Jeanne de Penthièvre (c.1326–1384), duchess of Brittany, was an active and determined ruler who maintained her claim to the duchy throughout a war of succession and even after her eventual defeat. This in-depth study examines Jeanne’s administrative and legal records to explore her co-rule with her husband, the social implications of ducal authority, and her strategies of legitimation in the face of conflict. While studies of medieval political authority often privilege royal, male, and exclusive models of power, Erika Graham-Goering reveals how there were multiple coexisting standards of princely action, and it was the navigation of these expectations that was more important to the successful exercise of power than adhering to any single approach. Cutting across categories of hierarchy, gender, and collaborative rule, this perspective sheds light on women’s rulership as a crucial component in the power structures of the early Hundred Years War, and demonstrates that lordship retained salience as a political category even in a period of growing monarchical authority.

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PRINCELY POWER IN LATE MEDIEVAL FRANCE

Jeanne de Penthièvre and the War for Brittany

ERIKA GRAHAM-GOERING
To Jeanne

To all the other Jeannes

And to my parents and grandparents, who are not called Jeanne, but still deserve it most of all
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A NOTE ON NAMES

‘Jeanne de Penthièvre’ did not, as such, exist. In her documents, Jeanne, duchess of Brittany and countess of Penthièvre, referred to herself by first name and/or title(s), or occasionally as ‘Jeanne de Bretagne’. For our purposes, however, this does nothing to distinguish her from the many other Jeannes of Brittany, and because it has become usual to refer to her as Jeanne de Penthièvre, I adopt this tradition for clarity’s sake without implying any dissociation from the Breton ducal line. I considered extending this principle to her children, who were likewise known as ‘de Bretagne’ at the time; however, to increase transparency in relation to later usage which has variously identified them with first one then the other parental lineage, I have referred to them as ‘de Blois-Penthièvre’ in defiance of medieval toponymic (or, for that matter, patronymic/matronymic) conventions. As for given names, I have modernized these according to French orthography, save for actors whose primary historical context lay outside the limits of what is now France, where I have preferred the English form of the name.
ABBREVIATIONS

ADCA Archives départementales des Côtes-d’Armor, Saint-Brieuc
ADHV Archives départementales de la Haute-Vienne, Limoges
ADIV Archives départementales d’Ille-et-Vilaine, Rennes
ADLA Archives départementales de Loire-Atlantique, Nantes
ADML Archives départementales de Maine-et-Loire, Angers
ADPA Archives départementales des Pyrénées-Atlantiques, Pau
ADTG Archives départementales de Tarn-et-Garonne, Montauban
AN Archives nationales (France), Paris
BmN Bibliothèque municipale, Nantes
BnF Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris


d’Argentré d’Argentré, B. *L’Histoire de Bretagne*. Rennes, 1583

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List of Abbreviations


Inventaire (1384) La Borderie, A. L. M. de (ed.) Inventaire du mobilier de Jeanne la Boîteuse, duchesse de Bretagne (1384). Nantes, 1854


MPC Sérent, A. de (ed.) Monuments du procès de canonisation du bienheureux Charles de Blois, duc de Bretagne, 1320–1364. Saint-Brieuc, 1921


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