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HUGUENOT HEARTLAND.
MONTAUBAN DURING THE FRENCH WARS OF RELIGION.

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Abstract

Montauban is a small southern French town. But its relative obscurity today denies its heroic history as a Huguenot stronghold. By the end of the Wars of Religion, Montauban stood out as one of the greatest concentration of Protestants in the whole of France and the role that this town played in the Huguenot struggle for survival is one of the untold stories of the French Reformation.

This study explores the Calvinist ascendancy in Montauban through the examination of the town's political and ecclesiastical hierarchy. The relationship between minister and magistrate was clearly crucial for the consolidation of the Protestant church. Catholic worship was proscribed and Calvinism established as the official creed of the town. The close partnership between the town's ministers and political elite, and the readiness of members of the elite to serve on the consistory, opened up opportunities for altering the moral parameters of the town.

Unlike other French towns Montauban greatly benefited from an uninterrupted period of Protestant domination, spanning seventy years. One of the ways in which the vigour of the Reformation in Montauban was expressed was through evangelisation. This study explores the relationship that developed between Montauban and its surrounding rural and urban communities and the extent of Montauban's influence.

The role assumed by Montauban at the centre of a local network of Protestant churches owed much to the ever-present threat of Toulouse. Toulouse was the seat of the regional parlement and a staunch defender of Catholic orthodoxy; its proximity to Montauban played a crucial part in tightening the links between Montauban and its surrounding churches and in shaping a distinctive Huguenot culture. The immediacy of the Catholic threat and the distance that Montauban felt from other southern French Protestant strongholds provides the context through which to explore the nature of Huguenot identity in the south; in particular to scrutinise the notion that a separate Huguenot state emerged in the south of France during the Wars of Religion.

Finally this study attempts to assess the relationship between Montauban and International Calvinism. It demonstrates the limits that Montauban's geographical location had upon its relationships with other centres of European Protestantism, particularly highlighting the peripheral role played by Geneva in the direction of Huguenot affairs in south-west France. The isolation of Montauban from the wider world of International Calvinism leads to a concluding discussion on the distinctiveness of southern French Protestantism.

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List of abbreviations

ACSA	Archives communales de Saint Antonin-Noble-Val
ADG	Archives départementales de Gard, Nîmes
ADH	Archives départementales de l'Hérault, Montpellier
ADHG	Archives départementales de la Haute-Garonne, Toulouse
ADTG	Archives départementales du Tarn-et-Garonne, Montauban
AMM	Archives municipales de Montpellier
<u>AM</u>	<u>Annales du Midi</u>
AN	Archives nationales de France, Paris
<u>ARG</u>	<u>Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte</u>
<u>BHR</u>	<u>Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et de la Renaissance</u>
BN	Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris
Bibl. SHPF	Bibliothèque de la Société d'histoire du protestantisme français, Paris
<u>BSATG</u>	<u>Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Tarn-et-Garonne</u>
<u>BSHPF</u>	<u>Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français</u>
<u>EHQ</u>	<u>European History Quarterly</u>
<u>FH</u>	<u>French History</u>
FRB	French Religious Book project, St Andrews
<u>HJ</u>	<u>Historical Journal</u>
<u>RAM</u>	<u>Recueil de l'Académie de Montauban</u> (formerly, <u>Recueil de la Société des sciences, belles-lettres et arts du Tarn-et-Garonne</u>)
<u>RHEF</u>	<u>Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France</u>
<u>SCJ</u>	<u>Sixteenth Century Journal</u>

Editorial note

The spelling of sixteenth-century French has been left untouched. All quotations therefore appear exactly as in the original documents or books. Occasionally I have added accents, punctuation and words in square brackets to clarify meaning.

Chapter 1. Introduction.

The late 1550s and early 1560s in France were extraordinary times. In a short space of years Protestantism was transformed from an outlawed minority into a mass movement. The consecutive deaths of two persecuting kings and the ambiguous court policies of Catherine de Medici opened a window of opportunity for Protestants. The conversion of leading nobles and bishops to Protestantism served to hearten the Protestant faithful. But above all it was the popular response to the Reformation that brought about the movement's success. A groundswell of interest was kindled by public preaching, psalm-singing and the circulation of Protestant literature. The rapid growth of the new congregations seemed to provide proof in itself of divine approval for the movement and many rushed to 'embrace a cause whose time now appeared near'.¹ The movement's leaders hoped for nothing less than a complete transformation of France.

Historians of an earlier generation have tended to analyse these developments as they were understood by those at the political centre, that is, the royal court. This is hardly surprising given the type of documents most readily available to the historian, preserved in central Parisian archives: acts of government, official and private correspondence, diplomatic dispatches, accounts, memoirs and diaries. Studies based on these documents by Jean Mariéjol, Lucien Romier and James Westfall Thompson and more recently by Nicola Sutherland and John Salmon have been very helpful in providing a framework with which to understand the complexities of court politics.² But their emphasis upon the preoccupations of the principal political players has had a distorting impact upon the literature of the French Wars of Religion. What was decided at court and what was happening in the country at large were two quite different things, particularly so at a time of civil unrest.

¹ Philip Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 54.

² Jean H. Mariéjol, *La Réforme et la Ligue (1559-1598)* (Paris, 1904); Lucien Romier, *Les Origines politiques des guerres de religion* (2 vols., Paris, 1913-14) and *Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis* (2 vols., Paris, 1922) and James Westfall Thompson, *The Wars of Religion in France 1559-1576: the Huguenots, Catherine de Medici, and Philip II* (Chicago, 1909). More recently see the works of Nicola Sutherland: *The French Secretaries of State in the Age of Catherine de Medici* (London, 1962); *The Massacre of St Bartholomew and the European conflict, 1559-1572* (London, 1973); and, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition* (London, 1980) and J. M. H. Salmon, *Society in Crisis: France in the sixteenth century* (London, 1975).

It is strange that we have such little understanding of the local impact of the Reformation. After all, the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century was a golden age for regional history in France. It was the time of Lucien Febvre's study of the Franche-Comté and Gaston Roupnel's study of the Dijonnais.³ It was also a time when local history societies were flourishing and journals were established to publish studies of local historical interest.⁴ But contributions to these journals were often written by local amateur historians who created 'a jumble of chance genealogies, usurped glories, proofless assertions'.⁵ It was suggested that local narrative history was not a world for serious French historians. Instead the professionals were drawn ineluctably towards the new and exciting prospects that emerged with the Annales school of history. The Annales school did not reject local history but its character was transformed to reflect a new interdisciplinary approach and greater attention towards previously unstudied social groups.⁶

The impact of both the court-centred narrative history and the Annales school of history is reflected in today's French textbooks on sixteenth-century France. These are characterised on the one hand by a chronological approach and an interest in kings, queens and princes and on the other by a thematic approach which draws much from the social sciences to reflect upon the impact of demography, the economy, social structures, and cultural attitudes.⁷ The domination of the narrative and *annaliste* schools of history has left local history much neglected and confined to the realms of popular history, specifically written with local audiences very much in mind.

Over the past 25 years, however, there has been an ever sharper awareness that one cannot fully explain cultural, religious and political change solely by reference to the court. Similarly one cannot fully understand the impact of social, demographic and economic change without reference to political and religious

³ Lucien Febvre, *Philippe II et la Franche-Comté* (Paris, 1912) and Gaston Roupnel, *La ville et la campagne au XVII^e siècle, étude sur les populations du pays dijonnais* (Paris, 1922).

⁴ For example, in Montauban the *Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Tarn-et-Garonne* and the *Recueil de l'Académie de Montauban* were established in 1871 and 1885 respectively.

⁵ Pierre Goubert, 'Local History' in Felix Gilbert & Stephen R. Graubard (eds.), *Historical Studies Today* (New York, 1972), pp. 300-315.

⁶ For example, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's classic study, *Les Paysans de Languedoc* (2 vols., Paris, 1966).

⁷ For example, Georges Livet, *Les Guerres de religion (1559-1598)* (Paris, 1970); Hubert Méthivier, *L'Ancien Régime en France* (Paris, 1981); Joël Cornette, *Histoire de la France: l'affirmation de l'état absolu, 1515-1652* (Paris, 1994); Lucien Bély, *La France moderne, 1498-1789* (Paris, 1994); Arlette Jouanna, *La France du XVI^e siècle 1483-1598* (Paris, 1996).

change.⁸ This recognition has given the archival-based urban study a new lease of life. Anglo-American historians have dominated this branch of scholarship. Natalie Zemon Davis, Philip Benedict, Barbara Diefendorf, Penny Roberts and Kevin Robbins, in particular, have been the standard-bearers for this new historical emphasis upon the town.⁹ And continuing an earlier tradition, a number of French historians such as Robert Sauzet and Marc Venard have revived the regional study.¹⁰ Writing on the importance of the local study, Benedict argues that,

Religious divisions cut deep into society, provoking bitter conflicts in provincial cities... The religious parties had an existence at the local level that was substantially independent of the actions of the court elites. Their fate was determined as much or more by the play of local forces as it was by events in Paris.¹¹

Benedict's study of Rouen was an attempt to relate political events with religious mentalities in an attempt to 'recreate and to understand the full experience of a major provincial capital's inhabitants over nearly 40 years'.¹² Furthermore Diefendorf's study of Paris demonstrates very clearly that, far from being a passive player in the course of events, the capital through its political leverage could intervene and affect the court's priorities:

When we look closely at the city's role in the wars, we can see that the crown and high noblemen, so often depicted as independent of popular opinion in the capital, were in fact often constrained in their actions by the force of popular opinion in the capital.¹³

⁸ Nicolette Mout, 'Reformation, revolt and civil wars: the historiographic traditions of France and the Netherlands' in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Hank van Nierop *et al.* (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands, 1555-85* (Amsterdam, 1999), p. 26.

⁹ Natalie Davis, *Society and Culture in early modern France* (London, 1975); Benedict, *Rouen*; Barbara Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross. Catholics and Huguenots in sixteenth-century Paris* (Oxford, 1991); Penny Roberts, *A City in Conflict: Troyes during the French Wars of Religion* (Manchester, 1996); Kevin Robbins, *City on the Ocean Sea: La Rochelle 1530-1650. Urban society, religion and politics on the French Atlantic frontier* (Leiden, 1997).

¹⁰ Robert Sauzet, *Contre-réforme et réforme catholique en Bas Languedoc: le diocèse de Nîmes au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1980); Wolfgang Kaiser, *Marseille au temps des troubles, 1559-1596: morphologie sociale et luttes de factions* (Paris, 1992); Marc Venard, *Réforme protestante, réforme catholique dans la province d'Avignon au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1993); Michel Cassan, *Le Temps des guerres de religion: le cas du Limousin (vers 1530-vers 1630)* (Paris, 1996).

¹¹ Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 233.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. xii.

¹³ Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, pp. 6, 179-180.

The gathering interest in towns among historians of the French Reformation reflects a more general shift in Reformation scholarship towards the localities, towards urban and provincial studies and the relationship between these localities and their wider political environment. Through urban studies of towns and cities across Europe, historians have come to appreciate the complexities of the Reformation in its adoption and in its implementation.¹⁴ The question being asked by historians of these localities was how the message of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin was being put into practice on the local level. How was the Reformed message being received, and how was it changed upon its absorption into local European society?

This question has been at the centre of recent Reformation scholarship and the new insights emerging from this research communicate the value of local studies in demonstrating the complexities of the Reformation process. In France this process has been facilitated by the civic tradition of document preservation. While the national archives and libraries in Paris provide invaluable collections of documents and literature, local and regional archives and municipal libraries still play a crucial role. Indeed one often finds smaller towns and even villages proudly preserving their own communal archives. The local preservation of archival material lends itself ideally to the urban study.

In the immediate years and months before the outbreak of war in 1562 the growth of Protestantism in France had gone unchecked. An overriding sense of Protestant triumphalism emerged in cities across the land and many towns were the targets of Protestant coups in the early stages of the war. For these few months it seemed entirely possible that Protestantism might succeed in its goal of domination. But the wars activated a vigorous and violent Catholic counter-attack that extinguished Protestant hopes of success. Barbara Diefendorf's study of Paris reveals how the Protestant community in the city felt defeated but not broken. She demonstrates how Protestants maintained their strength by developing a 'parallel' community within the city. Though dispersed across the city, the Protestant faithful nurtured ties that bound the entire Protestant community – rich and poor –

¹⁴ In particular, see the collected essays in R. W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London, 1987) and R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *The German People and the Reformation* (Cornell, 1988), and Hans-Christoph Rublack's essay, 'Is there a "new history" of the urban Reformation?' in E. I Kouri & Tom Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe* (Hong Kong, 1987), pp. 121-141.

in 'fellowship and mutual assistance'.¹⁵ In Rouen, Benedict argues that although Protestants comprised a minority of the city population little attempt was made by the Protestants to disguise their presence. The adoption of Old Testament names for their children and the moral rigour of Protestants, as enforced by the consistory, nurtured a perception amongst the town's Catholics of the Protestants' self-righteousness, an 'inflated sense of [their own] superiority' which may have been reinforced by the Calvinist belief that they were God's Chosen People.¹⁶

While many Huguenot communities were able to find strength to draw themselves together in the years after the first war, the massacres of St Bartholomew's day in August 1572 proved to be a watershed. The blood spilt in Paris triggered violence across the provinces, paralysing Huguenot communities. Many Protestants were massacred, many fled into exile but many more abjured their faith. Fear and disillusionment prompted feelings of divine abandonment. One Calvinist minister wrote of how he began to see the massacre as 'an expression of God's indignation as though [God] had declared by this means that He detested and condemned the profession and exercise of our Religion'.¹⁷ In these bewildering times Rouen's Huguenot community was reduced to a small community of 1,500; a dramatic drop from the Protestant population of 16,500 seven years earlier.¹⁸ The decline of Protestant communities in cities across northern France was permanent.

But French Protestantism was never a uniform phenomenon; not before St Bartholomew's day, and certainly not after. Far from the political cauldron of Paris, events in southern France had always followed a rather different course. In the vast majority of northern French cities, Protestantism's taste of victory had been short-lived. However, in the south many of the towns adhering to the new faith had proved themselves more successful in withstanding the Catholic offensive. Rather than seeing their influence eroded in the years after the first war, Protestants in towns such as Montauban, Castres, Millau, Montpellier and Nîmes succeeded in consolidating their hold upon town life, dominating the town magistracies. And this position of strength endured for many southern towns even in the aftermath of St Bartholomew's day; few southern Protestant towns were

¹⁵ Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, pp. 127-136.

¹⁶ Benedict, *Rouen*, pp. 105-109.

¹⁷ Robert Kingdon, *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement, 1564-1572* (Geneva, 1967), p. 117.

¹⁸ Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 134.

affected by the mass defections that characterised the northern towns of Paris, Rouen, Caen, Orléans, and Troyes.

It seems somewhat perverse that most studies of French Calvinism have focused on northern France where Calvinism ultimately failed, whereas in the south, the Huguenot movement achieved a position of domination that it never relinquished. Following the Edict of Nantes in 1598, it has been calculated that of the total Huguenot population of France, an estimated 850,000, three quarters resided in the provinces of the south and south-west; a situation which reflects the difficulties that Louis XIV had in this area in attempting to expel the Huguenots and a situation which reflects the pattern of Protestant churches even today.¹⁹ This stronger position, however, is not reflected in the balance of the literature that has concentrated, by and large, on centres such as Paris and Rouen in which Protestantism ultimately failed.

What remains conspicuously absent from the literature is a single study of a major Protestant stronghold in southern France. This is particularly strange given the allusions made in the literature to the Protestant 'state within a state' that supposedly developed in southern France in the wake of St Bartholomew's day.²⁰ This study of Montauban seeks to provide an opportunity through which to explore the nature of southern French Protestantism.

Anyone visiting Montauban today will notice vestiges of the town's intrepid history as a Huguenot bastion. Most striking are the indentations upon the octagonal church tower of Saint Jacques. These were caused by royal artillery fire during the great siege of 1621, from which the town emerged triumphant and unbowed. Even today the town commemorates and celebrates its victory against a royal army which had seemed invincible up to that point and indeed many of the town's streets bear the names of the town's most illustrious defenders: 'la rue Chamier' after the minister, Daniel Chamier, who was killed upon the town's ramparts and 'le jardin Dupuy' after the first consul who had masterminded the town's defences.

In contrast to its remarkable history Montauban today is a somewhat sleepy provincial backwater very much in the shadow of its bustling neighbour

¹⁹ Perez Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1992), II. 16 and Henri Dubief & Jacques Poujol (eds.), *La France protestante. Histoire et lieux de mémoire* (Millau, 1992), p. 114.

²⁰ Janine Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi, 1559-1598* (Toulouse, 1980), pp. 177-224.

Toulouse. The predominance of Toulouse has been a permanent feature of Montauban's history and has shaped Montauban's development throughout the centuries. But Montauban's bullish defence of the Huguenot cause in the second half of the sixteenth century and early decades of the seventeenth century – even in the face of overwhelming odds – provides the clearest example of how the town sought to demonstrate its separate identity. Throughout the period of the Wars of Religion Montauban's history was shaped by adversity, be it religious, military or political. In the process Montauban carved a place for itself in the annals of French history which has been too long forgotten.

Even before the outbreak of the first war Montauban had embraced the Reformation. This was a course of action that hardly endeared the town to the Parlement of Toulouse, in whose jurisdiction Montauban was situated. Rising tensions between the parlement and Montauban were subsumed by the violence of the first war. During this time Montauban sustained three consecutive sieges by the king's governor of Guyenne, Blaise de Monluc. During the war and in the subsequent era of peace Montauban's Protestant ministers and magistrates consolidated their grip both within the city and over its surrounding towns and villages. In a royal visit to the town in 1564, the political elite agreed to dismantle the town's fortifications and divide the town's magistracy between Protestant and Catholic representatives. But with the resumption of war three years later, the town's defences were hastily reconstructed and all office-holding was reserved for Protestants, a situation that endured until 1632. The Protestant domination of Montauban and its strategic location at the heart of the French Midi between La Rochelle on the west coast and the Protestant churches of Lower Languedoc in the south-east greatly heightened the town's importance for the Huguenot cause. As early as 1570 Montauban had been designated as one of the four 'places de sûreté' for Huguenots across France and after 1621 it remained one of the only two left, the other being La Rochelle. Indeed by the early seventeenth century Montauban stood at the centre of the single greatest concentration of Huguenot faithful in the whole of France.²¹

²¹ Philip Benedict, *The Huguenot Population of France, 1600-1685: the demographic fate and customs of a religious minority* (Philadelphia, 1994), p. 51. Montauban's Protestant population fluctuated during the period of the Wars of Religion. Between 1564 and 1600, the average annual number of Protestant baptisms was 611 which compares with 213 for Caen, 272 for Montpellier and 720 for La Rochelle. See Benedict, *Rouen*, Appendix 1.

With the exception of Jean Fornier's manuscript narrative of the three sieges of Montauban in 1562 and the published accounts of the wars of the 1620s there are no surviving accounts of the events of the Wars of Religion in Montauban.²² Scant are the details that can be drawn from the few surviving memoirs and letters that have been preserved. Some important moments in the town's history are alluded to in some of the general histories of the sixteenth century, such as those written by Théodore de Bèze, Jean de Serres, Jean Le Frère, Simon Goulart and La Popelinière.²³ But the limitation of these printed sources together with the lacunary nature of the archival material has left a lot of room for historians with fanciful imaginations. The partisan nature of the history-writing of Montauban is all the more pronounced as tensions between Catholics and Protestants continued well after the duration of the religious wars. Indeed, as the seventeenth century progressed, the Counter Reformation began to gather momentum across France and its impact scarcely by-passed Montauban and the way in which its history was written.

Henry Le Bret was the first historian to attempt a synthesis of the town's history.²⁴ Published in 1668, Le Bret's work surveyed the history of Montauban from the town's foundation in 1144 until the end of the Wars of Religion. But it was the Wars of Religion that preoccupied Le Bret most, causing him to dedicate half of his study to these troubles. Le Bret had been brought up in Paris and excelled as a barrister in the king's council. In 1656 he put aside his legal career

²² Jean Fornier, 'L'Histoire de l'affliction de la ville de Montauban lors, qu'elle fut assalée par plusieurs fois, & longtemps assiégée des Cheualliers & grans Seigneurs de la France, l'an 1562' (1564) in ADTG, 1 Mi 10. For the events in Montauban in the 1620s, see L'Armée Royale devant Montavban, & ce qui s'est passé à l'assaut (Bordeaux, Simon Millanges, 1621); L'estat dv siege de Montavban. Par l'armée Royalle de sa Majesté contre ceux de la Rebellion (Paris, Isaac Mesnier, 1621); Recit veritable de ce qui s'est passé en la deffaicte des ennemis rebelles au Roy, venans au secours de Montauban (Paris, Pierre Rocolet, 1621); Histoire particvliere, des plvs memorables choses qui se sont passees au Siege de Montauban: & de l'acheminement d'iceluy ([Montauban], 1623); Recit veritable de tovt ce qui s'est passé à Tholose, & aux enuirons de Montauban, depuis le 28. Du mois de Iuin (Montpellier, Jean Pech, 1625); Histoire veritable de tovt ce qui s'est fait & passé dans la Ville de Montauban, durant & depuis les derniers mouuemens iusqu'à present ([Montauban], 1627); and, Pierre Berauld, L'Estat de Montauban depuis la descente de l'Anglois en Ré le XXII juillet 1627 jusques à la reddition de La Rochelle ([Montauban], 1628).

²³ [Théodore de Bèze], Histoire ecclésiastique des églises reformées au royaume de France, ed. P. Vesson (2 vols., Toulouse, 1882); Jean de Serres, Histoire des choses memorables avenues en France (n.p., 1599); Jean Le Frère, La vraye et entiere histoire des trovbles et gverres ciuiles aduenues de nostre temps (2 vols., Paris, 1584); Simon Goulart, Memoires de l'Estat de France, sous Charles Neufiesme (3 vols., Meidelbourg, 1579); La Popelinière, L'Histoire de France (2 vols., Abraham, 1581).

²⁴ Henry Le Bret, Histoire de la ville de Montauban (2 vols., Montauban, 1668)

to become a priest. Within three years he had been appointed as a canon to the cathedral chapter of Montauban and three years later he became provost with special responsibility for presiding over the chapter. In this role he played a zealous role in restoring Catholicism to Montauban and was in part responsible for the closing down and transfer of the Protestant academy, the demolition of the Protestant temples, the foundation of a Catholic seminary and the laying of the first stone of Montauban's new cathedral which stands today.²⁵ It is in this context that he wrote his *Histoire*, which was uncompromising in its association of Protestantism with civic disorder and rebellion. In his introduction, he writes,

Je Parleray du Calvinisme, du temps & de la manière qu'il s'insinua dans Montauban, des desordres qu'il y causa comme par tout où il entra, des Incendies, Meurtres, Batailles, sièges & autres semblables malheurs qui ont affligé cette ville & le reste de la France depuis Henry II. jusques en 1629, que par la Paix générale les Catholiques furent restablis dans Montauban.²⁶

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, another cathedral canon, Perrin de Grandpré, penned his own manuscript history of Montauban (which was never printed). Perrin used sources from the town archives along with those of local abbeys to portray yet another grisly picture of how 'le libertinage et la corruption' of Calvinism had infected Montauban and its surrounding region.²⁷

Of the two works by Le Bret and Perrin, Le Bret's has had the most profound effect upon the subsequent understanding of events in Montauban during this turbulent phase of the town's history. One hundred and fifty years after its publication, some local historians – Mary-Lafon, in particular – began to attack Le Bret's work. In 1841, with money provided by Montauban's municipal government, the Abbé Marcellin and Gabriel Ruck, a regional school inspector, sought to review, edit and annotate Le Bret's work as a 'patriotique entreprise'.²⁸ Marcellin was a professor of rhetoric at Montauban and a preacher of national acclaim; indeed he had been official preacher at the court of Louis Philippe in

²⁵ Emerand Forestié, 'Biographie de Henry Le Bret', *BSATG*, 18 (1890), pp. 89-128 and René Toujas, 'Quelques précisions biographiques sur Henry Le Bret', *BSATG*, 86 (1960), pp. 31-37.

²⁶ Le Bret, *Histoire*, I. 4-5.

²⁷ ADTG, Ms. 3: Perrin de Grandpré, 'Histoire de la ville de Montauban', manuscript (n.d., late seventeenth century), pp. 205-206, 210.

²⁸ Henry Le Bret, *Histoire de la ville de Montauban*, ed. Abbé Marcellin & Gabriel Ruck (Paris, 1841), p. xxxiii.

Paris. In an ‘*advertissement*’ to the readers, Marcellin and Ruck were forthright in their reasons for editing Le Bret’s work:

L’Histoire de Montauban par Le Bret est loin, bien loin de satisfaire aux conditions présentement exigées des travaux historiques. Entachée des vices généraux qui déparent toutes les productions du même genre et de la même époque, presque constamment nulles sous le rapport de la critique, vide des évènements qui devraient y dominer, elle est encore très incomplète dans le récit de ceux qu’elle rapporte.²⁹

The editors were scathing in their treatment of Le Bret’s omissions and particularly criticised the author for his emphasis upon the religious history of the town to the neglect of its civic heritage. The editors sought to rectify these omissions by incorporating original documents into the text. Their bold critique of the text and their alterations sought to stave off criticism of Le Bret’s work and provided the grounds to re-assert Le Bret’s thesis as the standard text of Montauban’s history.

But Jean-Bernard Lafon (whose pseudonym was Mary-Lafon) was not impressed by Marcellin and Ruck’s efforts. Mary-Lafon had been brought up in a village outside Montauban but had studied in Paris where he played an active part in the 1830 Revolution and was thereafter keen to promote the ideal of *liberté* wherever he went. In the introduction of his own Histoire d’une ville protestante (1862), Mary-Lafon wrote,

L’objet principal de l’historien de nos jours n’étant plus seulement l’érudition, que nos pères nous ont rendue trop facile, mais la vérité, le mouvement, l’intérêt, qualités qui leur furent inconnues pour la plupart, nous nous sommes appliqués surtout à reproduire aussi énergiquement et d’une touche aussi fidèle que possible, la véritable couleur des événements au seizième et au dix-septième siècles... Nous avons cherché ardemment à redonner la vie à ces vaillantes générations trempées dans le sang et le feu... Il n’est pas inutile, en effet, de remettre sous les yeux de cette génération flasque, énervée, rongée jusqu’à la moelle par l’égoïsme et le mal de l’or, les prodiges de vigueur, de constance et de dévouement accomplis par nos pères, pour achever l’émancipation de l’esprit humain et la conquête de la liberté religieuse.³⁰

Mary-Lafon’s whiggish approach re-drew the contours of the town’s history, praising the Protestant insurgence in Montauban as an anticipation of *liberté*. In

²⁹ Ibid., p. xxv.

this respect, it is significant that his history concluded in July 1790, the month in which the Civil Constitution of the Church was promulgated, drastically curtailing the authority of the Pope and re-organising the practice of religion within France's borders. The primary focus of Mary-Lafon's Histoire was the evolution of this journey towards *liberté* and the facts and events of the town's history were made to fit neatly around this proposition:

Fondée en haine des moines, la cité [de Montauban] s'était empressée d'adopter les dogmes albigeois et avait fait une rude guerre à l'Eglise du treizième siècle. Comme les grandes passions des peuples se transmettent de génération en génération, l'aversion traditionnelle des montalbanais pour le clergé existait dans toute sa force en 1550. Depuis longtemps déjà, le Catholicisme déperissait sur ce sol intelligent et libre.³¹

In 1881, Abbé Camille Daux, a keen local historian, responded vigorously to Mary-Lafon in his Histoire de l'Eglise de Montauban.³² With the support of the local bishop, Daux accused Mary-Lafon of being 'l'historien-romancier' and attacked Mary-Lafon's Histoire as more fiction than history. Daux's Histoire was based upon sound archival research but he in turn was criticised by Daniel Benoit for being an author who accepted 'sans examen les imputations les plus calomnieuses contre les réformés et met en doute leur bonne foi et celle de leurs historiens'.³³

Daniel Benoit had studied at the newly-restored Protestant faculty of theology in Montauban and between 1878 and 1916 he was to serve as a minister of the Reformed church of Montauban. Aside from his pastoral duties he spent most of his time dedicated to historical research and wrote extensively on the Protestant churches during the period after 1685 and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. But to mark the 350th anniversary of the church's foundation in Montauban, Benoit wrote the Origines de la Réforme à Montauban (1910). Benoit's history was primarily concerned with enshrining the memory of the early Reformed church. He dedicated the book to 'mes chers coreligionnaires de Montauban et des églises environnantes' and in his introduction wrote,

³⁰ Mary-Lafon, Histoire d'une ville protestante (Paris, 1862)

³¹ Ibid., p. 21.

³² Camille Daux, Histoire de l'Eglise de Montauban (2 vols., Paris, 1882)

³³ Daniel Benoit, Les origines de la Réforme à Montauban (Montauban, 1910), p. 7.

Ce livre est une oeuvre de piété filiale. L'auteur a voulu rappeler à ses coreligionnaires ce que furent ces hommes du seizième siècle dont ils descendent et ce qui donna, aux meilleurs d'entre eux, cette force morale qui nous étonne encore après trois siècles.³⁴

Benoit explored Montauban's Reformation by examining the contributions of his ministerial predecessors whom he clearly held in the highest esteem. Indeed at times Benoit's Histoire reads as a hagiography not unlike Crespin's Histoire des martyrs that he had edited nineteen years earlier.

Finally in 1941 Gaston Serr published his Documents et souvenirs which was superseded by his Eglise protestante, published posthumously in 1958.³⁵ The author of these histories was brought up in a Protestant family; indeed his grandfather was a minister of the church in Montauban and Gaston Serr himself was an important member of the church's consistory. Serr was never trained as a historian although he attended courses in history at Toulouse while he studied medicine. He subsequently became a professor at the faculty of medicine at Toulouse, but he continued to develop a keen interest in archival work. In the introduction to his first book he wrote how it was 'dans notre souci de la vérité' that 'nous avons fait à leur sujet une longue enquête archivistique qui nous a quelquefois amené à compléter et même à remettre en question certains rapports des anciens historiens'.³⁶

Serr's subsequent Eglise protestante was an institutional study of Protestantism. There is little mention of the wider context of the polemic, tension and violence of the Wars of Religion. Instead Serr focussed upon the organisation, administration and liturgy of the Reformed church drawing a major part of his material from the official records of the French Reformed churches – the Confession of Faith, the Discipline and the records of the national synods – which he cross-referenced with the town's few remaining consistory records. In a similar fashion to Benoit, Serr drew much of his material on Montauban's ministers from Crespin and de Bèze.

Other than these few local studies, Montauban – which boasted the largest urban Protestant population in France in the early seventeenth century – has gone

³⁴ Ibid., p. 11.

³⁵ Gaston Serr, Documents et souvenirs du XVIe siècle sur les protestants montalbanais (Toulouse, 1941) and Une Eglise Protestante au XVIe siècle: Montauban (Aix-en-Provence, 1958)

³⁶ Serr, Documents et souvenirs, p. 3.

largely unnoticed in the historical literature of the Wars of Religion. Part of the reason must lie in the town's relative obscurity today; few people have heard of, let alone are able to locate Montauban. Despite being a 'chef-lieu de département', it is still overshadowed by Toulouse. Indeed even for those visiting the town today it is hard to reconcile its relaxed southern French atmosphere with its defiant stance in the sixteenth century. But besides the limits of people's geographical awareness, the archives have proved the main obstacle for historical studies on Montauban.

My year working in the town's archives revealed the difficulties that would face any historian attempting to piece together the town's history. As I was to discover, the lack of modern scholarly attention paid to Montauban's Reformation owes much to the fragmented nature of the surviving sources. The minutes of town council meetings are missing for the years 1560 until 1581 – a sad loss for our understanding of the Reformation's founding years and its search for institutional security – while records for the town's consistory are extant only for the years 1595 to 1598. This state of affairs stands in contrast to Nîmes, another southern French Protestant stronghold, where the wealth of surviving civic and ecclesiastical documentation has proved alluring to many historians.³⁷ In Montauban's instance, a number of documents were lost at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes when many Huguenots went into exile or underground taking their records and papers with them.³⁸ At the time of the Revolution other documents were destroyed and it was not until October 1796 that all church and municipal records were ordered to be deposited in *archives départementales*. However, the *département* of Tarn-et-Garonne, in which Montauban is now situated, was only created subsequently in 1808 and it was not before 1810 that its own archives were established. In the years between 1796 and 1810 the local archives were dispersed and the rest of the nineteenth century was

³⁷ Ann H. Guggenheim, 'Calvinism and the political elite of sixteenth-century Nîmes', Ph.D. thesis (University of New York, 1968); Gerard Thomas Moran, 'The Catholic church and the Protestant party in Languedoc during the Wars Of Religion 1559-1598', Ph.D. thesis (Cornell University, 1978); Philippe Chareyre, 'Le consistoire de Nîmes, 1561-1685', Thèse de doctorat (4 vols., Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier, 1987) and his '“The great difficulties one must bear to follow Jesus Christ”. Morality at sixteenth-century Nîmes' in Raymond Mentzer (ed.), *Sin and the Calvinists* (Kirksville, 1994), pp. 63-97; Raymond Mentzer, 'Disciplina nervus ecclesiae: The Calvinist reform of morals at Nîmes', *SCJ*, 18 (1987), pp. 89-115 and his 'Organisational endeavour and charitable impulse in sixteenth-century France: the care of Protestant Nîmes', *FH*, 5 (1991), pp. 1-29. Further work is currently being undertaken on Nîmes by Josh Millet (Harvard University) and David Morris (Leeds University).

spent trying to retrieve and consolidate archival material relating to the *département*. Between 1859 and 1964, large quantities of documents including the baptismal and marriage records of the Reformed church of Montauban, were transferred from the town hall to the archives, and in 1902 the archives themselves moved premises.³⁹ With the turbulent history of Montauban's archives, it is small wonder that documents have mysteriously vanished.

In light of these circumstances it would appear at first sight that Montauban was not the most promising place for research. The lack of consistory proceedings has meant that the classic basis for the Calvinist case study does not exist. Montauban does not have the archival staples of consistory records and town council registers and admittedly without these sources it is harder to tell a story – the day-to-day realities can never be known to the historian. However it is still possible to build up a picture of Calvinist culture by using a range of documents normally passed over by institutional historians of Calvinist churches. If one delves beneath the surface, there is a large amount of relevant information embedded in documents that do not deal directly with Protestantism but which are highly revealing for an insight into a functioning Protestant culture.

My archival work is based upon a year of study in Montauban, reinforced by subsequent separate trips to the other southern French cities of Toulouse, Montpellier and Nîmes. I have also worked in the Bibliothèque de la Société du Protestantisme Français and the national archives and library in Paris which all dispose of important manuscript materials relating to the Huguenot churches of the south. In Montauban I have made especial use of the very rich collection of notarial records of the town. For the period of the Wars of Religion I have collected evidence from 35 notaries. The marriage alliances, loan and rental agreements, commercial transactions, purchases of land and real estate and testamentary evidence which were recorded by the town's notaries all provide insights into who was associating with whom, why and when. Few archival enterprises can be more laborious than trawling through often uninventoried bundles of notarial documents but at the same time few can yield such a detailed picture of the relationships that existed between different people. In this case the picture has been greatly enhanced by the survival of the Protestant baptismal,

³⁸ Benedict, *Huguenot Population*, p. 11 and François Balestie, *Le Montalbanais des dragonnades au réveil* (Montauban, 1971)

³⁹ Mathieu Méras, *Guide des archives de Tarn-et-Garonne* (Montauban, 1972), pp. 7-8.

marriage and death records (the *état-civil*) of the town which extend uninterrupted from 1564 until the end date of this study in 1629. Little is given away in these particular documents but they do intimate the ties of affinity within the town – the links of godparenthood and marriage that formed the heart of kinship groupings within the town.

The work of Brady on Strasbourg, Diefendorf on Paris, Naphy on Geneva, Marnef on Antwerp and now Robbins on La Rochelle has provided this study with the methodological guidelines with which to pursue this type of research.⁴⁰ All of these historians have used notarial documents, in particular, as a basis for prosopography. Prosopography seeks to reconstruct the ‘common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives’.⁴¹ In other words, it provides a collective biography of a group of people through which one can interpret their behaviour within the historical process. For the purposes of my study I have restricted my prosopographical research to the political and church elite of Montauban for whom the weight of surviving documentary evidence is most substantial.⁴² By generating a picture of the town’s elite, this study will provide an insight into understanding political action and cultural change in Montauban.

There were, however, initial problems in identifying the political and church elite. There are no surviving lists of the names of political or church officeholders and it soon became clear that the list of ministers provided in Serr’s *Histoire d’une Eglise protestante* was woefully incomplete. There are no surviving lists of professional qualifications, no family genealogies and no local biographical dictionaries. Hence my picture of who were members of the elite and

⁴⁰ Thomas A. Brady, *Ruling Class, Regime and Reformation at Strasbourg, 1520-1555* (Leiden, 1978); Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, pp. 113-114, 127-136; William G. Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation of the Genevan Reformation* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 129-137; Guido Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation. Underground Protestantism in a commercial metropolis, 1550-1577* (Baltimore, 1996), pp. 171-202; Robbins, *City on the Ocean Sea*, pp. 99-106, 123-128.

⁴¹ Lawrence Stone, ‘Prosopography’ in Gilbert & Graubard (eds.), *Historical Studies Today*, pp. 107-140.

⁴² In *Ruling Class*, p. 36-37, Brady suggests that prosopographical research is limited to research of the upper classes since both qualitatively and quantitatively the weight of documentary evidence lies with the upper classes. The difficulties in drawing together material for the lower classes of pre-Industrial Europe leaves them as ‘faceless generalisations’. However, see Claire Dolan, ‘The artisans of Aix-en-Provence in the sixteenth century: a micro-analysis of social relationships’ in Philip Benedict (ed.), *Cities and Social Change in early modern France* (London and New York, 1992), pp. 174-194 and my study of the bookselling world of southern France: ‘A provincial perspective: Protestant print culture in southern France’ in Philip Conner, Paul Nelles and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *The Sixteenth-Century French Religious Book* (Aldershot, forthcoming), chapter 16.

who were not only slowly emerged through the course of my first few months of archival research. In order to keep this study to a manageable size I have limited my prosopography of the political elite to those who sat as first consuls in the town council at some point and/ or held royal offices in the seneschal court. This provides a list of some 68 individuals, many of whose names will become more familiar as this study unfolds. My prosopography of the church elite comprises all the Reformed ministers of the town and all the church elders that I have been able to identify. Using notarial, baptismal, taxation, town council and consistory records I have been able to identify 80 ministers and 210 elders who lived in Montauban during the period 1560 to 1629.

Prosopography as a method of scholarship is not without its problems. One can overstate the cementing role of kinship and its impact upon political and cultural change. One of the problems with notarial records is that they can provide a very complete picture of one aspect of human life and tell us nothing about other aspects of that same life. Lawrence Stone warns us that there are ‘countless examples in history of members of the same family who have disagreed among themselves often with violence’ and, he asserts, ‘even when kinship ties were strong and can be shown to have been so, there are limits to the meaningful pursuit of genealogical links’.⁴³ Human motivations and behaviour can be very hard to fathom and a study that over-relied upon notarial documents would open itself up to considerable shortcomings. I have therefore sought to temper my use of notarial records and the *état civil* by using the widest possible range of surviving documents. This has enabled me to balance what can be found out about human relationships with what actually happened in the town’s history. Furthermore, where appropriate, I have made extensive use of comparative work from other French and European examples to highlight the distinctiveness of Montauban’s Reformation.

The structure of this thesis can best be thought of as a series of concentric circles with Montauban at its heart. It therefore opens with an urban study of Montauban, demonstrating how the town responded to the Reformation through an analysis of the political elite and the shaping of a new confessional culture. It has been noted that the documentary evidence does not exist to create a narrative

⁴³ Stone, ‘Prosopography’, pp. 107-140.

of events in Montauban throughout the period of this study and it was never the intention of this study to provide a purely local history. Instead I have tried to use Montauban as a means through which to examine how the Huguenot movement functioned in southern France. Hence subsequent chapters view the wider Reformation in the French Midi through the viewpoint of Montauban. This study first examines the extent to which Montauban functioned as the centre of the local network of churches, known collectively as the churches of the 'colloque'. The study subsequently explores Montauban's place in the wider political and religious concerns of the Protestant south before examining Montauban's relationship with the wider world of international Calvinism. Finally I draw together some of the features that contributed to the emergence of Calvinist confessional culture in southern France.

Chapter two is the first of two chapters that deal with the Reformation in Montauban. The chapter seeks to provide background to the Reformation before attempting to identify the culture of authority that attended the Calvinist ascendancy in Montauban. In particular it lays open the relationship between the traditional power structures and the Huguenot hierarchy that emerged. This is essential if one is to understand the tenacious grip of Protestantism over the town. Of particular interest is the way in which the new social institution of the consistory related to the more established political institutions of Montauban. The chapter explores the nature of this relationship by generating a prosopography of the ministers and magistrates of the town and examining the ways in which they interacted with one another.

Chapter three assesses the practical working out of the relationship between minister and magistrate, addressing the question of how Calvinism was able to move from its conception to reality. Other urban studies of towns across Europe on both sides of the confessional divide communicate the limitations that Protestant and Catholic reformers faced in their bid to 'christianise' early modern society and alter its moral tenor. Chapter three addresses the question whether Montauban's urban Reformation was any more successful in re-ordering the moral parameters of the town. With few surviving consistorial records the chapter will demonstrate how it is possible to elaborate on a functioning Calvinist system by using a range of civic records. These documents provide crucial evidence of the ways in which the political elite supported the fledgling church, playing an

active part in maintaining ministers and supporting the Reformed tradition of worship. Furthermore many of the towns of southern France had exceptional powers in the area of criminal jurisdiction and a unique register of criminal sentences for Montauban demonstrates the extent to which the consuls employed this prerogative to reinforce the work of the consistory.

The close relationship between the religious and political elite of Montauban, and indeed the overlap in personnel, afforded the town opportunities to forge a distinctive cultural identity. Chapter four broadens the focus of my study to encompass the ways in which Montauban related to its external environment and how this reinforced the town's self-image. Montauban could not stand alone in splendid isolation. All major Calvinist cities across Europe acted as beacons sometimes drawing in ministers from surrounding villages, sometimes radiating influence out. In the Netherlands where records of the *classis* (the Dutch equivalent of the colloque) survive, historians are well informed about the role of the major cities. In France, it is famously the case that few, if any, of the synodal records survive below the level of the national synod. However, Montauban is not wholly bereft of these documents since some colloque and provincial synod records have survived in the private archives of the Constans family, direct descendants of one of Montauban's most renowned ministers. Despite vigorous efforts to locate this family, I was unable to trace the present location of this archive. Until the 1950s the family resided in a little village 8 km north of Montauban and it was at this time that a microfilm was taken of many of their documents including the colloque records and some of these have been transcribed by Daniel Benoit in his *Origines de la Réforme*. Furthermore, fragmentary records for some of Montauban's satellite communities can be found in the *archives nationales* in Paris. But by far the most important discovery of material for this chapter was to be found in the *archives communales* of Saint Antonin-Noble-Val, a town located 40 km north-east of Montauban. The survival of this rich archive within the orbit of Montauban has enabled me to unravel the relationship between Montauban and its surrounding region. Professional historians have scarcely ever touched this archive and it is only open for two hours each week on Monday afternoons. However I had the good fortune to be able to arrange special privileges through the 'Amis du vieux Saint Antonin', a vibrant local history society justly proud of the town's distinguished heritage.

Even today, I was told, the *Amis* commemorate and re-enact events from the Wars of Religion drawn from the town council records! I spent a precious two weeks in Saint Antonin, working through the surprisingly complete town council records (1561-74 and 1576-92) and the municipal accounts of the town. These records have enabled me to identify particular patterns in the way in which local churches were catered for while deepening an understanding of the nature of the regional network of Reformed churches.

Montauban's field of influence extended over considerable distances across the region of Upper Languedoc and Upper Guyenne, where it was indisputably the largest and most settled Protestant community. How did Montauban's Reformation influence the course and character of the larger Reformation? The final three chapters explore the extent to which Montauban played a wider role in the Huguenot world. The vigour of Catholic opposition to Protestantism in southern France meant that the Huguenot ascendancy could never be taken for granted. The precarious nature of Protestantism's achievement forms the backdrop to a consideration of Montauban within the context of the so-called 'United Provinces' of the Midi. Much ink has been spilt, particularly in French historiography, over the 'state within a state' that the Protestants apparently created for themselves in response to the Catholic threat.⁴⁴ This emphasis has been based largely upon the surviving minutes of the Huguenot political assemblies.⁴⁵ These, however, give a very partial and perhaps unduly idealised picture of what was intended – certainly more than was ever accomplished. Here, chapter five subjects the 'United Provinces' to a new, more critical scrutiny, by seeking to compare these proceedings with local sources – in particular town council records and contemporary narratives – to reveal an ever wider gap between what was said (and recorded at these assemblies) and what happened in practice. Indeed, instead of a so-called 'United Provinces', the picture that emerges is one of regional clusters of Protestant communities (such as Montauban and its satellite towns) with little or no links with other southern Huguenot strongholds. Instead of a united front of southern Calvinism this study reveals the striking tensions that existed within the movement, between the towns and the

⁴⁴ In the current literature, see particularly the work of Janine Garrisson.

⁴⁵ See 'Assemblées générales politiques de ceux de la religion prétendue réformée depuis l'an 1572 jusques en l'année 1597' in Mazarine, Ms 2604. These proceedings have been summarised in Léon Anquez's *Histoire des assemblées politiques des réformés de France (1573-1622)* (Paris, 1859).

noble leadership of the Huguenot movement as each sought to safeguard their own interests in a struggle characterised by survival of the fittest.

My analysis would suggest that the 'United Provinces' of the Midi has largely been a historiographical invention; it was certainly never recognised as a functioning reality by Henry of Navarre. Independent of the political assemblies, Navarre expended great energy in building up a local network of loyal clients through which to effect his will. These findings in chapter six are supported by evidence that emerges from the private archives of the Scorbiac family. These archives, previously untapped by historians, have been carefully preserved in the Scorbiac family since the sixteenth century. Of particular interest has been the correspondence of Guichard de Scorbiac, a prominent member of the local elite and a key figure in Henry of Navarre's court. Today the descendants of Guichard de Scorbiac reside in the same house that was built by Guichard's son and again I am most grateful to the family for the enthusiasm and kindness that they lavished upon me. Guichard de Scorbiac is a crucial figure in this study, clarifying the ways in which the local world of Montauban related to the wider strategies of the Huguenot leadership.

Chapters two to six deal with Montauban and its role in directing the regional Huguenot cause. The penultimate chapter (chapter seven) looks at the ways in which Montauban's confessional identity was linked to that of the wider world of International Calvinism. Prosopographical tools once again have been important in highlighting the international dimension of the town's pastorate and the breadth of experience and knowledge that the town's ministers brought to the town. Alongside notarial documents, printed primary sources have been employed – in particular, the Registers of the Company of Pastors in Geneva and the Calvin and de Bèze correspondence – in assessing the relationship between Montauban and Geneva. Geneva has often been regarded as the hub of an international movement of Calvinist churches but what this study demonstrates is the limit to Geneva's influence in the day-to-day running of the Reformed church in Montauban.

The endeavours of the Reformed church in Montauban were not entirely dependent upon the strength of International Calvinism. The final brief chapter provides an opportunity to consider the specialness of southern French Protestantism during the period of the Wars of Religion. If Montauban and its

surrounding churches were less reliant than has been traditionally recognised upon the succour provided by the Calvinist community both within and beyond France, what sustained the strength of southern French Protestants and how can historians assess the achievements of the Reformation in the French Midi? These are the questions which have formed the bedrock of this study and which I attempt to answer in the concluding chapter.

This thesis explores the nature of Montauban's Reformation at a time of great adversity. The larger questions that this thesis seek to address are firstly how Montauban emerged as a successfully functioning Calvinist centre and secondly the role that Montauban played as a leading power in the Huguenot south. This study does not and cannot seek to provide yet another internal study of a city Reformation. Its ultimate aim is to view the town within a broader context and to use the town as a means through which to ponder wider questions which remain largely unresolved in the literature such as the relationship between the towns and nobles, the role of the political assemblies and the part played by Henry of Navarre in the Huguenot movement. In this process it is hoped that this thesis will provide new insights into the impact of Calvinism upon southern France.

Chapter 2. The culture of authority in Montauban.

The early Reformation in Montauban.

Montauban is a medieval ‘bastide’ town located in the pays de Quercy. Its foundation dated from the twelfth century when the Count of Toulouse granted a charter for a new town, freeing the town’s population from the burdens of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The town’s charter bestowed upon Montauban a range of privileges and created an environment in which the town’s autonomy and political prestige were valued as one of the same thing. This point, of course, was not lost four centuries later, by Protestant commentators who saw history repeating itself once again with the town’s rejection of Catholicism and the re-assertion of its political autonomy.¹

Montauban’s development owed much to its strategic location on the river Tarn, linking together the provinces of Guyenne and Languedoc. In particular, the town’s bridge spanning the river, provided one of the few crossing points, connecting the southern economy centred on Toulouse with that of the north.² Any visitor passing through Montauban would have immediately been struck by the town’s formidable defences.³ Bounded on one side by the Tarn, the town stood upon a raised wedge of land sandwiched between two other smaller tributaries. The town’s natural strength of location was enhanced by thick surrounding walls built of brick, five fortified gates, a series of dykes and ramparts, two formidable circular defensive towers and three châteaux, vestiges of the town’s turbulent history as a garrison during the Hundred Years’ War.⁴ The geography of the town was even more striking with its streets set in a grid-like pattern: five streets running from north to south, and five streets running from east

¹ Fornier, ‘Histoire de l’affliction’, lines xxxvii-lii.

² To the north of Montauban, the Lot and Dordogne were bridged at Cahors and Bergerac, providing the main trading route between Toulouse and Paris.

³ See, for example, Thomas Wentworth’s response (1612) to the fortifications and how they were being developed in John Lough, *France observed in the seventeenth century by British travellers* (Stocksfield, 1984), pp. 249-250 and ‘Relation de mon voyage à Montauban en l’année 1624,’ ed. Charles Garrisson, *BSATG*, 15 (1899), p. 77.

⁴ Hélène Guicharnaud, *Montauban au XVIIe, urbanisme et architecture* (Paris, 1991) p. 25-41 and her ‘Les fortifications de Montauban’, *BSATG*, 103 (1978), pp. 7-23; Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, pp. 49-56.

to west, dividing the town into neat sections with a central square. This was the classic lay-out of the fortified 'bastide' towns of southern France.⁵

Beyond the town's walls lay the fertile alluvial plains of the lower reaches of the Tarn river, renowned for its fertile soils. Aside from agriculture, Montauban developed a strong manufacturing tradition of leather and cloth, all of which found a wider market downstream through Bordeaux.⁶ Bordeaux was the capital of Guyenne and the province's lieutenant governor had ultimate responsibility for Montauban. But Montauban, more than 200 km from Bordeaux, was very much a distant outpost of the province. Beyond the watchful eye of the king's governor, Montauban's political development benefited greatly. But the town still had to contend with the authority of the Parlement of Toulouse, ever hungry to extend its sphere of influence. Toulouse was only 50 km from Montauban, less than a day's riding away; Montauban's political heritage was very much moulded by the inevitable contest between a town eager to develop its own political privileges and an ever powerful parlement, ready to encroach upon the affairs of towns across the region.⁷

Montauban's commercial significance as a trading centre and its growing urban population won for the town political importance. In the fourteenth century Montauban became a diocese at the expense of the dioceses of Cahors and Toulouse. However, the church's authority was limited in the town by Montauban's founding charter for the cathedral and its chapter house remained on the old site of the town, significantly outside Montauban's walls. But the town's greatest source of pride issued from its designation as one of the seneschal seats of Quercy through which the king exercised his control over the region.⁸

The declining power of the counts of Toulouse in the wake of the Albigensian crusade and the disruption of the Hundred Years' War provided the

⁵ The best contemporary description of Montauban is found in *Histoire particulière, des plus mémorables choses qui se sont passées au Siège de Montauban*, pp. 29-41.

⁶ Montauban's importance in the regional trade of Quercy, Rouergue, Limousin, Agenais, Gascogne, Languedoc and other neighbouring provinces is attested to in 'Articles présentés au Roi' (1626) in ADTG, Archives communales, 21 GG 3, liasse 42/ no. 16. See also Henry de France, 'Notes sur le commerce à Montauban', *BSATG*, 34 (1906), pp. 57-65; Edouard Forestié, *Notice historique sur la fabrication des draps à Montauban du XIVe siècle à nos jours* (Montauban, 1883), pp. 5-7; Michel & Mirelle Lacave, *Bourgeois et marchands en Provence et en Languedoc* (Avignon, 1977), pp. 99-100, 117-120; J. Enjalbert, 'Le commerce de Bordeaux et la vie économique dans le bassin Aquitain au XVIIe siècle', *AM*, 62 (1950), pp. 21-35.

⁷ Robin Harris, *Valois Guyenne. A study of politics, government and society in late medieval France* (Bury St Edmunds, 1994), pp. 78, 86-88.

⁸ Gustave Dupont-Ferrier, *Les Officiers royaux des bailliages et sénéchaussées et les institutions monarchiques locales en France à la fin du moyen âge* (Paris, 1902), pp. 112, 136, 138.

space in which Montauban developed its political identity. The political prestige of the town grew as it extended its privileges while the town's ever greater economic stature and growing population – reaching perhaps 17,000 by the early seventeenth century – provided the backdrop to the town's self-assertion. Finally Montauban's proximity to Toulouse provided the context in which the town's autonomy was continually tested and strengthened.⁹

This brief summary of Montauban's urban heritage is important for explaining how Montauban developed in response to the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century. No town in France was left untouched by the penetration of evangelical ideas and beliefs. But France was an enormous country of great diversity and the way in which the Reformation affected the country's population varied from community to community. It will become apparent in the course of this thesis how profoundly the particular political and cultural heritage of Montauban influenced the course and shape of events surrounding the Reformation in this region.

David Hemsall's study of Languedoc uses a diversity of documents to paint a picture of the early Reformation in the province. He identifies three factors which contributed to the spread of evangelical ideas across the region: the breakdown in episcopal authority and monastic discipline; the rivalries between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in the pursuit of heresy; and, the role of educational establishments in incubating evangelical ideas amongst a network of teachers and students.¹⁰

Hemsall's analysis certainly strikes a chord when we turn to what we know of the situation in Montauban. It was only in 1551, 12 years after his appointment to the diocese of Montauban that the bishop finally arrived.¹¹ During his absence the local church had been buffeted by public disputes among the clergy – between the secular and regular clergy, the cathedral and town churches, and the chapter and the bishop's agents – and between the clergy as a whole and

⁹ For details on the town's population, see Henry de France, 'Etude sur la population montalbanais au XVIIe siècle', *BSATG*, 13 (1885), p. 183 and Benedict, *Huguenot Population*, p. 55.

¹⁰ David S. Hemsall, 'The Languedoc 1520-1540: a study of pre-Calvinist heresy in France', *ARG*, 62 (1971), pp. 225-243. See also the work of Raymond Mentzer: 'Heresy suspects in Languedoc prior to 1560: observations on their social and occupational status', *BHR*, 39 (1977), pp. 361-368; 'Calvinist propaganda and the Parlement of Toulouse', *ARG*, 68 (1977), pp. 268-282; and, *Heresy proceedings in Languedoc 1500-1560* (Philadelphia, 1984).

¹¹ For the episcopacy of Jean de Lettes-Montpezat, see Daux, *Histoire*, I. xi. 37-52.

the Parlement of Toulouse.¹² In this latter case, the parlement was horrified by the scandalous life of one particular priest and suspended him from his charges. This united Montauban's clergy in outcry against the parlement's interference, leading to public denunciations and even the publication of a tract by the president of the parlement against the clergy of Montauban. The clergy of Montauban could not have chosen a worse cause to vent their rage against the parlement, for in the process the church in Montauban was exposed to further public opprobrium.

In this era of local divisions, evangelical ideas spread across the diocese unhindered. Felix Platter on his tour of France in 1552, recognised the region around Montauban as the first stretch of 'reformed' territory that he had encountered since he left the districts surrounding Nîmes and Montpellier where the new ideas were rousing great interest.¹³ Knowledge of this situation had certainly reached the king who in the previous year had instructed the bishop to carry out a visitation of the diocese and root out the 'erreurs, scandales, faulces et reprouvees doctrines' propagated by 'sectateurs' and 'perturbateurs du repos publicque'.¹⁴

Certainly heretical literature and preachers had been arriving in the region from the late 1530s.¹⁵ On several occasions the parlement was alerted to some suspicious appointments to the teaching staff of Montauban's schools.¹⁶ But ultimately it was the bishop's poor example and failure to instigate reform that prepared the ground for the town's Reformation. Within a few years of the bishop's return to Montauban, he fell in love with a local noblewoman and built a

¹² ADTG, G 226, fo. 1r-249v; Daux, *Histoire*, I. xi. 37, 40-41. See also Joseph Vaissète & Claude Devic, *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (15 vols., Toulouse, 1872-92), IV. 807-813.

¹³ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Beggar and the Professor, a sixteenth-century family saga*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, 1997), p. 235.

¹⁴ ADTG, G 209, fo. 2v-3v. Active attempts to reform religious life were being undertaken but their effect was patchy and their implementation long overdue. See, for example, the ten-day provincial council at Narbonne: *Canones, sev regvlæ ecclesiasticæ Concilij prouincialis Narbonensis* (Toulouse, 1552).

¹⁵ Hemsall, 'Languedoc 1520-1540', p. 234; Francis Higman, 'Le levain de l'Évangile' in Francis Higman (ed.), *Lire et découvrir. La circulation des idées au temps de la Réforme* (Geneva, 1998), pp. 45-47.

¹⁶ ADTG, 1 BB 6, fo. 48r-49r; Mathieu Méras, 'Michel d'Affinibus et les origines de la Réforme à Montauban' in ADTG, 104 Doc; Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, pp. 17-19; Serr, *Eglise protestante*, pp. 2-4. Amongst alumni from Montauban's schools, several paid with their lives for their Protestant faith including Jean Joery (burnt upon the orders of the Parlement of Toulouse, 1551); Martial Alba (one of the five students burnt at Lyon in 1553), and Guillaume d'Alençon (burnt at Montpellier in 1554 with forbidden literature that he was caught carrying). On the relationship between schools and the Reformation, see George Huppert, *Public schools in Renaissance France* (Illinois, 1984); J. Roman, *Origine et progrès des églises protestantes dans le Languedoc* (Toulouse, 1888), pp. 10, 16-17, 19, 22; Charles Dardier, 'Origines de la Réforme à Nîmes jusqu'à l'établissement d'un consistoire (1532-1561)', *BSHPF*, 29 (1880), pp. 487-489.

residence at Beauvais, a short distance away from where the noblewoman lived; even today the road linking Beauvais with the noblewoman's house at Verlhac is called 'lou cami dé l'Abesqué', the way of the bishop. Finally under the influence of one of the bishop's advisors, who was later to become a staunch Calvinist, the bishop married his lover and fled to Berne, leaving his diocese profoundly demoralised and without leadership at a critical time.¹⁷

In his Histoire, the Catholic author, Georges Bosquet, decried Montauban as 'la plus ancienne heretique du ressort' and blamed the town's emergence as 'cette nouvelle Geneue' squarely upon the scandalous misconduct of the former bishop.¹⁸ In the decade after the bishop's departure, little has survived to reveal how evangelical ideas developed within the town. However, in the official Protestant history of the French Reformed churches, the Histoire Ecclésiastique, the editor-in-chief, Théodore de Bèze, recounted the 'merveilleux commencement' of the Calvinist church in Montauban in 1560 around an organisational group of five young men, all from professional legal backgrounds. De Bèze described how this group built around themselves, in an ordered fashion and with the support of the ruling elites, the basis of a Reformed church. Finally their project was brought to completion on 22 June 1560, with the arrival of Jean Le Masson, a Reformed minister who had been responsible for forming churches in other surrounding towns.¹⁹

This edifying narrative of the origins of the Reformed church in Montauban evokes, as with so many such cases in the Histoire Ecclésiastique, an orderly measured progress towards church founding. This account, however, is suspiciously tidy, typical of the volume as a whole, which sought to gather together, edit and publish *ex post facto* accounts of the early Reformation. The first edition was published in Geneva in 1580 and when laid alongside other contemporary accounts it becomes clear that certain events were deliberately re-arranged to reflect the intentions of the editors 20 years later.²⁰ The Histoire Ecclésiastique's evocation of an ordered Reformation in Montauban around the group of five sits uneasily upon the explosive, popular appeal of the evangelical

¹⁷ Daux, Histoire, I. xi. 50-52.

¹⁸ Georges Bosquet, Histoire de M. G. Bosquet, sur les troubles advenus en la ville de Tolose l'an 1562 (Toulouse, 1595), pp. 7-9.

¹⁹ [de Bèze], Histoire ecclésiastique, I. pp. 121-22; Benoit, Origines de la Réforme, pp. 17-18.

message which characterised the early years of Reformation in the rest of France.²¹ Indeed, my research into the town council records has exposed some striking evidence of the existence of a vigorous grassroots movement in Montauban that the town authorities were clearly having problems controlling.

On 19 May 1559, the consuls of Montauban issued a decree prohibiting assemblies ‘avec tabourin de Suysse’. Of particular concern was the report of individuals attending these gatherings with weapons. The growing popularity of these gatherings made them a threat to the peace and order of the town.²² The consuls’ prohibition, however, fell upon deaf ears and the stage was set for a confrontation. Two days after the proclamation townsfolk came together to display placards and sing psalms through the streets, a provocative action which predictably resulted in further disturbances between the rival confessional groups within the town. Seeing this contemptuous behaviour unfolding before his eyes, the first consul seized some of the placards and three of the protesters’ drums and reiterated the prohibition against such gatherings, threatening to imprison those that disobeyed. Notwithstanding such threats, the defiant crowd re-grouped that afternoon. Again, the prohibition was announced but this failed to dampen passions, leaving the consuls fearing for their own safety. The leaders of the illegal gathering demanded a forum in which they could discuss with the political authorities guarantees for their safety in return for putting aside their weapons.²³ Before agreeing to such a request, the first consul sought to discuss the matter with a general council, comprising the heads of all Montauban’s important families. Immediately, one quarter of the delegates were excluded or left the debating chamber on account of their sympathy for the evangelicals. It would seem that the Reformed message had already gathered adherents amongst some of the ruling families as well as amongst artisans. Even those remaining in the

²⁰ Mark Greengrass, *The French Reformation* (Oxford, 1987), p. 80. See also Scott Manetsch, *Theodore Beza and the quest for peace in France, 1572-1598* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 139-140.

²¹ Gabriel Loirette, ‘Catholiques et Protestants en Languedoc à veille des guerres civiles’, *RHEF*, 23 (1937), pp. 503-525; Robert Sauzet, ‘L’iconoclasme dans le diocèse de Nîmes au XVIe et au début du XVIIe siècle’, *RHEF*, 66 (1980), pp. 5-15; Olivier Christin, *La Révolution symbolique* (Paris, 1991). For insights into the confusion that followed the Reformation’s wake, see Susan Karant-Nunn, ‘What was preached in German cities in the early years of the Reformation? *Wildwuchs* versus Lutheran unity’ in P. Bebb & S. Marshall (eds.), *The Process of Change in early modern Europe* (Ohio, 1988), pp. 81-96.

²² ADTG, 1 BB 22, fo. 5r. See also ACSA, BB 1, fo. 5r.

²³ No mention is made of the professional background of these individuals, although it would seem that they were artisans originating from the peripheral *faubourgs* of Fossat and Tarn; mention is made of a cobbler as one of the ringleaders.

general council came to recommend that the consuls adopt a moderate line in their response to the gatherings.²⁴

While the crowds were placated by the tone of the consuls' response, the consuls themselves had been through a bruising experience. The situation was further aggravated later that same day when a crowd of four hundred gathered again, singing psalms through the streets until dusk. The overt nature of the challenge to the consuls' authority, together with the utter disregard for law and order, was too great an affront for the consuls to bear. The next day they met with the royal officials of the town to work out means with which to re-establish their 'honneur, auctorite et prehemences' as 'administrateurs et gouverneurs de la justice et de la republique'.²⁵ The first consul was clear in his mind that a firmer line should be taken against the seditious gatherings, specifically drawing attention to the disturbances that he had heard about in other parts of the kingdom, such as at Poitiers, Agen, Toulouse and Bordeaux. Again, it would appear that what was at stake was the issue of order rather than that of religious orthodoxy *per se*. It is interesting that among those who sought to reaffirm the injunctions against such illegal gatherings were those who were to take commanding roles in the foundation of the Calvinist church one year later.²⁶

These violent beginnings – not mentioned in the Histoire Ecclésiastique – clearly preceded the events described by de Bèze. In the following months tensions were rarely far from the surface. In September 1559, the criminal records of the town record how two troublemakers had incited a crowd to attack the Augustinian monastery and threaten the life of the prior. The convicted pair were banished from the town for one year; a sentence later commuted to public flogging and the payment of a fine.²⁷ A month later, Jean de la Rogeraye, one of the town's teachers was reprimanded for publicly and illegally reading lessons from Scripture.²⁸ La Rogeraye was later imprisoned upon the orders of the bishop and was due to be questioned by a group of commissioners from the parlement but

²⁴ ADTG, 1 BB 22, fo. 5r-8r.

²⁵ ADTG, 1 BB 22, fo. 8v-13r.

²⁶ Special mention here should be made of Jean Montanier, Pierre Cabos and Jean Constans, all of whom, according to de Bèze, were responsible for the foundation of the early church.

²⁷ ADTG, 1 BB 22, fo. 74v; ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 14v.

²⁸ ADTG, 1 BB 22, fo. 77v.

the night before their arrival some of his former students organised a prison raid, releasing him.²⁹

No town council records have survived for the crucial two decades between 1560 and 1580, but in the early months of the Reformation one can perhaps surmise that the disorders accompanying the growth of Protestantism within the town only intensified. It must have become apparent to the ruling elites that their authority was disintegrating in the face of a community that was defining for itself new religious boundaries. Successive proclamations against illegal public gatherings were met with blatant disregard, if not disdain. The ruling elites, however, were not deeply entrenched in their opposition to the Reformation. The national debate on religious freedom provided the opportunity for the city fathers to regain the initiative by embracing a cause whose time now appeared to be near.³⁰

The neutral, even sympathetic attitude of the political elite of Montauban towards the Reformation inevitably provoked a response from the Parlement of Toulouse whose role in the defence of the Catholic faith was unequivocal. This chapter has already alluded to the profound tensions that existed between the parlement and the towns of the region and how a town like Montauban had to struggle to retain its independence vis-à-vis the parlement. The new religious choice of Montauban and the parlement's vigorous defence of Catholicism provided the pretext for ever deeper antagonism.

In November 1560 the new bishop appealed to the parlement to take action against the growth of Protestantism in Montauban. The parlement sent a delegation accompanied by 80 armed foot-soldiers but their entry into the town was barred.³¹ Perhaps at the core of this act of defiance was the consuls' instinct for self-preservation. The rivalry between the authority of the sovereign court and that of individual towns was a recurring motif across the region. Montauban's consuls did not have to look very far to see the fearful consequences of Villars' intervention in Nîmes where a month earlier the town's charter had been suspended and the traditional election procedures for consuls had been discarded.

²⁹ [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. p. 181; Serr, *Eglise protestante*, pp. 11-12; M. Dubédat, *Histoire du Parlement de Toulouse* (2 vols., Paris, 1885), I. 364.

³⁰ This is a scenario not dissimilar to what had been happening in the German Reformation; very rarely in German towns was the Reformation ushered in by political elites. See Bernd Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation* (Durham, North Carolina, 1982), p. 61.

³¹ Le Bret, *Histoire*, II. 46. See also Fornier, 'Histoire de l'affliction', Book 1, lines 18-24; *Mémoires d'un Calviniste de Millau*, ed. J.-L. Rigal (Rodez, 1911), pp. 16-17.

This was to ensure the selection of a ‘packed’ town council chamber, more compliant to the parlement’s wishes. Similar action had been taken against the municipal magistrates of Toulouse over the course of several years.³² In the consular elections of Montauban in 1561 an attempt by parliamentary commissioners was made to interfere with the election’s outcome so as to prevent the appointment of Protestant candidates. However, Montauban was made of sterner stuff. Such was the aversion to the proposed violation of custom and tradition that the existing consuls anticipated the commissioners, held an early election, and presented the results as a *fait accompli* to the commissioners upon their arrival.³³ Few things could have irritated the parlement more. Montauban’s resolution filled the parlement with indignation and in its rage it condemned and hanged in effigy several members of Montauban’s political elite.³⁴ The cry went out that Montauban was a town in rebellion, that it had abrogated its obedience to the king, minted its own money and created ‘ung canton de ceste ville comme en Allemagne’.³⁵

From the beginning of 1561 the Protestant community began to assert itself more openly. The first Protestant funeral service took place in January of that year, leaving all the town ‘merveilleusement esmue’.³⁶ The body of the dead artisan was carried to the cemetery in simple fashion by six artisans. Onlookers viewed this new spectacle with astonishment. At the cemetery, the minister presided over a simple service, preaching on Resurrection and the way in which Christian burials had taken place in the early church, before offering up some prayers which were concluded with a sung recital of the Ten Commandments. Unlike a Catholic funeral there were to be no requiem masses or prayers for the souls in purgatory, there was to be no torch-lit procession to accompany the

³² Guggenheim, ‘Calvinism and the political elite’, pp. 209-210; Robert A. Schneider, ‘Crown and capitoulat: municipal government in Toulouse 1500-1789’ in Benedict (ed.), *Cities and Social Change*, pp. 199-200.

³³ Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, pp. 30-31.

³⁴ These included Jean Paulet (*lieutenant principal* of the seneschal court), Jean Brassac (*lieutenant particulier*), Amy Pégorier (first consul), and Hugues Bonencontre (*syndic*) together with Jean Le Masson, minister of Montauban. See [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. pp. 453-454.

³⁵ ‘Lettre du Vignault à Calvin’ (26 May 1561), in *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. G. Baum, E. Cunitz & E. Reuss (59 vols., Brunswick, 1863-1900), XVIII. pp. 468-470.

³⁶ [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. p. 447; ‘Mémoires de Guichard de Scorbiac’ in ‘Livre de famille’ (Private archives of the Scorbiac family), fo. 2v. See also Penny Roberts, ‘Contesting sacred space: burial disputes in sixteenth-century France’ in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (eds.), *The Place of the Dead* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 142-143.

funeral bier, there were to be no prayers in Latin, no sacramentals such as holy water and there were to be no anniversary masses.³⁷

A few days after this first Protestant funeral service, the church of Saint Louis was appropriated for Sunday preaching.³⁸ What is noticeable is the lack of any official protest against such overt manifestations of organised Protestantism and it is clear that by Easter 1561, when the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the church, the majority of the political elite had openly embraced the Protestant faith. It was at this time that Guichard de Scorbiac, an ambitious young member of the town's political elite made his confession of faith, 'esperant que Dieu me fera misericorde & me confirmera en ses promesses pour y perseverer jusqu'a la fin de mes jours'.³⁹

But the recent burning in effigy of members of the political elite in Toulouse had been cause for consternation amongst the city fathers. While they resisted the encroachments of the parlement, the consuls were quick to send envoys to the king to protest against the detraction of the parlement and to affirm the town's fidelity towards the king.⁴⁰ Indeed it is a telling sign of both the way in which the political elite had mastered the Reformation and their underlying respect for royal authority that they responded so positively to the king's ambassador. On 25 April 1561, the seneschal of Quercy delivered a letter from Charles IX ordering the cessation of public preaching in the town, to which the town complied.⁴¹ For the following three months public preaching was confined to private homes and sometimes to the courtyards of politically prominent members of the town elite in compliance with the royal request.⁴²

But the restoration of calm was short-lived. Tensions must have been sufficiently close to the surface for the town cut short the traditional procession through the streets of the town to mark the feast of Corpus Christi on 5 June 1561. The gathering numerical strength of the Reformed community and the frustration of not being able to hold communal services of worship were resolved in July 1561 when the church of Saint Jacques was commandeered. Jean Fornier described how the new minister, Pierre Sestier, preached in this church against

³⁷ For details of Catholic funerals, see Catholic wills – for example, ADTG, 5 E 45, fo. 3r-7r, 75r-77r and ADTG, 5 E 170, fo. 1r, 32v-34r.

³⁸ 'Mémoires de Scorbiac', fo. 2v.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, fo. 2v.

⁴⁰ Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, p. 32.

⁴¹ Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, p. 35. See also, ACSA, BB1, fo. 36r.

⁴² [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. p. 454.

intercessionary prayer to the saints and condemned the veneration of images and statues. Despite warnings against public acts of iconoclasm without the support of the magistracy, it would appear that the message of the ministers could not be separated from its logical outcome. Militant Calvinists, whose passions were stoked by another minister, Jean Le Masson, took their opportunity while Sestier was attending a provincial synod.⁴³ Over a period of days all the churches and chapels across the town had their 'idolatrous' statues and images removed and altars destroyed. The Mass was proscribed and all clergy were hounded out of town.⁴⁴ There must have been some political collusion with what went on as the municipal accounts provide a clear picture of the organised manner in which clerical wealth was auctioned off.⁴⁵ The ritual purification of the town was complete and over the following weeks this example was followed in many of the surrounding villages and towns. It can be no coincidence that such acts of iconoclasm came close on the heels of the preaching of Bernard Bironis and Jean Carvin, both deacons and later ministers of the church of Montauban.⁴⁶ Across the region, the authority of the Catholic Church had been cast aside, leaving the way open for the institutionalisation of a Calvinist church. In the words of the Catholic historian, Camille Daux, 'le vandalisme révolutionnaire était complet'.⁴⁷

By the end of 1561 the Calvinist domination was complete in Montauban. Over the next 60 years the Calvinist church was able to consolidate its hold over the town; for the period of the Wars of Religion its victory was permanent. Indeed, well into the seventeenth century, an English traveller in France was able to note how in Montauban 'they are almost all Protestants that inhabit in this city'.⁴⁸ This is a point on which to dwell, for across France the explosive growth of Protestantism in the early 1560s was a feature of many towns but its development proved extraordinarily fragile. Future chapters will discuss the nature of the Calvinist ascendancy and the peculiarly complete way in which Montauban took to heart its opportunity for establishing a Calvinist society. The remaining part of this chapter will explore what it was that differentiated

⁴³ Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu* (2 vols., Paris, 1990), I. 509-510.

⁴⁴ Fournier, 'Histoire de l'affliction', Book 1, lines 67-90; F. Moulenq, *Histoire de Tarn-et-Garonne* (4 vols., Paris, 1991), II. 79, 88-110; Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu*, I. 506-507.

⁴⁵ ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 8r-12r. See also ACSA, BB 1, fo. 87r, 88v, 90r.

⁴⁶ [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. p. 461.

⁴⁷ Daux, *Histoire*, II. i. 26.

⁴⁸ Francis Mortoft (1658) in Lough, *France Observed*, p. 246.

Montauban from other towns and cities where the Reformation quickly floundered.

Obviously there are many reasons why the Reformation succeeded in Montauban. The institutional weakness of the local Catholic church and its failure to retain the support of both political allies and a sizeable proportion of the town's population meant that the church was in no position to launch a Catholic counter-attack either during the first war or in its aftermath. Guido Marnef has demonstrated that Calvinism reached its 'indisputable zenith' when it succeeded in identifying with the political power: 'when political conjuncture was favourable thousands were persuaded to go over to Calvinism'.⁴⁹ It is to these political conditions which I would now like to turn towards for they were to prove crucial for the long-term survival of Protestantism.

In the sixteenth century French towns were characterised by their keen sense of autonomy. Many towns had emerged from the medieval age free from seigneurial interference, boasting an array of privileges, liberties and exemptions.⁵⁰ Montauban was no exception in developing its sense of self-government. The town's charter initially provided for independent municipal magistrates or consuls. Initially their task was to enforce the rights of the counts of Toulouse and maintain the franchises and customs of the town. Through the course of the Hundred Years' War and the difficulties that confronted the count, Montauban's consuls proved highly successful in wresting political, judicial, military and financial rights from the local overlord.⁵¹

The town's consuls were elected on an annual basis by an electoral college drawn from the town's general council.⁵² The composition of the consulate

⁴⁹ Guido Marnef, 'The changing face of Calvinism in Antwerp, 1555-1585' in Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke and Gillian Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 159.

⁵⁰ Philip Benedict, 'French cities from the sixteenth century to the Revolution, an overview' in Benedict (ed.), *Cities and Social Change*, pp. 20-21; Judith Pugh Meyer, *Reformation in La Rochelle. Tradition and change in early modern Europe, 1500-1568* (Geneva, 1996), pp. 17-33; Bernard Chevallier, *Les bonnes villes de France du XIVe au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1982); Albert Rigoudière, 'Réglementation urbaine et législation d'état dans les villes du Midi français aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles'; Bernard Chevallier, 'L'état et les bonnes villes en France au temps de leur accord parfait (1450-1550)' in Neithard Bulst & Jean-Philippe Genet (eds.), *La ville, la bourgeoisie et la genèse de l'Etat moderne* (Paris, 1988), pp. 35-70 and 71-85; and, R. Doucet, *Les institutions de la France au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1948), pp. 380-385.

⁵¹ Maurice Langevin, 'Le consulat de Montauban', *BSATG*, 104 (1979), pp. 44-5; J. Devals, 'Etude sur l'organisation municipale à Montauban', *RAM* (1867), pp. 123-149.

⁵² The outgoing consuls selected 24 'conseillers' from the 40 who comprised the 'conseil général' (whose members were drawn from a wider council called the 'assemblée générale'). These 24

reflected the social spectrum of the town with two important figures (normally lawyers), three lesser figures (drawn from the merchant and artisan classes) and a labourer or peasant from the town's rural hinterland. Representation of the different professions was a characteristic of many southern French towns with perhaps the exception of Toulouse whose socially top-heavy consulate reflected the model of northern French cities.⁵³ Little is known of how the town's consuls, drawn from very different social backgrounds, worked with one another. But the nature of consular government in southern France does appear strikingly different from the composition of city magistracies in other European cities. Particularly in the German Imperial cities, the narrowing of the ruling oligarchy was a characteristic feature of the century before the Reformation.⁵⁴ While Montauban was not impervious to similar trends the careful representation of different social groups was an important component for the development of civic consensus.

Montauban's consuls viewed themselves as 'micro-potentates', reinforcing their authority with a range of symbols and rituals, foremost of which must have been the wearing of their distinctive scarlet red gowns.⁵⁵ They were responsible for the appointment of a municipal civil service.⁵⁶ Consular tasks were varied and extensive. They included the regulation of work and the supervision of trading guilds; the organising of communal resources (setting prices for staple goods, regulating their standard, specifying the conditions and times at which meat and fish could be sold, anticipating food shortages, and surveying weights and measures); the resolution of disputes and conflicts; the drawing up of municipal accounts and the raising of various levies, taxes and loans; the maintenance of water fountains; the upkeep of public buildings such as the churches, schools and hospitals; and, finally, the maintenance of the town's security and defence.⁵⁷ In

were shortlisted to 12, from which the outgoing consuls and the *juge mage* nominated the new consuls in the presence of the king's officials. Those who served as consuls were excluded from holding the post until a period of ten years had elapsed. See Le Bret, *Histoire*, II. 155.

⁵³ AMT, BB 12, fo. 1r, 33r, 94r, 306r. See also Annette Finley-Croswhite, *Henry IV and the Towns* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 125-126.

