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***‘Vivre et mourir en la religion ancienne, romaine et catholique’*. Catholic activism in south-west France, 1560-1570.**

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Submitted for the degree of PhD in History

University of Warwick, Department of History

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Abstract

***‘Vivre et mourir en la religion ancienne, romaine et catholique’*. Catholic activism in south-west France, 1560-1570.** Kevin Gould PhD in History June 2003

This thesis determines the impact of Catholic activism in south-west France during the 1560s. Using manuscript and archival material, it examines the nascence, infrastructure and aims of the various *ligues* and *associations* of the period, and assesses their ability to secure hegemony by usurping local administrative and military apparatus. The thesis is divided into four parts:

Part I studies Catholic activism at Bordeaux and the Bordelais. Chapters 1 and 2 establish the demography and structure of government there and evaluate antecedents to the *ligues* of the 1560s: namely the activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves, the *basoche* and the *syndicat* of 1561. Chapter 3 examines the role of the Catholic nobility in the internecine struggles of the period, and Chapter 4 explores the post-1568 domination of military and bureaucratic offices at Bordeaux by a coalition of leading Catholic activists.

Part II focuses on events at Agen and the Agenais. Chapter 5 details the establishment of an executive council of Catholic notables within the town, while Chapter 6 assesses the role of the local nobility in supporting this coalition government after 1563.

Part III concentrates on affairs at Toulouse. Chapter 7 examines the birth of formal Catholic activism within the town, focussing on the enterprises of the confraternity, *basochiens* and militant court officials. Chapter 8 analyses the reinvigoration of Catholic endeavours at Toulouse after 1567, gauging the success of a policy to finance the Catholic war effort by sequestering Protestant goods, and appraising the somewhat anachronistic phenomenon of the *croisade* of 1568.

Part IV considers the extent to which national and European dimensions influenced the form and nature of Catholic activism during the 1560s. Chapter 9 examines the impact of Catholic grandee patronage on the *ligues* of the south-west, and assesses the resurgence in confraternal activism after 1567. Chapter 10 examines the influence of Spain and the papacy on the evolution of the *associations*, and explores the level of reciprocity between *ligueurs* and European potentates. Chapter 11 details the ambitions of Catholic powers to remove the Calvinist queen of Navarre, Jeanne d’Albret, from power in Béarn and Navarre, and assesses the role played by the *ligueurs* in this enterprise.

Abbreviations

AD Gironde	<i>Archives départementales de la Gironde</i>
AD Haute-Garonne	<i>Archives départementales de la Haute-Garonne</i>
AD Lot-et-Garonne	<i>Archives départementales de Lot-et-Garonne</i>
AHG	<i>Archives historiques du département de la Gironde</i> (58 vols., Bordeaux, 1858-1932).
AM Bordeaux	<i>Archives municipales de Bordeaux</i>
AM Toulouse	<i>Archives municipales de Toulouse</i>
BM Bordeaux	<i>Bibliothèque municipales de Bordeaux</i>
BN	<i>Bibliothèque nationale, Paris</i>
<i>Commentaires</i>	<i>Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires 1521-1576</i> (eds. P. Courteault, J. Giono, Paris, 1964).
<i>Commentaires et lettres</i>	<i>Commentaires et lettres de Blaise de Monluc, maréchal de France</i> (5 vols., ed. A. de Ruble, Paris, 1864-72).
HE	Bèze, Théodore de. <i>Histoire Ecclésiastique des églises réformées au royaume de France</i> (3 vols., eds. G. Baum, E. Cunitz, Nieuwkoop, 1974).
HGL	Devic, Claude, and Jean Joseph Vaissète, <i>Histoire générale de Languedoc</i> (10 vols., Toulouse, ed. Lacour, 1994).
<i>Lettres de Catherine de Medici</i>	<i>Lettres de Catherine de Médicis</i> (10 vols., eds. H. de la Ferrière, G. Baguenault de Puchesse, Paris, 1880-1909).
<i>Mémoires de Condé</i>	<i>Mémoires de Condé, ou recueil pour servir à l'histoire de France, contenant ce qui s'est passé du plus mémorable dans le Royaume</i> (6 vols., London, Paris, 1743).
Rev. Acq.	<i>Review d'Acquitaine</i> (16 vols., Auch, 1857-68).

Notes on editorial standards and contemporary usage

This thesis is written in accordance with the *MHRA Style Book: Notes for authors, editors, and writers of theses* (5th edition, London, 1996).

When quoting from primary sources I have retained the spelling and orthography of the original, with the exception that accents have been added in the few instances where the meaning of the sentence would have otherwise been ambiguous. No additional punctuation has been supplied. Corrections and interlineations in manuscripts have been silently introduced. Accidental obliterations in manuscripts are indicated thus, < ... >, with each dot indicating a missing character. The reason for the obliteration (e.g. damp, fire damage) is explained in a footnote. All prose citations over forty words in length have been set off from the main text and indented. Any other bibliographic and/or editorial information relevant to particular texts has been given in a footnote.

Prior to 1564 in France all years began on Easter Sunday. Throughout this thesis I have used the new date form, with the year commencing on 1 January, so as to avoid confusion.

This thesis is 80,350 words in length exclusive of appendices, footnotes and bibliography, in accordance with the regulations of the University of Warwick.

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Introduction

In 1986, John Bossy delivered a paper to *The Ecclesiastical History Society* that aimed 'to expound the conviction that the persistence of French Catholicism through the crises of the Reformation was largely the result of the voluntary association of French Catholics'.¹ But the author added an important caveat: 'despite the very considerable importance of this subject, one might even claim its decisive importance for the outcome of the wars of religion in Europe as a whole, it has (with some shining exceptions) not received very much attention from historians, and that in England essential texts and studies are hard to come by'.² While Bossy may have overplayed the role of Catholic *ligues* and *associations* in the wider European context, their impact on the course of the religious wars in France (1562-1598) was indeed significant. Episodes of Catholic militancy litter the sectarian conflict: from the massacre at Vassy in 1562 through to the Saint Bartholomew's day massacre of August 1572; and from the Guise-led insurrection of the 1580s to the final stand of the *Sainte Union* in 1598. Yet, while historians have made great strides in their dissection of this national League after 1584 they have paid little attention to provincial precursors. Standard commentaries on the 1560s, for example, focus on the activities of Catholics only at times of acute tension, notably the three distinct conflicts of 1562, 1567 and 1568, preferring instead to concentrate on two themes: the Huguenot struggle for security and legitimacy; and the crown's attempts to impose limited toleration through the publication of numerous edicts of pacification.

¹ John Bossy, 'Leagues and associations in sixteenth-century French Catholicism', *Studies in Church History*, 23 (1986), pp. 171-89. For quotation, see p. 171.

² *Ibid.*

The result is that the evolution in Catholic sentiment has tended to be marginalized in the historiography of the early stages of the conflict. Of the few general surveys that cover aspects of this issue, Denis Crouzet's massive two-volume appraisal of sectarian violence during the religious wars is the most influential. It argues that the period's confessional strife can only be properly understood if set in the context of the millenarian angst that pervaded French society during the second half of the sixteenth century. For Crouzet, while political and economic factors would play their part in motivating Catholics to militancy, their fanaticism was driven by a need to purge society of heresy and to prepare the community for the coming apocalyptic 'end of days'. Natalie Zemon Davis's groundbreaking study of the nature of confessional violence during the wars did much to lay the foundations for such an approach; being the first such survey to detail the specifics of sectarian violence. Olivier Christin has recently added to this debate. He argues that much Catholic activism during the 1550s and 1560s constituted a riposte to Huguenot iconoclasm rather than premeditated deeds, and that, initially, Catholics reacted by reinforcing their conceptions of orthodoxy - re-emphasising ritual and confirming doctrine - rather than resorting to overt violence. On a broader theme, Myriam Yardeni suggests that Catholics at this time were not simply defending themselves from physical assault, but were seeking to protect their traditions and customs against institutional and bureaucratic pressures, as Protestants infiltrated the corridors of urban and provincial power. As a result, Catholics were obliged to confront wider notions of patriotism and nationalism too, with Yardeni showing that Catholic propaganda of the period was satiated with the concept that to be 'un bon français' one had to be 'un bon catholique'. Nancy Roelker has also addressed this issue, revealing that Catholics attempted to use the argument of 'le bon catholique' to

strengthen the argument against plurality of religion in France, while Luc Racaut, in his study of Catholic propaganda of the period, finds that the crown struggled to counter such viewpoints; its attempts to censor Catholic polemic by targeting the more vocal proponents failing in many instances.³

More recently, though, a number of more focussed, regional reviews of Catholic attitudes during the 1560s have appeared. David Nicholls has examined the clashes between Protestant and Catholic magistrates within the administration at Tours during this decade, and detailed the measures taken by the latter to secure Catholic hegemony within the town. For Paris, Barbara Diefendorf has reconstructed developments in collective Catholic piety throughout the period, assessing the efficacy of Catholic ritual and polemic in unifying Parisians against the emergent Reform movement. Ann Ramsey, meanwhile, has shown that the invigoration of the community through ritual and polemic was also a feature of contestation between moderate and militant Catholics at Paris, although both proved more intransigent in their loyalty to political, social and cultural allegiances than they did in their adherence to doctrinal dogma. For Burgundy, Mack P. Holt's socio-cultural investigations in events across the Dijonnais reveal how Protestantism was 'suppressed' by concerted action from Catholic communities and institutions alike, with Catholic politicisation and cultural ties forged by wine growers from below and

³ Denis Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu* (2 vols., Seyssel, 1990); Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The rites of violence', in her *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, CA., 1975), pp. 152-87; Olivier Christin, *Une révolution symbolique. L'iconoclasme huguenot et la reconstruction catholique* (Paris, 1991), esp. Part Two: 'La riposte', pp. 177-285; Myriam Yardeni, *La conscience nationale en France pendant les guerres de religion (1559-98)* (Paris, 1971), esp. pp. 99-119; Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print. Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion* (Aldershot, 2002); Nancy Lyman Roelker, *One King, One Faith: Heresy and Tridentine Catholicism in the sixteenth-century Parlement of Paris* (Berkeley, 1996), esp. Chapter 10. De Potter reports that in 1568 the papacy, outraged at Charles IX's sympathetic stance towards the Huguenots, issued a catechism detailing how 'le bon catholique' should interact with Protestants, describing the preferred practices for the arrest, denunciation, and excommunication of 'heretics'. See De Potter, *Lettres de Saint Pie V, sur les religieuses de son temps en France, suivi d'un catéchisme catholique-romain* (Brussels, 1827), pp. 4-149 for papal letters; pp. 155-328 for Catholic catechism.

magistrates and clerics from above. James R. Farr has also focussed on this region, assessing notions of traditional Catholic authority (hierarchy, order and conflict, and perceptions of rebels and royalists under the League) through an examination of the customs and practices of the artisans of Dijon.⁴

For Normandy, Philip Benedict's study of Rouen shows that the town's Catholic activists, described as 'penitents as well as militants', understood well the need to assume control of the machinery of town authority rather than simply to wage a battle of polemic and propaganda against their Huguenot neighbours. Stuart Carroll, meanwhile, has examined the relationship between the Guise 'affinity' and the Catholic cause in this northern province, finding that, for the 1560s at least, religious dogma was not yet a mature determining factor of the duke's political strategy; instead, it was the feud between Coligny and Guise which directed Catholic/Guise policy in the region. There are three important surveys of Catholic activity in the Champagne region. A. N. Galpern's study of religion and religious change in this north-eastern province during the sixteenth century deals largely with the decline of late-medieval piety, revealing the extent to which traditional Christian practices were fragmented by the successes of the local Reform movement. Its exploration of the manner in which Catholic communities responded to this challenge suggests that their reactions were vibrant if never fully militant in nature. In detailing the ascendancy of the Catholic League at Troyes, however, Penny Roberts has described substantial participation by Catholic zealots in the usurpation

⁴ David Nicholls, 'Protestants, Catholics and magistrates in Tours, 1562-1572: The making of a Catholic city during the religious wars', *French History*, 8, 1 (1994), pp. 14-33; Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross. Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 1991); Ann W. Ramsey, *Liturgy, Politics, and Salvation: The Catholic League in Paris and the Nature of Catholic Reform 1540-1630* (Rochester, N.Y., 1999); Mack P. Holt, 'Burgundians into Frenchmen: Catholic identity in sixteenth-century Burgundy', in Michael Wolfe (ed.), *Changing Identities in Early Modern France* (Durham, N.C., 1997), pp. 345-70; Mack P. Holt, 'Wine, community and Reformation in sixteenth-century Burgundy', *Past and Present*, 138 (1993), pp. 59-93; James R. Farr, *Hands of Honor. Artisans and Their World in Dijon, 155-1650* (Ithaca, 1988), see esp. his chapter: 'Artisan Religion: Reformed and Traditional', pp. 223-60.

of the town's administrative institutions, and shown that contestation at Troyes was not simply confined to confrontation between *ligueurs* and Reformers, but that a power struggle between moderate and militant Catholics also pervaded. Finally, Mark W. Konnert has examined events at Châlons-sur-Marne, revealing how the determination of the civic corporation to tolerate rather than exploit religious differences ensured the town would escape serious sectarian violence during the 1560s - this despite Champagne being the epicentre of Guise power in the region.⁵

As regards the south of France, Marc Venard has studied Catholic activity at Avignon, showing that despite increasing pressure from external Protestant forces this papal enclave was able to complete its programme of Tridentine reforms with relative freedom from interference. For Venard, the presence of numerous well-established confraternities helped to facilitate this progress, and, alongside the introduction of the Jesuits, provided a stabilising force within the town, one that facilitated greater authoritative control for its Catholic leadership. For Nîmes, Robert Sauzet provides a detailed 'church history' of attitudes to Catholic reform within the diocese, while Wolfgang Kaiser's 'morphologie sociale' of the southern port of Marseille examines the growth of militant Catholicism in an urban setting devoid of the influence of a *parlement* and lacking a strong presence of royal officials. Janine Garrisson-Estèbe supplies a valuable general account of Catholic responses to the

⁵ Philip Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge, 1981); Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power during the French Wars of Religion. The Guise Affinity and the Catholic Cause in Normandy* (Cambridge, 1998); Stuart Carroll, 'The Guise affinity and popular protest during the Wars of Religion', *French History*, 9 (1995), pp. 125-51; A. N. Galpern, *The Religions of the People in Sixteenth-Century Champagne* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976); Penny Roberts, *A City in Conflict. Troyes during the French Wars of religion* (Manchester, 1996); Mark W. Konnert, *Civic Agendas and Religious Passion. Châlons-sur-Marne during the French Wars of Religion, 1560-1594* (Kirkville, Miss., 1997); Mark W. Konnert, 'Provincial governors and their regimes during the French Wars of Religion: the duc de Guise and the city council of Châlons-sur-Marne', *Sixteenth-Century Journal*, 25 (1994), pp. 823-40.

domination of political and social institutions of the south by the Huguenot elites, but her study of a 'United Provinces of the Midi' rarely ventures west of Castres.⁶

Surveys of Catholic activism in the south-west of France - the focal point of this thesis - are, however, conspicuous by their absence. Of the small pool of published research, the articles of Joan Davies and Mark Greengrass are perhaps the most pertinent, as they scrutinise confessional clashes at Toulouse during the religious wars. The doctoral thesis of each author is also an important source for general studies of Catholic activity within the region, as both provide broad surveys of the political and religious dynamics confronting Languedoc during the period. Michel Cassan's assessment of confraternal activism at Limoges is most relevant too, as it sets Catholic doctrinal and organisational reform of the 1560s in the context of increasing Protestant violence against local Catholic communities, especially the disruption of Catholic processions and ceremonial. Finally, Philip Conner's study of Montauban provides a brief analysis of regional political associations during this period, arguing that 'leaguings' was by no means the prerogative of the Reformers during the 1560s, as many have suggested, but that Catholics also recognised and developed its potential from an early stage.⁷

⁶ Marc Venard, *Réforme protestante, réforme catholique, dans la province d'Avignon au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1993); Marc Venard, 'Catholicism and resistance to the Reformation in France, 1555-1585', in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop and Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585* (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 133-48; Robert Sauzet, *Contre-réforme et réforme catholique en Bas-Languedoc* (Louvain, 1981); Wolfgang Kaiser, *Marseille au temps des troubles. Morphologie sociale et luttes de factions 1559-1595* (Paris, 1992); Janine Garrisson-Estèbe, *Protestants du midi 1559-1598* (Toulouse, 1980).

⁷ Joan Davies, 'Persecution and Protestantism: Toulouse, 1562-1575', *Historical Journal*, 22 (1979), pp. 31-51; *Languedoc and its Governor, Henri de Montmorency-Damville, 1563-1589* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of London, 1974); Mark Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot in Toulouse in May 1562', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 34 (1983), pp. 367-91; 'The Sainte Union in the provinces: The case of Toulouse', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 14, 4 (1983), pp. 469-96; *War, Politics and Religion in Languedoc in the government of Henri de Montmorency-Damville, 1574-1610*, (PhD thesis, University of Oxford, 1979); Michel Cassan, *Le temps des guerres de religion. Le cas du Limousin (vers 1530-vers 1630)* (Paris, 1996); Philip Conner, *Huguenot Heartland. Montauban and Southern French Calvinism during the Wars of Religion* (Aldershot, 2002).

For the most part, though, the brevity of contemporary surveys of the southwest is frustrating. Should the historian wish to access secondary accounts of Catholic activities at Bordeaux, for example, it is to the nineteenth-century antiquarians that one must turn. Earlier research on the conduct of Blaise de Monluc, one of the king's leading military officials in Guyenne between 1560 and 1570, highlighted such incongruities. Attempts to gain greater insights into the function of the various Catholic organisations under his sway were frustrated by the limitations of secondary material. With no definitive synthesis of Catholic activism available, Joseph Lecler's short article 'Aux origines de la ligue' becomes a most important point of reference. It assesses numerous oath-bound Catholic *associations*: the *syndicat* at Bordeaux; the *ligues* at Agen, Toulouse and Cadillac; the militant confraternity at Limoges; and the *croisade* at Toulouse.⁸ However, Lecler's emphasis concerns the precursory nature of these *associations* to the later national Catholic League. Thus, he does little to quantify the size, structure, or the activities and objectives of these earlier 'antecedents'. Other commentaries return similarly fragmentary results: in his *Histoire de Bordeaux*, Dom Devienne also alludes to Monluc's role in energising the Catholic towns of Guyenne during the 1560s, but omits any detailed discussion on the form this action took, while Ernest Gaullieur prefers a simple narrative, examining Protestant reaction to Catholic enterprises. In two equally cursory essays, A. Dupré and Charles Dartigue examine the formation of the *syndicat* of Catholic officials within the *parlement* at Bordeaux in 1561, but fail to ascertain its origins or its position within the hierarchical structures of the sovereign court; while even Monluc's biographer, Paul Courteault, neglects to expand on this turbulent period of his charge's career. James Westphall Thompson's

⁸ Joseph Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue: Premiers projets et premiers essais (1561-1570)', *Études*, 227 (1936), pp. 188-208;

survey is perhaps the most useful companion to Lecler's work, and includes a commendable, if ultimately unsatisfactory attempt to form a coherent historiography from hitherto incongruent sources. But Thompson's attention rarely concentrates on affairs at Bordeaux and Toulouse, with much of his chapter on provincial leagues focussing on events in northern and eastern France.⁹

The study of Catholic activism in the south-west of France during the 1560s, then, is minimal at best. This lacuna in the historiography is curious, especially given the presence of figures as renowned as Monluc, and the recent predilection of historians for focussed, local studies in place of broader narratives. Preliminary observations suggest that many commentators have simply dismissed these early *associations* as disparate, localised entities, their parochial nature and inability to expand into province-wide forces ensuring their continuing anonymity. Indeed, even Lecler, the most reflective authority on these matters, succumbed to such complacency, describing the earliest *ligues* as 'limitées, éphémères, sans lien entre elles'.¹⁰ This thesis will contend, however, that this was far from the case. It will argue that historians are too quick to label these *associations* simply as reactive forces, transient unions that had little influence on the political affairs of the provinces. They were neither spontaneous responses to specific provocation nor disparate bodies confined within geographic or administrative boundaries. Instead, an inter-connectedness of organisation and activity will be revealed that belies their omission from the historiography. For as Bossy has noted, the failure to explore such

⁹ Dom Devienne, *Histoire de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1771); Ernest Gaullieur, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux et dans le ressort du parlement de Guyenne* (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1884), I, pp. 322-27; A. Dupré, 'Projet de ligue catholique à Bordeaux en 1562 et 1563', *Revue catholique de Bordeaux*, 12 (1891), pp. 372-78; Charles Dartigue, 'Une cabale politico-religieuse à Bordeaux en juillet 1562: le syndicat contre le parlement', *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire du protestantisme français*, 98 (1951), pp. 141-52; Paul Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien* (Geneva, 1970); James Westfall Thompson, *The Wars of Religion in France, 1559-1576* (New York, 1958), esp. Chapter IX: pp. 206-31.

¹⁰ Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue', p. 189.

complex forces in greater detail has precluded valuable insights being made into Catholic *mentalités* during the early years of sectarian conflict, a time of seismic shifts in Catholic perspectives and posture.¹¹

Two factors have determined the selection of the south-west as the geographical region to be studied here: the aggressive character of the Reformed church in the provinces of Guyenne and Languedoc, and the intercession of neighbouring foreign powers in support of Catholic communities. The south-west witnessed arguably the most concentrated, and the most successful, thrust of the Reformed church's early evangelical missions during the 1550s and 1560s. Across the region towns, villages and great swathes of the population in the countryside converted to, or at least came under the control of, Huguenot nobles and ministers. Contemporaries captured the magnitude of these incursions quite succinctly. A letter from the Toulouse *parlement* to the crown in January 1562 reported that:

Par violence et insidieuses proditions, les réformés ont saisy et mis en captivité plusieurs villes, esglises et monastaires et mis hors les religieux, et aucuns brutallement battus, blesses et mortris, mis aussy en ruine partie desdictes esglises, autelz, croix et ymaiges de nostre rédempteur et de la glorieuse vierge et autres saints, pillé calices et reliquaries d'argent et autres ornemens précieux. Et faut entendre par faict et parolle qu'ils ont conspire se render dominateurs en ce royaulme.¹²

In Guyenne, Monluc, newly appointed as *lieutenant-général*, warned the crown that the Reformers 'estoient maistres de la compagne',¹³ while Raymond de Pavie, *sieur* de Fourquevaux, the Catholic governor of Narbonne, informed the French

¹¹ As there are so few relevant religio- or socio-political models relating to the Catholic *associations* of the 1560s, and little secondary material relevant to this thesis, a detailed discussion of the archival, printed primary and secondary sources used in this survey has been provided in the Appendix.

¹² *Parlement* of Toulouse to Charles IX (7 January 1562). A. de Ruble, *Jeanne d'Albret et la guerre civile* (Paris, 1897), p. 101.

¹³ *Commentaires*, p. 513.

ambassador in Spain that 'les séditieux audit Guienne font les mauvais comme par toutz aultres lieux'.¹⁴

Recent work by James Wood has confirmed that these observations were not exaggerated. Wood has shown that of the seventeen dioceses which suffered the greatest financial impact during the 1560s, twelve (seventy-one per cent) were located in or on the borders of Guyenne and Languedoc; seven of the eleven highest regional mortality rates from conventional military operations during the religious wars occurred in the south-west; while Guyenne would also feature some of the highest levels of Huguenot abuse against Catholic priests and canons in France during this period.¹⁵ Denis Crouzet concurs, stating that the south-west represented 'la géographie d'un protestantisme conquérant et violent, qui est à l'avant garde, par son radicalisme, de la Réforme française... Guyenne est un peu comme un laboratoire des experiences destructives qui vont en 1562 rythmer le parcours combatant de la Réforme'.¹⁶ For Crouzet it was the very ferocity of the Reformers' expansion across the south-west that induced such an energetic Catholic response, and it was little wonder that the region assumed something of the character of a nursery for fledgling *ligues* and *associations*. By the end of the first war, in April 1563, each faith had consolidated their battle lines: Protestant forces held La Rochelle, Montauban and Moissac to the north, Nîmes and Montpellier to the east, and Béarn and Navarre to the south; Catholic resistance was centred mainly at

¹⁴ Fourquevaux to Saint-Sulpice, ambassador of Charles IX in Spain, (17 June 1562), Edmond Cabié, *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. Documents transcrits, classés et annotés* (Paris, 1906), pp. 5-6.

¹⁵ The archdiocese of Toulouse witnessed the highest levels of Protestant violence against friars during the 1560s. See J.B. Wood, 'The impact of the Wars of Religion: A view of France in 1581', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 15 (1984), pp. 148-53.

¹⁶ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, pp. 523-24. In his analysis of the amalgam of sectarian clashes amid 'la grande angoisse eschatologique', Crouzet gives more emphasis to the south-west of France than to any other region. Crouzet even entitles a chapter of *Les guerriers de Dieu*, 'Pourquoi le sud-ouest?', a reference to the region's volatile nature.

Bordeaux, Toulouse, Agen and Castres. The scale of the armies deployed across the region, and of the military forces assembled in defence of the towns, caused Florimond de Raemond, a *conseiller* of the Bordeaux *parlement*, to remark that Guyenne was 'le magasin de soldats et la pépinière des armées'.¹⁷

The intercession of external powers, such as Spain and the papacy, in support of the Catholic activists of the south-west is the second determining factor in the selection of the south-west as a focus of study. As frontier provinces, Guyenne and Languedoc had long traditions of resisting military, political and economic pressures from external potentates. During the 1560s, however, Catholic *ligue* leaders would seek out intervention from foreign allies in an attempt to bolster their power bases at home. These alliances, which became reciprocal in nature as the *ligueurs* acted as intelligence conduits for their associates at Madrid and Rome, were especially prominent in the campaigns in Béarn and Navarre against the Calvinist queen, Jeanne d'Albret. Here, the *ligueurs*' support of the Catholic rebels at Oloron after 1563, and of the royal army sent in to secure the territory after 1568, was substantial. In fact, the succour provided by the Catholic captains of the south-west to the Béarnais rebels, together with the determination of - and no little provision of money and mercenaries from - Spain and the papacy, would see the Calvinist proselytising of Béarn and Navarre reversed, albeit temporarily, during this period.

The notional parameters delineating the term 'south-west' in this thesis, therefore, will extend from the towns of Périgueux and Limoges in the north, to Pau and Navarrenx at the foot of the Pyrenees, and from Bayonne in the west across to Castres in the east (See Map 2). Much of the focus will fall necessarily on the main centres of Catholic activism within this zone: Bordeaux, Agen and Toulouse.

¹⁷ Paul Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn* (Paris, 1938), p. 210. Florimond de Raemond would later become mayor of Bordeaux, and was the first to publish Monluc's *Commentaires* in the 1590s.

However, as many leading activists ranged extensively across the region, some active in several *associations* simultaneously, this survey will not restrict itself dogmatically to specific loci but will assess the activities of the *ligueurs in situ* as necessary. Of course, in creating such geographical boundaries the problem of administrative jurisdiction is raised. This region, for example, included two sovereign courts of *parlement* (Bordeaux and Toulouse), several provincial and numerous local *états*, and a multitude of *sénéchaussées, présidiaux* and lesser courts. And while the French crown governed Guyenne and Languedoc, the neighbouring territories of Albret, Foix and Armagnac were administered by Jeanne d'Albret. Contention arising from such overlaps of jurisdiction was a recurring issue in early modern France, and this study will examine the capacity of provincial and urban authorities to preserve their prerogatives in light of such controversies, and of the crown to maintain its authority despite the presence of numerous competing philosophies.

