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"La maleureuse bataille': Fifteenth-Century French Reactions to Agincourt[1]

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the military and political impact of the battle of Agincourt in France, and the way in which this defeat was remembered up until the end of the Hundred Years War. The English presented their victory as a sign of God's support for Henry V and his claims in France, but the French preferred to understand their defeat as a divine punishment for their sins. This led to debate about who had incurred God's wrath, as civilians blamed soldiers, soldiers blamed their aristocratic leaders, and partisans for the Armagnac and Burgundian factions blamed one another. But most French commentators attempted to bridge these divisions, or at least to minimize the damage by attributing the disaster to the actions of foolish young hot-heads and to cowards. This avoided the need to name and shame specific noblemen, but meant that only the most traditional lessons were highlighted from this defeat.

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I

The battle of Agincourt (25 October 1415) remains one of the most celebrated victories in English history.[2] Experts now debate whether the army of Henry V was as heavily outnumbered as contemporary sources reported, but the notion of a dramatic military triumph won against the odds burnished the aura of English military superiority that had developed during the glory days of Edward III in the 1340s and 1350s.[3] But Agincourt was not a decisive victory for the English. Merely defeating a French army was not enough to force the French king, Charles VI, to accede to Henry V's demands. The French had certainly suffered heavy losses at Agincourt, including around five hundred noblemen killed or captured, undermining their ability to defend the kingdom and also weakening the crown's political and administrative control in Normandy, Artois and Picardy that had provided the lion's share of the army.[4] But Charles VI himself had taken no part in the battle, and was neither humiliated in front of his leading noblemen, as his predecessor Philippe VI had been at Crécy in 1346, nor captured and forced to negotiate, as had happened when Jean II was taken prisoner at Poitiers in 1356. Shortly after Agincourt, a royal secretary named Jean de Montreuil did not even mention the battle when revising a manual for French diplomats that rehearsed the arguments against Henry V's claims in France.[5]

Henry V needed to fight on after Agincourt in order to secure his wider strategic goals, attempting to exploit the weakness of a French regime that was militarily, politically and administratively shaken.[6] The English king did not strike at the capital immediately after the battle, as many had feared, but even when he finally left France on 11 November 1415, there was little doubt that he would return.[7] Having secured Harfleur against French efforts to recapture the town in 1416, Henry V launched a full-scale invasion of Normandy, landing at Touques on 1 August 1417 and demanding that Charles VI surrender the crown of France.[8] This marked the start of an English occupation of northern France that would last until 1450.[9] And when the duke of Burgundy was assassinated during a meeting with the Dauphin Charles at Montereau on 10 September 1419, his son, Philippe Le Bon, forged an alliance with Henry V. Together, they pressured Charles VI into agreeing the treaty of Troyes on 21 May 1420, by which the king disinherited his own son and adopted Henry as his heir.[10] The Anglo-Burgundian alliance dominated French politics until the Congress of Arras in 1435, when the duke finally abandoned the English and reconciled with the Valois monarch, Charles VII.[11]

The need to continue fighting in France shaped the way in which Agincourt was remembered and celebrated in England until the end of the Hundred Years War and beyond. Historians have carefully traced the way in which the triumph was celebrated and remembered in the years after the battle. The Lancastrian regime emphasised the triumphal scale of a victory that was presented as a sign of divine support for Henry V, and hence used to justify appeals for public support for further military action.[12] Twelve days after the battle, the chancellor addressed parliament, where he attributed this success to the hand of God and compared his king to Judas Maccabeus.[13] Then on 23 November 1415, Henry V paraded through London, wearing a simple gown and riding with just a small number of men, thereby demonstrating his concern to thank God rather than to indulge in any personal glorification.[14] A convocation of the clergy of the

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province of Canterbury held at St Pauls' Cathedral on 2 December 1415 agreed to elevate St George's Day into a double feast to commemorate the great victory.[15] These themes were further underlined in two biographies of the king, the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* written by an anonymous royal chaplain, and the *Liber Metricus* by Thomas Elmham, both written during his lifetime.[16] In short, the official line was that victory at Agincourt proved God's favour for Henry V and hence for his legal claims in both England and France, thereby helping to mobilize manpower and financial resources in pursuit of military goals.

Less attention has been paid to the ways in which Agincourt was remembered and understood across the Channel. Scholarly attention has largely focused upon the personal and immediate reactions of two of the greatest French authors of the age, Christine de Pizan and Alain Chartier.[17] Their writings provide invaluable insight into the deep grief occasioned by this disaster amongst the elevated circle of aristocrats who were personally affected by the defeat. But they represent just a starting point for studying the complex and fragmented responses to Agincourt in France, that have been surveyed by Anne Curry in an important collection of translated extracts and a brief chronological overview.[18]

Unlike in England, there was no official response to the battle of Agincourt in France because of the vacuum of leadership created by the incapacity of King Charles VI, the loss of so many leading noblemen in the battle itself, and the unexpected death of the Dauphin just weeks later on 18 December 1415. Nevertheless, there were common elements in French responses to Agincourt, shaped by the continued military threat presented by the English and a refusal to accept their claim that God had ruled in favour of Henry V. The French preferred to see Agincourt as a battle that they had lost, rather than as an English victory. Furthermore, the French held that this defeat was a divine punishment inflicted upon them for their sins, rather than evidence of God's support for the English. Philippe de Villette, abbot of Saint-Denis, had warned Charles VI in a sermon entitled *Accipe sanctum gladium* on 2 April 1414, that God

> 'sometimes gives victory to the good, sometimes to the wicked, not by chance or hazard, but for reasons and causes which are very good, even though they may not seem constant or intelligible to men … Then, in all battles where the outcome is in any way in doubt, or uncertain, you should fight fearing lest God wishes to punish you for anything else than the cause at issue'.[19]

This theology allowed the French to avoid giving credit to the English for their victory, and instead focus upon identifying the sins that had led to their defeat, inevitably triggering a great deal of divisive debate.

Curry has argued that these French responses were driven and defined by the tensions between the Armagnac and Burgundian parties, as 'each faction soon sought to blame the other for the defeat'.[20] The rivalry between the two factions had brewed for many years, and indeed Philippe de Villette had delivered the sermon *Accipe sanctum gladium* on the occasion of the raising of the oriflamme for a military campaign against the rebellious duke of Burgundy who had been driven from the royal court by his Armagnac rivals.[21] Agincourt stoked the long-

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standing tensions between these factions.[22] In the aftermath of the battle, there were fears that the duke of Burgundy, Jean Sans Peur, would capitalize on the loss of so many leading Armagnacs by seizing power in Paris.[23] By 10 December, Jean was at Lagny, just fifteen miles from the capital, from where he exchanged aggressive messages with the Dauphin Louis de Guyenne who was demanding that the duke dismiss his troops or be attacked as a traitor.[24] Eight days later, the Dauphin died of illness, and it was only the appointment of a new constable, Bernard count of Armagnac, that stabilized the situation and forced Burgundy to withdraw on 28 January 1416.[25] Nevertheless the hostility between the Armagnacs and Burgundians endured, shaping French politics throughout the final stages of the Hundred Years War.[26]

Yet it would be a simplification to view French reactions to Agincourt solely through the lens of this partisan political squabble. On the one hand, responses to the defeat were also shaped by other internal divisions, and in particular social and class tensions. There were other kinds of finger-pointing and scapegoating as civilians blamed soldiers, and ordinary soldiers blamed the noblemen who had led the French army. On the other hand, it was only the most extreme partisan voices that laid the blame for the disaster Agincourt directly at the feet of their rivals. Most commentators tried to offer more constructive reactions to the disaster, and carefully avoided calling out particular individuals or groups by name, instead blaming the defeat upon the traditional culprits for such setbacks in chivalric culture, rash youths and cowards. Regurgitating these clichés had important consequences for the specific military lessons that contemporary chroniclers could offer from the story of Agincourt for future generations.