⁵⁴ Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *German People and the Reformation*.

⁵⁵ Le Roy Ladurie, *Beggar and the Professor*, p. 234.

⁵⁶ The municipal posts included a town clerk and secretary; treasurer; jailor; agents (*syndics*) to liaise with the seneschal, the parlement and the provincial estates); sargents and 'intendants' to maintain order within the town and organise the town militia and guard; a time-keeper to maintain the clocks of the town; a civil servant charged with overseeing weights and measures; a bell-ringer; plumbers to oversee the town's water fountains; and, an executor of high justice. These appointments were made annually by the newly elected consuls, and they can be found in the preface of all the extant town council records (see ADTG, 1 BB series).

⁵⁷ For a general description of consular responsibilities, see Paul Cayla, *Dictionnaire des institutions, des coutumes et de la langue en usage dans quelques pays de Languedoc de 1535 à*

peacetime this comprised a night-watch and the lighting of the streets but at times of war it involved the onerous burden of repairing and strengthening the town fortifications, building up arsenals and mustering armed companies.⁵⁸

Consular government gave a 'personnalité juridique' to Montauban.⁵⁹ The judicial functions of the consulate are crucial for understanding the extent of municipal autonomy. In many southern towns the consuls exercised extensive jurisdiction over civil and criminal matters, a prerogative that towns in northern France had largely lost by the mid-sixteenth century.⁶⁰ Montauban's consulate never flinched from using a full range of sanctions – the pillory, flogging, banishment, the galleys and even the death penalty – against those that transgressed the consuls' authority. In the sixteenth century punishment was a very public spectacle and this clearly served to reinforce consular authority.⁶¹ For each sentence the town crier would announce to townsfolk the nature of the crime and the sentence passed. Most sentences included an 'amende honorable' or a public apology by which the accused was required to plead forgiveness in the courtyard of the town hall and sometimes at the end of the Sunday sermon in the Protestant temple.⁶² Similarly flogging was a very public act. Often this punishment would be carried out through the streets, public squares and cross-roads of the town. There was sometimes an attempt to identify the criminal with the scene of the crime. Hence in 1598 one man was sentenced for having stolen some rope from one of the boats moored on the banks of the river Tarn. The thief was condemned 'aux verges dans la place public et dans le bapteau dud. plaintiff' and in 1603 another thief was 'a baptu avec foetz de chanvre sur ses épaules dans

1648 (Montpellier, 1964), pp. 181-191; Gaston Zeller, *Les institutions de la France au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1948), pp. 26-31 and 42-46.

⁵⁸ André Corvisier, 'Les guerres de religion, 1559-1598' in Philippe Contamine, Anne Blanchard et al. (eds.), *Histoire militaire de la France* (4 vols., Paris, 1992), I, 309.

⁵⁹ Pierre-Clément Timbal, 'Les villes de consulat dans le Midi de la France. Histoire de leurs institutions administratives et judiciaires', *Recueil de la Société Jean Bodin*, 6 (1954), pp. 343-370.

⁶⁰ Clos, 'La juridiction criminelle des consuls dans le Midi de la France', *Académie de législation de Toulouse*, 14 (1865), p. 33. For northern towns, see Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 32.

⁶¹ Compare with the very public nature of consistorial discipline: the 'réparation publique' of sinners, made at the end of the preaching (see, ADTG, I 1, fo. 82r, 86r, 192r, 202r, etc), and the announcing from the pulpit of those who were suspended or excommunicated from the Lord's Supper. See Raymond Mentzer, 'Marking the taboo: excommunication in French Reformed churches' in Mentzer (ed.), *Sin and the Calvinists*, pp. 97-129. Similarly in the college and academy of Montauban 'les chastiments publicz pour les deletz notables' were made in the 'salle commun' at the end of the classes in front of the principal and all the regents. See ADTG, Archives communale, AA5, fo. 63r-68r.

⁶² For example, 'Antoinette del Port... pour avoir palharde. Condemne au fouet et faire amende honorable ung jour de dimanche au temple de l'église reformee a la fin du presche' in ADTG, 5 FF

le place publique et avant la boutique dud. Gasc', from where he had stolen some wares.⁶³ Again an individual who had stolen some vine-stock from a vineyard was beaten around the town, with two sections of the stock attached to his neck.⁶⁴ Similarly, a married man who had seduced a chambermaid, was scourged in the town square with a distaff on either side of him, the traditional symbols attributed to bigamists.⁶⁵ The consuls dealt with a range of crimes against property and took action against fornication, adultery, violence, murder, conspiracy and sedition, fraud, perjury and vagrancy; in exercising this prerogative the authority of the consuls was clearly visible.

Parallel to the municipal government, Montauban also stood as one of the centres of the king's administration. Although the seat of the seneschal of Quercy was established in Cahors to the north of Montauban, the crown made Montauban the seat of the *lieutenants particuliers* and the seneschal court.⁶⁶ Various judges who presided over civil and criminal cases and who were advised by a collective body of *conseillers* served this court. The seneschal court had the task of registering, publishing and applying the king's ordinances and overseeing his affairs and those that affected the first and second estates. Aside from the dignity attached to royal office-holding, significant political advantage accrued from holding such offices, all the more so as such posts were permanent. Royal office holding guaranteed a stability and income that could not be matched by municipal charges.

Municipal and royal offices were the established sources of political authority in Montauban. Amongst Montauban's leading families a tight network of social, cultural and economic links developed, the aim of which was to gain, retain and extend political power. For those families that were successful in this enterprise the opportunities were great. To a much greater degree than those towns in the north of France many southern towns controlled vast communal territories

2, fo. 18v (25 may 1570). See also Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Harvard, 1983), p. 94.

⁶³ ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 28r, 34r, 36r, 37v, 38r, 42r.

⁶⁴ ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 36r.

⁶⁵ ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 40v.

⁶⁶ There were points during the period of the Wars of Religion in which the seat of the court was transferred from Montauban to Moissac, a Catholic town 30 km to the west of Montauban. For a general description of the roles of the seneschal court, see Paul Dognon, *Les institutions politiques et administratives du pays de Languedoc du XIIIe siècle aux guerres de religion* (Toulouse, 1895), pp. 334-341; Doucet, *Institutions de la France*, pp. 251-264; Zeller, *Institutions de la France*, pp. 168-173.

and exercised significant influence over the surrounding countryside.⁶⁷ In this way political offices provided the means to extend a family's influence both within the precincts of the town and also in the surrounding towns, villages and countryside.

With the Calvinist ascendancy in the town, a third and new form of authority emerged in the consistory. This organ of church government played an important role in implementing the local Reformation. The consistory directed the religious life of the faithful and was invested with authority to conduct ecclesiastical administration, supervise moral behaviour and oversee social welfare. One of the distinctive aspects of the consistory was the degree of control conferred upon the elders – lay representatives elected from the congregation – who had a special responsibility alongside the ministers for making Protestantism a functioning reality.⁶⁸ By the late sixteenth century the eldership of Montauban was characterised by a relatively rapid turnover of church officials with elections being held every six months.⁶⁹ Elders co-opted their successors with each outgoing elder proposing two names from which the consistory selected a successor.⁷⁰ Elected elders were required to take an oath to follow the prescriptions of the Discipline, to carry out their charges faithfully and to behave in a manner befitting their office. This solemn oath was affirmed before the congregation.⁷¹

Three bodies therefore, regulated Calvinist Montauban: the consulate, the seneschal court and the consistory. Together, these bodies sought to define the framework of daily life. But what was the relationship between these different bodies and how did the consistory – a new social institution – relate to the more established political institutions of the town? Was its growing authority viewed

⁶⁷ Xavier de Planhol & Paul Claval, *An Historical Geography of France*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge, 1988), p. 143.

⁶⁸ Raymond Mentzer, 'Ecclesiastical discipline and communal reorganisation among the Protestants of southern France', *EHQ*, 21 (1991), pp. 163-183.

⁶⁹ This was in contrast to Geneva, for example, where elders frequently held positions for several consecutive years. See Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 76-78.

⁷⁰ This procedure followed provisions made by Provincial Synod of Mauvaizin (1577): 'A la nomination des anciens, chacun de ceux qui sortiront de charge nommera deux personnes de qualité requise, desquels toute la compagnie dudit consistoire recevra celui des deux que bon lui semblera', cited in *Recueil des réglemens faits par les synodes provinciaux du Haut Languedoc et Haut Guienne*, ed. A. Pujol (Castres, 1679), p. 19.

⁷¹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 15v: 'Bironis [minister] a remonstré que ceulx qui de nouveau sont esleus au consistoire suivant la regle et doctrine ecclesiastique doivent prester le serement à Dieu et à son église de bien et fidellement exercer leur charge veiller sur les muintins seditieux et autres gens qui venient vie escandaleuze et en advertir le consistoire et aussy faisans office d'anciens, conforter le coeur des affligés et subvenir aux pauvres et garder la doctrine ecclésiastique. Les frères... avec la main levée au seigneur Dieu avoir promis nous en acquiter fidellement'. See also, ADTG, I 1, fo. 5v, 91r-91v, 159v, 175r, 176v, 207v-208r, 264r-264v, 272v, 318r-318v, 320r, 347v, 349r.

with suspicion by the political elite and how did they respond to the demands that it made upon the town population? And who comprised the elders? Is it possible to identify any overlap in personnel between the consistory and the political elite? These are not straight-forward questions to resolve given the absence of any records relating to the seneschal court, the limited detail of the town council records and the lacunary nature of the consistory records which are only extant for the years 1595-98. However the rich collection of notarial records has enabled me to accumulate evidence of the family networks and associations which provided the basis for communal decision-making. These relationships tell us a great deal about how authority functioned: how problems were tackled, how decisions were made, who was involved and how society evolved as a consequence.

The political elite of Montauban.

Real political power in Montauban was concentrated in the hands of a small core of families, the bourgeois patriciate. Prominent among this group were the Aliès, Bardou, Bonencontre, Brassac, Brassard, Colom, Constans, Natalis, Pechels, Scorbiac and Viçose families. Most of these families emerged from relatively modest origins as merchants, teachers and notaries. Their social advancement was achieved by a combination of linking family interests together through an ever-closer solidarity and by making astute political and economic investments. The convergence of these families was fortified by a common adherence to Protestantism. With the exception of three years in which the consulate was shared between Catholics and Protestants (1565-67), Montauban was almost unique in France for the Protestant elite retained control of the town until 1632.

From early in 1561 the town's consuls identified themselves with the Protestant ascendancy, lodging ministers and making their houses and courtyards available for worship.⁷² Members of the town elite readily assumed positions in the consistory. For example, in 1562 both Hugues Calvet (first consul) and Bernard Aliès (a *conseiller* in the seneschal court) sat on the consistory. And Jean Constans (*conseiller*) and Bernard Bironis (*licentié*) after temporarily serving as

⁷² For example, Hugues Calvet *conseiller* and first consul (1562-63 and 1575-76), hosted Jean Le Masson, minister. According to de Bèze, Pierre de Pechels and Durand Brassac allowed their courtyards to be used as meeting places for Calvinist worship.

deacons of the church, became ministers. Furthermore the political elite were quick to employ their authority to defend the town's ministers. Upon an inquest by a royal judge in March 1562 into the activities of a minister at Montauban, several of the elite attested to his innocence, arguing that the said minister had never exhorted his congregation to do anything other than obey and honour the king and his authority.⁷³ The level of support and protection given to the fledgling Calvinist church by the political elite provides a clear example of the lengths to which the town elite was prepared to go in identifying themselves with Protestantism.

How were these Protestant ruling families able to retain control of the town over such a long period of time? Certainly a significant part of the answer lies in the nature of sixteenth-century politics, largely defined in terms of the family. Thomas Brady argues,

‘Family’ was at once a category of familial relationship of blood and marriage, and of property in the broadest sense of the term. ‘Family’ was not just a household but a community maintained for the preservation and enhancement of all the forms of property that gave the family its social position: real property, capital, and cultural capital.⁷⁴

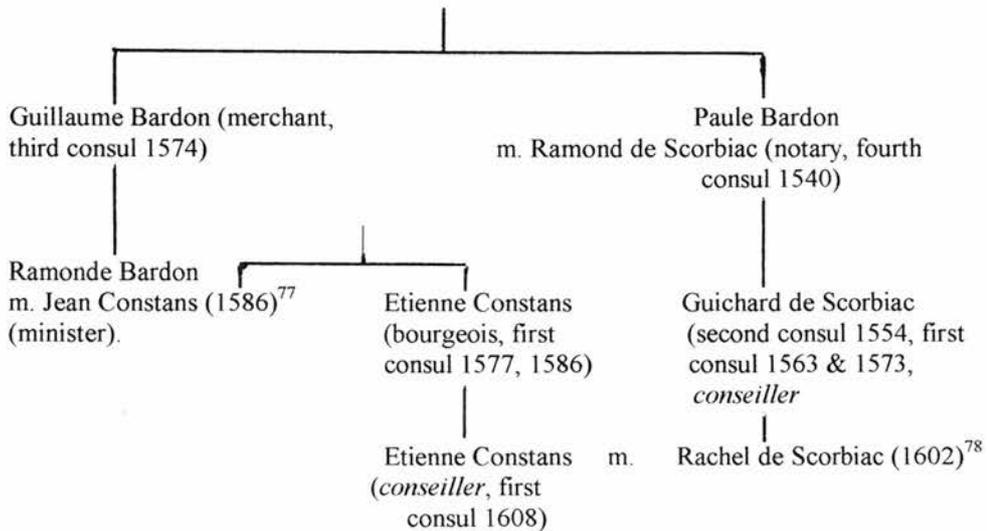
Families accrued power in order to extend their interests and increase their honour. One of the striking findings of my research in Montauban has been the extent of cohesion amongst the ruling elite of the town over a period of several generations. This has strong parallels with many of the German cities that had embraced the Reformation. In particular Brady's study of Strasbourg explored the emergence of a common political front between the noble patriciate class and the mercantile aristocracy. Similarly in a recent study of La Rochelle, Kevin Robbins demonstrated the ‘matrix of kinship ties’ which drew together the honour and fortune of the elite families and which provided a basis to a unity of political purpose. In particular, Robbins identified clear links between what he described as

⁷³ See ‘Inquisition au sujet de Martin Tachard’, transcribed in Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, pp. 223-248 and ‘Inquisition sur la justification des ministres de Montauban faict par M Calvet conseiller à Montauban’ (2-22 February 1563) in BN, Ms Français 15879, fo.64r-77r.

⁷⁴ Brady, *Ruling Class*, p. 41. For a beautifully written account of the processes involved in attaining and securing power, see Raymond Mentzer, *Blood and Belief. Family survival and confessional identity among the provincial Huguenot nobility* (Indiana, 1994)

the ‘practices of civic office’ and the ‘protocols of extended family life’, the ways in which private life informed political interests.⁷⁵

The relationship between families and power was expressed in a number of ways. Most obviously marriage played a crucial part in alliance-building between two different groups of kin. It could provide a means through which to resolve social hostilities or consolidate existing friendships and political alliances. Successful marital strategies could yield a wide array of benefits, ranging from sizeable dowries and inheritances to a new generation through which to perpetuate lineage and augment a family’s honour.⁷⁶ In Montauban, the connections between the Bardon, Constans and Scorbiac families express the close nature of familial solidarity and the way in which these families supported one another in the attainment of power through the period of the Wars of Religion.



The sacrament of baptism and the choice of godparents for the fruits of marriage – the children – also played an important part in sustaining bonds of kinship amongst the immediate family and extending lines of affinity with marriage kin and those with whom no natural kinship existed. In the late medieval age, spiritual kinship through godparenthood had become a popular and well-used means of intensifying and extending family relationships. It was not unusual for a newly-baptised child to have at least four godparents. Godparenthood provided a

⁷⁵ Robbins, *City on the Ocean sea*, pp. 100-102, 106, 228.

⁷⁶ For example, Jean de Scorbiac’s marriage to Catherine de Salluste yielded a dowry of 1333 écus, while the death of her mother yielded a further 1629 écus as inheritance. See ADTG, 5 E 141, fo. 740r-742v (1591) and ADTG, 5 E 807, fo. 217r (1600).

⁷⁷ For marriage, see ADTG, 12 GG 29, fo. 63r; ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 54r-55r.

special link between the godparent and godchild with the former promising to watch over their godchild's religious well-being and accepting social responsibility to tend to the child's needs in the event of the parents' death. But baptismal sponsorship formed the basis of two relationships because the sponsor was linked not only to the baptised child but to the parents of the child as well. John Bossy has argued that it was the latter relationship of co-parenthood or 'compaternitas' that was rather more prized than the godparent-child relationship. Indeed one of the chief objects of spiritual kinship, he argues, was 'the creation of a formal state of friendship between the spiritual kin and the natural kin'.⁷⁹ *Compaternitas* provided a means of ritualising, even sacralising, friendship between the natural and spiritual parents, the effect of which was sometimes expressed in the transmission of names from the godparent to the godchild.

Since 1539 religious establishments across France had been enjoined to record baptisms although rarely was this provision adhered to.⁸⁰ The Calvinist churches were more assiduous in recording all the births of the faithful and a surviving register of baptisms extending from 1564-1629 has been preserved in the archives of Montauban.⁸¹ In Montauban the registers would suggest that the Calvinist church decided to address the problem of multiple sponsors and revert to the early church practice of allowing each child to have only one godfather and no godmother.⁸² However, by the 1570s, the names of both a godfather and a godmother were mentioned together with the names of the natural parents, sometimes with an indication of their professions.

The choice of godparents provides particularly rich insights into the nature and meaning of political alliances. Of the 30 godparents selected by Guichard de Scorbiac, for example, almost all of them were members of the Scorbiac and Bardon families (Guichard's mother was Paule de Bardon) or from the Tissandier

⁷⁸ For marriage, see ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 78r.

⁷⁹ John Bossy, 'Blood and baptism: kinship, community and Christianity in Western Europe from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries', in Derek Baker (ed.), *Sanctity and Secularity* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 133-134 and his 'Godparenthood: the fortunes of a social institution in early modern Christianity' in Kasper von Greyerz (ed.), *Religion and Society in early modern Europe, 1500-1800* (London, 1984), pp. 194-201; Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, pp. 145-150.

⁸⁰ See Article 51 of the Edict of Villiers-Cotterêts (1539) in *Ordonnances Royaux sur le fait de la justice & autorité d'icelle* (Paris, 1606), pp. 68-69.

⁸¹ ADTG, 12 GG 1 – 12 GG 18. Article 35 of the Synod of Paris (1559) stated 'tant les mariages que les baptêmes seront enregistrés et gardés soigneusement en l'église avec les noms des pères et des mères et parrains des enfants baptisés'. Lists for those who had died were kept from 1584 onwards. See Gildas Bernard (ed.), *Les Familles protestantes en France* (Paris, 1987), pp. 16-18. For discussion on the Calvinist need to classify society, see Mentzer, 'Ecclesiastical discipline', p. 167 and his 'Marking the taboo', pp. 97-99.

family, Marie de Tissandier being Guichard's wife. With the one notable exception of two nobles chosen as the godparents to Guichard's seventh child, all the godparents that Guichard had chosen reinforced existing kinship ties.⁸³ Guichard's choice of nobles for godparents reflects a more general pattern in which godparents were sometimes chosen from those of higher social status than the natural parents themselves.⁸⁴ While godparenthood reinforced familial solidarity and reflected existing social relationships, it could also be employed as a means of extending interests. To cite another example I have identified 16 godparents for the children of Jean Constans (minister) and Ramonde Bardon. Of this number 11 belonged to the Constans and Bardon families, a further four were brothers or sisters-in-law, and one was the son of another minister.⁸⁵ Again, Constans' choice of godparents served to tighten blood and marriage kinship while also providing the means by which positive bonds were developed with colleagues, in this case with a fellow minister.

This brief analysis is indicative of broader trends through the bourgeois patriciate of Montauban. Of the 400 godparents that I have identified for the children of bourgeois over the period 1564-1629, a full 73 per cent of the godparents share the surname of the parents or bear the name of another of our patriciate families. The choice of a marriage partner and the choice of godparents for one's children served to strengthen existing social relationships while providing a striking display of solidarity. Such choices provided a crucial backdrop to elite culture. The emergence of such a culture involved the fashioning of a world that became increasingly exclusive. The obligation to preserve and

⁸² Joseph H. Lynch, *Godparents and Kinship in early medieval Europe* (Princeton, 1986), p. 339.

⁸³ ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 43v (1566); ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 81v (1569), 122r (1571); ADTG, 12 GG 3, fo. 16r (1572), 63v (1574), 172r (1577); ADTG, 12 GG 4, fo. 38v (1578); ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 131v (1585). See also the family papers in the Scorbiac archives.

⁸⁴ For example, Jean Constans *conseiller* invited the seigneur de Montbartier to be the godfather to his son – ADTG, 12 GG 3, fo. 22r (1572). See also Samuel Bonencontre (*conseiller*) who invited noble Guy de Bar, son of seigneur of Villemade, and noble Pierre d'Hébrard seigneur of Montabie, to be godfathers to two of his sons – ADTG, 12 GG 15, fo. 27r (1617) and ADTG, 12 GG 16, fo. 168r (1622).

⁸⁵ ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 232r (1588), 291r (1589); ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 8r (1590), 39r (1591), 65r (1592), 85r (1593); ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 22r (1596), 110r (1598). Of the 16 godparents identified for Jean de Scorbiac sieur de Bayonette (son of Guichard de Scorbiac), eight were blood relatives of the Scorbiac family, two were brothers-in-law, one was a sister-in-law, one was a daughter-in-law, one was the step-father of his wife, one was the daughter of a noble and a further two reflected professional links. See ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 90v (1593), 153r (1594); ADTG, 12 GG 9, fo. 1r (1601); ADTG, 12 GG 10, fo. 46r (1604); ADTG, 12 GG 12, fo. 71v (1609); ADTG, 12 GG 14, fo. 24r (1615); ADTG, 12 GG 15, fo. 42r (1615); ADTG, 12 GG 16, fo. 84r (1620).

further a house's honour nurtured a network of constructive kinship, characterised by an intense interaction between kin to achieve common goals.

While social networks and education served to validate status, the pursuit of office provided the most tangible rewards. The prized position of first consul assured the officeholder an unrivalled position in the running of daily town affairs. The office denoted civic distinction and gave to its holder significant political authority. Consular offices provided a rich repository of patronage within the town while providing access to regional clientage networks. After their one year of government, consuls could not be re-elected to the consulate until a period of ten years had elapsed. The links between the ruling families ensured that members of the political elite were rarely far from the levers of political power and it is striking how the same families dominated consular government over the entire period of this study.

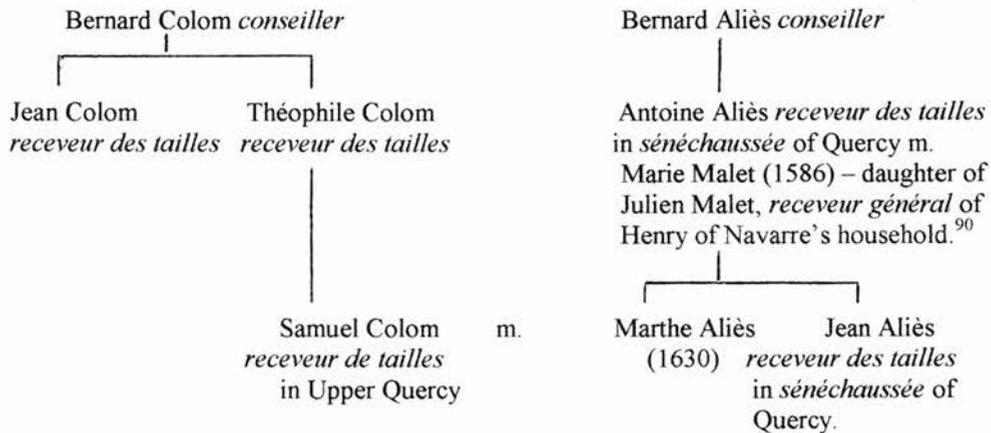
The ultimate goal of all political aspirants was a position within the hierarchy of the crown judiciary or administration.⁸⁶ Although families sought political positions on the consulate, royal office-holding guaranteed status, stability, public power and high incomes and indeed it was not uncommon for political aspirants to seek consular offices as a means to royal offices. The career patterns of Guichard de Scorbiac and Jean de Viçose are instructive. Scorbiac was born the son of a notary, qualified as a lawyer and saw promotion through the consular ranks and became an ambassador for the town. Elected second consul in 1552, Scorbiac was re-elected as first consul in 1563 and 1573 and finally achieved a position in the seneschal court in 1578 before ensconcing himself in the Parlement of Toulouse and its *Chambre de l'Edit*. Through these positions Scorbiac began to develop strong links with Henry of Navarre's entourage, an important relationship which will be explored in greater depth in chapter six.⁸⁷ The social ascendancy of Scorbiac was matched by Jean de Viçose. Viçose's father was Portuguese but had settled in Montauban as a teacher and doctor. Jean de Viçose graduated with a law degree and was later appointed to the *Chambre de l'Edit* in 1581, a post which he resigned in favour of his brother-in-law, Samuel

⁸⁶ Royal legislation (1547) prohibited royal officers from serving in municipal charges, but with the onset of civil war, this provision was flouted. See Frederick M. Irvine, 'From Renaissance city to Ancien Régime capital: Montpellier, 1500-1600' in Benedict (ed.), *Cities and Social Change*, pp. 105-133. See also Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, pp. 60-61.

⁸⁷ Guichard de Scorbiac, *Notice généalogique et biographique sur la famille de Scorbiac à Montauban (1527-1888)* (Toulouse, 1888), pp. 6-31 and [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, II. p. 326.

particulier in the seneschal court, purchased the offices of *enquêteur* and *commissionnaire examinateur* to the seneschal, and finally became *lieutenant principal* in 1597. This office was of considerable political importance and enabled Viçose to appoint other family members to the court.⁸⁸ Above all, royal offices were property and, as such, part of patrimonial wealth. In this way, the benefits of such offices could be passed through the generations or sold to another member of one's kinship network.⁸⁹

The emergence of a political heritage amongst families is expressed in the fortunes of two other Montalbanais families, the Colom and Aliès families, who developed their status through administering royal finances, through which the families converged in 1630 with the marriage of Samuel Colom and Marthe Aliès.



This example provides a clear example of 'dynastic officialdom' in practice and the ways in which family honour became attached to a sense of pride in public service.⁹¹

Gathering economic wealth particularly through the acquisition of rural estates reinforced political power. On occasions where this was beyond the means of an individual aspirant, affluent bourgeois clubbed together in association to

⁸⁷ Guichard de Scorbiac, *Notice généalogique et biographique sur la famille de Scorbiac à Montauban (1527-1888)* (Toulouse, 1888), pp. 6-31 and [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, II. 326.

⁸⁸ Nadine Gilbert, 'Une Famille protestante de Montauban: les Viçose (XVIe – XVIIe siècles)', *Thèse d'Ecole Nationale des Chartes* (2 vols., Paris, 1989), I. 55-59 and II. Pièces justificatives, no. 15.

⁸⁹ For example, Jean Brassac resigned his office of lieutenant, selling it to his son-in-law, Jacques Dupuy (*conseiller*, first consul) for 14,000 livres. See ADTG, 5 E 709, fo. 315r (1614).

⁹⁰ Marriage of Antoine Aliès and Marie Malet, see ADTG, 5 E 133, fo. 196r (1586).

⁹¹ Ralph E. Giersey, 'Rules of inheritance and strategies of mobility in pre-revolutionary France', *American Historical Review*, 82 (1977), pp. 287-288. See also Jonathon Powis, 'Aristocratie et bureaucratie dans la France du XVIe siècle: Etat, office et patrimoine' in Philippe Contamine (ed.), *L'Etat et les aristocraties* (Paris, 1989), pp. 231-246.

purchase lands collectively. The purchase of land proved essential for long-term survival providing both permanence and continuity for aspiring houses.⁹² Progressive acquisitions and exchanges of arable land and vineyards, particularly those tracts adjoining existing estates, were common among Montauban's elite families.⁹³ Similarly, the accumulation of town properties that could then be rented provided further sources of income.⁹⁴ Commodity speculation and annuities, paid out to individuals and local municipalities, which further served to extend influence and heighten status, accompanied the amassing of real estate.⁹⁵

The growing wealth of Montauban's ruling families buttressed the developing political history behind each family. Over a period of three generations, Montauban's bourgeois elite were able to mark their social advancement and nurture among themselves the values and tastes that contemporaries would have associated with ennoblement. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, one becomes very much aware of the importance of the honorific titles that members of the elite began to display⁹⁶ and the efforts they made to marry into established noble families.⁹⁷

⁹² Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, p. 34; Janine Estèbe, 'La bourgeoisie marchande et la terre à Toulouse au XVI^e siècle (1519-1560)', *AM*, 76 (1964), pp. 457-467; Richard Gascon, *Grand commerce et vie urbaine au XVI^e siècle: Lyon et ses marchands 1520-1580* (2 vols., Paris, 1971), part 3, chapter 3; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, 'Sur Montpellier et sa campagne aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles', *Annales ESC*, 12 (1957), pp. 223-230 and Irvine, 'Renaissance city', pp. 108-109, 115-116.

⁹³ Between 1585 and 1612, Jean de Viçose made 20 purchases of land to develop 'la metairie grande de Verlhaguet' to the west of Montauban. Between 1608 and 1619 he bought three *seigneuries* at Lacourt-Saint Pierre, Villebrumier and Génébrières. See Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', I. 83-90, 106-114. For another example see Guillaume de la Planche (first consul 1572, 1581): ADTG, 5 E 188, fo. 378r (1567); ADTG, 5 E 189 (1570); ADTG, 5 E 190, fo. 174r, 353r, 391r, 401r, 534r (1572-1573); ADTG, 5 E 191, fo. 79r, 96r, 156r, 225r, 243r (1573); ADTG, 5 E 192, fo. 48r, 60r, 148r, 189r, 201r, 215r (1575); ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 59r, 144r, 149r-150r, 155r, 173r (1584).

⁹⁴ For example, Antoine Colom (first consul 1560) left various town properties in the *gâche* of Tarn to his wife and another in the *gâche* of Montmurat to his son. See ADTG, 5 E 1197, fo. 188r-193r (1571).

⁹⁵ Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, pp. 58-60.

⁹⁶ Here one can cite noble Jean Constans sieur d'Alboy (ADTG, 5 E 861, fo. 147v); noble Samuel de Pechels sieur de Boissonade (ADTG, 12 GG 15, fo. 82r); noble Jean de Scorbiac sieur de Bayonette (ADTG, 12 GG 12, fo. 48r) and noble Jean de Viçose sieur de Lacourt-Saint Pierre (ADTG, 5 E 856, fo. 270r).

⁹⁷ For example, marriage of Jean de Scorbiac (*conseiller*, first consul 1596) to Catherine de Salluste, daughter of noble Alexandre de Salluste (brother of the celebrated Huguenot author, Guillaume de Salluste seigneur de Bartas) in 1599 (ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 53r; ADTG, 5 E 484, fo. 541r); Samuel Bonencontre (*conseiller*) to Marguerite de Tieys d'Ariat, daughter of noble Pierre de Tieys in 1600 (ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 60r); Marie Aliès (daughter of Antoine Aliès *receveur* of royal taxes for Quercy) to noble Jean de Caumont baron of Montbeton in 1612 (ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 38r); and, Marguerite de Constans (daughter of Etienne Constans *conseiller*, first consul 1608) to noble Isaac de Guilhemy sieur de La Mole et de Fontgrave in 1620 (ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 99r; ADTG, 5 E 861, fo. 147v).

Throughout the period of the Wars of Religion Montauban prospered as an independent outpost of the Reformation. Montauban's leading families fully supported these developments and were some of its major beneficiaries. Increasingly isolated from other regional centres on account of their confessional identity, Montauban's elite families secured their position by developing strong mutual ties amongst themselves. In this way the Reformation provided impetus for the fusion of blood, kinship and confessional identity.

What was further remarkable about the Reformation in Montauban was that it was achieved through close co-operation between the lay and clerical hierarchy of the town. This was not necessarily always the case. In Holland, the Ecclesiastical Ordinances drafted by the States in 1576 and 1583 left the relationship between the ministers and magistrates exceedingly ambiguous. This ambiguity prepared the ground for confrontation, particularly when the magistracy began to claim the right to appoint ministers, arbitrate over doctrinal controversies and regulate the use of excommunication, reduce the restrictions on those who wanted to receive communion, and appoint political commissioners to supervise ecclesiastical assemblies.⁹⁸ William Naphy's study of Geneva demonstrates similar antagonisms between lay and clerical elites, particularly over the issue of excommunication.⁹⁹ These tensions were largely absent in Montauban. One good reason for this was the relative harmony between Montauban's elite and the town's ministers.

Montauban's ministers.

It was by no means inevitable that the relationship between the city fathers and Montauban's ministers should have been harmonious. Indeed if the relationship between the Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy and the political elite in the two decades before the Reformation in Montauban was anything to go by, the signs were not promising. Yet with the urban Reformation Thomas Brady has argued that these new relations allowed civic religion to be transformed from 'an

⁹⁸ *Calvinism in Europe 1540-1610. A collection of documents*, ed. Alastair Duke, Gillian Lewis and Andrew Pettegree (Manchester, 1992), pp. 175-181, 184-187 and the Synod of Dordrecht's response (1578) in *ibid.*, pp. 182-184. For a fuller discussion of these issues, see Andrew Pettegree, 'Coming to terms with victory: the upbuilding of a Calvinist church in Holland, 1572-1590' in Pettegree, Duke and Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe*, pp. 160-180.

unsettling, disruptive force into a supportive, legitimising force for oligarchic rule and basic civic values'.¹⁰⁰ One of the outcomes of the Reformation, Brady suggests, must have been to temper the authority that the ecclesiastical establishment had hitherto wielded in the town. In this analysis the Reformation provided a means by which the city authorities sought to extend their authority at the expense of the church and use their influence to control religion more effectively. While this was true for Montauban to a certain extent – for it was the town consuls who appointed and paid the wages of the ministers – chapter three will demonstrate the reciprocal relationship between the church and political elites of the town. This portion of this chapter will look into how Montauban's pastoral body was able to secure its own authority vis-à-vis the political authorities and what formed the basis of the special relationship that emerged between minister and magistrate.

Between 1560 and 1629 I have identified 80 ministers who served the church in Montauban.¹⁰¹ Although the number fluctuated, Montauban rarely had fewer than four pastors ministering to the town's needs in any given year and frequently had twice that number. The number of ministers who served in Montauban clearly signifies the vitality of the church and the town's importance

⁹⁹ Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 181-187.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas A. Brady, 'In search of the godly society: the domestication of religion in the German urban Reformation', in Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *The German People and the Reformation*, pp. 28-29. See also Heinz Schilling, *Civic Calvinism in north-western Germany and the Netherlands* (Kirkville, 1991), p. 39.

¹⁰¹ Jean Le Masson dit Vignaux (1559-61); Pierre Sestier dit du Croissant (1560-63); Pierre de Perrier (1561-62); Gaspard de la Faverge (1561); Jean Carvin (1561-63); Martin Tachard (1561-63); Jean Constans (1562-63, 1566, 1568-98); Etienne Noalhan (1562, 1576); Jean de Lassus (1562, 1564-70, 1574); Jean Chassignon dit La Chasse (1563-64); Jean Genyès (1564); Lagarde (1564); Jean du Puy, or Puitz (1564); Pierre Cazalet (1564); Michel Berauld (1564-1607, 1610-11); Jean Helie (1565); Guillaume Lodis (1565); Pierre Galhouste (1565-68, 1600); Jean Larquier (1565); Fasevenques (1566); Pierre Colliod (1566-68); Bernard Larquier (1567-70); Barthe (1568); Bernard Bironis (1568, 1571-98); Guillaume Rodier (1570); Fleury, or Floris de Larivoire (1571-75); Jacques Pradelhes (1572); Jean Assier (1573-79); Detaffies (1574); Jehan Reynaud (1575); Jean Cazaux (1575-82, 1592?); Antoine Olivier (1576-81); Jehan Gardesi (1578-94, 1621); Michel Charles (1580-1608); Gilbert de Vaux (1582); Jehan Gautier (1583); Louis Reynaud (1584); de Mors (1586); Jean Lafon (1591); Pierre de Hurdes (1593); Bernard de Sonis (1592-1617); Marc-Antoine Benoist (1597-1610, 1600-21); Jean Tenans (1598-1607, 1599-1617); Abel Bicheteau (1599-1606, 1620-25); Bardou (1600); P. Leclerc (1600); Jean Richaud (1600-01, 1610, 1621); Pierre Berauld (1602-42); Jean II Constans (1602-13); Pierre Girard (1603-28?); Dupuy (1604); Ambroise Coustauld (1605, 1607); Jehan Cabos (1610-18); Isaac Moynié (1611-21); Pierre Cazaux (1613-28); Jean Guarrin (1614); Jean Benoist (1617); Hector Joly (1611-20); Daniel Chamier (1612, 1619-21); Perille, Samuel Delon, Barbat, Josian, and Cayla (all refugees in Montauban in 1621); Pierre Ollier (1621-45); Hélie Reynaud (1622); Paul Gauside (1622); Pierre Charles (1623-51); Jean Cameron (1624-25); Timothée Delon (1625-30); Pierre Crubel (1626); Antoine Perès (1627-28); Viguier (1628); Jehan Balarand (1628); Jean Verdier (1628); Antoine Garrisoles (1629); and, Pierre Teston (1629).

within the Huguenot movement. Few churches in France, perhaps with the exception of La Rochelle, could boast such a great number of pastors.

The ministers were responsible for expounding the Word of God to the Protestant faithful and administering the sacraments.¹⁰² Preaching stood at the heart of the ministers' vocation. Although transcripts of sermons have not survived for Montauban, work on Calvin's surviving sermons demonstrates the importance placed upon the preaching of the Word. In exposing the Scriptures the ministers' task was to make God present, to allow God himself to speak, to declare 'his existence, his purpose, his will, redemptively revealing man to himself as the creature of God, as the sinner, as the redeemed'.¹⁰³ It was important to explain in simple, clear language the meaning of the Word so that it could be applied to everyday life. Calvin preached a regular cycle of sermons based on a methodical scheme of biblical exegesis and was never afraid to extemporise harsh and partisan reflections on domestic political issues.¹⁰⁴

In Montauban, aside from catechetical instruction and daily prayers, preaching took place in the town's two temples on Sunday and Wednesday mornings.¹⁰⁵ Philippe Chareyre's analysis of the consistory records of Nîmes has revealed the various themes which were preached upon by the ministers of the town: warnings against blasphemy, magic, dancing, comedies, sabbath breach, fornication and exhortations to attend preaching more regularly and contribute more generously to charity.¹⁰⁶ These were all messages that resonated from the pulpits of Montauban and proved decisive in shaping the town's Reformation.¹⁰⁷

At times of military struggle ministers took on a heightened pastoral role. Each minister was assigned a different section of the town and instructed to make his rounds both in the morning and in the evening so as to attend to the needs of the people and lead the civic guard in prayer.¹⁰⁸ During the siege of 1621, one of

¹⁰² Book IV, chapter 3 of Jean Calvin's, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. T. McNeill (2 vols., London, 1960), II. 1053-1068.

¹⁰³ T. H. L. Parker, *John Calvin: a biography* (London, 1975), p. 90. See also Richard Stauffer, 'Un Calvin méconnu: le prédicateur de Genève', *BSHPF*, 123 (1977), pp. 204-217.

¹⁰⁴ 'Extracts from Calvin's sermons on Micah' in *Calvinism in Europe. A collection of documents*, pp. 30-34.

¹⁰⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 88r. See also Serr, *Eglise protestante*, pp. 84-87, 97-98.

¹⁰⁶ Chareyre, 'Consistoire de Nîmes', III. 104-106.

¹⁰⁷ For example, in 1597, the faithful were exhorted not to frequent 'les bottes et autres fetes solennelles que les papistes ont accoustumee d'observer et nommement celle de Caucelles' (ADTG, I 1, fo. 242v) and were forbidden from the pulpit to 'arrenter les benefices des ecclesiastiques de l'eglise romaine' (ADTG, I 1, fo. 243v, 260r).

¹⁰⁸ *Histoire particuliere, des plvs memorables choses qui se sont passees au Siege de Montauban*, p. 44.

churches in northern France. In the sixteenth century France was linguistically divided with a northern language, the ‘langue d’oil’ and a southern language, the ‘langue d’oc’. Even within the different linguistic zones, there existed a range of dialects that were ‘more or less mutually unintelligible’.¹¹¹ The distinctiveness of the Gascon dialect in south-western France was so marked in the Middle Ages that those that attempted to codify the language of the Troubadours considered Gascon to be a ‘foreign language’, quite separate from the Occitan-Provençal of south-eastern France.¹¹² This regional variation had implications for the spread of the Reformation. Even if the French language had made deep inroads into parts of southern France by the mid-sixteenth century, the vast majority of people still spoke in their local mother tongue. For this reason people would have found it easier to communicate with a minister fluent in the local language and sensitive to the local culture.¹¹³

There is little evidence surviving to demonstrate that language was an issue for ministers but correspondence certainly survives from the early churches in the Netherlands, a land that was not dissimilar in its linguistic diversity. In 1575, for example, the church at Rotterdam wrote to the Dutch church in London describing how the shortage of ministers was impeding the growth of the Reformation in the city. However, the church was very particular in its request for another minister for it explained how its ‘uneducated people’ could not understand preachers from East Friesland.¹¹⁴ It would seem more than probable that those ministers in Montauban who were not from the region would have faced practical problems in their pastoral duties as a result of language difficulties. It was therefore very much to the benefit of the church in Montauban that its ministers were largely born into the environment that they served.¹¹⁵

At the heart of the ministerial corps of Montauban one can identify an inner core of ministers who came from within the ruling families of Montauban and who were therefore able to tap into the nodes of affinity that bound these

¹¹⁰ Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 144-153.

¹¹¹ Planhol & Claval, *Historical Geography*, p. 124; Fernand Braudel, *The Identity of France*, trans. Sian Reynolds (2 vols., London, 1988), I. 92-94.

¹¹² Planhol & Claval, *Historical Geography*, p. 127.

¹¹³ A. Brun, *Recherches historique sur l’introduction du Français dans les provinces du Midi* (Paris, 1923)

¹¹⁴ *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum. Epistolae et tractatus*, ed. J. H. Hessels (3 vols., Cambridge, 1889-1897), III. Letter 312.

families together. Jean Constans, for example, served the church at Montauban from 1562 until his death in 1598 with only a two-year interruption between 1564 and 1566. His father was first consul in 1550 and 1568 and a *conseiller* at the seneschal court. His brother and his brothers-in-law all held consular charges. Jean Constans' first marriage to Marie Dubreil made him brother-in-law to Paul Bardon, first consul in 1597 and *conseiller* while his second marriage to Ramonde Bardon consolidated his position within the Bardon family and its links with the Scorbiac and Leclerc families. Constans' children later married into the ruling elite while his nephews succeeded in attaining some of the most prized political offices.

The example of Jean Constans and the way in which his social network coincided with those who were responsible for the civic government of the town is far from being unique. Marc-Antoine Benoist – who served the church in Montauban from 1597 to 1608 – was the brother of Guillaume Benoist who was first consul in 1599. Marc-Antoine's daughter married Guillaume Natalis, whose father held consular charges in 1591, 1603, 1612 and 1621, and whose mother was the sister of Guillaume Le Planche, first consul in 1572 and 1581.¹¹⁶ This provides another example of the tight bonds between the pastoral corps and the political elite. Again, Jean Caussade, who held the position of first consul in 1578, 1590 and 1602, had three children, all of whom married ministers or the daughters of ministers.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ For the importance in the Scottish Highlands of a bi-lingual pastorate, see Jane Dawson, 'Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland', in Pettegree, Duke and Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe*, pp. 231-253.

¹¹⁶ Marriage of Guillaume Natalis, son of Jean Natalis (lawyer) and Marie de la Planche, to Jeanne Benoist, daughter of Marc Antoine Benoist (minister), in whose house the marriage agreement was codified (1613). See ADTG, 5 E 160, fo. 666r and ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 48r.

¹¹⁷ Marriage of Jacob Caussade (lawyer) to Marie Tenans, daughter of Jean Tenans, minister of Montauban in 1610 (ADTG, 5 E 210, fo. 369v-372r), Marie Caussade to Jean Moynié, minister of Caussade and later of Montauban, in 1611 (ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 34r) and Bernardine Caussade to Pierre Ollier, minister of Montauban (indicated in ADTG, 12 GG 17, fo. 76r and in the marriage of their child to Elie Reynaud (minister) in 1630. See ADTG, 5 E 225, fo. 336r-339r). For other examples: circa 1561, Martin Tachard (minister) married the sister of Jean Constans (minister), whose father was Jean Constans *conseiller*; in 1598, the daughter of Bernard Bironis (minister) married into the Aliès family (ADTG, 5 E 330, fo. 89r); in 1610 and 1613, Jean Cabos and Pierre Cazaux (both ministers) married sisters of Pierre Noalhan, first consul in 1615 and 1629 (ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 27r, 45r); in 1623, Esaye Peyrille (minister) married Françoise Cabos, daughter of noble Jean de Cabos and niece of Antoine Aliès consul (1602) and *receveur des tailles* and through this marriage Peyrille became brother-in-law to Samuel Gautier *conseiller* (ADTG, 5 E 219, fo. 140r-141v); in 1624 Antoine Perès (minister), whose mother was Marie Aliès, married Ysabeau Constans, whose father held consular charges in 1608 and 1630 (ADTG, 5 E 220, fo. 174v-178r); in 1625, John Cameron (minister) married Jeanne de Thomas, the sister-in-law of Samuel de Scorbiac lieutenant (ADTG, 5 E 221, fo. 94v-97r); Isaac Dumas (minister) was the brother-in-law to the 'conseiller plus ancien dans la senechal de Quercy' (ADTG, 5 E 221, fo.

The rate at which ministers were paid never compared with that of the rising bourgeois and indeed in terms of taxable wealth the gap between the church and political elite widened significantly through time.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, the family background and reputation of some of the ministers was such that the town's population held them in high regard. Their high standing is exemplified by the size of dowries that ministers received from their bride's family upon their marriage. The dowry was of a similar amount to that which members of the bourgeois would have expected.¹¹⁹ The status of ministers within Montauban was also amplified by the ways in which they reflected bourgeois interests. In particular, ministers invested their resources in land and urban real estate, accumulating properties in a comparable fashion to the political elite.¹²⁰ Again, the testamentary evidence of ministers, like that of members of the political elite, reveals that ministers accumulated extensive libraries and rich medal collections,

315r); Marc Montanier (minister) was the cousin of Pierre Balarand *conseiller* who had married into the politically prominent Pechels' family (ADTG, 5 E 863, fo. 223r-236r); and, the son of Jean Richaud (minister) married Marthe Bardon, daughter of Paul Bardon first consul in 1597 and *conseiller*.

¹¹⁸ For example, in 1572 Jean Constans (minister) contributed just over 4 livres to the *taille* while members of the ruling elite were taxed to the tune of 3 to 11 livres (ADTG, 2 CC 14, unfoliated). In 1582, Jean Constans and Jean Gardesy (ministers) contributed just over 6 livres while those of the ruling elite were taxed from anything between 10 to 21 livres (ADTG, 2 CC 20, unfoliated). In 1591, while the contribution of ministers such as Jean Constans remained similar to that a decade earlier, some of the ruling elite were contributing as much as 33 livres (ADTG, 2 CC 27, unfoliated) and in 1601, over twice that much again (ADTG, 2 CC 38, unfoliated).

¹¹⁹ Compare the dowries, for example, given to the following ministers: 1200 and 1500 livres to Jean Constans in 1579 and 1586 (ADTG, 5 E 1200, fo. 152r and ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 54r-55r), 1998 livres to Pierre Berauld in 1602 (ADTG, 5 E 807, fo. 560r-562v), 3000 livres to Aaron Tinel in 1616 (ADTG, 5 E 175, fo. 156r-157v), 4000 livres to Abel Viala in 1623 (ADTG, 5 E 219, fo. 307r-310v), 4000 livres to Antoine Perès in 1624 (ADTG, 5 E 220, fo. 174v-178r), and 3000 livres to John Cameron in 1625 (ADTG, 5 E 221, fo. 94v-97r) with the dowries presented to members of the political elite: 2000 livres to Bernard Colom (consul) in 1568 (ADTG, 5 E 1055, fo. 218r-220r), 3000 livres to Guillaume Benoist (consul) in 1584 (ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 53r-54v), 3999 livres to Jean Viçose (*conseiller*) and Jean de Scorbiac (*conseiller*), both in 1591 (ADTG, 5 E 471, fo. 73r-75v and ADTG, 5 E 141, fo. 740r-740v), 4000 livres to Jean Dupuy (consul) in 1614 (ADTG, 5 E 709, fo. 315r), 6000 livres to Jean Lavialle (lieutenant) in 1615 (ADTG, 5 E 214, fo. 548v-550v), and 4000 livres to Jean-Baptiste Natalis (consul) in 1618 (ADTG, 5 E 175, fo. 325r).

¹²⁰ For example, evidence abounds of Jean Constans investing his wealth in farmland and vineyards in the years from 1572 until his death: ADTG, 5 E 835, fo. 467r-468v; ADTG, 5 E 133, fo. 144r; ADTG, 5 E 1201, fo. 168r; ADTG, 5 E 467, fo. 454r; ADTG, 5 E 136, fo. 122r; and, ADTG, 5 E 330, fo. 27r, 63r, 75r. Similarly, the prolific purchases of Jean Tenans in the decade, 1604-14: ADTG, 5 E 1603, fo. 93r; ADTG, 5 E 700, fo. 414r; ADTG, 5 E 206, fo. 2r, 24r, 42r, 68v, 112v, 115r, 269r, 384r; ADTG, 5 E 207, fo. 292v; 5 E 208, fo. 52v, 177v; ADTG, 5 E 853, fo. 109v; ADTG, 5 E 209, fo. 328v-330v, 357r-358v; and, ADTG, 5 E 213, fo. 164v-166r. See also Jean Richaud's purchases in the years 1610-21: ADTG, 5 E 853, fo. 304v; ADTG, 5 E 500, fo. 76r; ADTG, 5 E 855, fo. 269r; ADTG, 5 E 860, fo. 307v, 507r; ADTG, 5 E 217, fo. 63r-64v; ADTG, 5 E 861, fo. 322v, 330v; ADTG, 5 E 861, fo. 430v.

both of which were passed on from one generation of the family to another as prized possessions.¹²¹

If ministers were among those accumulating not only books but medal collections this certainly indicates that they were among those privileged enough to have surplus wealth. Certainly many were in a position to augment their salaries with other income from land or inherited wealth. Evidence is provided by numerous examples of business transactions between ministers and magistrates, purchases of property and even lending and borrowing agreements.¹²² Frequently, members of the political elite invited ministers to attend as witnesses to their marriage agreements.¹²³ All this suggests a profound personal relationship between the political and church elite that must have provided the means for positive and constructive dialogue.

If one can identify close bonds of association between those ministers originally from Montauban and the elite families to which they belonged, what can be said of those ministers that came from outside the town? Pierre Sestier and Michel Berauld originally came from northern France and Daniel Chamier and Jean Richaud came from Dauphiné while John Cameron was a native of Glasgow in Scotland. Even individuals such as Michel Charles and Bernard de Sonis who came from towns less far away still had the same problems to face, namely of how to integrate themselves into the local environment. Here, the professional bonds between ministers played a crucial part in incorporating outside ministers. Inter-marriage amongst members of the pastoral corps provided a crucial means through which non-native ministers were accommodated within the existing social matrix.¹²⁴

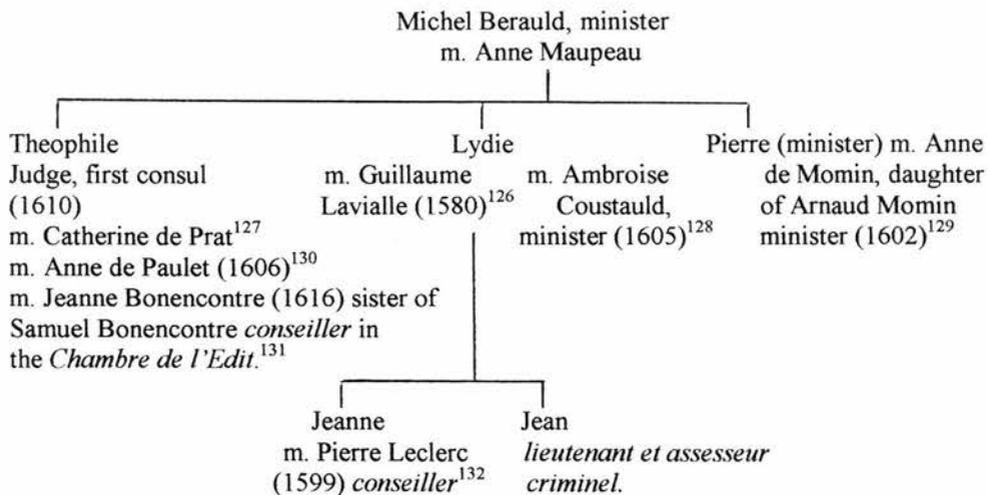
¹²¹ For example, Jean Constans' will (1597) in ADTG, 5 E 136, fo. 566r (now missing). See Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, pp. 165-167. See also that of Pierre de Hurdes (1611) in ADTG, 5 E 500, fo. 504r-508r. Medal-collecting was a popular activity among elites who could afford them. Medals were commonly struck to commemorate or celebrate important occasions such as a military victory. They sometimes also portrayed a satirical message, attacking those events that were considered important by one's adversary. See Joséphe Jacquot, 'La réforme vue à travers des médailles et des jetons', *Actes du colloque L'Amiral de Coligny et son temps* (Paris, SHPF, 1974), pp. 731-744.

¹²² For example, formal accords between ministers and members of the political elite (ADTG, 5 E 1201, fo. 288r-289v and ADTG, 5 E 201, fo. 518r-519v); loans to ministers from members of the bourgeois (ADTG, 5 E 1064, fo. 275r, ADTG, 5 E 1489, fo. 246r, 285v-286v and ADTG, 5 E 1726, fo. 764r) and purchases of property from ruling families (ADTG, 5 E 329, fo. 166r).

¹²³ For example, Jean Constans was a witness to the marriage agreement of Guillaume Benoist in 1581 (ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 53r-54v).

¹²⁴ For example, marriage between Bernard de Sonis and Marie de Momin, through which de Sonis (from Lectoure, Gascony) became brother-in-law to another minister of Montauban, Pierre Berauld. Marriages of the daughters of Daniel Chamier (from Lower Languedoc) to Jean Guarrin,

Michel Berauld served the church at Montauban from 1564 to 1611 with a seven-year interruption between 1573-79. He had no prior links with the town having been brought up in Le Mans where he had been ordained as a Dominican. After becoming a Protestant he trained for the ministry and served communities in Lower Languedoc where he married Anne de Maupeau, daughter of the minister of Montpellier. Nevertheless, upon his arrival at Montauban, it would appear that he quickly nurtured bonds of affinity with his fellow ministers and members of the political elite. This is reflected in his choice of godparents for his children in his first five years in Montauban. He invited members of the Scorbiac and Bardon families to sponsor his children alongside a fellow minister and a church deacon.¹²⁵ Furthermore, as his children grew up, Berauld clearly succeeded in positioning himself within the town's elite. His eldest son, for example, became a judge and first consul of the town in 1610 while his marriage alliances reflected the growing prestige of the family. The example of Michel Berauld demonstrates how new ministers were able to develop links of affinity with the political elite. They also were able to rely upon their ministerial colleagues. One of Berauld's daughters, for example, married a minister while his son, who also became a minister, married Anne de Momin whose sister had married Bernard de Sonis, a ministerial colleague of Michel Berauld's at Montauban.



Pierre Testas and Philippe de Nautonnier, all of whom were local ministers. For references, see n. 136, below.

¹²⁵ ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 18v, 57v; ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 20v, 61r; ADTG, 12 GG 3, fo. 22v.

¹²⁶ ADTG, 12 GG 29, fo. 10r.

¹²⁷ Indicated in ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 70r, 151r and ADTG, 12 GG 9, fo. 17r.

¹²⁸ ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 105r.

¹²⁹ ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 76r and ADTG, 5 E 807, fo. 560r-562v.

¹³⁰ ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 119r.

¹³¹ ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 68r.

The support that ministers gave to one another laid the basis for an effective pastoral body within Montauban. Inter-marriage between members of this corps served to buttress the functional unity of the pastorate.¹³³ The ministers of the town potentially provided an institutional counter-weight to the political elite. This could have been a destructive force but in Montauban this was not the case. Montauban's ministers forged a special relationship with the political elites. The ministers sought either to employ existing ties with the political elite or to draw themselves up into the bourgeois by an increasingly complex web of business, personal and social relationships.

Montauban does provide a striking example of a town where the Calvinist domination was almost complete. But this domination did not breed complacency. There were few moments in the town's history when Montauban was not under attack and few things would have weakened the Calvinist edifice so much as open divisions between the political and church elites. It was this imperative for unity which opened up profound opportunities for a more co-operative working relationship, a relationship deepened by those lay members of society who sat on the consistory as church officials.

Church elders in Montauban.

Calvinism in practice meant more than an altered set of theological beliefs. One of its goals was to renew the Christian life so as to reflect scriptural precepts. What is particularly distinctive about this attempt was the way in which the Calvinist reformers developed an ecclesiology that enabled the laity to play a more important role in the direction of the church.¹³⁴ In particular it was the consistory that provided the means by which lay people gained greatest control over local

¹³² ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 52r.

¹³³ See marriage in 1581 between Jean Gardesi and Ysabeau Pourcel, whose father was minister of Saint Antonin (ADTG, 12 GG 29, fo. 19v); marriage of Bernard de Sonis and Marie de Momin, whose father was minister of Puycasquier (ADTG, 5 E 175, fo. 262r-264r and indicated in ADTG, 12 GG 10, fo. 115r; ADTG, 12 GG 12, fo. 159r; and, ADTG, 12 GG 15, fo. 65r); marriage of Daniel Chamier's daughters to Jean Guarin (1614), Philippe de Nautonier (1619) and Pierre Testas (1629), all of whom were ministers (ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 51v; ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 93r; and, ADTG 12 GG 31, fo. 124r and ADTG, 5 E 1496, fo. 136v-140r); marriage between Antoine Garrissoles and Marie Gauside, whose brother was a minister (indicated in ADTG, 5 E 162, fo. 109v-111r); marriage in 1630 between Elie Reynaud and Jeanne Ollier, daughter of another minister Pierre Ollier (ADTG, 5 E 225, fo. 336r-339r).

¹³⁴ Mentzer, 'Ecclesiastical discipline', p. 163.

ecclesiastical affairs. It was the nature of lay participation in the consistory and its independence from civil authority which, in Michael Graham's words, made the consistories 'unique institutions in early modern Europe', quite distinct from the pre-Reformation church courts.¹³⁵ In Montauban there are striking similarities between the way in which the town council and the consistory were structured. In both instances, consuls and elders were co-opted, were drawn from a broad social spectrum and were given responsibility over different sections of the town. Of the ten elders elected to serve on the consistory, three typically would have been of bourgeois origins, three would have been merchants and the remainder would have been artisans, amongst whom were counted cloth-makers and cobblers.¹³⁶ The structure of the consistory meant that every level of society was represented within its ranks and indeed representatives of those different levels of society had the opportunity to contribute actively to the shaping of the town's Reformation.

The regulation of community life must have provided the greatest challenge to the consistory. No one enjoyed the experience of being admonished for one's behaviour or even being called to appear before the consistory, even less so if it was by an elder of lower social standing.¹³⁷ This may provide an insight into the ambivalent attitude that many felt towards the consistory in other Calvinist centres. Kevin Robbins goes as far to suggest that the consistory in La Rochelle was looked upon as an 'unreliable and popularly disregarded' agency of social control.¹³⁸ In the mid-seventeenth century some English visitors to France were scandalised by the position held by the lay elders of the French Reformed churches. Robert Heylyn, an Anglican, commented,

To those very men composed equally of ignorance and a trade are the most weighty matters of the church committed... When any businesse which concerneth the good of the congregation is befallen, they must be called to councell, & you shall finde them there as soon as ever they can put off their Aprons; having blurted out there a little classical non-sense, & passed

¹³⁵ Michael Graham, *The Uses of Reform. 'Godly discipline' and popular behaviour in Scotland and beyond, 1560-1610* (Leiden, 1996), p. 2.

¹³⁶ For example, in the second half of 1598, the consistory comprised Pierre de Lada (lawyer), Jean Assier (bourgeois), François Mirabet (bourgeois), Jean Darassus (merchant), Antoine de Porta (merchant), Jean Dumas (chemist), Jean Preyssac (painter), David Gillar (cobbler), Pierre Guy (clerk) and Isaac Portus (unknown). See ADTG, I 1, fo. 264r-264v, 272v.

¹³⁷ Bruce Lenman, 'The limits of godly discipline in the early modern period with particular reference to England and Scotland' in von Greyerz (ed.), *Religion and Society*, p. 135.

¹³⁸ Robbins, *City on the Ocean sea*, pp. 145, 183, 238 n. 98. See also, Graham, *Uses of Reform*, pp. 259-261, 320-322.

their contents by nodding of their heads, then any other sensible articulation, they hasten to their shops.¹³⁹

To be fully effective and to rebut the often-repeated accusations that Calvinism was a religion of social subversion, the consistory had to operate as a collective body with collective responsibility for its actions.¹⁴⁰ Sixteenth-century townsfolk would not have tolerated a situation in which anything other than the natural leaders of society became *de facto* judges.

In Montauban the uninterrupted nature of the town's Reformation and the relatively rapid turnover of elders meant that the consistory developed its own institutional identity as a means through which to resolve urban tensions and conflict. The consistory sought to instil church discipline 'on behalf and by authority of the congregation'.¹⁴¹ Seen in this light it was not always such an uphill struggle for the elders to identify the sources of disorder in the town. Andrew Pettegree's research, in particular, has shown that much of the pressure for regulating morals and behaviour emanated from within the community, from ordinary members of the congregation who resorted to the consistory rather than going to the expense and effort of judicial proceedings. Members came quite freely to the consistory to bring certain matters to its attention.¹⁴²

Complete lists of elders in Montauban are only available for the three years in which the consistory records are extant. However, by trawling through town council records, notarial documents and the *état-civil*, I have been able to identify a not inconsiderable total of 210 elders who served on the consistory during the period of the Wars of Religion. This amounts to just over one fifth of the total number of elders. Admittedly a bias is introduced in identifying elders by using these documents since certain social types among the elders are more likely to appear than others. Nevertheless it is possible to make some suggestions about the nature of the consistory and the way in which it was perceived by townsfolk

¹³⁹ Lough, *France Observed*, pp. 242-243.

¹⁴⁰ Robert M. Kingdon, 'A new view of Calvin in the light of the registers of the Genevan consistory' in Wilhelm H. Neuser & Brian G. Armstrong (eds.), *Calvinus Sincerioris Religionis Vindex* (Kirkville, 1997), p. 24.

¹⁴¹ Heinz Schilling, '“History of crime” or “History of sin”? Some reflections on the social history of early modern church discipline' in Kouri and Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society*, pp. 295, 297-298.

¹⁴² Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in sixteenth-century London* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 184-193 and his *Emden and the Dutch Revolt* (Oxford, 1992), p. 54. See also Chareyre, 'Great difficulties', pp. 78-85.

and in particular to pose the question of what contemporaries thought of this novel institution within their midst.

My research suggests that the importance that the reformers attached to the consistory in the ecclesiological polity was reflected in the status that it was given in Montauban. From the very first days of its operation, the consistory's active role within society was promoted by its distinguished membership. Amongst those that sat on the first consistory in 1561 was a former ecclesiastical judge and official of the bishop, a former Dominican monk, the former headmaster of the town's schools and a lawyer, all of whom, save the first who was murdered, became ministers of the church.¹⁴³ The following year, the consistory included Bernard Aliès and Hugues Calvet, both *conseillers*, while the latter was also the first consul that very same year.¹⁴⁴ And amongst the elders of 1563 were former second and third consuls.¹⁴⁵

With the transition of Montauban from a Catholic to Calvinist town the consistory emerged as a significant institution. In Nîmes the ruling families initially felt threatened by the consistory's rapid evolution and radical agenda. On 26 October 1562 the ministers and elders of this town were warned that they would incur a heavy fine if they encroached upon the jurisdiction of the presidial court. In matters particularly pertaining to 'des differentz, controverses et procès criminalz', the town's royal officials were keen to safeguard their jurisdictional rights vis-à-vis the consistory.¹⁴⁶ The fears of the Nîmois elites were by no means exceptional. In Geneva, for example, members of the ruling families increasingly resented the influence that Calvin and his colleagues on the consistory were having on the town's customs.¹⁴⁷ Catholics viewed the consistory as a subversive institution and it is clear from an investigation made by royal officials in Montauban in 1563 that this was a charge brought against the town's consistory by its Catholic opponents. Those that gave witness, all being Protestants, were keen to dispel the confusion and insist that there was a clear separation of duties

¹⁴³ François Calvet, Pierre Clément, Jean Carvin and Bernard de Bironis.

¹⁴⁴ Eugène and Emile Haag, *La France protestante* (10 Vols., Paris, 1846-59), III. 104.

¹⁴⁵ Augustin de Saint-Just was second consul in 1559 and Jean Durval was third consul in 1560. See ADTG, 462 Doc.

¹⁴⁶ Jacques Boulenger, *Les Protestants à Nîmes au temps de l'édit de Nantes* (Paris, 1903), pp. 195-197; Ann H. Guggenheim, 'The Calvinist notables of Nîmes during the era of the religious wars', *SCJ*, 3 (1972), p. 80.

¹⁴⁷ Kingdon, 'A new view of Calvin', p. 29.

between the consistory and the magistracy and to underline this it was noted that a royal official was present at the election of new consistories.¹⁴⁸

In Montauban the emerging consistory succeeded in etching a role that complemented the existing structures of authority within the town. Indeed, as in other Calvinist communities across Europe, the consistory provided a valuable source of experience for those wishing to gain political office. For example, Jean Horace de Pechels was elected to the consistory in 1584 and subsequently took positions as first consul in 1587, 1600 and 1611 and *conseiller* at the seneschal court.¹⁴⁹ The same was true of lesser figures such as Antoine Pagès, a merchant, who was elected as an elder in 1586 and fifth consul a year later.¹⁵⁰ What this demonstrates is that being a church official was regarded as an important role in the regulation of society and indeed a stepping stone for many up and coming individuals, a means through which to gain experience of responsibility and the recognition that went with it. Church offices were clearly prized commodities, another feather in the cap for political aspirants.

But being an elder was not merely a 'stepping stone' to greater things. There are numerous examples of established and respected members of the elite who did not shun the opportunity to serve within the church hierarchy. Political heavyweights such as Hugues Bonencontre, Jean Aliès, Jean de Viçose, Paul Bardon, Jean de Scorbiac and Hélie Molin all took up positions on the consistory.¹⁵¹ These individuals had all had experience of consular charges and had worked their way up through the various royal courts, some of them taking on

¹⁴⁸ 'Inquisition sur la justification des ministres de Montauban' (February, 1563) in BN, Ms Français 15879, fo. 64r-77r.

¹⁴⁹ ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 29r. See also examples of Pierre Causse, elder in 1581, second consul in 1585 (ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo. 67r); Bernard de Noalhan, elder in 1584, second consul in 1586 (ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 29r); Jean Brassard (lawyer), elder in 1595, second consul in 1597, first consul in 1606 and 1620 and Guillaume Benoist (lawyer), elder in 1595 and first consul in 1599 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 91r-91v and ADTG, 1 BB 29, fo. 6r, 38v); Bernard Lauzet (merchant), elder in 1596, second consul in 1598 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 5v); Pierre de Lada (lawyer), elder in 1598, second consul in 1603 and François Mirabet, elder in 1598, third consul in 1599 and 1611 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 264r-264v), etc. See Schilling, *Civic Calvinism*, p. 160; Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 214, 217; Chareyre, 'Consistoire de Nîmes', I. 162.

¹⁵⁰ ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 50r. See also examples of Antoine Laporte, elder in 1585, fourth consul in 1587 and 1600 (ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 85v); Jean Preissac, elder in 1586, fifth consul in 1591 (ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 98v); Jean Barreau, elder in 1595, third consul 1600 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 5v); Guillaume Coffinhal (chemist), elder in 1596, fifth consul in 1599 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 91r-91v); Pierre Brandalac (notary), elder in 1597, fourth consul in 1604 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 207v-208r); Antoine de Porta (merchant), elder in 1598, fourth consul in 1600 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 264r-264v); and, Jean Bernard (captain), elder in 1599, fifth consul in 1600 (ADTG, I 1, fo. 347v), etc.

¹⁵¹ ADTG, 12 GG 3, fo. 46r (1573); ADTG, 1 BB 27, fo. 19r (1592); ADTG, I 1, fo. 91r (1596); ADTG, I 1, fo. 207v (1597); ADTG, I 1, fo. 318r (1598); and, ADTG, 1 BB 30, fo. 44r (1601). See Schilling, *Civic Calvinism*, pp. 106, 147-148.

prime positions as lieutenants of the *sénéchaussée*. In her study of Nîmes, Ann Guggenheim demonstrated that few powerful members of the political elite belonged to the consistory and that they generally preferred posts relating to politics and the military rather than to religion, morality and social welfare.¹⁵² Other studies have shown that this was not always the case. In Geneva, for example, William Naphy has argued that there was a unified and stable magisterial element in the consistory and by 1546 this included one presiding *syndic* and two other senators as well as nine members drawn from the Councils of 60 and 200.¹⁵³ In Montauban it was not unknown for serving members of the consistory also to be serving consuls. Certainly this was the case for Hugues Calvet who was both first consul and an elder in 1562, Pierre de Vours who was second consul and elder in 1584 and Paul Bardon who was first consul and elder in 1597.¹⁵⁴ In 1596, Pierre de France combined the office of treasurer of the consistory with that of second consul.¹⁵⁵ If these were relatively rare occurrences, there are numerous examples of elders being drawn from the councils from which consuls were elected and to which the consuls turned for advice and consultation. If serving consuls sat infrequently on the consistory as elders, their professional associates within the councils frequently combined the two positions. This link between town and church government was explicit; both aspiring and established members of the town's political elite saw value in and were prepared to support the consistory in its aims and practice.

Furthermore, the overlap in personnel between the political and ecclesiastical bodies went deeper, binding together the subordinate bodies of municipal government. Evidence remains of members of the municipal 'intendants de police', for example, also serving on the consistory. Each year, it was the responsibility of the consulate to appoint six *intendants* whose task was to maintain order within the town and alert the consulate and town militia when dangers arose. This role clearly complemented the disciplinary role of the elders.¹⁵⁶ There are also examples of bourgeois taking up positions as treasurers for the church's poor relief system.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, members of the ruling families

¹⁵² Guggenheim, 'Calvinism and the political elite', p. 274.

¹⁵³ Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 76-78.

¹⁵⁴ *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, ed. P. de Witt (2 vols., Paris, 1868), II. p. 285.

¹⁵⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 5v, 90r, 207v.

¹⁵⁶ For example, in 1607 Pierre Camoyran (chemist) was appointed both as an elder and *intendant de police*. See ADTG, I BB 36, fo. 12v and 13r.

¹⁵⁷ For example, Jean Bardon in 1617 (ADTG, 5 E 162, fo. 99r).

featured on the joint bodies, comprising church and political figures, which regulated the college¹⁵⁸ and the town's printing presses.¹⁵⁹

This overview demonstrates the close relationship between the town's elite families and the consistory. The support of the city fathers would suggest that the consistory was both perceived and functioned as an effective body in the supervision of the Reformed community of Montauban. There is also evidence to suggest a close intimacy between the church elders and the town's ministers who also sat on the consistory and presided over its meetings. For example, Théophile Berauld who had been appointed as a judge and later became first consul was an elder in 1597 and a syndic to the churches of the colloque.¹⁶⁰ But he was also the son of the prominent minister, Michel Berauld, and brother to Pierre Berauld who was training for the ministry. This example highlights the level of intimacy between the political and ecclesiastical structures of Montauban.

In total, 62 per cent of the elders that I have identified had sat, were sitting or would sit on the town consulate. This is a significant proportion and its implications were profound. In particular, it meant that the ruling elites of the town had practical experience of working with one another. It meant that those who sat within the consular chamber had a comprehensive understanding of the goals of a 'godly' society and the values that it sought to inculcate. The overlap of personnel between the civic and ecclesiastical institutions of the town provided the basis for a more effective relationship in the exercise of power. This practical awareness was intensified by the invitations issued by both the consistory and the consulate to one another asking them to attend each other's meetings when a common issue was being discussed.¹⁶¹

There was a high degree of institutional integration at the heart of Montauban's government. The interlocking of the political elite and the ministerial corps was buttressed by the nature of the town's eldership. Although

¹⁵⁸ Namely, Jean Constans (minister), Jean Natalis, Jean Burgades and Jacques Thomas, all of whom were bourgeois.

¹⁵⁹ ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo. 85r; Emerand Forestié, *Histoire de l'imprimerie et de la librairie à Montauban* (Montauban, 1898), p. 84-85. Those *surintendants* mentioned by name include Jean Constans (minister) and Pierre de Vours (bourgeois).

¹⁶⁰ ADTG, I 1, fo. 207v-208r and ADTG, 5 E 807, fo. 289v.

¹⁶¹ For example, ministers invited to the consular chamber on successive occasions to discuss the town's security and the town's position with regard to peace negotiations. See, ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 57r, 94r (1564-65); ADTG, 7 CC 11, fo. 62r, 74r, 75r, 94r (1573-74). Consuls invited to consistory to discuss various directives of the colloque together with those matters affecting the town church such as ministerial wages and provision of ministers. See ADTG, I 1, fo. 40v-50r, 57r-57v, 219r-220r, 232r-232v, 248r-249r (1595-97).

emphasis here has been upon the political elite the Reformation in Montauban advanced as a genuine civic experience. Both the consulate and consistory comprised representatives from every level of town society and this overlap in personnel was a recurring feature of government. But at the heart of the culture of authority that developed was the family and the tightening links of affinity between the different bodies of control. This could have only been a positive experience for government, facilitating the exchange of information and providing the means and support through which to achieve the goals of government.

Chapter 3. Montauban and the shaping of a ‘godly’ society.

In January 1565 Blaise de Monluc, the king’s lieutenant general in the province of Guyenne, forwarded a list of complaints to Charles IX that he had received from the Catholic population of Montauban.¹ Among the complaints listed, Monluc accused the town’s consuls and royal officials of ‘une connivance et dissimula[t]ion de justice’ in harbouring ‘ung infini de personnes estrangeres’ of the Reformed religion. Monluc also mentioned the apostasy of numerous priests and religious of the town, most of whom had now married. Monluc depicted a town redrawing its identity. Now, he remarked in dismay, even on days of abstinence, meat was being sold openly by the town’s butchers. The traditional feast days and holidays were being disregarded with all the artisans working at their trade, shops open and merchants setting up stalls to sell their wares. Furthermore, Monluc made clear that this was far from being a benign development. The influx of Protestant refugees in the town was a source of trouble, the town’s arsenal was being steadily restocked, arms remained in general circulation amongst the town’s inhabitants and one captain was continuing his vigilante activities against the Catholic population. Indeed, the Catholic remnant within the town had no recourse to justice since those of the Reformed religion dominated the seneschal court.

Life in Montauban changed abruptly in the years after 1561. All of the Catholic religious houses, monasteries and churches – including the cathedral just outside the town’s walls – had been ransacked and destroyed during the first war.² In the subsequent years of peace, clergy attempting to return to Montauban faced insurmountable difficulties in surviving for the Catholic Church had lost all its buildings and belongings.³ The clergy’s attempts to collect its dues and reclaim the Church’s benefices were met with contempt. Catholic prayer and liturgy were disrupted and the clergy were harassed. The impoverishment of the clergy often left them with no option than to leave the town to the great scandal of the Catholic people of Montauban. Even in the years after the Edict of Nantes the clergy continued to complain that the consuls turned a blind eye towards acts of sectarian aggression in which clergy were attacked, congregations provoked and the

¹ BN, Ms. Français 15881, fo. 22r-26v.

² Vaissette and Devic, *Histoire générale*, IV. 807-813 and XI. 372.

³ Le Bret, *Histoire*, ed. Marcellin & Ruck, II. 45.

Catholic dead disinterred.⁴ One can only imagine the magistrates' apprehension when the bishop finally announced that in 1606 he would lead a solemn procession through the town to celebrate the feast of Corpus Christi, the first such procession since the outbreak of the first religious war.⁵

But the town's rejection of the Catholic clergy and Catholic worship did not automatically create a new 'godly' society. In the vacuum left by the Catholic Church the town's ministers, consistory and magistrates all played a role in effacing the 'superstitions' of the past and building up a society upon sound scriptural precepts. This chapter will probe the extent to which a distinctively Calvinist society emerged in the decades after the Protestant ascendancy.

Our understanding of the early years of the Reformation in Montauban is limited by the lacunary state of both the town council and the consistory records. However, notarial records and in particular the preambles of wills do provide insights into the way in which the Reformation was adopted in Montauban. Historians of the English Reformation have long been aware of how shifts in the phrasing of preambles – most of which contained a declaration of faith – could be used as an index of the changing nature of religious attitudes and practices.⁶ As I trawled through notarial records seeking material to build a picture of Montauban's political elite, I gathered data from 328 wills for the period of 1545 to 1624. I selected these wills at random and the sample comprises men and women, bourgeois, merchants, artisans, and labourers. Historians have become very much aware of the problem of distinguishing personal statements of faith from those suggested to the dying person – or written as a conventional formula –

⁴ 'Coppie des mémoires envoyés en court par le clergé de Montauban, 1578' in ADTG, G 1213, no. 37; 'Procès-verbal aux excès des Calvinistes et leurs usurpations envers le clergé catholique du Quercy, Languedoc et Gascogne' (1588) in Louis Canet (ed.), *Lectures d'histoire locale sur le Tarn-et-Garonne* (3 vols., Montauban, 1925-31), II. 251-254; 'Complainte par le syndic de clergé du diocèse de Montauban, 1607' in ADTG, G 1213, no. 26; Le Bret, *Histoire*, ed. Marcellin & Ruck, II. 62-63. Compare this with the situation in Nîmes where confessional rivalries were greatly eased through the mediation of Damville. From 1582 onwards the cathedral chapter met regularly in Nîmes and was able to address the temporal and spiritual interests of the Catholic church in Nîmes. David Morris has argued that 'a significant degree of economic, political and cultural co-habitation existed between Protestants and Catholics in Nîmes well before the promulgation of the Edict of Nantes'. See David Morris, 'Power, Patronage and Religion in a regional Huguenot capital: Nîmes 1572-1600', Ph.D. thesis (University of Leeds, forthcoming), chapter 7.

⁵ ADTG, 1 BB 34, fo. 75r-76v and ADTG, 1 BB 35, fo. 81v-85r. The re-institution of Catholic processions in Montauban came unusually late. In Nîmes, Castres and Nérac, Corpus Christi processions through the streets of the towns had already been held in 1594, 1596 and 1601 respectively.