Defining a timescale over which the survey should run requires equal deliberation. The logical opening point seems to be the formal outbreak of hostilities in April 1562, at which the prince of Condé raised the Protestant banner at Orléans. According to standard histories, it was at this juncture that Catholic opposition to the Reform movement polarised and assumed a more prescribed, militaristic aspect. As a result, Catholic *ligues* sprang up across France intermittently, mainly in 1563, 1567 and 1568, with the provincial episodes of the Saint Bartholomew massacres at Bordeaux and Toulouse in October 1572 signalling the end of this first phase of the wars, and ushering in a new era in Catholic political machinations. Examination of provincial archival material, however, suggests that significant instances of organised Catholic activity are apparent even before this period, with various confraternities

and other community-based groups vigorously opposing the Reformed church in the south-west as early as 1540. Catholic activism, therefore, cannot be so easily compartmentalised, especially as several of these initial assemblies would prove influential to the structure and philosophy of the later, formal *associations* of the 1560s. The birth of the Catholic *syndicat* at Bordeaux in 1561 is one such case in point, where confraternal activism of the previous decades greatly influenced Catholic sentiment at the beginning of the religious wars. Such a view is supported by Ann Ramsey's recent study of the nature of Catholic reform at Paris, which reveals evidence of similar confraternal endeavours, much of which also commenced its tendency towards militancy during the 1540s: 'confraternities are one of the most elusive yet strategic sites where elite desires to reform popular culture intersect with broadly held Catholic desires to reform intense religious experience... attitudes towards these mixed religious, trade and political associations are a key to understanding the socially complex strands of Catholic militancy that emerge from the 1540s onwards'.¹⁸

A similar variance arises regarding the upper limit of the study. The provincial massacres of October 1572 could provide an appropriate finishing date, given the shattering blow to the Protestant psyche that such experiences dealt. But further analysis of extant archival material revealed that 1570 was a more apposite watershed for the research, for two reasons. Firstly, at the edict of Saint-Germain, of August 1570, both faiths were effectively impotent, neutralised by exhaustion and the ruinous impact of the high cost of years of warfare. Secondly, 1570 signalled the beginning of the fall from grace of Monluc; the terrible facial injuries received at Rabestens that July forced a temporary retirement from command in Guyenne,

¹⁸ Ramsey, *Liturgy, Politics, and Salvation*, pp. 21-22. See esp. Part One and Part Two.

during which time his opponents attempted to oust the general from office by presenting numerous allegations of corruption and mismanagement before the royal court.¹⁹ Monluc had been the cornerstone of the region's Catholic activism throughout the previous decade and, while other Catholic magistrates and veteran *ligueurs* continued to dominate affairs after this period, his demise signalled a lessening of the interaction and interconnectedness between individual spheres of Catholic power across the south-west. Each town now tended towards a more insular approach to its defence, less reliant on neighbouring or external succour in times of trouble. The thesis, therefore, will focus on the period 1560-1570, assessing attitudes and responses to the outbreak of the first, second and third wars, exploring relevant antecedents where applicable, and setting all exemplars in context with later Catholic activity of the 1570s and 1580s.

The standard histories are correct, however, to state that it was high-ranking, experienced men - veteran military commanders, senior local and royal officials, and leading members of the clergy – that assumed command of the Catholic *ligues* of the 1560s. Even the *syndicat* at Bordeaux, formed by politically active *avocats* and lesser officials within the *parlement*, will be shown to have needed the patronage of senior magistrates within the court to prevent its immediate censure. This study, then, will examine the role played by the leadership of the various *associations*, but also go beyond this to assess the extent to which subsequent political and social interaction between the protagonists shaped the nature of Catholic relations across the region. Three factors are pertinent here: the integral nature in provincial affairs of Monluc; the dearth of Guise influence in the south-west; and the power vacuum caused by the absence of a provincial governor in Guyenne throughout the decade. Monluc's

¹⁹ A. Jouanna, J. Boucher, D. Biloghi, and G. Thiec (eds.), *Histoire et dictionnaire des guerres de religion* (Paris, 1998), p. 1,114.

central role in Catholic activity here suggests that pervasive connections did exist among the more militant Catholics of the region. Monluc, after all, was heavily involved at Bordeaux, Agen, Toulouse, Limoges, and in Béarn and Navarre, while even those *associations* not under his direct supervision were controlled by long-standing allies or former captains: Roffignac and Malvin oversaw the *syndicat* at Bordeaux; Candalle founded the *ligue* at Cadillac; and Negrepelisse and Terride managed the union of Catholic nobles across the Bordelais.²⁰ The question would be, then, one of definition: were the ties that bound the Catholic activists under Monluc and his fellow militant leaders the vertical patron-client bonds so favoured by Roland Mousnier, Robert Harding and Sharon Kettering, where distinct contracts of *fidélité* were drawn up between the clients; the more horizontal ties of kinship, sociability, deference and loyalty, as explored by Stuart Carroll in his study on the Guise affinity in Normandy; the ‘multiplex relationships’ of Mark Greengrass’s studies, which deal more with the ‘personal and affective traffic of honour’ than with overt client networking; the long-standing *amitiés* between Gascon veterans, as described by Ruble and Courteault; or simply ‘loops of association’ - a term used by English social historians of the seventeenth century to describe expedient relations between small groups who shared a common, if short-term political or economic focus?²¹

²⁰ Other illustrious Catholic nobles to serve under Monluc during the 1560s were the *sieurs* de Tilladet, Bellegarde, Cancon, Monferrand, Lamothe-Gondrin, Fimarcon, Cosseils, Besoles, Larroque Des-Arts, Saint-Salvy, Bardachin, Lamothe-Rougé, Poy, Eymet, Verdusan, Uza, Civrac, Seignan, Barrenau, Larroque-Dorman, Pourdac, Goas, Lachapelle, Castel, Saint-Geniès, Lavit, Lussan frères, Lebron, and Noé. See François Vigneron, *Éloge d’Armand Gontaut de Biron, maréchal de France sous Henry IV, suivi notes historiques sur les actes de valuer et de patriotisme de la noblesse de Guienne, et particulièrement de celle de Gascogne* (Paris, 1788), pp. 88-89.

²¹ Roland Mousnier, *Les institutions de la France sous la monarchie absolue, 1598-1789* (2 vols., Paris, 1974), I, pp. 85-93; Robert R. Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite. The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (London, 1978), pp. 21-107; Sharon Kettering, ‘Clientage during the French Wars of Religion’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 20 (1989), pp. 221-39; Sharon Kettering, ‘Patronage and kinship in Early Modern France’, *French Historical Studies*, 16 (1989), pp. 408-35. For discussions on *fidélité* without actual service being provided, see Roland Mousnier, ‘Les concepts d’ordres d’états, de fidélité et de monarchie absolue en France de la fin du xve siècle à la fin du xviiiè’, *Revue Historique*, 247 (1972), pp. 289-312; Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power During the French Wars of Religion. The Guise Affinity and the Catholic Cause in Normandy* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 53;

Further, were those magistrates and judicial officers active in supporting the *ligueurs* coerced into doing so, or were they acting of their own accord? And were the *ligues* stronger for their close ties with fellow activists in neighbouring centres, or were they equally as effective in isolation?

The dearth of Guise patronage in the south-west is surprising, given the high profile of several former clients of this grandee family in regional affairs. So while Guise patronage of Catholic militancy in the northern and eastern homelands was extensive throughout the 1560s, it was conspicuous by its absence in Guyenne and Languedoc. Whether this resulted from difficulties in communication due to the great distance between Bordeaux and Toulouse and the north-eastern centres of Guise patrimony, or whether the Guise were wary of overt involvement in lands notionally governed by the Bourbons, is open to debate. Certainly, Stuart Carroll suspects that this was a conscious decision on their part, noting that Guise policy during the early 1560s ‘was dominated not by dogma but by a wily defence of family honour and an opportunistic and flexible reaction to events’.²²

The absence of provincial governors at Guyenne and at Languedoc would also have a bearing on the nature of Catholic activism during this period. Both Robert Harding and Sharon Kettering have identified the governor as a leading determinant of the extent to which networks, local alliances, and bonds of fidelity permeated regional political and social structures in late sixteenth-century France, especially at

Mark Greengrass, ‘Functions and limitations of political clientalism in France before Cardinal Richelieu’, in N. Bulst, R. Descimon & A. Guerreau, *L'état ou le roi: Les fondations de la modernité monarchique en France (XIV^e-XVII^e siècles)* (Paris, 1991), pp. 78-79; Roland de Catalogne, ‘Monluc et la réforme à Toulouse’, *Archistra*, 42-43 (October-December 1979), pp. 67-88; Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, esp. Chapters 9-10; the term ‘loops of association’ is used by Stephen Hipkin in his study of the confederation of interests that united opponents of enclosure in seventeenth-century England. Stephen Hipkin, ‘“Sitting on his Penny Rent”: Conflict and Right of Common in Faversham Blean, 1595-1610’, *Rural History* 11,1 (2000), p. 23. A similarly important study of civic and collective identity and association within the urban setting in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is found in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks, *The Middling Sort of People. Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800* (London, 1994), pp. 84-89.

²² Carroll, *Noble Power*, p. 252.

times of weak central authority as occurred during the religious wars.²³ Yet, in Guyenne, there would be no resident governor throughout the 1560s: the incumbent, Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, was permanently absent, preferring to administer his office by communiqué from the royal court; at his death, in November 1562, his heir, Henri de Bourbon, was too young to assume the title, and remained disenfranchised until late in 1569. In Languedoc, the situation was similar. The governor, constable Montmorency, rarely visited his province throughout his tenure, while his son, Henri de Montmorency-Damville, fared only slightly better, spending intermittent time within his *gouvernement*, before leaving to head the royal army after 1565 as marshal of France.²⁴ As a result of these factors, leading royal officials and local nobles, both Catholic and Protestant, were less restricted in their attempt to fill the ensuing power vacuum and to fight for control of the administrative institutions of the localities. This temporary rupture in the traditional hierarchy of provincial authority may well have allowed Catholic activists more room to establish themselves and expand their associations, free from the restrictions usually imposed by grandee and governor patrons.

In Guyenne, the absence of the Bourbons saw the mandate of governorship pass to Burie, the *lieutenant du roi*. Burie would prove an exasperating character to Catholics, infuriating the militants at Bordeaux by siding with the moderate *premier président* of the *parlement*, Jacques-Benoît de Lagebâton, in matters relating to conciliation with Protestants. For Burie, the sovereign court was simply 'la mediatrice de paix entre le Roy et son peuple', not a tool to be wielded by zealots

²³ Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, pp. 21-107; Kettering, 'Clientage', pp. 221-39, and 'Patronage and kinship', pp. 408-35.

²⁴ Damville was made Marshal of France on 10 February 1566. See *HGL*, 9, p. 25. In fact, the constable, Anne de Montmorency, only owned two *seigneuries* in Languedoc: Florac and Bagnols. See Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 40.

against royal authority.²⁵ He would not be alone in this view. In 1560, a leading noble of Guyenne, Armand de Gontaut, baron de Biron, warned the Bordeaux *parlement* not to become embroiled in disputes over religion at the expense of performing its principal duties, urging magistrates to adhere more strictly to the letter of their commission, and to engage only in pursuits that met with royal approval and that reinforced the royal edicts.²⁶ Catholics, however, responded by vilifying Burie's leadership and martial skills, claiming he was insipid and inept, a complaint that should be seen in context of the contrasting tactics being employed by Burie's subordinate, Monluc, who had embarked upon a ruthless campaign to subjugate Huguenot suspects at this time.²⁷

This friction between crown officials and local representatives would become pivotal to the success or failure of Catholic activism across the region, especially at Bordeaux where the ideological clash between Lagebâton and the militant Catholics dominated affairs throughout the decade. Philip Benedict has shown that such tensions were particularly prevalent at urban centres that housed provincial *parlements*,²⁸ while Jonathan Powis, whose study of the Bordeaux *parlement* in the sixteenth century suggests that unremitting discord was a feature of court life, notes that innate frictions within urban institutions were always exaggerated during times

²⁵ Jean de Métivier, *Chronique du parlement de Bordeaux* (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1886), II, pp. 288-89.

²⁶ Biron to Burie (30 October 1560), Armand de Gontaut, Baron de Biron, *The Letters and Documents of Armand de Gontaut, Baron de Biron, Marshall of France (1524-1592)* (2 vols., ed. J. W. Thompson, Berkeley, 1936), I, pp. 6-7. Such counsel against malpractice was by no means restricted to elite officials within the administration. Harding has shown that the public's image of lesser officials and clerks of the court throughout the religious wars bordered on 'notoriety', with the municipal *syndics* of Nantes going so far as to propose in 1588 that all *avocats et procureurs* be excluded from candidacy for municipal charges on the grounds that they were 'gens pernicieux'. Robert R. Harding, 'Revolution and reform in the Holy League: Angers, Rennes and Nantes', *Journal of Modern History*, 53 (1981), p. 415.

²⁷ Monluc wrote in March 1562: 'si j'eusse fait le doux, comme Monsieur le Burie, nous estions perdus', *Commentaires*, p. 487. A similar attack was launched by Jean de Lange, leader of the Bordeaux *syndicat*, against Burie's competence (February 1562), see AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 696.

²⁸ Philip Benedict, 'French cities from the sixteenth century to the Revolution. An overview', in Philip Benedict (ed.), *Cities and Social Change in Early Modern France* (London, 1989), p. 20.

of sectarian conflict.²⁹ At Bordeaux, these antagonisms were exacerbated further by the turbulence of the revolt of the Gabelle in 1548, in which a leading Catholic noble, Tristan de Moneins, had been murdered by a riotous mob.³⁰ The town was still wracked by ongoing recriminations over this affair, leading Hauser to claim that the inroads made by the Reform church, and the converse militant posturing of the two sovereign courts of the south-west, owed much to this event.³¹ The fractious and contentious nature of elite relationships at Bordeaux would thus prove a fertile exemplar for Jonathan Powis's doctoral research on the history of the magistrates of the *parlement*, a locus Géralde Nakam describes as 'la théâtre de graves tensions'.³²

The main focus of contention within the *parlements* of Bordeaux and Toulouse, of course, centred on Catholic hostility to Protestant attempts to influence legislation by gaining election to office. The crown's insistence that both faiths were represented within the local institutions agitated Catholics; for them, such a policy was assisting Huguenots in their aspirations to secure legitimacy. Catholics were also concerned at the extensive restructuring of Protestant political and military infrastructures in the south-west, realised by the synods of Clairac (November 1560) and Sainte-Foy (November 1561). These innovations were a defining moment in relations within the province. Where before, traditional rivalries and petty jealousies had characterised relations among the Catholic nobility and urban officiate, now unanimity and homogeneity of purpose described Catholic activism, as lesser and

²⁹ Friction and contestation within the various institutions of Bordeaux during the sixteenth century has been examined in Jonathan Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux c. 1500-1563* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Oxford University, 1975),

³⁰ For this episode, see S. C. Gigon, *La révolte de la gabelle en Guyenne, 1548-1549* (Paris, 1906), esp. 'L'insurrection dans le Bordelais', pp. 73-84.

³¹ Hauser wrote that the 'Democratic revolutionary character of the Huguenot movement in Guyenne probably owes some of its intensity to the memory of the revolt of 1548 and the merciless suppression thereof'. Henri Hauser, 'A Review of Courteault, Blaise de Monluc', *Revue Historique*, 97 (March-April, 1908), p. 341 note 6.

³² Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*; Géralde Nakam, *Montaigne et son temps. Les événements et les essais* (Paris, 1982), p. 73.

elite officials put aside past antagonisms to unite in common goals: the defence of Catholic prerogatives and customs; and the ostracising of all Huguenot officials and citizens. It is as a consequence of these initiatives that Monluc and other military captains assumed a more pro-active rather than reactive stance in Guyenne. All levels of society were galvanised into action, from the elites through to the urban officiate and down to the community. Here, loyalty and fraternity were encouraged by the use of specific oaths of allegiance, sworn to the Catholic Church, to the defence of their town, and to the furtherance of the Catholic cause. Formal affiliation could also be displayed and reaffirmed in the many civic processions and ceremonials, while membership fees were introduced to enable the *associations* to secure the services of veteran captains and to stockpile arms and munitions ready for distribution in times of crisis. These were hardly features of temporary, rapidly assembled, clandestine units, but an indication of stable, structured corporations, proud of their heritage, overt in their intent to engage and prevail.

But Catholic enmity should not be seen as focussed solely against the Reform movement during this period. Resentment at the crown's policy of limited religious toleration for Protestants was also a factor in the antipathy felt by many *ligueurs* to royal authority.³³ Catholic hackles were especially raised at the amnesty granted to Huguenot prisoners and exiles by successive royal edicts, despite assertions that abuse and provocation of Catholic communities continued unabated across the region. Nicola Sutherland has described these initial edicts as 'curious, contradictory, self-defeating and provisional'.³⁴ Catholic commentators, however, were far more

³³ For an overview, see Olivier Christin, 'From repression to pacification: French royal policy in the face of Protestantism', in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop, Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585* (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 201-14.

³⁴ Nicola M. Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition* (New Haven, 1980), p. 128. There were six royal edicts published between 1560 and 1563: the edict of Amboise (2 March 1560), which

damning, questioning the very ideology behind the crown's strategy. For them, the concept of tolerating Protestantism was anathema, as Jean de la Vacquerie, a doctor of the Sorbonne in Paris, iterated to the king in early 1561: 'Religion is the primary and principal foundation of all order... there is never more trouble or a greater tempest in a commonwealth than when there is some schism or dissension concerning the issue of religion there'.³⁵ But Catholic grievances also linked the theological controversy with the intense social frictions ravaging France during the early 1560s, a connection Mack P. Holt has explored in his study of the nature of sectarian violence during the religious wars. Holt sketches each confession as 'a body of believers rather than a body of beliefs', each viewing the other as 'pollutants of their own particular notion of the body social, as threats to their own conception of ordered society'.³⁶ Mario Turchetti believes the crown was well aware of these concerns, and shaped its legislation to address social disorder as much as it did accommodation of multiple faiths.³⁷ The problem for the crown, though, was that neither Catholic nor Protestant truly favoured a move towards religious pluralism, as both viewed toleration as a failure to defeat the 'other' militarily and evangelically.³⁸

disassociated religion from politics, thereby allowing Calvinists to escape charges of sedition so long as they remained loyal to the state; the edict of Romorantin (May 1560), which transferred the prosecution of heresy from the crown courts, which could impose the death penalty, to the church courts, which could not, effectively securing less severe sentencing for Protestants; the edicts of Fontainebleau (19 April 1561), and of Saint-Germain (11 July 1561), which introduced amnesties for Huguenot prisoners and exiles; the edict of Saint-Germain (17 January 1562), the first formal acknowledgement of Huguenot rights of worship, which granted limited liberties for Protestant ceremonial, but required that Catholic worship should not suffer from such concessions; and the edict of Amboise (19 March 1563), the peace edict, and determinant of the crown's policy of 'pacification' for the coming years. For a summary of each, see Robert J. Knecht, *Catherine de' Medici* (London, 1998), pp. 288-89.

³⁵ Jean de la Vacquerie, 'Catholique remonstrances aux Roys et princes Chrestiens...', (Paris, 1561). Quoted in Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 44.

³⁶ Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 2.

³⁷ M. Turchetti, 'Religious concord and political tolerance in sixteenth- and seventeenth- century France', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 22 (1991), pp. 15-25.

³⁸ Stankiewicz suggests that Catholics saw toleration as a term of contempt: 'They had no interest in promoting it; occasionally they practiced a quasi-toleration – a false attitude concealing some ulterior motive, a utilitarian attitude taking for granted that at some point toleration would be rejected, an expedient usually referred to with derision'. W. J. Stankiewicz, *Politics and Religion in Seventeenth-Century France* (Berkeley, 1960), p. 1.

In fact, if the preambles of the various edicts are examined closely, the crown also conceded this point, each stating they were merely ‘par provision, et jusques à la détermination dudit concile générale’.³⁹

The need to end the warfare that was devastating the kingdom, however, meant that the crown would persist with its attempts at conciliation throughout the decade. In March 1563, the edict of Amboise confirmed Huguenot rights of worship, declared a new amnesty, and ordered all confiscated property and lands to be returned to their former owners. If Catholics were aggrieved at these concessions, they were outraged at the clause banning affiliation to their *associations*. Worse, the crown determined that it would be the *parlements* who enforced these measures, effectively casting the magistrates as executors of its policy of toleration in the provinces. This dilemma, which forced militant Catholics to dismantle their *ligues* or defy royal authority, would define relations between the *ligueurs* and crown until the renewal of hostilities in September 1567.

The final years of the decade saw a most confused situation. The appearance of a sizeable Protestant army in the south-west forced the king - now more vulnerable than at any juncture during his brief reign - to reconcile with Catholics in order to

³⁹ Edict of Saint-Germain (17 January 1562), André Stegmann, *Édits des guerres de religion* (Paris, 1979), p. 10. The theme of toleration until an interim council could reunite both sides was quite prevalent at the time. Yet while Michel de l'Hôpital openly berated Catholics for their intolerance, and Protestants for their reforming zeal, urging both to show restraint until a council could settle their differences, Loris Petris has shown that the long term goal of the chancellor was always a return to religious unity; civil tolerance was simply employed in the meantime to prevent France from imploding into civil war. See Loris Petris, 'Faith and religious policy in Michel de l'Hospital's civic evangelism', in K. Cameron, M. Greengrass, P. Roberts, (eds.), *The Adventure of Religious Pluralism in Early Modern France* (Bern, 2000), p. 140. Indeed, as late as 1591, the Protestant military commander, François de la Noue, argued that re-unification of the two creeds was still possible, urging that liberty of conscience and reform of abuses could yet unite the French church. See M. Wolfe, 'Protestant reactions to the conversion of Henry IV', in M. Wolfe, (ed.), *Changing Identities in Early Modern France* (Durham, N.C., 1997), p. 378; Turchetti, 'Religious concord and political tolerance', pp. 16-18. For the provisional character of this edict, see Mario Turchetti, 'Middle parties in France during the Wars of Religion', in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop, Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585* (Amsterdam, 1999), p. 169. For an overview of l'Hôpital's policy on religious toleration in France, see Albert Buisson, *Michel de l'Hospital* (Paris, 1950), pp. 143-226.

impede the ambitions of the Huguenot nobility. Militants such as Roffignac, Candalle and Lange at Bordeaux, Lalande and de Nort at Agen, and Armagnac, Daffis and de Paulo at Toulouse, were thus returned to favour as the crown sought to harness Catholic military resources in the region. If Catholics continued to be exasperated by crown policy - concessions were still granted to Huguenots and *associations* still banned in subsequent edicts – their communities would find new, legitimate vehicles with which to champion the defence of orthodoxy: the resurgent confraternities and urban coalitions.

In order to engage fully in these controversies, this thesis will be divided into four parts. The first three are studies of specific geographic areas - Bordeaux, Agen and Toulouse – while the fourth is an examination of wider national and European dimensions. Part I comprises a study of Catholic activism at Bordeaux and across the Bordelais. Chapter 1 establishes the demography and structure of government of the region and evaluates the impact of the growth of the Reformed church across Guyenne on Catholic *mentalités*. It then examines the activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves and its affiliated sub-group, the performers of the *basoche*, in events in Bordeaux during the 1540s and 1550s, arguing that their defence of Catholic traditions and practices can be viewed as an antecedent to the *associations* of the 1560s. Chapter 2 will assess the role of the Catholic *syndicat* at Bordeaux, formed in May 1561 by minor officials of the *parlement* ostensibly to counter the increasing influence of the Reformers within the administration of the town. The subsequent confrontation between militant officials and moderate *parlementaires* for ascendancy would prove a pivotal episode in the affairs of the sovereign court, polarising allegiances across the province by confession. The *syndicat's* role in opposing crown

and provincial attempts to accommodate the Reform movement will then be assessed, along with a review of its success and events leading to its ultimate demise.

Chapter 3 examines the part played by the Catholic nobility in the internecine struggles of the early 1560s, specifically their support for senior Catholic magistrates at Bordeaux and their participation in attempts to remove the leading moderate at court, the *premier président* of the *parlement*, Jacques-Benoît de Lagebâton, from office. The formation of an elite-led *ligue* at Cadillac will also be considered. This *association*, commanded by a prominent militant and former captain under Monluc, Frédéric de Foix-Candalle, would unite the Catholic nobility of the Bordelais in opposition both to the expansion of the Reformed church and to the crown's determined efforts to impose limited toleration on the provinces. As such, its structure, *modus operandi*, legitimacy and longevity will be assessed. Chapter 4 will conclude this survey, exploring later events across the region, especially the post-1568 domination of military and bureaucratic offices at Bordeaux by a coalition of leading Catholic activists from the *parlement*, town council and local church. Forged to prevent further Huguenot insurrection within the town, such cooperative command of urban administration would prove an important feature of Catholic tactics over subsequent years. It would usher in a new era of Catholic hegemony, the *pièce de résistance* of which would be the return to Bordeaux of the Jesuits - initiated and financed by leading personalities of the Catholic hierarchy.

Part II switches focus to concentrate on events at Agen and across the Agenais. Chapter 5 details the pressure placed on Catholic communities of the region by a belligerent Reform movement and examines their response to such provocation. As at Bordeaux, a coalition 'government' made up of Catholic nobles and notables from the town council, *présidial*, and clergy was employed to confront the ascendancy of

the Huguenots, although this occurred far earlier at Agen. Chapter 6 assesses the next phase of Catholic activism at Agen: the part played by the local nobility in supporting the Catholic cause during 1563. Directed by Monluc, and backed by delegates of the *états de l'Agenais*, and by the coalition at Agen, Catholic militants established the earliest oath-bound *ligue* of the period in February 1563. This would be the first Catholic *association* capable of taking the fight to the Protestants rather than relying on defensive measures for security. Although forcibly dismantled soon after by the crown, the mere fact that Catholics had set aside traditional jealousies and rivalries to combine to form the *ligue* at Agen seems to have united the disparate Catholic bodies of the region.

The period 1565-1570 would see the continuing domination of affairs in the Agenais by Monluc and his forces. Monluc was able to balance the securing of Catholic hegemony at Agen with adherence to crown dictate as *lieutenant du roi* in Guyenne, largely due to some imaginative interpretation of royal authority. The vigour and resourcefulness with which he and his Catholic comrades supported the Catholic cause, yet avoided open censure from the crown, perplexed Protestants and moderates alike. Despite not being rated as important a Catholic centre to the course of the war in the south-west as the citadels of Bordeaux or Toulouse, Agen was none the less a strategic prize for both faiths during the 1560s. Its safeguarding required Catholic defenders to display an innovation in strategy that would prove a model for many similar episodes of urban resistance.

Part III concentrates on affairs at Toulouse, the second great Catholic bastion of the south-west. Chapter 7 mirrors the approach of Chapter 1. It explores possible antecedents to the formal *associations* of Toulouse in 1563: the growth of an active confraternity; a pro-active group of street performers that energised the Catholic

community on the streets; and the growing involvement of royal officials in the Catholic cause despite pressure from the crown to implement its policy of toleration. Two specific events are then evaluated: the Protestant coup of May 1562, which forced the Catholics of Toulouse into military action; and the elite-led *ligue* of March 1563, by which the Catholic leadership consolidated its supremacy over its opponents. Chapter 8 analyses the reinvigoration of Catholic activism within Toulouse after 1567, examining the success of the Catholic policy in financing the war effort through the sequestering of Protestant goods and the taxing and fining of local Huguenots. It also explores the somewhat anachronistic phenomenon of the *croisade*, called at Toulouse in August 1568 to combat Protestantism. That the *croisade* ultimately failed to achieve its purpose should not lessen its relevance to this study, as the fact that it was validated by the papacy, backed by the *parlement*, and supported by leading nobles of the *sénéchaussée*, reflects the depth of sentiment felt by many Catholics at this time. And that Catholics should consider such an entity as a tool says much about the prevailing tension and sense of urgency in Toulouse towards the end of the decade.

Part IV considers the extent to which national and European dimensions influenced the form or nature of Catholic activism during the 1560s. This is especially relevant as the Catholic leadership of Guyenne and Languedoc were concerned not only with local issues, but faced the problems associated with the governance of border provinces. Chapter 9 will examine the impact of Catholic grandee patronage on the *ligues* of the south-west, specifically the role of the Guise in Guyenne, and, to a lesser extent, Montmorency in Languedoc. The influence of the Triumvirate, the union of elite Catholic nobles in 1562 that boasted financial and military backing from Spain and the papacy, will then be assessed to ascertain

whether the *ligues* should be seen as local phenomena, or as part of a pan-European Catholic corpus. The role played by Catholic activists in promoting the resurgence in confraternal activism after 1567 - an attempt, arguably, by the Catholic military commanders to bolster their forces by co-opting highly motivated *confrères* into their urban militias and local garrison troops – will also be examined.

In Chapter 10, the involvement of Spain and the papacy in the progress and activities of the *ligues* will be explored. Philip II of Spain had long been a vociferous opponent of conciliation with Protestants, and did not hesitate to offer financial and military support to Monluc in Guyenne to advance Spanish foreign policy aims. The degree to which Philip's succour was accepted, or indeed requested, will be examined to define the relationship between the *associations* of the region with their Catholic neighbour. The extent to which the *ligues* received similar support from the papacy, not only in terms of finance and manpower, but in validating the various oaths, unions and crusading ideals of the period, will also be assessed, as will the endeavours of a key protagonist in the region, cardinal Armagnac, a leading militant at Toulouse but also the papal inquisitor for the south of France. The papal inquisition in the 1560s may well be viewed as an anachronism, but there is evidence to suggest that Armagnac used this office as yet one more weapon in the Catholics' diverse arsenal against the Huguenots, a tool to prise out Protestant suspects and an instrument with which to assail the Calvinist queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret.

