

The English Occupation of Normandy and Norman *Brigands*, 1415-1450

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1. Introduction

In the second half of the Hundred Years War which started with Henry V's expedition of 1415, the English strategy of the war underwent a radical change from that of the first half which was marked by repeated chevauchées, i.e., prolonged pillaging expeditions, and occasional confrontations of the expeditionary forces with the French cavalry which invariably ended in major English victories. However, this strategy could not end the war and the English gained neither the French crown which they avowed to conquer nor any piece of land except for Calais and its environs. Henry V radically changed this strategy. He aimed at the outright military conquest of France and the first target for Henry in this strategy was Normandy which had been held by his ancestors as dukes of Normandy till 1202 when it was confiscated by the king of France as their feudal lord. Henry claimed it as his rightful inheritance and, as he asserted, he was only reclaiming what had to be duly restored.

After some diplomatic negotiations with France which he thought was necessary before formally declaring war he suspended the talks denouncing the French for their perfidy saying that the king of France was not ready to render justice for him. He had been already preparing for war and as soon as the Anglo-French negotiations were suspended he instantly collected his army and departed to France with them.(1)

His first campaign lasted from August to November 1415 and this resulted in the seizure of Harfleur as the second English bridgehead across the Channel and Battle of Agincourt in which numerous French nobles were either killed or taken for ransom by the English including the king's cousin, Charles, duke of Orléans. This was only a second version of Edward III's campaign of 1346-47 in which the English forces won a smashing victory over the French at Crecy and then laid siege to Calais which they ultimately took after a year. The Agincourt campaign was an extension of the first half of the war and the change of strategy was not yet apparent.

Henry's true design only became apparent in his second campaign which started in 1417 and by the time of drafting the Treaty of Troyes in 1420 the English took most of western Normandy and part of eastern Normandy including Rouen, the Norman capital

(1) For Henry V's French policy and the early stages of his war against France, see E.F. Jacob, *Henry V and the Invasion of France*(London, 1947)

and the see of the archbishop. Fortified cities and towns were systematically reduced and placed under the guard of the English garrisons. The French royal family and nobility divided against itself into the two feuding parties of Burgundians and Armagnacs or Orleanists could not offer any effective resistance to the advancing English forces. As Henry took the position of the hereditary lord of Normandy, he summoned inhabitants of Norman towns to surrender to their natural lord. If they refused to obey, they were punished by heavy fines as in the case of Rouen when they ultimately opened their gates in January 1419. If inhabitants wanted to leave their home towns to be placed under the English occupation, this was permitted under certain conditions. Henry as the natural lord of Normandy was unwilling to inflict undue hardships to his subjects. Later it appeared that unexpectedly large numbers of urban inhabitants were leaving towns occupied by the English, the authorities of the occupation forces even took measures to exhort them to stay and return to their respective trades. Henry as the legitimate lord and the successor to the French king wanted to conciliate newly conquered inhabitants of Normandy and to be accepted by them as their lawful lord.(2)

Henry and his brother, John, duke of Bedford, who took the responsibility of representing English interests in France and Normandy after premature death of Henry in 1422, took various measures to conciliate and pacify the Norman inhabitants. These measures included the delivery of safe-conducts and assurances of safety to inhabitants who reconciled themselves to the fact of the English occupation, the prohibition against English soldiers from wanton plunder, seizure of provisions, taking of hostages for ransom and so forth. However, warfare in the middle ages meant an opportunity for soldiers to profit themselves by victimizing civilians and it was difficult and even meant tactlessness for the commander to enforce these prohibitions to the letter of the law. So there were always causes of friction between Norman inhabitants and the English forces of occupation.

2. The reaction of Norman inhabitants to the English occupation

As has been set forth above, the fact of the English occupation of Normandy brought about a novel situation for both the English and the Normans which they had never experienced before. The English on the one hand had never conquered and ruled

(2) R.A. Newhall, 'Henry V's Policy of Conciliation in Normandy, 1417-1422', *Anniversary Essays in Medieval History by Students of Charles Homer Haskins*(Boston/New York, 1929)

over a people who had lived under a monarchy with a well-organized non-English system of government.(3) The Normans on the other had no experience of foreign rule over them. This novel situation gave birth to various new problems and new devices to tackle these problems. However, we cannot tarry and discuss these interesting questions. We must hasten to the heart of the matter.

We have seen that Henry V styled himself legitimate lord of Normandy as a male descendant and successor to the ancient Angevin dukes of Normandy. Was this claim to the lordship of Normandy accepted as legitimate by his supposed subjects, i.e., inhabitants of Normandy? This question is one of the birth and direction of sympathy and loyalty among inhabitants of the French province situated near the seat of the French monarchy, which formed part of the French royal demesne, yet had had a distinctly close relationship with England and was invaded and occupied by the English forces during the Hundred Years War.