⁶ For a good summary of this literature, see Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 504-512.

by the notary.⁷ For this reason I drew my evidence from 23 different notaries so as to obviate the risks associated with relying too heavily upon a small number of individuals. However, in the years after 1565 the use of testamentary evidence as a way of understanding religious belief is particularly difficult as the town's ministers insisted that all testamentary preambles reflected Protestant beliefs. At the Colloque of Montauban in 1565 it was agreed that notaries were to be instructed not to record any clauses 'tendant à superstition et idolatrie' and certainly not to be involved with any acts in which 'le nom de Dieu est deshonoré et la superstition confirmée et avouée'.⁸

Even in the years before limits were placed upon notaries testamentary evidence would suggest that devotion to the saints and to the Blessed Virgin Mary was waning well before the town's formal adherence to the Reformation. In the years 1545-49, 23 per cent of wills omitted any mention of the saints with this figure rising to 50 per cent in the years 1555-59. This parallels trends in the diocese of Lyon and in the Cévennes where similar studies have demonstrated that there was a 'spiritual crisis', that the Reformation was an act of rupture with Catholic belief well before it had developed as a coherent body of doctrine and belief.⁹

With the Calvinist ascendancy in Montauban in 1561, the sign of the cross and the invocation of the saints almost vanished from wills. In their place preambles laid greater emphasis upon the persons of the Trinity, in focussing on the remission of sins through the merit of Christ's passion so that their soul could share in the heavenly company of angels and saints. As Duffy rightly points out, this stress may have been typically Protestant, but there was nothing exclusively Protestant about this formula.¹⁰ Nevertheless in Montauban a re-orientation from traditionalist Catholic wills to reformist wills had clearly taken place and this reflects a profound shift in the politico-religious environment of Montauban. With the expulsion of the clergy and the prohibition against Catholic worship it was no longer safe to flaunt one's Catholic identity. This trend closely resembled what

⁷ Margaret Spufford, *Contrasting communities* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 320-344; Peter Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: religion, politics and society in Kent, 1500-1640* (Woking, 1977), pp. 58-59. I would like to thank Fr Augustine Kelly for bringing this literature to my attention.

⁸ Colloque of Montauban (September 1565) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6.

⁹ Philip Hoffman, *Church and Community in the Diocese of Lyon, 1500-1789* (New Haven & London, 1984), p. 30; Didier Poton, 'Aux origines du protestantisme en Basses Cévennes', *BSHPF*, 129 (1983), p. 480.

¹⁰ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, p. 507.

was happening in the Cévennes and other Protestant centres over the same time period.¹¹ But it was only in the mid-1570s that many wills began to reflect a greater understanding of the distinctively Calvinist notion of predestination, that the testator would be buried ‘en toute simplicité sans aulcune pompe ny superstition’ or ‘en toute simplicité selon l’ordre de l’église reformée’ and counted amongst the ‘nombre de vrai Chrestiens et esluz... preordonne à salut et la vie eternelle’.¹²

Through the early decades of the Reformation it became customary for testators to leave a legacy for the poor of the hospitals or for the church. In comparison to La Rochelle the population of Montauban was far more reluctant to leave charitable bequests.¹³ In the years 1585-94 only 39 per cent of wills contained a charitable legacy compared to 63 per cent of Rochelois wills in the decade 1580-89. Despite exhortations from the pulpit encouraging the Protestant faithful to leave legacies for the poor,¹⁴ social welfare remained firmly in the hands of the municipal government. On several occasions the consuls ordered levies to be raised specifically for the town’s poor relief funds and this may explain the smaller proportion of testamentary bequests for the poor.¹⁵ By the first three decades of the seventeenth century, however, charitable practices in both Montauban and La Rochelle were broadly in line with one another with about three fifths of wills containing a charitable donation. Perhaps the inhabitants of these towns continued to view poor relief primarily as a civic rather than a religious responsibility for in comparison to Wilma Pugh’s study of charitable bequests in the Protestant communities in Lyon and Nîmes, Montauban and La Rochelle were markedly less benevolent.¹⁶ Pugh suggests that the high proportion of legacies left by Protestant testators in the towns she studied reflected greater

¹¹ Alain Molinier, ‘De la religion des oeuvres à la Réformation dans les Cévennes (1450-1600)’, *RHEF*, 72 (1986), pp. 259-263; Meyer, *Reformation in La Rochelle* (Geneva, 1996), pp. 99-100; Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, pp. 113-114.

¹² This reflected the greater prominence given to this doctrine by the Genevan reformers in the wake of Calvin’s death. See Philip Benedict, *The Faith and Fortunes of a Religious Minority* (Aldershot, forthcoming), p. 271.

¹³ Robbins, *City on the Ocean sea*, pp. 164-173.

¹⁴ ADTG, I 1, fo. 259v, 319r.

¹⁵ ADTG, I BB 26, fo. 97v-101r; ADTG, I BB 28, fo. 25r; ADTG, I BB 42, fo. 54v, 56r-56v. See Mathew Koch, ‘Poor relief in Montauban, 1548 to 1629’, *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, 23 (1996), pp. 69-80.

¹⁶ Wilma J. Pugh, ‘Social welfare and the Edict of Nantes: Lyon and Nîmes’, *FHS*, 8 (1974), pp. 349-376 and her article, ‘Catholics, Protestants, and testamentary charity in seventeenth-century Lyon and Nîmes’, *FHS*, 11 (1980), pp. 479-505. It would appear that the Calvinist church at Nîmes had developed a particularly sophisticated system of poor relief in comparison to that of Montauban. See Mentzer, ‘Organisational endeavour’, pp. 1-29.

confessional divisions within the towns between the rival institutions of poor relief which sought to win over the poor by charity.

It is difficult to base reliable conclusions on changing religious attitudes on testamentary evidence alone. Intercession to the saints disappeared in preambles and the proportion of people leaving legacies to the poor increased in line with the Protestant emphasis on providing for the needs of the poor. But there are other documents available that can help the historian gauge the extent to which the Reformation was embraced on a popular level. In this instance the archives in Montauban are fortunate to contain the baptismal records of the Protestant church in Montauban. In his pioneering work on Rouen, Philip Benedict analysed names given to children born of Protestant parents as a means of understanding Protestant self-perception. By comparing Protestant and Catholic baptismal records, Benedict demonstrated that there was a divergence in the names.¹⁷ Calvinists rejected the cult of saints and in preference to choosing the name of a beloved saint for their child they turned instead to the Bible and, in particular, the Old Testament.¹⁸

By comparing the surviving baptismal records in 1570 of Montauban with those of its Catholic neighbour Toulouse, it is possible to examine the extent to which Montauban must have stood out as a lone Protestant town in a Catholic region.¹⁹ It is clear that for boys Jean and Pierre remained the most popular names in both Montauban and Toulouse. But what is striking, as Benedict pointed out for Rouen, is the renunciation of the cult of saints by the Calvinists. Hence in Toulouse names such as Antoine, Bernard, Dominique and François were all favourites but they simply do not exist in Montauban. Instead Montauban's male children emerge with a whole new range of names: Abraham, Daniel, David, Isaac and Samuel. This reflects a deliberate policy on the part of the national synod – embraced by the Protestant population of Montauban – to reject the names of venerated saints. This could not have been an easy step given the importance of names in family history but it did serve to underline the impact of the Reformation

¹⁷ Benedict, *Rouen*, pp. 104-105, 257-260.

¹⁸ Concerning names imposed on children, the National Synod of Orléans declared that 'ministers shall reject those which remain from the old paganism' and instead parents and godparents were to be 'admonished as far as possible to take those which are approved by God's sacred word' in *Calvinism in Europe. A collection of documents*, p. 94.

¹⁹ For Montauban see ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 82v-118v. For Toulouse, I have used the baptismal records for the parishes of La Dalbade and Saint Etienne in AMT, GG 1, fo. 1r-10r and AMT, GG 193 (unfoliated).

in Montauban.²⁰ Old Testament names were bestowed upon the town's children, a development scarcely visible in Catholic Toulouse. This shift had two effects. First, the change in names represented a conscious break from the town's Catholic heritage and from the town's Catholic surroundings. This would have made Protestants all the more conspicuous in the outside world. It would have also made Montauban's Protestants within the town walls more self-consciously aware of their distinctive identity and destiny. Secondly, the emergence of Old Testament names served to re-connect the new religion with God's chosen people, marking out French Protestants as the 'New Israel', a theme to which I will return to in chapter seven.

For girls, the dichotomy between Protestant Montauban and Catholic Toulouse was less stark. Despite Protestant polemic against the veneration of Mary, and the particular violence shown by iconoclasts to statues and images of Our Lady, Mary remained by far the most popular name for Protestant girls. Other biblical names from the New Testament became more prominent – in particular, Anne, Elizabeth and Marthe – while many of the names of saints such as Catherine and Marguerite vanished to be replaced by Old Testament names such as Judith, Rachel and Suzanne.

Interestingly, the proportion of children being baptised in Montauban with Old Testament names remained similar to that in Geneva. Neither of these places reflected the high proportion of Old Testament names bestowed on children in Rouen. In comparing the situation in Rouen and Geneva, Benedict argues that this disparity reflected 'the difference between a minority Reformed congregation whose members all joined out of conviction and a community where the faith was imposed on all by law'.²¹ The evidence from the baptismal records suggests that Montauban's situation was more akin to that of Geneva's than Rouen's in that once Protestantism had won the allegiance of the political elite and the majority of the town's population, the Reformation in Montauban could not have been voluntary in any meaningful sense of the word.

²⁰ See the crisis provoked in Geneva by the ministers who sought to define what names could be bestowed upon children at baptism in Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 144-153.

²¹ Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 106. Benedict's conclusions would seem to reflect Marnef's analysis of the baptismal names of Antwerp's Calvinists who were members of the stranger churches in London. For the decade 1567-77, Marnef calculated that 70 per cent of male baptismal names and 64 per cent of female baptismal names derived from the Old Testament. See Marnef, 'Changing face of Calvinism', pp. 155-156.

In Montauban the initial eagerness to reject the Catholic veneration of saints and baptise children with names from the Old Testament was not sustained; indeed the findings for 1570 are strikingly at odds with those in 1590.²² Jean, Pierre, Jeanne and Marie remained the favourite boys' and girls' names in both Montauban and Toulouse. However, in Montauban, the popularity of Old Testament names – Daniel, David, Isaac, Judith, Rachel and Suzanne – all receded before the return of the old Catholic favourites of Antoine, Bernard, François, Jacques, Marguerite and Catherine and locally popular names such as Ramond and Peyronne. The proportion of male children christened in Montauban with names from the Old Testament fell from 25 per cent to 14 per cent in the years between 1570 and 1590 while over the same period of time the proportion of male and female children with non-biblical names increased from less than 1 per cent to 26 per cent.²³

Work on the baptismal records of Rouen reveals a similar decline over time in the conferral of Old Testament names. In Rouen Old Testament baptismal names decreased from 51 per cent to 36 per cent between 1565 and 1576-85. In comparing these figures Benedict suggests that this decline reflected a 'general slackening of zeal for the cause once the first flush of enthusiasm began to wane' and a 'declining willingness to testify publicly to their faith', and this was true of other Protestant communities across France.²⁴ In Montauban, the initial imperative to embrace the Reformed religion and mark out a distinctive identity, separate from the Catholic roots of the town, was clearly expressed in a choice of names that found scriptural support. In the years after the first war and the St Bartholomew's day massacres any lingering hopes that France might one day become a Protestant kingdom had evaporated. By this time everyone knew the confessional identity of Montauban and perhaps the Protestant community in Montauban had become increasingly aware of the need to be pragmatic in a world which was not always understanding of its beliefs. Montauban was never a hermetically sealed Protestant town. It depended upon its links with the regional economy – particularly with Toulouse – for its economic survival, and to mark

²² For Montauban see ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 294r-306v and ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 1r-18r. For Toulouse see AMT, GG 6, fo. 42r-62r and AMT, GG 197 (unfoliated, January-September 1590).

²³ For the year 1600, the proportion of Old Testament names for male children and the proportion of children with non-biblical names in Montauban remained identical to that of 1590. See ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 150v-194r.

²⁴ Benedict, *Rouen*, pp. 149-150. In La Rochelle, Old Testament names decreased from 36 per cent to 30 per cent between the years 1563-65 and 1579-80.

oneself out unnecessarily in these circumstances with names that were clearly identified as Huguenot was foolhardy except to the most committed. Despite the best efforts of the ministers to separate the Reformed community from what they considered ‘popish contamination’, Montauban could not but be influenced by its surrounding world.²⁵

Kevin Robbins in his study of La Rochelle identified a growing disenchantment, even irreverence, towards the strictures of Calvinism and the demands that it made upon private behaviour and public affairs.²⁶ Lack of documentary evidence makes it impossible to relate the full story of how the Reformation was received and put into practice in Montauban. One has very little idea of the number of Catholics that remained in the town and one has very little idea of the extent to which Montauban’s population was committed to the new faith and how coherent that faith was to different groups of people. With the support of the city fathers, the Calvinist church in Montauban succeeded in entrenching itself but with the relative absence of town council and consistory records it is impossible to ascertain just how successful the town’s ministers and consistory were in re-shaping the beliefs and behaviour of the townsfolk. The work of other historians, such as Gerald Strauss’s, *Luther’s House of Learning* (Baltimore, 1978), invites the historian not to take too deterministic an attitude in evaluating how effectively Reformed precepts were cultivated and adhered to in Protestant cities. Nevertheless, for Montauban, the testamentary evidence and the baptismal records reveal general shifts in the religious world of the town. They indicate just some of the ways in which the Protestant seizure of power affected everyday matters ranging from the naming of one’s children, to who money was left to and what people believed. Montauban was a large town and it is beyond the realms of reality to imagine that the entire population submitted to the new beliefs and practices of Calvinism without question. Nevertheless what is extraordinary about the situation in Montauban was that Protestant magistrates governed the town for an extended period of time over several generations. It was this uninterrupted span of Protestant control that provided an opportunity to frame a new society.

²⁵ Janine Estèbe [Garrisson], ‘Les deliberations du consistoire de Montauban: quelque images d’une société en voie de mutation’ in *Actes du XXVIIe congrès d’étude de la fédération des sociétés académiques et savantes de Languedoc-Pyrénées-Gascogne* (Albi, 1974), p. 347. See also Schilling, *Civic Calvinism*, pp. 56-57.

²⁶ Robbins, *City on the Ocean sea*, p. 183.

How did Calvinism move from its ideals into a functioning system of beliefs and practices? Reformation of religion applied not exclusively to church and worship but, even more than that, to the whole of common life. The Protestant theology of *sola fide* led, as an extension, to the Protestant emphasis on interiority, embodying an inward personal reform. The extension of this greater emphasis upon inner reform was the Protestant concern for experiential theology, for a living faith and a belief that the Bible imposed certain binding norms on behaviour.²⁷ It behoved Protestants to live their Christian lives in practice. The theology that they preached was meaningless without reformation of morals and manners and French Calvinists quickly became associated with such demands. In Montpellier in 1561, for instance, large numbers of Catholics ran through the streets of the town, crying defiantly that in spite of the Huguenots they would continue to dance.²⁸ It is evident that even at this early stage the Huguenots were clearly identified with a new moral order.

Calvin accorded a particularly positive role to the ‘godly’ magistrate in the divine ordering of the world. Rulers were ‘God’s tribunal on earth’. It was their duty to sustain religion by ‘laws, edicts and judgements’ in order to ‘advance the kingdom of Christ and maintain the purity of doctrine, purify scandals and cleanse the filth that corrupts piety and impairs the lustre of the divine majesty’.²⁹ The first provincial synod of Montauban in April 1561 explored in depth the issue of authority and in particular the responsibilities bestowed upon magistrates. In subsequent years the town’s ministers never tired from exhorting the magistracy from the pulpit to employ ‘le glaive en main pour fere la punition... suyvant leur auctorité que Dieu surprendroit à eux’.³⁰ It was customary for the town’s newly elected consuls to receive a delegation from the consistory. The delegation congratulated the consuls upon their election and reminded them of their responsibilities. Specifically, the deputation exhorted the consuls to take a vigorous stance against theft, fornication, adultery, violence, blasphemy, and the

²⁷ Heiko A. Oberman, *Masters of the Reformation* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 277.

²⁸ *Complainte apologetique des églises de France, au Roy, Royne mère, Roy de Navarre, et autres du Conseil* (n.p., 1561), sig. B4v. I would like to thank Andrew Pettegree for this reference.

²⁹ See Comm. Ex. 18 and Is. 49, together with Insts. 4, ix, 16, all cited in William J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin. A sixteenth-century portrait* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 204-206, 211.

³⁰ Robert Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France 1555-1563* (Geneva, 1956), pp. 86-87 and the submission of Bernard Constans in ‘Inquisition sur la justification des ministres de Montauban’ (February, 1563) in BN, Ms Français 15879, fo. 64r-77r.

playing of games. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, emphasis was also placed on the regulation of dancing, masquerades, tavern culture and sabbath breach. The consuls in return promised ‘avec l’aide de Dieu, s’employer au chastiment des vices et entrenement et conservation de la republique de lad. ville et habitans d’icelle’.³¹ Nothing could better illustrate the church’s hopes for co-operation with the consulate in the ordering of a ‘godly’ society.

Montauban provides an unusual example of a ‘godly’ society that appears to have worked. It is easy to be cynical about the extent to which pious principles were put into practice and indeed the range of examples where Calvinist principles were applied effectively was small. Most studies highlight the gap that appeared to emerge between Calvinist injunctions and practice. This gap is not so apparent for Montauban; indeed an examination of the surviving records reveals the close and complementary relationship that developed between the town’s consistory and the town council in the creation of a ‘godly’ society.

There are no memoirs or sermons to reveal to us the ways in which Montauban’s ministers sought to instil a new moral order. However there are two surviving records of investigations made by royal officials in 1561 and 1563 into the preaching of the town’s ministers.³² The submission of Jean de Malroux, baron de Laguëpie was typical. The preaching of the Word, he recounted, was always tied to the minister’s ‘affection à reformer la vie meschante des hommes’ and in this way ‘beaucoup de vices ont été reprimez et chastiez, comme les blasphemes, jeux, danses, tavernes et aultres plusieurs vices’. Similarly noble

³¹ ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 29r; ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 4v; ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 6r-6v; ADTG, 1 BB 27, fo. 19v-20r; ADTG, 1 BB 28, fo. 21v; ADTG, 1 BB 29, fo. 6v-7r; ADTG, 1 BB 30, fo. 3r; ADTG, 1 BB 33, fo. 28r; ADTG, 1 BB 36, fo. 13r; ADTG, 1 BB 37, fo. 8r; ADTG, 1 BB 38, fo. 34r; ADTG, 1 BB 39, fo. 17v-18r; ADTG, 1 BB 40, fo. 12v; ADTG, 1 BB 41, fo. 32r; ADTG, 1 BB 42, fo. 37v. For example, 15 May 1585, ‘Estant assemblee Messieurs les consulz au chasteau consular, heure d’une heurs après midi, se sont presenter M Bironis, ministre de la parolle de Dieu, Constans medecin, Pierre Miquel et Antoine Olivery, deputed par le consistoire, lesquelz au nom dud. consistoire ont congratuler lesd. sieurs consulz de leur nouvelle entree aud. consulat, et les ont prier, au nom de Dieu, tenir la main et s’employer virilement à la reprimande et extirpation des vices qui ne pullulent que pas trop en ceste ville et jurisdiction, comme des larcerins, palhardises, blasphemes, renimentz, jeux et autres choses vilaines...’, and for 1603, ‘remonstrant que les magistratz et l’esglise devoient estre coniointz pour par commun main employer a l’honneur et gloire de Dieu refformation des vies et escandalles que se commettre journellement... reprimer les blasphemes [et] empescher d’estalles les jours de dimanches, les marchandises et venturailles pendant les presches et de fermer les boutiques les jours de mecredys a fin qu’ung chascung se trouve aux prieres publiques que se font lesd. iours au temple’. See also Chareyre, ‘Consistoire de Nîmes’, I. 165-167.

Antoine de Reyniès claimed that the town had been ‘grandement réformé’ in such a way that there were no ‘renyements ne blasphemes, ne aucuns jeux ne batteurs de pavés, ains l’on peult aller, tant de nuict que de jour, sans crainte de personne, ni sans veoir ne ouyr sinon les gens qui chantent pseaulmes et louanges à Dieu’, and that this was the fruit of the preaching. Gambling, drunkenness, debauchery, balls and banqueting were, it was claimed, no longer part of life in Montauban.

Questions arise as to the authenticity of the claims made about the town’s cultural transformation. Several of the submissions made to the royal officials (who in both cases were Protestants) were almost identical in language suggesting some form of collusion amongst those that submitted evidence or more likely a manipulation of the material by the investigating team. Even allowing for a wave of evangelical fervour in the ‘wonderyears’ of the Reformation, the earlier portion of this chapter suggested that this initial burst of reforming zeal was not sustained.³³ How then was a ‘godly’ society created in Montauban, who sustained it and how profound was its impact upon the town’s population? These are the questions that I wish to address in the remaining part of this chapter.

Historians have largely gauged the impact of the Reformation through an examination of consistory records.³⁴ Janine Garrisson remarks, ‘sans trop exagérer, on peut se permettre de dire que l’histoire des églises protestantes françaises est aussi celle de leurs consistoires’.³⁵ These records are indeed an alluring source of information full of incidental details pertaining to life in the Reformed community. Raymond Mentzer points to how consistory records provide ‘an exceptional source for exploring the broad contours of sociability and the mental outlook of ordinary, mostly unlettered people’ and as such provide ‘an

³² ‘Inquisition au sujet de Martin Tachard’ (March, 1561) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 3 and ‘Inquisition sur la justification des ministres de Montauban’ (February, 1563) in BN, Ms Français 15879, fo. 64r-77r.

³³ Mounting apathy towards the Reformation was hardly unique to Montauban. See Amy Nelson Burnett’s study of Strasbourg, *The Yoke of Christ. Martin Bucer and Christian Discipline* (Kirksville, 1994), p. 163.

³⁴ See here, Raymond Mentzer’s various articles, ‘*Disciplina nervus ecclesiae*’, pp. 89-115; ‘Le consistoire et la pacification du monde rural’, *BSHPPF*, 135 (1989), pp.373-91; and, ‘Ecclesiastical discipline’, pp. 163-183, and work by Philippe Chareyre, ‘Great difficulties’, pp. 63-97, and ‘Consistoire de Nîmes’. For Montauban, see René Miquel, ‘Le consistoire protestant à la fin du XVIe siècle, à Montauban’, *BSATG*, 73 (1945), pp. 20-29; Estèbe, ‘Délibérations du consistoire’, pp. 345-356; J. Estèbe & B. Volger, ‘La genèse d’une société protestante: étude comparée de quelques registres consistoriaux languedociens et palatins vers 1600’, *Annales ESC*, 31 (1976), pp. 362-388.

³⁵ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 92.

important opportunity to explore the wider repercussions of the momentous religious transformation that marked the age'.³⁶

In his study, *Uses of Reform*, Michael Graham surveys the way that historians of the French Reformation have been using consistory records since the 1930s. He identifies two methods of analysis. The first is a largely anecdotal, even micro-historical, approach. The second has been to take a more statistical approach, classifying and enumerating disciplinary cases in order to build up a picture of social discipline. This latter form of analysis, however, has its own problems as different historians have adopted different methodologies and classified consistory business according to different categories, making comparison between churches difficult.³⁷ Important new evidence now emerges from Judith Pollman in her study of Arnoldus Buchelius, an elder for the church at Utrecht, where uniquely, Pollman has been able to compare the surviving memoirs of a church elder with the town's consistory records. Comparing the two, Pollman has discovered that church elders spent much time on house visits, 'informal' discipline and private admonition which went unrecorded in the consistory records. The consistorial records of Utrecht, she demonstrates, record no information on more than half of the cases discussed by Buchelius.³⁸ More often than not it was only in those cases in which the elders' gentle exhortation failed and scandal emerged that individuals were actually summoned before the consistory. This would seem to indicate that, as attractive as the consistory records are, they alone barely reflect everything that went on in a given church and may only reflect a changing practice of recording rather than a changing practice of discipline.³⁹

Philip Benedict adds a further note of caution by pointing out that the consistory records alone 'can indicate the forms of behaviour which the church sought to eliminate, but they can never indicate with certainty how widespread such practices might have been and whether they increased or diminished with

³⁶ Raymond Mentzer, 'Moral discipline, abortion and the Reformed community in late sixteenth century France', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, forthcoming. See also, Schilling, *Civic Calvinism*, p. 40.

³⁷ This was first pointed out by Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 183 n. 5. See also Graham, *Uses of Reform*, p. 322.

³⁸ Judith Pollman, *Religious choice in the Dutch Republic. The reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565-1641)* (Manchester, 1999)

³⁹ The Dutch and French exile churches in London both faced similar problems but the consistory proceedings of the French church tend to be more detailed. See Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities*, p. 183.

time, for the simple reason that one can never be certain whether changes in the number of recorded cases concerning a specific offence indicate alterations in the frequency of the offence or in the amount of attention devoted to it'.⁴⁰

Historians have also postulated preaching as an alternative means through which the Reformation was put into practice, but with little systematic investigation. Robert Scribner described the sermon as an 'excellent means of social control'. The remarkable persuasiveness of the sermon, he argues, was based on the 'exalted social authority of the sources and the conviction that everyone was listening – and with respect – to the same message'. In this way preaching of the Word was able to arouse an impatience for change which expressed itself in direct action.⁴¹ Studies of Calvin's impact upon Geneva or Viret's impact upon Lyon, Nîmes and Montpellier demonstrate the powerful effect that a celebrity preacher could have upon a church.⁴² But in concentrating on individual preachers it is tempting to romanticise the real impact of a preacher and this is certainly the case in Benoit's study, *Origines de la Réforme à Montauban*. The extent to which the power of oratory could have an enduring and transforming impact upon a town's population is questionable. Gregory Hanlon casts doubt on how consistent the links between articulate thought and behaviour were and he argues that belief by itself was 'too unstable to have a consistent effect on the behaviour of many persons'.⁴³ For this reason and for the lack of surviving sermons, historians have generally relied upon the consistory records. However these records alone can hardly tell the whole story of French Protestantism. Although they show the Calvinist church in its most active role one doubts how much of an impact the consistory could have had by itself and how much of an impact it could have had outside the confines of a voluntary, self-contained church.

Montauban, of course, was not such a church, but one more akin to Geneva, where by dint of the Calvinist domination of the city, all inhabitants were deemed to be under the church's authority. This brought with it additional

⁴⁰ Benedict, *Huguenot Population*, p. 103.

⁴¹ R. W. Scribner, 'Social control and the possibility of an urban Reformation' and 'The Reformation as a social movement' in his edited volume of essays, *Popular Culture*, pp. 145-184.

⁴² Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 153-161; Stuart Foster, 'Pierre Viret in France, 1559-1565', Ph.D. thesis (University of St. Andrews, 2000), pp. 94-96. See also Steven E. Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities* (Yale, 1985), p. 154.

⁴³ Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in seventeenth-century France. Catholic and Protestant co-existence in Aquitaine* (Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 10-11.

problems, but they were more than compensated for by the far greater opportunity this gave the church leadership to bring the force of law to support their moral strictures.

The previous chapter demonstrated the interlocking between the ecclesiastical and political elite in Protestant Montauban. It showed how minister and magistrate were often related to one another through kinship and how they increasingly pursued common goals and aspirations. The convergence of interests between these poles of authority provided the underpinning to a more effective disciplining of the town. There must have been disappointment certainly amongst the town's ministers as the exuberance of the Reformation subsided into indifference and ministers failed to achieve the new moral order that they sought. But even when public support for the Reformation began to lose momentum the town's consuls were able to reinforce the ministerial message. The contribution of the town's magistrates was all the more emphatic given the judicial prerogatives of the consuls. In his evidence to the 1563 investigation into the town's ministers, Bernard Constans described how the town's ministers and consistory dealt with miscreants: they 'exhortent et admonestent benignement de changer leur mauaise vie' and if this failed the magistrate was implored to exercise his authority and punish the offender.⁴⁴

The near absence of consistorial records in Montauban has been a blessing in disguise for this study since it has directed research towards the civic records of the town. Some of the town accounts record occasions when individuals or even groups of individuals were fined for circumventing consular decrees. However the greatest prize for the historian has been the discovery of the consuls' register of criminal sentences. It is unlikely that all the sentences that the consuls passed are recorded; there are some years for which no sentences appear in the registers.⁴⁵ A study of the Genevan judicial records suggests that the records of trials were only kept when the case resulted in execution or banishment, when the charge was a particularly grave one, or when the case had a certain curiosity value.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ 'Inquisition sur la justification des ministres de Montauban' (February, 1563) in BN, Ms Français 15879, fo. 64r-77r.

⁴⁵ Compare with Geneva, a town of similar size, where an average of 60 sentences were passed by the civil authorities in the years 1541 to 1550. See Naphy, *Calvin*, pp. 106-111.

⁴⁶ E. William Monter, 'The consistory of Geneva, 1559-1569', *BHR*, 38 (1976), pp. 285-286. See also Bruce Lenman and Geoffrey Parker, 'The state, the community and the criminal law in early modern Europe' in V. Gatrell, Bruce Lenman and Geoffrey Parker (eds.), *Crime and the Law. The social history of crime in western Europe since 1500* (London, 1980), pp. 17-19.

Nevertheless, the register of criminal sentences in Montauban comprises 363 convictions recorded for the period 1561 to 1606 (when the register comes to an end) and casts valuable light upon the relationship between ministers and magistrates.

It is possible to examine the nature of this relationship through an analysis of sentences against sexual misdemeanours. Illicit sexual relations comprise just under one fifth of the total number of sentences meted out by the town's consuls in the years 1561-1606. If one takes into account the whole range of criminal sentences, men outnumbered women by more than three to one. The exception to this trend lay in the realm of illicit sexual relations, with 48 sentences against females and only 14 against males. Only very rarely did the consuls seek to prosecute both guilty parties. This gender bias against women is even more pronounced when one considers that the consuls were more often than not aware of the identity of the male accomplice.⁴⁷ But it would appear that the consuls' primary concern was to rid the town of loose women, many of whom were not natives of Montauban. This saved the consuls from the implications of their actions, namely the costs involved in supporting illegitimate children, who were often cast aside as orphans.

Beyond the consular court, the consistory of Montauban played a parallel role. Its terms of reference were wider, seeking to investigate each case more fully, bringing both guilty parties to recognition of their responsibilities.⁴⁸ The consistory's approach was characteristically more even-handed with slightly more men than women appearing before the consistory for sexual offences.⁴⁹ The surviving consistory records for the late 1590s indicate that the consistory had developed channels between itself and the consuls, forwarding information to the consuls against those that it was unable to act against and bringing to their attention activities that it considered suspect.⁵⁰ Similarly, the consistory told the consuls about a woman who had married in the Catholic Church, without knowing whether her previous husband was dead or alive. Although the consistory had no

⁴⁷ ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 18v, 25v, 28r, 31r, 32r, 33r-33v, 34v, 40v, 43r. See Ulinka Rublack, *The Crimes of Women in early modern Germany* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 134-162.

⁴⁸ ADTG, I 1, fo. 21r-23v, 27v, 30v, 31v, 33v, 34r, 37r-37v, 42r, 43v, 44v, 53v, 59r, 61r, 62v, 77v, 80v, 86r, 92v, 110v-111r, 137v, 141r-141v, 142v, 163r, 168r, 163v-164r, 170v-171r, 174r, 178r-178v, 188r, 231r-232v, 236v-237r, 241v, 278v, 312r, 314r-314v, 318r, 328r, 329r-329v, 332v, 336v, 339r-339v.

⁴⁹ Estèbe, 'Les deliberations du consistoire', pp. 348-349; Schilling, *Civic Calvinism*, p. 62; Graham, *Uses of Reform*, pp. 87, 197, 211. See also Chareyre, 'Great difficulties', pp. 67-72.

⁵⁰ ADTG, I 1, fo. 22r-23v, 174r-174v, 336v, 339r-339v.

direct authority over the Catholic minority within the town, it was clearly able to marshal evidence and information, leaving it to the consuls to pursue.⁵¹

The cosy relationship between the consulate and the consistory is also demonstrated by the way in which the consistory sought to complement consular justice. As has been demonstrated, it was the woman who was invariably the only one punished by the consuls. There is much evidence to suggest that the consuls' sentence was not necessarily the last word on the matter. Indeed the consistory would often seek to use the consuls' procedure, in its own bid to investigate the crime further and bring it to a satisfactory resolution. On 2 March 1598, for example, Catherine Rosselle was sentenced by the consuls to make public reparation for her dissolute behaviour. Two days later, two elders were commissioned to examine the proceedings of the consuls. This revealed that Gabriel Olivier, a notorious philanderer, had been involved with Rosselle. The consistory was able to find two witnesses who corroborated Rosselle's version of the story, that Olivier frequently paid visits to Rosselle's house. Such was Olivier's past record, and such was the evidence stacked up against him, that he was subsequently excommunicated by the consistory, until he admitted his culpability and repented. The co-operation between the consistory and consuls in this case was by no means exceptional in Montauban.⁵²

It is clear from the surviving consistory records that the consulate and the consistory had established a system that shared responsibility in prosecuting the sources of disorder within society. In particular the consuls took an interest in any case which had resulted in pregnancy since there was a social price to pay for such actions. The consuls also took an interest in any case which involved individuals who were not from Montauban or who came from within the town's jurisdiction but beyond the church's jurisdiction in Montauban. In 1590, for example, Jean Saux, a labourer from a neighbouring village 10 km away, was arrested by the consuls and sentenced to death for an act of bestiality.⁵³ The consulate also

⁵¹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 318r.

⁵² ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 37v; ADTG, I 1, fo. 328v, 329r-329v, 332v. See also the cases involving Marguerite Reyne and Pierre Delhoste, again something of a womaniser, in ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 34v and ADTG, I 1, fo. 21r-21v, 22r-23v, 27v, 34r, 37r; Jeanne Capelle in ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 35r and ADTG, I 1, fo. 137v, 141r-141v, 142v; Domenge Vignière and Daniel Fos, ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 35v and ADTG, I 1, fo. 163r, 168r, 178r-178v, 188r; and, Maude Alexandre in ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 33v, 36v and ADTG, I 1, fo. 312r. For the reciprocal influences between minister and magistrate in the government of Protestant communities, see also Boulenger, *Protestants à Nîmes*, pp. 105-118; Mentzer, 'Le consistoire', p. 391; Lenman, 'Limits of godly discipline', p. 137.

⁵³ ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 31r.

presided over those cases that involved Catholics who likewise were beyond consistorial disciplining. In contrast, the consuls would forward cases to the consistory which were of a lesser importance and involved members of the Reformed community. In 1597, for example, a betrothed couple were arrested and imprisoned by the consuls. Despite their resolute denial that the relationship had been consummated, the fiancée's pregnancy soon told another story. However the criminal records of the town make no mention of any sentence passed. Instead, the case turned up before the consistory where the couple promised to make public reparation for their sin.⁵⁴ It would appear that there was a division of labour between the consulate and the consistory, and there was a mutual exchange of information between the town's two bodies of social control.

The co-operation between the consulate and consistory is again manifest in the stance taken against blasphemy. There are many examples of individuals being fined by the consuls for irreverence shown to the name of God.⁵⁵ The town's ministers viewed blasphemy as 'vn grief et enorme peché, repugnant aussi au troisieme commandement' which could not go without 'vne tresaspre et rigoreuse punition'.⁵⁶ In 1566, a more elaborate punishment in Montauban was devised for blasphemers. This involved the construction of an iron cage, which was installed upon one of the arches of the bridge spanning the river Tarn. Those accused of besmirching the sacred name of God were locked in the cage, and plunged into the river three times.⁵⁷ Although the register of criminal sentences does not make any mention of any individual being dealt in this manner after 1567, the consuls were nevertheless maintaining the cage in 1571 and it remained within the remit of the town executioner in 1588.⁵⁸ The cage must have subsequently fallen out of use, being re-established in 1606 'a cause de renyment

⁵⁴ ADTG, I 1, fo. 231r, 232r-232v, 236v-237r.

⁵⁵ ADTG, 7 CC 9, fo. 22v; ADTG, 7 CC 11, fo. 7r; ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 28r; ADTG, 7 CC 15, fo. 25r. See also, ACSA, BB 3, fo. 399r.

⁵⁶ [Jean Chassagnion], Des Grands et Redovtables Ivgemens et pvnitions de Dieu aduenues au monde, principalement sur les grands, à cause de leurs meffaits, contreuenans aux Commandemens de la Loy de Dieu (Morges, 1581), pp. 166-167.

⁵⁷ ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 17r, 18r: 'Bernard Faure fils du feu Pierre teyssier de toilles des faubourg de Tarn de Montauban... pour certaines desobeissances et blasphemes dites à Jehanne Bloty sa mère... fut condamne à faire amende honorable un jour d'audience de la court de consuls en chemise, tete et pieds nus, avec une torche de cire ardent aux mains. Et apres este mys dans la cage de fer nouvellement faite... pour punition des renymens et blasphemateurs du nom de Dieu et este plonge dans la riviere pour trois foyes'.

⁵⁸ ADTG, 7 CC 10, fo. 15v; ADTG, Archives communale AA5, Livre noir, fo. 33r-34v.

et blaspheme quy se profferement ordinairement en ceste ville'.⁵⁹ Clearly the consistory was used to the consulate dealing with sins of this nature and felt confident enough of the consuls' support in threatening those that refused to submit to its judgement with consular scrutiny.⁶⁰ In Montauban a close level of co-operation began to emerge in the enforcement of values which were communally held.

While efforts were made to regulate public behaviour in the town considerable efforts were also made to promote the new religion at first by prohibiting the Mass and obliging the townsfolk to attend Protestant services. In 1595 four tailors were summoned before the consistory and sternly admonished for 'immitant l'idolatrie de la papauté' and marking the feast of St Lucy by taking the day off and indulging in 'une infinité de jeux et desbauches'. They were warned that if such behaviour persisted 'ils seront reprinses par les magistratz'.⁶¹ Attendance at prayers and preaching became a civic occasion, with the consuls employing a bell-ringer specifically to call the town to worship and paying the wages of the town's ministers and readers and the precentors who led the congregation's psalm-singing.⁶² The town consuls took responsibility for providing, refurbishing and paying for the upkeep of places for worship and took an important part in the preparations for the quarterly celebration of the Lord's Supper.⁶³ Similarly the consuls were charged with maintaining order inside the temple, in particular by resolving the squabbles arising from the saving of seats and regulating the hordes of beggars that obstructed the doors of the temple.⁶⁴ The elders drew up lists of those who failed to attend services, calling them before the consistory to give account of themselves.⁶⁵ The municipal accounts demonstrate how the consuls supported this effort, prosecuting those that did not abide by the rules. Mule drivers, hawkers, and those harvesting their crops were all fined by

⁵⁹ ADTG, 1 BB 35, fo. 99r, 100r. Similar punishment was meted out in other Protestant cities; see Rodolphe Reuss, *La justice criminelle et la police des moeurs à Strasbourg au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle* (Strasbourg, 1885), p. 254; Robbins, *City on the Ocean sea*, p. 238.

⁶⁰ ADTG, I 1, fo. 154r, 210v, 215r, 216v, 225r, 242v.

⁶¹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 87r.

⁶² ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 47r, 53r-53v, 58v, 101v-102r; ADTG, 7 CC 8, fo. 16v; ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 55r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 136r, 137r, 207v, 254r, 306v; ACSA, BB 2, fo. 91v.

⁶³ ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 35r, 56v, 98v, 113r, 119r, 213r; ADTG, 7 CC 9, fo. 61r, 102r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 255r; ADTG, 1 BB 35, fo. 117r, 118r; ADTG, 1 BB 37, fo. 15v, 64v-66v, 70r-71r, 95v, 109r; ADTG, 1 BB 40, fo. 140r-143r. See also Guicharnaud, *Montauban au XVIIe*, pp. 92-99; Henri de France, 'Le grand temple de Montauban', *BSATG*, 8 (1880), pp. 245-273.

⁶⁴ ADTG, I 1, fo. 82v-83r, 325r, 333r, 340v; ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 18r, 19r.

the consuls, with the proceeds going to the treasurer of the municipal poor relief. For example, in July 1584, two labourers were fined 2 écus each ‘pour avoyr coupe de bled le jour de dymenge’, while in April 1585, ‘Jehan Rafine a este condemné pour avoyr crie le jour de dymenge par la ville, de raizyn confys a vendre’, for which he was fined a smaller sum of 5 sous.⁶⁶ Similarly the town consuls prosecuted innkeepers who continued to serve food and drink and provide entertainment ‘le jour de dimanche pendant le presche... contre la prohibition’.⁶⁷ The consistory also pursued those who tried to circumvent the provisions, warning a cobbler that if he continued to work in the hours before the Sunday preaching, he would be reported to the magistrates. The cobbler came before the consistory and was again warned ‘de ne travailler point le iour du repos saintifiee par le seigneur pour ne donner point scandale’, an instruction to which he complied.⁶⁸

Besides Sunday worship, the church in Montauban provided an additional public service every Wednesday morning at 8 o’clock. On 19 June 1585, the town crier announced that the opening of shops was forbidden before this service had finished under pain of a fine of 2 écus.⁶⁹ The consuls took this new provision seriously, and in subsequent weeks, groups of up to 18 at a time were being fined ‘pour avoyr ouvrer les boutiques le mercredi à l’heure du presche’. This level of surveillance continued through the years.⁷⁰ The consuls were also implored to enforce similar measures on those occasions when public prayers were held in response to exceptional events such as a military victory.⁷¹

The regulation of church services and moral matters such as illicit sexual behaviour and blasphemy demonstrate how closely the town council and consistory worked with one another. Having established this tradition of co-operation the Calvinist elite of the town were able to move beyond their original and more obvious concerns in the creation of a ‘godly’ society to a more sophisticated level of regulating lifestyle matters. Montauban provides a striking

⁶⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 31v, 214r.

⁶⁶ ADTG, 7 CC 9, fo. 32r; ADTG, 7 CC 15, fo. 16r, 26r; ADTG, 5 FF 2, fo. 22r.

⁶⁷ ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 20v. In 1569, the consuls of the neighbouring Protestant town of Saint Antonin also issued a proclamation against frequenting ‘les tavernes pendant les presches’, see ACSA, BB 1, fo. 198v.

⁶⁸ ADTG, I 1, fo. 56v, 58r, 318r.

⁶⁹ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 23r. Similar provisions were made for neighbouring Protestant towns such as Saint Antonin, see ACSA, BB 2, fo. 110r.

⁷⁰ ADTG, 7 CC 16, fo. 12v, 13v; ADTG, 7 CC 25, fo. 10v. See also, ADTG, 1 BB 30, fo. 3r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 90r, 281r, 323r.

and rare example of a town that was successful in controlling local entertainment culture. Few Calvinist societies were able to match the extent to which games, theatre, dancing and dress were affected by the emerging moral order within the town.

The distinctiveness of Montauban's experience stands out when the town is compared to the Calvinist experience in other parts of Europe. In the Netherlands, for example, the Calvinist ministers had hoped that the civic authorities would join them in imposing a new 'godly' regime, as they had experienced in exile and as they imagined existed in Geneva. But while the Calvinist ascendancy was assured in the Netherlands, the civil magistrates were not prepared to co-operate with the ministers in imposing a new 'yoke on the community's shoulders'.⁷² The result was a two-tier system of church life in which Calvinism was accepted as the official creed of the provinces but full membership of the church was confined to the 'lidmaten', an inner core of individuals who were prepared to submit themselves to the full discipline of the church.⁷³ In this instance, the ambivalence of the magistrates towards the moral agenda of the ministers clearly impeded the general application of communal discipline.

In the heady days of the early 1560s in Scotland a raft of moral legislation at the national level such as the Adultery Act of 1563 accompanied the Calvinist ascendancy. But again the full force of this legislation was rarely, if ever, put into practice. 'By insisting on a church which included all', Michael Graham suggests, 'the Scots reformers created a situation in which they had to play to the lowest common denominator, due both to the recalcitrance of much of the population and the hesitancy of many traditionally-minded elders to view something like a game, a bonfire, or celebration of Christmas sinful'. Furthermore, he points out that although the Reformed church enjoyed official legal status, it could not always rely on the support of the magistracy. In fact, he concludes, 'the Scottish kirk may

⁷¹ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 185r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 297r.

⁷² Andrew Pettegree, 'The politics of toleration in the Free Netherlands, 1572-1620' in Ole Peter Grell & Bob Scribner (eds.), *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 182-198; Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 248-249.

⁷³ This division was perhaps first presaged in Bucer's Strasbourg with the creation of the 'Christlichen Gemeinschaften'. See Burnett, *The Yoke of Christ*, pp. 180-187, 202-205; Gottfried Hammann, 'Ecclesiological motifs behind the creation of the *Christlichen Gemeinschaften*' in D. F. Wright (ed.), *Martin Bucer. Reforming church and community* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 129-143; Euan Cameron, 'The godly society in the theory and practice of the European situation' in W. J. Shiels & Diana Wood (eds.), *Voluntary Religion* (Worcester, 1986), pp. 137-139, 142.

have had the worst of both worlds – an unenthusiastic membership and little state support'.⁷⁴ While the civic authorities were prepared to classify sin as crime when formulating legislation they were much less keen to punish 'sin'. The lack of political support on a local level for the 'godly' society is self-evident when one compares the disciplinary practices of the consistories in the Huguenot strongholds of southern France with those of Scotland for the period 1560-1600. 55 per cent of cases dealt with by Scottish kirk-sessions involved the regulation of sexual behaviour, compared with only 6 per cent of the cases dealt with by the southern French consistories. Meanwhile only 0.5 per cent of cases in Scotland dealt with controlling popular culture (gaming, dancing, and drinking) while in southern France the figure was much higher at 18 per cent.⁷⁵

The disparity between the disciplinary practices of Scotland and southern France demonstrates the different status that the Reformed churches had in each kingdom. In Scotland Protestantism became the official religion against a background of general apathy, if not scepticism, towards the new moral strictures. In the southern French strongholds, however, the Protestant communities existed often in defiance of the crown and had to struggle heroically through the Wars of Religion in order to survive. Even in their area of greatest strength in southern France, the Huguenot population was never more than a minority and great efforts were made to consolidate a distinctive identity in the face of considerable adversity. In those towns that were dominated by a Huguenot population, however, these efforts could be supported particularly effectively by a partnership between the local church and political authorities. In these towns the authorities recognised that they had a position of remarkable freedom which could be utilised to deepen and broaden Calvinist identity – and in particular the disciplinary scope of the consistory – in the town. What is exceptional about Montauban was that the church's discipline was backed up with the penalties of the local criminal jurisdiction. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this co-operation in the creation of a new moral order in Montauban. The support of the magistracy enabled the consistory to extend its moral agenda from illicit sexual behaviour, blasphemy and sabbath breach towards popular entertainment culture.

⁷⁴ Graham, *Uses of Reform*, pp. 341-342 and his article, 'The civil sword and the Scottish Kirk, 1560-1600' in W. Fred Graham (ed.), *Later Calvinism, international perspectives* (Kirkville, 1994), pp. 237-248.

⁷⁵ Graham, *Uses of Reform*, pp. 329-340.

But the campaign to contain popular entertainment culture was hardly the preserve of Protestant reformers. Bruce Lenman has argued that ‘historians have been too ready to ascribe to Protestantism attitudes shared by the Roman Catholics of the Counter Reformation, or indeed by most of pre-Reformation Latin Christendom’.⁷⁶ Bernd Moeller cites the mid-fifteenth century town council records of Basle which declare that ‘the government of every city is established primarily to augment and support the honour of God and to prohibit all injustice and especially the grossest sins and crimes according to the ordinance of holy Christianity’. The notion of a ‘corpus christianum’ or sacred society was familiar to townsfolk who saw their personal salvation very much tied up with the communal salvation of the town.⁷⁷ In this way the sins of individuals were never perceived as purely personal problems but had a much wider impact requiring communal reparation so as to allay divine wrath. Throughout the sixteenth century royal and ecclesiastical legislation repeatedly sought to control and even eradicate popular practices such as the playing of games and the exuberance of the carnivalesque.⁷⁸ In the second half of the sixteenth century the diocesan statutes of Lyon reveal a gathering campaign against popular pastimes and rituals, many of which were perceived as remnants of bacchanal paganism.⁷⁹ In 1558 and 1564 the Parlement of Toulouse issued proclamations against players of cards and dice and

⁷⁶ Lenman, ‘Limits of godly discipline’, p. 124. See also R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550-1750* (London & New York, 1989), pp. 122-123.

⁷⁷ Moeller, *Imperial Cities*, pp. 46-47.

⁷⁸ For example, for edicts against blasphemy, see *Arrest de la Court de Parlement de ne iurer & blasphemmer le nom de Dieu, de ne se pourmener es Eglises, & n’aller es tauernes & cabaretz* (Le Mans, [1569]); *Arrest contre les blasphemateurs du saint nom de Dieu... faisans oeuvres manuelles ès iours de Dimanches & festes* (Paris, 1572); *Les defences de part du Roy à l’encontre de ceux qui rangent & blasphement le nom de Dieu* (Lyon, 1574); *Les defeses de par le Roy a toutes personnes de ne iurer, blasphemmer, renier & faire autres vilains sermes cōtre l’hōnneur de Dieu: sur les peines y cōtenues* (Le Mans, 1574). For edicts against entertainment culture, see ‘Ordonnance de la cour touchant les jeux des paumes, des quilles, courte boulle... de dez et des cartes... & de la vont aux tauernes & cabarets, & vaquent à commessations & gourmandises’ (27 March, 1547) in Pierre Rebuffi, *Ordonnances loix, edictz, et statvtz Royaux de France* (2 vols., Lyon, 1559), II. 271-272 and *Ordonnance du Roy, contre les blasphemateurs, berlandiers, tauerniers, cabaretiers, Basteleurs et autres personnes faisans exercise de jeux dissolus. Auec inionction aux Archeuesques, Euesques, Pasteurs & Curés de resider sur leurs benefices, aux peines y contenues* (Paris, 1588). For edicts on sumptuary codes, see ordinances against ‘tous luxes, sumptuositez, & despenses superflues, en quoy nosdicts subiets se sont licentieusement adonnez, & la plus part se consommet tous les iours, tant en viures que habillemens’ in *Ordonnance dv Roy sur le faict & reglement de la police* (Paris, 1572), sig. A2r, and the bishop of Valence’s instructions against women ‘qui portez le mirouer attaché à vostre ceinture, pour regarder à tous momens d’heure, si vous estes bien coiffées, regardez dans ce mirouer aussi souvent pour le moins, que vous faictes dans l’autre, & vous verrez combien vostre ame est mal coissee, & combien il y a d’ordures, de vilanie, & de saleté’ in *Deux instructions et trois epistres, faictes et envoyées au clergé et peuple de Valence et Dye* (Paris, 1558), fo. 10r.

⁷⁹ Hoffman, *Church and Community*, pp. 87-88.

those that idled time away in the taverns.⁸⁰ In the 1580s, provincial church councils at Bordeaux and Aix denounced the social evils of dancing, seeking to reduce the disruptive number of annual masquerades and festivals.⁸¹ Jesuit preachers were particularly vociferous in their attacks against gambling, card-playing, dancing and the vanities of cosmetics and jewellery.⁸² Penitential confraternities were established to promote devotional practice and good works and their members were warned to stay away from dances and indulgent pastimes.⁸³ Many Catholic authors and preachers such as Jean Gerson, Guillaume Briçonnet, Jean Benedicti, Carlo Borromeo, Claude de Saintes and François de Sales echoed these themes.⁸⁴ There was clearly an earnest effort to re-orientate mind-sets, to efface folk beliefs and popular practices which countered Christian precepts.

Diocesan statutes sought to instil order amongst the clergy so that they could present a good example to their congregations. In 1567, the canons of the cathedral chapter of Montauban – which at this time were convening in a neighbouring town – drew up articles ‘pour la reformation de tous les habitués’ which included the requirement that all clergy ‘vivre les tous avec toute modesté et amytié’ by avoiding ‘la frequentation des jeux publiques dissoluez’ and ‘les tavernes cabaretz’ and by eschewing ‘la companie des personnes malvivantes et des malvais exemple’.⁸⁵ To some extent Catholic civil authorities responded to these calls for reform. In Toulouse, a recurring theme in the town council records was the vow to purge the city of blasphemy, gambling, drunkenness and debauchery and model themselves as ‘la république chrétienne’. The city fathers took an increasingly tough line on prostitution, closing a number of ‘public houses’ in 1527 and confining prostitution to the ‘château vert’, before closing this in 1557. But 40 years later Thomas Platter was still talking about the houses of disrepute across the town, openly frequented by men in broad daylight.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Répertoire bibliographique des livres imprimés en France au seizième siècle, ed. L. Desgraves et al. (32 vols., Baden-Baden, 1968-80), XX. pp. 87, 93.

⁸¹ Robert Mandrou, Introduction à la France moderne, essai de psychologie historique 1500-1640 (Paris, 1961), pp. 229-230.

⁸² John W. O'Malley, The First Jesuits (Harvard, 1993), pp. 75, 196-197.

⁸³ Robert A. Schneider, Public life in Toulouse, 1463-1789. From municipal republic to cosmopolitan city (Cornell, 1989), pp. 116-118.

⁸⁴ For example, Francis de Sales, Introduction to the Devout Life, trans. Michael Day (London, 1962), pp. 175-179. See also Mandrou, Introduction à la France moderne, pp. 231-232.

⁸⁵ ADTG, GG 227, fo. 38v-44r.

⁸⁶ Schneider, Public life in Toulouse, pp. 64, 106, 175.

The extent to which Catholic cities created ‘godly’ societies in the sixteenth century is at the present moment an under-developed part of the literature. The indications are that although town decrees increasingly sought to restrict certain types of behaviour, the institutional response was limited and considerably delayed. Robert Mandrou argues that the civil authorities were scarcely interested in confirming ecclesiastical prohibitions against dance, for example.⁸⁷ Philip Hoffman argues that the Catholic city fathers of Lyon only really began to make inroads against popular entertainment culture in the aftermath of the Wars of Religion as a means to obviate popular unrest and disorder.⁸⁸ What is distinctive about Montauban is the thorough-going attempt to re-order the town’s moral life from the moment of the Calvinist ascendancy in the town. Despite the limitations associated with christianising any society, the experience of Montauban communicates the extent to which theory was being put into practice, the ways in which a new confessional identity was being forged for the town. This development was contingent upon the growth of effective institutional structures with which to regulate society. The interlocking of the religious and political elites identified in the previous chapter together with the particular circumstances of adversity in which Protestant communities existed in southern France provided a crucial impulsion towards a ‘godly’ society by creating a constructive partnership between minister and magistrate. Through formal and informal modes of exchange, the ecclesiastical and political authorities of the town pursued a common agenda through which new opportunities for social control emerged.

Research into the municipal accounts demonstrates how the consistory was not the only instrument intent upon rooting out idle pastimes. The first surviving account book for the town in 1564 reveals how three men were fined 50 sous each for playing cards on the river bank beneath the town’s walls.⁸⁹ The town crier from time to time proclaimed the consuls’ decrees against such games and the consuls subsequently targeted those that flagrantly violated these provisions, dealing their cards and dicing in public places and causing scandal,

⁸⁷ Mandrou, *Introduction à la France moderne*, pp. 231-232.

⁸⁸ Hoffman, *Church and Community*, p. 94.

⁸⁹ ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 24v.

particularly on Sundays.⁹⁰ Card-playing, besides being a flippant activity, was perceived as a source of numerous disorders such as deceptions, quarrelling and illegal winnings.⁹¹ Sometimes the consistory informed the consuls about those who played games and asked them to take action against them and on other occasions it would appear that the consuls themselves came across groups of people playing games. The consuls subsequently issued summons for the miscreants to appear before the consulate and pay a fine.⁹² Sometimes this fine was as much as 2 écus which was paid directly into the poor relief coffers; those that failed to pay up were locked up in the municipal jail.⁹³ And it was not merely the playing of cards in public places that caught the attention of the consuls. There are numerous examples of groups of individuals being fined for playing cards in their own houses.⁹⁴ The consuls were not only concerned with what was going on within their town walls. They also had jurisdiction over the neighbouring suburbs, villages and countryside within a 10 km radius of the town.⁹⁵ In 1578, two of the town's consuls 's'en allarent au Fau parce que leur avoit este demeure que le jour du dimanche plusieurs paisans jouent leur argent a grandz sommes au grand escandalle de tout les peuples', for which they were fined 'ung teston chasung, pour este employé au proffit de la ville'.⁹⁶

Playing cards were not the only pastimes to be targeted; the consulate also fined people for indulging in games of skittles and boules.⁹⁷ There were also games involving magic, astrology and fortune-telling and it is no great surprise that these were seized upon by the town's ministers as particularly pernicious.

⁹⁰ For example, in the neighbouring Protestant town of Saint Antonin, the consuls proclaimed 'il est prohibé et deffendu à toutes personnes de quelque qualité et condition qu'ils soyent de ne jouer publiquement ny autrement a jeu de cartes detz ny autres jeux de sort... ny jurer ny blaphemer le nom de Dieu ne professer paroles dishonestes ny chanter chansons dissolues sur peyne de prison pour la premier fois et de punytion corporelle pour la second' in 'Ordonnances de police' in ACSA, FF 16 (6 April, 1588). See also 'Ordonnance pour la police et le bon ordre de la ville de Nismes' (1 August, 1586) in Léon Ménard, *Histoire civile, ecclésiastique et littéraire de la ville de Nismes, avec des notes et les preuves* (7 vols., Paris, 1750-58), V. 182.

⁹¹ Lambert Daneau, *Brieve remonstrance sur les jeux de hazard, et principalement de dez & de cartes* ([Geneva], 1574) and his *Deux traitez... Le second... sur les jeux de cartes et de dez* ([Geneva], 1579) and his *Brieve remonstrance sur les ieux de sort ou de hazard* ([Geneva], Pierre Prunier, 1591), all in the FRB project paper files. See also Michel Reulos, 'Jeux interdits et réglementés', *Les Jeux à la Renaissance. Actes de la colloque à Tours, 1980* (Paris, 1982), pp. 635-644.

⁹² ADTG, I 1, fo. 93v.

⁹³ ADTG, 7 CC 9, fo. 25v, 30r; ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 5v, 8v, 11r, 17v, 18v-19r; ADTG, 7 CC 15, fo. 19r-19v, 21v, 22v; ADTG, 7 CC 17, fo. 7r; ADTG, 7 CC 18, fo. 12r, 14v; ADTG, I 1, fo. 236r-237r.

⁹⁴ ADTG, 7 CC 10, fo. 20v; ADTG, 7 CC 15, fo. 25r.

⁹⁵ Le Bret, *Histoire de Montauban*, ed. Marcellin & Ruck, I. 94-99.

⁹⁶ ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 17v.

One game called ‘dodechedron de fortune’ was described by its inventor as ‘le plus subtil & artificiel’ of games, proceeding according to ‘les reigles & demonstrations de l’astrologie iudicaire obseruant ses effectz & proprietz assignées aux douze maisons du ciel’.⁹⁸ The consistory records of Montauban describe the horror upon discovering similar such games, for example in October 1598 the arrival of a wheel of fortune which was luring all the young people astray and providing an opportunity for them to fritter away their money. An elder was immediately delegated to investigate who had brought the game into the town and to report his findings to the consuls who were to be implored ‘ne souffrir les scandales’ from this profane pastime.⁹⁹

It would not be true to say, however, that ministers and magistrates were entirely at one in their approach to gaming. While the consuls tended to be socially specific in identifying those that played games, the consistory had no qualms in hauling before it, and rebuking, members of the local nobility such as the sieurs of Verlhac and Latour ‘pour avoir joué leur argent et chevaux au tripot et blasphemé le nom de Dieu’.¹⁰⁰

Acrobatic performances, comedians, carnival and masquerades, and theatre all became things of the past for Calvinist Montauban. In 1597, the consuls approached Jean Constans, minister of Montauban, to inform him that certain actors had arrived in the town and had asked permission ‘de jouer publiquement certaines comedies ou tragedies’. The consuls told Constans that they did not know how to respond to this request since it was the first that they had heard of since ‘l’introduction de la Religion’. After consulting the consistory, Constans advised the consulate that such events only incited ‘curiosité, desbauches et perte de temps’, while not contributing to the ‘édification’ of the townsfolk.¹⁰¹ The anti-theatrical prejudice was clearly deeply embedded in Montauban, perhaps because the element of freedom within a performance provided a release from everyday life and threatened the hegemony of the pulpit:

If you will learne to rebell against princes, closely to carry treasons, to consume treasures, to practise idleness, to sing and talke of filthy love and venery, if you will learne to deride, quippe, scorne, scoffe, mock, and

⁹⁷ ADTG, 7 CC 9, fo. 30r; ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 17v; ADTG, 7 CC 18, fo. 11r-11v.

⁹⁸ [Jean de Meung], *Le plaisant ieu du Dodechedron de Fortune* (Paris, 1560), sig. A2r.

⁹⁹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 352v.

¹⁰⁰ ADTG, I 1, fo. 128r. See also Chareyre, ‘Great difficulties’, pp. 88-92.

¹⁰¹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 255v.

flout, to flatter and smoth, if you will learne to play the Divell, the swaggerer, the whoremaster, the glutton, the drunkard, the iniurious or incestous person, if you wil learne to become proud, haughty, and arrogant: finally if you wil learn to contemne God and all his lawes, to care neither for heaven nor hell, and to commit all kind of sinne and mischeefe with secresie and art, you need not goe to any other Schoole, for all these good examples may you see painted before your eyes in enterludes and playes.¹⁰²

The ban on play performances did not preclude the possibility, however, of plays that had a moral or a pedagogic function. In May 1597, for example, a teacher at the college asked the consistory for guidance ‘s’il pourroit faire jouer a certains enfans de sa classe la tragedie de Jephté’, a play by George Buchanan.¹⁰³ Once permission was received the consulate would often make money available to cover the expenses of setting up a temporary stage for the event.¹⁰⁴

But the support and assistance of the magistrates for the ministers’ moral agenda was not without its limits and this is demonstrated most clearly when one considers the issues of dancing and dress. Right from the beginning of the Calvinist ascendancy the Huguenots had been associated with their aversion towards dancing.¹⁰⁵ It became a favourite subject of Protestant authors who expounded their arguments with reference to biblical and patristic texts. Thus Jean de Chassagnion in his book entitled, *Des Jugemens et Punitions de Dieu* (1581), wrote:

Tu chantes (dit Basile) des chansons profanes, ayant mis en oubli les Pseaumes et humnes que tu as appris. Tu remues les pieds et fautes et danses, fol et mal-aisé que tu es, au lieu qu’il faudroit ployer les genous en prieres deva[n]t Dieu. Les filles s’en retournent ayans perdu leur viginité et les femmes mariees sans avoir gardé leur pudicité a leurs maris. Car si

¹⁰² I. G., *A Refutation of the Apologie for Actors*, (London, 1615) cited in Christie Desmet, *Reading Shakespeare’s Characters. Rhetoric, ethics and identity* (Massachussets, 1992), pp. 19-20. For similar sentiments, see also William Prynne’s, *Histrio-matrix. The players scourge, or, actors tragedie... Wherein it is largely evidenced, by divers arguments, by concurring authorities and resolutions of sundry texts of Scripture... That popular stage-playes are sinfull, heathenish, lewde, ungodly spectacles, and most pernicious corruptions; condemned in all ages, as intolerable mischiefes to churches, to republicks, to the manners, mindes, and soules of men. And that the profession of play-poets, of stage-players, are unlawfull, infamous and misbeseeming of Christians* (London, 1633). For a wider discussion of these themes see Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (University of California, 1981), pp. 79-80. I am indebted to Rachel Heard of the English department of St Andrews for these references.

¹⁰³ George Buchanan, *Jephete ou le voeu, tragedie* (Paris, Robert Estienne, 1587).

¹⁰⁴ ADTG, I 1, fo. 254r; ADTG, I BB 30, fo. 13r, 14r. See also Barish, *Antitheatrical Prejudice*, pp. 82-83.

¹⁰⁵ See n. 28 above and Charles Bost, *Poésies populaires huguenotes du Vivarais du XVIe siècle à la fin de la révolte camisarde* (Alençon, 1941), p. 7.

quelques vnes d'aventure ont euité le peché quant au faict, la pensee toutefois en a este atteinte. Oyez (dit Chrysostome) ces choses, vous filles et vous femmes mariees, qui n'avez point honte de danser et baler aux nopces des autres, & de fouiller ainsi vostre sexe. Là où il y a de la danse lasciuue, là certainement est le diable, qui en est l'autheur.¹⁰⁶

And yet to outside observers visiting France the French appeared to be addicted to dancing. Sir Robert Dallington recorded how

Yee shall not onely see the Damoiselles & them of the better sort but every poor draggletayle even to the coblers daughter, that can dance with good measure, & Arte... making musick of their own voices, without any instrument. And rather than faile, the old women themselves... who have more toes than teeth, these that are left, leaping in their heads, like Jacks in virginals, will bear their part. This argueth (I will not say a lightnes & immodesty in behaviour) but a stirring spirit, & livenesse in the French nature.¹⁰⁷

Fifty years later in the mid-seventeenth century, another visitor described dancing as 'an exercise much used by the French who do naturally affect it':

It seemeth this natural inclination is so strong & deep rooted; that neither age nor the absence of a smiling fortune can prevail against it. For on this dancing green, there assembled not only youth and Gentry, but age also & beggery. Old wives which could not put foot to ground without a crutch, in the streets; had here taught their feet to hoble... In this mixture of age and condition, did we observe them at their pastime; the rags being so interwoven with the silks, & wrinkled browes so interchangeable mingled with fresh beauties.¹⁰⁸

And this was precisely the problem. Dancing was an ingrained element of popular and elite culture, an integral part of the annual cycle of festivals and feast days which had been associated with the traditional liturgical calendar. It was an integral part of sociability; in particular, dancing always had accompanied ceremonies to celebrate engagements and weddings. Despite its enduring popularity dancing – in particular that associated with the carnivalesque – ceased to exist in Montauban. In a ditty of a violinist from Toulouse written by Augier Gaillard, a local poet and writer, the violinist exclaimed, 'Alas, Augié, I must tell

¹⁰⁶ [Chassagnion], *Grands et Redovtables Ivgemens*, pp. 308-309. See also, Lambert Daneau, *Traité des danses auquel est amplement résolue la question assavoir s'il est permis au Chrestien de danser* ([Geneva], 1579) and Jean Boiseul, *Traité contre les danses* (La Rochelle, 1606).

¹⁰⁷ Sir Robert Dallington (1598) in Lough, *France Observed*, p. 120.

¹⁰⁸ Peter Heylyn (1656) in *Ibid.*, p. 121.

you/ that at Montauban I do not have any business/ because as someone has told me they detest dancing/ more than in any other town in France/ and when they happen to see someone dancing/ it seems to them that they are seeing a flying ass'.¹⁰⁹

An analysis of the surviving consistory records for the late 1590s indicates that over a quarter of the cases dealt with by the consistory concerned dancing and games.¹¹⁰ By this time it is clear that the consistory was taking a vigorous stance against dancing, and indeed the evils of this social activity were expounded on at length in preaching. The faithful were admonished by the ministers not to frequent 'les bottes et autres fetes solemnelles que les papistes ont accoustumee d'observer et notamment celle de Caucelles'.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, dancing proved an alluring, and therefore ineradicable, part of popular culture. Examples abound of the consistory censuring individuals who participated in festivals and dancing in neighbouring Catholic vicinities.¹¹² The consistory exhorted the magistrates to take a more trenchant line on dancing in order 'esviter le iugement de Dieu duquel nous sommes menant'.¹¹³ The consuls made a vague response that they would 'reprimer les insolences' but it was hardly one of their priorities. More often than not it fell upon the consistory to inform the consuls of flagrant instances of dancing. Learning of a dance on 17 January 1596, the consistory gave instruction that one of the elders 'tiendra l'oeil sur ces facons de fere et aussy tost que le violin y sera et le bal dressé il promet en advertir le magistrat ensemble l'assemblee par y aviser'.¹¹⁴

While there are clear signs of the consuls taking action against those that infringed the ordinances of the town regarding blasphemy, sabbath breach and the playing of games, there is no evidence of the town consuls supporting the consistory's line on dancing. Dancing provides a clear example of the distinction between crime and sin, between civic and church discipline. And there was a reason for this distinction. More often than not, it seemed to be the consistory

¹⁰⁹ 'Hélas, Augié, el cal que ieu vous diguo/ A Montalba n'a pas my boutiguo,/ Car l'on me dis qu'els haissou la danso/ Mai que no fan en vilo de la Franso,/ Et quant degus elis vesou bala:/ Lan semble qu'elz vezou un aze voula' cited in Charles Garrisson, Augié Gaillard, Roudié de Rabastens (Paris, 1886), p. 254.

¹¹⁰ Estèbe, 'Délibérations du consistoire', p. 348.

¹¹¹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 242v. The word 'bottes' derives from the Occitan, 'boto' meaning a saint's day's celebration.

¹¹² ADTG, I 1, fo. 4v, 93r, 98v, 107v, 133v, 138r, 142r, 144v, 151r, 154v, 156r, 158v, 193r, 242r, 276r, 299v-301r, 307r, 312r-312v, 315r, 321v, 323v, 341r.

¹¹³ ADTG, I BB 27, fo. 30v.

summoning members of the political elite to give account of themselves for having attended various dances. In 1596, for example, Jean de Scorbiac, a *conseiller* in the seneschal court and first consul for that year, found himself in an awkward position with the consistory for having organised a masked ball and banquet, in which was performed Robert Garnier's La Tragedie de Hippolyte.¹¹⁵ In short, the political elite was never going to assist in pursuing a social activity that was as much a part of elite culture as popular culture.

Dancing provides one example where Calvinist discipline ran ahead of the social norms of the time; dress was another. Patrice Chereau's film, 'La Reine Margot' (1993) depicts Protestants in Paris at the time of the massacre of St Bartholomew's day as being conspicuous by their dress, in this case attired exclusively, almost as if in uniform, in black tunics with white collars. This is clearly an anachronism, which draws most of its strength from the stereotypical image of Calvinists based upon early seventeenth-century portraits of Dutch Protestants. In sixteenth-century Montauban, the consistory's concern was to act more against excess and luxury rather than creating a Huguenot uniform of black hats and white collars. Again the Calvinist concern for appropriate rather than lavish and flamboyant dress was part of an ancient tradition, stretching back to the early church fathers and even before them to Seneca. Tertullian in his Apparel of Women argues, for example, that had God wished us to wear fancy garments, he would have produced sheep with 'purple or sky-blue fleeces'. Clement of Alexandria wrote that 'these flimsy and luxurious things... with the scanty protection that they afford, do nothing more than disgrace the body, inviting prostitution'.¹¹⁶

This theme of honest comeliness was taken up by the national synods of the Reformed churches and by certain Protestant authors.¹¹⁷ There are, however,

¹¹⁴ ADTG, I 1, fo. 93r.

¹¹⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 144v, 151v, 154v, 156r, 158v. See also the high-society engagement party organised by the Bardon family, ADTG, I 1, fo. 299v, 300r, 301r, 307r, 312r.

¹¹⁶ Judy Kronenfeld, King Lear and the Naked Truth. Rethinking the language of religion and resistance (Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 126-131.

¹¹⁷ The National Synod of Orléans (1563) instructed the churches to admonish the faithful of both sexes 'to be very modest in their apparel, and to avoid all excesses and superfluities' while the National Synod of Sainte Foy insisted that 'both sexes are required to keep modesty in their hair, and everything else, that no scandal may be given to our neighbour' in Calvinism in Europe. A collection of documents, pp. 94, 115. See also the literature that accompanied these injunctions: St. Cyprian, Traité touchant la discipline et les habits des filles, trans. Lambert Daneau (Geneva, 1580) and [Lambert Daneau], Traité de l'estat honneste des Chrestiens en leur accoustrement (n.p., 1580) which dealt with 'des parures & ornemens' and 'des habits & accoustremens des femmes chrestiennes'. Information derived from the FRB project paper files.

few if any examples of action being taken on this issue by individual Protestant churches. Most churches across France were too preoccupied with resolving disputes and investigating illicit sexual behaviour to try to re-fashion sumptuary codes. In Montauban, however, dress codes began to be developed so as to encourage modesty. The constitution of the newly-founded academy in Montauban in 1600 instructed students ‘ne porteront point de cravates, ni bourguignottes, ni des cannes ou bâtons, ni autre chose contraire à la modestie, ni des cheveux longs’ and, significantly for the first time, it prescribed that all students ‘seront vêtus de noir’.¹¹⁸

Even for those that deplored extravagant apparel, there was never any question that it was appropriate for those of a higher rank to dress in a more opulent manner.¹¹⁹ However, in 1584, Charlotte Arlabeste, the wife of Philippe du Plessis-Mornay, one of the Huguenot movement’s most valued leaders, clearly overstepped the mark with her attire. Arbaleste had accompanied her husband to Montauban and was residing with the Bonencontre family, while her husband dealt with business in Pamiers. The minister Michel Berauld was scandalised by her unseemly appearance, in particular her towering hairstyle twisted in an ornate fashion and held together with pins which reflected the courtly styles of the time.¹²⁰ Berauld responded by withholding the token that was required before one could receive communion; in effect, suspending her from participation in the Lord’s Supper. Rather than submitting to Berauld’s decision, Arbaleste reacted forcefully, appealing to the colloque and the national synod as well as to political heavyweights, such as the president of the *Chambre de l’Edit*. She argued that she had had experience of the Reformed tradition in England, the Netherlands and right across France, but that she had never been reprimanded for the way in which she had dressed or experienced such a ‘grand deffaut de charité’. She deftly demonstrated her Calvinist orthodoxy, expounding her confession of faith at length to the consistory, while pointing out that wherever she had been, she had indeed been welcomed for her piety, modesty of manner and charity towards

¹¹⁸ ADTG, Archives communales, AA 5, fo. 63r-68r and re-produced by Michel Nicolas, ‘Lois et règlements de l’Academie de Montauban formulés en 1600’, *BSATG*, 9 (1860), pp. 394-408.

¹¹⁹ Amanda Eurich, *The Economics of Power: the private finances of the House of Foix-Navarre-Albret during the religious wars* (Kirksville, 1994), pp. 166-167, 175; Kronenfeld, *King Lear*, pp. 31-36.

¹²⁰ See the scriptural injunction against extravagant dress in 1 Peter 3: 3: ‘Your adornment should not be an exterior one, consisting of braided hair or gold jewelry...’.

others.¹²¹ Arbaleste demanded scriptural warrant that she had exceeded the Discipline and denounced the zeal of Berauld as reprehensible. In her communication to the colloque, she argued that her excommunication had nothing to do with ‘l’ordonnance d’un synode national, n’y d’un provincial, n’y d’un colloque, mais d’une ville seule’ and in particular, the ‘appetit et fantasie’ of Berauld himself.¹²² This head-on collision between the consistory and a political dignitary was by all accounts an unhappy occurrence. The president of the *Chambre de l’Edit* stood aghast at how the whole affair had grown out of control, and clearly brought pressure to bear on the consistory to resolve the situation before it brought any more discredit upon the church.¹²³

The Arbaleste affair was unfortunate but it nonetheless demonstrates the institutional security that the consistory felt within Montalbanais society, that it had the stature to confront even dignitaries. Furthermore it demonstrates how the consistory was prepared to employ its own authority and sanctions to re-order communal values, even when the support of the civic authorities was noticeably absent.

Gerhard Oestreich has explored the complementary developments in political and religious thought that enabled the political authorities in Germany to foster church discipline and confessional identity. Oestreich’s concept of what he calls ‘social disciplining’ has been examined further by Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard who have developed the notion of ‘confessionalisation’ which demonstrates the tight links between the religious and secular aspects of society in the pursuit of order.¹²⁴ While the goals of the religious and political authorities may have been converging, the different aims of punishment together with what should be punished – as denoted in the Arbaleste case above – should alert the historian to the different motivations that operated behind the common goal of order. Bruce Lenman and Geoffrey Parker make a distinction between the

¹²¹ ‘Mémoire rédigé par Mme de Mornay sur l’incident survenu entre elle et le consistoire de Montauban au sujet de sa coiffure’ in *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, II. pp. 277-305; ‘Copie d’une lettre adressée par Mme Du Mornay à President de Clausonne’ in Bibl. SHPF, Ms. 1347/1. For a general survey of the affair, see Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, pp. 180-182 and see also Henry Heller, *Iron and Blood. Civil wars in sixteenth-century France* (Montreal, 1991), pp. 72-75.

¹²² ‘Lettres par Mme de Mornay au colloque réuni à Bruniquel près de Montauban (1584)’ in *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, II. pp. 306-310; ‘Copie de lettre adressée par le colloque du Bas-Quercy à Mme Duplessis Mornay’, in Bibl. SHPF, Ms. 1347/1.

¹²³ ‘Copie de lettre de M le President de Clausonne au consistoire de Montauban’ in Bibl. SHPF, Ms. 1347/1.

punitive aims of secular discipline and the restitutive aims of church discipline. The former sought to deter offenders, safeguard society from criminals and exact retribution. On the other hand, church discipline sought not so much to punish but to bring sinners to an understanding of their fault and restore them to full communion with the church. In short the emphasis was one of penance and conversion.¹²⁵

In cities across Europe the differences between the ecclesiastical and political goals of discipline often led to tensions which ultimately had a limiting effect upon the maintenance of order. While the ministers sought to create God's kingdom on earth, Thomas Brady has identified the ambivalence of many of the urban lay people towards rigorous moral campaigns. Indeed he argues that municipal elites 'did not favour too close an identification of the Gospel with the common good' since 'they lacked full hegemony over these concepts'.¹²⁶ In the Genevan Reformation, William Naphy demonstrates the open struggle that emerged between the magistrates and ministers over the control of urban life, a struggle which became so polarised that people found themselves facing 'a choice between a defence of traditional Genevan rights and the ministerial vision of a godly society'.¹²⁷

The competition between the political and religious elites that was such a prominent feature of urban Reformations across Europe did not, however, exist to the same extent in Montauban. In contrast Montauban provides a startling example of a church whose authority was additionally enhanced by the town council through its support of the consistory's agenda. It was the exceptional relationship between the town council and consistory and the distinctive attributes of both that provided the stimulus to the creation of an ever more 'godly' society.

There was nothing inevitable about the extent to which a 'godly' society was created in Montauban. And it would also be wrong to assume that there was never any tension between the consistory and consulate in the control of the town's morals. Surely the fact that the consistory had to remind the consuls repeatedly of their 'godly' duties towards the people indicates that the consistory was always less than satisfied by the consuls' efforts. But in the 70 years of the

¹²⁴ For a summary of this literature, see Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline*, pp. 188-212.

¹²⁵ Lenman and Parker, 'The State', pp. 11-12. See also Schilling, 'History of crime', pp. 300-301.

¹²⁶ Brady, 'In search of the godly society', p. 29.

town's Protestant domination, the disciplinary role of the consistory and the examples that the consuls made of those that had circumvented the town's moral ordinances must have had an effect on what was seen as allowable and what was not. Anyone visiting Montauban would have been aware that traditional feasts were not being celebrated, that dancing was frowned upon, that card games were not publicly held, that plays were seldom performed. Some members of the Catholic clergy and lay confraternities in neighbouring Toulouse must have yearned for such a society, but given the size of Toulouse, a city at least twice the population of Montauban, it was quite impossible to enforce such provisions in an age before effective police control. Perhaps it was the combination of Calvinism's new institutional structures and Montauban's particular size and self-contained nature that enabled such a successful effort in taming popular entertainment culture.

But ultimately, and perhaps ironically, it was the adversity that Montauban faced throughout the period of the Wars of Religion that gave the town the freedom and autonomy that was required to create such an outstanding example of a 'godly' society. In Montauban the defence of the traditional rights of the town and its distinctive 'godly' culture went hand in hand. From the first religious war in which Montauban was besieged on three separate occasions by Catholic armies from Toulouse, the population of Montauban could not have failed to have been aware that they had chosen a difficult path from which they could not now turn back. The evolution of a new moral tenor within the town and their feelings of insecurity towards the surrounding Catholic population formed a crucial part of the town's emerging confessional memory and identity. A Catholic victory over the town would have jeopardised both the town's ancient prerogatives and its new-found direction.

