



# **AUGUSTE RODIN'S 'THE BURGHERS OF CALAIS' AND THE BLACK DEATH POLICY OF THE ENGLISH**

How Auguste Rodin created an artistic composition of axiomatic change.

by Pierre Beaudry October 20, 2014



## **FOREWORD**

“If a Black Death could spread throughout the world once in every generation, survivors could procreate freely without making the world too full.”

Bertrand Russell – 1949

“In the event that I am reincarnated, I would like to return as a deadly virus, to contribute something to solving overpopulation.”

Queen Elizabeth's consort Prince Philip – 1988

This is wake-up time. This report is a wake-up call attempting to answer a simple but difficult axiomatic question: “Why is it that American leaders and citizens don’t see that the plague of Ebola that is being brought to their doorsteps at this time is being carried out by the same people who brought about the Black Death to Europe during the fourteenth century?” The answer to that question can be found in the situation that the population of France found themselves into, when the King of England, Edward III, laid siege to the French town of Calais in 1346.

## INTRODUCTION

In his [Chronicles](#), Jean Froissart (1337-1405), A French writer at the court of the King of England, told the story of how the French town of Calais' people were spared a horrible death by the heroic action of six of their leaders, who voluntarily accepted to give their lives to save them from famine. What Froissart didn't say, however, is that the starvation of that town had been deliberately staged by his patron, and that the siege of Calais was merely the beginning of 13 years of terror operations that completely destroyed the Charlemagne system which had been in place in France for 400 years. Facing the risk of complete extinction of their population, the leaders of Calais were, therefore, confronted by the same existential crisis of an axiomatic change that the leaders of the United States are confronted with today.

### 1. AUGUSTE RODIN'S AXIOM BUSTING 'BURGHERS OF CALAIS'

At the start of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453), the social order of Europe had completely broken down and the system that Charlemagne had put into place for the benefit of mankind, four centuries earlier, was being systematically looted. The economic miracle that Charlemagne had accomplished with his "Capitularies" had completely broken down, and the whole of continental Europe was systematically being taken over and looted by the Norman-Plantagenet royal family of England. Everything that Charlemagne had built was being destroyed under a deliberate policy of genocide.

The intention of the English to take over France goes back to William the Conqueror, the descendent of the Viking Rollo, who invaded Normandy and became Duke of Normandy in 911, after Charlemagne's legacy had been divided by his incompetent grandsons and great grandsons. William the Conqueror, or the Bastard as he was otherwise known, became the second Duke of Normandy in 1035 and completed his conquest of the British Isles by becoming King of England after winning the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Then, after William the Conqueror's great-great grandson, Henry II (Plantagenet), took over Aquitaine in 1152, his great-great-great grandson, Edward III, decided to finalize the task by laying the siege of the French town of Calais in 1346. [Elizabeth II](#), the 32<sup>nd</sup> in the list of descendents from William the Conqueror, is today pursuing the same genocidal policy.

The reason why Charlemagne's system worked so well was because it was morally just and was built for the benefit of all of the people and not just for a happy few. The Charlemagne system was a Christian system; it was as simple as that. It took care of the poor and of little people. The contrary policy was the mercenary policy of the William the Conqueror lineage, which was essentially centered on the British principle of the survival of fittest. Historians don't need to search for any other hidden intention to explain the workings of history; that's the long and the short of it. See my short report on a few of Charlemagne's Capitularies: [ROSA LUXEMBURG AND CHARLEMAGNE](#)

The Hundred Years' War was essentially a war of pillaging and of terrorizing the countryside of France (and later Italy) by the English Plantagenet Royal family and their roving mercenary knights. Mercenary companies were organized formally by the English oligarchy during the 1340's, just prior to

the Black Death (1349-1353) for the purpose of launching a systematic pillaging system across the French countryside, by English terrorist captains who were fortune hunters under the guise of knights, and whose objective was to break up the economic system that Charlemagne had established.

As British controlled central bankers of today are the parasites of the world monetary system, so were English mercenaries the parasites of the Charlemagne economic system in Europe during the Hundred Years' War. They knew where fortunes were to be made and they simply organized bands of highway robbers holding everyone for ransom by bringing their personal wars to each and everyone's doorsteps. This is also what Bankers are doing, today, by taking over the banking system of every city in every nation of Europe and the Americas.