II

Agincourt was the occasion of great sadness and grief in France. Shortly after the battle, a monk at the abbey of Saint-Denis named Michel Pintoin (d. 1421) presented a detailed account of the campaign in his celebrated Latin chronicle of the reign of Charles VI.[27] Pintoin was unable to restrain his emotions as he described the defeat as 'the great sadness which I cannot think about without shedding tears, and which covers France and its people with shame and confusion'.[28] Pintoin also described the grief that overwhelmed the king when news of the defeat reached him at Rouen immediately after the battle, not to mention the wider court: it was 'a sight to bring tears to the eyes to see some of the women crying bitterly at the loss of their husbands, others inconsolable at the death of their children and their closest relatives, but especially those who had fallen without glory'.[29]

Modern commentators have been particularly struck by two fascinating sources that illustrate the depth of aristocratic grief occasioned by Agincourt.[30] The first is Alain Chartier's *Livre des quatre dames*, written within a year of the battle.[31] This sophisticated literary work imagined a debate between four ladies who were competing to prove which one of them had suffered the most because of the battle: the first lady's lover had died in combat, the second's had been taken prisoner, the third's was missing, and the fourth's had only survived because of his cowardice. Chartier used these fictional characters to explore the pain and grief experienced by real women affected by Agincourt. For example, the lady who was grieving because her lover

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was missing recalls the fate of Marguerite Dauphine, wife of Jean IV de Bueil, grand master of the crossbowmen, who was forced to have her husband declared lost because his body was never found after the battle.[32]

Two years later, Christine de Pizan wrote the *Epistre de la prison de vie humaine* to console 'queens, princesses, baronesses, ladies and young girls of the noble royal blood of France' who were grieving because their male relatives had died or been captured at Agincourt.[33] Echoing the usual themes of such works of *consolatio*, Christine reminded her readers that life was a human prison from which death was a means of escape, that life was merely a loan from God that must ultimately be returned, that death was part of the divine plan, and that tears and sadness could not bring back the dead. She recommended faith in the Scriptures, and the writings of St. Augustine, Gregory the Great, Bernard of Clairvaux and Boethius.[34] She also reassured the aristocratic women that the French knights who had died at Agincourt were thereby 'elected with God's martyrs through battle, and were made obedient until death to sustain justice and the right of the French crown and their sovereign lord'.[35] This was striking language, boldly attempting to reimagine French casualties of Agincourt as martyrs, even though they had been fighting against fellow Christians. This was an appropriation of the rhetoric and theology of crusading, that had been seen, for example, in the celebration of those French knights who had died at the battle of Nicopolis on 25 September 1396.[36]

But in reality, there was a striking contrast between the public commemoration of those who had died at Nicopolis, and the silence following Agincourt that presumably amplified the importance of Christine's *Epistre de la prison de vie humaine* as a work of private consolation. When news of Nicopolis had reached Paris, Charles VI and Berry led a procession to the priory of Sainte-Catherine du Cal-des-Écoliers, seeking divine help for those Frenchmen who remained in Turkish hands. The king and the royal court also attended a funeral service at Notre Dame on 11 January 1397 for all those who had died, and memorial services and masses were performed in churches across Paris.[37] But the response in 1415 was far more modest. The French nation of the University of Paris held a service on 31 October 1415, followed by a vigil in the chapel of the College of Navarre on 11 November, and a requiem mass performed the bishop of Chalon-sur-Seine, the following day.[38] Meanwhile the duke of Burgundy attended a requiem service for Antoine duke of Brabant and the Count of Nevers at the Église Saint-Nicolas at Châtillon-sur-Seine on 11 November 1415, and services also took place at other provincial churches, including the collegiate church of Saint-Quiriace at Provins.[39] But when the king entered Paris on 29 November, there was no royal entry or official welcome to the city, and the Dauphin did not visit the Abbey of Saint-Denis when he passed by it the following day.[40] Indeed, no official services were held after the king returned to the capital and there was no repeat of the processions and public prayers that had been enthusiastically organized before the battle.[41] Furthermore, there is little indication that the battle was discussed at public assemblies. The greffier of the Parlement of Paris, Nicolas de Baye, did not record the news in his official record until a month after Agincourt, and then merely noted that the English had defeated the royal army.[42]

This muted reaction must be explained in part by the unexpected death of the Dauphin Louis de Guyenne, on 18 December 1415; he was buried on 23 December near the main altar at

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the church of Notre-Dame.[43] But it was also a consequence of the threat posed by the English and by the Burgundians, and of the inability of Charles VI to offer leadership in this moment of crisis, disruption and chaos. This had been made manifest in the immediate aftermath of the battle, when the king had acted too hastily in replacing numerous royal officers thought to be dead or taken prisoner. Charles had to issue an ordonnance on 29 October 1415, revoking those nominations that had been made before it was confirmed that the offices were actually vacant; he promised that he would only make future grants with the advice of the royal council.[44] Around the same time, Master Jean Maulin, royal librarian, brought a book on artillery and siege engines from the Louvre to the king at Rouen. It is might well be Charles had requested this item in order to help shape a plan to recapture Harfleur from the English, but it is seems far more likely that the book was simply intended to give the king something 'to look at if he could do nothing else'.[45]

One striking consequence of the muted official response to Agincourt was a lack of consensus about the very name of the battle. Pintoin, Chartier and Pizan all avoided identifying it, with Chartier famously preferring to refer to it as that 'maudicte journee'.[46] This silence served a dramatic purpose, underlining the deep emotional reactions inspired a disaster so immense that it could not be named.[47] But it also testified to genuine confusion about what to call the battle. One anonymous French official composed a text entitled *Débats et appointements* between 1418 and 1419 in which he referred to the battle of Blangy, a small village around four miles south-east of Azincourt.[48] Meanwhile official documents issued in Burgundian territories referred to it variously as the battle of Azincourt, Blangy and 'Ruiseauville', a village located two miles north of Azincourt.[49] It was only in the following decade that chroniclers started to refer to the battle consistently by the name that the English sources had been using since the very beginning.

It is also important to recognise that Alain Chartier and Christine de Pizan were testifying to the emotional reactions of the aristocratic elite for whom they were writing, rather than the wider populace. For example, the *Epistre de la prison de vie humaine* survives in just one single manuscript.[50] It was addressed to Marie de Berry, duchess of Bourbon, and daughter of Christine's generous patron Jean duke of Berry; Marie had lost her son-in-law, Philippe de Bourgogne, count of Nevers, at Agincourt, along with two cousins, Antoine duke of Brabant and the constable Charles d'Albret.[51] Neither Christine nor Chartier were addressing the plight of the families of less socially prestigious soldiers in the aftermath Agincourt, whose voices are lost to history. Yet it is very plausible that such people might have had complex reactions to the sacrifices made by their relatives.

First and foremost, the ordinary French soldiers killed at Agincourt were not accorded the same respect as their aristocratic brothers-in-arms, as was usually the case following medieval battles.[52] The heralds at Agincourt only counted noble casualties and prisoners, and there was no official tally of the full number of dead, partially explaining why chroniclers offered wildly differing estimates of the total number of Frenchmen killed there.[53] The constable, Charles d'Albret, and the admiral, Jacques de Châtillon were buried at Hesdin, eight miles from the battlefield, while the duke of Alençon was interred one hundred and sixty miles away at the Abbaye Saint-Martin de Sées.[54] The body of Antoine duke of Brabant was found two days after the battle and transported by his servants in a funeral cortége via Saint-Pol,

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Tournai and Halle to Brussels.[55] But the corpses of few other soldiers received such respectful treatment.[56] Local churchyards were quickly overwhelmed, and the *Chronique du Ruisseauville* even claimed that a temporary prohibition on the delivery of new corpses was issued.[57] So the vast majority of the casualties were simply buried with little ceremony in trenches near to the battlefield, thanks to the efforts of the local bishop of Thérouanne, Louis de Luxembourg.[58] Even the location of that burial site still remains a mystery, and it is far from clear how many men were interred there.[59]