¹²⁷ Naphy, *Calvin*, p. 187.

Chapter 4. Montauban as a 'mother' church.

Urban studies of the Reformation rarely consider the world beyond the town's walls. In the last thirty years the Reformation has been characterised overwhelmingly as an urban event. There are two problems with this assumption. First, urban societies were not hermetically sealed; they depended upon the world outside and to ignore these links is absurd.¹ Secondly, in the French context, it is less than clear that the Reformation was a wholly urban affair. The rugged and isolated Cévennes region of Languedoc, described by de Bèze as 'un país rude & aspre', provides a clear example of a largely successful rural Reformation.² This chapter will deal with the way in which the Protestant church of Montauban viewed itself in relation to its neighbouring towns and villages. It will ponder the question of whether the town sensed any responsibility in evangelising and supporting the scattered remnant of Calvinists beyond its town walls.

The signals from the literature are somewhat conflicting. On the one hand it has been argued that the 'best Reformed churches' acted as 'little Genevas', infusing life into the surrounding parishes. This is the impression that comes through strongly from the study of the Dutch 'classes'.³ Guido Marnef demonstrates how during the 'wonderyear' of 1566 the Calvinist church of Antwerp took the leading role from the refugee churches and developed an important supervisory role over the Reformed churches of the Duchy of Brabant and beyond.⁴ In Scotland, Jane Dawson's study of St Andrews shows how this town performed the role of the 'best reformed kirk' for the surrounding area, using its authority to influence its rural hinterland and plant kirks and to support the superintendent.⁵ And in France Maryelise Lamet's study of Caen in Normandy demonstrates how from as early as 1562, the Reformed church at Caen modelled

¹ As argued by Tom Scott, *Freiburg and the Breisgau: town-country relations in the Age of Reformation and the Peasants' War* (Oxford, 1986).

² [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. p. 123. See also Le Roy Ladurie, *Paysans de Languedoc*, I. 349-355; Clovis Cantaloube, *La Réforme en France vue d'un village cévenol* (Paris, 1951); Robert Poujol, *Vébron, histoire d'un village cévenol* (Gap, 1981); Benedict, *Huguenot Population*, pp. 63-64, 69-70.

³ Alastair Duke, 'The Reformation of the backwoods: the struggle for a Calvinist and Presbyterian church order in the countryside of South Holland and Utrecht before 1620' in Alastair Duke (ed.), *Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries* (London, 1990), p. 251; Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 215-216.

⁴ Marnef, 'Changing face of Calvinism', p. 148.

⁵ Jane Dawson, 'The face of ane perfyet Reformed kyrk': St Andrews and the early Scottish Reformation', in James Kirk (ed.), *Humanism and Reform* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 431-434

itself as a 'mother' church, supporting churches in 18 locations in the area.⁶ Furthermore, it attempted to develop a Calvinist seminary at its university, equipped to train Protestant pastors. This attempt reveals the sense of mission that the Caennais church felt towards its neighbouring towns and villages in these early years. The pastoral support radiating from Caen's Reformed church underlined the town's ecclesiastical authority.

In other circumstances, however, it has been argued that the Calvinist influence could be as much centripetal as centrifugal. Ministers, for obvious reasons, preferred the urban positions to the less satisfying work in the outlying villages and countryside. In the Netherlands, ministers' correspondence is filled with lamentations at the inadequacies of rural congregations.⁷ Ministers could scarcely conceal their desire to be promoted to a more prominent urban charge. The Genevan church arguably did not help the cause of the rural ministry by consciously using its rural parishes as training grounds for young or inexperienced pastors.⁸ Relations between the town and the surrounding country areas were not always good. Kevin Robbins's recent monograph on La Rochelle portrays a vibrant urban Reformed community that had little or no interest in what went on beyond its town walls. The relationship between the town and its surroundings was one of tension and as a result, he argues, La Rochelle became a Reformed oasis in an otherwise unregenerate land.⁹

Montauban was situated at the northerly limit of the Toulousain plain. From the south-east to the west of the town lay the flood plains of the rivers Tarn and Garonne which wended their way towards their confluence at Moissac, 25 km west of Montauban. This area was described in local histories as a region of 'costaux fertiles en vins excellens et bleds'.¹⁰ The flat and fertile countryside and temperate climate lent itself to the farming of an array of crops: in particular,

⁶ Maryelise S. Lamet, 'Reformation, war and society in Caen, Lower Normandy: 1558-1610', Ph.D. thesis (University of Massachusetts, 1978), pp. 214, 224, 287-288.

⁷ Calvinism in Europe. A collection of documents, pp. 166-169, 170-171, 191-196.

⁸ E. William Monter, *Calvin's Geneva* (New York, 1967), p. 126; William G. Naphy, 'The renovation of the ministry in Calvin's Geneva' in Andrew Pettegree (ed.), *The Reformation of the Parishes* (Manchester, 1993), p. 120.

⁹ Robbins, *City on the Ocean sea*, pp. 37-44. Robbins' argument, however, stands at odds with the research of Anne Jean-Victor, 'La violence durant les guerres de religion (1560-1598) dans le diocèse de Luçon, d'après les sources catholiques', *Mémoire de Maîtrise* (Université Catholique de l'Ouest, Angers, 1988), pp. 44-46, and Pascal Rambeaud, 'The origins of rural Calvinism in Aunis: the sphere of influence of La Rochelle', *SCJ*, 30 (1999), pp. 388-395.

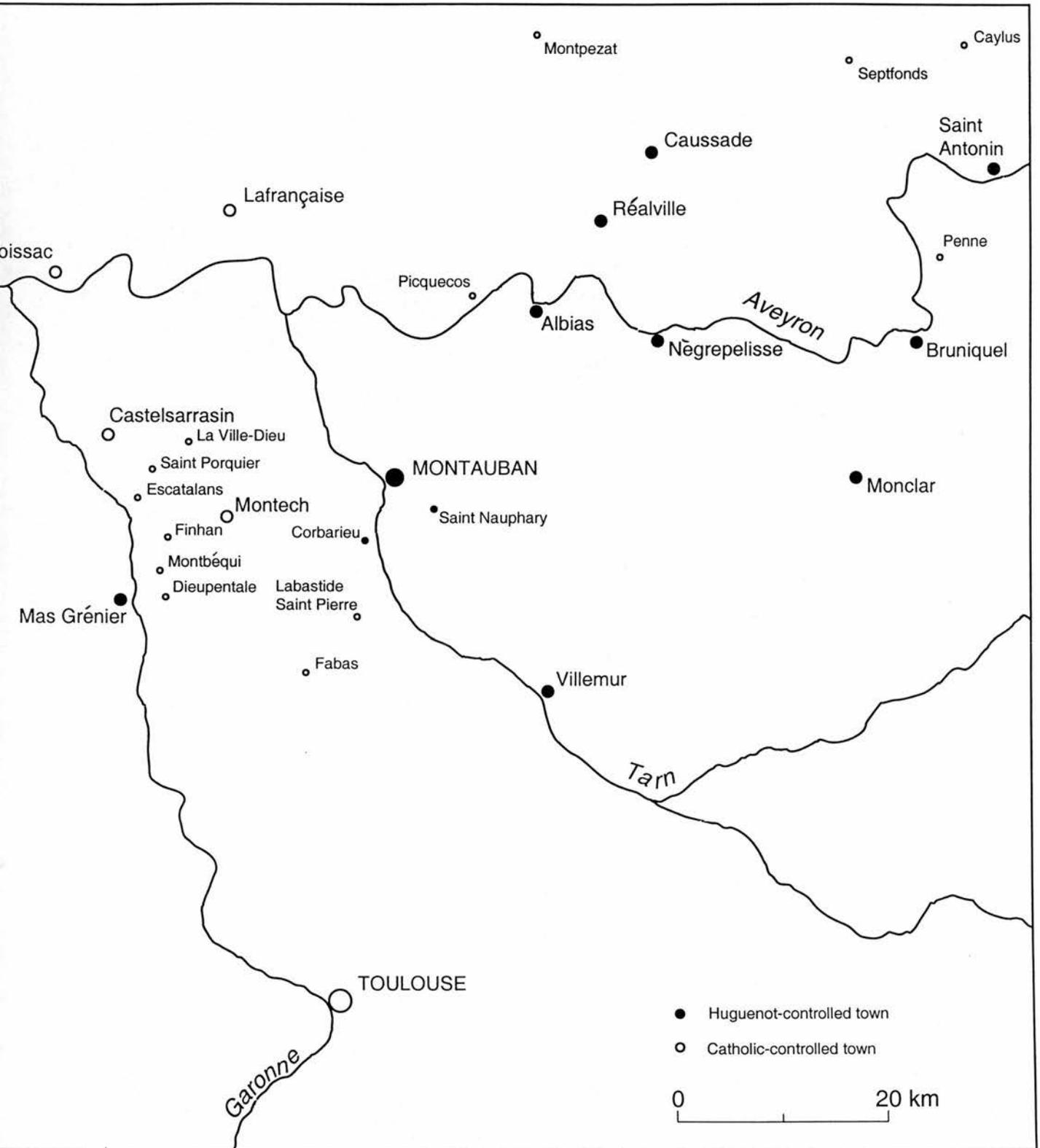


Figure 1: Map demonstrating the urban confessional geography of the region around Montauban.

The history of southern France had been convulsed with conflict. One of the legacies of this unsettled heritage was the sophisticated urban defences protecting Montauban and its surrounding towns. Across Languedoc, the tradition of the 'castra' or fortified village had been well established since the twelfth century. Protection behind walls was deemed a necessity at a time when the governmental institutions of order were still at an embryonic level of development.¹³ In the wake of the Hundred Years' War and the expulsion of the English from the south-west of France in 1453, the Valois dynasty insisted upon a highly successful policy of strengthening the region's defences. Robin Harris has highlighted the 'political paranoia' of the French monarchy, the profound fear that the English would return. Vigorous attempts, therefore, had been made to initiate a castle-building programme. Town fortifications were buttressed to create a region bristling with 'bastide' towns. Furthermore, towns were expected to maintain an effective arsenal. Indeed, the towns of the south-west were granted substantial military prerogatives, such as maintaining armed companies and exemptions from royal taxation in order to pay for these demands.¹⁴

The military prerogatives of the towns across this region yet again underscore the depth of local political autonomy that had been granted to these communities. The charter of Saint Antonin, for example, can be traced back to the early twelfth century. The charter listed guarantees for the town's inhabitants vis-à-vis the local seigneur, curtailing the latter's powers and feudal pretensions. By the thirteenth century the town was represented by a town council comprising 12 consuls who extended their supervision over trade and resolved any disputes that arose before their tribunal.¹⁵

The political independence of towns such as Saint Antonin was made possible by the vitality of the local economy. A commissioner visiting the town in 1552 described Saint Antonin in the following generous terms:

La ville de Saint Anthony est une belle et grande ville cloze et formée de beaulx pons et belles murailles et est assise en un bon terroir et pais, car est assize sur la rivière de Avayro [Aveyron] et de la Boneta... Et y a grand

¹³ Michael Costen, *The Cathars and the Albigensian crusade* (Manchester, 1997), p. 43.

¹⁴ Harris, *Valois Guyenne*, pp. 113-118; Janine Garrisson, 'Les Protestants du sud-ouest et le premier Bourbon' in *Avènement d'Henri IV, Quatrième centenaire: Provinces et pays du Midi au temps d'Henri de Navarre 1555-1589*. Actes du colloque à Bayonne 7-9 Octobre 1988 (3 vols., Pau, 1989) II. 93-94; Courvisier, 'Guerres de religion', p. 309.

¹⁵ Colette Marion, 'La charte des coutumes de Saint Antonin: traduction et commentaires', *Bulletin de la Société des amis du vieux Saint Antonin* (1984), pp. 54-68.

nombre d'artisans et gens de mestier comme taneurs et autres pour abilher et acouter les peaulx des menus bestailz et les cuyrs des boefz et vaches; que par le moyen de ce se faict grand trafficque en faict de pelaterie et de beaucherie que a cours et descharge tant à Lyon que autres bonnes villes du royaume. Item y a deux fois marché la sepmaine et quatre belles foires où se faict grand trafficque de merchandise, tant de draps de laine que de soye, de saffran, poysson salé que l'on y apporte de divers lieux; et y a aussi grand nombre de bestails gros et menu, comme muletz et mules, polins, jumens, beufz et vaches, veaulx et génisses, motons, brebis, cheuveaulx, chevres, porciaux et de tout autre bestail à pied forcheu que est du creu des habitans pour raison des beaulx herbaiges et pasturoiges que y sont; que communes années il y a foire que se faict trafficque de saffran de sept et huict charges, que la livre se vend communement cent soulz, et y a tel paisant que parfois en à de son creu quarante où cinquante livres; et se y a quantité infinye de prunes de si bones que en ayt en tout le royaulme de France car toutes les années s'en culhissent du creu de ladite ville ou des envyrons quinze cens charge et plus, que le profict leur en revient de plus de sis mil livres. Item et par moyen desd foires et marchés et marchandises susdites, plusieurs merchans tant de ce royaume, des Alemaignes que d'autres pais estrangers y viennent querir lesdites marchandises par le moyen des trafficques que se font. Il y a dans lad ville plus de cent merchans, riches gens, et encores y trafficquent de grand quantité de bleds et de vins pour ce que led pais est assez en bon terrouer; mesmement lesd revières de Avayro et Bonete menent une belle et grande plaine, laquelle est couverte de grande quantité de noyers que de autres bons arbres fructiers; si porte grand quantité de chanvre et de lynes pour faire des toiles et linges; et pareillement si faict grand quantité de quintaulx de salpêtre dont par le moyen des espèces desd. marchandises ou trafficques d'icelles.¹⁶

This excerpt is instructive for it demonstrates the essential nature of all the towns across this region: compact communities, enclosed by walls and fortifications, sustaining themselves and drawing considerable wealth through farming, manufacturing and the trading of goods with the outside world.

As the largest town in the vicinity, Montauban was clearly at the centre of the region's commercial activity. But trade was not the only way in which the region's towns and countryside were drawn together. My study of Montauban's urban elite has revealed close political links between Montauban and its surrounding satellite towns. Montauban was the seat of the seneschal court and the source of royal authority within the region. Its offices therefore provided a goal for political aspirants who had been brought up in the neighbouring villages and towns. One such individual was Martin du Valada, a trained lawyer and

¹⁶ Martine Salmon-Dalas, 'Saint Antonin au milieu du XVIe siècle', *Bulletin de la société des amis du vieux Saint Antonin*, (1997), pp. 31-34.

bourgeois of the neighbouring town of Réalville, who held consular charges in Réalville (as first consul in 1581) and consular charges in Montauban in 1572, 1583 and 1601. These links with Montauban were buttressed by his marriage into the Colom family, a Montalbanais family specialising in royal financial administration. Similarly, Arnaud de Prévost held his position as first consul of Caussade simultaneously with his office as *lieutenant principal* of the seneschal court in Montauban.¹⁷ Again, Jacques Dupuy, born into a bourgeois family in Caussade, was to become *lieutenant particulier* in the seneschal court and first consul of Montauban in 1621.¹⁸

Porous political boundaries between Montauban and its neighbouring towns also existed between the urban elite of Montauban and the lesser nobility. Chapter two demonstrated the manner in which the urban bourgeois sought to extend their ownership of land beyond the town's walls as part of a drive towards ennoblement. By the early seventeenth century, the lesser nobility and the rising bourgeoisie were converging in status. Jean de Viçose lieutenant general of the seneschal of Quercy, for example, purchased estates from Elie de Bar seigneur de Campanaud at Lacourt alongside his other acquisitions at Villebrumier and Génébrières, east of Montauban.¹⁹ In 1612 Marie Aliès, the daughter of Antoine Aliès *receveur* of royal taxes for Quercy, married Jean de Caumont baron de Monbeton. The newly-wed couple drew equally from both sides of their families for godparents for their children.²⁰ Similarly in 1613, Isabeau de Burières, whose brother was a *conseiller* at the seneschal court in Montauban, married noble Elie de Bar and Jonathan Bosquet baron de Verlhac married Catherine de Viçose, daughter of Jean Viçose, in 1628.²¹

Montauban acted as a political magnet for the elites of neighbouring towns and Montauban's own town elite sought to cultivate links with the local nobilities. This provides just one indication of how far Montauban was from being a cocooned world. On account of its size Montauban found itself at the centre of a web of satellite villages and towns. Its size and its importance as an economic,

¹⁷ ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 13r; ADTG, 12 GG 5, fo. 22r; ADTG, 5 E 1055, fo. 218r-20r; ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo. 60v, 79v-80r.

¹⁸ ADTG, 5 E 709, fo. 315r; ADTG, 5 E 860, fo. 269r; ADTG, 5 E 219, fo. 236r-238v.

¹⁹ Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', I. 83-90, 106-114.

²⁰ ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 38r; ADTG, 12 GG 14, fo. 90r; ADTG, 12 GG 15, fo. 55r; ADTG, 12 GG 16, fo. 90; and, ADTG, 12 GG 16, fo. 137r.

²¹ ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 47r and G. Dumons, 'Les barons protestants montalbanais et la révocation', *BSHPF*, 61 (1912), p. 415.

political, ecclesiastical and administrative hub meant that the authority of Montauban extended well beyond its town walls.

Montauban's regional importance could not have failed to have implications for the consolidation of the Reformation in the region. The majority of Montauban's satellite towns were quick to adhere to the Reformation. We may recall that the Toulousain author, Georges Bosquet, described Montauban as 'la plus ancienne hérétique du ressort'. What follows in his description is an account of how other towns across the region succumbed to the Huguenot 'contagion'.²² What is clear is that the consuls of these smaller towns were quite incapable of withstanding the wave of Calvinist fervour that swept across France in the early 1560s. In June 1561, the consuls of Saint Antonin re-asserted a royal ordinance forbidding all ministers and lay preachers from preaching on pain of being hanged.²³ One week later the town council records describe the 'cornemens, hurlemens que à present se font en la presente ville par les habitans d'icelle les uns contre les autres, crians papistes, hugonaulx, heretiques, et autres plusieurs parolles injurieuses; se portant l'ung aux battemens et plusieurs aggressions que se font tous les jours'. Again the consuls invoked royal edicts and sent delegates to Cordes and Albi, both towns that remained resolutely Catholic, to seek advice as to how to secure peace.²⁴ One month later, the consuls were forced to issue prohibitions against carrying arms, hoarding gunpowder and smuggling weapons in and out of the town.²⁵ The situation was clearly escalating out of control. In August 1561, the whole region suffered bouts of iconoclastic terror and in response the consuls expelled all Huguenots from Saint Antonin.²⁶ However, less than six months later, the town had become a centre of Huguenot resistance, forbidding Catholics from holding any civic offices and selecting the comte de Crussol as the town's protector 'pour l'advenement du regne de Dieu, profit et utilité du roi et de la republique de cette ville'.²⁷

²² Bosquet, *Histoire svr les trovbles*, pp. 7-22. Bosquet's picture is confirmed in [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. pp. 122, 461-462.

²³ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 3r.

²⁴ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 5r.

²⁵ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 12v.

²⁶ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 17v, 19r.

²⁷ ACSA, BB1, fo. 75v. Crussol was later elected by the Assembly of Nîmes (November 1562) to become the 'chef, deffenseur et conservateur desd. villes et diocèses' of Languedoc. See Gordon Griffiths, *Representative Government in Western Europe in the sixteenth century* (Oxford, 1968), p. 265.

Saint Antonin had been unable to withstand the groundswell of religious change. Vigorous attempts to stem the disorders proved futile and by the start of the Wars of Religion the town had become a Huguenot bastion. Saint Antonin played an important role in the military manoeuvres of the first war and the Catholic commander, Monluc, was later to advise the king that if he ever wanted to settle this region of southern France, it was necessary to ‘faire razer les murailles de Montauban, Saint Antonin et Millau car ces trois villes s’entendent l’une avec l’autre’.²⁸ By the onset of the Wars of Religion, the new religion had embedded itself across a region whose towns prided themselves on their tradition of political autonomy and strong urban defences.

In this region of Quercy and Rouergue around Montauban the local nobility almost unanimously adhered to the new religion.²⁹ Gérard de Lomagne baron de Serignac (later seigneur de Terride), Bernard-Roger de Comminges vicomte de Bruniquel, baron d’Arpajon, the vicomte de Monclar and Antoine de Rapin seigneur de Mauvers all held great sway over local events on account of their patrimonial interests within the region and their military prowess through the wars.³⁰ Many of these nobles acted as governors of Montauban during the Wars of Religion. They were responsible for the town’s defence and for regional strategies of warfare. They allied themselves with other important regional Huguenot leaders such as the vicomtes de Gourdon, de Paulin and de Panat. In 1578, Henry of Navarre received several of the king’s domains as part of Marguerite de Valois’ dowry. These included land in Rouergue and Quercy, in particular lands north of the river Aveyron and the vicomtal lands of Villemur, and the jurisdiction around Mas Grenier to the west of Montauban.³¹

Noble adherence to the Reformed cause was crucial in providing moral and military support to the smaller towns and villages of the region that adopted the Reformation.³² Similarly the lesser nobility whose lands and homes were

²⁸ AN, Ms Français 15881, fo. 5r.

²⁹ Guillaume Lacoste, *Histoire générale de la province de Quercy* (4 vols., Cahors, 1886), IV, 120-121.

³⁰ Haag, *France protestante*; F. Galabert, ‘Principaux capitaines du montalbanais durant les troubles du XVI^e siècle’, *BSATG*, 25 (1897), pp. 49-55, 280-289, 322-336 and *BSATG*, 26 (1898), pp. 27-53; Rey-Lescure, ‘Notes généalogiques sur des familles du montalbanais et du castrais’ in *Bibl. SHPF*, Ms. 817/4

³¹ Gilbert, ‘Famille protestante’, I, 62 and private archives of the Scorbiac family, *Lettres missives originales et instructions officielles reçues par Guichard de Scorbiac*, ed. Yannick du Guerny (1998), no. 107, 121.

³² See Anne-Marie Cocula, ‘Châteaux et seigneuries: des îles et îlots de réforme en terre Aquitaine (XVI^e – XVII^e s.)’ in Robert Sauzet (ed.), *Les frontières religieuses en Europe du XVe au XVIIe*

directly adjacent to Montauban played an important role in the rural church-building of the second half of the sixteenth century. In the province of Poitou, an anonymous Catholic observer described how the rural folk were loath to embrace Protestantism but the '*sieurs particuliers* of the villages of the so-called Reformed religion constrain their subjects to go to the *presche*'.³³ The attachment of the rural folk to the religion of their ancestors, the shortage of ministers and the disruption of war meant that the Reformation in rural areas was always going to be an imperfect process. Nevertheless an important role was played by the de Bar, Bosquet, Astorg, Caumont and Latour noble houses that had dominated the plains around Montauban since the fourteenth century.³⁴

Guyon de Bar, baron de Meuzac, embraced the Reformation and established a church in his fortified castle at Meuzac in 1562. Following the Edict of Nantes these lands became one of the '*lieux de culte seigneuriaux*'. The consistory records of Montauban allude to the existence of a functioning church order in the villages of Meuzac and Villemade on Guyon's land, providing clear examples of the way in which the Calvinist edifice reached out into the countryside.³⁵ Indeed, Guyon's son was delegated as the consistory's representative at the provincial synods in Figeac and Réalmont in the early seventeenth century. Very little is known about these rural churches as no material has survived to document their development. However these local lords held authority over all aspects of rural life, '*toute seigneurie et juridiction haulte, moyenne et basse*' and all appointments.³⁶ One therefore suspects that rural consistories such as that at Meuzac were manipulated by the de Bar family to reinforce their control over their land (see Figure 2, overleaf).

siècle (Paris, 1992), pp. 185-193 and Jean-Marie Constant, *Nobles et paysans en Beauce aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (Lille, 1981), pp. 335-350.

³³ Benedict, *Huguenot Population*, p. 70.

³⁴ Dumons, 'Barons protestants', pp. 408-420.

³⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 127v, 329r, 336r.

³⁶ 'Denombrement de la terre et seigneurie' (1613) in Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', II. Pièces justificatives, no. 18.

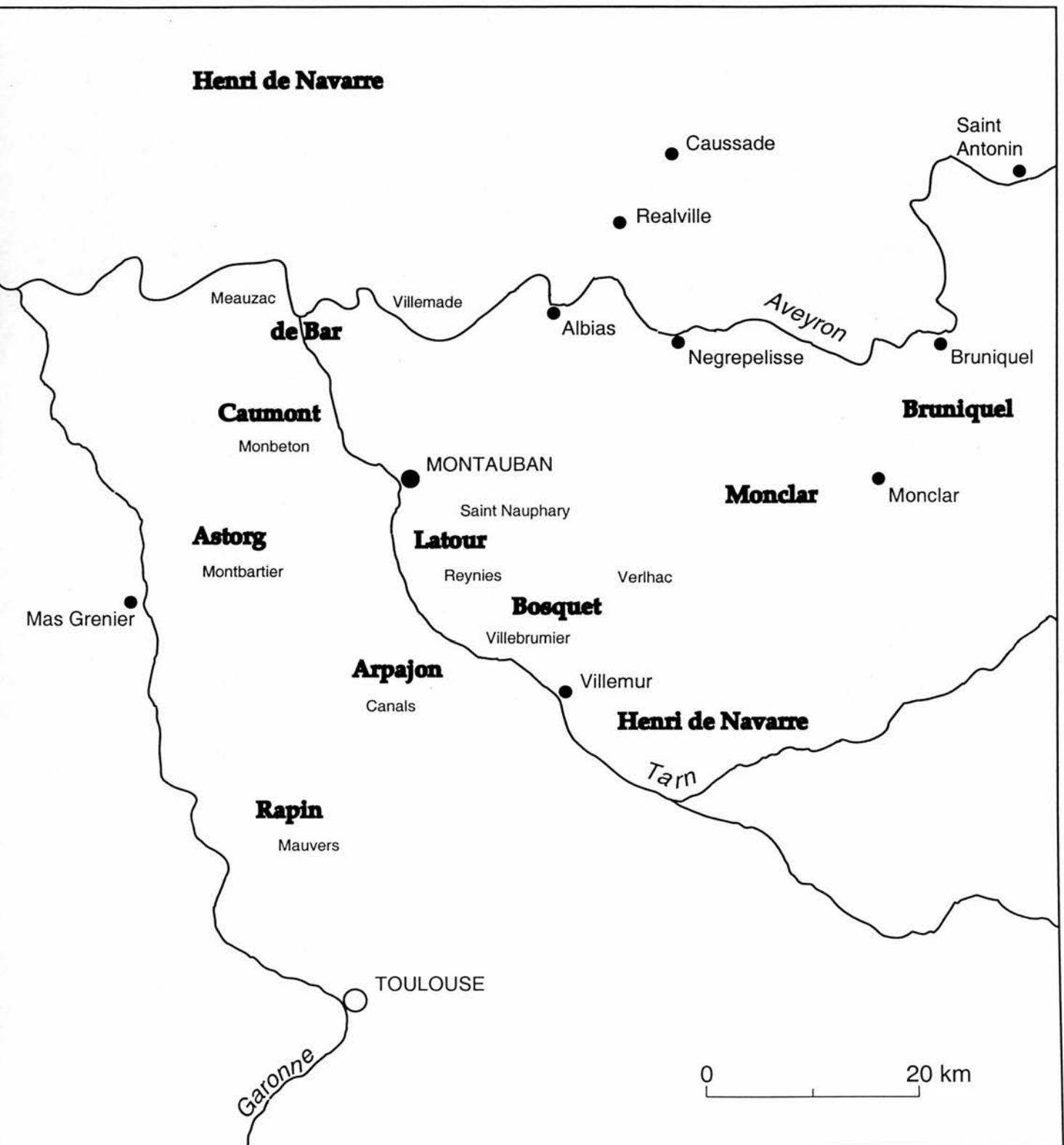


Figure 2: Map demonstrating Protestant noble lands in the region around Montauban.

The choice on the part of the lesser nobility of Montauban to embrace the Reformation was strengthened by their ever tighter kinship bonds with one another. In 1569-70, Guyon de Bar seigneur de Meuzac asked Jonathan de Bosquet seigneur de Verlhac and Antoine de Latour seigneur de Reyniès to be the godfathers to his eldest children.³⁷ Similar networks of alliance and intermarriage exist between Guyon's children and the Caumont family who held lands at Monbeton and between David de Caumont and Marie de Latour, the daughter of Antoine de Latour mentioned above.³⁸ Furthermore, Montauban's lesser nobles were of sufficient standing to contemplate kin ties with the higher nobility. In 1570, for example, Antoine d'Astorg seigneur de Montbartier invited the celebrated Huguenot commander, the comte de Montgomery, to sponsor his daughter at her baptism while Astorg's son invited Henry of Navarre, the vicomte de Gourdon and the wives of Terride and Panat to be the godparents to his children.³⁹ And in 1593 Astorg's daughter, Isabeau, married the vicomte de Gourdon.⁴⁰ Meanwhile, successive generations of the Caumont of Monbeton family tapped into their wider family networks that extended into Périgord, Guyenne and Armagnac.⁴¹

The links between the local and regional nobility, between the nobility and the town elites, and between the town and village elites were crucial at a time of adversity. These links surely existed prior to the Reformation but they became closer and more exclusive in its aftermath. This must have been in part a response to the fact the Calvinist hierarchy insisted on an unequivocal disavowal of the Catholic faith and its adherents. One cannot but be struck by the attempts of the Calvinist hierarchy to separate themselves from the Catholic world that lay around them. As early as April 1561, a provincial synod at Montauban declared that those students attending Catholic schools and studying law and science at Toulouse, for example, were not able to live 'en pure conscience' and therefore could not participate in the sacraments or take up any charge in the Reformed church.⁴²

³⁷ ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 53v and ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 101r.

³⁸ ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 61r and ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 29r.

³⁹ ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 85r; ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 226r; ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 26r and ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 73r.

⁴⁰ ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 6r.

⁴¹ ADTG, 12 GG 12, fo. 89r and ADTG, 12 GG 15, fo. 55r.

⁴² Provincial Synod of Montauban (April, 1561) in Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, pp. 197-207. See also ADTG, I 1, fo. 82r, 192r and the provisions made at the synods of Réalmont (1576) and Millau (1599) in *Recueil des réglemens faits par les synodes provinciaux*, p. 102.

Protestants who had held Catholic children at the baptismal font as godparents were censured by the consistory.⁴³ Mixed marriages were violently denounced both in print and from the pulpit.⁴⁴ The faithful were repeatedly exhorted not to join Catholic funeral cortèges and to discontinue the ancient customs associated with Catholic burial rites.⁴⁵ The following year, in 1562, the provincial synod's stance was made all the more explicit:

A este proposé que, de tant qu'il y a plusieurs qui veullent estre receuz en l'eglise, lesquels touteffois ne se sont poinct présentés publiquement pour estre receuz, comme le filz pour criante du père, la femme pour crainte du mary et autres semblables. A este arresté que, de tant que notre foy requiert confession publique, mesme à l'administration des sacrements, ilz ne seront receuz que publiquement et singulierement es lieux ou sont en public.⁴⁶

There could be no compromise with the Catholic world. In these early years this stance was a necessary step for it was only in distinguishing themselves from Catholicism that the Reformed churches could forge their own identity.

And yet not everyone in and around Montauban was persuaded of the Reformation or of its demands. Reconstructing the confessional geography of an area is not a straight-forward process since it was always changing, particularly in response to conflict. At the onset of the first of the religious wars, the cathedral chapter of Montauban was initially transferred to Villemur which only later became a Protestant stronghold in 1570. To the north and east of Montauban Protestant towns and seigneurial churches quickly dominated the lands. However, to the west of Montauban, the Catholic party was more effective in re-grouping its

⁴³ For example, the Provincial Synod of Millau (1617): 'la compaignie ordonne que les pères et mères qui prenent des parrains et marrains de la religion romaine, pour presenter leurs enfans au baptême par procureur, faisant profession de la religion reformée, seront poursuivis par censures ecclésiastiques' in *Recueil des réglemens faits par les synodes provinciaux*, p. 65.

⁴⁴ *Discours sur les Mariages contractez entre personnes de diverse religion* (Montauban, Denis Haultin, 1595) in 'Bibliographie montalbanaise', no. 30 in Forestié, *Histoire de l'imprimerie* and ADTG, I 1, fo. 146v, 330r-330v, 351v.

⁴⁵ Provincial Synod of Caussade (1572): 'les fidèles ne peuvent en bonne conscience, assister aux banquets qui se font aux funeraillies et enterremens de ceux de contraire religion'. Provincial Synod of Castres (1585): 'la coutume qu'on a en quelques lieux de cette province, que les pauvres au retour des enterremens s'assemblent devant les portes des maisons des décedez ou bien aux cimetières, même pour avoir l'aumône, sera abolie, d'autant que ce sont des reliques de la vieille superstition; et les ministres feront admonition un jour de dimanche après la predication, exhortant néanmoins les héritiers desdits décedez, de n'épargner leur charité à l'endroit des pauvres souffreteux, en autre lieu et saison'. Provincial Synod of Réalmont (1606): 'les fidelles seront exhortez de s'abstenir de suivre de loin, et se trouver aux convois des enterremens des morts des catholiques romains, à cause des superstitions qui s'y commettent'. See *Recueil des réglemens faits par les synodes provinciaux*, pp. 136-137, 143.

forces. Sheltering behind the royal forests, the towns of Montech, Castelsarrasin and Moissac together with the Cistercian abbey of Belleperche, all 15 to 25 km away, became launch pads for a Catholic riposte. The bishop of Montauban at times resided at Montech, the seneschal court of Quercy moved to Moissac during times of war and in the 1590s the Parlement of Toulouse met intermittently in Castelsarrasin.⁴⁷ All three towns were girded with fortified walls and drew support from the Catholic strongholds of Toulouse and Agen via the river Garonne.

The proximity of Catholic centres to Montauban meant that the town's hinterland became an arena for intense bouts of conflict, severely disrupting the life of the region. The 1574 records of the *Cours des Aides* describe Castelsarrasin, Montech and Saint Porquier as the 'seules villes demeurées en l'obeissance du roi'.⁴⁸ The baron de Fourquevaux wrote despairingly of the situation in the lower part of the diocese of Montauban, 'de sorte que de trois ville-maîtrisses et trente-sept lieux, châteaux ou villages audit bas-diocèse, le roy ne jouit que de Castel-Sarrasin, Montech, qui sont villes-maîtrisses, et de Saint Porquier et les Cathalens [Escatalans]'.⁴⁹

The interlacing of confessional communities, in both rural and urban areas, served to accentuate sectarian hatreds and triggered a particularly vicious cycle of local conflict, largely ignored in the literature. An inquest by the Catholic Church in 1588 described how Protestant soldiers 'courent journellement et ravaigent jusques aulx portes des villes et lieux catholiques, ayant faicts et tenans prisonniers ung infini nombre de personnes qu'ils traictent cruellement, emprisonnent, bruslant, saquageant, prenant, et emportant tout ce qu'ils peuvent rencontrer, et reduict les povres habitans desdictes villes et lieux en perpetuele ruyne'.⁵⁰ As a result 'les personnes acouster ne frequanter les ungz avec les autres, toutes trafiques ont cessé et cessent, et les terres demeurent incultes et inlabourables'.⁵¹ Even in times of peace, confessional tensions were far from spent. It was only in

⁴⁶ Provincial Synod of Castres (January, 1562) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 2.

⁴⁷ Jean Cathala-Coture, *Histoire politique, ecclésiastique et littéraire du Quercy* (3 vols., Montauban, 1788), I. 410.

⁴⁸ ADH, B 16728 (unfoliated).

⁴⁹ Daux, *Histoire*, II. i. 73-74.

⁵⁰ 'Procès-verbal aux excès des Calvinistes et leurs usurpations envers le clergé catholique du Quercy, Languedoc et Gascogne' in Canet (ed.), *Lectures d'histoire locale*, II. 251-254.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, See also 'Denombrement de la terre et seigneurie' (1613) in Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', II. Pièces justificatives, no. 18. There are strong parallels between the religious wars in Languedoc and those of the Thirty Years War in Germany. In this regard I have greatly profited from John Theibault, *German villages in Crisis. Rural life in Hesse-Kassel and the Thirty Years War, 1580-1720* (New Jersey, 1995), especially pp. 135-157.

the 1590s that a Protestant peasant minority emerged in Montauban's hinterland and upset the status quo by seeking to dominate and govern peasant life, even to the point of intimidating the Catholic majority in an attempt to control peasant interests on the town council. The minutes of a meeting in the seneschal court in 1599 report:

la plus grande partie des paysans habitantz de ladit jurisdiction de Montauban sont de la religion catholique romaine et ont profecion d'icelle et que le nombre des paysans qui font profecion de la religion reformée dans ladite jurisdiction est fort petit. Neanmoings lesd. paysans de la religion reformée de ladite jurisdiction veulent dominer et suppediter tous les autres paysans Catholiques d'icelle juridiction qui sont à la campagne.

Others at the meeting confirmed that the number of 'paysans' that made profession of the Reformed faith in the jurisdiction was 'fort petit en esgard aux autres catholiques' and that the former wanted 'dominer et avoir l'autorité et gouverner sur toutz les autres paysans catholiques de lad. jursidiction, singullierement lorsqu'il est question du consulat'.⁵²

The close relationships among towns and between towns and nobility in the area around Montauban were unmistakably shaped by the confessional geography of the region. Raymond Mentzer's very fine study of the Lacger family of nearby Castres demonstrates how this family's conversion to Protestantism 'permeated, moulded and modified' their family designs and stratagems.⁵³ Their choice for Protestantism affected the family's political aspirations, their social relationships, and their attitude towards the outside world. Mentzer demonstrates how the Lacger family built and maintained 'carefully delimited associations with houses of similar political and professional status within close geographical proximity' and that 'these particular families also shared fundamental religious views and, for this reason, protected one another'.⁵⁴ The goals of strengthening the bonds of religious solidarity and preserving religious identity stood very much in the forefront of Huguenot minds in the face of their Catholic neighbours.

The Catholic response to the Reformation galvanised those towns and villages that embraced the Reformation. In particular, it gave to Montauban a

⁵² ADTG, Archives communales, 19 GG 1, liasse 84.

⁵³ Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, pp. 9-10.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

prominent role in co-ordinating the regional Huguenot cause. Montauban's ministers and deacons had played a crucial role in constituting churches in the neighbouring villages and towns and even set their sights further, assisting church-building in Lectoure, Villefranche and the cathedral city of Lavaur, all more than 60 km away.⁵⁵ But the Calvinist dream of dominating the religious landscape of France did not materialise. After the explosive growth of Calvinist churches across the region in the early 1560s, the Protestant tide receded before the Catholic resurgence co-ordinated from Toulouse, Agen and Cahors. Montauban, out of all the regional cities in Upper Guyenne and Upper Languedoc, was left alone as a Protestant centre. Nérac, Castres, Millau and Pamiers were the closest large Protestant towns, but all of these were 100 to 200 km away.

The failure of the Protestants to dominate the region gave an important role to the Calvinist ecclesiastical structure. Before the outbreak of the first war the Reformed churches of France had been divided into colloques and provincial synods. While the normal everyday problems and issues facing local churches were dealt with locally by a church's consistory, the ecclesiastical structure of colloques, provincial and national synods provided the means through which contentious problems of church practice could be resolved, ensuring a greater uniformity amongst the emerging churches. In the Netherlands, van Deursen has argued that the Dutch equivalent of the colloque, the *classis*, was 'pre-eminently the instrument of Calvinisation'.⁵⁶ This is a view echoed by Alastair Duke who describes the *classis* as the 'lynch-pin of the Reformed polity' without which 'the impact of the Calvinist Reformation was seriously weakened'.⁵⁷ The role of this level of ecclesiastical governance in promoting the new religious and moral precepts of the Reformation, it is argued, was crucial in developing a new confessional identity.

In the colloque of Lower Quercy, Montauban inevitably took a leading role. The minutes for five of the colloque meetings between 1565 and 1575 have been preserved in the private archives of the Constans family, a microfilm of which exists in the *archives départementales* of Tarn-et-Garonne. Further evidence of the activity of the colloques emerges from the town council and

⁵⁵ Edmond Cabié, 'La Réforme à Lavaur en 1561 et 1562', *Revue du Tarn*, 23 (1906), pp. 205-219.

⁵⁶ Cited in Duke, 'Reformation of the Backwoods', p. 251.

⁵⁷ Alastair Duke, 'Towards a Reformed polity in Holland, 1572-78' in his *Reformation and Revolt*, p. 224.

consistory records of Montauban and there are fragments of three colloque proceedings in the 1590s at the Protestant library in Paris.⁵⁸ Limited as this evidence is, the documents clearly reveal Montauban as the primary location for colloque meetings with other meetings rotating around secondary venues such as Villemur, Nègrepelisse and Caussade and even smaller rural churches such as Corbarieu. The colloque comprised about 40 delegates, ministers and or elders, from Montauban, its satellite towns and the rural parishes. Even when the colloque met in the towns outside Montauban the moderator of the colloque was invariably a minister from Montauban.

What is particularly noticeable from the colloque proceedings is a total absence of any political preoccupations. Instead the material recorded deals uniquely with matters of ecclesiastical interest: ministerial provision and responsibilities, arbitration of disputes between churches and their consistories, implementation of moral codes and the relationship of the new churches to the 'old' religion. On a practical level, the colloque provided a source of authority where it may otherwise have been lacking. For example, smaller churches found it difficult to bring pressure to bear on unruly troops. At the Colloque of Nègrepelisse in 1575, the minister of Bruniquel brought up the case of a woman who had been raped by two soldiers. The colloque affirmed that the soldiers were to be excommunicated and reported the details to the civil authorities.⁵⁹ One wonders why the minister of Bruniquel brought this case to the colloque's attention since the outcome was surely obvious. But perhaps this and other examples indicate the institutional weakness of the consistories in smaller towns in dealing with those that refused to abide by its decisions. In this case the colloque not only served to reinforce the individual consistory's authority but also made known the reprobates to other churches in case they sought to participate in the Lord's Supper elsewhere.

The agenda of the annual provincial synods followed much the same pattern as that set by the colloque but with representatives from all five colloques of the provincial district of Upper Guyenne and Upper Languedoc. The geographical boundaries of this provincial synod extended from Pamiers (Foix) in

⁵⁸ ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no.2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11; ADTG, 1 Mi 37, R2, fo. 118r; Bibl. SHPF, Collection Auzières, Ms 570³, fo. 4r, 7r, 11r; ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo. 60r-60v; ADTG, 1 I, fo. 35v, 107r, 190v, 245r, 327r; ACSA, GG 26; 'Mémoires de Jacques Thuet, docteur-avocat, de 1616-1630', *BSATG*, 13 (1885), p. 198.

⁵⁹ Colloque of Nègrepelisse (August, 1575) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 1.

the south to Castres (Lauragais) and Millau (Rouergue) in the east, Figeac in the north (Upper Quercy) and Mauvezin (Armagnac) in the west. Again the Constans family has preserved some of the proceedings of the provincial synods and extracts of the minutes from all of the meetings were gathered and edited in the later seventeenth century.⁶⁰ From as early as 1560, the churches of this province had been co-ordinating their responses to outside events. There is clear evidence pointing to concerted attempts to implement the provisions of the assembly at Poitiers (1557) and first national synod at Paris (1559).⁶¹ Most recent historiography has concentrated on the published proceedings of these national synods by Aymon and Quick respectively but there has been relatively little analysis of how these proceedings were put into practice on the local level and the degree to which national strategies were interpreted locally. Stuart Foster's recent research on Lower Languedoc has demonstrated how the model of ecclesiastical polity differed markedly in this region from both the Genevan model and that implemented in northern parts of France. This was in part a reflection of local geographical considerations and the cultural heritage of Languedoc. But more important was the role of the renowned reformer, Pierre Viret, in shaping a polity that had a tried and tested track record in the Pays de Vaud. Among the innovations that Foster highlights was the creation of an additional level of ecclesiastical governance called the 'classes' and Viret's visitations in which he assumed a position as 'superintendant' of the region's churches.⁶²

It was entirely due to the force of Viret's personality that this reformer was able to address effectively many of the difficulties that faced the nascent churches of Lower Languedoc. Viret's effect on Lower Languedoc could not have failed to impact upon other areas of southern France. Indeed he was solicited by the church of Toulouse to become their minister and in 1564 Montauban's magistrates sent an envoy to Viret in Lyon to reclaim two ministers for the church of Montauban.⁶³

⁶⁰ See Recueil des réglemens faits par les synodes provinciaux; ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 2; Benoit, Origines de la réforme, pp. 197-207, 293-295. For Lower Languedoc, see Recueil des réglemens. Extraits des actes des synodes provinciaux tenus dans la province du Bas-Languedoc de 1568 à 1623, ed. C.-L. Frossard (Paris, 1885).

⁶¹ Provincial Synod of Montauban (April, 1561) in Benoit, Origines de la Réforme, pp. 197-207. On these national assemblies, see Pierre Dez, 'Les "articles polityques" de 1557 et les origines du régime synodal', BSHPF, 103 (1957), pp. 1-9; Michel Reulos, 'L'organisation des églises réformées françaises et le synode de 1559', BSHPF, 105 (1959), pp. 2-24.

⁶² Foster, 'Pierre Viret in France', pp. 112-118. See also Glenn Sunshine, 'From French Protestantism to French Reformed churches: the development of Huguenot ecclesiastical institutions, 1559-1598', Ph.D. thesis (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992), pp. 139-143.

⁶³ ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 144v-148v.

Mention is also made in the colloque minutes of the existence of a *classe* structure in Upper Languedoc.⁶⁴ These *classes* are not to be confused with the Dutch *classis* which was the equivalent of the colloque in France. The *classe* was an altogether different layer of church governance between the colloque and provincial synod and, as in Lower Languedoc, there is evidence to suggest that this existed in the area of Montauban until its suppression in 1571. The *classe* covered a wider area than the colloque, often incorporating two or three colloques and was a way in which church business could be resolved at the lowest level according to the principle of subsidiarity. The existence of this multi-layered system of church governance served to strengthen the solidarity of the churches of southern France. It is in this respect that we can understand the importance attached to delegates from other colloques and *classes* attending one another's meetings. For example, at the Colloque of Montauban in September 1565, representatives arrived from Mauvezin (colloque of Armagnac), Puylaurens (colloque of Lauragais), Paulin (colloque of Albigeois), Pamiers and Carla (colloque of Foix), and Verfeil (colloque of Rouergue).⁶⁵

In the Netherlands the places where the Reformation was most successful did coincide with those places where the *classis* met regularly. The *classis* of Voorne and Putten, for example, convened once a month. 'Such regular meetings', Duke argues, 'helped to cultivate an *esprit de corps* as well as furnishing an opportunity for the supervision and counselling of the inexperienced and the correction of the headstrong and self-conceited'.⁶⁶ However, the colloque of Lower Quercy, of which Montauban was by far the most important town, met far less frequently. No evidence survives to tell us how regularly the colloque met in the early years of the Reformation but in 1579 delegates from the local churches were convening at colloque meetings every three months, thereafter bi-annually.⁶⁷ The relative infrequency of these meetings, particularly in the later years of the sixteenth century, suggests that the colloque played less of a role in the overall supervision of the churches than in the Netherlands. The weakening role played by the colloque was balanced by the singularly strong role played by

⁶⁴ ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6.

⁶⁵ ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6. Gaston Serr lists the churches of the colloque of Lower Quercy as Montauban, Nègrepelisse, Meauzac, Monclar, Saint Antonin, Campagnac, Reyniès, Verfeuil, Villemur, Albias, Corbarieu, Caussade, Réalville, Saint Nauphary, Bruniquel, Verlhac and Mas Grenier.

⁶⁶ Duke, 'Towards a Reformed polity', p. 224.

⁶⁷ Serr, *Eglise protestante*, p. 48.

Montauban. Montauban dominated the ecclesiastical landscape of Lower Quercy. Its Huguenot population was almost ten times the size of any of its surrounding towns or villages and as such played a crucial role in the locality as a 'mother' church. Furthermore the growing regional importance of the town to the Huguenot cause is attested by the size of its Huguenot population. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the colloque of Lower Quercy had the largest population of Protestant faithful of all the colloques of this region, indeed one third of the Protestant population of the entire ecclesiastical province.⁶⁸

The prominence of the church in Montauban gave it an unrivalled role in supervising the progress of the surrounding churches. In November 1561, delegates from the embryonic churches of Cahors, Montcuq, Molières and Castelnau-Montratier, 40-60 km to the north of Montauban, convened at Montcuq to consider news from the seigneur de Montlaurzun. Montlaurzun was a local noble from Montcuq who had been delegated to represent the churches of the Upper Quercy at court. In a letter Montlaurzun advised the churches to follow the dictates of Montauban in all the matters concerning the raising of contributions and to follow their advice and directions as to how to implement the collections.⁶⁹ Montauban was clearly playing a leading role in engaging with the regional churches and co-ordinating a common response from the earliest days of the churches.

In the aftermath of the first war, a letter from Jeanne de Crussol, a noblewoman from Upper Quercy, again demonstrates how the church in Montauban was perceived as the fount of authority for the Calvinist churches in the region.⁷⁰ Madame de Crussol had received information from Geneva indicating that the minister who had served her church, Robert Le Prévost, had been associated with scandal, and indeed he was reprimanded on a later occasion by the colloque of Lower Quercy for his unorthodox ideas on the afterlife.⁷¹ Madame de Crussol was naturally concerned with the disrepute that this minister could bring to her family name and she asked Calvin and de Bèze to send any

⁶⁸ Lower Quercy 25,800; Upper Quercy 4800; Armagnac 1800; Albigeois 16,500; Lauragais 9600; Foix 8500. See Samuel Mours, *Les Eglises réformées en France* (Paris, 1958) and his article, 'Essai d'évaluation de la population protestante réformée aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles', *BSHPE*, 104 (1958), pp. 1-24.

⁶⁹ ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 4.

⁷⁰ 'Madame de Crussol à Calvin et Bèze' (12 September 1563) in *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, ed. Henri Meylan, Alain Dufour, et al. (Geneva, 1960-), IV. pp. 199-200.

⁷¹ Colloque of Montauban (26 September 1565) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6.

evidence that they had concerning the minister so that she could bring it before the consistory in Montauban so that the matter could be resolved. When one considers that Madame de Crussol's residence was at Assier in the Lot valley, over 70 km away from Montauban, one cannot but conclude that the supervisory role of Montauban over the region's churches was enormously significant.

Montauban's domination of the region's churches was, however, not always without challenge. The consistory records of 1595 reveal how after a colloque, the delegates from Montauban presented the colloque's proceedings in the customary way to a 'General Assembly' whose purpose was to ratify what was agreed. This assembly included members of the consistory, the town's consuls, *conseillers* of the seneschal court, together with bourgeois, merchant and artisan representatives.⁷² One of the decisions of the colloque was to suspend Bernard Bironis, a long-time minister of Montauban, from preaching duties on account of 'l'imbecillité et faiblesse de la voix dud. Bironis'. This decision to remove Bironis was all the more perplexing since apparently there had not been any complaints against the minister from the Montauban faithful. At the general assembly, the colloque's decision was described as 'contre toute forme de droict et justice', amounting to 'une notable ingratitude' towards Bironis. The assembly resolved to launch an appeal against the colloque's ruling and in the meantime flouted the colloque's suspension orders in exhorting Bironis to 'continuer sa predication ordinaire'. The assembly's appeal was heard by the provincial synod in Castres six months later which deemed the whole case 'mal jugé' and overrode the colloque's decision in favour of Montauban.⁷³ This attempt of the colloque to employ its institutional authority to counter Montauban's pre-eminence was at most cheeky gesturing, a fact made plain by Montauban's refusal to abide by a decision made by the colloque against its own interests.

Montauban exercised an unrivalled control over the churches of its colloque. The French Confession of Faith declared that 'no church shall claim any authority or dominion over any other'.⁷⁴ But despite this theoretical parity between the churches, the size and prowess of Montauban as a Huguenot bastion enabled Montauban to institutionalise its authority through the colloque and

⁷² For example, ADTG, I 1, fo. 45v-50r, 243v, 248r-249r.

⁷³ ADTG, I 1, fo. 43v-44r, 45r-50r, 120v-121r.

beyond. Part of this authority issued from the sense of responsibility that the town had recognised towards surrounding churches. And in fairness to the mother church, this was in large part stimulated by the many questions and requests that the surrounding churches directed towards the church in Montauban.

The nature of the relationship between Montauban and its satellite churches can be examined in terms of ministerial provision. A particular problem facing the early churches across France was the mismatch between supply of and demand for trained and ordained ministers. Those dispatched by the Genevan Company of Pastors to France in the years 1559-63 amounted to no more than one minister for every ten churches.⁷⁵ In these circumstances many churches depended upon locally-trained ministers. Recent research on the Dutch Reformation has laid great importance upon trial sermons in selecting candidates for the ministry. Prospective ministers were asked to expound upon a passage of Scripture before ministers and elders who then commented, corrected and suggested ways of improving the quality and technique of the sermon. It has been argued that this emphasis upon a practical training before established ministers, rather than a formal seminary education, yielded the first generation of ministers in the Netherlands.⁷⁶ In France the second national synod suggested a similar system of trial sermons or 'propositions' and there is evidence from the surviving consistory records of other towns that this method was used to select candidates. In the pays de Loire, several churches sent candidates to Le Mans where ministers examined the candidates' grasp of the faith and reasons for wanting to become ministers before instructing candidates to preach 'propositions'. If the candidate was judged worthy, one of the ministers of Le Mans laid his hands on the candidate's head and commanded him to exercise faithfully the ministry and adhere to the Confession of Faith. Those candidates below the standard required for the ministry were invited to remain in Le Mans for an extended period of time to gain practical experience of a fully functioning church order.⁷⁷ In Montauban it is more

⁷⁴ *Reformed Confessions of the sixteenth century*, ed. Arthur C. Cochrane (London, 1966), p. 155 (Article 30).

⁷⁵ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, p. 54.

⁷⁶ Richard Fitzsimmons, 'Building a Reformed ministry in Holland, 1572-1585' in Pettegree (ed.), *Reformation in the Parishes*, p. 182.

⁷⁷ Philip Conner, 'The institutionalisation of a Calvinist church in France. Le Mans in the context of the wonderyears, 1561-62', M. Litt. thesis (University of St Andrews, 1997), pp. 27-28. This thesis was based upon the 'Registre du consistoire de l'église du Mans' in *Recueil de pièces inédites pour servir à l'histoire de la Réforme et de la Ligue dans le Maine*, ed. M. Anjubault & H. Chardon (Le Mans, 1867). It has been argued for the diocese of Lyon that the Catholic rural parish

than likely that most of the ministers, particularly those who were farmed out to rural parishes and who left no trace of a formal ministerial training, were selected through a process of ‘propositions’.⁷⁸ It was only later in the sixteenth century with the consolidation of the Reformed churches and the establishing of academies specifically for the training of ministers that more formal modes of training emerged.

In Béarn the synods exhorted ministers to preach as far as possible in the local language.⁷⁹ For many of the Genevan-trained ministers this was difficult for Béarnais was more akin to the Iberian languages than to French. However, in Montauban and its surrounding area, we have seen that the overwhelming majority of ministers were of local origin. The absence of a linguistic barrier between the minister and his congregation had enormous advantages for evangelisation. For the Calvinist religion that depended so much upon the preaching of the Word, a strong grasp of the specifically local linguistic traditions was clearly an important asset.⁸⁰

Locally-bred ministers were the key to a successful missionary strategy. In order to address the nature of ministerial provision, I have generated a prosopography of ministers who served in Montauban and its surrounding churches during the period of the Wars of Religion. Drawing from a range of documents – consistory records, notarial documents, baptismal registers, municipal accounts, town council records and the minutes of colloque meetings – I have been able to develop a picture of the Calvinist churches from a regional

clergy were instructed in a similar way by other clergy until the early seventeenth century when seminaries were established. See Hoffman, *Church and Community*, pp. 51, 76.

⁷⁸ For example, Colloque of Montauban (26-28 September 1565): ‘M Jean Eustache et Guillaume Rodier ont este ouys en leurs propositions et censurez, apres examen fait et rendu tesmoignage tant de leur vie que capacité, ont este esleuz au saint ministere, auquelz remonstrances faictes de prescher pure doctrine, maintenir la gloire de Dieu, et observer diligement la discipline ecclesiastique sans estre mercenaires, et eux l’ayant ainsi promis par serrement, apres la priere, les mains ont este imposees et ont baillé la main d’association aux freres’ in ADTG, I Mi 16, no. 6. Again in 1598, the consistory records of Montauban mention that M Tremblay asked to be received into the ministry. Tremblay was examined before a panel of ministers comprising Berauld, Constans, Gardesi, Benoist and church elders on ‘plusieurs argumens et questions en theologie tant en latin qu’en francais. Et ayant respondu aussy arguments a este trouve souffisant et capable pour estre receu au ministere. Et à l’instant l’ayant receu. Berauld et autres ministres luy ont baillé les mains d’association quant le M Tremblay preste le serement en tel est requis et acoustume’ in ADTG, I 1, fo. 323r-323v. See also Foster, ‘Pierre Viret in France’, pp. 113-114.

⁷⁹ Mark Greengrass, ‘The Calvinist experiment in Béarn’ in Pettegree, Duke and Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe*, p. 132.

⁸⁰ Part of the success of the Reformation in Gaelic Scotland can be attributed to bi-lingual pastors whose knowledge of Scots and Gaelic enabled them to transmit the Protestant faith effectively. See Dawson, ‘Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd’, pp. 235-238.

perspective.⁸¹ Although far from being complete, I have been able to trace the careers of 64 ministers who worked within the region. Casting one's eye through ministerial careers one could be excused for not recognising any rhyme or reason in the appointments that were made. The postings given to ministers appear disjointed. Pierre Galheuste, for example, served in Albias in 1561, Verlhac in 1562, La Penche (just north of Caussade) in 1565, Montauban from 1565 until 1576 with a brief interlude at Figeac in Upper Quercy, followed by a longer stay in Cajarc in Upper Quercy, before returning to serve the church at Mas Grenier from 1589. At times he combined this charge with Montauban, where he remained until 1598 with brief sojourns in Bruniquel and Figeac, before returning to Verlhac in 1603, where he had started his career.⁸² It would be impossible, given the limitations of the primary material, to fathom exact reasons for these changes. One would need to take into account the impact of war, the physical health of the minister, the relationship between the minister and his community, and the needs of the region as interpreted by the colloque, little of which evidence survives, if any.

Nevertheless, taken together, the pattern of ministerial careers through the period of the Wars of Religion does demonstrate certain trends which reflect the way in which Montauban and the churches of Lower Quercy related to one another. The vast majority of these villages did not have resident ministers and this contributed to the painfully slow progress of the Reformation in these regions. Raymond Mentzer has argued that in the absence of a minister, lay church officials took on a heightened role.⁸³ In particular the shortage of ministers and the demands of the Protestant population provided the impetus for an extension of responsibilities for the diaconate. As early as January 1562 in Upper Languedoc, the deacons were described at the provincial synod as 'diacres catechisants', intimating a role which went well beyond that outlined by the Genevan model of a diaconate with its unique responsibility for social welfare and poor relief. Aside from catechetical instruction, the diaconate was charged with the responsibility to

⁸¹ Aside from archival material which will be cited in the footnotes, I have profited from Haag, *France protestante*; 'Notes et recherches pour servir à l'histoire du Protestantisme à Montauban et dans le montalbanais. XVIe, XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles', in ADTG, Fonds Garrisson, 18 J 41bis, pp. 138-238 and Rey-Lescure, 'Notes généalogiques', Bibl. SHPF, Ms. 817/4.

⁸² ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 24r; ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 11r; ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 152r; ADTG, 5 E 329, fo. 166r; ADTG, 5 E 300, fo. 16r, 51r-54r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 296v, 340r; ADTG, 2 CC 15, 31, 33, 38; ADTG, 4 CC 13, 15, 18, 19; ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6. See also, Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 148-149.

⁸³ ADTG, I 1, fo. 221r, 329r. See Mentzer, 'Le consistoire', pp. 373-391.

supervise procedures for marriage ‘pour garder que ne soient faicts mariages clandestins’. And in the absence of a minister, deacons were to take a more public role in leading the prayers of the faithful with the warning that they were only to use those prayers that were found in the catechism ‘sans adjouter ny diminuer et ne leur sera permis d’interpreter l’Escripture sinon qu’ilz pourront lire en l’assemblée le texte de la Bible’. One deacon took his role even further and confessed to the provincial synod that he had administered the sacrament of baptism.⁸⁴ The continuing shortages of ministers to guide nascent churches led to all manner of aberrations. The same provincial synod asked laymen making public prayers on their own ‘auctorité privee’ to restrain themselves and await ‘de diacres ou anciens capables pour faire les prieres affin que le peuple soit entretenu en la pure religion’. But even by 1565, the confusion had not been fully resolved and the Colloque of Montauban was warned that in some areas lay folk, ‘sans vocation’, were baptising children.⁸⁵

Montauban exercised an increasingly important role in directing the rural parishes, many of which were without ministers. In 1598, the consistory of Montauban gave the permission for a deacon of the seigneurial church of Meauzac, 15 km north-west of Montauban, ‘de catechiser pour ceste pays aulx de ladite esglise’. Furthermore, the consistory records relate that henceforth ‘ils envoyeront ung ancien au present consistoire pour y assister et rapporter sur escandalles quy pouvoir arriver à ladicte église de quinze en quinze jours’.⁸⁶ This exemplifies the level of oversight that Montauban exerted over its outlying parishes.

The enhanced responsibilities of the diaconate in Lower Quercy were a pragmatic response to the demands that faced the ministers. The consistory records of Montauban are short in detail but they indicate that in Montauban there were at least two ‘lecteur et catechiste’; one of whom had his annual wage increased to 25 écus as his remit widened to include the ‘consolation de

⁸⁴ ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 2; ACSA, BB 3, fo. 513r. The Provincial Synod of Caussade in 1572 again outlined the role of the diaconate: ‘les églises pourront élire des diacres catechistes, pour catechiser, premièrement les nouveaux venus en l’église ou devant la célébration de la sainte cène, et lire la sainte écriture publiquement devant la prédication; et seront exhortez d’employer à ces fins, les écoliers qui doivent pretendre au saint ministère, à ce que ce leur soit un degré pour y parvenir; lesquels catechistes se garderont d’user d’exhortations, et de toute forme de prédication publique; et plutôt useront d’interrogatoires, pour l’instruction des ignorans’. See *Recueil des réglemens faits par les synodes provinciaux*, p. 95. See also Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 133, 135 and Foster, ‘Pierre Viret in France’, p. 123.

⁸⁵ Colloque of Montauban (September 1565) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6.

malades'.⁸⁷ This would seem to reflect the situation in Béarn, where thirty years earlier Pierre Viret created a distinctive order of 'catechist' alongside the existing church offices of pastor, elder and deacon, whose task was to 'proposent les principaux pointz de la religion le plus simplement, clairement, familièrement que possible sera, sans entrer es questions'.⁸⁸ It would appear that this separate order was adopted in Montauban and still existed in the late 1590s, quite against the intentions of the national synods.

Lay catechists played a crucial role in the Reformation of Lower Quercy. But even with these provisions, the rural churches around Montauban still depended upon ministers from Montauban particularly to administer the sacraments. The consistory records relate letters from communities such as Meauzac and Islemade asking for a minister to be sent to administer the Lord's Supper.⁸⁹ But the situation was less than ideal and the infrequency of ministerial visits to these communities had a debilitating impact upon the rural churches. The consistory of Saint Nauphary yearned for the opportunity to have two sermons each Sunday. Letters from this church in 1581 describe very vividly the challenges that faced rural churches. Mention is made of 'des plainctes des paisans ignorans' and the scandals that they committed. Mention is also made of the onerous demands placed upon the deacons in the absence of a minister. Given this situation, the letters from the consistory of Saint Nauphary reflect a sense of demoralisation.⁹⁰

The nobility under whose patronage rural churches were often established could also impede progress. The proceedings of the colloque reveal many complaints by ministers against those nobles who withheld or delayed the payment of ministers' wages. In such circumstances it was usually agreed that the colloque would write a collective letter, bringing pressure to bear on the noble to make good his arrears. Furthermore, if the situation persisted, the minister was given permission 'se retirer à Montauban' from where the church at Montauban would farm him out to another church where he was more valued.⁹¹ In such

⁸⁶ ADTG, I 1, fo. 329r.

⁸⁷ ADTG, I 1, fo. 199r, 221r.

⁸⁸ Greengrass, 'Calvinist experiment in Béarn', p. 136.

⁸⁹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 127v.

⁹⁰ 'Missive de l'église de Saint Nauphary à l'église de Montauban (1581)' in ADTG, I Mi 37, R 2, pp. 4-5.

⁹¹ Colloque of Villemur (February 1575) and Colloque of Montauban (October 1576) in ADTG, I Mi 16, no. 7, 9.

events, the church in Montauban provided the only means through which nobles could be brought to book. In 1579, the minister of the rural church of Campagnac resigned from his post and retired to Montauban in disgust at the treatment he had received from the Huguenot magnate, the vicomte de Paulin. In explaining himself, the minister described the conditions under which he had had to work:

Le presche se fait en la sale du logis de M de visconte de Paulin, en laquelle y a le plus souvent plus de chiens que de personnes pour ouyr la parolle, lesquels chiens toubtent non seulement cel qui enseigne, mais aussi ceulx qui sont enseignés, et, qui plus est, il est impossible d'obtenir qu'on s'assemble la que Madamoille la Vicontesse ne soit levée, qui est sy tard que tous ceux du vilage ont ordinairement disné et la plus part s'en sont ja allés à la besogne, qui est cause qu'il n'y a ordinairement sur septmaine que qlques domestiques dud sieur visconte et bien peu de la ville que se treuvent au presche. Item que M le visconte tient en sa maison qlque violon por aprendre ses enfens à danser et mesmes q. led. sieur visconte danse et ses domestiques ordirement, au grand escandale de l'église.⁹²

It was explained to the colloque that the minister of Campagnac had found refuge and support in Montauban and on this account he subsequently received a letter from Paulin which promised a full redress of all the minister's grievances.

The consistory in Montauban had no qualms in reprimanding nobles who failed in their duties to protect and support the Reformed churches in the countryside. In particular it was able to use its authority, over and above the authority of the local rural church itself, to shape the Reformation in the rural churches. The consistory records of Montauban relate numerous occasions when action was taken against nobles. Chapter three mentioned the sieurs de Latour and Verlhac who were reprimanded on two occasions for their gambling habits.⁹³ That same year another noble, the sieur de Monbeton received a visit from an elder of Montauban, advising him to attend preaching more regularly if he wanted to participate in the Lord's Supper.⁹⁴

Ministers serving in the seigneurial churches faced serious challenges in establishing Reformed beliefs and precepts. They were nevertheless regarded as hard-graft training ground for ministers, in particular as they provided opportunities for preaching to smaller and often less educated groups of people

⁹² Colloque of Caussade (January 1579) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 11.

⁹³ ADTG, 1 1, fo. 128r, 235r.

⁹⁴ ADTG, 1 1, fo. 214r.

than in the towns. The consistory records of 1598 reveal how candidates for the ministry were posted to neighbouring village churches each Sunday to read Scripture, lead prayers and practise their preaching.⁹⁵ The proximity of these churches to Montauban enabled these young recruits to keep in constant touch with more experienced ministers. As ministers increased in confidence and gathered experience, they were entrusted with greater responsibilities. Pierre Charles' career was typical of that of many ministers: Charles studied at Montauban's academy from which he graduated in 1600 before serving the rural churches of Verlhac and Saint Nauphary and then the larger towns of Réalville, Albias, Villemur and Nègrepelisse, finally moving to Montauban in 1626 where he remained until his death in 1651.⁹⁶

The process by which ministers built up their experience through serving rural charges before the larger towns, however, had its drawbacks. While there were a few ministers who spent most of their lives working in the smaller rural parishes,⁹⁷ most ministers felt drawn towards serving the urban churches. Indeed, many pastors made their goal to minister in Montauban plain by purchasing properties and cultivating social networks in Montauban even as they served in the surrounding districts. And so while many ministers were very dutiful in fulfilling their role in the lesser churches it would appear that their ambitions remained fixed upon the larger towns. Abel Bicheteau, for example, was ordained into the ministry in 1598 following instruction from Jean de Serres in Montauban. For the next 10 years he served the rural church at Corbarieu, 10 km south of Montauban. And yet in 1599, mention is made of the house that he had bought from a member of the political elite in Montauban and in other notarial documents through the succeeding years, Bicheteau is described as 'habitan de Montauban'.⁹⁸ This suggests that Bicheteau continued to reside in Montauban while carrying out his pastoral duties out of town. Similarly in the month of June 1619, depending on

⁹⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 336v; 'Missive de l'esglise de Saint Nauphary à l'esglise de Montauban (1581)' in ADTG, I Mi 37, R 2, p. 3.

⁹⁶ ADTG, 12 GG 17, fo. 16r; ADTG, 12 GG 18, fo. 40r; ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 66r; ADTG, 5 E 1438, fo. 381r; ADTG, 5 E 518, fo. 243r; ADTG, 5 E 219, fo. 625r; ADTG, 5 E 722, fo. 13r-15r; ADTG, 5 E 1500, fo. 410r, 475r. For similar patterns, see the ministerial careers of Abel Bicheteau, Jean Cabos, Jean Cazaux, Pierre Cazaux, Jean Constans, Pierre Galheuste, Paul Gauside, Jean Gautier, Jean Genyiès, Jean Guarrin, Jean Lafon, Lagrande, Jean Lasaigne, Marc Montanier, Jean Moynié, Etienne Noalhan, Antoine Olivier, Bernard Preissac, Jean Reynaud, and Louis Reynaud.

⁹⁷ For example, Gérard Boyssset, Lazare Cazaux, Isaac Dumas, Guillaume Lodis, Pierre Rabastens, Jean Tremblay, and Bernard Vaysse.

⁹⁸ ADTG, 5 E 1062, fo. 67r-70v; ADTG, 5 E 847, fo. 375r.

the document consulted, another Reformed pastor, Jean Richaud, is variously described as ‘ministre de Meauzac et Villemade’, ‘ministre, habitant de Montauban’ and ‘ministre de Montauban’.⁹⁹ The different titles need not have been mutually exclusive.¹⁰⁰ Bicheteau and Richaud, like so many other ministers, had been brought up and educated in Montauban and their allegiance remained, naturally enough, with their native town.

It was not until the late 1590s and early seventeenth century that rural churches such as Reyniès, Verlhac, Saint Nauphary, Meauzac and Villemade could rely upon having a permanent minister to watch over their spiritual welfare. Prior to the early seventeenth century, the shortages of ministers and the disruption of war certainly had a detrimental effect upon the growth of these rural churches. But as more ministers became available, particularly in the wake of the establishment of the academy at Montauban in 1600, many rural churches began to boast their own minister. The *état civil* reveals an ever closer relationship between the ministers who worked in these parishes and the nobles who protected them. For example, in 1589, Michel Charles, minister of Montbartier, asked Isabeau de Montbartier, the wife of the seigneur de Montbartier to be the godmother to his daughter.¹⁰¹ Again, in 1607, Michel Charles lent a significant sum of money to Olympe de Latour, the wife of the baron de Brandalin and sister of Jonathon de Bosquet seigneur de Verlhac, to whose estate he had been transferred.¹⁰² The personal links between noble and minister and the minister’s greater presence in the rural parishes gave a new lease of life to the Reformation of the countryside.

The extent to which rural parishes were looked after varied. For whatever reasons – shortages of ministers, the resistance of the rural population to the

⁹⁹ ADTG, 5 E 860, fo. 255v, 264v, 307v and ADTG, 5 E 201, fo. 518r-519v.

¹⁰⁰ For other ministers who combined their ministry in Montauban with rural charges outside Montauban, see Jean Assier, Marc-Antoine Benoist, Pierre Cazaux, Michel Charles, Jean Constans, Pierre Crubel, Pierre Galheuste, Jean de Lassus, and Guillaume Rodier.

¹⁰¹ ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 273v and in 1592, Michel Charles asked Anne de Tapie, the wife of seigneur du Bar to be the godmother to another of his daughter’s (ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 59v). Again the minister Pierre Colliod asked noble Antoine de Rapin de Grenade to be the godfather to his son in 1568 (ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 28r); Raymond de Lafon minister of Meauzac asked noble Pierre de Bar baron de Meauzac to be the godfather to his son in 1593 (ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 93v) and Jean Richaud minister of Lagarde and Islemade, asked noble Ysaac de Bar sieur d’Islemade to be the godfather to his son in 1601 (ADTG, 12 GG 9, fo. 12r).

¹⁰² ADTG, 5 E 206, fo. 530v-532v (1607). See also ‘Contrat entre noble Ysaac de Bar seigneur et baron de Villemade et Jean Richaud ministre de Meauzac et Villemade’ (1619) in ADTG, 5 E 201, fo. 518r-519v.

demands of the new religion, the impact of war, and the immediacy of the Catholic threat – the impact of the Reformation in the countryside was not as profound as it was in the towns. This must have been apparent to any minister visiting these rural parishes. And yet the church in Montauban did not wash its hands of responsibility towards these churches. After all these rural churches provided a crucial link between the urban and noble bases of the Huguenot movement. And although little of the correspondence survives between the rural churches and the church of Montauban it is clear that the former relied upon the latter for their survival. Montauban provided preachers, ministers, a wealth of advice and support, and most of all Montauban wielded its moral authority to promote the Reformation. Nevertheless, it was always going to be the case that the rural parishes were secondary to the churches situated in the towns around Montauban. The Reformation of the towns was a priority, for the church in Montauban saw here its greatest hopes realised. The towns of Saint Antonin, Villemur and Mas Grenier, for example, were quick to follow Montauban's lead in embracing the Reformed cause. The concentration of an urban population – sometimes of as many as one and a half to two thousand people – the support of the municipal magistracies and local nobility, and the strength of these towns with their own fortifications made the urban Reformation a priority, to which Montauban devoted considerable resources.

There have been some local studies of Montauban's satellite towns by keen local enthusiasts but the paucity of documentary evidence makes it almost impossible to reconstruct the histories of these towns through such a turbulent time.¹⁰³ Furthermore rarely do these local studies consider anything that went on outside the town's walls. However, prosopographical research of the region's ministers shows how important these urban churches were in Montauban's eyes. In particular this is shown by the great efforts to maintain a permanent ministerial presence in these towns throughout the period. It is less clear how these smaller urban churches fared in the early part of the 1560s when there was a distinct shortage of ministers to go around. It would appear that these towns depended upon the services of itinerant ministers. But from the mid-1560s there is barely a

¹⁰³ F. Galabart & L. Boscus, *La ville de Caussade* (Montauban, 1908); J. Lacassagne, *Une cité protestante, Nègrepelisse* (Montauban, 1927); Jean Donat, *Le mouvement protestant et l'édit de révocation à Saint Antonin* (Toulouse, 1932); Gaston Tournier, 'L'église réformée de Villemur', *BSHPF*, 85 (1936), pp. 26-33; Jean-François Breton, *Mas-Grenier. Place de sûreté protestante, 1576-1621* (n.p., 1977).

year for which I have been unable to identify the minister of Saint Antonin, Nègrepelisse, Bruniquel, Villemur or Mas Grenier; similarly for Réalville, Albias and Caussade in the years after 1572.

Montauban and its cluster of satellite Reformed churches stood out in sharp relief compared to other areas across France where the very existence of Protestant churches was seriously threatened. In the south of France some churches were overrun altogether by the violence of the religious conflict. In contrast, and under the protection of Montauban, many of the smaller urban churches of Quercy thrived and this must have been attractive to other ministers across the south of France whose churches had been destroyed. There are examples of some very experienced ministers who originated from beyond the borders of Quercy who fled to Montauban before being placed as ministers in its satellite towns. For example, Michel Charles was a native of Mauvezin in Armagnac, 60 km south-west of Montauban. He had trained at Geneva in 1566 and had 15 years pastoral experience in the Huguenot strongholds of Lectoure and Fleurance. In the early 1580s, he was re-located and served the smaller churches of Villemur and Mas Grenier before taking up a post in Montauban in 1589.¹⁰⁴ Similarly the Genevan-trained Jean Chrestien who established a thriving Reformed community in Villefranche-en-Rouergue in the early 1560s later served the church at Saint Antonin. And again, Ambroise Coustauld ministered to the Huguenot community at Monflanquin in Périgord and subsequently took up a position at Nègrepelisse. In each of these cases, the minister served in the smaller urban churches around Montauban before taking up a post in Montauban. This might suggest that the smaller towns were being used as a testing ground for ministers before they worked in Montauban. But it may also suggest that Montauban's secondary towns were more important in themselves than their size would suggest. Satellite towns such as Villemur and Mas Grenier were not merely dependencies of Montauban: they engaged with the surrounding environment and its population as independent churches. They earned for themselves a minister of proven ability.

¹⁰⁴ ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 165r, 273v; ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 59v, 158r; ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 171r; ADTG, 12 GG 9, fo. 46r; ADTG, 12 GG 11, fo. 4v; ADTG, 12 GG 29, fo. 14r; ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 14r; ADTG, 5 E 467, fo. 139r; ADTG, 5 E 147, fo. 236r, 522v; ADTG, 5 E 848, fo. 244v; ADTG, 5 E 206, fo. 530v-532v; ADTG, I 1, fo. 4v, 5r, 8r, 236r, 237v; ADTG, 2 CC 57; ADTG, 4 CC 29.

With a permanent minister to oversee ecclesiastical affairs and the firm, guiding hand of Montauban ever present, the urban churches began to make an impact upon the society in which they existed. Chapter three demonstrated the importance in Montauban of the relationship between the minister and magistrate in altering the moral tenor of the town and this appears to be a pattern replicated in towns such as Saint Antonin. Often the church of Saint Antonin took its cue from Montauban. In December 1567, for example, in order to mark the victory of the Prince de Condé, the town's minister 'propose de rendre graces à Dieu de la belle victoire', as had been done at Montauban 'en grande solemnité'. Following this example it was decided that there would be preaching of the Word and singing of psalms, and that all the town's shops would be closed.¹⁰⁵

Consistorial records do not survive for Saint Antonin but its town council records demonstrate attempts on behalf of the consulate to pursue those who unsettled society. Gambling, dicing and blasphemy were seen as a root cause of the disruptions that emerged in the 1560s. Throughout the second half of the sixteenth century, the town consuls railed against gamblers and drunkards and invoked the 'edictz du roy et arrestz de la court de Parlement de Tholoze'.¹⁰⁶ But the consuls went beyond the edicts and in 1578 announced that it was forbidden 'à toutes personnes de quelle qualité ou condition qui soient de ne chanter en lieu que ce soyt aulcunes chansons mondaines, escandaleuses et controuvans à l'honneur et gloire de Dieu, sur peyne d'estre mys en prison et condamnés à l'amende de cent sous'.¹⁰⁷ A raft of consular legislation was enforced against those who contravened the town's regulations that prohibited townsfolk from frequenting public houses during preaching, opening their shops during the Wednesday sermon and working on the Sabbath.¹⁰⁸ In 1577, a fine of 10 livres (half of which was to go to the poor) was imposed on butchers who had slaughtered cattle on the day on which the Lord's Supper was being celebrated.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, in 1578, undoubtedly under pressure from the town's consistory, the consulate took measures against a local superstitious rite of passage known as the

¹⁰⁵ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 185r.

¹⁰⁶ For example, ACSA, BB 1, fo. 21v; ACSA, BB 3, fo. 483r.

¹⁰⁷ ACSA, BB 2, fo. 157v.