Take the siege of Calais as an example. *Jamais deux sans trois*: when you have a period of pandemics accompanied with a general breakdown of government, you will always be left with a population that is becoming more and more piggish. That's when the test of your mortality hits you in the face. That is what I would call *The Burghers of Calais* axiomatic test.

The siege of Calais was a strange affair that lasted an entire year, during which time the French King, Philip VI, did not interfere with the English army nor jeopardize its resupply efforts; and the King of England, Edward III, did not interfere with the French army when French sailors supplied food and drink to the town's population. Edward first positioned his land forces on September 4, 1346, but was supplied with cannons and catapults only in November, while he launched his attack on the town only in February of the next year. It was as if the two kings were playing a war game during five months, before they decided to attack each other. In fact, both armies had skirmishes, off and on, while each army was given regular additional reinforcements and rest periods until Spring arrived.

The town kept being supplied with food and water until the end of July 1347. It was only by August that fresh supplies were cut off by the English, at which point the children and the elderly were safely taken out of danger. The Belgian chronicler, Jean Le Bel, reported that Edward III was so "charitable" that he fed the children and elderly and gave each "a small monetary gift." Le Bel is known for his bias in favor of Edward III.

By August 1, the population had begun to starve and the leaders of the town indicated they were ready to surrender. On the same day, Philip began to dismantle his encampment and Edward was ready to enter the walls of the city victorious. The complete truth of the matter, however, was never told, because the siege of Calais had been made to appear simply like another war game as opposed to a crucial axiomatic experiment in how to obtain the submission of a population and force it to accept evil as its ruler.

As Wikipedia reported: "On August 1, the city lit fires signaling they were ready to surrender. Philip destroyed the encampment from which his army had been planning to attack the English so that it would not fall into their hands. Edward was persuaded by his advisers to allow the remaining citizens to live. After providing them with some provisions, he allowed them to leave the city." ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege\\_of\\_Calais\\_\(1346\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Calais_(1346)))

As the case of the town of Calais showed, when Edward III laid its siege, Philip VI, ordered the city leaders to hold out to the bitter end. "Don't abuse the people," he said, "but don't give in to the

enemy either.” However, when Philip failed to lift the siege, starvation ultimately forced the town’s people to surrender to the English. In reality, Edward III was about to massacre the entire town when his wife, Philippa of Hainault, interceded in favor of the town’s people and asked her husband to be merciful.

Edward III agreed to spare the population providing that six town leaders were to offer themselves as hostages, presumably to be executed. Edward demanded that they come out of the town and come to his camp barefoot and in their undergarments, with ropes around their necks and with the keys of the city in their hands. The first town leader to volunteer to put his life on the line was Eustache de Saint Pierre, who was soon followed by five other leaders who accepted to sacrifice themselves for their city. Whether Edward III was magnanimous or bestial, the chronicles do not say, and the truth may never be known. However, it doesn’t really matter, because the truth of the situation was told through another means; that is, through an exceptionally powerful artistic composition.

The true story lies in an irony which is worth looking into and which has been immortalized by Auguste Rodin in his famous monument to *The Burghers of Calais* (1889) (Monument aux Bourgeois de Calais). Rodin expressed the truth of the matter in a unique irony when he was asked to compose a monument to the heroes of the Hundred Years’ War by the town council members of Calais in 1885. The idea was to give tribute to the heroes of Calais for their patriotism at the time when Edward III laid siege to their town. Rodin’s monument to the bourgeois of Calais first scandalized the City Council, because they expected an academic expression of pride and courage, while Rodin gave them human expressions of

sublime, determination, resignation, doubt, fear, and pain. Art critic, Nelly Silagy Benedek, of the Metropolitan Museum of Art wrote an excellent pedagogical on this monument. She wrote:

“In 1347, according to the fourteenth-century Chronicles of Jean Froissart, King Edward III of England laid siege to the French town of Calais. After eleven months, with the people desperately short of food and water, six of the leading citizens, or burghers, of Calais offered themselves as hostages to Edward in exchange for the freedom of their city. The king agreed, ordering them to dress in plain garments, wear nooses around their necks, and journey to his camp bearing the keys to the city. Although the king intended to kill the burghers, his pregnant wife, Philippa, persuaded him to spare them, believing that their deaths would be a bad omen for her unborn child. (Nelly Silagy Benedek, [\*Auguste Rodin: The Burghers of Calais, A resource for Educators.\*](#))



**Figure 1** Auguste Rodin (1840-1917)



**Figure 1** The Burghers of Calais, by Auguste Rodin. (1889) (Monument aux Bourgeois de Calais.)

The point that Rodin is making is that in moments such as an axiomatic existential crisis as the one experienced by the population of the town of Calais, it is better to portray the minds of the people through the motions of their entire person who has to make a decision about the significance of his individual mortality. So, instead of demonstrating the fallacy of courage and bravery, he preferred to show that the burghers were conflicted and vulnerable, which is how a real human being has to face the truth of his condition when he realizes he is going to die. Here is the relevant passage in the Froissart's [\*Chronicles\*](#) that Rodin used for his composition:

“...the richest burgher in the town, Sir Eustache de Saint Pierre, got up and said: ‘Gentlemen it would be a great shame to allow so many people to starve to death, if there were any way of preventing it. And it would be highly pleasing to Our Lord if anyone could save them from such a fate. I have such faith and trust in gaining pardon and grace from Our Lord if I die in the attempt, that I will put myself forward as the first. I will willingly go out in my shirt, bareheaded and barefoot, with a halter [noose] around my neck and put myself at the mercy of the King of England.

“... another very rich and much respected citizen, called Jean d’Aire... rose up and said he would keep him company. The third to volunteer was Sir Jacques de Wissant [sic], who was

very rich both by inheritance and by his own transactions; he offered to accompany his two cousins, and so did Sir Pierre his brother. Two other completed the number, and set off dressed only in their shirts and breeches [undergarments], and with halters round their necks, as they had been told. (John Joliffe, ed., and trans., *Froissart's Chronicles*, London: Harvill Press, 1967, p. 155, quoted in Tancock, *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin*, p. 182.)

Eustache de Saint-Pierre



Sublime

Jean d'Aire



Determination

Pierre de Wiessant



Resignation

Jacques de Wiessant



Doubt

Jean de Fiennes



Fear

Andrieu d'Andres



Pain

**Figure 2** The six different emotions a human being goes through when he has to face his mortality.

Rodin replicated not merely the precise description given by Froissart in his Chronicles, but he composed for the different personalities each an imagined state of mind which is appropriate to the universal axiomatic crisis that every human being has to go through under such circumstance. As individuals, the figures each represent the characteristic of a typical human being who is being confronted with his mortality. The irony lies in the fact that the sublimation of each of those human emotions, which those six people attained in real life, represents the classical artistic pathway by means of which the spectator must identify in his own soul and resolve in his own axiomatic moment in order to attain immortality, as those six men did.

As a group, the fact that all of the figures are of the same height, that they all express a singular facet of the same crisis, and are each turned in a different direction shows that no one escapes the dynamic unity of effect of a true axiomatic change. The sculpture has no front and no back, like most sculptures have, and it has no single focus point; it is in constant flux, in a constant ambiguous motion. This is why no single view can be taken of all of the six faces at once. Rodin made the following insightful remark to that effect:

“They are still questioning themselves to know if they have the strength to accomplish the supreme sacrifice – their soul pushed them onward, but their feet refuse to walk. They drag themselves along painfully, as much because of the feebleness to which the famine had reduced them as because of the terrifying nature of the sacrifice... The more frightful my representation of them, the more people should praise me for knowing how to show the truth of History.