Chapter 11 will explore this point in more depth, detailing the ambitions of France, Spain and the papacy to oust Jeanne from her lands in Béarn and Navarre. Here, Armagnac, Monluc and the Catholic generals were used as pawns in a wider conspiracy, adding military muscle to the diplomatic pressures applied from Paris, Madrid and Rome. At the local level, though, these men were active supporters of the

Catholic rebels of Basse-Navarre, Oloron and Lescar, who sought to overthrow Jeanne's Calvinist regime from within. These rebellions are usually viewed as isolated occurrences, unconnected with Catholic activism at Bordeaux and Toulouse. But by assessing their interaction, the merging of command hierarchies, and the mutual support and reciprocity offered by each, the sphere of influence of the *ligueurs* will be shown to have been more diverse than is traditionally stated, and to encompass concepts broader than simply localised defence. Such inter-connectedness of activism across the entire region has rarely been acknowledged or explored by historians, and it is expected that this study will reposition the various *associations* of the south-west within the historiography the religious wars. It will show them to have been continuations of established Catholic activism rather than spontaneous reactions to specific episodes of Protestant aggression, and far more than the disparate, localised, limited and parochial entities of the annals.

PART I: BORDEAUX AND THE BORDELAIS

Chapter 1. Catholic activism at Bordeaux: antecedents

Chapter 2. Catholic activism at Bordeaux: the *syndicat*

Chapter 3. Catholic activism at Bordeaux: the nobility

Chapter 4. Catholic activism at Bordeaux, 1565-1570

Chapter 1. Catholic activism at Bordeaux: antecedents

The town of Bordeaux deserved its status as capital of Guyenne. The largest urban centre of the province by far - its population of around 50,000 in 1559 dwarfed that of the surrounding towns - Bordeaux was also the premier Atlantic trading port of the region, exporting vast quantities of wine to Europe.¹ Its formidable defensive architecture reflected a chequered history, in which French, English, and Gascon troops had fought incessantly for dominion over the town. Encircled by an imposing curtain wall, Bordeaux was fortified by seven stout gateways: two opening to the countryside; five facing the river Garonne. A decorated central gateway, the *porte de Cailhau*, provided a ceremonial entrance into the town from the port, while its battlements posed a daunting obstacle to any amphibious assault. Its location at the mouth of the river allowed the town fathers to control all waterway traffic along this important southern artery. In times of strife, chains could be thrown across the Garonne from its landing stage to prevent galleys from continuing downriver.² Incorporated into the curtain defences were two robust fortresses: the château Trompette commanding the north-eastern approaches to Bordeaux; and the château Hâ guarding the land to the north-west. Garrisoned within each were royal soldiers and the town's formal guard, each commanded by a professional captain.³

¹ Bordeaux's population had swelled from 25,000 in 1515 to around 50,000 by 1559. Anne-Marie Cocula, *Étienne de la Boétie* (Bordeaux, 1995), pp. 72-73.

² Chevalier describes the *porte de Cailhau* at Bordeaux as 'un véritable arc de triomphe'. Bernard Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes de France du XIVe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1982), p. 125.

³ Some useful general histories of Bordeaux can be found in: Robert Boutrouche (ed.), *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715* (Bordeaux, 1966); Alex Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique et monumentale* (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1844); Dom Devienne, *Histoire de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1771); Camille Julian, *L'histoire de Bordeaux depuis les origines jusqu'à 1895* (Bordeaux, 1895); Abbé Patrice-John O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux* (6 vols., Bordeaux, 1863); Gabriel de Lurbe, *Chronique Bordeloise* (Bordeaux, 1594); Jean Darnal, *Chronique Bordeloise. Supplément* (Bordeaux, 1619).

As in other large French towns, the administrative infrastructure of Bordeaux comprised a maelstrom of complex, competing entities. Civil government was the prerogative of the town council, the *jurade*. An *arrêt du parlement* of 1527 specified that the civic corporation should consist of a mayor and twelve serving officers, or *jurats* (a figure halved seven years later by decree), so that each of the six *quartiers* of Bordeaux - Saint-Éloi, Saint-Pierre, Saint-Michel, Saint-Rémy, Sainte-Eulalie, and Saint-Mexent - was represented by a single *jurat*.⁴ Following the revolt of the Gabelle in 1548, when numerous *jurats* were implicated in the insurrection that saw the *sieur* de Moneins dragged from his home and murdered on the streets of Bordeaux, the *jurade* was temporarily suspended. In its stead, twenty-four *prud'hommes* were elected from among the loyal bourgeoisie to serve under the mayor. When the king exonerated the six *jurats* two years later, in 1550, reinstating the ancient rights of the city corporation, the incumbent *prud'hommes* were kept on, forming a new body, the *Trente*. The office of mayor, previously named 'in perpetuity' by the king, was now made an elective post, restricted to one two-year term.⁵ By *lettres patentes* of 1559 and 1560, the *jurats* were then granted jurisdiction over the town's policing, with responsibility to appoint both the captain and lieutenant of the guard.⁶

Bordeaux was also the seat of the sovereign court of *parlement* in Guyenne. Its origins date back to the late-fifteenth century, when a single courtroom, the *Grand'Chambre*, dispensed royal justice. A *chambre des enquêtes* was established

⁴ AM Bordeaux, Carton II, 17, *Ceremonies* (24 July 1527). See also Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique*, II, p. 204.

⁵ Elected mayors of Bordeaux after 1550: 1550-52, François de Lamothe, *sieur* de Cambes; 1552-54, Gaston de l'Isle, baron de la Rivière; 1554-56, Pierre Eyquem, *sieur* de Montaigne; 1556-58, Louis de Saint-Gelais, *sieur* de Lansac; 1558-59, François de Lamothe, *sieur* de Cambes; 1559-61, Pierre Geneste, *sieur* de Fabas, 1561, François de Carle, *sieur* de la Roquette; 1561-63, Antoine, *sieur* de Noailles; 1563-64, Gaston de l'Isle, baron de la Rivière; 1564-67, Gaston de la Touche, *sieur* de la Faye; 1567-71, Guy de Saint-Gelais, *sieur* de Lansac; 1571-73, Henri de Foix, *comte* de Candalle; 1573-75, Charles de Montferrand. See Boutrouche, *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, pp. 541-45.

⁶ AM Bordeaux, Carton II, 14, *Guet de Garde* (1559/1560).

under Louis XII, with a *chambre criminelle* added in 1519, and two new chambers; a *chambre des requêtes* and a second *cour criminelle*, or *tournelle*, added in 1546 and 1547 respectively.⁷ Each chamber played a specific role in the judicial administration of the province. The *Grand'Chambre* provided the major appeal court for Guyenne, dealing mainly with high profile local and crown issues, while the *chambre des enquêtes* served as its annex, hearing all lesser civil cases. The *chambre des requêtes* incorporated petitioning into the daily life of the *parlement*, allowing litigants to plead their case and offer a defence rather than simply be judged. It also served to relieve the *chambre des enquêtes* of many of its petty cases, while the *cour criminelle* served to vet appeals to decide whether they were worthy of proceeding before the *Grand'Chambre*.⁸

With the expansion of legal chambers, the number of officials appointed to serve the *parlement* increased too. Originally, the court was served by two *présidents* and eighteen *conseillers*, of which nine served as *clercs*. In 1519, royal *lettres* created a new office, that of *premier président*, and added eight further offices of *conseiller*. Four more were created in 1537, five in 1543, while 1547 saw fifteen *conseillers* and two *présidents* added to serve in the new chambers.⁹ Thus, when Etienne de la Boétie entered the *parlement* in 1553 as an up-and-coming *conseiller*, he reported a professional corpus numbering one *premier président*, seven *présidents*, sixty-two *conseillers*, sixty-two *avocats*, eighty-five *procureurs*, eleven *huissiers*, eight *secrétaires*, two *greffiers* and two *receveurs aux amendes*.¹⁰

⁷ Gaston Zeller, *Les institutions de la France au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1948), pp. 153-54. The *parlement* suffered a similar fate to the *jurade* following the Gabelle riots of 1548, being suspended by royal order until the amnesty of 1 January 1550.

⁸ Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, pp. 177-81.

⁹ Boutrouche, *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, pp. 289-90; C.B.F. Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux depuis sa création jusqu'à sa suppression (1451-1790)* (Geneva, 1978), p. 99.

¹⁰ Cocula, *Étienne de la Boétie*, pp. 72-73.

Guyenne also boasted nine *présidial* courts, judicial bodies aimed at bridging the gap between the *parlement* and the lesser *seigneurial* and *sénéchaussée* courts.¹¹ The *présidiaux* were the cause of intense friction between administrative bodies of the province, especially as the edict of Fontainebleau (1552) granted them ‘last resort’ jurisdiction over many criminal cases, a prerogative previously held by the *parlement*. This became increasingly evident during the initial stages of the religious wars in Guyenne, where cases involving Protestants were regularly dismissed by *présidial* officers sympathetic to the new religion, even if Catholic magistrates had decided to the contrary.¹² The governance of Bordeaux was thus wracked by jurisdictional conflict and jealousies, as the various institutions - *jurade*, *présidial* and *parlement* - fought for pre-eminence.

Autonomous fiscal bodies, such as the *cour des aides* at Périgueux, could also add to the tensions. Formed by the crown in 1554, ostensibly to create and then sell offices to fund the royal war chest, the officers of the *cour des aides* were paid significantly higher wages than the Bordeaux *parlementaires*, 500 *livres* per year as opposed to 375 *livres*.¹³ This caused immense resentment, so much so that when the opportunity arose, the magistrates moved to annex the *cour des aides*, absorbing its rival into the structures of the *parlement* by October 1557. This was a serious blow to the consulate of Périgueux, who had paid the crown 50,000 *écus* in 1554 to guard against this very outcome, although jurisdictional rivalries would blight the early period of the merger, with the *cour des aides* forced to operate in parallel with the newly-established *chambre des requêtes et des aides* for several years, only fully

¹¹ Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, pp. 175-77. Each *présidial* was officiated by a *président*, seven *conseillers*, a *procureur* and an *avocat du roi*.

¹² Powis has shown that many of these discrepancies centred on the *lieutenant-criminel* of the *présidial* at Bordeaux, whose leniency in cases of ‘scandal and illegal assembly’ forced the *parlement* to review and revise many decisions. Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, pp. 77-78.

¹³ Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*, p. 104; Nakam, *Montaigne et son temps*, p. 55.

integrated into the *parlement* in November 1561.¹⁴ Wider representation also suffered in the shadow of these three behemoths, with neither the *états de Guyenne*, nor the *assemblées particulières* (the *états de l'Agenais, de Quercy, de Rouergue, and de Périgord*), being convoked on a regular basis.¹⁵

The Reformed church in Guyenne

Protestant gains during the 1550s were so extensive that, by 1561, it was estimated that over 2,100 Reformed churches were active across the kingdom.¹⁶ In Guyenne and Languedoc, the gains were even more spectacular. That same year, it was estimated that of Bordeaux's fifty thousand inhabitants, over fourteen percent, around seven thousand, were allied to the Reform movement,¹⁷ while the Spanish Ambassador to the French court, Thomas Perrenot, *sieur de Chantonnay*, estimated that over four hundred Catholic churches in the south-west had been desecrated by Huguenots during the recent sectarian strife.¹⁸ Astute policy from Calvin in Geneva can take much of the credit for this phenomenon. Buoyed by repeated requests from local communities, Calvin's evangelical mission provided large numbers of qualified ministers and preachers to serve the towns, nobility and *menu peuple* of the south-west; of the eighty-eight ministers sent from Geneva to France between 1555 and

¹⁴ See Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, pp. 66-68; Zachary Sayre Schiffman, 'An intellectual in politics: Montaigne in Bordeaux', in Michael Wolfe (ed.), *Changing Identities in Early Modern France* (Durham, N.C., 1997), p. 309; Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*, pp. 107-11.

¹⁵ Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, pp. 57-70.

¹⁶ R. M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France 1555-1563* (Geneva, 1956), p. 106. For an outline of the scale to which the nobility of France converted to Protestantism, see Jean-Marie Constant, 'The Protestant nobility in France during the Wars of Religion: A leaven of innovation in a traditional world', in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop, Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555-1585* (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 69-82.

¹⁷ Nakam, *Montaigne et son temps*, p. 47; Boutrouche, *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, p. 243. Monluc reported that ten per cent of the population of Guyenne were of 'la nouvelle religion' in 1562. BN Dupuy, 588, fo. 106.

¹⁸ Ruble, *Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 139.

1562, sixteen were appointed to Guyenne, nine to Languedoc, and three to Bergerac.¹⁹ The Abbé O'Reilly encapsulates these inroads: 'la réforme trouva une grande facilité d'expansion; elle y fit des progrès étonnants et enrôla sous sa bannière de nouveaux et de nombreux prosélytes'.²⁰ For O'Reilly, a Catholic historian, the blame for such incursions lay squarely with royal ministers who, following the death of Henry II in 1559, allowed a lull in heresy persecution while simultaneously debating the merits of toleration. This shift in crown policy, culminating in the accommodatory edicts of Saint-Germain (January 1562) and Amboise (March 1563), appears to have empowered many representatives of the Reform movement to seek access to local and provincial institutions, a move which further boosted the argument for concessions.

Protestant expansion across Guyenne, and especially into the corridors of power at Bordeaux, only served to strain the tensions between the governing elites. Until 1555, the Huguenot's best hope of achieving any representative position in Guyenne had been to infiltrate the universities of the south-west, traditionally welcoming of Humanist intellectuals. By 1561, though, they were succeeding in penetrating the machinery of government, as increasing numbers of incumbent office holders converted from Catholicism, with monasteries, convents and the lesser clergy of Guyenne all reporting that their numbers had dwindled considerably.²¹ For Catholics, the infiltration of Protestants into the body politic of Guyenne was no subtle metamorphosis. It represented a damaging break with tradition; one they claimed would threaten the stability of the province. Throughout Henry II's reign,

¹⁹ The 16 ministers assigned to Guyenne took residency in 12 churches there; the 9 sent to Languedoc served in 9 churches. See Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, p. 55; Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 38; Janine Garrisson-Estèbe, *Les protestants au XVIe siècle* (Paris, 1988), p. 207.

²⁰ O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 188.

²¹ Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn*, p. 209.

Catholic nobles and magistrates had been at the vanguard of the fight against heresy and sedition, with royal authority and Catholicism inexorably linked: to challenge one meant to challenge the other. By 1562, though, with the crown seemingly intent on turning a blind eye to Huguenot machinations in its urgency to implement its policy of accommodation, the Bordeaux *parlement* feared for the welfare and integrity of local authority.²²

An analysis of Protestant infrastructure in the south-west reveals that such fears were not unwarranted. In order to consolidate their gains of the late 1550s, the Reformed church had convened a synod at Clairac, on 19 November 1560, under the auspices of Calvin's chief minister, Boisnormand.²³ This meeting sought to integrate the disparate churches of the region into a single entity. Guyenne would be divided into seven constituencies: Condommois, les Landes, Béarn, Agenais de la Garonne, Agenais vers Sainte-Foy, Bordelais et Bazadais, Quercy and Rouergue, each governed through its colloquy, answerable only to the provincial synod. The two largest colloquies established were at Agen, containing twenty-one churches, and at Condom, with fourteen, though all were responsible for the affairs of their individual churches, irrespective of their size.²⁴ By instituting such revisions, the Reformers had created a province-wide bureaucracy that facilitated the establishment of an effective military infrastructure, with individual churches ordered to acquire military cadres capable of defending the local community. Each church would fund the recruitment of a professional captain and appropriate forces by diverting money away from local taxes into a war chest, with additional sums put aside should the levying of mercenary companies be required. The synod, however, made it clear these would

²² Jonathan Powis, 'Order, religion, and the magistrates of a provincial *parlement* in sixteenth-century France', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 71 (1980), p. 181.

²³ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 1.

²⁴ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 1.

not be autonomous commands. Orders were to be issued by the colloquy to the church leadership, and the captains were to follow these to the letter. No doubt aware that such innovations might alarm Catholic authorities, the synod urged all captains to make their military activities as unobtrusive as possible, with all muster rolls and manoeuvres to be undertaken in secrecy or at night.²⁵ There was little difficulty in recruiting suitable commanders, either, as the south-west had been flooded with unemployed veterans after the royal army had been disbanded following the peace with Spain in 1559.²⁶ Monluc reported that the incentives offered to these veterans were, at times, more than financial: 'les bons ministres leur promettoient non-seulement des richesses, mais, à ce que j'oyois dire, paradis comme s'ils en eussent eu la clef'.²⁷ Ironically, Monluc would also receive such an offer from a captain of the Reformed church at Nérac in January 1562.²⁸

Huguenot military potential continued to evolve over this period. One of the more important innovations, the *assemblée politique*, emanated from a second synod, held at Sainte-Foy, near Agen, in November 1561. The *assemblée politique* essentially formalised the military structures of the Reformed churches by creating local councils to oversee the organisation, training and deployment of its troops. This would prove to be the foundation of a pyramidal hierarchy that successfully united the Huguenot communities across Guyenne. Each church contracted an experienced

²⁵ For further reading on the Synod at Clairac, see G. Bourgeon, *La réforme à Nérac. Les origines (1530-1560)* (Toulouse, 1880), pp. 83-84; Lucien Romier, *La conjuration d'Amboise* (Paris, 1923), pp. 222-25; Georges Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen pendant les guerres de religion du XVIIe siècle', *Revue de l'Agenais et des anciennes provinces du sud-ouest XIV – XVI* (Agen, 1887-1889), XIV, p. 439; Lecler, 'Aux origines de la ligue', p. 190. For a broader picture of provincial synods across France during 1559/60, see Garrisson-Estèbe, *Les protestants au XVIe siècle*, p. 193.

²⁶ The Venetian ambassador, Barbaro, noted that most of the Protestant infantry deployed during the first war was 'composée de vieux soldats, pour la plupart gascons'. *Commentaires*, p. 1,207, note 10.

²⁷ *Commentaires*, p. 510.

²⁸ This elicited a most vitriolic response from the newly-appointed *lieutenant-général* to Guyenne: 'et quelles diables d'églises sont cecy, qui font les capitaines?'. *Commentaires*, p. 478. In fact, Monluc claims to have been solicited on numerous occasions by the Reformers, one offer promising money and the use of four thousand foot soldiers. *Ibid.*, pp. 476-77.

captain to organise its militia, who would report to the regional colloquy for instructions. The colloquies now featured committees to oversee military affairs, each governed by a *colonel*, with two *protecteurs*, stationed at Bordeaux and Toulouse, commanding the combined forces of the south-west.²⁹ As a model for organising defence and uniting disparate centres of population across Guyenne, this pyramidal hierarchy would prove immensely successful. So much so, in fact, that it was quickly adopted by regional synods across France, and ultimately by the national synod as the blueprint for its military reforms after April 1562.³⁰

Catholic condemnation of such innovation was swift. Florimond de Raemond, a Catholic *conseiller* at Bordeaux, ridiculed the colloquies for featuring ‘un ministre, un avocat, un marchand, un solliciteur, un tailleur, un chaudronnier, un jardinier’,³¹ while more senior magistrates accused the Reformers of ‘vouloir introduire leur religion à coup d’espée, abattre la monarchie de France, et la réduire en forme de république et cantons’.³² Théodore de Bèze, Calvin’s representative in the south-west, rejected these charges, arguing that the Clairac and Sainte-Foy initiatives were nothing more than a means to allow Protestants to contribute more effectively to royal military potential.³³ Monluc, though, was in no doubt that the synod’s reorganisation of its military structure was at the root of much of the region’s troubles.³⁴ The threat posed by Protestant forces was now very real for Catholics. Their innovations had already delivered an improved fighting force in Guyenne; at Bordeaux, complaints of iconoclasm, armed assemblies and abuses of the clergy

²⁹ See Lucien Romier, ‘A dissident nobility under the cloak of religion’, in J.H.M. Salmon, (ed.), *The French Wars of Religion. How Important were Religious Factors?* (Boston, Mass., 1967), p. 28.

³⁰ See especially the re-organisation of the synod at Nîmes, in R. J. Knecht, *The French Civil Wars, 1562-1598* (London, 2000), pp. 74-75. For wider reformed military structures, see Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, pp. 106-09.

³¹ Florimond de Raemond, *Histoire de la naissance, progrez et decadence de l’hérésie de ce siècle* (2 vols., Rouen, 1610), I, p. 994.

³² Jouanna et al, *Histoire et Dictionnaire*, p. 68

³³ *HE*, I, p. 888.

³⁴ Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 118.

flooded in to the authorities.³⁵ The *parlement*, though, was divided over a course of action, with the moderate officials preferring to continue adherence to the crown's policy of promoting accommodation as a means of securing stability within the province. The situation could have proven bleak indeed for Catholics had not two dynamics been at play: the first comprised a current of pro-Catholic sentiment, invigorated by the activities of a confraternity within Bordeaux; the second saw the establishment of a *syndicat* of Catholic officers within the *parlement* at Bordeaux, supported by the Catholic magistrates and nobles of the region, emphatically opposed by moderates and Reformers alike.

The presence of these two dynamics challenges the traditional history of Catholic activity within Bordeaux, which sees dissenting Catholic voices fuse into a distinct political corpus, the *syndicat*, only in November 1561, in response to a failed assault on the château Trompette by Protestant troops the month before. This is too blunt an analysis, and needs to be reassessed. Instead, it will be proposed that organised Catholic activism had been rife within the town for decades before the religious wars, sometimes concerted, sometimes disparate, but always encapsulating a wide gamut of Bordeaux society, and supported by prominent members of the judiciary. This activism was driven by two bodies within Bordeaux: the confraternity of Saint-Yves, the representative corporation of the *avocats* and *procureurs* of the *parlement*; and the *basochiens*, the affiliated actors and musicians of the confraternity, whose performances brought colour and melody to the town's various religious processions and feast day celebrations. An appraisal of the political, social and religious map of Bordeaux during the mid-sixteenth century reveals that the

³⁵ See especially AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 374-427 for April 1560; fos. 428-554 for May 1560; fos. 555-632 for June 1560; fos. 633-707 for July 1560; Bordeaux *parlement* to king (23 August 1560), BN ms fr, 15,873. James B. Wood has noted that the highest incidences of violence against priests, canons and friars during the first decades of the religious wars occurred in Guyenne and lower Languedoc. Wood, 'The impact of the Wars of Religion', p. 148.

confraternity and *basoche* were fundamental to organised Catholic activity within the town, establishing foundations that facilitated the birth of the *syndicat*, and constructing networks and alliances of sympathetic Catholics that would support even greater activism during the 1560s. To ascertain their impact on events in Bordeaux, and to place them in the wider context of Catholic activism, the endeavours of the confraternity and *basoche* will be outlined below.

Early Catholic reaction: confraternity of Saint-Yves and players of the *basoche*

The cult of Saint-Yves had been a medieval phenomenon. Its patron, Yves Héloré, was born on 7 October 1253 at Kermartin, near Tréguier in northern France. The son of a local nobleman, Yves had been expected to pursue a military career, but instead entered the university at Orleans to embark upon a vocation in the legal profession. On qualifying as a *juge et avocat*, Yves quickly gained renown for his tireless defence of the poor, needy and abused of the region, and, at his death in 1303, locals immortalised his achievements in inscription on his tomb: ‘consolateur des affligés... avocat des veuves... tuteur des orphelins... défenseur des innocents... patron des avocats’.³⁶ Over the following years, numerous miracles were reported at this site, prompting a papal inquest. On 19 May 1347, Yves was pronounced a saint by pope Clement VI at Avignon, and assumed the role of *patron des avocats* within the courts of the land.³⁷

³⁶ See Christian Chavanon, *Béatification professionnelle de Saint Yves* (Bordeaux, 1936), pp. 7-10.

³⁷ The best general histories of the cult of Saint-Yves in France are: Jean François Fournel, *Histoire des avocats au parlement de Paris depuis Saint Louis jusq'au 15 octobre 1790* (2 vols., Paris, 1813); S. Ropartz, *Histoire de Saint Yves, patron des gens de justice* (Saint-Brieux, 1856); Louis Arthur de la Borderie, *Monuments originaux de l'histoire de Saint Yves* (Saint-Brieux, 1887). I would like to thank Professor Michael Jones for his time in sharing his knowledge of northern French confraternities of Saint-Yves in the late medieval and early modern periods.

While revered in various regions throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it was the early decades of the sixteenth century that witnessed the wide scale veneration of Saint-Yves across France. In the various *parlements*, confraternities dedicated to the protection of the needy were established by the *avocats* and *procureurs* as a mark of respect to their patron. The first appeared at Paris in 1517, celebrating its feast day on 19 May, the date of Yves' canonisation. The earliest reference to such a confraternity at Bordeaux is to be found in the *registres du parlement* for May 1529: 'la fete Saint-Yves avoit esté remise ce jour... ledit jour, devers le soir, ont esté celebrées vespres, et ce fait, le boire a esté baillé par les syndics de la confrerie Saint-Yves'.³⁸ An examination of the *registres* for subsequent years shows that this feast day ritual was observed each May without fail throughout the century. The entry for May 1536 reveals that the ceremony was never restricted solely to the *avocats* and *procureurs*, but that significant numbers of magistrates were frequently in attendance:

Après-disner, furent dites vespres à la manière accoustomée pour la confrairie Saint-Yves... et faite la collation par MM. les presidens, conseillers, et advocats et procureurs en ladite cour et autres, comme est de coustume faire, en la salle de l'audience, et furent créés syndics de ladite confrairie, deux procureurs en icelle pour la présente année.³⁹

The integral role of the attending *parlementaires* in the administrative affairs of the confraternity is best seen in an entry for May 1559, which reports that once the mass in veneration of Saint-Yves had been completed, an election was held to appoint four *commissaires* to represent the confraternity before the court for the

³⁸ BM Bordeaux, ms 1,497, III, fo. 89. Unfortunately, the articles of the Confraternity of Saint-Yves at Bordeaux no longer exist. However, a complete set of articles, drawn up in 1527, does exist for the Confraternity of Saint-Yves at Rieux. See Le Palenc, 'La confrérie des avocats de Rieux au seizième siècle', *Bulletin de la société archéologique du midi de la France*, 25-28 (1899-1901), pp. 313-14.

³⁹ BM Bordeaux, ms 1,497, III, fo. 101.

coming year. The *avocats* and *procureurs* would nominate eight contenders, four from each corporation, with the gathered magistrates selecting their preferred candidates. Supervising this procedure were the four outgoing *commissaires*, whose terms of office would terminate at the swearing-in of the new electees before the altar of the palace chapel. To conclude proceedings, two *conseillers* were taken to examine the confraternity's accounts; a practice that suggests the *parlement's* financial division took a keen interest in the expenditure of the brotherhood.⁴⁰ It is pertinent to note that among those magistrates who regularly attended the Saint-Yves ceremonial were some of the more active Catholic zealots of the 1560s, such as *présidents*, Roffignac and la Chassaigne, and *conseillers*, Malvin, Baulon and de Nort.

Music and pageantry played prominent roles in the feast-day services. This fell under the remit of the *clercs de la basoche*, young and apprentice *avocats* and *procureurs* of the sovereign court, whose role as musicians and performing artists allowed them a distinctive identity and sense of community within the town.⁴¹ The *basoche* were, in fact, one of only two groups permitted to stage plays, ballads and

⁴⁰ See AM Bordeaux, ms 765, fols. 867-69. The election of the *commissaires* for May 1559 is described here in great detail. For the *avocats*, the four candidates proposed were Pierre Bouchot and Simon Chimbault, 'vieux maitres', and Berthomé Bellinguet and Jean de Lauteur. For the *procureurs*, the candidates were Pierre Abouseilh, Pierre Monteil, Martial Simon and Jean Ytier. The four outgoing *commissaires* were Rencille and la Rivière, *avocats*, and La Roche and Nantiac, *procureurs*. In the subsequent election, the magistrates decided upon Chimbault, Bellinguet, Monteil and Simon as representatives for the coming twelve months.

