc*, C. Klincksiek, Paris 1960, t. I, pp. 123 - 127.

⁷³ See above, p. 250.

⁷⁴ Mid- to late July 1428 for a period of about 15 days.

⁷⁵ At the time New Year fell on Easter Sunday.

⁷⁶ Domremy.

⁷⁷ Duparc, Pierre, *Procès en nullité de la condamnation de Jeanne d'Arc*, C. Klincksiek, Paris 1977, t. I, p. 293.

Her plans were put on hold while the people of Domremy sought refuge in Neufchâteau during the second half of July 1428, precipitated by Antoine de Vergy's second expedition against Vaucouleurs.

"Item, dicta Johanna, circa vicesimum annum ætatis ejus ... transiit ad villam de Novocastro in Lotharingia et ibidem seruiuit per aliqua tempora cuidam mulieri hospitæ nuncupatæ La Rouse..."

"... Item, dicta Johanna existens in dicto seruitio, traxit in causam coram Officiali Tullensi, causa matrimonii, quemdam juvenem in prosecutione causæ, pluries eundo ad dictum civitatem Tullensem ...".⁷⁸

During her fortnight stay in Neufchâteau, while not occupied with assisting her hostess, the inn-keeper *La Rouse*, or defending charges of breach of promise in Toul, Joan underwent a further spiritual awakening, making further contact with Franciscans only too ready to encourage her aspirations. This of course was not the first time she had spent time with the Friars Minor. Their influence, particularly in the Meuse valley between Vaucouleurs and Neufchâteau, was considerable and within an eleven kilometre radius of Domremy there were at least two Franciscan houses, St-Nicolas-de-Brixey to the north and, to the south, a house first established by the Hermits of Saint-Augustine. More important is the fact that the curate of her home parish, Jean Colin was also canon of the Collegiate Church of Saint-Nicolas-de-Bury, a place Joan visited once a month to take Holy Communion with the orphans who lived there. Joan also regularly visited the Franciscan Hermitage of Notre-Dame-de-Bermont.⁷⁹ More cogently, while awaiting a favourable outcome in Vaucouleurs, Joan confessed to Jean Colin (her parish curate) at the Collegiate Church of Saint-Nicolas-de-Bury on at least two or three occasions:

"Discretius vir dominus Iohannes Colini, curatus ecclesie parrochialis de Dompno Remigio, et canonicus ecclesie collegiate Sancti Nicolay de Brixeyo ... Dixit per suum iuramentum, quod

⁷⁸ Quicherat, *Procès*, t. I, pp. 214-215.

⁷⁹ *"Et erat ipsa Iohanneta in fide catholica et bonis moribus imbuta. Erat eciam simplex, bona, verecunda, devota ac Deum timens, ut sibi videbatur. Ibat enim ad ecclesiam libenter, et sepe. Et aliquociens ibat ad ecclesiam beate Marie de Bermont ..."* Doncoeur, P., Lanhers, S.J. & Y, *Documents et Recherches Relatifs à Jeanne La Pucelle, (tome v) La Réhabilitation de Jeanne La Pucelle, La Rédaction Episcopale du Procès de 1455 – 1456*, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris 1961, p. 132. In 1263, the hermitage of Notre-Dame-de-Bermont was donated to the *hôpital de Gerbonvaux* itself established by Geoffroy de Bourlémont. *Ibid.*, p. 312. See above, p. 252.

dicta Iohanna, existens in Valliscolore, bina aut trina vice venit ad testum loquentem ad confessionem. ...".⁸⁰

To add to her already potent spiritual practice, it would appear from a variety of sources that during their enforced flight, on at least three occasions, Joan made her confession to the Cordeliers, the sole order to possess a monastery in Neufchâteau. It is worth noting that the only other house in Neufchâteau was a Clarissan convent founded in 1280.

The Neufchâteau Cordeliers enjoyed patronage from the rich and powerful of the region. Their monastery was founded in the middle years of the thirteenth century by Mathieu II, Duke of Lorraine. Marguerite de Joinville, mother of Antoine de Vaudémont, (René d'Anjou's great rival), Charles II, Duke of Lorraine (René's father-in-law and Antoine's uncle) and Pierre V de Bourlémont, Lord of Domremy and Greux, had all endowed the monastery, one which had long operated as a hub for Neufchâteau, where assemblies of the bourgeois were held in its chapter house.⁸¹ The friars of Neufchâteau were fervent supporters of Charles VII, and like the Cordeliers of Anjou and Tours, they were remarkably pro-active in disseminating propaganda to advance his cause.⁸²

Luce outlines one of their most effective practices, uncovered during his research into a register held in the *Chambre des Comptes de Bar*. He reports that, according to the register, the Cordeliers of Neufchâteau made a habit of living in perpetual contact with the population of the town, never passing by an opportunity (whether sacred or profane) to be on the scene when things were happening in and around the town. The mentions in the register specifically deal with the sale of pious keep-sakes: crosses, images of Saint Francis, and monograms of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.⁸³ At the time of France's great misery, these Franciscans seem to have been conscious of an ideal opportunity to reinforce a particularly Franciscan devotion to Jesus and Mary. For Joan, contact with these Cordeliers probably cemented her belief in the importance of her soon-to-be-realized religious and patriotic undertaking. The life she had led to date, her spiritual and active daily observance of her faith, mirrored all the most firmly held ideals and spirituality of Franciscanism. The Neufchâteau Cordeliers doubtless boosted both Joan's faith and her morale and, with their contacts all over France (including at Yolande's

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 135.

⁸¹ Luce, op. cit., pp. 185 - 186.

⁸² Luce, Siméon, « Jeanne d'Arc et les ordres mendiants [sic] », in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, t. XLV, May, 1881, pp. 65-103, n.b. pp 67-71 regarding Yolande d'Aragon.

⁸³ Luce, *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy...*, pp. 186 - 187.

court),⁸⁴ and particularly at the court of Bar-Lorraine, Franciscans would most certainly have smoothed a path for her and established the foundation propanganda for the spread of her legend.

Misery multiplied in Domremy-Greux upon the Arcs' return from Neufchâteau. The need for Joan to act must have become irresistible, her voices ever more insistent, the prospect of delivering France an intoxicating ideal ripe for commission. Yet Joan now seemed to be under instructions not to undertake her mission until a particularly auspicious moment on the religious calendar had arrived. Had the Neufchâteau Franciscans counselled her to wait? We do not know for certain. It does however seem that at this point in her progress, her approach was becoming more organized and unified. She did not attempt to visit Vaucouleurs until quite late in 1428 (o.s.), (a propitious moment, as Orleans was under siege and the English were threatening Anjou-Maine as never before), a time when Vaucouleurs, though neutralized by the Vaudémont, was still in Baudricourt's hands.

Lent was fast approaching and, without seeking leave from her parents, Joan left Domremy,⁸⁵ ostensibly to assist her cousins Jeanne and Durand Lassois with the birth of their child. Her excitement, however, must have been impossible to contain, for as she left the confines of her home town it would seem that she could not restrain herself from bidding adieu to those whom she passed along her route, and apparently they all understood that she was off to Vaucouleurs. The record states:

"Ad Deum! Ego vado ad Valliscolorem." She reportedly declared to Gérard Guillemette.⁸⁶

"Ad Deum!" she called to Mengette, who added during her Nullification testimony: *"Et tunc recessit; et eam testem commendavit Deo. Et ivit ad Valliscolorem. Nec aluid scit."*⁸⁷

Passing through Greux she took leave of Jean Waterin, exclaiming: *"Ad Deum!"* He added to his testimony: *"Audiuit enim pluries sibi dici quod relevaret Franciam et sanguinem regalem. Nec aluid scit."*⁸⁸

⁸⁴ See below, pp. 272-273 & cf. Luce, "Jeanne d'Arc et les ordres mendiants [sic]", pp. 69-70.

⁸⁵ Just as Colette of Corbie had acted in circumventing the wishes of her parents: the mission was the most important thing for both young women, even if it meant defying the directives of parents. Cf. Lopez, *Culture et sainteté...*loc. cit.

⁸⁶ *Documents et Recherches ...*, p. 126.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Joan reappeared in Vaucouleurs in early January at a time when Baudricourt feared an offensive from his Anglo-Burgundian rivals and was more than ever in need of the continued support of René d'Anjou, who was finding himself increasingly cornered, largely as a result of his multiple allegiances. He was Duke of Bar, heir to the duchy of Lorraine and Yolande's second son, therefore carrying loyalty to his sovereign Charles VII (his brother-in-law and childhood companion). Bar and Lorraine had sworn allegiance to Burgundy (in spite of their struggles against the Vaudémont) and by extension to Henry VI. For some five years, the English had been pressing René to swear fealty to them for his territories in Bar. He had managed to avoid confronting this issue until late 1428 when the calls from Henry VI became more strident.⁸⁹ The traffic between René and Baudricourt (who needed his armed support), René and his father-in-law Charles of Lorraine, René and his uncle Louis of Bar, must have been unrelenting as they all sought to draw the best outcome from the situation. If we add to this the near certainty that René would have stayed in contact with his mother Yolande, it would be disingenuous to suggest that any of these players would have been unaware of Joan's reappearance in Vaucouleurs and of her intention to set out for Chinon as soon as possible.

Joan's second visit to Vaucouleurs therefore coincided with Baudricourt's fears that he could lose his ally René due to the pressure being applied to his companion-in-arms by the regent Bedford. Baudricourt was no doubt surprised by her obstinacy and curious as to her reappearance, having so unequivocally dismissed her previously. Notwithstanding this, he seems to have been too preoccupied with his own pressing concerns to give her a more positive hearing, this despite the fact that her "legend" had already established itself in the area.⁹⁰ Joan was again rebuffed and she decamped from the Lassois ménage in Burey-le-Petit to Vaucouleurs to await developments and to maintain a constant presence in Baudricourt's garrison, establishing herself in the home of Henri and Catherine Le Royer, themselves connections of Lassois.

Given his increasingly troubled circumstances, Baudricourt seems to have had his interest sufficiently stimulated by Joan's persistence to go to the trouble of visiting her at the Le Royer residence, accompanied by a priest. It appears that the purpose of this visit

⁸⁹ Luce, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

⁹⁰ We have the Nullification testimonies of Jean de Metz and Poulangy to verify the fact that at the time of her reappearance in Vaucouleurs she was becoming increasingly well known. Cf. Doncoeur and Lanhers, *Documents et Recherches Relatifs*, pp. 138 - 140 & pp. 150 - 152.

was to verify her spiritual credentials and if necessary exorcise any demons which might have taken root in the young visionary. Catherine Le Royer during the Nullification trial:

*“Dixit quod tunc ipsa testis vidit intrare Robertum de Baudricuria, tunc cappitaneum dicte ville de Valliscolore, et dictum dominum Iohannem Furnerii, in domo sua. Et audivit dici eidem Iohanne quod ipse presbiter apportaverat stolam, et coram dicto cappitano eam adiuraverat dicendo sic, quod, si esset mala res, quod recederet ab eis, et si bona, veniret iuxta ipsos. Que Iohanna dicebat quod se traxit iuxta ipsum sacerdotem et erga sua genua. Dicebat eciam ipsa Iohanna quod presbiter non bene fecerat, quia suam audierat confessionem. Et dum ipsa Iohanna vidit quod dictus Robertus nolebat eam ducere, dixit ipsa testis quod audivit eidem Iohanne dici quod oportebat quod iret ad dictum locum, ubi erat Dalphinus, dicendo: ‘Nonne audistis quod prophetizatum fuit quod Francia per mulierum deperderetur; et per unam virginem de marchiis Lothoringie restauraretur’. Et tunc ipsa testis hec audisse recordata est, et stupefacta fuit.”*⁹¹

We have only Catherine’s word for the degree of stupefaction displayed by those present upon hearing Joan’s pronouncement. Despite Joan’s increasing anxiety, in Le Royer’s testimony the interview terminated with an assurance of Joan’s goodness and her palpable impatience to move forward *“Dixit eciam ipsa testis quod ipsa Iohanneta bene disiderabat, et erat tempus sibi grave ac si mulier pregnans, eo quod non ducebatur ad Dalphinium”*⁹² with Baudricourt keeping his counsel and still refusing to commit himself.

Whatever Baudricourt might have taken away from this encounter, he was probably prudent enough to seek advice from his ally and friend René d’Anjou. Tisset states in regard to Baudricourt: *«Il était constamment en rapport avec Louis, cardinal de Bar, puis avec René d’Anjou, duc de Bar.»*⁹³ Baudricourt’s close ties with Louis de Bar (and by extension René) were not merely a result of a strategic alliance; his second wife Alarde de Chambley was the daughter of the Marshal of Bar.⁹⁴ In spite of this acknowledgement, Tisset does not seek to elaborate upon a probable connection between Joan-Baudricourt-René-Yolande. While no missive is extant to support this probable connection, what happened next is suggestive, for Joan was summoned to Nancy to appear before Charles II, Duke of Lorraine, Anglo-Burgundian ally and René’s father-in-law.

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 144 - 145.

⁹² Loc. cit.

⁹³ Tisset, P., *Procès de Condamnation*, t. II, p. 48, n. 2.

⁹⁴ Robert de Baudricourt is named as one of René’s executors, Archives de Bouches-du-Rhône, B205, f°90. Cf. Bataille, Henri, “Qui était Baudricourt?”, in *Revue lorraine populaire*, vol. 9, n°51, 1983, pp. 184-188.

During her trial testimony Joan confirmed that: «... le duc de Lorraine manda qu'on la lui conduisît: et elle y alla et lui dit qu'elle voulait aller en France.»⁹⁵ Why would he have summoned her? The reason given is that he was in poor health and sought a cure. Why Joan? She had not produced a miracle nor yet a small victory, her mission had not been sanctioned, but the Duke of Lorraine summoned her to suggest a “cure” to him. Someone close to the Duke must have petitioned him to receive the young untested visionary and in all probability that someone would have been René d'Anjou, informed of Joan's appearance by his friend and ally Baudricourt. At the time of her convocation to Nancy, Joan was preparing for a pilgrimage in anticipation of a departure for France to a site dedicated to Saint Nicholas, patron of Lorraine, travellers and pilgrims.

While Quicherat holds for Saint-Nicolas-de-Brixey, Tisset states that most others have held for St-Nicolas-de-Port, and he justifies this by stating that: «On admet le plus souvent que Jeanne serait allée à Saint-Nicolas-de-Port, siège d'un pèlerinage très couru du saint évêque de Myre,⁹⁶ vénéré notamment comme patron des voyageurs ... la visite au duc de Lorraine certainement était faite d'accord avec le capitaine [Baudricourt] Jeanne aurait pu penser cependant profiter du voyage à Nancy pour gagner coûte que coûte Chinon, bien qu'elle s'éloignât, en se dirigeant vers Nancy, de la France. Le fait qu'il est dit que Jeanne s'arrêta à Saint-Nicolas avant de se rendre à Nancy est ... tout à fait normal, car alors on allait directement de Toul à St-Nicolas ... sans passer par Nancy. Nouillonpont [Jean de Metz] déclare que, lorsque l'héroïne se rendit à Nancy, il l'accompagna jusqu'à Toul.»⁹⁷ Lassois accompanied her for the rest of the journey to Nancy.

From the above we begin to understand that regardless of Baudricourt's public position in relation to her mission, he and others were intrigued enough to support her claims, with Joan herself in active preparation for a departure. The currency of her myth was growing; she had spent time with the Neufchâteau Franciscans, reappearing at Vaucouleurs, her insistence to be heard all the more urgent. Baudricourt had visited her at the Le Royers' with the intention of verifying her spiritual credibility, satisfied himself and departed without committing himself either way. If Joan needed to venerate Saint -

⁹⁵ Tisset, op. cit., pp.50-51.

⁹⁶ The site was very attractive to pilgrims including Saint Louis and his queen, a biographer recording that St. Louis and Marguerite de Provence made a pilgrimage to St-Nicolas-de-Port in 1254 after having being saved from a storm at sea when someone invoked the name of Saint Nicholas of Lorraine, promising the saint a silver ship in return for their salvation. Badel, Emile, *Le Voeu de Saint Louis à L'Eglise de Saint-Nicolas-de-Port. La nef d'argent de 1254, le vaisseau du cardinal de Lorraine, les armoiries de la cité de Lorraine (1546)*, Nancy, Imprimerie de Rigot, 1918.

⁹⁷ Tisset, *Procès de Condamnation ...*, t. II, pp. 50 – 53 and his accompanying notes.

Nicolas she could have paid a visit to Saint-Nicolas-de-Brixey, where she had already established contact via Jean de Colin, her parish curate. Charles II was an ally of Burgundy and by extension an ally of Bedford. Why would Duke Charles have petitioned Joan for a cure for his physical ills? Why indeed Joan? She herself had never made claims to any thaumaturgical gift. Why not instead Colette of Corbie, a woman of impeccable spiritual credentials, one with close ties to Burgundy,⁹⁸ Berry, Savoy and the Bourbons? The request for a cure could well have been a ruse to allow the Anglo-Burgundian to summon Joan to Nancy. The answer she gave Charles of Lorraine was astonishing. According to the testimony of Marguerite de Touroulde, Joan related that she had suggested to the Duke that he repudiate his mistress Allison du May in favour of his «bonne femme», Marguerite of Bavaria:⁹⁹

*“Et audioit dici ab eadem Iohanna quod dux Lothoringie, qui habebat quamdam infirmitatem, voluit eam videre. Et cum eodem locuta fuerat ipsa Iohanna, ei eidem dixerat quod se male regebat, et quod numquam sanaretur nisi se emendaret, eundemque exortaverat ut ipse reciperet suam bonam coniugem.”*¹⁰⁰

Joan might merely have been offering the Duke prudent advice on how to live in accordance with the scriptures, but if so, given the differences in their respective estates, not to mention her young age, she acted with extraordinary courage and audacity. On the other hand, she could have been airing the concerns of René d’Anjou and Isabelle of Lorraine, given the existence of Allison du May’s bastard sons and what this might in the future mean for the Lorraine succession.¹⁰¹

It is certain that René attended the interview;¹⁰² he had left his garrison position at Saint-Mihiel at the end of January 1429 to join Charles II in Nancy. On the eve of his departure for Nancy, 29th January 1429, he sent a letter to Baudricourt.¹⁰³ Joan admitted that during the interview with Charles II she did not emphasize her mission but concluded by requesting that he grant leave to his “son” René to accompany her to Chinon and in return she would pray for his good health:

⁹⁸ See below, p. 274, note 133.

⁹⁹ Marguerite of Wittelsbach (1376-1434), daughter of Rupert III of Germany.

¹⁰⁰ «*Documents et recherches relatifs ...*» p. 208.

¹⁰¹ See Appendix 1, n. 41.

¹⁰² Louis, Cardinal of Bar also attended the audience. Cf. Luce, *ibid.*, pp. 209 – 219.

¹⁰³ Luce, *ibid.*, pp. 208 – 210.

“... et pauca de suo voiagio eidem duci declaravit. Dixit tamen ipsi duci quod ipse traderet ei filium suum et gentes pro ducendo eam ad Franciam et ipsa deprecaretur Deum pro sua sanitate.”¹⁰⁴

Joan might have believed that in René she had a sure ally¹⁰⁵ notwithstanding his complex allegiances, but Charles of Lorraine did not grant Joan’s request, sending her on her way with a safe-conduct, the equivalent of a handful of coins to defray the cost of her visit, and in some testimonies, a black horse: ¹⁰⁶ “*Et iverat eadem Iohanna sub salvo conductu ad prefatum ducem; a quo reversa est ad oppidum de Vallecouris antedictum.*”¹⁰⁷

Given that the king’s brother-in-law René, Louis Cardinal-Duke of Bar and the powerful Duke of Lorraine had all consented to give Joan an audience, Baudricourt probably was obliged to take Joan’s claims seriously. Lent had begun and Joan’s impatience to leave could not be suppressed. Unable to contain herself, on 12th February, the day of the massive defeat near Orleans which became known as «*la Journée des Harengs*»,¹⁰⁸ Joan sought out Baudricourt, emphasizing that Orleans’s only hope rested with her intervention.¹⁰⁹ Baudricourt had already dispatched a missive to Chinon detailing Joan’s appearance and the tenor of her claims. That Baudricourt’s communication had not gone unanswered is testified to by the presence of the royal messenger Colet de Vienne (accompanied by Richard his archer) in her small armed escort to Chinon.

A deposition unearthed by Quicherat, one recorded by an ocular witness to Joan’s appearance in Chinon, the mayor of La Rochelle, Hugues Guibert, describes the habit or uniform that had been expressly assembled for her:

¹⁰⁴ Tisset, *Procès de Condamnation ...*, t. I, p. 49.

¹⁰⁵ Or might have been instructed to petition Charles II to grant leave for René to accompany her to Charles and Yolande.

¹⁰⁶ Deposition of Jean Morel of Greux: “... et audioit dici quod dominus Karolus, tunc dux Lotharingie, voluit eam videre, et tradidit sibi unum equum, ut dicebatur, pili nigri.” Duparc, *Procès en Nullité de la Condamnation de Jeanne d’Arc*, t. I, p. 255.

¹⁰⁷ Tisset, loc. cit.

¹⁰⁸ 12th February 1429. This is according to Basin (Bishop of Lisieux and historian, 1412-1491. His principal work [*Historiarum de rebus gestis temporibus Caroli VII et Ludovici XI Francorum regum*] is of considerable value, in spite of being coloured by his rancour for Louis XI), the French commanders were the Duke of Bourbon (in fact his son Charles de Bourbon, Count of Clermont, the Duke himself [Jean I] being at the time a prisoner in England) and Charles d’Anjou (Yolande’s youngest son aged about fifteen at the time). Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, (ed. Samaran, Charles), Paris, Société d’Edition, «Les Belles Lettres», 1964, t. I, p. 125. The defeat almost completely deflated French morale. Clermont had engineered an almost fool-proof strategy to ambush the English supply convoy, but John Stewart Darnley, Scots Constable in France, disregarded Clermont’s orders, and was butchered along with most of his Scots troops. Clermont tried in vain to rescue the situation from the Scots débâcle but was unable to do so.

¹⁰⁹ Luce, op. cit. p. 222.

«Item, le xxiiij^o jour dudit mois de fevrier, vint devers le Roy nostre seigr., qui estoit à Chinon, uune Pucelle de l'aage de xvij à xij ans, née de Vaucouleur en la duché de Lorraine, laquelle avoit nom de Jehanne et estoit en habit d'homme: c'est assavoir qu'elle avoit pourpoint noir, chausses estachées, robe courte et de gros gris noir, cheveux ronds et noirs, et un chapeau noir sur la teste ...». ¹¹⁰

The colours selected for Joan's travelling kit reflect an Angevin preference for grey and black¹¹¹ and the horse given to Joan by the Duke of Lorraine was quickly replaced by another more worthy mount purchased for her by Lassois for twelve francs (later reimbursed by Baudricourt). Joan's principle benefactors were Jean de Metz, Bertrand de Poulagny, Jacques Alain, Henri Le Royer and Lassois.¹¹²

Baudricourt sent Joan on her way on 23rd February 1429¹¹³ with the often reported parting words: "*Vade ... vade, et quod inde poterit venire, veniat.*"¹¹⁴ To reach Chinon the travellers had to traverse Anglo-Burgundian held territory, therefore travel was mostly undertaken at night.¹¹⁵ Their first stop, some fifty kilometres from Vaucouleurs, was the Abbey of Saint-Urbain-lez-Joinville, where the abbot Arnoult d'Aunoy, a relative of Baudricourt,¹¹⁶ had been alerted to expect their arrival.¹¹⁷ The only other overnight stop on the eleven day trip to Chinon was in the duchy of Touraine, at Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois, where Joan reportedly heard three masses in one day and wrote to Charles requesting permission to enter Chinon, on the understanding that she had a great many

¹¹⁰ Quicherat, Jules, » Relation inédite sur Jeanne d'Arc », in *Revue Historique*, t. IV mai-août 1877, p. 336.

¹¹¹ René d'Anjou's archers and household officers were likewise monochromatically liveried in shades of black, grey and white. Françoise Pipponier has this to say about the "uniform" of the Angevin House of Bar-Lorraine: « A tout un personnel qui remplit des fonctions fort variées à son service, le roi [René d'Anjou, known widely as *le bon roi René* after the death of his elder brother Louis III] fait livrer régulièrement le même type des vêtements: des robes drap noir et surtout gris, et il entend parfois ses largesses à des serviteurs occasionnels ou à des étrangers. » Given the closeness of Baudricourt's association with René d'Anjou, we could argue that Joan may have fallen into the category of *serviteur occasionnel* to the House of Bar-Lorraine. Pipponier, Françoise, *Costume et vie sociale. La cour d'Anjou XIVe-XVe siècle*, Paris-La Haye, Mouton & Co. 1970. Cf. Vale op. cit p. 94 regarding the relative sobriety of dress favoured by the greater House of Anjou up until about 1470.

¹¹² Doncoeur et Lahners, *Documents et Recherches ...* pp. 145 & 151.

¹¹³ Some sources suggest that she departed Vaucouleurs on 13th February.

¹¹⁴ Tisset, *Procès de Condamnation ...* t. I, p. 50. Tisset's translation is given in t. II, p. 54, «*Va, va et advienne que pourra.*»

¹¹⁵ Wallon, Henri, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1875, t. I, p. 103.

¹¹⁶ On his mother's side, according to Jolibos, Emile, *La Haute-Marne ancienne et moderne, dictionnaire géographique, statistique, historique et biographique de ce département ...*, Chaumont, Imprimerie de Vve. Miot-Dadant, 1858, p. 492 and Albanès, Joseph Hyacinthe, *Gallica christiana novissima, Histoire des archevêchés, évêques et abbayes de France ...* Montbéliard 1895, P. Hofman, both cited by Luce, op. cit., p. 224.

¹¹⁷ Lancesseur, Lt. Colonel de, *Jeanne d'Arc Chef de Guerre, Le génie militaire et politique de Jeanne d'Arc, Campagne de France 1429-1430*, Paris, Nouvelles Editions Debresse, 1961, p. 28.

things to tell him, promising that she would be able to recognize him from a crowd of others:

*“Interrogata an ipsa fuerit apud Sanctum Katherinam de Fierbois: Repondit quod sic, et ibidem audivit tres missas uno die et deinceps ixit ad villam de Chinon. Item dicit quod misit licteras ad regem suum, in quibus continebatur quod ipsa mictibat pro sciendo si ipsa intraret villam ubi erat rex suus pre-|-fatus, et quod bene progressa [pergressa] fuerat per centum et quinquaginta leucas pro veniendo versus ipsum ad eius auxilium, quodque sciebat multa bona pro eo. Et videtur ei quod in eisdem licteris continebatur quod ipsa cognosceret bene prefactum regem suum inter omnes alios.”*¹¹⁸

The Duchess of Touraine was none other than Yolande of Aragon. She had taken possession of the duchy in the name of Louis III in January 1425,¹¹⁹ governing it during the entirety of his absence. Here is an extract of the act of the *prise de possession* by Bertrand de Beauvau, Bishop of Angers and Jean Dupuy, one of Yolande’s principal counsellors, in her name:

*«... on baillerait la possession du duché de Touraine, ville et chastel de Tours à très haulte et excerlente princesse la royne de Sécille, pour et ou nom de très hault et excerlent prince le roi de Jherusalem et de Sécille, duc d’Anjou son filz, auquel le Roy nostre sire a atailé ledicte duché [Touraine] non compris les ville, chastel et chastellenie de Chinon,¹²⁰ comme est appareu par lectres du Roy nostre dict seigneur ...»*¹²¹

At Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois, Joan entered Yolande’s territory and therefore the protection of the *«royne de Sécille et de Jherusalem»*. The young visionary was probably in awe of the mystical associations of Jerusalem and the heroes of the Crusades with the House of Anjou. The Angevins themselves were proud of their association with the kingdom of Jerusalem and Yolande herself added the prestigious arms of Jerusalem to the posthumous shield of Louis I d’Anjou in about 1425, at a time when she was reinforcing her power base in Charles’s court.¹²² Despite the fact that Yolande was ready

¹¹⁸ Tisset, *Procès de Condamnation* ... t. I, p. 76.

¹¹⁹ Above, p. 213.

¹²⁰ At that time nominally the possession of Richemont’s wife Marguerite, Duchess of Guyenne and Burgundy’s sister, but in Charles’s (La Trémoille’s) hands. See over.

¹²¹ Archives Municipales de Tours, *Délibérations*, t. III, f^o 9.

¹²² Mérindol, Christian de, « L’imaginaire du pouvoir à la fin du moyen âge, les prétensions royales », in Blanchard, Joël et Contamine, Philippe, (eds.), *Représentation, pouvoir et royauté à la fin du moyen âge, actes du colloque organisé par l’Université du Maine les 25 et 26 mars 1994*, Paris, Picard, 1995, p. 66 & pp. 65-92. We must not underestimate the importance of Jerusalem to the prestige of the House of

to risk a great deal to support Joan, the twin obstacles of La Trémoille and the chancellor Regnault de Chartres had to be surmounted. Chinon had been effectively mortgaged and signed over to La Trémoille so Joan wrote to Charles requesting permission to enter Chinon and seek an audience with him.

According to Beaucourt, Charles's state of penury was so pronounced that La Trémoille had been called upon to replenish the royal treasury: «... de janvier à août 1428, il [La Trémoille] avait avancé des sommes s'élevant à environ 27,000 livres pour lesquelles la châtelainie de Chinon lui avait été donnée en gage.» Beaucourt goes on to say that by October 1428, Chinon had been all but surrendered to la Trémoille and that: «La Trémoille avait en effet pris un tel ascendant que, selon l'expression d'un contemporain, personne n'osait même le contredire. Mais il faut dire que l'insouciance du roi, son défaut d'énergie laissaient la porte ouverte à bien des abus ... Ainsi le faible prince n'est plus qu'un jouet entre indignes mains.»¹²³ This, however, does not suggest that Yolande was without influence, for opinion on the royal council was divided between La Trémoille's faction and Yolande's supporters and allies, among them Louis I, Count of Vendôme, Robert le Maçon, Lord of Trêves, Gérard Machet, l'Amiral Culant, Jean, Bastard of Orléans, Christophe d'Harcourt, Guy de Laval, Robert de Rouvres and Charles de Bourbon.¹²⁴

Before examining what additional influences if any paved the way for Joan's appearance and acceptance by Charles VII, we must first address Yolande's own personal piety and spiritual loyalties in order to achieve a balanced account.

Yolande was not only held in high regard by reason of her political acumen and fine intellect, but was also renowned for her deep piety. We have previously discussed the importance of and the rôle played by the *frères mineurs* in the realms of Aragon. Yolande's devotion to Franciscans was practised throughout her life, witnessed by her very personal association with the Cordeliers of Angers and by significant donations to their establishment. Her confessor was Guillaume Heraud, one of the Angers Cordeliers,

Anjou. It would appear that from about 1425 onwards, in cementing her ascendancy over Charles, Yolande d'Aragon was consciously proactive and concerned with emphasizing the cachet of her titles and associations.

¹²³ Beaucourt, Gaston du Fresne de, « Le caractère de Charles VII », in *Revue des questions historiques*, Le Mans, Imprimerie Ed. Monnoyer, 1872, pp. 181 - 224.

¹²⁴ Vallet de Viriville, *Charles VII, roi de France et ses conseillers*, Dumoulin, Paris 1859. From April 1429 we note that further connections of Yolande including René appear on the list of councillors.

and in his presence on 29th December 1410, Yolande had made a deposition destined to support the eventual beatification of Jeanne-Marie de Maillé, Louis II's god-mother.¹²⁵

Luce details the way in which Yolande and her most noble ladies practised their spirituality in an active way.¹²⁶ The identities of Yolande's spiritual companions merit mention as do their particular Franciscan connections: the widowed Jeanne de Laval-Tinéniac, lady of Châtillon,¹²⁷ (widow of both Bertrand du Guesclin and Guy de Laval XII, Lord of Vitré, governor of Brittany),¹²⁸ who in 1396 established a convent of Cordeliers in Laval; Marie de Montalis, Lady of Montjean, who herself founded a convent of *Frères Mineurs de l'Observance* in Cholet,¹²⁹ and another Jeanne de Maillé,¹³⁰ who in 1428 inaugurated a third convent of *Observants*, eight leagues from Poitiers.¹³¹ These names will resurface as our study progresses.

With the work of these noble benefactors guided by Yolande, the legacy of Jeanne-Marie de Maillé¹³² and the active spirituality of Colette of Corbie, it might be said that the heightened mysticism of the Poor Man of Assisi underwent a renaissance of sorts, igniting the spiritual practice of many who came under its influence. By the time Joan was attentive to her voices and planning her mission, Maine, Anjou, Poitou and

¹²⁵ See below, p. 274, note 133, our discussion regarding Colette of Corbie & Jeanne-Marie de Maillé and consult *Acta sanctorum Martii*, Bollando, Ioanne, A., Henschenio, Godfrido, A. & Papebrochio, Daniele, Antwerpe, Iacobum Meursium, 1669, t. III, pp. 761 - 764, for "Regina Siciliae & aliae mulieres testes auditaie"; cf. Griguer, Thérèse, « La saintété en Touraine au XV^e Siècle. (La vie et le procès de canonisation de Jeanne-Marie de Maillé). », in *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, vol. 91, n° 1, 1984, pp. 27-37 & Vauchez, André, « Influences franciscaines et réseaux aristocratiques dans le Val de Loire : autour de la bienheureuse Jeanne-Marie de Maillé (1331-1414). », in Vauchez, André, (ed.), *Mouvements franciscains et société française XIIIe-Xxe siècles. Etudes présentées à la table ronde du CNRS 23 octobre 1982*, Paris, Beauchesne Editeur, 1984, pp. 95-106. See our Appendix 1, n. 42.

¹²⁶ Luce, op. cit. pp. 244 - 245.

¹²⁷ Grandmother of Guy XIV de Laval and André de Laval (their mother was Anne de Laval, their father was Jean de Montfort, known as Guy XIII de Laval) who joined Joan's army in June 1429, she was also mother of Catherine de Laval, married to Guy de Chauvigny, Lord of Châteauroux; and Jeanne de Laval, married to Louis de Bourbon, Count of Vendôme; and of Louis de Laval, Lord of Châtillon, who would become governor of Champagne and Grand Master of Forests and Waterways under Louis XI. Cf. the very recent publication, Walsby, Malcolm, *The Counts of Laval. Culture, Patronage and Religion in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century France*, Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2007. See our Appendix 2 for genealogical tables.

¹²⁸ The Laval, like the cadet branch of the Bourbons, were crucial allies and vassals of the House of Anjou.

¹²⁹ A dependency perhaps of l'Abbaye de Notre-Dame-de-Belle-Fontaine located south of Angers about 10 km from Cholet.

¹³⁰ This Jeanne de Maillé was married to Thibault de Laval, Lord of Loué. Their children were Guy de Laval, Seneschal of Anjou, Thibault de Laval, Lord of Saint-Aubin, Marie de Laval, Jean de Laval, Lord of Brée and Jeanne de Laval.

¹³¹ Luce, loc. cit.

¹³² Jeanne-Marie de Maillé died on 28th April 1414; she was buried at the convent of the Friars Minor in Tours, where her brother, Ameil de Maillé, was archbishop.

Touraine hosted at the very least six convents of Franciscan *Observants* in Laval, Bressuire, Cholet, Amboise, Fontenay-le-Comte and the one founded by Jeanne de Maillé outside Poitiers. All these convents were established within a very few years of each other, and all were inaugurated by Yolande or the ladies of her household. The Cholet Convent was considered the mother-house of all the *Minori Observanti* convents established in France. Furthermore in 1414, Yolande's maternal uncle, Louis of Bar, established a Franciscan house in Varennes in the diocese of Reims. In the years immediately prior to or after Joan's appearance, Colettine houses in Moulins, Aigueperse, Castres and Le Puy were jointly inaugurated by the Houses of Bourbon and Laval and Colette of Corbie. To round off this discussion of a particularly Angevin devotion to Franciscan *Observants* is the fact that in 1431 René d'Anjou introduced *Observant* reforms to a monastery previously established in 1420 at Pont-à-Mousson.¹³³

Apart from an inherent preference for *Observance*, there was a further very strong political motivation for this flurry of Franciscan inauguration by Yolande and her connections during the early part of Charles's reign: the Kingdom of Naples, where Franciscans had always played a leading rôle. First Benedict XIII and later, at the time of Constance, Martin V, protected the rights of the *Observants* who sought various reforms

¹³³ Luce, *op. cit.* p. 249. We must note that support of particular Franciscan orders was not unique to the House of Anjou. The House of Burgundy, first through the offices of Blanche of Geneva, Countess of Savoy, and later Marguerite of Bavaria, Duchess of Burgundy, became closely linked to the great Clarissan reformer Colette of Corbie. Nancy Bradley Warren makes the particularly cogent point that "Saint Colette was mobilized in [a] politicized propagandist fashion by Jean sans Peur, duke of Burgundy. In 1414, after an unsuccessful Burgundian attempt to retake Paris, outright civil war resumed between the Burgundian and Armagnac forces. The Armagnacs enjoyed a string of military successes through the spring and summer of 1414; Jean's duchess Margaret and their children were reportedly even menaced at Dijon and Rouvres by enemy soldiers. In June of this turbulent summer, perhaps partially in recompense for Colette's intercessory prayers that reportedly helped to save Margaret and the Burgundian heirs (and to perhaps also gain public support in an important town at a time when his power was in jeopardy), that Jean granted to Colette, who already through her lifetime had a reputation for sanctity and enjoyed considerable local popularity, a disused arsenal at Poligny to found a convent of her order there." Bradley Warren, Nancy, "Monastic Politics: St. Colette of Corbie, Franciscan Reform, and the House of Burgundy", in Copeland, Rita, Lawton, David & Scase, Wendy (eds.), *New Medieval Literatures Volume V*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 204. We must also recall that Jeanne-Marie de Maillé died in April 1414 and that an inquest into her sanctity was initiated in Tours very soon afterwards. Perhaps Burgundy, through the offices of his wife, had serendipitously tumbled upon a handy local Franciscan foil to the Angevins' saintly Jeanne-Marie de Maillé? This was at a time when Jean sans Peur was still smouldering over the return of his daughter Catherine by Louis II d'Anjou and the King of Sicily's ascendancy and increasing hegemony on the royal council. Cf. Vauchez, André, "Influences Franciscaines et réseaux aristocratiques dans le val de Loire. Autour de la Bienheureuse Jeanne-Marie de Maillé (1331-1414)". Bradley Warren emphasizes the idea that "[the Burgundians]...rode the rising tide of her [Colette's] cult, tapping into her popularity to cultivate good will for themselves among the townspeople – a goal in which the House of Burgundy was perennially interested..." *op. cit.* pp. 223-224.

to their existing structure. It was Martin V who had sanctioned Louis III's pretensions over Naples, ensuring that he was adopted as son and heir by Joanna II on 21st June 1423. The Neapolitan Franciscans employed every tactic in their arsenal to ensure that Alfonse of Aragon would not emerge victorious in the peninsular kingdom. Bernardino da Siena¹³⁴ (the "Apostle of Italy"), Giovanni da Capistrano and Matheo Cimarra were all *Observants* who undertook a crusade of predictions aimed at undermining the Aragonese and favouring Louis III. Bernardino da Siena in particular preached that the Holy Name of Jesus be invoked as armour against the Anti-Christ. The popularity of this new manifestation of Franciscan devotion quickly spread. Bernardino's disciples, Capistrano and Cimarra, added an important modification of their own design to his message: the addition of the Holy Name of Mary. The two names were henceforth joined in Franciscan devotions and new convents sprang up in Sicily dedicated to Santa-Maria-de-Jesus.

Bernardino was convoked by Martin V to answer charges of heresy brought against him by his detractors, the Hermits of Saint Augustine and the Dominicans or *Frères Prêcheurs*, who had accused him of promoting idolatry in his devotion to the images and name of Jesus. With the help of his disciples, Capistrano and Cimarra, he successfully defended himself, and the vogue for their reverence of the names of Jesus and Mary spread throughout Christendom. Provincial priests, priors of convents, the lay religious and mendicant friars were all recruited by a general chapter held in the Piedmont town of Vercelli¹³⁵ on 8th June 1427 to propagate devotion to the Names of Jesus and Mary.¹³⁶ If we study Sigeric, Archbishop of Canterbury's map of the pilgrim route from Canterbury to Rome in 990 A.D.,¹³⁷ we see that it passes close to Joan's home territory. Franciscan mendicants, newly inspired by Bernardino's great victory would have traversed Domremy-Greux and its environs spreading the gospel of the need to venerate the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

¹³⁴ Greatly admired and supported in his canonization process by René d'Anjou.

¹³⁵ Vercelli in Piedmont was an important stopping point on the Canterbury to Rome pilgrimage trail known as the *Via Francigena* or *Chemin des Francs*, which passed through Châlons-sur-Marne, Bar-sur-Aube and other places. Piedmont held strong Angevin sympathies.

¹³⁶ Luce, *ibid.*, p. 258.

¹³⁷ A pilgrim route still in use in 1429. Cf. Magoun, Jr., Francis Peabody, "The Rome of Two Northern Pilgrims: Archbishop Sigeric of Canterbury and Abott Nikolas of Munkathvera", in *Harvard Theological Review*, vol 33. n^o. 4, (October 1940), pp. 267-289; Cao, G.B, "Il viaggio in Italia di un pellegrino inglese nel 1344", in *Bolletino della società geografica italiana*, Series 6, IV, (1927), p. 476-496. For the *Via Francigena*, Birch, Debra, J., "Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages", Boydell and Brewer, 1998.

The mantra Jesus-Maria was repeated by Joan in her missives, on her standards and in her spiritual observance, and it is of further interest to our study in relation to her standards,¹³⁸ for Bernardino's forerunners, the *Jesuates*, emblazoned their standards with the name of Jesus, surrounded by rays of gold on an azure blue field, with a dove rising above it.¹³⁹ The description of one of Joan's standards, given by Hugues Guibert, mayor of La Rochelle records that:

«Et fit faire audit lieu de Poitiers son estandard, auquel y avoit un escu d'azur, et un couloun blanc dedens ycelluy estoit; lequel couloun tenoit un role en son bec où avoit escrit "de par le roy du ciel" ...».¹⁴⁰

From what we have discussed above we should begin to understand that Joan's spirituality was very much influenced not only by her mother and uncle but more specifically by Franciscan *Observants* whom she had ample opportunity to encounter throughout the years of her adolescence and later once her avowed mission had commenced. Further, we have highlighted that Yolande's spiritual preferences and those of her offspring and connections meshed perfectly with those of Joan, therefore rendering Yolande's support of Joan inevitable once the usual checks and balances had been undertaken. Yolande understood that unity would be the key to France's survival; Joan was purpose-built to unify Charles's subjects against the English.

From the time of the writing of Chartier's *Quadrilogue invectif* in 1422,¹⁴¹ when the three ladies *Clergé*, *Noblesse* and *Paysanerie* were exhorted by the misery of a fourth, *La France*, to put aside their quarrels and petty grievances and unite to resist the invader, Franciscans and Carmelites had traversed the countryside, preaching this particular message of solidarity and resistance as well as a deep veneration for the names and images of Jesus and Mary. To enhance and invigorate their message of salvation, many cited the prophecies of Merlin, particularly focusing upon coming salvation to be delivered by a maiden from the *Bois chesnu* on the frontiers of Lorraine. These prophecies

¹³⁸ See below for a description of her standards.

¹³⁹ Luce, *ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁴⁰ Quicherat, Jules, « Relation inédite sur Jeanne d'Arc », in *Revue Historique*, mai-août, année 2, t. 4, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1877, p. 338.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Chartier, Alain, *Les Œuvres*, Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1975, pp. 402-454. Between the years 1409-1414 Alain Chartier was in the service of Yolande, entering into the service of the dauphin Charles in 1417 as secretary. Chartier, Alain, « *Le Quadrilogue invectif* » (traduit & annoté par Bouchet, Florence), Honoré Champion, Paris 2002, pp. 7-8.

were invoked by Joan prior to her departure for Chinon.¹⁴² From the time of his father's death Charles himself had been feverishly praying for a miracle and deliverance, testified to by his frequent pilgrimages to Le Puy and elsewhere. Charles's wife Marie and mother-in-law Yolande had well and truly tilled and prepared the ground by the time of Joan's appearance. They had received letters from René citing the appearance of a «*bergerette extraordinaire*», originating from the marches of Lorraine,¹⁴³ and all that was required of Charles was to stand firm and ready himself for the coming miracle.

By the time Joan had passed through Gien, the people of Orleans knew of her existence and the possibility of their imminent salvation. A new optimism was kindled and the Bastard of Orleans, with the urging of his most effective generals Xantrailles and Vignolles,¹⁴⁴ sent messengers to court to establish the truth of the rumour of approaching seraphic deliverance. The Bastard's ambassadors were Archambaud, Lord of Villars, Seneschal of Beaucaire and Jamet du Thillay. Villars was one of Yolande's most devoted Provençal officers and both were in attendance when Joan was presented to her «*gentil dauphin*».¹⁴⁵

Upon her arrival Joan was installed in a hostelry to await an audience with Charles. As mentioned above two factions were at odds with one another, La Trémoille's and Yolande's. Regnault of Chartres was cautious and sceptical, tending to side with La Trémoille. Machet, Bishop of Castres and Charles's confessor, supported Yolande along with the other council members loyal to her listed above. Three days after her arrival Joan was summoned, the court assembled in anticipation of her audience with Charles with some two to three hundred knights and their ladies arrayed in full finery, the reception area ablaze with torches. No simple retainer escorted Joan to the waiting assembly: she was introduced by Yolande's vassal and loyal ally Louis I, Count of Vendôme.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² See above, p. 259.

¹⁴³ Archives de la Meuse cited by Orliac, op. cit., p. 158 ff., and Frager, Marcel, *Marie d'Anjou, Femme de Charles VII*, Les Editions de Paris, Société des Editions Littéraires, Paris 1948, p. 170.

¹⁴⁴ La Hire.

¹⁴⁵ It must be remembered that the Bastard, like Charles himself, was raised in Yolande's household from 1413.

¹⁴⁶ Louis I de Bourbon-La Marche, Count of Vendôme, was Grand Chamberlain of France in 1408, Grand Master of France in 1413. In 1424 he married Jeanne de Laval, daughter of Anne de Laval and granddaughter of Jeanne de Laval-Tinténiac (one of Yolande's ladies-in-waiting, see above) and Jean de Montfort. Vendôme, in common with the Lavals, was another of Yolande's vassals.

Charles de Bourbon¹⁴⁷ was seated on the throne. Joan passed him by and picked Charles VII from among the crowd of onlookers, thereby verifying her first claim:

*«Le roy estoit bien acompaigné, et combien que plusieurs faingnissent qu'il fussent le roy, toustesfois elle s'adressa à luy assez plainement, et luy dist que Dieu l'envoyoit là pour lui ayder et secourir; et qu'il luy baillast gens, et elle lèveroit le siège d'Orléans, et si le mèneroit sacrer à Reims; et que c'estoit le plaisir du Dieu que ses ennemis les Anglois s'en allassent en leurs pays; que le royaume lui devoit demeurer; et que si ils n s'en alloient, il leur mescherroit.»*¹⁴⁸

All of this had the hoped-for impact upon Charles as well as those willing to believe in Joan's good intentions. Notwithstanding the impression she had made upon Charles, pragmatism demanded that:

*«Après ces choses ainsi faictes et dictes, on la fist remener en son logis; et le roy assembla son conseil pour sçavoir qu'il avoit à faire: où estoit l'archevesque de Reims, son chancelier, et pluieurs prélats, gens d'église et laïcs. Si fut advisé que certains docteurs en théologie parleroient à elle et l'examineroient, et aussi avec eux canonistes et légistes; et ainsi fut fait.»*¹⁴⁹

The examination process was not only demanded by her detractors who sought to impeach her mission before it started but also by her supporters who needed to establish and legitimize her credentials. Joan nonetheless expressed her frustration and tried to fill in the waiting period by practising her daily offices, attempting to convince Charles to believe in her and revealing knowledge of his secret prayers.¹⁵⁰

«Un jour elle voulut parler au roy en particulier, et luy dist «Gentil Daulphin, pourquoy ne me croyez-vous? Je vous dire que Dieu a pitié de vous, de vostre royaume, et de vostre peuple; car saint Louys et Charlemaigne sont à genoux devant luy en faisant prière pour vous; et je vous

¹⁴⁷ Charles de Bourbon was Count of Clermont and Lieutenant-General for Charles VII in the Languedoc, Guyenne, Dauphiné, Bourbon and Forez. He succeeded his father Jean I [who had been a prisoner of the English since Agincourt] as Duke of Burgundy in 1433. His mother was Marie, Duchess of Auvergne, daughter of Jean *le Magnifique*, Duke of Berry. Charles de Bourbon married Agnès of Burgundy in 1425. He was a loyal supporter of Charles VII and Yolande d'Aragon until about 1439 when he became jealous of Angevin hegemony in the shape of Charles du Maine, Yolande's youngest son. He led the revolt known as the Praguerie, which was quickly put down, and lost much of his prestige and property as a result of his actions. Charles de Bourbon had an infamous brother-in-law, Rodrigue de Villandrando, who caused Yolande and the Angevins a great deal of angst and anxiety. See below, p. 351. Cf. Quicherat, Jules, *Rodrigue de Villandrando, l'un des combattants pour l'indépendance française au Xvè siècle*, Paris, Hachette, 1879.

¹⁴⁸ Vallet de Viriville, Auguste, *La chronique de la Pucelle ...*, Paris, Adolphe Delahays, 1859, pp. 273 – 274.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Attested to amongst others by fifteenth-century historian Pierre Sala, Cf., Quicherat, Jules, *Procès ...*, t. IV, pp. 279-280.

diray, s'il vous plaist, telle chose, qu'elle vous donnera à congnoistre que me devez croire.» Toutesfois elle fut contente que quelque peu de ses gens y fussent, et en la présence du duc d'Alençon, du seigneur de Trèves [Robert le Maçon], de Christofle de Harcourt, et de Maistre Gérard Machet, son confesseur, lesquels il fist jurer, à la requeste de ladicte Jeanne, qu'ils n'en révèleroyent ny diroyent rien, elle dist au roy une chose de grand conséquence, qu'il avoit faicte, bien secrète: dont il fut fort esbahy, car il n'y avoit personne qui le peust sçavoir que Dieu et luy. Et dès lors fut comme conclud que le roy essayeroit à exécuter ce qu'elle disoit.»¹⁵¹

The chronicler's evocation of the names Alençon, Robert le Maçon, Christophe d'Harcourt and Gérard Machet gives weight to the suggestion that Joan was very much in the company of Angevin officers and allies. Alençon had been under Yolande's protection living in Saint-Florent-lez-Saumur,¹⁵² his Verneuil ransom having wiped him out financially. Joan quickly won over her «*beau duc*», who was married to Charles d'Orléans' daughter Jeanne. Alençon's mother was Marie of Brittany, sister of the Duke of Brittany; his uncles therefore were Richemont, Jean V and Richard d'Etampes. Again we see a network of Yolande's officers and allies, a chosen few, «*quelque peu de ses gens ...*», drawing a web of support around Joan. We can demonstrate still more traces of Yolande's influence in Joan's relatively ready acceptance by Charles as the best hope for his salvation and that of Orleans.

Given that Joan was arrayed in male attire, both her sex and claims to virginity needed to be verified. This was performed under the leadership of Yolande assisted by Jeanne de Preuilly, wife of Raoul de Gaucourt, governor of Orleans, and Jeanne de Mortemer, wife of Robert le Maçon,¹⁵³ Yolande's stalwart in the absence of Richemont. It was Yolande herself who reported to the royal council the findings of this intimate investigation into Joan's physical credentials:

«Dit aussi que ledit report fait audit seigneur par lesdiz maistres, fut depuis icelle Pucelle baillee a la royne de Cecile, mere de la royne nostre souveraine dame et certaines dames, estant avecques elles; par lesquelles icelle Pucelle fut veue, visitée et secretement regardée et examinée es secretes parties de son corps; mais après ce qu'ilz eurent veu et regardé ce que faisoit a regarder en ce cas,

¹⁵¹ *La Chronique de la Pucelle...*, pp. 274 – 275.

¹⁵² Duparc, Pierre, *Procès en Nullité ...* t. I, deposition of Jean d'Alençon, p. 381: "... || venit versus regem, rex erat in villa de Chinon, et ipse loquens in villa Sancti Florentii ..."

¹⁵³ Deposition of Jean Pasquerel, Doncoeur, S.J., & Lanhers, Y., *Documents et Recherches Relatifs à la Jeanne La Pucelle*, t. V. *La Réhabilitation de Jeanne La Pucelle, La Rédaction Episcopale du Procès de 1455-1456*, pp. 216 – 217.

ladicte dame [Yolande] diste et relata au roy qu'elle et sesdictes dames trouvoient certainement que c'estoit une vraye et entiere pucelle, en laquelle n'aparoissoit aucune corruption ou violence.

*Dit qu'il [Jean d'Aulon] estoit present quant la dicte dame [Yolande] fist sondit report.».*¹⁵⁴

As a result of these preliminaries, Joan and the court decamped to Poitiers, seat of *parlement* in exile, to hold an inquiry into Joan's bona fides and to arrive at a decision regarding her self-declared mission. Vallet de Viriville states that Charles and Joan were recorded in residence at Poitiers from 11th – 23rd March 1429.¹⁵⁵ Easter Sunday fell on 27th March in that year, with the Jubilé du Puy commencing on Holy Friday 25th March and continuing for some ten days. We must not forget that this particular jubilee was organized as a national manifestation of loyalist unity and that it was attended by Joan's mother, Isabelle de Vouthon-Romé, and her brothers. It was from here that Frère Pasquerel, the Tourangeau Hermit of Saint-Augustine was dispatched to join Joan's household.¹⁵⁶

Let us turn again to Yolande's connections, this time in Poitiers. Upon her arrival, Joan was lodged in the house of Jean Rabateau,¹⁵⁷ citizen of Orleans and an influential member of Charles's council firmly allied to Yolande.¹⁵⁸ Joan sojourned under the guardianship of Rabateau's wife, an unnamed «*bonne femme*».¹⁵⁹ Throughout her stay in Poitiers, Joan «... *estoit tousjours en habit d'homme, ny n'en vouloit autre vestir,*»¹⁶⁰ which did not seem to unnerve either the «*bonne femme*» of Jean Rabateau, or indeed the crowd (including the ladies of Poitiers), who daily flocked to the *Hostellerie de la Roze*¹⁶¹ to see and speak with Joan. All were struck by her piety, sincerity, humility and goodness.¹⁶² For her part, Joan was impatient with the inquest into her credentials and authenticity, stating that she had no miracles or signs to call forth, for she: «... *ne vouloit pas tenter Dieu, et que le signe que Dieu luy avoit ordonné c'estoit lever le siège de devant Orléans et de*

¹⁵⁴ Deposition of Jean d'Aulon, *ibid.*, p. 298. In his *Histoire de Jeanne d'Arc dite La Pucelle d'Orléans*, Amsterdam, La Compagnie, 1759, Première Partie, p. 24, Abbé Lenglet du Fresnoy goes further to state that: «... *déclarent [les Sages-femmes] non-seulement qu'elle étoit vierge, mais de plus, quoiqu'âgée de 18 ans, elle n'étoit pas sujette aux incommodités du Sexe.*»

¹⁵⁵ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 61.

¹⁵⁶ Her brothers and cousin, the monk Nicolas de Vouthon, also joined her household at around this time. See our discussion above, p. 249, note 24. See also our Appendix 1, n. 43.

¹⁵⁷ Duparc, *Procès en Nullité ...* t. I, p. 368.

¹⁵⁸ Vallet de Viriville, *loc. cit* & cf. Gaussin, *op. cit*.

¹⁵⁹ Vallet de Viriville, *Chronique de la Pucelle ...*, p. 275.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Ledain, Bélisaire, *Jeanne d'Arc à Poitiers*, Paris & Poitiers, Librairie H. Oudin, 1894, p. 40.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

mener le roy sacrer à Reims ...».¹⁶³ After some fifteen days, Joan received a favourable judgement and was allocated a very specific task. The *Chronique de la Pucelle* relates that:

«Pour le temps de lors, on faisoit grand diligence d'assembler vivres, et spécialement blez, chairs salées et non salées, pour essayer à les mener dedans la ville d'Orléans. Si fut délibéré et conclud qu'on esprouveroit ladicte Jeanne sur le faict desdicts vivres; et luy furent ordonnez harnois, cheval et gens; et luy fut spécialement baillé pour la conduire et estre avec elle, un bien vaillant et notable escuyer, nommé Jehan d'Olon, prudent et sage, et pour paige, un bien gentil homme, nommé Louys de Comtes, dict Imerguet, avec autres varlets et serviteurs.».¹⁶⁴

Rather than a military command, Joan was to be placed at the head of an armed escort of supplies destined for Orleans. This was a realistic proposition, for as we have discussed above, there was no shortage of able generals. There was however a paucity of morale, unity and fresh produce. Added to this was La Trémoille's general lack of enthusiasm for Joan's mission and Regnault of Chartres's view that they proceed with extreme caution. For La Trémoille, Joan represented a threat to his powerbase and a probable return of Yolande's overt influence over Charles; while Regnault (an individual preoccupied with his personal rank and prestige) was suspicious of parvenus – particularly those originating from the lower orders. This resistance did not however appear to disconcert Yolande and indeed, might well have suited her plans.

On or around 24th March, Charles and Joan left Poitiers for Chinon.¹⁶⁵ Her legend was not yet in full flower, yet for some fifteen days Poitiers¹⁶⁶ had become increasingly excited about Joan's presence and her mission. Though she had not yet achieved a single material victory, she had already started to rally and unify Charles's subjects. Yolande's faith in her newest protégée had been well-placed. Joan's departure from Poitiers, given by an ocular witness to the historian Jean Bouchet, bears this out:

«J'ay ouy dire en ma jeunesse et dès l'an mil quatre cent quatre vingt et quinze, à feu Christophe du Peirat lors demeurant à Poitiers et près de ma maison, qui avoit eu hostellerie où pendoit l'enseigne de la Roze, où ladicte Jeanne étoit logée et qu'il la veit monter à cheval toute armée à

¹⁶³ Vallet de Viriville, *Chronique ...* loc. cit.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 277.

¹⁶⁵ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, p. 61.

¹⁶⁶ The seat of Charles's *parlement* and his university, sanctuary for his most learned clerics and lawyers.