There are also hints of tensions between the French men-at-arms and the ordinary soldiers who had served at Agincourt. The aristocratic men-at-arms had formed the heart of the army, as was customary, and they were supported by crossbowmen together with a significant number of less skilful infantry. Before the battle, the constable and the marshal had drawn up a plan of battle for taking on the English, which imagined a prominent role for the crossbowmen positioned on the wings of the main formation. But when the battle did finally take place, the crossbowmen were withdrawn.[60] Many chroniclers reported that the men-at-arms had deliberately pushed the lower ranks to the back, or had even dismissed them from the army entirely. According to Michel Pintoin, for example, the men-at-arms had been so certain of victory that they had preferred to keep all the glory for themselves, and had therefore foolishly dismissed not just the crossbowmen, but also a further six thousand troops from Paris.[61] This claim was echoed in other accounts, such as the chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins in which the men-at-arms were said to have despised the soldiers from Paris and elsewhere, armed with their axes and hammers.[62] Lurking behind these remarks was the shadow of the Cabochien uprising in Paris just two years earlier, which had been graphically described by Pintoin and the anonymous author of the chronicle attributed to Juvénal des Ursins just pages before their discussions of Agincourt.[63] Just three weeks after the battle of Agincourt, Charles VI issued a general pardon, freeing those who had been imprisoned for their role in the sedition, but exempting Simon Caboche and the forty-four other leaders who had escaped royal justice through the protection of the duke of Burgundy.[64]

Perhaps the most interesting comment comes from an anonymous chronicle written at Ruisseauville, close to Agincourt, which claimed that there was a popular belief that the humble soldiers known as *gros varlets* could have tipped the balance of the battle in favour of the French: 'It is said that the men of Hesdin and the countryside thereabouts were strong enough to defeat all the English after the battle … It is said that the *gros varlets* might have fought well against the English and all their power'.[65] Whether this was true or not is less important than the notion that the marginalization of ordinary soldiers had handed a decisive advantage to the English. It is not difficult to imagine how such ideas might have emerged if these troops had indeed been sent to the rear of the French army; they would have had ringside seats to watch the disaster play out, and in the aftermath might have 'had a somewhat disproportionate weighting in the general understanding of the battle that developed'.[66]

Agincourt certainly raised questions about the ability of the aristocracy to perform their traditional duty as protectors of the people of France. An anonymous poem written very soon

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after the battle was transcribed into the record of the greffier of the Parlement of Paris, Nicolas de Baye. It emphasised the dire consequences of Agincourt for the people who had to rely upon 'weak protectors who bring them danger', and blamed the defeat by a 'Feeble enemy' upon a lack of leadership and division amongst the royal princes.[67] These themes were repeated, for example, in the *Quadrilogue invectif* (1422), in which Alain Chartier used the character of 'Le Peuple' to give voice to popular concerns at the failure of aristocracy to live up to their responsibility to defend France and protect the people.[68]

That the royal army had failed to protect the kingdom from the English invaders was even more galling given the decades of violence and abuse perpetrated by French soldiers against their own people. Many chroniclers recounted a story in which Henry V addressed his prisoners at dinner after the battle, claiming that victory had been granted to him by God, the Virgin Mary and St George as punishment for the sins of the French soldiers who had gone into 'battle in pride and bombastic fashion, violating maidens, married women and others, and also robbing the countryside and all the churches; acting like that, God will never aid you'.[69] Writing in the early 1470s, the Norman chronicler Thomas Basin specifically linked the defeat at Agincourt to the infamous sack of Soissons following the end of a ten day siege on 21 May 1414. He argued that God had punished the French soldiers for their brutality, and in particular for plundering the abbey of Saint-Crépin-le-Grand, the site of the tombs of St. Crispin and his brother Crispinian whose feast day was 25 October, the date of the battle of Agincourt.[70]

The pillaging and destruction that had taken place at Soissons was a particularly striking example of the violence and cruelty perpetrated by French soldiers against their own people.[71] The Burgundian chronicler, Enguerrand de Monstrelet, offered a moving account of the destruction, reporting that no true Christian could fail to feel pity for the victims of the soldiers and denouncing the vicious rape of so many women, from noble ladies to nuns.[72] One Parisian commentator said that the soldiers at Soissons had acted worse than Saracens.[73] That these horrors had been perpetrated by the French royal army just seventeen months before Agincourt may have coloured later reflections upon the battle. The chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins even claimed that the bishop of Norwich assured the people of Harfleur that they should not fear Henry V and his English army because they were good Christians and would not repeat what had been done at Soissons.[74]

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Yet Soissons was not a simply example of the violent abuse of civilians by uncontrolled and ill-disciplined soldiers, because the sack had been deliberately ordered by the commanders of the royal army. The author of *Débats et appointements* (1419) complained that Soissons was destroyed by those who should have been governing and protecting it.[75] The town had been targeted because of its loyalty to the duke of Burgundy. In January 1414, the Dauphin Louis duke of Guyenne had thrown his support behind the Armagnacs who were seeking revenge against Jean Sans Peur, duke of Burgundy for the murder of Louis d'Orleans in 1407. When the royal council

declared Burgundy to be a rebel, a traitor and a murderer, the Dauphin was dispatched to bring his father-in-law to justice, leading an expedition that left Paris on 9 April 1414.[76] Joined by King Charles VI, this royal army laid siege to the Burgundian-controlled town of Soissons on 11 May and forced the garrison to surrender ten days later, leading to the sack of the town. The campaign then continued, with the French army laying siege to Arras on 28 July, until they agreed a peace with Burgundy on 4 September.[77]

Tensions between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians continued long after Agincourt, and so their feuding and hostility affected the French debate about the battle, as partisans from each side tried to place the blame for the disaster upon their rivals. Critics of the duke of Burgundy speculated whether he had actively encouraged Henry V to attack France. In the aftermath of the English invasion of Normandy in August 1417, for example, the Armagnac-controlled royal council accused Burgundy of having assisted the English two years earlier.[78] In the early 1430s, a Norman chronicler claimed that Burgundy had foolishly made an alliance with Henry V that had opened the door for the Agincourt expedition, but that the duke had quickly abandoned this when the English won the battle.[79]

It was undeniable that Burgundy and Henry V had had strong connections pre-dating the English king's inheritance of his throne. In 1414 they discussed a marriage alliance and English military support for a Burgundian campaign against the Armagnacs, and a year after Agincourt the two princes met for secret talks at Calais.[80] But just two weeks before the beginning of the Agincourt campaign, Burgundy had sworn to abide by the terms of the treaty of Arras that he had signed with the Armagnacs in September 1414, pledging his loyalty to Charles VI.[81] The duke later tried to scotch rumours that he had conspired with the English in a manifesto that he issued at Hesdin on 25 April 1417, in which he claimed that it was actually the Armagnacs who had been responsible for allowing Henry V to invade France and to win the battle of Agincourt.[82]

But the core problem for Burgundy was that neither he, nor his son Philippe, had taken the field at Agincourt.[83] Michel Pintoin claimed that Jean Sans Peur did not join the host because the other French princes did not like him and had wanted to win all the honour for themselves.[84] The more hostile chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins reported that the duke had been nearby at the start of the battle but had not been bothered to take part.[85] An overtly Burgundian poem named *Le Pastoralet*, written between 1422 and 1425, offered a strong defence of Jean Sans Peur. In an allegorical account of the battle, the anonymous poet readily admitted that the absence of the duke was a crucial factor in the defeat because the English had been frightened of him, but argued that Burgundy had been unable to risk taking part in the battle because of the threat of betrayal by the Armagnacs.[86] Following the rapprochement between Charles VII and Philippe duke of Burgundy in 1435, Burgundian writers shifted ground to focus upon defending Philippe's absence from the battle of Agincourt. Monstrelet, Lefèvre and Wavrin all claimed that the nineteen year old Philippe had desperately wanted to join the battle, but had been prevented by his father.[87]

Of course, the absence of the duke and his son was mitigated by the fact that two of his brothers, Antoine duke of Brabant and Philippe count of Nevers, died there.[88] The most partisan Burgundian accounts contrasted their brave sacrifices with the abject failures of the Armagnacs

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who had fought alongside them. For example, the allegorical account of the battle in *Le Pastoralet* presented a simple contrast between the bravery of the Léonois (Burgundians) who lost their lives fighting courageously, and the cowardly Lupalois (Armagnacs) who caused the defeat by fleeing from the English.[89] Some forty years later, the *Livre des trahisons de France envers la maison de Bourgogne* directly accused the Armagnac princes who fought at Agincourt of treachery, and contrasted this with the brave self-sacrifice made by Brabant and Nevers, that stood against the treachery of the Armagnac princes.[90]

Yet it is important to remember that partisan reponses to Agincourt like these two texts were very unusual. Most commentators and chroniclers were too cautious to place blame explicitly upon one side or the other, and were simply trying to negotiate the perilous challenge of reflecting upon the battle within the longer history of conflict between the two parties, and in the context of an increasingly hostile political atmosphere.[91] Simply placing the blame upon one aristocratic faction or another offered little hope for the future.[92]