⁴¹ The origins of the *basoche* in France date back to 1303, when Philippe le Bel authorised the institution of a community of *clercs du parlement de Paris*. Paris had specific organisations of *basoche*: *basoche du palais*; *basoche du châtelet*; *basoche de la chambre des comptes* (called *L'Empire de Galilée*); and *les Enfants sans-souci* (known as *les Sots*). Due to the exponential rise in legal cases before the *parlement* following the Pragmatic Sanction of 1438, Harvey estimates that by the end of the fifteenth century there were over ten thousand *basochiens* at Paris. Howard Graham Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche. The Contributions of the Law Societies to French Medieval Comedy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1941), p. 17. For further details of the origins of the *basoche*, see M. Brives-Cazes, *Notices historiques sur la basoche de Bordeaux du XVe au XVIIIe siècle* (Toulouse, s.d.); E. Valsse-Cibiel, 'Notes rétrospective sur la basoche Toulousaine', *Mémoires de l'académie impériale des sciences, inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse*, 6 (1868), p. 223; René Glangeaud, *La basoche de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1912), p. 5; Jean-Baptiste Dubédac, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse* (2 vols., Paris, 1885), I, p. 310; Abbé Cau-Durban, 'Statuts de la basoche du sénéchal de Toulouse', *Mémoires de la société archéologique du midi de la France*, XVI (1908), pp. 167-68.

processional songs on the streets of Bordeaux during the sixteenth century, the other being the *écoliers* from the *collège de Guyenne*, although only the *basoche* performed for the Saint-Yves festivities.⁴² The two groups were almost exact contemporaries; the *collège de Guyenne* being founded in 1533 by members of the *jurade*, keen to replace the town's defunct *collège de grammaire*, while the first mention of the *basoche* performing for the confraternity appears in the *registres du parlement* for 1534.⁴³

The staple for both groups had been traditional biblical tales and devotional song. By the 1540s, however, each began favouring the more controversial morality plays and farces, so popular across the rest of France.⁴⁴ This new material, which ridiculed church abuses and even mocked individual *jurats* and *parlementaires*, was well received by audiences at first. But as the Reform movement gained momentum in and around Bordeaux, its provocative content began to incite vocal outbursts from attending partisans. The sectarian nature of the plays was exacerbated as the two groups diverged along confessional lines. The *basoche*, as members of the confraternity, proffered the Catholic voice in Bordeaux, deriding the Huguenots and their innovations, and defending the traditional church structures of the region. By performing at the confraternity's feast-day celebrations, the *basoche* were able to reach a wide audience across the town, especially as the festivities often lasted for eight days.⁴⁵ As such, their performances became a focal point for Catholic sentiment in Bordeaux, a forum at which Catholic identity within the town could be defined.

⁴² Harvey shows that it had long been a tradition for the students of the *collège de Guyenne* to rehearse and present plays during their training, thus occasioning the rivalry between the *écoliers* and *basoche* at Bordeaux. See Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*, p. 14; Gaullieur, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux*, I, pp. 251-55.

⁴³ AM Bordeaux, ms 759, fo. 869. For the formation of the *collège de Guyenne* at Bordeaux, see Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes de France*, p. 231; Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, p. 211.

⁴⁴ For detailed study of the various forms of *farce*, *moralité* and *sottie* performed by the *basoche* in France during the sixteenth century, see Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*.

⁴⁵ 'La fetes des basoches durant 8 jours avant le fete de St Yves. Le roi de la basoche se promenoit par les rues suivis tous les eleves deux a deux, l'epée au côté'. BM Bordeaux, ms 828, 5, fo. 53.

The Protestant cause was championed by the *écoliers* of the *collège*, an institution once respected across France as a prominent seat of Humanist learning, but now renowned as an engine of Reform evangelism in the south-west. By 1551, many *écoliers* could be seen openly espousing the Calvinist faith in Bordeaux, even attacking local Catholic ceremonies and chanting psalms to interrupt processions and masses.⁴⁶

With public performances now a popular vehicle for the dissemination of sectarian propaganda, the authorities in Bordeaux were forced to deal with rising numbers of confrontations between the two groups. By 1545, members of the *jurade* were regularly intervening to restore order, causing the *parlement* to rule that from henceforth the content of every play was to be vetted before performance.⁴⁷ The court appointed a committee to validate the coming month's material, with representatives from both groups charged with presenting their proposed repertoires before the *Grand'Chambre* well in advance. In the Catholic case, this duty fell to the incumbent artistic director of the company, an elected official notionally titled the *roi de la basoche*. The office of *roi* had been honorific at best, although the holder did receive a *redevance annuelle* of 15 *sols* from the confraternity. For Jehan Pachabelier, however, things would be slightly different. Elected to the position of *roi* in May 1545, Pachabelier became the first *basochien* fully accountable for the activities of his fellow Catholic players before the court.⁴⁸

This development had important ramifications for Catholics. Firstly, it legitimised the status of the *basoche* within Bordeaux; despite their affiliation to the confraternity, they had never been recognised formally by the magistrates. It also

⁴⁶ For examples of urban violence committed by the youth during religious ceremonies, see Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes de France*, pp. 287-308.

⁴⁷ BM Bordeaux, ms 367, fo. 81. For wider moves to censor the content of *basochien* performances across France at this time, see Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*, p. 34.

⁴⁸ Ernest Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne* (Paris, 1874), p. 257.

raised the profile of the *roi de la basoche* within the hierarchy of Bordeaux society. Thus, from 1545 onwards, the *roi* became an intrinsic part of formal ceremonial within the town, heading processions and welcoming visiting dignitaries on arrival. His status was raised even further in May 1549, when Henry II formally integrated the office of *roi* into the administrative structures of the Bordeaux *parlement*, effectively granting Catholics five distinct representative voices within the court: the four elected *commissaires* and the newly-appointed *roi de la basoche*.⁴⁹

The zenith for the *basoche* came in December 1559, with the royal visit of Elizabeth of Spain to Bordeaux. As the queen's entourage processed through the *porte de Cailhau* into the town, it was the confraternity of Saint-Yves that formed the elite guard, marching 'en armes en fort bon ordre sous l'enseigne du roy de Bazoche', with their *roi*, Jehan Larquier, mounted on a white charger, in full armour, leading the way.⁵⁰ Larquier had fought hard for this honour; a recent royal *arrêt* had temporarily frozen further appointments to sovereign courts in France, an attempt by the crown to cut back on royal expenditure, denying Larquier his planned promotion to the office of *procureur*. Holding office as either an *avocat* or *procureur* was a prerequisite of candidacy for the role of *roi*. Only a personal appeal to the king, sweetened by the offer 'mettre en armes tous ses supporte', and a promise that the *basoche* would play a special piece before Elizabeth during her visit, allowed Larquier to enter the court officiate, and thus gain election as *roi*.⁵¹ Larquier then managed to delay his appointment just long enough to ensure that his promotion

⁴⁹ BM Bordeaux, ms 367, fo. 96; AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fo. 149. The *registres du parlement* confirm that *côtisations* were paid in full to the *procureur-général* of the court by the *basochiens*, AD Gironde, 1B 211, *Arrêt du parlement* (16 February 1560), fo. 56, and by the *avocats* and *procureurs* of the confraternity of Saint-Yves, AD Gironde, 1B 165, *Arrêt du parlement* (2 March 1556), fo. 20; AD Gironde, 1B 212, *Arrêt du parlement* (18 March 1560), fo. 266.

⁵⁰ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 89-94 and 104; BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 179-88. See also AD Gironde, 1B 207, *Arrêt du parlement* (29 November 1559), fos. 40; 182.

⁵¹ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 147-50.

would be presided over by Elizabeth herself, a brashness that was not appreciated by the court, which threatened to fine Larquier and censure his office as punishment.⁵²

Confrontation between *basoche* and *écoliers* at Bordeaux

With so much polemic now channelled through the plays, literature and songs of the *basoche* and *écoliers*, the rivalry between the two bodies intensified throughout the 1550s.⁵³ This war of propaganda captured in microcosm the growing social tension between Catholics and Protestants across Guyenne. Inevitably, the initial weapons of the players - parody and satire - gave way to stones, swords and guns. At one Catholic performance at Libourne, in May 1555, attending Reformers attacked the *basoche* with clubs, claiming that much of the material was offensive to their church. Royal troops were needed to quell the ensuing riot.⁵⁴ As a result of this mêlée, the *roi*, and leading members of the confraternity of Saint-Yves, were summoned by the *Grand'Chambre* at Bordeaux, on pain of a 500 *livres* fine, to explain Catholic involvement in the disturbances.⁵⁵

Matters escalated dramatically in 1556 with the institution of a military-style structure to the *collège de Guyenne* by the *écoliers*. The students divided themselves into four divisions - *Gascogne, France, Navarre, Provence* - each headed by a captain and sub-lieutenant to oversee discipline. Each cell would be responsible for co-ordinating specific militant activity in Bordeaux, able to deploy separately or in

⁵² AD Gironde, 1B 207, *Arrêt du parlement* (26 November 1559), fo. 96. Larquier held his nerve though, and on 16 December 1559 he received confirmation of his promotion to *procureur*, and of his tenure as *roi de la basoche*, before Elizabeth within the *Grand'Chambre* at Bordeaux. AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 147-50.

⁵³ Harvey claims that the issue of censorship was circumvented by both troupes by performing in secret and not writing down the content of the plays. This may have led to fewer prosecutions, but it leaves the historian with fewer records to examine. Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*, p. 223.

⁵⁴ AD Gironde, 1B 158, *Arrêt du parlement* (14 May 1555), fos. 93-97.

⁵⁵ AD Gironde, 1B 161, *Arrêt du parlement* (September 1555), fo. 30.

conjunction with others.⁵⁶ Gaullieur highlights the close resemblance between these measures and the innovations of the synods of Clairac and Sainte-Foy after 1560, and suggests that the schemes employed by the *écoliers* at this early date may well have been precursors to the military initiatives adopted by the Reformed church four years later.⁵⁷ The escalation forced the *parlement* into stronger action. In April 1556, it issued an *arrêt* banning ‘aucunes pièces concernant la religion ou foi chrétienne, la vénération des saintes et les institutions de l’Eglise’ from the plays and comedies of both the *basoche* and *écoliers* and, the following year, proscribed any material that defamed the *jurats* and *parlementaires* themselves.⁵⁸ By 1559, however, both groups had taken to patrolling the streets of Bordeaux in gangs, actively seeking out their rivals, with armed skirmishes the norm. On one occasion, in May 1560, a band of *écoliers* was intercepted by the town guard before it could disrupt Catholic services at Saint-André. In the ensuing fight, however, the guard found themselves so heavily outnumbered that only assistance from the soldiers at the nearby château Hâ allowed them to escape without too many casualties.⁵⁹ The *parlement* ordered an immediate inquest into this outrage, requisitioning all similar cases of accusations of armed

⁵⁶ Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, pp. 257-60. It is interesting to note that the students of the University of Paris in the early thirteenth century were similarly divided into four nations: France, Picardy, Normandy, England. See David Nicholas, *The Evolution of the Medieval World* (London, 1992), p. 349.

⁵⁷ Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, p. 257.

⁵⁸ *AHG*, 3, p. 466. Caricatures against royal and provincial magistrates were rare during the early decades of the sixteenth century. The farces tended to reflect notorious criminal trials, as in the oft performed ‘La condamnation des banquetz’, or would parody the *avocats* themselves, as in ‘La farce de Mestre Trubert et d’Artrougnart’ and ‘Plaidoyé de la Simple et de la Rusée’. See Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*, pp. 72-103. During the high period of Calvinist evangelism during the 1550s, however, Catholic sentiments turned on those magistrates suspected of sympathising with the Reform church. Thus, Harvey shows that anti-magisterial performances increased dramatically across France, with the morality play ‘Mars et Justice’ (c. 1553) a prime example of a diatribe against the latitude being granted to Calvinist ministers. *Ibid.*, p. 51. Even those members of the clergy thought to be reticent in confronting the Reformers were satirised, as the profusion of anti-clerical farces of the late 1550s reveals: ‘Les pauvres deables’; ‘Le meunier de qui le diable emporte l’ame’; ‘Le porteur de Patience’; ‘Frère Guillebert’; ‘Du pardonneur, du Triaculeur’; ‘De la Tavernière’. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁵⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 433-42.

bands of *écoliers* roaming the region so as to track down the ringleaders.⁶⁰ On 16 May, the court took the decisive step of banning the *écoliers* from assembling outside the walls of their *collège*, warning that further transgressions would be severely dealt with.⁶¹

The *collège de Guyenne*, though, had a powerful patron in Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, and governor of the province. Navarre dispatched letters to Bordeaux vilifying the magistrates for showing favour to the *basoche*, forcing the court to rescind their punitive *arrêt* against the *écoliers*.⁶² This divided the court completely. Catholic *conseillers* and *confrères* vehemently opposed such interference, urging that further measures should be taken against the *collège*, not concessions. The moderate party within the court, meanwhile, led by the *premier président*, Lagebâton, affirmed the governor's right to intervene, and urged conciliation between all parties. A compromise of sorts was reached; the decision to censure the *écoliers* would be re-examined by magistrates if Catholic accusations of illicit assemblies in Bordeaux were investigated fully by the court.⁶³ Thus, in January 1561, the *parlement* dispatched a number of its *conseillers*, in pairs, and accompanied by soldiers from the Château Hâ for protection, to survey the town and to arrest those caught attending any illegal gathering. Within two months, six *conseillers* were being employed on a full-time basis to search suspect houses and remove any weapons found to the security of the *maison de ville*.⁶⁴ Yet difficulties remained. One Catholic merchant, whose name is missing from the *registres*, complained to Charles de Couci, *sieur* de Burie, the king's lieutenant to Guyenne, that he had sent six communiqués to the *parlement* relating details of over thirty

⁶⁰ AD Gironde, 1B 214, *Arrêt du parlement* (3 May 1560), fo. 23.

⁶¹ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 452-58.

⁶² BM Bordeaux, ms 367, fo. 213.

⁶³ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 461-66.

⁶⁴ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 300.

armed assemblies within the town in recent months, but that nothing had yet been done to end these gatherings.⁶⁵ Similarly, Huguenots began to lodge counter-complaints, reporting those Catholics suspected of contravening the various royal edicts of 1561.⁶⁶

Matters came to a head in February 1561, when the incumbent *roi de la basoche*, Charles Amussat, marched a large force of armed *basochiens* to the gates of the *collège*, intent on gaining entry and attacking the *écoliers*. Fortunately, the *parlement* had been informed of this, and deployed a number of soldiers in the vicinity to forestall full-scale fighting.⁶⁷ This was the final straw for the beleaguered magistrates. On 15 February, an *arrêt* was issued censuring the activities of both parties. The *écoliers* were ordered to disband their divisional structures, while the *confrères* were prevented from electing a *roi de la basoche* for the immediate future.⁶⁸ Five days later, the *Grand'Chambre* issued a more detailed ordinance, forcing both *écoliers* and *basochiens* to disarm completely and to hand in all weapons to the court.⁶⁹

Denied recourse to armed pursuits, the *écoliers* continued to vex the Catholics of Bordeaux by gathering on street corners and, on occasion, within the corridors of the *parlement* building itself, to chant the psalms of Clément Marot. While apparently a more peaceable activity, this was no less illegal, as an *arrêt* of 26 March 1561 had banned the singing of psalms anywhere within the walls of Bordeaux 'sur peine de la hart'.⁷⁰ Catholics living near the *collège* felt especially aggrieved at this

⁶⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 400.

⁶⁶ In one instance, numerous Catholic magistrates and notables of Bordeaux were accused of failing to surrender their arms, and of continuing their surreptitious patrols of the streets at night, in direct contravention of a recent *arrêt* calling for the disarming of the town's inhabitants. AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 339.

⁶⁷ Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, p. 260.

⁶⁸ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 269.

⁶⁹ AD Gironde, 1B 226, *Arrêt du parlement* (20 February 1561), fo. 274.

⁷⁰ AD Gironde, 1B 227, *Arrêt du parlement* (26 March 1561), fo. 363.

new phenomenon, reporting that ‘les escoliers et martinets, accompagnées de 400 à 500 personnes, chantoient les psaumes dans le cour du dit collège, à quoy il ne pouvoit pourvoir’.⁷¹ An investigation launched by the *parlement* found the *écoliers* guilty of contravening the *arrêt*, and charged them accordingly, although the judgement was not delivered until later in the year.⁷² There were many who argued, however, and with some justification, that the deputation sent to examine the claims constituted a *fait accompli*, in that each of the four deputies assigned - Roffignac, Béraud, Baulon and Monein - was a known, and most zealous, Catholic. It would be most interesting to know the response, if any, of those militant Catholics based within the *parlement* building to this aural provocation. The court was, after all, home to both the confraternity and the *basoche*, and would soon be the seat of the nascent *syndicat* too. The *registres*, though, are silent on this matter.

Nascence of the Catholic *syndicat* at Bordeaux: 19 May 1561

It was amid such tensions that Jean de Lange, one of the more vocal Catholic activists of the period, took centre stage in affairs at Bordeaux. Lange had entered professional life in July 1547, as an *avocat de la chambre de plaïde* in the Bordeaux *parlement*. He served two concurrent terms on the *jurade* between September 1554 and October 1556, and would be appointed to the office of *conseiller du parlement* in 1568.⁷³ The first reference to Lange participating in Catholic affairs at Bordeaux appears in the *registres* for 1556, with the entry for 2 March reporting he ‘rendre

⁷¹ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 273.

⁷² AD Gironde, 1B 236, *Arrêt du parlement* (29 November 1561), fo. 98.

⁷³ ‘Serment prêté par Jean de Lange, l’un des Trente; il jure d’être obéissant aux mandements de MM. les Jurats, de bien les conseillers, sans égard pour personne, et de garder le secret (15 September 1554)’, ‘Inventaire sommaire des registres de la jurade, 1520-1783’, I, *Archives Municipales de Bordeaux*, (Bordeaux, 1896), fo. 22. See also Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, ‘Jean Lange, conseiller au parlement de Bordeaux’, *Revue catholique de Bordeaux*, 1883 (Bordeaux), p. 687.

l'administration et comptes de la confrairie Saint-Yves'.⁷⁴ He continued as treasurer for the confraternity up until 19 May 1560, when his application for election to the office of *commissaire* proved successful.⁷⁵ The significance of this promotion is made apparent when an amendment to the confraternity's rules of May 1555 is considered: it required all candidates wishing to apply for the office of *commissaire* to have served a minimum ten years membership with the confraternity beforehand.⁷⁶ This would indicate that Lange had been an affiliate since the 1550s and therefore involved, perhaps, in conflict with the Reform movement and the *écoliers* of the *collège*, since at least 1550.⁷⁷

Lange was to become the Catholic zealot *par excellence* at Bordeaux. Ernest Gaullieur describes him as 'un avocat d'un grand talent, mais d'une fanatisme qui fit couler à Bordeaux des flots de sang',⁷⁸ while Jean Darnal, writing only years after Lange's death, was of much the same opinion; 'Lange... porté de zèle à la religion Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine... [il] esmouvoit les habitans de la ville de faire un scindic'.⁷⁹ Boscheron-Desportes lauds Lange as 'un brillant orateur', who carried many a Catholic argument in debates before the *parlement*.⁸⁰ His distinguished performance at the *états-généraux* at Orleans on 21 August 1560, where he delivered a vibrant harangue against church abuses, confirmed this view, and would prove a formative moment in Lange's career. For it not only established him as a significant

⁷⁴ AD Gironde, 1B 165, *Arrêt du parlement* (2 March 1556), fo. 20.

⁷⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 503-04. The office of *commissaire* carried the expectation that the holder would defend zealously the Catholic cause in Guyenne. Of the *commissaires* elected between 1554 and 1560, the following would prove to be keen adherents of Catholic activism in Bordeaux during the religious wars: (1554) Bertrand de Camaing and Charles Morin, *avocats*, Antoine Vignac and Etienne Reynac, *procureurs* (1554); Laroche and Lurnel, *avocats*, l'Enseigne and Dupré, *procureurs* (1555); Rencille and la Rivière, *avocats*, Laroche and Nantiac, *procureurs* (1558); Simon Chimbault and Berthomé Bellinguet, *avocats*, Pierre Monteil and Martial Simon, *procureurs* (1559); Lange, Languellieur and Benoist (1560).

⁷⁶ AM Bordeaux, ms 763, fos. 577-79; BM Bordeaux, ms 1,497, III, fo. 183.

⁷⁷ The ten-year apprenticeship period was also applied to performers of the *basoche* after 1551. See Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*, pp. 66-67.

⁷⁸ Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, p. 289.

⁷⁹ Darnal, *Chronique Bordelais, Supplément*, p. 76.

⁸⁰ Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*, I, p. 159.

voice within Catholic polemic at this time, but brought him to the attention of the cardinal and duke of Guise, the foremost Catholic grandees in France.⁸¹

While historians have acknowledged, if not yet fully exposed, Lange's participation in the affairs of the *syndicat* at Bordeaux, they invariably fail to address two concurrent factors. Firstly, no reference is made to the contribution of previous episodes of Catholic activism, especially the activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves and the *basoche*, in shaping the political climate that spawned the *syndicat*, nor indeed to Lange's involvement in this. Secondly, no attempt is made to examine the veracity of traditional histories that place the nascence of the *syndicat* in November 1561, a decision largely, and incorrectly, predicated on Lange's impassioned address to the *parlement* that same month, in which he lambasted Huguenot attempts to seize the nearby château. This study has already shown that concerted Catholic opposition to the Reform movement in Bordeaux began long before 1561. It has revealed how, through the activities of the confraternity and the *basoche*, Catholics were experienced in challenging attempts to legitimise and accommodate Protestantism, a capacity that would see many of its activists play leading roles not only in the functions of the *syndicat*, but in the development of wider Catholic activism during the 1560s at Agen, Cadillac and Toulouse. This correlation has rarely been acknowledged.

This chapter will now turn to the emergence of the *syndicat*, to examine the timescale associated with events at Bordeaux, and to illustrate the extent of the symbiosis between Catholic traditions of activism and the necessity for a concerted response in the early 1560s. The *registres du parlement* hold the key here. The entry

⁸¹ For 'La harangue du peuple et tiers estats de toute la France au Roy tres-chrestien Charles neuvième, tenant ses estats generaux en sa ville d'Orleans le premier jour de janvier 1560, faite par maistre Jean de Lange de Luxe, conseiller et advocat de la Royne au parlement de Bordeaux (Orleans, August 1560)', see BM Bordeaux, H 8,613; BM Bordeaux, ms 712, 8, II, fo. 208. See also Tamizey de Larroque, 'Jean Lange, conseiller', p. 687.

for 19 May 1561 appears at first to detail a standard Saint-Yves ceremony, listing the assembled *parlementaires* and their participation in the administrative functions of the confraternity.⁸² It continues, though, by describing how the assembled magistrates then granted Lange permission to establish an autonomous appendage to the confraternity, a body that would be open to current members and Catholic officers of the *parlement* only, but one that would be administered from within, and financed solely by, the confraternity itself.⁸³ This appendage was, in fact, the *syndicat*, receiving official authorisation a full six months earlier than is traditionally attributed. The entry further discloses that this was not an impulsive decision, lodged before the *parlementaires* by desperate Catholics, but that the magistrates, in granting Lange's request, were simply confirming an application made twelve months previous. This suggests that permission to form a *syndicat* at Bordeaux must have been sought during the Saint-Yves festivities of May 1560, the same ceremonial at which Lange was inaugurated as *commissaire*. The *registres* for 19 May 1560 confirm this, disclosing that the *parlement* had been forced to suspend judgement on the *lettres patentes* presented by the confraternity until both the *Grand'Chambre* at Bordeaux and the *conseil privé* at Paris had consulted fully over the issue and given their assent.⁸⁴

This shifts the *syndicat* further back in time, preceding any serious armed confrontation between Catholics and Reformers at Bordeaux by months, and the first major attempt on the château Trompette by a year and a half. Yet for the *lettres patentes* to be presented before the confraternity's assembly in May 1560, the *syndicat* must have been mooted in Catholic circles even before this date. Again, the *registres* provide the answer, revealing that the first application occurred as early as

⁸² AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 441-42; BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 599.

⁸³ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 442-43; BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 599.

⁸⁴ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fo. 505.

May 1558. In fact, it appears that the confraternity were granted official permission for their *association* on 4 June 1558, only for the *parlement* to delay proceedings by refusing to discuss the matter until the following November.⁸⁵

The extensive activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves and the *basoche* in confronting the Reform movement during the 1540s and 1550s, and their proposing of such a formal *association* a full three and a half years before standard interpretations have suggested, alters completely our perspective on organised Catholic activism at Bordeaux during this period. It obviates the traditional rationale that posits the *syndicat* as a response to specific military threats, as concerted military action would not threaten Bordeaux for a further two years. It also implies that the *syndicat* was not an innovation of November 1561, but an adjunct of the confraternity, a culmination of established Catholic activism within the town. It also serves to reposition the role of Jean de Lange in its initial formulation. For while Lange was undoubtedly the key protagonist during the early 1560s, his role within the confraternity was largely administrative during the 1550s. It may be the case, then, that the *syndicat* was intended to counter the escalating threat from the *écoliers* during the previous decade, a determined response to the divisional organisation of the *collège*, rather than a response to events in 1561. This would certainly explain how, in May 1561, Lange was able to offer the *parlement* the services of four thousand fighting men, a mere week after the *syndicat's* supposed creation.⁸⁶ Were these men the same *confrères* and *basochiens* who had confronted the *écoliers* on the streets of Bordeaux throughout the latter half of the 1550s?

What is most evident, however, is that organised Catholic activism in the south-west of France should not be seen as a prerogative of the post-1562 conflict.

⁸⁵ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 155.

⁸⁶ Devienne, *Histoire de la ville de Bordeaux*, I, p. 134.

Catholic activists have been shown to be involved in disputes over religious ideology, in the contestation with Huguenots over the domination of social space, and in the struggle for political hegemony within Bordeaux's institutions, well before the first religious war. The *syndicat* should be viewed, perhaps, as an escalation of Catholic resources, a harnessing by the confraternity of sympathetic magistrates who previously only interacted through the ceremonial and administrative functions of the confraternity, but who now preferred a more pro-active role in combating the growth of the Reform movement in Guyenne.⁸⁷ It may well have been seen as the vehicle that would help Catholics steer the political agenda at Bordeaux to their own advantage, a reciprocal agreement whereby its membership gained the support and protection of high ranking Catholic *parlementaires*, who in return were provided with an extensive power base that would boost the possibility of Catholic hegemony in the province. The following chapter will explore these issues further, examining the structure and activities of the *syndicat*, its role vis-à-vis the *parlement* and other institutions of Bordeaux, and assess its contribution to the Catholic cause during the first years of the 1560s.

⁸⁷ Among the magistrates registered as attending the confraternity's ceremonial were many of the period's most zealous defenders of the Catholic cause: *présidents* Roffignac, La Chassaigne, Fauguerolles and Beraud, and *conseillers* Malvin, Baulon, and de Nort. See BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 155; AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fo. 505; AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 443.

Chapter 2. Catholic activism at Bordeaux: the *syndicat*

The formation of a Catholic *syndicat* at Bordeaux in May 1561 would prove to be a milestone in the progression of Catholic activism in the south-west of France. It facilitated effective opposition to the growing moderate consensus within the administration at Bordeaux, and helped define Catholic attitudes to the crown's policy of accommodating Protestants. Yet, as has been noted above, this primacy is not reflected in the historiography of the religious wars in France; no dedicated study has yet been made of the *syndicat*, while broader surveys of Catholic activity tend to play down its importance, emphasising that it was forcibly decommissioned the following year by royal decree. All circumvent any determination of its hierarchical, administrative or financial structures - dissuaded, perhaps, by the dearth of surviving archival material pertaining to its functions. Even the more explicit commentators on Catholic activism of the period, such as Lecler, Thompson and Gaullieur, are vague, as is Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, the biographer of Jean de Lange, who makes only fleeting references to his charge's involvement with the *syndicat*. Jonathan Powis, whose doctoral thesis on the magistrates of the Bordeaux *parlement* during the sixteenth century was rightly heralded as a *tour de force* on administrative politics in Guyenne, also evades the question, allocating few pages to its activities, while the tacit conclusions reached by Denis Crouzet and Camille Julian, regarding

the *syndicat's* structure and *modus operandi*, draw heavily from Théodore de Bèze's commentary in the *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, rather than from archival sources.¹

Yet despite such shortcomings, the *syndicat* should not be seen as a chimera. By analysing the *registres du parlement*, and the copious correspondence generated by crown and provincial officials opposed to the *syndicat's* existence, it is still possible to garner valuable insights into affairs. Four themes are especially prominent within these records: Catholic initiatives aimed at deploying its militia on the streets of the town; crown attempts to pacify the region by forcing the populace to disarm; Catholic surveillance of the Huguenot population within Bordeaux; and the deteriorating relations between the *syndicat* and the *lieutenant du roi* in Guyenne, the *sieur de Burie*. These issues dominated court business during this time, revealing a unity of purpose among the clergy, magistrates and local nobility that provided solid support for the *syndicat*. This chapter will use these resources to explore events during the early 1560s at Bordeaux, and to reconstruct, where possible, the birth of Catholic ascendancy within the town. It will offer new conclusions over the size, strength and aims of the *syndicat*, examine its *modus operandi*, trace its forced demise in June 1562, and assess its legacy for the wider Catholic cause in Guyenne.

