

GRAND DUKES OF THE WEST:
THE GROWTH OF VALOIS BURGUNDY

by

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Abstract

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Valois dukes of Burgundy managed to create for themselves one of the most impressive dominions in Europe. Its first ruler, Philip the Bold, was given the duchy of Burgundy by his father, king John II of France, on September 6, 1363. Philip laid the foundation for the future expansion of Burgundy through his marriage to the Countess of Flanders. He also acted as regent of France during Charles VI's youth and subsequent mental illness. Philip's position at the court allowed him to divert considerable funds to his personal holdings. Philip's son, John the Fearless, attempted to follow in his father's footsteps, but he was unable to exert similar power at the French court due to the ongoing civil war. During his reign John made numerous enemies within France and was eventually himself assassinated by orders of the dauphin. This murder shifted the allegiance of John's heir, Philip the Good, who turned to the English for an alliance and cut ties with France. Philip spent considerable time in expanding the Burgundian realm and as a result he was soon capable of negotiating over being crowned king, a possibility that could be granted by the Holy Roman Emperor. Although he was not successful in elevating Burgundy to a kingdom, Philip had considerably enhanced Burgundian power. His son Charles the Bold continued along a similar path, but with a more militaristic approach. His hostile attitude gained him numerous enemies and towards the end of his reign he was involved in several conflicts that eventually cost him his life on January 5, 1477, leaving Burgundy without a direct male heir, dividing it between France and the emerging Habsburg dynasty. This thesis shows how the ambitions of the four dukes allowed them to establish a powerful realm, which was eventually destroyed by this same ambition.

Grand Dukes of the West: The Growth of Valois Burgundy

On September 6, 1363, John II of France invested his youngest son, Philip, with the duchy of Burgundy. He received it with considerable benefits, as Philip had complete control over his new land and the only requirement was that he needed to swear fealty to the French king.¹ The Valois dukes of Burgundy were, therefore, from the beginning in an excellent position to expand their influence over neighboring lands. Early on their attention would mainly center on France. The first two rulers, Philip the Bold and John the Fearless, were mainly concerned with French affairs and enhancing their power within the kingdom of France. Whereas the later dukes, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, shifted their attention to the Holy Roman Empire and focused on expanding their territory. Increasing their personal power would be on the minds of every ruler until the death of Charles the Bold in 1477, which also brought an end to the duchy. This paper examines the growth of the dukes of Burgundy from vassals of the French king to independent rulers and argues that from the beginning of Valois Burgundy its rulers started down a path of increased personal rule, breaking away from their feudal obligations, which eventually led to them seek out their own kingdom. However this pursuit also led to the eventual downfall of their dynasty as their personal pride caused them to act against their better judgment.

¹ Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Bold: The Formation of the Burgundian State* (New York: Longman, 1979), 3. This paper will rely heavily on the work done by Richard Vaughan, as he is the most preeminent scholar

Philip the Bold: The Establishment of Burgundian Power

As the fourth and youngest son of King John, Philip was not initially destined to become anything more than a royal prince. Born on January 17, 1342, he studied military affairs during his upbringing as was expected, but it was in administrative and diplomatic matters that he truly excelled and where he was most comfortable. These skills served him well throughout his life.² It was, however, through Philip's military actions that he began his rise to eminence. In 1356, during the Hundred Years' War, French and English forces clashed at Poitiers where Philip fought bravely alongside his father. Despite the disastrous defeat of French forces that led to the capture of both Philip and the king, Philip ultimately benefited greatly from his actions on the battlefield. Following their release in 1360, John granted Philip the small duchy of Touraine as sign of his gratitude.³ The next year the last Capetian ruler of Burgundy, Philip of Rouvres, died without an heir and John moved in to take over the land for the crown. The king, who still felt indebted to his youngest son, granted Philip the duchy in 1363 as long as Philip gave up Touraine. Philip gladly surrendered the insignificant duchy for the wealth of Burgundy.⁴ Philip was granted the duchy as an appanage, which was usually given to the younger sons of kings under the stipulation that following the death of the duchy's ruler, without a direct male heir, it would revert back to the crown. This condition would end up having significance for Philip's descendants.⁵

² Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, *The Promised Lands: The Low Countries Under Burgundian Rule, 1369-1530*, ed. Edward Peters, trans. Elizabeth Fackelman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 14

³ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 1-2

⁴ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 2.

⁵ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 15.

With the new duchy under his control, Philip's first action was to find a suitable wife. A good candidate emerged from the same events that gave Philip the duchy. Philip of Rouvres's widow was the twelve-year-old Margaret of Flanders, who was heiress to not only Flanders, but also the counties of Artois, Nevers, Rethel and the imperial county of Burgundy. The marriage negotiations were not easy and were only concluded in 1369 after years of talks. Philip was supported by his brother who had ascended to the French throne as Charles V, who figured the lands would be a valuable addition to the crown. But Margaret's father, Louis of Male, was hesitant to make an alliance with France, which at the same time meant handing over his territory to the French crown. Louis eventually agreed to the marriage but only after securing considerable gifts from both Charles and Philip. Louis would receive a payment of 200,000 *livres* and Charles agreed to hand over to him the towns of Lille, Douai, Orchies and the surrounding territory that neighbored Flanders.⁶ Philip, however, made two separate oaths with Louis and Charles that helped in securing the marriage. Philip promised Charles that the towns and surrounding territory in Flanders that Charles had given to Louis would be returned to the French crown, should he not have a male heir. But at the same time he and Margaret also swore an oath to Louis in secret that the newly gained territory would never revert to France.⁷ Philip was therefore already acting in his own best interest at the expense of the French crown and was even willing to lie under oath to his king and brother.

Despite his deceitful negotiations, Philip nevertheless performed his duties as a subject of the king during Charles V's reign. He improved his administrative and diplomatic skills at the French court and much of his early years as duke of Burgundy

⁶ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 4-6.

⁷ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 16.

were spent conducting matters for Charles, gaining experience that would help him building up his own powerbase in Burgundy.⁸

The death of Charles V in 1380 marked a significant change in Philip's life. Charles VI, who succeeded his father, was only eleven when he rose to the throne. Philip was named as one of the regents alongside his two brothers.⁹ Philip quickly established his preeminence among his brothers and by 1382 he had become the primary regent, a position that he would exploit for his own benefit. The regency lasted until 1388, during which time Philip diverted a considerable amount of the royal funds into his own personal treasury.¹⁰ In addition to money he also used his position to secure new lands.

Shortly before Charles VI took over personal rule of the kingdom Philip was dismissed as regent, but Philip managed to gain one final diplomatic acquisition before being removed from his position. Through his marriage to Margaret, Philip had also become connected to the duchy of Brabant as it was ruled by Margaret's maternal aunt, Joanna of Brabant.¹¹ Shortly before Margaret's father died in January 1384, Joanna's husband Wenzel had died without leaving a direct heir. The closest heir had by now become Margaret's mother. Philip who had through Margaret gained control of Flanders decided to push his recently gained claim to Brabant. However, securing Brabant was not easily accomplished.

Joanna's husband Wenzel had been the duke of Luxembourg and his uncle and heir was the current emperor, Wenzel IV. Wenzel had a close ally in William, the duke of Guelders, who was also extremely hostile to France. Not afraid to use military force to

⁸ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 18.

⁹ Jean Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France, Spain and the Adjoining Countries*, trans. Thomas Johnes (New York: Leavitt & Allen, 1853), 268-270.

¹⁰ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 40-41.

¹¹ See Appendix C for a family tree.

get his will across William decided to support the house of Luxemburg's claim to the land and contested Philip's claim. William successfully harassed Joanna's territory and exhausted her resources in the process. It was not until 1388 that Charles VI, after being persuaded by Philip, assembled a force to march into Brabant to settle the issue in Philip's favor. Although no battle was fought, this display of French power caused William to back down from attacking Brabant in the future. Brabant now came under Burgundian rule and throughout his reign, Philip negotiated with Joan and the Estates of Brabant over the succession of her territory. In 1390 Joan agreed to make Philip her heir but the Estates objected to this settlement. Negotiations continued for many years until it was finally agreed in 1403 that Joan's heir would be Philip's second son Anthony, who would rule Brabant independent from Philip's other territories. While he had failed to add Brabant to his personal domain, by securing Anthony as its future ruler the territory fell under Burgundian influence.¹² This arrangement eventually allowed for the peaceful annexation of Brabant into Burgundy during the reign of Philip's grandson. This would be one of his last achievements for his own realm, as much of his attention was forced to be directed towards the French crown and its increasing instability.

In 1392, Philip once again took on the responsibilities of regent as Charles VI succumbed to his first instance of a mental disorder that would continue throughout Charles's lifetime. But this time the king's younger brother, Louis of Orleans, contested Philip's authority. The two constantly clashed over who should rightfully act as regent, an issue that was further complicated by the irregularity of Charles's illness and the fact that no regency was ever formally set up. Philip managed at times to hold similar authority to that which he had held during the king's youth and once again used the royal

¹² Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 96-98.

treasury for his own benefit. Whenever Louis was able to gain control of the king he did the same thing. This meant that the funds of the kingdom were soon drained, with each side blaming the other. The two would continue to quarrel until Philip's death in 1404.¹³ Even if much of Philip's later life was consumed by French affairs he had nevertheless laid the groundwork for the future success of Valois Burgundy.

Before Philip died, he summoned his three sons and "commanded them to be loyal and obedient ... to king Charles of France."¹⁴ While all three sons agreed to this, reality turned out to be much different. The actual intentions of all of the French vassals at this time was no secret even to contemporary chroniclers such as Guillaume Cousinot and Juvenel des Ursins, who observed that the French princes were merely looking out for themselves and not the kingdom.¹⁵ This observation characterizes perfectly the reign of John the Fearless, Philip's heir to Burgundy.

John the Fearless: Enhancing Burgundian Power

Even though Philip had used his position to further his own interests, he nevertheless remained loyal to the French crown. John, on the other hand, performed his duties as a vassal mainly when it suited him best. John was more willing to side with whomever he saw as more advantageous to his own ambition. While this included honoring his duty as a vassal of the French king, he was also ready to open communications with the English when his position was threatened. This was largely due to the growing animosity between the houses of Burgundy and Orleans that would grow even worse during John's reign.

¹³ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 56-60.

¹⁴ Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *The Chronicles of Enguerrand De Monstrelet*, Vol. I, trans. Thomas Johnes (Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1975), 30-31.

¹⁵ Richard Vaughan, *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power* (New York: Longman, 1979), 29.

During John's reign, with his shifting loyalties, there began to emerge a better sense of the ambitions of the Valois dukes of Burgundy.

