Military defense in the royal towns of Touraine during the Wars of Religion: a daily martial culture

Defending and safeguarding the town

The three royal towns of Amboise, Chinon and Loches, spread across the Touraine region, all had fortresses, real royal strongholds, which had to be defended from the crown’s enemies in the context of the Wars of Religion. The three municipal authorities, responsible for ensuring the defense of their urban areas through a system of citizen guards, were therefore in regular contact with the soldiers, whether they were sent by the royal authorities to guard the town and the castle, or simply as a stopover on their way to a war zone. Military and defensive issues are therefore omnipresent in the administrative documents of these three cities and are manifested by the militarisation of urban spaces. This paper proposes, among other things, to compare the military and defensive mechanisms of the three cities, as well as their impact on urban life, in order to understand the place of the martial fact in the political culture of the second half of the 16th century.