Catholic ascendancy: the deployment of militia

Of the surviving documentation, the most abundant category relates to Catholic attempts to deploy its armed supporters onto the streets of Bordeaux. Once more, Jean de Lange was the most vocal proponent of this policy. He had advocated

¹ Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue', pp. 188-208; Gaullieur, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux*, I, pp. 322-27; Thompson, *Wars of Religion*; Tamizey de Larroque, 'Jean Lange, conseiller', pp. 685-97; Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*; Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*; F. Hauchecorne, 'Le parlement de Bordeaux pendant la première guerre civile', *Annales du Midi*, 62 (1950), pp. 329-40; Jullian, *Histoire de Bordeaux*.

a greater policing role for the confraternity of Saint-Yves as early as May 1560, only for the *parlement* to delay a response until it had received guidance from the crown on such a sensitive issue. Lange received his response on 7 September, with royal *lettres missives* authorising the confraternity to arm itself and take its place within the town guard to bolster security during the coming vacation.² Perhaps aware of this new mood at court, François de Peyrusse, *comte d'Escars*, the *lieutenant du roi de Navarre* for Guyenne in the absence of the governor, requested that the confraternity's remit be extended to increase the number of patrols of the town's walls and gates, and to assist in the surveillance of hotels situated near the perimeter wall.³ In light of the recent *lettres*, the *parlement* had little option other than to agree, although it insisted that no confraternal members be used to confront suspects or to enter the hotels to check passports. The *lieutenant du roi* to Guyenne, the *sieur de Burie*, endorsed these moves, albeit grudgingly, decriing the shortage of manpower at Bordeaux. He stipulated, though, that it should be the *jurade* who assumed jurisdiction over the inspection of the town's hotels, not the confraternity's militia. As such, all hoteliers were to maintain up-to-date *brevets* listing all guests residing on their premises to speed up the work of the investigating *jurats*.⁴

The policing of the wider Bordelais, however, gave cause for great concern. With Burie having only minimal resources at his disposal, and those largely centred within Bordeaux, the authorities lacked sufficient manpower to patrol the countryside effectively. This forced the *lieutenant du roi* to co-opt the local Catholic nobility into maintaining order across the region, much to the anger of Huguenot communities.

² AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fo. 810.

³ AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 787-92. D'Escars would be an important figure in Catholic hegemony within the south-west, holding numerous high offices: *lieutenant-général du Limousin* (22 September 1561); *seneschal de Toulouse* (25 May 1562); *gouverneur de Bordeaux* (4 May 1563); *gouverneur de la château Hâ* at Bordeaux (4 May 1563); *cappitaine de compagnie de cinquante hommes* (12 February 1565); *lieutenant des châtellenies de Rancon, Champagnac, et du Périgord* (7 February 1568). See Cassan, *Le temps des guerres de religion*, pp. 198-99.

⁴ Burie to Francis II (14 September 1560). BN ms fr, 15,873, fo. 8.

Initially, the deployment of the private retinues of the *sieurs* de Monluc, Lanssac, d'Orthe, Candalle, d'Aussun, Lauzaun, Caumont, Biron and Noailles proved effective in this role, as confirmed in a report to the king from Lanssac, who testified that the Catholic nobility had prevented any substantial escalation of violence.⁵ Burie accepted this, and requested permission to maintain the Catholic nobles under arms for the immediate future. But he also urged the crown to send reinforcements to augment his personal forces.⁶

Within Bordeaux, though, the *lieutenant du roi's* policies continued to be questioned by Catholics. In October 1560, Lange wrote to the regent, Catherine de Medici, accusing Burie of incompetence and mal-administration, and of failing to adequately defend the province.⁷ Attached to the letter was a *mémoire*, written on behalf of the Catholics of the *parlement*, which named several magistrates suspected of favouring the Reformers. These allegations were to polarise the *parlement*. Dubois, a moderate *conseiller*, contended that the court had always striven to perform their duties with impartiality and rebuked Lange, a mere *avocat*, for speaking above his station. In response, Thomas de Ram, the *lieutenant-général* of the *sénéchaussée* of Guyenne, and a solid Catholic, disputed Dubois's assertions, claiming that moderate magistrates had recently ordered the release of a number of Protestant prisoners, arrested for assaulting Catholics, even though they had not yet stood trial. The court ordered an internal investigation, but failed to verify Ram's assertions. As a result, the invective between Catholics and moderates intensified.⁸

In December, Burie was forced to reply to further allegations by Lange:

⁵ Lanssac to Francis II (11 September 1560), *AHG*, 13, p. 125.

⁶ Burie to Catherine de Medici (3 November 1560), *AHG*, 13, pp. 136-39.

⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 778, fos. 360-95.

⁸ O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 204.

Madame, j'ay entendu qu'un advocat de ceste court de parlement, nommé Lange, a couru la poste pour vous faire entendre beaucoup de choses de moy... je vous assure, Madame, que je n'ay rien gasté en vostre gouvernement et ne fuz oncques callompnyé, que je scaiche, que par ledict Lange, ce que je ne voudrois endurer d'ung beaucoup plus homme de bien que celuy-la.⁹

A second letter, contrasting Burie's lengthy, loyal service to the crown with the subterfuge practiced by certain Catholic officers at Bordeaux, followed in January 1561; its suggestion that 'ledit Lange soit retenu, car par sa detemption et confession se pourront descouvrir plusieurs autres choses qui sont contre le service du Roy, ou beaucoup d'autres personnes pourront estre comprises', a tacit admission of the ascendancy of the Catholic faction within the town.¹⁰

Lange escaped reprimand, however, due to the support of sympathetic voices within the upper echelons of the Bordeaux *parlement*. Foremost among these was the *président*, Christophe de Roffignac, described by Camille Jullian as 'un des plus intelligents sectaires qu'ait produits le catholicisme bordelais'.¹¹ Roffignac would play a key role in defending elite and grass roots Catholicism at Bordeaux during the 1560s. Backed by patronage from the leading Catholic family of France, the house of Guise, and having spent ten years in Paris as a client of the cardinal of Lorraine during the 1540s and 1550s, he was also a regular of the Saint-Yves festivities, often presiding over its elective and administrative functions.¹² Courteault portrays Roffignac as the antithesis of Lagebâton and Burie, his zealous orthodoxy and keenness to eradicate Protestantism from the south-west being in stark contrast to the

⁹ Burie to Catherine de Medici (19 January 1561), *AHG*, 10, p. 38.

¹⁰ 'Madame, si j'ay esté accusé à tort, qu'il vous plaise avoir souvenance qu'il y a cinquante-deux ans que je suys nourry du pain du Roy, et que au lieu de reposer sur la fin de mes jours, je ne soye recompensé d'estre callompnyé par ung tel homme que celui-là et ses complices'. Burie to Catherine de Medici (20 January 1561), *AHG*, 10, pp. 35-36.

¹¹ Julian, *Histoire de Bordeaux*, esp. Chapter 12.

¹² See Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 107.

conciliatory tones of the two moderate leaders.¹³ As such, it was inevitable that Roffignac would be pitted against these two adversaries for most of the period. In this struggle, the *président* was ably served by a number of loyal *conseillers* of the *parlement*, the most prominent being Charles de Malvin and François de Baulon. Malvin would prove a tireless defender of Catholic cases brought before the court, organising their defence and often giving evidence himself.¹⁴ Baulon played a similar role, supporting Roffignac and Malvin where necessary, although his most prominent actions would come later in the decade: securing the return of the Jesuits to Bordeaux in 1568.

But it was the accord between Lange and Roffignac that would provide the fulcrum for Catholic activism at this time. Tamizey de Larroque is correct in identifying the two as key to events during this period: ‘si le fougueux président de Roffignac fut, à cette époque, le chef de la ligue bordelais, Lange en fut le secrétaire’.¹⁵ This description, though, fails to grasp the precise nuance of the relationship; Lange was no mere lieutenant to the *président*; theirs was a partnership, reciprocal in nature. Each was able to initiate independent activity within Bordeaux and to support the other as necessary - a most important factor for Lange, who, as an *avocat*, was vulnerable to attack from moderate magistrates within the *parlement*.

The need to address the increasing cycle of violence across the Bordelais resurfaced in November 1561. As the limitations of Burie’s resources became apparent, the *parlement* moved to ensure that Bordeaux remained secure. Orders were dispatched requisitioning forty soldiers from each of the town’s fortresses, the châteaux Trompette and Hâ, only for their respective captains, Vaillac and Noailles,

¹³ Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn*, p. 217.

¹⁴ For example, Malvin’s evidence against the Reformers’ illegal armed assemblies outside Bordeaux. AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 179-86.

¹⁵ Tamizey de Larroque, ‘Jean Lange, conseiller’, p. 687.

to refuse, claiming they possessed insufficient numbers to meet this demand while maintaining the integrity of their own defences.¹⁶ So the *parlement* turned once more to the *syndicat* for manpower. Roffignac directed all *avocats* and *procureurs* to take their turn on guard duty; the younger officials ordered to arm themselves and report to the *maison de ville* at once, while the older and more infirm were granted exemption so long as they provided a trustworthy representative to take their place.¹⁷ Lange and the *procureur-général* of the *parlement*, la Ferrière, were instructed to initiate a count of all Catholics of fighting age across the Bordelais, to be undertaken by the *sénéchal* of each *ressort*, in case further reinforcements were required.¹⁸ Burie raised several objections to the court's use of Catholic officials for this purpose, only supporting the plan on condition that the recruits were restricted to guarding the gates, and that each group was placed under the authority of a *jurat* and accountable to the *capitaine du guet* for their conduct.¹⁹ In April 1562, at the outbreak of war across France, these security measures were updated. The *parlement* now ordered that only Catholic officers were to man the gates, with two 'presidans et conseillers... aveq leurs robes longues' to be stationed at each at all times, with one hundred armed members to be enlisted from the *syndicat*'s militia to patrol the streets at night.²⁰ Requiring magistrates to wear their formal robes while on guard duty seems to have been a common ploy during this period. By making themselves conspicuous, the elites aimed to demonstrate that this was a group effort; that everyone should pitch in to secure the town. It also served as a reminder of the symbolism and tradition associated with the town and its guard, themes intended to

¹⁶ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 304-25.

¹⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 229-31.

¹⁸ AD Gironde, 1B 245, *Arrêt du parlement* (8 May 1562), fo. 66.

¹⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 886-91; BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 331.

²⁰ For order that only Catholics could man the gates, see BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 421. For order that *présidents* and *conseillers* should serve too, see BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 654. For order that a hundred militia were to serve in night patrols, see BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 359.

energise the defenders into standing firm and fighting. Ducourneau has shown that the complement on duty at each gate rose from thirteen in November 1561 (a *dixainier*, two soldiers, and ten town guardsmen) to twenty five - all Catholics - in June 1562 (two magistrates of the *parlement*, a canon of Saint-André, an officer of the chancellery, ten representatives of the bourgeoisie, ten confraternity members, and two soldiers of the municipal guard), while the night patrols of the streets rose from fifty to one hundred and fifty over the same period.²¹

It was also decided at this time that three hundred additional soldiers would be levied from outside the town to bolster its defences.²² To finance this measure, Antoine de Noailles, the governor of Bordeaux, enforced a new tax on the Huguenot citizens, although Burie was successful in securing assurances that the *syndicat* and members of the clergy should contribute too.²³ Catholics, however, were spared the ignominy of having the soldiers lodged in their homes; Noailles determined that only Protestant homes were to be used for this purpose, adding that each *jurat* was to accommodate two soldiers each - payback, no doubt, for repeated attempts by the *jurade* to counter Catholic authority over the past year.²⁴ By June 1562, the rising cost of maintaining the garrison force meant that Catholic *conseillers* were now expected to pay a monthly sum of 6 *livres* to the town's coffers.²⁵ Members of the confraternity of Saint-Yves, on the other hand, were still giving only on a voluntary basis, with the result that very little was raised from this source. This forced the *parlement* to rule that all *confrères* should now pay a monthly disbursement, the amount to be negotiated by each official. The body of *avocats* backed this motion

²¹ For November 1561 guard figures, see AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 248; BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 295-97. For June 1562 guard figures, see Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique et monumentale*, II, p. 192.

²² BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 644.

²³ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 874.

²⁴ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 385.

²⁵ BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 644.

unanimously, seemingly keen to ensure the Catholic leadership of Bordeaux had a sizeable military presence at its disposal.²⁶ The corporation of *procureurs*, however, failed to agree on a contribution, and rejected the court's decision. In response, the *parlement* ordered the *procureurs* to appear before the *Grand'Chambre* to settle the issue, on pain of a 500 *livres* fine. On arrival, they were 'tellement diviser que ceux de l'ancienne religion se mettent d'un côté et ceux de la nouvelle religion de l'autre', and then admonished for refusing to pay.²⁷

The decision to separate the *procureurs* within the chamber along confessional lines is a most intriguing one. It perhaps indicates that the bulk of those reluctant to pay towards the maintenance of the troops were of the Reformed persuasion, aggrieved at being forced to finance soldiers that had proven hostile to their coreligionists in the town. There had been numerous appeals before the *parlement* supporting this view: the Protestant *avocat*, l'Aubergnac, for example, had petitioned the court arguing that the garrisoned troops 'etoient ordonné pour les facher et molester'.²⁸ By separating them, then, the magistrates may have been attempting to apply greater pressure to each grouping. Whether this is the case or not, the measure proved successful and, on 15 June, an *arrêt* was published confirming that full contributions had been agreed upon by all *confrères*.²⁹

Catholic ascendancy: disarmament

The second most abundant category of surviving records relates to crown attempts to disarm the populace at Bordeaux. The edict of Saint-Germain, in July

²⁶ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 198.

²⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 200.

²⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 922.

²⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 232.

1561, imposed a strict ban on the carrying of all weapons within the town, even for the nobility. For many, this compromised the town's municipal charter, which placed matters pertaining to the security of the town in the hands of the *jurade*, not the crown. Catholics argued that disarming their militia would leave the town at the mercy of Protestant forces and disrupted the debate over ratification of the edict to such an extent that the *premier président*, Lagebâton, was forced to adjourn proceedings, pending further guidance from the *conseil privé*.³⁰ In the meantime, Lange collected a petition of over 3,000 Catholic signatures, demanding that Lagebâton rescind the edict. The *premier président* reported Lange's refusal to disarm the *syndicat's* militia to the crown, adding that 'les catholicques de ladicté ville ont créé six syndics d'entre eulx'.³¹

Lecler suggests that this development, similar in many ways to the measures implemented by the Reformed church following the synod of Clairac seven months earlier, was a defining moment for Catholic organisation in Bordeaux, the point at which the *syndicat* determined its infrastructure.³² Gaullieur concurs, adding that the six *syndics* mentioned by Lagebâton pertained to the *syndicat's* division of the town into quasi-military units, each embedded within one of the six *jurades* of Bordeaux, with each *jurade* sub-divided into *quartiers* and *paroisses*, and a captain appointed to command each sector.³³ The *Histoire Ecclésiastique* also verifies this development, adding that the *syndicat* sought to maintain surveillance over the Huguenot population by 'attirans à leur ligue les paysans des banlieues'.³⁴ If it seems that the *syndicat* was simply borrowing from the innovations of the Reformed synod, it should be noted that comparable mechanisms were being implemented by the

³⁰ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 297-303.

³¹ Lagebâton to Catherine de Medici (July 1561), BN ms fr, 15,875, fo. 442; *AHG*, 10, p. 320.

³² Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue', p. 193.

³³ Gaullieur, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux*, I, pp. 311-25.

³⁴ *HE*, I, p. 872.

parlement concurrently to bolster the guard patrols across the town: a deputy, supported by two *conseillers*, was to be appointed to maintain order in each of the eight parishes of Bordeaux, a move itself somewhat reminiscent of the Calvinist consistorial hierarchy of deacons and elders within the community.³⁵ A closer inspection of the confessional composition of the deputies suggests further confluences between the *syndicat's* initiatives and the dictates of the *parlement*: seven of the eight *conseillers* appointed were staunch Catholics, each being a regular participant in the ceremonies of the confraternity of Saint-Yves, and each becoming an integral part of Catholic hegemony at Bordeaux over the coming years.³⁶ It may be the case, then, that the *syndicat* and the Catholic leadership of Roffignac, Baulon and Malvin, who himself assumed the deputyship of the parish of Saint-Projet, were working in unison, with the *parlement* allowing Lange and the *confrères* to implement their organisation within each *jurade*, then reinforcing this with a formal surveillance of the parishes under its own officers.

The Catholic party at Bordeaux lost their petition, though, with Lagebâton ordering the immediate registration of the edict.³⁷ In this, the *premier président* was supported by Burie, who claimed that recent violence at Toulouse had been the result of allowing the town's *dizaines* to remain under arms.³⁸ This left the Catholic party with one option: a joint letter from the *syndicat* and the clergy of Bordeaux, urging

³⁵ 15 July 1561. AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 536-38.

³⁶ The Catholic deputies were: Malvin (parish of Saint-Projet); Vergoing (Saint-Pierre); Anselin (Saint-Éloy); de Nort (Sainte-Maxance); de Monehn (Sainte-Colombe); Guilleragues (Sainte-Aulaye); and d'Alesme (Saint Rémy). Only de Ferron represented the moderate consensus, though his appointment to the largest parish of Bordeaux - that of Saint-Michel, which required four *conseillers* to serve there due to its size - may have been an expedient, as de Ferron was one of the more experienced officials within the *parlement*, and so more likely to restore order to this district. AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 536-38. Even when the *parlement* tightened its hold within the parishes the following December by providing each deputy with a list of two hundred parishioners eligible to be mobilised for active duty should the need arise, the bias towards Catholic appointees remained at seven to one. Cocula, *Étienne de la Boétie*, p. 134.

³⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 614-22.

³⁸ BN ms fr, 22,372, fo. 949.

the crown to exempt Bordeaux from the terms of the edict due to its position as ‘une ville frontière et maritime’.³⁹ This would be an oft-repeated supplication by Catholics of the south-west during this period. In March 1562, Monluc would try to exempt Bordeaux from having to site a *prêche* near its walls by citing a clause within the edict of January that allowed ‘frontier towns’ to ban such assemblies within its jurisdiction for security reasons.⁴⁰ The following year, in September 1563, the governor of Bordeaux, the *comte* d’Escars, attempted to secure similar immunity from the terms of the edict of Amboise, claiming that ‘la ville de Bourdeaux est ville de frontiere et maritime, par cella aysée d’estre surprinse des ennemys... [et] habitée de tant de diverses nations et deux diverses religions demouroit sans garde de porte et guet’.⁴¹ One month later, d’Escars repeated his request, claiming that an English force, recently landed at La Rochelle, threatened to move into Guyenne unless local Catholics were allowed to arm themselves and join the king’s forces arrayed against the enemy.⁴² In December, the clergy of Bordeaux dispatched a remonstrance to the crown arguing that ‘ladicte ville et pays de Bourdeloys est assez en frontiere de la royaume d’espaigne, navarre et angleterre’, that this had been the case for centuries, and, as such, the town had traditionally been allowed to arm its citizens to ensure its defence against external foes.⁴³ The Catholics of Languedoc were no less willing to try this manoeuvre, with the provincial governor, Damville, arguing ‘que le Languedoc est un pays de frontiere, comme la Picardie, Bourgogne, Bretagne, Provence et autres, requerant que d’autant que votre bon plaisir a esté iceulx exempter de l’effet de l’édit quant aux ministres et prédicans, pour les dangereux

³⁹ Ruble, *Jeanne d’Albret*, p. 47.

⁴⁰ BN ms fr, 3,186, fo. 60.

⁴¹ D’Escars to Catherine de Medici (6 September 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 20,598, fos. 190-96.

⁴² D’Escars to Charles IX (15 October 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 20,598, fos. 199-201.

⁴³ ‘Remonstrance faicte au Roy par le clerge du pays de Bourdeloys’, (4 December 1563), BN ms fr, 15,878, fos. 294-95.

inconveniens qui s'en pourront ensuivre'.⁴⁴ However, neither the joint petition, nor indeed any of the other Catholic petitions, would be successful.

At Bordeaux, the clergy were especially aggrieved at the crown's dismissal of their appeal, as much of the recent violence committed by Huguenot forces had been targeted on local priests and their churches. By forcing Catholics to disarm, the clergy feared that the assaults would increase in ferocity.⁴⁵ Such information should not have surprised the authorities. As early as March 1561, Burie had warn Catherine de Medici that 'la guyenne ne fut il y a long temps en sy grand trouble qu'elle est à présent',⁴⁶ while in April, the archbishop of Bordeaux, Antoine Prévôt de Sanssac, had appeared before the *parlement* to chide the magistrates over their inability to counter the brutality being unleashed against the clergy of Guyenne.⁴⁷ Lange did offer Burie the services of 'la noblesse et autre grand force' to bolster security across the region, a reference perhaps to the confraternity's own militia force,⁴⁸ while Prévôt appealed to the crown to dispatch Catholic reinforcements to Guyenne.⁴⁹ Both were turned down. The Bordeaux clergy took the opposite approach, arguing that if Catholics were to lay down their weapons, then the crown should do more to ensure that all Protestant were disarmed too, and their communities policed regularly to prevent further assaults on the clergy.⁵⁰

It does appear that the clergy had joined with Prévôt and the *syndicat* in presenting a united Catholic front at Bordeaux. A cursory glance at its constitution, though, reveals that its allegiance was slightly less definite than may be thought. Of

⁴⁴ Damville to Charles IX (18 December 1563), *HGL*, 9, *Preuves X*, p. 507.

⁴⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fols. 692-93.

⁴⁶ *AHG*, 13, p. 156.

⁴⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 396. In March 1561, a representative of the clergy of Agenais, Dunoyer, had also demanded that the *parlement* do more to arrest and condemn those 'mutiners, heretiques, schismatiques et seditieux' currently terrorising the Catholic clergy of the province. See AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fols. 420-26.

⁴⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 495.

⁴⁹ Prévôt and Catholic clergy to Charles IX (19 June 1561), BN ms fr, 3,186, fo. 153.

⁵⁰ Clergy of Bordeaux to Charles IX (19 June 1561), BN ms fr, 3,159, fo. 72.

the 390 benefices of the Bordeaux diocese (217 *curés*, 150 *vicairies-perpétuelles*, 23 *prieurés-curés*), for example, the archbishop conferred only 236. The rest were subject to nomination by diverse chapters, *abbés*, noble patrons and even the *parlement* in a few cases. It was the wealthy families of the region, for instance, that largely nominated the canons of the chapters at Saint-André and Saint-Seurin, while several Bordelais chapters held close ties with the nobility of Bordeaux, and many *prébendés* and *demi'prébendés* held by magistrates of the sovereign court.⁵¹ This meant that Catholic consensus could only be assured if these patrons remained staunchly Catholic. They certainly did during this period, but had a number converted to Protestantism, as would happen in other areas of France - especially eastern Languedoc - then the homogeneity of the clergy, and thus their support of the *syndicat* at Bordeaux, would have been lessened significantly.

Catholic ascendancy: surveillance

The third theme evident from archival survivals was the partiality of the *syndicat* for the surveillance of known Huguenots and their activities within Bordeaux, with investigation and prosecution brought to bear where illegal pursuits were suspected. Again, Lange and Roffignac were the driving force behind this policy, authorising *syndicat* affiliates and members of the clergy to observe and report any suspicious behaviour within the town. One of the first to be accused by this intelligence network was Mathieu le Berthou, the *capitaine du guet*, who was interrogated by Catholic magistrates in September 1561, and again in April 1562,

⁵¹ Robert Boutrouche (ed.), *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715* (Bordeaux, 1966), pp. 221-28. Hunault de Lanta, doyen at Saint-Seurin and Saint-Saveur de Blaye, was *abbé* during the 1550s as well as being *conseiller-clerc au parlement*, and was later admitted to the *Grand'Chambre* at Bordeaux. See Boutrouche, *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, p. 226.

over claims that he had allowed several Protestant prisoners to escape from jail. Unfortunately for Berthou, his trial was presided over by Roffignac and Malvin. It was of little surprise, then, to find that the *capitaine* was subsequently removed from all duties.⁵² In June, these surveillance methods were formalised by the *parlement*, allowing Roffignac to authorise Catholic *conseillers* to visit and search the houses of suspected Huguenots for hidden arms.⁵³ Having such a mandate clearly benefited the *syndicat*: in one such instance, Beraud, a *commissaire* of the confraternity, reported that a stranger ‘est habillé comme un homme de robe court’ had made numerous visits at night to the house of a known Reformer in Bordeaux. Beraud informed the *parlement*, who dispatched several *conseillers* to investigate. However, before the visitation could arrive, the two men fled to the safety of Béarn.⁵⁴ Ducourneau suspects that the men were tipped off by sympathetic *jurats*, concerned about the victimisation of their co-religionists, but also irked by the usurpation of this traditional remit of the *jurade*: the searching of houses traditionally fell within the category of policing the town, and as such was a prerogative of the civic authorities, not the *parlement*.⁵⁵ It is interesting to note that Catholic officials at Bordeaux were especially suspicious of Huguenots who moved about the town dressed in ‘robes longues ou courts’, giving their spies permission to stop and search these men for concealed weapons at any time.⁵⁶

The following month, the Catholic leadership attempted their most audacious move to date. Roffignac ordered Malvin to search the house of Lagebâton, ‘pour veoir faire ouverture de certains bahuts et d’une caisse... pour savoir s’il n’y avoit aucunes armes’. To intrude into the sanctum of the *premier président* was fraught

⁵² AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 751.

⁵³ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 582.

⁵⁴ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 719-25.

⁵⁵ Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique et monumentale*, II, p. 192.

⁵⁶ *Registres du parlement de Bordeaux* (29 June 1562), BN ms fr, 22,372, fo. 1,045.

with peril, and Malvin, despite his hard-line Catholic credentials, was shrewd enough to request that a witness accompany him in this task, no doubt keen to obviate any recriminations that may follow.⁵⁷ This was, in fact, the culmination of concerted Catholic pressure against Lagebâton, begun the previous year. The *syndicat* had first lobbied the *parlement* to expel ‘personnes accusés ou notoirement soupçonner d’heresie, sedition et scandale public, et de s’etre trouvé dans des assemblés de religionnaires’ from office in June 1561.⁵⁸ This was aimed specifically at suspect *jurats*, and has the hallmark of Roffignac’s influence all over it. The Catholic *président* was no fan of the *jurade* at Bordeaux, having long mistrusted its motivations. In fact, Roffignac had written to the constable Montmorency in April 1559, in an attempt to secure royal backing for the removal of numerous of its civic powers, and would later countersign an *arrêt* requiring all *jurats* to reside permanently within the town and to attend their local Catholic church services.⁵⁹

A second motion, submitted in September 1561 by *syndicat* members Sauvanelle and le Bouhet, aimed to encompass the entire urban bureaucracy under the Catholic’s surveillance umbrella, urging the court to pass legislation condemning any official whose family members were caught attending local *prêches* or illegal gatherings.⁶⁰ This would have immediate ramifications at Bordeaux. The *procureur-général*, la Ferrière, lodged a complaint demanding that action be taken by the *parlement* against three of its magistrates: de Ferron, de Ciret and Gasc - known Reformers, whose wives and family members had been seen attending a nearby

⁵⁷ AD Gironde, 1B 247, *Arrêt du parlement* (21 July 1562), fo. 153. Malvin selected Jehan Gauteille, a *clerc du greffe* of the court, as his witness.

⁵⁸ AM Bordeaux, Carton II, 17, *Election des jurats* (29 May 1561). This *arrêt* was passed by the court in July 1561, and only revoked in 2 July 1564, thus in keeping with the terms of the edict of Amboise, which allowed municipal authorities to elect candidates ‘sans avoir egard de la diversité des religions’. AM Bordeaux, Carton II, 17, *Election des jurats* (2 July 1564).

⁵⁹ Roffignac to Montmorency (28 April 1559), *AHG*, 13, p. 119. For *arrêt* forcing *jurats* of Bordeaux to live in the town and attend church (March 1562), see AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 816-19

⁶⁰ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 756.

prêche.⁶¹ When a second *prêche*, held near the church of Saint-Michel in Bordeaux, degenerated into wide scale violence in early October, many were killed, and numerous more injured or arrested. The widow of one of the deceased, a well-known Catholic noble, Menault de la Grave, laid the blame for her husband's death clearly at the feet of Lagebâton, who, she claimed, had allowed numerous armed Huguenot officers and their wives, not to mention his own spouse, to attend. The widow demanded that the court divulge the religious affiliation of its magistrates and their wives, and declare the number of its officials who regularly attended such assemblies.⁶²

The resulting debate over this issue within the *parlement* is most interesting. In December 1561, the court granted Catholics their injunction, preventing all officials of Bordeaux from attending the *prêches*, only for it to be immediately contested by two lesser officers: Moreau, a *procureur*, and le Blanc, an *avocat*. The two claimed that at least sixty others had expressed a preference for continuing to attend such assemblies, and requested that the injunction be rescinded. Lange, speaking on behalf of the *syndicat*, challenged their claim, stating that if there was indeed such strong sentiment within the court, it should be presented in written form. So on 10 December, Moreau and le Blanc returned to the *parlement* with a *requête*, signed by forty officials, confirming their wishes to continue attending the *prêches*. But it was a trap. La Ferrière, an ally of Lange, interjected, stating that as all *avocats* and *procureurs* had sworn an oath on taking office at Bordeaux, promising 'd'être bons catholiques observans les constitutions de l'église n'ayant été atteindre ne soupçonner du crime d'herésie', by signing the declaration they had contravened

⁶¹ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 746.