*blanc, pour aller au dit lieu d'Orléans, et me montra une petite pierre qui est au coing de la rue Saint-Etienne, où elle prit avantage pour monter à cheval.»*¹⁶⁷

The *Chronique de la Pucelle's* account backs up Bouchet's understanding of Joan's departure from Poitiers and the impression she had upon the Poitevins:

*«Elle fut armée et montée à Poitiers; puis s'en partit; et en chevauchant, portoit aussi gentilement son harnois, que si elle n'eust faict autre chose tout le temps de sa vie. Dont plusieurs s'esmerveilloient; mais bien davantage les docteurs, capitaines de guerre et autres, des reponses qu'elle faisoit, tant des choses divines que de la guerre ...»*¹⁶⁸

On the eve of her departure from Poitiers Joan sent her first «*lettre du défi*» to Bedford. It is dated *mardi sepmaine sainte*, [22nd March] and is preceded by the favoured cantillation of the Franciscans, † IHESUS-MARIA †.¹⁶⁹ Its register is bellicose, demanding that the English immediately recognize Charles as the true King of France and render France «*a la Pucelle, qui est cy envoyée de par Dieu ... pour reclamer le sanc royal*». She goes on to state that she is «*toute preste de faire paix*», but if not «*les feray tous occire*» and ... «*Se ne voulez croire les nouvelles de par Dieu et la Pucelle, en quelque lieu que vous trouverons, nous ferons dedens et y ferons ung si grant hahay que encore a il mil ans que France ne fu si grant, se vous ne faictes raison ...*»¹⁷⁰

Joan soon left Charles in Chinon and moved on to Yolande's temporary headquarters, Tours, hostilities having forced her to decamp provisionally from Angers-Saumur. In Yolande's capacity as Duchess of Touraine, the Tourangeaux had petitioned her protection against Ferrando of Seville, leader of a band of Spanish mercenaries who had been pillaging the region. She sold her plate and paid him half the ransom of 2,500 gold crowns for his cooperation on the understanding that he would lend his support to the besieged in Orleans. She then turned her attention to the preparation of the supply and reinforcement convoys destined for Orleans.¹⁷¹

While Yolande was occupied with preparations for Joan's imminent departure, Joan travelled to St-Florent-lez-Saumur to visit the Duchess of Alençon, Jeanne d'Orléans and

¹⁶⁷ Bouchet, Jean, *Les Annales d'Aquitaine, faicts et gestes en sommaire des roys de France, et de l'Angleterre, et pais de Naples et Milan ...* Poitiers, E. de Marnef, 1557, p. 64. Bouchet's witness was very old indeed having attained his century, according to the historian's reckoning.

¹⁶⁸ *La Chronique de la Pucelle ...*, p. 278.

¹⁶⁹ See above, p. 275.

¹⁷⁰ Tisset & Lanhers, *Procès de Condamnation ...*, t. I, pp. 221 – 222.

¹⁷¹ See above regarding the convoys. Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 63.

her mother-in-law, Marie of Brittany.¹⁷² Joan assured them that she would personally ensure that the “*beau duc*” would be safely returned to them. She then returned to Tours, Yolande’s interim capital and the most prosperous, prestigious and industrious of Charles’s loyal cities.

In Tours, Joan was lodged with Eléonore de Paul, former lady-in-waiting to Marie d’Anjou until her marriage in 1428/9 to Yolande’s principal counsellor for Tours, Jean Lepuy, Lord of Roche-Saint-Quentin.¹⁷³ It was during this stay that Joan was supplied with head-to-toe armour, including spurs,¹⁷⁴ at the express command of Charles, who further commissioned a battle standard and pennants to be painted to her particular specifications. Joan’s appearances in full battle accoutrement were designed to inspire awe and stupefaction in both loyalists and opponents alike.

In her trial testimony Joan describes her banners with a great deal of circumspection regarding their origins and significance. She gives descriptions stating that the field of the standard was sown with gold fleurs-de-lys, with God seated between two angels and the device, JHESU-MARIE painted above or to the side of the image. The Bastard of Orleans testified that it was white with the image of the Lord holding a lily. Pasquerel goes into substantially more detail, describing an image of Jesus, seated upon clouds in judgement, while an angel extends a lily to receive the Saviour’s blessing.¹⁷⁵ Morosini records a letter dated 9th July 1429 describing «... *un étendard blanc, sur lequel est Notre Seigneur mis en manière de Trinité; d’une main il tient le monde, et de l’autre, il bénit; de chaque côté est un ange qui présente deux fleurs de lys telles que celles que portent les rois de France ...*». ¹⁷⁶ Apart from the addition of the «JHESU-MARIE», the design of the battle standard appears to have been conventional and in keeping with her pronouncement that Charles was God’s regent for the Kingdom of France and that her mission to legitimize his rule and liberate his kingdom was a just undertaking.

Quicherat claims that Joan held back details of a personal escutcheon of her design appearing on her standard, details that were given by the *greffier* of La Rochelle: «... *Et fit faire audit lieu de Poitiers son estandard, auquel y avoit un escu d’azur, et un coulon blanc*

¹⁷² Sister of Jean V, Duke of Brittany and Charles’s Constable-in-exile, Arthur III de Richemont.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 65 and the deposition of Louis de Contes, Duparc, *Procès en Nullité ...*, t. I, p. 362.

¹⁷⁴ This despite the fact that she had not been created a knight; Charles himself was not dubbed a knight until his *sacre*, when his cousin the «*beau duc*» d’Alençon accorded him this honour.

¹⁷⁵ Duparc, *Procès en Nullité ...*, t. III, p. 391.

¹⁷⁶ Morosini, Antonio, *Chronique d’Antonio Morosini – extraits relatifs à l’Histoire de France, Introduction et Commentaire par Germain Lefèvre-Pontalis ...*, Paris, 1898-1901, t. III, p. 111.

*dedans ycelluy estoit; lequel coulou tenoit un role en son bec où avoit escrit "de par le roy du ciel". Et ce fait escrist aux Anglois dudit siege uune lettre close ...».*¹⁷⁷ The reason for her omission was probably no more complicated than that it accorded perfectly with her policy of not volunteering unsolicited information to her accusers. Her circumspection should not be taken to suggest that her escutcheon was a product of the *greffier's* imagination. As Harmand states in his study: «*Cette description ne peut concerner que les revers de l'enseigne, puisque nous savons, à n'en pas douter, que sa face présentait une toute autre décoration. En outre, il semble que les détails donnés par le greffier de La Rochelle soient trop précis pour avoir été le produit de l'imagination d'un contemporain et on doit les admettre d'autant plus que l'existence d'un écu d'azur est affirmée par un autre document sur le revers de l'étendard.*».¹⁷⁸ It might well be the case that while in Poitiers Joan did indeed design a personal escutcheon, one that did not rest upon heraldic devices but rather upon symbols that held particular significance for her. The standard itself, however, was painted and made up in Tours.¹⁷⁹

The azure blue, the dove, the presence of the aphorisms «*Jhesus-Marie*» and «*de par le roy du ciel*» hark back to emblems favoured by the Franciscan-inspired *Jesuates*.¹⁸⁰ We must bear in mind that Joan herself had ample opportunity to meet with the disciples of Bernadin of Siena (himself a successor to *Jesuata* spirituality) both in Domremy-Greux and further afield both before and after the commencement of her mission. The Angevins too were staunch defenders of the *Observants* and their very particular spirituality. In the Windecke Chronicle,¹⁸¹ where Joan's assault on Paris is described, appears the following sensational detail regarding her standard: «*... alors que la Pucelle se*

¹⁷⁷ Quicherat, Jules, «*Relation inédite sur Jeanne d'Arc*», in *Revue Historique*, mai-août, année 2, t. IV, 1887 p. 338. We have discussed this above in relation to Franciscan/*Jesuata* symbolism.

¹⁷⁸ Harmand, Adrien, *Jeanne d'Arc ses costumes, son armure*, Paris, Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1929, p. 297. Cf. p. 298 regarding Perceval de Cagny's supporting evidence (as interpreted by Harmand) regarding the escutcheon. The *greffier's* account, while not eyewitness, is contemporary and, though containing small errors, it is nevertheless an additional source for Joan's appearance, clothing, sword of Saint Catherine, banner, standard, surrender of Troyes after her appearance and Richard's sermons. Margolis, op. cit. p. 60. Perceval de Cagny was in the service of Jean, Duke of Alençon and in Margolis's view is: "Considered the most literate and complete of the chroniclers dealing with J'. Cagny eyewitness and participant in her life. Best source especially for her journey to Rheims, the Siege of Paris, her departure for l'Isle-de-France in 1430 and her relationship with Charles VII and Alençon." Margolis, op. cit., p. 50.

¹⁷⁹ Quicherat, *Procès*, t. V, p. 258: From the thirteenth household account of the Treasurer for Wars, Hemon Raguier: «*A Hauves Poulnoir, [Scotsman James Power], peintre demourant à Tours pour avoir paint et baillié estoffes pour ung grant estandart et ung petit pour la Pucelle, 25 livres tournois.*».

¹⁸⁰ Discussed above and in our Appendix 1, n. 44.

¹⁸¹ We have chosen to incorporate this foreign contemporary chronicle into this study for, as Margolis tells us, it represents: "[the] Most important German chronicle by notary (1380-1442) to Emperor Sigismund." Margolis, op. cit., p. 87.

tenait dans le fossé, à l'assaut, avec son étendard, [...] un blanc coulomb vint se poser sur son étendard. Le coulomb avait une couronne d'or en son bec et la tenait ainsi.»¹⁸² Here again mention of a dove and golden crown/rays, distinguished by the fact that it describes not a painted escutcheon but rather the physical phenomenon of a dove bearing a golden crown alighting on her standard.

The same symbols in relation to Joan's banners and person appear time and again, symbols which bear a direct relationship to Franciscan/*Jesuata* iconography. There is one more piece to add to this puzzle before we move on to discuss Joan's progress. In one of the letters recorded by Morosini a curious observation comes to light. Joan is referred to "*La dite Pucelle est âgée de dix-huit ans environ ; in el paix de la Rena,*¹⁸³ *a le confine de Franza, e iera begina guardatrixe de piegore*¹⁸⁴ *nasuda de homo de vilazo*¹⁸⁵ ...".¹⁸⁶ Whether or not Joan followed the practices of the Beguines,¹⁸⁷ or was herself a Beguine or a member of the Third Franciscan Order, is not known. Morosini may have believed that she conformed to their profile, and while his is the only mention of such a possibility it should not be dismissed summarily, as many Beguine communities adopted the rule of the Third Order of Saint Francis, and it was precisely a preference for ardent mysticism that frequently led to charges of heresy and calls for control over their spiritual activities, a charge Joan's Rouen judges repeatedly put to her.

As well as banners, standards and martial attire, Charles also ordered that a battle sword be prepared for Joan, but she declared that she had been instructed by her Voices to seek a very particular sword buried behind the altar of the sanctuary chapel at Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois. Her armourer was dispatched to Fierbois with a letter from Joan

¹⁸² "... als die Maget in dem graben an dem sturm stunt mit irem baner, das ein wiss tube kam und sass uf irem baner. Die tube hatte ein gulden crone in irem snabel und hielt die also." Lefèvre-Pontalis, Germain, *Les Sources Allemandes de l'Histoire de Jeanne d'Arc*, Paris, Albert Fointemoing, 1903, pp. 120 - 121.

¹⁸³ Roughly equivalent to the term "the marches of Lorraine".

¹⁸⁴ Guardian of livestock.

¹⁸⁵ Daughter of a villager.

¹⁸⁶ Morosini, op. cit, t. III, p. 111.

¹⁸⁷ Morosini's editor Lefèvre-Pontalis attests that, in accordance with the observation made by P. Ayroles, Morosini's chronicle is the only text to have openly indicated that Joan was a member of the Third Order of Franciscans and that early on, during the birth of the Third Order, the male communities were known as Begards and the female communities Beguines. This was probably due to the fact that, during the thirteenth century, many Beghard and Beguine associations were absorbed by the Third Orders of St-Francis and St-Dominic. Morosini, t. III, pp. 91-92.

addressed to the guardians of the pilgrimage site¹⁸⁸ with specific instructions on the location and condition of the mythical blade.

Joan's Rouen judges were very interested in her stay at Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois and the later retrieval of the sword from beneath its altar:

«Interrogée si elle fut à Sainte-Catherine de Fierbois:

Elle répondit que oui et elle y entendit trois messes en un jour ... Item elle dit qu'elle avait une épée qu'elle prit à Vaucouleurs. Elle dit encore [que], tandis qu'elle était à Tours ou à Chinon, elle envoya chercher une épée se trouvant dans l'église de Sainte-Catherine de Fierbois, derrière l'autel; et aussitôt après on la trouva toute rouillée.

Interrogée comment elle savait que cette épée était là:

¹⁸⁸ Yolande's loyal subjects. According to Tisset, Saint-Catherine-de-Fierbois was «[un] sanctuaire très vénéré. Les gens d'armes prisonniers qui avaient été rendus à la liberté y déposaient leur harnois.» He gives as his source Champion, Pierre, *Procès de Condamnation de Jeanne d'Arc*, Honoré Champion, Paris 1921, t. II, p. 363, n. 138: « On sait qu'il y avait à Fierbois un sanctuaire renommé sous l'invocation de Saint-Catherine, et très visité par les pèlerins (H. Wallon, *Jeanne d'Arc*, p. 59). Il avait été restauré, à la fin du XIVe siècle, par un saint homme, aveugle et paralytique, Jean Godefroy. La sainte y accomplit force miracles; les gens d'armes prisonniers et rendus à la liberté y déposaient leurs harnois (cf. J.-J. Bourassé, *Les Miracles de Madame Sainte Katerine de Fierbois en Touraine*, 1858). » It is reasonable to suggest that there would have been no shortage therefore of suitable swords with venerable associations in the keeping of the sanctuary. Cf. Chauvin, Yves, (ed.), *Livre des miracles de Sainte-Catherine-de-Fierbois (1375-1470)*, Poitiers, Société des Archives Historiques du Poitou, 1976, Bourassé, Jean-Jacques, *Les miracles de madame sainte Katerine de Fierbois en Touraine, 1375-1446. Publiés d'après un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque impériale par M. l'abbé J.-J. Bourassé*, Tours, 1858. Saint-Catherine-de-Fierbois seems to have been the staging point for several contemporary miracles on or around the time of Joan's appearance. For example in 1424, one of Yolande's Saumurois subjects, a certain Jean du Coudray, who was at that time being held prisoner in the fortress of Bellême, recommended himself and his devotion to Saint Catherine and shortly thereafter, in Anatole France's words: « sauta dehors, étrangla l'homme du guet, escalada le mur d'enceinte, se laissa tomber d'une hauteur de deux lances et s'en alla librement par les champs. » France, Anatole, *Vie de Jeanne d'Arc*, Paris, Editions Alive, 1999, p. 111. Furthermore, only nine months prior to Joan's arrival in Fierbois, a gentleman Jean du Chastel (one of the famous Breton family of du Chastel, a connection of Tanguy du Châtel, cf. Durand, Philippe, "Les Chastel pendant une tranche de la guerre de Cent Ans", in *Amphitrite*, vol. 7 (1974), pp. 10-25 & Michael, Jones "Bon Bretons et Bon Francoys: The Language and Meaning of Treason in Later Medieval France", in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, vol. 32, (1982), pp. 91-112), escaped from the custody of an English captain who claimed that in so doing, he had gone back upon his word not to flee. Du Chastel denied the charge and challenged the Englishman to a duel. Du Chastel triumphed, apparently through the offices of Saint Catherine whose name he had invoked for support. In recognition of her intervention, Du Chastel offered the *harnais* of the vanquished English captain to Saint Catherine's shrine in Fierbois in the presence of the Bastard of Orleans, La Hire and a great many other knights. This renders Joan's Fierbois sojourn and the later retrieval of the sword from beneath the sanctuary's altar all the more interesting. France, loc. cit and cf. Launay, G. « Notice », in *Bulletin de la Société archéologique, scientifique et littéraire du Vendômois*, t. XIX, 1880, pp. 23-25. Perhaps this heavy Armagnac-Angevin association with Saint Catherine's Fierbois shrine was one of the sources of the interest of the Rouen inquisitors in Joan's association with Saint-Catherine-de-Fierbois, mystical swords and the miraculous.

Elle répondit que cette épée était dans la terre rouillée, portant cinq croix gravées; elle sut que l'épée était là par ses voix et qu'elle n'avait jamais vu l'homme qui alla chercher ladite épée. Et elle écrivit aux gens de l'Eglise de ce lieu qu'il leur plût qu'elle ait cette épée et ils la lui envoyèrent ... Elle dit encore que aussitôt après que l'épée fut trouvée, les gens de l'église de ce lieu la frottèrent et sur-le-champ la rouille tomba sans effort. Et ce fut un armurier de Tours qui alla la chercher et les gens d'Eglise de ce lieu donnèrent un fourreau à Jeanne et ceux aussi de Tours, ensemble avec eux; ils firent faire deux fourreaux, l'un de velours vermeil et l'autre de drap d'or. Et elle s'en fit faire un autre de cuir bien fort. Elle dit cependant que, quand elle fut prise, elle n'avait pas cette épée. Elle dit encore qu'elle porta continuellement ladite épée, depuis qu'elle l'eut jusqu'à ce qu'elle partit de Saint-Denis après l'assaut de Paris.

Interrogée quelle bénédiction elle fit ou fit faire sur ladite épée:

Elle répondit qu'elle n'y jamais fit ni fit faire une quelconque bénédiction et elle n'aurait pas su quoi faire. Item elle dit qu'elle aimait bien cette épée, parce qu'elle avait été trouvée dans l'église de Sainte-Catherine qu'elle aimait bien.»¹⁸⁹

We pause here to examine the issue of the Fierbois sword to emphasize the idea that Joan herself (or her Voices/counsel) understood the emblematic cachet of a sword with provenance and/or mythical/spiritual associations. Many figures of history and legend have wielded singular swords: Arthur's sword *Caledfwlch/Caliburn/Caliburnus/Excalibur*, a blade engraved on both sides with «*take me up*» and «*cast me away*», was not only a mythical sword but its scabbard too was said to have powers of healing; injuries stemming from loss of blood could not kill the bearer. Note the description of Joan's scabbards; she states that there were at least three of them, two ceremonial and one strong and practical. Her sword was engraved with five crosses or (fleurs-de-lis). Perceval's sword, the *Sword of Trebuchet* was sheathed in solid garnet, foretold to be broken in a careless moment only to be later repaired by its lake-dwelling maker, Trebuchet. Joan, while testifying that she had been parted from her sword at Saint-Denis after the rout outside Paris, was also said to have broken the Fierbois sword in a careless moment of anger across the back of a camp follower. The most interesting aspect about Joan's sword is that at the time of its retrieval a legend was in circulation that it was the sword of Charles Martel who, on 7th October 732 in a moment of macro-historical consequence, halted the Islamic conquest of Western Europe on a battle-field between

¹⁸⁹ Tisset, *Procès de Condamnation*, t. II, pp. 75 – 76.

Poitiers and Tours. Joan was in Tours at the time she sent for the Fierbois sword, and Charles Martel was a person of historical and legendary significance, particularly at the site of his great victory against the pagan invaders. He was, furthermore, the grandfather of Charlemagne, (himself owner of the legendary sword *Joyeuse*), who secured Western Europe for Christianity by the cross and the sword. What better pedigree could a weapon possess? Others, however, suggested that the sword had actually belonged to Louis d'Orléans, assassinated by Jean sans Peur in 1407, and we must recall that the House of Orleans occupied a special place in Joan's heart and prayers.¹⁹⁰ Whatever its true provenance, it was held to be a sword of noble pedigree.

Joan herself had invoked the prophecies of Merlin from Domremy-Vaucouleurs,¹⁹¹ and the Grail quest held a strong symbolic importance for the people of the mediæval epoch,¹⁹² particularly in its emphasis on the purity of its heroes. Yolande had spent decades emphasizing her son-in-law's legitimacy to rule, citing their familial links to Saint-Louis and Charlemagne. Joan invoked both names of in her pleas to Charles to accept her credentials.¹⁹³ The Fierbois sword was just another feature of a legend actively propagated regarding Joan and Charles. The sword made perfect sense and would have meshed very neatly indeed with the indispensable public relations aspect of Yolande's project, her efforts ably assisted by her Franciscan supporters. Joan's Rouen judges sought to determine whether the Fierbois sword had held magical/heretical qualities for Joan and whether she herself had blessed or had sought to have it blessed. They should perhaps have sought to emphasize its existence as a propaganda tool for Joan's supporters and sponsors.

Letters and *bulletins d'information* widely circulated by Charles's chancellery prior to the lifting of the siege of Orleans round out the official aspect of a concerted information offensive to "sell" Joan's credentials as a metaphysical/spiritual complement to the military campaign to unify and liberate France. This officially-sanctioned public relations enterprise consisted of the findings of the Poitiers inquest, Joan's letter to the English

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Tisset, *Procès...*, t.I, pp. 44-54.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Fraioli, Deborah Anne, "The Literary Image of Joan of Arc: prior influences", in *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies*, vol. 56, n° 4, pp. 811-830 & Fraioli, Deborah Anne, *Joan of Arc: The Early Debate*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2000. Cf. Wayman, Dorothy, "The Chancellor and Jeanne d'Arc", in *Franciscan Studies*, vol. 17 (1957), pp. 273-305 & Valois, Noël, "Jeanne d'Arc et la prophétie de Marie Robine", in *Mélanges de Paul Fabre: Etudes d'histoire du moyen-âge.*, Paris, 1902, p. 456.

¹⁹² Cf. Taylor, *Joan of Arc...*pp. 18-19.

¹⁹³ See above, p. 278.

and an anonymous poem in Latin lauding Joan's bona fides and her vocation, presenting her as «*la blanche Pucelle ... envoyée de Dieu*».¹⁹⁴ Cordier notes that this public information campaign infiltrated the kingdom and beyond to an astonishing degree, citing evidence from, amongst other places, Brittany, the Dauphiné, Tournai, Strasbourg, Mayence and German sources uncovered by Lefèvre-Pontalis.¹⁹⁵ We must not underestimate the need for such propaganda, particularly as the kingdom was fractured and the great Houses were in conflict with one another. Charles's anticipated victory demanded unity and the approbation of God. Henry V had claimed that his victories against France were a clear judgement upon France's sins: in *le Mistere du Siege d'Orleans*, the character Dieu states that France's misery is a «... *maledicticon celeste / pour leur vie faulse et deshonneste, / es François principalement; / et vueil que on les admoneste / que pugniz seront grandement!*»¹⁹⁶ Not only was it Joan's mission to unify Charles's subjects, it was more cogently still focused upon legitimizing Charles's rule.¹⁹⁷ In the words of Huizinga: «*La vie de la chrétienté médiévale est, dans toutes ses manifestations, saturée de représentations religieuses. Pas de choses ou d'actions, si ordinaires soient-elles, dont on ne cherche constamment à établir le rapport avec la foi.*»¹⁹⁸ For Joan's contemporaries it was all about Faith; disbelief was frequently suspended, especially in time of crisis, as *quid pro quo* for longed-for salvation.

The news of Joan's imminent appearance in Orleans and the objectives of her mission most certainly reached the ears of Yolande's uncle, the aging Cardinal of Bar. Ever conscious of his tenuous hold over Bar, and fearing for René's inheritance, he sent letters from René's chancellery at the beginning of May to reconfirm the agreement between Bar-Lorraine, rendering homage and obedience to the regent Bedford for the county of Guise.¹⁹⁹ Bedford, in issuing a list of those lords loyal to Henry VI, named René d'Anjou with the bitter observation that his loyalty was distinguished by his prompt infidelity whenever circumstances presented themselves for a return to Charles's cause.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁴ Cited by Cordier, Jacques, *Jeanne d'Arc sa personnalité son rôle*, Paris, La Table Ronde, 1948, p. 175. Cordier makes many references to Lefèvre-Pontalis op. cit., and the Trial documents to support his well argued case.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., and cited above p. 284 and n.n. 180 & 181.

¹⁹⁶ Hamblin, V.L., *Le Mistere du Siege d'Orleans*, Geneva, Droz, 2002, p. 308, ll. 6,996 – 7,000. Cf. Peyronnet, Georges, "L'étrange rencontre d'un conquérant dévot et d'un prédicateur messager de paix: Henri V d'Angleterre et Saint Vincent Ferrier (1418). », in *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, vol. 87, 3-4, (1992), pp. 663-681.

¹⁹⁷ It was the objective of the Rouen trial to prove that she had misled the gullible and to de-legitimize Charles's coronation by disproving her spiritual credentials.

¹⁹⁸ Huizinga, Johan, *Le Déclin du Moyen Age*, Paris, Saverne, 1958.

¹⁹⁹ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 72.

²⁰⁰ See Appendix 1, n. 45.

The legend in place, the costume and props prepared, let us now turn our attention to Blois, where Yolande was deeply involved with Alençon in preparations for the supply/reinforcement convoy destined to raise the siege and the morale of Orleans. There was no particular urgency for supplies, as the English hold over Orleans was perforated; people were able to come and go from the city, if not entirely at their leisure, then with no great hardship. They may have been bored with their daily bread, but they were not starving. This convoy was not hurriedly assembled as a result of Joan's appearance, it had been long in the planning, and it too formed part of the hearts and minds offensive about to be initiated.²⁰¹ From Jean d'Alençon's testimony we learn that: "*... hiis auditis, rex misit loquentem versus reginam Cicilie pro preparando victualia ad ducendum Aurelianis, pro exercitu conducendo; et ibidem invenit dominum Ambrosium de Loré et dominum Ludovicum [Louis, l'Amiral Culant], de cuius cognomine non recordatur qui preparaverant victualia.*"²⁰² Alençon was ordered by Charles to join Yolande in Blois to prepare the supply convoy; in Dunois's words:

*"... ipse rex fecit congregari multitudinem armatorum, pro conducendo victualia apud dictam civitatem Aurelianensem ... ad villam de Bloys, in qua venerunt domini qui conducebant victualia, scilicet domini de Rès et de Boussac, marescalli Francie, cum quibus erant dominus de Culen, admiraldus Francie, La Hire, et dominus Ambrosius de Loré, postea factus prepositus Parisiensis, qui omnes insimul, cum armatis conducentibus, victualia et Johanna Puella, venerunt a parte ..."*²⁰³

Yolande had prepared the convoy; the great lords and officers of the Crown (most of them her most loyal allies)²⁰⁴ assembled in Blois to lead it and Joan to Orleans. The convoy strategy used for the liberation of Orleans was almost identical to the one

²⁰¹ See below pp. 290-292 for various embassies and messengers who travelled to and from Orleans and Joan's own relative ease of ingress and egress once she had established herself in Orleans.

²⁰² Doncoeur & Lanhers, t. V, p. 212.

²⁰³ Duparc, *Procès en Nullité*, t. I, pp. 317- 318.

²⁰⁴ Culant, Boussac, Ambroise de Loré (one of Yolande's Manceau knights) and Raïs were all connected to Yolande. In 1422 Yolande exercised her right of guardianship over a vassal in his minority, Gilles de Laval, Lord of Retz or Raïs. She had the use of two thirds of the revenues of his lands and he retained a third, the procurer of the castellany of Ambrières concluding that: *«tous les presens revenus et enrichemens de ladite terre et baronnie, par la coustume de Normandie, appartient à la Royne de Sicile ad ce Giles de Rays, seigneur de ladite terre et baronnie qui est en l'aage de XIII à XV ans soit en l'aage de XX ans accompliz.»*, Reynaud, *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 75. At the time of his appearance at Blois therefore, he would have only relatively recently been released from Yolande's guardianship. Gilles de Raïs was an extremely wealthy and cultivated individual, eventually falling foul of his strange desires.

employed by Richemont in the liberation of Montargis by the Bastard and La Hire in 1427.²⁰⁵

Joan has been much lauded for liberating Orleans militarily, but, as we will see, her real achievement was to win the hearts and minds of her own people, unify them behind her standard and therefore Charles's, rather than personally rout the English from Orleans. Charles's very able generals were equal to the task of raising the siege once all the necessary conditions were in place. It was hoped that the victory would sufficiently attract the attention of Burgundy for him to contemplate uncoupling his destiny from Bedford's and reopen negotiations with Charles. We will demonstrate why this was the case. In order to do this we must first examine certain factors relative to the liberation of Orleans.

In the absence of the Duke of Orleans, Charles's generals and the city of Orleans had been in contact with Burgundy to solicit his support against the English. This was in keeping with all negotiation attempts that had been ongoing for many years between Charles-Yolande and Burgundy with the support of their intermediaries Brittany and Savoy. According to the *Journal du Siège d'Orléans*, Poton de Xaintrailles, one of the Bastard's lieutenants, accompanied by members of the Orleans bourgeoisie, travelled to seek an audience with Philippe le Bon and Jean de Luxembourg, returning to Orleans around 17th April 1429.²⁰⁶ Xaintrailles succeeded in his embassy, for the *Journal* reports that Burgundy: «... à ceste occasion envoyoit avecques les ambassadeurs sa trompette, qui de par luy commanda à tous ceulx de ses terres et villes à luy obéissantes, estans en celluy siege, qu'ilz s'en allassent et departissent, et ne mesfeissent plus en aucune manière à ceulx d'Orléans.»²⁰⁷ Burgundy, who was at the time «*pas content*» with Bedford, called off his troops, leaving

²⁰⁵ See above, pp. 229-230.

²⁰⁶ Charpentier, Paul & Cuissard, Charles, *Journal du Siège d'Orléans*, Orléans, H. Herliusan, 1896, p. 70. The oldest extant manuscript is dated 1472 and the *Journal* seems to have been commissioned by municipal leaders so that the record of this moment in the city's history might be preserved in the city's archive. It covers events from the initiation of the siege on 12th October 1428 to the end of September 1429 and was completed by notary Pierre [Soubsdan] Soudan (whose father participated in the defence of Orleans) by about 1467. Cf. Taylor, *Joan of Arc...*p. 356. The sources used for the record were Jean Chartier, The Berry Herald, the Nullification trial, especially Jean, the Bastard of Orleans's testimony and miscellaneous oral and written accounts as well as an unidentified register of events as they occurred. As Margolis has it: "Thus, [the] *Journal* is one of the better chronicles esp. for insight into the Orléanais' perception and lore about J'...J's miraculous presence and the people's fervent admiration of her." Margolis, op. cit. p. 59.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 70.

the English forces at a critical numerical disadvantage.²⁰⁸ To a pre-existing strategy of military action, furious diplomatic activity, and Burgundy's volte-face were added celestial intervention and divine legitimization of Charles's right to kingship. Under such circumstances, Joan and the generals could not have failed.

We need to identify who was in control of this operation and who was there to rally the faithful behind one banner: Joan was not given the command. Charles's lieutenant was the Bastard of Orleans and he worked closely with an able and trusted war cabinet whose meetings were held without Joan's assistance.²⁰⁹ This is made abundantly clear by the fact that she was unaware of the route to be taken from Blois to Orleans. We will examine this claim below but first we should analyze Joan's entry into Orleans as given by the *Journal*:

«... car ainsi comme à huyt heures au soir, malgré tous les Angloys qui oncques n'y mirent empeschement aucun, elle y entra armée de toutes pieces, montée sur ung cheval blanc; et faisoit porter devant elle son estandart, qui estoit pareillement blanc, ouquel avait deux anges tenans chacun une fleur de liz en leur main; et ou panon estoit peinte comme une Anonciacion c'est l'image de Nostre Dame ayant devant elle ung ange luy présentant ung liz.

Elle ainsi, entrant dedans Orléans, avoit à son cousté senestre le bastart d'Orléans, armé et monté moult richement. Et aprez venoyent plusieurs autres nobles et vaillans seigneurs, escuyers, cappitaines et gens de guerre, sans aucuns de la garnison, et aussy des bourgoys d'Orléans, qui luy estoyent allez au devant ... la vindrent recevoir les autres gens de guerre, bourgoys et bourgoises d'Orléans, portans grant nombre de torches, et faisans autel joye comme se ilz veissent Dieu descendre entre eulx ... ilz se sentoient jà tous reconfortez, et comme desassiégéz, par la vertu divine qu'on leur avoit dit estre en ceste simple Pucelle ... lesquelz l'accompaignèrent au long de leur ville et cité, faisans moult grant chière, et par très grant honneur la conduisrent tous jusques auprez de la porte Regnart en l'ostel de Jacquet Boucher [Jacques Boucher], pour lors

²⁰⁸ The English had a maximum of 5,000 men at their disposal with only 3,000 of that number battle-ready. The French had a force of 5,600 battle-ready men, to which another three thousand were added from Blois on 29th April and 4th May. Cf. Cordier, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

²⁰⁹ In fact Joan only ever participated at one royal council meeting, on 10th July 1420 during the siege of Troyes, and it was in fact Yolande's stalwart Robert le Maçon who suggested that she be called into the meeting to give her "advice". Below, p. 305. By way of contrast, Yolande d'Aragon was mentioned as being present as an official *conseiller* on a minimum of twenty-eight occasions. Gaussin states: « *La présence de femmes au Conseil est un fait exceptionnel : 2 sur 282, et encore, pour l'une d'elles, Jeanne d'Arc, il ne s'agit, nous l'avons vu, que d'une présence ponctuelle. L'autre « conseiller » femme fut Yolande d'Anjou, duchesse d'Anjou, belle-mère du roi, dont elle fut vraiment un conseiller. Exception donc, qui n'empêche pas d'affirmer qu'à cette époque les femmes ne jouaient, en France, aucun rôle politique, du moins officiellement.* » Gaussin, *op. cit.* p. 93.

*trésorier du duc d'Orléans, où elle fut receue à très grant joye, avecques ses deux frères [Jean and Pierre],*²¹⁰ *et les deux gentilzhommes et leur varlet, qui estoient venuz avecques eulx du pays de Barroys.»*²¹¹

This description of Joan's triumphant entry into Orleans contains all the elements of a well-staged spectacle designed to draw maximum value from the reaction of its spectators. This was not the discreet but much anticipated arrival of a new general, but rather, as the *Journal* puts it, it affected witnesses so profoundly that they might have been in the presence of «*Dieu descend[u] entre eulx*». This is precisely the impact that had been hoped for. Joan did not arrive alone but in the company of their great general the Bastard of Orleans. She was met at the treasurer's mansion «*à très grant joye*» by her brothers and companions from Vaucouleurs. She was arrayed in full martial attire including spurs and mail, an unknighthed knight and as yet an unbeatified saint. Where were their fearless adversaries the English in all of this? Astonishingly they were passively observing events, this despite the fact that Joan's procession with its accompanying great torches must have attracted much interest both inside and outside the city walls. From the hands of Yolande, Joan had been delivered by the Bastard of Orleans into the care of the Duke of Orleans's treasurer, one of his highest ranking officers. Joan was an ambulant *oriflamme*²¹² of inestimable value so, who better to charge with her safe-keeping than Orleans's treasurer Jacques Boucher? This was not in all probability how Joan would have seen herself. She most assuredly believed that she was France's only hope of victory, God's chosen envoy.

Cordier makes the well-established point that Joan was largely excluded from deliberations of the Bastard's war cabinet: «*Jeanne avant et pendant son séjour à Orléans n'exerça aucune fonction militaire, ne prit aucune décision et ne donna aucun ordre touchant les opérations. Il est même fort douteux qu'elle ait été consultée à leur sujet.*».²¹³ He elaborates upon his theme by stating that while she was omnipresent on the field of battle, her actions were precipitated by her emotions, her natural impulsiveness, and underscored

²¹⁰ Jean later held the prevostship of Vaucouleurs and Pierre would be created a knight on 28th July 1443, having settled in the duchy of Orleans.

²¹¹ *Journal du Siège ...*, pp. 76 – 78.

²¹² «*La légende de l'oriflamme, appelée également enseigne, bannière ou gonfanon de Saint-Denis ... passait pour avoir accompagné Charlemagne lors de son prétendu voyage à Jérusalem ... Dans l'esprit des gens du Moyen-Âge, l'oriflamme était incontestablement liée au souvenir de Charlemagne.*», Contamine, Phillippe, «*Des Pouvoirs en France 1300/1500*» Paris, Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure, 1992, p. 50.

²¹³ Cordier, *op. cit.*, p. 167. See above, p. 292, note 209.

by «une impavidité étonnante chez une jeune fille»²¹⁴ which undeniably had an impact upon the morale and courage of her party. Joan inoculated Charles's forces against fear and pessimism and established herself as France's new *oriflamme*.²¹⁵ By 8th May 1429 the English had been shamed and driven from Orleans and her "sign" witnessed.²¹⁶ On the following day or shortly thereafter Joan departed the city to seek out her «gentil dauphin» in Tours:

«Ces choses ainsi faites, alla la Pucelle avec ses gens à Tours en Touraine; là devait en même temps venir le roi; et la Pucelle y fut avant le roy. Elle prit son étendard à la main et chevaucha vers le roi. Et quand ils vinrent à s'aborder, la Pucelle inclina la tête vers le roi, si fort qu'elle put, et le roi la fit gracieusement relever, et tient-on qu'il l'eût volontiers baisée de la joie qu'il avait ... Et elle demeura auprès de lui jusqu'après le 23^e jour du mois de mai ...».²¹⁷

Windecke does not identify the other participants in this encounter. Yolande was last mentioned in Blois, and while she might well have returned to her capital Tours by the time of Joan's return we have not unearthed documentary proof to support this supposition. Blois however was close enough to Tours, and Yolande had in the past travelled to and from the two cities as required. From the moment of Joan's "home-coming", all parties started to take her credentials as a leader far more seriously. While the approach to her leadership was still marked by prudence, Joan started to play a more active rôle than had hitherto been envisaged. She was no longer merely a spiritual mascot; she had started to attract a constituency of the most powerful captains and generals in the realm.

Windecke describes the decision of the royal council regarding their next move. Joan, Yolande and God carried the day:

²¹⁴ Loc. cit.

²¹⁵ Saint Denis and therefore the actual *oriflamme* had been in English hands since 1419. This despite Thomassin's chronicle which records: «Aucunes fois [Joan] appeloit [Charles] «l'auriflambe».» *le registre Delphinal*, loc.cit. We would contend that Charles's potential as a symbolic «*oriflamme*» for a demoralized France had burned out well before Joan's appearance and it was for this very reason that her appearance was vital to his cause.

²¹⁶ It is extremely interesting to note that 8th May was a major celebration for Franciscans for on that day (as well as 29th September), friars celebrated the Liturgy of Saint Michael the Archangel. Furthermore in Francis's prayer of Exhortation to the Praise of God, the final exhortation (17) is "Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle." These two elements testify to the precision in timing of the lifting of the siege on 8th May 1429 and to the Franciscan practice of exhorting the intercession of Saint Michael. *Francis and Clare – The Complete Works*, Armstrong, Regis J and Brady Ignatius. C, NY, Paulist Press, 1982, p. 43.

²¹⁷ The Chronicle of Eberhard Windecke, in Lefèvre-Pontalis, op. cit. p. 177.

«Et tint le roi conseil sur ce qu'il devait faire, car la Pucelle voulait de suite le mener à Reims, et le couronner et faire roi.²¹⁸ Et se mit le roi sus, et est en chemin et espère réduire Meung et Jargeau et [Beaugency]. Dieu veuille y pourvoir aussi!». ²¹⁹

Propaganda burgeoned on both sides, with most of Joan's contemporaries believing that her appearance could only be described in terms of paranormal phenomena. For loyalists she was *l'Angélique*, inspired by God and His Mother, and for Bedford and his men she was "une femme desordonnée et diffamée, estant en habit d'homme et de gouvernement dissolu"²²⁰. The English were doubtless keen to capture her and neutralize her impact. For the moment, however, she was still a valuable asset to Charles's cause and therefore protected by both him and Yolande, despite La Trémoille's best efforts to undermine her influence over the king, and Regnault's continuing deep suspicion of her motives and connections. But what of Brittany (Yolande's hitherto intermediary and erstwhile ally) in all of this?

Windecke takes up his tale:

«Ces choses ainsi faites, envoya le duc de Bretagne son confesseur à la Pucelle pour s'enquérir si c'était de par Dieu qu'elle était venue porter aide au roi. Et dit la Pucelle: «Oui». Et dit le confesseur [the Franciscan friar Yves Milbeau]: «Puisque donc il en est ainsi, alors viendra volontiers le duc, mon seigneur, pour faire service et aide au roi,» - et nommait le duc son droit seigneur - «mais de son propre corps ne peut-il venir, car il est en grand infirmité, et doit-il lui envoyer son fils aîné à grand puissance.»²²¹ Et dit la Pucelle au confesseur que le duc de Bretagne n'était pas son droit seigneur, et il n'aurait pas dû, selon raison, attendre si longtemps pour envoyer ses gens lui faire service et aide.»²²²

This interesting exchange is backed up by supporting documentary proof.²²³ Joan appears to have ignored the fact that it was Charles's favourite La Trémoille who drove both Richemont and his brother Brittany's support from Charles's party. Post-Orleans,

²¹⁸ Others such as the indigent Alençon had a personal interest in attempting to liberate domains to the north.

²¹⁹ Lefèvre-Pontalis, loc. cit.

²²⁰ Monstrelet, op. cit, t. IV, p. 341.

²²¹ Francis I of Brittany, Jean V's eldest son, would marry Yolande's younger daughter, Yolande d'Anjou in 1431. See below, pp. 341-342.

²²² Lefèvre-Pontalis (Windecke Chronicle), p. 179.

²²³ Frère Milbeau was sent to Joan in May 1429 in the company of the Duke's herald, Hermine. Lefèvre-Pontalis cites a document held in the *Chambre de Comptes de Nantes*, cited by Lobineau, Dom Guy-Alexis, *Histoire de Bretagne*, Paris, Guérin, 1707, t. I, p. 580 and Morice, Dom *Histoire de Bretagne*, t. I, p. 508. Cf. indication in Quicherat, *Procès ...* t. IV, pp. 485 & 498, n. 1.

Jean V did in fact come forward to offer the assistance of his duchy in the form of his eldest son and heir, while his brother Richemont waited in the wings for his cue.

The campaign for the Loire and the march to Reims was initiated with a string of easy successes for Charles's forces. In the wake of Orleans, Charles had named as his lieutenant-general Alençon (Richemont's and Brittany's nephew). Richemont's allies Gilles de Rais (Laval) and the youthful Guy de Laval and his brother André, sire of Lohéac had all joined Joan's forces. Richemont gathered his closest allies²²⁴ together and readied himself to re-enter the fray. Gruel reports:

*«L'an mil CCCC XXIX mon dit seigneur le connestable se mist sus en armes pour aler secourir Orleans et assembla une tres belle compaignie ... monseigneur de Beaumanoir, monseigneur de Rostrelen et toutes les garnisons de Sablé [Yolande's domain] et de La Flesche [Yolande's domain], de Durestal [Durtal, cant., Maine-et-Loire, arr., Baugé, again Yolande's domain] et toutes le garnisons de ces basses marches [all contained within Yolande's domains]; et de Bretagne plusieurs notables gens ... Robert de Montauban, missire Guillaume de Saint Gille, missire Alain de Feuillée, missire Brangon de Herpagon, missire Loys de Secouralles et pluseurs autres chevaliers et escuiers sans compter ceulx de sa maison et grant nombre des gens de bien de ses terres de Poictou jusques au nombre de CCCC lances et VIIIc archiers.»*²²⁵

The mere presence of so many troops drawn from Yolande's garrisons probably suggests that she, Richemont and Brittany had decided that it was time for the Constable to reappear.

Richemont had followed Joan's progress along the Loire. On 15th June Joan's troops took the bridge at Meung and on the same day laid siege to Beaugency. It was at this point that Richemont determined to intercept her and plead for a return to the king's good graces. He sent Rostrelen and Le Bourgeois to demand lodgings from Charles's captains.²²⁶ Richemont was informed that Charles would repulse his attempts to join the royal army. Gruel again:

²²⁴ Pardiac, Beaumanoir, Rostrenen, Robert de Montauban, Guillaume de Saint-Gilles and Alain de La Feuillée. Cosneau, op. cit., p. 166.

²²⁵ Gruel, Guillaume, *Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont Connétable de France, Duc de Bretagne (1393-1458)*, ed. Le Vavasseur, Archille, Librairie Renouard, Paris 1890, p. 69.

²²⁶ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 167.

«Et aussitost que le Roy le sceut [that Richemont intended to link up with the royal army], il envoya monseigneur de la Jaille²²⁷ au devant de luy et le [Richemont] trouva à Lodun; si le tira à part et luy dist que le Roy lui mandoit qu'il s'en retournast à sa maison, et que ne fust tant hardi de passer en avant; et que s'il passoit oultre que le Roy le combatroit et qu'il voiroit quiouldroit combattre. Lors mon dit seigneur respondit que ce qu'il faisoit estoit pour le bien du Royaume et du Roy. Lors le seigneur de la Jaille lui dist «Monseigneur, il me semble que vous ferés très bien. Si print monseigneur le chemin et tira sur la riviere de Vienne et passa à gué; puis là tira à Emboise; et Regnaud de Velourt, qui estoit capitaine du dit lieu d'Emboise, luy bailla le passage; et là sceut que le siege estoit à Boysgency. ».²²⁸

The La Jaille (probably Bertrand, captain-governor of Loudun after his father Tristan IV) mentioned above by Gruel would have been one of Yolande's vassals, perhaps pointing to the underlying reason for his ready capitulation in the face of Richemont's determination. Regardless of an individual's preferred allegiance, no one at court during La Trémoille's ascendancy dared contradict him openly.

Richemont stood his ground while La Trémoille quit Chinon to seek refuge in his city of Sully, taking the wise precaution of ensuring that Charles accompanied him. La Trémoille must have suspected Yolande's hand in Richemont's reappearance and he reacted by sending La Jaille to head off the Constable. Richemont might have believed that he had right (or at least Yolande) on his side for he refused to capitulate and, according to Gruel, the king's envoy read the situation from Richemont's standpoint. It is furthermore of interest to note that it seems that Bertrand de La Jaille's son Pierre spent his adolescence in Richemont's household and, at the time of the confrontation being discussed above, Pierre de la Jaille seems to have been in fact, Richemont's

²²⁷ Grandson of Jean de la Jaille (1324–1405), Marshal of France. It is worth noting that La Jaille-[sur] Yvon is in Anjou. Tristan IV de la Jaille was one of Yolande's most trusted counsellors and one of her personal envoys to Henry V in the period 1418-1419. Rymer, t. XI, *passim*. Tristan had in fact previously been one of Louis II's leading captains and followed him to Naples. Upon his return with Louis II, Tristan was made Governor of Angers and Grand Master of Louis II's household. In 1425 Yolande created him guard and captain of Loudun, and Tristan later returned to Naples with Louis III, where he died after the victory at Aquila. Cf. Brisay, René Archille Joseph de, *La Maison de la Jaille avec tableaux généalogiques par le Marquis de Brisay*, Paris. H. Champion, 1910 ; Baudry, J., *Histoire généalogique de la maison Eder par J. Baudry*, Rennes, J. Plihon et L. Hommay, 1911 & Hucher, E., "Lettres par lesquelles la reine Yolande d'Anjou constatans que la Tour élevée par Adam Chatelain au manoir épiscopal du Mans, devant l'église des Cordeliers, est batie sur un terrain appartenant à l'évêché, déclare qu'elle appartient exclusivement à celui-ci (Cartulaire de l'évêché du Mans, ms. 247, f° 192, 28th August, 1417) », in *Société historique de la province du Maine : Cartulaire Le Mans évêché.*, Le Mans, 1908, pp. 198-200.

²²⁸ Gruel, *op. cit.* p. 70.

squire.²²⁹ An absurd state of affairs for all those involved. Joan and Alençon had earlier received orders to stop Richemont rejoining Charles's army,²³⁰ an ironic situation as he was Charles's Constable and therefore commander-in-chief of all his forces. Gruel:

*«Et tantost on lui vint dire que la Pucelle et ceulx du siege venoient le [Richemont] combatre, et il respondiit que s'ilz venoient qu'il les verroit. Et bientost monterent à cheval la Pucelle et monseigneur d'Alenczon et pluseurs autres. Toutefois La Hyre, Giralde de la Paglere, monseigneur de Guitri et autres capitaines demanderent à la Pucelle [ce] qu'elle vouloit faire, et elle leur respondiit qu'il failloit aller combatre le connestable. Et ilz lui respondiirent que si elle y alloit qu'elle trouveroit bien à qui parler et qu'il y en avoit en la compaignie qui plustost seroient à luy que à elle, et qu'ilz ameroient mieulx lui et sa compaignie que toutes les pucelles du Royaume de France.»*²³¹

La Trémoille's plan to humiliate Yolande by sending one of her vassals to head off Richemont back-fired, as is clear from La Jaille's reaction above.

While we must approach Gruel's account with the customary caution directed at a chronicler lauding the qualities of his subject, his account does shed some light upon the probable opinions of Yolande's captains. We must not forget that Joan was following Charles's (La Trémoille's) orders not to allow Richemont to approach. Charles had never forgiven Richemont's removal of his previous favourites Giac and Camus, while La Trémoille feared losing his influence over Charles. Despite the need to chase the English from France, La Trémoille stood ready to reignite civil conflict with Richemont, even though the Constable's troops were probably superior to Charles's own and he had the support of Yolande and Brittany. Charles's generals on the other hand probably wanted Richemont back in the fold.

In the end, Joan accommodated Yolande's stalwart military auxiliary. Gruel:

«Cependant monseigneur [Richemont] chevauchoit en belle ordenance et furent tous esbahiz qu'il fut arrivé. Et vers La Maladerie la Pucelle arriva devers luy et monseigneur d'Alenczon et monseigneur de Laval, monseigneur de Loheac, monseigneur le bastard d'Orleans et plusieurs capitaines qui luy firent grant chiere et furent bien aises de sa venue.

²²⁹ Cf. Piponnier, op. cit. *passim*. Pierre would later serve as René d'Anjou's chamberlain and counsellor.

²³⁰ Wallon, op. cit., t. I, p. 196.

²³¹ Gruel, pp. 70-71.

La Pucelle descendit à pié et monseigneur aussi et vint la dicte Pucelle embracer mon dit seigneur par les jambes.²³² Et lors il parla à elle et luy dist: «Jehanne, on m'a dit que me voulés combattre; je ne scey si vous estes de par Dieu or non; si vous estes de par Dieu, je ne vous crains rien, car Dieu sceit mon bon vouloir; si vous estes de par le deable, je vous crains encore moins.»²³³

Richemont's strength of arms was too great an advantage to ignore and he was welcomed back by Charles's generals.²³⁴

La chronique de la Pucelle:

«Le conte de Richemont... se mist en toute humilité devant ladicte Pucelle, luy suppliant que, comme le roy luy eust donné puissance de pardonner et remettre toutes offenses commises et perpétrées contre luy et son autorité, et que, pour aucuns sinistres rapports, le roy eust conceu hayne et mal talent contre luy, en telle manière qu'il avoit fait faire deffense, par ses lettres, que aucun recueil, faveur ou passage ne luy fussent donnez pour venir en son armée: la Pucelle le voulust, de sa grâce, recevoir pour le roy au service de sa couronne, pour y employer son corps, sa puissance et toute sa seigneurie, en luy pardonnant toute offense. Et à celle heure estoient illec le duc d'Alençon et tous les haults seigneurs de l'ost, qui en requirent la Pucelle, laquelle leur octroya, parmy ce qu'elle receut en leur présence le serment dudict connestable, de loyalement servir le roy, sans jamais faire ny dire chose qui luy doibve tourner à desplaisance. Et à ceste promesse tenir ferme, sans efraindre, et estre contraincts par le roy si ledict connestable estoit trouvé defaillant, lesdicts seigneurs s'obligèrent à la Pucelle par lettres sellées de leurs seaulx.»²³⁵

This version of events describes a very formal reunification of Richemont with Charles's army and captains. It implies that Joan had the power of a royal pardon, which might or might not have been the case. Perhaps Richemont and his allies (Yolande included) were actively testing the limits of Joan's influence over Charles. Joan obliged the other lords to

²³² Gruel may be indulging in "chronicler's licence" here in describing Joan's reaction upon meeting the Constable for the first time. Nonetheless, if Gruel is guilty of exaggeration, his choice of reaction seems in keeping with Joan's ardour (and characteristic responses) in encountering other individuals on other reported occasions; after all Richemont was Yolande's man, in spite of what Charles might have thought of him. Le Vavasseur states that the list of generals who participated in this first encounter might also be an example of Gruel's overreaching to legitimize the ready acceptance of Richemont by Joan and Alençon (n. 1, p. 71). The fact remains that Richemont had the support of the captains and generals listed by Gruel, which is borne out by the Bastard of Orleans/Richemont partnership in the routing of English forces from key centres both pre and post Joan's epoch. See above pp. 229-230 for Montargis 1427 and below pp. 375-378 for their joint victories in Rouen and Paris.

²³³ Gruel, pp. 71 - 72.

²³⁴ 16th June 1429. Cf. Cosneau, op. cit., p. 168 - 169.

²³⁵ *La Chronique de la Pucelle*, pp. 304 - 305.

affix their seals to Richemont's oath of fealty in direct contradiction to La Trémoille's position in relation to the Constable.

From our examination above we see Yolande's party unifying, with La Trémoille for the moment in defensive mode, fleeing Chinon to his refuge in Sully until he could devise and implement a counter-strategy to neutralize Richemont and by extension the revival of Yolande's influence over Charles.

Many have alluded to Yolande's authority over Charles and the rôle she played in the recovery of France. The "unscientific" yet frequently apposite Michelet had this to say about the origin, quality and relatively modest circumstances of Charles's most effective and loyal counsellors:

*«Maintenant si l'on veut savoir qui les approcha de lui, quelle influence le [Charles] rendit docile à leurs conseils, on trouvera, si je ne me trompe, que ce fut celle d'une femme, de sa belle-mère, Yolande d'Anjou. Dès le commencement de ce règne [Charles's] nous la voyons puissante, c'est elle qui fait accueillir la Pucelle; c'est avec elle, dans une occasion, que le duc d'Alençon s'entend sur les préparatifs de la campagne. Cette influence, balancée par celle des favoris, semble avoir été sans rivale ...».*²³⁶

La Trémoille was right to fear Yolande's re-invigorated ascendancy over her son-in-law. If we are to believe Jean Juvénal des Ursins,²³⁷ Gruel and others, Yolande and her allies had become increasingly proactive with Joan's appearance. With Charles for the moment in the thrall of his celestial intermediary, all that La Trémoille could hope to achieve was to distance Richemont and Yolande from victories in the Loire campaign and the proposed march to Reims for Charles's coronation, underpinning his efforts with a strategy to undermine Joan's standing and credibility as soon on the occasion presented itself.

Richemont, Joan and the royal army turned their attention to Beaugency-Meung where they emerged victorious over the English,²³⁸ who in this defeat had not merely lost their strategic positions, but moreover their reputation as invincible adversaries, the confidence in their superiority and the attendant prestige which had in the past been the

²³⁶ Michelet, *Histoire de France*, (ed. Mettra, Claude), Geneva, Editions Editio-Service, , t, IV, p. 26.

²³⁷ The accepted author of *La Chronique de la Pucelle*. See above p. 175, note 58.

²³⁸ 18th June 1429.

principle source of their courage.²³⁹ This was the real strength of Joan's mission: her ability to rally the French while at the same time demoralizing the English. It would also seal her fate at the hands of the enemies, who would show her to be fallible, besmirching her character and diminishing her achievements with the odour of heresy.

The day after Beaugency-Meung, the triumphant army entered Orleans to enthusiastic acclaim. The citizens prepared for Charles's anticipated arrival but La Trémoille obstructed plans to laud the victory and by extension, Joan's /Yolande's/Richemont's escalating hegemony. La Trémoille kept Charles firmly sequestered in Sully and worked to undermine Richemont's participation. Joan, Alençon and other powerful lords sought an audience with Charles at Sully where they implored him to welcome his Constable back into the fold. They met with a stony refusal, Charles and La Trémoille wanting nothing to do with their Constable. Their rejection of Richemont and the negative response to their decision is perhaps best expressed by Martial d'Auvergne:

*«Le Roy pour son Pays conquerre,
Non obstant son chemin tira
Droit devers la ville d'Auxerre,
Où son ost troys jours demoura.
Si luy fut faicte obeissance,
Et Entrée par les Habitans,
Qui eurent une surcéance
Dont plusieurs ne furent contens.
De cest appointment y là,
Tremouille si fut blasmé fort,
Et puis Richemont s'en alla,
Car entr'eulx y avoit discort.»²⁴⁰*

²³⁹ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 172.

²⁴⁰ D'Auvergne, Martial, *Les poésies de Martial de Paris dit D'Auvergne – Les Vigilles de la Mort du Roy Charles VII*, Paris, Imprimerie d'Antoine Urbain, 1724, t. I, p. 103. This epic poem is held to be a very skillful versification of the chronicle penned by Jean Chartier (himself neither a great stylist nor indeed a terribly accurate chronicler) compiled prior to the Nullification trial, whose main value lies in its recording of the political climate and documents gathered together during the reign of Charles VII. Margolis, op. cit., pp. 50-51 & 268.

La Trémoille had succeeded in overthrowing the will of Charles's army to accept Richemont's return, and quarantined for the moment Yolande's authority by removing her military auxiliary:

«... le Roy manda à monseigneur le connestable qu'il s'en retournast à sa maison ...»
Richemont reacted, he: «... envoya devers lui [Charles] lui supplier que ce fust son plaisir qu'il le servist, et que bien et loyaulment le serviroit luy et le Royaume. Et y envoya monseigneur de Beaumanoir et monseigneur de Rostrelen, et prioit à La Trimouille qu'il luy pleust le laisser servir le Roy qu'il feroit tout ce qu'il lui plairoit; et fut jusques à le baiser à genoulz; et oncques n'en vould riens faire. Et lui fist mander le Roy qu'il s'en allast, et que mieulx ameroit jamais n'estre coronné que mon dit seigneur y fust. Et en effet convint à mon seigneur s'en revenir à Partenay à toute sa belle compaignie ...». ²⁴¹

Gruel's account includes the claim that Charles would rather refuse his crown than take Richemont back. This threat (whether it originated from Charles or La Trémoille) seems to have convinced Richemont (and doubtless Yolande) that he must swallow his pride for the greater good of the kingdom. Having succeeded in removing Richemont from the march to Reims, «dont se fut très grant dommage pour le roy et son royaulme»,²⁴² La Trémoille threw his support behind the campaign to Reims and was confident enough furthermore to ensure that neither Yolande nor Marie d'Anjou participated in the coronation, citing the continuing dangers of the campaign. It seems that both queens had intended to attend the coronation, for the *Journal* reports that it was understood that Louis de Culant,²⁴³ Admiral of France, had presented himself to the queen: «... parceque plusieurs estoient d'opinion qu'il [Culant] l' [Marie d'Anjou] amenast couronner avecques luy à Reins. Et peu de jours après luy fut amenée à Gien, là où il tint plusieurs conseilz, pour conclure la manière à luy plus convenable à tenir ou voyage de son sacre. En la fin desquelz conseilz fut conclud que le roy renvoyroit la royne à Bourges ...»²⁴⁴ The Berry Herald adds the observation that La Tremouille blocked the participation of Richemont, his allies and others : « pour ce que le Seigneur de la Tremouille craignoit qu'ilz ne vousissent entreprendre a

²⁴¹ Gruel, p. 74.