John was initially not too concerned with affairs at the royal court, focusing mainly on sorting out his own affairs in Burgundy. His mother died shortly after his father on March 21, 1405, and he spent much of his time in securing his inheritance of the lands he gained from his mother.¹⁶

However, circumstances soon demanded that John's attention shift more towards France and within a year after assuming power in Burgundy a perfect opportunity presented itself for John to insert himself in French affairs. After the death of Philip, Louis of Orleans became sole regent in France and quickly began abusing his position, granting himself gifts in the form of both money and land. In the meantime, Louis was growing unpopular in Paris due to his extravagant lifestyle and in 1405 with the treasury empty Louis needed to levy new taxes. John voiced his displeasure with the new tax and at the same time he was also growing concerned about Louis securing territories that surrounded his northern holdings. All these factors offered John a perfect opportunity to begin his involvement at the king's court.¹⁷ On August 14, 1405, John, together with 800 men who were secretly armed, set out from Arras towards Paris. When Louis learned of his movement he quickly left Paris together with queen Isabella and the nine-year-old dauphin. John received a letter informing him of the actions of the duke of Orleans and quickly set out to pursue him. He managed to catch up to them and convinced the dauphin to come with him to Paris where he should be. When John returned to Paris the leading men of the city greeted him as a hero. John soon issued a petition that contained

¹⁶ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 6.

¹⁷ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 30-31.

numerous reforms in order to undo some of the damage inflicted by Louis' regency. At the same time Louis was gathering an army of his own outside of Paris and soon the two sides were involved in a tense stalemate. The dukes each denounced the other and his actions, and it was not until mid-October that the two sides agreed to lay down their arms, after mediations involving the kings of Navarre and Sicily and the dukes of Bourbon and Berry.¹⁸ Even if John had initially managed to gain some influence at French court it soon became clear to him that none of his reforms were actually being implemented. In January of 1406 the proposals were abandoned altogether and John's position as a regent was considerably weakened as the royal council was being filled with men who were loyal to Louis.¹⁹

John's position was therefore not significantly enhanced following this episode. Instead he found himself in a position where many of the resources that his father had managed to divert to Burgundy were being consumed by Louis. There soon emerged rumors that Louis was also trying to seduce John's wife. With Louis seemingly frustrating John in almost all directions it was clear that something needed to be done. By the middle of 1407 plans were already set in motion for the murder of Louis and on November 23 these plans were carried out and Louis of Orleans was assassinated on the orders of John.²⁰ After the assassination John initially fled to Burgundy but he was soon able to return due to Louis' deep unpopularity amongst the population of Paris and some of the other regents. Jean Petit, of the University of Paris even delivered a long sermon justifying John's actions due to treasonous activities by Louis. He said that Louis had

¹⁸ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 36-42.

¹⁹ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 37.

²⁰ Jean Juvenal des Ursins, "Murder of the Duke of Orleans, 1407," in *English Historical Documents* Vol. IV, 1327-1485, ed. A. R. Myers (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1969), 200-1.

engaged in high treason with the king of England and together the “duke of Orleans and Henry of Lancaster agreed mutually to labour and assist each other to accomplish the deaths of the two kings [Charles VI of France and Richard II of England].”²¹ He had also endangered the life of the queen and dauphin and “thus he proved himself a tyrant and disloyal to his prince and to the welfare of the kingdom.”²² John, on the other hand, had merely acted as a loyal subject who “is therefore bound to defend him [Charles VI] not only by words, but by deeds.”²³ The arguments presented against Louis were convincing enough for the Parisians and even for king Charles himself. John was therefore able to make a triumphant return to the capital.

In order to secure his own interests John was therefore willing to even murder the king’s brother in order make sure that he could continue building up his power within his personal holdings. By 1409, John had gained full control of the royal court and surrounded the king, who continued to suffer from mental breakdowns, and his household with Burgundian councilors.²⁴ With John once again in charge money began to flow into Burgundy like it had before and like his father he did it at the expense of the kingdom.

However, John did not enjoy the same amount of royal power that his father had done. The assassination of Louis earned him permanent enemies within the kingdom, which hindered John’s complete control of France. Louis’s son Charles married the daughter of the count of Armagnac in 1408 and their followers formed the chief opposition to John. While violence was initially avoided, the Armagnac and Burgundian

²¹ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 78.

²² Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 79.

²³ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 62.

²⁴ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 40-41.

factions soon plunged France into civil war.²⁵ John continued to enjoy the benefits of the French crown until 1413, when the Cabochien revolt erupted. The Cabochiens sought to reform the government and had numerous contacts with Burgundian nobles. The effect of the mobs that rose up in Paris were minimal on Paris itself; the most notable event occurred when mobs broke into the dauphin's residence and harassed him into reinstating his old Burgundian advisors. While John had nothing to do with the revolt his close relationship with some of its leaders gained him further enemies, the dauphin among them. Charles VI was also disturbed by these events and John began losing the support of the royal household as a consequence. The Armagnacs took this opportunity to seize power for themselves and by August John was forced to flee back to Burgundy.²⁶ John was now completely shut out from royal affairs and the Armagnacs successfully suppressed his supporters in Paris. What initially ensued was a series of writings from both sides blaming each other. With the rhetoric growing more hostile it was only a matter of time until the two sides would clash on the battlefield.²⁷ During the following year the two sides launched unsuccessful campaigns against each other and by September of 1414 they agreed to an armistice, but this was an agreement that both sides knew would be broken as it left all of the disputes unsettled.²⁸

With John shut out of French affairs and fearing reprisals from the Armagnacs, he resorted to something that his father could not have thought of, opening communications with France's mortal enemy, England. Ever since John had been obliged to flee from Paris in 1413 he had initiated some early contact with the new English king Henry V.

²⁵ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 41.

²⁶ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 99-101.

²⁷ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 194.

²⁸ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 195-202.

With France consumed by civil war, Henry V of England saw a perfect opportunity to press his own claim for the French throne. During the campaigns of 1414 when the Armagnacs were besieging John's city of Arras there seems to be some evidence that an Anglo-Burgundian alliance was being worked on. For Henry V this alliance would serve him well for his upcoming invasion. The negotiations did not amount to anything, as John remained indecisive on the issue of an alliance and once peace was concluded between the Burgundians and Armagnacs he withdrew from the negotiations.²⁹ The only thing to come out of these discussions was propaganda for the Armagnacs who alleged that the two sides had in fact signed a treaty, when in reality the conclusions of the talks only highlight the mutual suspicion that existed between the English and Burgundian parties.³⁰

The complicated relationship between John and the two kingdoms is highlighted further with his confusing actions before and after the battle of Agincourt. In the autumn of 1415 Henry V decided to launch his invasion and on October 25, he did battle with French forces at Agincourt, where the English achieved a decisive victory. Notably absent from this battle was the duke of Burgundy. The actual intentions of John remain uncertain. In a letter dated October 10, John's son Philip wrote that his father had departed with "all his power to advance against the English."³¹ In another letter John himself assured the king of his intentions to meet up with the royal army assembling at Rouen.³² Even though these assurances were made two weeks before the battle, John never actually set out to join the French army. His son was also restrained and told to stay

²⁹ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 205-207.

³⁰ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 43.

³¹ *Archives départementales du Nord* B17618, in *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power*, by Richard Vaughan, 207-208.

³² Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 208.

in Artois, an order likely issued by John.³³ These actions are made even more suspicious by the fact that by November John was moving with his army towards Paris in hopes of returning to his old position. The defeat of the French army did little to change the internal difficulties of France, despite the fact that many of the Armagnac nobles were killed or captured during the battle. By January of 1416, after laying siege to Paris, John was once again forced to return to Burgundy empty handed as the city refused to let him enter.³⁴

Following his failure to regain control of royal affairs John was soon in contact with Henry. In October of 1416 John and Henry met at Calais, a meeting that still remains shrouded in mystery; historians to this day still disagree over what actually occurred.³⁵ Nonetheless, some general conclusions can be made about the meeting. Henry still hoped that he could make John into a powerful ally, while John remained as indecisive as before, with one English observer noting that John had merely resorted to “evasion and ambiguities” and “like all Frenchmen, he would prove to be a double-dealer, one person in public, and another in private.”³⁶ While whatever the two sides may, or may not, have agreed on remains unknown, the fact that John was willing to meet with the king of England while the latter was invading France shows the extent to which he was willing to go to in order to secure his own position.

During the summer of 1417 as Henry was busy taking over Normandy, John simultaneously launched his own invasion towards Paris in hopes of regaining royal power. While on his way he received a message from the French king, which noted his

³³ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 208.

³⁴ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 208-210.

³⁵ R.C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI, 1392-1422* (New York: AMS Press, 1986), 176; Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 213.

³⁶ *Gesta Henrici quinti*, in *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power*, by Richard Vaughan, 214.

astonishment at John's actions and how the king and dauphin were beginning to wonder if he was in fact allied with the English. John told the messenger that he should have his head cut off for merely delivering such a message. In his reply to the king, John denied any alliance and stated that he was only ridding the kingdom of evildoers.³⁷ As he made his way towards Paris, he took control over many of the important towns and he had soon managed to surround the capital and began to tighten his grip on it. In November he managed to gain control of Queen Isabella of France by luring her away from the Armagnacs. The two set up their own government, one that rivaled the one in Paris headed by the dauphin, Charles, and his Armagnac supporters. The queen granted John considerable powers and by May of 1418 the two sides came to an agreement that once again saw John return to his old position as primary regent of France with full control of the government.³⁸ The dauphin, who at this time was fifteen years old, did not agree to these new arrangements and defied his parents by setting up his own court in Bourges and proclaiming himself the regent of France. John also found out that he was unable to fully return to his old position as the civil war had sharply divided the country and created an atmosphere of mistrust, hindering his exercise of royal power.³⁹

France was now divided between three parties, the King of England controlling the north, John controlling Paris along with his own lands, and the dauphin in control of central and southern France. What followed was a series of negotiations between all parties. Henry V was willing to talk with both French sides in order to negotiate a peace, but neither side was willing to accept his demands. At the same time John and the dauphin negotiated with each other about bringing the civil war to a close, without

³⁷ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 181-182.

³⁸ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 226.

³⁹ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 227.

success as well.⁴⁰ By the summer of 1419 little had changed and in hopes of settling the deadlock the dauphin, along with his advisers, had agreed to take drastic measures. On September 10, John agreed to meet with Charles in hopes that he could gain influence over the dauphin, but when they met John was instead struck down by Charles's retainers and murdered.⁴¹ While the dauphin hoped that this would put an end to his problems, instead it opened up the opportunity for Henry to march towards Paris. John's assassination would also end up having a long-term impact on future Franco-Burgundian relations.

John's reign was characterized by the civil war that consumed France and the extreme measures to which he had to resort in order to get rid of his enemies. But while he may have justified his actions by claiming that he was acting in the best interest of the kingdom, his need to control the royal household was also essential to advancing his own power. His interest lay mainly in advancing his own personal power. There was at this time no evidence of advancing Burgundian autonomy, but after his assassination the circumstances changed drastically.