⁶² AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 755.

both their oath, and the edicts of the king. La Ferrière moved that all forty be suspended from office until the court decided their punishment.⁶³

Catholic ascendancy: relations with Burie

The fourth theme evident within the archival material at Bordeaux is the deterioration in relations between the *syndicat* and Burie. Catholic ire at the *lieutenant du roi's* refusal to intervene and halt the violence against the clergy has been noted already. Burie's reluctance to lead his forces into the Bordelais was predicated on his troop deficiency, as he explained to that *Grand'Chambre*: 'cette ville n'est point comme un chateau et n'a hommes pour garder leur murailles et leur portes'.⁶⁴ Instead, Burie sought to assuage conflict by dispatching Huguenot dignitaries from Bordeaux to calm the situation, and to ensure that better organisation of Protestant events was attempted so as to avoid aggravating the Catholic population.⁶⁵ Catholics within the *parlement*, however, argued that those causing unrest should be reprimanded, not indulged. Had Burie utilised the militia force offered by Lange to police the town, then the *lieutenant du roi's* personal troops could have been deployed to counter trouble across the countryside. Instead, the *lieutenant du roi* had been forced to co-opt Catholic nobles such as Monluc, Lausun, Fumel, Bajaumont, and Cassaneuil to police the region, a move not contrary to

⁶³ For this affair, see AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 301-18. The *requête* was signed by: (*avocats*), le Blanc, Labarthe, de Gamardes, de Bignon, Morin, de Rogier, de Bordes le jeune, de la Gualterie, l'Hallet, Lauvergnac, Sauvenelle, de Sarrague, Thibault le jeune, Barnaud, Larquier, de Foure, la Tour, Belliguet, de Losse, de la Vaissérie, le Feure, l'Eglise, du Vergieu, Carmel fils, de Montbrun, de la Marque, de Lariou, Voisin, Carneau le jeune, Maisonneufue, de Termes, Bagen, de la Vie, de Guinsard, Moncamp, (*procureurs*), Moreau, Meynard, Jude, la Broute, Ythieu, du Vergieu, Menoyse, Chassaing, du Chalard, Dupeyras, le Double, Aliton, Boirante, l'Eveque, Larquier, de Petit, Arnaud, Maigen.

⁶⁴ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 746.

⁶⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 747-48.

Catholic opinion, but one that raised concerns over the legitimacy of the combatants should armed conflict ensue.⁶⁶

Matters had been complicated, too, by Burie's response to the activities of the Protestant noble, the *sieur de Savignac de Thouars*, who had led an armed escort to put down violent episodes around Montségur and Saint-Salvy in August 1561. Savignac had admitted that such vigilante actions were contrary to the recent edict, but argued that he was simply restoring order to the region on behalf of the crown and *parlement*, and that his forces would disarm once the insurrection was ended.⁶⁷ The *syndicat* was incensed at this, accusing Savignac of creating an independent police force numbering over two thousand strong. Roffignac and Malvin berated Burie for being incapable of controlling the Reformers in Guyenne. The *lieutenant du roi's* reply - that Savignac's force was operating in the *sénéchaussée de l'Agenais*, and thus outside of his official jurisdiction - did little to appease Catholic anger.⁶⁸

Matters came to a head in December 1561, with Lange delivering a damning indictment against Burie's management of the province before the *parlement*. The harangue lambasted the Reform movement and its adherents, claiming that Guyenne had never been so divided. For Lange, the crown's policy of accommodation was a disaster, the Huguenot synods and consistories nothing more than breeding grounds for dissent, hampering effective local government.⁶⁹ Thomas de Ram, the *lieutenant-général* for the *sénéchaussée* of Guyenne, joined in the condemnation, asserting that Burie's inactivity had encouraged Protestants to rebel, and forced Catholics to take independent measures to defend themselves. Ram informed the court that the *syndicat* had fresh evidence that officials continued to frequent local *prêches*, and

⁶⁶ AM Bordeaux, MS 767, fo. 705.

⁶⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 693-700.

⁶⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fos. 711-12.

⁶⁹ For Lange's speech, see AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 369-96.

that weapons were being taken from the town hall and distributed among the Huguenots of Bordeaux, all under the nose of Burie.⁷⁰

The audience, though, was not united in condemnation of Burie. Dubois, a Protestant *jurat*, launched a rebuttal of Lange's arguments, adding that the *syndicat* was the real problem here; its divisive nature splitting the administration of Bordeaux in two, creating power struggles within the institutions of Bordeaux. Dubois was seconded by Bichon, a Huguenot *conseiller*, who decried the disruptive influence the patrols of the *syndicat's* militia were having amid the streets of Bordeaux.⁷¹ The moderate *parlementaires*, however, sided with Lange in the debate, and voted in favour of a draft remonstrance, urging the crown to send Catholic troops to the province immediately and requesting permission to co-opt greater numbers of the confraternity's militia to bolster the town's defences in the meantime.⁷² It seems clear that the absence of the moderate's de-facto leader, Lagebâton, who had been called to Paris to consult with the *conseil privé* the week before, may account for this decision. Indeed, on his return later that month, the remonstrance was formally rescinded, and the moderate magistrates rebuked for acceding to Catholic demands.⁷³ The *premier président* then turned on Lange, censuring the *avocat* for using inappropriate rhetoric before the court, and for employing improper pronouncements in his harangue against Burie, irregularities that contravened the technicalities of language permitted to an *avocat* before the *Grand'Chambre*.⁷⁴ Despite appeals from Catholic *présidents* Roffignac and Lachassaigne, and supporting testimony from la

⁷⁰ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 399-403.

⁷¹ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 444-47; 477-79.

⁷² AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 448-62.

⁷³ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 685-99.

⁷⁴ Powis has examined the irregularities in this speech to the *parlement*, and supports Lagebâton's claims that Lange's language directly infringed on the privileges of the court, and that his claim to represent the Catholic populace was in derogation of the rights of the *jurade*, which claimed sole representation of the corporation of the city. Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 266.

Ferrière, Lagebâton refused to absolve Lange, and his reprimand was formerly entered into the minutes.⁷⁵

Burie's exact position at this juncture is open to debate. He clearly felt no compunction about throwing his hat in with the Catholic party at Bordeaux, but neither did he overtly favour the Protestant cause. Catholic propaganda painted Burie as a pro-Huguenot moderate, his support of crown initiatives to implement toleration confirming this. Such views, though, are dismissed by Brantôme, who rejected any suspicion of Burie's religious orthodoxy, and by Paul Courteault, who maintained that Burie was 'un bon catholique' right up to his death in 1565.⁷⁶ Indeed, Burie was never slow to express his concern at the persistent violence of the Reformers, and warned the crown on several occasions that the threat posed by ministers returning to the south-west from Geneva in January 1560 was formidable: 'Et voila, Sire, le fruit qu'ont apporté les ministres en vostre royaume, et n'est que le commencement du mal, veu ce qu'ilz ont entrepris de faire'.⁷⁷ Most telling, perhaps, are the pejoratives of Monluc, which stress Burie's ineffective command but ignore controversies over confessional affiliation.⁷⁸

Dénouement

The first months of 1562 saw an escalation in the friction between moderate and militant officials at Bordeaux. Numerous complaints were lodged before the

⁷⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 685-99.

⁷⁶ Catholic opinion is alluded to in *Commentaires*, pp. 508-09. For Brantôme, see Brantôme, *Oeuvres complètes* (ed., Lalanne, 11 vols., Paris, 1864-82), III, pp. 396-97. For Courteault, see *Commentaires*, p. 1,189, note 1.

⁷⁷ Burie to Charles IX (28 January 1561), *AHG*, 43, pp. 236-38.

⁷⁸ Monluc wrote of Burie: 'pour crainte de perdre... il ne vouloit rien hazarder, qui estoit un grand deffaut à luy', *Commentaires*, p. 541; 'si Dieu ne m'eust inspire à m'opposer à eux et faire pendre ceux qui tomboient entre mes mains, je croy que tout le pays estoit perdu, car la douceur de monsieur de Burie n'estoit pas de saison', *Commentaires*, p. 521; 'il estoit vieux, et les gens vieux ne peuvent ester si diligens que les jeunes' – the latter a rare criticism coming from a man of sixty-two years himself. *Commentaires*, p. 527.

parlement objecting to the activities of *syndicat* members, with many calling for this Catholic corpus to be dismantled. Such arguments brought the legitimacy of the *syndicat* into sharp focus. Burie and Lagebâton decided the time was right to launch a pre-emptive, two-pronged assault on Lange and his affiliates. On 7 March, the *premier président* ordered two Bordeaux *conseillers*, Arnaud de Ferron and Jean d'Alesme, to undertake a formal investigation of the activities of the *syndicat*, and to prepare a report for assessment by the *conseil privé*.⁷⁹ Burie, meanwhile, had commenced his own offensive against the Catholic activists at Bordeaux. In late March, he presented an appeal before the *parlement*, alleging that the *lettres-patentes* that had validated the *syndicat* the previous year had yet to be registered. Lange's organisation was, thus, an illegal entity and, as such, its members were banned from assembling in any numbers, as per the terms of recent royal edicts.⁸⁰ By 12 April 1562, the *conseil privé* had reached a verdict on these matters. Acting on information garnered from the two commissioners and from Burie, the king issued an *arrêt* ordering the immediate cessation of the *syndicat's* activities, declaring all previous resolutions passed by its leadership to be null and void.⁸¹ Ducourneau believes that this was a victory not only for Burie and Lagebâton, but also for the moderate city officials, whose persistence had forced the authorities at Bordeaux, and the crown, to

⁷⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 763. For letter of consent from the crown to the replacement of Compain and Girard, see Charles IX to Bordeaux *parlement* (March 1562), BN ms fr, 3,210, fo. 49.

⁸⁰ O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 206.

⁸¹ 'Arrest sur le différend ranyoyé au Roy, tant par la court de Parlement de Bourdeaulx, que le sieur de Burie, lieutenant général dudict sieur au pays de Guyenne, en absence du Roy de Navarre, touchant la cassation d'une prétendu sindicat faict par aulcuns particuliers habitans de la ville de Bourdeaulx, comme tendant à diviser et désunir les subjects du Roy, après que M. Jehan de Lange prétendant le sindicat devoyr estre auctorisé, d'une part, et M. Jehan Chacin au contrayre, d'autre; ledict sieur a déclaré et declare ledict sindicat nul et de nul effect et valleur, et ordonne que les rolles faict par eulx en vertu d'icellui, et toutes aultres pièces concernant ce faict seront mizes par devers ledict sieur de Burie, et a deffandu et deffant aus particuliers fère tels sindicats sur peyne d'estre declarés désobéissans au Roy; tenu à Paris, le xii jour d'apvril 1562', 'Registre du clerc de ville de Bordeaux', *AHG*, 46, p. 268.

intercede: 'les jurats se plainirent au parlement de la conduite de Lange, et grâce à leur fermeté, ils firent dissoudre l'assemble des syndics'.⁸²

But this would not be the conclusive victory that the moderate party had hoped for, as events forced the administration at Bordeaux to rethink their decision. On 26 June, a force of Protestant soldiers, led by the *sieurs* de Duras, Pardaillan and Langoiran, attempted to gain entry to the château Trompette, apparently with the collusion of two captains of Burie's company, Savignac and Sadillac, who were to open the gates under cover of darkness. It was presumed that the castle's commander, Vaillac, would remain neutral in this affair, as he had recently married into the Pardaillan family. But Vaillac remained constant in his duties, and ordered the gates to remain locked.⁸³ This seems to have been an extremely close call for the Bordeaux authorities. Dupré is in no doubt that had Vaillac not interceded here, then Duras and his Protestant forces would have used the château as a base from which to besiege the town. If Bordeaux fell, he continues, then the defence of other Catholic centres across Guyenne would have been almost impossible.⁸⁴ The Catholic leadership at Bordeaux grasped the opportunity to voice their concerns at the erosion of military defence of the town since the suspension of the *syndicat*. They called for concerted action to be taken against the Reformers: Monluc called upon the Catholic population 'n'épargner ni leurs biens ni leur sang pour le service du roi et la bonne religion ancienne, catholique et romaine',⁸⁵ while Roffignac and Malvin demanded that 'chacque officier du Roy déclare publiquement de quelle religion il est afin

⁸² Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique et monumentale*, II, p. 192. For Burie's role in the winding up of the *syndicat*, see Gaullieur, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux*, I, pp. 412-17

⁸³ For events surrounding the attempt on the château Trompette of 26 June 1562, see Bordeaux parlement to Charles IX (4 July 1562), *AHG*, 17, p. 269. See also AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 662; AD Gironde, B, *Arrêt du parlement* (13 January 1563), fo. 92; Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*, I, p. 151; Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique et monumentale*, II, p. 193.

⁸⁴ Dupré, 'Projet de ligue catholique à Bordeaux', p. 373.

⁸⁵ *Commentaires*, p. 515.

qu'on puisse scavoir et connoitre a quoi ils se voudront resoudre, et de quelle foy et religion ils sont et veulent suivre et tenir'.⁸⁶

When, in late June, violent assaults on Catholics in the parish of Saint-Rémy were reported, Burie was forced to dispatch a large concentration of his troops to augment the guard there, weakening the remaining town defences. As further reports of unrest filtered through, Burie had little option but to permit Catholics to arm themselves in readiness.⁸⁷ He then authorised the *sénéchal* of Guyenne to permit Catholics to establish a new corporation, to be administered as an adjunct of the *parlement*, whose initial duties would be to boost the town guard and to report on violent incidents within the town. The court was understandably wary of such a move, and appointed five *conseillers* to liaise with the corporation. But while it required that all Catholic movements be validated by Lescure, the *procureur-général*, the *parlement* did grant limited powers of intervention to the militia over matters concerning the 'punition des sacrileges, voleries, et autres excès commis par eux de la nouvelle religion et leur complices'.⁸⁸ This was a most surprising development, but shows that a military commander could resort to expedient action as necessary. There is little doubt that Burie would have preferred not to rejuvenate the Catholic power base so shortly after securing the termination of the *syndicat*. But the security and stability of the town came first, and Burie needed competent militia to suppress the threat of wide-scale insurrection.

There is little doubt, too, though, that Catholics viewed this as a prime opportunity to re-establish their *syndicat*. Within weeks of the creation of this new corporation, the usual suspects were appearing before the *parlement* petitioning for the legitimisation of this corpus. Central to this manoeuvre was Lange's compatriot,

⁸⁶ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 427.

⁸⁷ BN ms fr, 22,372, fos. 1,070-74.

⁸⁸ BN ms fr, 22,372, fos. 1,070-74.

the *avocat*, le Melon. On 20 July 1562, le Melon succeeded in gaining permission to register the ‘election, confirmation et exécution dudit syndicat en la maison de la present ville’.⁸⁹ He was seconded in this by Malvin, with Lescure, La Ferrière and Lahet, stalwarts of Lange’s former *association*, confirming to the court that le Melon had the backing of the clergy and ‘la pluspart des meilleurs bourgeois et catholiques de la present ville’.⁹⁰ Burie counter-signed the *requête* the following day,⁹¹ and even some moderate magistrates accepted the necessity of this expedient; one asserting that ‘la cour trouvera que le syndicat est utile’.⁹² Others, however, were alarmed at the regeneration of such a potent force within Bordeaux politics. Many of the *jurats* were especially apprehensive at the ceding of jurisdiction over certain punitive and police matters to this new *syndicat*, a decision one *jurat* labelled as ‘une chose inouïe et nouvelle’.⁹³

Yet the moderates at Bordeaux soon began to backtrack over the issue. On 23 July, Burie informed Monluc that the *syndicat* had been sanctioned ‘pour garder de la ville, et non pour autre chose’,⁹⁴ while two days later Lagebâton convened a special séance of the *parlement* to debate the ramifications of the *lieutenant du roi*’s decision.⁹⁵ Burie, le Melon, Malvin, and several *jurats* spoke for and against the *syndicat*, after which a vote was held. The result saw a remarkable u-turn, with the *parlement* refusing to validate le Melon’s *lettres patentes* on three grounds: firstly, the *syndicat* was plainly ‘contre l’intention du Roy et son arret et execution’ - as such, no exemptions to this clause could be granted without recourse to crown arbitration; secondly, the concerns of the *jurade* over the infringement of

⁸⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 504.

⁹⁰ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fos. 514-16. See also Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*, pp. 154-62 for resurgence of the *syndicat* under le Melon at Bordeaux.

⁹¹ BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 661.

⁹² AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 523.

⁹³ BN ms fr, 22,372, fos. 1,074-75.

⁹⁴ BN ms fr, 22,369, fo. 137.

⁹⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fos. 514-16.

jurisdictional prerogatives were valid - experience had shown that such a prominent, well-supported entity would establish a competing body of power within the administration, and could only prove divisive to the government of the town; thirdly, if the authorities accepted an official Catholic corpus within the political framework of Bordeaux, it would find it difficult to reject demands from Huguenots for their own version – and with two such bodies active within the town, the *parlement* foresaw only conflict and contestation.

Le Melon threatened to go over the heads of the *parlement* and appeal directly to the crown.⁹⁶ Burie accepted this, adding that he would honour his commitment to allow the confraternity's *commissaires* license to present minor denunciations concerning policing matters before the lower courts for the foreseeable future.⁹⁷ Lagebâton, though, intervened here, stating that 'la cour n'est besoin ni necessaire faire et constituer aucun syndic pour faire une simple dénonciation'. He added that the appropriate machinery to deal with lesser claims was already in place within the structure of the court, and Catholics should follow these procedures if they wanted to obtain justice through civil suits. Lagebâton urged that it would be wiser to remove all powers from the *syndicat* and its officials, a point conceded by Burie.⁹⁸ The debate closed, then, with the censuring of le Melon's *association*, and a prohibition on any further Catholic *associations* within Bordeaux.

This chapter has traced the birth, life and demise of the Catholic *syndicat* at Bordeaux. It has shown how a number of dedicated lesser officials within the *parlement* managed to appropriate substantial authority in support of the Catholic cause. In this, they were patronised and protected by leading Catholic magistrates of the court and by the clergy of the Bordelais, but opposed vociferously by the

⁹⁶ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 551.

⁹⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 539.

⁹⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fo. 551.

moderate consensus at Bordeaux, marshalled by the *premier président* of the *parlement*, Lagebâton, and by the province's *lieutenant du roi*, Burie. The extent to which the *syndicat* managed to infiltrate the administrative institutions of the town is quite impressive, as is their ability to assume influence over Bordeaux's militia and town guard deployment. The surveillance of Huguenot suspects was most extensive, while their determination to oppose the crown's policy of conciliation reveals a self-belief that outweighed any actual legitimacy - they were, after all, merely *avocats* and *procureurs* of the court. But royal and provincial authority would eventually win the day, with the crown validating Lagebâton's demand that the *syndicat* be dismantled forthwith, and the confraternity barred from supporting further Catholic machinations within the town. Now, with the local magistrates and officials excluded from such organised collaboration, it would be left to other protagonists, specifically to the local Catholic nobility, to assume the mantle of protectors of the Catholic church and patrons of Catholic hegemony across Guyenne. The following chapter will examine this phenomenon.

Chapter 3. Catholic activism at Bordeaux: the nobility

The participation of the nobility of Guyenne in the confrontations with moderate officials at Bordeaux will be the third feature of Catholic activism considered here. The censuring of the *syndicat* in August 1562 promised much for the moderates; the *premier président* of the *parlement*, Lagebâton, certainly saw the suppression of Lange, le Melon *et al* as key to a return to more conciliatory politics. But if this victory was to deny Catholic activists a legitimate outlet for their grievances, it did not signal the end of Catholic machinations within Guyenne. Instead, greater intervention by the Catholic nobility of the Bordelais gave fresh impetus to Catholic activism across the region.

Elite intervention at Bordeaux

Isolating the driving forces behind the Catholic nobility's intervention into affairs at Bordeaux has long divided historians. Confessional issues were undoubtedly paramount; rarely do Catholic appellants in Guyenne fail to demand the extirpation of Huguenots or a more vigorous defence of Catholic interests in their petitions. But other issues were equally prevalent. Social grievances were especially common, with the disenchantment over the failure of the Bordeaux authorities to end the rising incidences of violence against local landholders and their property a common complaint during the early 1560s. Many at Bordeaux still remembered the Gabelle riots of 1548, in which a leading Catholic official, Tristan de Moneins, the king's lieutenant, was dragged from the *parlement* building and beaten to death by a

rampaging mob.¹ Powis believes that this event had a profound effect on the Bordelais nobility, shaking the very foundations of their social structures: ‘if such a high-ranking officer, a symbol of the king’s authority, could be overthrown, then the nobility’s own standing, whether as royal officers or as provincial notables – in short as members of the ruling class – could not long survive’.² A similar tension was evident in late 1561. During a violent seven-month period, numerous Catholic nobles fell victim to violent assaults. In August, the *sieur* de Levignac was forced to flee his château after an attack from around two thousand ‘voleurs’, the *sieurs* de Lestelle and de Thouars had their homes raided and ransacked, while at Villeneuve-d’Agen, numerous *gentilshommes* also reported being maltreated by their vassals.³ The following February, the *sieur* de Rouillac was besieged at his home at Saint-Mézard, following an attempt to prevent an armed mob from damaging the church on his land. Rouillac had his throat cut, a fate suffered by his neighbours, the *sieurs* de Cuq and de la Monjoye, from nearby Astaffort, after they tried to intervene.⁴ Even Blaise de Monluc found himself confined to his home at Estillac by ‘cinq à six cents hommes qui tenait la campagne’, a result of his intervention against the Huguenot coup at Agen in June 1561.⁵

The most significant attack on a Catholic noble, however, occurred in late-November 1561, when the baron de Fumel was murdered in his own home by an

¹ Moneins was the king’s lieutenant in Guyenne in the absence of the king of Navarre. His other offices at this time were governor of Navarrenx and *sénéchal* of Béarn. For the 1548 Gabelle riot, see Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*, esp. Chapter 3; Gigon, *La révolte de la gabelle*, pp. 73-84.

² Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 62.

³ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 408; Ruble, *Jeanne d’Albret*, pp. 141-42; Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 516.

⁴ *Commentaires*, p. 483.

⁵ ‘Jurade d’Agen sur les entreprises des Prétendus Réformés’ (4 June, 1560), *AHG*, 29, p. 11. Monluc also claimed to be the target of an assassination plot, forged by a secret council of Guyenne reformers, an assertion that Burie would later validate before the *parlement* ‘Les réformés avoient formé le projet de l’assassiner, et que leurs ministres excitoient le peuple à la révolte’, Burie to *parlement de Bordeaux* (17 January, 1562), Dom Devienne, *Histoire de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1771), p. 138.

armed mob, seemingly intent on destroying his residence and pillaging his estate.⁶ This crime sent shockwaves through the Catholic community. Fumel was a major landholder in Guyenne, a prominent lawyer, well known at court, and a former ambassador to Constantinople during the 1550s.⁷ But he was also renowned for his dislike of Calvinist ministers preaching on his lands, and many suggested that he was killed by a mob of angry Protestants seeking vengeance for his continual violation of their *prêches*. Labenazie, the prior of the *collège d'Agen*, promotes this sectarian view, claiming that Fumel was: 'tuèrent cruellement... n'estant qu'à l'agonie, ils dépouillèrent tout nu, le mirent sur son lit avec un carreau derrière le corps qui le tenoit en son séant; les sujets inhumains tiroient à son coeur palpitant des coups d'arquebuze, criant: Vive l'Evangile!'⁸

Recent historians, however, have reassessed the events of November 1561 and now posit quite different theories. Janine Garrisson-Estèbe portrays Fumel as a tyrant, his murder 'une révolte populaire, spontanée, sanglante'.⁹ For Garrisson-Estèbe, the killing of Fumel was an act perpetrated by oppressed workers attempting to liberate themselves from social subjugation, embittered by the consequences of a pervasive economic decline. Jules Andrieu sees both social and religious motivations behind the assault, suggesting that while Fumel's employees may well have wanted him dead, his flagrant disregard for the sanctity of Protestant worship may have been the specific trigger for his murder.¹⁰ Georges Weill, writing in the late-nineteenth

⁶ For three contemporary descriptions of the events at Fumel in November 1561, see AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fos. 202-4; *AHG*, 8, pp. 207-21; J. A. de Thou, *Histoire Universelle* (London, 1734), IV, pp. 370-71.

⁷ See Pierre Miquel, *Les guerres de religion* (Paris, 1980), p. 226.

⁸ Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen and pays d'Agenois* (2 vols., Montauban, 1888), I, p. 248.

⁹ Garrisson-Estèbe, *Les protestants du midi*, pp. 166-67.

¹⁰ 'Le baron de Fumel était profondément détesté de ses vassaux et accablait les religionnaires de la contrée. Le 21 novembre 1561, il s'était permis d'entrer à cheval dans le temple des réformés de Condat'. Jules Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais* (2 vols., Agen, 1893), I, p. 218. Andrieu seems to have borrowed from De Bèze here, who wrote that Fumel was 'détesté a cause de sa crauté', and that his death was revenge for continued disruption of Protestant services on his lands. Bèze to Calvin (12

century, claimed that the Reformers of the south-west were 'more volatile' than their counterparts across France, highlighting the propensity of popular elements within the province to allow defiance or resistance to turn rapidly into disorder and riot.¹¹ Géralde Nakam follows this line, adding that the ruthless treatment meted out to infractors by the forces of law and order in Guyenne, and the harsh conditions that the poor were forced to survive under, contributed to this volatility. At Bordeaux, for example, it was commonplace for 'les gahets' to be singled out and forced to wear a red piece of cloth on their chest, precluding most from entering the town's shops.¹²

Denis Crouzet, on the other hand, states that this was no 'très brève guerre sociale', but 'une émeute religieuse'.¹³ For Crouzet, Garrisson-Estèbe's statement that 'durant ces révoltes, si des paysans Huguenots ont marché, ils l'ont fait en tant que paysans et non comme huguenots' is too rigid, as much of the violence of the early 1560s was committed by Protestant against Catholic, and vice versa, not by the socially or economically disadvantaged against their social superiors.¹⁴ Crouzet supports this supposition by analysing the social make up of the assailants: of those arrested in relation to the unrest at Fumel, only sixty-three (less than eleven per cent) were from the town of Fumel or its jurisdiction. If this had been inspired by social or economic grievances, he argues, one would expect the majority to be disgruntled locals or tenants complaining against their landlord. Instead, the bulk of those arrested hailed from neighbouring towns, from areas well known for their adherence to the Reform movement, and for episodic unrest and violence against Catholics:

December 1561), Théodore de Bèze, *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze* (26 vols., ed. H. Aubert, Geneva, 1960-2002), III, pp. 235-38.

¹¹ Georges Weill, *Les théories sur le pouvoir royal en France pendant les guerres de religion* (Paris, 1891), pp. 75-76.

¹² See Nakam, *Montaigne et son temps*, p. 46.

¹³ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 517.

¹⁴ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 516.

seventy-four of those arrested lived at Tournon de l'Agenais; thirty-one at Penne de l'Agenais; with others from Monflanquin, Cuzorn, Sauveterre and nearby towns.¹⁵

Garrison-Estèbe's eagerness to place the 'lower classes' at the forefront of agitation in Guyenne during the 1560s is not without corroboration from contemporary accounts. In December 1560, Fronton de Béraud, *conseiller* of the *parlement* of Bordeaux, observed that the Reformed doctrine had infiltrated 'la plus grande partie du peuple, mesmes des rustiques et gens de labour' in the Agenais and the Bazadais.¹⁶ Such sentiment was echoed by the court itself the following year: 'en la dite ville de Périgueux ceux qui font les susdictes assemblées sont la plupart gens artisans et mecaniques'... il se craint d'une emotion populaire'.¹⁷ At Agen, the town's bishop, Janus Frégose, informed the *états de l'Agenais* in early 1561 of evidence of 'des insolences, scandelles et contemnemens que les païsans dudit païs leur ont fait depuis ung an en çà', offering the crown the full resources of the clergy and Catholic nobility of the Agenais to combat this menace: 'toute la noblesse est indignée de la revolte des paysans... le roi et la reine peuvent compter sur son dévouement'.¹⁸ Predictably, Monluc also blamed lawlessness and brigandage on the peasants, claiming: 'et desja commençoient la guerre descouverte contre la noblesse'.¹⁹ He would later counsel local magistrates to stamp out deviation or delinquency at its first appearance, so as to avoid repeating the errors made by the apparently lenient *parlement* of 1548 on the eve of the Gabelle riots, warning that: 'si on donnait licence au peuple... le peuple print l'autorité'.²⁰

¹⁵ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 518. The figures here are contentious. The *Histoire Ecclésiastique* claimed that over two thousand gathered to protest against the baron de Fumel, whereas Monluc's *arrêt* of March 1562 noted that only two hundred and twenty three had been present. See *HE*, I, p. 885; *Commentaires*, pp. 483-87.