¹⁰⁸ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 199r; ACSA, BB 2, fo. 111r; 'Ordonnances de police' in ACSA, FF 16 (1588).

¹⁰⁹ ACSA, BB 2, fo. 116r-116v.

‘baptême au grasal’ since it profaned ‘la sainte institution et sacrement du baptême ordonné par Dieu’.¹¹⁰

In other parts of Europe it was not uncommon for the civil authorities to impede the church’s attempt to instil order. Magistrates would prefer to turn a blind eye or refuse to enforce disciplinary decrees. Scott Dixon demonstrates the extent to which local secular officials in Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach considered pastors a threat to their independence.¹¹¹ Indeed when divisions opened up between pastor and parish, the secular authorities sought to use the division as a means to isolate the minister and limit his authority. Ecclesiastical and political authority often seemed to work against one another. The situation, in Saint Antonin, however, would seem to provide a counterpoint to this picture. Like Montauban, the evidence suggests that the co-operation between minister and magistrate over a sustained period of time did succeed in altering the moral framework of urban life.

External pressure, particularly from the Parlement of Toulouse, demanded a greater unity of purpose between magistrate and minister. But that unity was not beyond testing. At Mas Grenier, a Huguenot stronghold on the river Garonne, for example, the minister Pierre Galheuste applied himself most earnestly to reproaching the moral disorders and scandalous activities of the Huguenot garrison. Such was the rigour of Galheuste’s moral crusade in the 1590s that he not only alienated himself from the town council but also from the consistory and invited abuse from the soldiers.¹¹²

While the degree of co-operation varied, the Huguenot consulates of the smaller towns around Montauban took their responsibilities in sustaining the Calvinist faith seriously. In Saint Antonin, the consuls raised money from the townsfolk specifically for the church and provided lodging for their minister and to those ministers who fled to Saint Antonin for refuge at times of war.¹¹³ They paid their resident minister an annual wage of 400 livres and saw to it that the two deacons were recompensed for their services to the tune of 50 to 75 livres each year.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, the consuls personally took an active role in seeking out a

¹¹⁰ ACSA, BB 2, fo. 168r-168v, 232v.

¹¹¹ C. Scott Dixon, ‘The Reformation and parish morality in Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach’, *ARG*, 87 (1996), pp. 270-281.

¹¹² Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 148-149.

¹¹³ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 287v, 384r; ACSA, BB 3, fo. 568v

¹¹⁴ ACSA, BB 2, fo. 27v, 92r, 102r, 158r, 366r; ACSA, BB 3, fo. 400v, 409v, 411r, 431v, 513r, 601r, 637v; ACSA, BB 4, fo. 27r; ACSA, CC 53, fo. 15v; ACSA, GG 26.

new minister whenever their resident minister could not perform his duties for whatever reason. They sent delegations to synods and to towns such as Montauban and Castres in order to seek a replacement.¹¹⁵ The consulate cherished their ministers at a time when they knew that there were shortages and this protection extended to prosecuting those that spoke ‘en hayne et malice contre le pasteur et ministre de l’esglise reformee de ceste ville’.¹¹⁶

Saint Antonin was largely a self-reliant community. In the early 1580s, the consulate talked of the vitality of the local church, ‘la multiplica[ti]on du peuple et accroissement de ceste esglise’, and the need for another minister.¹¹⁷ Up until this point, the church in Saint Antonin had greatly benefited from the continuity that the minister, Porcel, had given by serving the church at least since 1567. However, his death in 1580 induced panic and eyes immediately turned to Montauban for a replacement. Saint Antonin’s consuls specifically sought to attract Jean Gardesi who had served the church temporarily one year earlier. The church at Montauban agreed to this proposition pending confirmation from the provincial synod. And in the meantime, the consuls of Saint Antonin paid the expenses for another young minister, born and bred in Saint Antonin, to go to Montauban for a period of two or three months ‘estudier et façonner avecq les mynistres à Montauban’. One can imagine the indignation of the consuls when this younger minister refused to return to Saint Antonin and disappeared into Gascony for unknown reasons.¹¹⁸

With colloques only meeting at the very most on a quarterly basis and provincial synods meeting bi-annually, Montauban as the most important church within the colloque had a key role in co-ordinating ministerial provision, a role normally reserved for the colloque. Montauban’s part in designating ministers for the region’s churches was implicitly acknowledged by the colloque itself. The Colloque of Montauban in 1576, for example, agreed that ‘le frere Monin [minister] demeurera comme il est à Caussade jusques à ce qu’il y aura esglise requerant un pasteur; qu’en tel cas est commis au consistoire de Montauban, avec les pasteurs y estans, de l’envoyer à lad. esglise requerant ministre’.¹¹⁹ But unless there were problems to resolve, the smaller urban churches looked after their own

¹¹⁵ ACSA, BB 2, fo. 265v, 271r, 291v-292r, 303r-303v.

¹¹⁶ ACSA, BB 3, fo. 400v.

¹¹⁷ ACSA, BB 3, fo. 405v-406r.

¹¹⁸ ACSA, BB 3, fo. 265v, 271r, 291v-292r, 303r-303v.

¹¹⁹ Colloque of Montauban (1576) ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 8.

day-to-day affairs. The direction and decision-making for each church was taken by that church's consistory and it was only when problems or divisions arose that the matter was referred to higher bodies such as the church at Montauban or the colloque.

The gathering strength of the Reformed churches in towns such as Saint Antonin and Villemur gave to these towns an important role in evangelising their own vicinities. Many of these towns had civil and criminal jurisdiction over the surrounding countryside. Following Montauban's example, the consuls of towns such as Saint Antonin used their authority to bear down on those in the countryside that infringed the moral codes that were now being enforced in the town.¹²⁰ And from the first meetings of the colloque and provincial synods, the ministers were exhorted 'se transporter aux lieux' so as to administer the sacraments and preach 'si la comodité le porte'. In particular, it was 'enjoinct à tous ministres ayant esglises à l'envyron d'eulx destituées de ministres, de faire leur deivoir de les aller visiter le plus souvent que faire se pourra'.¹²¹ This was a pattern that characterised the churches right across the region. The consistory records of Montauban intimate how Marc-Antoine Benoist, the minister of Villemur, also looked after the rural churches at Verlhac, Villebrumier and Reyniès.¹²² Following the devastation of war, towns such as Saint Antonin were given the responsibility to reconstruct those rural communities adjacent to them and even support them financially.¹²³

The smaller urban churches were clearly playing a key role in infusing life into the countryside. The church-forming phase continued in the rural parishes into the 1570s with new churches being established at Mirabel, Génébrières and Villebrumier, for example. But not all of these ventures were ultimately successful. The lives of some churches like those of La Ville-Dieu and Escatalans, 20 km west of Montauban, were short-lived, particularly on account of their proximity to the Catholic stronghold of Castelsarassin. Nevertheless in the towns where Reformed churches were able to consolidate themselves, they began to exert a gravitational force on the rural villages and countryside. Breton's study of Mas-Grenier reveals how the church in this smaller town drew converts from the

¹²⁰ For example, ACSA, BB 1, fo. 8r.

¹²¹ Provincial Synod of Castres (January 1562) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 2.

¹²² ADTG, 1 1, fo. 42v (1595).

¹²³ Colloque of Villemur (February 1575) and Colloque of Lower Quercy at Saverdun (September 1630) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 7, 17.

surrounding villages of Bourret and Finhan.¹²⁴ Similarly Janine Garrisson has analysed a list of those received into the church of Villemur. During the period 1574-81, 347 individuals joined the Reformed church at Villemur, a not insignificant number given that the entire population of the town was just over two thousand. In particular, the church at Villemur welcomed converts from the neighbouring villages and towns where no church existed, for example from Rabastens, L'Isle-en-Albigeois and from Toulouse.¹²⁵ This is reflected in the baptismal records of the town which show that godparents were selected from towns as far afield as Rabastens, Saint Jory and Toulouse, and even further afield, from Villefranche-en-Rouergue.¹²⁶ Villemur was very much a Protestant outpost in the Catholic Toulousain plain and it would rather suggest that the town was the centre of an underground network of Protestants in the Catholic-controlled countryside and neighbouring towns.

With the exception of Saint Antonin whose natural strength of position and impressive ramparts provided relative security from invading forces, Montauban's other satellite towns felt more exposed. Nevertheless the hope was that town fortifications would delay any besieging army while assistance arrived from Montauban. The rural churches, on the other hand, were subject to the vicissitudes of war. Despite the best efforts of the church in Montauban to provide ministers and to train catechists the unsettling experience of war meant there were real problems in consolidating the Reformation in these areas. And yet the survival of the Protestant towns and the continuing efforts to establish and re-establish rural churches even into the seventeenth century would suggest that the Calvinist elite were far from despairing. On a purely local level the guiding role played by Montauban and its ministers and its network of satellite churches opened up the possibility of creating a Huguenot heartland.

Philip Benedict cites Willy Richard in suggesting that the further one went from the primary Calvinist centres, the fewer Old Testament names were chosen for Protestant children. It is suggested that saints' names continued to hold greater importance in the smaller towns and villages and that such communities were only 'lightly touched' by the Reformed spirit, even several decades after the

¹²⁴ Breton, *Mas-Grenier*, p. 106.

¹²⁵ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 68, 70.

¹²⁶ 'Registres des baptêmes de l'église P. R. de Villemur' (1574-81 and 1591-99) in AN, TT 276 or ADHG, 1 Mi EC 53.

Reformation had been formally adopted.¹²⁷ If names are an index of the strength of popular commitment to Calvinism then Villemur's Protestant population had been protestantised relatively successfully. One decade after the Reformation, the proportion of male infants being baptised with Old Testament names was 25 per cent in Montauban (1570) and 40 per cent in Villemur (1574-75). Furthermore Villemur was almost entirely successful in eradicating non-biblical saints' names from the baptismal registers. This would suggest that the Reformation had a surprisingly profound impact upon life in the dispersed urban towns and villages that surrounded Montauban.

But despite the strength that the smaller urban churches built up, Montauban remained unrivalled in its preponderance. Although little survives, there was clearly regular correspondence between Montauban and its neighbouring churches through which the needs and problems facing churches could be resolved.¹²⁸ In 1592, an elder from Montauban was sent to mediate a dispute between the rural church of Meuzac and its neighbouring rural churches of Islemade and Lagarde over the payment of their minister's wages.¹²⁹ Montauban could provide advice and support for its satellite churches but it also drew from these churches when it was in turn in need. When there was an acute shortage of ministers in Montauban, the town could draw on ministers from neighbouring villages or towns to fill the shortfall. In 1597, for example, following the death, illness and the absence of the town's ministers, the consistory of Montauban sent letters out to four ministers in the neighbouring villages and towns seeking their assistance.¹³⁰ But perhaps more striking is the role played by Montauban's consulate in reinforcing the consistory's authority over the region. Jean Crubel who held positions both on the consulate and in the consistory as an elder and the second consul, was delegated to speak to Marc-Antoine Benoist, the minister of Villemur. Crubel's task was to persuade Benoist to leave Villemur for Montauban and to assure him that he would be paid in full by the church of Montauban.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 106 n. 1.

¹²⁸ See, for example, 'Coppie [sent to the consuls of Saint Antonin] de la lettre par le Roy de Navarre escripte à messieurs consuls et consistoire de Montaulban' (26 June, 1588) in ACSA, EE 3; Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 110-111.

¹²⁹ Bibl. SHPF, Collection Auzières, Ms 570³, fo. 4r.

¹³⁰ ADTG, I 1, fo. 221v-222r. For other examples, see ADTG, I 1, fo. 14v, 109r, 236r, 237v, 254r.

¹³¹ ADTG, I 1, fo. 251r, 252v.

This action would not have been popular amongst the faithful of Villemur but another incident later that year illustrated why the town remained submissive to Montauban's dictates. Henry IV had agreed to maintain ministers from royal taxes, a decision ratified by the *Chambre des Comptes* and *Cours des Aides* in Montpellier. This decision was executed by the *exacteur* of royal taxes in Villemur but before any money was disbursed to Villemur's minister, the *exacteur* was arrested in Toulouse and his collection was confiscated. Immediately the church in Villemur alerted Montauban about this matter and it was agreed 'par commun advis que lesdits sieur consuls de ceste ville communiqueront de ce faict avec messieurs des principaux de robe longue pour suivant leur resolution' and that they would advise the church in Villemur 'qu'il cognoistrans estre expediant et necessaire'.¹³²

The political importance and prestige of Montauban imbued the town with the moral authority to supervise the churches of the vicinity. From 1561 until 1631, a total of 70 years, Montauban had preserved itself as a Protestant stronghold. The surrounding Catholic countryside and cities that flanked Montauban continually tested the resolve of the Montalbanais. Despite the ongoing pressures and the depredations of war, Montauban remained true to the Huguenot cause and consolidated its identity. The pre-eminence of Montauban in the vicinity was in part an inevitable result of the size of its Protestant population and the role that the town played in the wider strategies of the Huguenot cause, but also in part a response to the limitations of the colloque system. In comparison to the Netherlands France was geographically a much larger country and markedly less urbanised. This meant that towns were further apart, weakening the bonds between the different churches and making liaison between the different churches less practical. This is reflected in the infrequency with which colloques convened, a state of affairs which became more pronounced with the abolition of the *classe* structure in 1571. And yet co-ordination between the churches was a prerequisite at a time of religious war when the very existence of the Reformed churches was at peril. Herein lies the importance of Montauban as a mother church to its surrounding rural and urban churches. Montauban was the headquarters of the regional Huguenot military and financial organisation. Its noble military

¹³² ADTG, I 1, fo. 232v-233v. See also ADTG, I 1, fo. 42v.

Chapter 5. Montauban and the Protestant South.

The Huguenot heartland of Montauban did not stand as a lone bastion of Protestant strength in southern France. By the end of the sixteenth century 75 per cent of the entire Huguenot population resided in the south in a configuration known as the ‘Huguenot crescent’.¹ This extended from La Rochelle on the west coast to Nérac, Montauban and Castres in the centre-south and the towns and villages of Lower Languedoc and Dauphiné on the south-eastern frontier. This chapter seeks to demonstrate how Montauban – one of the most important Huguenot strongholds in southern France – related to these other Protestant centres. The chapter will challenge the historiographical tradition that argues that the Protestants of the south created a separate state, a ‘United Provinces of the Midi’ before exploring the real geography of confessional identity in the south and the nature of political association. These reflections will provide the framework in which to probe the function of the Huguenot political assemblies in the 1570s and 1580s, often regarded as the embodiment of Calvinist republican sentiment.

The historiographical debate.

The massacres of Protestants on St Bartholomew’s day in 1572 have been regarded by some historians as the decisive turning point of the French Reformation. It is argued that the impact of murder, abjuration and emigration led to the terminal decline of the French Reformed communities. Amongst Huguenots the massacres had triggered vastly conflicting emotions – disillusionment, panic, fear and also a strong sense of royal betrayal. But the apparent collapse of Calvinism appears somewhat misplaced when one reflects that French Protestantism never was a uniform phenomenon: not before St Bartholomew’s day and certainly not after. Events in the south of France, away from the court and the political cauldron of Paris, had always followed a rather different course and all the more so after the massacres, which saw the elimination of many Protestant communities in the north of France. The question is whether this dramatic turn of

¹ Greengrass, *French Reformation*, pp. 43-44.

events created a new type of Calvinism centred on the south. Characteristically in the literature it has been suggested that Protestant indignation and the search for security found its most tangible form in a new political ideology and new political organisations.

The lack of local archival material relating to the Huguenot response to the St Bartholomew's day massacres has forced historians to base almost all their assumptions on what happened in France upon the surviving proceedings of the Huguenot political assemblies. These assemblies met frequently after the massacres and copies of their resolutions have been preserved in the Mazarine library, Paris.² These proceedings have received their fullest treatment in Léon Anquez's *Histoire des assemblées politiques*.³ The starting date of this study is 1573 and this has only served to affirm the assumption that the massacres marked a watershed, an impression reinforced by historians' fascination with the monarchomach literature.⁴

Reflecting the weight of this literature, Philip Benedict argues that after 1572 the Protestant movement became 'more radical, democratically organised and urban based' and adopted 'more forthright theories of resistance to a tyrant king'.⁵ These theories came to fruition with the creation of what Jean Delumeau called the 'Provinces Unies' of the Midi.⁶ This concept has been greatly developed in the successive works of Janine Garrisson. Garrisson emphasises the ways in which the Protestant population of southern France functioned independently from the rest of the kingdom: 'Je pense que le Midi protestant a fonctionné pendant presque quarante ans en Etat indépendant'.⁷ In *Protestants du Midi* (1980), Garrisson discusses this creation of 'l'état calviniste du sud', 'une république fédérative' with Calvinism acting as a 'porteur d'une théorie de

² For example 'Assemblées générales politiques de ceux de la religion prétendue réformée depuis l'an 1572 jusques en l'année 1597' in Mazarine, Ms. 2604.

³ Anquez, *Histoire des assemblées politiques*. See now James S. Valone, *Huguenot Politics: 1601-1622* (New York, 1994), p. 2.

⁴ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1978), II. Chapters 8-9; Myriam Yardeni, *La Conscience nationale en France pendant les guerres de religion (1559-1598)* (Paris, 1971), pp. 136-143 and her 'French Calvinist political thought, 1534-1715' in Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism*, pp. 315-338; Donald Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology. Consciousness and society in the French Reformation* (Cambridge, 1981), chapter 8; Ralph E. Giersey, 'The monarchomach triumvirs: Hotman, Beza and Mornay', *BHR*, 32 (1970), pp. 41-56; Robert Kingdon, *Myths about the St Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572-1576* (Harvard, 1988), pp. 136-160.

⁵ Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 125.

⁶ Jean Delumeau, *Naissance et affirmation de la Réforme* (Paris, 1965), pp. 180-181.

⁷ Janine Estèbe [Garrisson] in 'Discussion sur la communication de Mme Estèbe' in *L'Admiral de Coligny et son temps*, p. 751.

l'état'.⁸ Echoing the work of Myriam Yardeni, Garrisson portrays a new political ideology, one in which the traditional institutions of the region were employed to effect a 'révolution' out of which emerged 'la constitution d'un état indépendant et séparatiste'.⁹ More recently, Garrisson has discussed these developments in terms of 'sécession', by which is meant an absolute separation from the kingdom of France.¹⁰

With the exceptions of Monsieur Méjan, Perez Zagorin and Michel Perronet, who have raised sceptical voices, the notion of a 'United Provinces' of the Midi has been largely unquestioned.¹¹ Indeed Garrisson's arguments have been accepted as the standard textbook interpretation of events in the south of France. John Salmon describes how the Huguenot leadership sought to create a 'federal republic' by welding their districts 'into a powerful and self-contained organisation, independent, at least for the moment, of the royal authority'.¹² Robert Knecht describes how the constitution developed by the political assemblies 'determined the constitution of an independent state', a 'Huguenot republic'.¹³ And Robert Kingdon argues that the Assembly at Millau in December 1573 devised 'a sweeping plan for an independent Protestant government... committed at every level to the republican principle', laying out the potential for 'an effective secession'.¹⁴

In pursuing this vision, historians of France may have been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by parallel events in the Netherlands. The birth of an 'état parallèle' out of the struggle of civil and religious warfare was an outcome of the religious conflicts in the Low Countries. From the late 1570s, the opponents of Spanish rule, most of whom were Protestant, sought independence

⁸ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 222; Janine Garrisson, *L'Homme protestant* (Brussels, 1986), p. 30.

⁹ 'La Saint-Barthélemy aboutit à un renforcement inimaginable de la conscience nationale chez les Protestants, sous une forme tout à fait laïque et démocratique. C'est là, sans aucun doute, une véritable révolution' in Yardeni, *La Conscience nationale*, p. 143. See also Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 221 and Garrisson, *L'Homme protestant*, p. 27.

¹⁰ Garrisson, 'Protestants du sud-ouest', p. 100.

¹¹ M. Méjan in 'Discussion sur la communication de Mme Estèbe' in *L'Admiral de Coligny et son temps*, pp. 749-750; Zagorin, *Rebels and Rulers*, II. 18; Michel Perronet, 'La "république des Provinces-Unies du Midi": les enjeux de l'historiographie' in Anne Blanchard, Henri Michel & Elie Pélaquier (eds.), *La Vie religieuse dans la France méridionale à l'époque moderne* (Montpellier, 1992), pp. 5-26.

¹² Salmon, *Society in Crisis*, p. 191.

¹³ R. J. Knecht, *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598* (London, 1989), pp. 51-53.

¹⁴ Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 188-189. For similar treatments, see Cornette, *L'affirmation de l'état absolu*, pp. 105-107; Frederic Baumgartner, *France in the sixteenth century* (New York, 1995), p. 217; Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 98-99; R. J. Knecht, *The Rise and Fall of Renaissance France* (London, 1996), pp. 436-438.

from their oppressors and in 1609 the Netherlands was formally divided between a largely Protestant confederation of provinces, comprising Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Groningen, Friesland, Gelderland and Overijssel (the 'United Provinces') and the southern Catholic Walloon provinces of Flanders, Artois, Hainaut, Brabant and Luxembourg which remained under Spanish control. Garrison, amongst others, seems to have been inspired by the apparent similarities in the experiences of the Dutch Calvinists and those of the French Midi: 'une comparaison avec la jeune république néerlandaise s'imposait bien sûr!'¹⁵

The coincidence of Protestant strength with a distinct geographical region imbues the notion of a 'state within a state' with considerable credibility. Furthermore, the political, financial and military developments that the Huguenots of southern France engineered in response to the Catholic threat would seem to amount to a quest to create a separate state. These separate developments were seized upon by those seeking to revive regionalist sentiment in the French Midi in the second half of the nineteenth century. This revival of interest in the cultural heritage of the Midi prompted the founding of the journal *Occitania* and the emergence of institutions such as the *Escola Occitania* and a seat of Occitan language at the University of Toulouse. Frédéric Mistral gained renown by promoting the Provençal language by gathering around him a group of Provençal poets called the 'Félibres', a nineteenth-century revival of the Troubadour tradition. But there emerged another more radical strand of occitanism which sought to promote a 'fédération occitane', separate from the rest of France. The leading exponent of this movement, Louis-Xavier de Ricard, argued that the cultural and social originality of Occitania had been eroded by the French: 'This bourgeois, royal, unitary France, as it was made, was made not by the Midi but actually against it' and 'unfortunately northern France crushed our hopes of political liberty as it crushed the religious liberty of the Albigensians and the Reformation'.¹⁶

It has been suggested that Protestantism was little more than the ideology of Occitan independence.¹⁷ To what extent was the separate cultural identity of the

¹⁵ Garrison, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 9, 220, 336 and Garrison, *L'Homme Protestant*, p. 29. See also A. D. Lublinskaya, *French Absolutism: the crucial phase, 1620-1629*, trans. Brian Pearce (Cambridge, 1968), p. 166 and Heller, *Iron and Blood*, pp. 76-78.

¹⁶ Louis-Xavier de Ricard, *Le Fédéralisme* (Paris, 1877), p. 184, cited in Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 208-209.

¹⁷ See now Suzanne Citron, *Le Mythe nationale* (Paris, 1987), cited in David Bell, 'Recent works on early modern French national identity', *JMH*, 68 (1996), p. 100.

south, espoused by the Occitan revivalists, a reflection of events in the sixteenth century? One might suggest that the inherent problems and limited success that these revivalists have had in trying to articulate a separate southern identity should prompt the historian to question whether it would have ever have been possible to have created a 'United Provinces'.¹⁸

The first regional histories of the south emerged in the seventeenth century and sought to extol the region's riches and beauty. Jacques Cassan in his Panégryque (Béziers, 1617), for example, described the province of Languedoc as resembling 'un très beau et délicieux iardin'. Guillaume de Catel in his Mémoires de l'histoire du Languedoc (Toulouse, 1633) classed the province as 'l'une des meilleures, et plus fertiles prouinces de la France', in which 'on ne trouue aucun coin de terre infructueux'.¹⁹ What emerges through these histories is the strong sense in which the region prided itself for its 'auto-suffisance'. But this attempt to create a regional consciousness could not conceal striking regional variations between the different areas of the south that manifested themselves in a range of peculiarities.

Beneath the outward lines of royal control in southern France lay a complex cultural and political heritage, reflecting local customs and traditions. For both Guyenne and Languedoc, any sense of common consciousness within and between the provinces was strictly limited for sixteenth-century France was a localised society, a patchwork of regions and localities, existing quite separately from one another and 'possessing a degree of independence even if they all belonged within the same political and religious whole'.²⁰

Southern France offers little in the way of topographical unity. It can be divided into three main regions. The focus of Upper Languedoc and Upper Guyenne were the wheat-growing plains around Toulouse bounded on the south by the Pyrenees and on the north by the remote hills and plateaux of Quercy and Rouergue. Further to the east, the markedly drier coastal plains and *garrigues* of Lower Languedoc encompassed Arles, Nîmes, Béziers, Montpellier and Narbonne together with the lower sections of the river Rhône, a region noted for its cloth,

¹⁸ Theodore Zeldin, The French (London, 1997), p. 18.

¹⁹ Cited in Régine Monpays, 'L'image du Languedoc chez les historiens de cette province au XVIIe siècle', AM, 110 (1998), pp. 25-40.

²⁰ Braudel, Identity of France, I. 115, 117.

textile and silk trades.²¹ Hemming this region in from the north and west lay the Cévennes, a relatively wild and inaccessible maze of valleys, an ‘undecipherable labyrinth of hills’ and desolate plateaux comprising Gévaudan, Vivarais and Velay.²²

The exceptional size of the southern provinces – the distances between regions and the difficulties faced by those regions in communicating with one another – precluded the possibility of close contact. This can be verified by the almost complete absence of any mention of Montauban in the notarial records of Nîmes, and vice-versa.²³ This is hardly surprising since it could take as many as seven whole days to travel from parts of Lower to Upper Languedoc. The commercial focus of Montauban in Upper Languedoc and Guyenne included the cities of Toulouse and Bordeaux and the neighbouring towns of Mauvezin, Lectoure, Lavaur and Saint Antonin; that of Nîmes in Lower Languedoc comprised Lyon, Alès, Anduze, Montpellier, Sommières, Avignon and Uzès.

These different spheres were reflected in the administrative developments of the province. Even before the Reformation, the dioceses of the Catholic Church in Languedoc were divided into two ecclesiastical provinces with archbishoprics at Toulouse and Narbonne respectively.²⁴ The crown established the seat of its regional parlement at Toulouse and the *Chambre des Comptes* and *Cours des Aides* at Montpellier. Similarly, for the collection of taxes and administration of the region’s finances, the crown developed Toulouse and Montpellier as separate ‘généralités’.²⁵ Neither the town council records nor the municipal accounts of Montauban and Montpellier reveal much evidence of any liaison for administrative purposes between the two towns. Instead, the records of Montpellier reveal a lively web of communication confined to the towns of Lower Languedoc on a variety of political, economic and pastoral levels.²⁶ During the later Wars of Religion, the separation of Upper and Lower Languedoc was

²¹ René Nelli, *Histoire du Languedoc* (Paris, 1974), pp. 156-157, 170; Le Roy Ladurie, *Paysans de Languedoc*, I. 113, 131, 126.

²² Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Cevennes Journal. Notes on a journey through the French Highlands*, ed. Gordon Golding (Edinburgh, 1978), p. 87.

²³ See *Notariat de Nîmes. Inventaire des actes filiatifs* (1996), ed. Yannick du Guerny.

²⁴ Moran, ‘The Catholic church’, p. 23.

²⁵ The *généralité* of Toulouse comprised the dioceses of Toulouse, Carcassonne, Albi, Castres, Mirepoix, Saint Papoul, Alet, Lavaur, Rieux, Montauban, Cahors, Rodez, Pamiers and Vabres. The *généralité* of Montpellier comprised the dioceses of Montpellier, Nîmes, Narbonne, Béziers, Agde, Uzès, Lodève and Saint Pons.

²⁶ For example, AMM, CC 646 (1577), fo. 14r, 31r and 51r are typical in revealing links between Montpellier and Nîmes, Uzès and Pézenas.

reflected in the creation of two Huguenot 'gouvernements', one based at Montauban, the other at Nîmes. In his *Mémoires*, Simon Goulart recorded how 'Le Languedoc est une province fort ample' and for this reason it was necessary to divide 'tout le Languedoc en deux gouvernements, dont l'un estoit a Mōtauban, l'autre a Nismes, qui comprenoit les Seuenes & Viuaréz'.²⁷

Regional differences can be broken down even further. As chapter two demonstrated, each town had its distinct charter of privileges, its array of commercial advantages, its rights to administer justice and local government. In the Netherlands, J. J. Woltjer argues that these lay 'in parallel' for all the rebel towns and provinces alike, providing a basis in which towns and provinces could unite in defence of their privileges. However, he argues, 'in the course of the struggles the privileges acquired such sanctity that they became an end in themselves, even to an extent that seriously hampered the conduct of the rebel government'.²⁸ There is some resonance in these observations for events in southern France where Protestant towns liaised with one another while at the same time were not adverse to negotiating secretly with the crown so as to secure their best interests, a theme to which I will return later.

The lack of political unity and common consciousness across provinces as large as Guyenne and Languedoc is not as surprising as one first thinks. While the adoption of the Protestant faith did create new ties between urban communities, it is very difficult to see how these could best be employed when there was no pre-existing tradition of co-operation. Each town instinctively felt for its interests, followed by those of the neighbouring villages and towns. But the links across regions and between provinces were at best tenuous. The distances between different regions, the varying nature of lifestyle, dialect and economies and the way in which municipal privileges were jealously guarded all militated against a sense of provincial unity.

The emergence of Protestantism did not magically break down these boundaries. The examples of active assistance amongst Protestants across southern France are few and far between. Events in Lower Languedoc had a limited impact upon events in Upper Languedoc and Guyenne. In both cases, the pattern that prevailed was one of smaller concentrations of Huguenot strength,

²⁷ Goulart, *Mémoires*, II. fo. 258v.

²⁸ J. J. Woltjer, 'Dutch privileges, real and imaginary' in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, 5 (1975), p. 26.

often gathered around and sustained by a ‘mother’ church. Rather than a Huguenot republic with all its associations of a distinct geographical region with geographical borders, Huguenot strategy was much more localised. At best the Huguenots achieved a system of local confederations, sometimes, but not always, co-ordinating with one another. In the first of the religious wars, Monluc identified the fortress towns of Montauban and Saint Antonin as providing the centre of one such confederation across Lower Quercy.²⁹ Similar confederations existed between Castres and the ‘pays de montagne’, Millau and the churches of Lower Rouergue and between Pamiers, Mazères and Saverdun in the pays de Foix, a pattern which was replicated in other areas of Protestant strength in France.³⁰ It is on this local level that the practical decision-making that was so essential to Huguenot military strategy was made.

If Protestant strength in southern France was dispersed and its leadership was localised, how is it that historians have become obsessed by the idea of a ‘United Provinces’ of the Midi? Sixteenth-century Catholics viewed the Protestant designs – with their attempts to establish churches, raise taxes, muster troops and convene assemblies – with great suspicion.³¹ Catholic propagandists bridled at the innovations of the new religion and its ramifications for the unity of the body politic. They feared the overturning of law and order, a fear seemingly substantiated by the waves of popular violence and iconoclasm that swept the country in the early 1560s. As violence gathered into civil war the Huguenots were accused of being at the root of all social disorder. One author later argued in 1589 that ‘comme ces jours passez il a faict courir le bruict que l’intention des Villes Unis est de se reduire en estat populaire’.³² Another author wrote how in Geneva, La Rochelle, Montauban and Nîmes, Protestant noblemen had developed a tendency in which they saw ‘les paysans, les faquins et mercadas [merchants] leur estoient esgaux et compagnons, et s’assoyêt a leur costé, et quelquefois au

²⁹ AN, Ms. 15881, fo. 5r-22v; ‘Lettres des consuls de Bioule, Nègrelisse, Montauban, Caussade et Saint Antonin, au sujet des accords à faire entre les communautés defendant la cause de la Religion’ (1590) in ACSA, EE 7.

³⁰ For example, ‘Règlement particulier fait pour la constitution de l’union des provinces de Saintonge, Aunis et Angoumois avec celles du Poitou, Anjou, Touraine approuvé et confirmé à Sainte Foy’ (26 July, 1594) in Bibl. SHPF, Fonds de La Rochelle, Ms. 710, no. 27.

³¹ For example, Blaise de Monluc, *Commentaires de Messire Blaise de Montluc, Mareschal de France* (2 vols., Paris, 1594), II. fo. 343r-344r.

droict, et que les ministres cômmandoiët à baguette aux uns et aux autres'. After further allusions to the situation in the Netherlands and England, the author concluded that 'le Calvinisme de la France vous ruinera'.³³ The Catholic author, Jacques-Auguste de Thou, famously described Protestant institutional developments as 'une nouvelle espèce de république, composée de toutes ses parties et séparées du reste de l'état, qui avait ses lois pour la religion, le gouvernement civil, la justice, la discipline militaire, la liberté du commerce, la levée des impôts et l'administration des finances'.³⁴

The historiography of Protestantism in the French Midi must be one of the few examples where Protestant historians have accepted and adopted in full the Catholic propaganda of the sixteenth century. Part of the reason for this has to do with the political turbulence of nineteenth-century France and the shape of its constitution. David Nicholls, in a fascinating article on the social history of the Reformation, has mapped out how the fortunes of Protestant history-writing altered with the establishment of the Third Republic.³⁵ At the end of the nineteenth century Protestants were very much a beleaguered minority. Up until 1871, Nicholls argues, most writers in the early nineteenth century had taken a negative view of the Reformation, presenting it as an accident born out of the abuses in the church and as a catalyst of social tumult. The exception was Jules Michelet who portrayed a more positive picture, identifying the Reformation as a popular movement anticipating calls for *liberté*.³⁶

Michelet's influence on French historiography has been profound. Michelet believed that in the French Revolution the genius of the French soul had been released and that its highest ideals had been attained.³⁷ His Histoire de France sought to identify the general purpose of events out of which emerged the collective identity of the French people. Michelet came to view the Catholic

³² Advertissement en forme de response d'un gentilhomme poictevin (Langres, 1589), cited in André Devyer, Le Sang épuré, les préjugés de race chez les gentilhommes français de l'Ancien Régime (1560-1720) (Brussels, 1973), p. 61.

³³ Seconde remonstrance à la noblesse catholique qui tient le party du Roy de Nauarre (Paris, 1590), p. 22.

³⁴ Cited in Garrison, Protestants du Midi, p. 220. In his political testament, Cardinal Richelieu described how he felt that the Huguenots 'shared the state' with the king. See The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu, trans. Henry Bertram Hill (Madison, 1961), p. 9.

³⁵ David Nicholls, 'The social history of the French Reformation: ideology, confession and culture', Social History, 9 (1984), p. 29.

³⁶ Jules Michelet, 'Protestant democratic liberty and sinister Catholic conspiracy' in J. H. M. Salmon (ed.), The French Wars of Religion (Boston, 1967), pp. 40-48; Paul Vialleneix, 'Michelet, la réforme et les réformés', BSHPPF, 123 (1977), pp. 204-217 and BSHPPF, 126 (1980), pp. 489-508.

Church and the monarchy as the twin barriers to this unfolding process. While not rejecting religion Michelet sought to wrestle it from the hands of the Catholic Church and project it upon the nation which he believed was 'the legitimate embodiment of the religious impulse in the world'.³⁸ In this scheme of history opposition to the Catholic Church in the years before the Revolution was seen as anticipating the *liberté* which accompanied the Revolution. For Michelet the links between Protestantism and republicanism became irresistible: 'Le Protestantisme seul nous donne la République'. In the constitution and representative political assemblies that the Protestants convened in the wake of St Bartholomew's day and in the writings of their polemicists, Michelet concluded, 'Voilà la Révolution anticipée, en fait, de trois cens ans'.³⁹

At the time, however, Michelet's republicanism was nothing but an embarrassment to Protestants. The Société de l'histoire de Protestantisme français had wanted to repudiate the links between Reformation and Revolution drawn by hostile Catholic opponents. However, with the deposition of Napoleon III and the establishment of the Third Republic in 1871, Michelet's previously outspoken sentiments became more acceptable. Protestants now began to view the notion of the 'United Provinces' of the Midi, with its 'republican' and 'democratic' features, more favourably. Indeed a new genre of history emerged, portraying the Protestant minority of France as the true standard-bearers of modernity and progressive political thought and culture. One Protestant historian concluded that the Edict of Nantes which brought the Wars of Religion to an end, was the 'fruits des efforts de la République protestante' which had won for Protestants 'la première charte de la liberté religieuse en Europe', a sentiment echoed in the recent quarto-centenary commemorations of 1998.⁴⁰

The legacy of nineteenth-century historiography was far-reaching. Its impact has been deepened by an attempt to draw a dichotomy between two sorts of government, with Protestantism as the champion of local culture and Catholicism tending towards political centralisation and tyranny.⁴¹ In the

³⁷ Michael Bentley, *Modern Historiography* (London, 1999), p. 34.

³⁸ Ceri Crossley, *French Historians and Romanticism* (London, 1993), pp. 197-199.

³⁹ Jules Michelet, *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. Paul Vialleneix (21 vols., Tours, 1971-82), VIII. 285-286. See also Gildea, *The Past in French History*, pp. 250-251.

⁴⁰ G. Bonet-Maury, 'Le Protestantisme français et la république', *BSHPF*, 53 (1904), pp. 234-250; Nicholls, 'Social history', pp. 28-29.

⁴¹ The association of Catholicism with absolutism was not new. In *Francogallia* (Geneva, 1573), François Hotman (a Protestant) argued that France had been deprived of its freedom first by the Roman Empire and then by 'the great beast of Rome', the papacy. Hotman argued that the Valois

nineteenth century this well-worn theme was revived by Louis-Xavier de Ricard who argued that the Latin peoples (among whom he included the French) were 'ethnically and historically destined for federation', by which he meant an association of autonomous cities and provinces. Ricard argued that the Latin idea of the Roman Republic was distinct from the Caesarian idea of Imperial Rome, which then coalesced with the Catholic Church to create the unitary state.⁴² In the following years attempts were made to rediscover 'le génie d'Oc' and in 1962 the *Comité Occitan d'Etude et d'Action* began to co-ordinate this revival. The movement had considerable problems in defining the characteristics of southern identity, other than a sense of opposition to northern France. Using historical narrative – in particular, the Albigensian crusade, the Wars of Religion and the war against the Camisards – the movement sought to link the notion of Occitania with the Marxist notion of 'internal colonisation'. In this way an attempt was made to combine a 'regional struggle for decolonisation to the socialist class struggle'.⁴³

Many of these themes re-surface in the works of Janine Garrisson, herself a native of Montauban. In Protestants du Midi Garrisson emphasises how 'la république huguenote' sought to 'retrouver les traditions propres aux Pays d'Oc' and draw upon the 'institutions locales et provinciales déjà existantes'. Protestantism engaged with the local customs and supported them, reinforcing the sense of locality that was being threatened by the centralising policies of the Catholic crown. Garrisson suggests that had the political model enshrined in the 'Provinces-Unies du Sud' been embraced more widely, France would have been 'décentralisé et traditionaliste, assemblage de petits groupes responsables et actifs'. Sadly, she reflects, the Huguenots did not succeed in their enterprise with the result that the Absolute State was constructed upon the grave of local liberties and customs.⁴⁴ For this reason, 'le Huguenot gardera à travers les siècles la nostalgie de cet Etat communal et princier, même si dans les institutions de son Eglise, il a pu conserver comme un reflet de la république perdue'.⁴⁵ But all was

monarchy had become slaves to these Roman attitudes, ruling their land as 'bloody tyrants'. See Mark Greengrass, *France in the age of Henri IV. The struggle for stability* (London, 1995), p. 19.

⁴² Ricard, *Le Fédéralisme*, p. vi, cited in Gildea, *The Past in French History*, p. 209.

⁴³ Gildea, *The Past in French History*, p. 212.

⁴⁴ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 336.

⁴⁵ Garrisson, *L'Homme protestant*, p. 31.

not lost, Garrison argues, for the Huguenots were ‘precurseurs du monde où nous vivons encore, on peut leur accorder des vues prophétiques’.⁴⁶

History is at the heart of French Protestant identity, provoking strong emotions. The heroic struggle of the Huguenot minority to preserve their faith is a central component of Protestant identity, particularly in the Cévennes – the heart of the eighteenth-century Camisard revolt. On his travels in 1878 through southern France, Robert Louis Stevenson wrote how he was surprised to see ‘what a lively memory still subsisted of the religious war’ and how proud the Cévenols were of their ancestors: ‘the war was their chosen topic; its exploits were their own patent of nobility’ and he was told that ‘the country was still full of legends hitherto uncollected’.⁴⁷

Garrison’s Protestants du Midi has certainly succeeded in rescuing the plight of the Huguenot population in southern France from obscurity. Southern France, after all, was the area of their greatest strength and prior to this study there had been little, or nothing, written on the Protestants of this region. The story of a Huguenot minority struggling for survival against the odds and the inventive ways that they sought to overcome their trials is a stirring one. But the troubled state of the historiography and the lack of archival-based local studies should prompt the historian to question the validity of some of the assumptions that underpin the notion of a ‘United Provinces’ of the Midi. The remaining portion of this chapter will deal with the way in which Montauban understood itself in relation to its Protestant and Catholic neighbours and how it responded to the opportunities and challenges posed by both.

The geography of confessional identity.

Simon Goulart described how in southern France there were several regions ‘où il y a grãd nombre de gens de la Religion tellement meslez parmy les Catholiques’.⁴⁸ The preceding chapter demonstrated the extent to which

⁴⁶ Garrison, Protestants du Midi, p. 337.

⁴⁷ Stevenson, The Cevennes Journal, p. 104. See also Philippe Joutard, ‘Le Musée du désert’ in Pierre Nora (ed.), Les Lieux de mémoire. Les France (Evreux, 1992), p. 533.

⁴⁸ Goulart, Memoires, II. fo. 258v. In his travels through the Cévennes, Robert Louis Stevenson observed how Protestants and Catholics lived side by side. Entering a particularly Protestant region of the Cévennes Stevenson was surprised to come across the thriving Catholic community of Saint-Germain de Calberte: ‘strange was the position of this little Catholic metropolis’, he

Montauban acted as a 'mother' church to its surrounding churches. In this respect it is possible to talk of Montauban as a Huguenot heartland, providing support and protection to those Protestant towns and villages within its vicinity. But this heartland was a strictly delimited area, perhaps reaching out at most to those churches within a 30-40 km radius of Montauban. Chapter four also revealed how within this radius not everyone was eager to embrace the Reformation; indeed the vicious bouts of local conflict and violence, even at times outside formal periods of war, demonstrated the precarious nature of the Calvinist ascendancy in this heartland.

Although Montauban stood at the centre of a cluster of Protestant satellite towns and noble territories, the vast majority of the rural population remained Catholic. Furthermore the Catholic strongholds of Toulouse, Albi and Agen were uncomfortably close, only 50 to 70 km away from Montauban. The relationship between Montauban and Castres on one hand and Toulouse and Albi on the other is instructive. These were the four most prominent towns in Upper Languedoc and all within one day's ride of one another. Yet their confessional histories could not have been more different. Toulouse was characterised by its fanatically anti-Protestant stance and was to become a stronghold of the Catholic League. As the seat of the Inquisition, set up in the wake of the Albigensian crusade, and as the seat of a parlement which was described by de Bèze as 'le plus sanguinaire de France', Toulouse was renowned for its intolerance towards heretics.⁴⁹ Both Toulouse and Albi had been strongholds of the Cathars in the early thirteenth century and the traumatising effect of this experience left an indelible mark on the Catholic Church's character in these towns, most markedly in the bold design of the cathedral of Albi which resembled as much a fortress as a church.

Catholic fears of Protestant uprisings in the region reached a climax with the attempted Huguenot coup in Toulouse in May 1562. For three days in May 1562 the city was plunged into open street conflict which left over 300 dead and many more fleeing the city for their lives.⁵⁰ The failed coup in Toulouse left a profound mark upon the city's Catholic population. That such a broad cross-

writes, 'a thimbleful of Rome, in such a wild and contrary neighbourhood'. See Stevenson, *The Cevennes Journal*, pp. 117-118.

⁴⁹ [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I. p. 54. See also Mentzer, 'Calvinist propaganda', pp. 268-282; Schneider, *Public life in Toulouse*, pp. 14-17, 115-119.

⁵⁰ Mark Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot in Toulouse in May 1562', *JEH*, 34 (1983), p. 385. See also [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, II. p. 280 and de Serres, *Histoire*, pp. 222-225, 234-237.

section of the town's population – nobles, bourgeois, merchants and artisans – were identified with the Huguenot cause only served to deepen the fears of the Catholic majority.

The extent of civic unrest on the streets of Toulouse, and indeed in the surrounding suburbs, villages and countryside had a traumatic effect upon Toulouse's Catholic population.⁵¹ In the subsequent six months the parlement worked tirelessly to track down those that had supported the Huguenot conspiracy. The Tournelle records demonstrate how the parlement condemned over 200 Huguenots, identifying them with 'la conjura[ti]on faicte dinvalhir et saisir la maison de lad. ville, rebellions, sacrileges, murtres, boutemens de feu, volleries, saccagemens, et aultres crimes et excez ensuivyz a cause de ladicte conjura[ti]on'.⁵² Those convicted were paraded through the town and coerced into making acts of public reparation before the town hall, the churches, the monasteries and other public places before being tied to a hurdle, dragged through the streets and executed in one of the town's squares. As many again were condemned *in absentia*, including several nobles and members of the parlement.⁵³ In total over a thousand suspects were investigated by the authorities.⁵⁴

This bloody retribution had a profound effect upon the collective Catholic mentality of the city providing a powerful stimulus to future bouts of repression. Each year after 1562 an annual commemorative procession was held to mark Toulouse's victory over the Protestant heretics.⁵⁵ In the aftermath of the attempted coup the Colomiez printing presses of Toulouse rushed to the defence of the Catholic faith, publishing robust defences of the Mass and the Real Presence and other Catholic beliefs such as purgatory which came under heavy attack from the reformers.⁵⁶ The local literary Catholic response also expressed itself with vitriolic attacks against the Huguenots who were characterised as disobedient and

⁵¹ ADHG, B 3440, fo. 72r-72v.

⁵² ADHG, B 3440, fo. 50r-51v, 54r, 55r-56v, 61r, 64r-64v, 79r-79v, 90r, 93r-93v, 102r-102v, 134r-135v, 137r-139v, 226v, 229r-229v, 243r-243v, 245r-245v, 28r, 301r-310v; ADHG, B 3441 (unfoliated), 22 August, 31 August, 1 September, 3 September, 7 September, 24 September 1562; ADHG, B 3442 (unfoliated), 13 October 1562.

⁵³ ADHG, B 3440, fo. 70r-71r.

⁵⁴ Greengrass, 'Anatomy of a religious riot', p. 397.

⁵⁵ Mark Greengrass, 'The Sainte Union in the provinces: the case of Toulouse', SCJ, 14 (1983), p. 471.

⁵⁶ For example, Esprit Rotier's Response aux blasphemateurs de la sainte messe. Avec la confutation de la vaine et ridicule cène des Calvinistes (Toulouse, 1562) and Sermon de la verité du corps de Jesus Christ au saint sacrement de l'Eucharistie (Toulouse, 1565) in Répertoire bibliographique, XX. pp. 91, 96.

lawless rogues.⁵⁷ From very early in the Wars of Religion, Catholic authors placed Calvinism within a genealogy of heresy, associating them with the Albigensian heretics and wishing them the same fate.⁵⁸ One Toulousain author even resurrected the language of crusade, calling on Catholics to take up arms ‘en l’armée de la croisade instituée en la ville de Tholose contre les Calvinistes’.⁵⁹

Some of those who were convicted by the parlement for their part in the attempted coup of 1562 were natives of Montauban. Many of those who escaped in the great exodus from Toulouse fled for safety to Montauban. The Protestant seigneur d’Arpajon marched to Rabastens, 35 km north-east of Toulouse, and shepherded 600 Huguenot refugees from Toulouse to the security of Montauban.⁶⁰ Montauban’s avowal of the Huguenot cause stood in stark contrast to what was happening in Toulouse. Catholic refugees from Montauban, who naturally gravitated to Toulouse, told of atrocities against Catholic clergy and nuns, sacrilege against the Blessed Sacrament and destruction of churches, monasteries and convents, all of which must have provoked grave distress. The tensions between Toulouse and Montauban were tangible, all the more so since they were only 50 km apart.

The sectarian acts of aggression in the towns and countryside across the region stoked fear and distrust between the two confessional camps. With Toulouse subdued and the judicial repression of Huguenots in the city underway, the Catholic commander, Blaise de Monluc, marched towards Montauban with an army of ‘dix mille pietons, de deux mille cheuaux, & de vingt deux doubles canons’ and occupied the surrounding towns as garrisons.⁶¹ The size of the approaching army filled the town with a sense of panic with many fleeing ‘auec telle precipitation’ that the town’s gates were left ‘ouuertes à l’abandon’, leaving the town almost deserted in the face of the besieging army.⁶² For those who had fled their homes in such a hurry and for those who were prepared to face the

⁵⁷ Deffense première de la religion et du roi, contre les pernicieuses factions et entreprises de Calvin, Bèze, et autres leurs complices coiniurez et rebelles (Toulouse, 1562) in Répertoire bibliographique, XX. p. 89.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Jean Gay (*procureur* of the Parlement of Toulouse), L’Histoire des scismes et hérésies des Albigeois conforme à celle de présent (Paris, 1561) and Pierre des Vaux-de-Cerney’s Histoire des Albigeois, et gestes de noble Simon de Montfort (Toulouse, 1568) in Répertoire bibliographique, XX. p. 168. See Luc Racaut, ‘The polemical use of the Albigensian Crusade during the French Wars of Religion’, FH, 13 (1999), pp. 1-19.

⁵⁹ Jean de Cardonne, Remonstrance aux catholiques de prendre les armes (Toulouse, 1568) in Répertoire Bibliographique, XX. p. 98.

⁶⁰ Serr, Documents et souvenirs, p. 48.

⁶¹ Serres, Histoire, p. 226.

terrifying prospects of a siege it must have been wholly apparent that the advancing army comprised troops from Toulouse and indeed was funded and supplied with wagons, horses and artillery from the same city, a pattern which was to be repeated again and again in the later years of the wars.⁶³

While Catholic armies from Toulouse marauded Montauban's hinterland, the Protestants sought to control the strategically important routes to and from Toulouse; in particular, the vantage points along the river Garonne.⁶⁴ The merchants of Toulouse must have recognised that it was not only Protestants who were interrupting the vital river traffic between Toulouse and Bordeaux, but Protestants from Montauban. Indeed, during times of war, both Montauban and Toulouse strictly prohibited any trade or contact between the two cities.⁶⁵ At these times, the noble governors of Montauban must have been loathed for their depredations of the Toulousain countryside.⁶⁶ In short, the citizens from both cities experienced feelings of isolation, a sense that the enemy lay close beyond the city walls, a fear that there may have even been a 'fifth column' of enemies within their own walls, keeping their heads below the parapet until the time was right for subversion.⁶⁷

This may not have been too far from the truth. Despite the rigour of the persecution of Toulouse's Protestants in 1562, Protestants were quick to regroup in the years thereafter. In October 1564, the consistory of Toulouse (which included Pierre d'Assézat seigneur de Ducède and Antoine Ganelon sieur de Seilh, both very wealthy and respectable members of Toulouse's elite), wrote to Théodore de Bèze asking him to recall 'la grandeur et importance de ceste église' and to provide a minister. The letter described how the church was temporarily meeting in Grenade, 15 km north-west of Toulouse, and was drawing a large number of 'gens de bien' from across the region.⁶⁸ Other Protestant dignitaries

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁶³ 'Pièces à l'appui des comptes' (1562) in AMT, CC 2442, pp. 563-630; Monluc, *Commentaires*, II. fo. 399r-399v, 419r, 457r; Vaisette & Devic, *Histoire générale*, XI. 400, 427-428, 822, 944.

⁶⁴ *Guerres de religion dans le sud-ouest de la France et principalement dans le Quercy d'après les papiers des seigneurs de Saint-Sulpice de 1561 à 1590*, ed. Edmond Cabié (Albi, 1906), pp. 198-200, 761; Breton, *Mas-Grenier*, pp. 49, 51; Jean Lestrade, *Les Huguenots dans les paroisses rurales du diocèse de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1939), p. 57.

⁶⁵ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 35r (18 July 1585).

⁶⁶ ADTG, 7 CC 10, fo. 18v (1573).

⁶⁷ Janine Estèbe [Garrisson], 'Les Saint-Barthélemy des villes du Midi', *l'Admiral de Coligny et son temps*, pp. 717-730; Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 30.

⁶⁸ *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, V. pp. 148-149.

from Toulouse were participating in worship in the neighbouring town of Montauban.⁶⁹

In May 1566 Toulouse was awash with rumours that Huguenots had assembled in the surrounding towns of Montauban, Pamiers and Puylaurens with the intention ‘de surprendre et invader la ville de Thle [Toulouse] et meutrer tous les catholiques’.⁷⁰ The *capitoulat* or town council of Toulouse discussed how it had come to their attention that the city had been infiltrated by the ‘chefs des factions aux derniers troubles’ and how they had encountered ‘des menasses et assemblees’. The following month depositions were taken to the effect that the Huguenots intended not only to take over Toulouse but all of its surrounding towns, this all at a time of apparent peace.⁷¹

With the renewed outbreak of war in 1567, it was reported to the *capitouls* of Toulouse that a large group of people had gathered in Montauban under the pretext of celebrating the Lord’s Supper. The old rumours again re-surfaced, that the Huguenot army, brandishing their weapons, planned to capture the towns surrounding Toulouse before turning on Toulouse, ‘capittale du pais de Languedoc’, and putting to flight and murdering ‘tous les fidelles et hobeiseans sujets du Roy’. The gathering of troops in and around Montauban incited panic among the Toulousain population. The town’s fortifications were strengthened and the civic militia was put on a state of high alert. The *dixeniers* of each of the town’s *quartiers* were instructed to be vigilant for any suspicious activities and to spy on any known Huguenots.⁷² In August 1568 the *capitouls* wrote to the king describing this region as ‘la plus troublee inquiete et occupee par voz ennemiez’, citing Montauban and Saint Antonin as two of the greatest sources of trouble: ‘il seront impossible de vivre en paix avec diversité de Religion parce que l’honneur de dieu y est grandement blesse et offence’ for the devil had introduced ‘une babillone pleine de scisme et de scandalle’.⁷³

In the wake of the Peace of Longjumeau in 1568 Philibert de Rapin, brother of the local Protestant noble, Antoine de Rapin baron de Mauvers, arrived in Montauban with a royal commission to disarm paramilitary contingents in Upper Languedoc. But Philibert was immediately identified as one of the leaders

⁶⁹ ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 112r; Paul Romane-Musculus, ‘Les Protestants de Toulouse en 1568’, *BSHPF*, 107 (1961), pp. 70-71, 88.

⁷⁰ AMT, BB 12, fo. 14v.

⁷¹ AMT, BB 12, fo. 15v, 17r.

⁷² AMT, BB 12, fo. 40v-41r, 42r-42v, 45v.

of the attempted Huguenot coup in Toulouse in 1562 and was arrested by the consuls of Grenade, a town to the north-west of Toulouse. Thompson argues that 'he was so bitterly hated in Toulouse that he was accused of wanting to destroy the city utterly and remove the very stones to Montauban'.⁷⁴ Within three days the Parlement of Toulouse had executed Philibert in spite of the amnesty declared by the king. This event demonstrates the depth of hatred that had been stoked up in Toulouse against Huguenots in the first decade of the wars. The execution, of course, led to a terrible spate of reprisals by troops from Montauban in the area around Grenade and Toulouse. Ruined houses were left daubed with the words, 'Vengeance de Rapin', this again at a time of formal peace.⁷⁵

Mark Greengrass has argued that the conflicts across Upper Languedoc heightened the sense of Catholic exclusiveness in Toulouse to a degree unknown in northern cities.⁷⁶ In Montauban, the situation was no less fraught. A culture of rumour, counter-rumour and conspiracy nourished a psychosis of fear. Warnings of 'mauvais desseins et entreprises pernicieuses' were frequent at any time of formal warfare.⁷⁷ Concern for the safety of the town meant that measures were taken to improve security: the political elite was required to take an oath of fidelity to the Huguenot cause, the market was held outside the city's walls and all people coming into the town were to be searched and questioned about the nature of their business, where they were staying and what their religion was, a process which reflected that followed at Toulouse.⁷⁸ In December 1583, an attack against one of Montauban's consuls together with the capture of a man in Mas-Grenier who admitted having been paid a sum to betray Mas-Grenier into the hands of Toulouse threw Montauban into a state of panic.⁷⁹ Three years later the town council records explain how letters were intercepted revealing a plot to capture Montauban. The names given suggested an alliance of local Catholic nobles, the seneschal of Toulouse and leaguer military commanders. The local Catholic nobles, together with their entire households, were declared 'ennemis capitaux de ceste ville'. The Huguenot elite of Montauban ordered an investigation to draw

⁷³ AMT, BB 12, fo. 129v-130v.

⁷⁴ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, pp. 394-395.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* See also Vaisette & Devic, *Histoire générale*, XI. 501-502.

⁷⁶ Greengrass, 'Sainte Union in the provinces', p. 474.

⁷⁷ For example, ADTG, 7 CC 11, fo. 30r (1573); ADTG, 7 CC 14, fo. 28r, 31r, 47r (1581); ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 74v-76v, 92r-94v, 99v-102v, 109v (1583-84); ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 74v (1586).

⁷⁸ ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 103r (1584); ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 151r-153v (4 May 1586).

⁷⁹ ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 84r.

up a list of suspects and root out any accomplices to the plan. Such was the level of concern that the town's military governor, the seigneur de Terride, who was related to one of the Catholic nobles implicated, was asked to leave the town.⁸⁰ And only months later, placards appeared upon the door of the temple and at street corners with the aim to 'distraire les peuple de l'obeysance du magistrat'.⁸¹

The prevailing culture of conspiracy heightened fears for security. The impact of the confessional juxtaposition of towns such as Toulouse and Montauban was that much more pronounced since the confessional rivalries that emerged in the 1560s reinforced pre-existing rivalries. There must have always been an aversion in Montauban to the economic and political power wielded by the neighbouring city of Toulouse. Indeed the tensions between the authority of the Parlement of Toulouse and that of towns' consulates was a recurring motif across the region, particularly as the former had no qualms in attempting to override civic privileges and manipulate the outcome of consular elections.⁸² The antagonistic relationship between Montauban and Toulouse, to which religion provided yet another dimension, was broadly analogous to the situation in other regions of France where a larger and smaller neighbour vied for influence. For example, Caen and Rouen were the two major cities in Normandy and Rouen was the seat of a parlement. Until 1568 Caen became a centre for Protestantism while Rouen became a champion of the Catholic faith. Again, a similar tension emerged in the towns of Saumur and Angers in Anjou, with the former becoming a Protestant stronghold and the latter a leaguer stronghold.⁸³

The relationship between Montauban and Toulouse demonstrates how local and religious rivalries fed from one another. On a more parochial level confessional differences provided the pretext to settle longstanding scores and this was clearly the case in the relationship of Saint Antonin with Caylus, towns which were less than 10 km apart. Saint Antonin and Caylus had been locked in serious land disputes since the thirteenth century over who held the rights over the fertile flood plains between them. In the sixteenth century these disputes continued to be

⁸⁰ ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 24r-26r.

⁸¹ ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 62r-63r.

⁸² Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, pp. 30-31; ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo.4r; Guggenheim, 'Calvinism and the political elite', pp. 209-210; Claude Tievant, *Le Gouverneur de Languedoc pendant les premières guerres de religion (1559-1574): Henri de Montmorency-Damville* (Château-Gontier, 1993), pp. 143, 146-147; Schneider, *Public life in Toulouse*, pp. 41, 69 and his article, 'Crown and capitoulat', pp. 199-200.

⁸³ Lamet, 'Reformation, war and society in Caen'; *Mélanges d'histoire et d'archéologie angevines*, ed. Association des amis des archives d'Anjou (Angers 1998), pp. 79-80.

hotly contested and were the subject of endless litigation before the seneschal court of Rouergue at Rodez and the *Cours des Aides* in Montpellier.⁸⁴ It is perhaps hardly surprising that Caylus became an outpost for the Toulousain League while Saint Antonin consolidated itself as a Huguenot bastion. Skirmishes, ambushes and hostage-taking between these two towns were a feature of the entire period of the religious wars.⁸⁵

Central to the concept of a 'United Provinces' of the Midi is the notion that the Protestants created an independent southern kingdom, a 'république fédérale'.⁸⁶ But the 'United Provinces' of the Midi was far from anything that we would recognise as a separate Protestant state. Gregory Hanlon describes the areas of greatest Protestant strength in the south as 'islands of an archipelago in a sea of hostile or at best indifferent peasants'.⁸⁷ And David Bryson, who demonstrates how Jeanne d'Albret sought to shape the province of Guyenne into a Huguenot homeland, concedes that Huguenot domination was never accomplished. Instead the Huguenots developed a strategy of consolidating Protestant sanctuaries which more often than not stood in isolation from one another.⁸⁸ Even within the areas of greatest Protestant domination there was no room for complacency. The ultimate failure of the Calvinist 'wonderyears' of the early 1560s had left vast areas in southern France outside Protestant control. Sixteenth-century Huguenots needed no reminding that their hold over towns such as Montauban was precarious and was something that had to be tenaciously defended.

The Politics of 'association'.

Southern France covered an enormous area of great regional variation. It is not surprising that events in Lower Languedoc rarely impinged upon events in Upper Languedoc and Guyenne. The Wars of Religion across these provinces were

⁸⁴ 'Requêtes, mémoires, pièces diverses faisant connaître la nature d'un procès survenu entre les habitants de Saint Antonin et ceux de Caylus concernant les terroirs de l'Olmet et de la Mandine qui se disputaient ces deux communautés' in ACSA, FF 10-15. See also 'Role des frais faits dans le procès concernant les terrains de l'Olmet et de la Mandine disputés à la commune de Caylus' in ACSA, CC 110. For Mas-Grenier and Verdun, see Breton, *Mas-Grenier*, p. 47.

⁸⁵ For example, ACSA, BB 2, fo. 271v, 280v, 285r, 287r; ACSA, EE 2; ACSA, EE 3.

⁸⁶ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 9.

⁸⁷ Hanlon, *Confession and Community*, pp. 20-21.

characterised by a localised leadership with localised strategies for survival. In this instance it has been demonstrated how Montauban provided a crucial role in providing a refuge for religious dissidents, mustering armies, liaising with other neighbouring Protestant towns and nobles, and co-ordinating a response to the Catholic opposition.

Montauban provided the heart of a local association of Protestants in Upper Languedoc and Guyenne. But it was also aware of its fellow brethren, who were likewise being persecuted and had developed similar strategies for survival. Indeed links did exist between these different centres and it is these links – particularly with the political assemblies – which have been seized upon as irrefutable evidence of Huguenot designs to create a separate state. In this section I propose to subject the established picture of Huguenot associations as a radical novelty to critical scrutiny. I aim to demonstrate that leaguings had long historical roots in European political culture. Furthermore in the context of the French Wars of Religion I will show that the Catholics could make as good a claim as the Huguenots in recognising the political potency of leaguings.

Across Europe leaguings was a long-established means by which to promote one's self-interest. In the thirteenth century a loose association of north German merchants and cities drew together to form the Hanseatic League. Although the participating members of this organisation drew together to promote their trade they never lost sight of their own interests and indeed the opposing interests of various regional groups of cities became one of the impediments to unanimous action and the decline of the league in the sixteenth century. On the political front the early years of the Swabian League (1488-1534) in southern Germany provides an example of how a range of nobles, cities and prelates came together in a peacekeeping federation and promoted a more widely effective jurisprudence across the region.⁸⁹ The League inculcated a custom of routine consultation and co-operation which underpinned the members' ability to act together, providing the basis for the Schmalkaldic League (1531-47).⁹⁰ The

⁸⁸ David Bryson, *Queen Jeanne and the Promised Land. Dynasty, homeland, religion and violence in sixteenth-century France* (Leiden, 1999), pp. 167-168. See also Venard, *Réforme protestante*, p. 769.

⁸⁹ F. Thomas, 'The Swabian League and Government in the Holy Roman Empire of the early sixteenth century' in J. G. Rowe (ed.), *Aspects of Late Medieval Government and Society* (Toronto, 1986), pp. 249-276.

⁹⁰ Thomas A. Brady, 'Phases and strategies of the Schmalkaldic League', *ARG*, 74 (1983), pp. 162-181.

Schmalkaldic League was a military alliance between nobles and cities with the defined purpose of defending the Protestant religion. What is most interesting is that this league was imperial rather than regional, stretching from Lake Constance to the Baltic Sea. The league met frequently at *diets* and established a common ecclesiastical constitution and most importantly provided a political counter-weight to the centralising strategies of the Emperor Charles V.

It is in this context that the Catholic leagues in France can best be understood. These leagues have been viewed very much as a product of the late 1580s. However, the notion of Catholics bonding together to face a common threat would not have seemed unusual even at the outset of the first religious war. In Avertissements des Catholiques Anglois aux François Catholiques, the author reminded his readers of the tradition that existed in leaguings against a common enemy:

Ce n'est pas chose nouvelle devoir les Catholiques liguez ensembleme[n]t: Toutes les guerres de deuant où nos Anglois & vos François se sont si courageusement portez, n'estoient que liguez. Pourquoi ne sera il permis de se liguez contre les heretiques, veu que tant de fois on s'est ligué contre les infideles?⁹¹

Catholics would have been very much aware of the language of league used in reference to the Ottoman Empire. La Popelinière discussed the whole notion of 'la ligue des Princes Chrestiens contre le Turc' and 'vne ligue assuree de quelques seigneurs Confederez contre le Mahometan'.⁹² For Catholics, transferring the language of league from the infidel Turk to the heretical Protestant would have been a natural step.

From as early as 1561 in the Midi, Catholic *syndicats* had been established in Toulouse, Bordeaux and Agen with the express aim of extirpating heresy.⁹³ These *syndicats* were organised with *surintendants* whose task was to mobilise support in furthering the goals of the *syndicat*. In March 1563, in response to the murder of François de Guise, a treaty of 'confederation et association' was brokered by the Parlement of Toulouse between 'l'état Ecclesiastique, la noblesse

⁹¹ [Louis d'Orléans], Premier et seconds avertissements des Catholiques Anglois aux François Catholiques, & à la Noblesse que suit a present le Roy de Nauarre (Paris, 1590), fo. 26r.

⁹² La Popelinière, Histoire de France, II. fo. 22v.

⁹³ Jean-Marie Constant, La Ligue (La Flèche, 1996), pp. 55-58; Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot', pp. 370, 380; Charles Dartigue, 'Une cabale politico-religieuse à Bordeaux en Juillet 1562: le syndicat contre le parlement', BSHPE, 98 (1951), pp. 141-142.

& le commun du tiers estat des habitans des villes, Diocèses, Sénéchaussées, Vigueries, & jurisdictions du Ressort du Parlement de Toulouse'. Stretching across Guyenne and Languedoc, the league was to be led by Cardinal d'Armaignac Archbishop of Toulouse, Cardinal de Strozzi of Albi, Blaise de Monluc, the seigneurs of Terride and Nègrepelisse and the baron de Fourquevaux, governor of Narbonne.⁹⁴ The proceedings of the first Huguenot political assembly in Nîmes six months later described the 'calamiteuse ruyne' brought about by the 'execrables sedition complotée, conduite, executée par la plus grande party des presidens et commissaires de la court du Parlement de Tholose'. The assembly complained that the parlement had developed both within Toulouse and in the neighbouring dioceses and towns 'une ligue et monopolle pour accabler de fond en comble tous ceulx de la vraye religion' in defiance of the decisions of the Estates General of France and the edicts of the king.⁹⁵ Meanwhile in the pays d'Albigeois, the Cardinal of Albi was orchestrating a wave of violence against Huguenots and in their book of 'douléances', the Huguenots of this region complained of the extortion against those suspected of harbouring heretical ideas:

Led sieur Cardinal soubz couleur et tiltre de viceroy aud pays d'Albigeois a imposez deniers sur le commun peuple et empruntz sur les bonnes maisons qu'il rendoit à son plaisir soubconnés d'estre huguenaulx, faict vendre les biens des fidelles et s'approprier les deniers, en sorte que les deniers par luy exigés aud pays d'Albigeois, ainsi que gens d'honneur sont bien informés par ses recepveurs, depuis la feste de Pentecouste deniere, montent la somme de troys cens mil ecus et plus.⁹⁶

One year after its foundation, the Catholic League of Toulouse had developed the financial means to muster substantial armies in pursuit of the League's goals.⁹⁷

D'Aubigné described the Toulousain League as the 'prototype et premier exemple de toutes les ligues qui ont depuis paru en France'.⁹⁸ At the same time the Catholic nobles of Guyenne organised a league, drawing strength from the parishes and districts of the province, and liaising with a council chosen from the

⁹⁴ G. de Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse* (2 vols., Toulouse, 1701), II. Preuves, pp. 62-64; [de Bèze], *Histoire ecclésiastique*, II. pp. 294-296; Serres, *Histoire*, p. 225.

⁹⁵ 'Collection des procès-verbaux des assemblées politiques des réformés de France pendant le XVIe siècle' (Nîmes, November 1562), ed. Jean Loutschitzky, *BSHPE*, 22 (1873), p. 511.

⁹⁶ 'Douléances pour les pauvres évangélistes dispersés de la ville de Guailac et d'autres églises reformées à présent dissipées au pays d'Albigeois en Languedoc. A présenter au Roy en son conseil', ed. Ferdinand Teissier, *BSHPE*, 38 (1889), p. 632.

⁹⁷ Mentzer, 'Calvinist propaganda', p. 271.

⁹⁸ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 214, n. 1.

third estate.⁹⁹ The methods developed for sustaining these leagues were revived with each new war and spread to other parts of southern France. In November 1567, the Parlement of Toulouse immediately decided to proceed ‘à la saisie, annotation & inventaire des biens, tant meubles que immeubles, detes & noms des absens & fuitifs de la nouvelle pretendue Religion, & de ceux qui se sont retirez & rendus dans les villes de Montauban, & Puylaurens, Castres & autres’.¹⁰⁰ In addition to securing the support of the parlement, the league in Toulouse received sanction from Pope Pius V and the movement extended to Lower Languedoc and Navarre.¹⁰¹ Each Catholic town appointed a military governor or ‘chef’ to maintain the security of the town and garrisons were established at Gaillac, Albi, Rabastens and Montech. Letters between the Catholic leaders – Montmorency-Damville, the duc de Joyeuse and the baron de Fourquevaux – intimate a highly organised military structure with a coherent strategy. The surviving ‘rolle’ of captains for the diocese of Castres in 1572, for example, lists the commissions for those officers who had promised to take responsibility for the upkeep and security of the towns, villages and fortified castles. It also marks the number of men available to them and the costs that this would incur. The militarisation and financing of the league went hand in hand. *Receveurs* were appointed to each civil diocese, charged with the responsibility of maintaining accounts and raising the requisite sums that were agreed upon by the provincial estates.¹⁰²

With the death of François d’Alençon in 1584 and the assassination of the Guise brothers in 1588, the league evolved a radical agenda espousing regicide and the manipulation of the succession in an attempt to negate Henry of Navarre’s right to the throne. Studies on the Catholic League describe a confederacy of urban associations under Parisian leadership, ‘the Catholic cities of the Holy Union’.¹⁰³ Pamphlets printed in Paris explicitly talk of the ‘union des Catholiques’

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 214-216.

¹⁰⁰ *Recueil de toutes les choses memorables advenues, tant de par le Roy, que de par Monseigneur le Prince de Condé, Gentilshommes & autres de sa compagnie, depuis le vingt huitieme d’Octobre, mil cinq cens soixante sept, jusques à present* (n.p., 1568), p. 332.

¹⁰¹ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 355, n. 1.

¹⁰² *Les Guerres de religion en Languedoc d’après les papiers du baron de Fourquevaux (1572-1574)*, ed. C. Douais (Toulouse, 1892), pp. 56-58, 63-64, 80-82, 127-130; Tievant, *Gouverneur de Languedoc*, pp. 199-259.

¹⁰³ Greengrass, *France in the age of Henry IV*, pp. 55-56. See also Henri Drouot, ‘Les conseils provinciaux de la Sainte Union (1589-1595)’, *AM*, 65 (1953), pp. 415-433; Elie Barnavi, ‘Centralisation ou fédéralisme? Les relations entre Paris et les villes à l’époque de la Ligue (1585-1594)’, *Revue Historique*, 259 (1978), pp. 335-344; John Bossy, ‘Leagues and associations in sixteenth-century French Catholicism’ in Sheils & Wood (eds), *Voluntary Religion*, pp. 171-189.

and 'les villes catholiques associez'.¹⁰⁴ Members of the league took an oath of union to live and die in the Catholic faith, to commit themselves with their weapons to the cause, vowing never to obey a heretic as ruler and never to accept Henry of Navarre as king of France.¹⁰⁵ This oath was sworn every three months and carried with it political obligations, namely to affirm Charles de Bourbon as king of France, to obey the leaguer nobles and to report any suspicious activities to the leaguer authorities. Paris was at the hub of this movement, issuing instructions through its network of local commissioners and through correspondence with other leaguer towns. Toulouse and the Catholic towns of Languedoc needed no encouragement in embracing these ends.¹⁰⁶

The assassination of Jean-Etienne Duranti in February 1589, President of the Parlement of Toulouse and widely regarded as a 'politique', was cause for great celebration in Paris. The details of these events were immediately published in Paris, demonstrating the interest generated by leaguer developments across the kingdom.¹⁰⁷ Toulouse itself became a centre of leaguer publications, re-printing editions that had appeared in Paris, Lyon and Troyes, again on subjects that were far removed from Toulouse and the Midi.¹⁰⁸ These links between regional printing centres exemplifies the degree of national co-ordination between leaguer centres across France.

¹⁰⁴ Requete présentée au Roy par messieurs les cardinaux, princes, seigneurs et des deputez de la ville de Paris, et autres villes catholiques associez et unis pour la deffense de la religion Catholique, apostolique et Romaine (Paris, 1588); Suite de la requeste présentée au Roy, par messieurs les cardinaux et princes. Traictant des causes et moyens de l'union des Catholiques, pour la conservation de leur religion (Paris, 1588). References from the FRB project paper files.

¹⁰⁵ 'Forme du serment de la Ligue' in [Matthieu], Histoire des derniers trovbles de France (n.p., 1604), fo. 9r.

¹⁰⁶ See 'Articles de l'association' (20 November, 1587) in AMT, BB 15, fo. 712r-713v and Articles accordez et jurez, en l'assemblee des Estats du país de Languedoc: faite dans la ville de Lavour: pour l'union des habitans catholiques dudit país: ensemble l' Arrest de la cour du Parlement de Tolose (Toulouse, Jacques Colomiez, 1589); Articles Accordez Et Arrestez En l'assemblée des ges des trois Estats du pays de Languedoc, assemblez en la ville de Castelnaudarry, au mois d'April, mil cinq cens quatre vingts neuf, Pour la conseruation et vnion des habitans dudit pays, en la Religion Catholique Apostolique et Romaine. Ensemble le serement presté par monseigneur de Ioyeuse (Toulouse, Jacques Colomiez, 1589). References from the FRB project paper files. See also Greengrass, 'Sainte Union in the provinces', pp. 469-496.

¹⁰⁷ Coppie d'une lettre envoyée par un advocat de Tholose a un advocat de la cour de Parlement de Paris. contenant ce qui s'est passé depuis le 25 de janvier iusques au 8. de febvrier 1589. Avec l'emprisonnement du premier president, grand politique de ladite ville, ensemble l'ordre tenu en l'élection d'un nouveau gouverneur (Paris, Pierre Hury, 1589). Reference from the FRB project paper files.

¹⁰⁸ For example, Discovrs de devx belles defaictes des ennemis executées en Champagne & Bourgongne. Par les Sieurs de Hautefort, de Feruagues, de Giouuelle, & autres Capitaines, le 23. iour d'Auril, 1589 (Toulouse, Colomiez, 1589) and Discovrs Veritable De La Prise Dv Comte de Soissons, avec la deffaicte de ses troupes de Laverdin. Par Monseigneur le Duc de Mercueur (Toulouse, Jacques Colomiez, 1589). References from the FRB project paper files.

Despite the attempt to equate the Protestants of the Midi with a project for a separate state, there is much more in common between Catholic and Protestant modes of organisation than is often supposed. Indeed, Catholic authors openly held up the Huguenot model as something to be emulated. They pointed to towns such as La Rochelle and Montauban and ‘autres tels Sodomes & Gomorrés liguees’, arguing that ‘les Prouinces Catholiques s’unisent de mesme liase pour maintenir leur iuste possession contre les iniques conspiratiōs des heretiques’. In particular, the Catholics were keen to underline the extent of Huguenot organisation in an attempt to further their own designs. ‘Voyez leurs ligues’, Louis d’Orléans wrote, ‘& y prenez exe[m]ple. Aduisez comme ils assurent leurs chefs, comme ils leur obeissent, & cōme ils les defrayent de leur bourse commune... Leurs villes sont liguees, faites liguier les vostres, vnissez vos prouinces, ayez intelige[n]ce ensembleme[n]t’.¹⁰⁹ By portraying the confederation of Huguenot towns as a streamlined organisation, leaguer authors sought to highlight the immediacy of the Huguenot threat so as to reduce the resistance of those towns that refused to commit themselves to the league or follow its prescriptions.¹¹⁰ Given that the league of 1585 was assembled ‘sans permission du Roy’ and ‘contre la personne du Roy et estat dudit Royaume’, it has been suggested by some historians that the network of leaguer towns across the kingdom comprised the real ‘state within the state’.¹¹¹

What all this demonstrates is the political importance of the town in the sixteenth century. The raft of municipal privileges, liberties and exemptions of each town nurtured a sense in which towns existed as autonomous entities. The extent of their fortifications provided security against one’s enemies, assuring the towns a voice that could not be ignored in the political discourse of the day. In this way it was only natural that towns such as Toulouse and Montauban played an important part during the Wars of Religion. The administrations that they developed and their control over their hinterlands meant that the towns became

¹⁰⁹ [d’Orléans], *Premier et seconds avertissements*, fo. 25v-26r. See also, Jacques Le Bossu, *Deux devis, D’un Catholique et d’un Politique, sur l’exhortation faicte au peuple de Nantes, en la grande Eglise de saint Pierre, pour iurer l’Vnion des Catholiques, le huictiesme iour de Iuin, mil cinq cens quatre vingts & neuf* (Nantes, Nicolas des Marestz & Francois Fauerye, 1589), fo. 36v.

¹¹⁰ See for example, Mark W. Konnert, *Civic Agendas and Religious Passion. Châlons-sur-Marne during the French Wars of Religion, 1560-1594* (Kirkville, 1997), pp. 139, 142, 149; Barnavi, ‘Centralisation ou fédéralisme?’, p. 336.

¹¹¹ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 22r-22v, 25r-28r; Gaston Mercier, *L’Esprit protestant* (Paris, 1901), p. 64; Greengrass, *France in the age of Henri IV*, pp. 55-56; Annette Finlay-Croswhite, ‘Henri IV et les villes’ in *Avènement d’Henri IV*, III. 203-204.

crucial sources of money and troops for the waging of war. But it became abundantly clear that individual towns could amplify their political voice by associating with one another. This was not at the expense of a town's particular identity; such associations existed only in so far as the aims of its members coincided with one another. Associations emerged between towns and nobles where there was a common denominator. During the Wars of Religion this common denominator was religion, and both Protestant and Catholic towns and nobles found strength in solidarity.