“I have not shown them grouped in a triumphant apotheosis; such glorification of their heroism would not have corresponded to anything real.” (Miller and Marotta, *Rodin: The B. Gerald Cantor Collection*, p. 69)

Therefore, the monument to the bourgeois of Calais is unified under a single emotion, that of the struggle that both their bodies and spirits are waging in their choice between mortality and immortality. Here is how Rodin identified this unity of effect of his composition:

“In the indecision of the last inner combat which ensues, between the devotion to their cause and their fear of dying, each of them is isolated in front of his conscience... And certainly, if I have succeeded in showing how much the body, weakened by the most cruel sufferings, still holds on to life, how much power it still has over the spirit that is consumed with bravery, I can congratulate myself on not having remained beneath the noble theme I dealt with.” (Quoted from Millicent Bell, [Auguste Rodin](#), *Raritan*. 14.4 (1995): 1-31. Academic Search Premier, 6, February 2007, par. 29).

Thus, the paradox that Rodin has put before us with the *Burgers of Calais* is that in a world crisis like we have today, where everyone's life is threatened by a Black Death disease such as Ebola, if the individual concentrates on his own personal means of survival, those means will kill him. The point is that you can only save yourself if you save your fellowman, and that can only be done if you put your life on the line for the benefit of the other.

## **2. RANSOMING THE KINGDOM OF FRANCE AND THE TRUTH OF HISTORY**

The Hundred Years' War involved essentially two royal families; the Norman-Plantagenet royal house of England and the Valois royal house of France, playing a war-game with each other at the expense of the population. The dynastic claim of the Plantagenet was that the Norman, William the Conqueror, was a French Duke of Normandy. Since Henry II had also made the claim of Aquitaine, by way of marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine (Guyenne and Gascony), the English felt they had more than a strong hand to make a play for the whole of France. All that was needed was a provocation and a war would be triggered. In 1337, Edward found the perfect way to start war: he insulted the King of France, Philip VI, by refusing to pay homage to him. That was the start of the Hundred Years' War.

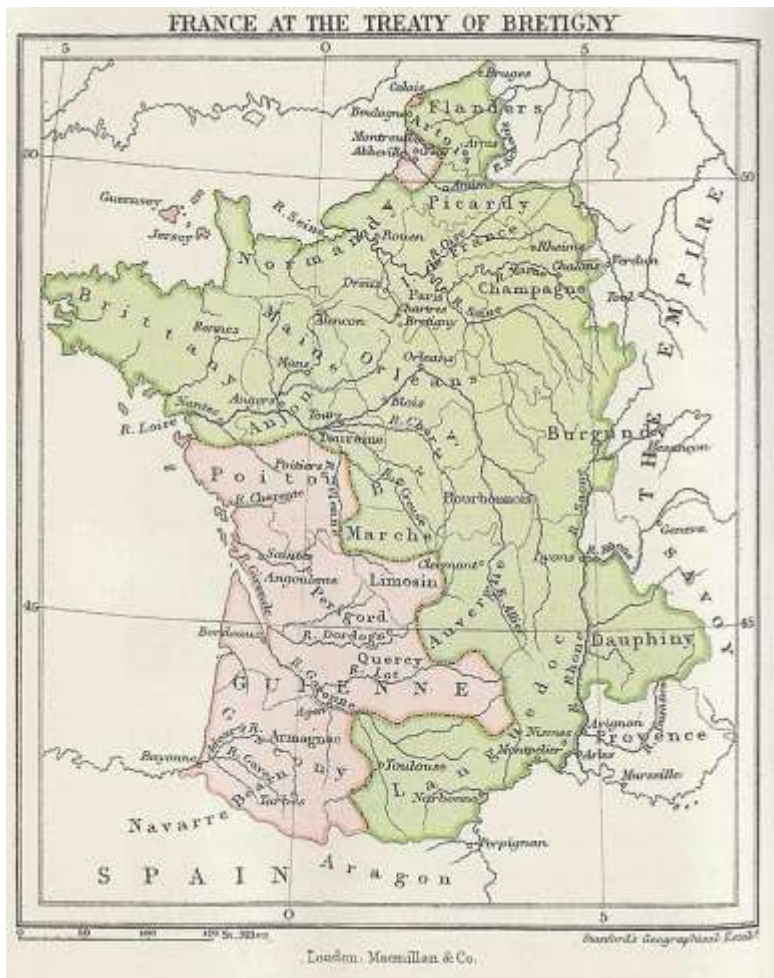
After defeating the French navy at the Battle of Sluys in 1340, and overrunning Brittany in 1342, Edward III went on a rampage across Normandy and ended his campaign by defeating the French King, Philip VI at the Battle of Crécy in 1346, a victory that his son, Edward the Black Prince replicated ten years later at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356.

