

A STUDY OF THE CHRONICLES OF JEAN FROISSART IN THE WORKS OF GODFRIED CROENEN

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The article analyzes modern interdisciplinary research on the chronicles of Froissart on the example of the works of Godfried Croenen. The importance of computer source studies is emphasized as a tool for research of several editions of the First Book of Chronicles. The author points out that Croenen's research helps to investigate the genesis of book production in medieval France in the XV century on the example of the chronicles of Froissart. The article also stresses the popularization of historical knowledge on the example of The Online Froissart website.

Key words: book production; Jean Froissart; Galbert of Bruges; Pierre de Lifol; computer source studies.

International cooperation and interdisciplinary approach are fundamental features current historical science. Today's century is the age of information technology. The person who met Petrarch and Geoffrey Chaucer at the wedding of Edward III's son, created a unique chronicle in the time. More than 150 manuscript volumes containing the Chronicles have survived in more than 30 different libraries across Europe and North America. Many scribes created copies of the Chronicles throughout the XV and XVI centuries. The work was written in the French language and translated in Dutch, English, Latin, Spanish. Jean Froissart left us four Books, which described peasant uprisings, political live royal courts, struggle with Muslims and the most important topic – the Hundred Years' War. In this regard, our goal is to look through the current research on the legacy of the historian of the XIV century Jean Froissart.

Godfrid Croenen is British historian, who specialized in history of book of the XV century, in particular Jean Froissart's Chronicles and the manuscripts as well as early prints through which this historical work was transmitted. In addition, he is interested in commercial book production in France and Flanders. His research on the chronicle of Froissart can be divided into two directions. The first is the study of the Froissart chronicle itself, which implies the study of the author's personality, the origin of various editions, and the representation of a number of events through the vision of the chronicler. The second direction is the spread of Froissart's work throughout Western Europe: activities of librarians, copyists, illustrators, contacts with customers, payment and used materials. A huge number of editions of the first book of the Chronicles

of Froissart create many questions, interpretations, flaws in the study of this or that event. It is interesting to see how the author compares three editions of one book, seeking to learn the essence of the Battle of Crecy. The author comes to the conclusion that the later edition was compiled. There we can see the descriptions of the events preceding the battle more accurately. If Froissart says in the earliest edition (Amiens redaction) that he heard Edward III praying before the Battle of Crecy, then in the B/C redaction he tells us about anonymous informants. And in the most recent edition – Rome manuscript, we already see the true suppliers of information to the chronicler such as John Chandos and Bartholomew Burghersh from the English side and Charles of Montmorency from the French side. The researcher regards this as a reason to compose the best possible, coherent and convincing historical writing. This purpose was not only to record accurately historical facts, but also to teach readers important lessons concerning the physical strength and preparedness of soldiers, their courage and military discipline [1, p. 408–410].

We must remember that Jean Froissart is trying to create a universal history of Western Europe. Therefore, it is extremely important for us: what place the events of national stories have in his narrative. That is why Godfrid Croenen turned to the history of Flanders, which was close to Froissart, because he was originally from Valenciennes. The researcher compares the story of the murder of Count Charles of Flanders, which was described by Galbert of Bruges and Flemish uprising of 1379–1385, narrated by Froissart. Both works are similar for modern science, because the chroniclers have common themes – military clashes, violence, uprisings against the Count of Flanders. In addition, Gilbert and Froissart repeatedly refer to the practice of burning down houses as thoroughly effective and highly symbolic means of punishment. Another parallel that the historian traces in the chronicles is the theme of escape. Both Gilbert and Froissart told us about the experience of the counts in changing clothes in order to merge with society. Froissart even presented us a story when a count in disguise sought salvation from a poor woman in the house, hiding himself in the attic where the children were sleeping. The influence of divine forces on the development of the historical process in Gilbert's is extremely stressed compared to Froissart's. A native of Valenciennes was able to accuse the devil as an instigator of sin and rebellion in Flanders, but this should be regarded as a literary device. Froissart was aware of the real socio-economic causes of the rebellion of the population of Flanders, so God intervenes in his story only periodically. Additional themes that bring both chroniclers are closer each other and allow us to revise our classical vision of Froissart in the theme of pride, revenge and enmity. Godfrid Croenen concludes that those moral qualities such as cunning, duplicity, cruelty are allowed and even welcomed by Froissart. At the same time, these characteristics are extremely censured and condemned by the chronicler