Philip the Good: The Growth of Burgundian Influence

While Philip the Bold and John the Fearless had mainly been concerned with expanding their power within the French sphere, Philip the Good had far greater ambitions. It was during Philip's reign that Burgundy would grow considerably in both power and territorial extent. Philip, furthermore, even managed to detach Burgundy from the French throne and begin the pursuit of a kingdom of his own.

⁴⁰ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 266.

⁴¹ Vaughan, *John the Fearless*, 286

Philip was, however, initially thrown in the middle of the conflict between England and France. John had been in control of the royal court at the time of his death and queen Isabella had immediately sent for Philip to assume his father's position. By November 1419 Charles VI had granted Philip the powers to conclude a treaty with Henry. Initially Henry had demanded that he receive the territory that Edward III had gained after the peace concluded by the Treaty of Brétigny in 1360. But after his successes Henry's demands grew. He now wanted to marry the king's daughter, act as regent of France and become sole heir to the French crown. While Philip initially protested against these terms he eventually agreed to them, as did Charles VI who would still continue to enjoy the luxuries of his royal position. For Philip the main motivation for agreeing to Henry's demands was the hope of complete destruction of the person who had killed his father, the dauphin, and for now this political agreement was the best way to achieve this goal. With Henry becoming regent and heir to France the question of an Anglo-Burgundian alliance was also brought up. While there were some initial hesitation on the part of Philip and his councilors, eventually the two sides came to an agreement. The fear among the Burgundians was that had Philip not come to terms with Henry, someone else would.⁴²

Philip therefore agreed to what John was never able to commit to: an Anglo-Burgundian alliance.⁴³ By allying himself with England, Philip hoped to isolate the dauphin and make sure that he would never be crowned king due to the dauphin's involvement in the murder of his father. However, when both Henry V and Charles VI died in 1422 it left two rival claimants to the throne of France, the dauphin claiming the

⁴² Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970), 3-4.

⁴³ Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue*, 194.

throne as Charles VII and Henry V's infant son Henry VI. These events hardly interested Philip who by this time had begun turning his eyes towards securing more territory in the Low Countries, and his alliance with England gave him a great amount of freedom to act independently of the French king.⁴⁴

During the 1420s and 30s Philip spent most of his time securing territories in the Low Countries. Philip pursued a much more active policy of acquiring territory than his father and grandfather had done. The primary reason behind this was that his predecessors had enjoyed the benefits of the French crown, while Philip had to survive with only the income from his personal holdings.⁴⁵

One of the first territories that caught his attention was the duchy of Brabant due to its close Burgundian connection.⁴⁶ Philip's paternal uncle Anthony had died at the battle of Agincourt leaving the duchy in the hands of his inept son, John IV of Brabant. In addition to being an ineffective ruler, John's marital situation was also less than ideal. He had married Jacqueline of Bavaria in 1418.⁴⁷ She was an heiress, having inherited the counties of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland upon her father's death in 1417. However, by 1420 their marriage was already in trouble and on April 11, 1420, Jacqueline escaped from her husband and fled to England where in 1422 she married Duke Humphrey of Gloucester. At that time Jacqueline's uncle, John of Bavaria, had succeeded in gaining control over Holland and Zeeland.

This complicated family feud offered Philip the perfect opportunity to exert further influence over the Low Countries. Philip negotiated with John of Bavaria and

⁴⁴ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 61-64.

⁴⁵ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 64.

⁴⁶ See Appendix C and D for family trees.

⁴⁷ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 64.

managed to convince him to make him his heir. Philip had some basis for his claims as his mother was from the Bavarian house and had been the sister of John. At the same time the duke of Gloucester and Jacqueline sailed over from England in 1424 to reclaim her lost territory, but the invasion was a complete disaster for Jacqueline. Philip together with John's forces from Brabant were prepared to face their troops and caused serious problems for her and her new husband. Furthermore, John of Bavaria died on January 5, 1425, and by mid-March the duke of Gloucester, finding himself in a hopeless situation, headed back to England without Jacqueline, but instead with one of her ladies-in-waiting. Jacqueline was however prepared to fight and from 1425 to 1428 she managed to keep Philip from gaining her titles.⁴⁸ Philip continued to pressure her but she could not hold on forever and with the nobles of her realm beginning to side with Philip she was eventually forced to surrender. The treaty that was signed made Philip heir to all of her titles and he was instantly appointed governor of her territories. The treaty also stated she could not marry again without the consent of Philip, a clause that would later cost her any power she still had left.⁴⁹

After fighting for Jacqueline's lands, Philip soon acquired Namur and Brabant through more peaceful negotiations. Shortly after Philip had concluded the treaty with Jacqueline the county of Namur passed into Philip's hands as well.⁵⁰ In 1420 Philip had made an agreement with John III, the count of Namur, who was in need of money and had no heir. For a considerable fee John III offered to sell the county to him under the agreement that it would pass on to Philip following his death. Philip quickly gathered

⁴⁸ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 32-40.

⁴⁹ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 542.

⁵⁰ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 548.

together the required money and secured the county himself.⁵¹ Brabant followed in a simple manner the next year. John IV of Brabant had proven to be an utter failure as duke and after his death in 1427, his younger brother Philip of St. Pol took his place. His time in power was brief as he passed away in 1430 without an heir. The junior branch of the House of Burgundy that was set up in Brabant therefore died with him.⁵² Philip quickly moved in and negotiated with the Estates of Brabant for recognition as the legitimate heir to the duchy. Even though other claimants were put forward the Estates elected Philip as the new ruler.⁵³ Philip soon gained complete control of Jacqueline's lands as well. In 1432 he found out that she had married a local nobleman. Philip acted quickly and had her new husband imprisoned. Likely too tired of fighting against Philip, she quickly agreed to hand over all of her land to Philip if he would only release her husband, which he quickly agreed to do.⁵⁴

By 1432 Philip had therefore considerably expanded his Burgundian realm. The duchy of Brabant, together with the counties of Namur, Hainault, Holland and Zeeland had all been added to the Burgundian dominion through a mix of diplomacy and military force. But these would not be Philip's final acquisitions, for in 1443 the duchy of Luxembourg was added to his personal realm and he also managed to secure for his illegitimate son the bishopric of Utrecht in 1455, strengthening his control over the Low Countries.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 29-30.

⁵² Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 576-77.

⁵³ Richard Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1975), 21.

⁵⁴ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 90.

⁵⁵ Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *The Chronicles of Enguerrand De Monstrelet*, Vol. II, trans. Thomas Johnes (Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1975), 131-33; Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. II, 238.

With all of these newly acquired territories Philip could turn his attention to coming to a final agreement with Charles VII of France. Even though Philip had made an alliance with the English king he never fully committed to the English cause; instead he merely played the two sides against each other in order to further his own interests.⁵⁶ By 1435 England and Burgundy were still at war with France. Charles was, however, eager to negotiate with Philip, and throughout the 1420s he sent numerous peace proposals offering favorable conditions to Philip. There were both personal and political reasons for Philip not to pay attention to any of these propositions. He refused to talk to the person whom he held responsible for his father's death, while at the same time the English alliance helped him secure his own position.⁵⁷ In 1435 the three sides agreed to come together in the city of Arras in hopes of ending the conflict. While the English and French were unable to come to an agreement, the French and Burgundians ultimately did. The Treaty of Arras that was signed was a victory for both sides.

Charles apologized for his involvement in the murder of Philip's father and promised to hold accountable all those who were involved. Numerous towns along the Somme River were granted to Philip as well as other small territorial concessions. Perhaps the most important gain was symbolic, however: the "duke of Burgundy shall not be bound to do homage nor service to the king for the lands he now holds in France, nor for any others that may fall to him by right of succession; but shall remain during his life personally free from all subjection, homage, and obedience, to the crown of France."⁵⁸ Both sides also promised to break any alliances that were harmful to the other and agreed to come to the other's aid should one be attacked. Charles therefore turned Philip from an

⁵⁶ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 8.

⁵⁷ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 20-21.

⁵⁸ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. II, 10-14.

English to a French ally. Philip had gained freedom from the French crown and this allowed him to exercise personal control of his lands without interference from France. There still, however, remained one small drawback in the treaty: following the death of either Philip or Charles, paying homage was to be once again be reinstated.⁵⁹

While he had gained freedom from France, Philip also held imperial territory that required him to pay homage to the Holy Roman Emperor. With his freedom from France, Philip's attention was mainly directed towards the Empire. His relationship was initially tense due to Emperor Sigismund regarding him as a usurper for the way he took over Holland and Brabant; the emperor consequently refused to acknowledge him as rightful ruler over the territories. However, once Frederick III was crowned emperor in 1442, he and Philip began a long series of negotiations to settle the disputes over Philip's claims to the Low Countries. Another topic that came up during these meetings was the question of crowning Philip as a king.⁶⁰ Frederick was prepared to offer Philip a kingdom of his own and some of the early suggestions put forward were that he would become king of either Brabant or Frisia. Philip was pleased with these early suggestions but he wanted even more concessions. He proposed that the new kingdom should "owe no homage to the Empire" and that the territory should include, in addition to his current numerous holdings, some of the neighboring duchies and counties as well.⁶¹ Frederick was not prepared to agree to such extravagant demands and was only prepared to offer Philip a kingdom if it was held as an imperial fief. He had no interest in setting up a strong independent kingdom right next to him. The negotiations continued until 1448 without an agreement being reached and the two would not meet again until 1459. The closest that

⁵⁹ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. II, 14.

⁶⁰ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 285-88.

⁶¹ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 288-89.

Philip perhaps came to gaining his kingdom was in 1463 when the two rulers met once again, this time joined by Pope Pius II. This time Philip was further offered the position of imperial vicar for the lands west of the Rhine River, but the outcome was the same as before.⁶² Philip therefore failed to secure a royal crown because he refused to accept anything less than what he thought he deserved and in the end it was his own pride that got in the way of him gaining a kingdom of his own. With negotiations with the Holy Roman Empire going nowhere, Philip's attention in his later reign began to shift back towards France.

Even though Philip spent a considerable amount of his later reign cultivating relationships within the empire, this did not mean that French affairs were completely ignored. While Charles VII and Philip had very little contact after the Treaty of Arras, Charles's heir, Louis, spent in fact a large part of his time as dauphin in Philip's court, time that would prove beneficial for the future king at the expense of Burgundy.