¹⁶ Fronton de Béraud to Cardinal de Lorraine (4 December 1560), *AHG*, 13, p. 143.

¹⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 789.

¹⁸ BN Dupuy, 588, fo. 106; Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 446.

¹⁹ *Commentaires*, p. 483.

²⁰ *Commentaires*, p. 578.

Henri Hauser is unhappy with such class-based stereotypes. For Hauser, the peasantry were rarely pro-Reform in any great numbers, and largely neutral in the sectarian confrontations of the 1560s. According to Hauser, the *menu peuple* had far more to be concerned with protecting their traditions and struggling with the harsh realities of their life cycle, rather than becoming embroiled in confessional disputes.²¹ That Hauser predicated this view on the nature of the peasantry of France as a whole could leave him open to criticism, as he fails to explore the specific sectarian frictions among the lower classes of the south-west. But in this, he is supported by Paul Courteault, whose detailed understanding of the confessional activism of the *paysans* of the Bordelais during the religious wars suggests that they were neither violent revolutionaries, nor even a homogenous unit - a dynamic whose absence would tend to preclude any local, let alone provincial, unity of purpose in this respect.²²

Courteault does, however, identify the collection of obligations and taxes as a flash point for contention between Catholic nobles, their tenants and the peasantry during this period. Refusal to pay was often accompanied firstly by punitive measures against the payee, and then more frequently, by physical violence against the collector himself, many of whom were lesser Catholic *gentilshommes* of the region. James B. Collins has highlighted the delicate position these men found themselves in, especially as the Reformers started to divert funds into their own coffers.²³ Burie was most damning of those refusing to pay taxes: 'Ils se vantent... de ne paier plus les dixmes et droits de l'Esglise, et se vantent aussi publiquement qu'ils

²¹ See Henri Hauser, 'The French Reformation and the French people in the sixteenth century', *American Historical Review*, (January 1899), pp. 222-26.

²² Courteault gives the example of participating peasantry at the commune at Montségur in 1560, who were 'gens mécaniques et de nulle littérature... amenés à la nouvelle doctrine, les uns par simplicité et ignorance, les autres plutôt par curiosité que par malice', hardly the revolutionaries of Garrisson-Estèbe's texts. Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn*, p. 218.

²³ See James B. Collins, *The Fiscal Limits of Absolutism* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 3-4.

ne vous paieront plus de tailles, ne les devoirs aux seigneurs', reporting all such instances to the crown.²⁴ The Bordeaux *parlement* was also keen to come down hard on such evasion, and suspended the Reformed church at Montauban in October 1561 for refusing to pay its obligations.²⁵ Some contemporaries even claimed that many were embracing the Reform movement simply as a means of avoiding taxes, rents and other dues. The correspondence of Armand de Gontaut, baron de Biron, a leading Guyenne nobleman, later to be made a marshal of France, for example, noted a propensity among local *seigneurs* to convert to Calvinism in order to free themselves of their fiscal and social duties.²⁶ Monluc also noted this phenomenon, though he takes a typically sarcastic view of Huguenot justifications for this: 'quand les procureurs des gentilshommes demandoient les rentes à leurs tenanciers, ils leur respondoient qu'ils leur montrassent en la Bible s'ils le devoient payer ou non'.²⁷ The extent to which economic hardship channelled members of the nobility of Guyenne to the Reformed church is explored elsewhere in detail, but certainly, rising inflation, bad harvests and loss of earnings due to a decline in military sponsorship were major factors.²⁸

The controversy, then, over whether the nobility of Guyenne saw the murder of their neighbour, Fumel, more as a crime against 'the establishment' than as a confessional outrage, is yet to be resolved. The subsequent actions of the *lieutenant*

²⁴ Burie to Charles IX (10 June, 1561), *AHG*, 10, p. 61. See also Burie to Catherine de Medici (June 1561), BN ms fr, 3,186, fo. 142.

²⁵ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, p. 43. It should be noted, though, that these issues were by no means specific to the south-west of France; a royal ordinance, issued at Dieppe in August 1563, reported that 'plusieurs personnes... tant gentilshommes que autres tenants terres et possessions des prélats et gens d'église de nostre Royaume et autres charges de dixmes, champarts, cens, rentes et devoirs, sont refusants et dilayants de leur payer'. Henri Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II* (2 vols., Paris, 1887), I, p. 269.

²⁶ Biron to Catherine de Medici (31 October 1560), Armand de Gontaut, Baron de Biron, *The Letters and Documents of Armand de Gontaut, Baron de Biron, Marshall of France (1524-1592)* (2 vols., eds. S. Ehrman & J. Thompson, Berkeley, 1936), I, pp. 8-11.

²⁷ *Commentaires*, p. 487.

²⁸ For arguments over economic downturn and its consequences see Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, pp. 15-16; Henri Hauser, *La prépondérance espagnole, 1559-1560* (Paris, 1948), pp. 197-203.

du roi, Burie, however, may provide a useful pointer to determine the true nature of events. Burie is considered to be a particularly moderate politician of this period, and repeatedly refused to throw his hat in with Monluc, Lange and the *ligueurs* of Guyenne through the early 1560s. Yet Burie appears to have been so incensed at the attack on Fumel that he personally headed an *association* of local Catholic nobles in order to track down and bring the perpetrators to justice. This 'ligue nobilaire', as Burie referred to it in a missive to the king of Navarre, included the *sieur* de Negrepelisse and many from the nobility of Quercy, Armagnac, Rouergue, Comminges, Périgord and Agenais.²⁹ It proved a most effective vehicle, with many of the main culprits identified and taken into custody. Once it had achieved its purpose, however, Burie severed his affiliation, and returned to Bordeaux, never to associate himself with such *ligue* ethos again throughout the decade. Burie's actions show that the threat posed to the Catholic nobility of the province at this time was not simply confessional in nature, but a complex, multifaceted affair, encompassing political, social and economic motivations. How, then, did the Catholic elite of the region respond to such specific provocation, and to the continuing disputes over the status of the Reform movement in the province? A review of the endeavours of four of Monluc's military captains - the *sieurs* de Candalle, Tilladet, Terride and Negrepelisse - will shed light on this matter.

²⁹ Burie to Navarre (November, 1561), BN ms fr, 3,186, fo. 62. The *Histoire Ecclésiastique* asserts that this *ligue nobilaire* was also headed by Lalande, the Catholic leader at Agen, and three of Monluc's captains: Monts, Terride and d'Aussun. *HE*, I, pp. 885-87. Crouzet, though, can find no evidence to support this claim. Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 378. For evidence that Catholics at Bordeaux were aware of Burie's anger at events at Fumel and the perceived threat to the Bordelais nobility, see Antoine de Noailles to Gilles de Noailles (1561), BN ms fr, 6,910, fo. 138.

Leading Catholic noble protagonists

The participation of leading nobles from across Guyenne would prove fundamental to the success of Catholic activism during the 1560s. Monluc had appointed two of his most trusted captains to important offices during February 1562; François de Cassagnet, *sieur* de Saint-Orens, known as captain Tilladet, was made military governor at Bordeaux, while Antoine de Lomagne, *sieur* de Terride, was given command of the king's forces across the Bordelais. In early March, Monluc reported that another of his captains, Louis de Carmaing, *sieur* de Negrepelisse, had approached him 'avecq ung bon nombre de gentilzhommes des pays d'Aginois, Armagnac, Quercy, Périgort, Rouhergue, Commenge... nous offrir leurs personnes et biens pour le service de vostre Majesté'.³⁰ By granting trustworthy Catholic captains these important positions within the military infrastructure of the province, Monluc was consolidating both his personal network and his ability to counter Protestant threats. Thus, at the outbreak of hostilities in March 1562, he was able to report to the crown that: 'en faisant sonner la cloche fist assemblér quatre ou cinq mille hommes, parmy lesquelz y avoyt beaucoup de noblesse, de façon qu'en vingt quatre heures ilz se sont resduiz à sa mercy',³¹ adding in a separate letter to Catherine de Medici, that: 'il n'y a rien qui ayt tant espoventé les séditieux que l'assemblée de la noblesse'.³² Each of these captains were granted license not only to manage their troops independently but to arm Catholic inhabitants of the surrounding countryside to boost the fighting capability of their forces. This was contrary to the terms of the July 1561 edict, although as *lieutenant-général* of Guyenne, Monluc was

³⁰ Monluc to Charles IX (13 March 1562), BN ms fr, 3,186, fo. 60.

³¹ *AHG*, 43, pp. 259-60. See also *Commentaires*, pp. 548-49.

³² Monluc to Catherine de Medici (13 March 1562), BN ms fr, 3,186, fo. 3. Monluc also granted six other commissions to dependable Catholic captains at this time: three went to captain Charry, his lieutenant since the 1540s, two to captain Bajordan, one to baron de Clermont, and one to captain Arné. See Vigneron, *Éloge d'Armand Gontaut de Biron*, p. 88.

allowed licence to employ military expedients as necessary in such matters, and much to the chagrin of moderate magistrates at Bordeaux, who feared this would destabilise the situation further. This policy would pay dividends for the Catholic forces in September 1562 at Terraube, near Lectoure, when militia reinforcements turned the tide of battle for Catholic troops against their Huguenot opponents.³³

The fourth, and most energetic Catholic captain, was Frédéric de Foix, *comte de Candalle*. Candalle had long been a controversial figure within provincial politics of the south-west, a central character in the determined efforts of the house of Foix to frustrate the designs of Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, during the 1550s. The situation was exacerbated in 1558 following Candalle's heroic defence of Dax against besieging Spanish forces. Now a favourite of the king, Henry II, Candalle moved into the inner circle of Guise clientele, a situation that threatened Navarre's position at court. The result was perpetual antagonism between the two, as revealed in a letter from Candalle to the cardinal of Lorraine in October 1558: 'il ne fault point que je vous déguize le mal contantement que le roy de Navarre... et la royne... m'a monsté par ses lettres. J'ay veu dedans leurs lettres une véhémance si grande'.³⁴ Candalle was no friend of the moderates within Guyenne either. On his triumphant return to his home at Cadillac, 45 kilometres south-east of Bordeaux, Candalle launched a stinging attack on Burie, accusing the *lieutenant du roi* of incompetence, negligence and mis-management of affairs in the province.³⁵ He also crossed swords with Lagebâton, being censured from the *parlement* in December 1554 for refusing to lay down his weapon while appearing before the *Grand'Chambre*.³⁶

³³ *Commentaires*, pp. 547-53.

³⁴ Candalle to Cardinal of Lorraine (16 October 1558), *AHG*, 24, p. 13.

³⁵ Candalle to Henry II (16 October, 1558), *AHG*, 24, p. 11.

³⁶ BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fos. 343-45. A similar clash occurred between the two four years later, in August 1558. BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 428.

Throughout the sectarian conflict of the 1560s, Candalle would prove himself one of the leading Catholic activists within Guyenne. He served with distinction in Monluc's forces during mid 1562, and forged a cooperative relationship with the veteran general, mirroring his commander's reputation for fanaticism on occasion.³⁷ Candalle's first telling contribution to the Catholic cause at Bordeaux came on 12 December 1562, with the presentation of a remonstrance before the *parlement*, vilifying the activities of the local Reformers.³⁸ His opening address captured Catholic sentiment succinctly:

le pays de guienne est composé de la plus belliqueuse nation qui soit en ce royaume tachant par tous moyens à s'emparer dudit pays et principalement de cette ville comme capitale d'icelui...leur intention n'est autre que d'entreprendre contre la couronne du Roy.³⁹

The remonstrance continued with an indictment of the Huguenot's practice of guarding its *prêches* with armed soldiers, paid for by 'tributes' from its churches and nobility. For Candalle, the only option open to loyal servants of the crown was to arm the Catholics of the province, and assemble a Catholic force capable of confronting and dispersing these illegal gatherings. He concluded with a warning: 'leur enterprise n'est autre que si les choses succedoient selon leur intention de ruiner tous les catholiques et permet la cour faire estat que si lesdits seditieux prevaloient trouvant la cour assemblée qu'il tailleroit ceux d'icelle en pieces'. This once more revived memories of the Gabelle debacle, and Candalle urged both the *parlement* and the crown not to fall into the same trap of showing leniency when constraint would be more appropriate.

³⁷ In January 1563, the *lieutenant-juge* at Castelveil complained to the Bordeaux *parlement* that Candalle had proven 'over-zealous' in his repression of disorders in the town. AD Gironde, 1B 254, *Arrêt du parlement* (11 January 1563), fos. 71-72.

³⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fos. 129-44.

³⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 130.

Candalle's pivotal role in energising the Catholic nobility of Guyenne, however, was to become most apparent during 1563. In early March, Candalle invited his closest ally, Louis de Lur, *vicomte d'Uza*, and *sénéchal* of Bazadais, to a meeting of local Catholic nobles at Bordeaux to debate the progress of the war. Candalle seems to have respected d'Uza's opinion on matters, writing: 'vous donnerez voz bons adviz, lesquels je suivray tant qu'il me sera possible'.⁴⁰ D'Uza suggested that Candalle convoke the *états de la noblesse de Guyenne*, to involve greater Catholic consensus before confronting the Reformers. This prerogative had rested with the house of Foix since the previous century, but it is interesting that when, on 6 March, Candalle presented his *lettres* of convocation before the *parlement*, the main sponsor of the petition was none other than Blaise de Monluc.⁴¹ The two had forged ever-closer relations during the conflict, and when Monluc made his triumphant *entrée* into Bordeaux on 10 March, Candalle was at his side. Within the supporting entourage were other leading Catholic protagonists of the time: Roffignac, Lachassaigne, Baulon, Malvin, Gaultier, Mabrun, Alesme, and Lange, as well as Sentout and Fayet, the two remaining Catholic *jurats*. Lagebâton, de Ferron, and other moderate *parlementaires*, however, were noticeable by their absence.⁴² Catholic spirits rose further at the crown's decision to divide the lieutenancy of Guyenne between Monluc and Burie; Monluc being given charge of the western province, which included authority over Bordeaux and Agen, while Burie was made responsible for the countryside east of the river Lot.⁴³

⁴⁰ Candalle to d'Uza (5 March 1563), *AHG*, 19, p. 314.

⁴¹ 'Les choses qui passent maintenant ou qui ont passé cy-devant, sont à mon grand regret si pernicieuses et de telle importance à la noblesse de ce pays de Bourdelois, que pour nous pourvoir des remèdes convenables je suis contrainct, suyvant la vieille et antienne forme accoustumée en ceste maison en tel cas, assembler les estatz de la noblesse'. BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 708-12.

⁴² BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 455.

⁴³ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 593.

On 17 March, Candalle supported Monluc in an emergency session of the *parlement* at which the magistrates validated the creation of a ‘magasin d’argent’ to finance Catholic soldiers’ pay, and of a dedicated grain store to ensure supplies could withstand periods of conflict. Both measures were to be paid for by a new tax on the citizens of the town, though as the clergy, nobility and numerous Catholic bourgeoisie were to be exempted (Catholic shopkeepers and artisans were still expected to contribute), it effectively became a tax on the Huguenot population of Bordeaux.⁴⁴ That same day, Candalle presented his *requête de la part de la noblesse de Guyenne* before the *Grand’Chambre*, demanding to know why ‘plusiers presidents et conseillers de la court, notamment le premier president, qui a tousjours porté affection a la nouvelle religion’ had failed to take measures against the perpetrators of recent unrest within Bordeaux, when much of the court and the captain of the *château Trompette* had urged an immediate response.⁴⁵ Candalle charged Lagebâton and the moderates with protecting the Huguenots from punitive justice, of entertaining them in their houses, of spying on Catholics, and of twisting the edicts to favour the Reform movement. The *requête* also claimed that Lagebâton was biased in his judgements, deciding against Catholics more than against Protestants. Its most damning accusation, however, recorded that:

ledit sieur president estant en la grand Rüe des Fosses armé et a cheval avec aucunes quy depuis se sont rendus fugitifs et qu’on sçavoit estre seditieux et des principaux de la conjuration lesquels consistoriaux estoient a cheval armés et armes decouvertes faisant ledit sieur president une bande apart avec lesdits conjurateurs fut audit lieu rencontré par le corps de ladic cour quy lors estant en armes sans ce que ledit sieur president se unit aucunement joindre au corps d’icelle cour.

⁴⁴ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 628.

⁴⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 634; BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 462.

To accuse the *premier président* of the *parlement* of being armed and mounted in the Grand Rue des Fosses Sainte-Liège, and in the company of many Protestant leaders, many of who stood accused of complicity in the attack on the château Trompette in mid 1561, was quite a step. Two separate Catholic historians of Bordeaux, Dom Devienne and Abbé Patrice-John O'Reilly, suggest that such a bold move was only possible due to the backing Candalle received from Roffignac and Malvin within the court.⁴⁶ Indeed, both authors state that, while the *requête* may have been penned by Candalle, it was Malvin who actually presented it before the court. Powis, however, has discovered that it was, in fact, Charles Dada, a *procureur* of the *parlement*, who drafted and presented Candalle's petition.⁴⁷ Dada, a client of the Catholic Pontac family, which featured two court *conseillers*, Jean and Jacques II, and *greffier* to the confraternity of Saint-Yves, was also a well-known Catholic supporter at Bordeaux.⁴⁸ It is probable, therefore, that both Dada and Malvin worked in conjunction with Candalle to present this *requête* before the *Grand'Chambre*.

Lagebâton's response was typical of the man. After stating that he had always been a 'très studieux conservateur de l'autorité et droits du Roy et de l'honneur de la ditte cour', he proceeded to attack the *requête*, drawing attention to several falsities and irregularities. Firstly, if Candalle had indeed assembled the Catholic nobility to draw up this document, then such a meeting was illegal, outlawed by various royal edicts, and thus its conclusions invalid. Lagebâton then enquired why, if the *requête* was written on behalf of 'toute la noblesse de guienne', did it feature just two signatures, those of Frédéric de Foix, *sieur* de Candalle, and Vignac, *gentilhomme*?

⁴⁶ Devienne, *Histoire de la ville de Bordeaux*, I, p. 144; O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 224.

⁴⁷ Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 276. Jacques II de Pontac, dean of cathedral of Saint-André, and Arnaud Humault de Lanta, were co-authors of the remonstrances drawn up by the clergy for the *états* of June 1561, warning of the imminence of violent unrest and the need to suppress the Reform movement in Guyenne. Both would also prove tenacious opponents to Lagebâton's governance at Bordeaux. See BN Dupuy 588, fos. 19-35; BN ms fr, 3,159, fo. 72.

⁴⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 769, fos. 204-09.

Candalle was asked repeatedly to provide the names of other Catholic nobles supporting the *requête* but refused to do so. Finally, Lagebâton queried the veracity of the second signature, that of Vignac. He claimed that the court had no knowledge of this man, that he was ‘un homme totalement inconnu et sans aucune qualité ni expression’. As such, the *requête* would be dismissed, with Lagebâton ordering the *procureur-général* to lodge a formal counter-petition, censuring Candalle for his excesses.⁴⁹

But Catholic support for Candalle was strong within the *parlement*. The *conseiller*, Jean de Mabrun, intervened at this point, stating that as the *recusation* of the nobility accused Lagebâton personally, then the *premier président* could not legally sit in judgement over the case. Lagebâton refused calls for a new *séance*, though, retorting that: ‘il n’etoit point un enfant et qu’il sçavoit bien qui avoit fait la ditte requete’. Instead, he informed the court that he had received reports of a meeting between Candalle and Lange at a house in Bordeaux on 15 March, at which ‘on trouvois grand nombre de personnages tant d’eglise que des gentilshommes traittans quelques affaires que je ne voulus entendre est entr’autres y etoient les avocats de Lange et Rigolle’. Lagebâton continued that it was during this meeting that ‘le seigneur de Candalle entra en propos avec le dit de Lange sur une requete contenant causes de recusation contre aucuns de messieurs de la ditte cour’, implying that the petition had been fabricated by Lange, Candalle and other leading Catholics as an attempt to discredit Lagebâton and the moderates within the court. As such, it should be dismissed.⁵⁰ Indeed, many historians have accepted this argument,

⁴⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 642; BN ms fr, 22,369, fo. 145. For more on this contest, see Devienne, *Histoire de la ville de Bordeaux*, I, p. 144; O’Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 225.

⁵⁰ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 635-48. Mabrun’s family also had a history of confrontation with Lagebâton. His brother served as a company commander in Catholic forces of another of the *premier président*’s nemesis, Antoine de Noailles, throughout 1562. See Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 278.

deeming Candalle's *requête* to be erroneous. They are especially swayed by the dispute over the 'homme inconnu', Vignac, presuming this nobleman to be no more than a figment of Candalle's imagination. Analysis of a document held at the departmental archives at Agen, however, questions such circumspection. The 'Procès-verbal fait par les députés aux états de la généralité de Guyenne en la ville d'Agen, les 16 et 17 novembre 1561', lists the names of all delegates attending the local *états* that month. It reveals that a 'Gaston du Vignac, jurat de la ville de Cadilhac', was in attendance for both sessions.⁵¹ This is most probably Candalle's co-signatory to the *requête* and, as such, would tend to negate one of Lagebâton's trump cards in his dismissal of Catholic allegations.

***Ligue* at Cadillac, March 1563**

In late March 1563, Candalle and his adherents were spurred on to more concerted action, forming an oath-bound Catholic *ligue* at Cadillac. Again, the exact nature of Candalle's *association* is difficult to determine due to a dearth of extant material. Historians have made only speculative progress here. Most believe the *ligue* to have been a direct response to the *premier président's* intransigence, placing its nascence sometime in late March/early April, following the dismissal of the Catholics' petition.⁵² Ruble, though, believes it to have been a consequence of the meeting between Candalle, d'Uza and other Catholic nobles at Bordeaux on 13 March, a theory that suggests Catholics intended to establish an organisation

⁵¹ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, CC 65 (17 November 1561).

⁵² Brief reviews of Candalle's *ligue* at Cadillac are to be found in Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue', pp. 195-98; Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, pp. 213-17; Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle* (10 vols., ed. A. de Ruble, Paris, 1886-1909), II, p. 213; Jouanna et al, *Histoire et Dictionnaire*, pp. 151-52; *Mémoires de Condé*, VI, pp. 290-306. A later copy of the 'articles' for the *association* at Cadillac can be found in BN ms fr, 15,875, fo. 491 (April 1563).

regardless of Lagebâton's subsequent obstinacy over Candalle's *requête*.⁵³ As regards its structure, Lecler states that Candalle and leading adherents from the *tiers états* would meet each Sunday to plan the activities of the *ligue*, but offers little other evidence of their manoeuvrings, while Ruble attempts an outline of its hierarchy based on material pertaining to its sister *associations* at Agen and Toulouse.⁵⁴ Only Thompson and Jouanna offer more detailed proposals, claiming the *ligue* to have been pyramid-shaped, with Candalle as supreme chief, assisted by a council chosen from delegates of the *tiers états*. Below this, provincial representatives directed agents across the region, who, in turn, governed Catholic cells within the *sénéchaussées*, districts and parishes.⁵⁵

The *ligue* at Cadillac was, in fact, the third such noble-led *association* created at this time, following on from those at Agen and Toulouse.⁵⁶ All, however, were immediately censored by a clause within the edict of Amboise, which ended the first religious war on 19 March 1563. Aiming, among other purposes, to accommodate rather than exclude Huguenots from the corridors of power, the edict declared all 'ligues et associations' to be divisive entities, contrary to crown policy, and thus each should be dissolved immediately.⁵⁷ But whereas those at Agen and Toulouse were disbanded within days of its registration (10 April), Candalle made no attempt to dismantle his *association* at Cadillac. The Huguenot noble, the *sieur* de Pardailan, made it clear that Candalle's refusal was the prime cause of the current unrest in Guyenne:

⁵³ Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 206 (note) and 214.

⁵⁴ Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue', pp. 196-97; Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 214.

⁵⁵ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, pp. 216-17; Arlette Jouanna, *La devoir de la révolte. La noblesse française et la gestation de l'état moderne, 1559-1661* (Paris, 1989), pp. 181-83.

⁵⁶ These two examples will be dealt with at length in subsequent chapters examining Catholic activism across the Agenais and at Toulouse.

⁵⁷ For Peace of Amboise (19 March 1563), see Stegmann, *Édits des guerres de religion*, pp. 32-37. For a detailed analysis of the registration of the edict at Bordeaux, see Hauchecorne, 'Le parlement de Bordeaux', pp. 329-40.

Je veux bien vous advertir des menées qui se font en ceste Guyenne... c'est qu'il y a une des plus grands du païs qui a fait une assemblée de la plus grand part de la noblesse de ce païs, à Bourdeaux, leur persuadant de faire association entre eux avecques une bource commune; depuis la paix faicte il se dresse un syndicat de la noblesse, capitaines et soldats, pour se garantir des meschancetés qu'ils ont faictes, qui me fait pincer et croire qu'ils sont favorisés de la plus grand part du magistrat de ceste Guyenne.⁵⁸

Lagebâton concurred, and strongly recommended to the crown that Monluc should be forced to intervene here and terminate this union.⁵⁹ This left Monluc with a problem: to act against his former captain and the Catholics of Guyenne, or to defy the crown. He decided upon an expedient bout of amnesia, replying to Catherine: 'Je vous puis assurer... que depuis la nouvelle de la paix, il n'y a eu traité d'association aucune; que, au moindre mot que j'en ai dict, tout ne soit cessé comme s'il n'en avoit jamais esté parle'.⁶⁰ He was supported here by the Catholic clergy of Bordeaux, who were more blatant in their 'disguising' of the truth about Candalle and the militant Catholics: 'depuis la paix, l'on n'a aucunement poursuivy ny parfait aucune association, et assurer leurs majestés que aucun du corps de la court n'y a jamais assisté ny poursuivi'.⁶¹

It fell, then, to Lagebâton and the moderates of the *parlement* to act. Candalle was summoned before the magistrates to explain himself, appearing on 4 May 1563. At his side was a close confidant, the acting mayor of Bordeaux, la Rivière, who offered to act as a character witness to Candalle's conduct. Lagebâton, though, dismissed la Rivière as 'un catholique fanatique, signataire de l'acte d'association interdit par le Roi', and reminded Candalle that further contravention of royal orders

⁵⁸ Pardaillan to Catherine de Medici (15 April 1563), *AHG*, 17, fo. 289.

⁵⁹ *Lettres de Catherine de Medici*, I, pp. 551-53.

⁶⁰ Monluc to Catherine de Medici (11 April 1563), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 206; Monluc to Charles IX (15 April 1563), *Ibid.*, p. 214.

⁶¹ Clergy of Bordeaux to Catherine de Medici (15 April 1563), Ruble, *Lettres et Commentaires*, IV, p. 214.

would be deemed treasonous.⁶² Candalle seemed prepared for such a rebuke, however, presenting a second *remonstrance* before the magistrates, again in the name of the convoked *états de la noblesse*, and again expounding Catholic grievances against the *premier président* and moderates within the court. This new document set out the justification for recent Catholic activities, demanding that the *parlement* legitimise the *ligue* at Cadillac rather than censure it, as it represented the only body capable of defeating the enemies of the crown, and of defending the Catholic religion in Guyenne.⁶³ The crown, however, found in favour of Lagebâton in the matter, and instructed its two royal commissioners in Guyenne, Antoine Fumée and Jehan Angenoust, to investigate Candalle.⁶⁴ But the officials met with hostility from Catholics across the province and failed to make any headway with their enquiry. At Bordeaux, they were obstructed by belligerent Catholic *parlementaires*, angered at this attack on their co-religionists, and, on occasion, by moderates wary of such intrusions into the jurisdiction of the court. The clergy of Guyenne also failed to assist, once more insisting that Candalle and his associates were no *ligueurs*, but merely defenders of local Catholic traditions.⁶⁵ By August, the two commissioners

⁶² 'En vertu de la convocation qu'il avoit faite en cette ville de la noblesse pour faire une association et d'autant que toutes associations par l'edit du Roy sont cassées et que le dit seigneur veut que ceux qui se continueront soient punir comme criminiaux de lèse majesté ce neantmoins ledit seigneur de Candalle vient hier en la cour requereur qu'il plut à icelle ordonner quelque appointment sur la requete de recusation presentée par luy pour toute l'assemblée qui est renouveler laditte association et contrevenir au vouloir du Roy'. AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 783. For Lagebâton's dismissal of La Rivière, see Lagebâton to Charles IX (27 May 1563), *Mémoires de Condé*, V, p. 186.

⁶³ For the debate, see AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 777; BN ms fr, 22,372, fo. 1,132. Copies of the *remonstrance* were sent by Candalle and the Catholic nobility to the crown as justification of their *ligue* at Cadillac: Catholic nobility at Cadillac to Catherine de Medici (20 May 1563), BN ms fr, 15,875, fo. 491; Candalle to Catherine de Medici (20 May 1563), BN ms fr, 15,875, fo. 495.