The Hundred Years War is said to have been no war between two nations and national sentiments of the two nations of England and France awoke during the war and in particular during its latter half.(4) In saying so, reference is often made to Joan of Arc. However, it may be imagined that even preceding Joan the French national sentiment was gradually being awakened in the regions placed under the English occupation like Normandy.(5) Still it is hard to grasp the situation as it was avoiding at the same time the error of seeing it through modern eyes and interpreting it with excessively modern notions.

The past studies on this subject were made mostly by French historians and partly by English and then Americans. Those studies, especially most of those by French scholars and English works could not keep clear of national prejudice. If we look at the bibliography appended at the end of a book published in 1969, we see studies on this

(3) England of Edward I conquered Wales in the 1280s and kept it under its own rule ever since. However, the Welsh had no national unity nor their own system of government so that the English could impose their own system without much regard to the reaction of the native Welsh population.

(4) D.C. Douglas, Introduction, in É. Perroy, *The Hundred Years War*, tr. by H.B. Wells with an Introduction by D.C. Douglas (New York, 1951), xii

(5) J. Calmette et E. Déprez, *La France et l'Angleterre en conflit* (Paris, 1937) carefully describes expressions of French national and patriotic sentiments in the latter half of the Hundred Years War. These expressions are mostly utterances of distinguished individuals.

subject were published already in the 1850s.(6) According to the author of the book, however, the largest number of studies were published between 1871 and 1914, i.e., the years between the Franco-Prussian War and the First World War. He suggests that this fact has something to do with the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to France in this period. In other words the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War aroused French national sentiments and the concession of Alsace-Lorraine to Prussia was compared to the medieval occupation of Normandy by England. Attempts were made consciously or unconsciously to prove by way of example that foreigners' rule were unacceptable to the native population.

In contrast to this English and some Norman historians appreciate constructive aspects of the English administration of occupied Normandy(7) and undervalue resistance movements of inhabitants as banditry.

This conflict of views originates largely in the nature of surviving sources. In order to clarify conditions of society under the English occupation we resort to administrative documents of the English authorities of occupation in addition to chronicles and other testimonies of contemporary French authors. These documents record resistance movements of inhabitants only within the context of the maintenance of peace of society as a task of the English authorities of occupation. This means that the wording of the documents are such that it does not discriminate actions of resistance against the authorities of occupation — political offence — from simple anti-social acts — infamous offence — and they are mixed up.

Incidentally the fact that the peace of society was in much disturbed condition cannot be denied seeing that the execution of criminals was inordinately frequent as far as can be seen in surviving documents of the occupation authorities, that travellers had to face great danger during their travels, and that there were so many outlaws with prices on their heads. It must be admitted, though, that deterioration of law and order was a general state of affairs throughout France which had fallen into violent political dissension and anarchy in this period. The question is what special features this disorder showed in the regions under the occupation.

(6) R. Jouet, *La résisistance à l'occupation anglaise en Basse-Normandie(1418-1450)* (Caen, 1969). The following discussions owe much to this work.

(7) E.g., the foundation of the University of Caen by duke of Bedford in 1431, and the revitalization of the estates of Normandy by the occupation authorities. Perroy, *The Hundred Years War*, 249; B.J.H., Rowe, 'The States of Normandy under the Duke of Bedford, 1422-1435', *English Historical Review* 46(1931)

3. What sort of men were the *brigands*?

Here is an important question in the interpretation of documents left by the English authorities of occupation: what is the true nature of *brigands* who often appear in the records as disturbers of the peace. *Brigand* is a word common both to French and English, meaning a bandit, robber or plunderer. The view that they were anti-English, pro-Valois partisans was presented in France as early as the 1850s(8) and it was Lefèvre-Pontalis who defined them clearly as Valois volunteers and studied their activities in east Normandy during five years 1424-29. He picked up every episode of inhabitants' resistance movements from contemporary chronicles and documents of the English authorities of occupation describing their images, relationship between episodes and between their activities and the movements of the Valois regular army.(9) He asserted in his work that *brigand* and other similar terms which appear in documents indicate guerrillas and partisans hiding in woods and wasteland. These people were, according to his explanation, are patriots who refused to take an oath of obedience to Henry V or tore it off. He declared further that those Frenchmen who were executed in occupied Normandy were, unless shown otherwise by contrary evidence, condemned patriots.