²⁴² Chartier, Jean, *Chronique de Charles VII roi de France*, ed. A. Vallet de Viriville, 3 vols, Paris, P. Jannet, 1888, t. I, p. 89. Taylor tells us that: "Jean Chartier served as the royal historiographer from 18th November 1437, in which capacity he composed an official history of France in Latin, a continuation of the *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, covering the years between 1422-1450. Taylor, op. cit. p.250. See above, p. 301, n. 240.

²⁴³ See above, p. 290, n. 204 for Culant's connection to Yolande.

²⁴⁴ *Journal du Siège ...*, p. 107.

avoir le gouvernement du Roy ou lui faire desplaisir sa personne. »²⁴⁵ La Trémoille seems not to have considered the possibility that René d'Anjou would appear at Reims, and probably believed that Charles d'Anjou was too young, and/or too preoccupied with affairs in Provence in the absence of his mother Yolande,²⁴⁶ to be a real threat to his authority. Richemont, not one to stand idly by, decided to bring the campaign up to Bedford in Normandy.²⁴⁷

Richemont's efforts in Normandy and Joan's successes and increasing popularity in greater France (and indeed her renown in England) constrained Bedford to write to Henry Beaufort, Cardinal of Winchester who had been charged by Martin V to raise a force of 5,000 men-at-arms (funded by Rome) destined for a crusade against the Hussites

²⁴⁵ The Berry Herald op. cit. pp. 138-139.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Hébert, *Regeste...*, pp. 318-319 & Gouiran & Hébert, *Potentia...*, pp. 249-260 for details of Estates convoked for 25th May, 1429-11th June 1429 the motif for which was "*Défense du pays contre la menace aragonaise*". It would appear that at that time, "*Le roi d'Aragon est dit péparer une expédition terrestre et maritime.*" *Regeste...*, p. 318. The interesting thing is that Charles d'Anjou convoked the Estates for this stated need yet, if we consult *Potentia*, we find that Yolande herself, while very much occupied in the affairs of France, was still deeply implicated in the defence of Provence - we might even go so far as to suggest that some of the funds being raised for the defence of Provence might actually have underwritten the defence of France during Joan's mission. Cf. esp. *Potentia*, pp. 258-260, « ...l'excellent prince mossenhor Charle, frayre del rey [Louis III], nostre sobeyran senhor, e per so car ha notificat **que par mandament de la reyna, nostra sobeyrana dama, prochanament spera de partir d'acquest pays per anar al pays de Fransa, peruffrent se de tota la causa que el poria particularment e general al <p> ben et honor del dich pays se totjort emplicar e en tota la part que seria aver, per tant reconoyssent lo dich pays los benifficis del dich mossenhor Charle fach[s] en aquest pays en alculna suportation del dich mossenhor Charle, juxta la paurtat del pays, ja sia ayso que el fos digne de mays, li donan e an ordenat li esser donat, demore al present pays o vaga en Fransa, la soma de dos milia florins, a rason de VI grosses per fuoc, convertidors mil et Vc en vaysella d'argent, e los Vc en argent, loscals dos milia florins volon esser exhigitz per lo thesaurier sotscrich d'aysi a lo VIII jort del mes de julh prochanament venet e detrach [s] e prezes de la soma de Vim florins autras ves ordenatz per la deffensa del pays sus l'an mil IIIc XXVI [Fol. 233] e del mes de fevrier, suplican a la excelencia del dich mossenhor Charle que lo dich don graciosament vuelha acceptar. », p. 258. Our emphasis. It would seem from the above that in May-June 1429 Charles d'Anjou was being sent north to France at the express directive of his mother Yolande and funded by the generosity of her Provençal subjects. If we consult Zurita for this period on the subject of France and Provence we note that France had indeed petitioned the help of Aragon: "*Del socorro que se pidió al rey por el rey de Francia; y de las condiciones con que se le ofrecía.*" Zurita, op. cit., t. V, p. 692. The Aragonese assistance was to be nominally for the defence of Normandy and the Guyenne (where Richemont the exiled Constable was gaining some ground against Bedford's forces [Richemont's wife was Duchess of Guyenne]) in return for which all Aragonese claims over Carcassone, Belcaire and Montpellier would be honoured. These, as we are well aware, were part of the province of Languedoc and Languedoc abutted Yolande's southern counties of Provence and Forcalquier. Zurita names *Jorge de La Tramulla* (Georges de La Trémoille), Zurita, *Ibid.*, pp. 692-693. It is highly likely that, given the proximity of Languedoc to Provence-Forcalquier, Provence believed it would face the resumption of aggression by Alfonse V once he had re-claimed possessions in the adjoining province. As for La Trémoille, he would have been perfectly willing to encourage such an offensive against his great rival on the royal council, Yolande d'Aragon. She must have found herself in an uncomfortable position, welcoming assistance from Aragon in support of her son-in-law's struggle to regain his kingdom while fearing reprisals from her own eldest son Louis III's great rival, Aragon, in the struggle for ascendancy over Naples-Sicily.**

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 138 & Cf. Cosneau, op. cit. p. 174.

in Bohemia.²⁴⁸ Bedford and Winchester came to an agreement, establishing a protocol signed on 1st July for six months' duration.²⁴⁹ The appearance of Winchester's troops made for an interesting counter-offensive in the propaganda war launched by Joan's party for not only were they accompanied by Cardinal Winchester himself, they were moreover dressed in white emblazoned with the crusader's cross²⁵⁰ with one battalion displaying a singularly partisan standard:

*«En l'an mil IIIc XXIX, environ le mois de juillet, party [...from England] le roy d'Engleterre, ung vaillant capitaine acompaigniés de plusieurs gens d'armes jusques au nombre de XV cents, lesquelz venoit pour secoures devers le duc de Betefort régent; et estoient tous dy Englès vestus de blanc. Et pour tant que la renommée estoit en Engleterre du fait de la Pucelle, ledit capitaine avoit fait faire ung estendart tout blancq dedens lequel avoit une quenelle chergié de lin à quoy pendoit ung fuisel autour du fille, comme à moitiet fusée et y estoit entresemé en plusieurs lieux de fusiaus wis et avoit escript audit estendart: «Or viegne la belle!» en signefiant qu'il lui donroit à filler comme il ne fally mie ainsy que vous orés chy après.»*²⁵¹

At around the same time Bedford believed it politic to restate the terms of the Treaty of Troyes and reaffirm the loyalty of his ally Burgundy. A piece of political theatre was staged in Paris on 15th July 1429 for the benefit of Burgundy and a population becoming increasingly discomfited by Joan's victories.²⁵² Burgundy pledged a fighting force to Bedford's cause but was unable to deliver upon his pledge because his Flemish and northern Picard subjects flatly refused to serve their duke «*hors de leur pays*» and against French forces, in accordance with a strict interpretation of feudal law.²⁵³

Troyes and Châlons, having received instructions from Burgundy, resisted Charles's appearance, refusing him immediate entry. Charles and Joan each sent missives to Troyes and laid siege to the city.

«... Durant lesquelz souffrirent ceulx de l'ost plusieurs malaises de faim; car il y en avoit de cinq à six mil qui furent près de huyt jours sans menger pain. Et de faict en feust beaucoup mors

²⁴⁸ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 104.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Rymer, Thomas, "*Acta publica inter reges angliaë et alios*", Hagæ-Comitis, Neaulm 1745, t. IV, part 4, p. 147, t. X, p. 417, p. 419, pp. 423 - 424.

²⁵⁰ Rymer, t. IV, part V, p. 147, cited by Quicherat, «*Supplément aux témoignages contemporains sur Jeanne d'Arc*», in *Revue historique*, t. XIX, Paris 1882, p. 63.

²⁵¹ *Chronique de France; Ms. 26 Bibl. Lille*, cited in an article «*Document nouveau sur Jeanne d'Arc*», June 1857, p. 102 in *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 2^e série / t. I, Années 1857-1858,

²⁵² *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, ed. Mary, André Henri Jonquières, Paris 1929, pp. 219 - 220.

²⁵³ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 105.

de famine, se n'eust esté l'abondance des feves qu'on avoit semées celle année par l'admonestement d'ung cordellier nommé frère Richart qui ès Advens de Noël et devant avoit preschié par le pays de France en divers lieux et dit entre autres choses en son sermon: «Semez, bonnes gens, semez foison de feves, car celluy qui doibt venir viendra bien bref.» Et tant que pour celle famine et aussy parce que les Troyens ne vouloyent faire obéissance, fut par aucuns conseillé au roy qu'il retournast arrière sans passer oultre, considérans que la cyté de Chalons et mesme celle de Reims estoient aussi ès mains des adversaires.»²⁵⁴

Charles's council was divided and the march to Reims was in danger of falling apart, but the name of the Franciscan frère Richard is mentioned and in almost the same breath, one of Yolande's most loyal officers is invoked:

«... et aprez que le plus d'eulx [members of the royal council] eurent remonstré que, pour la force de la ville de Troyes et la faulte d'artillerie et d'argent, estoit milleur de retourner: maistre Robert le Maçon, qui estoit homme de grant conseil, et avoit autrefois esté chancelier, dist en effect, requis déclarer son oppinion; qu'on en devoit parler expressément à la Pucelle, par le conseil de laquelle avoit esté emprins celluy voyaige, et que par advanture elle y bailleroit bon moyen. Ce que advint ... elle respondit très saigement, et dist que, se le roy vouloit demourer, que la cité de Troyes seroit mise en son obeyssance dedans deux ou trois jours ... qu'elle n'en faisoit aucune doubte ... Et lors elle monta sur ung courcier, tenant ung baston en sa main, et feist toutes aprestes en grant dilligence, pour assaillir et faire jecter canons, dont l'évesque et plusieurs de la ville s'en merveillèrent fort ...»²⁵⁵

When morale started to slip and determination wavered, Robert le Maçon played the Joan card, ensuring that her credibility, mystique and the spectacle she always provided would rally flagging commitment. Joan unified Charles's forces and impressed her adversaries with her dazzling performance. As for Frère Richard, he had appeared rather conveniently in Troyes.²⁵⁶

At the end of April 1429, Richard had been obliged to leave Paris in a hurry because of concerns regarding his allegiances and the huge popularity of his sermons. He was apparently not an entirely respectable religious: *«ce fust ung très bon preudhomme, mais il*

²⁵⁴ *Journal du Siège ...*, pp. 109 – 110.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 110 – 111.

²⁵⁶ See Appendix 1, n. 46.

estoit venu sorcier.»²⁵⁷ Richard re-appeared at Troyes at the very moment Charles was encountering difficulties with the officials of the city. Richard was delegated by the bourgeoisie of Troyes to meet with Joan and exorcise her if necessary. Joan for her part seemed to take Richard *cum grano salis* and took pains to diminish his importance during her Rouen testimony.²⁵⁸ Whatever her personal feelings towards Richard, she allowed him to lead them into Troyes and to act as her messenger to the burghers of Châlons.

«*Les habitans de la ville de Chaalons ayant receu pareille advis desdictz habitans de Troyes, touchans le venue et arrivée dudict daulphin, et d'abondant que les lettres de Jehanne la Pucelle avoient esté portées audict Troyes par ung nommé frère Richard le Prescheur, en baillèrent advis aux habitans de Reims, leur mandans qu'ils avoient esté fort esbahis dudict frère Richard, d'aillant qu'ilz cuidoient que ce fust ung très preudhomme, mais qu'il estoit sorcier.*».²⁵⁹

While Bedford was manœuvring in various ways to halt Charles's progress to Reims,²⁶⁰ Charles's army pushed on, encountering little resistance from cities and towns nominally loyal to Burgundy and Bedford once Joan came into view «*avec tout son ost ... toujours devant, armée de toutes pièces ...*».²⁶¹ They were received into Châlons by the Bishop, Jean de Sarrebruck «*avec grande multitude de peuple de ladict cité, [and] vinrent au devant du roy et lui firent pleine obéissance*».²⁶² It might well have been that Charles was allowed entry despite the presence of Joan and Richard, the former reputedly having been read by the Anglo-Burgundian side as «*... unne folle pleyne du diable ...*»,²⁶³ and the latter, «*... ung très bon prudhomme, mais ... sorcier*».²⁶⁴ On the other hand, Charles's achievements were held to be: «*... choses estantes advenues plus par grace dyvine que oeuvre*

²⁵⁷ *Mémoires de Jean Rogier, prévôt de l'échevinage de Reims, (t. II. règne de Charles VII),* ed. Barthélemy, Edouard de, Reims, Paul Giret, 1875, p. 290, *passim*. Richard would be later banned from preaching in Poitiers in March 1431. Cf. Couget, Henri (Chanoine honoraire, Curé de Saint-Roch), *Jeanne d'Arc devant Paris*, Paris, Editions Spes, 1925, pp. 129-148. According to Quicherat, Jean Rogier leaves us vital and precious information regarding Joan's and Charles's VII voyage to Reims. In spite of the fact that Rogier was not a contemporary of Joan (he died in 1637), he meticulously assembled and recorded invaluable documents which no longer survive. His *Mémoires* are built upon the firm foundation of Joan's and Charles's letters, written military orders and directives and municipal deliberations and correspondence from the cities of Troyes and Châlons-sur-Marne. Quicherat, *Procès...t. IV*, p. 284.

²⁵⁸ Tissot, *Procès de Condamnation ...*, t. II, pp. 94 – 95.

²⁵⁹ Rogier, *loc. cit.*

²⁶⁰ Including a letter-writing campaign with his ally Burgundy to towns along Charles's route. Wallon pp. 227 – 228.

²⁶¹ *La Chronique de la Pucelle*, p. 319.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 320.

²⁶³ Rogier ..., *loc. cit.*

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

*humain, par l'advis de son sang et lynage et de son Grand Conseil,*²⁶⁵ [and] *il estoit acheminé pour aller en ladicte ville de Reims pour y prendre son sacre et couronnement*».²⁶⁶

Bedford and Burgundy were not able to move sufficient forces to block Charles's entry to Reims but their envoys, the lords of Chastillon, Saveuse and Lisle-Adam, did their best, arriving with an impressive escort prior to Charles's arrival in an attempt to forestall him: «*[lesquelz seigneurs] exposèrent plusieurs choses ausdictz habitans de la part du duc de Bourgoingne, [saying that] l'armée, pour resister au daulphin ne pouvoit estre preste que de cinq à six sepmaines ...*».²⁶⁷

Towns and places loyal to Bedford and Burgundy continued their letter-writing offensive in an attempt to stop Reims from capitulating. For all of that, in admitting Charles, the people of Troyes communicated to Chalons that their Bishop had reported that the king: «*... leur remonstra et exposa très haultement et très prudamment les causes par lesquelles il estoit arryvé par devers eulx, disant que par le trépas du feu roy son père, luy survivant estoit seul et unique héritier dudict royaume; et pour ceste cause, il avoit entrepris son voyage à Reims pour luy faire sacrer, et aux aultres partyes de son royaulme pour les réduire en son obéissance; et qu'il pardonneroit tout les temps passé sans rien réserver; et qu'il les tiendrait en paix et franchise, telle que le roy saint Loys tenoit son royaulme ...*».²⁶⁸

The examination above does not diminish Joan's rôle in the Loire campaign and the march to Reims. It is merely an attempt to put her actions into the context of a masterplan to re-establish Charles as rightful king of France. Before Joan's appearance Charles had all but given up hope of ever ruling his kingdom. Joan was the catalyst needed to ensure the success of the overall enterprise. Yolande had groomed Charles for kingship from his earliest adolescence and had in part sponsored Joan to call attention to and publicize his credentials as a credible sovereign. The result of Charles's discourse with Jean Saarbruck, Bishop of Troyes, was:

«Lesquelles choses estantes rapportées par devers eulx, en uune grande assemblée fut conclud et délibérée de luy rendre pléniere obéissance, attendu son bon droict, quy est telle chose que chacun peult savoir, moyennant qu'il leur feroit abolition générale de tous cas, et qu'il ne leur lairoit

²⁶⁵ From which Joan was excluded, excepting one exceptional circumstance when she was included *via* the offices of Robert le Maçon. See above, p. 292, n. 209.

²⁶⁶ Rogier ..., *Ibid.*, p. 291.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 294

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 295

*poinct de garnison, et qu'il aboliroit les aydes excepté la gabelle: de quoy luy et son conseil furent d'accord. Et pour ces causes, lesdictz habitans de Troyes pryoyent lesdictz habitans de Reims de vouloir faire audict roy plénière obéissance, telle qu'ilz l'avoit faict affin d'eulx ensemble tousjours s'entretenir en unne mesme seigneurye, et qu'ilz puissent préserver leurs corps er leurs biens de périlz ... et que l'on sera très joyeux quand on l'aura faict, d'autant que c'est le prince de la plus grande discrétion, entendement, et vaillance que yssy de piéça de la noble maison de France.».*²⁶⁹

No mention here of Joan, rather an emphasis upon the pledges of a general amnesty, and the abolition of aids and subsidies (excepting taxes) made by Charles, coupled with an appreciation of his right and fitness to rule. It was countered by another letter destined for Reims dated 13th July from an Anglo-Burgundian, Jehan de Chastillon, Lord of Triosy and brother of the captain of Reims, claiming that: «... *ladicte [Charles's] entrée avoit esté faicte par la seduction de l'évesque et du doien dudict Troyes par le moien d'ung Cordelier nommé frère Richart... [Chastillon] certifoit avoir veu Jehanne la Pucelle ... que c'estoit la plus simple chose qu'il vit oncques; ... et ne la comparoit pas à sy vaillante femme comme madame d'Or,*²⁷⁰ *et que les ennemys ne se faisoient que mocquer de ceulx quy en avoient doute ...».*²⁷¹ Here we see an attempt to undermine Charles's legitimacy by mocking the presence of Richard and Joan. Regnault of Chartres, as presiding officer of Charles's royal council-on-the-move and a personnage of unimpeachable credentials in the eyes of many, cross-counteracted: «... *il manda aux habitans dudict Reims par ses letters du douziesme dudict mois de juillet, qu'ilz eussent à se disposer pour recevoir le Roy honnorablement à son sacre: à quoy faire il les prioit et exhortoit».*²⁷² Finally, the inhabitants of Châlons sent letters to Reims dated 16th July, reporting that they had allowed Charles into their city with full obedience, exhorting Reims to do the same: «...*louans fort la personne du Roy, estant doux, gracieux, pitieux et misericors, belle personne, de belle maintient et haulte entendement: [saying that] pour rien ilz ne voudroient avoir faict aultrement: et conseillent ausdictz habitans de Reims*

²⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 296.

²⁷⁰ Madame d'Or was a golden-haired dwarf attached to the household of Philippe of Burgundy. Huizinga, op. cit., p. 23. According to Le Févre, Madame d'Or was «*une moulte gracieuse folle et qui bien savoit estre*». At the wedding of Isabel of Portugal to Phillippe of Burgundy she was «*assise au milieu des deux grans dames*», Le Févre, t. II, p. 168. Chastillon therefore inferring that while Joan was undoubtedly a curiosity, she was not a patch on Madame d'Or. On the subject of dwarves, black slaves and exotica see the recent paper by Núria Silleras-Fernández of the University of California-Santa Cruz, *Nigra Sum Sed Formosa*. Silleras-Fernández, Núria, "Nigra Sum Sed Formosa: Black Slaves and Exotica in the Court of a Fourteenth Century Aragonese Queen." in *Medieval Encounters*, 13, (2007), pp. 546-565.

²⁷¹ Rogier ..., loc. cit., and p. 297.

²⁷² Ibid., p. 298.

que le plustot, sans dilayer, et pour le mieulx, qu'ilz aillent au devant de luy, pour luy faire obéissance, et qu'ilz en receporont grande joye et honneur». ²⁷³

Joan had placed Charles firmly on the route to his coronation. He had emerged victorious as a result of well-targeted diplomacy in the wake of an unexpected string of military successes, (themselves largely the result of Joan's presence) and furthermore had proven himself worthy of the support of his subjects: «*Les habitans de la ville de Reims estans advertys de l'acheminement dudict roy Charles, envoyèrent au devant de luy jusques à Sept-Saulx nombre de notables bourgeois de ladicte ville, quy offirent au Roy plein et entière obéissance comme à leur souverain, ainsy qu'il se voit par lettres patentes données le susdit jour seiziesme du mois de juillet audict an mil quatre cens vingt neuf, audit lieu de Sept-Saulx, en forme de chartre ...*». ²⁷⁴

The moment for which Yolande had long planned had finally arrived: the legitimization of her son-in-law as King of France: «*... celluy jour [16th July 1429] au matin, qui estoit samedy, entra et feist son entrée l'archevesque, car deppuis qu'il en avoit esté faict archevesque n'y avoit entré. Et l'après disner, sur le soir, y entra le roy et son armée entièrement; là où estoit Jehanne la Pucelle, qui fut moult regardée de tous. Et là vindrent aussi René, duc de Bar et de Lorraine, frère du roy de Secille, et aussi le seigneur de Commercy [Robert de Sarrebouche], bien accompaignez de gens de guerre, eulx offrans à son service.*». ²⁷⁵

Although Marie and Yolande did not personally attend the coronation, the above account suggests René's direct participation.

Irrespective of the presence or absence of Angevin princes, ²⁷⁶ Marie and Yolande could take satisfaction from the description contained in a *lettre de trois gentilshommes angevins à la femme et à la belle-mère de Charles VII* dated from Reims on 17th July 1429. ²⁷⁷

Whether Louis III was present or not is of little importance, the mere fact that he had been recalled in the face of the massive (and ruinous) investment and diplomacy Yolande had expended on his behalf from the time of Louis II's death to underwrite and support his Italian campaign clearly demonstrates her determination to guarantee Charles's throne and secure her grandson Louis's inheritance.

²⁷³ Loc. cit., & p. 299.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 299.

²⁷⁵ *Journal du Siège ...*, p. 113.

²⁷⁶ See Appendix 1, n. 47.

²⁷⁷ See Appendix 1, n. 48.

Yolande, Richemont and Marie might have been sidelined by La Trémoille, but René d'Anjou definitively re-entered Charles's faction at the time of the coronation.²⁷⁸ Having spent the early days of July with his father-in-law, Charles II, Duke of Lorraine in Metz, René energetically renounced his contractual allegiance to the Anglo-Burgundians just fifteen days after Charles's *sacre*:

«... je, René, fils du roi de Jherusalem et de Sicille, duc de Bar, marquis du Pont, conte de Guyse, vous [Bedford] faiz assavoir que, comme très révérend père en Dieu mon très chier et très amé oncle le cardinal de Bar se soit, puis pou de temps en ça, soy en sa personne transportez par devers vous pour plusieurs besoignes et affaires, et entre autres choices ait pour moi et en mon nom, et par vertu de certaines mes lettres de procuracion par moy à lui sur ce données, fait en voz mains, comme vous disant régent le royaume de France, foy et hommaige des terres et seignories que je tieng en fiedz de la couronne de France,²⁷⁹ et de ce vous en ait promis obéyssance, comme mes prédécesseurs ont acoustumé faire ou temps passé aux roys de France ...; je, pour certaines causes qui ad ce m'ont meu et meuvent, ay dès maintenant et pour lors [...]renuncié par ces présentes plennement et absolument à tous les fiedz, terres et seignories dont mondit oncle a et pourroit avoir reprins de vous comme régent ... Et ces choses vous signifie je et escrips par ces présentes, scellées de mon seel, pour y sauver et garder mon honneur. Donné le tiers jour d'aoust, l'an mil quatre vingt neuf.»²⁸⁰

Despite the best efforts of the Cardinal of Bar, by this act René irrevocably tied himself to his childhood companion's destiny. It was a decision that would not be without consequences for René in his continuing struggle against Vaudémont. He had returned to assist his mother, sister and brothers in their combined effort to ensure that Charles was recognized as the rightful sovereign of France. The army turned their attention to the liberation of Paris but this was to be complicated by the fact that post-coronation Charles's party had reopened negotiations with Burgundy.

The balance between military action and furious diplomatic activity was one that had always underscored the conduct of the Hundred Years War. We have discussed Yolande's ventures in both these areas and noted that diplomacy, while sometimes shortlived, was a more cost-effective way in which to achieve a positive outcome or at

²⁷⁸ Cf. Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 72 & Quicherat, t. IV, pp. 23, 77, 185, Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 99.

²⁷⁹ See above, p. 269.

²⁸⁰ AN, J. 582, n° 33.

the very least allow time to regroup forces and strategies.²⁸¹ Wars were expensive undertakings to be avoided wherever possible. Many commentators and chroniclers of the next phase of Joan's mission have laid the entire blame for military inaction firmly at the feet of La Trémoille and Regnault of Chartres, but was it not also Yolande's preferred strategy to try to arrive at an understanding with Burgundy, to work to detach him from Bedford's cause through the intermediary of third parties such as Brittany and Savoy? While La Trémoille's undoubted objective was to halt Joan's progress (and therefore Angevin influence), Yolande might have reasoned that it was worthwhile not to object strenuously while others (whatever their motivations) attempted reconciliation with Burgundy. Perhaps she felt it was viable to exploit La Trémoille's rancour against Joan while at the same time supporting Joan's efforts, through the active involvement of her sons in her military campaigns. It is perhaps reasonable to suggest that at this point in proceedings, Yolande pragmatically adopted a watching brief. Her sons had thrown their effort behind the military campaign to liberate France but if diplomacy succeeded, so much the better for the House of Anjou.

Joan sent at least two letters to Burgundy prior to the coronation, imploring him to break with the English and join Charles, his rightful sovereign. The *Greffier* records that:

«Le duc de Bourgogne, qui avoit esté à Paris²⁸² et s'en estoit allé à Laon, envoya ledit xvije jour de juillet ambassade devers le Roy audit lieu de Rains pour traiter son appointment; mais laditte enbassade n'estoit que dissimulation et pour cuider amuser le Roy qui estoit disposé d'aller tout droit devant Paris.»²⁸³ Above we mentioned a letter to Yolande and Marie written the day after the coronation, in which is contained the observation that: «Demain s'en doibt partir le roy tenant son chemin vers Paris. On dit en ceste ville que le duc de Bourgogne y a esté et s'en est retourné à Laon, où il est de present, il a envoyé si tost devers le roy qu'il arriva en ceste ville. A ceste heure nous espérons que bon traité y trouvera avant qu'ils partent. La Pucelle ne fait doute qu'elle ne mette Paris en l'obéissance.»²⁸⁴

Immediately post-Reims the objective was clearly Paris, but peace negotiations had been initiated, negotiations which would lead nowhere except to Joan's capture.

²⁸¹ See above, p. 172 & *passim* for Yolande's treaties with Henry V, prior to her stay in Provence, 1419-1423.

²⁸² Above p. 304, we saw that Bedford had welcomed Burgundy to Paris with great ceremony in the early part of July to restate their allegiance to the Treaty of Troyes.

²⁸³ Quicherat, « Relation inédite sur Jeanne d'Arc. », p. 344.

²⁸⁴ Quicherat, *Procès*, t. V, p. 129. See above regarding the *Greffier*, p. 284, note 178.

Notwithstanding the unlikelihood of a swift and peaceful settlement with Burgundy, it appears to have been common knowledge in Reims that Burgundy had indeed sent his ambassadors to the city perhaps to outline conditions under which an agreement might be contemplated. The ambassadors returned to Burgundy carrying a letter from Joan:

«Prince de Bourgoingne, je vous prie, supplie et requiers tant humblement que requierir vous puis, que ne guerroyez plus ou saint royaume de France, et faictes retraire incontinent et briefment voz gens qui sont en aucunes places et forteresses dudit saint royaume ; et de la part du gentil roy de France, il est prest de faire paix avec vous, sauve son honneur, s'il ne tient en vous.»²⁸⁵

The request made here by Joan is almost precisely the one that had been made by the Bastard's ambassadors (and granted by Burgundy) prior to the lifting of the siege of Orleans.²⁸⁶ On the wave of optimism created by the *sacre*, it might have been believed that Paris could fall as easily as Orleans once Burgundy's support had been removed from Bedford. Burgundy would have understood that with the *sacre* came greater prestige for Charles as a legitimized sovereign. Notwithstanding Charles's enhanced situation, Philippe le Bon would have also cannily grasped that all options needed to be kept alive and it would have suited him well to have Charles dangling on the prospect of a durable peace after years of conflict. With La Trémoille's brother Jean as Burgundy's grand-master and grand-chamberlain²⁸⁷ (and bearing in mind that Georges de La Trémoille himself was at one time attached to Burgundy), Philippe would quite justifiably have felt he had a foot in each camp. This time, to all intents and purposes, the brothers Trémoille directed negotiations rather than the Yolande-Brittany-Savoy bloc, as had been the case in the past.

Against this backdrop of talks and contact, Charles continued his progress from Reims to Paris, for should the city capitulate to him, Burgundy's position would be compromised²⁸⁸ and Charles could find himself in a stronger position from which to bargain. However, as diplomatic traffic increased, Charles detoured to Provins from 2nd-5th August in preparation for a fall back to the Loire to show willing should a positive settlement with Burgundy be forthcoming. The *Cordeliers* record that: «*Ainchois que le roy*

²⁸⁵ Quicherat, op. cit., t.V, pp. 126-127.

²⁸⁶ See above, p. 291.

²⁸⁷ Courcelles, Jean-Baptiste-Pierre, *Généalogie de la Maison de la Trémoille*, publisher unidentified, c. 1890, p. 14. See Appendix 1, n. 49.

²⁸⁸ Couget, op. cit., p. 62.

*Charles allast devers Paris, avoit eu ung conseil entre l'archevesque de Rains, le seigneur de la Trimouille, Poton et La Hire d'une part et messire Jehan de Luxembourg, le chancelier de Bourgongne, les seigneurs de Croy et sire Bourdin de Saligny et autres; mais il n'y eubt nulle conclusion de abstinences ne de paix ...».*²⁸⁹ Joan for her part remained sceptical of a progress and on 5th August she wrote to the Reimois who had sent to her, detailing their anxieties:

*«Et [il] est vrai que le roi a fait trêve au duc de Bourgogne quinze jours durant ... ne vous donnez nulle merueille si je n' y entre si brièvement, combien que des trêves, qui sont ainsi faites, je ne sois point contente et ne sais si je les tiendrai. Mais si je les tiens ce sera seulement pour garder l'honneur du roi; combien aussi qu'ils ne rabuseront point le sang royal, car je tiendrai et maintiendrai ensemble l'armée du roi pour être prête au chef des dits quinze jours, s'ils ne font la paix ...»*²⁹⁰

Joan's position (or indeed the fall-back position of Charles's chancellor) is laid bare in this missive. Charles's negotiators were pushing for a settlement while Burgundy hedged his bets and bought time, awaiting Bedford's next move. Bedford himself sent an abrasive letter (from Montereau) to Charles dated 7th August, regarding the *sacre* and making his position abundantly clear in relation to Joan and Richard:

*« Scavoir faisons à vous, Charles de Valois, qui vous soliés nommer Daulphin de Viennois, et maintenant sans cause vous dites Roy ... par les moyens que avez tenus et tenez, qui faites séduire et abuser le peuple ignorant, et vous aidés plus des gens suppersticieus et réprouvés, comme d'une femme desordonnée et diffamée, estant en habit d'homme et gouvernement dissolu, et aussi d'un frère mendiant, apostat et séditieux ... abhominables à Dieu ...»*²⁹¹

What eventuated from talks held near La Fère was a fortnight's truce accepted by both parties, with Burgundy's team going so far as to promise to hand Paris over to Charles upon the expiration of the truce in mid to late-August.²⁹² Joan was displeased with this result, envisaging instead a continuation of armed struggle against Bedford's interests while simultaneously positing reconciliation between Charles and Philippe. Notwithstanding her point of view, the truce was signed and Charles headed for

²⁸⁹ Cordeliers, p. 75.

²⁹⁰ Varin, Pierre, *Archives législatives de la ville de Reims ...*, Paris, Imprimerie de Crapelet, 1840-1852, Statuts I, p. 596, Quicherat, *Procès*, V, p. 139, cited in Cordier, op. cit., p. 262.

²⁹¹ Monstrelet, op. cit. t. IV, pp. 340-341

²⁹² Couget, *ibid.*, p. 62.

Coulommiers near Compiègne to better position himself for continuing negotiations. Bedford, in all likelihood, increasingly alarmed by the exchange between Charles and Burgundy, blocked access to Compiègne. The English employed a strategy of military threat, not attacking but ensuring that Charles would remain on full alert. Despite Bedford's efforts Charles entered Compiègne, having first dispatched an embassy to continue talks with Burgundy in Arras, where representatives of the Duke of Savoy ensured that a pact was signed.²⁹³ With the reappearance of Savoy, mention is made of Yolande's officers and connections (some *via* Richemont) in the following account from Monstrelet:

«Desquelz ambassadeurs estoient les principaulx l'archevesque de Rains, Christofle de Harcourt, les seigneurs de Dampierre et de Gaucourt [et de Fontaines],²⁹⁴ chevaliers avec aulcuns aultres gens d'estat ... lui [Burgundy] remoustrant, entre aultre choses, la parfaicte affection et vray désir que le Roy avoit de pacifier avec lui ...».²⁹⁵

The treaty was apparently on the point of being signed when messengers arrived from Bedford urging Burgundy to maintain their alliance. The treaty process was suspended «Sur la parole desquelz fut le traictié atargié et prins aultre journée d'envoyer devers le roy Charles [in Compiègne] légacion comme dit est. Pour laquelle faire furent commis, messire Jehan de Luxembourg, l'évesque d'Arras, messire David de Brimeu et aulcunes aultres notables et discrètes personnes ...».²⁹⁶

The fortnight truce expired and Paris was still held by Bedford-Burgundy. Yolande's connections and Savoy were implicated in continuing peace negotiations and Burgundy's position as strategic trump-card was ever more compelling for both sides.

Burgundy's ambassadors were in Compiègne and in talks with Charles's representatives, René d'Anjou, the Counts of Clermont and Vendôme, the Sire of Albret (La Trémoille's half-brother), Regnault of Chartres, the Bishop of Séz, La Trémöille,

²⁹³ Ibid., p. 64, disappointingly Couget gives no direct reference but "this work by the former Curate of Saint-Roch is highly regarded [by Johannic scholars]" (Margolis, Nadia, *Jeanne d'Arc in History, Literature and Film*, New York London, Garland Publishing, 1990, p. 179).

²⁹⁴ The Buchon edition of Monstrelet mentions de Fontaines whereas Douët-d'Arcq's edition does not. Buchon, J.A.C., (ed.), *Les Chroniques et mémoires sur l'Histoire de France: Chroniques de Enguerrand de Monstrelet*, Paris, A. Dezrez, 1836, pp. 611-612. Harcourt, Yolande's most loyal servants on council, Dampierre from Bar-Lorraine and Fontaines, who was Yolande's lieutenant-general in Anjou-Maine in matters concerning the on-going war with Bedford. See above p. 203. Gaucourt was governor for the Duke of Orleans.

²⁹⁵ Monstrelet, ed. Douët-d'Arcq, t.IV, p. 348.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 613.

Christophe d’Harcourt, the Bastard, Robert le Maçon and Gaucourt including, amongst others, the generals Xaintrailles and La Hire.²⁹⁷ The royal council, the Church and the army are all represented in the above group. Five of the eleven individuals mentioned are Yolande’s faithful, while the Bastard was supportive of her strategy and Gaucourt had family connections within her entourage and held the post of governor for Charles d’Orléans. It is clear that the claims we have made regarding Yolande’s disposition to negotiate (while still keeping the military option alive) are largely substantiated. Despite La Trémoille’s best efforts to exile Yolande from the centre of power, it would appear that she still maintained a directive voice within Charles’s inner circle.

Peace for their time was not the outcome of the Compiègne talks, but rather an extension to the existing truce for a period of four months from 28th August to Christmas, with Burgundy taking the precaution of ensuring that Charles would be constrained from attacking Paris:

*«... réservé aussi à nostre dit cousin de Bourgoingne que, se bon luy samble, il porra, durant ladicte abstinence, employer luy et ses gens à la deffence de la ville de Paris et resister à ceulx qui voudroient faire guerre ou porter dommage à icelle ...».*²⁹⁸

Leaving Guillaume de Flavy in charge of the garrison at Compiègne, Charles and his still impressive army departed, moving closer to Paris despite undertakings to Burgundy that they would not try to take the capital by force. Bedford continued his bellicose stance but did not directly engage with Charles’s army, which was divided into three distinct forces: the first under the command of Alençon and the Count of Vendôme, the second under the captaincy of René d’Anjou and the third with Charles de Bourbon and La Trémoille at its head.²⁹⁹ Charles’s army emerged triumphant and invigorated from a series of skirmishes with Anglo-Burgundian forces, so much so that momentarily even the favourite wanted a share in the glory.³⁰⁰

Joan was impatient to push ahead and by 23rd August, accompanied by Alençon, she embarked upon a series of sallies, positioning herself closer to Paris in prelude to a definitive attack:

²⁹⁷ Couget, op. cit., pp. 66 – 67.

²⁹⁸ *Cordeliers*, p. 77.

²⁹⁹ *Journal du Siège ...*, pp. 120 – 122.

³⁰⁰ See Appendix 1, n. 50.

«Et le tiers jour s'en partit la Pucelle et le duc d'Alençon, le duc de Bourbon, le conte de Vendosme, le conte de Laval et les mareschaulx de Sainte Sévère et de Rays, La Hire, Poton et plusieurs autres ...».³⁰¹

Inferior numbers and the possibility that Richemont's troops were present around Senlis, determined Bedford to decamp for lower Normandy, where Richemont had been taking the offensive right up to English held positions, causing alarm.³⁰² Bedford departed, leaving his chancellor Louis de Luxembourg in control of Paris,³⁰³ with Burgundy dispatching four hundred men-at-arms and a large number of noblemen under the command of Marshal L'Isle d'Adam to support the defence of Paris.

Placing an equal wager on the outcome of the extended truce or perhaps testing the durability of Burgundy's allegiance to Bedford, according to Jean Juvénal des Ursins's *Chronique de la Pucelle*:³⁰⁴

«... en la fin dudit mois d'aoust, vint le dit Charles avec le duc d'Alençon, Messire Charles de Bourbon, la Pucelle dont devant est fait mencion, le duc de Bar, accompagniés de 30 à 40,000 hommes, tant Franchois, Hennuyers, Liégeois comme Barreis, mistrent le siège devant Paris. Et estoient logiez à Saint-Denis, à Montmartre et autres lieux entour Paris, et mistrent la ville en telle subjection, qu'il n'y venoit vires de nul côté, et estoient vires si chiers en la ville, que c'estoit grant merveilles.

Et y furent bien près de six sepmaines [actually two-three weeks]; et quant ilz virent qu'il ne se rendoient point, avisa le dit Charles et ceulx de sa compaignie que l'on leur feroit l'assault ...».³⁰⁵

The *Chronique de la Pucelle*:

«Alors se commencèrent grand courses et escarmouches entre les gens du roy estans à Saint-Denys et les Anglois, et autres estans lors dans Paris. Et quand ils eurent esté par aucun temps à Saint-Denys, comme trois ou quatre jours, le duc d'Alençon, le duc de Bourbon, le comte de Vendosme, le comte de Laval, Jeanne la Pucelle, les seigneurs de Rais et de Boussac, et autres en leur compaignée se vinrent loger en un village qui est comme en my-chemin de Paris et de Saint-Denys, nommé la Chapelle; et le lendemain commencèrent plus grands escarmouches ... et

³⁰¹ Journal... p. 126.

³⁰² Cosneau, op. cit. p. 175.

³⁰³ *La Chronique de la Pucelle*, p. 332.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 459 – 460.

³⁰⁵ 8th September 1429.

vinrent lesdicts seigneurs aux champs vers la porte Saint-Honoré ... et fisrent assortir plusieurs canons et coulevrines pour jester dedans la ville de Paris et en eut plusieurs coups de jectez.

*Estoient les Anglois autour des murs circuiant et tournoyant à tout estendarts, et entre les autres y en avoit un blanc à une croix vermeille, et alloient et venoient par ladicte muraille ...».*³⁰⁶

All the individuals listed above had Angevin connections or bore allegiance to Yolande. Her people were involved in diplomacy but at the same time some of the same individuals were taking the assault right up to the boulevards of Paris. Note the mention of the crusading standard, singled out for special mention, doubtless one of Winchester's number.³⁰⁷ The fact was that not only were the English making themselves visible along the walls of the *porte Saint-Honoré* but they also deployed a mass display of standards as a visual riposte to Joan's own colours. While Alençon and Bourbon moved to re-deploy and reinforce their canons and culverins, Joan made a grave miscalculation:

*«Ladite Jeanne dist qu'elle vouloit assaillir la ville; mais elle n'estoit pas bien informée de la grande eaue qui estoit ez fossez ... Néanmoins elle vint à grant puissance de gens d'armes, entre lesquels estoit le seigneur de Rais ..., et descendirent en l'arrière-fossé avec grand foison des gens de guerre, puis atout [avec] une lance monta jusques sur le dos-d'asne, et tenta l'eaue qui estoit bien profonde; quoy faisant elle eut d'un traict les deux cuisses percées, ou au moins l'une ...».*³⁰⁸

Joan wanted to keep up the assault but night had fallen and she was injured, a morale booster for the English, but the French, not wanting to risk the life of their *sentient oriflamme*, carried her out of harm's way for the night.

Cagny again: *«Et avoit très grant regret d'elle [Joan] ainssi soy departir, en disant: «Par mon martin, la place eust esté prinse.» Ilz [the captains] la mendrent à cheval et la ramenèrent a son logis audit lieu de la Chapelle et touz les autres de la cornpaignie le roy, le duc de Bar, le conte de Cleremont qui ce jour estoient venuz de Saint Denys.»*³⁰⁹

Still hopeful of a positive result the French, having retired to La Chapelle, planned to continue their assault the following day but Jean Juvéanal des Ursins advises us that:

³⁰⁶ *La Chronique de la Pucelle*, pp. 331 – 332.

³⁰⁷ See above, pp. 303-304.

³⁰⁸ *La Chronique de la Pucelle*, p. 333.

³⁰⁹ *Chronique de Perceval de Cagny* (see above p. 284, note 178), in Quicherat, t. IV, p. 27.

«Mès fut avisé par ung nommé Messire de la Trimouille du côté du dit Charles; car il auroit trop grant occision, car les dits assaillans avoient intention, comme l'en disoit, d'occire et d'ardre. Et auxi l'en disoit que M. de Bourguongne avoit envoié un hérault devers le dit Charles en disant qu'il tendroit l'apointement qu'il avoit fait avec le dit Charles, et qu'il sesast lui et ses gens. Mès si lui avoit apointement entre eulx, ne quel il estoit je n'en saurois parler. Mès toutes vois il lui eut trèves jusques à Noel ensuivant et ainssi le fit Charles au dit assault sonner de retraite ...».³¹⁰

Joan had fully intended to push on the following day:

«Le vendredi IXe jour dudit mois, combien que la Pucelle eust esté bleciée du jour de devant à l'assault devant Paris, elle se leva bien matin et fist venir son beau duc d'Alençon par qui elle se conduisoit et luy pria qu'il fist sonner les trompilles et monter à cheval pour retourner devant Paris; et dist, par son martin que jamais n'en partiront tant qu'elle eust la ville ... Et tantdiz que ilz [the captains, the Baron of Montmorency and his fifty or sixty nobles, readying themselves to accompany Joan and Alençon] se approuchoient, vindrent le duc de Bar et le conte de Cleremont de par le roy, qui estoit a Saint Denys. Et aussi de par le roy prièrent audit d'Alençon et commandèrent à touz les autres cappitaines, qu'ilz s'en venissent et amenassent la Pucelle devers lui. La Pucelle et le plus de ceulx de la compaignie en furent très marriz, et néantmoins obéirent à la voullenté du roy espérans aler trouver leur entrée à prendre Paris par l'autre costé et passer Saine à ung pont que le duc d'Alençon avoit fait faire au travers de la rivière endroit Saint Denis; et ainssi s'en vindrent devers le roy.

Le samedi ensuivant, partie de ceulx qui avoient esté devant Paris, cuidèrent bien matin aler passer la rivière de Saine audit pont; mais ilz ne pount pource que le roy qui avoit sceu l'intencion de la Pucelle, du duc d'Alençon et des autres de bon voulloir, toute la nuit fist dépecier ledit pont. Et ainssi furent demourez depasser. Ce jour le roy tint son conseil, ouquel plusieurs oppinions furent dictes; et demoura audit lieu jusques au mardi XIIIe jour tousjours tendant affin de retourner sur la rivière de Laire au grant desplaisir de la Pucelle.».³¹¹

The point of this long citation is to examine whether the blame for Joan's failure and later capture should rest squarely at the feet of La Trémoille and Regnault of Chartres. Cagny himself makes no such specific charge. Instead he describes the situation leading up to the retreat from Paris. It was René d'Anjou and Clermont (Charles de Bourbon) who delivered the order to retreat to Saint Denis, and while this could have been a

³¹⁰ La Chronique de la Pucelle, pp. 460 – 461.

³¹¹ Chronique de Perceval de Cagny, Quicherat, Procès, t. IV, pp. 27 – 29.

manifestation of La Trémoille's desire to belittle the Angevins, it might well have been a signal to Joan from Charles, Yolande and other members of his council to take the order seriously. The fact that Cagny states that Charles's council met «*ouquel plusieurs oppinions furent dictes*» demonstrates that the debate might have been lively and that the council had not merely capitulated to the favourite's will. From July-September 1429 Charles's council included at various times: Charles d'Albret; Alençon; René d'Anjou; le Sire d'Argenton; Charles de Bourbon; Regnault; Culant; le Sire de Cucé; Gaucourt, Graville; Harcourt; La Trémoille; Guy de Laval; Robert le Maçon, le Sire de Mareuil; le Sire de Montjean; Etienne de Montmoret; Jean de Rochechouart, Sire de Montmart; the Bastard, Gilles de Rais, Rouvres; the Bishop of Orléans; the Bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne; Jean de Sarrebrucke; Saint-Sévère; Jean Tudert and the Count of Vendôme.³¹² We do not know for certain which of these individuals participated in the meeting described above but while La Trémoille might have been difficult to contradict, there were other members with a voice on the royal council from diverse backgrounds, including many associated with Yolande.³¹³

Cagny gives the result of the meeting in these terms:

*«Le mardy XIIIe jour dudit mois de septembre, le roi conseillé pars aulcuns de ceulx de son conseil et de son sang qui estoient inclinez à acomplir son voulloir, partit après disner dudit lieu de Saint Denys; et quant la Pucelle veit que à son partement ne povoit elle trouver aucun remède, elle donna, et lessa tout son hernois complect devant l'image de Nostre Dame et les reliques de l'abbaye de Saint Denys et à très grant regret se mist en la compaignie du roy ... Et ainssi fut le vouloir de la Pucelle et l'armée du roy rompue.»*³¹⁴

Joan lost the support and companionship of her «*beau duc*» d'Alençon:

*«... quant le roy fut venu audit Lieu de Gien, ledit d'Alençon s'en ala devers sa femme et en sa vicomté de Beaumont; et les autres capitaines chacun en sa frontière, et la Pucelle demoura devers le roy, moulte ennuyée du departement et par espécial du duc d'Alençon que elle amoit très fort, et faisoit pour lui ce qu'elle n'eust fait pour ung autre ...»*³¹⁵

³¹² Vallet de Viriville, Auguste, *Charles VII, roi de France et ses conseillers*, Paris 1850 and cf. Gaussin, op. cit., for a truly analytical and statistical study of the composition of Charles's council.

³¹³ Charles had given an undertaking not to attack Paris and, as noted above, Burgundy intended to hold him to his promise. Above, pp. 311-312 & p. 317.

³¹⁴ Cagny, in Quicherat, t. IV, p. 29.

³¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 29 - 30.

Alençon turned his attention: «*Poy de temps après, ledit Alençon assembla gens pour entrer ou païs de Normandie, vers les marches de Bretagne et du Maine, et pour ce faire requist et fist requerre le roy que il lui pleust lui bailler la Pucelle, et que par le moien d'elle plusieurs se mettroient en sa compaignie qui ne se bourgeroient se elle ne faisoit le chemin*³¹⁶ ...». Alençon seems to have entered into the service of Brittany and Yolande in an attempt to push Bedford out of their border territories. He wanted Joan to ensure that the troops who had rallied to her standard would continue to fight on this new front. René d'Anjou, in the company of his mentor Barbazan (who had been named governor-general for Champagne), left to chase the English out of Champagne, later to be joined by the ever-faithful Baudricourt.³¹⁷ As for Alençon's request: «*Messire [Regnault] de Chartres, le seigneur de la Trémoille, le sire de Gaucourt, qui lors gouvernoient le corps du roy et le fait de sa guerre, ne vouldroient oncques consentir, ne faire, ne souffrir que la Pucelle et le duc d'Alençon fussent ensemble; ne depuis ne la poeult recouvrer.*».³¹⁸ There was no way the reigning triumvirate was going to allow the possibility that Alençon and Joan might join forces with Richemont (who had the support of Brittany and Yolande) in Normandy. On the other hand, we must not discount the fact that both Alençon and Joan had perhaps started to develop into wilful renegades, Joan because of her passionate commitment to the liberation of France and Alençon in the interest of his own best interests.³¹⁹

Bedford continued to shower Burgundy with gifts and titles, conferring upon him the position of lieutenant-general for Henry VI, which gave him the guard and government of Paris and most English territories in France.³²⁰ These actions largely kept Philippe, who from November to January was in any case occupied with preparations for his nuptials to the *infanta* Isabelle of Portugal and the establishment of a knightly order, the *Toison d'or*, on side.

Joan appears to have simmered at the duplicity of Burgundy and her own enforced inaction. She informed the visionary Catherine de la Rochelle (whom she seems to have believed a fraud) upon learning that Catherine «*voulait aller vers le duc de Bourgogne pour faire la paix*» that «*il lui [Joan] semblait qu'on ne trouverait point de paix, sinon par le bout de la*

³¹⁶ Loc. cit.

³¹⁷ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 77.

³¹⁸ Cagny, in Quicherat t. IV, p. 30.

³¹⁹ Alençon was to embroil himself in all manner of rebellious and even treasonous activities, only narrowly escaping execution for the crime of lese-majesty. See below chapter 7 La Trémoille's ready manipulation of Alençon against his own uncle, Jean V, Duke of Brittany.

³²⁰ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 176.

lance». ³²¹ What is most intriguing about this exchange is that Catherine might have been put in Joan's path by the ubiquitous Richard, who, as we have seen above, had all manner of interesting connections. Were the Angevins trying to convince Joan to ease back on her martial aspirations? ³²² Or had La Trémoille/Regnault recognized an opportunist in Richard and therefore accorded him patronage? Or did the fact that Bedford had named Burgundy governor of Paris and lieutenant-governor for Henry VI mean that Charles needed to convince Joan to drop her planned offensive? Catherine employed a rather limp argument in an attempt to dissuade Joan from mounting an assault upon La Charité-sur-Loire: «... *ladicte Catherine ne lui conseillait pas d'y aller et qu'il y faisait trop froid; et elle disait à Jeanne qu'elle n'irait point.*». ³²³ Catherine was all for negotiation with Burgundy despite his patchy record of adherence to agreements.

La Trémoille dispatched Joan to Charité-sur-Loire to lay siege to it. The project foundered, degenerating into the mediæval equivalent of a guerilla offensive once the greater force had failed. Joan appeared confused and disoriented, with Jean d'Aulon testifying that she had claimed: «... *qu'elle n'estoit pas seule, et que encore avoit elle en sa compagnie cinquante mille de ses gens, et que d'ilec ne se partiroit jusques a ce qu'elle eust prinse ladicte ville. Et dit il [d'Aulon] qui parle que, a celle heure, quelque chose qu'elle deist, n'avoit pas avecques elle plus de quatre ou cinq hommes ...*». ³²⁴

Charité-sur-Loire was the beginning of the end of Joan's mission, one which had started to unravel outside Paris on the Feast of the Virgin, 8th September 1429. Joan returned to Charles, who offered ennoblement for herself and her family, transmittable by both the male and female lines. The official decree of this late-Mediæval equivalent of a "golden parachute" was co-signed by the Lords of « La Tremoille et [de] Trevis [Robert le Maçon] ... ». ³²⁵ Joan was unmoved by this and continued to aspire to military glories while Burgundy resisted Charles's overtures, having all but received the French Crown from Bedford in return for his loyalty. Compiègne refused to capitulate to Bedford and Burgundy despite the fact that they had regrouped and reinforced their army in the interval following Charles's departure from Paris. On 6th May, Charles finally conceded that he had been duped by his cousin Burgundy: «*l'adversaire de Bourgogne ... Après qu'il*

³²¹ Tisset, *Procès de Condamnation* ... t. II, 100.

³²² See our Appendix 1, n. 46 regarding Richard and his connections & pp. 305-307 above.

³²³ Tisset, loc. cit., this exchange occurred around November 1429.

³²⁴ Doncoeur & Lanhers, *Documents et Recherches* ... t. V, p. 305.

³²⁵ Quicherat, *Procès*, t. V, pp. 150 - 153 : « *Per regum, episcopo Sagiensi, dominus de la Tremoille et de Trevis et aliis præsentibus.* »

nous a, par aucun temps, amusés et déçus par trêves et autrement, sous ombre de bonne foi, parce qu'il disait et affirmait avoir volonté de deparvenir au bien de la paix, laquelle, pour le soulagement de notre pauvre people, qui à la déplaisance de notre coeur, tant a souffert et souffre chaque jour pour le fait de la guerre, avons fort désirée et désirons, il s'est mis avec certaine puissance pour faire guerre à l'encontre de nous et à nos pays et loyaux sujets.»³²⁶

The royal caravan moved to Compiègne to fortify it against the Anglo-Burgundians who were besieging it and «En ce temps, [18th May 1430] se partirent de Compiengne la Pucelle, l'arcevesque de Rains, le conte de Vendosme et plusieurs autres cappitaines et gens de guerre, et chevaucherent tant qu'ilz vindrent devant la ville de Soissons, cuidans passer par ladictte ville pour aller combatre le duc de Bourgoingne ... Lesdiz gens d'armes cocherent celle nuit aux champs ... Lesdiz seigneurs s'en allerent a Senliz et ladictte Pucelle a Compiengne ...»³²⁷

Joan's return to military activity was met with trepidation both in Paris and by the English, but according to Chastellain her own party was overjoyed:

«... le nom de la Pucelle estoit si grant jà et si fameux, que chacun la resongnoit comme une chose dont on ne savoit comment jugier, ne en bien, ne en mal; mes tant avoit fait jà des besongnes et menées à chief, que ses ennemis la doubtoient, et l'aouroient ceulx de son party, principalement pour le siège d'Orliens, là où elle ouvra merveilles; pareillement pour le voyage de Rains, là où elle mena le roy coronner, et ailleurs en aultres grans affaires, dont elle predisoit les aventures et les événements.»³²⁸

Yet Charles's *angélique* saviour was soon to fall into the hands of the English, a fate she feared more than anything else. Joan had displayed her valour and commitment right up to and beyond her capture at Compiègne. Once captured, certain individuals sought to distance themselves from her by besmirching her reputation and piety. Cagny describes her capture:

«En l'an MCCCCXXX, le XXIIIe jour dudit mois de mey, la Pucelle estant audit lieu de Crespy, sceut que le duc de Bourgongne, en grant nombre de gens d'armes et autres, et le comte d'Arondel, estoit venu asseigier laditte ville de Compiengne ... Et combien de ses gens lui deissent que elle avoit pou gens pour passer parmi l'ost des Bourgoignons et Englois, elle dist: «Par mon martin, nous suymes assez; je iray voir mes bons amis de Compiengne» Elle arriva audit lieu

³²⁶ Paraphrased by Pernoud in *Jeanne d'Arc par elle-même et par ses témoins*, pp. 172 – 173.

³²⁷ The Berry Herald, op. cit., t. II, pp. 143 – 144.

³²⁸ Chastellain, Georges in Quicherat, *Procès*, t. IV, p. 442.

environ solail levant, et sans perte ne destourbier à elle ne à ses gens, entra dedens laditte ville ... Et environ IX heures au matin, la Pucelle ouyt dire que l'escarmouche estoit grande et forte en la prarie devant laditte ville. Elle se arma et fist armer ses gens et monter à cheval, et se vint metre en la meslée. Et incontinent elle venue, les ennemis furent reculiez et mis en chasse. La Pucelle chargea fort sur le costé des Bourguignons. Ceulx de l'embusche advisèrent leurs gens qui retournoient en grant desroy; lors descouvriront leur embusche et à coyste d'esperons se vindrent metre entre le pont et la ville, la Pucelle et sa compaignie ... Et quant les Bourguignons et Engloiz aperceurent que elle retournoit pour recouvrer la ville, à grant effort vindrent au bout du pont ... Et ainssi demoura la Pucelle enfermée dehors et poy de ses gens avecques elle ... Elle resista très fort contre eulx et en la parfin fut prinse de V ou de VI ensemble, les ungs metans la main en elle les autres en son cheval, chacun d'iceulx disans: «Rendez vous à moy et baillez la foy.» Elle respondit: «Je ay juré et baillé ma foy à autre que à vous et je luy en tendray mon serement.» Et en disant ces parolles fut menée au logis de messire Jehan de Lucembourc.»³²⁹

Joan was relinquished into eager English hands and her fate as a prized political prisoner to be tried in an ecclesiastical court was sealed.

Manuscript sources held in England record that:

*"... the woman sometimes called Joan who is commonly named Puella ... arrested and captured ... this woman forgetful of that grace that belongs to the female sex, of the steep descent to shame, of complete shame, a disgraceful habit fitting the manly sex, disastrously and monstrously disgraceful to have ... her presumption was being challenged in agreement with and towards the Catholic faith ..."*³³⁰

Abandoned by her party, Joan was martyred for her cause, her beliefs and above all for her success in unifying Charles's army. Her final words were the repetition of the Holy Name of Jesus for whom she had lived and died.

During the course of this chapter, we have examined the networks and synergies that almost certainly led Joan to Yolande. Our discussion has, we believe, demonstrated the

³²⁹ Cagny in Quicherat, *Procès*, t. IV pp. 32 – 34.