when telling about the chivalry of England or France, as well as royalty. This allows us to reconsider Froissart's personality and his approaches to moralizing in his work [2, p. 240–250]. However, the researcher notices typical characters for Froissart in the narrative of the Ghent uprising. An elderly woman living outside the walls of Oudenaarde made her way through the crowds of Ghent militia to warn the guards about the impending danger. Unfortunately, the guards didn't believe her, they said that she had mistaken her cows for men from Ghent. This allowed the count's enemies to take the city by surprise. On the other hand, the old woman's actions were effective in saving the Count's life [3, p. 7–14].

Now let's shift to the next direction of Godfrid Croenen's research. Author leads to a number of thesis researching book printing in Paris at the beginning of the XV century. First of all, we recognize the first book publisher of the first copies of the chronicle of Froissart – Pierre de Lifol. Secondly, the creation of copies was paid in several tranches. For example, a book publisher received 20 francs as a down payment. Then he should receive 40 francs for completion of the first book, and the second amount of 60 francs for providing the second book. Thirdly, we can say that the first book publisher produced in several several books at once, as we are told by the Codicological similarities of several publications. They include the proximity of sizes, the use of red for numbering Roman numerals, the similarity of rubrics and miniatures [4, p. 261–271]. Pierre de Lifol was an extremely enterprising man, because we find his books even in England, where the Stanley family owned copies of the chronicler Froissart at the beginning of the XV century. It is very interesting to observe that of the Englishmen who owned the chronicles were lawyers. After the death of Thomas Urswick, a number of books, the chronicles of the canon from Shime appeared in the inventory of the name of Marks, located in Essex. Chronicles are also found in the description of the property of Thomas Kebell, who died in 1500 [5, p. 409–419].

One of the most important achievements of Godfried Croenen is the curation of the project the Online Froissart [6]. This project is a product of cooperation between the Universities of Liverpool and Sheffield, as well as the Institute of Digital Humanities. In the site, the researcher will be able to find a complete bibliography with sources and historiography on the Chronicles of Froissart. Universities have provided users with access to facsimiles of dozen of copies of the Chronicles. The employees of this project have done tremendous work, because we have been provided with transcribed copies of Froissart's works and a huge dictionary of the Old French language. We are able to receive comments on the miniatures provided, and codicological descriptions of the manuscripts. The Internet resource allows us to compare several versions of each chapter in each book of the Froissart Chronicle at once. This site is an example of computer source studies, which directly solves the problems of popularization of

historical knowledge, attaching the originals of sources and all the data accompanying it to free access. It can be noted that thanks to this site, one of the oldest manuscripts of the Froissart chronicle was transcribed and given the name "C" for the versions of the first and second books. Its internal content is the most dramatic in context, some parts have been removed, and others have been completely rewritten, while some have been added. However, little work has been done on the study of the contents of the book. In the future, these studies will be extremely important for understanding the author's rewriting of his literary works [7, p. 56–60].

Finally, Godfrid Croenen is a representative of the science of the XXI century, who uses the achievements of information technology to solve its own research problems. His scientific activity allowed us to look at the genesis of book production in whole, not only Froissart's Chronicles, but also more broadly of all chroniclers of the late Middle Ages. The researcher was able to trace the supply links, as well as the ways of distributing books among Western European chivalry. Unfortunately, we haven't seen works dedicated to Froissart in the last five years. But let's hope that a huge launch was given to the source studies of the monumental work of the chronicler from Valenciennes.

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