There were certainly few people brave enough to stand back and argue bluntly that the rivalry between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians had been the root cause of the disaster.[93] A rare exception was a letter sent in the name of the king by the *grand conseil* on 27 February 1419 which argued that the defeat at Agincourt had been caused by political divisions in France, and therefore called upon the Dauphin Charles and his Armagnac supporters to make peace with the Burgundians.[94] Another exception was the bishop of Beauvais, Jean Juvénal des Ursins, in the advice that he prepared for French diplomats in 1435. Anticipated the English argument that Agincourt proved God's support for their efforts to conquer France, Ursins countered that God had merely been punishing the French for their divisions:

> 'Agincourt … was only a divine execution to chastise my children, and all by the means of this Sedition and Division. Because if they had not been, your Henry would not have caused such harm in France … And if he won the battles of Agincourt and Verneuil, this was only because of these sins, because commonly and often God punishes sinners through worse sinners than them.[95]

The bishop made this observation as French diplomats were preparing for the Congress of Arras where negotiations were due to take place to win the duke of Burgundy back to the allegiance of King Charles VII.[96] It was therefore the right moment for Jean Juvénal to present Agincourt as a divine punishment for the sedition and internal divisions that had afflicted France, a direct allusion to the rivalry and the civil war between the Armagnacs and the Burgundians that was finally reaching a conclusion.

Most writers were more circumspect, preferring to maintain the hope, or at least the fiction of French unity. Writing very soon after the battle, Michel Pintoin had carefully presented the disaster as divine punishment for the collective sins of all French people:[97]

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> 'There were those who in the bitterness of their grief, cursed divine providence and asked why France, who had previously been so beloved by fortune, had experienced such misfortune. I heard several men of wisdom reply that the misfortune had been caused to the realm by the sins of its inhabitants and that if they had deserved God to be their helpmate, they would without doubt have easily destroyed the force of their enemies and humbled their excessive pride … [They blamed the] corrupt offspring, the sons of iniquity, who held the faith as nought and rushed, without any concern or holding back, into all kinds of vices following evil and avoiding good.'[98]

This led Pintoin to launch a scathing attack upon the sins of all French people, denouncing debauchery, avarice, blasphemy and all kinds of vice. In the context of that wide-ranging critique, Pintoin complained that the bishops had abandoned the people to the wolves, and more tentatively asked others to decide whether the nobility were also responsible because they had become decadent and because of the feuding that had arisen between the Armagnacs and Burgundians following the assassination of Louis duke of Orleans in 1407, and which had been comprehensively narrated in his chronicle.[99] But his core message was that all Frenchmen shared responsibility for the disaster at Agincourt.[100]

Pintoin also sought to depoliticize the defeat by attributing the disaster to the arrogance and cowardice of unnamed French soldiers, rather than by explicitly blaming either the Armagnacs or the Burgundians. He famously claimed that the younger French knights had demanded places at the front of the army and had recklessly attacked the English position against the advice of more-experienced soldiers.[101] In their pride, they had been so certain that fortune would favour them that they 'took little time to realise to their cost that the outcome of combat depends not on human forces but on fortune, or, more precisely, the sovereign arbiter of fortune'.[102] These problems were then compounded by the cowardice of other French troops who had shamefully refused to reinforce the vanguard as the battle turned in favour of the English.[103] This analysis was echoed in most contemporary French accounts of the battle that avoided identifying these arrogant and cowardly soldiers.

It was a very well-worn cliché to blame military disasters upon ill-discipline, and in particular the twin evils of rashness and cowardice: the '*topos*, hasty youth opposing the wise counsel of elders … was a feature of many medieval narratives.'[104] In their accounts of the defeat at Crécy in 1346, the influential chroniclers Jean Le Bel and Jean Froissart had described French knights foolishly rushing into the fray, so keen to win honour that they had abandoned all order and discipline.[105] Meanwhile chivalric manuals consistently emphasised the dangers of ill-discipline, arrogance and rashness on the battlefield. Writing just a few years before Agincourt, Christine de Pizan had urged French princes to recognise the importance of avoiding foolhardiness and of moderating courage with reason and discipline.[106] Seven years later, Alain Chartier suggested that the principal lesson to be learned from Agincourt was the danger of recklessness and rashness. He therefore underlined the importance of wise planning, the

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careful deployment of troops, and hence diligence, patience and moderation, as had been demonstrated by great Roman commanders.[107]

One of the greatest advantages of the blaming a military disaster upon hot-heads and cowards was that it avoided the need to identify specific scapegoats. There was certainly little effort to name and shame specific individuals who had fought at Agincourt.[108] Pintoin mentioned just two noblemen who had been foolishly carried away in the battle, Brabant and Alençon, one a Burgundian and the other an Armagnac.[109] The chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins also reported that two leading Armagnacs, Alençon and Bourbon, had championed the idea of aggressive attack in the discussions before the battle.[110] And Monstrelet, Lefèvre and Wavrin named Orleans and Bourbon as the commanders of the vanguard, and thereby implied that they were complicit in the foolish attack upon the English.[111] But even then, these three Burgundian chroniclers did not directly argue that the arrogant and hot-headed knights were synonymous with the Armagnacs.

There was even less effort to identify the cowards who had fled from the battlefield.[112] The anonymous author of the *Geste des nobles francois* reported that when Bernard count of Armagnac was gathering a military force to defend against another English attack in 1416, he allegedly refused to allow the nobles of the Île de France, Picardy and Normandy into his army because he despised them for retreating from Agincourt.[113] The fact that the count was a leader of the Armagnac faction implied that the cowards had not been partisans for his side, which seems plausible given that so few of their leaders either survived the battle or escaped capture by the English. The fiercely partisan *Le Pastoralet* might have suggested that the Armagnacs had caused the defeat by running from the English, but that effort to identify the cowards as Armagnacs was not plausible and gained little traction.[114] Indeed, another line of attack by the Burgundians may have been to charge the men taken prisoner by the English with cowardice. An anonymous Parisian cleric reported that there was a popular belief in the capital that those who had been captured at Agincourt had not been loyal or true to their companions-in-arms.[115] But it is hard to believe that such a notion was persuasive given that there is very little evidence to suggest that surrender on a battlefield was seen as shameful at this time.[116] In the *Livre des quatre dames,* Alain Chartier juxtaposed the plight of an anonymous knight captured at Agincourt with that of another man who had saved himself by fleeing the battlefield, and the different reactions of their ladies implied that only cowardice was shameful.[117]

Focusing blame upon unidentified hot-heads and cowards also preserved some hope for the future, because of the notion that the experienced military veterans had recognised the folly of engaging in battle in such an impulsive manner. Chroniclers repeatedly argued that the English would have been defeated if only the arrogant young men had listened to the voices of those wiser men who had had a viable plan.[118] Ironically, we know now that one of the most experienced French commanders, Marshal Boucicaut, had indeed developed very different tactics for how to fight the English.[119] Anticipating that the English would want to fight from a defensive position, he proposed that the French should take the battle to them, advancing on foot, deploying crossbowmen and varlets at the front, and targeting the wings of the English army. Yett when battle was finally joined on 25 October, there were crucial changes in the French

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tactics. Firstly, they did not employ their crossbowmen to soften up the English lines and secondly, despite initial efforts to target the English flanks, the attack was funnelled towards the centre and hence the strength of the English position.

Modern historians hotly debate why the French adopted these new tactics. One theory is that the original plan was changed after Orleans, Bourbon and Bar joined the French army, substantially increasing the number of troops and therefore requiring a redistribution of the forces on the battlefield.[120] Another suggestion is that the French may have simply made a major tactical error in allowing the battle to take place in a narrow field between the villages of Azincourt and Tramecourt, allowing Henry V to use the woods on either side of his position to protect his flanks, thereby preventing the French from taking full advantage of their superior numbers in the manner envisaged in Boucicaut's plan.[121] Contemporary French accounts of Agincourt did not deny that the battlefield posed problems. For example, they repeatedly complained that the ground was very soft because of the October rain, and acknowledged that this had caused the troops to become exhausted as their advanced towards the English line.[122] But by focusing upon the over-confidence of the cocksure young knights who had led the attack upon the English lines, the chroniclers protected the reputation of the experienced military veterans and commanders who had made the tactical decisions.