³³⁰ British Library, Ms. BL. Add 30583, *Procès criminel fait à Jeanne d'Arc de Vaulcouleur, vulgairement appelée la Pucelle Jeanne es années 1430 et 1431*, f° 2, our paraphrasing of the Latin original. The British Library manuscript catalogue entry states that: "The manuscript collection [30583] contains state papers relating to the history of France in its internal affairs [...] being a collection formed by Antoine de Loménie, Seigneur de la Ville-aux-Clers, Secretary of State to Henri IV and Louis XIII [1606-1638], for the use of his son, Henri Auguste de Loménie, Comte de Brienne, secretary of State to Louis XIII and Louis XIV [1615-1643]. This copy was made for Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, the Minister of Louis XIV [1672-1690]."

ways in which these networks, the imperatives of the kingdom of France and indeed those of the House of Anjou, ensured that Yolande, Queen of Jerusalem-Naples-Sicily, would sponsor and, to some extent, protect the young visionary from the most easterly reaches of her son-in-law's troubled realm. What then, was Yolande's position in Joan's decline and fall and what if anything had Joan's crusade set in train?

CHAPTER 7: EN LA FORET DE LONGUE ATTENTE

*En la forest de Longue Actente,
Chevauchant par divers sentiers
M'en voys, ceste annee presente,
Ou voyage de Desiriers.
Devant sont allez mes fourriers
Pour appareiller mon logeis
En la cité de Destinee ;
Et pour mon cueur et moy ont pris
L'ostellerie de Pensee.¹*

Joan and her supporters understood what would happen should she fall into English hands. Joan was for Bedford, initially, a “*femme desordonnée et diffamée, estant en habit d’homme et gouvernement dissolu*”² and later, well after her execution, a “*Disciple and Lyme [limb] of the Feende*” quite rightly punished for her transgressions and those of her party.

As late as mid-June 1434, some three years after Joan’s execution, in an attempt to defend himself against criticism of his management of the war effort in France and in order to attract additional funding from his parliament to continue his campaign in France,³ Bedford wrote of Joan and her impact upon his projects in unflattering terms in a letter entitled by Rymer, *Super Morte Comitum Sarum, Super Incantamentis diabolicæ Fœminæ quam Puellam nuncupant, et de Statu tunc Rerum in Francia, inter allia hæc memorantur Ducis Bedfordiæ ad Regem verba; videlicet:*

“... and of unlevefulle doubtte that thei [the French] hadde of a Disciple and Lyme of the Feende, called the Pucelle that used fals Enchauntements and Sorcerie. The which Strooke and Discomfiture nought oonly lessed in grete partie the Nombre of youre Peuple [his captain’s troops], there, but as well withdrowe the Courage of the Remenant in meroeillous wyse, and couraiged youre Adverse-Partie and Ennemys to assemble hem forthwith in grete Nombre ...”⁴

Earlier, from Montereau, a place charged with immutable significance for both sides, Bedford made clear his opinion of Charles VII’s continuing association with Joan in a letter sent by him to his rival on 7th August 1429:

¹ Ballade CV, Orléans, Charles d’, *Charles d’Orléans. Poésies.*, (2 vols), Champion, Pierre, (ed.), Paris, Honoré Champion, 1966 (reprint of 1923/4 edition), t. I, p. 165.

² See above, p. 313.

³ Cf. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 238-239.

⁴ *Acta, Fœdera ...* Rymer, t. X, p. 408, cited by Quicherat, t. V, pp. 136-137,

«Nous, Jehan de Lancastre, régent de France et duc de Bethfort, sçavoir faisons à vous, Charles de Valoix, qui vous soliez nommer daulphin de Viennoix, et maintenant, sans cause, vous dittes roy ... par les moyens que avés tenus et tenés, qui faittes seduire et abuser le peuple ignorant, et vous aydiez plus de gens superstitieux et reprouciés, comme d'une femme desordonnée et diffamée, estant en habit d'homme et de gouvernement dissolut, et aussy d'un frère mendiant, appostat et sédicieux, comme nous sommes informés; tous deux, seloncq la Saincte Escripiture, abhominables à Dieu ...»⁵

Playing to Burgundy in this 1429 missive, Bedford continues his harangue by singling out Montereau-1419, Charles's Achilles' heel:

«... regardant le bien de paix, nous l'orrons, et ferons tout che que bon prinche catholique doibt et puet faire, et tousjours sommes et serons enclins et volontaires à toutes bonnes voies de paix non fainte, corrompue, dissimulée, violée ne parjurée, comme fut à Moustereau ... chelle dont, par vostre coulpe et consentement, s'ensieoy le terrible, détestable et cruel murdre commis contre loy et honneur de chevalerie, en la personne de feu nostre très chier et très amé père,⁶ le duc Jehan de Bourgongne ...»⁷

In the above, Bedford outlines the ongoing case against Charles's legitimacy to rule by calling into question both his relationship with Joan, a «*femme desordonnée et diffamée*», and by pointing to the enduring spectre of Montereau. It is little wonder therefore that once Joan was lost to Bedford, Charles's chancellor Regnault de Chartres issued a public statement to the people of Reims (site of Charles's *sacre*) distancing Charles from her.⁸ The original letter is lost, but a record of Regnault's missives is contained in Rogier's *Mémoires*, along with his observations:

«... Et sur ce que on luy dicte que les Anglois avoient faict mourir Jehanne la Pucelle, il respondit que tant plus il leur mescherroit; et que Dieu avait souffert prendre Jehanne la Pucelle pour ce

⁵ Quicherat, t. IV pp. 382-383

⁶ Bedford's father-in-law.

⁷ Quicherat, op. cit, p. 384.

⁸ This would have posed no great hardship for Regnault, an individual never particularly supportive of Joan or her connections.

*qu'el s'estoit constitué en orgueil, et pour les riches habitez qu'el avoit pris; et qu'el n'avoit faict ce que Dieu luy avoit commandé, ains avoit faict sa volonté».*⁹

We must remember that for Joan's contemporaries, pride, or more precisely, *superbia*, was the fount of all evil.¹⁰ In Tobias 4:14 we read: "*superbiam numquam in tuo sensu aut in tuo verbo dominari; permittas in ipsa enim initium sumpsit omnis perditio*".¹¹ Saint Augustine had warned against pride, the original sin,¹² while Jehan Petit specifically highlighted the text "*radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas*" in his defence of Jean sans Peur's assassination of Louis d'Orléans in 1407.¹³ Joan the humble virgin had sinned through pride: on 23rd May, during the final day of interrogation, in response to the reading of her transgressions, she responded: "*Quantum est de dictis et factis meis que ego dixi in processu, ego ad hec me refero et volo ea sustinere*".¹⁴ Guillaume Manchon, one of the notaries recording her words for the trial, noted his immediate reaction to this utterance in the margin of his minutes: "*Responsio Iohanne superba*".¹⁵ This is not, as some would have us believe, testimony to his admiration for her "pluckiness" and wit but rather a visceral personal interjection at the depth of her pride.

The subtext of Regnault's missive (as reported by Rogier), a communication securely anchored to mediæval notions of pride as the original sin, is therefore that the enduring salvation of France, in the words of Paradin, could only be: «*secours et ayde ... qui exalte les humbles et humilie les orgueilleux ...*».¹⁶ France had lost its humble *bergère* as a consequence of her «*orgueil*» and «*volonté*» and in what would turn out to be a grave miscalculation Regnault introduced a substitute *ingénu*, Guillaume le Bergier, «*ung meschant*» according to the *Bourgeois*, who «*faisoit les gens idolastres en lui*».¹⁷ For a while

⁹ Quicherat, t. V, pp. 168-169.

¹⁰ Huizinga, op. cit., p. 25.

¹¹ *Biblia sacra vulgata*, Tb. 4:14, p. 680.

¹² «*Initium omnis peccati superbia*.» from *Ad orosium contra priscillianistas et origenista*, Dialogue, qq. lxxv, qu. 4, Centre de traitement électronique des documents (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique) *Sanctus Aurelius Augustinus "Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum", "Contra priscillianistas et origenistas", Orosius "De errore priscillianistarum et origenistarum"* [microfiches], Turnhout [Belgique]: Brepols 1985. Cf. Aquinas's discussion on whether pride was Adam's first sin, *Summa Theologica*, Second part of the Second part, question 163, article 1, Aquino, Thome de, *Summa theologica [Secundus liber Secunde parties beati Thome de Aquino]*, Venetiis, T. de Ragazonibus, 1491.

¹³ Above, p. 133.

¹⁴ Tisset et Lahners, *Procès de Condamnation*, t. I, p. 383.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Guillaume Paradin, see above p. 245.

¹⁷ *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 247.

things went to plan, but by the beginning of August 1431, between Beauvais¹⁸ and Gournay, Le Févre records that:

«Bien advez ouy parler comment aucuns, de légier entendement et de créance voulage, se boutèrent à croire que lez faiz de la Pucelle estoient choses miraculeuses et permises de par Dieu, et fort y furent enclins de ce croire. Or, advint après la mort de Jehenne la Pucelle que aucuns, aussi de folle créance, mirent sus ung fol et innocent bregier, lequel, comme avoit dit Jehenne la Pucelle, disoit qu'il avoit révelacion divine, affin qu'il se meist sus en armes, pour aidier ce noble roy de France : icelle folie fut expérimentée à la charge, déshonneur et perte du royaulme.»¹⁹

Given that the trigger for Joan's execution was her refusal to put aside male attire, Charles's party ensured that the same mistake would not be repeated. Joan had been discredited but a new representative of the humble was raised up to rally the troops. Unfortunately for Guillaume *le Bregier*, he was quickly captured by the English, who took him to Rouen, scene of Joan's *passion*, where we are told that without ceremony:

«... il [Guillaume] avoit esté gecté en la rivière de Saine et noyé. [And] Icelle bataille fut appelée la bataille du bregier; laquelle bataille est plus au long escripte ès livres de ceulx qui ont cronicques ...».²⁰

While there is no extant document attesting to Yolande's reaction to Joan's capture, trial and execution, judging from her past actions Yolande was a woman more than naturally in tune with the tide of events and the temperature of the people. She appears to have been able to adjust her plans to accommodate whatever direction the wind blew. With Richemont's exile, Yolande had continued to work towards unity; with Joan eliminated and pilloried, Yolande resorted to other means to advance her projects, and her new responsibilities were to prove even more labyrinthine.

With the disappearance of Joan and indeed prior to her capture, the aging *royne de Jherusalem et de Sicile* had been forced to turn her attention to lower Normandy, where

¹⁸ The Bishop of Beauvais, Pierre de Cauchon doubtless welcomed the removal of yet another opposing «*Pastourel*», this time in the region of his own bishopric.

¹⁹ *Chronique de Jean le Févre* ... t. II, p. 263.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

Richemont was campaigning against Bedford,²¹ and oversee, if only from a remove, the activities of René, Barbazan and Baudricourt in Champagne.²² René was moving east with his allies and his protector Barbazan to openly test Burgundy's authority and resources. According to Monstrelet:

«En ce temps, le duc de Bar, nommé Renier de Sezille, convoqua de ses duchez de Bar et de Lorraine et des marches d'Alemaigne à l'environ très grand nombre de gens d'armes, avec lesquelz se mist ce prudent et vaillant chevalier le seigneur de Barbazon ... à tout lesquelz il ala asségier Chappes à trois lieus de Troyes ...». [The besieged sent to Burgundy, who in response dispatched reinforcements including:] «messire Anthoine et messire Jehan de Vergy», [along with the Vaudémont, René's implacable adversaries in the struggle for the succession in Lorraine.] [They] «assablèrent, et vindrent assez près du logis du duc de Bar, pour le combater. Lequel duc, sachant leur venue, se mist en bonne ordonnance de bataille. Mais en bref, yceulx Bourguignons se mirent en desroy et retournèrent en leur pays».²³

Immediately following this account, Monstrelet takes up Joan's tale, detailing «*Comment Jehenne la Pucelle fut prinse des Bourguignons devant la ville de Compiengne*»²⁴. The ordering as well as the content of these successive accounts by Monstrelet could signal where Yolande's immediate attention was focused at the time of Joan's capture. Monstrelet continues his account of the year's events by detailing «*Comment le joane roy Henri vint en France et descendi à Calais*»,²⁵ shedding light on Bedford's project to mount a counter-coronation to erase the legitimacy of Charles's own *sacre* once he had Joan in his keeping. Bedford's strategy, including his plans for Joan, becomes unambiguous when we read in Monstrelet that Henry VI disembarked in Calais on St George's Day,²⁶ immediately heard mass in the Church of Saint Nicholas²⁷ and that the names of those on hand to greet the young king included the Count of Warwick and the ubiquitous Pierre Cauchon,

²¹ See above p. 303, n. 246.

²² See above chapter 5, regarding revived troop and resource-sharing between Richemont, Brittany and Yolande.

²³ Monstrelet, t. IV, pp. 385-386.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 389.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ 23rd April.

²⁷ It may have been by coincidence that Henry was taken to a church dedicated to the same saint venerated by Joan just before she was sent to Chinon, but it is worth noting all the same, given the attention paid by both sides to the public relations aspects of their respective campaigns for legitimacy to rule France. Henry's disembarkation on St. George's Day neatly rests in opposition to Joan and Charles's adherence to St.-Michel and their propensity for embarking upon missions on significant days in the Virgin's calendar.

who would preside over Joan's Rouen trial. Monstrelet's account of Henry's appearance closes with the words: «... *Si fut mené atout sa puissance en la ville de Rouen, où il fut long temps.*»²⁸ They there assembled with other worthies to witness Joan's show-trial and her inevitable execution.

As Monstrelet relates, France was bloodied but not yet broken:

[For] «... *le seigneur de Barbazan mist siege devant le chastel d'Anglure [and] avoit esté commis par le roy Charles de France gouverneur et capitaine des pays de Brie, de Laonnais, et de Champaigne*»,²⁹ where he sealed Charles's domination in Champagne.³⁰ Monstrelet's next entry details «*Comment Jehenne la Pucelle fut condampnée à estre arsse et mise à mort dedens la cité de Rouen*». ³¹

At this point we must emphasize that Joan's epic and what had preceded it and what would follow it, was to all intents and purposes a game of political brinksmanship with both sides seeking to seize the moral and spiritual high ground in relation to their particular sovereigns' rights to rule. Furthermore, both sides did their utmost to either retain or woo Burgundy to their respective factions, exemplified by the letter Bedford issued in eight-year old Henry's name to Burgundy immediately following Joan's execution:

«*Très chier et très amé oncle. La fervente dévotion que sçavons vous avoir comme vray prince catholique à nostre mère sainte Eglise et l'exaltacion de nostre sainte foy, raisonnablement nous exhorte et admoneste de vous signifier et escrire ce qu'à l'honneur de nostre dicte mère sainte Eglise, fortificacion de nostre foy et extirpacion d'erreurs pestilencieuses, a esté en ceste nostre ville de Rouen fait jà nagaires sollempnellement. Il est assez commune renommée, jà comme par tout divulguée, comment cette femme, qui se faisoit nommer Jehenne la Pucelle, eronnée, s'estoit, deux ans et plus, contre la loy divine et l'estat de son sexe féminin, vestue en habit d'homme, chose à Dieu abhominable, et en tel estat transportée devers notre ennemi capital et le vostre ... se vestit aussi d'armes appliquées pour chevaliers et escuyers, leva l'estendart, et, en trop grand outrage, orgueil et présumpcion, demanda avoir et porter les très nobles et excellentes armes de*

²⁸ Monstrelet, loc. cit.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 440-442.

³⁰ Lecoy de la Marche, *Le roi René...*, t. I, p. 78.

³¹ Monstrelet, op. cit. p. 442. Joan's execution took place on 30th May 1431.

France, ce que en partie elle obtient. Et les porta en plusieurs courses et assaulx, et ses frères, comme on dist, c'est assavoir, ung escu à deux fleurs de lis d'or à champ d'azur et une espée la pointe en hault férue en une couronne ... Dont presque toute la chrestienté a esté toute scandalisée ...»³²

Bedford continues his tactic of flattering Burgundy, pounding home the message that their joint enterprise was a just and noble one and that they alone were the true defenders of the Church and guardians of the Faithful in France: only their continued alliance would ensure France's salvation.

Joan had been examined, "gently" admonished, judged and shown mercy by the Church and the University, yet according to Bedford:

«... le feu de son orgueil, qui sambloit estre estaint en ycelle,³³rembrasa en flambes pestilencieuses par les soufflemens de l'ennemy ... Et comme elle fust rescheue ès crimes et faultes vilaines par elle accoustumées, fut delaissiée à la justice séculière, laquelle incontinant la commanda à estre brulée ...»³⁴

Bedford's letter was copied and *«fut publiée en pluseurs lieux, [so that] leurs gens et subjectz dore en avant feussent plus seurs et mieulx advertis de non avoir créance en telles ou semblables erreurs, qui avoit regné pour et à l'occasion de ladite Pucelle»*.³⁵

The tactic of divine intervention in the affairs of France, one that had delivered much to Charles's party, was conclusively terminated and discredited by Bedford. Yolande was left to try to salvage something from the wreckage of Joan's accomplishments. She needed to shore up old alliances, underwrite and oversee her sons' military exploits and find a way to rid herself of La Trémoille in order to recall Richemont to her service. Yolande was entering her fiftieth year and had already spent decades sequestered *«en la forêt de longue attente»*.

³² Ibid., pp.442-447.

³³ Note the continued reference to Joan's *«orgueil»*, this time by Bedford. He specifically cites her *«très périlleux et divisé esperit d'orgueil et d'oultrageous présumption»* Ibid., p. 445. See above our discussion regarding pride, pp. 326-327.

³⁴ Monstrelet, op. cit, p. 446.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 447.

Her most immediate concern³⁶ was her second son René, whose destiny was soon to be realized. We have mentioned Barbazan's activities in Champagne, yet it seems that René was not at his side at the decisive battle at Chappes and in some accounts he is reported to have moved south to the Dauphiné, where French troops, assisted by the mercenary Rodriguo Villandrando,³⁷ had mounted an expedition against Louis de Châlons, Prince of Orange. The French defeated him on 11th June 1431 but what part if any René played in the final victory is unclear, for by the third week of June he was in Varennes at the bedside of his ailing uncle Louis, Cardinal-Duke of Bar, who died on 23rd June 1431. Louis disinherited René in part by favouring other nieces and nephews with bequests of territory and concessions which should have by right passed to him. Perhaps the Cardinal-Duke had sought to punish René for his bellicose break with Bedford and Burgundy. Rather than initiating an acrimonious confrontation with his cousins, René chose to negotiate, eventually regaining his inheritance. He then graced the memory of his uncle with sumptuous funerary rites and erected, according to Louis's expressed desire, a sepulchre within the Cathedral-Church of Verdun.³⁸

Having reclaimed his duchy of Bar, René was almost immediately faced with the death of his redoubtable father-in-law, Charles II of Lorraine. With this death and that of Louis de Bar, Yolande's political manoeuvrings in the east of the kingdom were finally realized. Her activities would, however, create further difficulties for René both with Burgundy and the Vaudémont, who had long had him in their sights.

René's history of fluid allegiances³⁹ with both Charles VII and with Burgundy would eventually bring him much misery. To the end of his life Charles II had persisted in his alliance with Burgundy, but René had formally broken with Bedford and by extension, with Burgundy in the days immediately following Charles's *sacre*. Much in the manner of his (René's) own father Louis II,⁴⁰ Charles II implored René that if he wanted to live an untroubled and distinguished life he should never move against the Duke of Burgundy or his possessions: «*car en l'amitié des Bourguignons, ses voisins, gisoit son salut et grand*

³⁶ Coupled with her continuing interest in deliberations in Basle.

³⁷ Charles de Bourbon's half-brother, above p. 278, n. 147 & below p. 351.

³⁸ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, pp. 78-79.

³⁹ See above, chapters 5 and 6.

⁴⁰ See above, p. 166 & note 27. The advice given by Louis II regarding Burgundy was directed both at his own family and to his son-in-law Charles, later Charles VII.

bien».⁴¹ It was all very well for René's father-in-law to point out that one should at all costs seek to live in harmony with Burgundy, but Burgundy was the avowed adversary of René's brother-in-law and childhood companion Charles; and although René was Duke of Bar and of Lorraine he was above all an Angevin prince, one whose House was inextricably tied to the destiny of Charles. René could not contemplate re-allying himself with the Anglo-Burgundians (an alliance which in any case had always presented him with headaches). Yolande had allotted his portion upon her return from Provence in the summer of 1423.

Profiting from René's absence, Antoine de Vaudémont had resurfaced in Nancy in March 1431 emblazoned with the arms of Lorraine and in the company of his supporters. He demanded homage from the Lorrainois by right of his standing as the true heir-apparent to the duchy. While during the decline of Charles II he had promised not to seize his rights by force, he was not averse to pushing the boundaries of his pledge by attempting to insinuate himself with, or indeed threaten, the Duke's subjects. Vaudémont's newest push for recognition seems to have been provoked by the baptism of René's first son Jean, who was styled heir-presumptive to the duchies of Bar and Lorraine.⁴² Vaudémont's efforts were repulsed by René's supporters, the Bishop of Toul, Isabelle's brother-in-law the Marquis of Baden, and Robert de Sarrebruck, just to name a few.⁴³

According to Calmet, René's partisans stood their ground, telling Vaudémont:

«Votre oncle a laissé des filles qui, selon les droits et coutumes du pays, sont les héritières, principalement l'aînée; elle est déjà reconnue: vous n'avez rien à voir dans la succession.»

At which, we are assured, Vaudémont uttered the words:

*«Eh bien! Je jure sur mon âme que je serai bientôt duc.»*⁴⁴

⁴¹ Georges Chastellain (1405-1475) *Ceuvres*, Ed., Kervyn, de Lettenhove, Joseph Bruno Marie Constantin, Geneva, Slatkin 1971, t. II, p. 43.

⁴² Villeneuve-Bargemont, Louis-François de, *l'Histoire de René d'Anjou*, t. I, pp. 116-117.

⁴³ Lecoy de la Marche, t. I, p. 81.

⁴⁴ Calmet, Dom Augustin, *Histoire de Lorraine*, [reproduction in facsimilie], Paris, Editions du Palais-Royal, 1973, t. II, p. 767.

The gauntlet had been thrown and René was in no doubt of the fragility of his position, for Vaudémont had refused to do homage for territory in Bar over which René held dominion. René declared war on 14th April 1431:

«René, filz du roy de Jhérusalem et de Sicille, duc de Bar and de Lorraine et marchis, marquis du Pont et conte de Guyse, à vous messire Anthoine, comte de Vaudémont ... mesmement que toute la conté de Waudémont est tenue de nous en fief et homaige lige, jurable et rendable à grand force et à petite contre tous qui puevent viore et morir, et que tous vos prédécesseurs, contes de Wadémont, en soient entrez en la foy et hommage et en ayent faict les devoirs y appartenans à noz prédécesseurs ducz de Bar ... tant pour nostre honneur comme pour la conservation de nostredicte seignourie, vous signifions par ces présentes que, pour cause des refus et désobéissance faictes par vosdictz baillis, gens et officiers, comme dict est, nostre intention est, à l'ayde de Nostre Seigneur et le bon conseil, secours et confort de nos bons amis et loyaulx vassaulx, y pourveoir de rède, en y procédent par voye de fait à main armée par toutes les voyes et manières à nous possibles que pourrons et saurons, et comme en tel cas appartient ...»⁴⁵

Just how much «ayde» René expected to be forthcoming from «Nostre Seigneur» is unclear for, notwithstanding his faith in divine intercession, in May 1431, as Joan was being prepared for execution by Bedford, René hurried to Yolande's capital Tours to seek the assistance of his brother-in-law Charles VII. Charles had previously ordered the bailiff of Vermandois to support René in his struggles against Vaudémont: «*car nous réputons le faict de nostre dit frère comme le nostre propre*». ⁴⁶ Charles (or Yolande) was as good as his word, according René's request by detailing Barbazan to back René with an armed force.

Two days after Joan's execution, René was on his way back to Lorraine to besiege Vaudémont for a second time. After twelve days, René left the command of the siege to Isabelle's brother-in-law,⁴⁷ to allow himself to consolidate his troops. Vaudémont took René's lead and gathered together forces sent to him by Saint-Pôl, Savoy (erstwhile mediator-at-large and negotiator on behalf of Yolande and Brittany to the court of Burgundy) and Louis I of Châlon-Arly, Prince of Orange. These troops were joined at Joinville by additional Burgundian forces. They advanced towards Vaudémont and

⁴⁵ Archives de Meurthe-et-Moselle, B. 960, n° 137. Cf. *Annuaire de la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de la Lorraine*, Metz 1930, t. XXXIX, pp. 18-19.

⁴⁶ BNF, Ms. Lorraine 68, f° 229, cited by Lecoy de la Marche, t. I, p. 83.

⁴⁷ Jacob I, Marquis of Baden.

Nancy, devastating Bar and burning villages along the way. In Vosges they received word that René and Barbazan had amassed an expeditionary force of their own and prepared for the inevitable confrontation.

The Berry Herald:

« Et quant le duc de Bar et le sire de Barbazan sceurent ces nouvelles, ilz se partirent de Nancy et chevaucherent tant par leurs journees qu'ilz trouverent et atignirent leurs ennemis, lesquieulx s'en retournoient en Bourgoingne, pour ce qu'ilz estoient informez que ledit duc avoit trop grant puissance sur les champs. Et quant ilz virent qu'ilz ne povoyent passer une riviere, qui la estoit, et que les batailles du duc leur gardoient les pas, si se fortifierent d'un fossé d'un costé et et d'unne haye de l'autre costé et par devant de leur charroy... »⁴⁸

From the account above it seems clear that René was well-positioned for victory, but the young hot-heads of his contingent overrode Barbazan's sage counsel not to give up their strategic position for the sake of a paltry victory over Vaudémont's inferior force. René managed to snatch defeat from the jaws of an almost assured victory in the war for succession over Lorraine:

*«Neantmoins le Duc ordonna
Que l'en yroit frapper dessus,
Mais Barbazan conseil donna
Qu'on ne leur devoit courir sus.
Si dist la raison & maniere,
Du dangier qui estoit celle part,
Mais je ne sçay qui par derriere
Luy dist qu'il estoit trop couart:
Lors dist que la premier yroit,
Et que personne de la feste
Son cheval bouter n'oseroit
Où mettroit la queuë de sa beste.
A tant d'illecques s'en partirent,
Pour frapper dessus chauldement;*

⁴⁸ The Berry Herald, op. cit. pp. 147-148

*Mais les bourguignons si saillirent
 Sur eulx moult verteusement,
 Vaillamment et fort combatirent,
 Et au derrenier finalement
 Les Bourguignons si desconfirent
 Le Duc & ses gens nettement
 Ledit Duc de Bar là fut prins,
 L'Evesque de Mestz Rossemac,
 Et d'autres grans Seigneurs seurprins
 Dedens leur dicte place et parc.
 A ceste journée si moururent
 Douze cens Lorrains & Barroys,
 Avec plusieurs gens qui y furent,
 Tant d'Allemans comme François.
 Ainsi fut tué à l'approche
 Ledit Barbazan noble et saige,
 Vaillant Chevaillier sans reproche,
 De la mort duquel fut dommaige».⁴⁹*

From an initial position of strength, René found himself a prisoner of the Burgundians, who would not release him without penalty, and Yolande and her daughter-in-law Isabelle of Lorraine were henceforth obliged to work towards his release. With the death of Barbazan, Charles VII lost one of his most able generals and his lieutenant-governor in Champagne, a region where he had regained and retained much territory due to the activities of his irreplaceable «*Vaillant Chevaillier sans reproche*». «*La pitieuse et douloureuse journée de Bulgneville*»⁵⁰ The Bulgnéville débâcle was a powerful strategic success for Vaudémont and Burgundy as it had removed René and his loyalist influence in Bar-Lorraine and stalled Charles's ascendancy in Champagne. Even after his release, René would find his prestige and authority as Duke of Lorraine and of Bar irreversibly diminished. Lecoy de la Marche points out that this conflict was «... *considérablement agrandi par le nombre et la qualité des alliés des deux adversaires. C'était au fond, la grande lutte de la France contre l'Angleterre et la Bourgogne qui se poursuivait sous une forme nouvelle*».

⁴⁹ Martial, d'Auvergne, op. cit. t. I, pp. 130-131. See above regarding Martial d'Auvergne, p. 301, note 240.

⁵⁰ 2nd July 1431, BNF, Ms. Lorraine 239, n° 2.

Importantly, Lecoy de la Marche concludes this comment by posing the question:

«La politique de Yolande d'Aragon triompherait-elle des derniers obstacles, ou les ennemis coalisés parviendraient-ils à enserrer le royaume dans un cercle de fer?»⁵¹

For her part, Yolande was soon to discover that in her daughter-in-law Isabelle of Lorraine she had an excellent lieutenant.

While Bar and Lorraine mourned their loss, their duchess Isabelle was about to embark upon the most magnificent phase of her career. At twenty, she would reveal that she was a worthy successor to Yolande in the affairs of the east of the realm. With the help of her mother Marguerite of Bavaria, Isabelle closed the borders of her duchies to Vaudémont and forbade her subjects to accommodate even the most anodyne of her cousin's requests. She then protested to Vaudémont and solicited assistance from Charles VII, and Emperor Sigismund. Her repeated protest to Vaudémont eventually yielded fruit in the shape of a three-month truce, commencing 1st August 1431, allowing her time to assess her situation and plan her next move.⁵²

René's conditions of captivity were such that Burgundy was obliged to intervene, having been urged to improve matters by Sigismund (from whom Lorraine was held in fief), Isabelle, her mother, Savoy and his heir-apparent, the Count of Geneva. Burgundy accorded René provisional release so that he could see to urgent rebuilding and reparation in his duchies. By an act dated 16th February 1432, René agreed to return to custody on 1st May 1433. As part of the agreement, Burgundy issued safe-conducts for René's two sons Jean and Louis (the eldest barely emerged from infancy), so that they could be brought to Dijon as hostages to replace René.⁵³ René then attempted to reconstruct his territories.

Bar-Lorraine was not however Yolande's only concern; she had Louis III's campaign to consider.

⁵¹ Lecoy de la Marche, *op. cit.*, t. I, pp. 83-84.

⁵² Calmet, *op. cit.* t. II, p. 775.

⁵³ BNF, Ms. Lorraine 238, n° 4.

Louis III's recall to France to assist Charles well before Joan's appearance at Chinon has been discussed, yet little exists to shed light upon his activities. Given that Louis had long been betrothed to Isabeau of Brittany⁵⁴ it seems worthwhile to consult once again the *Lettres et mandements* of Jean V held in the Breton archives. From this source we learn that by at least 4th February 1430, three months prior to Joan's capture, Louis III was back in Italy where, with the departure of Alfonse V of Aragon from Sicily and the successive deaths of powerful generals da Montone and the Constable Sforza, power in Naples had fallen into the hands of Jeanne II's favourite, Gianni Caracciolo, an individual who sought to distance the only other real contender for authority, Louis III, from Naples. Caracciolo bestowed upon the young aspirant the captain-generalcy of Calabria.⁵⁵

Document 1884 of *Lettres et mandements* reveals that an order for payment was issued on 4th February 1431:

«à messire Rollande de Saint Pou et maistre Jehan Doguet, envoiés par le duc en ambassade devers le duc de Savoye pour troicter du mariaige de Mgr le conte⁵⁶ avec la fille⁵⁷ dud, duc, et de là à Rome devers le pape pour esliger à mond. Sgr deux dismes et troicter d'autres choses, et de là aller devers le roy de Cecille, en Ytalie, lui savoir sa volonté du mariage de lui et de madame Ysabeau de Bretagne». ⁵⁸

One or the other party to the 1424 betrothal had cooled, and Brittany sought to clarify the situation or withdraw from the agreement by testing the temperature of Louis's enthusiasm for the match. By 1st October 1431, Isabeau was preparing for a wedding, documents recording a mandate:

«... à André Spinolle ..., pour 15 aunes 1/2 de satin bleu figuré et broché d'or, pour faire une houppelande pour madame Ysabeau de Bretagne pour ses nopces. Une autre houppelande de veloux cramoisy violet ...»⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Since November 1413. See above, pp. 145-146.

⁵⁵ Léonard, op. cit. p. 486.

⁵⁶ Francis I.

⁵⁷ This could only have been Marguerite of Savoy as her sister Marie was by then married to Filippo-Maria Visconti and Bonne, their eldest sister, had died the previous year. In the end it would be Louis III d'Anjou who would marry Marguerite de Savoy and Yolande d'Anjou, Francis I of Brittany. See below.

⁵⁸ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, p. 270.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

All is revealed by document 1925 dated 2nd December 1431, *Concession d'un droit de menée au comte de Laval*:

«... nostre très chier et très amé filz le conte de Laval, sire de Vitré et de la Roche ... pour le désir que avons de augmenter et acroistre par prorogatives et noblesces en tout ce que nous seroit possible, les terres et seigneuries de nostred. filz, mari, seigneur, espoux de nostre très chiere et très amée aînée et seulle fille Ysabel ...»⁶⁰

On the same day, Guy de Laval was accorded 50,000 gold crowns, «à l'occasion de son mariage».⁶¹

Guy XIV de Laval and not Louis III had wed Isabeau. Guy, we recall, had accompanied Joan on her mission. He was the grandson of Jeanne de Laval-Tinéiac, Lady of Châtillon and member of Yolande's coterie of pious Franciscan patronesses,⁶² and, as will be seen, members of the Laval family were longstanding counsellors to the House of Anjou. No account exists as to why the Breton-Angevin betrothal was dissolved. It would seem that Brittany took care to increase Guy's property holdings and cash reserves to make him a fitting husband for the daughter of a duke. Was it that Louis III was likely to spend the rest of his career in Italy and Provence (and indeed much closer to the duchy of Savoy than Brittany)? Given the bellicose pretensions of his relatives the Penthièvres, Jean V no doubt wisely believed that he would need an able and devoted son-in-law *in situ* as an effective auxiliary to his own efforts.⁶³

The Breton documents are revealing of the activities and whereabouts of individuals important to this period. A letter dated 22nd February 1431, clearly indicates that Richemont was part of his brother's council, for he witnessed the document: «... *presens Mgrs les contes de Richemont et de Laval ...*».⁶⁴ A preceding document indicates that contact

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 287.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 228.

⁶² See above, pp. 273-274. Cf. Walsby, *The Counts of Laval...* for detailed genealogical tables and information. See our Appendix 2 for a simplified genealogy.

⁶³ As discussed, Louis II had organized the betrothal in November 1413, prior to sending Catherine of Burgundy back to her father. The agreement was ratified in 1417 and in 1422, Louis III had attempted to marry Isabeau by proxy (above p. 203). It seems probable that Brittany had cooled towards Louis III (see below).

⁶⁴ *Lettres et mandements*, p. 292.

had been established between La Trémoille and Jean V: «*Mandat de paiement à Mallo roi d'armes, envoyé à Chinon devers le sire de la Tremoille pour li signifier l'allée de ses hostaiges et avance sa venue devers Mgr [Brittany]*». ⁶⁵

The wording of this mandate is telling, for it seems that Richemont was installed at the court of Brittany and La Trémoille, having first secured the necessary hostages, was to journey into hostile domains. This reading is confirmed by document 1935 dated 22nd February 1431:

«*Lettres du duc, signées et scellées, par lesquelles il promet et jure à Georges, Sgr de la Tremoille, de l'«amer et pourchacer son bien et honneur, le garder et deffendre contre touz celx qui le voudroient grever ou endomaiger en corps et en biens, et le garder et preserver en l'estat, service et auctorité qu'il a pleu au roy lui donner en son hosteill et autour de lui.»*⁶⁶

Clearly, Georges did not wish to be ambushed in unsympathetic territory by Brittany's brother, Richemont. The embassy La Trémoille headed was magnificently and sumptuously arrayed and he was accompanied by the warrior Poton de Xaintrilles, Robert Le Maçon and the Sire of Argenton.⁶⁷ They halted at Champtocé in the arrondissement of Angers, on the frontiers of Brittany and Anjou and here they conferred with Jean V who was himself accompanied by his new son-in-law, Guy de Laval. It was decided that Guy would assist Charles's troops by covering the border territory of Anjou and Maine, the cost of the initiative to be defrayed by Brittany:⁶⁸ «*Mgr Laval u veaige que briefvement il doit faire en France devers le roy et en sa guerre.*⁶⁹ Whether or not the issue of Richemont's return was discussed is not reported but, upon his return to Charles waiting in Saumur, Georges reinvigorated his military offensive against the forces and territory of the exiled Constable. In Charles's name he boldly confiscated dower territories from Richemont's wife, the Duchess of Guyenne,⁷⁰ moved the court to Poitiers and arrested Richemont's and Yolande's loyal allies Louis d'Amboise, Antoine

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 291.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 292.

⁶⁷ Cosneau, op. cit. p. 180.

⁶⁸ BNF, Ms. Fr. 11542, f° 24.

⁶⁹ *Lettres et mandements*, loc.cit.

⁷⁰ *Ordonnances ... t. XVI*, pp. 464-466. The revenues from these territories still flowed to Richemont, but the domains themselves had to be reintegrated into Crown territories.

de Vivonne and André de Beaumont,⁷¹ successfully prosecuting them for the crime of lese-majesty. Vivonne and Beaumont were decapitated⁷² and Amboise's lands and revenues were confiscated.⁷³

Georges must have felt the re-emergence of Yolande's influence, for as discussed above, upon his return from Champtocé in the company of her loyal retainers, he immediately moved to neutralize her influence and keep Richemont in exile. Yolande reacted by turning to Brittany for assistance.

In spite of the dissolution of Louis's betrothal to Isabeau of Brittany, Yolande did not let her ties with Brittany disintegrate, and in this she was to prove far more pragmatic and forward thinking than her son. Indeed, she, more than Louis III, remained constant to the task bequeathed to her by Louis II. In Chapter 5 we noted that one of Louis II's testimonial instructions was that his House work towards establishing a lasting *rapprochement* with Brittany, whom he believed held the key to the re-establishment of unity between the great Houses and therefore France's salvation.⁷⁴

A significant document was established at Redon on 14th March 1431, barely three weeks after La Trémoille's departure from Brittany in the company of Guy de Laval:

«*Contrat du mariage entre François de Bretagne et Yolande d'Anjou*»

«*Nous Yolant, par la grace de Dieu royne de Jherusalem et de Sicile, duchesse d'Anjou et de Touraine, contesse de Prouvence, de Forcalquier, du Maine, et de Pimont, Jehan ... et François ... filz aisé et heretier presumptif de mon très redoubté Sgr. et père le duc de Bretagne dessusd., Ayans commun desir et parfaicte voulonté de tousjours continuer, maintenir, et de plus en plus accroistre les bonnes et vrayes amitez et aliances qui de touz temps ont esté entre noz predesseurs ... Pour lesquelles tousjours plus fermer et entretenir au prouffit, paix, union et tranquillité de nous ... ait esté traicté et pourparlé entre nous royne et duc ... de nous alier, oultre la prouchaineté de lignaige en quoy nous entreactenons, et aproucher en affinité par mariage*

⁷¹ March 1431.

⁷² 8th May 1431, the second anniversary of the lifting of the siege of Orleans.

⁷³ Yolande and Charles d'Anjou later restored Amboise's assets. Letters of restitution are held in the Archives Nationales de France, XIa 8604, f^os 121-122; P 2298, f^os 689-695 and were established in Tours in September 1434. Cf. Cosneau op. cit., pp. 181-183.

⁷⁴ See above, p. 166, note 27.

d'aucuns de noz enfens ... du bon vouloir et consentement de nostre très redoubté sgr Mgr le roy considerans les grans et inestimables biens qui s'en puent ensuir, ...

Et par le moyan de cest traicté et appointment de mariaige, est dit, traicté et appointé que si aucunes desplaisances ou malvoillances estoyent, de la partie de lad. royne ou du roy sond. filz et de ses autres enfans, pour cause et occasion du mariage fait de madame Yzabeau de Bretagne, fille aînée de mond. Sgr. de Bretagne, à Mgr. de Laval, vers led. sgr. de Laval ou autres pour la cause de ce, tout est regreté, osté et mis au neant, et en seront contens, sans remors, desplaisir ne scruple en avoir ne tenir contre led. sgr. de Laval ne sa lignée, ne autres à cause de ce; et en donneront lad. royne et roy de Sicile leurs lettres, jouxte la fourme selon le contenue des minutes sur ces faictes, et qui seront baillées de la partie de mond. sgr. le duc, lesquelles lettres seront apportées au jour desd. epousailles avecques lad. dispense ...»⁷⁵

The document above takes care to emphasize the strength of past affiliation and the constancy of the alliance between Yolande and Jean V. We will pause here to examine Reynaud's claim that: «*La déchirure du tissu familial [between Louis III and Yolande] est sensible à cette date de 1431*».⁷⁶

Reynaud assumes that it was Louis III in defiance of Yolande's will, rather than Brittany, who had refused to proceed with the betrothal organized in 1424. However, as the new contract clearly stipulates that it expunges «*aucunes desplaisances ou malvoillances [que] estoyent, de la partie de lad. royne ou du roy sond. filz et de ses autres enfans, pour cause et occasion du mariage fait de madame Ysabeau de Bretagne ... à mgr. de Laval ...*» It seems likely that Louis did not break the betrothal agreement. Reynaud holds that the dissolution of the earlier agreement caused a palpable falling-out between mother and son, most notably as Louis proceeded not only to rail against the betrothal of his younger sister Yolande to the heir-presumptive of Brittany⁷⁷ but furthermore betrothed himself to

⁷⁵ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, pp. 295-298.

⁷⁶ *Le Temps de Princes...*, op. cit., p. 43.

⁷⁷ Louis III revoked his proxy from the canon of Le Mans to negotiate the marriage of his younger sister and sent a letter from Saint-Marc dated 28th June 1431 citing not only his disapproval of the betrothal of his younger sister Yolande but also that of his brother Charles to the daughter of the Count of Rohan. The Breton marriage went ahead as planned. AN, P 1334/18 n° 81, Archives Départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône, B 11, pp. 62-64, BNF, Ms. Fr. 3907, n° 21, all cited by Reynaud in *Le Temps des Princes...*, p. 43. Louis's behaviour no doubt informed the need for Angevin hostages to ensure that the Breton marriage went ahead. See below.

Marguerite of Savoy, daughter of Amedeus VIII and Marie of Burgundy.⁷⁸ There appears to be no hard evidence to support Reynaud's assertion of a serious rupture between mother and elder son. While Louis may well have felt strongly about the Breton alliance he did not revoke Yolande's lieutenant-generalcy in favour of either of his brothers or any other person and we will see below that the Savoyard connection, reinforced by Louis's marriage to Marguerite, would bring considerable advantage to Yolande and her son-in-law Charles VII.⁷⁹

It is hard to see why Yolande would have been against a Savoyard union, as for years she had striven, both through the surrender of Nice to Savoy and the mediation of Jean V, to keep negotiating channels open between Anjou and Savoy. This conduit was established and maintained in preparation for Louis's Italian ventures and to seek a mediated solution for the continuing civil strife in France.⁸⁰ On the contrary, such an Anjou-Savoy and by extension, an arm's length Anjou-Burgundy alliance would have presented an advantage to her diplomatic arsenal, not to mention the financial bonus⁸¹ it brought to Louis's continuing campaign in Italy, taking pressure off overstretched Angevin fiscal resources. Louis's opposition to his sister's betrothal to Francis of Brittany might be explained by the dissolution of his Breton betrothal. We should note that Pierre de Beauvau, Yolande's deputy in Provence,⁸² acted as Charles VII's representative at the betrothal negotiations between Louis III and Savoy.⁸³ Members of the Beauvau, Bueil, Brézé, Fontaine, Hardouin, Chartier and Laval families were entrenched counsellors and officers of Louis II, Yolande, Charles VII and Louis III. Reynaud herself concedes that: «*La force des clans est sensible au sein des conseils*».⁸⁴ If we take all of this into consideration, it is difficult for us to justify her generalization: «*La déchirure du tissu familial est sensible à cette date de 1431*». Furthermore, during 1431 calm returned to Provence with treaties established between the county and the court of Aragon, negotiated at the time of Louis III's betrothal to Marguerite of Savoy by Pierre de Beauvau, with the assistance of his

⁷⁸ Jean sans Peur's sister.

⁷⁹ We must not forget that Louis married Marguerite of Savoy, who was originally destined for Brittany's heir Francis I (see above p. 338 and n. 57.), and that this contract ensured that Francis was betrothed to Yolande d'Anjou. A solid solution for all concerned it would seem.

⁸⁰ Above, p. 158 for Louis II's delegation of authority to Yolande.

⁸¹ *Le Temps de Princes*, p. 44.

⁸² Beauvau was lieutenant-governor of the counties of Provence-Forcalquier.

⁸³ *Le Temps de Princes*, pp. 153-154.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

aides, his brother Bertrand and Louis de Bouliers, Jordan Brès,⁸⁵ all Angevin-Provençaux retainers long in the service of Louis II, Yolande, Louis III and Charles VII.

In Brittany, Richemont was still in attendance, indicating perhaps that time was drawing nearer for his reappearance in France. That La Trémoille had requested detailed written assurances from Jean V prior to his February visit to Brittany should suggest that Georges was losing his hold over Charles and was sensitive to the renaissance of Yolande's influence over her son-in-law.

The traffic between the courts continued. On 18th April 1431 another mandate was issued «à mgr. de Laval ... pour employer au souday des gens d'armes et de troit, pour icelx mener et conduire devers le roy et à son service, en fournissant à certains apointemens et scellés parlés et faits à Chantocé entre le duc, Mr. de Laval et Mr. de la Trémoille et autres gens du roy».⁸⁶

This document is followed by «Confirmation du contrat de mariage entre François de Bretagne et Yolande d'Anjou» dated 21st April 1431. Apparently, Yolande had managed to buttress frayed relations between her House and Brittany. We must remember that only a week earlier René had issued an official declaration of war against Vaudémont and was on his way to Tours to seek aid, while his brother Louis III was fulfilling his duties as captain-general for Calabria and, like his predecessors, cooling his heels on the frontiers of his titular realm. These were busy times indeed for *la royne de Secile*.

Continuing exploration of *Lettres et mandements* yields further details:

On 26th April a mandate issued to Guy de Laval instructs that he be indemnified «... pour l'estat de sa personne, u cas qu'il conduiroit son armée u pays d'amont, ainsi que avoit esté dit par son scellé, 3000 l; et u cas que lad. armée demouroit ez basses marches, 2000 l».

This might seem innocuous enough, but if we refer to Blanchard's notes, which record that Guy had undertaken: «par l'ordre du duc au sire de la Tremoille de mettre certain nombre de gens d'armes devers le roy et à son service [and that the] armée demoura, par apointement fait

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 182.

⁸⁶ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VI, p. 305.

avec icelui de la Tremoille, ez marches d'Anjou et du Maine»,⁸⁷ we must pose the questions: Why was La Trémoille organizing troops to be stationed «*ez marches d'Anjou et du Maine*», and, under whose instructions? Given La Trémoille's animosity towards Yolande and Richemont, it is hard to believe that a *rapprochement* of significant durability had occurred between them.

Examination of the composition of Charles's councils might assist. From about the first trimester of 1431, a marked pattern emerges: each record of participants includes a steadily increasing number of Angevin officers and allies, including Harcourt, Maçon, the Bishop of Orleans, Vendôme, Bourbon, Maillé and l'Amiral Culant just to name a few.⁸⁸ Yolande was patiently rebuilding her power base on the council, simultaneously reinforcing her contacts with Brittany. By the time of the betrothal agreement she was again residing for part of the time in Angers-Saumur,⁸⁹ and as we have indicated above La Trémoille had ordered Laval's troops to stand by on the borders of Anjou-Maine. Little by little, Yolande was again setting the agenda, with La Trémoille (it would seem) increasingly being shunted between France and Brittany. We have noted the decisive action that La Trémoille made in the immediate wake of his return from Champtocé and the reasons for such a strategy.

Notwithstanding his position as favourite, Georges understood that with the execution of Richemont's/Yolande's allies he was taking an enormous risk for, on the eve of the executions, he had taken care to extract letters of remission from Charles, absolving him of past wrong-doings and ensuring that he would be out of judicial reach for present and future actions. This is not the strategy of an individual confident and comfortable in his continuing influence over the king.⁹⁰ Although La Trémoille and his wife were still gorging themselves with royal favours and acquisitions funded by the royal estate,⁹¹ for the highly able and avid Georges, the writing on the wall was becoming increasingly legible.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 305.

⁸⁸ Vallet de Viriville, *Charles VII roi de France et ses conseillers* ... & cf. Gaussin, op. cit.

⁸⁹ *Lettres et mandements*... t. VI, p. 298. She had earlier shifted her headquarters to Tours as a result of English incursions (and victories) into Anjou-Maine.

⁹⁰ Pierre Cauchon did much the same in the wake of Joan's condemnation, soliciting similar letters from Henry VI (Bedford) and the University.

⁹¹ Cosneau, p. 182, particularly note 2.

All of these busy negotiations and preoccupations of Yolande occurred during the time of Joan's extended incarceration, trial and execution. The apparent abandonment of Joan by Yolande and Charles was, from their point of view and in the context of their times, understandable; Joan was another casualty of a war that had dragged on for over five generations. If Yolande and Charles were to survive and salvage something from Joan's mission and their years of struggle, they had to push on, employing every tactic at their disposal, regardless of human cost, while La Trémoille continued his policy of doing what was best for La Trémoille.

The Breton archives reveal that Brittany was determined to see the completion of the marriage of his son and heir Francis, Count of Montfort, to Yolande's younger daughter Yolande d'Anjou. Documents 1959-1960 dated 20th and 26th August 1431 state that Angevin lords and knights⁹² were required to remain as hostages in Nantes until the marriage contract was fulfilled. As previously noted, this was doubtless designed to circumvent the ire expressed by Louis III upon the establishment of the original contract. The August contract reiterates that: «... *la reine declare qu'elle et le roi son fils rejettent «toutes les deplaisances et malvoillances que nous et nosd. enfens avions et povoyons avoir envers beau cousin de Laval et tous autres, à cause du mariage fait de belle cousine Yzabeau, aînée fille de Bretagne, et dud. beau cousin de Laval, sanz ce que aucun remors ou scrupule en demeure sur noz cuers ...»*.⁹³ Irrespective of Louis's opinion regarding the union, and in spite of the fact that he was the head of the House of Anjou, his mother apparently overrode his grievances. Document 1961 is a mandate for payment «à Mgr. de Richemont pour estre venu à Nantes aux noces de Mgr. conte de Montfort». ⁹⁴ With the Anjou-Breton alliance re-established, Richemont was one step closer to reinstatement as Constable of France, while Louis III, having anchored himself to the House of Savoy, offered the prospect of potential future advantage for all concerned.

Having successfully married her younger daughter to Brittany's heir-apparent, Yolande returned in late August-early September from Nantes to Saumur, where Charles was

⁹² Louis de la Tour, Guillaume de la Jumelière, Martigné Brient, Jehan Fournier and *juge ordinaire d'Anjou*, the Lord of la Guerinière: «... *les susnommés, conseillers de la reine de Sicile, s'engageaient «à tenir dès à present hostage touz ensemble en ceste ville de Nantes, sanz en partir ne yssir aucunement, jucques à l'acomplissement des choses cy après declerées; sauff qu'ilz pourront par chascun jour, si bon leur semble, et tant de foiz qu'ilz voudront, dempuix qu'on aura ouvert la porte des pontz, au matin, jucques ad ce que on la vueille fermer au vespre...»*». *Lettres et mandements...* t. VII, pp. 3-5, n. 5.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

once more in residence.⁹⁵ Her firm resolve was to broker reconciliation between the King and his Constable, but her timing was inauspicious, for war was once again raging between La Trémoille and Richemont in Poitou and Saintonge.⁹⁶ Neither was in the ascendancy and France continued to suffer. Apart from the recovery of Louviers from English hands in October 1431, ongoing civil strife favoured the cause of the invader. It was largely due to these activities of La Trémoille that the English, who had suffered severe set-backs during Joan's campaigns, regained the upper hand.

Despite La Trémoille's influence, Yolande managed the restitution of territory confiscated from Richemont, but this concession only inflamed La Trémoille, who increased his offensive against the Constable by launching an attack against Marans.⁹⁷ Richemont was recalled by Jean V to assist him in a matter concerning Alençon, who was holding his chancellor Jehan de Malestroit hostage. It seems that Alençon had acted upon the advice and under the protection of La Trémoille, who had promised him advantage and assistance in the recovery of his lost territories.⁹⁸ Jehan de Malestroit⁹⁹ had been on an embassy to Charles to negotiate the return of the Constable. Malestroit had been seconded in his negotiations by Yolande¹⁰⁰ and it would have been in La Trémoille's interest to flex his muscles both in the direction of Yolande and Brittany while keeping Richemont busy with the liberation of the Breton chancellor and skirmishes in Marans.¹⁰¹

With Alençon claiming the support of Charles VII,¹⁰² and Jean V having exhorted his nephew Alençon to release his prisoners,¹⁰³ Brittany called for aid¹⁰⁴ from Bedford, who was only too ready to assist, for he too valued the prospect of a durable alliance with

⁹⁵ BNF, Ms. Fr. 11542, f° 13.

⁹⁶ Cosneau, p. 184.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 185.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ The Bishop of Nantes.

¹⁰⁰ BNF, Ms. Fr. 11542, f° 13.

¹⁰¹ Cosneau, p. 186.

¹⁰² «*Eodum duce de Alençonio dicente et asserente predicta fecisse et perpetrasse de mandato predicti regis Franciæ.*» Vallet de Viriville, Auguste, Notice des archives de M. le marquis du Hallay-Coëtquen, Paris 1851, pp. xvii, 51, 52, 60. Cited in Cosneau op. cit., p. 186.

¹⁰³ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VII, p. 9: «1431, 31 octobre – *Mandat de paiement* «à Alain Coaynon, secrétaire du duc, pour plusieurs voyages faits vers le duc d'Allanczon, touchant la delivrance du chancelier»; Cf., Ms. Fr. 11542, f° 16.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 8: «1431, 12 octobre – *Mandat de paiement* «à Jamet Godart, pour ses despens d'aller en ambassade à Rouen vers le roy d'Angleterre avec *A ma Vie*». «*A ma Vie*» was the *nom de guerre* of one of Brittany's retainers.

Jean V. An absurd situation arose wherein Richemont and Laval found themselves supported by the English against their cousin Alençon, who was himself being assisted by La Trémoille, Raoul de Gaucourt and the Bastard of Orleans. This situation is rendered all the more ludicrous if we recall that besieged with the Constable's nephew Alençon, in Pouancé were Richemont's sister Marie of Brittany (Alençon's mother) and Jeanne d'Orléans (Duchess of Alençon, about to give birth), daughter of the long-captive Charles d'Orléans.¹⁰⁵ Richemont managed to head off dynastic catastrophe by negotiating a settlement and reconciliation between Alençon and Jean V.

The next logical move was to thrash out a treaty between Brittany, Richemont and Charles VII, and for once it seems that La Trémoille was reluctant to intervene, putting his energies instead towards negotiating an agreement with Burgundy.¹⁰⁶ As we shall discover, the key to a lasting agreement with the Montfort clan lay with retaining Richemont.

Yolande had always believed Richemont essential both to her projects and to the liberation of France. She was not alone in this, for both Bedford and Burgundy had long realized the pivotal value of their former ally. Bedford would just about have ransomed his nephew's kingdom to retain Brittany and Burgundy within the fold, and if he could lure Richemont and his ally the Count of Etampes¹⁰⁷ to his side his prestige would have been greatly strengthened both in England and abroad. Burgundy advised Bedford and his government in England in these terms:

*«Il semble que l'on devrait très diligemment envoyer devers le duc de Bretagne, afin de le entretenir et qu'il se veuille déclarier et employer à la voye de guerre et aussi de retraire le comte de Richemont, Richard de Bretaigne et leurs subgiez qui ont esté et sont au service du dauphin».*¹⁰⁸

Contact between Brittany and Bedford is confirmed in *Lettres et mandements*:

¹⁰⁵ Cosneau, loc. cit.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Richard of Brittany (younger brother of Richemont and Jean V), married to Marguerite d'Orléans, sister of Charles d'Orléans.

¹⁰⁸ BNF, Ms. Fr. 1278, f° 46, v°. Cited by Cosneau, p. 189.

«1431, 7 décembre. – Mandat de paiement «au sire de Coesquen pour les mises qu'il a faites à Dol, Rennes et ailleurs à la conduite du sire de Scalles et autres anglois venus devers le duc.»».¹⁰⁹

«1431, 9 décembre. – Mandat de paiement de 600 l. «à Georget Rigueman escuier anglois, lieutenant de Maine [for Bedford], venu vers le duc à Rennes avec 240 chevaux ou plus, où il sejourna 15 jours avant avoir sa response, à ce qu'il retournast plus hastivement pour seroir le duc en sa guerre.»»¹¹⁰

«1432, 24 février. – Mandat de paiement «à Yvon de Rosserf allant en ambassade à Paris vers le duc de Bethford.»»¹¹¹

In fact, Bedford had a plan which, had it been executed, would have been the ruin of Yolande and Charles. Richemont was to be created Constable for Henry VI, given title to numerous domains and a vast force of arms to ensure that Charles would be forced into exile in the Languedoc, unable to call for support.¹¹² Ms. Fr. 1278,¹¹³ further states that Richemont was to be given the Touraine, the Angevin duchy as well as vast tracts of land and territory under the control of La Trémoille: «... Et, avec ce lui soit donné le duchié de Touraine, la conté de Saint-Onge, le pays d'Aunis et la ville de La Rochelle, avecques les terres et seigneuries que tient le seigneur de la Trémoille ès pays de Poitou et de Saint-Onge et autres places ...».¹¹⁴ Little wonder therefore that La Trémoille had remained in contact with his brother, re-opening negotiations with Burgundy through him and little wonder that, rather than waiting to see if Richemont displayed a level of avidity, vengeance and ambition equal to his own, he sought to reopen negotiations with his great nemesis Richemont and Jean V.¹¹⁵ After all, Georges's own possessions were under threat from the very man he had pursued ceaselessly since the late 1420s, a man whose value and tenacity he had perhaps underestimated.

Yolande, Brittany and the Bastard of Orleans countered Bedford's strategy by launching further negotiations, ensuring that the towns and fortresses of Gien, Montargis and Dun-

¹⁰⁹ *Lettres et mandements...* t. VII, p. 10.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹¹² BNF, Ms. Fr. 1278 f° 47-48.

¹¹³ See Appendix 2, doc. 7 for an extract from this manuscript.

¹¹⁴ BNF, Ms. Fr. 1278.