The Huguenot political assemblies.

In 1562, the town consuls of Saint Antonin had selected a uniform for the town's armed militia. They chose a 'casaque rouge' with 'les armes du roi meslée aux armes de la ville pour donner a cognoistre que la ville est tenue sous son obeissance parce que les adversaires de Dieu et du Roi disent le contraire'.¹¹² Accusations of mendacious treachery and sedition were levelled against French Protestants even before the Wars of Religion erupted. But nothing animates the notion of the political subversion of the Protestants and the supposed 'état calviniste du sud' more than their political assemblies. Held without the permission of the crown (at least during periods of war), it has been argued that the political assemblies were at the heart of 'un projet politique coherent'.¹¹³

For those that have sought to build this case a crucial piece of evidence has been the 'règlement politique', a document whose very authenticity is not clear. The 'règlement politique' is purported to have been drafted at an assembly at Millau in April 1573. It draws from a variety of biblical and classical sources in laying out a political framework independent from the crown.¹¹⁴ The document justifies this framework as the way to proceed while awaiting God 'de changer celui de leur roy, et restituer l'Etat de France en bon ordre ou susciter un prince voisin qui soit manifesté par sa vertu et marques insignes estre libérateur de ce povre peuple affligé'. The document prescribes that each Huguenot town and its surrounding territory should elect annually 'avec voix suffrages publicques' a

¹¹² ACSA, BB 1, fo. 75v.

¹¹³ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 222.

governor and a council of 24 and a further council of 75, with the obligation of each level of government to consult with one another. This confederation was to be overseen by an elected commander-in-chief, 'un chef général à la façon de dictateur romain pour commander en la campagne, auquel aussi ceux des villes et citez obéyront en tout ce qui sera de sa charge pour le bénéfice commun de leur conservation'. The commander-in-chief was to be elected in the same way as was practised by the 'douze florissantes villes de Grèce' and was to be advised by an elected council.

This document's rejection of the monarchy, the confederation of semi-independent city-states and the idea of direct participation in the government of the city, 'une sorte de démocratie directe', if its authenticity was shown to be beyond doubt, would have amounted to a radical political departure for the Huguenots: 'C'est une véritable constitution républicaine'.¹¹⁵ But setting aside this document, which Garrisson herself admits is 'un texte énigmatique' with date and author unknown,¹¹⁶ and relying solely upon the evidence as presented by local archival material and the surviving minutes of the political assemblies, this section will seek to look afresh at the relationship between political assemblies and the Calvinist communities in the Huguenot south.

The raising of Condé's standard and the drawing up of the Traicté d'Association in Orléans in 1562 found resonance across the kingdom.¹¹⁷ In particular, the explosive growth of Calvinist churches in the province of Languedoc had already brought in its wake concomitant political developments. For example, in times of emergency, the towns of Lower Languedoc had called together extraordinary assemblies known as councils of 24. With Villars' recent campaign against the Huguenots in Lower Languedoc and his exclusion of suspected Protestants from the Nîmois consulate, the council of 24 was once again resurrected in October 1561, this time as the political arm of the church.¹¹⁸ Similarly the out-voting of Protestant representatives at the Provincial Estates of

¹¹⁴ Document reproduced in Haag, France Protestante, X. Pièce Justificative XXXV; Griffiths, Representative Government, p. 257.

¹¹⁵ Garrisson, Protestants du Midi, p. 181; Philippe Corbière, De l'organisation politique du parti Protestant en 1573 (n.p., n.d.), p. 9.

¹¹⁶ Garrisson, Protestants du Midi, pp. 179-180.

¹¹⁷ Traicté d'Association faite par Monseigneur le Prince de Condé avec le Princes, cheualiers de l'Ordre, Seigneurs, Capitaines, gentilshommes et autres de tous états, qui sont entrez, ou entreront cy-après, en ladicte association, pour maintenir l'honneur de Dieu, le repos de ce Royaume, et l'estat et liberté du Roy sous le gouvernement de la Royne sa mère ([Orléans], 1562). Reference from FRB project paper files.

Languedoc in November 1561 prompted the Huguenots to organise their own parallel 'assemblée générale des Estats dudict pais de Languedoc' one year later.¹¹⁹ The matters brought up at the meeting of these estates were then discussed and implemented by local regional assemblies.¹²⁰

The Huguenot political councils, local assemblies and provincial estates provided institutional bases for the Huguenot movement while opening up political opportunities for the Huguenot elite. But their primary purpose was to co-ordinate political and military leadership in the face of the Catholic adversary. This alliance had to be reconciled with the entrenched tradition of municipal independence. A political assembly held at Nîmes in November 1562 recognised this as a source of possible tension and affirmed the primary role played by the 'villes capitales' of the province. But the assembly also insisted upon the need to avoid division and called for the towns, their dioceses and all 'leur adherens' to remain

assotiés par ensemble et avec leurs chefs en personnes, forces et volontés, desirent d'avoir et contracter semblable association avec tous leurs circonvoisins qui retiennent mesme fidelité au roy et à la patrye, et voudront singulierement estre tenneus par monseigneur le prince de Condé et tous aultres pour comprins en l'association qu'il a contractée à Orléans le onsieme jour d'avril dernier pour le service de sa Majesté.¹²¹

The Huguenot association of 'villes capitales' did not form the basis of a new constitutionalism. The assembly at Nîmes was keen to quash the 'peste de libertins' who in certain places had suggested that Scripture provided the basis to 'une liberté terrienne et affranchissement'.¹²² Instead of a new-fangled political theory, Mark Greengrass has proposed that what was new about the political assemblies was the language and approach to politics. The proceedings of the political assemblies manifest a more 'lateral, public form of politics' which placed a high premium upon the generating of information and the sharing of

¹¹⁸ Guggenheim, 'Calvinism and the political elite', pp. 304-311.

¹¹⁹ J. Russell Major, *Representative Government in early modern France* (Yale, 1980), p. 226; Griffiths, *Representative Government*, p. 255.

¹²⁰ Francus, *Notes et documents historiques sur les Huguenots du Vivarais* (4 vols., Privas, 1901), I. 202.

¹²¹ 'Collection des procès-verbaux' (Nîmes, November 1562), p. 514.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 555.

experiences, with information moving ‘sideways from community to community’.¹²³

While proceedings of the Huguenot political assemblies have survived for Lower Languedoc, very little has survived in Upper Languedoc and Guyenne to suggest that the churches of this region organised themselves in a similar way. Montauban did not send delegates to the political assemblies of Languedoc before 1573; another indication of the different spheres of activity within the Midi. Although the southern half of Montauban’s diocese fell within the formal boundaries of Languedoc, the city of Montauban itself and the upper part of the diocese was part of Guyenne and had no tradition of sending delegates to the provincial estates of Languedoc.¹²⁴ Guyenne was also a *pays d’état* but before 1561 the provincial estates rarely met.¹²⁵ In contrast, Languedoc had a much more vibrant political culture of diocesan, seneschal and provincial estates.¹²⁶ This created a tradition of political dialogue and co-operation between the different ‘master towns’ that were accustomed to send delegates to these assemblies.

The less sophisticated political tradition in Upper Languedoc and Guyenne meant that the way in which this region responded to the threat of civil war might have been quite different to that in Lower Languedoc. There is no evidence to validate these conclusions but if Montauban was anything like the neighbouring Protestant town of Castres, it would have established political and military councils with which to direct its affairs and those of the neighbouring towns and villages.¹²⁷ Certainly the way in which military manoeuvres were co-ordinated between Montauban, Saint Antonin, Lavaur and Castres in the first war would suggest the existence of some form of military federation across Upper Languedoc.¹²⁸

¹²³ Mark Greengrass, ‘Financing the cause: Protestant mobilisation and accountability in France (1562-1589)’ in Benedict, Marnef, and van Nierop (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War*, pp. 233-252.

¹²⁴ J. Russell Major, *The Deputies to the Estates General in Renaissance France* (Madison, 1960), p. 87.

¹²⁵ Harris, *Valois Guyenne*, p. 75 and J. Russell Major, ‘French representative assemblies: research opportunities and research published’, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 1 (1964), p. 201. For details on the provincial estates of Languedoc, see Major, *Representative Government*, pp. 59-60, 227; Griffiths, *Representative Government*, pp. 234-236.

¹²⁶ Major, *Deputies to the Estates General*, p. 87

¹²⁷ *Mémoires de Jacques Gaches sur les guerres de religion à Castres et dans le Languedoc, 1555-1610*, ed. Charles Pradel (Paris, 1879), p. 16; Camille Rabaud, ‘La Réforme à Castres’, *BSHPP*, 22 (1873), pp. 53-56.

¹²⁸ *Mémoires de Jacques Gaches*, p. 28. Other regions developed similar alliances. The assembly held at Bagnols in March 1563 reveals the existence of a ‘contraict contenant l’alliance avec

The nurturing of ‘bonne fraternité et communion’ and a ‘parfaite union et société’ between Protestant strongholds was essential to avoid ‘toute confusion’ and indeed in the second war, moves were made in Lower Languedoc to reinforce the centralising authority of the sieur de Saint Romain over the local *gouvernements*. This was to avoid ‘la pleuralité des gouverneurs en ung mesme corps et de la diversyté des comandementz desdits gouverneurs’ which militated against ‘telle intelligence et unyon de vounté qu’il est requis en l’administration d’une province’.¹²⁹

Given the institutional developments that emerged over this first decade of the religious wars in Languedoc, the question arises as to the extent to which 1572 was a real watershed. In the aftermath of the massacres, it has been suggested that Protestant indignation and the search for security in Languedoc found its most tangible form in new political organisations, providing the impulsion behind the creation of the ‘United Provinces’ of the Midi. But to what extent were the developments in the years after 1572 any different from those of the preceding periods of war? What actually did happen in the Midi in response to St Bartholomew’s day?

In northern cities – Paris, Rouen, and Caen – the trauma of the massacres prompted a wave of abjurations and emigration. But separated from the north, events in the Midi followed a rather different trajectory. In his *Mémoires*, Simon Goulart described the derision that many Huguenots across France poured upon those foolhardy Huguenot communities in the south that resisted royal designs. Other than La Rochelle and Sancerre, Goulart wrote,

il y avoit d’autres places qui comencoyet a leuer la teste, come Montauban[n], Nismes, Milliaud, Priuaz, Aubenas, Mirebel, Anduze, et autres villetes de Viarez et des Seuenes. Mais à cōparaison du Royaume, cest effort estoit ridicule, et plusieurs mesmes de la Religion s’en mocqueroient, disans qu’il n’y avoit propos, que ceux de ces ville-là, entreprinssent de resister, veu qu’on avoit fait si grands carnages de leurs freres: que le Roy avoit ses forces entieres et tout le Royaume à son comandement: qu’apres telles tempestes, il n’y avoit Prince ni gentilhomme en France, qui ostat faire profession ouuerte de la Religion, ni moins faire teste a l’armee d’un Roy si puissant.¹³⁰

lyonnais et le pays de Daulphiné’, promoted by sieur de Soubize and baron des Adrets. See ‘Procès-verbaux des assemblées politiques’, *BSHPF*, 24 (1875), pp. 363, 365.

¹²⁹ ‘Procès-verbaux des assemblées politiques’ (Nîmes, December 1569), *BSHPF*, 26 (1877), pp. 402, 404-407.

¹³⁰ Goulart, *Mémoires*, II. fo. 13r-13v; de Thou, *Histoire universelle*, VI. p. 483.

Montauban was always going to play an important role as it had developed a reputation for resistance since the first wars and had received special recognition as a *place de sûreté* since 1570. Furthermore the strategic importance of Montauban cannot be underestimated, for it was located at the heart of the Midi, providing a crucial link between the provinces of Languedoc and Guyenne.¹³¹

Upon hearing the extent of the massacres, the townsfolk ‘mettent en merueilleux soucy’.¹³² Anxiety pervaded the region. Frantic communications arrived at Montauban from as far afield as Millau and Puylaurens, all awaiting the leadership and direction that Montauban was expected to provide.¹³³ The gates of the towns were closed and on 4 September 1572 news reached the town council of Toulouse that the Huguenots in Montauban had taken ‘la main forte’ and expelled Catholics residing within the town.¹³⁴ Local Huguenot nobles retreated into the towns and set about fortifying their castles. The town council registers of Saint Antonin on 5 September reflect the uncertainties and anxieties of the times: the need to maintain guards at the gates, to find out the intentions of neighbouring communities, and the fear that the town could be attacked at any time such was the ‘bruict de guerre que se mene communement pour raison du massacre’.¹³⁵

It was only at the end of September that those nobles who had escaped the bloodshed in Paris arrived in Montauban. The vicomte de Monclar and baron de Paulin arrived first; the Catholic governor of Guyenne, the Admiral Villars, who had hoped to use their influence to assure Montauban’s submission to the king, had spared both. But a few days later, the sieurs de Terride (formerly Serignac) and Reyniès arrived, each bearing harrowing tales of ‘l’atrocité de cette fatale journée’ and the perils that they confronted. Terride was in no mood for compromise.¹³⁶ At an assembly held in Montauban, the nobles recounted the Catholic plan to ‘exterminer tous ceux de la Religiõ, sans espargner les petits ou plus que les grands’ and after much deliberation, it was decided to ‘s’opposer a la fureur des massacreurs, sans plus delayer’.¹³⁷

¹³¹ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 61r-63r.

¹³² Goulart, *Memoires*, II. fo. 15r.

¹³³ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 87r; Le Frère, *Vraye et entiere histoire*, II. fo. 590v-591r.

¹³⁴ AMT, BB 13, fo. 138r.

¹³⁵ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 279v.

¹³⁶ de Thou, *Histoire universelle*, VI. pp. 478-479; La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 87v.

¹³⁷ Goulart, *Memoires*, II. fo. 126v-128r.

Shocked by the scale of the massacres and the lack of noble leadership, the initial Huguenot response had been muted; the Huguenot communities appeared paralysed. But five weeks after St Bartholomew's day in Paris, many Protestants in southern French Catholic towns suffered similar fates. Massacres in Bordeaux, Toulouse, Gaillac, Villefranche-en-Rouergue and Rabastens left Huguenots panic-stricken and left the Huguenot leadership facing a stark choice if they were to survive.¹³⁸ Under renewed noble leadership, an increasingly defiant response was mustered. Villars reported to the king that 'encores qu'ils eussent touiours mauvaise volonté de se convertir, disant qu'ils ayment mieulx mourir ensemble, deffandant leurs vyes le plus qu'ils pourrent, que de se mectre entre les mains de leurs meutriers'.¹³⁹

News reached Villars that Terride was proclaiming 'merveilles et faisant fort le brave'.¹⁴⁰ The arrival of a new wave of Protestant refugees with first-hand accounts of the massacres stoked passions with their calls to arms. A flurry of meetings were convened between nobles and townsfolk, 'le tout mis au conseil et debatue de part et d'autre, tant par les habitans qu'estrangers qui s'y trouuerent'.¹⁴¹ Two days after the massacres in Toulouse, Villars wrote to Charles IX explaining that Montauban, Saint Antonin and Millau 'sont deliberez ne recepvoir aulcune garnison, parce que, à ce qu'on m'a escript, ilz se renforcent et fortiffient'. He advised that 's'il est ainsi ilz pourront donner beaucoup de fascherie en ce pays et brasser plusieurs entreprises grandement préjudiciables au service de vostre Majesté'. Villars sent envoys to these towns to clarify 'leurs dessins et la façon qu'ils ont délibérer se gouverner'.¹⁴² The apprehensions of the king's governor were well founded. One contemporary wrote how 'Terride et autres se pourmenans par le pays pour inciter a leur exemple les autres places: envoyerent gens a La Rochelle, Nismes, Millaud, Castres, et autres endroits, les avertir de leur resolution et les exhorter au semblable'.¹⁴³ News of La Rochelle's preparations for

¹³⁸ Joan Davies, 'Persecution and Protestantism: Toulouse, 1562-1575', *HJ*, 22 (1979), p. 35; V. Carrière, 'Les lendemains de la Saint-Barthélemy en Languedoc', *RHEF*, 27 (1941), pp. 221-229; Philip Benedict, 'The Saint Bartholomew's massacres in the provinces', *HJ*, 21 (1978), p. 221.

¹³⁹ Villars to Charles IX (22 October 1572) in 'Documents concernant le Languedoc et la Guienne après Saint-Barthélemy', ed. Jean Loutchitzky, *BSHPF*, 22 (1873), pp. 267-268.

¹⁴⁰ Villars to the duc d'Anjou (6 October 1572) in *ibid.*, pp. 254-255.

¹⁴¹ Le Frère, *Vraye et entiere histoire*, II. fo. 613r.

¹⁴² Villars to Charles IX (7 October 1572) in 'Documents concernant le Languedoc', pp. 256-257.

¹⁴³ Le Frère, *Vraye et entiere histoire*, II. fo. 613r. See also Goulart, *Memoires*, II. fo. 126v-128r and Serres, *Histoire*, p. 482.

war heartened the Montalbanais, providing relief to an otherwise gloomy picture of defeat, defection and exile.¹⁴⁴

The momentum of the Huguenot resurgence in the Midi can to some extent be attributed to the weakness of the royal military machine in this region. According to Villars' own admission, the military strategies of the Huguenot command met with an unexpected level of success:

Ceulx de la nouvelle opinion qui vous occupent Montauban and aultres villes en Rouergue et Quercy et font chacung jour de mal en pys, prennent villes et chasteaux, saccagent, pillent et tuent les Catholiques... La mauvaise volonté de vostre ville de Mōtauban, St Antonin et Millau, lesquelles à mon advis ne changeront jamais que par force, continuant tous les jours apeller leur voysins, prandre prisoners et surprendre le plus qu'ilz peuvent des places, où ilz se fortifient.¹⁴⁵

The rapid succession of letters from Villars to the king, the duc d'Anjou and Catherine de Medici reflect the sense of helplessness felt by the royal governor in containing the Huguenot threat. The lack of financial resources and, in particular, the lack of artillery meant that Villars was far from even contemplating possible sieges of Huguenot strongholds.

But the fear of Catholic resurgence demanded organisation and across the Midi local assemblies were held throughout the months of October and November 1572 at Saint Antonin, Millau, Saint Hippolyte, Pierre-Segarde (Viane), Réalmont and Saint Pierre de Salle (Cévennes).¹⁴⁶ Many of these assemblies were held in remote, hilly areas, away from any immediate Catholic threat. Noble and town elites gathered together to plot local strategies for military and political organisations. Nobles, advised by councils of five, were assigned areas or *gouvernements*, which they were responsible for garrisoning and protecting. For example, at the assembly at Réalmont, the vicomte de Gourdon was placed in charge of Upper Quercy; the seigneur de Terride in charge of Lower Quercy 'vers Montauban et Gascogne'; the vicomte de Paulin in charge of Puylaurens and the Lauragais; the vicomte de Panat and his brother in charge of Rouergue and Millau; and, the vicomte de Caumont in charge of the 'pays de montagne' and

¹⁴⁴ *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, XIII. pp. 217, 220, 230.

¹⁴⁵ Villars to Charles IX and the duc d'Anjou (15 October 1572) in 'Documents concernant le Languedoc', pp. 258-262.

¹⁴⁶ Corbière, *Organisation politique*, pp. 8-10.

Foix.¹⁴⁷ Similarly certain towns were assigned to co-ordinate the necessary logistical, administrative and financial support for the *gouvernements*.

The groundwork prepared by these local assemblies was consolidated in February 1573 by assemblies held at Anduze in Lower Languedoc and Réalmont in Upper Languedoc.¹⁴⁸ The assembly at Réalmont drew up over fifty propositions, most of which dealt with the ‘conduytte des gens de guerre et affaires des villes et esglises dud pays’.¹⁴⁹ These proceedings were then presented to local estates held in the ‘villes cappitale’ of each province. The minutes recording one of these provincial assemblies has survived for Capdenac in Upper Quercy.¹⁵⁰ It tells of a meeting bringing together the vicomte de Gourdon (who had attended the assembly at Réalmont), two ministers, various local nobles, four captains and delegates from the towns of the region. Matters arising included the payment and maintenance of ministers, the mustering of armies and the ‘estat de la gendarmerie’ and the election of officers, including Gourdon’s council, a *receveur-général* and *receveurs particuliers* for each town, a provost and an executor of high justice.

What is particularly striking about the measures taken in these assemblies is the extent to which organisation remained localised. Even in the wake of the terrible massacres by a seemingly tyrannical government, the political assemblies never sought to dictate a new political agenda to the Huguenot faithful. Town councils and local nobility remained the instruments that shaped decision-making and implemented its provisions. The continual dialogue between provincial and regional assemblies served to reinforce the sense of local organisation while maintaining a framework for mutual security.

At a time of struggle it was very important to develop a web of communication between different Huguenot strongholds, to develop a collective sense of purpose in the face of adversity. The assembly at Saint Pierre de Salle in the Cévennes in November 1572 had concluded by agreeing to send ‘advertissements aux autres eglises des pays circonvoisins de notre estat et nous joindre en union generale pour la defense commune et sauver les ungs aux

¹⁴⁷ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 114v; Le Frère, *Vraye et entiere histoire*, II. fo. 613r; Goulart, *Memoires*, II. fo. 128r.

¹⁴⁸ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 182-183, 339-348; La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 137r; Serres, *Histoire*, p. 483; de Thou, *Histoire universelle*, VI. p. 479.

¹⁴⁹ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 336r.

¹⁵⁰ E. Jolibois, ‘Organisation militaire des Protestants après le massacre de la Saint-Barthélemy’, *Revue de département du Tarn*, 5 (1885), pp. 114-118.

autres'.¹⁵¹ The assembly at Anduze in February 1573 was the first political assembly to draw together representatives not just from Lower Languedoc, but also from across Rouergue, Albigeois, Lauragais and Quercy.¹⁵² Links were tightened between individual towns. The governor of Millau, for example, attended a conference in Nîmes in February 1573 in which a pact was made to help and support one another and to join in such strength so as to restore the state.¹⁵³ Letters from Montauban exhorted the town of Nîmes not to surrender to the duc de Joyeuse's demands to allow a royal garrison in the town.¹⁵⁴ Envoys from Béarn communicated with Montauban, Nîmes and the Cévennes, to draw up a response to Henry of Navarre's demand, made under coercion, that Béarn follow his example and return to the Catholic faith.¹⁵⁵ And in April 1573, an envoy from Nîmes arrived in Saint Antonin, on his way to Montauban, to discuss possible alliances with Germany and the Swiss confederation for the restoration of good government in the provinces of the kingdom of France.¹⁵⁶

But the bi-lateral communication between particular towns and nobles over and above the political assemblies created tensions in the direction of the Huguenot movement. Beneath the veneer of a united front, different towns jockeyed with one another in a bid to gain the greatest advantage at the onset of peace. As the siege of La Rochelle continued, there is evidence buried in Montauban's municipal accounts demonstrating that the Rochelois, Montalbanais and Nîmois elites were communicating with one another and with the king without any reference to the Huguenot assemblies.

The co-operation between major Protestant cities was by no means an unambiguous benefit for the wider Huguenot movement. François d'Anjou personally solicited the nobles and consuls of Montauban with letters full of 'belles promesses', assuring them of how much 'il aimoit ceste ville-là qui est situee en sa cote de Quercy'.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, he asked that the town draw up its terms in articles that he would personally present to the king, his brother. The Huguenot

¹⁵¹ 'Cayer de l'assemblée de S-Pierre de La Salle' (11 November 1572) in ADG, C 845 (unfoliated).

¹⁵² ADG, C 845.

¹⁵³ *Mémoires d'un Calviniste de Millau*, p. 252.

¹⁵⁴ De Thou, *Histoire universelle*, VI. p. 486.

¹⁵⁵ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 137r. For other examples of regional liaison for the later years of the wars, see ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 78r-78v; ADTG, 1 BB 41, fo. 32r; AMM, BB 397, fo. 23v, 29v.

¹⁵⁶ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 340r-340v.

¹⁵⁷ Goulart, *Memories*, II. fo. 129r.

chronicler, Jean de Serres, viewed Anjou's attempts as a cruel ploy 'pour desunir les provinces, et avoir plus aisement les uns apres les autres'.¹⁵⁸ Anjou's honeyed words clearly succeeded in drawing Montauban's attention. On 23 May 1573, Guillaume de la Planche, the first consul, was reimbursed with a sum of 100 livres for the journey that he had undertaken to La Rochelle, 'au camp du Roy, pour luy parler et presente le tres humble et affectionne service que la ville de Montauban luy presente, et selon les memoires dudit sr de La Planche adviser obtenir appoinctement du roy'.¹⁵⁹

In July 1573, by the Edict of Boulogne, a treaty of pacification was signed in which special provision was made for the towns of La Rochelle, Montauban and Nîmes: 'Nous avons accordé & accordons à ceux desdites villes de La Rochelle, Nismes & Montauban: qu'ils jouyront de leurs priuileges anciens & modernes, droits de Iuridictions & autres esquels ils serõt maintenus & conseruez'.¹⁶⁰ These included their exemption from garrisoning royal troops, their release from having to pay outstanding taxes or to repay debts, the dismissal of sentences passed or legal cases that were continuing against the towns, letters to confirm all offices, and an assurance that the Reformed religion could be exercised freely both in private and in public.¹⁶¹ With these guarantees Montauban quickly became a compliant and willing partner of the king's, promising the king undying obedience and seeking to promote order across the region, sending deputies to as far afield as Millau to extol the virtues of peace.¹⁶²

But the Edict of Boulogne was quite unacceptable to the wider Huguenot movement. There was an attempt to publish the edict in Nîmes but its terms came up against a barrage of hostility from other churches.¹⁶³ The edict's ratification was viewed as a betrayal by many Huguenots for it left at large those who were responsible for the massacres and failed to provide sufficient safeguards for the remaining Huguenot population.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, the edict was denounced as something that 'auoit esté basti avec quelques particuliers hors leur charge, l'auis desquels ne

¹⁵⁸ Serres, *Histoire*, p. 484. See also de Thou, *Histoire universelle*, VI. p. 606.

¹⁵⁹ ADTG, 7 CC 11, fo. 55v-56r; La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 137v-138r; Corbière, *Organisation politique*, p. 19.

¹⁶⁰ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 184r. See also de Thou, *Histoire universelle*, VI. p. 644.

¹⁶¹ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 213r-214v.

¹⁶² 'Consuls de Montauban à Charles IX' (17 July & 7 October 1573) in AN, Ms. Français 15558, fo. 70r, 121r; ADTG, 7 CC 11, fo. 56v.

¹⁶³ Ménard, *Histoire civile* (1878 edition), V. 87.

¹⁶⁴ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 129r.

pouuoit preiudicier au general de toutes les Eglises'.¹⁶⁵ One chronicler from Millau wrote how Montauban was later rigorously censured for consenting to the peace 'sans avoir esgart en la promesse qu'ils avoient faicte d'autres fois en pleines assemblees, comme ils sachent bien que s'estoit chose inique et scandale à toutes les eglises'.¹⁶⁶

The criticism levelled against La Rochelle and Montauban in particular arose out of the failure of these towns to confer with their fellow churches. In August 1573, Huguenot nobles, consuls and ministers from across the Midi met at Millau and Montauban and put aside the peace terms which had been agreed one month earlier to present a more encompassing agenda. Justice for those who had been victims of the massacres was a foremost concern, followed by a raft of requests ranging from the free exercise of the Reformed religion, exemption from church taxes, free access to all offices, bi-partisan courts and measures to safeguard Huguenot security within the towns. The aim of these measures was 'de parvenir peu à peu à une vraye entière et generale reintegration d'amitié entre tous vos suiets des deux religions'.¹⁶⁷

In the meantime, Languedoc was divided between two *gouvernements* with the vicomte de Paulin based at Montauban and the seigneur de Saint Romain at Nîmes. Paulin and Saint Romain were given the responsibility of overseeing preparations for war and liaising with the 'estats du pays' for advice and the raising of money. The 'estats' of each *gouvernement* were to be comprised of delegates from each of the diocesan assemblies that were responsible for the local collections of money and mustering of men. In this way, 'l'association fut renouvellee entre ceux de la religion es prouinces susnommees, où ils tenoyent vn tresgrand nombre de places, & vn reiglement fort exact dressé pour leur conseruation'.¹⁶⁸

Upon hearing of the situation in the Midi and the details of what was agreed at the assemblies of Montauban and Nîmes, Catherine de Medici is said to have broken down in tears. Exasperated at the boldness of the Huguenot demands

¹⁶⁵ Serres, *Histoire*, p. 487.

¹⁶⁶ *Mémoires d'un Calviniste de Millau*, pp. 273-275. See also, La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 191r.

¹⁶⁷ *Articles contenant la Reqveste presentee av Roy par les deputez des Eglises reformees du pais de Languedoc & autres lieux circonvoisins, assemblez par le cōmandement de sa Maieste* (Basle, Pierre de Ray, 1574), p. 28; Mazarine, Ms. 1504, vol. IV; La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 186v-189r; Serres, *Histoire*, pp. 488-489; Haag, *France protestante*, X. 114-121.

¹⁶⁸ Serres, *Histoire*, p. 487-488, 490. See also La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 258v.

she exclaimed that 'si le Prince de Conde estait en vie, qu'il eust pris Paris, ou la moitie des villes du royaume, avec vingt mille chevaux et cinquante mil hommes de pied en la campagne, il ne voudroit pas avoir demande la moitie de ces articles insolents'.¹⁶⁹ Royal commissioners were sent to verify the situation in the Midi for themselves.¹⁷⁰

The subsequent political assembly at Millau in December 1573 has been viewed as first Protestant Estates-General and its constitution as 'la première oeuvre législative de cette instance souveraine'.¹⁷¹ But as Garrisson herself points out, this assembly was based upon its antecedents.¹⁷² Indeed this assembly made very few, if any, institutional innovations, often repeating decisions made at Réalmont which, as we have seen, had their own roots in the first decade of religious wars.

Very little is known of what went on in these assemblies because only the minutes of what was finally agreed have survived, often giving a distorted view of the unity of purpose achieved at these gatherings. The proceedings of the assembly at Millau include measures for the political organisation of the Huguenot cause. But the memoirs of an anonymous Calvinist suggest that the most important issue at stake at this assembly was the king's response to the delegations that he received in the preceding months. But even these matters could not be addressed for there were considerable tensions between the towns and nobility to be overcome; indeed, for the first ten days of the assembly, proceedings were held up by 'certains eglises aient aeu quelques diférans avec certains gentilhommes et aussi la noblesse entre heus'.¹⁷³ Aristocratic factionalism was a recurring theme at these assemblies. Perhaps more than anything this explains the detailed way in which power was distributed between the towns and nobles. Instead of seeing the provisions enunciated as a blueprint for a new political ethos, the provisions perhaps reflect more the practical difficulties facing the Huguenot leadership. Why else would there have been a need to reaffirm 'tous les priuileges & status municipaux, franchises & libertez des corps des villes' and

¹⁶⁹ Cited in Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, p. 169. Fourquevaux described the articles as 'tout fort impertinentz et desraisonnables' (20 October 1573) in *Les Guerres de Religion en Languedoc d'après les papiers de Fourquevaux*, p. 165.

¹⁷⁰ See also letters from the Huguenot deputies in Paris (Chavaignac and Philippi) to the consuls of Nîmes (23 September and 19 October 1573) in ADG, C 845.

¹⁷¹ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 186. Garrisson bases her interpretation upon the proceedings of the assembly reproduced in Haag, *France protestante*, X. 121-126.

¹⁷² Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 188.

¹⁷³ *Mémoires d'un Calviniste de Millau*, pp. 282-288.

to ensure that the towns maintained their ‘entier & naturel ressort en tant que faire se pourra, soit pour reigle de la iustice, police, imposition & contribution des deniers’?¹⁷⁴ Perhaps it was the fractiousness of the Huguenot leadership which prompted such a sustained emphasis on maintaining ‘bonne intelligence & correspondance mutuelle’ and ‘entière association & fraternité mutuelle’ and the taking of an oath, ‘ne faire tous ensemble qu’vn mesme corps, se communiquer toutes choses requise d’vne sainte, ciuile & fraternelle communication, vniuersellement vtiles & necessaires à ladite vnion & cōionctiō tres estroite desdites Eglises...comme freres & domestiques en la maison du Seigneur’.¹⁷⁵

Historians have argued that successive assemblies, particularly the one held in Millau in July 1574, served to consolidate and amplify the institutional developments of the ‘United Provinces’ of the Midi. Gordon Griffiths asserts that out of the assembly held in July 1574 came a further elaboration of ‘Huguenot conceptions of representative institutions’ and a further elaboration of a ‘constitution for the government of their own Huguenot society’.¹⁷⁶ But, again, the historiography has masked the reality. Very little was altered between the assemblies in the immediate aftermath of St Bartholomew’s day in 1572 and those held two years later. There was in fact very little change or development in the personalities or structures of Huguenot organisation. The key noble voices of Upper Languedoc – Terride, Paulin and Gourdon – together with lesser nobles such as Reyniès and Verlhac, had more or less consistently attended all the regional political assemblies held at that time.¹⁷⁷ Consular representatives and ministers from towns such as Montauban joined them. The local assemblies held at Montauban in January, April and May 1574, for example, again reflected the key players on the local level: the town’s governor, the seigneur de Terride, together with Guichard de Scorbiac and Pierre Satur (first and second consuls of Montauban), Hugues Bonencontre (*syndic* of the town) and consuls from the

¹⁷⁴ Goulart, *Memories*, III. fo. 22v-27r.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*; La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 192r; ‘Règlement et forme d’intelligence entre le Roy de Navarre Monsieur le Prince et les églises reformées de France’ (1579) and ‘Procès-verbaux des assemblées politiques’ in Bibl. SHPF, Fonds de La Rochelle, Ms. 710, No. 8, 10, 13 (1579, 1581) and Mazarine, Ms. 2604, fo. 89r.

¹⁷⁶ Griffiths, *Representative Government*, pp. 257-258.

¹⁷⁷ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 114r-114v, 137r; Goulart, *Memoires*, II. fo. 128r; *Articles contenant la Requête*, p. 29; *Mémoires d’un Calviniste de Millau*, pp. 287 n. 2, 310, 313-314.

surrounding towns and villages: Bruniquel, Caussade, Villemur, Nègrelisse and Bioule.¹⁷⁸

Most crucial of all was the enduring respect for royal authority at this time, even in the immediate aftermath of the massacres. As has been suggested, the Huguenot organisation depended upon a narrow elite of nobles and town consulates. To reject the monarchy outright would have been to have undermined their own authority and the order upon which it was based. Raymond Mentzer's study of the Lacger family in the Lauragais demonstrates how Protestantism and loyalty to the crown were by no means mutually exclusive. Indeed noble families only understood their most profound aspirations and their long-term survival through the context of loyalty towards the crown.¹⁷⁹

But there had always been ambivalence in these loyalties. Particularist sentiment was easily agitated by royal attempts to override the privileges of the province and municipal customs of the *pays* which of course were 'particulières à chaque ville, non générales à toute la prouince'.¹⁸⁰ Relations between crown and province were certainly strained through the course of civil war, but the damage was never deemed irreparable. To create a separate 'state within a state' would have meant disavowing the crown. Garrisson has suggested that this did indeed happen and the 'United Provinces' of the Midi seceded from the rest of the kingdom. However, the proceedings of the political assemblies are crystal clear. Their intention was neither to oppose the law of God nor the legitimate authority of the king.¹⁸¹ Indeed even at this time when it has been suggested the most exotic political ideologies were appearing, the Huguenots leadership at this assembly spoke of their affection for the king, placing the blame for the massacres squarely upon a tyrannical section at the royal court which was seeking to subvert good order. At Millau in August 1573, the fidelity of the Huguenots to the 'père de patrie' was beyond doubt:

Nous protestons devant Dieu et ses Anges, qu'il n'est jamais entré en
nostre coeur avant ces derniers troubles, ny depuis, d'oster ny substraire a

¹⁷⁸ 'Procès-verbaux des assemblées politiques', *BSHPE*, 22 (1873), p. 508, n. 13 and p. 509, n. 1.

¹⁷⁹ Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, pp. 12-14, 42-45, 60-61, 166. See also Yardeni, *La conscience nationale*, pp. 121-135.

¹⁸⁰ Pierre Louvet, *Remarques sur l'histoire de Languedoc* (Toulouse, 1657), cited in Monpays, 'L'image du Languedoc', p. 39; William Beik, *Absolutism and Society in seventeenth-century France. State power and provincial aristocracy in Languedoc* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 38-39.

¹⁸¹ Assembly at Anduze (February 1573) in Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 339-340; Corbière, *Organisation politique*, pp. 41-42.

vostre Maieste noz deuoirs de treshumble tresobeissante et fidelle subiettiõ: ains d'une vraye et ferme loyauté de subiet, avons tousiours recognu et recognoissons, que telle est nostre vocation et conditon naturelle de par Dieu, de rendre a vostre Majeste toute chose deuës par le fidele suiet a son roy et souverain seigneur.¹⁸²

In December 1573, another assembly held at Millau consolidated the federation between Protestant towns and nobles but reiterated 'leur entière fidelité à l'Etat de France: n'ayans autre but que la gloire de Dieu, l'auancement du regne de Christ, le bien et service de ceste couronne, & le commun repos de ce Royaume'.¹⁸³ This tells us something of the nature of the union: the goal was to bond with one another so as to provide security, not to break away from the rest of the kingdom. Indeed, the assembly in July 1574 referred to the association as a means by which to preserve the crown and ancient laws and to remain faithful subjects of the king and his successors.¹⁸⁴

At precisely the same time a similar struggle to that in France was under way in the Netherlands. On 19 July 1572 the noble Philip Marnix of St Aldegonde addressed the delegates of the rebel towns at the States General meeting at Dordrecht on behalf of William of Orange. His address demonstrated the reluctance felt in couching the language of revolt in terms of rebellion against Philip II. Instead the emphasis was placed upon the legitimacy of William of Orange, as the king's chief vassal, in protecting the ancient privileges and rights of the towns and provinces against the king's evil ministers, foremost of whom was the Duke of Alva.¹⁸⁵ And in a letter one year later, William of Orange reminded Marnix that 'we do not fight His Majesty but must protect ourselves' and how he looked forward to the day when 'we may live in happy prosperity and in complete obedience to His Majesty'.¹⁸⁶ Both in the Netherlands and in France, Protestants adopted the same clichés of resistance, namely continuing allegiance to the crown but rejection of its evil ministers. It was only in July 1581 – eight years later – that the States General declared that the king of Spain had forfeited

¹⁸² Articles contenant la Reqveste, pp. 4-5.

¹⁸³ Goulart, Memoires, III. fo. 22v-27r.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., III. fo. 291-296v

¹⁸⁵ Texts concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands, ed. E. H. Kossman & A. F. Mellink (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 98-101. See also Alastair Duke, 'From king and country to king or country? Loyalty and treason in the Revolt of the Netherlands', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 32 (1982), p. 124.

¹⁸⁶ Texts concerning the Revolt, p. 111.

his sovereignty and government over the Netherlands.¹⁸⁷ It is anachronistic to project retrospectively what happened in the Netherlands in 1581 upon events in both the Netherlands and France prior to that date.

By July 1574 the Huguenots of Languedoc had entered into alliance with Damville with the ultimate aim of bringing about reconciliation and civil harmony in the kingdom.¹⁸⁸ While it is clear that the Huguenots, by their own account, had no intention of separating themselves from their country, they were troubled by such accusations by Catholic propagandists. Their negotiation with the German princes, the waging of war, the raising of taxes and the convoking of assemblies without the permission of the king was interpreted by Catholics as sedition. But two years after the massacres of St Bartholomew's day, the Huguenots were still repeating the same mantra:

Declairons et protestons par ces presentes de nous devans la Majesté de notre Roy devant tous seigneurs et estatz de notre commune patrie du Royaume de France ensemble à tous Roys, princes, potentatz et seigneurs de la Crestienté que nous n'avons prinse et ne tenons les armes en main par sedition ne rebellion quelconques ne pour a[u]lcunes sinistre affection que nous ayons enuers sa Majesté et son estat de la patrie. Pour lesquelles au contraires nous somme prestz d'employer corps et biens ains seullement ayant este constraintz à ce fere pour maintenir nous vies que dieu nous a donnez et liberté de nos conciences sellon les edictz sur ce faitz publiez et jurez comme chascung scait contre la desloyaulté non jamais ouye cruaulte des mauuais conseillers de sa Majesté pertubateurs du repoz public et ruyneurs du Royaulme.¹⁸⁹

And in a remonstrance made in the name of the Reformed churches to Damville at the same assembly, the Huguenots returned to the traditional language of the body politic with the king as the head of a family and the need to return unity to that family.¹⁹⁰

Obedience to the crown remained central to the Huguenot mentality. Perhaps the most telling indication of this is what happened at times of peace. Greengrass has suggested that the syncopated and short-lived nature of the formal

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 216-228.

¹⁸⁸ Goulart, *Memoires*, III. fo. 291r-296v; *Declaration et protestation de monseigneur de Dampville Marechal de France. Auec la protestation des Eglises refformées de France, assemblées à Millau en Rouergue, sur les troubles de presant* (Strasbourg, 1575), especially sig. D1r-D4v.

¹⁸⁹ 'Déclaration' drawn up at the Assembly of Millau (July 1574) in Archives de Scorbiac, liasse 1, no. 2 bis.

¹⁹⁰ Archives de Scorbiac, liasse 1, no. 2 ter. See also La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 240r-241v.

periods of warfare meant that any innovations made were not given the chance to become 'embedded, regularised and legitimised'.¹⁹¹ Perhaps this can best be demonstrated by the way in which the Huguenot political and military leaders succeeded in grafting themselves onto the royal administration in an almost seamless fashion in the aftermath of periods of formal warfare. In Guyenne and Upper Languedoc, for example, the late 1570s saw the Catholic crown turning to the Huguenot leadership for assistance in peace-keeping. The king endowed Protestant figures such as the vicomte de Gourdon and Guichard de Scorbiac with authority to enforce royal edicts and maintain peace and order in the towns and countryside alongside Catholic representatives. By investing the Huguenot political establishment with the responsibility of peace-making, the crown was able to work with the Huguenot movement to consolidate order.¹⁹²

The political assemblies were hardly revolutionary institutions, especially when one considers that the second half of the sixteenth century was characterised by a re-vitalising of 'representative' institutions across the country. Between 1558 and 1596, four assemblies of notables were convoked and five Estates General. Between 1585 and 1596 in Languedoc the duc de Joyeuse convened the estates no less than 22 times and in the final decade of the conflict a leaguer Parlement of Toulouse emerged alongside the established Parlement of Toulouse. Both Catholic and Protestant parties needed to assemble so as to co-ordinate collective responses to collective problems. But there was no long-term thought behind the Protestant political arrangements. The new institutions were of a temporary nature and of limited use; a pragmatic response to unprecedented circumstances, which would as easily be abandoned once normality was restored.

The southern provinces of France never created the United Provinces that emerged in the Netherlands. This chapter has demonstrated the strength of local privileges and customs and the patchwork of confessional loyalties that precluded the creation of a separate Huguenot state. In the Netherlands similar problems arose. But despite the particularism of the different regions and towns in the Netherlands, the Dutch were able to develop central structures under the guiding

¹⁹¹ Greengrass, 'Financing the cause', p. 239.

¹⁹² Philip Conner, 'Peace in the Provinces. Peace-making in the Protestant South during the later Wars of Religion' in Keith Cameron, Mark Greengrass & Penny Roberts (eds.), *The Adventure of Religious Pluralism in Early Modern France* (Berne, 2000), pp. 175-188.

authority of William of Orange, however artificial they may have been.¹⁹³ The tensions between urban and local interests within the common allegiance of the United Provinces remained an unresolved paradox of the fledgling state, but a state it did become with separate sovereign identity from the Imperial crown. In southern France the provinces of Guyenne and Languedoc both had their provincial estates as *pays d'état* and the Huguenot movement of the south was rarely short of noble leadership. During the wars, the provincial estates provided the precedent for the convocation of Protestant political assemblies and nobles oversaw Huguenot military strategies across the region. If we are to understand fully why events in the Netherlands were not replicated with a 'United Provinces' of the Midi it is necessary to look further.

In 1579, the northern provinces of the Netherlands agreed at Utrecht to create a defensive alliance. This was 'a league of several sovereign provinces', pooling their 'sovereign rights in a few limited areas'.¹⁹⁴ Only in a very gradual and reticent way did the military treaty of Utrecht evolve into the Dutch Republic, partly through the overarching authority of the Prince of Orange and partly through the dominating voice of the largest province of Holland.¹⁹⁵ But in southern France two factors militated against a similar evolution towards separate statehood. First, Languedoc and Guyenne were of a far greater geographical size than all seven of the northern provinces of the Netherlands together. In comparison to the Netherlands the population of southern France was very much more dispersed and markedly less urbanised.¹⁹⁶ Kevin Robbins' study of La Rochelle on the western seaboard provides a very neat example of how isolated an outpost La Rochelle was for the Huguenot cause. Similarly the Protestant strongholds such as Montauban and Nîmes were a long way from one another. There existed in southern France no cluster of large Protestant urban centres within close proximity of one another in the way that they existed in the Netherlands. The distance between the French Protestant centres and the less sophisticated political structures of the region in comparison to those of the

¹⁹³ A. Th. van Deursen, 'Between unity and independence: the application of the Union as a fundamental law', *Low Countries History Yearbook*, 14 (1981), pp. 50-64.

¹⁹⁴ Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic* (Oxford, 1995), p. 276.

¹⁹⁵ Olaf Mörke, 'Sovereign and Authority: the role of the Court in the Netherlands in the first half of the seventeenth century' in Ronald G. Asch & Adolf M. Birke (eds.), *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility* (Oxford, 1991), p. 442; H. Wansink, 'Holland and six allies: the Republic of seven United Provinces' in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman (eds) *Britain and the Netherlands*, 4 (1971), pp. 133-155.

¹⁹⁶ Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977), p. 23.

Netherlands – where there had always been a more vibrant tradition of States and States general – meant that there was not a sufficiently mature political culture to support a separate political state in southern France.

Secondly the majority of those that radicalised the Calvinist agenda in the northern provinces of the Netherlands had been forced at some point of the revolt into exile. As refugees in England, Germany and Emden, the exiles had found a profound unity in their Hispanophobia. Alastair Duke argues that ‘it was in exile that a sense of national awareness, more or less divorced from the king, developed in close association with the Reformed faith’.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, Duke argues that the notion of *majestas* gradually disengaged from the person of the king and was re-defined in a more abstract way to represent the corporate body of the king (namely the state or the ‘patrie’).¹⁹⁸ Although the monarchomach writings in France reflected a radicalising of one wing of the Calvinist movement, there is a clear gap between the ideas which were not embraced by the movement as a whole and which were not put into practice.¹⁹⁹ In the Netherlands there was no such prevarication. The edict of the States General of the northern provinces in 1581 unequivocally declared that the king of Spain had forfeited his right to govern the territory.

The ‘United Provinces’ of the French Midi is a nonsense. No attempt was ever made to create a separate ‘state within a state’. The political, geographical and confessional limitations to the concept, however, should not mask the reality of Huguenot political power. In the German context of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, political parties could be based upon isolated strongholds and yet still possess considerable political weight. The examples of the Swabian League and Schmalkaldic League are evidence of this.

Protestant towns and nobles in southern France were well aware that the political strength of the Huguenot movement depended upon a co-ordinated effort. In maintaining a front of unity through the political assemblies the Huguenots

¹⁹⁷ Duke, ‘From King and Country’, p. 126.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁹⁹ Myriam Yardeni argues that until the massacres of St Bartholomew’s day, ‘la conscience nationale protestante ne diffère pas encore dans son essence de celle des catholiques’. With the massacres, however, there emerged ‘une mentalité entièrement nouvelle’ in which Protestants began to consider themselves ‘indépendant de l’idée du roi et du royaume’. However during the wars of the League Protestant writings again began to reflect ‘un ardent patriotisme’. See Yardeni, *La Conscience nationale*, pp. 135-136, 143, 183. However, current work being undertaken by the sixteenth-century French religious book project at St Andrews is showing how unrepresentative

succeeded in projecting an authoritative voice upon the proceedings for peace. But this unity was limited and did not extend to the day-to-day affairs of the Huguenot movement. What this chapter has demonstrated is how impractical it would have been for the Huguenots to deepen their institutional response. The southern regions reflected an intense sense of localism, emerging from a combination of so many things – language, tradition, geography, local political organisation – and all of these left a deep mark upon the Huguenot movement. While the surviving minutes of the political assemblies indicate some of the concerns of the Huguenot leadership they can tell us little about the way in which what was agreed was put into practice. The evidence presented in this chapter clearly points to the way in which local problems were resolved with local solutions through the authority of the local nobles and towns.

Chapter 6. Henry of Navarre and the Huguenot heartlands.

The pride of the towns and their attachment to their autonomy worked strongly against the existence of a Huguenot republic in the south of France. This sense of urban independence was reinforced by geographical considerations. The great distances between Huguenot centres, the different worlds in which they existed and the proximity of Catholic opposition meant that if Calvinism was to succeed in this region it was to do so out of its own local resources. This encouraged the development of Huguenot sanctuaries – areas in which the local political configuration was such as to provide protection for the fledgling movement.

Janine Garrisson's model of the 'United Provinces' of the Midi relies almost exclusively upon documents that relate to what was agreed at the Huguenot political assemblies. She demonstrates how representatives from the towns were delegated to political assemblies which were responsible for developing an institutional response to the Catholic policies of the crown and how this was all overseen by the Huguenot noble leadership. Chapter five, however, demonstrated the internal contradictions of this organisation; in particular the divisions between the noble leadership and town representatives and the unwillingness of the towns to implement matters which went against their self-interest. Furthermore, it was shown how the syncopated character of the wars meant that any institutional developments that were agreed rarely had time to become reality.

The myth of a Huguenot Republic was recognised by Henry of Navarre as such, but the opportunity to exercise more traditional leadership was tangible. This was, after all, a region of traditional family influence, and to these customary bonds of lordship and landownership was now added the bond of common religious affinity. Yet how was this leadership to be exercised? This is not an aspect of Henry's path to kingship that has attracted much attention. Nor indeed has the relationship ever been systematically investigated from the point of view of the Huguenot towns. Barbara Diefendorf argues that there has been 'little serious inquiry into the relationship between Henry of Navarre and the southern Huguenots' and Nicola Sutherland points out that the years following Navarre's return to the Midi in the years 1576-84 are 'possibly among the least familiar of

the *ancien régime*'.¹ Clearly Navarre did use the political assemblies where he could in order to promote his strategies and raise funds for the war; efforts which often came up against the 'radical mistrust' felt by the assemblies towards an over-powerful protector.² Navarre, however, was astute enough to be aware of the fact that if he was to make the most headway with the Huguenot movement, he had to tap into the resources of the individual towns. This chapter explores the ways in which Henry of Navarre sought to develop relationships with the towns and how he sought to employ the authority of the towns to extend his influence across the regions.

Henry of Navarre's ascendancy in the Midi in the years after 1576 can by no means be assumed. Jean-Pierre Babelon poses the question, 'Quelle figure va faire le petit roi de Navarre face à un parti protestant militarisé, déjà galvinisé par l'ardeur belliqueuse et intrasigeante de son cousin Henri de Condé?'³ Henry of Navarre had been the titular governor of the province of Guyenne since 1562 but it was not until he reached the age of 15 that he was fully confirmed in his powers over this most prestigious of *gouvernements*. Only three months later, however, he was divested of his offices of governor and admiral; this as a result of his mother's public adherence to the Huguenot cause in 1568. Navarre lost his pensions and salary and fled to La Rochelle where he remained with Jeanne d'Albret. From there he made his way eventually to Paris, and, following the St Bartholomew's day massacre, he was detained at court for four years; a time in which he was entirely isolated from his homeland.

Navarre's absence from Guyenne greatly diminished his control over the province and left a vacuum filled by the local nobility.⁴ These lesser nobles were deeply committed to the Huguenot cause and their self-aggrandizement. The role of these warrior nobles has not gone unremarked in the literature. James Westfall Thompson refers to them collectively as the 'viscounts' and argues that the principal interest in the third war in the south of France was this 'famous group of

¹ Barbara Diefendorf, 'Recent literature on the religious conflicts of sixteenth-century France', *Religious Studies Review*, 10 (1984), p. 363; Sutherland, *Huguenot Struggle for Recognition*, p. 232.

² Jean-Marie Constant, 'The Protestant nobility in France during the Wars of Religion' in Benedict, Marnef, van Nierop et al. (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War*, pp. 78-79; Henri Zuber, 'La noblesse protestante (1584-1598). Histoire politique des rapports entre Henri IV et les grands réformés', *Avènement d'Henri IV*, III, 73-91.

³ Jean-Pierre Babelon, *Henri IV* (Poitiers, 1982), p. 216.

⁴ Eurich, *Economics of Power*, p. 64.

Huguenot warriors'. Sometimes they fought together, sometimes separately, but between them they apparently had 3-4,000 infantrymen and 3-400 cavalry at their disposal.⁵ Among these significant military figures were Bernard-Roger de Comminges vicomte de Bruniquel; Bertrand de Rabastens vicomte de Paulin; Antoine de Rabastens vicomte de Monclar; the vicomte de Panat; Gerard de Lomagne vicomte de Serignac (who later became the vicomte de Terride); the vicomte d'Arpajon; the vicomte de Rapin; and, the vicomte de Gourdon. All of these nobles owned lands abutting Montauban and most of them played important military roles as governors of the town or commanders of the regional armies. Amanda Eurich suggests that these nobles were quick to capitalise from Navarre's absence and used the tumult of war as a means through which to 'claim certain magisterial prerogatives for themselves'.⁶

The towns were of decisive military importance during the Wars of Religion. They were able to provide core logistical and administrative support to the war effort without which the military strategy of the noble leadership could not function effectively. During times of war the military co-ordination of towns were overseen by nobles of local or regional importance but the nobility never succeeded in overawing the towns.⁷ Noble governors clearly had important responsibilities during times of war that reinforced their sense of military prowess.⁸ But their code of honour and the symbolic power that rested upon it was not without limit. As towns won their rights as *places de sûreté* and as the accumulated burdens of war increased, the towns increasingly sought to assert their voice.

With the renewal of war in the aftermath of St Bartholomew's day, the consuls of Montauban drew up articles circumscribing the power of future governors of the town. These articles included provision that 'les magistrats

⁵ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, pp. 394-395. For further details on these families, see Haag, *France protestante*, I. 130-132; IV. 18-20; VII. 114-115, 468; VIII. 340, 382 and Galabert, 'Principaux capitaines'.

⁶ Eurich, *Economics of Power*, p. 64.

⁷ For Montauban, these included the vicomte de Rapin in 1562; Philibert de Rapin in 1564; Antoine de Rapin in 1567; the seigneur de Montbartier in 1568; the vicomte de Monclar in 1569; Antoine de Rapin in 1569-70; the sieur de Verlhac in 1573, the seigneur de Terride in 1574; the vicomte de Turenne in 1575-76; and, Terride, Turenne and Philippe de Mornay in 1584-86. See ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 104r; ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 61r-63r, 82r-83r, 87r-92r, 106r-108v, 145r; *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, I. p. 160.

⁸ Kristen B. Neuschel, *Word of Honour. Interpreting noble culture in sixteenth-century France* (Ithaca, 1989), pp. 65, 93; Arlette Jouanna, 'Recherches sur la notion d'honneur au XVIIe siècle', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 15 (1968), pp. 597-623; Devyer, *Le Sang épuré*, pp. 88-91.

reformez establis pour le roy en cette ville demeureront en leur auctorité et presence et le sieur gouverneur n'entreprendra aucune iurisdiction et connoissance sur eux soit pour la justice soit pour la police'.⁹ In practice this meant that those townfolk who were enrolled in the governor's companies were not to be separated from the magistrate's jurisdiction; that the keys of the town were to remain in the hands of the consuls; that foreign troops were not to be quartered upon the town's inhabitants without permission from the town council; that the military strategy of the governor was to be discussed by the same council; and, that the governor was obliged to meet with the consuls on a twice-weekly basis to discuss any 'pacquets ou avis' that arrived in Montauban. The document concluded by laying out that 'il ne sera permis au sieur gouverneur de faire aucune imposition, lever et exiger des deniers pour quelque cause et presente que ce soit sur les habitans de la ville et sa iurisdiction sans une deliberation et un arret precedent rendu par le conseil ordinaire de la ville'. The governor was to swear an oath accepting these provisions and was warned that any flaunting of the regulations would lead to the termination of his governorship.

Montauban was far from being an exception in limiting its governor's powers. In 1573, the consuls of Nîmes drew up a similar set of articles.¹⁰ In Montauban's case, one does not need to look very far to see why such regulations were so important. The town council records of Saint Antonin, for example, are replete with on-going sagas between the town's consuls and their governor. These conflicts tended to revolve around issues such as the size of the town's garrison, the billeting of troops upon townfolk, the failure to control troops, illegal levies of money, and the payment of the governor's wages.¹¹

After eight year's absence from Guyenne, Henry of Navarre must have quickly sensed that the political landscape of Guyenne had greatly changed. The towns were vying to retain their autonomy and the nobles had extended their control over the lands. In the face of these changes Navarre found himself being treated with immense caution and distrust. Since the massacres of St

⁹ 'Articles accordez arretez et iurez entre Monsieur le gouverneur de Montauban et les magistrats consuls et conseil ordinaire de cette ville' (1572) in Bibl. SHPF, Ms. 194/1, fo. 97r-100r.

¹⁰ Ménard, *Histoire civile* (1878 edition), V. 71-72.

¹¹ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 330r, 350r; ACSA, BB 2, fo. 38r, 42v, 43v; ACSA, BB 3, fo. 492r-492v, 514r, 563v, 565v-566r; *Lettres missives*, no. 86. For the same reason, some Catholic cities would later eschew the advances of the Catholic League for they were well aware that its obligations would incur costs and undermine the town's privileges. See Konnert, *Civic Agendas*, pp. 147-149 and Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power during the French Wars of Religion. The Guise affinity and the Catholic cause in Normandy* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 169-170.

Bartholomew's day, Navarre had been forced to abjure his Protestant faith and reside at the royal court. He had become known for his fondness of the Guises and his immoral conduct at court and some had even seen him in the Catholic army besieging La Rochelle in the summer of 1573. However upon his escape in 1576, Navarre again sought to be readmitted into the Protestant faith and take up a leading role in the Huguenot party. His escape coincided with the generous terms of the Peace of Monsieur that confirmed him once again as provincial governor of Guyenne. Given the history of these intervening years, Henry of Navarre was hardly seen amongst the Huguenots as the most dependable leader. Returning to Guyenne his calls for patriotism, tolerance and reconciliation did little to allay suspicions of their new leader's sincerity.¹²

Henry of Navarre's religious outlook was not dissimilar to that of the Protestant leader of the Netherlands, William I of Orange. In the early years of his life, Orange had been brought up as a Lutheran. He subsequently became a Catholic – although one with Erasmian attitudes – before adopting Calvinism and becoming a communicating member of the Reformed church in 1574. His relationship with the Calvinists was always an ambiguous one and his whole outlook on religious questions was characterised by an aversion to narrow-minded religious intolerance and an acceptance of religious pluralism.¹³ Nevertheless Orange's avowal of the liberties and privileges of the Netherlands against the encroachments of the Spanish government created a natural alliance between Orange and the Calvinist 'sea-beggars' and in this group Orange found that religion could serve party interest.¹⁴ Like William of Orange, Henry of Navarre enthusiastically embraced the titles of 'protector' of the Reformed churches and 'guardian of the true faith' more out of political opportunism than religious conviction.

Henry of Navarre's changing religious beliefs, his youth and inexperience did not hamper his political ascendancy for long. The problems that faced him in asserting his authority were formidable; certainly more formidable than has been recognised in a literature that casually assumes an unreflective loyalty towards the

¹² David Buisseret, *Henry IV King of France* (London, 1984), pp. 9-10; Manetsch, *Theodore Beza*, pp. 102-103.

¹³ Herbert H. Rowen, *The Princes of Orange. The Stadholders in the Dutch Republic* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 14.

new titular head of the Huguenot party. On the contrary, Henry of Navarre's ascendancy was hard won and required an application of his very considerable political skills. His arrival in Guyenne coincided with the resurgence of the League and this may have helped Navarre to galvanise support. In 1577 Navarre established himself at Nérac, the capital of the Duchy of Albret. Nérac stood at the heart of the province of Guyenne, midway between Bordeaux to the west and Montauban to the east. From Nérac Henry of Navarre travelled the length and breadth of his province. Navarre's correspondence demonstrates the itinerancy of his court which spent much of its time travelling between the towns of the province – Montauban, Lectoure, Mauvezin, Agen and Fleurance – and those of Navarre's patrimonial lands in Foix and his kingdom of Béarn.¹⁵

Most importantly Henry of Navarre remained based in the south. Between 1576 and 1586 Navarre rarely left the Midi and it was during this time that he consolidated his political control over the south. David Buisseret has suggested that Navarre 'seemed to lack any wider strategy' at this time, but this does not take into account the energy that Navarre channelled into developing clientage networks across the region through which he was able to extend his influence in more subtle ways.¹⁶ What is remarkable is how Navarre, still very young and tarnished by his time at court, succeeded in reasserting his authority in Guyenne. Navarre quickly built up affinities through which to promote war and peace-making strategies, justice and order, and administrative support; all of which were essential in providing a dependable power base in the south.

In developing regional strategies of control, Henry of Navarre was fully aware of the potential that lay in building links with the Protestant viscounts. From the first wars, these viscounts had taken active and distinguished roles in the Huguenot military effort. At the outbreak of the second war Jacques d'Arpajon, Antoine de Rapin and the vicomtes of Bruniquel, Monclar and Paulin had all joined Crussol's army in Lower Languedoc and marched up the Rhône valley to join Condé's army at Chartres. And in 1568 Jean d'Arpajon and the vicomte de Serignac had both led armies to assist Montgomery's campaign in Béarn. But the viscounts' primary achievement lay in securing the allegiance of large areas of

¹⁴ Heinz Schilling, 'The Orange court. The configuration of the court in an old European Republic' in Asch and Birke (eds.), *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility*, p. 452.

¹⁵ See also ADTG, 7 CC 12, fo.100r; ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 83r; ADTG, 7 CC 14, fo. 29r; ADTG, 7 CC 15, fo.56r, 57r, 80r; ADTG, 7 CC 18, fo.49r, and Garrisson, 'Protestants du sud-ouest', p. 100.

¹⁶ Buisseret, *Henry IV*, p. 12.

Upper Guyenne and safeguarding the Huguenot towns from the besieging Catholic armies.

There is some evidence to suggest that some of these regional nobles represented the interests of the Huguenot high command. Until his execution in 1568 Philibert de Rapin was the 'maistre d'hôtel' and 'surintendant' of Condé's household and the vicomte de Serignac was attached to the service of Jeanne d'Albret.¹⁷ But these links became ever more tenuous in the years after 1568 when Jeanne d'Albret and Henry of Navarre moved northwards to La Rochelle. While the Huguenot leadership's interests focused on the lands north of the Loire, the nobles in the Midi developed largely independent strategies. Occasionally the Huguenot nobles co-ordinated a campaign of military action such as the one led by Montgomery in Béarn, but the 'wars of the viscounts' were marked more by a localised form of conflict in which nobles tended to act independently from one another. As Kristen Neuschel has shown, shared religious convictions did not necessarily ensure a concert of interests.¹⁸

Henry of Navarre's eventual return to the Midi as governor of Guyenne in 1576 altered the equation of power in the Midi. The decision of Navarre to reside in Nérac, rather than in the safer climes of Béarn, meant that his presence was all the more immediate. The *gouvernement* of Guyenne was one of the largest districts in France and its resources provided ample opportunities for patronage. As soon as he arrived in the Midi, Navarre began to construct a loyal clientele, distributing honours, pensions, titles and places in his household for those that proved loyal to his leadership, a strategy which only intensified in the following years and which included the viscounts as beneficiaries.¹⁹

One year before Navarre's return Montauban had been under grave threat. In 1575, Toulousain armies commanded by Joyeuse, the sieurs de Cornusson, Clermont and La Valette had taken up their positions around the town and were preparing to starve the city to submission. Montauban appealed to Henri de la Tour vicomte de Turenne, who had been appointed by the assembly at Nîmes in January 1575 as 'chef general du pays de Guyenne'.²⁰ Turenne finally arrived with an army to break the siege. He was welcomed into the city with 'un grand

¹⁷ Haag, *France protestante*, VII. 114-115 and VIII. 382.

¹⁸ Neuschel, *Word of Honour*, p. 33.

¹⁹ Eurich, *Economics of Power*, pp. 96-97.

applaudissement du peuple'.²¹ At this time Turenne was the most powerful Protestant noble in the Midi. Turenne possessed vast domains across Limousin and Périgord and his first marriage to Charlotte de la Marck had brought the principalities of Sedan and Bouillon into his patrimony while his second marriage to Elizabeth of Nassau had served to underline his importance in the wider Protestant world. Having released Montauban from the clutches of its Catholic opponents, Turenne became the governor of the town and upon calling 'l'assemblee generale des estatz des province de Guyenne, Hault Languedoc et Foix', he was installed as 'chef general' of the province.²² He was to remain associated with Montauban over the following six years.

Henry of Navarre quickly embraced Turenne upon his return in 1576. Turenne became Navarre's chief privy councillor, first gentleman of the bedchamber and lieutenant general of Guyenne. Amanda Eurich remarks that it was in this latter position that Turenne 'commanded military forces and manoeuvres of Guyenne', becoming 'second only to Navarre in power'.²³ But it was Turenne's presence in Montauban and the connections that he had already begun to develop which proved so useful to Henry of Navarre.

In October 1575, following the prescriptions of the assembly of Nîmes, Turenne had gathered a council to assist him in the government of the region.²⁴ This included two nobles, two members of Montauban's urban elite – Guichard de Scorbiac and Etienne Constans – and a lawyer from Bordeaux, all of whom were to be paid monthly pensions of 100 livres.²⁵ A surviving commission, dated January 1576, signed by Turenne and addressed to Scorbiac and Constans, 'conseillers ordonnés pour notre conseil', reveals how Turenne had sanctioned these councillors to arbitrate in a dispute between the sieur de Savailan and the inhabitants of Casteljaloux, a town to the west of Montauban and more than 120 km away.²⁶ The commission also advised the two councillors to seek the advice

²⁰ 'Coppie de l'ordonnance du marechal de Montmorency gouverneur et lieutenant general etablissant le dit Turenne chef general du pays de Guyenne' in ACSA, EE 2 and La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 262r-267r.

²¹ 'Mémoires de Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne (Duc de Bouillon)' in *Choix de chroniques et mémoires sur l'histoire de France*, ed. J. A. C. Buchon (Paris, 1836), p. 398.

²² 'Acte de nomination du conseil établi prez M de Turenne' (11 October, 1575) in Archives de Scorbiac, liasse 1, no. 3.

²³ Eurich, *Economics of Power*, p. 98. See also Zuber, 'Noblesse protestante', pp. 77-78.

²⁴ La Popelinière, *Histoire de France*, II. fo. 262r-267r.

²⁵ 'Mémoires de Scorbiac', fo. 4v and 'Acte de nomination' in Archives de Scorbiac, liasse 1, no. 3.

²⁶ *Lettres missives*, no. 4.

and assistance of the seigneur de Terride and ‘autres que vous semblera bon et trouverer raisonnable et necessaire d’oppiner et deliberer aud. jugement’. Although the document reveals little about the nature of the dispute it does demonstrate how Turenne sought to promote order through a council which combined members of Montauban’s municipal elite and nobles. It also demonstrates the increasing importance that was attached to Montauban’s administration in the control of the entire region.

Navarre was quick to employ Turenne’s network of urban elites and nobles to promote his ends. Navarre was fully aware of the potential that towns had as instruments in effecting his will for the most important towns across the Midi were characterised by their developed political roles. Russell Major notes that in the civil diocese of Toulouse, for example, there were over 200 urban communities which were dominated in the diocesan estates by ten ‘master towns’ and it was these master towns that supplied the deputies for the Estates of Languedoc. Many of the noblemen had little interest in the diocesan estates for the primary task of these estates was to divide the diocesan tax that had been allotted to them by the provincial estates.²⁷ But even at the provincial estates Paul Dognon remarks that it is impossible to find a provincial estates in the kingdom with as small an aristocratic component as that in Languedoc. Indeed, at the provincial estates of Languedoc, the representatives of the towns had voting power equal to that of the first and second estates put together.²⁸ One is struck by the diluted aristocratic element within these different assemblies while one is also very surprised by the degree to which municipal governments across the region had developed a heightened political status. A similar story could be told for Guyenne, a province in which it became increasingly common for representatives of municipal governments to meet alone to deal with taxation and other matters pertaining to the province.²⁹

The civil and criminal jurisdiction of the towns not only extended well beyond the town’s walls but the towns had also developed a political importance – well before the outbreak of the religious wars – which had become crucial in the administration of the region’s finances. Gaining access to the Huguenot heartland

²⁷ Major, *Representative Government*, pp. 63-64.

²⁸ Dognon, *Institutions politiques*, pp. 253-254. See also Major, *Representative Government*, p. 62 and Major, *Deputies to the Estates General*, p. 87.

²⁹ Major, ‘French representative assemblies’, pp. 201-208.

of Montauban was clearly going to be an objective of great importance to Navarre.

Henry of Navarre's authority in the towns was promoted by a core of local officials whom he sought to draw into his orbit. One such figure was Guichard de Scorbiac, a distinguished lawyer and established member of Montauban's consular elite. We have already come across Scorbiac in chapter two as the head of a particularly successful urban-based lineage. Scorbiac's outstanding talents were recognised by the elites of Montauban who in 1574 elected him to represent their interests at the political assemblies of Millau and Nîmes. The mark he made at these assemblies is attested by a letter addressed to him by Damville, the governor of Languedoc, who sought to extend his hand of friendship to Scorbiac.³⁰

The importance of these rising political families did not escape Henry of Navarre. During his years in the south he was clearly scouting around for talented individuals who he could bring to his cause, a cause which looked increasingly promising to ambitious rising bourgeoisie. Scorbiac is a prime example of how this connection could benefit both parties. For Henry of Navarre, Scorbiac was of vital importance in effecting his will in the southern provinces over an extended period of time. For Scorbiac, Henry of Navarre was the passport for respect, influence and prosperity. The terms of this relationship and the way in which Navarre increased his control in the south through such instruments is made manifest in 140 surviving letters from Navarre to Scorbiac carefully preserved in the Scorbiac family archives. Their survival is providential for the historian and entirely due to the assiduous record-keeping of the family itself, in whose hands these letters have survived for four centuries. As a private collection these letters have remained virtually unknown to historians of Henry of Navarre and southern Protestants. They were made available to me through the generosity of the family. Enigmatic and elusive if taken individually, the correspondence as a whole provides an instructive window into Henry of Navarre's method of government and the emerging confidence of Navarre in the south.

With the arrival of Henry of Navarre, Scorbiac was quickly drawn into Navarre's court and proved adept in looking after Navarre's affairs and

³⁰ Lettres missives, no. 3.

representing his interests in those cases that came before the seneschal court. The skilful manner in which Scorbiac served his patron across the province of Quercy, particularly in the peace negotiations held at Bergerac in 1577, won Navarre's commendation. One year later Scorbiac was appointed to the king's household as *Maître des Requêtes*, a position that he was to exercise until his death in 1606.³¹

In the following years Scorbiac sought to consolidate his position. In 1578 Scorbiac was appointed by the deputies of the Reformed churches to present their case to the Queen Mother at Nérac and to participate in the conference held in Nérac which sought to secure peace.³² Catherine de Medici later described Scorbiac as a 'jurisconsulte profond et impartial, fidèle conseiller d'Henri de Navarre dévoué à son parti avec élévation d'esprit, loyal envers la royauté'.³³ In the wake of Scorbiac's contribution to the peace process and the conference at Nérac in 1579, Scorbiac was appointed to sit in the Parlement of Toulouse and in the *Chambre de l'Edit* as one of the Protestant *conseillers*.³⁴ In these tasks Navarre held Scorbiac in great esteem and as war erupted again in 1585, Navarre appointed Scorbiac as his 'surintendant général des finances publiques' for the *généralité* of Montauban.³⁵ Scorbiac was given leave 'de ferme à toutes et telles personnes' and invested with responsibility to oversee the land adjacent to Montauban and 'recevoir les deniers desd baulx afferme et du tout en passer avecq les fermiers bons et vallables contrats et acquits'. Finally Navarre's Privy Council gave Scorbiac permission to 'procurer, exercer et negocier en tout ce dessus et qui en depend toutes les choses requises et necessaires'.³⁶

Scorbiac was at the interface between the Protestant community of Montauban and Henry of Navarre. Mark Greengrass suggests that such relationships had the ability to sustain 'the channels of communication between locality and centre in a way that no bureaucratic arrangement, no intelligence system, no network of *intendants* could match because it grew out of and matched

³¹ 'Nomination de Scorbiac à la charge de Maître de Requêtes ordinaires de l'hôtel du Roi de Navarre' in Archives de Scorbiac, liasse 1, no. 6; 'Mémoires de Scorbiac', fo. 1r-3r, 9r. See also the family biography by Scorbiac, *Notice généalogique*, pp. 6-31, summarised in Garrisson, *L'Homme protestant* (Paris, 1986), pp. 54-57.

³² *Lettres missives*, no. 6, 9.

³³ Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, p. 202.

³⁴ *Lettres missives*, no. 3.

³⁵ Scorbiac, *Notice généalogique*, p. 28. See also Commission from Henry of Navarre to Scorbiac to levy taxation, from Nérac (1 December 1587) in *Lettres missives*, no. 101.

³⁶ 'Procuration générale' of Jacques Dupin sieur de Lallier to Scorbiac, from La Rochelle (16 March 1588) in *Lettres missives*, no. 132.

local patterns of thought and behaviour'.³⁷ Scorbiac articulated Navarre's voice in the province, liaising with his regional war council, governors, local nobles and the consuls of Montauban and those of other neighbouring towns. Scorbiac informed Navarre of the state of munitions within Montauban and the progress of work on the town's fortifications. Navarre delivered instructions to Scorbiac with regard to raising the requisite sums for the war effort, paying the troops, overseeing his patrimonial lands, resolving administrative deadlocks, organising political assemblies and publishing propaganda for the cause. In short, Scorbiac came to be the lynchpin of Navarre's control over Upper Languedoc and Upper Guyenne through Montauban, overseeing Huguenot administration, finance and justice.

In the first decade of the religious wars the failure of Jeanne d'Albret to assert her authority in Bordeaux has been seen as one of the greatest impediments to her project to create a Huguenot homeland in south-west France.³⁸ In contrast, her son, Henry of Navarre, endeavoured to extend lines of affinity into the towns. Not only did these prove effective but they also proved durable. Historians' interests in the late 1580s and 1590s tend to gravitate towards the north – to the emergence of the League in Paris, Navarre's spectacular victories at Coutras and Ivry, the sieges of Paris and Rouen, and the king's conversion in 1594. But few historians have sought to answer the question of how Henry of Navarre succeeded in simultaneously managing affairs in southern France. In developing a loyal clientele of nobles and city officials Navarre created a means by which to tap into the resources of the Huguenot heartlands of the south. Particularly in the years after 1586 when Henry of Navarre took the battle for his throne northwards, Navarre could continue to depend upon the loyalty of the southern Huguenot strongholds.

The development of a loyal clientele in the Midi was crucial to Navarre's wider designs. But in developing affinities, Navarre's strategy was far from being unique. Sharon Kettering has demonstrated how limited our understanding of the ways in which patronage ties bridged the 'social gulf between noble and non-

³⁷ Mark Greengrass, 'Functions and limits of political clientelism in France before Cardinal Richelieu' in Neithard Bulst, Robert Descimon et al. (eds.), *L'Etat ou le roi, les fondations de la modernité monarchique en France* (Paris, 1996), pp. 72-73.

³⁸ Bryson, *Queen Jeanne*, pp. 258, 313.

noble'.³⁹ However Stuart Carroll's recent monograph on the Guise affinity in Normandy has emphasised the importance of aristocratic affinities extending well beyond the nobility itself. Carroll shows how the Guise family developed a range of interest groups, drawing support from seigneurial farms as well as from the urban community, particularly legal officials and wealthy bourgeois who provided an important source of credit. During the Wars of Religion, Carroll demonstrates how the great noble families sought to expand their urban power bases and networks of urban support. A crucial role was played by the councils established by the Guise family – comprising nobles and members of the urban elite – which provided the expertise to resolve financial affairs and develop deeper links with town administrations.⁴⁰

The development of personal bonds of affinity between noble and non-noble created a social environment through which noble leadership could exert its influence. Provincial governors across France sought to nurture ties with urban elites and develop special councils with which to oversee affairs. In Nîmes, for example, Damville developed strong links with local urban officials, notably with Pierre Rozel, the *lieutenant principal* of the seneschal court, who was the head of a prominent family in the city with supporters in both the Catholic and Protestant camps of the town. It was through these links with civic notables that Damville was able to harness the significant resources that flowed through local institutions such as the consulate and the representative body of the local civil diocese, the 'assiette'. As Damville consolidated his position and as royal patronage increasingly centred upon him, the provincial governor was able to exert his influence upon both individuals and corporate bodies within the town and its diocese, mobilising resources, financing the war against the League and influencing Protestant opinions.⁴¹

These ties of affinity were mutually beneficial. While nobles could develop links with members of the town elites to extend their influence particularly through the formation of a council, the town elites found a means by which to promote the towns' interests. In particular town notables sought to

³⁹ Sharon Kettering, 'Patronage in early modern France', *FHS*, 17 (1992), p. 842. For the seventeenth century, see her book, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in seventeenth-century France* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 85-97.

⁴⁰ Carroll, *Noble Power*, pp. 54, 62, 76, 79, 88.

⁴¹ Morris, 'Power, Patronage and Religion', chapter 7 (forthcoming). See also Mark Greengrass, 'Noble affinities in early modern France: the case of Henri I de Montmorency, Constable of France', *EHQ*, 16 (1986), pp. 286-287.

pander to nobles' sense of honour in the hope of achieving preferential treatment when peace treaties were being drawn up. For example, in July 1576, delegations were sent from Nîmes to the Duke of Alençon, Navarre and Condé to publicise the anxious state of the town as a result of the costs of the war which the town had incurred; in particular, their maintenance of foreign troops to assist their besieged brethren across the region and the expense of sending representatives to Sancerre, La Rochelle, Montauban, Millau and Dauphiné. The sole motive for these delegations was to jockey for favourable terms when peace arrived: tax exemptions, subsidies for their college, property rights over former ecclesiastical lands and confirmation of the town's privileges.⁴²

Robert Harding has noted that the councils that provincial governors established to assist them in overseeing their private and public affairs have received very little attention from historians. This is partly because the sources are so fragmentary and partly because the councils tended to be temporary institutions to meet a particular need such as the outbreak of war. But regional councils did not emerge purely as a result of the religious wars. Harding notes that there were precedents for these councils as early as the fourteenth century but their growing importance during the period of the Wars of Religion does provide 'vital evidence of the devices governors found to compensate for the weakness of older, more personal means of local control'.⁴³

It was through the councils that the urban elite began to participate more fully in the strategies of the noble leadership. Work on the League in Burgundy has revealed that, aside from the nobility and military commanders, a very important component of Mayenne's clientele were the town mayors and councillors of Dijon, Mâcon and Autun, Burgundian financial officials (the royal treasurer and three presidents of the *Chambre des Comptes*) and the lawyers who sat on the sovereign judicial courts.⁴⁴ Annette Finley-Croswhite's work on Amiens reveals a similar picture where Vincent Le Roy, the lieutenant general of the presidial court, stood at the centre of an urban network of kith and kin through which the leaguer nobles, Aumale and Mayenne, were able to influence urban

⁴² Ménard, *Histoire civile* (1878 edition), V. 125-126.