Benedicta Rowe, English historian, criticised these arguments in the following terms.(10) *Brigands'* appearance in northern France was not at all limited to the years of the English occupation. Preceding the reign of Henry V as early as the beginning of the fifteenth century northern France, torn between the two feuding parties of the Burgundians and Orleanists or Armagnacs, was much disturbed by rampant bandit *brigands*. Thomas Basin, a contemporary chronicler, pointed out that as soon as the English left Normandy, *brigands* also disappeared. This only shows that *brigands* were products of the civil war.

Incidentally as we look up the word *brigand* in Frédéric Godefroy's *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française*, we find that in the fourteenth century it was used in the sense of a foot soldier and by the end of the century it came to mean a bandit. (11) In

(8) J. Quicherat, *Aperçus nouveaux sur l'histoire de Jeanne d'Arc*(Paris, 1850)

(9) G. Lefèvre-Pontalis, 'Épisodes de l'invasion anglaise. La guerre de partisans dans la Haute - Normandie (1424 - 1429)', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 54(1893); 55(1894); 56(1895);57(1896);97(1936)

(10) B.J.H., Rowe,'John Duke of Bedford and the Norman 'Brigands'', *English Historical Review* 47(1932)

(11) *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française : et de tous ses dialects du IXe au XVe*

the fifteenth century when the civil war in France became fiercer, it indicated an armed peasant who was forced by violence of soldiers to leave his home and became a fugitive in woods.

They forsook peaceful life of a peasant and waged a guerrilla war against the Burgundian and Armagnac armies that lived by plunder and robbery victimizing peasants. Thus preceding Henry V's war of conquest in Normandy the notion of *brigands* was formed, *brigands* who were armed robbers and plunderers just as *routiers*, though they lived a wandering life in woods and wasteland in contrast with the latter who were dismissed and unemployed professional soldiers entrenched in a fortified stronghold.

After Henry V's conquest of Normandy activities of those brigands continued and though some of them could have been declared pro-Valois partisans, most of them were only infamous robbers. It was proper that the English authorities of occupation should have taken a severe policy of repression against such infamous and reckless robber groups. That *brigand* was merely a word indicating a simple robber and not a soldier of the resistance movement against the occupation authorities can be proved by the fact that the word was applied also to an English deserter robber. These are the main points of Rowe's criticism against Lefèvre-Pontalis.

It was Jouet who lately directed a counter-criticism to Rowe's theory. He quotes such phrases as "brigans et inimicus noster", "per Brigantes et alias gentes partem Francie tenentes", "armignaz ou brigans" or "brigans armignaz" from various documents of the occupation authorities and explains that in these cases an Armagnac(Valois partisan) and a *brigand* mean clearly one and the same thing, i.e., the two words were synonymous. In other words although a *brigand* originally meant a bandit, after the English conquest of Normandy the rebel against the occupation authorities was likened to a bandit and ended in being called a *brigand*.(12) In fact in a mandate dated 27 June 1421 and sent to all the king's *baillis* of Normandy Henry V called those people "effecti predones et *brigandi*" who made an oath of obedience to him and later deserted their homes, breaking their earlier oath and hiding themselves in caves and forests.(13) It is true that sources mentioned

siècle, composé d'après le dépouillement de tous les plus importants documents, manuscrits ou imprimés, qui se trouvent dans les grandes bibliothèques de la France et de l'Europe, et dans les principales archives départementales, municipales, hospitalières ou privées / par Frédéric Godefroy, 10 vols(Paris, 1880-1902)

(12) Jouet, 19-20

(13) Ibid., 20-21

brigands in this area even before the English invasion, but instances were few and the appearance of *brigands* still sporadic. In contrast to this after 1418 *brigands* spread over the whole Normandy and moreover they were there continuously with the result that those executed as *brigands* were also numerous.⁽¹⁴⁾ In other words the brigandage which was only a small sporadic incident before the invasion of the English became daily happenings after their arrival and the source of their chronic anxiety.

It is indisputable, therefore, that the number of *brigands* greatly increased under the English occupation. However, it is also undeniable that the meaning of the word *brigand* is ambiguous. It may be asked then if there is any convenient way of telling in which sense the word is used when we encounter the word *brigand* in sources or it is said that so and so is a *brigand*.

This question was asked and answered both by Rowe and Jouet. A key to the answer for this question was brigands' designations. They were called not only *brigands* but also by various designations like 'traître', 'larron', 'guetteur de chemin', 'ennemi et adversaire du Roy notre seigneur'.⁽¹⁵⁾ Among these designations 'larron' and 'guetteur de chemin' apparently have no political connotation but the other two 'traître' and 'adversaire du Roy notre seigneur' suggest a plain political inclination of the men so designated who may well have been rebels against the English authorities.