¹¹⁵ Cosneau, p. 190.

le-Roi, confiscated by La Trémoille, were reinstated to Richemont by: « dit et ordonnance de la royne de Sicile, de mondit. sgr. de Bretagne et de Mgr. le bastard d'Orléans ... pourveu que dedens la Magdelaine prouchaine venante ilz en ordonneront et determineront; et ce que par eulx en sera ordonné, sera tenu et acompli. Et seront les gens du roy tenus faire venir devers mond. sgr. le duc en Bretagne, au moins jusques à Ancenis, mond. sgr. le bastard, sanz lequel lad. ordonnance ne pourra estre faicte; auquel lieu Ancenis lad. royne sera requise de venir si luy plaist, et neantmoins si venir ne lui plaisoit, mon. sgr. de Bretagne et mond. sgr le bastard ordonner en pourront ainsi qu'ilz verront l'avoir à faire en l'absence de lad. royne.»¹¹⁶

The treaty, «entre le duc de Bretagne, le connétable de Richemont et le roi de France» was ratified at Redon on 25th March 1432 and its favourability toward Richemont's interests underscores his value and the need to keep him out of the Bedford-Burgundy camp. The extract above highlights the importance of the rôle played by Yolande during the negotiation of the agreement and her close arrangement with Brittany, seconded once again by the Bastard of Orleans, her former collaborator (and general in the absence of Richemont) during Joan's campaigns.

In ratifying the Treaty of Redon from Rennes on 25th March 1432, Jean V took care to add:

«... et est nostre entencion que très haulte et puissante princesse et nostre très chière et très amée dame et suer, la royne de Sicille, nostre très chier et très amé nepveu, le duc d'Alençon, beau filz le conte de Laval et beaux frère et nepveu les contes d'Armaignac et de Pardiac, noz aliez, soient comprins esdiz appointment».¹¹⁷

On paper at least, a victory had been won and a form of unity re-established. The war however continued with Jean V not yet fully detached from Burgundy and Bedford¹¹⁸ and La Trémoille still a malign presence on Charles's council.

Notwithstanding the fact that Jean V was still partially allied with Burgundy, the contact between Jean V and Charles VII appears firmly established, with Document 2029, dated

¹¹⁶ *Lettres et mandements* ... t. VII, p. 18.

¹¹⁷ AN, J 245, n° 101.

¹¹⁸ Document 2023, dated 29th April 1432, *Lettres et mandements*... t. VII, p. 28, illustrates continuing ties with England: «Mandat de paiement «à Sens faillir, poursuivant de messire Gilles [de Bretagne], pour un veaige en Angleterre»».

21st June 1432, recording: «Mandat de paiement «à Pregent de Coetivi, envoyé par le duc de Redon à Angiers vers les commissaries du roy faire vider les garnisons prochaines du pays de Bretagne, touchant Jehan de la Roche et autres».». ¹¹⁹ Coëtivy was a close companion-in-arms of Richemont (and later Marshal of France, succeeding Gilles de Rais), in this instance acting as ambassador to Charles residing in Angers.

We note from the Breton archives that Charles was increasingly in residence at Angers. La Trémoille's response to Yolande's burgeoning influence was to bring the fight for ascendancy right up to her by setting the Castillian mercenary Rodrigo Villandrando upon her domains. This action resulted in the spectacle of Charles's forces led by Villandrando attacking his mother-in-law's territories. Villandrando, defeated by Charles d'Anjou's forces under the command of his lieutenant Jean de Bueil¹²⁰ at Ponts-de-Cé, turned his attention to Touraine. Part of La Trémoille's scheme was to detach Villandrando from the company of Richemont's allies La Marche and Pardiac to block the return of the Constable. Cosneau notes that the Castillian¹²¹ probably had orders from La Trémoille to attack Brittany as well, citing Ms. Fr. 11542 [entry date September 1432], confirming that Jean V sent an envoy to Angers to request assistance from Yolande and Charles d'Anjou.¹²² An earlier document, 2034 in the Breton archives, itself contained in the manuscript cited above,¹²³ records a «Mandat de paiement [dated 17th July 1432], «à un escuier de Rodigo de Villandras, nommé Le Begue, venu vers le duc en ambassade à Montcontour de par son maistre»»¹²⁴ probably established prior to the recruitment of Villandrando by La Trémoille. From Touraine, Villandrando turned his attention to Languedoc, attacking the Count of Foix, another of Richemont's allies. In recognition of

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 30.

¹²⁰ He was part of an illustrious Tourangeau family established within the confines of Maine, and his father and uncle, Pierre, distinguished themselves in the war against the English. Another of Jean V de Bueil's uncles (and his guardian upon the death of his father) Hardouin de Bueil, was Bishop of Angers until his death in 1439. On 26th October 1430, as captain of Sablé, Jean V de Bueil had made a pledge of loyalty and obedience to Yolande and her children, *Pièces originales*, t. V, 549, Bueil dossier, Félibien, Michel, *Histoire de la ville de Paris composée par D. Michel Félibien, revue augmentée et mise au jour par D. Guy-Alexis Lobineau*, Paris, G. Desprez, 1725 & Bueil, Jean de, *Le Jouvencel par Jean de Bueil*, Favre, Camille & Lecestre, Léon, (eds.), 2 vols., Paris, Librairie Renouard, 1888, (Geneva, Slatkin Reprints, 1996). Cf. Cosneau, op. cit., p. 198.

¹²¹ Above, p. 278, n. 147.

¹²² Cosneau, op. cit., p. 197, n. 6.

¹²³ BNF, Ms. Fr. 11542, f^o 23.

¹²⁴ *Lettres et mandements...* t. VII, p. 31.

his efforts, La Trémoille bestowed favours upon the Castillian, creating him counsellor and chamberlain to Charles VII.¹²⁵

While La Trémoille continued his campaign against Yolande and Richemont, raising forces necessary to combat their influence, he could not or would not ensure that sufficient troops were employed to defend against continuing English offensives. As a result Montargis¹²⁶ fell into English hands and it was probably this loss more than any of George's other lapses that informed his singular fall from grace:

*«Le seigneur de la Tremouille oyt ces nouvelles [of Montargis] lequel avoit le gouvernement de ce royaume, qui en fut moult corroucé, neantmoins que petite diligence y avoit faite, dont tout le peuple de France fut mal content de lui ... La perte de Montargis fut cause de bouter le seigneur de la Tremouille hors du gouvernement».*¹²⁷

La Trémoille was shortly to exit the scene and Richemont to re-enter it. However in the interim, on 14th November 1432, another event occurred favourable to the ongoing campaign to detach Burgundy from Bedford: Anne of Burgundy, Bedford's wife and Philippe of Burgundy's sister, died in childbirth in Paris, taking a still-born son with her to the grave.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Charles d'Anjou began to take an increasingly visible part in the affairs of the kingdom. A mandate for payment for 4333 *livres* dated 24th November 1432 was established:

*«à Mgr Charles d'Anjou, pour les plaisirs et services qu'il a faits au duc à la deffense du pays de Bretagne à l'encontre d'aucuns ennemis».*¹²⁹

To give a rounded picture of events during 1432 we must note that Rome too was making efforts to bring about a lasting solution to the Hundred Years War. Like his predecessor Martin V, Eugene IV sought to bring the opposing parties together at the

¹²⁵ Cosneau, p. 198.

¹²⁶ Above, pp. 229-230.

¹²⁷ The Berry Herald, p. 156.

¹²⁸ *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct or Dormant*, Cokayne, G.E., Gibbs, Vicary, Doubleday, H.A., White, Geoffrey H., Warrand, Duncan, Walden, Lord Howard de, Gloucester, Alan, Sutton Publishing, 2000, t. II, p. 72.

¹²⁹ *Lettres et mandements...* t. VII, p. 42. Cf. Ms. Fr. 11542, f° 23.

conference table, opening talks in Auxerre in July 1432.¹³⁰ Savoy reprised his rôle of mediator, while Richemont and Jean V kept lines of communication open between their party and Burgundy-Bedford. In concert with Savoy they put together a peace proposal, with Breton embassies¹³¹ arriving in Auxerre in November 1432. A definitive peace was not achieved, but at the very least the idea of reconciliation between Charles VII and Burgundy advanced during this period. La Trémoille continued to cause difficulties for all concerned as dog in the manger and general liability, so a proactive initiative was prepared to remove him from the political scene once and for all.

Jean de Bueil, Pierre d'Amboise, Prigent de Coëtivy, Raoul de Gaucourt and Pierre de Brézé colluded to oust La Trémoille, having first sought the agreement of Yolande, Charles d'Anjou and Richemont. To prepare for the favourite's removal, Jean V, Richemont and Savoy stacked Charles's council «*de leurs gens pour le conseiller et aider*»¹³² to advance the struggle and to establish a durable general peace throughout the realm. This burst of activity occurred in the first trimester of 1433 at a time when Burgundy, while content to work with the other princes towards a peaceful outcome, was not yet ready to detach himself from Bedford. Bedford then overstepped his friendship with Burgundy on 20th April 1433 by marrying Jaquetta of Luxembourg, daughter of Burgundy's vassal the Count of Saint-Pôl, without first seeking his ally's approval.¹³³ To the extreme vexation of Burgundy, this marriage took place a bare six months after the death of his sister, Bedford's wife Anne of Burgundy. Winchester tried to reconcile the two parties in Saint-Omer,¹³⁴ but neither wanted to be seen to be making the first move. Richemont tried to profit from Anglo-Burgundian discord but was prevented by La Trémoille, who had in the interim re-initiated his military offensive against him. The time had arrived for Georges's departure.

Given Charles's feelings against him, Richemont stayed well away from Chinon, where Charles's court was installed. BNF Ms. Fr. 8819, f^o 56, clearly records Richemont in Partenay on 22nd June 1433. In all likelihood, for La Trémoille, Gaucourt, captain of

¹³⁰ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 196.

¹³¹ Cf. *Lettres et mandements...* t. VII for numerous *mandats de paiement* relative to Breton embassies to Rome and other places.

¹³² Cosneau, loc. cit.

¹³³ *The Complete Peerage* ... loc. cit.

¹³⁴ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 199.

Chinon, and his lieutenant Olivier Frétard¹³⁵ were completely above suspicion, and it is probably this factor more than any other which assured the success of the plot against him, particularly if we consider that the identities of the active co-conspirators would have set Georges's alarm bells ringing. Without exception they were all marked by heavy Angevin-Breton loyalties. The Berry Herald records the removal of Georges and the installation of Charles d'Anjou to the post of royal favourite in these terms:

«Peu après [towards the end of June 1433], le Roy estoit ou chastel de Chinon, ouquel estoit le seigneur de la Tremouille couché en son lit. Si entrerent par le derriere du chastel par une poterne a celle heure que la leur ouvrit le lieutenant du sire de Gaucourt [Olivier Frétard] qui en estoit cappitaine et entrerent dedans le sire de Bueil, le sire de Coitoy et plusieurs autres; car ilz estoient XL ou L hommes d'armes avecques eulx. Ainsi entrerent dedans le chastel et le prindrent en sa chambre; et en y ot ung qui donna ung coup d'espee parmi le costé. Et ainsi fut prins par le seigneur de Bueil, nepveu de sa femme, et fut mené en ung sien chastel nommé Montresor. Le Roy fut fort effroïé et troublé quant il oyt ceste chose; la Roynes [Marie d'Anjou] le repaissa. Lors demoura et entra au gouvernement messire Charles d'Anjou [par le moien de la Roynes]....»¹³⁶

Beaucourt makes the point that the removal of La Trémoille left the way clear for those who could and would work towards the liberation of France.¹³⁷ Burgundy had sent envoys to London in an attempt to convince the government of Henry VI that it should either act to assure the loyalty of French princes with promises of substantial cash and territorial holdings or come to a peaceful settlement with Charles VII, offering to work with Savoy to establish a viable outcome. On 7th July, Winchester urged Burgundy to «*toujours entretenir les besoignes entre les ducs de Savoie et de Bretaigne et le comte de Richemont et y faire le mieux possible, pour le bien du roi [Henry VI]*».¹³⁸

From August-October 1433: «... fist assembler ledit roy les trois Estatz en la ville de Tours et fist dire par l'archevesque de Rains, chancelier de France, en la présence d'iceulx trois Estatz, qu'il advouit lesdits sire du Bueil, de Coitoy et de la Varenne [Pierre de Brézé] de la prise dudit sire de la Trimouille, et les recevoit en sa bonne grâce. Et estoient présens lesdits Charles

¹³⁵ The Berry Herald, pp. 156-157.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 291.

¹³⁸ Stevenson, J., *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France During the Reign of Henry the Sixth*, Longman, London 1861-1864, t. II, part I, p. 24. Cf. Letters from Burgundy's ambassadors to Philippe le Bon and responses from Henry VI, pp. 218-262 and Cosneau op. cit., pp. 210-202.

*d'Anjou, le sire du Bueil, de la Varenne et de Coitivy, qui demourèrent en grant gouvernement et auctorité avecques ledit roy ...»*¹³⁹

As Cosneau contends: «*En somme ce fut Yolande qui prit la direction du gouvernement ... on comprit que c'était le commencement d'une ère nouvelle et que les plus mauvais jours étaient passés*». ¹⁴⁰ With this development, Yolande finally emerged from the labyrinthine gloom of *la forêt de longue attente*. The job was not yet complete but some of the greatest obstacles had fallen away with the death of the Duchess of Bedford in November 1432 and the removal of La Trémoille in June 1433. It remained to be seen whether Burgundy could be uncoupled from his alliance with Bedford and the English driven from France.

The fall of La Trémoille and the installation of her youngest son Charles d'Anjou as closest advisor and friend to Charles VII did not solve all of Yolande's immediate concerns. It did however allow her to bring Richemont out into the open and back into the fold as her auxiliary and military main-stay. With Richemont would return exiled companions such as Pardiac and La Fayette,¹⁴¹ people who would play a leading rôle in the liberation of France. As always and for both sides, and especially for Yolande, Richemont and Jean V held the key to ultimate success.

War continued relatively unabated yet Richemont did not make immediate haste to his king's side, preferring to bide his time and attend the funerary rites of Jeanne de France, Brittany's wife and Charles's sister, who died on 20th September 1433. He then intended to participate in conferences planned for Calais in October 1433, to be mediated by the still captive Charles d'Orléans and to include Yolande, Charles d'Anjou, Jean V, Richemont, Richard de Bretagne and Alençon.¹⁴² These conferences must have been expected to proceed, as Henry VI had issued safe-conducts for all those mentioned above. Yet in spite of the best efforts of Brittany, the Calais meetings were again postponed and were not in fact held until very much later.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Chartier, Jean, *Chronique de Charles VII*, ... t. I, p. 171.

¹⁴⁰ Cosneau, p. 203.

¹⁴¹ BNF, Ms. Fr. 25710.

¹⁴² Rymer, op. cit., t. X, p. 555-561. Yolande's name «*Regina Cecilia*» appears first in this long document listing the players to be involved in negotiations intended to conclude with the liberation of Charles d'Orléans. She is followed by «*Karolus ejus Filius*» [Charles d'Anjou], *Dux Britannia* [Jean V], «*Arthurus and Richardus de Britannia*» [Richemont and Richard d'Etampes] et al.

¹⁴³ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 206. See below for the eventual Calais round of conferences convened on 9th June 1439.

What of the captive René, caught up in the continuing struggle for succession in Bar-Lorraine, still very much at the mercy of Burgundy's vicissitudes? We recall that René's captivity had caused problems in his domains: «*Les malheurs et les divisions causés dans mes états par ma détention, me font une loi d'employer le plus tôt possible tous les moyens qui sont en ma puissance pour y mettre promptement un terme.*»¹⁴⁴ and, that he had been released on licence for the period of one year, his infant sons detained in his place. Philippe le Bon had prudently chosen not to oppose openly Emperor Sigismond's stance on the matter, and in any event Burgundy had fallen out to some degree with the Vaudémont over the question of René's ransom.¹⁴⁵ René was in a weak position and agreed to a compromise whereby he pledged to solve the dilemma amicably rather than by force. On 23rd November 1432, he directed his Lorrainois officers to negotiate the best possible terms in his name, and shortly afterwards René presented himself to Burgundy in Flanders to plead his own case. On 13th February 1433 a solution was reached, based upon the betrothal of his elder daughter Yolande to Ferry, heir-apparent to Antoine de Vaudémont. The four-year-old Yolande was then dispatched into the care of her future father-in-law.¹⁴⁶ René would discover that in his future son-in-law he would have a strong champion but for the moment, it seemed that he had allowed Vaudémont to strengthen his pretensions over Lorraine. Notwithstanding this, René had found a way to coexist with his enemies, and relations in the east thawed considerably. He had even managed to arrive at a solution to his problems with his erstwhile gaoler Jean de Luxembourg¹⁴⁷ who had taken his county of Guise by force. On 23rd February 1433, in Bohain, Luxembourg paid René compensation for the loss of his county and another betrothal agreement was drafted to seal an alliance between René's younger daughter, the three-year-old Marguerite d'Anjou, and Pierre de Luxembourg, son of the Count of Saint-Pol, Jean de Luxembourg's brother.¹⁴⁸

If we study René's actions in adversity, we see that they mirror many of Yolande's favoured manoeuvrings: avoidance of armed struggle wherever possible (for it was a

¹⁴⁴ Archives de Bourgogne, layette 80, manuscript notes Dom Calmet cited in Villeneuve-Bargemeont, F.L., de, *Histoire de René d'Anjou*, J.J. Blaise, Paris 1825, t. I, p. 177. Cf. Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 101

¹⁴⁵ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, pp. 100-101.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 101-102.

¹⁴⁷ He was also Joan's gaoler, prior to her hand-over to the English.

¹⁴⁸ AN, P 1334/5, f° 154.

costly and uncertain strategy), negotiation through the intermediary of trusted envoys and allies, personal negotiation when the need presented, reinforcement of agreements with betrothal alliances and above all, ensuring the maintenance of steady flows of cash and assets to the family coffers from such arrangements wherever possible. As we have seen, Yolande was deft at pulling advantage from seemingly hopeless circumstances. René was to demonstrate that, while his situation was seldom rosy, he too could cut his losses and move forward to negotiate a sustainable outcome. Monstrelet sums up René's representatives' apparent dispositions upon leaving Bohain:

*« Lesquelx traictiés conclus et scellés d'eulx et d'aulcuns de leurs plus féables consilliers, pardonnèrent l'un à l'autre tout ce qu'ilz se povoient estre entremesfais [...] chascune partie eurent au cuer très grant joie... ».*¹⁴⁹

Displaying much the same dignity in adversity as his mother had always managed to project, René returned to Bar to mop up after his earlier losses. The engagement between Yolande d'Anjou and Ferry de Vaudémont was celebrated in the city of Bar on 1st July 1433,¹⁵⁰ and while France might have viewed René's accommodation with Burgundy and Vaudémont as a capitulation to the enemy, it was actually a timely strategy, for Burgundy was becoming increasingly disenchanted with his former brother-in-law Bedford and had started to make subtle overtures to Charles VII. It was René who would act as an early conduit in preliminary communications between the two courts.

At the beginning of 1434 René visited his mother Yolande in Provence, both to seek her counsel and to spend time with Charles, who was himself residing in the Dauphiné.¹⁵¹ René had interesting developments to report to his brother-in-law: Philippe le Bon had begun to make positive noises regarding a peaceful settlement to end the years of conflict between Burgundy and France. While Burgundy refused to negotiate without the inclusion of Bedford, his disposition to negotiate was increasingly palpable. René returned to his duchy charged with the task of sounding out Burgundy on the possibility of granting safe-conducts for Charles's envoys amongst others: Regnault of Chartres, the Bastard and Christophe d'Harcourt, who could open talks on his behalf. René forwarded

¹⁴⁹ Monstrelet, op. cit., t. V, p. 49.

¹⁵⁰ AN, KK. 1123, f° 17, v°.

¹⁵¹ René's objective no doubt being to secure further financial and military aid.

the request to Dijon but was met with refusal, Burgundy reiterating the need to include England in any talks and pointing to the possibility of trying again after the delayed Calais negotiations¹⁵² had played out.¹⁵³

Despite Charles's invitation to René to participate in Calais, René moved on to Chambéry where a wedding was to be held. René's participation at this wedding is a thought-provoking one and we should question whether Yolande might have influenced it. Charles was in the Dauphiné, Yolande was in Provence, Louis III in Naples. Louis's wife Marguerite of Savoy was in Chambéry to attend the five day wedding of her elder brother Louis, Count of Geneva, to Anne de Lusignan,¹⁵⁴ daughter of the King of Cyprus. Anne's mother was Charlotte de Bourbon, sister of the omnipresent Jacques de la Marche, after his Neapolitan adventure¹⁵⁵ firm adherent to Yolande's faction and protector of her interests. Moreover, Jacques was at the very centre of the Franciscan reform movement and would have had close ties to Colette of Corbie. As discussed previously, Colette herself had open access to both parties in France's civil conflict. In the light of these observations, the Chambéry wedding throws up considerable possibilities in relation to clandestine political/diplomatic/ecclesiastical lobbying directed at healing the rift between France and Burgundy. Certain details of the Lusignan-Savoyard wedding are of significance.

The list of the individuals gathered together at the Chambéry wedding and their places in the hierarchy reveal some interesting protagonists. Jean le Févre furnishes the specifics of «*la pompe et esbatemens de ladite feste*»:¹⁵⁶

«... Sy furent en la compaignie du conte de Genève, seigneur des noepces ... le duc, [of Burgundy], et les ducz de Savoye et de Bar [René]; Jehan, monseigneur de Clèves; Jehan, monseigneur de Nevers [Burgundy's son]; Phelippe, monseigneur de Savoye; les princes d'Orrenge, ... Christofle d'Harcourt et plusieurs grans seigneurs de Bourgongne, de Savoye, et d'ailleurs ...»

¹⁵² See above, p. 355.

¹⁵³ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

¹⁵⁴ Anne de Lusignan and Louis de Savoie would produce a child, Charlotte de Savoie, who would become queen to Louis XI, Yolande's grandson, the child she was determined would succeed as King of France upon her return from Provence in the summer of 1423. Charlotte de Savoie would be Louis's second wife, the first being the Scots princess Margaret Stuart.

¹⁵⁵ See above, *passim*.

¹⁵⁶ *Chronique de Jean Le Févre* ... t. II, pp. 287-297.

And:

«... fut la dame menée par deux chevaliers à pied, ... et destre du duc [Burgundy] et du duc de Bar [René]; et ainsi acompaignie jusques à la chapelle du chastel ... Devant la chapelle estoient plusieurs grans dames et damoiselles, chevaliers et escuiers ... premièrement, madame Margherite, fille au duc de Savoye, suer au conte de Genève ... et royne de Sézille;¹⁵⁷ la dame de Gaucourt¹⁵⁸ ... et plusieurs aultres dames et damoiselles ...

Or, fut la dame menée en la chapelle par le duc [Burgundy] et le duc de Bar [René] ...»¹⁵⁹

After the ceremony:

«La dame fut menée en la salle par le duc [Burgundy] et le duc de Bar [René] ...» to be seated at the high table with: «... le cardinal de Cypre,¹⁶⁰ le duc [Burgundy], la dame des noepces, la royne de Sézille [Marguerite], le duc de Bar [René], Jehan, monseigneur de Clève, et Jehan, monseigneur de Nevers.» [and at] «La tierce table: Christofle de Harcourt, le duc de Savoye, la dame de Gaucourt [et al]». ¹⁶¹

After the feasting came the dancing, and at least one of the pairings is worthy of inclusion:

«... y eult grant noblesse .. chevaliers, [escuiers], dames et damoiselles qui danssèrent deux et deux, dont le duc [Burgundy], et la dame de Gaucourt, furent premiers, le duc de Bar et la dame de Ric ...»¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Marguerite de Savoy, as wife of Louis III King of Sicily carried the title of Queen of Sicily. Yolande was actually dowager Queen, but was never referred to as such; this in spite of the fact that first Marguerite carried the title upon her marriage to Louis III and that Isabelle of Lorraine, (René's wife) later carried the title upon the death of Louis III in 1434.

¹⁵⁸ The Lady of Gaucourt was Jeanne de Preuilly (in Touraine). With Jeanne de Mortemer, wife of Robert le Maçon, she assisted Yolande (as her closest ladies-in-waiting) in the verification of Joan of Arc's gender and virginity in 1429, see above chapter 6.

¹⁵⁹ *Le Févre*, loc. cit. Burgundy was the groom's uncle.

¹⁶⁰ The bride's brother.

¹⁶¹ *Le Févre*...loc. cit.

¹⁶² Ibid.

So one of Yolande's personal companion-attendants, Jeanne de Preuilly led the dance with Burgundy.

The next day celebrations continued with René once again with Burgundy at «disner»:

«L'assiette de la grant table fut le cardinal de Chippre, la roine de Sézille, [Marguerite], le duc [Burgundy], la dame des nopces, le duc de Bar [René], Jehan monseur de Clèves, Jehan monseigneur de Nevers ...»¹⁶³

After «soupper», again the dance:

«Et menoit le duc [Burgundy] la royne de Sézille [Marguerite], le duc de Bar [René] la dame de Barget et tous es aultres danssèrent pareillement comme la nuyt devant».¹⁶⁴

Many things must have been discussed during the two days of continual celebration, with Savoy, Harcourt, the Lady of Gaucourt, Marguerite of Savoy and René in constant contact with Burgundy, indeed René seems to have been cast as second in the hierarchy only to Burgundy. The next day, Tuesday, the wedding party heard mass together and:

«Après la messe, allèrent disner en la salle, excepté le duc [Burgundy] et le duc de Savoye [Amadeus VIII], lesquelz disnèrent en leurs chambres. L'assiette [table] de la grant chambre: le cardinal de Chippre, la royne de Sézille [Marguerite], le duc de Bar [René] [et al ...]».¹⁶⁵

Perhaps the two absentees had elected to confer in private regarding what had been raised over the last several days with their respective interlocutors. While Burgundy had been accompanied by René and had led the dance with Yolande's lady-in-waiting Jeanne de Preuilly and her daughter-in-law Marguerite of Savoy, Savoy had been in the company of Christophe d'Harcourt, (who along with Robert le Maçon, was one of Yolande's most loyal officers and envoys). Jeanne de Preuilly was the wife of Raoul de Gaucourt, one of Charles's most able generals, captain of Chinon and governor of Orleans.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

«Et ainsi se passa ceste belle feste, comme vous avez ouy; et, dès icelluy [le jeudy] soir, les ungs prindrent congé des aultres; car l'endemain se partirent les princes, le duc [Burgundy] et le duc de Bar [René] ... Car à la vérité, ce fut une grande et noble assemblée de princes et grans seigneurs ... et, pour la beauté d'icelle, je le mis par escript.»¹⁶⁶

Le Févre describes the occasion down to the last detail. Was it merely «*pour la beauté d'icelle*» or was it that he sensed something larger, an encounter on “neutral” territory «*sans tournoy et joute, [a] «feste», aussi belle que on povoit veoir*»¹⁶⁷ between his *duc* and representatives of his adversaries, Charles VII and the House of Anjou?

Louis III's marriage into the House of Savoy had facilitated René's participation as well as the presence of Christophe d'Harcourt and Jeanne de Preuilly at the Savoyard-Cypriot nuptials. In the absence of overt negotiations with Burgundy, some level of coordination must have occurred between Yolande in Provence and Charles in the Dauphiné to ensure that maximum benefit could be drawn from the Chambéry encounter. With La Trémoille out of the way, Yolande could operate openly and in concert with her son-in-law. It is noteworthy that René's attendance at the Chambéry wedding occurred hard on the heels of Burgundy's refusal to issue safe-conducts to Regnault of Chartres, the Bastard of Orleans and Christophe d'Harcourt. It is worth noting the fact that Yolande's loyal Christophe d'Harcourt was the only one of the three refused safe-conducts by Burgundy above to attend the Chambéry wedding in the company of her lady-in-waiting and second son René.

Many threads were being drawn together, including papal efforts in Auxerre, initiated by Eugene IV, who, like his predecessor Martin V, actively tried to resolve the conflict between his warring princes. Eugene's legate, Nicolas Albergati, Cardinal of Saint-Croix, instigated a campaign exhorting Charles, Henry VI and Burgundy to meet and negotiate. Conferences had been inaugurated in Auxerre in July 1432 and Burgundy had, at the very least, been seen to be making an effort, first releasing René on licence (6th April

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., the description runs for some ten pages, perhaps attesting to the importance of this event in the mind of the chronicler. By way of comparison, the marriage of Isabel of Portugal to Burgundy runs for twelve pages.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

1431¹⁶⁸), concluding treaties with the Count of Clermont and Charles VII (8th & 24th September 1431 and 13th December 1431) and writing to Henry VI (29th December 1431) to persuade him to come to the negotiating table.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, Savoy had decided to reprise his mediation rôle. Burgundy was becoming more approachable, but he still refused to proceed openly without the participation of England. By the time of peace conferences in Auxerre in November 1432, the seed had been planted but no definitive peace established. Yolande, Richemont and Brittany tilled the ground Auxerre¹⁷⁰ had cleared, these preparations in turn clearing the way for Arras.

Evidence of their contact is clear from documents 2104 and 2106 of the Breton Archives:

«2104: 1433, 12 août. Mandat de paiement «à reverend père en Dieu l'evosque de Nantes, chancelier de Bretagne, pour ses despens et deffroy d'aller à Angiers devers la royne de Secille, en ambassade de par Mgr. [Brittany];» et «au bailli de Saint Lix, conseiller de Mgr. pour ses despens et deffroy d'aller de par mond. sgr. devers Mgr. le connestable, pour certaines causes et affaires secrez.».¹⁷¹

«2106: 1433, 14 août. Mandat de paiement de 11m. liv. «à messire Charles d'Anjou.»¹⁷²

From the above it seems highly probable that Yolande, Brittany and Richemont were making plans and consolidating strategies «*pour certains causes et affaires secrez*», plans which involved funding to the extent of 11,000 *livres*, destined for Charles d'Anjou from Brittany's treasury. The fact that it was Brittany's chancellor, no mere functionary, who travelled to Yolande in Angers emphasizes Yolande's authority and the seriousness of the Breton embassy sent to her in Anjou.

In the context of the business testified to by the Breton archives above, the Chambéry wedding takes on greater significance; it cannot be merely regarded as a "*feste aussi belle que on pouvoit veoir*» but rather an affair occasioning furious, if covert, diplomatic activity.

¹⁶⁸ Easter 1431 fell on 1st April.

¹⁶⁹ Cosneau, op. cit., pp. 195-196.

¹⁷⁰ And later Basle.

¹⁷¹ *Lettres et mandements*, t. VII, p. 60.

¹⁷² Ibid.

Our assertions are reinforced by the work of Lecoy de la Marche, who affirms that René arrived in Chambéry before Burgundy in the company of Christophe d'Harcourt. René's first action was to seek out Savoy (the bride-to-be's father-in-law, as well as his brother Louis's father-in-law) to solicit his advice upon how best to proceed with Burgundy.¹⁷³ We see testimony to an orchestrated strategy in Le Févre's account of the wedding where René was on every occasion (except the Tuesday evening) by Burgundy's side. René could not lead the dance with Burgundy at the wedding feast; this rôle was therefore allocated to Yolande's lady-in-waiting, Jeanne de Preuilly.

From April to June Charles established himself in Vienne, where Estates for the Languedoc and the Dauphiné had been assembled to underwrite the continuing drive towards the liberation of France. This assembly came hard on the heels of René's participation at the Chambéry wedding and Richemont's martial activities in the company of Alençon and the Bastard of Orleans. Again it is worth recording the names of some who participated at the Estates.

The Berry Herald testifies that:

*«L'an mil CCCC XXX III fut le Roy a Vienne ; et la vindrent devers lui les cardinaulx de Chippre et d'Arle, de par le Consille [Basle] pour le bien de la paix ; les oyt le Roy moult volentiers et leur bailla bonne et douce responce ; puis se partirent et s'en allerent a Balle sur le Rin, ou se tenoit ledit Conscille».*¹⁷⁴

The Cardinal of Cyprus, Hugues de Lusignan (who had officiated at his sister's wedding in Chambéry and had spent much time in René's company during the celebrations) appeared at Charles's court with one of Yolande's Provençal churchmen, Louis Aleman, Archbishop of Arles,¹⁷⁵ adding weight to the importance of Chambéry in diplomatic/political terms.

¹⁷³ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, pp. 106-107.

¹⁷⁴ The Berry Herald, p. 160.

¹⁷⁵ Louis Aleman was created Archbishop of Arles in December 1423 and promoted to the office of Cardinal-Prior of Saint-Cécile in 1426. He presided over the Council of Basle in 1438 and had an illustrious career as an ecclesiastic and papal diplomat (excommunicated and later reinstated). He was beatified in 1527. Müller, Heribert, *Die Franzosen, Frankreich und das Basler Konzil.*, Paderborn, F. Schöningh, 1990, t. II, p. 973. Cf. Saxi, Pierre, *Pontificium arelatense, seu Historia primatum sanctae arelatensis ecclesiae, cum indice rerum politicarum Gallia ac Provençia tempore uniuscujusque primatis, authore Petro Saxio*, Arles, J. Roize, Aquis Sextiis, 1629.

The Berry Herald continues:

«Et au dit lieu de Vienne vindrent devers le Roy le conte de Clermont filz du duc de Bourbon, le conte de [Foix], le connestable, le conte de Comminge et le bastart d'Orleans. Et aussi y vint la royne de Cecille, fille du duc de Savoye et femme du Roy Loys de Cecille, duc d'Anjou, laquelle estoit grandement acompaignee de chevaliers et escuyers, dames et damoiselles, et l'accompaignoient le marquis de Saluce et le conte de Villars, seigneur de Roche. Le Roy lui fist grant chiere; et elle vint devers lui après soupper, et après ce que ladicte Royne ot faicte la reverance au Roy, danserent longuement et puis prendrint vin et espices et servoit le Roy monseigneur de Clermont de vin et monseigneur le connestable servoit d'espices; et après print la Royne congé du Roy, et le landemain se partit et se mist en ses vaisseaulx dedans le Rosne [Rhône] et s'en alla en Advignon ...»¹⁷⁶

This passage records the return of Richemont with his (and Yolande's) allies to Charles's court. It also sheds light upon the fact that Louis III's wife, Marguerite of Savoy, was not insignificant in the process of working towards peace. Lecoy de la Marche insists that she arrived one month after Chambéry, expressly to communicate to Charles and her mother-in-law Yolande her uncle, Burgundy's, disposition to negotiate.¹⁷⁷

The Berry Herald's record of the period concludes with Marguerite progressing from Avignon to the newly renovated castle at Tarascon, where she was received by the Governor of Provence, «accompaignié des grans seigneurs et dames du país». She then «monta en ses gallees qui estoient au pié de son chastel dedans le Rosne, et ot tel vent qu'elle fut en IIII jours en la cité de Naples ou estoit le Roy son mari, qu'elle n'avoit oncques veu, et ne furent que III moys ensemble que ledit Roy mourut, dont fut dommaige, car il estoit jeune prince, tres bel et tres saige».¹⁷⁸

In none of these episodes is Yolande specifically mentioned by The Berry Herald. What we do know however is that she was in Provence prior to the Chambéry wedding, for it was there she had received René. It seems that from The Berry Herald's account of

¹⁷⁶ The Berry Herald, p. 161.

¹⁷⁷ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 107.

¹⁷⁸ The Berry Herald, pp. 161-162. Cf. for the Estates convened upon the death of Louis III, Hébert, *Regestes...*p. 323.

Marguerite of Savoy's movements, Yolande had been in Provence to prepare for her daughter-in-law's arrival and departure for Naples, as well as, in all likelihood, to raise more funds for Louis's continuing campaign (by this stage he was co-regent of his titular kingdom with Joanna II)¹⁷⁹. Her presence in Provence during this period should put paid to Reynaud's generalization that: «*La déchirure du tissu familial est sensible à cette date de 1431*». ¹⁸⁰ Yolande's deputies dispatched her new daughter-in-law to Naples while she herself continued to underwrite Louis's campaign. In every way, Yolande continued to work for the interests of Louis III and their House.

Preparations in Provence finalized, Yolande moved north to Vienne where she met with her Archbishop, Louis Aleman, and the Cardinal of Cyprus, witnessing both the arrival of her daughter-in-law and the return of her Constable to Charles's favour.

Yolande's crucial presence in Vienne at the time of the arrival of the Cardinal of Cyprus and the Archbishop of Arles is confirmed by Mss. Fr. 25710, n°s 81-85, 20877, n° 4 and 20385, n° 1. Further, her household accounts for the period detail her movements and expenditure during this crucial period in the peace process.¹⁸¹ Both she and her youngest son Charles d'Anjou were Charles VII's attentive confederates in the preliminaries to peace talks in Arras.¹⁸² The list of others present in Vienne during this critical three month period includes: Charles de Bourbon, Richemont, the Bastard of Orleans, La Fayette, Gaucourt, Culant, Christophe d'Harcourt, Hugues de Noyers, Alençon, Jean de Beuil, Coëtivy, Gravelle, Gilles de Rais, Etienne Bernard (Treasurer of Anjou) and the Archbishop of Toulouse.¹⁸³

We have noted the lobbying undertaken on René's behalf of the Emperor, who had been at pains to remain above the fray in the war of succession over his fiefdom, the Duchy of

¹⁷⁹ Léonard, loc. cit., cf. Hébert, Michel, « Dons et entrées solennelles au Xve siècle : Marguerite de Savoie [1434] et Jean d'Anjou [1443] », in *De Provence et d'ailleurs. Mélanges offerts à Noël Coulet. Provence historique*, v. 49, (1999), pp. 267-281. For the original arrangements and allocations made for Louis III, King of Sicily's betrothal to Marguerite of Savoy in 1432 see Gouiran & Hébert, *Potentia...* pp. 261-274 & Hébert, *Regestes...*, pp. 320-322.

¹⁸⁰ See above, pp. 338-339.

¹⁸¹ AN, KK. 244 f° 28 commences with entries for March 1433 with f° 29 v° concluding with entries for April 1435.

¹⁸² Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII ...* t. II, p. 308.

¹⁸³ Vallet de Viriville, *Charles VII, roi de France et ses conseillers ...* Cf. Vic, Claude de, Vaissète, Joseph, *Histoire générale de Languedoc, avec des notes et les pièces justificatives, composée sur les auteurs et les titres originaux, et enrichie de divers monuments; par deux religieux Bénédictins de la congrégation de Saint-Maur*, Paris, J. Vincent, 1740-1745, t. IV, p. 482.

Lorraine. However, Burgundy overplayed his hand by refusing to do homage to Sigismond for territories he held in fief from the Empire.¹⁸⁴ The Emperor reacted to this snub by involving himself in the Angevin-Vaudémont dispute, convoking both René and Vaudémont to appear before a tribunal on 4th April 1434. René sought a restitution of his position as duke while Vaudémont sought investiture with the same title from their mutual overlord. They were ordered to present themselves to the Council deliberating in Basle.¹⁸⁵ Safe-conducts¹⁸⁶ were issued from Basle and the Emperor's chancellery for the disputants and their escorts, this in spite of the best efforts of Burgundy to block the new development.

On 24th April 1434, in Basle Cathedral, Sigismond solemnly delivered his decision regarding the Lorraine matter: sovereignty of Lorraine had devolved to René through his wife Isabelle, without prejudicing rights held by the Vaudémont.¹⁸⁷ René pledged loyalty to his sovereign over-lord and was re-invested with the Duchy of Lorraine.¹⁸⁸ Antoine withdrew and submitted his appeal and protest in writing.¹⁸⁹

The imperial ruling was a direct affront to Burgundy and an overt threat from his overlord Sigismond. As there was no question of Burgundy's moving against the Empire, he reacted by demanding the immediate surrender of René, despite the fact that he still had René's infant sons in his keeping. Burgundy was deaf to all appeals from Isabelle and the Bishop of Metz, reclaiming his rights as René's gaoler. René, having pledged obedience to Burgundy, capitulated and re-entered a further two years of captivity while Philippe, against his promises, continued to hold René's sons captive for a further year.¹⁹⁰ The goodwill established at Chambéry in February sank without trace and Isabelle was obliged to do all she could in order to shore up their duchies and guarantee the support of their allies in René's absence. By adopting a passive stance in the wake of René's re-imprisonment, Charles and Yolande forfeited René's freedom to the greater good, ensuring that long anticipated peace negotiations continue.

¹⁸⁴ Plancher, Urbain (Dom), *Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne, avec des notes, des dissertations et les preuves justificatives ...*, Dijon, A. de Fay, 1739-1781, t. IV, p. 187.

¹⁸⁵ AN, J 932, n° 7.

¹⁸⁶ AN, J 932, n°s 2 & 8.

¹⁸⁷ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 19.

¹⁸⁸ AN, J 932, n° 9.

¹⁸⁹ AN, KK. 1125, f° 669, v°.

¹⁹⁰ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, pp. 109-111.

Having regained the open collaboration of Richemont, who had been actively assisting René in Bar prior to his re-incarceration,¹⁹¹ Yolande endured further political and personal tragedy with the death of Louis III in November 1434.¹⁹² By Christmas 1434, her eldest son was dead without issue and her second son René was Burgundy's prisoner. On the positive side however, Richemont was back in the fold as never before and her youngest son Charles d'Anjou was favourite of the king, ably assisted by an increasing number of Angevin officers and loyal allies on the grand council.¹⁹³ She had an excellent lieutenant to the east in Isabelle of Lorraine and, despite Burgundy's manoeuvre against René, France and Burgundy were edging closer to a treaty through the combined mediation of Savoy, the Council and the pope.

In Naples, Joanna II had reaffirmed her adoption of Louis III in June of 1433, with Alfonse V of Aragon withdrawing to Sicily to await developments.¹⁹⁴ Louis III had played well in contracting a marriage with Savoy, for in the wake of his death, his father-in-law sent a diplomatic representative to Naples in an attempt to secure the kingdom for his daughter Marguerite, whom he had instructed to remain in her titular realm.¹⁹⁵

Negotiations with Burgundy continued uninterrupted, with Philippe signing an initial pact with his brother-in-law Bourbon on 4th December, largely the result of Richemont's return to Charles's favour and by extension his brother Jean V's support of Charles's cause.¹⁹⁶ A further conference was agreed to in Nevers aimed at reaching a definitive position on a peace proposal. All parties, including Brittany, Savoy, the pope and his council, continued to implore Burgundy to advance the cause of peace and on 27th December 1434 Burgundian ambassadors advised the pope's council that their master had assented to its petitions. Le Févre reports the reconciliation between Burgundy and

¹⁹¹ Cosneau, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-216.

¹⁹² Various dates are given for Louis's death: 15th November is cited by Léonard (p. 487), who possibly took as his reference, Clement, François, *l'Art de vérifier les dates des faits historiques, des chartes, des chroniques et autres anciens monuments ...*, Paris, 19, rue de la Vrillière, 1818-1819, t. XVIII, p. 345; 12th November is given by BNF Ms. Lat. 17332, and 14th November by BNF, Ms. Lat. 1156a, f° 1, and Bourdigné in his chronicle cited previously, f° cxlii v°.

¹⁹³ Cf. Gaussin, *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁴ Léonard, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 487. Savoy might well have acted in the interests of Savoy, yet Marguerite's presence was essential to maintain a continuous Angevin representation in Naples until help or René/Isabelle could arrive to take possession of their realm.

¹⁹⁶ Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII ...*, t. II, p. 154, n. 1.

Bourbon in Nevers¹⁹⁷: «... le duc [Burgundy] et le duc de Bourbon et les dames de Bourgogne et de Bourbonnois, aussi le connestable de France et plusieurs princes, barons, chevaliers et escuiers; et là firent grant feste les ungs aulx aultres ...».¹⁹⁸ René had been sacrificed to the bigger picture and: «Après, fut conclud que une journée se tenroit en la ville d'Arras, à la Saint-Jehan de lors prochain venant, pour la paix pour le royaume de France entre le roy Charles, VIIe de ce nom et le duc ...»¹⁹⁹

Simultaneously, Jean V continued to negotiate with Bedford,²⁰⁰ and on 20th January 1435 further talks in preparation for Arras were opened, attended by Richemont, Regnault of Chartres, Christophe d'Harcourt and La Fayette, representing Charles and Yolande. The Burgundy-Bourbon peace was countersigned by Richemont on 5th February²⁰¹ and the prospect of lasting peace advanced. Richemont's efforts were seconded by the Duke and the Duchess of Bourbon.²⁰² Vendôme, another of Yolande's dedicated allies,²⁰³ was charged with the task of communicating with Brittany and 1st July 1435 was decided upon for conferences in Arras between France, Burgundy and England, talks to be attended by the pope and his council.²⁰⁴

Once again, Yolande had other matters to consider for on 2nd February 1435 Joanna II died:

«... cōme Bonne chrestienne: congnaissant sa fin estre proche Disposa de sa conscience, & ordonna son testament Par lequel institua Monseigneur Rene duc Danjou son heritier au

¹⁹⁷ A first step on the path to peace.

¹⁹⁸ Le Fèvre, op. cit., t. II, pp. 303-304.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Cf. *Lettres et mandements*. t.VIII and (BNF), French Manuscripts: *Collection Bréquigny-Moreau* tomes 80-83, Moreau 704-707, specifically Moreau, 705, f°s 133-142.

²⁰¹ Cosneau, op. cit. p. 218, cf. Canat de Chizy, Marcel, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de Bourgogne; publiés par la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Châlon-sur-Saône ...* Châlon-sur-Saône, Imprimerie de Dejussieu, 1863, *Preuves* cxlv-cxlvii.

²⁰² Agnès de Bourgogne, sister of Philippe le Bon. She held very strong personal Franciscan sympathies and was an avid correspondent of Colette of Corbie. Agnès's husband Charles de Bourbon distinguished himself in Charles VII's army during the war against the Anglo-Burgundians. He was a cousin of Jacques de la Marche, staunch Franciscan and close connection/ally of Louis II and Yolande d'Aragon (see above, earlier chapters). Agnès herself must have been of inestimable value in keeping lines of communication open between Burgundy and Bourbon (and by extension France) during the most difficult years post-Montereau. Indeed, post-Montereau she consoled her mother Marguerite of Bavaria over the death of her father Jean sans Peur. A triangular correspondence between Marguerite, Colette and Agnès exists which would be interesting to unravel in another study. Cf. Lopez, Elisabeth, *Culture et Sainteté Colette de Corbie (1381-1447)*...

²⁰³ See above chapter 6 for his rôle in the introduction of Joan to Charles.

²⁰⁴ Cosneau, op. cit., p. 219.

*royaulme de Sicille & voulut pour lamour quelle avoit au roy Loys son deffunct frere: quil luy succedast».*²⁰⁵

René was henceforth in titular possession of the Duchies of Bar-Lorraine, the Counties of Provence-Forcalquier, the Duchy of Anjou, the County of Maine and the Kingdom of Sicily-Naples-Jerusalem. The problem was that he was Burgundy's prisoner and therefore unable personally to appear in Naples to take possession of his inheritance. Furthermore, rather than extending René a degree of indulgence, given his changed circumstances, Burgundy tightened his hold over this newest King of Sicily, sending René to the fortified garrison of Bracon.²⁰⁶ Burgundy now had an Angevin king rather than a mere duke to ransom.

Neapolitan ambassadors dispatched both to René in captivity, and to Isabelle, emphasized the dangers inherent in a delayed appearance in Naples. The content of their message is reported by Bourdigné:

*«Après le deces de lacquelle [Joanna II] au royaume De Sicille sourdirent grâs debatz et discords Et fut le royaume divise en trois factions Car les ungs tenoiît le party dy roy Rene duc Daniou: disans le royaume luy appartenir tant a titre successif (par la donnoison dicelluy faicte par les papes a ses predecesseurs) comme par linstitution testamentaire faicte par la royne Jehanne. Les autres tenoient le party Dalphonse Roy Darragon. Et Dautres estoient qui ne tenoient pour lung ne pour lautre/mais disoient quilz tiendroiët la querelle de celluy a qui le pape le donneroit et que cestoit a luy a en pourveoir²⁰⁷ ... Et lors ceulx qui tenoient le party Daniou manderent au duc Rene Daniou pour lors estant detenu au chasteau de Diion: prisonnier du duc Philippe de Bourgongne: quil se retirast au royaume de Sicille pour se mettre en possession de la succession de la royne Jehanne ...»*²⁰⁸

René was eager to ensure that his kingdom not slip through his fingers for want of his personal liberty. Unable to undercut the projects of his rival Alfonse of Aragon in

²⁰⁵ Bourdigné, op. cit., f° cxlii, v°.

²⁰⁶ Lecoy de la Marche, *le Roi René*, t. I, p. 113.

²⁰⁷ We must not forget that Savoy had instructed his daughter Marguerite to remain in Naples, particularly in light of René's captivity, in Léonard's words: «... il lui appartenait disait-il, de représenter la dynastie française en face de son compétiteur aragonais» who was standing by on the island of Sicily, «tout en préparant ses forces pour une nouvelle campagne ...». *Les Angevins de Naples*, p. 487.

²⁰⁸ Bourdigné, op. cit., f° cxliii.

person, he took the only avenue left open to him, having Isabelle depart for their peninsular kingdom without delay. Once again the Angevin family pattern emerges, Marie of Brittany, Yolande and now Isabelle of Lorraine, all assumed control for husbands and/or sons, with full powers for war and for peace. The inability of René to act personally meant that full executive and military authority was bestowed upon Isabelle in Dijon on 4th June 1435.²⁰⁹ She prepared herself for this new challenge, leaving her daughter Marguerite d'Anjou²¹⁰ in the care of Yolande. Lecoy de la Marche confirms that Marguerite:

«... avait été élevée, durant l'absence de son père et de sa mère, par Yolande d'Aragon, qui, dans les derniers temps de sa vie, l'avait encore auprès d'elle en Anjou».²¹¹

There would have been no better training ground and mentor for a future queen of a divided England. Notwithstanding her newest responsibility, Yolande continued with her preparations for Arras.

Yolande had ensured papal approval for her sons' continuing rights over Naples and it is clear that she had worked on Rome since at least 1431 (the establishment of the council at Basle) for a variety of reasons, including, but not exclusively, a peace settlement for France. We have discussed the mediation of Savoy, the involvement of the Cardinal of Cyprus and her own Archbishop of Arles, both in negotiations with Burgundy and

²⁰⁹ Archives des Bouches-du-Rhône, B11, f° 341. Bourdigné, op. cit., f° cxliii. Cf. Hébert, *Regestes...* pp. 324-338 for « Entrée de la reine Isabelle et démarches en vue de la libération de René. » Aix-en-Provence, September 1435.

²¹⁰ As well as Agnès Sorel, who later passed into the service of the queen, Marie d'Anjou. Michelet points out that once Yolande put Agnès into Charles's path, her influence: «... semble avoir été sans rivale, du moment que la vieille reine eut donné à son gendre une maîtresse ...». He continues by stating that: «La belle-mère du roi, Yolande d'Anjou [d'Aragon], belle-mère aussi d'Isabelle, était comme une tête d'homme: elles avisèrent à lier pour toujours Charles VII aux intérêts de la maison d'Anjou-Lorraine. On lui donna pour maîtresse la douce créature, à la grande satisfaction de la reine [Marie D'Anjou], qui voulait à tout prix éloigner La Trémouille [who had in fact been banished from Charles's court prior to Agnès's arrival from the east, although he still managed to cause minor disturbances from his enforced exile] et autres favoris ... la vieille Yolande parlait vraisemblablement par Agnès et sans doute elle eut la part principale dans tout ce qui fit. Plus politique que scrupuleuse, elle avait accueilli également bien les deux filles qui lui vinrent si à propos de Lorraine, Jeanne d'Arc et Agnès, la sainte et la maîtresse, qui toutes deux, chacune à leur manière, servirent le roi et le royaume». Michelet, Jules, *Le Moyen Âge Histoire de France*, Editions Robert Laffont, Paris 2000, p. 810.

²¹¹ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 231, he cites as evidence AN, K 504, n° 1, f° 32 v°, which records expenses allocated: «pour vestir Mme Marguerite à la venue des ambassadeurs de l'Empereur à Saumur et à Angers ...» in September 1442.

Basle. Yolande was an old hand in the struggle for Naples and well understood the imperative of consistent good relations with the papacy. Viriville asserts that:

«Dans l'intérêt du roi Charles et pour ses propres Etats d'Italie, Yolande d'Aragon avait besoin du pape. Elle ménageait Eugène IV ...»²¹²

Ohnesorge bolsters this idea, stating:

«L'importance de bonnes relations avec la papauté se voit dans le comportement des Angevins envers le concile de Bâle (1431-1449). Et comme le pouvoir des Angevins à la cour de Charles VII fut considérable, ils exercèrent leur influence sur le roi de France dans ce sens, en soutenant, avec un succès temporaire il est vrai, la papauté.»²¹³

He cites Heribert Müller in acknowledging that:

«... c'est justement à cause de Naples et pour soutenir son beau-frère le roi René que Charles VII se départit de son attitude habituellement proconciliaire».²¹⁴

Isabelle departed for Provence with an offensive in mind, armed with the combined support of Charles VII, Yolande in Touraine-Anjou-Maine-Provence and of those who held authority in her absence from Bar-Lorraine.²¹⁵

«Madame Ysabel de Lorraine son espouse pour lors residente a Marseille avecques ces deux fils monstra bien la magnanimite et haulte entreprinse de son cueur car elle menāt Jehan son aisne filz en sa compaignie alla au royaulme de Sicille avecques les ambassadeurs qui estoient venuz querir le roy son mary: ou des Sicilliens moult estimans et louans sa vertu et magnanimite: fut a grant ioye et hōneur receue: attendans dheure a heure a grant desir la venue du noble duc Daniou leur roy: lequel moult aymoiēt: cōbien que iamais ne leussent veu: et estoiet fors inclins a luy pour le bon traictement et gracieuseté que leur auoir faict le bon roy Loys son frere.»²¹⁶

²¹² Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII ...* t. II, p. 310 and *Erreurs et Rectifications*, p. 459.

²¹³ Ohnesorge, Christof, op. cit., p. 270.

²¹⁴ Ibid. Cf. Müller, H., «Etre conciliateur à l'époque conciliaire. Les Anjou et la cour royale face au concile de Bâle (1431-1449), in Autrand F., Gauvard, C., & Moeglin, J.-M., *Saint-Denis et la royauté. Etudes offertes à Bernard Guenée*, Paris, Histoire Ancienne et Médiévale, 1999, pp. 757-770.

²¹⁵ Cf. Hébert, *Regestes...*, loc.cit.

²¹⁶ Bourdigné, loc. cit.

Isabelle might have won the hearts and minds campaign for Naples but the reality of her situation was fraught with uncertainty. In Marseille she accepted the throne offered her by the Neapolitan commission charged with the responsibility of approaching her. She armed a small flotilla, signing a precious agreement with the Duke of Milan for support to be added to the existing alliance with the Genovese. Virtually the only obstacle in Alfonse's path to domination of the western Mediterranean was Genoa and Milan; the task therefore set for Isabelle was onerous and exacting. Notwithstanding her fragile circumstances, her party did triumph over the Aragonese, with Alfonse and two of his brothers taken by Milanese forces near the islands of Ponza on 5th August 1435, allowing her to be received with all ceremony in Naples on 18th October. Savoy conceded her sovereignty and recalled his daughter. Alfonse set to working upon the avidity of his gaoler Filippo Maria Visconti. The Angevins could only rejoice in momentary respite.²¹⁷

Back in France, all were unified in their displeasure towards Burgundy for keeping René hostage, yet all understood the importance of working towards the bigger picture: lasting peace with Burgundy. It was for this reason that René found himself partially isolated in the settlement arising from negotiations in Arras.

Prior to Arras, Richemont had met with Yolande and Marie d'Anjou in La Rochelle, where they had ostensibly assembled to await the birth of Richemont's nephew.²¹⁸ Preparations had been finalized for the long-anticipated meeting in Arras. According to Jean Chartier, Charles's embassy consisted of, amongst others:

«... Monseigneur de Bourbon, Monseigneur le conte de Richemont, connestable de France, l'archevesque de Rains, chancelier de France, Monseigneur Christophe de Harcourt, le mareschal la Fayette ...».²¹⁹

Dickenson confirms that Yolande sent no mere observers to Arras; her ambassadors were directly associated with the official French embassy, along with those of the King of

²¹⁷ Léonard, op. cit., pp. 487-488.

²¹⁸ This infant would later become Richemont's heir. His father was Richard of Brittany, Richemont's favoured younger brother, the Count of Etampes, and his mother was Marguerite d'Orléans, Countess of Vertus. Cosneau, op. cit., p. 222.

²¹⁹ Chartier, Jean, *Chronique de Charles VII*, t. I, p. 186.

Sicily (René) and Alençon.²²⁰ She cites Raoul de Bouvier, “*chanoine d’Angiers*”, who testified in 1451 that:

«... *la royne de Sicille Yolant y envoya Moreau tresorier d’Anjou, maistre Alain le Queu, et autres de son hostel ... Item dit que par plusieurs journees convindrent et assemblerent lesdits seigneurs ambaxadeurs et avec eulx ses gens de la royne de Sicile et de mondit seigneur d’Alençon ...*»²²¹

René was accorded an embassy:

«... *Le seigneur de Ciercle, le seigneur de Barach ou Harach, le bastard de Bar et Aimé Bourgoiz*».²²²

Burgundy’s representatives included:

«... *le conte de Vaudesmons [Antoine] ... Ferry Monseigneur de Lorraine ... [René’s son-in-law]*».²²³

Basle was represented by the Cardinal of Cyprus who, as we have seen, was one of the earliest involved with establishing the Arras talks and a person who had ample opportunity for contact with René, Marguerite of Savoy and Yolande both prior to and immediately after Chambéry 1434. Savoy did not send an envoy, having retired to Ripaille to begin life as a pious hermit. Dom Calmet indicates that as well as negotiating for peace, representatives of Yolande, Isabelle, and Charles VII were expressly charged with the task of ensuring both that René was not completely excluded from the eventual outcome and of persuading Burgundy to release him.²²⁴ A spirit of reconciliation was in the air, and despite the withdrawal of England from the talks a peace settlement was established to be read into the record at Saint-Vaast Cathedral on 21st September 1435.²²⁵

²²⁰ Dickenson, Jocelyne Gledhill, *The Congress of Arras 1435. A Study in Medieval Diplomacy*, New York, Biblio and Tannen, 1972, p. 13.

²²¹ Dickenson, pp. 230-231, *Testimony of Raoul le Bouvier as to events at Arras, given 6 November, 1451*, BNF, Ms. Fr. 5004, f° 18r-18v.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Calmet, Dom, op. cit., t. II, p. 793. Cf. Hébert, *Regestes...*, pp. 324-338.

²²⁵ Bedford died just prior to the establishment of the Treaty of Arras. He died near Rouen in Chantereine on 14th September 1435. Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 322.

However, at the very last minute, Burgundy submitted a written amendment demanding that René, Duke of Lorraine, be excluded from the treaty.²²⁶ We have noted the inclusion of Vaudémont in Burgundy's entourage, and it is probably his influence, coupled with that of Sigismond's earlier affront to Burgundy's authority, that had provoked this last minute development.