The plan was working well but Edward wanted to secure a psychological victory over the French people, a victory that would crush and totally humiliate the French people as a whole. In 1348, the Black Death began to tear up the French countryside as Edward III was invading the North of France, but it also struck England very hard. The idea Edward had in mind was to take advantage of the disease and create terror throughout the nation of France by slashing and burning the countryside without mercy. But, he needed a showcase situation to demonstrate his power and assert his dominion over France. Edward secured his position at Calais from whence he could deploy safely any number of English troops going into France from the North. His strategy was applied for a period of 13 years until Edward finally found a way to obtain total victory.

How did he do it? The intention behind the siege of Calais in 1347 was to break the spirit of the entire French population by forcing its submission and pay tribute to the English overlord. That is a simple truth of history. But, that plan didn't succeed because Philippa of Hainault intervened to save the Burgers of Calais. At the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> year, the "routiers" of Edward III, as the French called the mercenaries, captured the king of France at the Battle of Poitiers, Jean II (the Good), and ransomed the whole country to obtain his release.

The Treaty of Brétigny, signed at Calais, on May 25, 1360, was one of the most extraordinary treaties in history by the fact that it was the equivalent of giving away the kingdom of France to England.





**Figure 3** Map of France at the Treaty of Brétigny, May 25, 1360. The pink sections were under English domination.

One would think that the French King should have been totally humiliated by being taken prisoner of war by Edward III, but that was not the case at all. In point of fact, for John II, this was all a game that the rich play at the expense of the poor. The conditions of the Treaty of Brétigny were such that John II accepted to pay a ransom of 3 million gold crowns to Edward III; however, since he could only pay 1 million immediately, the French King agreed to leave replacement hostages, while he was allowed to go back to France and raise the rest of the ransom money. John II had no problems with that. He didn't mind taking from the poor and giving to the rich. He accomplished that royal function without a hitch. According to the Chronicles of the period, John II (The Good) agreed to give Edward III, as a token of his "Goodness," the totality of the kingdom of France:

"As a guarantee for the payment of his ransom, John gave as hostages two of his sons, several princes and nobles, four inhabitants of Paris, and two citizens (sic) from each of the

Twelve years after he had lifted the siege of Calais, Edward III forced Jean II (the Good) of France to become his prisoner, marking the final step of England's historical campaign of taking over the kingdom of France and end the first phase of the Hundred Years' War.

Having de facto turned the regions of Poitou, Périgord, Guyenne, and Gascony into de facto English colonies, Edward III had found a subterfuge to obtain control of the rest of France by holding King John, for ransom.

The irony, however, is that when the King of France was brought to London, he was welcomed with parties and parades, and was granted royal privileges including freedom to travel. Edward III's idea was not a joke. He was taking over France for the City of London and was celebrating his victory with the King of France.

nineteen principal towns of France. This treaty was ratified and sworn to by the two kings and by their eldest sons on 24 October 1360 at Calais. At the same time the special conditions relating to each important article of the treaty and the renunciatory clauses in which the kings abandoned their rights over the territory they had yielded to one another were signed. Edward III retired finally to England, for the last time.” ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty\\_of\\_Br%C3%A9tigny](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Br%C3%A9tigny))

Thus, in order to demonstrate to the English King that the 13 years of English mercenary terror across France had really succeeded, John the Good put the whole of France under ransom condition. However, the plan did not go precisely as he had anticipated. When it was learned that one of his sons, Louis of Anjou, had escape the prison of Calais where he was being held, John II announced that he was going to give himself up as a prisoner and return to England in order to show what Froissart called his “good faith and honor.” Therefore, leaving his impoverished and bankrupted people behind, John sailed for England to give himself up. As he arrived in London in 1364, Edward III had prepared another reception with parades and feasts to welcome him.

The irony of this “Goodness” is that, in order to pay his ransom to the English, John II changed the currency of France into Francs and coined the new money in gold Franks called Livre Tournois.



