

Summary

SANDRINE LAVAUD (Bordeaux Montaigne University) / From defence catchment area to hinterland. Bordeaux during the Hundred Years War

Buoyed by a favourable political and economic tide, Bordeaux asserted itself in the late Middle Ages as the capital of Anglo-Gascon Aquitaine. To impart substance to its dreams of city-statehood, it intensified the construction of its hinterland and tightened its hold on it. This heightened dominance, which took on multiple forms, brought areas under its tutelage. Historians examining modes of polarisation and the resulting formation of spaces may have recourse to a number of indicators of the process of territorialisation. In an earlier study I was able to gauge the relevance of grape-growing and wine-making as an approach to Bordeaux's centrality. The present study takes up this same perspective of appraising Bordeaux's hinterland but adopts a fresh indicator – the defensive criterion. The main corpus of sources, Bordeaux's municipal debates in the early decades of the 15th century, paints a picture of the defensive catchment area in a major phase of extension at a time when hostilities in the Hundred Years War were intensifying in Guyenne and the chief town had to ensure the defence of the duchy and at the same time become a strongpoint. In their war effort, the jurats of Bordeaux had all at once to assemble armed forces, conduct military operations, multiply negotiations and diplomatic initiatives and consolidate alliances. All these actions were recounted in the municipal registers and contributed to the construction of a defensive system. Reconstructing the components and spatial dynamics of this system and mapping it is a way for historians to measure the territorialisation it gave rise to and its part in the construction of Bordeaux's hinterland.