Another key was the manner of disposal of the condemned man's property. In the case of an infamous criminal after his execution only his movables and the year's revenue of his real property went to the king and his real property itself escheated to his feudal lord. In contrast to this in the case of treason, i.e., rebellion against the king, the condemned man's real property was seized by the king. Therefore if the condemned man's real property was seized by the king the man was condemned for treason and his crime was one of political nature, a revolt against the authorities of occupation.

Yet a third key was the manner of execution of the *brigand*. In those days the condemned criminal was executed by either hanging or decapitation and the *brigand* designated as traitor was decapitated and then hanged from the gibbet. In this case the traitor is the designation of the man who swore the oath of obedience and then

(14) Accounts of the treasurer-general of Normandy record that from June 1419 to April 1420, 152 brigands were captured and condemned, and from 1 May to 1 September 1422, 92 brigands were similarly put to death. Jouet, 93.

(15) 'Ennemi et adversaire du Roy' was the Lancastrian designation of the Valois armies and soldiers. Jouet, 23.

joined the resistance movement against the occupation authorities. Rowe and Jouet agree up to this point.(16) However, they disagree on the nature of offence of those hanged. Rowe thinks that the mode of execution was the decisive sign for differentiating a political offender from an infamous criminal. Thus she affirms that because men designated robber and king's enemy were usually hanged they were simple robbers and the designation of 'king's enemy' in these cases meant only that they were enemies of the king's peace. Jouet, however, thinks that the 'ennemi et adversaire du Roy' designates a man who did not swear an oath of obedience to the conqueror and stubbornly resisted the authorities of occupation. Therefore the death penalty by hanging could be applied to a certain group of political offenders. Rowe says that those rebels of firm purpose were not *brigands* but regular warriors and could be ransomed as prisoners of war. Jouet contradicts to this and says that the redeemables were limited to ones who could show by evidence that they belonged to the garrison of a certain Valois town or castle or that they had come from the unconquered Valois country and belonged to the regular Valois army. Those who remained in Normandy and resisted the authorities of occupation were condemned as *bridands*.(17).

In the final analysis there is no doubt as to the two categories of men: to the first category belong men who had once taken an oath of obedience to the conqueror and later broke it and hence was condemned as a traitor and to the second men who were redeemable prisoners of war belonging to the regular Valois army of the government of Bourges. However, besides these two categories there were many whose affiliations or positions were unclear and who in some sense of the word harmed the peace of society under the occupation. Whether any of them was a simple robber or a singleminded guerrilla is not clear in the document and there is no reliable means to tell the one from the other. Even Jouet thinks it beyond the mark to equate every *brigand* with a political activist against the occupation authorities.(18)

We have so far looked at the difference of opinion as to the semantics of *brigand* and we have reached stalemate. Nothing could be clarified through this path. So we will now proceed to observe the actual condition of the inhabitants' resistance to the occupation authorities. Before doing that, however, we may as well leave Normandy for a moment and have a wider view by looking at what the historian of this kind of social or anti-social violence has to say.

(16) Rowe, 'The Norman Brigands', 591-593 ; Jouet, 25-26.

(17) Jouet, 42-43.

(18) Ibid., 27.

4. Hobsbawm's Social Bandit

The name of that historian is Eric Hobsbawm. Although he has no publication on this period, he has indeed discussed this kind of violence in his two works, *Primitive Rebels*(1959) and *Bandits*(1969). A bandit means a robber or plunderer and almost synonymous with a *brigand*. We cannot enter into details of these books but in so far as it concerns our problem, we might briefly look at what he has to say chiefly in his later work *Bandits*.⁽¹⁹⁾ It must be noted that the bandits he discusses mostly belong to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and medieval examples are not included. However, he often refers to Robin Hood as the classical model of his *social bandit* and this indicates that his frame of reference included the middle ages and is not limited to the modern period.

First, we note that he uses the term *social bandit* as is shown above. What is the implication of the term *social* in this context? He may be setting *social* against anti-social or criminal. The ground for this guess can be found in his arguments at the beginning of the book. There he writes: although the robber from the legal point of view ranges from a mugger to a guerrilla, he is most interested in the rebel from the minority of agricultural society whom the public do not regard as a simple criminal. What is most interesting in the social bandit is that although he is an outlaw originating in the peasantry who is regarded as a criminal by lords and the state, he remains in peasant society and is regarded by his peer peasants as a hero, their champion, an avenger on their behalf and a fighter for justice and as such enjoys their support and help. And this is what divides him from other common criminals.

He also says that social bandits of this kind can be found in all class societies of intervening stages between clan society and modern capitalist society. From this remark it appears that he does not exclude the period we are studying, i.e., the middle ages, from his consideration.