**Figure 4** The Tournois Frank of John II armored on horseback. Franc à cheval: 1360.

Since no revenue was being generated for the royal house of Edward III, which meant that the English army could not be paid by his treasury, the English King was tickled pink to receive this French King’s Ransom in the new currency of the Tournois Franc of which he controlled a majority of 3 millions gold pieces. It is interesting to note that the first French franc was created to pay the ransom of the King of France to the English King during the short period of 1360 to 1364. The name of the franc came from the inscription “Francorum Rex” engraved on the coin. Although Edward III was ultimately made to renounce to the crown of France and give up the province of Guyenne, he was more than compensated by filling his coffer with French gold.

According to the chronicler, Jean de Venette, after the abduction of John II, France fell into complete chaos and took several hundred years to recover. The English possession of Calais lasted 211

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years until the French took the town back in 1558, when Francis of Guise laid a successful counter-siege. However, the spirit of Charlemagne was never to be recovered. As the chronicle reported:

“...From that time on, all went wrong with the Kingdom and the state was undone. Thieves and robbers rose up everywhere in the land. The nobles despised and hated all others and took no thought for the mutual usefulness and profit of lord and men. They subjected and despoiled the peasants and the men of the villages. In no wise did they defend their country from enemies. Rather did they trample it underfoot, robbing and pillaging the peasants' goods.” (Jean Birdsall and Richard A. Newhall, *The Chronicles of Jean de Venette*, Columbia University Press, 1953, p.66)

### **3. JOHN HAWKWOOD: MERCENARY BANDIT**

During the entirety of the Hundred Years' War, and throughout the entire territory of France, there were more mercenaries than regular soldiers, because regular armies had become too expensive for the nobility to maintain. More than ever, soldiers had to live off the land if they were to make a living, and that could only be done by invading more and more foreign lands. In fact, the best way for mercenary captains to make their fortunes was to ransom the nobility of targeted regions. This means that wherever a garrison of mercenaries was located, the village or town nearby was pillaged and ransacked for supplies.

Like a local mafia protection racket, the village would be forced to pay tribute to the mercenaries for future protection. The system worked pretty much in the same way that central bankers take over city and state banks with hostile takeovers, and then loot them for pure speculation. The mercenaries of the New Black Death were the predator model of contemporary central bankers.

The first mercenary group was originally created by the German Werner von Urslingen who fought for the Republic of Venice, the Visconti family interests, and later the Republic of Pisa. Urslingen had been trained under Lodrisio Visconti's Compagnia di San Giorgio (Company of Saint George) who, in 1339, recruited German mercenaries such as Konrad von Landau and Werner von Urslingen for the benefit of Italian aristocrats. In 1342, he created his own mercenary group called the “Great Company” with which he systematically looted and ravaged the Italian regions of Tuscany, Umbria, and Romagna. His motto was “Enemy of God, Enemy of Piety, and Enemy of Pity.”

When Edward sailed back to England, most of his soldiers were left behind to become employed as mercenaries. Readers of Arthur Conan Doyle's *The White Company*, may be surprised to hear that they were all deceived in believing that the gallant Knights of that book, such as Sir John Hawkwood, who were committing heroic deeds for the honor of their fair ladies, were in fact mercenaries and bandits ravaging the countryside of France and amassing a personal fortune. As Doyle was forced to admit in his book:

"Bethink you, then," said Sir Claude, "that you go under a hard rule, with neither freedom nor pleasure—and for what? For sixpence a day, at the most; while now you

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may walk across the country and stretch out either hand to gather in whatever you have a mind for. What do we not hear of our comrades who have gone with Sir John Hawkwood to Italy? In one night they have held to ransom six hundred of the richest noblemen of Mantua. They camp before a great city, and the base burghers come forth with the keys, and then they make great spoil; or, if it please them better, they take so many horse-loads of silver as a composition; and so they journey on from state to state, rich and free and feared by all. Now, is not that the proper life for a soldier?"

"The proper life for a robber!" roared Hordle John, in his thundering voice."

(Arthur Conan Doyle, *The White Company*, Chapter XXXII.)