Having come so far on the road to peace, neither Charles nor Yolande would have wanted to stall the process by demanding Lorraine's inclusion. Once more René, in his capacity as Duke of Lorraine, was sacrificed to the greater good,²²⁷ doubtless in the hope that the Lorraine question could be re-negotiated at a later date once Burgundy's attitude had softened. Since the death of Louis III, René had borne the title of Duke of Anjou, and it was in this capacity that he was eventually included in the treaty:

*«Oultre plus fera le roy par ses cousins et autres parens de son sang baillier leurs lectres patentes par lesquelles promettront entretenir ledit compromis et appointment; c'est assavoir, le duc d'Anjou [René], de Charles, frère dudit duc, du duc de Bourbon, des contes de Richemont, de Vendosme et de Foix, d'Armagnac, de Perdriac, et d'autres que ledit duc [René] voudra désigner ...».*²²⁸

As early as October, barely a month after the ratification of Arras, Chartier details the organization of an: *«Ambassade pour la délivrance du duc de Bar:²²⁹ Le dymenche vingt-quatriesme jour dudit mois oudit an, Monseigneur le duc de Bourbon, Monseigneur le Connestable, Monseigneur de Vendosme, Messire Christophle de Harcourt et Monseigneur de la Fayette arrivèrent à Rains. Et de là se partirent, en leur compaignie Monseigneur l'archevesque de Rains, pour aller à Digon, affin d'avoir la délivrance de Monseigneur le duc de Bar, lequel estoit prisonnier de Monseigneur le duc de Bourgongne ...»*²³⁰

Richemont stayed behind in Reims to attend to military and judicial matters²³¹ while the others attempted unsuccessfully to negotiate René's release.²³² At Yolande's insistence,

²²⁶ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, pp. 115-118.

²²⁷ BNF, Ms. Lat. 1502, f° 13.

²²⁸ Chartier, Jean, op. cit., t. I, pp. 203-204.

²²⁹ No mention here of either Lorraine or indeed Anjou.

²³⁰ Chartier, Jean, p. 215.

²³¹ Ibid., pp. 215-217.

Charles VII continued to defend René's eastern domains. She had been exhorted to intervene by René's Bar-Lorraine counsellors, who sought her help against mercenaries and bandits ravaging the territory in the absence of both Isabelle and René. Lecoy de la Marche cites a letter to Yolande from these counsellors evoking: «... *sa haute influence et l'amour de son fils, ... [putting all their] confiance en elle après Dieu.*».²³³ Richemont was dispatched to deal with the insurgencies in Bar-Lorraine.²³⁴

Despite Arras, conflict continued, generated by both the English and discontented officers of Charles VII. Charles's most frequently consulted and trusted counsellors from the time of Arras were Charles d'Anjou, Vendôme, Pardiac, Denis du Moulin (Archbishop of Toulouse), Martin de Charpaignes (Bishop of Clermont), Robert de Rouvres (Bishop of Maguelonne) Thibaut de Lucé (Bishop of Maillesais), Christophe d'Harcourt, Chaumont, the Bueils, Brézé and Coëtivy.²³⁵ All of the above bore allegiance to Yolande and Richemont and as is so often the case, those left out in the cold such as Charles, Duke of Bourbon, formed a *ligue* of the discontented.

On 8th June 1437, the vexatious aggrieved met in Angers, presided over by Bourbon. He had attracted Alençon, Brittany and the recently liberated René d'Anjou²³⁶ to his cause. Bourbon had been involved in the negotiations for René's release.²³⁷ René sealed his alliance with Bourbon by betrothing his elder son Jean, Duke of Calabria to Marie of Bourbon.²³⁸ Bourbon's brother-in-law, the Castillian Rodrigo Villandrando, threw his weight behind the *ligue*. Why René was involved with Bourbon, who was attempting to usurp the authority of Charles d'Anjou is uncertain, particularly considering the assistance generally forthcoming from Charles VII, Yolande and Richemont. Perhaps he sought greater personal influence at Charles VII's court by usurping his younger brother Charles d'Anjou from his position as the king's favourite, to push his Italian campaign

²³² Burgundy's demands were felt to be exorbitant and talks were dissolved. BNF, Ms. Lorraine 238, n^os 16 & 17, AN, KK. 1125, f^o 671.

²³³ Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I. p. 119. His source is a letter dated 10th March 1436, BNF, Ms. Lorraine 8, n^o 45.

²³⁴ Cosneau, op. cit., pp. 259-260.

²³⁵ Vallet de Viriville, *Charles VII et ses conseillers* ... p. 17 and Gaussin, op. cit.

²³⁶ He was liberated by an act dated 7th February 1437. Cf. Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, pp. 120-128.

²³⁷ Chartier, J., op. cit. t. I, p. 232.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 233. Bargemont, op. cit. t. I, p. 237 & note 22, p. 431.

forward.²³⁹ Perhaps he sought to prove that he could make a mark for himself without the influence of Yolande²⁴⁰ and Charles d'Anjou.

The *ligue* ultimately failed in its attempt to unseat Charles d'Anjou from his position of favourite. Villandrando was banished from the kingdom, Bourbon was humiliated, his allies obliged to withdraw chastened, and René brought to heel. The English started to experience real political and military set-backs during this period, with Richemont increasingly gaining the upper hand. After fifteen long years in the wilderness of his aspirations, Charles appeared at the head of his troops at the siege of Montereau, armed and on the offensive,²⁴¹ firmly re-established as France's *auriflambe*.²⁴²

Charles VII, having won his spurs, headed for his capital in triumph.²⁴³ He made his ceremonial and solemn *entrée* on 12th November 1437. Yolande's work on Charles's behalf was all but achieved. The Berry Herald testifies to the solid wall of Angevin presence around Charles:

«Et plus devant [Charles VII] estoient ceulx de messire Charles d'Anjou ; estoient en ces deux compaignies de cent a VI xx [six score] archiers ; et plus devant estoit monseigneur de Graille a tout VIII c[ent] archiers. De costé le Roy estoit a la destre monseigneur le connestable, ung gros baston en son poing; et a la senestre monseigneur le grant maistre d'hostel du Roy [Vendôme] ;

²³⁹ Cf. Cosneau's discussion regarding this matter, n. 7, pp. 269-270.

²⁴⁰ Who had made assurances to Burgundy to ensure René's release. Lecoy de la Marche, op. cit., t. I, p. 122.

²⁴¹ Cagny, Perceval de, *Chroniques de Perceval de Cagny publiées pour la première fois, pour la Société de l'Histoire de France, par H. Moranville*, Paris, H. Laurens, 1902, pp. 151+.

²⁴² «Elle [Joan] appeloit mondit seigneur [Charles] le daulphin, «le gentil daulphin»; et ainsi l'appela jusques ad ce qu'il fust couronné. Aucunes fois l'appeloit, «l'auriflambe».» From le registre Delphinale de Mathieu Thomassin, II, Quicherat, *Procès ...* t. IV, p. 307. Mathieu Thomassin served as delphinal counsellor for a period of some thirty years to both Charles VII and later his son Louis XI. Cf. Daly, Kathleen, "The political will and the administrative won't? Mathieu Thomassin and his dauphins (Charles III and Louis II)", in *Journal of Medieval History*, v. 33, (2007), pp. 217-232; Daly, Kathleen, "'Centre', 'power' and 'periphery' in late Medieval French historiography: some reflections." in Allmand, Christopher, (ed.), *War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2000, pp. 124-144, (includes work on Perceval de Cagny); Daly, Kathleen, "Some seigneurial archives and chronicles in fifteenth century France", in *Peritita: Journal of the Medieval Academy of Ireland*, vol. 2, (1983), pp. 59-73; Contamine, Philippe, "Naissance d'une historiographie. Le souvenir de Jeanne d'Arc hors de France depuis le 'procès de son innocence' (1445-1456) jusqu'au début du XVI^e siècle.", in *Francia*, v. 15, (1987), pp. 238-40 ; & Letonnelier, Gaston, « Mathieu Thomassin et le Registre delphinal », in *Annales de l'Université de Grenoble, section lettres-droit*, 1929, pp. 1-33.

²⁴³ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 383.

et derriere le Roy estoit monseigneur le daulphin moult richement abillé et couvert d'orfavrerie ; et a la destre de monseigneur le Daulphin estoit le conte de la Marche ...»²⁴⁴

Politically speaking, Yolande's son-in-law and grandson had arrived, escorted by her youngest son, their allies and their Constable Richemont. Long years had been spent in *la forêt de longue attente*, the peace had yet to be won and vital reforms made, but Yolande's contribution to Charles's victory is undeniable. Charles departed Paris on 3rd December 1437 for Orleans and Bourges with the intention of drafting major reforms particularly targeting the reorganization of the Gallican Church,²⁴⁵ monetary and taxation amendments, and army reform.²⁴⁶ Picot in his history of the General Estates makes the following observation:

*«Le conseil du roi s'était peu à peu rempli des hommes du premier mérite: à côté du connetable de Richemont et de Pierre de Brézé, siegeaient les frères Bureau, Cousinot, Chevalier, et au-dessus d'eux, les dirigeant par les grandes connaissances, Jacques Cœur, qui gouvernait admirablement les finances royales ...: il suffit de dire que, de 1433 à 1439, tous les services publics furent entièrement réorganisés».*²⁴⁷

This statement draws together the thread of our recent discussion, attesting to the fact that post-Trémoille, Yolande's influence over Charles and on the royal council was preponderant and vital to the cause of both civil peace and governmental reform. Not only was her younger son Charles installed as favoured counsellor and friend of Charles VII, hand-picked and strategically placed allies and retainers such as Richemont, Brézé, Richard of Brittany, the Bastard of Orleans, Xaintrilles, Jean Bureau and Jacques Coeur were unified in bringing her protracted campaign to its realization. In Michelet's estimation:

²⁴⁴ The Berry Herald, p. 192.

²⁴⁵ On 7th July 1438, Charles promulgated the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges. His council had declared itself neutral in relation to the dispute between Eugene IV and Basle, adopting most of Basle's reforms with modifications relative to France's needs. In fact, what he legislated for was the right of the civil authority to intervene in the affairs of the Church, i.e. the recognition of Basle was formal but the monarch would decide upon the validity of the Basle decisions, ecclesiastical appointments and levies and would not capitulate to the pope when such recognition ran counter to the interests of France.

²⁴⁶ Vallet de Viriville, *op. cit.*, t. II, p. 388.

²⁴⁷ Picot, Georges, *Histoire des Etats Généraux considérés au point de vue de leur influence sur le Gouvernement de la France de 1355 à 1614*, Geneva, Mégariotis Reprints, 1979, t. I, pp. 323-324.

«Tels furent les habiles et modestes conseillers de Charles VII. Maintenant si on l'on veut savoir qui les approcha de lui, quelle influence le rendit docile à leur conseils, on trouvera, si je ne me trompe, que ce fut celle d'une femme, de sa belle mère, Yolande d'Anjou [d'Aragon]. Dès le commencement de ce règne, nous la voyons puissante; c'est elle qui fait accueillir la Pucelle; c'est avec elle, dans une occasion, que le duc d'Alençon s'entend sur les préparatifs de la campagne. Cette influence, balancée par celle des favoris, semble avoir été sans rivale ...»²⁴⁸

On paper at least, civil conflict in France had ended with the signing of the Treaty of Arras, but the war with the English continued. However, with Bedford's death and Burgundy's detachment from Henry's cause, domestic problems in England and Charles's victories in France, Henry VI finally petitioned Charles VII for talks. Long anticipated negotiations were convened near Calais on 9th June 1439²⁴⁹ with Charles d'Orléans acting as ambassador, Regnault of Chartres, the Archbishop of Narbonne, the Bishop of Châlons, Vendôme, Dunois,²⁵⁰ Dampierre, Maillièrre, Regnault Girard, Captain of La Rochelle and Andry Le Boeuf representing Charles VII and Isabel, Duchess of Burgundy²⁵¹ and Nicolas Rolin²⁵² amongst others acting for Burgundy, with illustrious English lords and ecclesiastics including Winchester involved in proceedings. As a result of these negotiations, Charles d'Orléans secured his freedom, but the English refused to proceed further, not having obtained satisfaction on the question of Normandy.²⁵³

In October 1439, Charles convened Estates in Orleans, Estates co-presided over by Yolande:

«... et vindrent a Orleans ou furent assemblees les embassades des grans seigneurs de ce royaulme, de ceulx qui estoient en leurs païs ... et avecques ce, y avoit gens notables envoyez de tous païs et cités de ce royaume pour ouyr parler et pratiquer du bien et recouvrement d'icellui royaume et pour le povoir mectre en bonne paix, justice et pollice ... L'assemblee de tous les desusdiz venuz oudit hostel du Roy [vindrent le Roy] et la [vieille] royne de Cecille, acompaignee des seigneurs de son sang, c'est assavoir Monseigneur de Bourbon, de monseigneur le conte de

²⁴⁸ Michelet, loc. cit.

²⁴⁹ Vallet de Viriville, op. cit., p. 401.

²⁵⁰ The Bastard of Orleans.

²⁵¹ Cf., Sommé, Monique, *Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne : une femme au pouvoir au Xve siècle*, Villeneuve-d'Ascq, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 1998.

²⁵² Cf., Berthier, Marie-Thérèse, *Le chancelier Rolin (1376-1462) : ambition, pouvoir et fortune en Bourgogne*, Précý-sous-Thil, Editions de l'Armançon, 1998.

²⁵³ Monstrelet, op. cit., t. V, pp. 403-409.

Maine [Charles d'Anjou], monseigneur le connestable, messire Pierre de Bretagne, les contes de la Marche, de Vendosme et de Dunoy, après le Roy furent assis lesdiz seigneurs chacun selon leur degré ...»²⁵⁴

The Berry Herald records how the state of the kingdom was proclaimed to Charles and Yolande:

«En la presence du Roy et de la royne de Cecille furent la proposees de tous ceulx du royaume la estans moult de belle choses moult haultement et saignement, en demonstrant les desolacions, maulx, pilleries et meurtres, roberies et ravissemens qui estoient perpetrés et faiz soubz ombre de la guerre et aussi les haulx biens, la joye et les plaisirs qui viennent et sont par les païs ou paix est, et plusieurs notables et belles hystoires anciennes servans a la matiere, laquelle matiere et les parolles dictes oudit conseil seroient trop longues a escrire. Et toutefois, pour conclusion, fut ordonné et dit que le premier jour de may retourneroient lesdiz embassadeurs audit lieu de Saint Omer pour conclurre et fermer la besoigne de tous poins, ou cas que les Englois y voudroient entendre». ²⁵⁵

A far-reaching edict on army reform and a permanent system of taxation to underwrite a professional royal army was proclaimed on 2nd November, 1439:

«Pour obvier & donner remede à faire cesser les grans excez & pilleries faites et commises par les Gens de guerre, qui par longtemps ont vescu & vivent sur les peuple sans ordre de Justice ... le Roy par l'advis & deliberation des Seigneurs de son Sang, la Royne de Sicile, de nos Sieurs le Duc de Bourbon, et Charles d'Anjou, les Comtes de la Marche, d'Eu et de Vendosme, ... considerant la pauvreté, oppression & destruction de son peuple ainsi destruit et foullé par lesdites pilleries, lesquelles choses ont esté et sont à sa tres-grande desplaisance; et n'est pas son intention de plus tollerer ne soustenir en aucune maniere, mais en ce, bon ordre et provision y estre mises et données, par le moyen et ayde de Dieu nostre Créateur, a faicte, constitué, ordonné et estably, fait et establit par Loy et Edict general, perpetuel et non revocable, par forme de Pragmatique Sanction, les Edicts, Loix, Statuts & Ordonnances qui s'ensuyvent ...»²⁵⁶

²⁵⁴ The Berry Herald, pp. 204-206.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 208.

²⁵⁶ Ordonnances ... t. XIII, p. 306.

This indissoluble decree was targeted at great lords such as Burgundy (and his lesser supporters such as the Vaudémont, who had been able to start and sustain a war of succession in Lorraine against René d'Anjou), as well as at renegades like La Trémoille, who had caused so much hardship to Richemont and La Fayette, and at mercenaries and bandits such as Villandrando, who while essential in some ways to Charles's ultimate victory, left a trail of devastation in their wake.²⁵⁷ Those who ignored the ordonnance would be charged with the offense of lese-majesty. It was not only the prolongation of the war and the hardship associated with it that was in question but moreover the crippling cost and the distraction of putting down incursions, a cost and distraction with which Yolande, in particular, was only too familiar. As Picot observes, the document ensured the suppression of the nobles' most cherished immunities:

*«... le droit de guerre privée, qu'ils avaient consev   à la faveur des d  sordres dont g  missait le royaume, est solennellement aboli; les privil  ges de juridiction, limit  s et restreints, deviennent impuissants    prot  ger ou    sauver le coupable, quelque haut qu'il soit plac   ...»*²⁵⁸

Henceforth it would be the sole prerogative of the king to police the kingdom and to organize armies to defend it. To achieve this unity a permanent tax was imposed, a taxation which would put an end to the fiscal abuses of past favourites such as Giac and La Tr  moille. Article 44 of the act best expresses this intention:

*«(44) Item. Et pour ce que plusieurs mettent tailles sus en leurs terres, sans auctorit   & cong   du Roy, pour leur volont   ou autrement, dont le peuple est moult opprim  , le Roy prohibe et d  fend    tous, sur lesdictes peines de confiscation de biens, que nul de quelque estat, qualit   ou condition qu'il soit, ne mette ou impose taille ou autre aide ou tribut sur ses sujets ou autres, pour quelque cause ou couleur que ce soit, sinon que ce soit de l'auctorit   & cong   du Roy ...»*²⁵⁹

The voice of a revitalized and determined Charles rings out clearly from the final article of the act:

²⁵⁷ Cf. Quicherat, « Rodrigue de Villandrando ».

²⁵⁸ Picot, op. cit., t. I, p. 330. He refers to articles 21-22 of the ordonnance.

²⁵⁹ *Ordonnances ...*, t. XIII, p. 313.

«(47). Veut et ordonne le Roy, cette présente Loi & Ordonnance estre publiée ès bonne villes & autres lieux de son Royaume, afin que aucun n'en puisse prétendre cause d'ignorance ...»²⁶⁰

This official and public involvement of Yolande was probably her last, and it coincided with the fact that these Orleans Estates were to be the last Estates of Charles's long reign. From the issuing of the Ordonnance dated 2nd November 1439, henceforth the king alone could tax the contributables. Taxation therefore no longer required the annual or extraordinary deliberation and consent of the Estates. The Orleans Ordonnance was notable in that it produced two major outcomes: the establishment of a single and permanent army and a single and permanent tax, both under the centralized control of the king.²⁶¹ Far from being removed from the affairs of state in 1439, at the Orleans Estates Yolande played a primordial rôle as principal advisor to her son-in-law Charles, and co-presided over the assembly.²⁶² She had emerged from the gloom into the light of

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII*, t. II, p. 404.

²⁶² Contamine holds that an anonymous treatise dating from 1425 implores Yolande to act as an intermediary for a reform agenda to be presented to her son-in-law Charles. He gives as his source the treatise edited by Vallet de Viriville entitled "Advis à Isabelle de Bavière" in the scholarly journal, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole de Chartes*, Paris, Librairie A. Franck, 1886, t. 2, sér. 6. In his article on the treatise, Vallet de Viriville insists that the document was addressed to Ysabeau de Bavière and that it dates from 1434. Contamine on the other hand advances the hypothesis that it was actually addressed to Yolande d'Aragon and dated from 1425 based upon the facts that: "...seule la nomination de "mere de nostre souverain seigneur le roy" (in the preamble of the tract) peut indiquer l'identité du destinataire. Il est plus logique de penser, non pas à la propre mère de Charles VII, mais à sa belle-mère: Yolande d'Aragon, reine de Sicile et mère de Marie d'Anjou. En effet à plusieurs reprises dans des actes officiels, Charles nomme Yolande d'Aragon: "nostre très chiere et amée mere la royne de Sicile" et "nostre dite bonne mere". As to the date of the manuscript, which Vallet de Viriville claims is 1434, Contamine points to certain "...indications données dans le texte...un royaume en crise et réduit (le royaume de Bourges), l'allusion au décès récent d'Henri V, et à la bataille de Verneuil (17th August 1424). Finalement, on retiendra la date de 1425, date qui correspond à l'arrivée d'un nouveau connétable en la personne de Richemont." Contamine puts forward a further hypothesis that the anonymous author of the text was Jean Castel (1383-1431), son of Christine de Pizan and Etienne Castel. Jean Castel was secretary and notary to Charles VII and participated in embassies to Castille and elsewhere. Sené, Elsa, « Un miroir de prince du XV^e siècle, avis à Yolande d'Aragon », in *Bulletin de l'Association des amis du Centre de Jeanne d'Arc*, 19, Orléans, Centre de Jeanne d'Arc, 1995, pp. 145-148. Cf. Contamine, Philippe, *Les pouvoirs XIII-XVI*, Paris, Presses de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure, 1984, pp. 10-21. We have checked the document but it is not addressed to either queen or mother by name just to «Très excellente et puissante princesse, et nostre très redoubtée dame, mère de nostre souverain seigneur le roy» nor is it dated. Now, to all intents and purposes, with the Treaty of Troyes in 1420, Ysabeau ceased to be a mother to Charles and, in any case, as Contamine and others have long observed, Charles habitually referred to Yolande as «Nostre mère» ou «Bonne Mère». Notwithstanding the treatise's provenance, it articulates the very reforms that were undertaken by Charles and Yolande in the period 1438-1439 and reposes upon many of the ideas expressed by writers such as Yolande's one time secretary Alain Chartier in his *Quadrilogue Invecitif* cited above. Cf. Contamine, Philippe, *Des Pouvoirs en France 1300/1500*, Paris, Presses de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure, 1992, p. 46 and his comments in "Autour de Marguerite d'Ecosse reines, princesses et dames du XV^e siècle..." Paris, Honoré Champion, 1999, p. 16. We must not lose sight of the fact that in Aragon, centralization of military, fiscal and regal authority had been initiated by Yolande's ancestor Pedro III, the Great in the thirteenth century. See above, pp. 76-80.

France's new day, managing the metamorphosis of Charles from *le petit roi de Bourges* into the first manifestation of an absolute monarch of a unified France.

Despite the continued presence of the English, the task Yolande had set for herself upon her return from Provence in the summer of 1423 had been accomplished. She had employed diplomacy, political brinksmanship, military force and celestial intervention to achieve her ends. Her family was to remain at the forefront of affairs, most notably her granddaughter Marguerite, in Yolande's keeping since Isabelle's departure for Naples in 1434, and much later her great-granddaughter Anne of France. Though she would not in the end rejoice in similar successes, Marguerite d'Anjou became Henry VI's Queen and defender in much the same manner as Yolande had acted for Charles VII. Anne would distinguish herself as regent of France for her younger brother Charles upon the death of their father Louis XI.

Yolande retired to Saumur where she died aged sixty-one on 14th November 1442. Her final testament is witness to her sojourn in the *forêt de longue attente*, an extended stay wherein she was obliged to underwrite Louis III's ventures in Italy, protect her territories and possessions and support Charles in his struggle to retain the throne of France, efforts which had combined to dissipate the considerable fortune bequeathed to her by her husband Louis II in 1417:

«Item: pour ce que par aventure aucuns pourroient/Avoir en ymagination considéré la quantité de meuble tant d'or, d'argent,/Vesselle royaulx, et autres biens et choses que nous demourèrent après le/Decées de nostredit feu seigneur et espoux, et encore en deussions avoir/En grant nombre. Nous Disons et declairons pour rendre contens/Ceux que en porroient doubter que tout le plus bel et le meilleur/A esté employé pour le fait du royaume d'Italie et baillé au Roy Loys,/Nostre aisé fils dont Dieu ait l'ame pour sa conqueste; autre partie/En acquict de doibtes de nostredit feu seigneur et espoux sont nous Demourasme chargée; et aussi en grant nombre pour/La deffense du pays ...»²⁶³

From Montauban in February 1442, Charles VII recognized her contribution by bequeathing the lands and titles of Gien, Saint-Maixent, Chizé, Civray to name a few, to his brother-in-law and favourite Charles d'Anjou:

²⁶³ AN, P 1334/17, f.° 52.

«Charles par la grace de Dieu Roy de France scavoir faisons a tous presens et advenir comme de feue de bonne memoire Iolande en son vivant Roine de Jerusalem et de Sicille mere de nostre tres chere et tres amée compagne la Roine et de nostre tres cher et tres amé cousin Charles d'Anjou Comte du Maine et de Mortaing qui nous ait en nostre jeune aage faict plusieurs grands plaisirs et services en maintes manieres, que nous avons et devons avoir en perpetuelle memoire... laquelle nostredicte mere apres que fusmes deboutez de nostre ville de paris, nous receu liberalement en ses pais d'Anjou et du Maine, et nous donna plusieurs advois, aydes, secours et services tant de ses biens, gens et forteresses pour resister aux entreprises de nos ennemis et adversaires les Anglois et autres ...»²⁶⁴

Her grandson the Dauphin Louis, later Louis XI, in whose future interests she had largely directed her efforts since the summer of 1423, made this observation of her during a funerary oration:

«Cuer d'homme en corps de femme».

Of his own daughter Anne, *Madame la Grande*, Yolande's great-granddaughter, his annointed yet unofficial regent, Louis XI would attest that she was the:

«... moins folle femme du monde, car de sage je n'en sais point».²⁶⁵

"To this least-foolish of women", he entrusted the dauphin's care and education, leaving her the responsibility to govern France, if not the title of regent. Lacking the name of regent, Anne of France was nevertheless recognized as the controlling authority of the king, the finances of the state, and the power of the realm.²⁶⁶ This ought to resonate for us, for Anne was her father's daughter and every inch her great-grandmother's natural successor.

²⁶⁴ AN, P 2531, f° 215.

²⁶⁵ Cited by Jean-Marie de la Mure in *Histoire des ducs de Bourbon et des comtes de Forez*, Paris, Portier, 1860-1897, t. II, p. 326 n.

²⁶⁶ He actually appointed her husband Pierre de Beaujeu his lieutenant-general and gave them joint custody of her brother, the Dauphin Charles. Jansen, Sharon L., *Anne of France: Lessons of My Daughter*, Cambridge, D.S. Brewer, 2004, p. 4.

Commyne's said of Anne: «*ce fut ung roy*»,²⁶⁷ while Brantôme held that: «*Elle gouverna si sagement et vertueusement que [she was held to be] ung des grands roys de France*».²⁶⁸

Anne's words of advice to her daughter Suzanne could equally have originated from the pen of Yolande:

*"... widowed women cannot offer too many prayers, fasts or alms because devotion should be their principal occupation. When it comes to the government of their lands and affairs, they must depend only upon themselves; when it comes to sovereignty, they must not cede power to anyone."*²⁶⁹

As we have seen, this "article of faith" was Yolande's gold standard, one that in combination with her seemingly limitless patience contributed to the recovery and the restoration of France, to the great benefit of her heirs, successors and their subjects.

²⁶⁷ Cited in *Anne de Beaujeu*, Chabannes, Hedwige de, Linarès, Isabelle de, Paris, Crépin-Leblond, 1955, p. 3.

²⁶⁸ Brantôme, Pierre de Bourdeille, Seigneur de, *Collection universelle des mémoires particuliers relatifs à l'histoire de France*, Paris, Cuchet, Gaspard-Joseph, 1790, t. LXIII [*Les Dames illustres françaises et étrangères*], p. 125.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 64, our emphasis.

CONCLUSION

With the death of Yolande d'Aragon in November 1442 this study comes to a close. We have examined the verso of the tapestry of her life and times as well as the foundation sketches of her immediate predecessors, whose activities were essential to its composition, influencing her actions and decisions. What is telling about Yolande is that she managed to transform radically the original design sketch, sovereignty over the Kingdoms of Naples-Sicily-Jerusalem,¹ to include the recovery and reform of the Kingdom of France, ensuring that her son-in-law, grandson and their descendants would rule France, if not in the end maintaining direct Angevin dominion over Anjou-Maine-Provence and Bar-Lorraine:² the prize her descendants received was far richer than the one originally designed for them.

Yolande d'Aragon was a woman whom the *Religieux* described as having an “...*air de dignité répandu sur toute sa personne...*”,³ and this quality of dignity through adversity and seemingly limitless patience are evident in all her actions. None of her adversaries were ever able to criticize her personal morality, unlike the case of her contemporaries Ysabeau of Bavaria and Joanna II of Naples. Yolande's widowhood provided her with additional dignity and she wisely never sought to remarry.

Her title *royne de Sicile*, was never prefixed by *douaire*, most notably once she had successive daughters-in-law who carried the same title, and this gave Yolande an additional aura of power, her authority reposing first upon the lieutenant-generalcy bestowed by Louis II in 1410, and later the vice-royalty conferred upon her by her son Louis III in the summer of 1423. It was this authority which allowed her to utilize her power in all areas of princely endeavour: political, diplomatic, military and spiritual. It

¹ This was the objective underlying her betrothal to Louis II of Anjou- an alliance between the antagonist states of Aragon and Anjou.

² With the deaths of her sons René and Charles, these heritages were essentially subsumed into the crown of France by her acquisitive grandson Louis XI, *l'universelle araignée*, King of France. Lorraine, as discussed above, largely slipped from René's control as a result of the rout at Bulgnéville in 1431.

³ *Religieux*, v. I, p. 773.

seems that both dignities were of unlimited duration, though in theory only to be exercised in the absences of her husband and later, her son, Louis III. Interestingly, these lieutenancies were never unilaterally withdrawn nor indeed transferred to her younger sons René and Charles once they had attained their respective majorities. In this Yolande presaged (and possibly informed) the advice given by her great-granddaughter Anne of France to her own daughter Suzanne: *“When it comes to the government of their lands and affairs, they [widows] must depend only upon themselves; when it comes to sovereignty, they must not cede power to anyone.”*⁴

Yolande’s personal prestige was such that it was not only in the Kingdom of France and within her own domains that she was recognized as the Queen of Sicily; Henry V respectfully referred to her in a treaty negotiated in her name by her personal representatives as *“præclarissima[e] Domina[e] Yoland Jerusalem Cecillæ & Regina[e]”* during the treaty process between England and Anjou-Maine in 1417-1419,⁵ while in Aragon, during the succession debate of 1410, she was addressed as *“reina dōna Violanta de Sicilia”*⁶ despite the fact that Anjou and Aragon were unrelenting rivals in the battle to take the hollow crowns of Naples-Sicily.

While Yolande’s personal qualities and incisive political assiduity contributed to the success of her enterprise, it must be remembered that her upbringing in Aragon must have greatly influenced her later actions. In this she had a great deal in common with Urraca of Castile, Blanche of Castile, María de Molina, María de Luna and Maria of Castile to name but a few, as well as with her own mother Violant of Bar, who, while not an Iberian princess by origin, transformed herself from the time of her arrival at her husband Juan’s court at the age of fifteen to be the very model of an Aragonese queen. It appears that Violant was only too willing to make the transformation from the French model of queen-consort to the more proactive and involved Iberian tradition of queenship. In the words of Earenfight: *“Unlike northern queens...Spanish royal women were more likely to be active in the governance of the realm. They exercised considerable legitimate*

⁴ Jansen, Sharon, L., op. cit, p.4.

⁵ Rymer, op. cit., t. IX, p. 513 *passim*.

⁶ Zurita, Jeronimo, op. cit., v.5, ch. XI.xxv, p. 79.

authority more often, more publicly, and more directly than queens elsewhere in Europe.”⁷ They were true political partners, and when the other half of the partnership was absent or died many ruled independently. This is undeniably the case with Yolande d’Aragon. Earenfight refines her initial comment by stating that: “...the fact that there was no explicit legal prohibition of a queen’s right to act openly in the political sphere, left open a loop-hole in the institutional structure of both the Castilian and the Aragonese monarchy that resulted in a series of powerful queen-regents and queen-lieutenants.”⁸ This phenomenon was one the young Yolande would have witnessed first-hand in the actions of her mother, Violant, Queen of Aragon, and later, on the death of her father Juan I, in the actions of her aunt by marriage, María de Luna.

France however was not Iberia, and France adhered (more or less, and less when it suited) to the Salic “law”.⁹ While Yolande could operate freely in her territories by virtue of her lieutenant-generalcy and vice-royalty, she could only operate in the wider political arena of the Kingdom of France first by virtue of her status as guardian of Charles de Valois upon the death of Louis II, and later by recourse to her “dignity” as “*royne de Sicile*”, exploiting her status as “*Bonne-mère*” of the dauphin, later Charles VII. She did this astutely and to virtuosic effect, to the great benefit of her House and the wider kingdom.

Yolande d’Aragon faithfully adhered to the policies of Louis II, particularly in relation to his testimonial instruction that she work toward a *rapprochement* with the House of Brittany as a means by which to unify the princely Houses of France and drag Burgundy back into the fold. Establishing durable relations with Brittany was one of her first independent acts and probably the aspect of her activity to which she devoted the better part of her considerable energy. Her recruitment of Richemont was a master-stroke and, though his appointment was not an easy or untroubled one, he remained faithful to her

⁷ Earenfight, Theresa, M. (ed.), *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and Early Modern Spain...*, p. xiii.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.

⁹ Not so much a law as an expediency designed to remove English monarchs from the succession to the French Crown. See Appendix 1, n. 3 and Taylor, Craig et al. mentioned during the course of this study.

and to Charles in spite of the latter's attempts and those of his perfidious favourite Georges de La Trémoille to distance him from the king's inner circle. Without a Richemont and his ties to Brittany and beyond, Yolande's projects would probably have stalled. Both Richemont and Yolande employed their wider networks to bring their joint-endeavours to a positive conclusion.¹⁰ And both were untiring in their efforts, in spite of the many obstacles thrown in their way.

A further aspect of Yolande's upbringing was the importance of Franciscan spirituality. We have discussed in some detail the way in which the Friars Minor were able to benefit princely rule by their ability to interact with all estates of society and by virtue of their characteristic mobility and discretion, a mobility and discretion that allowed them to travel freely throughout kingdoms and beyond their borders. They were the original

¹⁰ We have discussed the loyalties of Richemont at various points in this study (pp. 204, n. 160, 216, n. 202 and 237, n. 283) and have drawn attention to claims made by Marina Warner regarding his supposed shifting allegiances. She states: "Richemont's career was even more turbulent than D'Alençon's, his shifts of allegiance more frequent and more abrupt." (op. cit. p. 38) Warner shows her hand most clearly in the comments which follow: "In the opinion of the Bourgeois de Paris, Richemont cared nothing for the King, Prince or people, nor what towns or castles the English might take as long as he had money." (loc. cit). In the French edition she cites as her source (Tuetey, Alexandre, editor), she has not noted the editor's comments regarding the Bourgeois and his hostility towards Charles's counsellors in general and, Richemont in particular, nor does she take account of the cleric's position and prejudices. Here is what Tuetey has to tell us: « *L'auteur du journal parisien, anglo-burgundian d'abord se rallie en 1436 au parti national. Fervent bourguignon dès l'origine et partisan déclaré de la faction des bouchers, il embrasse la cause anglaise et ne prend pas la peine de déguiser son aversion profonde pour les Armagnacs qu'il rend responsables de toutes les calamités qui désolèrent Paris sous la domination étrangère. Après la réduction de Paris sous l'autorité de Charles VII, il s'en prend aux 'faulx gouverneurs' et surtout au connétable de Richemont. Quelle est la cause de cette hostilité systématique?...A nos yeux, le chroniqueur resta toute sa vie homme d'opposition, parce que dévoré d'une ambition démesurée qu'il ne put jamais satisfaire, il brigua constamment les charges officielles sans arriver au but de ses désirs ; son rêve, on le voit bien, était d'entrer dans le conseil du roi et son langage trahit plus d'une fois cette secrète envie...jamais Charles VII ne daigna jeter les yeux sur lui [the Bourgeois] et ne songa à l'appeler dans ses conseils... » (Tuetey's introduction to the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, pp. xiii-xxvi). Warner seems to have taken none of Tuetey's comments into account, nor, it would seem, has she taken into account that the charges of avarice levelled against Richemont by the Bourgeois are in the context of Richemont's unenviable necessity to raise substantial levies for the financing of garrisons to ensure the newly minted victory over the English invader and to hold back raiding parties of brigands and opportunistic mercenaries. She has instead, to all intents and purposes, made very selective readings in an attempt to support her thesis regarding Richemont. A favourable critic of recent work of Warner's has this observation to make in relation to her subject's methodology: "Although Warner has been quoted as saying hers is an Enlightenment activity, her method approximates here to the exuberant excesses of Renaissance syncretists: mythographers happy to conflate anything with anything else, if some point of comparison existed. In its zest for the random fruits of research, Renaissance syncretism, nurturing new variants of ancient tales, produced a delicious, organised chaos. This is close to the yolky, juicy, sappy and fructifying cornucopia on which Warner feasts her readers. Davies, Stevie, (reviewer), "Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds, by Marina Warner.", in *The Independent*, (Arts and Entertainment section), Saturday, 9th November 2002. In her study of Joan of Arc, the methodology adopted by Warner in relation to her subject Richemont might perhaps have benefited from a closer and more objective reading of the sources cited in support of her thesis regarding Richemont's allegiances.*

agents *sans frontières*. Their credentials enabled them to breach barriers of hostility between warring Houses and regions, allowing them to deliver messages and disseminate policy. This is particularly relevant to our understanding of the spread of Joan of Arc's legend and indeed the genesis of her apogee.

All of the above would have been of little account had not a series of casual rather than causal events occurred.¹¹ The most notable of these events are: (a) Charles becoming dauphin (he was only third in line to the throne when he was betrothed to Marie d'Anjou. The deaths of his elder brothers Louis and Jean in quick succession enabled the Angevins to access greater prestige and proximity to authority as well as power); (b) the deaths of Henry V and Charles VI within weeks of each other in 1422, and the minority of Henry VI (only nine months old at the time), extending Charles and the House of Anjou a window of opportunity to regain power after the debacle of Montereau and the resultant Treaty of Troyes which had disinherited him; and, (c) the appearance of the young visionary Joan of Arc from the "*bois chesnu*" in the eastern reaches of the kingdom, where René d'Anjou was Duke of Bar and heir-designate to the duchy of Lorraine.

This is not to diminish the activities of Yolande d'Aragon but merely to record that serendipity had a part to play in the end game of her political œuvre. A lesser person might not have had the wit, aptitude or intelligence to use these realities to greatest effect. It was therefore a combination of Yolande's personal virtues, her meticulous planning and very occasionally, Fate, which ensured that her projects eventually came to fruition. It is for this very reason that Yolande ought to be acknowledged as the only realistic "*quelqu'un de plus sage*" in Charles's entourage. When Pius II noted this reflection in his *Commentarii* he was considering the phenomenon of Joan of Arc. We have extended Pius's cogitation to discover who managed the metamorphosis of Charles VII from "*le petit roi de Bourges*" into "*le Victorieux, le roi des rois*". We must bear in mind that Charles VII was also known as *le Bien servi*, and while he was served by many officers of

¹¹ Buchan, John, *The Casual and the Causal in History. The Rede Lecture 1929*, Cambridge, The Cambridge University Press, 1929.

varying capacities, one individual shines out amongst the gathering of usual suspects:¹² his *Bonne-mère*, Yolande d'Aragon, *royne de Sicile*.

As stated in our introduction, Yolande d'Aragon has frequently been singled out for mention, but meticulous examination of her activities has been largely lacking. This may well have been due to a scarcity of extant relevant documentation and perhaps scholarly stamina, for the trail, as we have found, frequently runs cold. It is for this very reason that we have thrown our net wide in order to capture evidence of her activities and contacts in other places. The *Lettres et mandements* of Jean V, Duke of Brittany, have proved to be an invaluable resource and have filled in many gaps, as has Rymer's collection of documents relating to English activity in France. We have also examined chronicles and the work of earlier historians to take note of the mention and participation of Angevin vassals and allies. We have checked familial and social connections, conducting a network analysis of both protagonists and bit-players in the vast drama represented by the closing phases of the Hundred Years War, pausing to ask who was communicating with whom, from where and why. This available extant documentation and strong and convincing circumstantial and contextual evidence have established our case.

In this vein, it was essential that we first establish an unbroken thread leading back to Yolande's predecessors as well as the political context informing her endeavours before tackling her personal history. Joanna I of Naples was less fortunate than Yolande in that she was apparently so ill-prepared for the legacy bequeathed to her by her grandfather, Robert the Wise. Joanna appears to have been largely unschooled in governance and therefore ill-equipped to tackle the vast problems that would beset her. In an attempt to overcome this shortcoming, the hapless queen shackled herself to a series of unworthy men, incapable of assisting her in her rule. Instead of working with her they determined to carve out regal futures and fortunes of their own, leaving her at the mercy of

¹² Richemont, Jean, the Bastard of Orleans (Count of Dunois and Longueville), Joan of Arc and occasionally Charles VII are frequently put forward as sole protagonists in the recovery and reform of France, without pausing to explain how and to what extent they managed to achieve this outcome.

circumstances largely not of her own making. She was however fortunate in having the support of the papacy for the greater part of her reign and remained a loyal daughter of the Church. Naples-Sicily played a huge part in Yolande's undertaking and her feelings on this matter ring out clearly from the final testament dictated by her in Saumur two days before her death:

*"Malade de corps, considérant la fragilité de nature humaine et que sans /Souffrir la mort corporelle a laquelle toute créature humaine est /Obligée...aucuns pourroient /Avoir en ymagination considéré la quantité de meuble tant d'or, d'argent /Vesselle royaux, et autres biens et choses que nous demourèrent après le /Decées de nostredit feu seigneur et espoux, et encore en deussons avoir /En grant nombre. Nous Disons et declairons pour rendre contens /Ceux que en pourroient doubter que tout le plus bel et le meilleur /A esté employé pour le fait du royaume d'Italie et baillé au Roy Loys, /Nostre aisé fils dont Dieu ait l'ame pour sa conqueste..."*¹³

Unlike Joanna, Marie of Brittany understood the importance of maintaining a firm grip on the reins of government. Like Violant of Aragon she too remained a widow, a position of relative power and influence throughout the Middle Ages. Yet Marie was less fortunate than Yolande in that she was obliged to drag their House out of penury before fulfilling the instructions of Louis I to send Louis II to Naples. Marie established a solid fiscal and political foundation, particularly in Provence, enabling many of Louis II's and Yolande's projects to be brought to fruition.

In the course of this study, having examined the *"envers de la tapisserie"* and followed the essential threads and knots of its lineal complexity to their origins, we have found that every stitch was placed by hand (occasionally guided by Fate), and more often than not by the hand of Yolande d'Aragon. To borrow the words of Boysset, she has proven to us the *"valeur"*, *"beauté"* and *"noblesse"* of her warp and weft. This princess of Aragon enabled the creation of a complex design on an enormous scale which reverberated long after her death. Her woven narrative is distributed over the entire surface of this period of French history, reinforcing the idea that venturing behind the tapestry is often more

¹³ AN P 1334/17 # 5, f.°2, f.°8.

instructive than merely contenting ourselves with the image commissioned for public view.

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J 291 : From 1258-, Provence, Bouches-du-Rhône, Var, Basse Alpes

J 513 : From 1263-1530, Sicily

J 582 : From 1246-, Lorraine, Metz, comptes, puis Duc de Bar, Toul, Verdun, Châtel-sur-Moselle

J 847 : From 1125-, Provence, Bouches-du-Rhône, Var, Alpes de Haute Provence, Alpes Maritimes, Vaucluse

J 880: From 1298-, Languedoc

J 917 : From 1266-, Spain, Castille, Aragon, Navarre, Pyrénées Atlantiques

J 932 : From 1348-, Lorraine, «Coffres de Lorraine»

JJ 16 : 1380-1422, *Registres de Chancellerie, Stricto senso, Charles VI & Chancellerie du Dauphiné*

JJ 169 : 1380-1422, *Registres de Chancellerie, Stricto senso, Charles VI , Chancellerie du Dauphiné, Voyage de Languedoc*

JJ 172: 1420-1424, *Registres de Chancellerie, Stricto senso, Charles VI & Henry VI, King of England*

JJ 173: 1424-1434, *Registres de Chancellerie, Stricto senso, Henry VI, King of England*

JJ 177: From 1429, *Registres de Chancellerie, Stricto senso, Charles VII*

K 62 : From 1422, *Itinéraire, Charles VII*

K 502 : From 1442, *Comptes, domaine de Louis II, duc d'Orléans (future King Louis XIII)*

K 2499 : Charles VI & Charles VII, *lettres patentes, la chambre des comptes, ordonnances, édictes, déclarations, arrêts du conseil et autres décisions royales*

K 242: From 1375, Dukes of Anjou & Kings of Naples, *comptes*

KK 243: 1405-1438, Dukes of Anjou & Kings of Naples, *comptes*, Yolande of Aragon, *chambre aux deniers*

KK 244: 1405-1438, Dukes of Anjou & Kings of Naples, *comptes*, Yolande of Aragon, *chambre aux deniers*

KK 1123: Duchy of Lorraine, Meurtre-et-Moselle, Meuse etc.

KK 1124: Duchies of Lorraine and of Bar

KK 1125: Duchy of Lorraine

Chambre des Comptes de Paris :

P 1334/1 : From 1251, *terriers ; Anjou, titres de la Maison d'Anjou, domaines, apanages*

P 1334/4 : From 1251, *terriers ; Anjou, titres de la Maison d'Anjou, domaines, apanages*

P 1334/5 : *terriers ; Anjou, titres de la Maison d'Anjou, domaines, apanages*

P 1334/17 : *Maison d'Anjou: testaments, mariages, traités*

P 1334/18 : *Maison d'Anjou: testaments, mariages, traités*

P 1338/3 : From 1200, *terriers/titres, Maison d'Anjou*

P 1340 : 1380-1486, *terriers/titres, Maison d'Anjou, Poitou & Saintonge*

P 1342 : 1382-1475, *terriers/titres, Maison d'Anjou, Touraine*

P 1351 : 1367-1473, *terriers/titres, Maison d'Anjou, Provence, Nice (Alpes Maritimes)*

P 1358/2 : 1167-1524, *titres des terriers Bourbonnais*

P 1372 côtes 2069 & 2103 : *terriers/titres Beaujolais*

P 2531 : *mémoriaux et extraits*

X 1^a : From 1254, *parlement de Paris/ parlement civil, lettres, arrêts, jugés*

X 1^a/8604 : *parlement de Paris/ parlement civil, lettres patentes et ordonnances : actes royaux et autres enregistrés par le parlement de Paris 1^{re} décembre 1418-1^{re} octobre 1436*

X 2^a/21 : *parlement de Paris/parlement civil, parlement criminel, 23 juillet 1423-28 novembre 1436*

Archives Départementales des Bouches-du-Rhône

B 9: *Magna Registre Amorum, 1221-1417*

B 11: *Magna Registre Liliis, 1203-1448*

B 271: *Administration du royaume de Naples et de Sicile, 1418-1419*

B 272 : *Administration du royaume de Naples et de Sicile, 1420*

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Série A1, f^os 329 v^o - 334 v^o

Archives de la Loire-Inférieure

Cass. 4, E 10

Archives de Meurthe-et-Moselle

B 960, n^o 137 *Déclaration de la Guerre de René 1er au Comte de Vaudémont*

Archives Municipales de Tours

Délibérations, t. III

Archives de Tarascon

BB 6

Archives de la Ville de Lyon

AA 77

AA 84

Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó (A.C.A)

Reg. 2034: Letter from Martin I to Violant of Aragon, 26th May, 1407.

Reg. 2052: Letter from Violant of Aragon to Maria de Castilla, 6th May, 1421.

Reg. 2055: Letter from Violant of Aragon to her daughter Yolande d' Aragon, 26th April 1410.

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Ms. Fr. 4488 : « *Compte septiesme de PIERRE SURREAU, receveur général des finances de Normandie, des deniers de ladicte recepte, depuis le XVe jour de janvier, l'an mil CCCC et vingt quatre.* » 1^{re} octobre 1428-30 septembre 1429.

Ms. Fr. 4491: "*Journal de la despence faicte et payee par PIERRE SURREAU, receveur general des finances de Normandie des deniers de ladicte recepte, depuis XVe jour de janvier, l'an mil CCCC et vingt quatre.*"

Ms. Fr. 5004 : "*Chroniques de Flandres faictes et compillées par Jehen Froissart.*"

Ms. Fr. 5053 : *Protocoles et recueils de pièces, à l'usage des secrétaires du roi.*

Ms. Fr. 5061 : « *Récit contenant : ff° 2 à 43, ' la justification...par maistre Jehan Petit ' du duc de Bourgoigne, sur la mort du duc Loys d'Orléans.* »

Ms. Fr. 5728: *Journal ou Chronique de Bertran Boysset, de 1365 à 1414, écrit de sa main...suivent (ff° 63, 67-68) des additions d'une autre main, se rapportant aux années 1490-1492.*

Ms. Fr. 11542 : "*Ce sont des mises d'Aufroy Guynot, trésorier et receveur general du duchié de Bretagne.*"

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APPENDICES

L'Envers de la tapisserie
The Œuvre of Yolande d'Aragon

A Study of Queenship, Power and Authority in Late Mediæval France

Appendix 1: Additional Notes and Observations

Appendix 2: Documents, Genealogical Tables and Maps

Appendix 1

Additional Notes and Observations

- 1) Sicily passed into the control of Aragon in 1282 after the massacre known as the Sicilian Vespers when Charles I of Anjou, King of Naples-Sicily, was defeated by Pedro III of Aragon, who claimed the island by right of his marriage to Constance (Hohenstaufen) of Sicily. The rebellion assured Sicilian independence for more than a century, (Sicily managing to defend itself from periodic Angevin incursions: see Chapter 1 of this study), with the House of Aragon holding Sicily while the first House of Anjou controlled the southern Italian mainland kingdom of Naples. The territories were united in 1442 under the authority of Alphonse V of Aragon. [Relates to p. 5 of thesis].

- 2) The defunct Árpáadian dynasty of Hungary was succeeded by Charles-Robert of Anjou. He was the grandson of Charles II of Naples, son of his son Charles-Martel and Clemencia, daughter of Rudolph I the Holy Roman Emperor. Charles I of Hungary, as he was known, was born in Anjou in either 1288 or 1291, dying in Visegrad Hungary in 1342. He claimed succession by virtue of his great-grandfather, King Stephen V of Hungary, with support of the pope Boniface VIII. His reign commenced on 27th August 1310. His son and successor was Louis, later Louis the Great, of Hungary. [Relates to p. 5 of thesis].

- 3) The “Salic” law or principle was not so much a law as a hastily cobbled together convention designed to exclude English pretenders from possessing the Crown of France through recourse to their maternal line. The trigger for the Hundred Years War largely rested upon the legacy of Aliénor of Aquitaine, who married Henry Plantagenet, Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou, and heir to the throne of England (later Henry II of England) by virtue of his mother, Empress Maud, daughter of King Henry I of England. Her second marriage was to Geoffrey V, the Fair, Count of Anjou and Maine, and later Duke of Normandy. He was the son of Fulk V, Count of Anjou and King of Jerusalem. Fulk became King of Jerusalem, having departed Anjou a year after the marriage of Geoffrey V to Empress Maud,

widow of Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor. Geoffrey's mother was Eremberg de la Flèche, heiress of Maine. In his article, "The Salic Law and the Valois Succession to the French Crown" (in *French History*, vol. 15, n°4, (2001), pp. 358-377), Craig Taylor tracks the transformation of the Salic myth into a French legal convention and suggests that "the development of the Salic Law during the Hundred Years War is [ultimately] a story of opportunism and even intellectual confusion, leading to the creation of one of the most successful and influential of all medieval myths." (p. 360) He elaborates further: "...in the fifteenth century, Jean de Montreuil and his colleagues in the royal administration took up the Salic Law as a specific, historical embodiment of the French custom governing the royal succession." (p. 365). In rounding-off his argument Taylor concludes that "...Montreuil and his colleagues were not attracted to the Salic Law because it filled some deficiency in traditional arguments, nor because it offered a powerful slogan to support their cause. The explanation for their championing of this authority lies more in the fact that the Salic Law offered a uniquely French, historical anchor for the law governing the royal succession..." (p. 366). Given the prominence of Ysabeau of Bavaria during the many "absences" of Charles VI, it is worth recalling Charles de Grasaille's 1538 assertion that "...the Salic Law regulated succession and inheritance but could not hinder a woman's responsibilities to her family which were sanctioned by divine law and so justified the queen's role as guardian or regent." (Taylor, pp. 374-375). [Refers to pp. 7 & 13 of thesis.]

- 4) Léonard refers to Joanna's third husband as Jacques III of Mallorca whereas Chaytor (Chaytor, H.J., *A History of Aragon and Catalonia*), seems to prefer Jacques IV. As we have used a number of citations from Léonard, we will refer to him as Jacques III. Jacques III was the nephew of Pedro IV of Aragon. His father, also called Jacques, was Pedro's cousin and he lost the kingdom of Mallorca to Pedro IV when the latter dispossessed him of it in 1343. Mallorca itself was captured from the Almohads in 1230-31, by James I, King of Aragon, later equally King of Mallorca. It seemed then to pass through the junior royal branch until Pedro IV repossessed it in favour of the senior branch. [Refers to p. 20 of thesis]

- 5) *“Aux nobles et prudentes personnes de la communauté de la ville de Marseille, ses honorables amis, le grand chambrier du royaume de Sicile. Nobles et prudentes personnes et honorables amis, la brièveté du temps nous empêche de vous écrire plus longuement, car Pierre Catanii, patron [du bateau], porteur des présentes, vous informera plus en détail que Madame la reine, notre commune maîtresse, est vivement assiégée dans le Château Neuf par Charles de Duras, à qui les Napolitains ont ouvert le chemin et l’entrée de Naples, bien que messire Othon, mari de Madame, tiende la campagne avec huit cents lances. Aussi si vous la secourez avec des galères, Madame pourra récupérer Naples. Nous vous demandons en conséquence vivement, au nom de votre fidélité, que vous la secouriez en cet article de nécessité, comme votre maîtresse légitime. Ecrite à la hâte au Château Neuf à la cité de Naples, le 18 juillet, 3ème indiction. [Our emphasis] Post scriptum: Madame tient les châteaux et les forteresses de la cité de Naples. Cited by Léonard in *Les Angevins de Naples*, pp. 464-465.*

This has been included so that we can understand the real state of Joanna’s distress. Her situation was not of her making. The death of Charles V, as well as a lack of haste, had held up any assistance that Louis I d’Anjou might have been able to extend to *his* kingdom. She had once again chosen an ineffective champion. [Refers to p. 38 of thesis.]

- 6) Her father was the pious Charles de Blois (born 1319), Count of Blois, later the Blessed or Venerable Charles de Blois, and her mother was Jeanne de Penthièvre, *la Boîteuse*, Duchess of Brittany and Countess of Penthièvre (born in 1319). Charles de Blois had a vocation to become a Franciscan friar, but political duty kept him in the secular world. He later became Duke of Brittany by virtue of his marriage in 1347 to Jeanne de Penthièvre. She was the niece of Duke Jean III of Brittany, granddaughter of the Arthur III of Brittany, who had precipitated the war of succession of Brittany. Once the conflict had been resolved, King Philippe VI of France recognized Charles of Blois as the legitimate Duke of Brittany by virtue of his marriage to Jeanne de Penthièvre, Duchess of Brittany. He was beatified for his concern for the poor and dispossessed suffering in cities captured by his forces, for the foundation of many religious houses and the care with which he guarded the spiritual welfare of his men. *Secular Saints*, Cruz, Joan Carroll, Tan

Books and Publishers Inc., Rockford 1989. It was his son-in-law Louis I d'Anjou who championed the cause for his beatification. [Refers to p. 43 of thesis].

- 7) Louis I d'Anjou's marriage to Marie of Brittany brought him Guise, manors in Mayenne, Ernée, Villaine, Pontaine, and privileges over property (appurtenances) surrounding Paris, Chailly and Longjumeau. In 1371, Louis I obtained from Amaury de Craon and his sister, Isabelle, Lady of Sully and Craon, the manors of Sablé and of Précigné in Maine. From Guillaume de Craon, Lord of La Ferté-Bernard, he received La Roche-aux-Moines in Anjou. He gained the manor of Brulon in Maine from Guillaume de Mathefelon and in 1376 he received Champigny, La Rayesse, Champvent and Le Coudray from the Lady of Baucay, wife of Charles d'Artois. The preceding examples serve to illustrate the conscious policy of consolidation practised by Louis I of Anjou. *Le Temps des Princes*, p. 26. [Refers to p. 50 of thesis.]
- 8) Provence would always be of primordial importance to Yolande, and not merely as a jumping off point to Italian conquest. (See also, Dante's point of view regarding the Angevins and Provence, p. 49 of thesis.) From 1419-1423 Yolande withdrew from her northern French territories, leaving her daughter Marie d'Anjou and her son-in-law, the dauphin and future Charles VII, in the care of trusted advisors. She made the journey south in the company of her youngest children at a time when the English invaders were menacing her territories of Anjou and Maine. Yet the English threat might not have been the primary cause for her departure, an observation which conflicts with the position stated repeatedly by Marcelle-Renée Reynaud in *Le Temps des Princes* and elsewhere. Reynaud places a great deal of emphasis upon the fact that Yolande was obliged to "flee" Anjou-Maine. Her position is examined in Chapter 5. [Refers to p. 52 of thesis.]
- 9) Marie of Sicily was the first wife of Martin the Younger who was himself the son of Martin I (the Elder), King of Aragon, later known as Martin the Humane. Before the death of Martin I's elder brother Juan I, King of Aragon (Yolande's father), Martin the Elder ruled Sicily under the name of Martin II of Sicily. For future reference, Martin I, the Elder was married to María de Luna (Martin the

Younger's mother) who died in 1406. He was then married to Marguerita de Prades, daughter of Pedro de Prades, Constable of Aragon. Martin the Younger was married first to Marie of Sicily, who died in 1402, and then to Blanche of Navarre in 1402. He died of malaria without a surviving legitimate heir in 1407, naming an illegitimate son Frederico as his successor. [Refers to p. 54 of thesis.]