Indeed, it is striking that French accounts were often vague about precisely who had led the army at Agincourt. During the battle, Charles VI was sheltering ninety miles away at Rouen with the Dauphin and Berry, wisely seeking to avoid a repeat of the battle of Poitiers in 1356 when King Jean II had been captured by the English.[123] The highest-ranking French military officer at Agincourt was the constable, Charles d'Albret, who had been appointed as royal lieutenant in command of the military campaign against the English in July 1415. Alongside him was his longstanding friend and companion, Boucicaut, marshal of France, as well as other experienced veterans like Guichard Dauphin, master of crossbowmen, and Jacques de Châtillon, lord of Dampierre. If Albret had ceded control to the princes of the royal blood who had joined them shortly before Agincourt, led by the twenty-one year old Charles duke of Orléans as one might expect, it is striking that the chroniclers were careful not to explicitly state this fact.[124]

IV

Blaming the disaster upon ill-disciplined soldiers also avoided giving too much credit to the English for the outcome of the battle, at a time when the enemy continued to represent a severe military threat. That the French had thrown away an easy victory was underlined by repeated reports that they had heavily outnumbered the enemy at Agincourt: English chroniclers emphasised the disparity between the sizes of the two armies in order to magnify the scale of the victory that Henry V had won, while their French counterparts tended to underline the decisive tactical advantage that they had been squandered.[125] So it is no surprise that French commentators showed little interest for what the English had done to secure their victory against

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such remarkable odds. It was presumably more reassuring to think that the English success was due to French errors that could potentially be corrected, than to see these foreigners as an overwhelming military threat during a period when they were engaged in the invasion and occupation of Normandy, and threatened to conquer the entire kingdom. Writers did praise the English for their discipline, primarily because this provided a pointed contrast with the rashness and cowardice of so many French soldiers. French commentators also acknowledged the importance of the English archers, but were careful not to present the longbows as a decisive and potentially unbeatable military weapon. For example, Pintoin noted the initial success of the archers in driving off the French cavalry that had tried to outflank the English position, and then in breaking up the French vanguard; he also described both the rain of arrows and the effectiveness of the archers in the bloody mêlée, able to kill a man with a single blow from their lead-covered mallets.[126] But Pintoin balanced this acknowledgement of the value of the English archers and their longbows with his criticism of the French for failing to make effective use of their own crossbowmen and communal militias, and ultimately denounced defeat at the hands of unworthy and lowly born Englishmen as humiliating and ignominious.[127] In later sources, the importance of the English archers was further mitigated by the claim that it was just the French horses that were vulnerable to the arrows because the men-at-arms were protected by their armour.[128]

Of course, it is still reasonable to assume that the French did learn practical military lessons from Agincourt, even if the evidence for this is merely circumstantial. Curry has argued that Henry V's victory at 'Agincourt made the French reluctant to engage in another pitched battle', and has cited the fact that Charles VI refused to attack the English army that was laying siege to Rouen over the winter of 1418.[129] Bennett has suggested that Jean Sans Peur was influenced by the lessons of Agincourt when he issued a military ordinance on 14 September 1417. This document set out a plan of battle in the event that they encountered the enemy as his army advanced on Paris. The duke emphasised the importance of ensuring sufficient space to deploy and of making proper use all of his troops, including his archers and crossbowmen, the *gens de trait*. He also threatened death for anyone who committed lèse majesté by abandoning their standards or banners in battle. It is possible this ordinance reveals the duke's response to the problems of the cramped deployment and ill-discipline at Agincourt, but this must remain speculation given that there is no direct reference to that battle in the document.[130]

One obvious challenge for the French must have been the fact that so many senior men had died or been captured at Agincourt, making it difficult for others to profit from their experiences. One man who went on to military success after being ransomed by the English was Jean d'Harcourt, count of Aumâle. But it is impossible to know whether he drew upon his experiences at Agincourt when he went on to win a significant victory at La Gravelle in Maine on 26 September 1423, where he used cavalry to rout the English archers, before being killed when leading the French army in a heavy defeat at Verneuil on 17 August 1424.[131] Another was Arthur de Richemont who had been just twenty-three years of age when he was wounded and captured at Agincourt. After his death in 1458, one of his squires, Guillaume Gruel, wrote a biography of Richemont in which he mentioned in passing that the Constable had brought a group of young

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squires to the battlefield at Agincourt in 1436, where he explained to them how the battle had unfolded and explained where various knights and noblemen had been located during the fighting.[132] This brief reference opens up an unusual window into the martial culture of the period, illustrating the importance of oral communication and the sharing of knowledge by experienced warriors that stands outside of the written texts that survive. This underlines the limitations of relying upon written sources to reconstruct the ways in which military men developed their knowledge and skills, learning from past victories and defeats, and passing on their experience to younger generations.

The fact that the Hundred Years War turned in favour of the French made it easier to reflect upon the tactical lessons offered by the battle. Between 1461 and 1468, Jean V du Bueil wrote *Le Jouvencel*, the story of a young French soldier who rose through the ranks to win great renown and status. Though superficially a fictional romance, *Le Jouvencel* was at heart a didactic work, designed 'to inspire all men, and especially those who pursue the extraordinary adventures of a life of war, to seek always to do good and to enhance their fortitude.'[133] Bueil drew upon his own experiences as a prominent French commander to paint an unusually realistic and rounded portrait of warfare in in service to the French crown. He also included a number of long digressions on technical matters ranging from military tactics to the laws of war, designed to educate his readers about the art of warfare. It was in this spirit that Jean de Bueil addressed the subject of the battle of Agincourt, keen to draw out the most important military lessons for a future generation of soldiers. Pausing his story to underline the importance of ensuring that infantry were always marshalled in strict order when on the battlefield, Bueil reviewed the lessons offered by some of the most famous battles of the previous fifty years. He observed that the French had lost at Agincourt because they had slept badly the night before the battle and were exhausted by the time that they marched out into the field to face the English whose morale was high thanks to the leadership of Henry V. He observed that the French infantry had lost all order when they finally encountered the English, illustrating the value of his key piece of advice that

> 'an army on foot should never initiate the attack, but rather wait patiently for the enemy to do so … A force that takes the initiative and advances will always be defeated, except with the help of God; it should take up position as favourably, and as early, as possible.'[134]

More importantly, the French reconquest of Normandy and Guyenne utterly transformed the significance of the English victory at Agincourt, even if that success did not put an end to the internal divisions within France. In 1458, an anonymous author wrote the patriotic *Débat des hérauts*, in which heralds from each side debated the superiority of France and England. After the English herald had boasted about the victories that they had won against the French, including the battle of Agincourt, his counterpart reminded him that God determines who wins and loses battles, using them to punish kings for their sins and people for their disobedience to their rulers.[135] But the French herald also declared the English might have won some battles, just

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like Hannibal enjoyed victories against the Romans, but it was the French who had secured the ultimate victory: Charles VII had overcome the greatest adversities and challenges, and

> 'drove and put you out of his duchy of Normandy, and did not leave you a single place in that country; and he conquered as much in one year as you and your King Henry had done in thirty-three years. Following up his good fortune, he advanced in the year 1453 with great power into the duchy of Guyenne, and … has in a short time conquered that country, and brought it under his dominion … In fact, he has not left you a single place in Guyenne, but has driven you back ignominiously into England.' [136]

VI

In conclusion, Robert Blondel lamented the dramatic loss of French lives at the battle of Agincourt in a Latin poem entitled the *Desolatio regni Francie* written in 1420. This Norman nobleman described the defeat as a source of anguish and woe for all French people, declaring that the destruction of the flower of knighthood had overwhelmed everyone with sadness, bringing tears to the eyes of laymen and priests alike. Like many other contemporary writers, he did not name the battle, which in its anonymity became a proxy for the damage that the English had inflicted all across France. Blondel imagined these foreigners as wild beasts who had plagued the realm, killing good Frenchmen or forcing them to flee, and thereby depriving the crown of aid and assistance. In short, he transformed the defeat at Agincourt into a rallying cry for all Frenchmen to unite and to seek revenge against their common enemies who had inflicted such a heavy wound upon the kingdom.[137]

Blondel showed the way in which the defeat at Agincourt might have been transformed into a focus for national grief and anger. His poem was part of a wider effort to rally the French behind against the English: he was one of a number of prominent writers who articulated a vision of a France united against the English and loyal to the crown, abandoning the internal divisions and rivalries that had opened the door to their ancient enemy.[138] But in reality, this kind of rhetoric had very little traction in the face of entrenched divisions within French society that prevented a unified show of support for the crown against the English enemy, and helped to shape reactions to Agincourt.[139] Even Charles VII's eventual victory in the Hundred Years War, driving the ancient enemies out of Normandy and then Guyenne between 1450 and 1453, did not resolve those internal divisions that continued to dominate French politics long after the English had been defeated.