The war, conquest and collapse of administrative systems is apt to produce a multitude of plunderers and outlaws. Their mentality and their system of values are those of the peasantry. They grope for the maintenance or restoration of traditional order and the remedy for social injustice. They were not pursuing the formation of a new social and political system on the basis of a certain ideology. In this sense their perspective was very limited and narrow.

Their class of origin was chiefly the peasantry and as a matter of fact they were fugitive serfs and fallen free peasants. Among them may be found gaol breakers and

(19) E.J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits*(London, 1969)

deserters and the latter often took the leadership for the host. The group of common criminals who were no *social bandits* were enemies of peasants and therefore they did not expect the sympathy of peasants. This kind of criminal groups neither have any local roots. The value system of criminal groups is the reverse of normal society. In contrast with this the value system of *social bandits* shares that of normal peasant society. Because a *social bandit* originally was a locally rooted peasant and no criminal, he could at any time return to the community of his origin as its respectable member once he gave up the life of an outlaw.

They in most cases were active in the territory of the village of their origin or their kin belongs to and were nourished by their kin or villagers. This is another point by which they are distinguished from modern guerrillas. They form small groups, are powerless out of the areas of their origin, have no organization and the membership of a group numbered between ten and twenty and no more and no less regardless of the age or of the place on earth.

The Slavic bandits called *haiduk*, active in the Balkan Peninsula of the Ottoman Empire, had a cultural and national background in that they stood by the Christians and were inclined to descend upon the muslim Turks. Thus they had more political permanence and were the more institutionalized counter-regime movement. The national bandit guerrilla like this case, born of the native traditional peasant society and resisting the foreigners' conquest and rule, in some cases approached and merged into the national liberation movement in the modern era.

Hobsbawm argues about his social bandit roughly thus in so far as it concerns our present subject. We will keep this interesting and suggestive theory in mind and then turn to the so-called Norman inhabitants' resistance movements reported in Jouet's and Lefèvre-Pontalis' studies. We will then return to Hobsbawm's definitions and consider how *brigands*' activities look like in the light of his explanations.(20)

5. The occurrence of brigandage

Jouet first examines causes which engendered resistance movements against the occupation authorities in Normandy. In spite of the fact that resistance movements surely existed immediately after the occupation in the form of disregard of Henry's call

(20) The following study which I found after the completion of the first draft of this paper interprets his evidence about *brigands* after the social bandit model of Hobsbawm. M.R. Evans, 'Brigandage and Resistance in Lancastrian Normandy: A Study of the Remission Evidence', *Reading Medieval Studies* 18(1992).

for submission, Jouet thinks that there were only few stout Valois partisans at that stage.(21) Most inhabitants worn down in the war between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs under the mad king Charles VI probably connived at the conqueror's rule, hoping that they might enjoy peaceful life under Henry V's strong government.

In these circumstances what most contributed to the growth of resistance to the English occupation authorities was first the want and later the break down of discipline among the English soldiery.

The war at that age was a lucrative business for soldiers so that plunder and taking of hostages for ransom were taken for granted as a matter of course. Provisions and fodder were collected by soldiers at their own initiative on the spot where the army happened to be quartered. Even the contract army and mercenary was not paid regularly and soldiers' wages were always in arrears. On Henry's way to the war and the conquests, therefore, to require too strict discipline may weaken soldiers' morale, kindle their discontent and increase the number of already increasing deserters.(22) To let loose soldiers' outrages, however, runs counter to Henry's principle to rule his lordship of Normandy justly as its legitimate lord and, moreover, obstruct the attainment of the purpose of establishing a stable rule in the occupied area. Thus it was again the path Henry could not follow.

To issue certificates of loyalty and to provide the bearer of a certificate with security from plunder and imprisonment, leaving non-bearers to excusable victimization, was a way out from this straits which, however, was not necessarily approved and observed by soldiers.(23) And to this conflict of soldiers' interest and the king's concern for his Norman subjects can be traced the origin of the problem of rampant gangs of robbers which were later to plague the English authorities of occupation. For inhabitants victimized by undisciplined invading soldiers became robbers or guerrillas because they lost their livelihood or because of their enmity against the occupation forces and soldiers disgruntled with military discipline, deserting the army, formed groups of *routiers*.(24)

According to Jouet until about 1430 the English armies in operation often plundered the area along their route and from about 1432 *routier* groups of deserters became markedly rampant.(25)

(21) Jouet, 33. (22) Newhall, 'Henry V's Policy of Conciliation in Normandy', 210-11.

(23) Ibid., 211, n.28. (24) Ibid., 212.

(25) After Henry VI's expedition to Paris in 1430-32 to celebrate his coronation as king of France the financial support of the English government to its forces in Normandy

In 1444 the truce of Tours was signed and a greater part of armies of both belligerent countries dismissed. Many of the soldiers thus unemployed remained in France and turned *routiers*. The English authorities of occupation took measures against them which, however, proved quite ineffective owing to the bankruptcy of the English government and the stalemate of the war.

