

JEAN FROISSART ABOUT THE CAUSES OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

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The article provides an overview of excerpts from the Amiens and Rome manuscripts of the first book of «Chronicles», in which Jean Froissart reveals his thoughts on the causes of the Hundred Years' War.

Key words: The Hundred Years' War; Jean Froissart; Medieval France.

It is worth noting that despite the large number of works in foreign historiography, both on the general issues of the Hundred Years' War and on the examination of individual questions related to the personalities involved in these events, this topic remains relevant and in demand in foreign historiography. Among the most important works are Eduard Perroy's «The Hundred Years' War», Jean Favier's «The Hundred Years' War», and Kenneth Fowler's «The Age of Plantagenets and Valois». Speaking about Russian historiography, it is worth highlighting N. I. Basovskaya's «Leopard Against Lily», as this work is the first comprehensive study of the question of the Hundred Years' War in Russian. In domestic historiography, there are relatively few works devoted to the study of the Hundred Years' War, and it is worth noting D. N. Cherkasov's articles devoted to the study of France in the XV century.

The Hundred Years' War between the English Plantagenets and the French Valois undoubtedly became one of the most significant events in Western Europe. The war, which began in 1337, saw two crowns clash and actively involved neighboring states. Traditionally divided into four stages, the war did not actually cease on the borders of both countries for all of its 116 years [13, p. 2]. By the end of the war in 1453, England, which had extensive lands in Gascony in southwest France, only held onto the tiny town of Calais on the coast of the English Channel.

The Hundred Years' War is traditionally considered to have taken place from 1337 to 1453. This conflict is divided into four stages: the Edwardian War (1337–1360), the Caroline War (1369–1389), the Truce (1396–1415), and the Lancaster War (1415–1453).

Jean Froissart was born in the county of Hainaut, which covered the territory of southern modern-day Belgium and northern France, in the major city of Valenciennes. He was born into a family of wool merchants in 1337

and witnessed many battles between the French and Edward III's coalition during his childhood and youth, during which time Hainaut was occasionally part of that coalition. He received his education at a parish school, where his talents for poetry likely emerged. In 1361, Froissart traveled to England, where he presented his rhymed chronicle of the Anglo-French wars to Queen Philippa of Hainaut. From 1361 to 1369, Froissart visited many regions of England, France, Scotland, Italy, and planned to visit Spain.

While traveling in Italy, he received news of Queen Philippa's death on August 19, 1369. After losing his patroness, Froissart returned to his native Hainaut, where he traded wool for some time. However, he soon found new patrons in the persons of Jeanne and Wenceslaus of Brabant and Robert of Namur, who commissioned Froissart to write a chronicle of the Anglo-French wars.

In the context of this study, the first book of the «Chronicles» is of the greatest interest. Fragments of the Amiens and Roman manuscripts, which have come down to us in single copies, were used in this study. These manuscripts are particularly interesting because they differ significantly in many parts of the text. It is traditionally believed that the Amiens manuscript was created by an unknown copyist no later than 1491 and is presumably the earliest edition of the Chronicles. The Roman manuscript, on the other hand, is considered a later edition of the Chronicles and has been edited to varying degrees, depending on different estimates, up to 90%.

Froissart believed that the main causes of the Hundred Years' War should be sought in the dynastic crisis of the XIV century in France, which led to the rise of the Valois. After Philip IV's death, he left three sons and a daughter. However, none of the sons had children, and after his death, the crown passed to his brother. Nevertheless, after the death of the last king, Charles, 12 peers and barons of France did not give the kingdom to his sister, Isabella, the Queen of England. Froissart wrote that they did this because they believed that the French kingdom was so noble that it was not fitting for it to pass to a woman, i.e., neither to Isabella nor to her son, the King of England, as they decided that a woman's son cannot claim the right of inheritance if the woman herself does not have that right. For these reasons, 12 peers and barons of France unanimously gave the French kingdom to Monsieur Philip of Valois, the nephew of King Philip, thereby removing the Queen of England, who was the sister of the last king of France, Charles, and her son from the throne. Thus, as many people saw it, the inheritance deviated from the correct line, which became the cause of the most destructive wars and devastations in different countries, both in France itself and around the world. In the Amiens manuscript, Jean Froissart presents the main information about the dynastic crisis of the XIV century in chapters 2, 3, 41, and 42. The author's main idea is

to consider the dynastic crisis as a deprivation of rights for Edward III, the son of Isabella of France. However, the author does not mention the problems that arose during the transfer of the throne to Philip V and Charles IV, considering that this transfer maintained the correct line of succession. The author nevertheless maintains some neutrality, believing that representatives of both sides showed themselves equally valiant during this event.

In the Roman manuscript, chapters 3 and 41 are devoted to the crisis. Unlike the Amiens manuscript, the author pays great attention to the dynastic issue. Referring to the tradition of transferring power through the female line, the author shows the fairness of choosing Philip of Valois as the French king, unlike the Amiens manuscript, justifying the peers and barons of France who appear as executors of the king's last will. However, Froissart continues to adhere to the opinion of a violation of the correct line of succession to the throne, insisting that it was this violation that led to numerous wars and devastation.

Overall, it can be concluded that throughout his life, Jean Froissart continued to defend the legitimacy and validity of the English king's claims to the French crown. In his opinion, it was this contradiction that led to the beginning of the Hundred Years' War.

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