But the French victory in the Hundred Years War did at least offer a chance to view Agincourt from a new vantage point. In 2002, a leading French military historian, Bertand Schnerb, observed that 'It is astonishing how much certain British historians are fond of the battle of Agincourt', and asked when these specialists would turn their attention to the neglected military history of the final years of the Hundred Years War that culminated in the reconquest of

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Normandy and Guyenne.[140] Since Schnerb made his comments, at least fifteen new books on Agincourt have been written in English, thanks in large part to the impetus created by the six hundredth anniversary of the battle in 2015. And yet there remain only a handful of books by Anglophone scholars dedicated to the far less glorious story of the unravelling of the English empire founded by Henry V which must surely merit sustained scholarly attention by the next generation of historians. In contrast, a recent study by a French historian, Valérie Toureille, presents a relatively short account of the battle followed by a much longer survey of the events leading up to the reconquest of Normandy and Gascony which certainly provides a very different context within which to view the battle of Agincourt.[141]

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[1] My title is taken from A. Chartier, *Le quadrilogue invectif*, ed. E. Droz (2nd edition. Paris, 1950), 35.

[2] The foremost expert is Anne Curry, author of *Agincourt. A New History* (London, 2005), reprinted as *1415 Agincourt. A New History* (Stroud, 2015); *Agincourt* (Oxford, 2015); and *The Agincourt companion* (London, 2015). She has also translated a collection of primary sources, *The Battle of Agincourt, 1415. Sources and Intepretations* (Woodbridge, 2000), henceforth *Agincourt Sources*. Other useful studies include J. H. Wylie and W. T Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth, volume,* 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1914-9), II, 140-229; P. Contamine, *Azincourt* (Paris, 1964); C. Hibbert, *Agincourt* (London, 1964); M. Bennett, *Agincourt, 1415. Triumph Against the Odds* (London, 1991); C. J. Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', in *The Hundred Years War (part II). Different Vistas*, ed. L. J. A. Villalon and D. J. Kagay (Leiden, 2008), 37-132.

[3] For the debate about the relative size of the armies at Agincourt are Curry, *Agincourt. A New History*, 185-6 and 274-300, and Rogers, in 'The Battle of Agincourt', 39, 42, 57-63 and 114-21.

[4] Curry, *Agincourt* (London, 2005), 276-9, and O. Bouzy, 'Les morts d'Azincourt. Leurs liens de famille, d'offices et de parti', in *Hommes, cultures et sociétés à la fin du moyen âge,* ed. P. Gilli and J. Paviot (Paris, 2012), 221-55, together with pages 000-00 below.

[5] J. de Montreuil, *Opera*, ed. N. Grévy, E. Ornato and G. Ouy, 4 vols. (Turin-Paris, 1963-86), II, 19-42 and 265-313, and IV, 30.

[6] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy, 1416-1424 (*New Haven, 1924), and A. Curry, 'After Agincourt, what next? Henry V and the campaign of 1416' in *The Fifteenth Century VII,* ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2007), 23-52.

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[7] See, for example, the comments in L. Bellaguet (ed.), *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1839-52), V, 580, henceforth *RSD.*

[8] Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* III, 55 and 58.

[9] Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy,* and C. T. Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy, 1415-1450* (Oxford, 1983).

[10] P. Bonenfant, *Du meurtre de Montereau au traité de Troyes* (Brussels, 1958).

[11] M. Warner, 'The Anglo-French Dual Monarchy and the House of Burgundy, 1420-1435. The Survival of an Alliance', *French history*, 11 (1997), 103-30.

[12] The English responses to Agincourt is explored in detail in Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* II, 230-76; C. T. Allmand, *Henry V* (London, 1992), 404-25, and Curry, *Agincourt* (Oxford, 2015), 40-67.

[13] C. Given-Wilson et al (eds.), *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 1275-1504*, vol. 9 (Woodbridge, 2005), 114-5, and also see 135-6, 177-8, 207-8 and 231-2.

[14] J. S. Roskell and F. Taylor (eds.), *Gesta Henrici Quinti* (Oxford, 1975), 100-12.

[15] E. F. Jacob (ed.), *The Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1431*, vol. 3 (London, 1945), 6-7 and 9-10.

[16] *Gesta Henrici Quinti. The Deeds of Henry V* (Oxford, 1975), and C. A. Cole (ed.), *Memorials of Henry the Fifth, King of England* (London, 1858), 77-166.

[17] These texts are discussed below, on pages 000-00. For modern analysis of these works, see, for example, R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 'Two Responses to Agincourt. Alain Chartier's *Livre des quatre dames* and Christine de Pizan's *Epistre de la prison de vie humaine*', *Contexts and Continuities*, ed. A. Kennedy, 3 vols. (Glasgow, 2002), I, 75-85, and *idem*., 'Alain Chartier and the Crisis in France. Courtly and Clerical Responses', *Courtly Literature and Clerical Culture,* ed. C. Huber and H.

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Lähnemann (Tübingen, 2002), 211-20; M. Ailes, 'Literary Responses to Agincourt: the Allegories of *Le Pastorlet* and the *Quadrilogue invectif', Reading Medieval Studies*, 41 (2015), 1-26.

[18] *Agincourt Sources* 99-194 and 332-59, and Curry, *Agincourt*, 67-76.

[19] C. J. Liebman, 'Une sermon de Philippe de Vilette, abbé de Saint-Denis, pour la levée de l'Oriflamme (1414)', *Romania*, 68 (1944-45), 464.

[20] A. Curry, 'Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory. French Responses to Agincourt', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, 28 (2002), 178.

[21] Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 136-43, and also see *RSD*, V, 280-330.

[22] For the wider history of this rivalry, see R. C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue. Crisis at the Court of Charles VI, 1392-1420* (New York, 1982); B. Schnerb, *Les Armagnacs et Bourguignons, La maudite guerre* (Paris, 1988); B. Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société. L'assassinat du duc d'Orléans, 23 novembre 1407* (Paris, 1992).

[23] The chronicle incorrectly attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins, in J. A. C. Buchon (ed.), *Choix de chroniques et mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France avecs notices biographiques* (Paris, 1875), 519 and 522, and Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 170-4.

[24] *RSD*, V, 584, and Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 525, discussed in Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth*, II, 284.

[25] A. Tuetey (ed.), *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, 1405 a 1449* (Paris, 1881), 66-9, together with R. Vaughan, *John the Fearless* (London, 1966), 209-10, and Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 171-4.

[26] See, for example, R. Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, and *idem*, *Philip the Good* (London, 1970), and P. Bonenfant, *Philippe le Bon. Sa politique, son action* (Brussels, 1996); B. Schnerb, 'Burgundy', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History, VII: c.1415-c.1500*, ed. C. T. Allmand (Cambridge, 1998), 431-56, and *idem*, *Jean sans peur. Le prince meurtrier* (Paris, 2005).

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[27] For the identification of Pintoin as author of this chronicle, see N. Pons and E. Ornato, 'Qui est l'auteur de la chronique latine de Charles VI, dite du religieux de Saint Denis?', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, 134 (1976), 85-102. The most important expert on this chronicle and chronicler is Bernard Guenée, author of *Un roi et son historien. Vingt études sur le règne de Charles VI et la 'Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denis* (Paris, 1999), and *L'opinion publique à la fin du moyen âge d'après la 'Chronique de Charles VI' du Religieux de Saint-Denis* (Paris, 2002).

[28] *RSD*, V, 556, as translated in *Agincourt Sources*, 105-6.

[29] *RSD*, V, 574-6, and *Agincourt Sources*, 338-9.

[30] See footnote 2 above.