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/903/903-h/903-h.htm>

As a review of the most recent book on [Hawkwood: Diabolical Englishman \(2004\)](#) stated: Forget all your childish and naïve notions of knighthood – that’s really just a codename for murderer, bully, bandit, and oppressor.” From Sible Hedingham, England, the home town of John Hawkwood, I have also found this curious piece of truthful revelation of what Hawkwood was all about:

“Hawkwood became leader of the White Company in 1363 and very soon proved a master in the business of pillage, blackmail and duplicity. Over the next 30 years he fought both for and against the Pope, Florence, Milan, Pisa, Siena and Perugia. Vast bribes were extracted from all of them and such was Hawkwood’s military reputation that he never lacked for clients prepared to employ him, despite the fact that over the years he betrayed them all. Unfortunately, they had no alternative as the city states mostly did not have their own standing armies and were therefore forced to employ mercenaries to do their fighting for them.

“The White Company was very highly organized – its modern equivalent, though on a much smaller scale, might be the yakuza (gangster) gangs in Japan. Apart from the soldiery the company employed lawyers and notaries to keep track of bribes and ransoms, sort out contracts and provide safe passes. Accountants and secretaries were a further necessary part of the organization as plunder had to be divided up among the troops who then sold their share through outside brokers. Also attached to the company were a huge retinue of priests, prostitutes, cooks, barbers, jesters and doctors. ([From Sible Hedingham to Florence. The Remarkable Life of Sir John Hawkwood](#))

During the Great Schism of the Catholic Church, such companies were hired by different Popes and Antipopes. For example, in 1379, the Compagnia di San Giorgio fought on the side of Pope Urban VI against Antipope Clement VII.

Take the case of the Cesena Bloodbath of 1377, otherwise known as the War of the Eight Saints. The war between Pope Gregory XI and a coalition led by Florence. Hawkwood’s method of warfare was to pit his employers and their enemies against each other.

While Italian chroniclist, Filippo Villani, identified the Englishman John Hawkwood, otherwise known as Giovanni Acuto, as the “grand master of war,” Muratori identified him as “a brigand of the first

rank.” ( [\*Sir John Hawkwood, Story of a Condottiere\*](#), preface p. 1) Viewed from the present strategic situation, Hawkwood has become the model that British Intelligence has been using to train Isis terrorists mercenaries that Obama is currently helping to train as beastmen of war with the support of the very same Saudi Arabia which has orchestrated the 9/11 Terror of 2001. Just like the old days of the Hundred Years War in France, the current British policy is to recruit terrorists from all European nations in order to send them to fight in Syria and Iraq.

John Hawkwood served under Edward III in France, and later became a notorious mercenary in Italy as the leader of the English Company known as the White Company from 1361 to 1365. The number of men in the company varied along the years, and in 1361, was recorded as having 3,500 cavalrymen and 2,000 infantrymen. The company’s finance was run by an Englishman by the name of William Thornton.



Froissart identified Hawkwood simply as a captain of mercenary adventurers. On December 28, 1360, John Hawkwood was employed to give assistance to Pope Innocent VI of Avignon, who has proclaimed a crusade against the disorganized troops of the Countess of Harcourt. Hawkwood joined his troops to the Marquis of Montferrat, won the battle, and got 10,000 gold Franks from the Pope for his generosity. Hawkwood then left for Italy. As the Chroniclers Temple-Leader and Marcotti put it, the English did not bring the plague across the Alps, “but they brought violation, burning, extortion, rapine, murder, and torture.” (Ibidem, p. 14)

**Figure 5** John Hawkwood aca Jean Haccoude and Giovanni Acuto. (1320-1394)

In 1360, the City of Pisa was again at war with Florence and called for the Grand English Company, also known as the White Company led by Hawkwood, to fight on their side against the city of Florence led by the German Company of the Flower, commanded by Albert Sterz and Bongarden. In October of 1364 the Pisan archives show that the city paid “William Thornton (Guglielmo Torenton) the treasurer of the Grand English Company, the sums of 5000 golf florins of 3 lire 10 soldi in Pisan money and 6000 of 3 lire 15 soldi , on account of the sum which the Company is entitled to receive from the Republic of Pisa.” (Ibidem, p. 25)