Charles VII of France and his son Louis had a troubled relationship ever since Louis had joined a revolt against his father in 1439. While the two were initially able to sort out their differences, in 1447 they had another falling out and remained hostile towards each other. In 1457 Louis fled from France to Burgundy when his father sent an army after him. Philip saw this as an opportunity to begin to rebuild the relationship with France and as a consequence spent considerable efforts to make his royal guest feel welcome. Charles VII sent out numerous requests that Louis be extradited, but Philip ignored them. The amount of hospitality that was shown to Louis soon began to annoy Philip's son and only legitimate heir, Charles. Charles was growing concerned about the growing French influence that Louis was exerting at the Burgundian court and the almost

⁶² Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 106.

embarrassing amount of humility that Philip was showing him. Philip and Charles therefore grew increasingly hostile towards each other during the final years of Philip's reign.⁶³

In 1461 Charles VII died and was succeeded by his son Louis XI. Philip attended the coronation of the new king hoping that the two sides could begin to reconcile their differences. This proved to be farthest from Louis's mind as he immediately began the process of undermining Burgundian power mainly through the pro-French contacts he had cultivated while at Philip's court. In 1463 Louis was also able to buy back the Somme towns that were ceded to Burgundy in the Treaty of Arras. This proved to be the last straw for Philip's son Charles who was determined to get back what his father had foolishly given away. As count of Charolais, Charles had some personal power before his father's death, and by 1465 he had joined together with numerous nobles of France against Louis XI, in hopes of strengthening their own position. No serious battles ended up taking place but Louis eventually conceded to their demands due their superior numbers. In addition to regaining the Somme towns the peace treaty also gave Burgundy the county of Picardy. This would only be the first confrontation between Charles and Louis, as the two would continuously clash throughout Charles's reign. For the moment, however, Louis still had hopes of forging an alliance with the future duke of Burgundy, a plan that in reality had little chance of success due to Charles's deep mistrust of the king.⁶⁴

Philip died only a few years later, on June 15, 1467. Charles's assumption of power also marked a significant shift in how Burgundy was governed. Philip had sought

⁶³ Blockmans, *The Promised Lands*, 114-115.

⁶⁴ Vaughan, *Philip the Good*, 379-391.

to expand the Burgundian realms through diplomatic means and only resorted to military confrontations when absolutely necessary. His negotiations for a kingdom had ended in failure, but Charles set out to accomplish what his father had failed to do and was not afraid of using force to achieve these goals.

Charles the Bold: The Height and Demise of Valois Burgundy

When Charles succeeded his father in 1467, the relationship between France and Burgundy was already strained. As soon as Charles came to power he began receiving reports that French troops were closing in on his territory. The cause for these actions by Louis was due to the unknown state in regards to the feudal obligations between himself and Charles. The French chancellor told Burgundian officials that these hostile acts would continue until Charles paid proper homage to Louis for his French territory. In the months following his father's death Charles had in fact refused to refer to the king as his sovereign as the Treaty of Arras had stipulated should occur following the death of Charles VII or his father Philip.⁶⁵

These early confrontations amounted to nothing more than small skirmishes and were punctured by short truces. Charles was mainly focused on defending his territory while he was at the same time busy negotiating with England the possibilities of a new alliance. Louis did all he could to try to prevent this from taking place, but in July 1468 Charles married Margaret, the sister of England's King Edward IV, thereby cementing an Anglo-Burgundian alliance.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London: Longman, 1973), 42-43.

⁶⁶ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 46-53.

This alliance was of great benefit to Charles as it caused Louis to seek a permanent peace with Charles. Charles's initial demands for a peace were similar to those that his and Louis' fathers had agreed to in 1435. He wanted the Somme towns to be confirmed as a part of Burgundy and Charles was to be absolved from paying homage for his French lands. Even though Louis felt that these demands were excessive, the two nevertheless began negotiations.⁶⁷ Louis agreed to most of the demands that Charles had set forward, and in return Charles was to pay homage for his French lands. However, if Louis violated the treaty Charles would be freed from all of his feudal obligations.⁶⁸ The agreement that was reached would prove to be of little consequence, as Louis had no intention of abiding by its terms and within a few years both were once again taking up arms against each other. This meeting also further highlighted Charles's attempts to distance himself from France. Even though these negotiations concluded with some alterations to Franco-Burgundian relations, in the long term they were of no significance.

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The relationship between the two was largely altered by the internal conflict in England known as the Wars of the Roses. In 1470 the Yorkist Edward IV was exiled from England and Louis found the Lancastrian side willing to help in attacking Burgundy where Edward was staying. While Louis gained some early success, the situation was soon reversed as Edward managed to return to England the following year and regain the throne. Charles was able to launch counter attacks against France, but like the earlier conflicts, they proved to be indecisive and by 1472 the two sides agreed on a truce. From this time forward France and Burgundy remained on deeply unfriendly terms, focusing

⁶⁷ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 54-56.

⁶⁸ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 181.

⁶⁹ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 56-57.

particularly on who controlled the Somme towns. These actions demonstrate the levels to which Burgundy had completely separated itself from France and the situation remained unchanged until Charles's death in 1477.⁷⁰ 1472 was, however, the final year that Charles personally led an army towards France, as his attention was in fact mainly directed towards the Empire throughout his reign.

One of the first acquisitions for Charles was the bishopric of Liège, which was surrounded by Burgundian territory. Ever since he had succeeded his father Charles had attempted to gain control of the territory. Liège continued to resist thanks in large part to aid given by Louis XI, but in 1468 Charles decided to act in a manner that would characterize much of his reign. He lay siege to the city and took it by force and proceeded to plunder and destroy much of it.⁷¹ In 1469 he furthermore managed to secure the duchy of Alsace as a mortgage from its bankrupt ruler Sigismund. Aside from Liège and Alsace Charles also managed to gain control over the duchy of Guelders. Burgundy had close ties to this duchy long before Charles came to power and in 1471 he convinced the duke to name him as regent and in 1473, shortly before his death, duke Arnold made Charles his heir. Despite some initial resistance to his rule Charles subdued the duchy simply by marching his army into the region without any serious clashes ever taking place.⁷²

Charles also coveted the duchy of Lorraine, which was situated in between his southern and northern territories; control of the duchy would bind these lands together. But for the

⁷⁰ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 181-82.

⁷¹ Philippe de Commynes, *The Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*, Vol. I, ed. Samuel Kinser, trans. Isabelle Cazeaux (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 188-90.

⁷² Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 182-83.

time being he sought the friendship of its rulers and secured an agreement that allowed his troops freely to pass through the duchy of Lorraine.⁷³

Compared to his later reign Charles, however, still remained cautious when dealing with the Empire. Guelders and Alsace were acquired without any serious military confrontations and he refrained from forcefully gaining control of Lorraine. While he did consider resorting to military approaches to secure some territories within the Empire, he nevertheless held back in hopes of not angering the Emperor at time when good relations were crucial. On September 30, 1473, Charles met with Emperor Frederick III, and, as with his father, the discussions revolved around elevating Burgundy to the status of a kingdom within the empire. It was during these negotiations that Charles came closest to wearing a royal crown.

The meeting between the two began in a somewhat nervous atmosphere. Neither Frederick or Charles could agree on how the other should be addressed and who should be riding first, but after these minor confusions they got on well as they attended hunts and feasts together. Soon there even began to emerge reports that Charles would in fact gain a kingdom. On November 4 a letter was sent to the margrave of Hochberg, which stated that the “Emperor has consented to restore and to create, ... for the lord duke of Burgundy, the kingdom of Burgundy.”⁷⁴ Charles would still not be fully independent as the new kingdom would still form a part of the Holy Roman Empire as had been proposed during the earlier negotiation with Philip. Unlike his father Charles seemed fine with this arrangement and the kingdom was soon to become a reality. During the weeks

⁷³ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 101.

⁷⁴ H. Stein, *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, in *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy*, by Richard Vaughan, 149.

that followed, this claim was given even more credibility, as numerous reports from Trier claimed that Charles had already been made the king of Burgundy. Even the elector of Brandenburg wrote to the duke of Saxony saying that the Emperor had crowned Charles. The bishop of Metz even began rehearsing the upcoming ceremony, which was to take place on November 18. Crown, scepter, royal standards and costumes were all brought to the cathedral at Trier and everything seemed to be in place for the coronation.⁷⁵ But no ceremony ever took place. The first sign that everything was not as it should be took place when the coronation was moved to November 21. The new date came and went and on November 25 Frederick himself departed Trier. The reasons for calling off Charles's coronation remain unknown. Frederick perhaps had second thoughts over creating a powerful kingdom and there is also some evidence that Charles kept adding more demands to his coronation. The one that perhaps caused Frederick to recoil the most was that Charles also wanted to be crowned king of the Romans, a demand that would have virtually meant the abdication of the Emperor himself. Pride, once again, seems to have got in the way for the dukes of Burgundy. The only thing, however, that is certain is that Charles left Trier without a kingdom.⁷⁶ This also marked a considerable shift in Charles's attitudes towards his neighbours within the Empire.

Following the failures at Trier, Charles began focusing increasingly on military conquests to gain land instead of relying on diplomatic means. This shift in policy soon brought Burgundy into conflict with many of her neighbors. One of the most significant events for the remainder of Charles's reign was the siege of Neuss in 1474. This somewhat insignificant siege was part of Charles's attempts to bring the bishopric of

⁷⁵ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 150-151.

⁷⁶ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 152-53.

Cologne into the Burgundian sphere. His actions at Neuss caused many of the rulers in the Empire to view Charles with suspicion and cost him a considerable amount of his prestige. During the same year a coalition of troops attacked Alsace, intending to restore it to Sigismund's direct control. Charles was unwilling to break the siege and as a consequence he lost his control over Alsace, for the time being.⁷⁷

At this time the situation in Lorraine had likewise deteriorated. Burgundian troops passing through the duchy had behaved in such a poor manner that the duke, Rene, began to view Charles with hostility as well.⁷⁸ By 1475 Charles abandoned the siege at Neuss, moved south, and proceeded to invade the duchy of Lorraine. For Charles this was a crucial piece of territory and by now he had also become obsessed with the idea of connecting his lands. Charles was initially successful in taking over Lorraine and recovering Alsace, but his aggression once again drew the attention of the neighboring states, especially the Swiss confederation. In March of the following year Charles confronted the Swiss troops at Grandson, but he was decisively beaten. This defeat would result in a fatal spiral for Charles. Obsessed with having his revenge, he gathered up another army and marched it against the Swiss. In June he was, however, once again defeated at Murton. Furthermore the former duke of Lorraine managed to reconquer his lands in October. Even though winter was approaching Charles marched his army towards the capital of Lorraine, Nancy, in hopes of regaining the duchy.⁷⁹ By the beginning of 1477 his army had been severely weakened due to the previous year's defeats and also by the prolonged winter siege. The duke of Lorraine together with the Swiss army marched with a considerable force against Charles. In the Battle of Nancy,

⁷⁷ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 184-85.

⁷⁸ Vaughan, *Valois Burgundy*, 204.

⁷⁹ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 193-94.

fought on January 5, 1477, Charles's forces were utterly defeated and he was killed in the midst of the battle.⁸⁰ His body was so mutilated that it was difficult to even identify his corpse when it was recovered several days later. For one more fatal instance, the pride that had caused both him and his father their kingdoms proved to be the end of Valois Burgundy itself.