⁴³ Robert Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite. The provincial governors of early modern France* (New Haven, 1978), p. 89 n. 7 and n. 8.

⁴⁴ Henri Drouot, *Mayenne et la Bourgogne. Etude sur la Ligue (1587-1596)* (2 vols., Paris, 1937); Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 97 and Sharon Kettering, 'Clientage during the French Wars of Religion', *SCJ*, 20 (1989), pp. 231-232.

affairs.⁴⁵ Part of Henry IV's challenge in Amiens in the early 1590s was to develop his own circle of *fidèles* parallel to the leaguer circle as a means to extend his base of support and use their influence to promote his cause to overturn the domination of the League.⁴⁶

By developing affinities with the towns and by establishing councils comprising urban and noble elements, the great provincial governors and military leaders were able to capture the loyalty of towns from within and this opened up enormous political potential. However the leaguer provincial councils tended to be short-lived as their effectiveness was impeded by jurisdictional rivalries and quarrels over financing.⁴⁷ In short, these councils often collapsed because their authority was never fully accepted and the new institutions never succeeded in developing the institutional maturity that was required for the weighty tasks of providing for noble armies and collecting taxation.

Robert Harding notes that no regional councils are more buried in obscurity than those of the Protestant governors.⁴⁸ The Scorbiac correspondence reveals how Henry of Navarre, the Protestant governor of Guyenne – in contrast to the leaguer councils – was able to develop his links with the urban elite of Montauban and employ them through an extended period of both war and peace. Despite the turbulence of the last two decades of the sixteenth century, Guichard de Scorbiac remained a trusted *fidèle* of Navarre's and stood at the heart of a strategy by which the resources and administrative expertise of Montauban increasingly lay in the hands of Navarre.

One of the key components in Henry of Navarre's achievement in becoming king of France was the success with which he won adherents in the towns. By developing loyal clienteles of urban elites in the Midi through the 1580s and in the northern cities in the 1590s Navarre created a sure means by which to promote his wider strategies. Similarly in the Netherlands William of Orange utilised the political powers of the stadholderate to affect the outcome of municipal elections and to appoint judicial officials in the towns.⁴⁹ By developing an overarching clientele Orange's influence radiated from his court to cover every town and province. From as early as August 1572 a large part of Holland and

⁴⁵ Finley-Croswhite, *Henry IV and the Towns*, pp. 29-31.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-29, 44-46.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁸ Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 91.

Zeeland were controlled by those loyal to Orange; city governments were purged and packed with officials favourable to Orange's leadership.⁵⁰ As stadholder of several provinces William of Orange provided a unifying role to the disparate and complex political landscape of the Netherlands. More than anything his presence was crucial for fostering the notion of a 'fatherland', a common identity above and beyond the local and provincial particularism of the Netherlands.⁵¹

Having established a loyal circle of supporters in the towns of the Midi, how did Henry of Navarre seek to capitalise upon these links? The remaining part of this chapter will deal with the ways in which Navarre – as the king's provincial governor of Guyenne and as the protector of the Huguenot churches – used his networks of nobles and urban officials to respond to the challenges of maintaining order at times of peace and developing a coherent military strategy in times of war.

Upon his return to Guyenne in 1576, one of Henry of Navarre's primary goals was to bring about reconciliation. The consolidation of his power in the province depended upon the maintenance of order and control. Writing to Scorbiac, Henry of Navarre declared that 'une bonne justice sans acceptation de personne et distinction de religion' was 'un des principaulx moyens et remedes pour la conserva[tion] et restaura[tion] de l'estat de la France'.⁵² But from the outset of the religious wars, one of the problems that was to trouble the Huguenot communities was the thorny issue of how they might expect impartial justice from the various courts of the land.⁵³ The towns of the Midi had significant privileges of civil and criminal jurisdiction and during the first war these were extended to deal with those matters which would have normally been resolved by the Parlement of Toulouse which remained staunchly Catholic.⁵⁴ With the outbreak of the second war in 1568 more formal arrangements were pioneered. Several Protestant *conseillers* from the parlement fled to Montauban and Condé conferred

⁴⁹ Israel, *Dutch Republic*, pp. 304-305 and J. L. Price, *Holland and the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century. The politics of particularism* (Oxford, 1994), p. 153.

⁵⁰ Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, pp. 142, 147.

⁵¹ *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum*, II. no. 90, 125.

⁵² *Lettres missives*, no. 68.

⁵³ A. Cambon de Lavalette, 'La chambre souveraine de Languedoc' in *RAM*, 3 (1870-71), pp. 45-226; Albert Grangé, *Les Chambres mi-parties: leurs origines, leur fonctionnement, leurs résultats* (Castres, 1899) and now S. Capot's, *Justice et religion en Languedoc au temps de l'Edit de Nantes. La Chambre de l'Edit de Castres (1579-1679)* (Paris, 1998)

⁵⁴ Cambon de Lavalette, 'Chambre souveraine', p. 53.

upon these *conseillers* a commission to establish 'une chambre souveraine' in Castres. This dealt with civil and criminal cases until the peace of 1570, when Protestants were readmitted into the parlement.⁵⁵

Attempts to accommodate a Protestant voice in the parlement came to a cruel end with the massacres of October 1572 in Toulouse. Exactly one year later, Huguenot delegates at an assembly at Montauban drew up a raft of proposals, addressed to the king. Their first request was to implore the king to commit judges of both confessions, in equal number, 'de faire iustice exemplaire desdicts massacres'.⁵⁶ Drawing attention to the 'deportements de voz cours de parlements contre ceux de la Religion, speciallement en vostre ville de Toulouse', the Huguenots demanded that 'iuges non suspects' be appointed to 'tous les procez d'entre les parties des deux religions', a principle which was to form the basis of any future pacification process.⁵⁷ In September 1574 a 'chambre de justice souveraine' was established in Montauban staffed by salaried officers: Scorbiac, Bonencontre, du Valada, Constans, Leclerc and Corneille – all of whom were established Protestant members of Montauban's political elite – together with d'Arvieu (*conseiller* at the Parlement of Bordeaux) and de Murvillar (formerly *juge criminel* at Béziers). These magistrates were sworn in and they continued to exercise their authority in the *château royal* of Montauban until the Peace of Monsieur in May 1576.⁵⁸ Other Protestant *chambres* were established under similar terms in Millau and Mazères in the pays de Foix and at the beginning of 1575, a further *chambre* was established at Castres.⁵⁹

It was not until after the Peace of Monsieur that bi-partisan courts were established across the kingdom. The *chambre mi-partie* of Languedoc convened fitfully at Montpellier, then at Revel before settling in L'Isle-en-Albigeois, neutral territory between Toulouse, Montauban and Castres.⁶⁰ In March 1579 Guichard de

⁵⁵ 'Les conseillers susdits qui estaint la fleur du Parlement de Toulouse obtinent la commission de M le Prince de Condé avec ordre de dresser une chambre souveraine pour le ressort de Toulouse pour ceux de la religion... où ils rendirent la justice civilement et criminellement jusqu'à la paix' in *Mémoires de Jacques Gaches*, p. 75. See also, Serr, *Documents et souvenirs*, p. 120; Cambon de Lavalette, 'Chambre souveraine', pp. 59-60.

⁵⁶ *Articles contenant la reqveste*, p. 7.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. These sentiments were echoed by Henry of Navarre. See *Lettres missives*, no. 68 and 'Mémoires de Scorbiac', fo. 9r.

⁵⁸ 'Mémoires de Scorbiac', fo. 3r. Evidence that the court functioned is provided by the town's register of criminal sentences which talks of 'la chambre ordonne par les Estatz en la presente ville pendant les troubles soubz l'autorité du Roy pour les causes resultans de la procedure Reforme'. See ADTG, Archive communale, 5 FF 2, fo. 20r-21v.

⁵⁹ Cambon de Lavalette, 'La chambre souveraine', pp. 59-60.

⁶⁰ 'Mémoires de Scorbiac', fo. 9r, 12r.

Scorbiac received his commission from Henry III as one of the Protestant *conseillers* of this court.⁶¹ The *chambre mi-partie* served to register the peace treaties and pacify the region but its operations continued to be affected by the renewal of hostilities in the 1580s. With the Treaty of Nemours in 1585, Henry III rescinded all edicts and proclamations that had yielded concessions to the Huguenots within the kingdom. The *chambres mi-parties* were abolished. But Henry of Navarre sought to breathe new life into them, informing Scorbiac that ‘vous pourrez tousiours continuer la tenir de la chambre, en attendant aultre resolution, comme j’espere que nous en aurons une meilleure’.⁶² These attempts, however, faltered as a consequence of the wars.⁶³ As provincial governor of Guyenne Henry of Navarre therefore sought to set up a court in Montauban comprising members of the town elite and members of his own council as the last court of appeal in Guyenne.⁶⁴ The judges included Guichard de Scorbiac, Etienne Constans and Jacques Dupin sieur de Lallier (secretary of Henry of Navarre and brother-in-law to Jean de Viçose, a key figure in Montauban’s seneschal court) together with members of the local nobility such as the seigneur de Terride.⁶⁵ The register of criminal sentences for Montauban indicate that a *chambre de justice*, established by Navarre, continued to function in his absence in Montauban throughout the period 1586 to 1591.⁶⁶ In establishing his own court as the sovereign authority within the region, Navarre was able to impress his voice upon the region not merely over civil and criminal jurisdiction but also over matters of military discipline.⁶⁷ Similar unofficial courts were established by Henry of Navarre across Guyenne at Bergerac, Agen, Nérac and Saint-Jean-d’Angély.⁶⁸

Ever since the establishment of a *chambre de justice* in Montauban in 1574, Guichard de Scorbiac had played a central role in the shaping of the emerging judicial institutions and in the implementation of the pacification process. In times of formal peace a bi-confessional commission was established to tour the region, resolve lingering disputes and forward its reports to royal officials

⁶¹ *Lettres missives*, no. 11.

⁶² *Lettres missives*, no. 80.

⁶³ *Lettres missives*, no. 86, 87; *Lettres missives*, no. 126.

⁶⁴ ‘Mémoires de Scorbiac’, fo. 15v-16r; *Lettres missives*, no. 81; Scorbiac, *Histoire généalogique*, p. 24.

⁶⁵ *Lettres missives*, no. 106.

⁶⁶ ADTG, Archives communales, 5 FF 2, fo. 28v-30r, 31r-32r; *Lettres missives*, no. 91.

⁶⁷ *Lettres missives*, no. 107, 111.

⁶⁸ Anquez, *Histoire des assemblées politiques*, pp. 47-49, 129; *Lettres missives*, no. 17, 20, 48; *Mémoires de Jacques Gaches*, p. 266.

at Bordeaux.⁶⁹ The Protestant representatives of this commission were Guichard de Scorbiac and the vicomte de Gourdon. On several occasions Navarre wrote to Scorbiac to use his influence to emphasise the importance of peace in Montauban and to encourage the consuls to use their authority to secure peace across the region.⁷⁰ In working through loyal town officials and the local notability, Henry of Navarre was able to shape for himself the role of peace-maker within the region, a vital prerequisite to securing control over the province.

With the intermittent outbreak of war the consolidation of order was far from being an uninterrupted process. However war opened up other opportunities for Henry of Navarre. Long treated with suspicion by some of the more militant members of the Huguenot party in southern France Navarre's military exploits provided irrefutable proof of his credentials as protector. In particular Navarre's attack and capture of Cahors in 1580 against all the odds won Navarre great admiration for his gallant bravery. Initially Navarre's army, marching north from Montauban, caught the town of Cahors off its guard and the bridge into the town over the river Lot was quickly captured. After that, however, 'every house was a fortress, every steep and narrow street a barricaded and well-defended pass'.⁷¹ For five days hand-to-hand conflict ensued with many of Navarre's commanders advising retreat but it was ultimately Navarre's dogged determination which carried the day.

The capture of Cahors was crucial in the construction of Navarre's military reputation in the Midi. Cahors was the provincial capital of Quercy and its seizure spread dismay among the Catholic towns of the region. The combination of Navarre's heroic feat of arms and the decisive role that he had assumed in brokering provisions for peace the preceding year at Nérac served to buttress his authority as the leader of the Reformed churches. Already at Nérac he had represented the concerns of the churches in Guyenne and Languedoc and now at the end of 1580 the seigneur de Lesdiguières, leader of the Protestants in

⁶⁹ 'Memoires de Scorbiac', fo. 11v; *Lettres missives*, no. 14, 15, 18; ADTG, Ms. 12, p. 257.

⁷⁰ ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo. 79v-80r; *Lettres missives*, no. 76. See also Conner, 'Peace in the provinces', pp. 175-188.

⁷¹ P. F. Willert, *Henry of Navarre and the Huguenots in France* (New York, 1893), pp. 130-131. See also Babelon, *Henri IV*, pp. 273-275.

Dauphiné, sought Navarre's support in promoting his concerns before Catherine de Medici.⁷²

The increasing stature of Henry of Navarre and the links that he developed with the towns were crucial for the financing of the Huguenot cause. The financial difficulties facing the Huguenot movement spanned the period of the Wars of Religion. Rather than developing new forms and structures of taxation, revenue was drawn from traditional sources: the Huguenots arrogated the king's taxes, took control of economic assets such as the salt pans of Aiguesmortes and confiscated the clergy's revenues and benefices.⁷³ One of the prerogatives of provincial governors had always been the power to raise extraordinary taxes without recourse to the king.⁷⁴ In this way the Huguenot leadership felt that it was entirely within its bounds to impose forced loans upon communities. From the outset of the first religious war, 'cotisations par maniere d'emprunt pour les affaires de la guerre' were made upon towns such as Montauban.⁷⁵ These sums were supplemented by the plunder of war and religious violence.⁷⁶ Recent research has also highlighted how the Huguenot leadership delved into their personal treasuries to sustain military campaigns. Certainly the depleted nature of the Huguenot war chests prompted Henry of Navarre to sell the land he possessed around Montauban.⁷⁷

The revenue raised by the Huguenot leadership played an important part in maintaining mercenary armies and waging war across France. But the burden of the demands over and above ordinary taxation meant that there was grassroots resistance to these fiscal exactions. In 1570, for example, the consuls of

⁷² Buisseret, *Henry IV*, p. 12.

⁷³ For example, *Lettres missives*, no. 86 and 'Ordonnance et règlement du Roy de Navarre sur les deniers royaux, biens et bénéfices ecclésiastiques' (7 May 1580) in Bibl. SHPF, Ms. 445/1. See also Mark Greengrass, 'Financing the cause', pp. 233-254; Philippe Chareyre, 'Les frégates et le sel. Les protestants du Midi et la Méditerranée 1560-1629' in Martine Acerra (ed.), *Coligny, les Protestants et la Mer* (Paris, 1999), pp. 203-219.

⁷⁴ Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 100.

⁷⁵ ADTG, 4 CC 11, fo. 1r (1569). See also ADTG, 4 CC 7 (1562); ADTG, 4 CC 13 and ADTG, 4 CC 14 (1569); ADTG, 4 CC 15 (1570); ADTG, 4 CC 18 and ADTG, 4 CC 19 (1574); ADTG, 4 CC 22 and ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 57r-58v, 69v (1586); ADTG, 4 CC 23 (1587); ADTG, 4 CC 24 (1589); ADTG, 4 CC 27 (1622). The wealth of 'papistes absens' was taxed at a rate double to that paid by Protestants. See ADTG, 4 CC 14, fo. 1r (1569); ADTG, Archives communales, AA 5, fo. 32r-32v; 'Cottize faite pour la depense du regiment de cabreretz [arquebusiers]' (1575) in ACSA, EE 2; *Lettres missives*, no. 32.

⁷⁶ For profits accrued from iconoclastic activities, see ACSA, BB 1, fo. 87v, 88v-89r, 91r (1563); ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 8r (1564); *Mémoires de Jacques Gaches*, p. 17; *Mémoires d'un Calviniste de Millau*, pp. 30, 80.

⁷⁷ *Lettres missives*, no. 136. See Eurich, *Economics of Power*, pp. 194-218.

Montauban followed the example of Nîmes and refused to grant the Huguenot leaders the sum that they demanded. Navarre and Condé sought 20,000 écus from Montauban to pay the German mercenary armies in the wake of the battle of Moncontour. The town consuls protested against the ‘grandes pertes, foulles et charges incroyables desquels ils ont esté en plusieurs sortes et mesmes vexez et travaillez tout ez premier et secondz que present troubles’. The consuls insisted upon the town’s commitment to the ‘bien et avancement de cest cause’ but explained that few towns across France had had to suffer to the extent they had done. They therefore asked that their contribution be halved.⁷⁸ And even when there was less active resistance to the collecting of funds, the town authorities often dragged their feet and only yielded their contributions with much reluctance.

The inefficiencies of the Huguenot revenue-raising apparatus were a major source of concern for Henry of Navarre. His household finances upon his return to Guyenne were in disarray, with expenses outpacing receipts.⁷⁹ Navarre was a pragmatist and he was well aware that the most efficient way to raise sums of money was to develop links with the local notables, towns and estates and to utilise their machinery to raise revenue. With the resumption of civil war in the 1580s Navarre appointed Scorbiac to the post of *surintendant de finances* for the *généralité* of Montauban. The regions of Rouergue and Quercy had always been exceptional in the province of Guyenne for they had their own assemblies of the three estates to raise taxes.⁸⁰ Cahors’ allegiance to the League in Toulouse had once again divided the province and Henry of Navarre made provision for Montauban to become his financial headquarters for Upper Guyenne.

In establishing the *généralité* of Montauban Henry of Navarre underlined his authority across the region and established a council to run his affairs. Scorbiac was by no means the only direct link between the region and Henry of Navarre. Navarre would often send his *secrétaire de finance*, Raymond de Viçose, to his hometown of Montauban on errands relating to the raising of funds within the *généralité*.⁸¹ Raymond de Viçose was the brother of Jean de Viçose, an important figure in the seneschal court of Quercy. In 1584, Henry of Navarre

⁷⁸ ADTG, 4 CC 15, fo. 1r (January 1570).

⁷⁹ Eurich, *Economics of Power*, pp. 207-208.

⁸⁰ J. Russell Major, ‘Henry IV and Guyenne: a study concerning the origins of royal absolutism’, *FHS*, 4 (1965), p. 367.

⁸¹ ‘Lettres de provision de l’office de secrétaire ordinaire de la maison de Navarre en faveur de Raymond de Viçose’ (10 July, 1577) in Gilbert, ‘Famille protestante’, II. Pièces Justificatives, no. 6; ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 67r; *Lettres missives*, no. 118.

added Jean de Viçose to his household, investing him with the title of *Maître des Requêtes* with specific duties for helping to administer Navarre's financial interests in the region.⁸² In this respect, Jean de Viçose depended upon his close collaboration with Guichard de Scorbiac, a relationship that was cemented by his daughter's marriage to Scorbiac in 1591.⁸³ Raymond de Viçose was also the sister of Marguerite de Viçose who married Pierre de Vours in 1577 and who subsequently assumed financial responsibilities from Henry of Navarre as treasurer and *receveur du domaine de Navarre* in Rouergue.⁸⁴

Alongside Jean de Viçose and Pierre de Vours, a number of other town notables were drawn into Navarre's tax-raising administration. These included Hugues Calvet and Jean de Caussade, both of whom had held positions as first consuls of Montauban, and Jérôme Lalauze, who was to succeed Jean de Viçose as *lieutenant principal* of the *sénéchausée*.⁸⁵ It is perhaps by no means a coincidence that the Aliès family who enriched themselves through their association with finance as *receveurs des tailles* in Quercy developed connections with Navarre's court. Above all this is shown in 1586 by Antoine d'Aliès' marriage to Marie de Malet, whose father, Julien de Malet, was *conseiller* and the *trésorier de receveur général des finances* of Henry of Navarre.⁸⁶ Again, Navarre's appointment of Etienne Constans, another significant character within the Montauban elite with family links in Upper Quercy, as his *receveur-général* in the *généralité* of Rouergue enabled him to maintain and extend his sphere of influence to the area east of Montauban.⁸⁷

Part of Henry of Navarre's achievement was in harnessing local resources for the wider cause. As the king's governor of Guyenne, Navarre claimed the right to issue his own commissions for the collection of taxes. Hence examples abound of Navarre issuing commissions to Scorbiac to collect royal taxation, ecclesiastical dues and 'des deniers extraordinaires promis sur les eglises reformees' and to audit the accounts of the *généralité*. In taking direct control of the Huguenot war effort, Navarre sought to effect a greater level of control over revenue collection. It was Scorbiac's task to divide up the contribution demanded

⁸² 'Lettre de provision de l'office de Maître ordinaire des Requêtes de l'hôtel de Navarre en faveur de Jean de Viçose' in Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', II. Pièces Justificatives, no. 9.

⁸³ ADTG, 12 GG 29, fo. 96r and ADTG, 5 E 471, fo. 73r-75v.

⁸⁴ ADTG, 5 E 991, fo. 200r; Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', I. 32.

⁸⁵ Gilbert, 'Famille protestante', I. 63-68 and II. Pièces Justificatives, no. 11.

⁸⁶ ADTG, 5 E 133, fo. 196r.

⁸⁷ *Lettres missives*, no. 82, 118, 134.

by Henry of Navarre amongst 'les villes, lieux et communautez' of the *généralité*, 'qui sont es pais sénéchaussées de Quercy, Rouergue et diocèse de Montauban, sénéchaussée de Thoulouse'. In a commission issued to Scorbiac in 1588, Navarre made clear that he had understood that 'le pauvre peuple a souffert plusieurs indues vexations et oppressions' which had engendered opposition to the collection of taxes.⁸⁸ In his commission Henry of Navarre and his council instructed Scorbiac to ensure that the taxes were levied 'indifferemment sur tous les biens roturiers sans aucune exception de personnes':

A ceulx que se vantent de prandre les dismes sans rien paier à l'exemple de quelques autres qui ont par ci devant entrepris de ce fere au prejudice du public et contre mon autorité, j'entend que tous sans acception de personne soient contraincts de quelque qualité et conditions qu'ils soient à les paier et ce par toutes les rigueurs et contraintes comme pour les exprès deniers du Roy et que contre les refractaires, la justice soit obeye et que le public ne soit fraudé par l'avarice, outrecuidance et mespris de telles personnes.

Those that refused to pay their portion of the tax were to be warned that they would be constrained 'par toutes rigueurs et procedé contre eulx comme ennemis du party'.

Henry of Navarre gave Scorbiac the authority to systematise revenue collection. Provision was made that payments were to be made quarterly in equal amounts, on the first day of January, April, July and October. The levies were then channelled into hands of a *receveur*, appointed by Henry of Navarre and his council. From these collections payment was made 'aux cappitaines, membres et soldats des compagnies sur l'estat et rolle quy luy en sera baillé'. This was a clear attempt to provide regular monthly wages that a professionally-led army required.

Montauban was the financial headquarters, issuing commissions, instructions and advice and co-ordinating the raising of taxes from the region.⁸⁹ As Montauban had responsibility for the raising of taxes for its hinterland, its satellite towns were charged with the responsibility for raising revenues from their hinterlands. The municipal records of Saint Antonin reveal how the town was directed to draw up a 'rolle des villaiges' so as to maintain the accounts for all the villages within a 25 km radius of the town.⁹⁰ Copies of the commission together

⁸⁸ *Lettres missives*, no. 113 (30 May 1588).

⁸⁹ For example, ACSA, BB 1, fo. 199r, 282v; ADTG, 7 CC 12, fo. 93r, 96r.

⁹⁰ ACSA, BB 1, fo. 339v, 340v; 'Quittance de 323 escus faite à Jean Ferrand premier consul de Saint Antonin pour la part de la ville dans l'imposition de 1330 ecus levés par ordonnance du Roi

with the amount owed by each village were sent from Montauban to the villages of the vicinity. The local lords and consuls of these villages were then answerable to the commissioners of Saint Antonin. In raising the requisite sums, the commissioners came up against appeals for exemptions on the grounds of war and disputes over the boundaries of Saint Antonin's jurisdiction.⁹¹

These problems illustrate that the taxes raised by Henry of Navarre were far from welcome. The Protestant towns did recognise some obligation to the common cause. They could hardly do otherwise when roving bands based on Catholic centres could easily descend and cause havoc in their own vicinity. Even when the region was not beset by active warfare, the potential for conflict still spread an air of insecurity. Nonetheless there were times when the towns felt that Henry of Navarre's demands strayed far beyond what was affordable. The crescendo of protest demonstrated that the relationship between Henry of Navarre and the towns was bound to reveal conflicting priorities and differences in evaluating Huguenot strategies. The thorny question raised by the need to finance the Huguenot cause inevitably brought this into sharpest relief.

Disputes over the boundaries between different jurisdictions beset the administration of Huguenot finances. The southern part of the *généralité* of Montauban extended into the province of Languedoc that was theoretically under the control of Damville. Initially this did not seem to be a problem, so distant was this region from Damville's primary theatre of action in Lower Languedoc. But it would appear that as the war of the League intensified and funds ran low, Damville began to claim jurisdiction over areas that had been contributing to the *généralité* of Montauban. The resulting tension is exposed in a flurry of letters between the two provincial governors. Navarre implored Damville to

delaisser les deniers royaux et eclesiastiques du bas dioceze de la ville de Montauban, en ce qui est de votre gouvernement, pour l'entretienement des gens de guerre et charges de ladite ville, attendu qu'à toutes les guerres passées, ils ont tousiours affectez et employées à celà et sont entrés en la recepte dud. Montauban.⁹²

de Navarre sur les Protestants de la generalite et repartis par les sieurs de Dussac et de Scorbac maitre des requetes dudit seigneur Roi' (17 November 1578) in ACSA, CC 108; 'Liste de cottize des villes et lieux qui doivent contribuer pour la solde et entretenement des gens de guerre' (August 1586) in ACSA, EE 6.

⁹¹ 'Missive de Terride aux consuls de Saint Antonin' (19 December 1575) in ACSA, EE 2; 'Lettre des consuls de Caussade aux consuls de Saint Antonin' (22 November 1587) in ACSA, EE 3.

The squabble was resolved in Navarre's favour but this particular administrative problem is typical of the tensions that bedevilled Huguenot fund-raising.

The difficulties in raising revenue and defining jurisdictional boundaries were accentuated by a vigorous tradition of municipal independence. In particular, Montauban's satellite towns resisted what they perceived to be the overbearing demands of Montauban (and Henry of Navarre), in turn creating obstacles on the local level. The weight of taxation prompted Montauban's satellite towns to consult with one another and create a common platform of opposition to the ongoing demands of Montauban's revenue collectors. Contributions began to decline significantly as towns began to default on their payments and refused to cooperate with officials.⁹³

Matters reached a critical point in October 1582 when Raymond Tresieux, *receveur* of Henry of Navarre in Montauban, seized a consignment of prunes which had been on its way from Saint Antonin to Bordeaux in lieu of unpaid taxes which were owed from the preceding wars. The whole affair triggered a wave of recriminations with letters of complaint being sent to the consuls of Montauban, the seneschal, Henry of Navarre and the Parlement of Toulouse. Two of Saint Antonin's consuls finally visited Montauban to resolve the issue, but were promptly arrested on the orders of the *receveur* and ransomed for the amount owed.⁹⁴ Three years later memories of this bitter experience continued to affect relationships between Montauban and Saint Antonin, with the latter's consuls boycotting assemblies and meetings held in Montauban.⁹⁵

Again, in 1588, the consuls of Nègrepelisse wrote to Montauban explaining that Henry of Navarre had demanded yet another imposition, 'chose impossible par une trop grand somme sans avoir assemblee les Estats suyvant l'ancien coustume'. The consuls explained that they had communicated with other neighbouring villages and towns 'pour savoir comment vous en gouverner et s'il est besoing de tous les consulat s'en assemblee à Montauban... pour tous par ensemble en fere la resolution et monstrier qu'il est chose incapable fere rolle d'imposition'.⁹⁶

⁹² Henry of Navarre to Damville (12 July 1588) in *Lettres missives*, no. 121. See also no. 122, 123.

⁹³ ACSA, BB 2, fo. 50r, 155r; ACSA, BB 3, fo. 523v, 577r, 699v, 704r-704v, 711r-711v; ACSA, BB 4, fo. 38r-38v. See Eurich, *Economics of Power*, p. 214.

⁹⁴ ACSA, BB 3, fo. 373r, 383v, 385v-386r, 398r, 401v, 412r, 560r, 577r, 582r.

⁹⁵ ACSA, BB 3, fo. 582r.

⁹⁶ 'Consuls de Nègrepelisse à la conseil à Montauban' (21 February 1588) in ACSA, EE 3.

Resistance to the seemingly inexorable demands for revenue was not merely confined to Montauban's satellite towns. There was a growing sense of unease amongst the Montalbanais over the onerous part that they felt the town was playing in the strategies of the Huguenot leadership. Philippe de Mornay's wife recorded in her memoirs how her husband, as governor of Montauban, became exasperated with the disrespect shown towards him and towards Henry of Navarre. Mornay's wife even claimed that 'il n'existe pas en France d'autre ville où il y ait plus de desordres'.⁹⁷ After her humiliating experience of excommunication at the hands of Montauban's ministers de Mornay's wife rarely had anything positive to say about Montauban. Nevertheless a letter written by Navarre several months later corroborates her observations:

J'ay entendu à mon grand regret qu'il y a des divisions par delà, lesquelles en apparence monstrent qu'il y a des esprits passionnez et incompatibles qui ne voudroient sentir et moins reconnoistre aucune superiorité. Je le dis sachant bien le mespris qu'on a faict de mes mandemens et de ceux de mon conseil, que jay voulu laisser par dela expressement pour la conduite des affaires, leur ayant donné tout pouvoir et déclaré mon intention avant mon départ. Je say aussi que ce mal s'est espandu ailleurs, où sans aucun respect de moy on a passé plus oultre; ce que je ne puis porter patimment, et desire que toutes ces factions cessent et que chacun considere la necessite que nous avons d'estre mieux unis ensemble, et rejeter loing suite toute semence de dissensions qui nous precipiteroient en une desolation irreparable.⁹⁸

Navarre's demand that the town submit itself to his instructions was reiterated less than a month later. In a letter to an assembly held in Montauban for representatives from Lower Quercy and Lower Rouergue, Henry of Navarre again exhorted 'toutz de vivre en bonne union du chef avec les membres'. The delegates responded somewhat predictably by claiming

Qu'il ne y avoit point de desunion du chef avec les membres et que toutes les villes estoient de bonne volonté et intention de courir une mesme fortune avec led. Roy de Navarre et qu'elles s'estoient prestés de s'entre secourir les unes les autres. Et feust arresté qu'on jureroit lad. union, ce que feust illec mesmes faict, se ressouvenans de la promesse et jurement faict aulx estatz generaulx des esglises reformees de France convocquées par led. roy de Navarre en ceste ville il y a deux ans.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, II. 275 (1585).

⁹⁸ 'Lettre de Henri de Navarre à Messieurs les ministres et consistoire de l'église de Montauban' (4 August 1586) in ADTG, I Mi 16, no. 12 and reproduced in *BSHPPF*, 24 (1875), pp. 368-369.

⁹⁹ ADTG, I BB 26, fo. 57r-58v (2 September 1586).

The difficulties in raising revenue provides an instructive example of why it was so important for Henry of Navarre to endeavour in developing lines of control into local society. Experience taught that if there were a way for individual towns and villages to avoid contributing to the Huguenot war chests then it would be found. Even the authority of Montauban was stretched to deal with all the competing complaints and explanations of why different towns could not pay their subventions. Henry of Navarre provided the most important key to breaking the administrative deadlock by virtue of his considerable political authority.

The inability to raise funds efficiently left shortfalls, which could only be filled by a range of expedients of which the minting of coins in Montauban was one. The urgent need to pay the German mercenaries in 1587 for the 'conservation commune' prompted Henry of Navarre to write to Scorbiac as his *surintendant de finance* and invest him with responsibility 'pour fere battre toutes especes d'or, d'argent et monneye permises (qui ont cours en ce royaume) pour la faire executer à Montauban pour le bien de lad. ville et de tout le pais'. Navarre gave commission to Durand de la Sarrete of Villefranche-en-Rouergue to act as master of the mint.¹⁰⁰ The coinage was made from plate pillaged from those Catholics that had fled Montauban together with booty from neighbouring villages. However, the pursuit of this venture raised deep suspicions. The town council records intimate that not everyone was prepared to place their trust in the new coinage which was 'ung grand dommaige pour le povre peuple qui, avec l'argent à la main, meurt de faim, ne peuvent avoir du pain avec lesdictz liardz'. In response, it was announced throughout the town on market day that those who refused to accept the coinage would be fined, while those who had coins that appeared defective could return them.¹⁰¹

The initiative for establishing a mint in Montauban must not necessarily be seen as evidence of republican sentiment. The minting of coins was a royal monopoly but as a result of difficulties in transporting coinage safely, coinage tended to be minted in a more dispersed fashion. During the wars of the League, royalist, leaguer and Huguenot towns in the Midi all established their own mints. Montauban was only one town alongside many in the south – Montpellier,

¹⁰⁰ *Lettres missives*, no. 100 (2 February 1587).

Béziers, Beaucaire, Carpentras, Villeneuve d'Avignon, Toulouse, Pamiers, Narbonne, Bordeaux and Bayonne – which were all circulating locally-fabricated coinage.¹⁰² In all of these instances it would appear to be the costs of war rather than a particular political statement that motivated this development.

Henry of Navarre was forthright in using local civic notables to develop his power base in Montauban and its surrounding areas. But he also depended upon the influence that his circle of loyal followers could exert upon civic politics and more broadly upon public opinion. Henry of Navarre was well aware of the importance of Condé's patronage of the printer, Eloi Gibier, in the opening years of the religious wars. Gibier had established his printing presses in Orléans and published enormous quantities of short political tracts in defence of the Huguenot struggle.¹⁰³ But Navarre had learnt most of all from his mother who had recognised the importance of the printing press. Jeanne d'Albret's patronage of the Haultin family in La Rochelle had been crucial in providing Protestant literature and propaganda in support of the Bourbon cause.¹⁰⁴ All this was not lost on Henry of Navarre who realised how important propaganda was in influencing public opinion, particularly at a time when the League were using the medium to such effect.¹⁰⁵

During the wars of the League Henry of Navarre instructed Scorbiac to make arrangements for several manifestos to be published.¹⁰⁶ Scorbiac was able to depend upon the loyal service of Louis Rabier who had been persuaded by the town consuls that it would be financially worth his while to set up his presses in Montauban.¹⁰⁷ In 1581 Navarre invested Rabier with the title, 'imprimeur du Roy de Navarre' and provided an annual allowance of 200 livres for his services.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 111v-112r (3 April 1586); ACSA, BB 4, fo. 22v (3 January 1590). For similar complaints, see H. Chobaut, 'Notes et documents sur la monnaie de Carpentras (1586-1603)', *Mémoires de l'institut historique de Provence*, 3 (1926), pp. 5-22.

¹⁰² Bruno Collin, 'Ateliers et émissions monétaires en Languedoc de 1584 à 1596', *Etudes sur Pézenas et l'Hérault*, 12 (1981), pp. 19-35; Chantal Beaussant, *Monnaies royales de Saint Louis à Henri IV, 1226-1610* (Evreux, 1989), p. 88.

¹⁰³ Louis Desgraves, *Eloi Gibier, imprimeur à Orléans (1536-88)* (Geneva, 1966), pp. 17-47.

¹⁰⁴ Eurich, *Economics of Power*, p. 192.

¹⁰⁵ Andrew Pettegree, 'The Sixteenth-Century French Religious Book Project' in Pettegree, Nelles and Conner (eds.), *French Religious Book*, chapter 1.

¹⁰⁶ Philip Conner, 'A provincial perspective: Protestant print culture in southern France' in *ibid.*, chapter 16.

¹⁰⁷ The role of the printing press in Montauban will be explored in greater depth in chapter seven, below.

¹⁰⁸ ADTG, 1 BB 23, fo.70r. See also Louis Lacaze, *Les imprimeurs et les libraires en Béarn (1552-1883)* (Pau, 1884), p. 55.

Letters addressed to Scorbiac and a receipt from Henry of Navarre reveal how on several occasions Henry of Navarre specifically instructed certain works to be printed.¹⁰⁹ After Rabier's departure from Montauban in 1582, town officials were able to arrange for the publication of some basic works to promote Navarre's cause in the face of rampant leaguer literature. For this project the town consuls made arrangements for the printing types left behind by Rabier to be used.¹¹⁰ A more systematic programme of anti-League literature was published by Rabier's successor, Denis Haultin, at Montauban throughout the early 1590s, denouncing the treacherous undertaking of the League in taking arms against the crown, and in turn, celebrating the League's military set-backs.¹¹¹ Navarre developed other links across the realm with printers loyal to his cause. The presses of Jamet Mettayer and Pierre L'Huiller based in Paris but operating out of Tours, for instance, produced a stream of literature favourable to the new king's cause.¹¹²

The extension of Henry of Navarre's sphere of influence into the towns of the Midi was crucial in providing backing for his conquest of the kingdom. Despite Navarre's best effort, however, his success could only ever be limited. Navarre never succeeded in allaying the suspicions of the southern Huguenots who became increasingly aware after 1584 that his interests lay outside the south. This is clearly illustrated by the obstacles erected in all the towns of the region to Navarre's extraordinary collections. Nevertheless there were also real benefits for the towns of the Midi to cultivate their ties with Henry of Navarre.

First, Navarre as the king's appointed governor and lieutenant general in Guyenne, represented a source of legitimacy. One of the internal paradoxes of the Huguenot movement in France up until 1589 was its concern to square its deference to royal authority in peace time with the taking up of arms against the Catholic – and royal – armies in war time. One way of resolving this paradox was to construe the war as a struggle not against the king but against the policies of his 'evil councillors'. In this pursuit the Huguenots of Guyenne could rest assured

¹⁰⁹ Lettres missives, no. 15, 16, 18, 39a, 39b and ADTG, 1 Mi 1, no. 27.

¹¹⁰ For example, Discours sur la comparaison et election des deux partis qui sont pour le jourd'huy en ce Royaume (Montauban, 1586). See Forestié, Histoire de l'imprimerie, pp. 70-71.

¹¹¹ 'Bibliographie montalbanaise' in Forestié, Histoire de l'imprimerie, no. 27, 28, 29, 31, 32.

¹¹² Michael Wolfe, 'Henry IV and the Press' in Pettegree, Nelles and Conner, The French Religious Book, chapter 11. William of Orange similarly recognised the political value of the printing presses. See Israel, Dutch Republic, p. 210 and Martin van Gelderen, The political thought of the Dutch Revolt, 1555-1590 (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 120-122, 151-153.

that they were acting under the orders of the king's governor in Guyenne, Henry of Navarre. There are strong parallels in this with the way in which William of Orange justified the revolt in the Netherlands. Until the early 1580s Orange insisted that Philip II remained the legitimate lord in the Low Countries while asserting his sacred obligation to protect the Netherlands on behalf of the crown against Philip II's evil councillors.¹¹³

Secondly Henry of Navarre provided crucial military leadership. The Huguenot military leadership with its network of contacts and spies was kept well-informed of its opponents' plans and movements and this information was shared with towns such as Montauban. Henry of Navarre was able to co-ordinate the grand military strategies of the Huguenots. His wider perspective enabled the Huguenots to seize opportunities and capitalise upon their enemy's failures. In the Netherlands the stadholderates held by William of Orange were not military offices but they were combined with the captaincy-general. Under William of Orange and his son, Maurice, the Orange court developed a loyal core of military commanders that became a 'bastion of the stadholder's power'.¹¹⁴ In a similar fashion Navarre nurtured his ties with the viscounts, appointing them to strategic centres as governors, and was able to develop a more co-ordinated response to the leaguer threat.

Henry of Navarre played a key role in motivating the Montalbanais, many of whom had become disenchanted with the war effort. By the time of the war of the League, the town's inhabitants had experienced over twenty wearying years of intermittent conflict. The town council records reveal how the town was now at more risk than ever on account of the large number of 'habitans se monstrent si froidz et refractaires'.¹¹⁵ It was only the flurry of urgent letters arriving from Henry of Navarre's court, warning of the success of the leaguer armies in the north and their seemingly inexorable march south towards the Dordogne that impelled the town towards strengthening its fortifications.¹¹⁶ Navarre issued commissions to establish a shop for manufacturing gunpowder in the town and donated 'deux cens quintaulx de poudre, cent mousqueterons et cinq cens piques

¹¹³ Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 16.

¹¹⁴ Schilling, 'Orange Court', p. 449. See also Israel, *Dutch Republic*, pp. 304-305.

¹¹⁵ ADTG, 1 BB 24, fo. 34r, 74v-76v, 84r-84v, 99v-102v (1583-84).

¹¹⁶ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 30r-33r (8 and 12 July, 1585), 67r-67v (14 October 1585), 93v-96r (19 December 1585), 100r (14 January 1586), 111v-113v (19 February 1586).

pour la deffance de la prezent ville'.¹¹⁷ Navarre posted Philippe de Mornay to Montauban to take control of an ambitious project to develop a ring of defences around the 'faubourg Tholouse' on the west bank of the river Tarn. This *faubourg* was later to be re-named 'Villebourbon' – a name which remains today – in recognition of Henry of Navarre's importance to the Huguenot cause.¹¹⁸

Thirdly, Henry of Navarre provided a leadership role, bridging the nobility and the towns. Nobles, some of whom were local, others of whom were passing through the territory conducted military campaigns around Montauban. But none of these nobles were accountable to town officials. The ravages committed by Huguenot as well as Catholic troops upon the countryside confronted the consuls of Montauban with a range of problems. In particular the devastation of the rural economy compelled rural folk to seek refuge in the towns that only served to swell the ranks of the poor and homeless. In one such instance in 1585, direct communication between Montauban's consuls and Huguenot commanders had no effect in altering the behaviour of the Huguenot army.¹¹⁹ The costs and disorders that the town incurred through billeting of troops accentuated such grievances. The consuls sought to limit the amount of time that troops were billeted upon townsfolk and even suggested other locations away from the town to which the troops could go.¹²⁰

The apprehension of Protestant noble governors at the concessions that they were being obliged to make by the towns led to a number of confrontations in Montauban. By 1585, the consuls of Montauban were claiming their own right to nominate their governor. They had no objection to Henry of Navarre appointing a governor for the province of Quercy but they now asserted their rights to select a governor and appoint captains who were to be wholly accountable to the consuls.¹²¹

The wresting of the town's military prerogatives from the noble governors continued later on in the year with the seigneur de Terride attempting to give the 'mot d'ordre' to the consuls. As the military governor and a representative on Henry of Navarre's council in Montauban, Terride sought to revise the captains'

¹¹⁷ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 25r (18 July 1585).

¹¹⁸ 'Extraits des mémoires manuscrits de Jean Natalis, docteur es lois et consul de Montauban', p. 1 in ADTG, Fonds Forestié, 1491; Guicharnaud, *Montauban au XVIIe*, p. 26.

¹¹⁹ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 30r, 111v-113v, 125r-125v.

¹²⁰ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 98r-99v; ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 28r-29v.

¹²¹ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 39r-41v (18 August 1585) and ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 76v (6 November 1585).

oath and give the password to the captains at night. The consuls relayed their concerns over Terride's encroachments to Henry of Navarre through Scorbiac and sought further discussions with Terride to resolve the impasse.¹²² Three weeks later, Terride was still giving the password to the captains and a gathering of the town's elite made the following unequivocal provision:

A este arreste que lesdits consuls prendront le mot dudit Terride, pour le bailler apres aux cappitaines, et qu'il luy sera remonstré benignement et avec la prudence en tel cas requisite, que s'il est gouverneur particulier de la present ville, ce soit sans consequence et sans prejudice des privileges d'icelle, et singulierement de celluy par lequel la garde tant de nuyt que de jour est commise ausdits consuls par les feus rois, de bonne memoire, confirmés par le roy regnant et le roy de Navarre, lieutenant general pour sa majeste. Et que ledit Terride jurera de maintenir tant lesdits consuls que les habitans en toutes leurs libertés, franchises, prerogatives et immunités.¹²³

Several months later Terride was expelled from the town on the spurious grounds that he was related to some conspirators.¹²⁴ Terride had become unpopular amongst all ranks in Montauban; his ambitious project to develop the town's fortifications had stretched the town to its limits. The rebuttal of Terride reflects a re-assertion of town over noble, a successful attempt to win back the town prerogatives that had been usurped by the nobility at the outset of the wars.

The relationship between town and nobility was clearly crucial to Huguenot strategies of survival, but it was also the most ambiguous of relationships. Co-ordinating the two arms of the Huguenot leadership was a delicate task. Part of Henry of Navarre's achievement was to draw upon the military leadership of the nobles and civic authority of the towns by working through a local network of town officials and nobles. Furthermore, by entrenching himself as the overall arbiter, diffusing local tensions, Navarre was able to consolidate his position at the helm of the Huguenot movement. Again there are parallels with William of Orange in the Netherlands. Guy Wells has argued that Orange proved exceptional in mediating between what were actually 'irreconcilable groups'. Working through nobles and town elites Orange created

¹²² ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 74r-75v (1 November 1585).

¹²³ ADTG, 1 BB 25, fo. 87r-92r (26 November 1585).

¹²⁴ ADTG, 1 BB 26, fo. 24r, 27r (June 1586).

an alliance of confessional opponents – Calvinist rebels and Catholics – against the spectre of Spanish tyranny.¹²⁵

In the preceding chapter we analysed sceptically the comparisons that have been drawn between the ‘United Provinces’ in the Low Countries and the ‘United Provinces’ of the Midi. This chapter, however, has shown how there were indeed great similarities between the leadership of William of Orange and Henry of Navarre. Both were sovereign princes and had independent resources to draw upon which were used to develop lines of influence and create political parties. The world in which both Orange and Navarre existed was one of upheaval and uncertainties and both leaders had to master fortune and respond to opportunities to promote their cause as they arose. The result was an ambiguous relationship in the Netherlands between the States and the stadholder and in France between the protector of the Reformed churches and the Protestant towns and nobility. In the former instance Herbert Rowen argues that William of Orange ‘could not do without the funds needed by the rebel army, which only the States could provide him; and the States needed his leadership in the conception and execution of policy, a task they had never performed in the past’.¹²⁶

The parallels between events in the Netherlands and events in southern France, however, end here. In July 1581 the northern provinces of the Netherlands – the ‘United Provinces’ – declared independence from Philip II. Chapter five demonstrated that the Protestants in southern France never made such a bold step, not even in the wake of the wretched massacres of St Bartholomew’s day. How does one account for the divergence between events in the Netherlands and in southern France? Recently historians of the Netherlands have argued that the Dutch Republic ‘was not conceived or born but simply grew’.¹²⁷ It was a product of chance. The source of the wars in the Netherlands, unlike those in France, was not primarily religious. The Habsburg crown never acquired a common title for all the provinces of the Netherlands. Hence Philip II was Duke of Brabant, Count of

¹²⁵ Guy Wells, ‘The unlikely Machiavellian: William of Orange and the princely virtues’ in Phyllis Mack and Margaret Jacob (eds.), *Politics and Culture in early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 90.

¹²⁶ Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 17.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23. See also Herbert H. Rowen and Craig E. Harline, ‘The birth of the Dutch nation’ in Malcolm Thorp and Arthur Slavin (eds.), *Politics, Religion and Diplomacy in early modern Europe* (Kirksville, 1994), p. 67.

Flanders, Count of Holland, Lord of Friesland, Lord of Mechelen, and so on.¹²⁸ It is quite wrong to consider Dutch political history as a yearning for unity. Rowen and Harline argue that the 'provinces and cities supported the Revolt in order to stay independent from one another and from any transcendent power'. They argue that 'this sentiment combined with opposition to Habsburg religious policy but significantly a good deal of this opposition came from Catholics, as well as Calvinists'.¹²⁹ It was never the intention of the rebels to reconstruct the political landscape of the Netherlands and to create a separate republic out of the northern provinces. Even in 1582, the year after the Act of Abjuration, the States General declared that 'the republican state form is not adapted to the Netherlands'.¹³⁰ Even after loyalty to Philip II became unsustainable the increasingly desperate search for an alternative sovereign continued for most of the 1580s. In short, the trappings of Dutch 'nationhood' only emerged gradually in the years after the Revolt.

The 'United Provinces' in the Netherlands did not emerge as a result of the region's adherence to Calvinism. It was not the political outcome of their religious choice. Recent work on the Netherlands has demonstrated that although Calvinism did become the official creed of the Republic, the vast majority of the population were not communicating members of the Reformed church.¹³¹ The Dutch Republic emerged primarily from a need to defend local privileges and liberties. Particularism was a strong force in southern France but its defence never provided the ideological justification for revolt. The primary source of the troubles in France was religious division rather than the defence of political privileges. Furthermore there was a more highly developed sense of national identity in France which centred upon the crown.¹³² The king of France was not 'Duke of Rouergue' or 'Lord of Quercy' but king of France. While people would have thought of themselves in terms of their town, region and province, they would have also understood themselves as subjects of the king of France, an attachment that was too deep to be cast aside lightly. Furthermore the Huguenots

¹²⁸ Hugo de Schepper, 'The Burgundian-Habsburg Netherlands' in Thomas Brady, Heiko Oberman and James Tracy (eds.), *Handbook of European History, 1400-1600* (2 vols., Grand Rapids, 1994), p. 504.

¹²⁹ Rowen and Harline, 'Birth of the Dutch nation', p. 73.

¹³⁰ Rowen, *Princes of Orange*, p. 23.

¹³¹ Pettegree, 'Coming to terms with victory', pp. 160-180.

¹³² Joseph R. Strayer, 'France: the Holy Land, the Chosen People, and the Most Christian King' in Theodore Rabb and Jerrold Seigel (eds.), *Action and Conviction in early modern Europe* (Princeton, 1969), pp. 3-16 and Colette Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology* (Berkeley, 1991).

Chapter 7. Montauban and the world of International Calvinism.

Montauban's adoption of the Reformed faith made it part of a wider, international movement. One of the defining characteristics of Calvinism was its ability to spread to different corners of Europe. Historians have long recognised the importance of the great international Calvinist centres such as Geneva and Emden that provided sustenance to this new mass movement in the form of books and trained ministers.¹ However, as the movement rapidly expanded across Europe, these international churches found themselves quickly losing their grip on the direction of the Calvinist movement. The failure to meet the flood of demands from emerging churches meant that Reformed churches in both France and the Netherlands increasingly relied upon their own initiatives and resources to sustain and consolidate their new churches.

This hybrid character is now recognised as being part of every Reformed church in the sixteenth-century Calvinist affinity. Even those churches which appear to be the most orthodox in following the Genevan model on closer inspection reveal distinct local characteristics and idiosyncrasies. Inevitably the Genevan model could never be transposed into France without consideration of local peculiarities and customs. Indeed as historians explore the character of these local Calvinisms, it is becoming clear that the adaptability of the creed was one of its major strengths.

Thus it is almost a truism to say that each church in the International Calvinist community reflected a tension between the international nature of the movement and the localism of its immediate environment. This chapter will reflect upon the extent to which these factors and influences were balanced in the case of Montauban. It will be seen that the peculiar circumstances of the south in fact brought a brand of Calvinism in which the localism was even more pronounced than in other examples that have been studied. Calvinism in southern France was a pillar of strength in the Huguenot movement but its strength derived most of all from its own resources and it was able to sustain itself on its own terms.

The local and international dimensions of individual Calvinist churches have been examined in various ways. Scholars of Scotland and Germany have

examined the varying activities of local consistories, comparing and contrasting the different preoccupations of the consistories in these countries. In the Netherlands historians have explored the relationship between church and state, a critical feature of a church which developed with a unique identity in the Dutch State. The resources available condition the means by which one may probe these conditions for southern France. The relative lack of consistory records closes off one particular avenue of enquiry but, as this study demonstrates, the existing municipal records can more than make up for this deficiency. Here once again I will make use of notarial records and also book inventories which provide a precious window into the reading habits of local church members. Montauban's ties with the wider Calvinist movement will here be investigated by three diverse lines of investigation: the composition of the ministerial body; the provenance of Huguenot literary culture; and, lastly, evidence for Montauban's immediate relationship with Geneva, the fountainhead of the Calvinist movement.

Montauban's reputation as one of the 'best Reformed' churches and one of the greatest Huguenot bastions drew to it ministers from across France. I have identified an elite core of 25 ministers, nine of whom were natives of Montauban, who at some point served the church at Montauban between the years of 1560 and 1629 as part of a career which moved them from one important Protestant centre to another.² This group particularly stand out on account of their training at the great Protestant centres of Geneva, Basle or Lausanne. Those who were not natives of the town arrived at Montauban from a range of southern Huguenot strongholds – Castres, Bergerac, Orthez, Pamiers, Montpellier, Nîmes, Montélimar, Millau and Alès – and from Protestant centres in the north such as Sedan and Saumur. Many of this group are conspicuous for their important roles at the national synods and political assemblies, their public disputations with Catholic theologians and the books that they wrote. Thirteen of them were qualified as professors of theology, philosophy, Greek or Hebrew. Michel Berauld presided over the national synods of 1594, 1596 and 1607, was vice-president of

¹ See especially Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion* and Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt*.

² Michel Berauld, Pierre Berauld, Jean Cameron, Daniel Chamier, Paul Charles, Jean Chassagnion, Jean de Chévery, Pierre Colliod, Timothée Delon, Fleury de Larivoire, Jean Gardesi, Antoine Garrissoles, Pierre Girard, Hector Joly, Raymond La Barthe, Jean Le Masson, Pierre Ollier, Esaie Peyrille, Jean de Serres, Pierre Sestier, Bernard de Sonis, Martin Tachard, Jean Tenans, Pierre Testas, and Gilbert Vaux.

the political assembly of 1601, disputed with Toulousain Jesuits in 1596 and with Cardinal Jacques Davy du Perron at Mantes in 1603.³ Similarly Daniel Chamier presided over the national synods in 1603 and 1612 and engaged in several disputations with Jesuits over the first two decades of the seventeenth century.⁴

The knowledge and breadth of experience of this elite core of ministers had a significant impact upon the consolidation of the Reformation in Montauban. Jean Tenans had studied at the Genevan Academy before serving in Reformed churches in northern France. Following the Massacres of St Bartholomew's day he fled to Basle where he taught Hebrew and ministered to the French refugee community. Two years later Tenans became minister of Metz. In 1579 Tenans moved to the church at Sedan before finally moving to Montauban in 1591.⁵ Pierre Girard followed a similar career. In a preface to one of his books, he described how he had been travelling to Basle with the intention of studying medicine. But on the way he stopped at Geneva where he discovered his vocation to the ministry. He dedicated himself to studying theology for four years in Geneva, followed by an 18-month stint in Basle and one year at the Calvinist academy at Heidelberg. This was followed by two years of further training in the Netherlands, studying at the academies of Leiden in Holland and Franeker in West Friesland. Finally he served the church and taught at the Academy of Montauban.⁶

³ ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 18v, 57v; ADTG, 12 GG 2, fo. 20v, 45r, 61r; ADTG, 12 GG 3, fo. 22v; ADTG, 12 GG 7, fo. 12r, 70r, 151r; ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 169r, 180r; ADTG, 12 GG 9, fo. 17r, 21r; ADTG, 12 GG 12, fo. 65r, 86r, 100r; ADTG, 12 GG 36, fo. 73r; ADTG, 5 E 1197, fo. 312r-313v; ADTG, 5 E 208, fo. 70v-73r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 57r, 89r-89v, 92v, 95v, 156r, 158v, 190v, 214v, 231r, 251r, 349v; ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 71r, 77v, 86r, 87v, 92r, 95v, 96r, 110r, 114v, 119r; ADTG, 2 CC 38; ADTG, 1 BB 30, fo. 89r; ADTG, 1 BB 31, fo. 46r-49r; ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6; Michel Nicolas, *Histoire de l'ancienne académie de Montauban et de Puylaurens* (Montauban, 1885), pp. 92-107; Emile Kappler, 'Conférences théologiques entre catholiques et protestants en France au XVIIe siècle', Thèse de doctorat (2 vols., Université de Clermont, 1980), II. 3-6.

⁴ ADTG, 5 E 857, fo. 109v; ADTG, 5 E 201, fo. 513r-516r; ADTG, 12 GG 36, fo. 82r; ADTG, 2 CC 53; ADTG, 2 CC 57; Nicolas, *Histoire de l'ancienne académie*, pp. 114-154; Kappler, 'Conférences théologiques', II. 43-48, 100.

⁵ ADTG, 12 GG 9, fo. 1v; ADTG, 12 GG 8, fo. 114r; ADTG, 12 GG 11, fo. 76r; ADTG, 12 GG 12, fo. 127r; ADTG, 12 GG 36, fo. 77v; ADTG, 5 E 147, fo. 33r; ADTG, 5 E 807, fo. 511r; ADTG, 5 E 1063, fo. 93r; ADTG, 5 E 205, fo. 148r-150r; ADTG, 5 E 700, fo. 414r; ADTG, 5 E 206, fo. 2r, 24r, 42r, 68v, 84r, 112v, 115r, 160r-162v, 269r, 384r; ADTG, 5 E 1089, fo. 111v, 117r-119v; ADTG, 5 E 207, fo. 292v; ADTG, 5 E 208, fo. 52v, 177v; ADTG, 5 E 853, fo. 109v; ADTG, 5 E 209, fo. 328v-330v, 357r-358v; ADTG, 5 E 213, fo. 164v-166r; ADTG, 5 E 215, fo. 564v-566r; ADTG, 5 E 222, fo. 489v-492r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 169r, 237v, 276r, 340v, 352v; ADTG, 2 CC 27, 33, 47, 53; ADTG, 4 CC 27; ADTG, 1 BB 31, fo. 46r-49r. See also Nicolas, *Histoire de l'ancienne académie*, pp. 223-226.

⁶ Pierre Girard, *La fleuve de la theologie* (Montauban, [1600]), sig. A2r and ADTG, 12 GG 30, fo. 83r; ADTG, 5 E 492, fo. 618r; ADTG, 5 E 700, fo. 100r; ADTG, 5 E 849, fo. 393v.

In these examples the international was clearly an important and inseparable part of the ministers' training, experience and outlook. Tenans and Girard were both itinerant, studying in foreign lands, learning how different churches dealt with various problems and experiencing first-hand the international dimension to Calvinism. One way in which this development became increasingly institutionalised was through the Reformed academies and universities across Europe. This growing body of independent Calvinist institutions – Geneva, Heidelberg and Leiden – together with the French academies at Sedan, Saumur, Orthez and Nîmes led to the development of a new confessional 'peregrinatio academica'.⁷ By 1600 the town consuls of Montauban had invested considerable sums of money in founding their own academy, raising the town's status as a centre for learning.⁸ Protestant academies had already been established in France but the academy at Montauban, alongside that of Saumur, was exceptional in that it was established at the end of the sixteenth century as an institution funded by all of the churches of France under the aegis of the national synod.⁹

The founding constitution of Montauban's academy sought to offer instruction in a range of disciplines: theology, medicine, civil law, mathematics, Greek, Hebrew, logic, grammar and rhetoric.¹⁰ Not all these plans were ultimately realised but the student rolls of the academy provide testimony to the growing renown of the institution. Students arrived at the academy from as far away as Brittany, Béarn, Provence and Metz.¹¹ Indeed a few students even travelled to Montauban from as far afield as northern Spain and Scotland.¹² There were also Scottish professors teaching at the institution: Peter Ramsey, William Duncan and the Glaswegian minister John Cameron. Cameron stood out as a Greek scholar

⁷ Ole Peter Grell, 'Merchants and ministers: the foundations of international Calvinism', in Pettegree, Duke & Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe*, p. 258. An interesting comparison could be made here with the Jesuits – characterised by their itinerancy – and their association with education and the colleges that they established. See O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, pp. 226, 228, 233, 239 and A. Lynn Martin, *The Jesuit Mind. The mentality of an elite in early modern France* (Ithaca, 1988), pp. 43-63.

⁸ ADTG, AA 5, fo. 45v-49v, 59r-62v.

⁹ Daniel Bourchenin, *Etude sur les académies protestantes en France au XVIe et au XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 1882); Solange Deyon, 'Les académies protestantes en France', *BSHPE*, 135 (1989), pp. 77-85.

¹⁰ ADTG, AA 5, fo. 63r-88r; Michel Nicolas, 'Lois et règlements de l'académie de Montauban formulés en 1600', *BSHPE*, 9 (1860), pp. 394-408.

¹¹ Bibl. SHPF, Ms 397/1 (collection de Michel Nicolas): 'Liste des étudiants de théologie à l'académie de Montauban et de Puylaurens, 1600-85', vol. 1; Nicolas, *Histoire de l'ancienne académie*, pp. 388-400.

¹² For example, Laurent Hernandès of Saragosse (1614) and Thomas Galbraith and John Maxwell of Glasgow (1618) in 'Liste des étudiants', fo. 127r, 174r, 175r.

and author, rich in experience from serving the Huguenot churches at Bordeaux and Bergerac and teaching at the academy of Sedan.¹³ Passing through Montauban in 1612, Thomas Wentworth wrote, 'Hear be many Scotsmen & many of the professors are of that nation'.¹⁴

The students and ministers from outside Montauban were a tangible demonstration of the town's place within the wider family of Calvinism. But this group of students and ministers comprised a small minority relative to the number of indigenous students and ministers, and few of the incoming group stayed for any significant length of time. Chapter two has already demonstrated how ministers who had been brought up and trained locally at Montauban dominated the town's pastorate. The foundation of the academy only served to confirm the self-perpetuating nature of Montauban's pastorate. In the early decades of the seventeenth century most of those who trained at the academy for the pastorate were the town's native sons. In its approach to the ministry, as in several other crucial aspects of church life, the church in Montauban was remarkably self-contained. Indeed the nature of the pastorate in the town is in some respects typical of the city's place in the international movement: always aware that it was part of a wider community and bound to this wider community by ties of friendship and affinity, but not ultimately dependent on that community for its survival and prosperity.

The rapid growth of the Huguenot movement in France owed much to the availability of the printed book. Roger Chartier describes how in the Protestant world 'the return to the true faith was inseparable from entry into the civilisation of the printed word'.¹⁵ The printed word played a crucial role in reinforcing and deepening the sense of group mentality and identity among French Protestants – through the reading of the Bible and psalms, biblical commentaries, and polemical tracts. In this way the book provided the basis for the emergence of Protestantism as a mass movement, providing a means through which 'a more conscious

¹³ Nicolas, *Histoire de l'ancienne académie*, pp. 155-168; *Répertoire des ouvrages de controverse entre Catholiques et Protestants en France (1598-1685)*, ed. Louis Desgraves (2 vols., Geneva, 1984), I. no. 1596, 1707, 1718, 1969, 2157.

¹⁴ ADTG, 12 GG 11, fo. 97r; ADTG, 12 GG 13, fo. 94r; ADTG, 5 E 1731, section 60. See Lough, *France Observed*, p. 239.

¹⁵ Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in early modern France* (Princeton, 1987), p. 154.

interaction' could develop amongst persons who 'more or less reflected one's own sense of self'.¹⁶

Despite the exalted place given to the book in the growth of the Protestant movement Montauban did not possess a printing press until 1577. This stands in contrast to other areas of France where the Reformation proved particularly successful. The Protestant printing presses in Caen and Lyon, for example, were able to provide a range of religious and polemical literature to respond directly to the challenges faced by the emergent churches in the early 1560s.¹⁷ However, the absence of a printing press in Montauban was far from being exceptional. Across southern France – a region in which the Reformation made deep inroads – there were no indigenous Protestant printing operations in the early years of the wars and it was only with great delays that presses were established in the Huguenot strongholds of the area.¹⁸ The Huguenot heartland of Montauban – and those of Castres, Montpellier and Nîmes – almost uniquely of lands in Europe which spawned a mass Calvinist movement, failed to develop a local printing industry of any consequence before the end of the sixteenth century.

There are two possible explanations. The first lays emphasis upon the special quality of religious life in the south and how it differed from that in the north of France. The second, which I will now develop, demonstrates how book supply could function without a printing industry.¹⁹ There is, however, some evidence for the first supposition. Studies have consistently pointed to a more developed print culture in northern France. Gregory Hanlon has suggested that rates of literacy in the Midi were lower than those in the north and that 'the written word held a more modest place in the religious culture of the Midi'.²⁰ Doucet's study of Paris reinforces this conclusion by demonstrating the vibrancy of book culture in the capital across the social spectrum of society. Furthermore the large number of collegial and conventual libraries within the city encouraged

¹⁶ Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London, 1982), p. 82.

¹⁷ Andrew Pettegree, 'Protestant printing in Caen', forthcoming article.

¹⁸ Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi*, p. 37.

¹⁹ For a wider consideration of this issue, see Conner, 'A provincial perspective', chapter 16.

²⁰ Hanlon, *Confession and Community*, p. 134, 142. However, it should be noted that the ability to write did not preclude the possibility of reading. Seventeenth and eighteenth-century local studies reveal little connection between the ability to read and the ability to write, the latter being much less widespread. Spufford argues that 'it was, of course, the ability to read (and not to write) which opened up the way for cultural change'. See Margaret Spufford, 'First steps in literacy: the reading and writing experiences of the humblest seventeenth-century spiritual autobiographers', *Social History*, 4 (1979), p. 414 and T. C. Smout, 'Born again at Cambuslang: new evidence on popular religion and literacy in eighteenth-century Scotland', *Past and Present*, 97 (1982), pp. 121-122.

the development of a sophisticated library culture.²¹ In the northern provinces surrounding Paris this vibrancy is reflected in the early dates at which provincial towns established their municipal presses. Poitiers, Tours and Metz all had functioning presses before the turn of the fifteenth century and Nantes, Rouen, Troyes, Amiens, Orléans, Angers, Alençon and Le Mans all had established municipal presses by 1530.²²

The picture is very different in southern France. Toulouse and Bordeaux stand alone as the only permanent provincial presses operating before the emergence of Protestantism as a mass movement in the late 1550s. An analysis of the works printed in Toulouse suggests that Toulouse never achieved the prestige in the printing world of cities such as Paris and Lyon. With rare exceptions, works printed in Toulouse were of a local character and for a specific audience. The technical deficiencies of an under-capitalised press together with the fierce competition of Parisian and Lyonnais bookselling 'associations' meant that the city failed to establish a position of independence from the dominant giants of francophone printing.²³ Thus publishers seeking to bring to the press large prestige works – even those targeted for a southern audience – would invariably look out of the region for a printer. Olivier Arnoullet printed Nicolas Bertrand's history of Toulouse, *De Tholosanarum gestis*, in Lyon in 1517 for a Toulousain bookseller. Similarly, the *Missel* of Toulouse, printed in 1490 in Toulouse was subsequently re-printed in Lyon in 1501 and 1524 and in Paris in 1552, while Simon Vostre likewise printed the only *Heures* of Toulouse that we know of in Paris.²⁴ In 1552, the privilege for Guillaume de la Perrière's *Considerations des quatre mondes* was granted to Toulousain booksellers who had this elegant book printed by Macé Bonhomme in Lyon.

²¹ R. Doucet, *Les Bibliothèques parisiennes au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1956), especially pp. 18-26. See also Albert Labarre, *Le livre dans la vie amiénoise du seizième siècle. L'enseignement des inventaires après décès, 1503-1576* (Paris, 1971) and Philip Benedict, 'Bibliothèques protestantes et catholiques à Metz au XVII^e siècle', *Annales ESC*, 40 (1985), pp. 343-370.

²² *Répertoire bibliographique*.

²³ Maurice Caillet, 'L'oeuvre des imprimeurs toulousains aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles', *Annales de l'Institut d'études occitanes* (1960), pp. 32-48; Raymond Corraze, 'Notes pour servir à l'histoire de la librairie à Toulouse (1500-1540)', *Bulletin philologique et historique du comité en travaux historiques* (1935), pp. 59-81; Jeanne-Marie Dureau-Lapeyssonnie, 'Recherches sur les grandes compagnies de librairies lyonnaises au XVI^e siècle' in R. Chartier, L. Desgraves et al. (eds.), *Nouvelles études lyonnaises* (Geneva, 1969), pp. 5-64; Simone Legay, 'Les frères Cardon, marchands-libraires à Lyon, 1600-1635', *Bulletin du bibliophile* (1992), pp. 416-425.

²⁴ Louis Desgraves, 'L'introduction de l'imprimerie dans le sud-ouest de la France jusqu'à la fin du XVI^e siècle' in M. Arnould (ed.), *Villes d'imprimerie et moulins à papier du XIV^e au XVI^e siècle* (Brussels, 1976), pp. 47-48.

These examples, however, do demonstrate one aspect of the southern book world that would later be crucial to the dissemination of Calvinism: the entrepreneurial strategies of booksellers, printers and publishers, particularly those of Lyon and Geneva, could offset the weakness of the indigenous printing operations in the south. What follows is an attempt to gain some insight into the print culture of Montauban by an examination of the book trade and publishing industry.

In the absence of local printing, most books sold locally were imported, but this seems to have posed no problem for a trade which seized eagerly on well-established trade links with Lyon, and its newer rival, Geneva. The links between Geneva and the French Midi were well-established by 1560. The role of credits of the Genevan publisher, Laurent de Normandie, reveal commercial transactions with booksellers in Montauban, Nîmes and Toulouse, both in the years before and after the first religious war.²⁵ Indeed a Genevan minister residing in Nérac in 1560, 100 km west of Montauban, informed Calvin of how 'les livres de religion se vendent au grand jour et aussi librement que cela se pratique chez nous'.²⁶ In Bordeaux (ostensibly a loyal southern French Catholic city) the inventories compiled after the deaths of two major booksellers in 1552 and 1571 underline the enduring strength of trade connections between Bordeaux and Protestant printers in Lyon and Geneva.²⁷

Despite vigorous attempts to regulate the book market the Catholic authorities ultimately proved ineffective. In 1554 a bookseller was arrested and executed in Toulouse after the seizure of two bales of books that had been printed

²⁵ ADTG, I 1, fo. 4v-5r, 7r-7v; Heidi-Lucie Schlaepfer, 'Laurent de Normandie' in G. Berthoud (ed.), *Aspects de la propagande religieuse* (Geneva, 1957), pp. 176-230. See also Louis Desgraves, 'Les relations entre les imprimeurs de Genève et de La Rochelle à la fin du XVI^e siècle et au début du XVII^e siècle' in Jean-Daniel & Bernard Lescaze, *Cinq siècles d'imprimerie genevoise* (Geneva, 1980), pp. 199-207. For links between Geneva and Castres, see *Mémoires de Jacques Gaches*, p. 3; Charles Pradel, *Notice sur l'imprimerie à Castres* (Toulouse, 1882), p. 4; Camille Rabaud, *Histoire du Protestantisme dans l'Albigeois et le Lauragais* (Paris, 1873), p. 33. For links between Geneva and Montpellier, see Segondy, *Histoire de Montpellier*, p. 203. For the underground book trade between northern French cities and Geneva, see Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, pp. 130-134 and Francis Higman, 'Le levain de l'Évangile' in his *Lire et découvrir*, pp. 45-47. For insights into the working of this international book trading network, see Andrew Pettegree, 'Emden as a centre of the sixteenth-century book trade. A catalogue of the bookseller Gaspar Staphorst', *Quaerendo*, 24 (1994), pp. 114-135.

²⁶ 'La Motte à Calvin' (27 July, 1560) in *Calvini Opera*, XVIII. p. 153.

²⁷ 'Inventaire du libraire Etienne Thoulouze (1552)', ed. Françoise Giteau, *Bulletin et mémoires de la société archéologique de Bordeaux*, 61 (1957), pp. 47-82. Analysis of Vincent Réal's inventory (1571) is currently being undertaken by Francis Higman. See 'A bookseller's world. The "inventaire" of Vincent Réal' in Pettegree, Nelles, Conner (eds.), *French Religious Book*, chapter 17.

in Geneva.²⁸ The seizure included Agostino Mainardo's Anatomie de la messe et du missel which had been printed by Jean Crespin in Geneva. But in executing one bookseller, the authorities barely disrupted an otherwise thriving clandestine trade of forbidden literature. That this was the case is demonstrated by the issuing of more than 20 warrants in May 1562 for the arrest of Toulousain booksellers and printers for the part that they continued to play in this illegal trade. And again in 1569, six Toulousain booksellers were among a list of heretics drawn up by the Parlement of Toulouse.²⁹

The smuggling of heretical literature was a lucrative business. It required a complex organisation so as to balance the profits with risks, but it opened up the promise of rich rewards for the skilful and enterprising.³⁰ In Toulouse and Bordeaux, Paul Hauben has identified the Bernuy and Lopez de Villeneuve families as playing an important role in this trade. Books were conveyed in specially compartmentalised wine caskets to dépôts in these cities before being distributed across south-west France.³¹

Montauban certainly provided a ready market for Protestant literature. From an investigation of surviving local documentation I have been able to build up a profile of booksellers in Montauban throughout the period 1560 to 1629. Through this time, I have amassed evidence of 28 booksellers who resided in Montauban, to say nothing of the town's printers and the itinerant band of *colporteurs* who would have passed through without trace.³² In the years up to 1589, in any one year, there was an average of 11 established booksellers serving

²⁸ AMT, BB 175, pp. 134-135.

²⁹ ADHG, B 3440, fo. 70r-71r, 137r-138v, 226v. See also Jacques Mégret, 'Guyon Boudeville, imprimeur toulousain (1541-62)', BHR, 6 (1945), p. 217; Paul Romane-Musculus, 'Artistes et ouvriers d'art protestants à Toulouse pendant l'intolérance (1562-1787)' in Actes du congrès d'études de la fédération des sociétés académiques et savantes de Languedoc-Pyrénées-Gascogne (Montauban, 1956), pp. 163-164.

³⁰ Robert Darnton, The Literary Underground of the Old Regime (Harvard, 1982), pp. 128-131. See the association between Jean Saugrain (Pau) and Durand-Badel (Cahors, Quercy) in 1580 which is related in Lacaze, Imprimeurs et les libraires, pp. 42-46.

³¹ Paul J. Hauben, 'In pursuit of heresy: Spanish diplomats versus Spanish heretics in France and England during the Wars of Religion', HJ, 9 (1966), p. 278 n. 21; Albert Puech, 'Les débuts de la Réforme à Nîmes d'après des documents inédits', Bulletin du comité de l'art chrétien, 4 (1890), p. 460.

³² Pierre I Astorg (1560-77); Pierre II Astorg (1566-1619); Arnaud Astorg (1565-95); Jacques Tabuet (1564-67); Jean Grosset (1560-81); Jean Arlause (1560-70); Ramond Arlause (1565-74); Ramond Chasot (1565); Jean Peyrusse (1566-87); Guillaume Peyrusse (1572-86); Antoine Gaudy (1560-82); Pierre Gaudy (1581); Jean Gilard (1567-81); Pierre Mafre (1568-82); Jean Fournier (1569); Pierre Foissac (1560-99); Jean Foissac (1574-87); Jean Prévost (1574-87); Pierre Marcorelle (1575-1610); Jean Laplaigue (1580); Antoine Pagès (1567-82); Théophile Babault (1584-1623); David Bellamis (1595-97); Pierre Mazy (1606); Didier Branconnier (1607-29);

the book market in Montauban. That such a number could sustain a livelihood on the sale of books would suggest an exuberant market for books.

An inner core of five Protestant families dominated the bookselling market in Montauban: the Astorg, Arlause, Gaudy, Foissac and Peyrusse families. Their operations centred on the ward of Montmurat in which were situated the Protestant temple and the town's college and academy. Judging from the tax contributions, business must have been brisk. Pierre Foissac's taxable income, for example, tripled in the period between 1560 and 1595.³³ The size of dowries again points to the wealth amassed by these families. Compare the dowry received by Arnaud Astorg from the daughter of a lawyer (700 livres) and Jean Peyrusse (500 livres) with that received by less established booksellers such as Didier Branconnier (120 livres), Pierre Mauson (100 livres) and even that of the town printer, Denis Haultin (300 livres).³⁴ Further indications of the success enjoyed by these core booksellers are manifested by the large sums borrowed for business ventures and their numerous and at times sizeable acquisitions of real estate. For example, in 1570 Arnaud Astorg purchased some land and a small building in the countryside for the not insignificant sum of 345 livres.³⁵ And in 1615, Didier Branconnier bought a vineyard situated just outside the town's walls next to the river Tescou for 600 livres.³⁶ All this suggests an optimistic economic outlook among the established bookselling community in Montauban, not to mention the stability that they derived from this niche market.

Although this inner core may have dominated the booksellers of Montauban, one is very much aware of a wider network of personal co-operation that bound together the bookselling community. In Montauban these personal links were affirmed by godparentage and even intermarriage.³⁷ These personal ties were crucial in the development of an effective book network. The exchange of information as to what books were available, where to find Protestant book

Philip Henry (1610-25); David Lus (1613-26); Pierre Mauson (1622). The dates in brackets are estimates based upon the documents at hand.

³³ Compare ADTG, 2 CC 9 (*gâche* of Montmurat) with ADTG, 2 CC 31 (Montmurat). For a similar pattern, compare Jehan Peyrusse's taxable income in ADTG, 2 CC 14 (Tarn-et-Tescou) with ADTG, 2 CC 20 (Montmurat).

³⁴ See ADTG, 5 E 187, fo. 271r-272r; ADTG, 5 E 837 fo. 195r; ADTG, 5 E 207, fo. 229v-231r; ADTG, 5 E 1442, fo. 417r-418r; and, ADTG, 5 E 1062, fo. 306r-307v.

³⁵ ADTG, 5 E 1055, fo. 172r-174r and ADTG, 5 E 1057, fo. 294r-495r.

³⁶ ADTG, 5 E 214, fo. 326r-327v. For other examples see ADTG, 5 E 1059, fo. 373r, 485r; ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 27r-28v. See also ADTG, 5 E 1055, fo. 98r-100r; ADTG, 5 E 195, fo. 268r; ADTG, 5 E 862, fo. 108r; ADTG, 5 E 214, fo. 326r-327v.

suppliers, when and where book fairs were being held, and the safest routes to smuggle forbidden literature across the plateaux of the Massif Central was crucial in these dangerous times.³⁸

One is struck by the combination of the personal and professional links binding the bookselling world together. There are indications of kin affinities between booksellers in Montauban and those of Toulouse and Castres, for instance.³⁹ In Montauban, there is evidence of Montalbanais booksellers paying business trips to Lyon.⁴⁰ One bookseller used his brother who resided in Lyon to negotiate with Genevan distributors.⁴¹ Montauban also became the home for booksellers from other regions of France, who established their operations within the town. These included natives of Saint-Foy-La-Grand (near Bergerac), Limoges, Millau, and further afield from Langres, Sedan and two from Geneva.⁴² Their arrival brought with them a new range of links and associations, further broadening the potential book culture in Montauban.

Such a large bookselling community implies, most obviously, a large demand for books. But what books? Book inventories – recorded as part of general inventories of personal goods taken by notaries after an individual had died – often provide revealing evidence of the state of the local demand for books. Few book inventories have survived. If succession was not an issue few individuals would have gone to the expense of having their goods inventoried. In Paris only *libraires jurés* had the right to prepare book inventories and so even when a notary drew up a general inventory the employment of a bookseller would have involved further expense.⁴³ If this was also true of the south of France this would have been a considerable deterrent to the compilation of book inventories. Where book inventories have survived, their contents are often difficult to decipher. Titles of books are recorded in short hand with no mention of the author, date or place of publication.

³⁷ ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 45v; ADTG, 12 GG 5, fo. 33r; ADTG, 12 GG 6, fo. 194r; ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 93v.

³⁸ Gascon, *Grand commerce*, I. 162-165.