By May of 1364, incapable of stopping the English from pillaging and burning their surrounding territories, the Florentines decided to resort to corruption and to pay Hawkwood not to attack them. Historians report that more than 100,000 golden florins were inserted into wine bottles and sent to the English in order to corrupt them. The White Company took the money and retired to Pisa only to find the doors of the city closed to them. As Temple-Leader and Marcotti reported: “Thus perfidiously, June [1364] was passed, the last month of their engagement, when they ought to have been opposing the Count

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of Monfort [in Florence] who without let or hindrance, was domineering the Pisan territories.” (Ibidem, p. 31) As a result, the White Company was divided between their service to Pisa and Florence. Hawkwood remained in Pisa with no more than 800 men.

In August of 1364, Florence attacked the Pisan forces and won the battle. As the victorious Florentine army passed under the walls of Pisa, they signed a peace treaty on August 28 Hawkwood profited by the misfortune of the Pisa defeat and supported Giovanni Agnello’s move to usurp the Lordship of Pisa against the payment of 30,000 florins.

In 1377, Hawkwood committed one of the most repugnant and atrocious deeds recorded in the history of warfare by massacring the defenseless people of the town of Cesena with his two hundred lancers. The insuperable barbarity with which Cesena’s people were treated was designed to set an example of the ferocity of John Hawkwood and was aimed at creating total terror among the surrounding populations by instilling the belief that the papacy had been taken over by Satan himself.

Acting as the legate of Pope Gregory XI in Northern Italy (1376-78), Robert, Cardinal of Geneva (future Pope Clement VII of Avignon) was the commander of the Pope’s troops led by John Hawkwood and who ordered the savage slaughter of between 3,000 to 8,000 people of the town of Cesena for the purpose of setting an example of Rome’s authority. His secret agenda was to destroy the papacy and after he became known as “the butcher of Cesena,” he began the Great Schism (1378-1418) as the first Pope to reestablish the papacy at Avignon. As the chronicler of Rimini reported:

“As many men, women, and nurslings as they found, they slaughtered, all the squares were full of dead. A thousand drowned themselves in trying to cross the moats – some fled by the gates with the Bretons pursuing, who murdered and robbed and committed outrages, and would not let the handsomest women escape, but kept them as spoil; they put at ransom on a thousand little boys and girls, neither man nor woman remained in Cesena.” (Ibidem, p. 122)

The thirty year Great Schism ended and the unity of the Church restored at the Council of Constance in 1414 when Jean Gerson, the defender of Joan of Arc, solved the crisis by having the different popes deposed by instituting the authority of the council of bishops. The decision led to the deposing and resignation of all of the schism popes and the election of Pope Martin V.

## CONCLUSION

The point to remember, finally, is that the intention of Edward III, like the intention of Elizabeth II, today, is to kill as many people as possible in the shortest time possible. Genocide is a deliberate British Empire intention, and so it is with current President, [Barak Obama](#), the modern drone mercenary killer who assassinates from a safe distance. Now, you understand why Obama must be removed from office right now.

Like Edward III did during the Black Death, the British Monarchy and their American President are pushing wars, famine, and killer pandemics around the world. But, it is not enough to warn the people about such a threat to their lives, it is essential to educate people on the power to put a stop to it. And the way to stop this intention from being realized is to internalize the necessity of an axiomatic change in your mind and to discover that this can only be done through the Christian power of Gethsemane. That is the lesson to be learned about Rodin's *Burghers of Calais*.

Unless you look at the Black Death in the eye and resolve yourself to risk your own life for the benefit of mankind, you cannot save yourself. That is the whole paradoxical irony of the matter. The solution to the great enigma of life resides in precisely this question of the imitation of Christ at Gethsemane. The issue is not how you can save your own life. The issue is how you can save the life of another by risking your own. The choice is simple but most difficult, because very few people have the courage to pay the price of their mortality for the benefit of others.

The strategic situation today is not any different than it was in Calais during the Black Death period. The threat of Queen Elizabeth II and of her consort Prince Philip is very serious and their depopulation policy is very well known. It is the same policy which Edward III applied to Calais in 1347. The question is: are there any leaders in any of your towns and cities who are willing to consider what the Burghers of Calais did?

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