As the great duchy that the Valois dukes had created passed into history, France and the emerging Habsburg dynasty began fighting over who should control its lands. Louis quickly moved with an army to reclaim the French lands. Simultaneously the Burgundian lands that were within the Empire were added to the Habsburg realm. The emperor's son and heir married Charles's daughter, Mary, the only legitimate surviving Burgundian heir, in August 1477, claiming the Burgundian territories in the process. Mary herself died suddenly in 1482, with her death marking the final end of Valois Burgundy and the beginning of a new phase in European history.⁸¹

Conclusion

From the beginning the ambitious Valois dukes of Burgundy set the groundwork for their future expansion. Philip after gaining the duchy initially secured Flanders for himself and his heirs. He also made good use of his position at the French court, using its financial and military resources for personal gains at the expense of France. His son John continued along similar paths that his father had done, but the civil war that erupted between the Burgundian and Armagnac factions severely hampered his ability to use the French crown to his advantage. John's inability to control the king did on the other hand

⁸⁰ Commynes, *Memoirs*, 324.

⁸¹ Blockmans, *Promised Lands*, 194-95.

expose his contradictory attitude towards his lord. This was highlighted by his readiness to negotiate with his supposed enemies and using the weakness of the kingdom after Agincourt to regain control of the France's affairs by use of military force. John's conflicting relationships ended up causing him his life while meeting the dauphin. John would be last of the Valois dukes to focus his attention on controlling France. The assassination of his father ended up having considerable effect on Philip's relations with France. Seeing the dauphin as an enemy he allied himself with England and began distancing himself from France. This separation was made even more final with the Treaty of Arras that absolved Philip from his feudal obligations. Free from France Philip began significantly expanding the Burgundian realm and influence. He did this by expanding into the Low Countries that belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. With his closer relationship with the Empire, he also began entertaining the idea of having Burgundy elevated to a kingdom. By the end of his reign Burgundy had grown into one of the most prestigious and powerful realms in Europe. Philip had expanded his realm mainly through diplomatic means, but when his son Charles succeeded him it marked a shift towards more militaristic efforts. While Charles showed some restraint early on in his reign, especially when dealing with the Holy Roman Empire, his failure at Trier to gain either an Imperial title or kingdom proved a turning point in his reign. During his final years Charles waged continuous wars against France and attacked many of his neighboring states in the Holy Roman Empire, gaining him numerous enemies in the process. His constant wars eventually cost him his life and the collapse of Valois Burgundy in the process.

Appendix A – Historiography of Valois Burgundy

Introduction

Until fairly recently studies concerning Valois Burgundy have remained scarce. The earliest works began to appear during the nineteenth century, but the dukes of Burgundy did not attract any substantial attention from historians aside from a few biographies. But even as the amount of literature has increased during the latter half of the twentieth century, there has still remained a habit of studying Valois Burgundy through the individuals connected with it, rather than through a more thematic approach. By looking at the historiography of Valois Burgundy we can see how early Victorian works were biographical in nature, focusing mainly on the last duke, Charles the Bold. The most significant contribution to the history of Burgundy began with Richard Vaughan, who in the 1960s traced the formation of a Burgundian state through the four dukes. Once interest in women's history began to emerge, two biographies on the wives of Philip the Good and Charles the Bold were also published. The most notable exception to this biographical tradition has come from Dutch and Belgian historians, such as Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, who have examined the relationship between Burgundy and its small but wealthy subjects in the Low Countries, with an emphasis being placed on the important role they played in the growth of the duchy.

Contemporary Chronicles

The earliest works concerning Valois Burgundy come from some of the contemporary chroniclers. For accounts that feature the dukes, three authors stand out: Jean Froissart, Enguerrand de Monstrelet and Philippe de Commynes, all of whom witnessed various

stages of the lives of the Burgundian rulers. However, their works need to be treated with a certain amount of caution as the writing can suffer from biases and historical inaccuracies.

Froissart's *Chronicles* cover the beginning of Valois Burgundy under Philip the Bold. Froissart was born c. 1337 to a family involved with banking in the town of Valenciennes. Even though he was expected to follow in these same footsteps, Froissart developed an interest in writing and courtly life, which ended up granting him access to numerous courts around Europe. During his early career he gained access to the English royal household and ended up staying in close contact with it throughout his life. Later on he also spent a considerable amount of time travelling around the smaller territories of the Low Countries.⁸²

In composing his work Froissart relied heavily on other people to describe events if he himself was not present. Because of this heavy reliance on others to gain information Froissart is at times wrong in his description of events. Due to this, scholars today have to be careful when reading Froissart and attempt to find supporting material in order to draw confident conclusions on his accuracy.⁸³

In terms of Philip the Bold and Burgundy, the *Chronicles* show Philip mainly as a regent of France and the role he played at the French court. When discussing Philip, Froissart remains largely neutral and does not comment too much on his actions.⁸⁴

Froissart also gives an account of John the Fearless and the unsuccessful crusade against

⁸² Jean Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. Geoffrey Brereton, (London: Penguin Books, 1978), 17.

⁸³ Stephen G. Nichols, "Discourse in Froissart's Chroniques," *Speculum* 39, no. 2 (1964): 279-280.

⁸⁴ Jean Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France, Spain and the Adjoining Countries*, trans. Thomas Johnes (New York: Leavitt & Allen, 1853), 268-270; 553.

the Ottomans with which he was involved.⁸⁵ Froissart himself notes that through his writings he hoped to inspire men to achieve great deeds, by looking at the lives of some of the great men of his time.⁸⁶ His writing can therefore at times lack critical analysis and he gives instead an idealized view of events and characters. Philip the Bold is not criticized for his work as regent even when he acted in his own self-interest rather than that of the French crown's.

Enguerrand de Monstrelet's *Chronicles* pick up where Froissart's ended in the year 1400 and in terms of the history of Burgundy, it focuses mainly on the lives of John the Fearless and Philip the Good. Monstrelet was born around 1390 in Ponthieu. Throughout his life he worked in Northern France, which brought him into close contact with the Burgundians on several occasions.⁸⁷ While Monstrelet does cover the history of various European regions, his focus throughout his work is mainly on France. In dealing with the political situation in France he remains largely neutral when covering events. The Armagnac and Burgundian civil war is treated with surprising impartiality and he does not always let his personal preferences come across in his writing.⁸⁸ There are, however, a few instances where we can see some of his biases emerge. He is notably much more sympathetic to the English and Burgundian causes. His treatment of Joan of Arc is also at times harsh, which has caused Monstrelet to be known in France mainly as the chronicler who was not favorable to the Maid of Orléans.⁸⁹ While there may be instances when his writing is more supportive of one side over the other, he was also

⁸⁵ Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. Thomas Johnes, 601.

⁸⁶ Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans. Thomas Johnes, 14.

⁸⁷ Hanno Wijnsman, "History in Transition: Enguerrand de Monstrelet's *Chronique* in Manuscript and Print," accessed Nov 18, 2015, <http://www.academia.edu/1180309>.

⁸⁸ Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *The Chronicles of Enguerrand De Monstrelet*, Vol. I, trans. Thomas Johnes (Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1975), xxi-xxxiv.

⁸⁹ Wijnsman, "History in Transition," <http://www.academia.edu/1180309>.

himself present at numerous events. The most famous incident that he witnessed personally was the capture of Joan of Arc by Philip the Good.⁹⁰ His chronicle should therefore be read with a certain amount of caution at times, but it still serves as one the greatest sources for Burgundian history in the first half of the fifteenth century.

For the final years of Valois Burgundy and the reign of Charles the Bold, the most important contemporary source is Philip de Commynes' *The Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*. In 1464 Commynes entered the service of Charles and was soon appointed counselor and chamberlain of Burgundy. Despite becoming a favorite of Charles, Commynes did not remain loyal to him. In 1472 Commynes defected from Charles to his rival, King Louis XI of France. The falling out was not that surprising considering that Commynes detested war, while Charles was no stranger to using it in order gain his aims.⁹¹ Following the death of Louis XI in 1483, Commynes was exiled from the court and it was after this incident that he began writing his memoirs. His purpose for writing the memoirs was to honor the deceased French king.⁹² As an enemy of Louis XI, Charles the Bold was therefore not always treated as kindly as the king who Commynes remembers fondly for the "graces which I received from him [Louis XI]."⁹³ Because of his fondness for Louis, he is at times defensive of the king's actions and thus relies on false information, while leaving out true facts.⁹⁴ Despite these personal preferences from Commynes, we nevertheless get a contemporary account from someone who was close to Charles the Bold as a friend and later enemy.

⁹⁰ Monstrelet, *Chronicles*, Vol. I, 572.

⁹¹ Philippe de Commynes, *The Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*, Vol. I, ed. Samuel Kinser, trans. Isabelle Cazeaux (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1969), 7-9.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

Nineteenth-Century Romanticism

Following Commynes, a long period of inactivity in terms of works being written on the dukes of Burgundy began. It was not until the nineteenth century and the Victorian era that historians would begin to study the duchy once more. Historians during this time focused primarily on Charles the Bold, as his death in battle and the subsequent fall of Burgundy fitted well with their romanticized view of the past.

One of the first histories of Burgundy was Dom Plancher's *Histoire générale et particulière de Bourgogne* released in four volumes between 1739 and 1781. It is solely focused on the history of the region of Burgundy within France and therefore leaves out the Low Countries completely. A more comprehensive history of the four dukes appeared at the beginning of the next century with Prosper de Barante's *Histoire des ducs de Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois* in 1838. His work remained one of the most influential studies well into the twentieth century.⁹⁵

Soon after Barante there also started to appear English studies on the duchy and its rulers. During the Victorian era, the focus remained largely on Charles the Bold alone. This interest is likely explained by the heroic image that he embodied, dying in the midst of battle after which his great duchy crumbled to pieces. In 1863 John Foster Kirk released the first part of his three-volume biography, *History of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy*, that gives a very vivid picture of his life. At over 1500 pages, Kirk's account of the brief reign of Charles the Bold is exhaustive. The work mainly deals with the conflicts that consumed the duke of Burgundy, giving very little attention to other

⁹⁵ Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Bold: The Formation of the Burgundian State* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), xxx.

subjects. In his account of events, Kirk enjoys adding his own artistic flourishes to the text. After quoting a diplomat describing Louis XI's rivalry with Charles, Kirk finishes with "*Piano, piano*, O penetrating diplomatist! We can believe it without this undiplomatic emphasis."⁹⁶ These personal additions end up taking over large parts of the work and become distracting after a while. As to Charles, Kirk sees him as a man with noble nature whom, even if he acted at times in tyrannical ways, had done so due to the "crude ideas, the narrow prejudices, the blunted sensibilities of the age."⁹⁷ For Kirk, the disturbances Charles had caused would be nothing compared to later conflicts that would consume Europe and had Charles survived, Burgundy could have provided a great neutralizing presence in the region.⁹⁸

Another biography of Charles the Bold released in 1908 by Ruth Putnam continues along similar themes expressed by Kirk and even relies heavily on his research.⁹⁹ In *Charles the Bold: Last Duke of Burgundy* the emphasis is once again on warfare. Putnam considers Charles to be a victim of his historical and geographical circumstances and through these he was driven to rash decisions that ultimately led to his downfall. In his early years he had acted honorably, but once he began to be deceived by his rivals, Charles was forced into a similar position and he descended into web of lies that would alienate him from badly needed allies. Charles became a solitary figure who alone had to fight all his enemies, and he was destined to fail, sooner or later.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ John Foster Kirk, *History of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy*, vol. III (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1868), 486-487.