[31] A. Chartier, *The Poetical Works of Alain Chartier*, ed. J. C. Laidlaw (Cambridge, 1974), 196-304.

[32] J. de Bueil, *Le jouvencel par Jean de Bueil*, ed. C. Favre and L. Lecestre, 2 vols (Paris, 1887-9), I, vi and II, 307-8. This edition has now been superceded by *Le jouvencel*, ed. M. Szkilnik (Paris, 2018).

[33] C. de Pizan, *The Epistle of the Prison of Human Life with An epistle to the Queen of France and Lament on the Evils of the Civil War*, ed. and trans. J. A. Wisman (New York, 1984), 2.

[34] C. de Pizan, *The Epistle of the Prison of Human Life*, 2-69, and

[35] C. de Pizan, *The Epistle of the Prison of Human Life*, 4.

[36] See, for example, D. Lalande (ed.), *Le livre des fais du bon messire Jehan le Maingre, dit Bouciquaut, Mareschal de France et gouverneur de Jennes* (Geneva, 1985), 115-6.

[37] *RSD*, II, 522 and *Le livre des fais du bon messire Jehan le Maingre,* 118-20.

[38] C. E. du Boulay, *Historia universitatis Parisiensis*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1670), 295.

[39] Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* II, 221 and 278.

[40] Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* II, 280, and Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 171.

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[41] For the events before Agincourt, see *RSD*, V, 552. For the aftermath, see Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* II, 277-8; *Agincourt Sources*, 332 and 457-67; Curry, 'Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory. French Responses to Agincourt', 178.

[42] A. Tuetey (ed.), *Le Journal de Nicholas de Baye*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1888), 224.

[43] *Le Journal de Nicholas de Baye,* 233, and *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris,* 66-7.

[44] In practice, Charles continued to respond to petitions in private. Archives Nationales de Paris, Xia 8603 folio 2r, discussed in Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 169 and translated in *Agincourt Sources*, 335-6.

[45] Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* II, 279, and H. Moranville, 'Extraits de journaux du trésor (1345-1419)', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 49 (1888), 426. Note that Pintoin criticized the Dauphin for not mounting an expedition to recapture Harfleur, in *RSD*, V, 582.

[46] Chartier, *The Poetical Works*, 214.

[47] Curry, 'Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory', 182.

[48] N. Pons (ed.), *L'honneur de la couronne de France* (Paris, 1990), 74.

[49] B. Schnerb, 'The Kingdom of France on the Eve of the Battle of Agincourt', in *The Battle of Agincourt*, ed. A. Curry and M. Mercer (New Haven, 2015), 19.

[50] Paris, BNF MS français 24786, folios 36r-97r.

[51] Marie's son, Charles count of Eu, was taken prisoner and not released until 1438, while her husband, Jean duke of Bourbon, died in English captivity in 1434.

[52] Curry, *Agincourt* (London, 2005), 227-33.

[53] Bouzy, 'Les morts d'Azincourt. Leurs liens de famille, d'offices et de parti', 221-55, and Curry, *Agincourt* (London, 2005), 276-9. For the use of the heraldic list, see for example, Monstrelet, III, 112-21; J. Lefèvre, *Chronique*, ed. F. Morand, vol. 1 (Paris, 1866), 265-9; J. de Waurin [Wavrin], *Recueil des croniques*, ed. W. Hardy and E. L. C. P. Hardy, vol. 2 (London, 1868), 224-30.

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[54] Wylie and Waugh, *The reign of Henry the Fifth,* II, 218, and also see Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 519 and Enguerrand de Monstrelet, in *La chronique*, ed. L. D. d'Arcq, vol. 3 (Paris, 1859), 121-2.

[55] Edmond de Dynter, *Chronique des ducs de Brabant,* ed. P. F. X. de Ram, vol. 3 (Brussels, 1857), 303.

[56] Anne Curry's *Soldier in Later Medieval England* project maintains a list of known burial sites on their website.

[57] The *Chronique du Ruisseauville* in 'Bataille d'Azincourt', *Archives historiques et littéraires du nord de la France et du midi de la Belgique,* 4 (1834), 142.

[58] *RSD*, V, 568-70 ; the *Chronique du Ruisseauville*, 143-4; Monstrelet, III, 121-2.

[59] T. L. Sutherland, 'The Battle of Agincourt: An Alternative Location?', *Journal of Conflict Archaeology*, 1 (2005), 246-7 and 259-61, and 'The Battlefield', in *The Battle of Agincourt*, ed. A. Curry and M. Mercer (New Haven, 2015), 197-8 and 201.

[60] C. J. Phillpotts, 'The French Battle Plan During the Agincourt Campaign', *English Historical Review*, 99 (1984), 64, and Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', 66-7.

[61] *RSD*, V, 548.

[62] *Choix de chroniques*, 517. Also see P. Cochon, *Chronique normande de Pierre Cochon,* ed. C. de R. de Beaurepaire (Rouen, 1870), 113; N. Desgrugillers (ed.), *Chronique anonyme du règne de Charles VI*, vol. 2 (Clermont-Ferrand, 2012), 58; Dynter, 300.

[63] *RSD*, V, 6-36, and *Choix de chroniques*, 477-86.

[64] L. G. de Vilevault (ed.), *Ordonnances des rois de France de la troiséme race, X, 1411-1418* (Paris, 1763), 249-50, and also see A. Coville, *Les Cabochiens et l'ordonnance de 1413* (Paris, 1888), 400, and Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 165 and 170, together with Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 522 and *Le Journal de Nicholas de Baye,* 228.

[65] This is partially transcribed in the *Chronique du Ruisseauville*, 141, and see *Agincourt Sources*, 126.

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[66] Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', 108n.

[67] *Le Journal de Nicholas de Baye,* 219-20. The poem also appears in Monstrelet, III, 123.

[68] Chartier, *Le quadrilogue invectif*.

[69] The *Chronique du Ruisseauville*, 142, translated in *Agincourt Sources*, 520.

[70] Basin erroneously claimed that the sack of Soissons had taken place on 25 October 1414, exactly a year before Agincourt. T. Basin, *Histoire de Charles VII*, ed. C. Samaran and H. de S. de Saint-Remy, vol. 1 (Paris, 1933), 24-30 and 44-6.

[71] B. Schnerb, *Enguerrand de Bournonville et les siens* (Paris, 1997), 109-38.

[72] Monstrelet, III, 9, and in general 6-11. Also see *RSD*, V, 312-4 and 322-328.

[73] *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris,* 53.

[74] *Choix de chroniques*, 507.

[75] This appeared immediately before a brief account of the battle of Agincourt, in *L'honneur de la couronne de France*, 74.

[76] Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 136-43.

[77] Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 199-204.

[78] Monstrelet, III, 193, 197-8 and 199-200.

[79] P. Cochon, *Chronique normande*, 273 and 275.

[80] Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 204-7 and 213-5.

[81] The chronicle attributed to Juvénal des Ursins transcribed the exchange of letters between the duke and Charles VI, in which Jean Sans Peur repeatedly declared that he loved the French king more than Henry V, immediately before the account of Agincourt, in *Choix de chroniques*, 508-17.

[82] *RSD*, VI, 74-8 and Monstrelet, III, 196-206, and also see 220-3, together with Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 215-6.

[83] Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 207-8.

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[84] *RSD*, V, 546.

[85] Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 519.

[86] J. Blanchard (ed.), *Le Pastoralet* (Paris, 1983), 198-207.

[87] Monstrelet, III, 98-9; Jean Lefèvre, I. 238-9; Wavrin, II, 197-8.

[88] The chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins claimed that Henry V tried to persuade Burgundy that his French enemies had been responsible for the death of Brabant and Nevers. *Choix de chroniques*, 524.

[89] *Le Pastoralet*, 198-207, and also see Ailes, 'Literary Responses to Agincourt'.

[90] J. K. de Lettenhove (ed.), *Chroniques relatives à l'histoire de Belgique*, vol. 2 (Brussels, 1870-6), 129.

[91] Curry has argued that Alain Chartier was attacking the Burgundians as cowards and traitors in the *Livre des quatre dames*, in 'Snatching Defeat from the Jaws of Victory', 183 and *Agincourt*, 67-8. But while there is no doubt about his Armagnac loyalties, Chartier made no direct mention at all of the duke of Burgundy or any of his partisans in that poem.