- 10) The monk of Saint-Denis describes the spectacle in these terms: *«Le pape Clément, qui depuis longtemps portait une vive affection aux princes des fleurs de lis, cherchait sans cesse l'occasion d'augmenter la gloire de cette famille ... il remit le sceptre, la couronne et les ornements royaux à monseigneur Louis, duc d'Anjou, cousin du roi de France, en présence de sa mère, de son frère Charles et des principaux barons, et l'investit du royaume de Sicile, dont il avait hérité par la mort de son père. ... Le jeune prince, avant d'être ceint du baudrier royal, prit l'épée sur l'autel pour témoigner qu'il tenait son royaume de l'Eglise, et s'engagea, par serment solennel, à lui obéir fidèlement tant qu'il vivrait ... il entra avec ses insignes royaux dans la salle du sacré palais préparée pour le festin, et s'assit à la seconde place à côté du roi de France ... qu'il n'y manqua rien de ce qui convenait à la magnificence du pape ou à la majesté des deux rois. ... le roi Louis reçut des hommages des barons ses sujets qui se trouvaient là, et qui prêtèrent serment de fidélité entre ses mains, suivant la forme accoutumée.»* Religieux, v. I, l. X, ch. IX, pp. 623-625. [Refers to p. 65 of thesis.]
- 11.a) The Count of Potenza was the powerful Sicilian captain (for Louis I) who proposed that the Sicilian barons proclaim Louis II their new sovereign king upon the unexpected death of Louis I. They pledged to ensure his success and remain loyal to their new king's cause, crying: *"Vive le roi Louis second! Mort à Charles 'le traître'"*, at the walls of the city of Barletta. This is documented in a letter addressed to the Council of the City of Marseille on 18th October 1384. Cited in Valois, Noël, *La France et le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, t. II, p. 84. [Refers to p. 65 of thesis.]
- 11.b) *«... Assigna quatre causes qui les mouvaient a acclamer monsieur Loys en Roy: l'une, pour ce que du droit, le royaulme li est deu; l'autre pour l'amour que il avoient à son père le Roy, que Dieu absoille, l'autre pour ce que la vengeance n'est pas accomplie de la mort cruele de leur dame la Royne Jehanne de Secille, laquelle il espoirent de Dieu estre ordenné a estre faite, ou de monseigneur le Roy Loys second, lequel est innocent; la quarte raison*

est l'espérance que il ont que cest enfant doie ensuivre la vaillance du père.» Le Fèvre, Jean, Moranvillé, Henri (ed)., *Journal de Jean Le Fèvre, évêque de Chartres, Chancelier de rois de Sicile Louis Ier et Louis II d'Anjou*, Paris, A. Picard, 1887, t. I pp. 77 and 79. [Refers to p. 65 of thesis.]

- 12) The *Religieux* describes Louis's defeat in these terms: *«L'illustre roi de Sicile Louis fut chassé de la ville de Naples par la trahison d'un comte, dont les conseils et les services avaient jusqu'alors contribué à sa grandeur et à l'affermissement de son trône... Ledit comte avait une fille que le roi lui avait promis de marier à son frère Charles, prince de Tarente. Il attendit vainement deux ans dans l'accomplissement de cette promesse. Le prince Charles se refusait absolument à ce mariage. Le comte, irrité de ces délais, trama une conspiration; il excita contre le roi la haine des Napolitains et introduisit dans la ville de Naples son cousin Ladislas ou Lancelot, fils de Charles de la Paix et ennemi mortel du roi. Ladislas y fut reçu avec faveur et couronné roi de consentement de tous ... Monseigneur Louis, ainsi détrôné, se rendit auprès de son bien aimé cousin le roi de France. Il alla ensuite par le Maine et l'Anjou dans la Provence, qui lui appartenait, et envoya en Italie le comte de la Marche son cousin avec une troupe de gens de guerre, pour garder quelques châteaux voisins de Naples, qui étaient restés sous son obédience, et pour faire le plus mal possible aux Napolitains.»* *Religieux*, v. I, l. XX, ch. XXI, p. 749. [Refers to p. P. 72 of thesis.]

- 13) Louis I's adoption by Joanna I as heir-presumptive to Naples had unleashed numerous actions and consequences relative to the search for potential brides for his two young sons. We have noted that by 1381 much activity was underway to ensure a strategic alliance for his sons. By 1382, the scheme was to betroth his younger son Charles to Lucia, the daughter of Barnabo Visconti, tyrant of Milan. As Louis I's need for a tactical ally in Italy became ever greater, Louis II took the place of Charles as a prospective marriage partner for the powerful Visconti's third daughter, Lucia. At the same time, negotiations continued in favour of Charles with Juana, the elder daughter of the Duke of Gerona (later Juan I of Aragon), thereby keeping the Sicilian strategy open. Louis II's place was then taken in the Aragon option by Louis I's young nephew and King of France, Charles VI.

Talks with the Visconti continued after the death of Louis I in 1384. In October of that year, according to Jean Le Fèvre, the Angevin knight, Renaud de Brezille, returned to Milan to keep the negotiations alive and later that year, in December, he suggested that Louis II, then only seven years of age, send a ring to the infant Lucia as a mark of his fidelity. On 29th April 1385 Clement VII instructed Marie of Brittany, who at the time was attempting to pacify Provence and win its allegiance, that she ought to send someone to investigate the prospects of young Lucia *in situ*. After this communication apparently nothing more was heard or said about the subject of the proposed Visconti alliance. The most probable cause for this would have been the assassination of Barnabo Visconti on 6th May 1385. His nephew, Jean Galéas, had instigated the attack in order to seize authority for himself. Jean Galéas had been co-ruler of Milan and the shift in power occasioned by the assassination produced a flurry of activity in the marital stakes. In Avignon during July of 1385 Berry put forward a plan to marry Louis II to the daughter of Jean Galéas, Count of Vertus. This was quickly brushed aside when a far more eligible candidate entered the race, Louis d'Orléans, younger brother of the king of France (eagerly sponsored by his other uncle Burgundy). Louis d'Orléans, Count of Valois, later Duke of Touraine, concluded a marriage with Valentine Visconti in April 1386, solemnized by proxy in April 1387 once the appropriate papal dispensations had been organized. Burgundy had triumphed over his brother Berry, and the Angevins found themselves out married and still in urgent need of a strategic ally on the Italian peninsula.

This was a minor setback for Marie of Brittany and she soon conceived a scheme to marry her elder son Louis II d'Anjou to Joanna, daughter of their great nemesis, Charles III of Duras (assassinated in February 1386). Her motivation for this might have been that, with the assassination of Barnabo Visconti, the Milanese appeared less likely to support the cause of the *ligue d'Aix*. The Cardinals of Embrun, Amiens and Consenza were given the responsibility of negotiating the proposal. This time it would be Louis II, rather than his younger brother Charles, who would bridle against a repugnant alliance: «*Le Roy Loys dist à sa mere que à traitié que elle menast pour li, de mariage à la fille Charles de Duras il ne se consentoit, mais y contredisoit, disant que ce ne seroit pas bien fait de estre marié à la fille d'un traistre ...*»

Le Fèvre, Jean, Moranvillé, H, (ed.) op.cit. t. I, pp. 351, 356 and 376, and *Le Temps des Princes*, pp. 37-38.

We ought not to conclude that, with these expansionist alliances in mind, Louis I d'Anjou neglected attempts to form marital alliances on the borders of his French domains. Before, during and after his Italian dreaming, Louis I made various attempts to unite his elder son with princesses of other great French Houses. In 1380, he ventured an alliance between his three-year old son Louis II and Jeanne, daughter of Pierre, Count of Alençon and Le Perche and Viscount of Beaumont. These negotiations failed, but were later revisited by Louis II in 1413 at a time when he was effective regent for the devastated kingdom of France. He sought an alliance for his second daughter Yolande with Jean, the second son of Jean I, Count of Alençon. This alliance fell through when Jean I died on the battlefield of Agincourt and Yolande d'Anjou did not in the event marry Jean II. Louis II himself had a conscious strategy which sought to re-establish an alliance with Brittany. He would not live to see this *rapprochement* and in his last testament he urged his wife Yolande d'Aragon to work to re-establish strong relations with Brittany in order to end the troubles of France. He believed, and was to be proven correct, that Brittany held the key to resolving both the civil war and the Anglo-French conflict.

In 1387 the Cardinal of Embrun, on behalf of Marie of Brittany, sought an ally in the House of Saint-Pôl to protect her domains of Guise and of Roucy from the threat posed by the Anglo-French war. Nothing immediately came of this venture; however, in 1428 Yolande d'Aragon attempted to negotiate a marriage on behalf of her daughter Yolande d'Anjou and Philippe, Count of Saint-Pôl. This collapsed when the Count died in 1430. The House of Anjou did eventually succeed in securing an alliance with the sister of the Count of Saint-Pôl when Charles du Maine, Yolande d'Aragon's youngest son, married Ysabeau of Luxembourg in 1443. Yolande d'Anjou married the heir to the duchy of Brittany, Francis I.

The ebb and flow of these negotiations and unrealized marriages occasioned no serious consequences for the House of Anjou. The only devastating reversal came in 1413 when Louis II broke the betrothal agreement between his son Louis III and

the Catherine of Burgundy, who was sent home after the ravages her father, the powerful and ambitious Duke of Burgundy, Jean sans Peur, had wrought upon Paris and his bold attempt to usurp ultimate authority from the tenuous grip of the compromised king, Charles VI. Burgundy never forgave the Angevin insult and determined to undermine Angevin enterprise, which he succeeded in doing, right up until the time of his assassination at Montereau in 1419.

The above is not to suggest that relations with Burgundy had been trouble free up until 1413. On the contrary, Marie of Brittany had had her own problems with the House of Burgundy. At the beginning of 1388, once Provence had been subdued to Angevin authority, Marie of Brittany seems to have taken some pains to avoid the Duchess of Burgundy on her journey north into France. She explained that she would be unable to pay a courtesy call upon the Duchess because *«elle tiroit vers la rivière de Loire pour trouver en son chemin monseigneur de Berri»* (Le Fèvre, op.cit. t. I, p. 510) who was about to lose his wife to illness. The real motivation for tactful avoidance was the rupture of the betrothal between her son Louis II and Bonne, second daughter of Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy. Bonne of Burgundy was destined for the arms of Jean, second son of Louis II of Bourbon. In Jean Le Fèvre's words: *«Ainsi l'avait voulu le roi de France.»* Le Fèvre, J, op.cit. t. I, p. 512. [Refers to p. 73 of thesis.]

- 14) A further interesting aspect to add is the fact that in 1362, when Jacques III of Mallorca, was planning his escape to Naples where he later became the third husband of Joanna I, he transferred his claim over Mallorca to his sister Isabella, wife of Jean, Marquis of Montferrat, should he, Jacques, have no surviving male heirs. It would appear that Pedro IV of Aragon, at the time of his death, had not extinguished all of Jacques's claims over Mallorca as his sister in turn transferred her rights to Louis I d'Anjou. Louis I had in the interim made an alliance with the kings of Portugal and Castile, while lieutenant-governor for the Languedoc, and was prepared to enforce his claims by invasion. This Mallorcan ambition predates his adoption by Joanna I and reinforces the view that he had actively pursued a policy of expansionism well before his claim over Naples-Sicily. Chaytor, H.J., *A History of Aragon and Catalonia*, Methuen Publishing Ltd., London 1933. [Refers to p. 80 of thesis.]

- 15) Pedro I, the Cruel, of Castile, was engaged in continual wars with Aragon from 1356-1366. He was eventually overthrown by his illegitimate brother Henry, Count of Transtamara, aided by Bernard Duguesclin and a free force of French and English soldiers. Henry of Transtamara was later defeated by an alliance between Pedro the Cruel and the Black Prince, Edward, Prince of Wales. Eventually, the Black Prince, disgusted by Pedro I's vicious behaviour and his inability to fulfil his obligations as an ally, sided with the Aragonese. Henry of Transtamara was able to make a second attempt for Castile supported by the King of France, Charles V, and his brother Louis I, Duke of Anjou, lieutenant-governor of the Languedoc. In 1369, Henry of Transtamara defeated and killed Pedro the Cruel and took undisputed possession of Castile. Conflict continued until the death of Henry in September 1374 relieved Pedro IV from immediate anxiety over Castile. In the intervening period, Louis I d'Anjou had allied himself with the Aragonese, having arbitrated the disastrous conflict to secure an armistice until the spring of 1374. The wars with Castile had been disastrous economically and unfruitful politically for the reign of Pedro IV. As king, Juan I was virtually to ignore the problems of Castile. [Refers to p. 89 of thesis.]
- 16) It may be a further indication of the unpopularity of Juan I's court that no claim to the Crown was raised (within Spain) at the time of his death in favour of either the *infanta* Yolande or indeed her sister by her father's first marriage, Juana, already married to Mathieu, Count of Foix. Martin I, Juan I's brother was proclaimed king, despite his absence in Sicily. His wife, María de Luna took authority in Barcelona, proclaiming herself regent. She presided over the Catalanian assembly that dealt with Violant of Bar's claim to be pregnant. María de Luna then organized a commission into the affairs of the late king's advisors and despatched envoys to Martin in Sicily. He had been in Sicily for some years trying to impose his authority and he would not be able to secure the island for his son, Martin the Younger, and his wife, Marie of Sicily, until 1398. They ruled jointly until her death in 1402. At the time of her death, Martin the Younger repudiated the Treaty of 1372 and ruled Sicily in his own name. The Count of Foix later sought the Crown of Aragon in his wife's name by taking advantage of Martin's absence. He gathered an army to add weight to his claim, his stance

causing a great deal of alarm in Catalonia where he held substantial estates and had strong supporters. His holdings in Foix and Béarn furnished him with considerable capital and support. He was seconded by the ever avid Bernard d'Armagnac, at the command of free companies at large in southern France. The ambitious Duke of Berry pledged his support along with other powerful French nobles and the Count of Foix invaded Catalonia and besieged Barbastro. María de Luna ruled effectively until her husband's return to Spain in 1397 and her proactive approach to the pretensions of the Count of Foix as well as an outbreak of disease in his ranks and interruptions in supply to his armies, forced him to renounce his ambitions and return to his territories via the kingdom of Navarre. Chaytor, *op.cit.*, pp. 199-202. C.f. The more recent work by Núria Silleras-Fernández, Silleras-Fernández, Núria, "Widowhood and Deception: Ambiguities of Queenship in Late Medieval Crown of Aragon", in *Shell Games: Studies in Scams, Frauds and Deceits*, Crane, Mark, Raiswell, Richard and Reeves, Margaret, (eds.), Toronto, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004, pp. 185-207, & "Spirit and Force: Politics, Public and Private in the Reign of Maria de Luna (1396-1406)", in *Queenship and Political Power in Medieval and early Modern Europe*, Earenfight, Theresa, (ed.), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005, pp. 78-90. C.f. Zurita, Jerónimo, Canellas López, Angel (ed.), *Anales de Aragón de Jerónimo Zurita*, t. IV, pp. 791-804. [Refers to p. 96 of thesis.]

- 17) Saint Vincent Ferrer entered the order of Saint Dominic in 1374, later receiving his commission he started teaching philosophy. He received his doctorate at Lerida in Catalonia. In 1390 he accompanied Cardinal Pedro de Luna to France. Once Pedro de Luna was proclaimed Pope Benedict XIII, he summoned Ferrer to Avignon, appointing him Master of the Sacred Palace. Ferrer worked diligently to end the Schism, refusing all ecclesiastical honours, including a cardinalate. Benedict XIII did not allow him to fulfil his desire to be an apostolic missionary until 1399. For the next twenty years Vincent Ferrer traversed western Europe. Provence was his initial field of endeavour, evangelizing the Dauphiné, Savoy and the alpine regions in 1401. 1403-4 found him in Switzerland, Lyon and the Savoy. Penitents from every estate of society followed him in massive numbers. In 1408 he tried again to put an end to the Schism. In 1409 he was appointed by

Benedict XIII to announce to Martin I, the Humane of Aragon, the death of his only son and heir. His preachings resulted in many conversions. He believed that his mission in life was to be a messenger of penance sent to prepare men for the day of judgement. His life was austere, the floor his usual bed, he perpetually fasted, saying Mass daily and preached for hours after Mass, visiting sick children most afternoons. He died on April 5th 1419 in Brittany. Fages, P.H-O, (O.P., Le P). *Histoire de Saint Vincent Ferrier*, Paris, Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1984. [Refers to P. 97 of thesis.]

- 18) Jean de Charlier de Gerson was an impressive theologian, an energetic intellectual and a brilliant orator. He had a life-long friendship with the illustrious Pierre d'Ailly of Compiègne, appointed Bishop of Puy in 1395. Gerson succeeded d'Ailly as chancellor of Notre-Dame de Paris and of the University in that same year. He was appointed to assist Benedict XIII and worked for the next seventeen years to bring an end to the Schism. In spite of the fact that he supported the claims of the Avignon papacy he always expressed moderate views in regards to both Rome and Avignon. He was opposed to violence in all things and did not vote for subtraction of obedience from Avignon in 1398, which led to opposition against him from within the University. He energetically campaigned for restoration of obedience, which allied him to Orléans and set Burgundy against him. D'Ailly and Gerson strove to oppose the movement for a further subtraction of obedience in 1406. Both were sent on a solemn embassy to Avignon in 1407 to prevail upon Benedict to resign quietly, but the pope refused. With the assassination of the Duke of Orleans on 23rd November 1407 the tide turned against Gerson when he refuted Jean Petit's proposition of the theory of tyrannicide. Gerson denounced the actions of the Duke of Burgundy in Paris and later again in 1415 at the Council of Constance, repeating the denunciation seven times in fifteen days. The theologians passed judgement on the issue on 6th July 1415 condemning tyrannicide in a general way, carefully omitting to mention the Duke of Burgundy. This satisfied neither Gerson nor the Armagnacs attending the council. The chancellor addressed an assembly convoked in the king's name on 5th May 1416 and skilfully protested at the moderate and ill-defined condemnation of Jean sans Peur (*Opp. Gersonii*, II, 328; V. 355, 362 sq.; Labbe & Mansi, XXVII, 728 sqq.,

op.cit., Schwab, op.cit., 609). Even before these actions, the Duke of Burgundy had provoked unrest against Gerson. His house had been pillaged and he himself had narrowly escaped assassination by seeking sanctuary in Notre-Dame for some two months. During his return from Constance, Gerson learned that the Duke of Burgundy had sworn to destroy him and exiled himself first to Melk and later to Vienna and Lyon. It is interesting to register his alliances and ties to both the Armagnac party and to his very close friend, Pierre d'Ailly, Bishop of Le Puy. Jadart, Henri, *Jean de Gerson 1363-1429 recherches sur son origine, son village natal et sa famille*, Reims: Deligne et Renart, 1881. Masson, A.-L., *Jean Gerson, sa vie, son temps, ses oeuvres*, Lyon, E. Vitte, 1894. The best modern collection of Gerson's works : Charlier de Gerson, Jean, Glorieux, Palémon, (ed.), *Œuvres complètes. Introduction, texte et notes par Mgr. Glorieux*, (10 vols.), Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1960-1973. [Refers to p. 123 of thesis.]

- 19) «...en présence de nos cousins le roi de Sicile, le duc de Bourgogne et le comte de Nevers, de nos oncles les ducs de Berri et de Bourbon, et de plusieurs autres princes du notredit royaume, assistant pour nous et en notre nom à l'assemblée des prélats, abbés ... [etc.] ..., réunis à Paris ... pour délibérer au sujet de l'union de notre Sainte mère l'Eglise et du bon état et gouvernement desdites églises, notre avocat ayant, à l'instance de notre procureur général exposé et développé éloquemment certaines considérations touchant et concernant la conversation des droits et libertés desdites églises et personnes ecclésiastiques en leur ancienne et canonique liberté, et la répression des graves usurpations et empiétements que la cour de Rome s'est permis depuis quelques années ... On nous a représenté que, le pouvoir du pape étant principalement établi pour la pâture corporelle et spirituelle du troupeau du Seigneur et pour la conservation de l'état et de la hiérarchie du corps mystique de l'Eglise, il ne lui est pas permis de faire tourner à son profit particulier les mesures prises dans l'intérêt commun et pour le bien de tous; il ne lui appartient pas de transgresser les règles fixées par nos pères, qui ont décidé que chaque église devait être maintenue dans la jouissance de ses droits, afin que la véritable concorde fût conservée dans le sein de l'Eglise; que bon ordre ne pourrait y subsister, sans le maintien de cette précieuse hiérarchie ... Néanmoins depuis quelques années ces pontifes, au mépris desdits décrets des saints pères et des conciles généraux, se sont réservé à la disposition de toutes dignités ecclésiastiques, des cathédrales, des collégiales et des autres dignités inférieures de l'épiscopat ... faisant naître ainsi contrairement aux saints conciles généraux, l'occasion

de désirer la mort d'autrui et ouvrant une voie irrégulière aux bénéfices qui viendraient à vaquer; ils ont inventé mille moyens d'absorber à leur profit le pouvoir des prélats, des chapitres, des collèges et d'autres, soit en imaginant des prohibitions et des décrets qu'ils voudraient rendre obligatoires même pour ceux qui ne les connaissent pas, soit en fulminant diverses sentences contre eux qui refusent de s'y soumettre; si bien qu'on trouverait à peine une seule personne qui ait conservé le droit de collation ou de présentation ... Comme le pontife romain ne peut connaître tous les hommes ni l'état de toutes les églises, il s'ensuit souvent que ses dignités sont conférées à des gens indignes, et d'une manière scandaleuse. Quelquefois même si on en a choisi qui n'ont d'autre mérite que leurs richesses et qui ne résideront jamais dans leur bénéfice.

... C'est pourquoi ... les princes doivent aussi défendre énergiquement la vérité qu'ils ont apprise des prêtres et travailler à la faire triompher, ... nous croyons devoir rétablir et rétablissons, autant au'il est en nous, dans la jouissance de leur ancienne liberté et du droit commun les dites églises et personnes ecclésiastiques ... de les faire observer inviolablement et intégralement par tous ceux qui y sont intéressés et de protéger lesdites personnes ecclésiastiques contre toute empêchement et toute violence dans lesdites élections ...

Signé par le roi, du conseil et consentement de messeigneurs le roi de Sicile Louis, les ducs de Guienne [the thirteen year old dauphin], de Berri, d'Orléans et de Bourbon, de votre honneur [the chancellor of France, Jean de Montreuil], du patriarche d'Alexandrie, des prélats, des grands etc ...» Religieux, v.2, bk. XXVII, ch. XVIII, pp. 473-485. [Refers to p. 123 of thesis.]

- 20) Raoul d'Auquetonville seems to have been the perfect candidate for the job. At the end of June 1407 a man claiming to be a student attempted to lease a house close to the royal residence. He met with no success but his preparations continued notwithstanding. By 8th August Auquetonville was in Lille, where he met with the Duke of Burgundy who paid him one hundred *écus*. The personal history of the man who led the ambush and murdered Louis d'Orléans is intriguing. He seems to have appeared in 1390 as an equerry assigned to the

king's stables. By September 1397 he was a general councillor charged with responsibilities for subsidies and aid, but he became a protagonist in numerous financial scandals, the most notable of which found him in conflict with Queen Ysabeau. By 1401 he was obliged to repay a sum of 5,000 francs to Ysabeau and was deprived of all royal office. In spite of strenuous objections, Philippe the Bold, the Duke of Burgundy before Jean sans Peur, installed him as treasurer of France on 21st June 1402. The death of Philippe in 1404, deprived Auquetonville of a protector and he was ousted from his position. By 1407 he was once again in the post of a simple equerry, but this time his master was Jean sans Peur. He nourished an unmitigated hatred for Ysabeau and the Duke of Orleans. He was the perfect contender for the post of royal assassin and Jean sans Peur was to prove an ideal master of the game. Guenée, op.cit. p. 110 & pp. 178-179. [Refers to p. 129 of thesis.]

- 21) John Parvus or Jehan Petit/Le Petit was a theologian and professor at the University of Paris. Some have stated that he was either a Franciscan or a Dominican but actually he was a secular belonging to no order. His education was assured by the generosity of Philippe le Hardi, father of Jean sans Peur and Duke of Burgundy before him. In April of 1407 he was part of an embassy sent by Charles VI to both Benedict XIII and Gregory XII, urging them both to stand aside in the interests of the Church. They failed in their mission but, returning to Paris, Jehan Petit gained great notoriety with his *apologia* on behalf of Jean sans Peur. The thesis presented to the gathering was deemed preposterous to the more rational-minded present, (particularly the chancellor of Notre-Dame, Jean Gerson), but as mentioned above Burgundy arrived in Paris bristling with troops, ready to go on the attack, confident in the support of the University who were at odds with Gerson's point of view. The queen decamped with the dauphin and the king pardoned Burgundy. Jehan Petit admitting, he had benefited from a pension funded by Burgundy, withdrew to the estate of the Duke at Hesdin, Artois, where he died on 15th July 1411. Valois, Noël, *La France et Le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, tt. III and IV. [Refers to pp. 131 & 199 of the thesis.]
- 22) Montaigu's days were numbered. Following the Council of Pisa and the death of the Duchess of Orleans, Valentine Visconti, the ever-confident and fearless

Burgundy moved against Montaigu who held the most powerful administrative position in the king's household. Montaigu had risen from humble beginnings to the post of king's secretary, his career advancing quickly; he was soon authorized to attend both public and private councils. He became superintendent of the king's finances. His daughters and sisters were married to the most illustrious lords of France. His brothers were created Archbishop of Sens and Bishop of Paris respectively. His son married the daughter of the constable of France, Charles d'Albret. Many resented his good fortune and his influence - he was the most powerful office bearer in France after the king, the queen and the princes and no one resented him more than Burgundy. Montaigu miscalculated by counting too heavily upon the protection of the king, the queen and Berry. Once back in Paris and in the ascendancy, Burgundy had his partisan, the provost of Paris, Pierre des Essarts, arrest Montaigu, declaring: «*Je vous arrête, traître infâme.* ». He was put on trial with assurance from his supporters that his protectors had stated: «*Ne craignez rien, on lui fera bonne justice.* ». Montaigu was beheaded on 17th October 1409 without the executioner pronouncing the sentence which had been imposed, a departure from normal practice. *Religieux*, vol. II, book XXX, chapter XIV, pp. 267-277. [Refers to p. 137 of thesis.]

- 23) Pope Alexander was born Petro Philarghi in about 1339 in Crete. He was a homeless street child who became the protégé of a Capuchin friar and later entered a Franciscan monastery on the island. He took full advantage of his salvation, later studying both at Oxford and at the University of Paris where he distinguished himself as a professor, preacher and writer. Departing Paris, he found a place at the court of the Duke of Milan, Jean-Galéas Visconti, as tutor to his sons and ambassador for the duke on important missions - a very Franciscan vocation. He was the key-note speaker at the Council of Pisa which convened on 25th March 1409 and was the unanimous choice of cardinals present as the new pope to fill the "vacant" throne of Peter on 26th June 1409. Unsuccessful in his attempts to reach Rome, in spite of the way cleared by Tanneguy du Châtel, he died in Bologna on 3rd May 1410. Farley, John, Cardinal, Archbishop of New York, *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, New York Robert Appleton Company, 1907. [Refers to p. 139 of thesis.]

- 24) The agreement was concluded in Paris on 31st January and 1st February 1410. The three outstanding installments were due on the feast day of Saint Remi, 28th October 1410, Christmas 1410 and Easter Day 12th April 1411. Four Burgundian lords were named guarantors. Valois, *op.cit.* t. IV, p. 127; A N, P1334/18 f°. 66. [Refers to p. 140 of thesis.]
- 25) Ohnesorge cites further sources: I. Vones, *Geschichte der Iberischen Halbinsel im Mittelalter, 711-1480*. Sigmaringen, Reiche-Kronen-Regionen, 1993, p. 193 and Bisson, T.M. *The Medieval Crown of Aragon A Short History*, p. 134. Bearing in mind that, at the time Louis III was only about seven years of age, perhaps it is more probable that his father might have held a legitimate claim as king-regent through his wife Yolande d'Aragon whose rights over the throne of Aragon were still very much a live possibility. Valois asserts that Louis II pushed for the rights of the throne of Aragon to be ceded to his and Yolande's son Louis III, supporting Bisson's thesis that, (Saint) Vincent Ferrer, the famous Dominican missionary, was the principal mediator responsible for the "Compromise of Caspe". He was a great champion of the Aragonese Benedict XIII and as Louis II supported the rival Pope John XXIII, it might be reasonable to assume that Ferrer set aside the Angevin claim over the throne of Aragon, Valois, *op.cit.* t. IV, p. 173. Their persistent claim however did not disappear. It resurfaced later when another son of Yolande and Louis II, René d'Anjou, was put forward as a successor to Aragon's throne. Further, both Charles VII and his son, Louis XI, while still dauphin, wrote to the King of Aragon citing the rights of his wife/mother Marie of Anjou to Crown territories in Spain. We will discuss in Chapter 5 Yolande's direct intervention in the succession struggle at the instigation of her mother Violant. [Refers to p. 140 of thesis.]
- 26) The first session was held on 16th November 1414, the second on 2nd March 1415 (1414 o.s., Easter fell on 31st March 1415). The Council was convened at Constance, seen as neutral territory within the Holy Roman Empire and under the protection of the Emperor Sigismund. It emerged that most strongly favoured the abdication of all three popes (particularly Sigismund, who exerted a strong influence over proceedings in his rôle as imperial protector of the Church). The French in particular urged this outcome under the leadership of Pierre d'Ailly and

Jean Charlier de Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris and representative of Charles VI. They soon came to be held as the “soul of the council”. Sigismond and Louis II still had a good relationship with one another at this stage and it was important for Louis II to have a strong voice at the Council. The net result of the Council was that Gregory XII voluntarily abdicated, John XXIII was deposed, submitting however to canonical-form, while Benedict XIII was cut off from the Church and sent into exile, effectively becoming a shepherd without a flock. The Roman cardinal, Odo Colonna was chosen for pope and he took the name Martin V. Enthroned on 21st November 1417, he entered Rome on 28th September 1420. The Schism which had occupied the hearts and the minds of both the faithful and the politically expedient for some forty years was brought to a close. Valois, Noël, op.cit. [Refers to p. 148 of thesis.]

- 27) Sancia was the daughter of James I, the Aragonese King of Sicily up until the death of his brother Alfonse III of Aragon. James I of Sicily was the second son of Pedro III of Aragon and became James II of Aragon in 1291. His younger brother Frederick became Frederick III of Sicily in spite of the fact that James I had made a treaty with Charles I of Anjou to hand Sicily over to Angevin rule. The Sicilians however had other ideas and rejected this option, choosing instead to install Frederick as regent and later had him crowned their king in 1296. [Refers to p. 155 of thesis.]
- 28) Violant’s great political enemy was the *infanta* Isabel, daughter of Sibil.la de Fortià and Pedro IV (Violant’s father-in-law). Isabel was born before the marriage of Sibil.la to Pedro IV and was herself married to Jaime, Count of Urgel, in 1405. Violant refused to accept that Jaime might be considered heir-designate to the throne of Aragon and challenged him continuously during the period 1410-1412. She became the leader of a francophile party made up of minor Catalan nobles, including Counts Roger Bernat de Pallars, Guerau Alemany de Cervelló, governor of Catalonia, and Count of Empúries, all of whom were avowed enemies of Urgel. If Martin I’s widow Margarida de Prades (his second wife), and the majority of Catalan nobles were pro-Jaime, the Centelle faction in Valencia and that in Urrea, Aragon, allied to the Archbishop of Zaragoza (close friend of Violant), were against Urgel. After his rebellion against Ferdinand of Antequera, the sovereign

designate, Jaime was imprisoned and his wife Isabel, her assets confiscated, was forced into exile to the monastery of Sixena. (Ponsich, op.cit. p. 261.) Yolande had been able to defend her claim because in Aragon laws of succession were ill-defined and largely based upon precedent. At the time of the Compromise, earlier successions had fallen to the eldest son, the next son in line or to an only daughter. More often than not an agnate (males from male lineage) had succeeded over the rights of daughters and descendants of daughters. Martin I, Yolande's uncle, had succeeded over both her and her elder half-sister, Juana. Notwithstanding this tradition, daughters such as Petronila of Aragon had succeeded in the past over second cousins, agnates, the kings of Navarre and Castile. [Refers to p. 160 of thesis.]

- 29) *“Voluit insuper jussit et ordinavit prefato domino Ludovico primogenito suo in quantum filio per patrem fieri potest quod predicte domine regine genetrici sue suisque preceptis et ordinationibus parere et obedire, eam quam revereri et honorari debeat prout cuiusque boni interest filii, Cuius quidem domini Ludovici primogeniti necnon ceterorum liberorum suorum etate minorum terrarum q[?] et dominiorum quorumcumque in quibus eos ad causam et per decessum dicti domini testatoris succedere contingent. Idem dominus testator voluit et ordinavit quod dicta domina regina euis Conjunx sit Baiula tutrix custos et administratrix huiusmodi quod dominorum liberorum donec legitime sunt etate ac terrarum possessionum et dominiorum suorum omnimodum regimen habeat custodiam et administracionem [q] [q] nullus alius de ipsis regimine custodia et administracione se preter voluntatem dicte domine regine quomodo [libet] intromittat ...”* A.N. P1334/17f^o
 [Refers to p. 165 of thesis.]

- 30) Violant wrote to Emperor Sigismund in 1416, commending her chaplain to him, at the time when preliminaries for the Council of Constance were under way (A.C.A. (*Archivo de la Corona de Aragón*), reg. 2034, f^o57 v^o, lat., 16th October 1416. Cf. Ponsich, Claire, « Trois princesses et la renommée d'une lignée, les trois Yolande, (1325-1442) », in *Bulletin de la Société Agricole, Scientifique et Littéraire des Pyrénées-Orientales*, (B.S.A.S.L.), vol. CIX, Perpignan 2002, pp. 271-272). Violant was the great-niece of the former Emperor, Charles IV, King of Bohemia (by her

grandmother, Bonne of Luxembourg, Queen of France, married to Jean II, le Bon) and therefore a cousin of Sigismund's. While Violant had not known Bonne, she had had contact with the House of Luxembourg. The Dukes of Bar were vassals of the Holy Roman Empire and at the age of about twelve, Violant participated, with her brother Philippe and their father Robert of Bar), in festivities held (during 1377-78) in Luxembourg where she was presented to the Emperor. As Duchess of Gerona and later Queen of Aragon Violant maintained close contact with the Holy Roman Empire. Her extensive extant correspondence bears this out: she wrote to her cousin Wenceslas on 17th March 1392, referring to him as Emperor of all the Romans, despite the fact he had never officially received this title. She met with Emperor Sigismund (Wenceslas's brother) in Perpignan, at the time of the council convoked there by Benedict XIII. Benedict had convoked the Perpignan Council in response to the convocation of the Council of Pisa. Gregory XII retaliated in kind by convoking a further council in Aquilea. [Refers to p. 166 of thesis.]

- 31) That Vincent Ferrer involved himself in the political landscape is undisputed. Whether his mission during the final months of his life was anything but spiritual is open to speculation. Ferrer was a Catalan, mediating the Caspe Compromise in 1412 which saw Yolande's petition for her rights over succession to Aragon's throne refused in favour of Alphonse V. Ferrer was confessor to Yolande's mother, Violant, Queen of Aragon (until he was summoned in 1399 by Benedict XIII to join him in Avignon as his confessor and apostolic penitentiary). He was much implicated in various missions and mediations for both Church and State within and without the kingdom of Aragon. A counsellor and confessor to the kings and queens of Aragon and arbiter of the kingdom's destiny, he was chosen by Benedict XIII to announce the death of Martin the Younger to his father Martin I. While Ferrer believed that Benedict XIII was the true pope, he advised him to abdicate to save the Church from the effects of the Schism.

Vincent Ferrer is interesting because he was a Dominican *frère prêcheur*, (rather than a Franciscan *frère mineur*) with a missionary zeal and a disposition to travel in a political and ecclesiastical landscape crowded with charismatic, constantly on the move, spiritual Franciscans. He was a captivating preacher who sermonized

upon the imminent arrival of an Anti-Christ, born during the year 1403 (an assertion not particularly helpful for the cause of the Dauphin Charles, himself born in 1403). Ferrier's sermons had a deep effect upon the hearts and souls of disoriented Christians, already shell-shocked by the repercussions of the Schism and the unstable political climate of the times. So deep was the alarm occasioned by his prophecies and those of his successors, that children abandoned their parents and women their husbands to follow in his footsteps as he preached his message of an impending apocalypse. His popularity and that of other mystics, spirituals and prophets underscores the search for leadership and direction in a time of upheaval and uncertainty. [Refers to p. 174 of thesis.]

32)

A mes tres chiers seigneurs les conseillours de la ville de Lyon ...

«... Si vous sertifie que mon dit seigneur [Charles] est tous deliberé, pour obier es grans inconveniens que sont sourvenus et pouroient plus sourvenir pour cause de debas, et ausy ayant regart au Roy d'Engleterre qui greve de jour en jour le royaume, de mander et mande deisja tous nous seigneurs de sont sanc et tous barons, etc., **comme la Royne de Cesile et ses enfans**, les ducs de Bretagne, de Savoie, d'Alanson, les comte de Foys et meins autres pour aviser et metre fin en cest douloureux debat; et sans faute est de propos de tenir et acomplir tout ce que par heux sera avisé et conclus, combien que l'on dit que son entente n'est point de soit tenir à paris ...»

Esript à Bourges le XV^e jour de juing ...

l'an mille III^e et XVIII

f. Caille.

Archives de Lyon, A.A 84, Cf. Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, « pièces justificatives », pp. 439-441, our emphasis. [Refers to p. 179 of thesis.]

33) By 1387 Marie of Brittany had managed to pacify Aix, but in Nice Puget-Théniers, Barcelonnette and neighbouring valleys the *ligue d'Aix* continued to cause conflict. Marie named Georges de Marle, a nobleman from the court of Avignon, seneschal of Provence and instructed him to bring the rebel cities to her obedience. Early in 1388 he approached Nice with the intention of subduing the rebels at the same

time as Luc de Grimaldi was besieging the city from the sea. In desperation, the Niçois sent to Naples to beg the assistance of the widow of Charles III de Duras, Marguerite de Duras. Unable to assist, on 30th March 1388, Marguerite authorized Nice to choose their own sovereign, on the condition that they did not choose a successor from the Second House of Anjou (i.e. Louis II or any of his line). She further made it clear that her son Ladislaus (still a minor, soon to be Louis II's great rival for Naples) should he be in a position to do so, would reimburse the chosen sovereign within three years for all costs relating to war, occupation and the defence of Nice.

By an act dated 6th August 1388, the Niçois chose Count Amadeus VII of Savoy as their overlord. As soon as this act was promulgated, Amadeus VII rushed to Nice to establish his lordship. Marie of Brittany however refused to accept the situation and made many attempts to win Nice over to Angevin rule. In the end, a treaty for twelve years, mediated by Clement VII, was concluded on 14th October 1389. This treaty was an essential prerequisite for the launch of Louis II's Italian campaign.

Returning to Provence after his defeat in Italy, Louis II was conscious of the fact that his Provençal county had been much diminished by the loss of Nice. He sent his ambassadors to Savoy, hoping to regain Nice by promising to pay its overlord an indemnity. Amadeus VII died in 1391 and his successor Amadeus VIII declared that he would agree to confirm his own rights and those of Louis II, in the expectation of the conclusion of a treaty to be signed by both princes on 12th July 1400. Liberated from this particular difficulty, Louis II married Yolande d' Aragon on 1st December 1400 in Arles. Camau, Emile, op.cit. pp. 104-111. [Refers to p. 186 of thesis.]

- 34) Henry V had been negotiating for Catherine de Valois's hand well before the Treaty of Troyes of 1420. Here is a brief synopsis of events leading both to the Battle of Agincourt and the marriage of Henry V to Catherine. In August of 1414 the civil war between the Armagnacs and Burgundians was at its apex, both sides appealing to England for assistance. Henry V sent his ambassador Richard Courtenay, Bishop of Norwich with his demand: the Crown of France, the unpaid

ransom of Jean II, captured at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356, and Catherine de Valois. Both factions refused. He then sent a lesser demand which largely amounted to the same thing: Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, the land between Flanders and the Somme, most of Provence and Aquitaine as it was prior to the Treaty of Brétigny of 1360, Guyenne, Limousin and all of France between the Loire and the Pyrenees west of the Massif Central, the unpaid ransom of Jean II, Catherine's hand and a dowry of 2,000,000 crowns. Berry (Louis II d'Anjou was in Provence), acting for an "absent" Charles VI, countered with an offer of part of Aquitaine, Catherine and a dowry of 600,000 crowns, subject to Charles VI's agreement when he regained his senses. This scared the two French factions sufficiently to force them to establish a truce. Henry re-dispatched Richard Courtenay to the French court in February 1415 with a final offer: all of Aquitaine, Catherine and a 1,000,000 crown dowry. The French responded with a last offer of part of Aquitaine, Catherine and an 800,000 crown dowry. No agreement was reached and the stage was set for an English invasion and the resulting Battle of Agincourt. Contemporary Sources: *Chronique de Jean Le Févre, Seigneur de Saint-Remy*, Morand, François, Librairie Renouard, Paris 1876, t. I, pp. 214-224, *Chronique de Monstrelet*, Buchon, J.A.C., A. Desrez, Paris 1836, pp. 292-366. Cf. for a detailed modern analysis: Miller, M.D., *Wars of the Roses*, unpublished manuscript, copyright 2003, Chapter 18, "Preparations for war with France, 1414-1415" and Rymer, Thomas, «*Actes ...* » t. X. [Refers to p. 196 of thesis.]

- 35) The Marseillais fled under sustained pillaging by Catalan *chiens*, ill-disciplined but loyal to Alfonse V of Aragon. The Marseillais were so slow to return to the scene of their persecution, that Yolande was obliged to proclaim an ordinance on 16th May 1424 demanding the return of the fugitives on pain of confiscation of their assets and remaining possessions. Everything that could be done was done to ensure the rapid reconstruction of the important Angevin port and its repopulation. Reimbursement of creditors and payment of interest was duly suspended for three years to assist the process. Exemptions of rights over the transportation of wood and building materials were accorded by Yolande and Charles VII.

Once Marseille started to emerge from its ashes, the thoughts of its inhabitants turned to vengeance, and charters and notarized acts of the time contained vehement curses against «*ces chiens de Catalans*». Merchants, owners of vessels, the first to return, thought of nothing but mounting a great sea offensive against the Aragonese and their allies. As a result Aragonese commercial activity suffered great losses. The Catalans organized a counter-offensive but Provençaux officials were ready for them. The Catalans renounced their mission and a treaty for four years was established on 5th June 1431. A mutilated Marseille was reborn. Busquet, Raoul, *Histoire de Marseille*, Paris, Editions Robert Laffont and Jeanne Lafitte, 1998, pp. 141-145. [Refers to p. 206 of thesis.]

- 36) Beaucourt states: “*Yolande n’avait point seulement tourné ses regards du côté de Jean VI [Jean V]; elle avait entamé secrètement des pourparlers avec le duc de Bourgogne: nous avons la preuve qu’au mois de Juin 1423 ce prince correspondait avec elle: Le 30 Juin, le duc faisait payer II L. 5s. [tournois] à messire Jean de la Villette, prêtre, «pour aler devers la Royne de Sezille porter lettres closes de luy pour aucunes choses secretes»*”. *Quatrième compte de Guy Guilbaut*, Archives de la Côte-d’Or, B1622, f^o 191. Beaucourt adds that: “*C’est peut-être à ses relations qu’il faut rattacher la mission donnée par le duc (à Paris, vers le 31 Août 1423) à un écuyer nommé Dignadam, qui reçut 150fr., «pour aler de par lui en certain voyage secret qui très grandement lui touchoit, don’t il n’en veult autre declaracion estre faicte.»*” *Cinquième compte de Guy Guilbaut*, Archives du Nord, B. 1929, f^o63. Beaucourt t. II, p. 353.

We note that a religious was employed “*pour aler devers la Royne de Sezille porter lettres closes ... pour aucune choses secretes*” and emphasize that this is keeping with our earlier discussion. [Refers to pp. 208 & 214 of thesis.]

- 37) «*... et à l’entrée de la ville fut mis sur lui un paile d’or de damas et fut porté ledit paile jusques à Saint-Maurice, c’est assavoir par Jehan de Verger et maistre Jehan Torchart par devant, et par le milieu Alain de la Haloude et Thomas Leclerc, et par le derrain bout Jehan le Moyne et Pierres Chabot, bourgeois et marchans d’Angiers. Et fu receu en l’église comme chanoine d’icelle, en surpeliz et en chappe de drap d’or; et avecques estoient le conte dalphin d’Auvergne, le sire de Montlaur, le sire de la Tour et autres granz seigneurs du païs d’Auvergne et d’ailleurs, le viconte de Thouars, le prévost de Paris, le président de*

[Refers to pp. 212 of thesis.]

- 38) As we have noted previously, by 1425 Yolande and Richemont were in control of Charles, and Bedford had been forced to return to England in December 1425 to mediate a dispute between Gloucester and Beaufort one which threatened to break out into civil war. Gloucester was also contemplating sending an armed force to Holland against the interests of Burgundy. Bedford also needed to raise more money to continue his conquest of France and had very limited success. During his absence, Brittany signed a treaty with Charles VII at Saumur in 1426. Bedford returned to France in March 1427 but, still very short of funds, sent Salisbury back to England for more money. Things started to turn against France in 1427 as Jean V reaffirmed the triple alliance between Britany, England and Burgundy earlier established at Troyes in 1420, with Salisbury returning to France in 1428 refinanced and re-provisioned. A period of disputation between Bedford and Salisbury ensued, with the former insisting that they ought first to move on Angers, both to assert Bedford's hold over the duchy and consolidate it with southern territories they had already conquered. Salisbury insisted that they try to take Orleans, despite the fact that its overlord was their prisoner in England. Salisbury prevailed and by 12th October 1428 Salisbury had laid siege to Orléans. [Refers to p. 222 of thesis.]

- 39) La Trémoille had first been chamberlain to Jean sans Peur in the years during this struggle against Louis d'Orléans. When the Armagnacs came to power in 1413, La Trémoille switched allegiance to Charles VI, becoming one of his chamberlains, and soon attached himself to the aging Duke of Berry (with Richemont). With Richemont he was taken prisoner at Agincourt, but swiftly raised the ransom for his release. He eventually found his way into the pleasure-seeking courts of the Dauphin Louis and Ysabeau of Bavaria where he became, (with de Giac), one of her favourites. In 1416 La Trémoille married Jeanne, the widow of the Duke of Berry. By 1427 he had again allied himself with Richemont, entering into the service of Charles VII. [Refers to p. 228 of thesis.]

40) Pius II was born Enea Silvio Piccolomini in 1405. He studied at the universities of Siena and Florence, settling in Siena as a teacher from where he was recruited in 1431 to act as secretary to the Bishop of Fermo, Domenico Capranica, who sought redress from the Council of Basle against Pope Eugenius IV (who had withdrawn the cardinalate designated to Capranica by Martin V). In 1435 Enea was dispatched by Eugenius's legate to the Council, Cardinal Alberghetti, on a secret mission to Scotland and England, the details of which are to be found in his *Commentarii*. After various machinations in Basle, Enea withdrew to Vienna to the court of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick III. There he was designated imperial poet-laureate, later making his peace with Rome. He was sent on a mission to Rome in 1445 by the Emperor, later returning to the Empire to redress conflict between Rome and German imperial electors. He had in the interim taken his vows and Nicholas V created him Bishop of Trieste. He continued his various embassies on behalf of Frederick and both the Emperor and Ladislaus of Hungary sent strong recommendations to Calixtus III, favouring Enea for nomination to a cardinalate. Calixtus died in 1458, and though the French Cardinal of Rouen was favoured, Enea ascended the throne of Peter. In 1461 he canonized Saint Catherine of Siena. In general, Pius II's views were liberal and far-seeing; he was a versatile and prolific writer, a scholar and publicist who succeeded by virtue of his intellectual strength. He left to succeeding generations vivid and accurate renderings of the spirit of a troubled and remarkable period – the dawn of the European Renaissance. If we take into account the personality and breadth of activity demonstrated by Pius II, his observations regarding France and Joan are an invaluable contemporary source to enable our understanding of this turbulent period of history. Boulting, William, *Aeneas Silvius (Enea Silvio) de Piccolomini, Pius II) Orator, Man of Letters, Statesman and Pope*, London, A. Constable, 1908. [Refers to p. 242 of thesis.]

41) This is a fair comment to make given that, four years earlier, in an act established in Nancy, dated 16th January 1425, Duke Charles had made over a donation to Allison du May (in recognition and recompense for the laudable services she and her sisters had performed), «... *nonobstant qu'elle soit bastarde, fille naturelle et illégitime de prestre ...*» of the house in which she resided in Nancy, its outbuildings and surrounding dependencies, contents of the residence including

gold and silver plate etc. AN, KK 1124, f° 216, v° 217). C.f. Luce's discussion, op.cit. pp. 211 - 212. Interestingly, Allison was assassinated in 1431 soon after the death of Charles II. It begs the question of whether she was particularly ambitious for her children, Jean, bâtard de Lorraine, Seigneur de Darnieulles, Ferry, bâtard de Lorraine, Catherine, bâtarde de Lorraine and Isabelle, bâtarde de Lorraine. Had she been determined to force the issue of succession, René and Isabelle, Charles's legitimate heirs, might well have felt cornered enough to place Joan in Charles II's presence to preach a return to his legitimate wife and family. After all, René was already deeply implicated in conflict over the succession of Lorraine with Isabelle's cousin, Antoine de Vaudémont. [Refers to p. 268 of thesis.]

- 42) «Une grâce [on the part of Jeanne-Marie de Maillé] à peu près de même nature (de guérison) fut accordée à la reine de Sicile, Yolande d'Aragon ... Nous en trouvons également les détails écrits par la reine elle-même et insérés au procès d'information. Cette princesse était atteinte d'une sorte de maladie dans la tête, accompagnée de douleurs si violentes, qu'elles ne lui laissaient pas goûter un moment de sommeil. Elle avait consulté tous les médecins et essayé de tous remèdes. Se sentant plus incommodée et plus souffrante que jamais, elle pensa tout à coup de la dame de Sillé, et aussitôt par une prière intérieure et secrète, elle se mit à se recommander à sa protection pour être délivrée, par ses mérites, du mal qu'elle endurait. A l'instant même elle s'assoupit et commença à dormir d'un doux et paisible sommeil. En dormant, il lui sembla voir la dame de Sillé qui la fortifiait et qui, lui faisant appuyer la tête sur ses genoux, couvrait cette tête endolorie du pan de son manteau. Quand elle s'éveilla, elle se trouva soulagée. De nouveau alors, pensant à la Bienheureuse, elle lui demanda intérieurement, et du fond de son cœur, de continuer à prier Dieu pour elle. Une seconde fois, la Bienheureuse lui apparut, l'encouragea, lui prit la tête et la fit reposer sur ses genoux, et enveloppa de son manteau. En se réveillant cette fois, elle se trouva encore beaucoup mieux qu'auparavant et presque guérie. A partir de ce moment, son état alla en s'améliorant. Quelques jours après elle était entièrement délivrée, et jouissait d'une santé parfaite ...» Janvier, L'abbé, *La Bienheureuse Jeanne-Marie de Maillé, Baronne de Sillé*, Paris, Albert Larcher, 1888, pp. 208-209. It is interesting to note that during her mission, (in 1395) Jeanne-Marie de Maillé sought out Charles VI in Tours and was accorded an audience at the instigation of Louis d'Orléans. During the interview she gave various predictions regarding the future of his kingdom. Ibid, p. 267. [Refers to p. 273 of thesis.]

- 43) The jubilee at Le Puy is held in the years when Holy Friday coincides with the feast of the Annunciation. The first official record of these jubilees starts with the jubilee held on 25th March 1407 which lasted one day. The record claims that 200 pilgrims were crushed in the crowd. The event was so well attended that the Bishop of Le Puy, Elias de Lestrage, formally petitioned Pope Martin V to lengthen the duration of the jubilee in recognition of its importance and popularity with pilgrims. As a result, the jubilee held in 1418 lasted five days and the jubilee of 1429, one that will later interest our study, lasted ten days, that is to say, until the Sunday after Easter. The development of the jubilee is linked to the importance of its cathedral, dedicated to the Virgin, one of the most ancient in Europe, dating back to the fifth century. It is not really known when the first jubilee was held but some sources suggest that it was held in 992 on the initiative of the Bishop of Le Puy, Guy II of Anjou. The jubilee of 1429 was of particular importance as it was publicized as a “national” manifestation of the faithful. At the time of its celebration, Joan of Arc was about to burst upon the spiritual and political scene of a shattered France, and it is recorded that Charles himself travelled to Le Puy to participate in the jubilee - the fourth time he had made such a visit to the site. It is traditionally understood that Isabelle de Vouthon-Roméé also attended. Source: the official web site of the Diocese of Le Puy, <http://catholique-lepuy.cef.fr> [Refers to p. 280 of thesis.]
- 44) The Jesuates were a religious order, “Clerici apostolici Sancti Hieronymi”, established by Giovanni Colombi in Siena around 1360-1365. Colombi was a wealthy married merchant who separated from his wife and placed her in a convent along with his daughters, leaving them a portion of his property. The rest he gave away to the sick and the poor and lived in poverty with his friend Francesco Miani, preaching and caring for the destitute. They were expelled from Siena and continued their mission in Arezzo and beyond. They petitioned Urban V to allow them to form an order, but were refused as there was a suspicion that they may have been connected to the heretical *Fraticelli*. They disproved this and eventually formed their order with the consent of the pontiff. Upon Colombini’s death on 31st July 1367, Miani assumed control. They devoted themselves to the care of the sick and to works of charity, the order mostly consisting of lay-brothers who had taken minor vows. The female branch of the order founded by Caterina

Colombini, a kinswoman of Giovanni, preserved the original vigour of its observance and survived the male order by some 200 years. Hélyot, Pierre (Père Hippolyte), *Dictionnaire des ordres religieux, ou Histoire des ordres monastiques, religieux et militaires et des congrégations séculières de l'un et de l'autre sexe, qui ont été établis jusqu'à présent*, Petit-Montrouge, Editeur Migne, 1847-1863, t. III, pp. 407-418. [Refers to p. 284 of thesis.]

45) *"Declaratio dominorum regni Francie sub obedientia domini Johannis regentis, ducis Bedfordiæ, tempore dicti domini regis Henrici sexti: ... Renatus, ... dux de Baare et Lorreyne, fecit fidem et treugam cum domino regent educe Bedfordiæ, quam postea fregit, et super his captus in bello, etc."* (Stevenson, *Letters and Papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France*, London 1861, II, 530, cited by Lecoy de la Marche, t. I, pp. 71-72. [Refers to p. 289 of thesis.]

46) If we look at the *mandements de paiement dépenses de commune [d'Orléans] du 23 mars 1428 (1429) – 22 mars 1429 (1430)* we discover some rather interesting entries:

«XIII. – A Jehan Mahy, l'un des procureurs de la Ville [Orléans] pour une partie de la despence que a faicte Frère Richart qui a preschié en ladite ville xxxiii jours ... Journal... p. 235.

A Philippot d'Orliens, pour avoir taillé ung Jhesus de coevre pour frère Richart ... A Jehan Mahy, pour le demourant de la despence que a faicte ledit Frère Richart, tant en poisson, beurre comme autres choses ... A maistre Guillaume Greslier, pour paier la despence faicte par Frère Richart en l'ostel Jehan Greslier, son père, depuis la vielle de Pasques Fleuries [Palm Sunday] jusques au mercredi d'aprez Quasimodo [first Sunday after Easter] pour tout.»

The above entries testify to Frère Richard's presence in Orleans prior to Joan's arrival and later for a period of thirty-three days in 1430, on or around Holy Week. Some of his time was spent in the company of Marie d'Anjou: «A Maistre Guillaume Greslier, pour despence faicte par Frère Richart le xxe jour de may qu'il vint

avecques la Royne.» Journal du siège d'Orléans ..., pp. 236, 238 and 242. [Refers to pp. 305 & 321 of thesis.]

- 47) Interestingly, at least one account mentions the arrival of Louis III, King of Sicily, and Charles d'Anjou who joined Marie and Yolande, waiting for news in Loches, while a curious letter from Jean Desch, secretary of the City of Metz to Jean Rottenbot, Count Vast, states that: "*Der Herzog von Angoy [Louis III], der grafe von Rechemont, der grave von Harecourt die sollen uf durnstag nach Sant Margreten tag mit Konigin zu Rense sin, und sint geczunt jn Epernay, das heit sich diser wochen des [dem] Konig ergeben*". The first account gives merely a reunion between the three sons of Anjou with their mother and sister. The second account is more intriguing for it claims that Louis III, Richemont and Harcourt met with Marie d'Anjou outside Reims, which if substantiated would have made for quite a show of force from the Angevin family, loyal Constable and faithful Christophe d'Harcourt upon Charles's return. No firm evidence attests to this captivating scenario. Lecoy de la Marche contents himself with: «*Louis III se distingue dans la campagne de France, en 1429*». See thesis, Chapter 5 pp. 222-223, Louis III's recall from Italy in 1426-7. We have no further evidence of his movements. See note following, which seems to suggest that Louis III had returned again from Italy on or around the time of Charles's coronation. It is possible that Louis III was still in France, or at least Provence, for Léonard notes that he started additional building works on the château at Tarascon from 1428 onwards and makes no mention of Louis III's particular activities in Italy at that time. Léonard, *op.cit.*, p. 495.

«*Les trois princes de la maison d'Anjou chevauchaient près de leur roi à cet immortel rendez-vous de la chevalerie de France. Du fond de l'Albruzze ultérieure, Louis III vainqueur à Aquila, et le comte du Maine, et d'y retrouver leur bien-aimée sœur ... Restez à Loches sur un ordre royal ...*» *Cœuvres complètes du Roi René*, Quatrebarbes, le Comte de, t. I, p. XV, Imprimerie de Cosnier et Lachèse, Angers 1845, p. XV.

«*Le duc d'Anjou, le comte de Richemont, le comte d'Harcourt doivent se trouver à Reims avec la Reine le jeudi après le jour de Sainte-Marguerite [c'est-à-dire le 19 juillet car Ste.-Marguerite se célébrait le 13 juillet à Metz, non pas le 20]; ils sont actuellement à Epernay, qui s'est rendu au Roi cette semaine.*» Quicherat, *Procès ...*, t. V, p. 354.

Lecoy de la Marche, *op.cit.* t. I, p. 51. [Refers to p. 309 of thesis.]

- 48) «Aujourd'hui [Charles] a esté sacré et couronné; et a esté moult belle chose à voir le beau mystère, car il a esté auxi solempnel et accoustré de toutes les besongnes y appartenans, auxi bien et si convenablement pour faire la chose, tant en abis royaux et autres choses à ce nécessaires, comme s'il eust mandé un an auparavant ... Et à l'heure que le roy fut sacré, et auxi quand l'on lui assist la couronne sur sa teste, tout homme cria Noël! et trompettes sonnèrent en telle manière, qu'il sembloint que les voultres de l'église se deussent fendre.