⁹⁷ John Foster Kirk, *History of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy*, vol. I (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1868), 552.

⁹⁸ Kirk, *Charles the Bold* vol. III, 552-553.

⁹⁹ Ruth Putnam, *Charles the Bold: Last Duke of Burgundy, 1433-1477* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1908), iv.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 454-461.

Aside from the literature, paintings depicting Charles also emerged during this time, showing the Victorian fascination with the final duke of Burgundy. In an 1862 painting *Charles le Téméraire retrouvé après la bataille de Nancy*, the French painter Auguste Feyen-Perrin depicts the dead naked body of Charles in way that is reminiscent of works that show Christ's body after it has been taken from the cross. Another painting by Eugène Burnand *La fuite de Charles-le-Téméraire*, shows Charles heroically riding with his retinue. None of the other dukes have received such attention by later artists and this shows how much Victorians saw Charles as a romantic hero.

The end of the Victorian era also signaled an end to the heroic Charles the Bold. While he still continued to receive attention from historians it was in a much different light. This shift away from Charles also allowed for deeper study of Valois Burgundy.

World Wars

The two World Wars understandably affected historians and we therefore see a decline in publications. During the inter-war years there was, however, one notable addition to the study of Burgundy. Otto Cartellieri's 1929 work, *The Court of Burgundy*, signaled a clear departure from the earlier Victorian literature and the change in perception of Charles the Bold in particular is quite striking. Moving away from the heroic image of Charles, Cartellieri instead focuses on the splendor of his father, Philip the Good and his court. Perhaps after the experiences of World War I, Charles is no longer seen as a glorious figure; instead he is portrayed as a warmonger who unnecessarily waged war and destroyed what his ancestors had worked to build. He was an "unhappy person" who only brought "sedition and revolt" and once he died there was no one who mourned his

death.¹⁰¹ The new hero is now his father who brought peace to the land and Philip is described as “another Arthur among his knights.”¹⁰² Cartellieri describes how Philip made it his mission to form a Burgundian state and free himself from the “antagonizing power” of France and Germany.¹⁰³ Special attention is also given to various aspects of Philip’s court, which is described as the “pillar of Western ideals.”¹⁰⁴ Fashion, feasts, literature and art were all activities that flourished during the golden age of Philip the Good and it was an escape from the horrors of the outside world, which was consumed in warfare. Cartellieri’s work is last one to paint an idealized picture of the dukes. As historians began to publish more works on Valois Burgundy following World War II, there begins to emerge a more balanced and critical analysis in the historiography of fifteenth-century Burgundy.

Post War

In 1949 French historian Joseph Calmette continued to explore the impressive court of Burgundy in *The Golden Age of Burgundy*. However, instead of just focusing on Philip the Good, Calmette expands on Cartellieri’s work and includes the entire history surrounding the duchy. In addition to art, literature and courtly life, the book also examines the development of the Burgundian state during these years. For Calmette there is no denying the fact that the dukes from the beginning set out to carve out for themselves a new state and to re-establish the old Kingdom of Lotharingia, which almost became a reality. Even if their lands contained people from various cultural groups, each

¹⁰¹ Otto Cartellieri, *The Court of Burgundy* trans. Malcolm Letts (New York: Alfred A. Knoph, 1929), 20-22.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 241-243.

complemented one another and had the duchy survived there is no reason to suggest that it could not have incorporated all of them into a unified state, as shown by the Habsburg monarchy in Austria.¹⁰⁵ Despite coming to an abrupt end Calmette still sees an enduring legacy in Burgundy's prestigious court, which gave patronage to famous writers and artists who created a lasting impression on history.¹⁰⁶ The most eminent scholar on the four dukes, Richard Vaughan, would develop the idea of a Burgundian state even further in his four works on each of the dukes.

Richard Vaughan

The most significant contribution to the study of Valois Burgundy comes from Richard Vaughan. His four books were published between 1962 and 1973. Of particular importance are his first two works on Philip the Bold and John the Fearless who had been largely ignored in favour of their more famous descendants, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold.

In his first work *Philip the Bold: The Formation of the Burgundian State*, published in 1962, Vaughan looks at the beginnings of what he calls the Burgundian state. Vaughan admits that considering Burgundy as a single state during this time is a controversial topic and by no means is he claiming that Burgundy during the time period resembled anything like a modern state.¹⁰⁷ While the territories that Philip controlled were diverse and far apart they nevertheless shared a common ruler and through this Vaughan argues that Burgundy could be considered a state in the "sense of a political

¹⁰⁵ Joseph Calmette, *The Golden Age of Burgundy: The Magnificent Dukes and their Courts*, trans. Doreen Weightman (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), 255.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 287-89.

¹⁰⁷ Vaughan, *Philip the Bold*, 237-38.

though not necessarily territorial or even juridical entity, under a single ruler and capable of acting in its own interests and of having its own relations with its neighbours.”¹⁰⁸

Philip had control over every aspect of his realm; administrative, financial and military matters were all under his control with little to no interference from either the Emperor or the French king. In the end it was Philip alone who “pursued his own dynastic and expansionist policies.”¹⁰⁹ But throughout his life Philip nevertheless remained largely dependent on the French throne and its finances in building up his power. While he still relied on France, he did so in order to advance his own interests and creating his own realm separate from France. Therefore, Philip’s “political outlook was Burgundian, not French.”¹¹⁰ For Vaughan it was thanks to the excellent statesmanship of Philip that the groundwork was laid for Burgundy to rise to a major power within Europe.¹¹¹

In his second work, *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power*, Vaughan continues to look at the development of the Burgundian state under Philip’s son, John, who continued where his father had left off. The growth of Burgundy during this time was by no means an accident according to Vaughan. It was instead made possible by the deliberate actions of John and his father who worked hard to advance their own power, by exploiting the weaknesses of France and the Empire during this time. Vaughan also does not consider John to be a French prince in any other sense than the language he used. Neither should any of the other dukes during this time be considered French. Whether dukes of Brittany, Savoy or Lorraine they were all rulers of their own lands and

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 238.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 237.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 240.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 237-240.

in this sense John was a Burgundian prince.¹¹² He was able to wield as much power as any ruler during his time and for Vaughan, John the Fearless was therefore “in everything but the title of king ... a European monarch.”¹¹³

When it comes to the final two dukes of Burgundy, particularly Philip the Good, Vaughan deviates from some of the views of earlier historians. In *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy*, unlike earlier historians such as Cartellieri, Vaughan does not portray the Burgundian realm under Philip the Good as glorious as it had previously been depicted. While Vaughan does admit that under Philip the power and splendor of the Burgundian court was at its highest, he at the same time sees cracks starting to appear in the duchy during Philip’s reign. Philip’s inability to produce a legitimate male heir for a long time meant that the fate of the duchy remained in the balance and only Philip’s life saved the duchy from disintegrating. In the end he only had one male heir, which left his dynasty in a perilous situation. Vaughan also criticizes Philip’s failures in centralizing the large territories that he acquired under one single strong administrative body, something that his father and son attempted to do much more effectively. His diplomacy is also questioned due to the fact the French king Louis XI successfully managed to weaken the Duchy from within. Philip also failed to gain the much sought after title of king and had to settle on being the Grand Duke of the West. In the end what Philip left to his son was “a clumsy administration, a legacy of hatred in towns like Liege and Ghent and, above all, the problem of French hostility.”¹¹⁴ It was up to his son to attempt to save the duchy.

¹¹² Richard Vaughan, *John the Fearless: The Growth of Burgundian Power* (New York: Longman, 1979), 287-89.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 228.

¹¹⁴ Richard Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970), 399-400.

In his final work, *Charles the Bold: The Last Valois Duke of Burgundy*, Vaughan looks at the last decade of the duchy under Charles the Bold. While the views of previous historians have varied considerably, Vaughan's view of Charles is more balanced. For Vaughan, Charles was more successful in administrative and financial affairs than his father had been. Despite his numerous wars Charles managed to field a powerful army on numerous occasions, in large part due to his vast treasury.¹¹⁵ Charles is not portrayed as the war hungry menace developed by Cartellieri. Instead Vaughan sees the aspirations of Charles as being all part of carefully thought out plans for strengthening his position, particularly within the Empire. Vaughan nevertheless sees that the cause behind the disintegration of Burgundian power was in the end due to Charles the Bold's constant warfare and his inability to admit defeat.¹¹⁶

Even though the topic of emergence of a Burgundian state is controversial, Vaughan's work still continues to be the most comprehensive study of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy. Following Vaughan, historians have branched out into different areas and focused instead on more specific aspects of the Duchy.

Recent Studies

Areas that have attracted the most attention from historians in recent years, in relation to Valois Burgundy, have looked at the relationship between Burgundy and the Low Countries, and examined the roles of the wives of the dukes played in shaping the duchy.

The Low Countries

¹¹⁵ Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold: the Last Valois Duke of Burgundy* (London: Longman, 1973), 405-07.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

After Philip the Bold's marriage to Margaret of Flanders, the history of Valois Burgundy was closely linked to Low Countries. His heirs managed to take over more of the counties and duchies until they were in control of almost the entire region. The history of the Low Countries is therefore closely connected with the duchy. Historians have particularly focused on the strength and individuality of the various regions.

Many historians have highlighted the important role that the various principalities played for Burgundy. In his 1992 work *Medieval Flanders*, David Nicholas notes that having a French ruler over the territory was nothing new. Instead what made Burgundian rule important was that for the first time it linked most of the Low Countries under one single ruler. The wealth of Flanders is also what made the subsequent expansion of Burgundy possible. Nicholas emphasizes that throughout this period all of the various territories managed to hold on to their own institutions and had independent administrations.¹¹⁷

Continuing along similar themes, the 1999 *History of the Low Countries* by Wim Blockmans, emphasizes many of the same points that Nicholas made. The counties of Flanders and Artois were extremely valuable for the dukes during this time and were essential in building up their power. He also emphasizes the independence and individuality of the various territories. But he also points out that towards the end many of the rights that some of the cities enjoyed began to be stripped away due to revolts against Burgundian power. This allowed Philip the Good to consolidate some of his power in the area.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ David Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders* (London: Longman, 1992), 317-318.