³⁹ ADTG, 12 GG 1, fo. 16r; ADTG, 12 GG 28, fo. 30r; ADTG, 5 E 328, fo. 193r; ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 46r-51r. See also Forestié, *Histoire de l'imprimerie*, pp. 41-42.

⁴⁰ ADTG, 5 E 250, fo. 46r-51r.

⁴¹ ADTG, 5 E 872, fo. 118v-119r.

⁴² ADTG, 12 GG 29, fo. 33r; ADTG, I 1, fo. 36r; ADTG, 12 GG 28, fo. 73r; ADTG, 5 E 207, fo. 229v-231r; ADTG, 5 E 1442, fo. 636r; ADTG, 12 GG 31, fo. 25r, 44r; ADG, 6 Mi 295 (1 November, 1631).

⁴³ Paul Nelles, 'Three audiences for religious books in sixteenth-century France' in Pettegree, Nelles and Conner (eds.), *French Religious Book*, chapter 15.

My archival research in Montauban and Nîmes has revealed 11 book inventories, ranging from the two books mentioned in a hatmaker's will to the more substantial collections of the towns' ministers such as Jean Constans' collection of 421 books and Pierre Berauld's collection which was valued at 6000 livres.⁴⁴ The family library became a prized source of prestige as well as knowledge, with personal collections being preserved intact within the immediate family from one generation to another.⁴⁵ Using bibliographical records from the St Andrews French Religious Book Project files I have been able to identify the author, full title, date and place of publication of 177 vernacular religious works.

The vast majority of the books cited in the inventories originated from the Genevan presses. The book inventories would suggest that three quarters of the books that arrived in Montauban and Nîmes between 1550 and 1570 in Montauban were published in Geneva. By far the most popular religious literature of the period were polemical tracts, followed by theological works, histories, exegetical works and biblical commentaries, and the published sermons of the great reformers.

⁴⁴ Inventory A: 4 books belonging to Abraham Daniel & Yssac de Galoys, sons of Nicolas Galoys 'armonier de Montauban' (1577) in ADTG, 5 E 838, fo. 231v-232r. Inventory B: 362 books belonging to Jacques Rozel, lawyer of Nîmes (1581) in Nîmes BM, Fonds Germer-Durand, Ms. 413, fo. 56r-59v. Inventory C: 194 books belonging to Jean de Rovéryé sieur de Cabrières, Catholic member of the Nîmois elite (1589) in ADG, 1 E 384, no. 6, fo. 1r-9r. Inventory D: 14 of 421 books belonging to Jean Constans minister of Montauban (1598) in Benoit, *Origines de la Réforme*, pp. 150-155; Inventory Dd: 13 books belonging to Daniel Rozel of Nîmes (1605) in Albert Puech, *Une ville au temps jadis ou Nîmes à la fin du XVIe siècle* (Nîmes, 1884), p. 540. Inventory E: 37 books belonging to Pierre de Hurdes minister, resident in Montauban (1611) in ADTG, 5 E 500, fo. 507r-507v. Inventory F: 6 books belonging to Jean Cathabal merchant of Montauban (1621) in ADTG, 5 E 1209, fo. 181v-184v. Inventory G: 2 books belonging to Jean Brandouil, hatmaker of Montauban (1621) in ADTG, 5 E 1731, section 63. Inventory H: 20 books belonging to Peter Ramsay, teacher at the Academy of Montauban (1621) in ADTG, 5 E 1731, section 60. Inventory J: 108 books belonging to Théophile Colom, *conseiller* in the seneschal court at Montauban (1622) in ADTG, Fonds Soc. Arch. de Tarn-et-Garonne, no. 66 (unfoliated). Inventory K: 58 books belonging to Guillaume Bosquet, lawyer at Montauban (1629) in ADTG, 5 E 1734, pièce 16. See also 310 books belonging to Pierre Constans, lawyer of Montauban (1648) in ADTG, Fonds Soc. Arch. de Tarn-et-Garonne (non classé), section Constans, fo. 125r-141v. I have not used this last inventory for it falls outside the period of this study. No inventory has survived of Pierre Berauld's library but its value in 1624 was well known. See 'Relation de mon voyage', pp. 75-87. In the citations from the inventories below, the letter of the inventory is given together with the number of the book in the inventory. The date and place of publication relate to the first edition. I would like to thank Guy Astoul (University of Toulouse) and David Morris (University of Leeds) for their help in locating the Colom, Rozel and Cabrières inventories.

⁴⁵ ADTG, 5 E 177, fo. 118r-120r. See also Robert Garrisson, 'Livres et lecteurs à Montauban au XVIIe siècle, la bibliothèque d'un magistrat montalbanais en 1672', *BSSHPE*, 119 (1973), p. 385 and Mentzer, *Blood and Belief*, p. 124-127.

Jean Calvin towers above all the others as the single best-selling author, responsible for just under one fifth of all the titles.⁴⁶ He is followed in popularity by Philippe de Mornay, described by some contemporaries as the ‘Huguenot Pope’,⁴⁷ Théodore de Bèze,⁴⁸ Pierre Viret,⁴⁹ Lambert Daneau⁵⁰ and Jean Crespin.⁵¹ One of the most important contributions of the book was to make Protestantism a truly international movement and readers in Montauban and other southern French Protestant strongholds were exposed to a range of international authors. These included works by Scottish and Dutch authors such as John Napier,

⁴⁶ B3: L'Accord passé et conclud touchant la matière des sacremens (Geneva, 1552). J72: Les actes du concile de Trent ([Geneva], 1548). J9: Commentaires sur les Actes des Apostres ([Lyon, Honorati, 1562]). B72, D5, E2, J14: Commentaires sur la concordance ou harmonie composee de trois Evangelistes ([Geneva], 1562). D2: Leçons sur le livre de propheties de Daniel (Geneva, 1562). B57, D3, J16: Leçons et expositions familiares sur les douze petis prophetes (Geneva, 1560). E14: Commentaires sur les Epistres Canoniques de S. Pierre, S. Jean, S. Jacques, & S. Jude (Geneva, 1560). D4, E6: Commentaires sur les epistres de Paul ([Geneva], 1556). J10: Commentaires sur les cinq livres de Moyse (Geneva, 1564). J38: L'Interim ([Geneva], 1549). B71, D1, K2: Institution de la religion Chrestienne ([Geneva], 1541). B70: Le livre des Pseaumes exposé ([Geneva], 1558). B31: Dixhuict sermons ausquels l'histoire de Melchisedec ([Geneva], 1560). B54: Sermons sur l'epistre S. Paul aux Ephesiens (Geneva, 1562). B45: Sermons sur les dix commandemens (Geneva, 1557). B68, J11: Sermons sur le livre de Job (Geneva, 1563). B30: Soixante cinq sermons sur l'Harmonie des trois Evangelistes (Geneva and Lyon, 1562). B52: Vingt deux sermons auxquels est exposé le Pseaume 119 (Geneva, 1554).

⁴⁷ J69: Advertissement aux Iuifs sur la vienne du Messie (Saumur, 1607). J13: De l'institution, usage, et doctrine du saint sacrement de l'Eucharistie (La Rochelle, 1598). Dd3, J20: Traicte de l'Eglise (La Rochelle, 1585). J18: Response a l'escrit publié par le sieur évesque d'Evreux ([Paris], 1600). J17: Veriffication des lieux impugnez (La Rochelle, 1598). J22: De la verité de la religion Chrestienne (Paris, 1585).

⁴⁸ B36: Brefve exposition de la table ou figure contenant les principaux poincts de la religion Chrestienne ([Geneva], 1560). B32: Confession de la foy Chrestienne ([Geneva], 1559). B26: Confession et simple exposition de la vraye foy (Geneva, 1566). B62: L'histoire de la vie & mort de feu M. Iean Calvin (Geneva, 1565). J27: Histoire Ecclesiastique (Antwerp [=Geneva], 1580). J47: Questions et responses Chrestiennes ([Geneva], 1572). J31: Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion et sepulture de Notre Seigneur ([Geneva], 1572). B65: Sommaire recueil des signes sacrez ([Lyon], 1561). B39: Les vrais pourtraits des hommes illustrés (Geneva, 1581).

⁴⁹ B59: Les cauteles, canon et ceremonies de la messe (Lyon, 1564). B66: Du devoir et du besoing qu'ont les hommes a s'enquerir de la volonte de Dieu par sa parolle ([Geneva], 1551). B61: Exposition familiere de l'oraison de nostre seigneur Jesus Christ (Geneva, 1551). J15: L'Instruction chrestienne (Geneva, 1556). B44: Metamorphose chrestienne, faite par dialogues (Geneva, 1561). B34: Le monde a l'empire et le monde demoniacle (Geneva, 1561). C8: Remonstrances aux fideles qui conversent entre les papistes (Geneva, 1559). B7: Traite de la providence divine (Lyon, 1565).

⁵⁰ E15, J68: Deux traitez. L'un, de la messe et de ses parties. L'autre, de la Transubstantiation du pain et vin de la Messe (La Rochelle, 1589). E12: Response chrestienne au premier livre des calomnies & renouvelles faussetez de deux apostats... n'aguères ministres, et maintenant retournez à leur vomissement ([Geneva], 1578). J32: Physique François ([Geneva], 1582)). J63: Traité de l'Antechrist ([Geneva], 1577). E10: Traicté des dances ([Geneva], 1579).

⁵¹ A3: Quatrieme partie des actes des martyrs ([Geneva], 1561). B12: Histoire des martyrs persecutez et mis à mort pour la verité de l'Evangile (Geneva, 1582). B47: Histoire mémorable de la persécution et saccagement du peuple de Merindol et Cabrières et autres circonvoisins, appelez Vaudois ([Geneva], 1555). B14, F1: Recueil de plusieurs personnes qui ont constamment enduré la mort pour le nom de nostre Seingeur Jesus Christ (Geneva, 1554). B18: Troisieme partie du recueil des martyrs ([Geneva], 1556).

Gilbert Primrose, John Cameron, and Philip Marnix.⁵² Jacques Rozel's inventory included Martin Luther's Declaration des fondemens de la doctrine Chrestienne, the Swiss and Dutch Confessions of Faith and a book by Andreas Hyperius, a native of Flanders and professor of theology at Marburg in Hesse.⁵³ Particularly popular were the apocalyptic writings of the Zurich reformers, Heinrich Bullinger⁵⁴ and Rudolphe Gualter.⁵⁵ But perhaps it was the histories which gave southern French Protestants the greatest sense of being part of a wider struggle. Jean Crespin's ever popular martyrologies, de Bèze's Histoire Ecclesiastique, Johann Sleidan's histories of the German Reformation under Charles V, together with biographies on the famous reformers – Luther, Oecalampadius, and Calvin – served to promote the international dimension to Protestantism.⁵⁶

Surprisingly, I have only managed to identify a handful of books published by the presses of the southern French Protestant towns. These include three books printed in Montauban, three in Bergerac and one in Orthez.⁵⁷ This would suggest that the range and quantity of books printed in the southern Protestant strongholds never matched those supplied from further afield. The reason for this is brutal economics: the international market functioned so well that there was no margin for local printing. When printing presses were established in the south, commercial considerations were less pressing than other strategic considerations.

There was some sense that local dignity required a printing press. The town fathers were increasingly eager for the prestige that a printing operation would bring alongside the foundation of their reputable educational establishments. In November 1592 representatives from the church in Montauban were instructed by the colloque to remind the consuls that the printing press had

⁵² J40: Napier, Ouverture de tous les secrets de l'Apocalypse (La Rochelle, 1606). J50: Primrose, La trompette de Sion (Bergerac, 1610). J43: Primrose, Le veu de Jacob (Bergerac, 1609). J59: Cameron, Traicté auquel sont examinez des prejudez de ceux de l'Eglise Romaine (La Rochelle, 1617). E5: Marnix, Premier tome du tableau des differens de la religion (La Rochelle, 1601).

⁵³ B20, B26, B27, B43. International authors also played a prominent part in the Reformation in other regions of Europe. See, for example, Peter Clark, 'The ownership of books in England, 1560-1640s. The example of some Kentish townfolk' in Lawrence Stone (ed.), Schooling and Society (Baltimore, 1976), pp. 95-114 and Francis Higman, 'Calvin's works in translation' in his Lire et découvrir, pp. 545-562. This tendency was reflected in the Catholic world. Catholic Students arriving in Toulouse collected the works of Loartez, de Granada, de Estella, de Guevara, Canisius and Titelmans. See François de Dainville, 'Libraires d'écoliers toulousains à la fin du XVIe siècle', BHR, 9 (1947), pp. 138-139.

⁵⁴ B13, B23, K7: Cent sermons sur l'apocalypse de Iesus Christ ([Geneva] and [Strasbourg], 1558). B67: Deux sermons de la fin du siècle (Geneva, 1557).

⁵⁵ J76: L'Antechrist. C'est a dire cinq homelies ou sermons par lesquels il prouve le pape de Rome estre le vray antechrist ([Geneva], 1559).

⁵⁶ A3, B10, B12, B14, B17, B18, B39, B47, B62, B69, F1, J27, K6.

⁵⁷ D10, J53, J56/ J43, J46, J50/ D12.

been established ‘pour servir à l’edifica[ti]on de l’esglise et decora[ti]on de lad. ville’. The ministers were appalled that the presses were being used to print material ‘contre la verité et pleines de blasons [blâmes] contre des personnes d’autorité et de qualité’ and demanded more effective regulation of the presses.⁵⁸

Given how well developed the book market was in southern France and the limits this imposed on what could be published the town fathers were deeply conscious that economic considerations deterred an established printer from trying their hand. Hence they attempted to lure an established printer with financial inducements. In Montauban the town’s printers were exempt from taxation and presented with an array of perks including rent-free accommodation, the provision of a shop in which to establish their presses, and an annual payment of 400 livres, part of which could be used to pay the wages of apprentices. Furthermore, printers were released from a range of onerous civic obligations such as night-watch and manual labour in constructing the town’s fortifications.⁵⁹ In Nîmes there is evidence that the town consuls paid for new typographical tools and print characters.⁶⁰ The town consuls of other Protestant towns in the south struck similar agreements with printers.⁶¹ All this was in itself significant, as the provision of both capital and perks demonstrated the value which municipal government attached to a functioning town press.

Above all the presses of Montauban found their niche in publishing the works of Montauban’s acclaimed band of ministers. Some of these were substantial works; Pierre Girard’s *Fleur de Théologie* was 745 pages long. It provided a companion text to the Calvinist catechism and the investment that must have gone into its publication would suggest that the work was intended for a wider audience than merely for Montauban and its surrounding towns. Similarly

⁵⁸ ADTG, 1 BB 27, fo. 139v. This sentiment was echoed with the foundation of a press at the university of Tournon. See *Recensement des livres anciens des bibliothèques françaises* (Lyon, 1967), p. 162.

⁵⁹ ADTG, 7 CC 13, fo. 76v; ADTG, 1 BB 27, fo. 18v-19r, 27r, 28v; ADTG, 1 BB 35, fo. 55r. See also Forestié, *Histoire de l’imprimerie*, pp. 42-43, 84-86.

⁶⁰ On 1 April 1580, the consuls of Nîmes paid 89 écus to a merchant to transport the following characters from Lyon: ‘quarante mil [lettres du corps] d’Athanasie... cinquante mil de Garamond... six mille de palladine, quatorze mil de gros lettres de deux pointz du corps de Garamond et d’Athanasie, douze livres de lettres de deux pointz, ung alphabet de lettres grisles, et douze livres de vignete de fonte’. See ADG, E Dépôt Nîmes, KK 4, fo. 350v-351r.

⁶¹ For Nîmes, see ADG, ADG, 2 Mi 44 12, fo. 349v; ADG, 2 Mi 44 13 (1590); ADG, E Dépôt Nîmes, KK 4, fo. 349v-350r; Albert Puech, ‘Les débuts de la Réforme à Nîmes’, *Bulletin historique et archéologique de Vaucluse*, 6 (1884), p. 219 and Ménard, *Histoire civile* (1878 edition), V. 157, 219. For Montpellier, see AMM, CC 662, fo. 25v, 55v; AMM, CC 663, fo. 4v, 58v; AMM, CC 664, fo. 30r; AMM, CC 665, fo. 18r. For Orthez, see Lacaze, *Imprimeurs et les libraires*, pp. 53, 62.

the publication of polemic by Montauban's ministers indicates how the town's ministers were never afraid to engage in the hotly disputed debates of the day. Michel Berauld's Defense de la vocation des Ministres de l'Evangile (1598) was intended as a rebuttal to a tract composed by Jacques Davy Bishop of Evreux. Bernard de Sonis's Replique (1599), written upon the orders of the national synod, sought to stem the flow of Catholic literature which publicised the apostasy and return to the Catholic faith of the magistrate, Jean de Sponde, a remarkable conversion celebrated in numerous Catholic triumphalist writings of the day.⁶²

Despite these distinguished publications Montauban never matched the output of the established Protestant printing centres. None of the southern Protestant strongholds ever found themselves in a position to challenge the hegemony of the established printing giants such as Geneva. The majority of the books arriving in Montauban and Nîmes emanated from Geneva. The remaining books were mostly published in Lyon and by the 1580s La Rochelle was proving its rising importance, challenging the established Protestant printing centres.⁶³ Books from La Rochelle could be transported in relative safety, avoiding Bordeaux and Toulouse, by the route running from La Rochelle, via Bergerac, to Montauban and Languedoc.⁶⁴

The establishment of Protestant printing presses in southern France was long-delayed. The primary reason for this was that they had to compete with well-established, well-capitalised printing centres at Lyon and Geneva, with their networks reaching deep into the heart of the Midi. Carving out a niche in a publishing world where demand was already so well catered for was indeed no straight-forward matter. Instead, the picture emerging suggests that the Huguenot strongholds of the Midi had fully integrated themselves within the Protestant book world. The evidence points to the development of a sophisticated grid served by an increasingly well-organised cadre of booksellers whose task was to distribute Protestant literature. The contents of the book inventories cited above demonstrate the range of literature that booksellers were able to supply and the effective manner in which they were able to tap into a national network of book

⁶² See Louis Desgraves, 'Aspects des controverses entre Catholiques et Protestants dans la sud-ouest entre 1580 et 1630', AM, 76 (1964), pp. 153-187.

⁶³ Indeed, as early as 1565 Barthélemy Berton of La Rochelle caused a furore in Geneva by publishing unedited sermons of Jean Calvin. See Desgraves, 'Les relations entre les imprimeurs', pp. 199-207.

distribution. Southern French society did not lack books; there is no evidence that the Midi was a less 'bookish' region or at least spawned a less 'bookish' form of Calvinism. The Huguenot strongholds of the south all had free access to a range of Bibles, catechisms, exegetical and polemical works that underpinned the endeavours of the first generation of Calvinist ministers who moved the peoples of the south to abandon the Catholic faith.

The indigenous print-shop culture that finally evolved was a phenomenon essentially of the mature age of the southern French Calvinist churches, not of the evangelical expansive phase. By the time that printing presses were established in towns such as Montauban, they could only provide literature to the converted, rather than to the unconverted. New research – part of the St Andrews French Religious Book Project – is demonstrating the importance of a strata of literature below the work of the major reformers, dealing with the immediate situation that faced the Huguenots in the early 1560s. Initially these works could not be published locally in southern France for absence of presses; for other reasons they were also not published in Geneva. This became a niche of the market exploited most effectively by Lyon. But with the demise of Protestant printing in Lyon after 1567, a gap was opened which officially sponsored local presses were able to fill. The presses of Montauban together with those of other southern Protestant strongholds – Nérac, Bergerac, Montpellier and Castres – became dependable mouthpieces; this at the time of the second half of the Wars of Religion when the churches of the Midi had become the emotional and geographical heart of French Calvinism.

What is perhaps most remarkable about the fortunes of the book trade in southern France was how it was formed primarily by commercial considerations. The failure to develop indigenous printing operations in the southern French Protestant strongholds had little to do with what the region's Protestant community required and had all to do with the established commercial patterns of the book trade. In supplying literature to the Huguenot strongholds the Lyonnais and Genevan publishers were not engaging in an altruistic trade; theirs was a business and it was the dynamics of this business which shaped the distinctive print culture of the Midi. The evidence presented here does suggest that print

⁶⁴ Bryson, *Queen Jeanne*, pp. 195-196.

culture in Montauban was fully integrated with the wider world of International Calvinism despite the publications of Montauban's distinguished local authors. Book culture provides one area where the local and the international dimensions were most decidedly tilted towards the wider Calvinist community. But that this should never have been the case without cool commercial factors is significant. When it came to other aspects of this relationship Montauban and the Huguenot towns of southern France often found themselves marginal to the concerns of the Genevan leadership however much of a special market the south provided for the Genevan printers. In key moments of the Wars of Religion Montauban drew strength from its own resources, necessarily so since help from abroad was seldom a practical possibility.

The detachment of Montauban from the world of International Calvinism is most striking when one compares Montauban's situation with that of towns of the Netherlands. Guido Marnef demonstrates that with the threat of persecution and exile, members of the Reformed church of Antwerp employed pre-existing commercial ties to develop close links with the French churches at Emden, Wesel and Frankfurt. Following Elizabeth I's accession in England, strong links were fostered with the 'stranger' churches in London. Under the full force of Alva's campaign of terror after 1568, refugees from the church at Antwerp fled to England, Emden, the Lower Rhineland and Palatinate and in the years after 1572 to the Calvinist strongholds of Zeeland and Holland. The Reformed church at Antwerp could depend on these international safe havens. Marnef concludes that these contacts with the refugee churches were of an 'essential importance for a community groaning under religious persecution'.⁶⁵

The international safe havens for Protestants in northern Europe did not only provide protection for refugees. Correspondence with the exile churches in London show how tangible the relationships were between the 'churches under the cross' in the Netherlands and the 'stranger' churches abroad. Aside from prayers and special days of fasting, the exile churches in London raised funds and trained ministers specifically to support the Netherlandish Protestant churches.⁶⁶ Furthermore at the Synod of Emden in 1571 which brought together representatives from the 'churches under the cross' in the Netherlands and

⁶⁵ Marnef, 'Changing face of Calvinism', p. 158.

⁶⁶ *Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum*, II. no. 87, 123 and III. no. 213; *Calvinism in Europe. A collection of documents*, pp. 143, 163.

deputies from Germany and East Friesland, it was decided that the churches would liaise with one another on an international level through annual meetings. These were to be held for 'all the churches scattered through Germany and East Friesland, for all the churches in England and for all those under the cross'.⁶⁷

News of the massacres of St Bartholomew's day in 1572 provoked an international outcry. The Scottish General Assembly urged the formation of 'a league and confederacy' between 'our neighbours of England, and other countries Reformed, and professing the true religion, that we and they may be joined together in mutual amity and society to support every one another'.⁶⁸ And the French-Walloon church at Southampton was far from being exceptional in manifesting its solidarity by declaring a public fast for the consolation of those afflicted by the 'terrible and horrible calamity' of the massacres.⁶⁹

The experience of exile was crucial in stimulating a genuine concern for those who faced persecution in their homelands. However, indigenous members of the Montauban church never experienced exile directly and those that came to the town as exiles seemed to have been absorbed fairly effortlessly without a great impact upon the community. This crucial forming aspect of International Calvinism, therefore, was much less marked in southern France. Furthermore there is very little surviving evidence to suggest that Montauban was in the habit of supporting 'churches under the cross' in distant lands. With the exception of national contributions raised on behalf of the Protestant leadership in France⁷⁰ and a brief military foray to Chartres in 1568 there is little to suggest that the southern French Huguenot strongholds ever contributed to events in the north. This picture is confirmed by the surviving consistory proceedings for Montauban which contain no indication that public fasts were held for their suffering co-religionists either in northern France or in other parts of Europe.

Montauban's relationship with Geneva, the capital of international Calvinism, is symptomatic of the distance felt between Montauban and the wider Protestant world. From the early days of the Reformation in Montauban the town

⁶⁷ *Calvinism in Europe. A collection of documents*, p. 158 (article 8).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁷⁰ For example in 1569 Montauban raised 9411 livres as its 'part et portion' of the sum of 150,000 livres demanded by the 'seigneur princes pour paiement de la solde des compagnies estrangeres venues en France pour la deffence de l'eglise de Dieu'. See ADTG, 4 CC 11, fo. 1r. For other contributions see ADTG, 4 CC series.

had felt peripheral to Geneva's primary concerns. Although the churches in Upper Languedoc and Upper Guyenne endeavoured to keep Geneva abreast of developments in the region, forwarding a manuscript copy of the provincial synod's proceedings to the Company of Pastors for their approval in April 1561, Geneva expended little time on the town.⁷¹ In response to the successive pleas on the part of the town council for a minister for the town, the Company of Pastors sent Gaspard de la Faverge to Montauban in May 1561.⁷² But La Faverge's sojourn in Montauban was not a happy one; it lasted less than four months. La Faverge was a native of Savoy and his cultural and linguistic background made his integration into the community difficult and his leadership of the church impossible, this at a time when militant Calvinists were taking the initiative and unleashing a campaign of iconoclasm.⁷³

The militancy of Montauban's emergent church and the marginalization of La Faverge who had attempted to promote Geneva's more restrained attitude towards church-forming opened a deep breach between the churches of Montauban and Geneva. Writing to the church at Montauban, the Company of Pastors was scathing in its denunciation of the ingratitude that the town had shown towards its minister.⁷⁴ La Faverge was replaced by Martin Tachard, a native of Montauban, who had no qualms about leading the town's aggressive stance against Catholicism.⁷⁵ After La Faverge's departure, the Genevan Company of Pastors sent no other ministers directly to Montauban or to its surrounding churches. Compare this with La Rochelle which had received Genevan-trained ministers since 1558 and which by 1563 could boast four ministers from Geneva.⁷⁶ Compare this also with the churches of Lower Languedoc and the Cévennes which in the early 1560s proved to be a very important missionary zone for Genevan-trained ministers. From incomplete lists made by the Company of Pastors and from the secondary literature it has been

⁷¹ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, pp. 86-87.

⁷² 'Du Vignault [Le Masson] à Calvin' (Montauban, 26 May 1561) in *Calvini Opera*, XVIII. no. 3398. Document reproduced in *BSHPF*, 14 (1865), pp. 322-324.

⁷³ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, p. 50 and Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu*, I. 509-510.

⁷⁴ 'Les ministres de Genève à l'église de Montauban' and 'Les ministres de Genève à Faverge' (Geneva, 11 August 1561) in *Calvini Opera*, XVIII. no. 3475 and 3476.

⁷⁵ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, p. 111.

⁷⁶ Meyer, *Reformation in La Rochelle*, p. 94.

possible to collect the names of 35 Genevan-trained ministers who served this region.⁷⁷

The church in Montauban did make occasional appeals for help to the Genevan hierarchy. In 1563 Martin Tachard urgently appealed to Geneva for a minister, but none was forthcoming.⁷⁸ During the subsequent months the church in Montauban depended upon short-term expedients, securing ministers from other churches from as far afield as Bergerac for one or two month placements.⁷⁹ This sense of desperation meant that the town was not always as careful as it should have been in its selection of ministers. Among the large number of temporary ministers was a former Dominican whose preaching in Montauban caused outrage in Geneva on account of the disrespect that he showed towards Calvin.⁸⁰ In 1564 Geneva again became concerned by the appearance in Montauban of another individual, Pierre Toillet, a keen advocate of Jean Morély's congregationalist views on church government.⁸¹ The continuing shortage of ministers in Montauban compelled the town council to contact Pierre Viret in Lyon. However, circumstances once again conspired against the church at Montauban and both of the ministers that Viret had set aside for the town were struck down by the plague.⁸²

The shortage of trained ministers and the disruption this must have caused to the church in Montauban was not Geneva's fault. In the context of the 'wonderyears' Geneva's response to Montauban was unsurprising. Churches across the country were pleading with the Company of Pastors for a minister to sustain their church, a demand that Geneva was never able to meet. But given Montauban's future importance to the Huguenot cause the town is conspicuous for the almost complete absence of Genevan ministers. Furthermore it would appear that throughout the tumultuous period of the wars, Geneva played a distant

⁷⁷ For Lower Languedoc: Jean d'Abbaye, Pierre Colliod, Etienne Courreau, Elie, Ramond Godon, Guillaume Herauld, Jean de la Chasse dit Chassagnion, La Serre, Pierre de la Source, Guillaume Mauget, Guy Moranges, Vincent Ortin, Pasquier, Jacques Pineton, Pierre Sachet, and Mathieu Seguin. For the Cévennes region: Jean Arnaud, Guillaume Boissin, Béton, Bourdenave, Castavède, Claude Chevalier, Guillaume de Coindeau, André Ducros, Boniface Esmuic, François Felix, Jean Fornier, Vaux, Herson, Aymé Lutel, Blaise Malet, Pierre Osteti, Guillaume du Pont, Pierre Railhet, Leonard Second, and Vachier. See Peter Wilcox, 'L'envoi de pasteurs aux églises de France. Trois listes établies par Colladon (1561-62)', *BSHPP*, 139 (1993), pp. 347-374.

⁷⁸ 'Tachard à Calvin' (16 November 1563) in *Calvini Opera*, XX. no. 4044.

⁷⁹ ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 39r-39v, 40r, 42r-42v, 45r-47r, 54v, 64v-65r, 71v, 88r, 109r, 151r-153r.

⁸⁰ 'Les Ministres de Genève à l'église de Montauban' (Geneva, 11 August 1561) in *Calvini Opera*, XVIII. no. 3475 and 'Parran à Calvin' (Pézenas, 2 March 1562) in *Calvini Opera*, XIX. no. 3730.

⁸¹ *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève*, ed. O. Fatio, O. Labarthe *et al.* (Geneva, 1962-), III. pp. 159-160.

and peripheral part to the everyday running of church events in Montauban. Only very rarely did Montauban confer with Geneva on matters of church discipline. The one exception that I have come across deals with an incidence in 1565 in which the colloque solicited Théodore de Bèze for his opinions on the manuscript version of a book on the afterlife.⁸³

The difficulties that Montauban faced in these early years of the Reformation forced the town to become increasingly self-reliant. Chapter two demonstrated how the vast majority of ministers serving the church in Montauban were local men with a local training. Only in a very limited way was the Reformation perceived as something imposed from beyond Montauban's boundaries. Much of its eventual success derived from the fact that Montauban's Reformation was a home-grown phenomenon, and remained so. The contrast becomes sharper when one compares Montauban's relationship with Geneva with that of a leading Protestant city in Lower Languedoc, Montpellier. The municipal records of Montpellier are peppered with high-ranking delegations of consular officials being sent from Montpellier to Geneva to obtain ministers and school teachers for the town. These delegations were as frequent in the 1590s as they had been thirty years earlier.⁸⁴

Montpellier had clearly nurtured and retained strong links with Geneva into the seventeenth century; links which were not matched in the relationship between Montauban and Geneva. Part of the reason for this may be attributed to the strained relationship that had developed between the two cities in the early stages of the 'wonderyears' and to the geographical distance and difficulty of travelling between the two centres. Geneva's relationship with Montauban was characteristic of the weaker relationship between Geneva and the churches of south-western France in general, a reflection perhaps of Geneva's own priorities. Analysing de Bèze's correspondence, Bernard Vogler suggests that de Bèze never really came to terms with the distinction between northern France where many Huguenot communities were in terminal decline and southern France where

⁸² ADTG, 7 CC 7, fo. 144v-148v.

⁸³ 'Colloque de Montauban' (26-28 September 1565) in ADTG, 1 Mi 16, no. 6 and 'Bèze, au nom de la Compagnie, aux pasteurs de Montauban' (Geneva, 9 December 1565) in *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs*, III. pp. 192-193.

⁸⁴ For example, compare AMM, BB 393, fo. 114r, 119r; AMM, CC 632, fo. 41r; AMM, CC 634, fo. 17r, 112r, 114r with AMM, BB 394, fo. 335v, 337r; AMM, CC 663, fo. 66r, 73v; AMM, CC 664, fo. 44r. For Nîmes, see also Ménard, *Histoire civile* (1878 edition), IV. 309, 313, 315, 317, 330, 355.

Huguenots comprised a majority in many towns.⁸⁵ He argues that most of de Bèze's correspondents were from the north which perhaps signals the limitation of Geneva's understanding of the Midi.

In the wake of the massacres of St Bartholomew's day, Théodore de Bèze wrote to the consuls of Montauban, encouraging them to remain unswerving in their faith, never doubting that God would rescue them.⁸⁶ But de Bèze soon became wholly preoccupied with those churches whose very survival was at stake. Such was his concern for the distressed communities of the north that he almost entirely neglected those churches that continued to thrive in the French Midi. De Bèze's priorities were skewed by the information that he received in Geneva. Following the massacres, several thousand Huguenot refugees arrived in Geneva together with almost one hundred ministers. Noting that many of these ministers had been trained in Geneva, Scott Manetsch argues that their forced return from the northern cities to Geneva served to strengthen Geneva's influence over the direction of the Huguenot cause. 'Likewise', he argues, 'Geneva's efforts on behalf of the French refugees confirmed the perception – promoted earlier by Farel and Calvin – that the Genevan church was a kind of spiritual “mother” to the Huguenots and thus had a privileged place of responsibility and authority in their ecclesiastical affairs'.⁸⁷ The calamitous first-hand reports of the religious refugees that arrived in the centres of Protestantism outside France – particularly Geneva but also Basle, Sedan, Metz, Strasbourg, and London – not only provoked international outpourings of grief but also served to focus all international attention upon the aggrieved communities in the north of France.

It was not only Geneva that saw a marked rise in its influence as a result of the massacre. In the aftermath of the massacres the importance of La Rochelle within France as a Huguenot bastion was greatly enhanced. The city's location on the western seaboard provided the city with access to external assistance. In 1609, Sir Thomas Overbury described La Rochelle as 'neere the sea, so consequently fit to receive succors from abroad' and he pointed out that 'the Protestant partie being growne stronger of late, as the Low Countries, & more united, as England

⁸⁵ Bernard Vogler, 'Europe as seen through the correspondence of Theodore Beza' in Kouri & Scott (eds.), *Politics and Society*, p. 261.

⁸⁶ 'Bèze [aux consuls de Montauban]' (Geneva, 3 October 1572) in *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, XIII. pp. 196-197.

⁸⁷ Manetsch, *Theodore Beza*, pp. 38-39. See also Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 109, 114-115, 126.

& Scotland, part of that strenthe reflects upon them'.⁸⁸ Throughout the wars the strategic importance of La Rochelle meant that troops from the Netherlands and from the Rhineland were often billeted in La Rochelle before embarking on campaigns in northern France.⁸⁹ For the Protestant communities of Lyon and the Rhône valley, Geneva was always within close range providing the promise of safe refuge. The churches of south-west France and particularly those of Béarn could rely upon the political protection from the House of Navarre. But Montauban and the churches of Upper Languedoc and Upper Guyenne, situated at the very heart of the French Midi, stood on their own far from the consoling arms of their European co-religionists and more importantly, too far distant to be much help to their co-religionists.

Montauban's isolation had profound implications for the development of Calvinism in the town and perhaps this is most evident in its reaction to the St Bartholomew's day massacres. In contrast to the northern Protestant cities, those of the Midi did not experience either a wave of apostasies or a mass exodus. The international enclaves would have received few if any Protestant refugees from Montauban and this meant that Geneva had little opportunity to extend its sphere of influence over the churches in south-west France. The absence of refugees from Montauban and the south-west meant that the European perception of French Protestantism was formed entirely by its direct experience of the suffering of the northern French communities.

The focus of the international community upon the northern French churches was reinforced by the literature on the massacres and their immediate aftermath. This dwelt on the horrible cruelties perpetrated in Paris and the defiance of La Rochelle and Sancerre against the royal armies.⁹⁰ In contrast, accounts in the Protestant histories of developments in southern French towns tend to be 'brief and perfunctory' with both Montauban and Nîmes receiving scant attention.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Lough, *France Observed*, p. 248.

⁸⁹ Bryson, *Queen Jeanne*, p. 210; Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 66, 127.

⁹⁰ For example, *Histoire des massacres et horribles cruaultez commise en la personne de messire Gaspar de Coligny... et la response des Rochelais* (n.p., 1573); François Hotman, *Discours simple et veritable des rages exercées... des horribles et indignes meutes commiz es personnes de Gaspar de Coligni* (Basle, 1573); *Discours et recueil du siege de La Rochelle en l'annee 1573* (Lyon, Jean Saugrain, 1573); Jean de Léry, *Histoire memorable de la ville de Sancerre* ([La Rochelle], 1574). Information from the FRB project paper files

⁹¹ Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 67-68.

The Protestant communities in the south survived the massacres relatively unscathed and were best able to co-ordinate a response to the Catholic opposition. Ironically, however, the potential of these towns remained largely obscured by the international Protestant community's concern for the refugees and victims. The blindness of International Calvinism to the situation of the southern French Huguenots was reinforced by Théodore de Bèze's continuing suspicion of Henry of Navarre. Until the mid-1580s, de Bèze remained guarded in his dealings with the Huguenot protector. Navarre's marriage to Marguerite of Valois (the daughter of Catherine de Medici), his abjuration of the faith, his time at the royal court, his association with what de Bèze perceived as 'dangerous councillors' and the extravagance of Henry of Navarre's court at Nérac all served to undermine de Bèze's trust in the prince.⁹² Navarre's ascendancy in the south-west as governor of Guyenne and protector of the Reformed churches limited de Bèze's sphere of influence in this region of France. Instead de Bèze directed his attention to those areas of France – particularly in the north – which proved more receptive to his leadership.

Faced with these conflicting indications it is perhaps appropriate here to attempt a balance in the relationship to International Calvinism. Certainly the Huguenots would have been drawn to the wider Protestant family through their access to the best available Calvinist literature. But they remained separate in their distinct and largely self-contained body of ministers, and their relative distance from the centre of events after St Bartholomew's day. In what respect then were they part of a movement which was greater than themselves? Certainly what they held in common was a shared culture of worship which provided what Bernard Roussel has described as a 'common cultural foundation'.⁹³ Hence the Confession of Faith, Discipline, church offices, the centrality of preaching, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper and the collective singing of metrical psalms as practised throughout France would have been broadly similar to that of other Calvinist centres such as at Geneva and in Scotland and in the Netherlands. These cultural bonds would have been strengthened by a common opposition to

⁹² Manetsch, *Theodore Beza*, pp. 106-108.

⁹³ Bernard Roussel, '“Colonies” de Genève? Les premières années de vie commune des églises réformées du royaume de France (ca 1559- ca 1571)', *Bulletin de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Genève* (1996-1997), pp. 3-6.

Catholicism and the emergence of a distinctive confessional identity, often reflected through the writing of Protestant histories and martyrologies.⁹⁴

These new forms of Protestant writing were by and large products of adversity, an adversity that the churches of the south shared. As we have seen in earlier chapters the church community in Montauban was characterised by a deep sense of insecurity. With Toulouse only a day's riding away the enemy quite literally were within striking distance of the town's gates. But the more acute experience of exile, massacre and martyrdom is one that Montauban only experienced vicariously.

It is interesting to ask to what extent the Huguenot churches of the south shared the more general sense of disappointment and retreat that must have characterised the wider Huguenot community. With Huguenot hopes for a complete religious transformation scuppered at the outset of the religious wars, how did the Huguenots come to terms with their failure? Calvin had always advocated exile as a means to escape the 'idolatry' of the Catholic religion so that Protestants could worship God 'purely' and in the peace of safer climes. The refugee experience for Calvinists across Europe played an important part in crystallising a Reformed identity separate from the Catholic world. Kingdon's study of Geneva, for example, demonstrated how the experience of exile stimulated the development of a tighter church discipline. The fruits of this discipline could then be projected upon the homeland.⁹⁵ In the Dutch context, Alastair Duke has pointed out that exile served not only to cultivate this Reformed identity but also to generate a sense of national awareness 'more or less divorced from the king'.⁹⁶

But for those who could not emigrate, Calvin had offered an alternative: steadfastness. This required the individual to withdraw from all forms of 'popish idolatry' and to adhere to the Gospel, a way of life in which the believer could expect persecution, trials and martyrdom.⁹⁷ Jean Chassagnion, minister of Montpellier, emphasised the importance of constancy and pointed to the

⁹⁴ Menna Prestwich, 'The changing face of Calvinism' in Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism*, pp. 1-14.

⁹⁵ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*; Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt*; Grell, 'Merchants and ministers', pp. 257-258.

⁹⁶ Duke, 'From King and Country', p. 126.

⁹⁷ Carlos Eire, *War against the Idols. The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 260-266.

Albigensian example as a model for Huguenots to follow. In the dedication of his book, *Histoire des Albigeois*, Chassagnion alluded to the Cathars who were like ‘petis troupeaux furieusement assaillis et deuorés par une miliasse de loups enragés, pour ne vouloir consentir aux ceremonies et superstitions de l’Eglise Romaine’. He sought to demonstrate how the Cathars preferred to die ‘à l’imitation des Martyrs’ than ‘de flechir et ployer le genouil deuant Baal’.⁹⁸ In drawing parallels between the Cathars and Calvinists and by extemporising the history of the Albigensians, Chassagnion hoped to give his readers a renewed sense of hope and a belief in their own righteousness.

This path of tribulation was the path followed by Montauban. Her adherence to the Reformation ensured that the town would have to struggle. Paradoxically, it was in Montauban’s own sense of suffering that the Montalbanais saw the hand of God. In remaining resolute in the face of persecution, the Huguenots of Montauban became convinced of their salvation. Their survival through the ordeals of their own history was evidence in itself of God’s protection. The Calvinist perception of themselves was intimately linked to the theology of the ‘Elect’; Calvinists were God’s Chosen People, the ‘New Israel’ yearning for the Promised Land.

After the first religious war, Protestants across France had to come to terms with the fact that they were a minority and that they would remain so. Being a Protestant meant choosing to remain one in the face of considerable adversity. In shaping a Reformed identity, Raymond Mentzer has pointed to the strenuous efforts made by the Calvinist hierarchy to demarcate their communities through consistorial discipline.⁹⁹ In addition, Mentzer argues that the Calvinist tendency to classify the community through the making of lists – baptismal, marriage and burial registers, lists of persons received into the church, rolls of worthy communicants – served to define the community. Taken together, he argues, ‘these records provide a detailed enumeration of those individuals who were an integral part of the community and, by extension, those who were not’.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Jean Chassagnion, *Histoire des Albigeois: touchant leur doctrine et religion, contre les faux bruits qui ont esté semés d’eux, et les ecris dont on les a à tort diffamés: et de la cruelle et logue guerre qui leur a esté faite, pour raurir les terres et seigneuries d’autrui, sous couleur de vouloir extirper l’heresie* (n.p., 1595), p. 7-9.

⁹⁹ Mentzer, ‘Marking the taboo’, pp. 97-129. The implications of Montauban’s peculiar position wholly dominated by the church are explored in chapter eight, below.

¹⁰⁰ Mentzer, ‘Ecclesiastical discipline’, pp. 166-167.

But while discipline provided an internal dynamic to Reformed communities, nothing instilled more hope than the Bible and the way in which it was employed to make sense of the present. Historians of the Dutch Reformation have long recognised the importance of the Hebraic analogy in the sermons and literature of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The relationship between biblical history and contemporary experience was continually alluded to. Simon Schama has argued that in Calvinist mentality, God's providential will *could only* be understood through the history of God's chosen people, the Jews. 'In practice', he argues, 'this meant that the Calvinist sense of their own dwelling in the contemporary world was saturated with scriptural allusions, analogy and example'. Again, 'lines dividing history and Scripture dissolved as the meaning of Dutch independence and power was attributed to the providential selection of a new people to be as a light unto the nations'.¹⁰¹ Analogies with individuals and events in the Old Testament helped believers to make sense of their present predicament by linking their cause with the cause of God's people throughout history.¹⁰²

Reflecting upon the very different experiences of Protestants across Europe, Bruce Gordon has argued that 'whether in positions of power or exile, the Protestant understanding of Scripture and history provided individuals and communities with a set of models which served as raw materials for the creation of identities'.¹⁰³ Correspondence, chronicles and contemporary histories in France reiterated the analogy of God's people as being delivered from Egypt, wandering in the wilderness, struggling for survival and finding God in that struggle.¹⁰⁴ In Montauban, the ministers were very quick to see in the town's weathering of three sieges in 1562 God's extraordinary providence, confirmed time and again by

¹⁰¹ Simon Schama, The Embarrassment of Riches. An interpretation of Dutch culture in the Golden Age (New York, 1987), p. 94-95.

¹⁰² G. Groenhuis, 'Calvinism and national consciousness: the Dutch Republic as the New Israel', in A. C. Duke & C. A. Tamse (ed.), Britain and the Netherlands, Papers delivered to the seventh Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference (The Hague, 1981), pp. 118-133; Paul Regan, 'Calvinism and the Dutch Israel thesis' in Bruce Gordon (ed.), Protestant History and Identity in sixteenth-century Europe (2 vols., Aldershot, 1996), II. 94.

¹⁰³ Bruce Gordon, 'The changing face of Protestant history and identity in the sixteenth century' in Gordon (ed.), Protestant History and Identity, I. 1-22.

¹⁰⁴ Charles Parker, 'French Calvinists as the children of Israel: an Old Testament self-consciousness in Jean Crespin's Histoire des Martyrs before the Wars of Religion', SCJ, 24 (1993), pp. 227-247; David Watson, 'Jean Crespin and the writing of history in the French Reformation' in Gordon (ed.), Protestant History and Identity, II. 39-58; Bryson, Queen Jeanne, pp. 179-180, 222, 224; Elisabeth Labrousse, Conscience et conviction. Etudes sur le XVIIe siècle (Oxford, 1996), pp. 71-73; Marguerite Soulié, 'Y a-t-il une "symbolique du Désert" au XVIIe siècle', BSHPE, 121 (1975), pp. 345-353.

notable examples of God coming to their aid.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately between these early sieges and the great siege of 1621 no sermons, diaries, memoirs or correspondence have survived for Montauban. But the link between God and His people would have been constantly renewed, particularly through the singing of psalms which provided a particularly effective way by which to identify the contemporary situation with that of the Israelites of the Old Testament.¹⁰⁶

The surviving accounts of the siege of 1621 are suffused with biblical imagery and language. With a royal army of 20,000 men surrounding the town and some 38 canons directed against the city's walls, the odds were stacked against the town. One author wrote how ministers from across the region sought protection behind Montauban's walls and prayed to God as Moses had done.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, the monk who had promised Louis XIII that the town would fall after 400 blasts of the canon was denounced by the ministers as the false prophet of Baal.¹⁰⁸ During the siege, the Montalbanais invoked the name of God, sang psalms, celebrated the Lord's Supper and trusted in divine protection.

The memoirs of Jean Natalis, a lawyer who lived through this siege, reflect something of the sense that God was behind the town's extraordinary deliverance. Natalis talks of the marvellous way in which God favoured the town. This was manifested by the unusually good weather between October and December 1620 which enabled great progress to be made on the town's fortifications, the unusually good harvest which meant that the town had more than enough supplies for the siege, even with 6000 extra mouths to feed, the various providential twists and turns of the siege itself, and the miraculous appearance of a rainbow across the sky, showing the favour of God. Natalis mentions that the same natural phenomenon had occurred almost thirty years earlier when the Duke of Joyeuse at the head of a leaguer army was defeated outside the neighbouring village of Villemur.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Serres, *Histoire*, pp. 226-236.

¹⁰⁶ Barbara Diefendorf, 'The Huguenot psalter and the faith of French Protestants in the sixteenth century' in Barbara Diefendorf & Carla Hesse (eds.), *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)* (Michigan, 1993), pp. 41-63.

¹⁰⁷ *Histoire particviere, des plvs memorables choses qui se sont passees au Siege de Montauban*, p. 44.

¹⁰⁸ *Méditation d'un advocat de Montauban sur les mouvemens de ce temps* (Montauban, 1622), p. 16.

¹⁰⁹ 'Extraits des mémoires manuscrits de Jean Natalis', pp. 73-79. See also, 'Chronique des événements déroulés à Montauban de 1589 à 1622', ed. A. Gandilhon, *RAM*, 20 (1904), pp. 82-83.

The notion of the 'New Israel' was adapted in a creative manner to the Montauban experience. It could project biblical meaning upon all local experiences, events and personalities and thus help develop a common conscience, a collective memory of the past that had God at its centre. And there was a reinforcing element to this dimension. The evocation of a covenant between God and his people denoted mutual responsibility.¹¹⁰ Accounts of the 1621 siege attribute a crucial role to God in protecting his people. In a reciprocal manner, ministers could employ the notion of a 'New Israel' as a means to promote their goal of creating a 'godly' society. God's blessing depended upon the obedience of the people. There are, after all, many biblical examples of God's vengeance against those that strayed from God's precepts towards their idolatrous past.¹¹¹

A providential reading of the present served as a hinge between the past and the future. It enabled the Huguenot faithful to draw from the rich biblical imagery and stories of the Old Testament to make sense of the present and to point a way to the future. Providential history could make sense of international events, national events, regional events but its most important role was to provide meaning for the local church and meaning for the individual. Providence was seen at work in the emergence of churches across Europe and in this sense the theology of providence provided a source of solidarity at a time of religious struggle. But at the same time the Israel analogy implied separation and exclusivity since it found its greatest strength in making sense of what was most immediate for people, making sense of local events and interpretations of local history.

A shared system of religious beliefs, institutions and mentality served to underpin the Calvinist international. The training of ministers, the education of students and the circulation of literature created links between different Protestant centres which in France became institutionalised through the synodal system of church government. But France was a land of immense regional diversity and the fate of Protestant communities across the country greatly differed. With the ongoing pressures of war, there was little room for complacency for the Protestant churches. Different churches developed different strategies for survival; many communities depended upon the support that they received from the international Protestant enclaves beyond the country's frontiers. But what emerges from this

¹¹⁰ Gordon, 'The changing face of Protestant history', p. 19.

chapter is the extent of Montauban's autonomy within the Calvinist international; the profound sense of separation that the town must have sensed as it attempted to defy its neighbouring confessional opponent, Toulouse. Far from the European outposts of Protestantism and failing to feature in the international perceptions of French Protestantism, the Reformation in Montauban could only depend upon its self-reliance and inner reserves of strength to survive.

¹¹¹ [Chassagnion], *Grands et Redovtables Ivgemens*, pp. 388-395.

Chapter 8. The culture of southern French Protestantism.

Explaining the peculiar religious configuration of France in the sixteenth century has vexed historians' minds to the present day. How can one explain the Huguenot 'crescent' which stretched from La Rochelle on the western seaboard to Lower Languedoc and Dauphiné in the south-east? Why did this region prove so tenacious in adopting and defending the Protestant faith? What was so distinctive about this southern part of France which made it so amenable to the Reformation? Studies of Huguenot communities in northern France chart the process by which Calvinists became a small and powerless minority. In the wake of the first war, urban Protestantism was stripped of the significant political power that it had attained. Subsequent action by the Catholic civil authorities, supported by the Catholic majority, slowly drained the energy of the Reformed communities, weakening the movement well before the withering impact of St Bartholomew's day.¹ After the massacres the terminal decline of Huguenot communities in the towns of northern France was sealed by their failure to evangelise; immigrants from Catholic rural hinterlands increasingly diluted their strength in the towns.²

This study has demonstrated how different events were in southern France. Even before the outbreak of the first war in 1562, Protestants had seized control of many towns and unlike their northern co-religionists they succeeded in retaining this control through subsequent periods of war and peace. In towns such as Montauban Protestants came to comprise a majority of the population and Protestant elites dominated municipal and royal offices through a seventy-year period. This created an environment in which Protestantism could consolidate its hold and develop a distinctive cultural identity.

The strength and persistence of Calvinism in towns across southern France raises the question as to what was so alluring about Protestantism to the towns of southern France and why it succeeded in this environment? Janine Garrisson postulates a link between 'la huguenerie méridionale' and 'l'obstination sudiste', suggesting that there was something in Protestantism which made it

¹ See, for example, Maryelise Suffern Lamet, 'French Protestants in a position of strength. The early years of the Reformation in Caen, 1558-68', *SCJ*, 3 (1978), pp. 35-55; David Nicholls, 'Protestants, Catholics and magistrates in Tours, 1562-72: the making of a Catholic city during the religious wars', *FH*, 8 (1994), pp. 14-33; Roberts, *City in Conflict*, pp. 134-135, 192.

² Benedict, *Huguenot Population*, pp. 46-47.

particularly successful in southern France.³ Was Protestantism just another manifestation of a separate world in the south of France?

Fernand Braudel captures the difference between the north and south of France in his book, *The Identity of France*. He writes, 'What we think of as civilisation (the way people are born, live, love, marry, think, believe, laugh, eat, dress, build houses, lay out fields or behave towards each other) was practically never the same in the south' and that 'there always has been and always will be "another" France'.⁴ Historical geographers trace the division between north and south France back to the centuries before Christ. France is an isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, linking together southern and northern Europe. There were two routes that travellers and tradesmen were able to take passing either side of the Massif Central; the first by way of the river Rhône, Lyon and the Seine valley and the second by way of the 'route des deux mers', connecting Narbonne with Toulouse and Bordeaux. It was along these two routes that two separate civilisations developed around the south and west and the north and east. These separate worlds were compounded by ethno-historical differences. Northern France was settled by the *Belgae* who slowly pushed southwards to meet the Ligurian, Iberian and Basque peoples of the southern fringes of what is now France. With the Roman conquest a Roman province was founded in the south-east (comprising present-day Provence and Lower Languedoc) and three administrative regions were established, which broadly corresponded with the pre-existing ethnic divisions: Belgic Gaul in the north, Aquitaine in the south-west (a name derived from the original Iberian name of the first settlers of the region) and Celtic Gaul comprising the region between the Seine and Loire.⁵

Upon the collapse of the Roman empire, Aquitaine re-emerged as an important territorial unit first under the Visigoths and later under the Merovingian kings, although its distance from the principal domains in the north continued to leave the region free to develop its own traditions and customs. This trend had been accentuated with the invasion of the Franks who swept down from Scandinavia and began to develop the Paris basin as the centre of their political power.⁶ In the tenth and eleventh centuries Aquitaine would not have been considered as French. Indeed Xavier de Planhol and Paul Claval argue that 'the

³ Garrison, *L'Homme protestant*, pp. 69-71 and Garrison, *Protestants du Midi*, pp. 7, 222.

⁴ Braudel, *Identity of France*, I. 86.

⁵ Planhol and Claval, *Historical Geography*, pp. 3-7, 34, 39.

Franks often came to bloody blows with the Aquitanians and Gascons, whom they despised and who reciprocated with similar sentiments towards them'.⁷ The tensions that began to emerge were amplified by the Albigensian Crusades of the early thirteenth century. Michelet wrote,

Ces grandes expéditions, qui rapprochèrent l'Orient et l'Occident, eurent aussi pour effet de révéler à l'Europe du Nord celle du Midi. La dernière se présenta à l'autre sous l'aspect le plus choquant; esprit mercantile plus que chevaleresque, dédaigneuse opulence, élégance et légèreté moqueuse, danses et costumes moresques, figures sarrasines. Les aliments mêmes étaient un sujet d'éloignement entre les deux races; les mangeurs d'ail, d'huile et de figues, rappelaient aux croisés l'impureté du sang moresque et juif, et le Languedoc leur semblait une autre Judée.⁸

This brief survey emphasises the opposition that had long emerged between what are now the south and the north of France. Ethno-historical differences were reinforced by the cultural particularities of the regions. Chapter four has already alluded to the linguistic division between *langue d'Oil* and *langue d'Oc*. But the linguistic separation was only one of many differences. There are striking contrasts between the customary law of the north and the written Roman law of the south. Mention could also be made of the different literary and musical traditions, different architectural and aesthetical traditions and the different temperaments and personality traits of the people.⁹ Planhol and Claval suggest that these cultural oppositions were heightened by the economic and social impact of the changing uses of land in the Middle Ages. The north and east of France became characterised by a landscape of open fields and organised communities while the countryside of the south and west remained enclosed and loosely controlled by dispersed settlements.¹⁰

But caution must be exercised in attributing general characteristics to entire regions. Chapter five demonstrated that southern France – despite all its differences with the north – never achieved a unified political and cultural consciousness. Any divisions that may exist between north and south should never

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 75, 79.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 105 and Karl Werner, 'Les nations et le sentiment national dans l'Europe médiévale', *Revue Historique*, 244 (1970), pp. 292-294.

⁸ Michelet, *Histoire de France*, II. 384-385.

⁹ *Ibid.*, II. 48; Planhol and Claval, *Historical Geography*, pp. 129-133, 151-152, 155; Theodore Zeldin, *The French* (London, 1997), pp. 16-18, 84, 108; Maurice Agulhon, 'Le centre et la périphérie' in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire. Les France* (Evreux, 1992), p. 826.

¹⁰ Planhol and Claval, *Historical Geography*, p. 134.

obscure the divisions that existed and continue to exist within each region. France is a patchwork of cultural identities. Braudel describes how ‘in a world where distances seemed interminable, villages, *bourgs*, towns, cities, *pays*, regions, indeed whole provinces, institutions, cultures, dialects and all manner of various originalities – all existed in sheltered cocoons, having almost no contact with one another’. Braudel concludes, ‘they were thus able to develop undisturbed, and even the smallest units were miraculously preserved’.¹¹ Local individuality is particularly striking in the world of French gastronomy. Commenting on the pride that the French exude for their local cuisine, Jonathan Fenby writes, ‘the cassoulet stew may be the quintessential dish of the south-west, but don’t expect regional solidarity as you sit down at the table. In the town of Castelnaudary it comes with pork, in Carcassonne with roast shoulder of mutton, and in Toulouse with the local sausage; and each version has its fervent disciples’.¹² Cassoulet is a distinctive southern dish but its local variations underline the complexity of southern identity.

In his pioneering work, *Tableau de la géographie de la France*, Vidal de la Blache draws a distinction between ‘le Midi méditerranéen’ (comprising Provence and Lower Languedoc) and ‘le Bassin d’Aquitaine’ of the south-west: ‘il y a donc au moins deux Midis dans le Midi’, manifesting regional differences in climate, topography, flora and fauna.¹³ Michelet’s own ‘Tableau’, based upon his travels through France, reveals further striking local differences in the area around Montauban:

Je pourrais entrer par le Rouergue dans la grande vallée du Midi... Cette terre, maltraitée et du froid et du chaud dans la variété de ses expositions et de ces climats, gercée de précipices, tranchée par deux torrents, le Tarn et l’Aveyron, a peu à envier à l’âpreté des Cévennes. Mais j’aime mieux entrer par Cahors. Là tout se revêt de vignes. Les mûriers commencent avant Montauban. Un passage de trente ou quarante lieues s’ouvre devant vous, vaste océan d’agriculture, masse animée, confuse, qui se perd au loin dans l’obscur; mais par-dessus s’élève la forme fantastique des Pyrénées aux têtes d’argent.¹⁴

¹¹ Braudel, *Identity of France*, I. 115.

¹² Jonathan Fenby, *On the Brink. The trouble with the French* (London, 1998), p. 271, 301-304. See also Pierre Ory, ‘Gastronomy’ in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory. The construction of the French past*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (2 vols., New York, 1997), II. 443.

¹³ Vidal de la Blache, *Tableau*, pp. 41-43. See also Jean-Yves Guoimar, ‘Vidal de la Blache’s *Geography of France*’ in Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory*, II. 187-209.

¹⁴ Michelet, *Histoire de France*, II. 33.

While the unity of provinces and *pays* had deep historical roots, efforts for greater political and cultural unity foundered upon local particularism and geography played an important part in this. Vidal de la Blache draws attention to the rivers which dissect Aquitaine, running ‘indépendantes les unes des autres, s’y encaissent entre des coteaux rectilignes, qui opposent aux communications transversales une série sans cesse renaissante de rampes à gravir’.¹⁵ The result was the creation of worlds that existed side by side and yet quite independent from one another. Braudel concludes, ‘the vital thing for every community is to avoid being confused with the next tiny *patrie*, to remain other’.¹⁶

This brief overview reveals what a fragmented world the Midi was and how difficult the historians’ task is to come to terms with why the Reformation proved so tenacious in this region. Surely southern identity *per se* is insufficient in explaining why Protestantism was able to make such inroads in southern France. After all, the historical geography to which I have alluded was as relevant to Catholic cities such as Toulouse as it was to Montauban. Recent Reformation research into other national contexts insists upon the complexity of the Reformation process. It was the local context – the support or resistance that the Reformation received and the way in which it was interpreted on a local level – which shaped the depth and breadth of its impact. Michael Lynch argues, for example, that there was no single Scottish Reformation, but rather ‘a series of local Reformations, each moving at its own pace’.¹⁷ This is a conclusion supported by Michael Graham’s comparative study of towns in Scotland that reveals profound differences in the way in which Scottish towns embraced the Reformation.¹⁸

Localism, therefore, was a defining principle for Reformed churches across Europe. ‘Despite their elaborate national constitution with assemblies, colloquies and synods’, Raymond Mentzer argues, ‘the French Reformed churches functioned above all as local entities’.¹⁹ This study has shown that while Montauban clearly did engage with other Protestant communities on a local, provincial, national and international level, it was the locality that provided the immediate context in which confessional culture evolved. Its success across

¹⁵ Vidal de la Blache, *Tableau*, p. 376.

¹⁶ Braudel, *Identity of France*, I. 41.

¹⁷ Michael Lynch, ‘Calvinism in Scotland, 1559-1638’ in Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism*, p. 229.

¹⁸ Graham, *Uses of Reform*, pp. 51-52, 57.

southern France provides an illustration of how eminently adaptable Calvinism was and how it could function in a range of different local environments.

Most studies of the French and Dutch Reformations continue to attribute great importance to the international Calvinist 'mother' churches in sustaining and directing Protestantism. In France's case, Geneva may have exercised an important role in some communities, but the vigour of the Reformation in south-west France and particularly around Montauban principally derived from its own efforts and most of all from local circumstances. What distinguishes Calvinism in this part of France was its internal strength. This is demonstrated by its ability to create a self-perpetuating ministry and retain the political protection of the ruling elites and the support of the urban masses.

The specific strength of Calvinism in Montauban is reflected in the sharply adverse reaction to the decision taken by delegates attending the national political assembly at Saint Foy in 1601. At this assembly it was resolved to establish councils in each province. The intention of these councils was to provide a small body with which to liaise with Huguenot representatives at court and present decisions and advice to the ecclesiastical bodies of the church. It was intended that these local communities would play a primary role in directing the Huguenot cause across France in the period after the Edict of Nantes.

The attempt to shift the power of government away from individual towns towards central bodies of control was rebutted by Montauban and the town council records reveal acute differences of opinion on the matter.²⁰ From their perspective, the town elite felt that the towns alone were quite capable of running their own affairs and, indeed, were in the best position to defuse local problems with their local political powers. Montauban's governing families argued that the establishment of provincial councils would never be able to match the town councils in representing and defending the interests of the Huguenot cause in the French Midi. This particular attempt to create a provincial council with executive powers was viewed with great suspicion for it was felt that it would weaken the very links between minister and magistrate that had proved so fundamental in creating a meaningful 'godly' society. Several members of the political elite made the point that while provincial councils may well have their use in those

¹⁹ Mentzer, 'Ecclesiastical discipline', p. 178.

communities where Calvinism was not in a position of domination, they had no place amongst the numerous towns of southern France where the magistracy was Protestant. The town fathers concluded that ‘les affaires concernant le bien et conserva[ti]on de ceste esglise seront traité, delibéré et resolué par ung conseil quy sera estably en la present ville’. Furthermore, it was agreed that the decisions made by the assembly at Sainte-Foy were to be denounced at the provincial synod and that deputies would be sent to announce Montauban’s decision to the neighbouring towns and encourage them to follow their lead.

This example demonstrates the peculiarly strong position in which many of the urban churches in the south, such as Montauban, found themselves relative to the rest of the country. A national political assembly felt that the churches needed to create new bodies to represent their political voice more effectively. Some of the Huguenot churches of the south, however, supported by local political elites, felt confident enough to stand up for themselves and employ more traditional means to defend their interests. They were not in a mood to surrender their ancient customs and cede power to external bodies.

The defiance of Montauban was a manifestation of the town’s vigorous tradition of local independence. Across southern France urban autonomy had developed through the Middle Ages – a time of political dispute and warfare and a time when new towns, *bastides* and *castelnaux*, were being built and which were particularly successful in wrenching privileges and immunities from the governing nobles. Behind their fortified ramparts, the towns of the Midi augmented their political privileges and powers. Consulates succeeded in acquiring and retaining civil and criminal jurisdiction, providing themselves with greater opportunities to shape urban life. Furthermore the towns in the south were able to exert their authority over vast communal territories having successfully extended their authority into the countryside in a way not matched by northern French towns.²¹ Their control over rural hinterlands served to reinforce the political pretensions of the municipal elites.

The tradition of local autonomy and civic pride which was so manifest in southern France was accentuated by the region’s distance from the political heart of France in Paris. In Braudel’s words, ‘diversity is the eldest daughter of distance’ and the state’s authority had its limits in the remoter parts of the

²⁰ ADTG, 1 BB 35, fo. 57v-66v.

kingdom.²² In the mid-seventeenth century Paris was still a distance of two-weeks' travelling away from Toulouse and Montpellier.²³ During the period of the religious wars, life in the north and south of France rarely overlapped. De Thou described how the court in Paris was largely indifferent as to the fate of the peripheral provinces of the kingdom.²⁴

Paris's cultural and political domination did not impinge upon daily life to the same extent in the south as in the north. The south's distance from Paris and its local traditions of municipal independence provided a receptive environment for the Reformed message. Across France the 'wonderyears' of the early 1560s transformed Protestantism into a genuinely mass movement. While in many towns the gains were quickly surrendered at the onset of civil war, towns such as Montauban were able to consolidate their new confessional identities. Gregory Hanlon alerts historians to the problem of overstating the 'voluntary, reflective decision' to convert to Protestantism. The spread of Calvinism, he argues, can be likened to 'municipal Erastianism' whereby the political, military and ecclesiastical leaders created a 'coercive alliance shepherding large numbers of less than enthusiastic "converts" into the Protestant flock'.²⁵ Crucial to this process was the adherence of the municipal elites to the Reformed faith. The combination of political authority and municipal autonomy in the Midi gave Protestantism the space and freedom it required to evangelise and expand.

But in these circumstances, the overturning of the Catholic Church in Montauban did not guarantee the success of the Reformation. Certainly Protestantism in the town greatly benefited from the protection that it received over an enduring and uninterrupted span of time and the constructive relationship that developed between minister and magistrate. But paradoxically it was the omnipresence of Montauban's neighbour, Toulouse, which provided the greatest single impetus for such a thorough-going Reformation.

Sociology can provide some clues as to how the status and self-perception of a religious community affected its identity. In his 1911 study, Social Teaching of the Christian churches, Ernst Troeltsch made a distinction between the

²¹ Planhol and Claval, Historical Geography, p. 143.

²² Braudel, Identity of France, I. 119 and Robert Muchembled, Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France 1400-1750, trans. Lydia Cochrane (London, 1985), p. 314.

²³ Agulhon, 'Le centre et la périphérie', p. 824.

²⁴ Cited by Thompson, Wars of Religion, p. 394 n. 1.

'ecclesia' or the established church in a given society and 'sects', by which are meant smaller groups often in opposition to the prevailing religious culture and values of the times.²⁶ The church-sect typology, which has been a cornerstone of the sociology of religion, would seem to have some relevance for the Reformation in France. There were cities where the Protestant population was vastly outnumbered. This encouraged a sense of religious solidarity amongst Protestants that transcended normal social boundaries.²⁷ Liston Pope has identified several characteristics pertaining to minority groups that found themselves at odds with the prevailing culture. These include an attitude of renunciation towards the existing cultural norms, an attitude of non co-operation with the established religion, an insistence upon a personal experience of conversion before membership, a psychology of persecution, adherence to strict biblical standards as a basis to behaviour, a keen interest in the next world, and a high degree of involvement in the shaping of the new religious community.²⁸ These characteristics have particular resonance for many of the minority Huguenot communities of northern France.²⁹

It would appear that the social cohesion of the Huguenot movement was that much stronger where the church was a beleaguered minority. What is less clear in the literature is what the impact of being the dominant religion had upon Huguenot culture in the Protestant towns of the south. If anything, in towns such as Montauban, it was the Catholics who were the beleaguered minority. In these Huguenot strongholds residence in the town became almost identical with membership of the Reformed church, the two mirroring one another. Elisabeth Labrousse has pointed to the very different experiences of Calvinism in the north and south of France. Whereas in northern regions, Calvinists were confined to small, somewhat introverted, urban circles, many of the Huguenot communities of the south constituted social pyramids similar to those of the population at large, comprising peasants, artisans, bourgeois and nobles.³⁰ Hence there was no

²⁵ Hanlon, *Community and Confession*, p. 123.

²⁶ Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon (2 vols., London, 1931), I. 331-343.

²⁷ See Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, p. 136.

²⁸ Liston Pope, *Millhands and Preachers* (1942), cited in William Sims Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements* (New York, 1997), p. 43.

²⁹ Benedict, *Rouen*, p. 109; Christopher Elwood, *The Body Broken. The Calvinist doctrine of the eucharist and the symbolization of power in sixteenth-century France* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 151-156; Mentzer, 'Marking the taboo', pp. 97-129.

³⁰ Labrousse, 'Calvinism in France', in Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism*, p. 293.

‘community within a community’, no group to define oneself against. In this situation it was less easy to demarcate the community of the Protestant faithful from the rest of the urban community, since the vast majority of the population was at least nominally Protestant.

However, numerical domination was not always an aid to shaping confessional identity. The situation in the Netherlands provides a clear example of how a position of religious monopoly could breed divisions and hamper the consolidation of a separate sense of identity. In the Netherlands the first ‘churches under the cross’ were established in the face of violent persecution. This persecution provided the impetus for a tight organisational structure and a strong sense of identity.³¹ But when the situation was transformed and Calvinism became the majority religion and official creed of the northern provinces after 1572 it became difficult to maintain the concept of the gathered church of the Elect. This difficulty became ever more pronounced with the tensions that emerged between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, with the former reluctant to allow the ministers to dictate the moral norms of the new nation.³² Andrew Pettegree argues that in the northern provinces the ambivalence of the municipal authorities towards the ‘godly’ agenda of the ministers and their tolerant attitude towards those of other religions ultimately provided ‘a far greater barrier to church building than the more intense persecution in Flanders and Brabant’.³³

The way in which a Reformed community perceived itself had an impact upon the way in which it related to the surrounding society. In Antwerp the Dutch church leadership quickly became divided over the definition of the church. Gaspar van der Heyden interpreted the Calvinist church as an exclusive body of believers who had to commit themselves unreservedly to the rules and regulations of the church. His fellow minister, Adriaen van Haemstede, represented a more pragmatic viewpoint, seeking to engage with and embrace what Calvin would have called ‘nicodemites’.³⁴ Similar tensions emerged in Béarn where there was disagreement over whether it was right to create an exclusive church once Protestantism had become the state religion. Recognising the extent of popular

³¹ Alastair Duke, ‘Building Heaven in Hell’s Despite: the early history of the Reformation in the towns of the Low Countries’ in his *Reformation and Revolt*, pp. 71-100.

³² Pettegree, ‘Coming to terms with victory’, pp. 160-180.

³³ Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt*, pp. 82-85.

³⁴ Marnef, ‘Changing face of Calvinism’, p. 147.

opposition to the Reformation, Pierre Viret favoured an exclusive church order for Béarn, advising that

Il ne faut pas tant travailler à amasser grand nombre des gens pour avoir de grandes assemblees, qu'à travailler comme ceux qui sont receuz soyent bons et biens reiglez. Car il vaut trop mieux d'avoir un petit troupeau de brebis et d'aigieux qu'un fort grand, auquel il y ait plus de loups, de chiens et de pourceaux que d'aigieux et de brebis, veu que telles bestes ne peuvent porter que dommage au troupeau, et qu'il faut puis après avoir la peyne de les en chasser au grand scandalle de l'Eglise.³⁵

While the 'godly' minority in cities such as Paris and Rouen – and in Béarn – knew that they could only guarantee their purity by strictly demarcating themselves from the Catholic world around them, the 'godly' majority in towns such as Montauban and Nîmes in the south and La Rochelle in the west sought to make Protestantism the monopoly religion. By expelling the Catholic clergy and placing limits on the Catholic liturgy, the political and religious elite assured the ascendancy of Calvinism. But it would appear that by outlawing Catholicism they inadvertently weakened the means by which to forge a separate confessional identity. Perhaps this is exemplified by the less popular use of Old Testament baptismal names in those towns which had a Protestant majority compared with those towns where the Protestant population was a minority.³⁶

How, then, can one account for the fact that the Huguenots prospered as a majority in Montauban? It would be wrong to conclude that the position of strength that the Huguenots of Montauban built for themselves was ultimately a handicap to an effective and far-reaching implementation of the Reformation. Despite Montauban's success as a Huguenot stronghold, there was little room for complacency. Two elements had a profound impact upon the population of Montauban and the way in which they perceived themselves: the town's sense of isolation from other Protestant strongholds and the immediacy of the confessional challenge posed by Toulouse. The proximity of Toulouse intensified fears amongst Montauban's population for their safety. Chapter five described how Toulouse's aggressive stance impinged upon the town in a very direct manner through successive sieges, sorties and skirmishes.

³⁵ Greengrass, 'The Calvinist experiment in Béarn', p. 134.

³⁶ See pp. 68-69, above.

One crucial reason for the success of Protestantism in Montauban was the political backing that the Reformed church received from the city fathers. The protection of the church became closely identified with the safeguarding of the town's political liberties. Furthermore, despite Protestantism's majority status in the town itself, Montauban's elites constructed a sense of minority status by proclaiming themselves to be an isolated Protestant beacon within an otherwise Catholic country. The immediacy of the Catholic threat and the absence of outside Protestant support reinforced the sense of separation from the wider world of Protestantism. It gave to the town a heightened sense of its own destiny as a group set apart. This made it easier for the town's ministers to project upon the town's faithful an understanding in which the central division in the world around them was that between the Protestant faithful and Catholics, rather than between the reprobate and elect.³⁷

In Montauban the notion of the Elect as the few chosen by God remained entirely relevant. Indeed the Protestant community in Montauban displayed characteristics of both Troeltsch's church and sect types. The Reformed church dominated the urban population and engaged with the ruling classes in order to 'weave these elements into her own life'.³⁸ At the same time Montauban's confessional choice was an anomaly in an otherwise Catholic region. This fostered a mentality in which Montauban appeared in opposition to the world. Furthermore the small size of the town and its intimacy provided the conditions in which to create a strong sense of fellowship amongst its Protestant inhabitants.³⁹ In Montauban urban religious identity came to be shaped as much by external insecurity as by internal security.

The division between Protestants and Catholics was not only sustained by the violence of religious war. Philip Benedict suggests that 'far from lessening with time, the degree of suspicion and walls of separation between the two confessions may have increased in France over the course of the seventeenth century under the steady drumbeat of controversial polemics and legal battles over the rights and prerogatives of the Reformed church'.⁴⁰ This would suggest that although Montauban's Protestant population was in a position of domination with the church supported by the municipal elite and the vast majority of townsfolk the

³⁷ Benedict, *Faith and Fortunes*, p. 298.

³⁸ Troeltsch, *Social Teaching*, I. 331.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, I. 331-332.

pressure from the surrounding Catholic world was always intense. This demanded a conscious and sustained effort to shape an identity for the Huguenot community that was distinct from the all encompassing Catholic world.

While this was evidently not possible for an entire region such as Béarn, the size of Montauban and the degree of control that the civil magistrates held over the town meant that the potential existed to create a distinctive Calvinist culture and identity. In this struggle to shape a separate confessional identity this study has identified the crucial importance of the local urban culture. In other European contexts where Calvinism became the dominant religion the political authorities proved themselves keen to limit the authority that the Calvinist ministers sought to exercise over local community affairs. In Montauban, however, the immediacy of the Catholic threat posed by the Parlement of Toulouse meant that the minister and magistrate had little choice but to co-operate with one another. This was not a relationship without its problems but it was a relationship whose strength was essential to the evolution of a ‘godly’ society that in turn justified the town’s political stance.

The interlocking of the political and ecclesiastical elites had a particular resonance in the Protestant towns of southern France. For these towns were distinguished by their jealously guarded prerogatives and privileges. The aggressive nature of the Parlement of Toulouse’s campaign against heresy in the years before 1560 – to the point of infringing local liberties and interfering with municipal elections – met with an indignant response from town officials, many of whom were sympathetic to the new doctrines. The Calvinist ascendancy within Montauban made the link between Protestantism and local liberties even more explicit and also presented the possibility that the fall of one would lead to the fall of the other.

Montauban’s adherence to the Reformation was bound inextricably with its identity as a self-governing town. While the Huguenot population needed no reminding of the fact that there were Catholics within their midst, they were able to rely upon the town council to project a ‘godly’ agenda on the local population irrespective of their confessional allegiance. This was not a situation unique to Montauban. Chapter four demonstrated the importance of the network of smaller urban satellite churches around Montauban and the way in which they used their

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 424-425.

privileges and tradition of self-government to reflect what was going on in Montauban.

How typical was Montauban of the Protestant world of which it was part and what was its contribution to the wider picture? In 1562 few would have recognised the important role that Montauban would assume in the later Wars of Religion; even fewer would have believed that the town would comprise the largest concentration of Protestants across France by the early seventeenth century. But in the aftermath of St Bartholomew's day the survival of Montauban as a Protestant centre was at odds with the picture of French Protestantism. Bewildered and demoralised, Protestant communities across France went into decline. Even the formerly strong Huguenot bastions in southern France – those of Castres and Montpellier, for example – temporarily succumbed to the Catholic resurgence. With the Huguenot noble leadership decimated and Protestant communities across France substantially weakened the importance of Montauban was greatly amplified. For Montauban was a town that remained solidly Protestant with the majority of its population and its town government dominated by Protestants. Precisely because of the proximity of southern Protestantism's greatest enemy, Toulouse, Montauban remained faithful to its Huguenot identity. The vigour of this identity was revealed in Louis XIII's failure to capture the town in 1621 and the enduring numerical strength of the Huguenot community throughout the period from the Edict of Nantes to its revocation.⁴¹

Barbara Diefendorf in her study of Paris attributes an exceptional role to the capital city in shaping the course of events throughout the wars. She describes how the city precipitated the outbreak of war with its refusal to accept the Edict of January in 1562 and its response to the massacre of Vassy. Thereafter the city repeatedly hampered Catherine de Medici's attempts to negotiate a peace and delayed the implementation of peace. Diefendorf concludes that 'most cities were too small to influence the larger course of the wars; they played out before a local audience their bloody dramas by persecution and revenge'. However, she cites the size and political weight of the capital city as reasons for how the city was an exception to the rule: 'had it not been for the fierce Catholicism of the people of

⁴¹ Benedict, *Huguenot population*, pp. 55, 102.

Paris', she argues, 'the Wars of Religion would have taken a very different course'.⁴²

In the wake of the massacres of St Bartholomew's day, Montauban alongside La Rochelle and Nîmes were the three major Huguenot bastions which gathered the inner strength to respond in an effective way to the violence inflicted upon them. These were much smaller – towns with a population of 15-20,000 – but without the leadership of these three towns and their influence over their surrounding districts the history of French Protestantism and the subsequent decades of conflict could have been very different. These cities provided refuge to the beleaguered Huguenot minority at times of war and they provided an important means through which to sustain a local Huguenot military strategy. Their stubborn resistance gave to them a crucial role in drawing up the terms for peace. Without the towns, the enfeebled minority to which Huguenots in France had been reduced could hardly have held the Catholic crown to ransom; and extracted from it terms hardly justified by their numerical strength.

⁴² Diefendorf, Beneath the cross, pp. 179-180.

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