Et durant ledit mystère, la Pucelle s'est tousjours tenue joignant du roy, tenant son estendart en sa main. Et estoit moult belle chose de voir les belles manières que tenoit le roy et auxi la Pucelle. Et Dieu sache si vous y avez esté souhaitées ... Demain s'en doit partir le roy tenant son chemin vers Paris. On dit en ceste ville que le duc de Bourgogne y a esté et s'en est retourné à Laon, où il est de présent; il a envoyé si tost devers le roy qu'il arriva en ceste ville. A ceste heure nous espérons que bon traité y trouvera avant qu'ils partent. La Pucelle ne fait doute qu'elle ne mette Paris en l'obéissance ...

*Vos très-humbles et obéissants serviteurs,
Beauvau, Morel, Lussé.».*

Quicherat, *Procès*, t. V, pp. 127-130. [Refers to p. 309 of thesis.]

- 49) Their father, Guy VI, was: «... *porte-oriflamme de France* [in 1382, he received the *oriflamme* from the hands of Charles VI and carried it during the campaign against the English], «*conseiller et chambellan du roi, premier et grand chambellan héréditaire de Bourgogne, fut un de plus illustres et de plus puissants seigneurs de son temps, et mérita par ses exploits le surnom «vaillant chevalier».*», Courcelles, Jean-Baptiste-Pierre, *Généalogie de la maison de La Tremoille*, 1890, p. 10. [Refers to p. 312 of thesis.]
- 50) «*En celles saillies et escarmouches souvent renouvelées vouldt aller le seigneur de la Trémouille: lequel estant monté sur ung courcier moult joliz et grandement habillé, et tenant sa lance ou poing, frappa son cheval des esperons, qui par cas d'aventure cheut à terre, et le trebaucha ou milieu des ennemys: par lesquelz il fut en grant danger d'estre tué ou prins; mais pour le scourir et monter se feirent grans diligences. Par quoy se fit monter à très grant peine, car à celle heure y eut très forte escarmouche; et tant que environ souleil couchant se joingnirent ensemble plusieurs François ...» *Journal du siège d'Orléans...* p. 123. [Refers to p. 315 of thesis.]*

Appendix 2

Documents

- 1) Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, reg. 2055, fols. 26r-28, Pedralbes, April 26, 1410 (reproduced from Vendrell, Francesca, *Violante de Bar y el Compromiso de Caspe*, Barcelona, RABLB, 1992, pp. 131-134). Documents 1 and 2 were made available to us in their complete form through the generosity of Professor Dawn Bratsch-Prince, Chair, Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Iowa State University, Ames Iowa. The comments and notes are hers.

In this extensive and eloquent letter, Violant accuses her daughter, Violant d'Aragó, Queen of Sicily and Jerusalem, of not defending more energetically her claim to the throne of Aragon. In these early days of the interregnum, Violant believes that her daughter and son-in-law have the right and the obligation to fight for the crown of the Aragonese kingdom. She cannot comprehend why they have made so little effort in this respect. With this letter, Violant aims to shake them out of their stupor.

A la molt cara e molt amada filla, la reyna de Iherusalem e de Sicília, duquesa d'Anjou. Molt cara e molt amada fillia:

Certifich-vos com a la scriptura de la present yo era sana et en bon punt de ma persona, mercè a Déu, et ab gran desir saber noves de la salut vostre e de vostres fills e meus; per què us prech me'n scrivats sovint et per tots los que vendran ançà, com açò és lo major plaer e complació que fer-me podets.

Més avant vos certifich que yo, veen la gran negligència et pocha cura vostra e del rey, mon fill, sobre lo fet de la successió d'aquest regne, que és inmensa honor e reparació vostra [fol. 26v] e de vostres fills e natura, per rahó de la qual ni vós ni lo rey, vostre marit, no devíets un dia reposar, mayorment considerant lo gran preu que y havets, havia delliberat de veure'm personalmente ab lo dit car mon fill ans que ell sia partit per lo viatge de Ytàlia. E de fet feya armar ací en Barchinona dues galees per anar a Mar[r]sella, les quals ja al jorn de huy eren en punt de partir. E hir

rebí un cavacador qui portà letres del rey, mon fill, e de mossèn Ramon de Conesa, scrites en la via d'Aex, ab les quals he vist com lo dit rey, sens altre dilació ni spera, se entenia recollir lo XXIII jorn d'abril, com diga que al XV jorn de ma[i]g ell és astret de ésser personalment en Ytàlia. E bé que yo haya consolació gran e plaer de les bones novelles e del bon spachament de son viatge, tant com toqua la conquesta de son realme, la qual Nostre Senyor Déu, per sa infinida clemència, la vulla endreçar.

Emperò siats certa, ma cara filla, que yo, veent la pocha endreça que lo dit rey mon fill jaquia de part deçà e lo poch escalfament que havia de tant e tan gran benefici com és aquesta successió vostra e de sos fills, la qual stà en la porta en punt d'entrar, son stada molt trista e despagrada, e no sens rahó, com yo veja ací tants et tan grans beneficis e infinides honors jaquir perdre per niente e sí dir "Mafrú!" per pocha virtut e fortalea, car altre juhí no se'n pot fer entre persones entenents; com lo benefici e honor de ésser rey e senyor d'aquest regne vós lo coneseu, qui'n sou exida. Car en lo món n'[h]a pochs que s'[h]i puxen comparar; et jaquir-ho per no res, o tant se val, no se'n pot presumir ni judicar animositat de coratge ni virtut de fortalea, et jatsia aquesta tan gran reparació e honor de vostres fills sia vostra pròpia e de vostre marit.

Emperò, no pens que major cor hi hajau que yo he; e bé u mostrau e haveu mostrat tro açi com per poch cor que y haguésseu encara. Yo no pensava que [fol. 27] lo rey mon fill se'n anàs recollir sens jaquir-hi altre millor provisió com no par, ni jaquís neguna si mossèn R[amon] no-l hagués enconrat al camí, qui par n'haja tret letra e poder bastant a vós de fer en aquest fet tot ço que ell matex fer poria, si present hi fos, segons que per letres del dit vostre marit, scrites de sa pròpia mà, e per letres del dit mossèn R[amon], he vist.

Yo'm dolch, ma cara filla, ultra lo gran benefici et honor perpetual vostra e de vostres fills, que ve[i]g perdre per no res, e he ben rahó de doler-me, no pas de res que despès haja, car yo ho he per ben esmerçat, com jamés no despení res tant gran et tant manifest fruit me donàs! Mas dolch la gran ignomínia et infàmia del rey mon fill e vostra, que un fet tan gran com aquest e tan clar per pocha virtut vullats perdre, ab infàmia et menyspreu perpetual, sens haver adversari pus poderós que

vós. Dolch la gran e clara justícia vostra veure perir e perdre entre les mans, venint en poder de aquells qui no han gens de dret. Dolch lo temps esdevenidor, com vostres fills se recordaran e veuran la lur casa e lo lur regne contrastar per mans stranyes, e crians quin serà lo dan, perill, despeses perdudes e afanys que hauran a sostenir en recobrar-ho, e quina rahó hauran de loar lurs predecessors, ço és vós e los altres qui tan mal recapte los havets donat. Dolch més la honor de la casa de França, d'on son exida, la qual honor o pèrdua no repararà la nació que huy viu; si açò a present scapa, no-ls calrà cercar d'huy més altres conquestes, si aquesta, tan clara que huy és sens dubitació, lexen per no res perdre. Certes lurs fets e conquests poran ésser notades e dites, dáquí avant, més pare[c]eria que acte militar. Més avant dolch, e he gran rahó de planyer, tant notable cavaller e tanta bona gent que, veents la clara e indubitada justícia vostra e de vostres fills, per amor de mi se só [fol. 27v] declarats e stan aparellats perir advenint lo cas. Car yo sola no som bastant sostenir sens sforç d'aquí, e ells en fe mia romandrien desolats e perseguits.

Per què, molt cara filla, si havets sentiment de les dites coses, mostrats-ho per obra en moltes maneres. Car açò no són fets que's dejen oblidar ni jaquir deràs, fets [...] aquí bollir e cremar ardentment car yo us certifich que si açí conexe[ts] que aquí sia raben e fret, axí com és stat tro ací, dats-ho tot per perdut. E haureu de tornes perduda vostra mare.

Molt cara e molt amada filla, tenits aprop lo rey de França, los duchs de Berry e de Burgunya, e tots altres parents vostres sollicitans aquells ab letres e missatgeries, hoc encara com vós hi sabésets anar personalment, en manera que aquest fet se proseguescha molt scalfadament e que venga d'aquí la flama a vista de tota res. E en açò no donets repòs ni comport algún.

Item: fets que la embaxada de part del rey de França venga ben esforçada, sens triga alguna, e que venguen solament per aquest fet, e no per altre, car açi-s diu que per lo fet de la església vénen; com aquest fet sia tal e de tan gran pes que los embaxadors no deuen d'alre parlar, et en açò conexeran les jents que la casa de França ho ha a cor, et que los embaxadors, que vendran hajen manament de aturar açí tant com lo negoci requir tro que sia declarat, et no se'n vullan tornar ab les

çabates polsoses ni fer ofici de correu. Car expèriencia demostra que tantost són ogats, volen-se'n anar.

Item: ma cara filla, com ací sien grans obs pecúnies o argent per portar lo cor de les gents a nostre justificat propòsit, donats-hi en continent compliment, segons se conté en lo memorial de mossèn Ramon de Conesa, car yo us assegure que un florí fa obra de cent mília, com jamés no fon labor ni sembradura tanta [fol. 28] multiplicació faves, e obre més a nostra part .M. florins que no fan los contraris C m[ili]a, com vos certifich que los adversaris hi despenen bé. Però la justícia, que és de nostra part, sobrepuja ab menys despesa. E si fos cas que el rey nostre fill o vós ho véesets a hull, com yo faç ací, perdérets tot lo sentiment de altres afers e aquest fet sols fóra vostre cor e vostra corona. En bona fe, ma cara filla, yo hi he ja esmerçat tot quant he pogut, e bé-s mostra per los actes a per de fora. Car no y dubtets que la muytat de la gent d'esta terra és ja informada e tenen e rahonen públicament e palesa la justícia vostra e de vostra fill.

Ma cara filla, scrivits-me contínuament, que açò no són fahenes de dormir, car vostres letres tro a huy són stades pus cares que si vós fóssets ultra mar. E scrivits per lo present correu clarament què havets cor de fer per lo manament e poder del rey vostre marit, per tal que yo veja quin regiment he dar a mi matexa. Car vós a mi clara me devets anar e no y haja res celat, si no fariets-me gran dan irreparable. E en totes les dites coses e altres que conegats sien expedients, siats curosa, ardent e cremant, per tal que, ab la ajuda de Nostre Senyor Déu e ab la vostra, vejats vostre fill regnar e seure, vós vivent e jove, en la cadire real de vostre pare, e de mi faça-n Déu què li plàcia, que no li deman altra glòria en aquest món. E ab tant, molt cara e molt amada filla, yo prech lo beneyt Fill de Déu, que us haja contínuament en sa curosa guarda.

Scrita en lo monestir de Pedralbes, a XXVI dies d'abril l'any de la nativitat de Nostre Senyor, MCCCCX.

Vostra bona mare, la reyna Y[olant].

[Relates to pp. 140 & 159 of thesis.]

- 2) Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, reg. 2052, fol. 106r, Barcelona, May 6, 1421.

Violant de Bar, dowager queen, to María de Castilla, Queen of Aragon, explaining to her the rôle of a queen, and asking for her help in establishing peace between Aragon and Anjou over the matter of Naples.

A la molt excellent princessa molt cara e molt amada neboda, la senyora reyna [d'Aragó].

Molt excellent princessa molt cara e molt amada neboda:

Desijans continuament saber vostre bon stament de sanitat, vos pregam lo més que podem que a nostra consolació nos en vullats scriure totes hores que avinent vos serà, e serà cosa que us grayrem que més no poriem. Si de nós, molt cara e molt amada neboda, vos plau saber, vos certificam que a la faycò de aquesta nós som en bon punt de nostra persona, la mercè de Deu.

Molt cara e molt amada neboda, per letres de nuestra molt cara filla, la reyna,^I per report dels portadors de la present, sos ambaxadors, havem vist e entès com la dita nostra filla, la reyna, tramet a vós los dits portadors ambaxadors, e açò per lo gran desig que ha que entre nostre car nebot, lo rey, marit vostre,^{II} e nostre car fill e de la dita reyna, nostra filla, lo rey Luis,^{III} hagues pau, amistat, e concordia, segons deu haver e's pertany entre dues persones de una casa e de una sanch procehins.

E no contrastant, molt cara e molt amada neboda, que'l enemich antich haje treballat e treballe ab sobirana vigilia sembrar zizanias e discordias entre los dits reys per mantenir la injusticia de una sola dona fora de parentiu e no coneguda, ne zelant la honor d'aquesta casa d'Aragó, segons experiencia ha demostrat en nostres dies,^{IV} més solament per son propia interes e barat, nós e la dita reyna, nostra filla,

^I Violant [Yolande] of Aragon.

^{II} Alfonso V of Aragon.

^{III} Louis III of Anjou.

^{IV} The "experiencia" that Violant makes reference to is Joanna's acceptance and then rejection of a marriage proposal with the second-born son of Fernando I of Aragon.

confiam en Deu, qui és deffenedor de justicia e del qual tots bens proceeixen, que Ell, pervertint l'orde diabolical, no permetrà que la dita zizania si mete rahils entre los dits dos reys, ans per sa infinida clemencia farà aquells de un cor e de un voler, segons dicten rahó e justicia.

Per ço, molt cara e molt amada neboda, nós, qui les dites coses desijam superlativament, segons sab Déu, e lo rey, nostre car nebot, e vós e tot lo mon han e haveu pogut veure e conixer, vos pregam, ab tanta affecció com dir se pot ne scriure que oynt los dits ambaxadors vos placia virtuosament e per obra treballar que entre los dits dos reys haje pau, concordia, e amiatat, segons deu e és rahonable. En açò, molt cara e molt amada neboda, deveu-vos ab sobirana voler e estudi treballar per molts esguarts, ço és per servei de Déu, a qui pau és acceptable entre los altres sacrifics e per esguard del dit rey, vostre marit, a qui de la dita pau se segueix repos e la qual ell e tots reys deven abraçar per descarrech de llurs consciencias e per repos de llurs vassalls.

Açò, molt cara e molt amada neboda, és propi a offici vostre, e és abit molt bé ornant totes reynes, e sabem-ho nós qui'n som passada. E per aquesta rahó nós e la dita reyna, nostra filla, volens-nos vestir lo dit abit, volem les dites coses manifestar e notificar a vós e de aquellas comunicar tant com possible nos serà. Pregans, requerins, e amonestans-vos altre e altre vegada, ab aquella instancia que's pertany, que per los dits esguarts e per repos de tantes persones, e per edificació e instrucció de tants beneficis qui a present no's poden preveure com penses e ulls humanals no y sien bastans en açò vos placia prestament pensar e treballar, e entre les altres cures que havets de la governació d'aquest regne avistar-hi aquesta, la qual serà a Déu molt acceptable, e per la qual aconseguirets gran renom en lo mon.

Si algunes coses, molt cara e molt amada neboda, vos plaen que nós façam, nós les farem de molt bon car. E havem lo Sant Spirit, beneyt Fill de Déu, en sa comanda.

Dada en Barcelona a .vi. dies de maig en l'any de Nostre Senyor de .M.cccc.xxi. La reyna Y[olant].

[Relates to p. 192 of thesis.]

Documents 3-6, Cucherat, l'Abbé F., Vingtrinier, Aimé M., (eds.), « Lettres inédites du Connétable de Richemont et autres grands personnages et conseillers et habitants de la ville de Lyon (1), in *Revue du Lyonnais : esquisses physiques, morales et historiques*, tome 18, (1859), pp. 327-335.

3) LETTRE AU COMTE DE RICHEMONT CONNÉTABLE DE FRANCE.

A noz treschiers et bons amis les Gens d'église, bourgeois, manans et habitans de la bonne ville de Lyon.

Treschiers et bons amis, vous povez avoir sceu comme ja pieça nostre tresredoubté seigneur et frère le duc de Bretagne et nostre treschier et amé oncle le duc de Savoye, aians compassion de ce royaume, qui veoyent par le povre gouvernement qui y estoit et encores est, cheoir à totale destruction, et, par le moyen de haulte et puissante princesse, nostre tres chiere et honnourée dame la Royne de Jherusalem et de Secile, ont envoyé plusieurs ambaxades devers monseigneur le Roi en entencion de mettre bonne paix et union entre lui et les seigneurs de son sang et que par le moyen d'icelle union l'on peut rebouter ses ennemis anciens et recouvrer sa seignorie par eulx occupée. Sur quoy ont esté tenues plusieurs journées, en quoy de tout nostre pouvoir nous sommes employé. Et tant finalement que la chose a esté jusques pres de finalle conclusion, en entencion de parvenir à la quelle, du consentement de nosdits frère et oncle et d'autres seigneurs du sang de Mondit seigneur le Roy et moyennant certains articles par lui accordés en la présence et par le conseil des gens des trois estas, avons prinse l'espée et acceptée l'office de Connestable de France. En quoy faisant et pour consideracion des pilleries et roberies ayans cours en ce royaulme par faulte de justice, à l'occasion desquelles le povre peuple d'icelui a esté et est en voye de totale desertion, requiesme à Mondit seigneur que justice feust faicte en faisant par icelle cesser lesdites pilleries, ce qu'il nous accorda, fist jurer et promettre. Pour laquelle chose mettre à exécution, furent par cry sollempnel et lettres patentes de Mondit seigneur et de nous mandez tous cappitaines de gens d'armes et de trait venir par devers nous en la ville de Scelles pour les mettre, apres veue faicte d'iceulx, les bons ès frontières et les aultres non passables cassez et envoyez à leur labour ou mestier. Feust aussi ordonné lever, par

manière d'emprunt, la somme de xxx^m livres tournois pour ycelle estre convertie ou paiement desdits gens ordonnez pour la frontière et à l'expulcion et vuydange des aultres, laquelle somme a esté levée sur vous et aultres subgez de Mondit seigneur. Après lesquelles choses, en attendant la dite journée de Scelles, afin d'assembler gens d'armes pour employer au service de Mondit seigneur, alames devers Mondit frère en Bretagne en entencion de retourner à la dite journée pour exécuter ce que dit est. Mais pendant ce temps le Président de Prouvence, perseverant en la traison, desloialté et mauvaitié dont de long temps a usé envers Mondit seigneur en levant et exigeant de vous et d'aultres, sur faulses et feinctes couleurs, grandes et grosses finances, lesquelles il a appliqué à son singulier prouffit en tenant gens d'estrange langue et autres pillars, larrons et robeurs en ce royaume pour le povre peuple d'icelui tenir en subgection et avoir couleur de faire les dites exactions dont inconveniens innumérables sont ensuiz, ou tresgrant et evident dommage de Mondit Seigneur et de ses bons et loyaulx subgez. A fait faire à Mondit Seigneur mutacion de ses bons et principaulx officiers qui s'estoient emploiez et emploient ou fait du la dite paix; a rompu la dite assignacion ordonnée pour faire cesser les dites pilleries, prins et appliqué à son prouffit ou en autres usages les deniers d'icelle assignacion, et pour rompre le traité de la paix fait tout le contraire de ce que pour l'entretienement d'icelle avoit été promis par Mondit Seigneur le Roy en la presence des dits gens des trois estas. Et qui pis est a rescript et envoyé devers les Anglois pour cuider traictier avec eulx et rompre le traité commencé avecques ceulx de son sang, et continuant sa dampnable entencion et faulse trahison a fait mander toutes gens d'armes qu'il a pu savoir et trouver, venir en la ville de Poitiers et induit Mondit Seigneur de nous venir combatre se nous feussions alé par devers lui, qui aler y devons pour le service, comme raison est et tenuz y sommes. Et non obstant ces choses, pour acquicter nostre loyaulté et nous tousjours employer au service de Mondit Seigneur, avons commancié et au plaisir de Dieu continuerons faire bonne justice et cesser les dites pilleries et nous emploierons et voulons employer de toute nostre puissance au bien de ladite paix et au recouvrement de la seigneurie de Mondit Seigneur. Et pour ceste cause sommes venu en ceste ville de Bourges aux gens d'église, bourgeois et habitans de laquelle, pource qu'elle est aujourduy l'une des plus notables obeissant à Mondit Seigneur, avons exposé nostre vouloir qui est de repeller et debouter le dit mauvais trahaitre President de Prouvence de la compaignie et conversacion de Mondit Seigneur, à ce

qu'il puisse estre en sa franchise et liberté et que vous et aultres ses bons et loyaulx subgez puissent soubs lui demeurer en bonne paix et tranquillité et mieulx vacquer à le conforter, secourir et aider à la confusion de ses ennemis comme à la chose du monde que plus desirons. Lesquelx gens d'eglise, bourgeois et habitans, acertenez des choses dessusdites, se sont adhez avecques nous, promis d'y tenir la main et de toute leur puissance en ce nous aider et secourir. Et pource que sommes acertenez de vos grans loyaultés et du bon vouloir que tous jours avez eu au bien de Mondit Seigneur et que ceste matière touche grandement tous ses bons et loyaulx subgez, escripvons devers vous en vous priant et requérant de par Mondit Seigneur et nous, si chier que vous desirez son bien et le vostre, que en cette matière semblablement vous vueillez joindre et adherer avecques nous, et en acquittant vos loyaultez nous promettre d'y tenir la main et en ce nous conseiller, secourir et aider de toute vostre puissance. Et semblablement de vostre part vous promettons de bonne foy et par le serment que nous avons à Dieu et à Mondit seigneur le Roy, de vous secourir, aider et conforter, vivre et mourir avecques vous et nous exposer de toute nostre puissance à mettre à exécution les choses dessus dites au bien de Mondit Seigneur le Roy et de tous ses loyaulx subgez.

Si nous faictes savoir sur ce par ce porteur vos entencions et voulenté, ensemble se chose voulez que puissions et nous la ferons de bon cuer.

Treschiers et bons amis, Nostre Seigneur soit garde de vous. Escript à Bourges le second jour de juing (1425),

Le conte DE RICHEMONT, Connestable de France,

Signé: ARTUR.

Et plus bas: GILET.

Au dos: A nos treschiers et bien amez les Gens d'eglise, bourgeois et habitans de la bonne ville de Lyon sur le Rosne.

Le duc de Bretagne, conte de Montfort et de Richemont.

Treschiers et bien amez, après ce que nostre treschier et très amé frère le conte de Richemond eut, de nostre consentement et pour le bien de paix, le relèvement du royaume de Monseigneur le Roy et de sa couronne, prins l'office de connestable ainsi que savez, lui, voulant procéder aux choses dessus dites ainsi que ja avoit commancé et continué à son povoir, comme avons sceu par les entrevenans, et croyons que tendis fera de mielx en mielx, le présidant de Provance avecques certains ses adherez et complices lesquels sont de povre, bas et petit lieu, pour conventise de gouverner et d'atirer à eulx les chevances du royaume sans avoir esgart au bien de mon dit seigneur, mais seulement pour leur singulier prouffilt en empeschant le dit bien de paix, ont de nouvel fait certaines manières d'entreprises contre notre dit frère en le voullant faire tuer et meurtrir se faire le peussent. Et imposans qu'il est ennemy de mon dit seigneur le Roy et plusieurs aultres choses à l'encontre de lui, non mye de lui mais principalement de mon dit Seigneur. Et ont mis sus, ont semé et publié, sement et publient de jour en jour, qu'il est empeschement de ce hault et grand bien de paix, voyre de plus grant division oudit royaume et de totale destruction d'icelui. Pour quoy nous, adcertenez des choses dessusdites, qui désirons de tout notre cueur ladite paix, la continuation de la seigneurie de mon dit seigneur le Roy, eschiver roberies, pilleries et vexations de peuple et qui ne voullons, ne ne povons bonnement souffrir telx des loyaux qui n'enquerent que le leur et ainsi gouverner mon dit Seigneur, avons disposé d'envoyer presentement et renvoyons de fait de noz gens en armes à l'encontre d'eulx et de leur mauvaisté et dampnable entreprinse, et nous y pensons employer de notre personne pour le bien de mon dit Seigneur et de la paix dessusdite. Et pour ce que nous avons sceu que de votre part, vous êtes déterminez à celle bonne fin dont nous vous savons très bon gré, et en tant que touche notre dit frère vous remercions. Nous vous prions que en si hault et noble propos, vous veuillez toudis perseverer, sachans que de notre part nous ne vous

fauldrons en aucune manière, ains vous conseillerons, conforterons et aiderons de toute notre puissance. Treschiers et bien amez, Notre Seigneur vous ayt en sa garde. Escript en notre ville de Nantes, le xiiij^e jour de juin (1425).

Signé: JEHAN.

Et plus bas: GODART.

[Documents 3 & 4 relate to p. 217 of thesis.]

5) LETTRE DE LA REINE DE SICILE, YOLANDE D'ARAGON.

Au dos: A réverend pere en Dieu, nos treschiers et grans amis les Arcevesque, Gens d'église, Senechal, Cappitaine, Conseillers, bourgeois et habitans de Lion.

La Royne de Secile, duchesse d'Anjou et de Touraine, contesse de Prouvence et du Maine.

Tresreverend pere en Dieu, treschiers et grans amis, nous avons receu par le porteur de cestes les lettres qu'avez escriptes à Monseigneur le Roy, Nous et le chancelier de France, dont mondit Seigneur à eues celles à lui escriptes, et de notres avons veu le contenu bien au long, et aussi le contenu de celles de mondit Seigneur par la copie d'icelles que nous avez envoyée, dont nous vous mercions. Et avons bien sceu et savons le tres grant vouloir et bonne volenté qu'avez au bien de mondit Seigneur, de beau cousin le Connestable, de Nous et de ce royaulme et aussi à la paix d'icellui, dont vous savons tant bon gré qu'escrive le vous saurions. Quant est du Président et autres qui ont perturbé le bien de la paix, mondit Seigneur les a, **par notre pourchaz et cellui dudit beau cousin**, mis hors et separez de sa compaignie. Et depuis avons tant fait que, à l'aide de Dieu, les choses sont de présent en tres bons termes. Et en brief doit cy venir le dit beau cousin le Connestable devers mondit seigneur pour confermer, conclure et appoincter du tout le fait de la dite pais et ensemble aviser pour pourveoir aux choses nécessaires au relevement de ce royaume et union des seigneurs du sanc de mondit Seigneur, mettre sus justice et oster toutes roberies et pilleries. **Et à ce faire nous emploirons du tout notre pover comme tousjours avons fait et tant qu'au plaisir de Notre Seigneur vendrons à notre entencion.** Tresreverend père en Dieu, treschiers et

grans amis, nous vous prions que touzjours veuillez perseverer et continuer à la bonne volenté qu'avez eue et avez au bien de monseigneur le Roy, de son royaume, de Nous et de la paix, en nous signifiant feablement se chose voulez que puissions, car volentiers et de bon cuer l'acomplirons au plaisir de Notre Seigneur qui vous ait en sa sainte garde. Escript à Poitiers le xxvii^e jour de juing (1425).

Les lettres dudit chancelier qui de present n'est pas cy, lui ferons avoir le plus tost que pourrons.

Signé: YOLANT.

Et plus bas: THOREAU.

6) DU VICAIRE DE L'ARCHEVÊQUE DE REIMS, CHANCELIER DE FRANCE.

A mes chiers et grans amis les Conseillers, bourgeois et habitans de la ville de Lyon.

Chiers et grans amis, je me recommande à vous, affin que sachiez des nouvelles de pardeça et en vous respondant à ce que ayez escript du parlement du Président. Vous en estes tous informez. **Le Roy est en ceste ville, la Royne de Secile et y a esté Charles, monseigneur de Bourbon, conte de Clermont, monseigneur le Connestable, son frère, messeigneurs de Vendosme et d'Harecourt, plusieurs prelas, barons et chevaliers. Et se y sont tenus grans conseils et tant que la merci N.-S., tout est en tresbonne union. Et demain se part d'icy mondit seigneur le Connestable pour aller faire ses monstres à Saumur et de là en la frontière. Dedans un mois les gens du Roy, de la royne de Secille, de Monseigneur de Bretaigne seront devers Monseigneur de Savoie pour le traictié de la paix et croy que je irai.** Et de présent le Roy et mondit seigneur le Connestable, envoient de leurs gens devers mondit seigneur de Savoie, entretenir la matière en attendant que soyons par-de là. Ecrivez moi de vos affaires envers le Roy et je y feray ce que je pourray. Chiers et grans amis, Nostre Seigneur vous ait en sa garde.

Escript à Poitiers, le ij^e jour d'aoust (1425).

Signé: LE VICAIRE DE L'ARCEVESQUE DE REIMS, CHANCELIER.

[Documents 5 & 6 relate to p. 218 of thesis].

- 7) **BNF, Ms. Fr. 1278, Recueil des pièces historiques sur les affaires de Bourgogne de 1306 à 1490, composé sur l'usage des ducs de Bourgogne. Ff° 47-48, « Avertissement » au duc de Bourgogne, pour le pousser à la guerre contre le roi de France. » Also cited by Cosneau, E., *Le Connétable de Richemont, (Arthur de Bretagne) (1393-1458), Paris Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1886, pp. 539-541.* [Relates to p. 349 of thesis].**

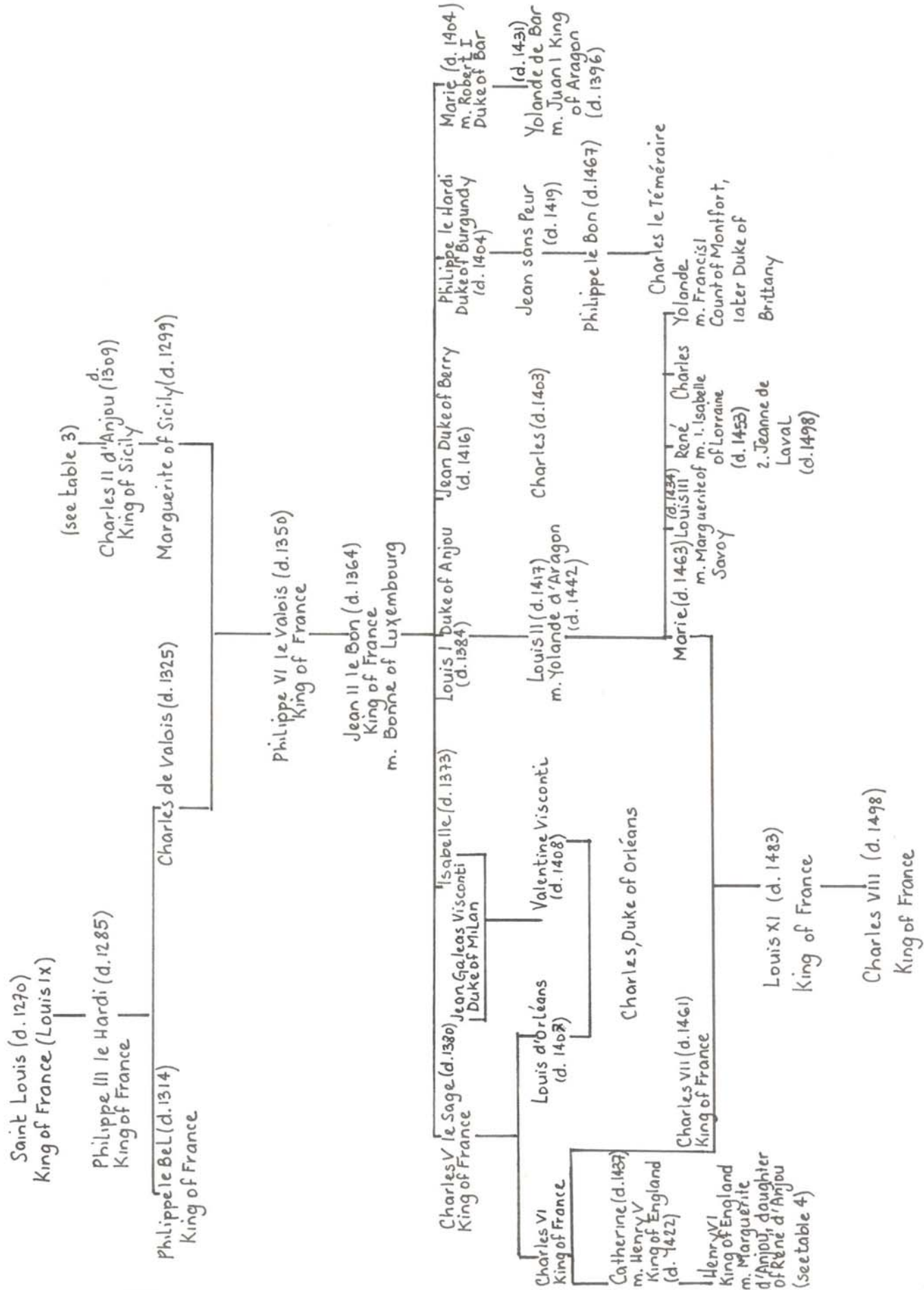
Ms.Fr 1278, folios (extract)

«... Il semble (considéré que monseigneur de Bourgogne congnoist la grant mauvaistié et malevolance que ses ennemis ont eu et ont envers de lui et encores se travaillent de faire chacun jour) que il lui est chose nécessaire de entretenir les alliances des Anglois...

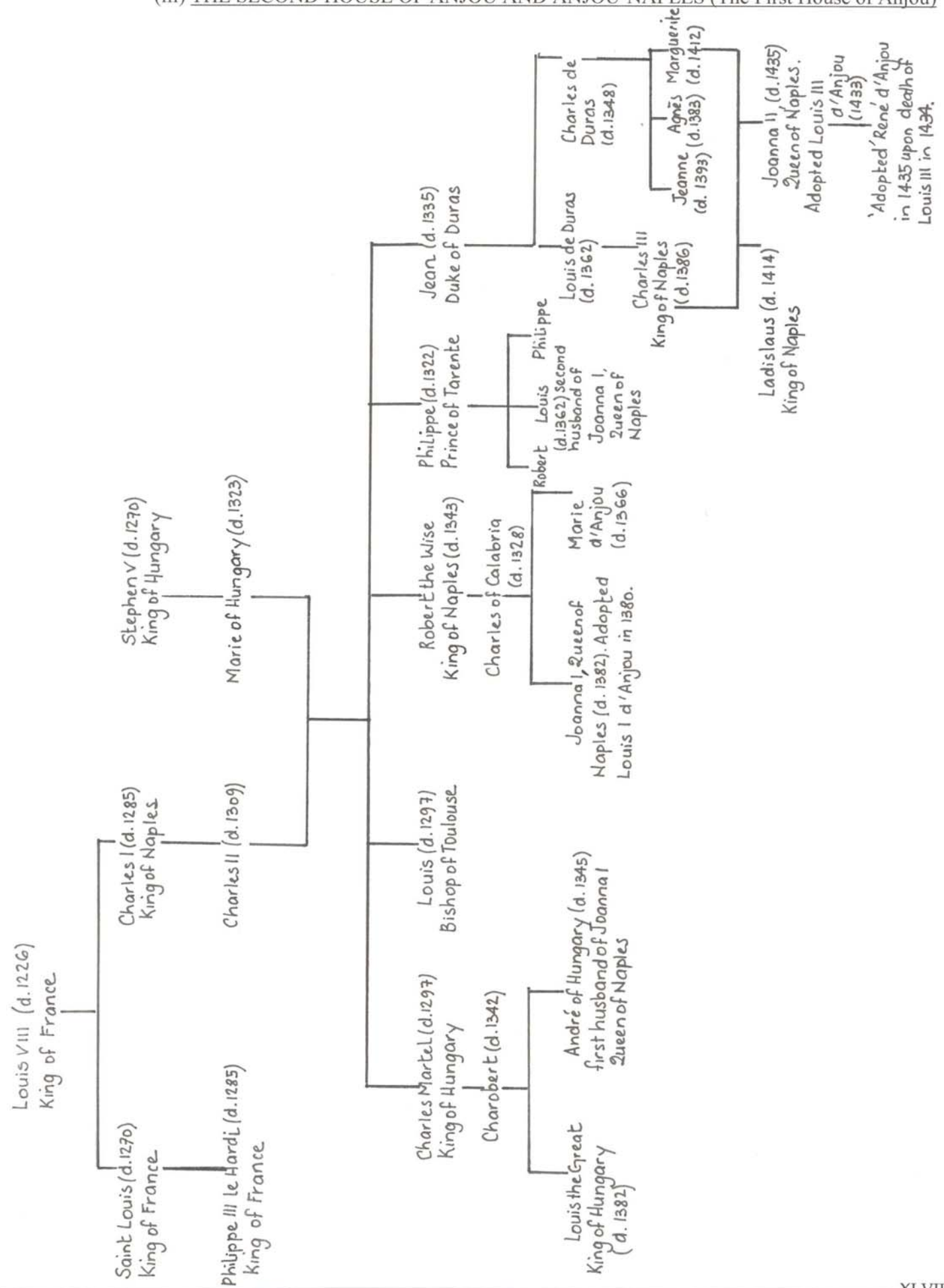
... item, que, pour l'entretènement et conduite de la chose, soit trouvé moien que monseigneur de Richemont se départe de la charge de qu'il a de l'office de connestable de par delà et soit pareillement mins oudit office de connestable de part deçà, par le moien de mondit seigneur de Bourgogne. Et, avec ce, lui soit donné la duchié de Touraine, la conté de Saint-Onge, les pays d'Aunis et la ville de la Rochelle, avecques les terres et seignories que tient le seigneur de la Trémoille ès pays de Poitou et de Saint-Onge et autres choses...

... item, moyennant l'aide de IIIM combatans que l'en pourroit bailler à mon dit seigneur de Richemont, ou aide de argent pour souladyer autres gens audit nombre de IIIM combatans qu'il pourroit trouver, se ainsi soit, en cas que mon dit seigneur de Bourgogne se voudroit disposer a ladite guerre et soy mettre sus a puissance, pour entrer et faire guerre ès pays voisins, comme ès marche de Berry, par la Charité et ailleurs et icellui monseigneur de Richemont, qui seroit fort de l'autre part et se pourroit joindre devers lui, touttefois que besoing seroit, et par ce contraindroict de Roy de départir et eslongier les marches, comme de soy retraire ès pays de Languedoc, ou autres loingtains, par quoy les ennemis tenans les places et faisans guerre à l'encontre de mon dit seigneur, de ses pays d'en deçà, semblablement pourroient être contrains de délaisser et désemparer les lieux et places et eulx en départir, par l'eslongnement dudit Roi, attendu que d'avoir secours ne pourroient avoir aucune espoir»

(ii) THE SECOND HOUSE OF ANJOU AND THE HOUSE OF VALOIS

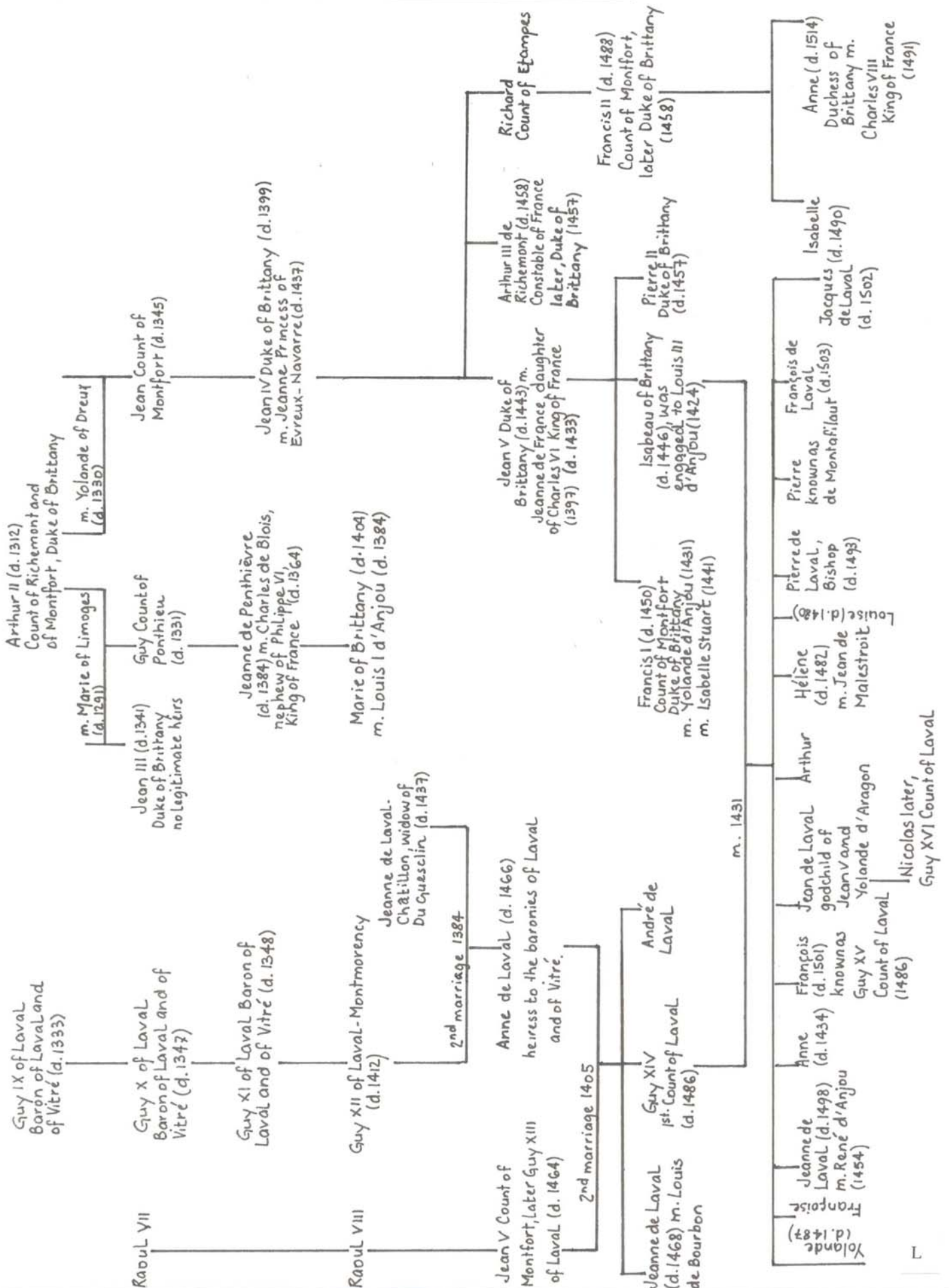


(iii) THE SECOND HOUSE OF ANJOU AND ANJOU-NAPLES (The First House of Anjou)



(v) THE SECOND HOUSE OF ANJOU AND THE HOUSES OF BRITTANY AND

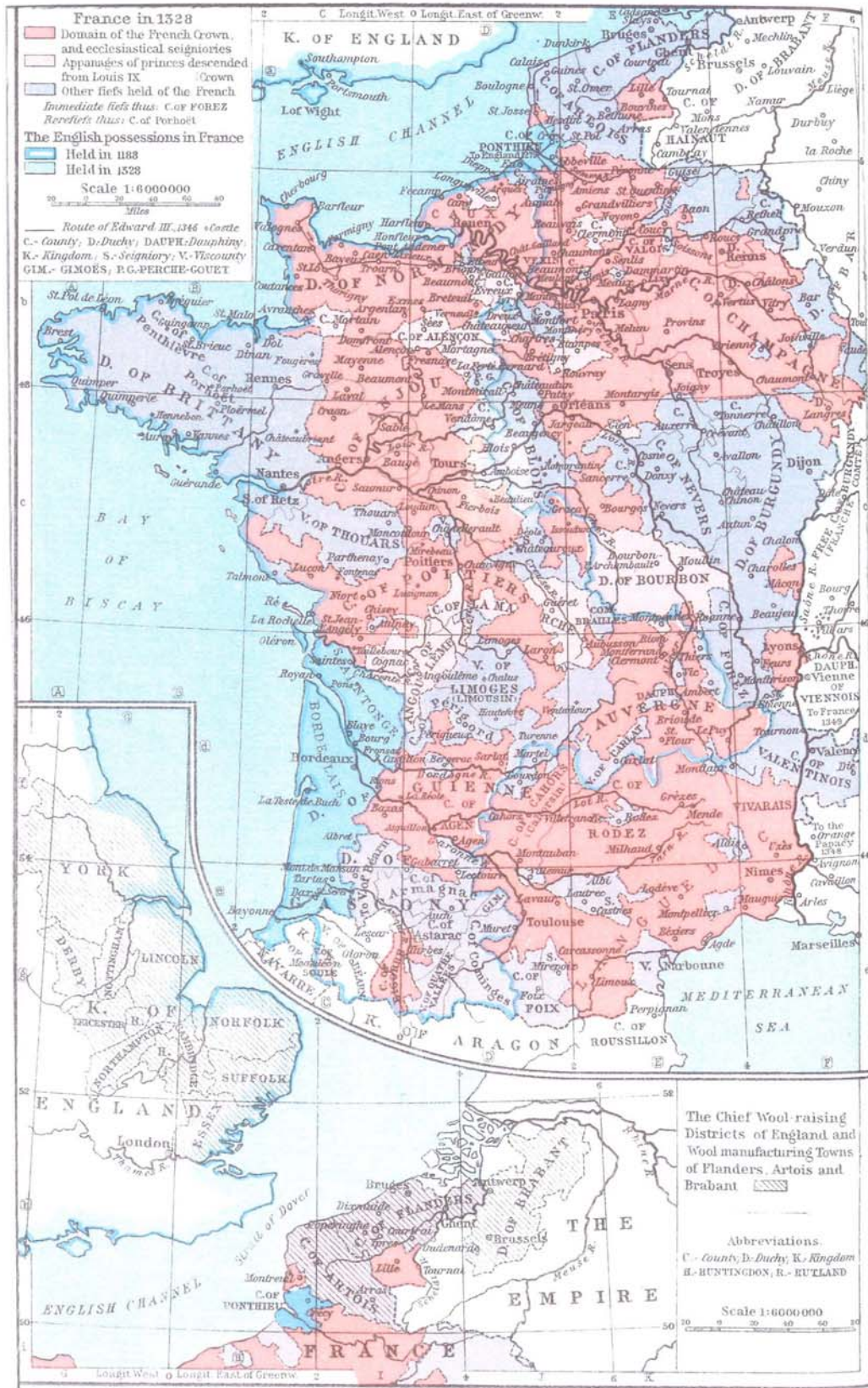
MONTMORENCY-LAVAL



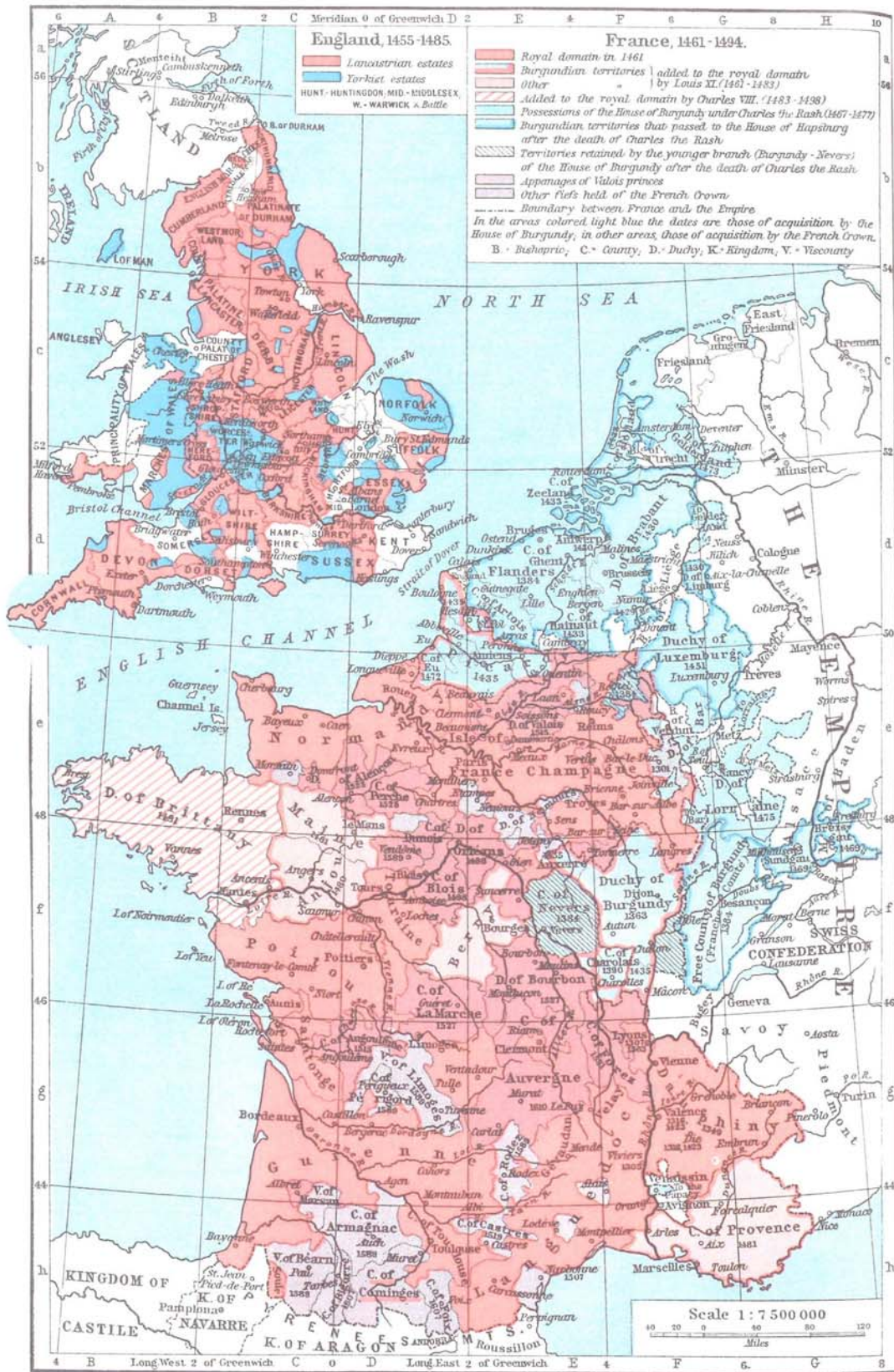
MAPS

Maps 1-3, Shepherd, William, R., *Shepherd's Historical Atlas*, (ninth edition), New York, Evanston, San Francisco & London, Barnes and Noble Books, 1973, pp. 76, 77 & 84. Map 4, Aceto, Francesco, & Le Goff, Guy Massin, (eds.), *L'Europe des Anjou: aventure des princes Angevins du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, Paris, Somogy, 2001, pp. 18-19.

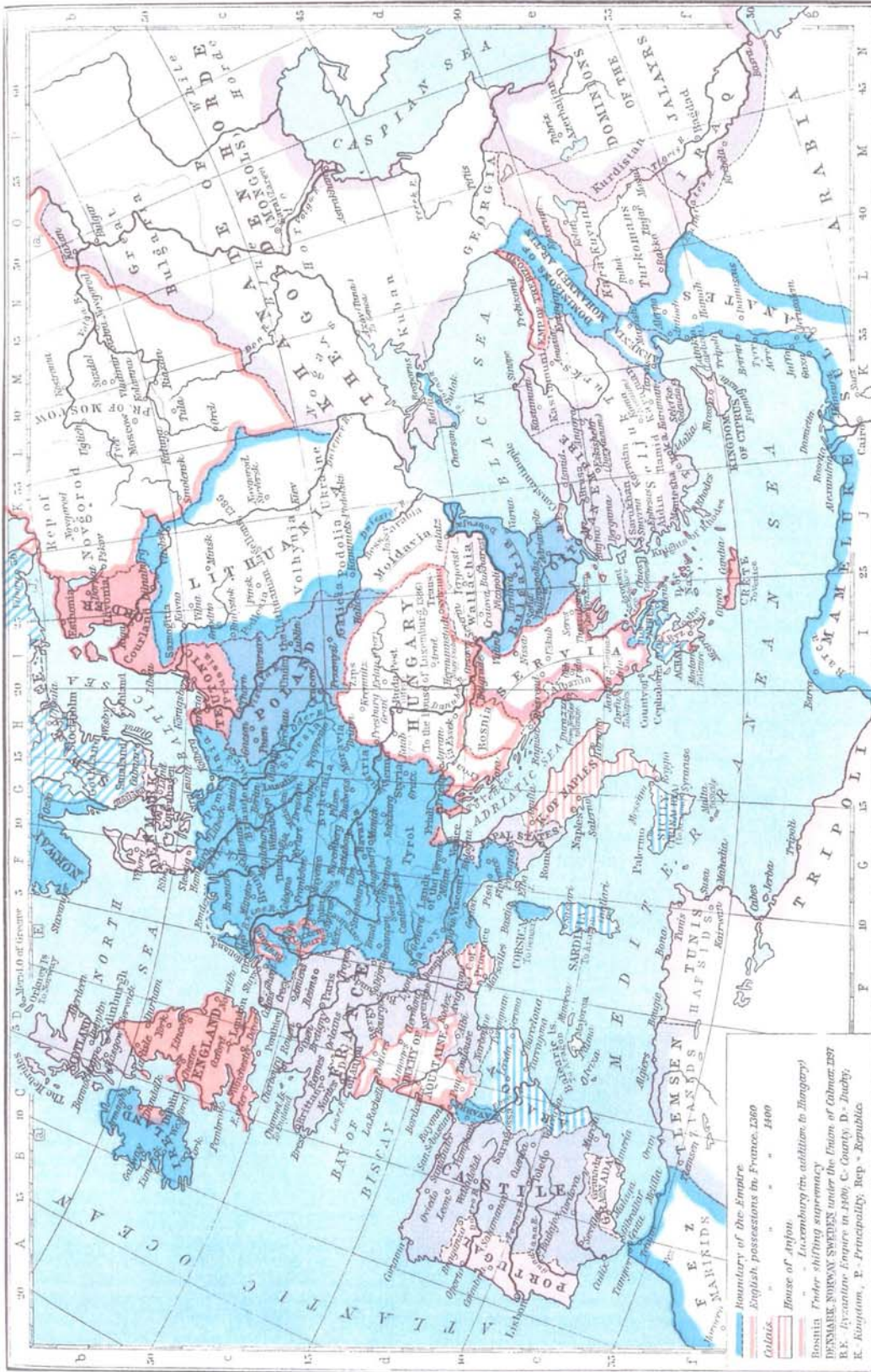
(1) FRANCE IN 1328



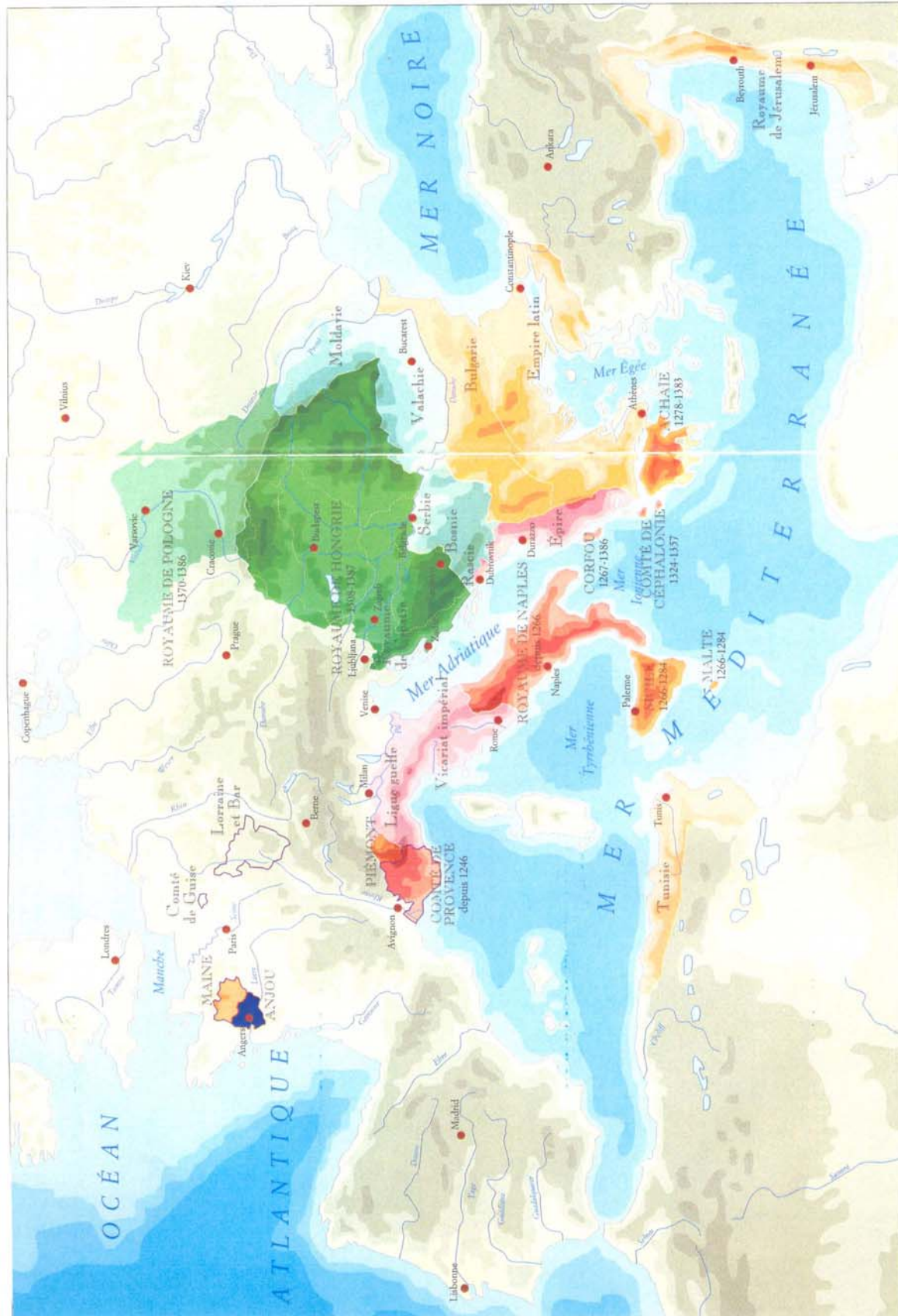
(2) ENGLAND AND FRANCE 1455-1494



(3) EUROPE 1360-1400



(4) ANGEVIN EXPANSION DURING XIIIth-XVth CENTURIES



■ Anjou	■ BRANCHE HONGROISE
■ BRANCHE NAPOLITAINE	■ Noyau des possessions territoriales
■ Noyau des possessions territoriales	■ Possessions éphémères
■ Possessions éphémères	 Zones d'influence
 Zones d'influence	 MAISON DUCALE
 Prétentions	 Territoires au XVe siècle