¹¹⁸ Wim Blockmans, "Formation of a Political Union, 1300-1600" in *History of the Low Countries*, edited by J. C. H. Blom and Emiel Lamberts (New York: Berghahn Books, 1999), 87-89.

Paul Arblaster's 2006 work *A History of the Low Countries* points to the fact that a large number of military interventions were needed in order bring the Low Countries under control. The strong independence that these various principalities tried to hang on to is therefore once again highlighted. At the same there is considerable attention paid to the artistic development that occurred during this time. The Dutch artist Jan Van Eyck rose to prominent position under Philip the Good and became the official court painter.

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The most comprehensive look into the relationship between Burgundy and the Low Countries comes from the combined work of Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier. Their 1988 work, *The Promise Lands: The Low Countries Under Burgundian Rule* once again emphasizes the strong independence that characterized the various realms. In their book Blockmans and Prevenier look at how the Burgundian court from the beginning started shifting from their initial home in Burgundy increasingly more towards the Low Countries. This period also began the integration of the various principalities into one single realm that laid the groundwork for the later emergence of an independent Belgium and Netherlands.¹²⁰ The authors stress that this union of lands did not come together as a "single centralizing vision."¹²¹ The dukes and the towns throughout this period always pursued their own interests. The various regions could agree to accepting some amount of centralization, but only when it suited them. If not they were more than ready to rebel against Burgundian rule.¹²² The success of the dukes

¹¹⁹ Paul Arblaster, *A History of the Low Countries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 96-105.

¹²⁰ Wim Blockmans and Walter Prevenier, *The Promised Lands: The Low Countries Under Burgundian Rule, 1369-1530*, ed. Edward Peters, trans. Elizabeth Fackelman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), xi.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 3-4.

in ruling the Low Countries was due to their ability to recognize the differences of the various principalities. They adopted a policy of keeping some of the local rulers in power, but at the same time adding some of their own men to keep things under control. Due to the various regional differences, Blockmans and Prevenier do not see Burgundy as a unified state, as Vaughan argued in his works, but more as a composite “empire, in which two totally different territorial complexes, themselves made up of a variety of smaller regions, came under the authority of a single ruler.”¹²³ Under Philip the Good there were attempts to create a more centralized rule, but this met with stiff resistance. During the final years Charles the Bold pushed these efforts to their limits, which only resulted in alienating the various regions that in turn possessed the wealth that he desperately needed to fund his wars. With the end of Burgundian rule, the efforts to centralize the region under one ruler also came to an end. What occurred instead was the joining together of the principalities by themselves to counter attempts made by the French to take over their land.¹²⁴

Throughout their reign the various principalities ended up being indispensable for the Burgundians. At the same time they also caused the most amount of trouble. Historians who have focused on the relationship between Valois Burgundy and the Low Countries have tended to emphasize the wealth and fierce sense of independence that the various regions exercised while they were under the rule of French princes; although nominally loyal to their overlords they still held tightly onto their own institutions.

Wives of the Dukes

¹²³ Ibid., 102-03.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 185-93.

A more recent development has been the addition of discussions on what role the wives of the dukes played within Burgundy. Like their husbands the women are also studied through biographical works. Isabel of Burgundy and Margaret of York, wives of the two most famous dukes Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, respectively, highlight the influential role that they played in Burgundian politics.

In 1989 Christine Weightman published *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy*, a biography of Margaret of York, the third and final wife of Charles the Bold.

Weightman emphasizes the role that Margaret played in England, Burgundy and the Holy Roman Empire. Her stepdaughter married the future emperor Maximilian I and with Margaret's help the Habsburgs consolidated their control of the Low Countries following the death of her husband. Margaret therefore served as a unifying presence following the dissolution of the duchy.¹²⁵ Throughout her life she remained loyal to Burgundy and continued to enjoy considerable independence as dowager duchess of Burgundy.

Weightman particularly focuses on the piety and affection for books that Margaret showed throughout her life, and the remarkable tenacity she showed in order to survive the fall of the house of York and the duchy of Burgundy.¹²⁶

Another study concerning the wives of Burgundy comes from Aline Taylor whose 2001 work *Isabel of Burgundy* looks at the third and final wife of Philip the Good. Taylor argues that Isabel played a crucial role in regards to the politics of the duchy, which allowed it to rise to an equal status with France, England and the Empire. As a Portuguese princess and granddaughter of John of Gaunt, she was able to wield considerable influence in the various courts around Europe and to aid in negotiations.

¹²⁵ Christine B. Weightman, *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, 1446-1503* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 217.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, ix.

Isabel was also involved with improving the finances of Burgundy that helped it enhance its prestige as the most splendid court in Europe and due to her close ties with the English court she further helped secure peaceful trade with England. Following her death in 1471, Burgundy began to lose its influence around Europe and it was only six years later the entire duchy ended up falling apart.¹²⁷ Due to her intellect and tenacity she was able to gain considerable independence and control her own destiny, at a time when women were treated as inferior in a world dominated by men.¹²⁸ Taylor states that she wants to rescue Isabel “from the dusty recesses of history’s closet,”¹²⁹ which is a feat that she almost succeeds in. What ends up hurting this work is the complete absence of footnotes from certain chapters.¹³⁰ These omissions end up casting the scholarly value of the whole book into question, which is a shame, as the women of Valois Burgundy remain severely unrepresented in its historiography.

Conclusion

As we have seen the historiography surrounding the Valois dukes of Burgundy has tended to focus heavily on the individuals leaders of Valois Burgundy and on their efforts to create a Burgundian state. Nineteenth-century romantically-inclined historians were attracted to chivalric hero of Charles the Bold, while historians influenced by the horrors of the World Wars dismissed him in favor of his more distinguished father. Richard Vaughan’s work during the 1960s and the following decade remains to this day the most comprehensive study of the four dukes and their rise to power. The increasing interest in

¹²⁷Aline Taylor, *Isabel of Burgundy: The Duchess Who Played Politics in the Age of Joan of Arc, 1397-1471* (New York: Madison Books, 2001).

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, xiii.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, xi.

¹³⁰ Chapters 5 and 10 do not contain any footnotes and the book does not include a bibliography at all.

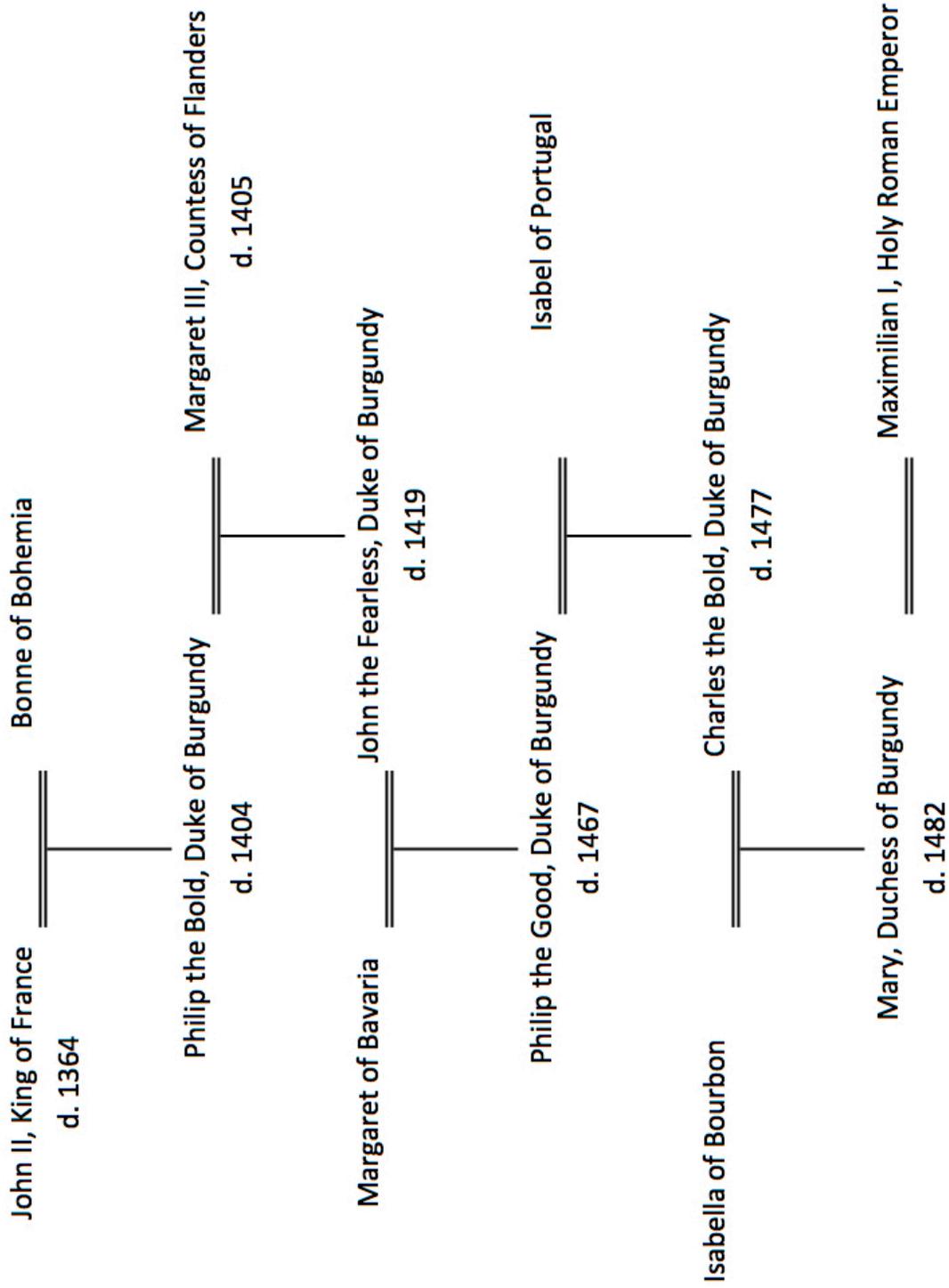
women's history has also added to our understanding of what part the wives of the dukes had in shaping the duchy. With the exception of works concerning Burgundy's relations to the Low Countries, works have therefore tended to come out in the form of biographies, with time and world events shaping the perception historians have had of the dukes and their realm.