In these circumstances peasants who joined the group of brigands, leaving their homes and lands, did so primarily for the sake of their living, or took to arms in order to resist *routiers* and English soldiers who oppressed them, cannot be said to have risen for France as patriots or for Charles VII. However, these *brigands* from the peasant class gradually inclined to the Valois as it dawned upon them that the hope of peace depended on Charles VII's victory when they saw the decline of the English fortune and the ascendancy of the Valois. There may have been few *brigands* with a clear-cut political attitude at first, so thinks Jouet.

With the progress of the conquest Henry V proclaimed his policy of conciliation and placation of inhabitants. It was calls for return to peaceful life at home to fugitives who left their homes and livelihood. These calls with various qualifications were repeated until immediately after the accession of Henry VI in 1422 and brigands and oath breakers who went back on their oath of loyalty to the conqueror were, except for the nobles, allowed to return to submission. Thus it may be concluded that until then those who refused to submit and remained in forests deliberately did so in accordance with their principles rather than were forced by circumstances. Moreover, from 1423 to 1426 *brigands* were, except for their chiefs or offenders of serious crimes, allowed to apply for letters of remission.

It was from 1419 that actions of the English authorities of occupation against those *brigands* began to appear clearly in the sources. It was in May of that year that the authorities laid down by an ordinance to grant a reward of six livres tournois in return for the delivery of a *brigand* with the intention of encouraging soldiers to capture and deliver *brigands* to the authorities. And as early as June the first payment of rewards appeared in the records. By the end of that year records of condemnation of *brigands* began to appear.

The payment of rewards was not unconditional and limited to the cases where the guilt of the *brigand* so delivered was established or the dead body of a *brigand* who resisted and killed was delivered. If the payment of rewards was conditional on such

all but ceased because of its financial straits. R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Berkeley/Los Angeles, 1981), 108, 115-17, 185-86.

situations, soldiers would have preferred delivering whoever may be the dead body to the authorities and securing the rewards to taking risks of losing the rewards by delivering a live *brigand* who could be judged not guilty and dismissed. Moreover, *brigands* and their friends preferred restoring their freedom by paying ransom to facing a trial by being delivered to the authorities. Thus they would have offered to pay a higher price than officially prescribed rewards and soldiers would have been willing to accept such an offer. In this way there arose a kind of business relationship rather than uncompromising hostility between *brigands* and soldiers of the occupation forces. This again made the extinction of *brigands* a difficult proposition.

6. Popular sentiment and popular sense of loyalty

What indicates peasants' sentiment toward the English in Normandy under the English occupation may be spontaneous peasants' revolts which frequently occurred in this period. For example the peasants' rising which occurred in eastern Normandy just after the battle of Verneuil in August 1424 was occasioned by the erroneous rumour of French victory which on its part was caused by the collapse of the English right wing in the early stage of the battle. Emboldened peasants rose here and there successively and attacked straggling defeated soldiers.(26)

Another evidence which bears witness to the sense of loyalty of the Norman peasantry was the ordinance issued in the name of Henry VI by the occupation authorities. This ordinance prohibited inhabitants from supplying the Valois French forces with provisions and ordained the penalty of death by hanging for the infringers. From the fact that such an ordinance had to be laid down and the wording of the legislation(27) itself can be read the existence of an undercurrent of rural loyalty to France of the Valois.

This wording of the ordinance is an indirect evidence for the loyalty of inhabitants. A more direct evidence can be found in the records of the occupation authorities regulating seditious speeches among inhabitants. Scarce records of this kind show that there were people who, uttering such speeches in drinking houses,(28) were overheard by spies of the English and punished accordingly.

(26) Lefèvre-Pontalis, in *BEC* 56, 489ff.

(27) "séfforcent jour en jour à traire et avoir soubztillement, malicieusement et frauduleusement de nos subgiez ... vivres et autres choses necessaries".
Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Français 26054, no. 1508, cité par Jouet, 63.

(28) "Dieu vueille garder la couronne de France et doint bonne vie au duc d'Alençon",

In the records of the occupation authorities peasants were depicted as if always fearful of *brigands*, threatened by them and robbed of ransom, provisions and horses. Jouet, however, points out that these documents of the occupation authorities depicting peasants as victims of *brigands* were without exception letters of remission granted by the occupation authorities. In other words letters of remission were documents granted by the occupation authorities in favour of the peasant who pleaded innocence by saying that he was only a victim of *brigands* against the official charge that he had met their needs and cooperated with them. Therefore in such documents the grantee tended to make a specious case for excuse of his victimization by the hands of *brigands* and we cannot accept it literally. Indeed the fact of the case pleaded sometimes suggested that the peasant had been cooperating with *brigands* willingly rather than compelled by threats and sometimes in order to procure remission after his arrest he feigned that his actions were due to brigands' threat and compulsion whereas he was one of their fellows for months to a year. In these circumstances we cannot accept peasants' pleas in these letters of remission as expressions of their true sentiments towards *brigands*.