[92] Ailes, 'Literary Responses to Agincourt', 17, notes that even *Le Pastoralet* balanced the attack upon the Armagnacs with 'a clear call for unity', showing 'the need for those within one class not to be disunited'.

[93] The anonymous poem copied into the register of the Parlement of Paris immediately after the battle did complain that 'Blood [was] so divided that no one cared at all for the other'. *Le Journal de Nicholas de Baye,* 219-20.

[94] Paris, BNF MS fr. 2699, fols. 211r, and in general 211r-14v. My thanks to Luke Giraudet for transcribing this document for me.

[95] J. Juvénal des Ursins, *Les écrits politiques*, ed. P. S. Lewis, 3 vols. (Paris, 1978-93), I, 196. Eleven years later, he argued that the French king had a right to avenge his loyal subjects murdered by the English at Agincourt, in *ibid*, II, 161.

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[96] J. Dickinson, *The Congress of Arras, 1435. A Study in Medieval Diplomacy* (Oxford 1955).

[97] This was, of course, a longstanding medieval trope. For the wider context of Pintoin's emotional reactions to such tragic events, see B. Guenée, 'Tragédie et histoire chez le Religieux de Saint-Denis', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, 150 (1992). 223-44, reprinted in *Un roi et son historien*, 141-61.

[98] *RSD*, V, 576, and *Agincourt Sources*, 339. This followed shortly after Pintoin's lengthy report upon Villette's sermon *Accipe sanctum gladium*, in *RSD*, V, 280-330.

[99] *RSD*, V, 578-80.

[100] This theme was also echoed, for example, by one of the most prominent Frenchmen captured in 1415, Charles d'Orléans, who argued in a *ballade* addressed to his fellow prisoner Jean I duke of Bourbon, that God had punished the French for abandoning the good life. Charles d'Orléans, *Charles d'Orléans. Poésies*, ed. P. Champion, vol. 1 (Paris, 1923), 135.

[101] *RSD*, V, 554-64, together with the *Geste des nobles francois*, 156; *Le Pastoralet*, 198-9; Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 520.

[102] *RSD*, V, 558, and *Agincourt Sources*, 106.

[103] *RSD*, V, 564, and also see 574 and 580, together with Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 519-20; Monstrelet, III, 109; Jean Lefèvre, I, 256-7; Wavrin, II, 215.

[104] M. K. Jones, 'The Battle of Verneuil (17 August 1424): Towards a History of Courage', *War in History*, 9 (2002), 379.

[105] J. Le Bel, *Chronique*, ed. J. Viard and E. Déprez, vol. 2 (Paris, 1905), 102, and J. Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. S. Luce, vol. 3 (Paris, 1872), 172-5.

[106] C. de Pizan, *Le livre du corps de policie*, ed. A. J. Kennedy (Paris, 1998), 65, discussed more broadly in C. Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood in France during the Hundred Years War* (Cambridge, 2013), 139-48.

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[107] Chartier, *Le quadrilogue invectif*, 35.

[108] Curry, *Agincourt* (London, 2005), 221-4.

[109] *RSD*, V, 570-2, and also see Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 518-9.

[110] *Choix de chroniques*, 518.

[111] Monstrelet, III, 103; Jean Lefèvre, I, 248; Wavrin, II, 206; G. Le Bouvier, Berry Herald, *Les chroniques du roi Charles VII*, ed. H. C. Courteault and L. Celier (Paris, 1979), 68-70.

[112] One exception was the Berry Herald who charged six knights, including Clignet de Brabant and Geoffroi Le Meingre (who did not fight at Agincourt), with shamefully abandoning a cavalry charge against the English lines. Berry Herald, 70.

[113] *Geste des nobles francois*, 158.

[114] *Le Pastoralet*, 198-207.

[115] *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, 66.

[116] Taylor, *Chivalry and the Ideals of Knighthood*, 180-3. Curry has preferred to accept the Burgundian propaganda at face value, arguing that 'the Armagnac party had been sullied by the defeat', because so many of their leaders had accepted 'the ignominy of surrender', in Curry, *Agincourt* (London, 2005), 247.

[117] Chartier, *The Poetical Works*, 275 and 280-1.

[118] *RSD*, V, 554-62 and 580; the *Geste des nobles francois*, in A. V. de Viriville (ed.), *Chronique de la Pucelle ou Chronique de Cousinot* (Paris, 1859), 156; the chronicle attributed to Jean Juvénal des Ursins specifically named Albret and Boucicaut as experienced men who had warned against giving battle, in *Choix de chroniques*, 520.

[119] Phillpotts, 'The French Battle Plan', 59-66.

[120] Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', 64.

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[121] M. Bennett, 'The Battle', in *Agincourt, 1415*, ed. A. Curry (Stroud, 2000), 33; Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', 67-70, 85-6 and 103-4. This analysis may have to be reconsidered in light of recent questions raised by archaeologists about the precise location of the battlefield, who question whether the French may have indeed chosen a more open piece of ground further north, between Azincourt and Ruisseauville. Sutherland, 'The Battle of Agincourt: An Alternative Location?', 245-63, and 'The Battlefield', in *The Battle of Agincourt*, 190-201. Curry has also suggested that the English may have chosen their position first, in *Agincourt. A New History*, 199.

[122] *RSD*, V, 558; the anonymous chronicle sometimes identified as the *Chronique des cordeliers*, 58; Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 518 and 520; Jean Lefèvre, I, 252; Wavrin, II, 211.

[123] The Berry Herald claimed that the duke of Berry advised Charles VI not to take part in the battle because he was aware of the lessons of Poitiers, in Berry Herald, 67.

[124] Hibbert, *Agincourt*, 106; Bennett, *Agincourt, 1415*, 16; A. Curry, *Agincourt. A New History* (London, 2005), 248; Rogers, 'The Battle of Agincourt', 39 and 106-8.

[125] For the modern scholarly debate about the relative size of the two armies, see footnote 3 above.

[126] *RSD*, V, 560-2. Also see, for example, Ursins, in *Choix de chroniques*, 518; Monstrelet, III, 107-8; G. Gruel, *Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont*, ed. A. Le Vavasseur (Paris, 1890), 17.

[127] *RSD*, V, 558-64.

[128] Ursins, *Choix de chroniques*, 518.

[129] Curry, *Agincourt* (Oxford, 2015), 39, and also see *idem*, *Agincourt. A New History* (London, 2005), 247.

[130] M. Bennett, 'The Development of Battle Tactics in the Hundred Years War', *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War*, ed. A. Curry and M. Hughes (Woodbridge, 1994), 17-9.

[131] J. Le Fizelier, 'Une épisode de la guerre des Anglais dans le Maine. La bataille de La Brossinière', *Revue historique et archéologique du Maine*, 1 (1876), 28-42; L. Gaillet, 'La bataille de La

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Brécinière dite de La Gravelle d'après une lettre du vainqueur, Jean VIII d'Harcourt, comte d'Aumale (26 septembre 1423', *Revue des questions historiques*, n.s. 42 (1909), 566-71; Jones, 'The Battle of Verneuil', 375-411.

[132] *Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont*, 126.

[133] Jean de Bueil, *Le jouvencel,* ed. Szkilnik, 146.

[134] Jean de Bueil, *Le jouvencel,* ed. Szkilnik, 320.

[135] *Le débat des hérauts d'armes de France et d'Angleterre*, ed. L. Pannier and P. Meyer (Paris, 1887), 8 and 16-7.

[136] *Le débat des hérauts*, 23-5.

[137] N. Pons and M. Goullet, 'Robert Blondel, *Desolatio regni Francie*. Un poème politique de soutien au futur Charles VII en 1420', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Litteraire du Moyen Age*, 68 (2001), 360-1.

[138] See, for example, J.-C. Mühlethaler, 'Une génération d'écrivains 'embarqués': le règne de Charles VI ou la naissance de l'engagement littéraire en France', in *Formes de l'engagement littéraire (XVe–XXIe siècle)*, ed. J. Kaempfer, S. Florey and J. Meizoz (Lausanne, 2006), 15-32.

[139] Jean Juvénal des Ursins, *Les écrits politiques*, III, 191-200.

[140] *Revue du Nord*, 345-6 (2002), 532.

[141] V. Toureille, *Le drame d'Azincourt. Histoire d'une étrange défaite* (Paris, 2015).

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