Appendix B – Map of Valois Burgundy during Charles the Bold's reign¹³¹

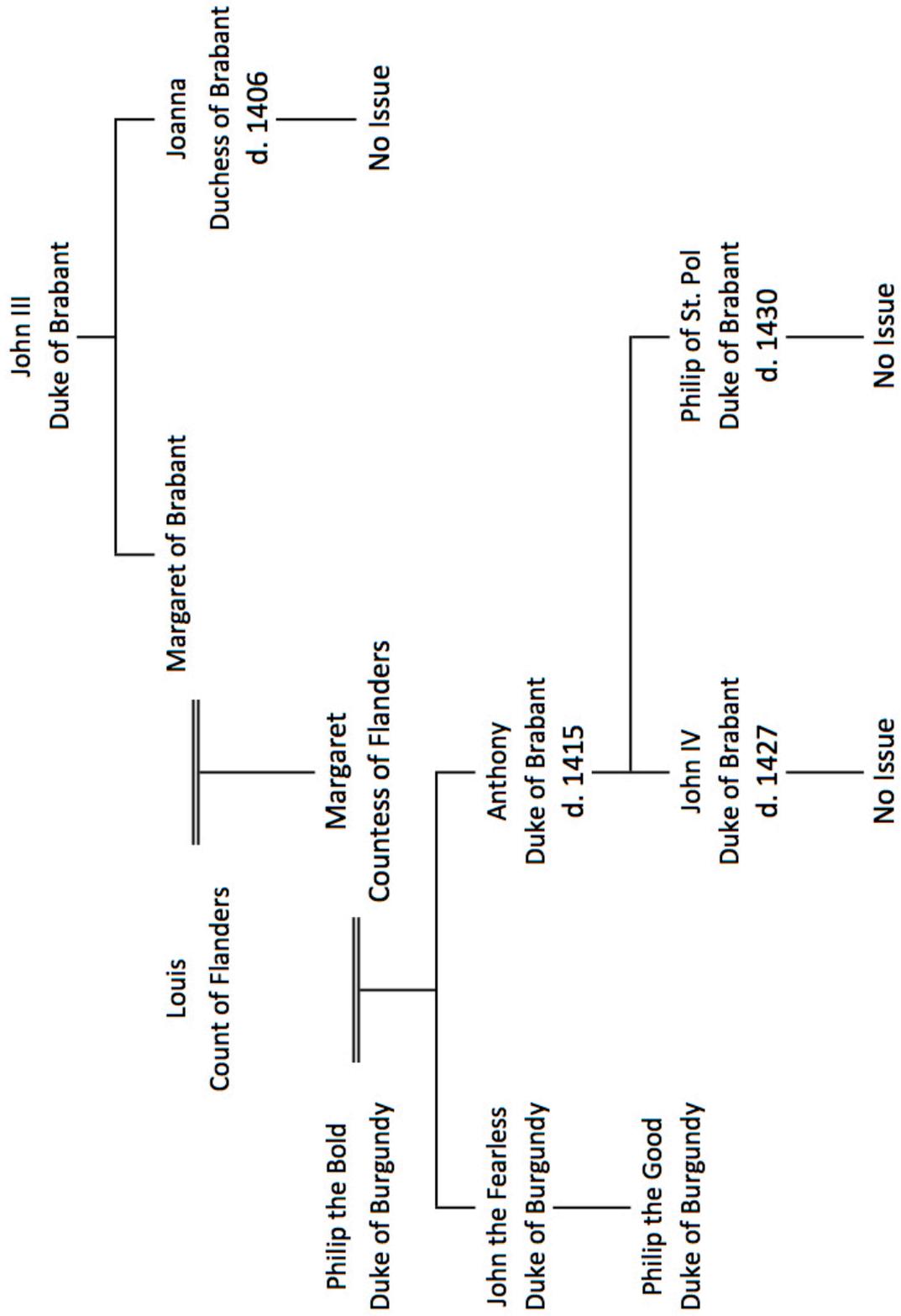


¹³¹ Source: Marco Zanoli, Wikimedia Commons, accessed April 10, 2016. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karte_Haus_Burgund_4_EN.png

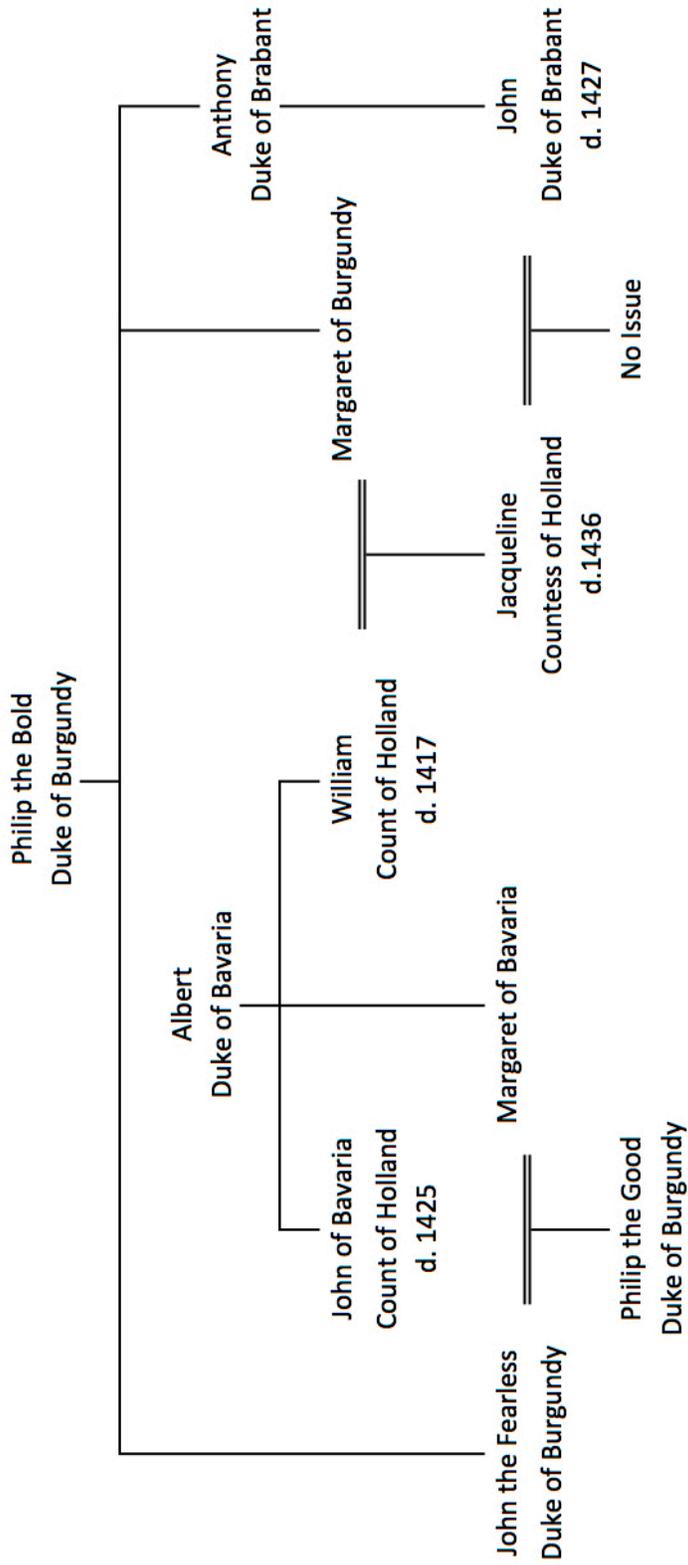
Appendix C – Valois Burgundy Family Tree



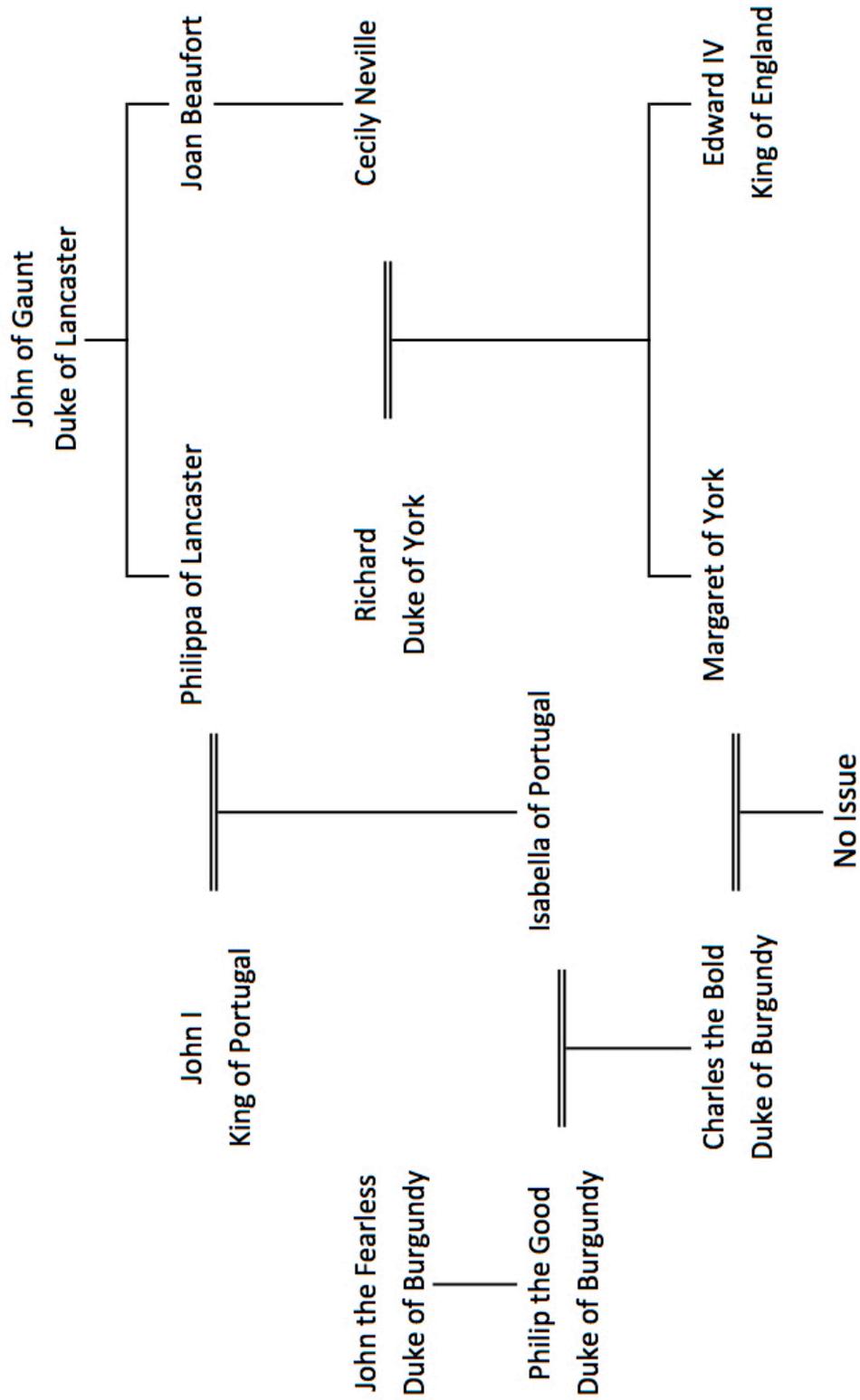
Appendix D – Burgundy and the Duchy of Brabant Family Tree



Appendix E – Burgundy and the House of Bavaria Family Tree



Appendix F – Burgundy and the English Royal House Family Tree



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