Elsewhere, however, there are evidences which testify to the fact that the people were afraid of *brigands*. For example near Alençon in western Normandy peasants of an entire village migrated or fled in fear of the Valois French army which advanced from the south and brigands lurking in the nearby forests. Or there are reports that in the dangerous country tenements and fees were deserted and nobody volunteered to undertake their management. Such cases may be interpreted to mean that the haunting of *brigands* horrified the peasantry of that area.

Then how did the *brigands* behave towards the peasantry? They did not necessarily indulge in wanton bloodshed and destruction. It is true that the sources record that they threatened to kill or maim peasants and pressed them with the possibility of setting fire to their homes. However, Jouet says it was rare that they should have really put these threats into practice. What they demanded by

Archives Nationale, JJ 172, no.615, cite *ibid.*: “qu’il avoit esté par deux foiz prisonnier des Arminaz, mais encore les amoit-il faisoit le qu’il ne faisoit les Anglois, et amoit mieux le roy de France Charles qu’il ne faisoit le roy d’Angleterre”. A.N., JJ 173, no.76, cité *ibid.*: “...je me doubte que tantost le temp changera, par quoy vous, messieurs les officiers du roy d’Angleterre, n’aurez pas si grant audience”. A.N., JJ 173, no.76 cité *ibid.*

threats was peasants' monetary donation or their service by labour. They sometimes demanded arms and provisions and in these cases they often paid the price. Even if they requisitioned these goods without paying the price, that was the usual behaviour of the army of that time and not quite typical of brigands'.

In the last analysis, however, for peasants *brigands* may have been a little bit of an embarrassment. They disturbed the peaceful life of peasants and dealings with them could bring peasants the penalty of imprisonment, confiscation of their property and sometimes the danger of death.

7. Social background

In order to grasp the nature of the activities of *brigands* in Normandy we need to know their social background. The social background here has two aspects. The one is their geographical-social background: whether they were active near their place of origin, near the place they lived or in remote places, and the other the social class of their origin. We will first look at their geographical-social background and then examine the social class of their origin.

The first big obstacle when we start to study these questions is that we cannot find necessary detailed information as to the most of the *brigands* executed. The number of the known names of *brigands* Jouet collected is 295 of which only for 168 the geographical origin is known. We have to judge the geographical-social background of the *brigands* solely on the basis of this material.

Of 168 *brigands* of whom the place of origin is known 153 are from Normandy and only 15 are from outside Normandy. Thus the great majority is shown to be the natives of Normandy. Further Table I shows the distribution of the outsiders to their place of origin and the place of their execution.

Of the place of their origin Brittany neighbours Normandy to the west of the latter and Maine to the south. Anjou is situated further south of Maine. In other words of the few outsiders the great majority comes from the neighbouring provinces. The outsider in the true sense of the word is only the solitary Spaniard.

Next we look at the places of their execution. The most of the penalized outsiders were executed at Avranches which is situated in the southwestern corner of Normandy and very near Brittany and indeed the most of the *brigands* from Brittany were executed there. The next largest number of the penalized outsiders were executed at Domfront which is situated also in the southwestern part of Normandy and very near the border of Maine. All the *brigands* from Maine were executed there. Thus of the fifteen outsiders thirteen were captured and executed in the borderland of the provinces

of their origin.

Next we look at the breakdown of 153 natives of Normandy and of these we find 140 from west Normandy and 13 from east Normandy. The majority of 140 *brigands* captured and executed in west Normandy were likely to have been local inhabitants. In order to establish this point Jouet dotted the place of their origin on a map and measured the distance between each of these points and the corresponding place of execution. The results are shown on Table II.

This table shows that captured and executed *brigands* came largely from the neighbourhood of their place of execution.⁽²⁹⁾ This means that they took up arms at the place of their origin, were active in its neighbourhood (within a day's journey) and captured. Now if they were robbers intending only to rob and plunder, would they have indulged in such activities near the people who knew and were familiar with them? If they were to be active solely as robbers, would they not have moved to the locality where none had an acquaintance with them and have freely engaged in such activities? The fact that they were active near the place of their origin suggests that they were active without leaving the community they belonged and their activities were at least tolerated and overlooked or even approved and supported by the people who knew them quite well.

Provided that the activities of *brigands* were those of local inhabitants in their neighbourhood and the participation of outsiders were negligible, it may be amplified from Table II that areas closer to garrisons of the English forces begot a larger number of *brigands*. In other words the garrisons of the English forces themselves disturbed the peace of the local community by soldiers' looting and extortion of ransom which on its part was likely to produce hostile activities of inhabitants.

As for the social class of their origin the one remarkable point is that there were few nobles among *brigands*.⁽³⁰⁾ Another point as to the social class of origin of *brigands* is that of 168 of them whose place of origin could be identified, only seven came from towns and an overwhelming majority from rural areas.⁽³¹⁾ As was noted above the English garrisons begot the strongest enmity in the rural area around them. The

(29) Lefèvre-Pontalis takes the same view. See *BEC* 54, 494-95.

(30) Jouet says thus, though the list of those executed shows sporadic occurrence of names, each containing a preposition 'de'. Could they be lesser nobles?

(31) Lefèvre-Pontalis thinks men of various social classes including nobles, clerics, monks and officials could be found among *brigands*. Lefèvre-Pontalis, *BEC* 54, 494.

rural area around the town embracing the English garrison was most liable to looting and extortion of ransom by soldiers of the garrison.

From these facts reported by Jouet *brigands* can be said to have been largely of peasant origin, were active in the neighbourhood of the place they lived and with fellow peasants' acquiescence or even support. How closely they resemble to and how numerous the common features are between them and Hobsbawm's social bandits! If they were inclined to descend upon soldiers and officials of the English forces of occupation and nobles who submitted to the occupation authorities, we may say that they share much in common with the *haiduk*, the Christian Slavic bandit guerrilla in the Ottoman Empire whom Hobsbawm counted among his social bandits.

8. Conclusion

Apart from the activities of *brigands* there were also many urban plots against the English occupation authorities in various towns and two major peasants risings apart from the scattered unorganized disturbances in 1424 already mentioned, namely the one in 1434 in Caen-Bessin and the other in 1436 in Virois. I have already exhausted the time assigned to me and we cannot enter into details of these movements.

From inhabitants' resistance movements in Normandy as discussed above can we draw any definite general conclusion about the growth of national sentiments in this region? It seems extremely difficult. However, we may observe at least the following points: first, there were broad trends among clerks, burgesses and the peasantry to overturn the rule of the English occupation forces once there was any slackness on the part of the latter. Second, these movements cannot be said necessarily to emanate always from any patriotic or loyalist motives towards Charles VII. Third, nonetheless there were among those people who were driving forces of these various moves a deep-seated sense of loyalty⁽³²⁾ to regard the Valois king, army and power as legitimate and identify themselves with them.

Joan of Arc who emerged in 1429 to relieve Orléans besieged by the English was a notable manifestation of this vague loyalism of the people toward the House of Valois⁽³³⁾ and their tendency to identify themselves with the party of the Valois. It may be thought that Joan was supported by this broad current of popular sentiments.

(32) This sense of loyalty was not necessarily always directed towards the House of Valois and its power. As Plaisse showed with regard to the barony of Neubourg, loyal sentiments of the peasantry were directed immediately towards their lord of

old, French noble of the party of the Valois who were expelled by the invading English. André Plaisse, *La Baronnie du Neubourg*(Paris, 1961), 310-13

(33) East Champagne where Joan of Arc came from was the area of influence of Charles VI's brother and Charles VII's uncle, Louis, first duke of Orléans, and inhabitants of this region had a strong sense of loyalty towards the Orleanists or the Armagnacs and their ally, Charles VII. Perroy, 25.

Table I. Places of origin and places of execution: Non-Norman *brigands*(Outsiders)

Places of origin	Number	Places of execution	Number
Brittany	6	Avranches	4
		Mortain	1
		Saint.-Lô	1
Maine	3	Domfront	3
Anjou	3	Avranches	2
		Bayeux	1
Others	3	Avranches	2
		Domfront	1
Total	15	Avranches	8
		Domfront	4
		Bayeux	1
		Mortain	1
		Saint-Lô	1

Note: Others are Boulogne-sur-mer, Île-de-France and Spain.

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Table II: Places of execution of Norman brigands
and distances from the places of their origin

Places of execution	Distance from the Places of execution and the number of those			
	In each category			
	Less than 15km	15-30km	30-50km	More than 50km
Alençon	1	0	0	0
Avranches	13	10	4	3
Bayeux	2	5	7	1
Caen	6	12	1	1
Carentan	3	1	0	0
Coutances	4	4	2	2
Domfront	0	1	1	0
Falaise	2	4	0	0
Saint-Lô	11	2	2	0
Vire	13	6	8	2
Total	55	45	25	9

From Jouet, 81

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