⁶⁴ BN ms fr, 15,876, fo. 201.

⁶⁵ For the activities of the *parlement* regarding this invasion of their jurisdiction, see Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 292 note 1; *Lettres de Catherine de Medici*, I, p. 552 note; *Lettres de Catherine de Medici*, II, pp. 114-15.

informed Catherine that, despite interviewing many of the local nobility, they had found no evidence of Catholic *association* or confederation.⁶⁶

The failure of the commissioners to expose the *ligue* at Cadillac is surprising, especially considering that they were present during yet another blistering attack on the moderates of Bordeaux, on 22 June 1563, by Candalle's second-in-command, the *vicomte* d'Uza.⁶⁷ Taking the form of an open letter to the crown and *parlement*, d'Uza's *requête* opened with a vitriolic attack on Lagebâton's competence, urging the crown 'employer icelluy premier président hors de ceste province en telle chose que sa Majesté advisera'. It then attacked the peace edict of March, claiming that Catholics were still being attacked, churches ransacked, with many no longer confident of receiving justice from the courts. D'Uza finished with a spot of misdirection. First, he gave an apology for Candalle's *association*:

la noblesse auroict cy-devant faict une association de bonne foy et non à aultres fins, que pour consacrer leurs vyes et employer leurs biens tant que la force et auctorité en demeurast au Roy et parce que les callompniateurs ont tousjours pourchassé de faire paroistre injuste tout ce qui a esté introduict pour leur résister.

Then, confirmation that it was validated by none other than Monluc:

pour obvier à toute callompnie, ledict seigneur de Montluc, représentant la personne du Roy, fut présent à ladicte association, icelle approuva et eût agréable, et, davantage, elle fut faicte sous le bon plaisir du Roy et de la Roynie.

Finally, a statement suggesting Monluc had since terminated the *ligue*: 'en telle façon, comme sy jamais telle association n'eust eu commencement'. That none of

⁶⁶ Fumée and Angenoust to Catherine de Medici (20 August 1563), BN ms fr, 15,878, fo. 112. In fact, the only conclusive report the two were to submit during this period concerned a *ligue*, formed in August 1563 by disparate factions of Guyenne, which aimed to secure the province against naval attack following Condé's recent treaty with England. See Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 270.

⁶⁷ The *requête* was drawn up in the form of an open letter, to be read before the *parlement*, then dispatched to the crown. See *Vicomte* d'Uza to Charles IX (22 June 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 20,598, fos. 170-80.

these details managed to end up in the commissioners' report to the crown two months later is quite bewildering.

Catholic nobility and the *premier président*, Lagebâton

Their presence did, however, see the Catholics of Guyenne close ranks and collaborate more. On 7 July 1563, for example, a report reached the *parlement* claiming that 'ceux de la nouvelle religion avoient deliberé de tuer le comte de Candalle, le seigneur de Lauzan, et le marquis de Trans', three of the leaders of the *ligue* at Cadillac. In response, Roffignac assigned two of his most trusted Catholic *conseillers*, Jean d'Alesme and Charles Malvin, to investigate the claims, and to provide each with an armed escort whilst visiting Bordeaux.⁶⁸ For once, Lagebâton's complaints at such 'factious and schismatic' activities received short shrift from the crown.⁶⁹ Then, on 30 July, Candalle tried once more to have the *premier président* arraigned, reporting that Lagebâton had libelled the Catholics of Guyenne, accusing them before the *conseil privé* of 'fausseté, imposture, calomnie, pillerie et vollerie'.⁷⁰ But when Candalle stated that the local nobility wished to sue for reparations, the *président* of the court, Lachassaigne, and the *procureur-général*, Lescure, stepped in to suspend proceedings. Both men were staunch Catholics, and no friends of Lagebâton, yet were obliged to obey the protocols of the *parlement*, which deemed that complaints against libellous assertions were outside the remit of the court.⁷¹ Candalle withdrew his accusation and exited the chamber in good order, only to

⁶⁸ AM Bordeaux, ms 772, fo. 12.

⁶⁹ Lagebâton to Catherine de Medici (21 July 1563), BN ms fr, 15,878, fo. 82.

⁷⁰ This episode is recounted in AM Bordeaux, ms 772, fos. 72-77. These 'libels' had, in fact, come to light quite by accident. The *vicomte* d'Uza had also been summoned to Paris, as a delegate of the *états de la noblesse*, to report on the continuing troubles in Guyenne, and discovered the extent of Lagebâton's allegations on arrival.

⁷¹ AM Bordeaux, ms 772, fo. 78.

return within the hour, complete with a second *récusation*, signed by himself, d'Uza, Montferrand, de la Riviere 'et autres barons seigneurs et gentilhommes catholiques de la senechaussée de Guyenne'. This new document alleged that Lange had also been libelled before the *conseil privé*, and thus, as an officer of the *parlement*, was within his rights to call Lagebâton before the *Grand'Chambre* to debate the matter.⁷²

As if constant antagonism from Candalle, d'Uza, de Trans and Lange was not enough, the *premier président* now came under fire from another leading Catholic noble, François de Peyrusse, *comte* d'Escars, recently named governor of Bordeaux following the death of Antoine de Noailles on 24 May 1563.⁷³ A local nobleman of the Bordelais, d'Escars' Catholic credentials were exemplary: he had supported the *syndicat* at Bordeaux from its beginnings; had served alongside Monluc throughout the conflict of 1562, despite a keen rivalry between the two for promotion; had been present at the secret meetings between Candalle, d'Uza and Monluc at Bordeaux in March 1563, and had been publicly acknowledged by de Trans, the co-founder of the *ligue* at Cadillac, as a stalwart of Catholicism in Guyenne in January 1564.⁷⁴ D'Escars and Lagebâton, though, had a chequered history. Powis has traced the roots of their enmity back to the 1550s, when d'Escars, then a high ranking official in the government of Antoine de Bourbon, was reproached by Lagebâton during his investigations into the affairs of Navarre on behalf of the French crown.⁷⁵ The enmity had rumbled on over the years until, in September 1563, d'Escars entered the simmering debate over the *recusations* of Candalle and d'Uza. Writing to Catherine de Medici, d'Escars reported intelligence that claimed Lagebâton and the two

⁷² AM Bordeaux, ms 772, fos. 79-81.

⁷³ AHG, 55, p. 50.

⁷⁴ De Trans to d'Escars (12 January 1564), BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 549. For d'Escars' presence at the meetings between Candalle, d'Uza and Monluc in March 1563, see BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fo. 458.

⁷⁵ Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 140.

commissioners appointed to report on Candalle's *ligue*, Fumée and Angenoust, had met that August to concoct incriminating evidence against leading Catholics of Guyenne, namely 'le feu conte du Lude, monsieurs de Montluc et le feu sieur de Noailles, l'archevesque de Bordeaux, le seigneur de Candalle et les princippaulx des estats de ce païs'.⁷⁶ When d'Escars entered the *parlement* a month later to complain of the *premier président's* 'animosité' towards him, Lagebâton denied him access, stating that the governor and his bodyguard must remove their swords before entering the building. This was a major slight to d'Escars' honour, who, as governor of the town, had been granted special dispensation from Burie to go anywhere within the *parlement* fully armed.⁷⁷ At this point, several Catholic magistrates interceded, demanding that the dispute between the two parties be heard before the *mercuriale*, as such a high profile argument was damaging the prestige of the court. But when d'Escars and his retinue turned up for the hearing on 10 December, they were not even allowed through the gates, turned away by the *huissiers* on the orders of Lagebâton.⁷⁸ Both sides appealed to the crown for adjudication, with d'Escars successful on this occasion. He received authorisation to enter the court at will, fully armed, with his bodyguard at his side if appropriate - a humiliating defeat for Lagebâton and the moderates.⁷⁹ Powis suggests that these bitter exchanges served to cement Catholic unity at Bordeaux, with d'Escars inviting many of the town's activists to become his advisors and political allies over subsequent years.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ D'Escars to Catherine de Medici (6 September 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 20,598, fo. 197.

⁷⁷ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 506-15.

⁷⁸ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, II, fos. 534-39.

⁷⁹ O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 226.

⁸⁰ Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 170.

Role of archbishop and clergy of Bordeaux

Throughout this period, the relationship between Lagebâton and the Catholic clergy of Guyenne had been equally strained. The *premier président* made little attempt to hide his disparagement of the leading clerics, accusing many of actively supporting Candalle's *ligue* at Cadillac. If the clergy had remained relatively quiet during the first war, in December 1564 they pinned their true colours to the mast, drafting a justification of the various Catholic *associations* of the province. This document, addressed to Catherine de Medici, openly admitted that the clergy was indeed a contributor to numerous Catholic bodies across Guyenne, but argued that these were simply defensive *associations*, designed to protect Catholics from assault, as opposed to the subversive nature of the Huguenot's counterparts.⁸¹ It ended by claiming that while Catholics had embraced the peace edict 'à bras ouverts', the Reformers had persisted with their 'si lamentables meurtres envers toutes personnes ecclésiastiques'. With the clergy thus fully engaged in the discourse the archbishop of Bordeaux, Prévôt de Sanssac, joined the fray, accusing Lagebâton of misadministration and perverting the course of justice by continuing to favour the Reformers over Catholics. Lagebâton dismissed Prévôt's allegations, though, claiming that as the archbishop was known to be in collaboration with Candalle, Lange, and other Catholic activists at Bordeaux, his testimony would remain invalid until the controversy surrounding the dismantling of their *associations*, and the

⁸¹ 'Madame, considere et poyse la difference entre ce que d'une part l'on appelle confederation et de l'autre synodes et colloques, et trouverez que du premier n'en est succédé que toute tranquillité et repos et du second pour le plus doux ha esté esmotion populaire et telle que a amené l'innumerable nombre des pilleries, sacagemens, sacrilèges et meurtres inhumains advenuz ces prochains ans, moys et jours, en toutes les contrées de ce vostre pouvre royaume'. Clergy of Bordeaux to Catherine de Medici (December 1564), BN ms fr, 15,881, fo. 381.

disarming of its militia, was settled.⁸² Fearing another embarrassing squabble within the sovereign court, the crown dispatched a *maître des requêtes*, the *sieur* de Vouzan, to oversee conciliation between the two parties, allowing each to voice his concerns without fear of rebuke or recrimination.⁸³

By May, however, Prévôt complained that the pace of the proceedings was too slow. He presented a new *requête* before the *Grand'Chambre*, which sought to bypass Vouzan's intermediary role. In this, Prévôt chose Candalle to act as his second, with Lange appointed as prosecuting *avocat*. The petition was blunt; demanding that the *premier président* be removed from office for malpractice and that all libellous claims against Catholics be withdrawn.⁸⁴ Lagebâton, though, was not to be fazed by this Catholic triumvirate, and countered even before the *requête* had been registered. He informed Vouzan that proceedings should be halted immediately while four technicalities relating to Prévôt's application were investigated. Firstly, as the *requête* challenged the honour of the *premier président* of the *parlement*, the presence of so many officials 'qui estoient grandz et inthimes amys dudit archevesque' was inappropriate. The *requête* could not be debated in such partial circumstances, and should be rescheduled for a private *séance*, devoid of all interested parties except the litigants. Secondly, Lagebâton refused point blank to be questioned by Lange: 'il n'estoyt pas raysonnable qu'ung cappitaine fust combatu par son soldat, ny ung president par son avocat'. This forum was that of a debate, he continued, not a trial. As such, all challenges should be submitted in writing, to be read out by the clerk of the court 'en ladicte manière accoustumée', not delivered by an *avocat* known to be a long-time ally of the plaintiff. Thirdly, Lagebâton was

⁸² *AHG*, 13, p. 179.

⁸³ *AHG*, 13, pp. 180-83.

⁸⁴ The following debate is to be found in 'Procès-verbal du différénd entre l'archevêque de Bordeaux et le premier président du parlement (1565)', BN ms fr, 15,881, fos. 157-60.

equally adamant that Candalle should play no part in proceedings, as the court was technically still investigating Candalle's participation in the various Catholic *associations* across the province. Finally, the *premier président* informed Vouzan that, as Prévôt was known to be 'en la sussitation du president Roffignac et des conseillers Mabrun, Gaultier, La Ganne, Vergoing et Belcier', these magistrates must abstain as a matter of protocol. In one go, Lagebâton had removed the leading Catholic activists from playing a part in the affair, devastating Prévôt's chances of carrying the dispute. The archbishop had no alternative other than to withdraw his *requête* and exit the chamber, though not before adding that he would take his case before the crown and, if nothing came of that, he and his brother, the *sieur* de Lanssac, would 'prendre vengeance de luy mesmes'. Such political skill and dexterity characterises Lagebâton's performances during the early 1560s, explaining his longevity in the office of *premier président* in the face of prolonged invective from Catholic agitators. In August 1566, Prévôt, Candalle and Lange tried one more concerted effort to prosecute Lagebâton, but were again out-manoeuvred by their nemesis.⁸⁵ For the moment, Lagebâton and the moderate party at Bordeaux had won the day, but matters were soon to change, as the recommencement of hostilities in 1567 saw a more determined Catholic consensus emerge at Bordeaux, one that would stop at nothing to remove the *premier président* from office.

This chapter has explored the interaction of the Catholic nobility, magistrates and clergy of Bordeaux in their opposition to the aspirations of Lagebâton, whose determination to adhere to crown dictate signalled all-out war to several leading Catholic militants. It has shown that alliances formed within the region's administrative institutions could bolster Catholic hegemony substantially, so long as

⁸⁵ 'Requête de la clergy et noblesse de guienne et maires et jurats de Bordeaux contre le premier président (August 1566)', BM Bordeaux, ms 369, III, fo. 99.

these bodies successfully usurped local and provincial authority. But they also served to arouse and strengthen the moderate consensus within these foundations, at times inflaming passions to such an extent that deadlock was achieved. The Catholic party at Bordeaux was aided throughout by the omnipresence of Monluc and his captains: technically an arbitrary royal force, but in essence, a tool to promote Catholic superiority. But the intricacies and jealousies that marked formal relations between the disparate elite bodies of Guyenne meant that even this military machine could, on occasion, sow seeds of disharmony throughout the administration. The most obvious such provocation came as a result of Monluc's promotion to *lieutenant du roi* in early 1563. Now, the Catholic general was able to convoke emergency military powers as necessary: to confiscate and sequester funds and property; to assume authority over urban councils; and to overturn the judgements of the various courts as appropriate. Powis has pointed out that: 'if during the first religious war the *parlement* remained amenable to the royal policy of moderation and avoided any final commitment to the Catholic zealots led by Monluc and Candalle, this was in considerable measure due to the now ingrained *parlementaire* fear of the arbitrary exercise of authority by army commanders'.⁸⁶ This characterises the battle of wills that raged behind the scenes at Bordeaux during the spring of 1563, with the *parlement* and *jurade* eager to retain control over their traditional jurisdiction, but facing a military commander whose usurpation of these prerogatives was expanding by the week, and who was backed by a large Catholic consensus across the region.

Ironically, it is exactly because of this dispute that the edict of Amboise, a most contentious piece of pro-Huguenot legislation, was validated and registered so quickly by the authorities at Bordeaux, supposedly the most militant of Catholic

⁸⁶ Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, pp. 39-40.

bastions within France.⁸⁷ Despite the large vocal Catholic element within the populace of the town, concurrent factors would mean that political expediency rather than confessional grievances determined the voting of the Catholic hierarchy here. On the one hand, Monluc saw in the edict an opportunity to strengthen his judicial powers in Guyenne, as its terms allowed greater surveillance of the community, and confirmed the sequestrating of goods from those contravening its decrees. On the other, the moderates within the *parlement*, and some Catholics too, welcomed the edict as a means of securing peace, as only with a cessation of hostilities could the urban councils petition for the ending of 'martial law' across the region. With stability secured, the generals would be relieved of their emergency powers, thereby allowing the courts and councils to resume full jurisdiction over their affairs, and to be accountable for the sizeable quantities of seized funds and property still being sequestered as a condition of the peace.⁸⁸

This study will now turn to the post-Amboise situation in Bordeaux, and examine the nature of Catholic activism across Guyenne, as the region firstly tried to recover from such a vicious conflict, and move towards more peaceable confessional relations, only to be hurled back into crisis as the second and third wars erupted in 1567 and 1568, leaving Catholics with little option other than to return to their *ligues* and *associations* in an attempt to defend their church, their communities and, at times, their very existence.

⁸⁷ The peace edict was registered at Bordeaux on 10 April 1563, and confirmed just ten days later. AD Gironde, 1B 257, *Arrêt du parlement* (20 April 1563), fo. 163; BN ms fr, 22,369, fo. 146.

⁸⁸ The destination of these sequestered funds had long been a contentious issue at Bordeaux. Monluc claimed that the receipts from the sale of sequestered property should be used to bolster the defence of the province and to pay his armies, whereas many moderates accused the Catholic captains of simply diverting sums to their own pockets. See, for example, AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fos. 745-54.; BN ms fr, 15,879, fos. 226-38.

Chapter 4. Catholic activism at Bordeaux, 1565-1570

Favorable Bourdeaux, le nom de favourable

*Se perdit en suivant l'exemple abominable.*¹

Agrippa d'Aubigné's commentary on the massacre at Bordeaux in September 1572 laments the fall of the town into the hands of Catholic zealots. For d'Aubigné, the massacre, one of several provincial episodes mimicking the crown-sanctioned carnage at Paris on 24 August 1572, Saint Bartholomew's day, was a direct result of the intolerance and fanaticism of the Catholic nobility and *parlementaires* of Bordeaux.² Yet the previous chapter has shown that, by 1566, political affairs at Bordeaux were characterised by stalemate, not militancy. The profusion of Catholic *associations* of the early decade had been largely negated by concerted action from the moderate party at court, while the *premier président* of the *parlement*, Lagebâton, had successfully frustrated the machinations of the Catholic hierarchy. Both parties could claim victory: the Catholic networks and alliances were still tacitly functional; the moderates had gained the upper hand in judicial clashes within the court. But, in general, a sense of impasse marked political relations during this time, and there was certainly little indication that, within four years, the Catholic party would emerge as the town's dominant force.

¹ Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Les tragiques* (2 vols., ed. C. Read, Paris, 1896), II, p. 97.

² For general reading on the 1572 massacres in the south-west, see Philip Benedict, 'The Saint Bartholomew's massacres in the provinces', *Historical Journal*, 21 (1978), pp. 205-25.

Second and Third Wars, 1567-1570

During the two-year lull in the conflict, between May 1565 and August 1567, the population of Guyenne took the opportunity to rebuild their lives. Across the Bordelais, both confessions' *gentilshommes* returned to their lands to salvage what they could of their former livelihoods, and grudging acceptance of political and religious differences marked relations between Catholics and moderates of the *jurade* and *parlement* at Bordeaux. The crown placed its faith in improved legislation as the best hope of maintaining the peace, with former adversaries now encouraged to work alongside one another to ensure effective government. The Amboise edict of March 1563 was to be the blueprint for recovery, and across Guyenne town councils were encouraged to implement its clauses fully, some for the first time. This *détente*, however, was not to last. In September 1567, Condé was suspected of involvement in the failed attempt to kidnap the king at Meaux, offering the Guise party the perfect excuse to resume hostilities in earnest. In the south-west, those who thought that the recent peace had weakened Catholic organisation were in for a shock. Within no time its leadership was revitalised, and moves to take control of strategic offices at Bordeaux were underway.

Pivotal in this regeneration was Blaise de Monluc. Monluc had been promoted to the office of *lieutenant du roi* in Guyenne following the death of Burie, on 10 June 1565.³ By 1567, his influence across the province was enormous, benefiting from the fact that the province's legitimate governor, the Huguenot Henry of Navarre, was still a minor. At the outbreak of war, therefore, Monluc became the chief arbiter of Catholic interests. His first response was to publish a number of

³ Charles IX to Monluc (11 June 1565), *AHG*, 55, pp. 59-62.

arrêts that sought to subjugate those Huguenots still resident in Bordeaux, and to ban all Protestant activity within the town.⁴ A series of further measures quickly followed: Monluc ordered all members of the *jurade* and *parlement* to profess their faith before their peers, and to ‘ne devés permettre que ceulx qui ont faict profession de ladicte nouvelle religion assistant aulcunement en vos deliberations’.⁵ In this, Monluc was supported by Prévôt, the archbishop of Bordeaux, who stipulated that ‘tous ceulx desdictz sieurs de ladicte cour, qui sont de ladicte religion pretendue, n’assisteront ni oppineront audictes affaires d’estat et negoces, communs ou publics’.⁶ The Catholic chapter of Saint-André also added their weight to proceedings, dispatching a deputation that promised Monluc the full support of the clergy, nobility, and *états* of Guyenne in his confrontations with the Reformers.⁷ Shortly after, the clergy itself submitted a *remonstrance* requesting that Monluc censure not only Protestant officers, but their wives and families too, many of which, it claimed, had benefited from immunity from prosecution because of their familial ties.⁸

The Catholic party within Bordeaux then turned on their moderate rivals. They demanded that the captain of the *château de Blaye*, a known Protestant, should be replaced by a Catholic officer, and urged that the resident Huguenots be forced to pay ‘les frais de la présente guerre’, as compensation for the culpability of their co-religionists.⁹ Monluc agreed to this, ordering the *jurade* to initiate collection of a tax, and to garrison all new *gens de guerre* in the houses of Protestants, not Catholics.¹⁰ The clergy then demanded an emergency session of the *parlement* be convened, to

⁴ *AHG*, 13, p. 399.

⁵ Monluc to *jurats* of Bordeaux (4 November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (4 November 1567).

⁶ AD Gironde, G 42 (30 October 1567).

⁷ AD Gironde, G 287, fos. 249-51.

⁸ ‘*Remonstrance du clergé de Bordeaux au Blaise de Monluc*’ (November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (November 1567).

⁹ Clergy of Bordeaux to Monluc (November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (November 1567).

¹⁰ Monluc to *jurade* of Bordeaux (November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (November 1567).

discuss claims that the *premier président* had fled the town, and was now in hiding. For Catholics, any official absenting themselves in such times of crisis should be charged with desertion of office.¹¹ Towards the end of the month, a further letter from the clergy enjoined the *parlement* to dismantle the safe refuges that had been created for Protestants at Bergerac, Mussidan, Sainte-Foy and Montauban following the Peace of 1563, claiming they were being used as bases from which rebels could strike at Catholic forces patrolling the area.¹² Monluc relayed these accusations to Paris and informed the king he had formed an emergency military council at Bordeaux to coordinate its defence. He and Roffignac were to head its executive committee with Malvin, Alesme, Vergoing, d'Escars, la Ferrière, Lahet, and Louis Roux (a Catholic *jurat*) representing the officiate of Bordeaux. Delegations from the clergy of Bordeaux, the *sénéchaussée* of Guyenne, the two *châteaux* of the town, and the bourgeoisie, were invited to make up the deliberating corpus.¹³ By contrast with the conflict of 1562, however, the crown was now in no position to object to the existence of such zealous Catholic bodies. Condé's attempt to seize the king had not only failed in its objective, it had allowed the Guise to regain power within the court, thereby stifling accommodation. So at Bordeaux, with Lagebâton still absent, and crown policy weaker than at any period since 1561, Monluc and the Catholic hierarchy were free to manage their affairs with a deal of impunity.

The crown did, nevertheless, manage to secure the Peace of Longjumeau in March 1568, temporarily ending the second period of warfare. This edict, though, satisfied neither faith. Catholics were incensed that concessions had been granted to the Reformers, despite recent military reverses - similar in many respects to the

¹¹ Clergy of Bordeaux to Monluc (4 November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (4 November 1567); Clergy of Bordeaux to Monluc (4 December 1568), *AHG*, 24, p. 454.

¹² Clergy of Bordeaux to Monluc (27 November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (27 November 1567).

¹³ Monluc to Charles IX (November 1567), AD Gironde, G 42 (November 1567).

Amboise compromise of five years earlier, which also followed a series of heavy Protestant defeats. The edict also advised that acts of Huguenot violence against Catholics were to be downplayed for the sake of future confessional relations. For the Catholics of Guyenne, who had suffered more than most at the hands of Protestant forces, this was an outrage. Monluc called the edict 'la plus injuste loy qui fût jamais conseillée à prince du monde', continuing that the manner in which Catholic victims were being neglected was unforgivable:

A qui demandera-on justice des maisons de monsieur de Sarlaboust, monsieur de Saint-Orens, du capitaine Parron, Campagne, Campanès, Lartigue et un infinité d'autres? Tout a esté brulé... et quand on demande raison, ils disent que ce sont les belistres, qui n'ont rien.¹⁴

At Bordeaux, Catholic resentment ran high. Despite the many references within the Longjumeau edict to toleration, the Catholic hierarchy moved to bolster its control over the administration of the town and province. On 27 March 1568, just three days after the edict's publication, Monluc appointed his most trusted captain, Tilladet, as military governor of Bordeaux.¹⁵ Tilladet had held this office during the crisis of 1562, and had played an active role in supporting the *associations* of Lange and Candalle. His first act as governor, on 5 April, was very much in keeping with his reputation as a staunch Catholic: he removed jurisdiction over town security and policing from the *jurade* of Bordeaux.¹⁶ This provoked a furious challenge from the *jurats*. They argued that control of the police, and of the keys to the gates, had been a traditional prerogative of the city councillors, a privilege that could be traced back to

¹⁴ *Commentaires*, pp. 658-59.

¹⁵ AD Gironde, 1B 307, *Arrêt du parlement* (27 March 1568), fo. 255.

¹⁶ Devienne, *Histoire de la ville de Bordeaux*, I, p. 154.

English rule in the thirteenth century.¹⁷ Monluc ignored such protests, asserting that the current state of affairs required that military expediency should take precedence over convention.¹⁸

The loyalty of the *jurade* had long been an issue for Catholic leaders at Bordeaux. Many of its officials were known to sympathise with, or be party to, the Reform movement, despite swearing an oath of office that dictated they ‘vivre catholiquement suivant les constitutions de l’eglise romaine à quoy il s’est soumis et obligé’.¹⁹ Suspicious of their loyalty, the Catholic leadership took steps to curb their powers: in late April, Tilladet decreed that any official of Bordeaux caught assembling under arms in support of the Reformers would be arrested and punished as a traitor;²⁰ in November, a leading Catholic *conseiller*, François de Baulon, was charged with ensuring that all Huguenot officers were excluded from attending the deliberations of the town council;²¹ and in January 1569, Roffignac and Malvin counter-signed a declaration confirming that only ‘fideles et catholicques’ officials could serve on the *jurade*.²² This would be no empty legislation. The following August, three prospective candidates, la Rivière, Goyon and Gourgues, were disqualified from a ballot for election after an investigation proved they had links to the Reform movement.²³ Roffignac and Malvin oversaw the new elections, requiring each candidate to prove they were ‘catholique... idoynes et capables, et hors de soupçon’.²⁴

¹⁷ These privileges were reaffirmed by Louis XII in 1511. O’Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 241.

¹⁸ AD Gironde, 1B 308, *Arrêt du parlement* (24 April 1568), fo. 231.

¹⁹ AM Bordeaux, ms 768, fo. 642.

²⁰ AD Gironde, 1B 308, *Arrêt du parlement* (27 April 1568), fo. 237.

²¹ AD Gironde, 1B 314, *Arrêt du parlement* (22 November 1568), fo. 39 and (25 November 1568), fo. 50.

²² AD Gironde, 1B 317, *Arrêt du parlement* (31 January 1569), fo. 185.

²³ AD Gironde, G 287, fo. 275.

²⁴ AD Gironde, 1B 324, *Arrêt du parlement* (8 August 1569), fo. 76.

Meanwhile, leading Catholics at Bordeaux were rewarded for their support with influential posts within the administration. In May 1568, Lange was promoted from *avocat* to *conseiller* of the court, a major boost to Catholic ascendancy within the *parlement*.²⁵ That same month, the *sieur* de Lanssac, brother of the archbishop, Prévôt de Sanssac, was assigned to the office of mayor, with a remit to bolster the town's defences - Monluc and Tilladet were still to be consulted over general policy matters, but the day-to-day organisation of town security now fell to Lanssac. Jurisdiction over policing was entrusted to Lanssac too, as was command of four thousand Catholic soldiers, to be deployed across the town to augment the guard.²⁶ In November, the *vicomte* d'Uza, Candalle's associate, was given charge of the royal navy docked at the port of Bordeaux,²⁷ while Vaillac, the governor of - and, in Catholic eyes, the saviour of - the château Trompette, was given command of 'les portz et havres de la mer pour surveiller les côtes du Médoc'.²⁸

Then, during late August 1568, power politics at the royal court once more plunged France into civil war. With the Guise faction continuing to dominate the king's ear, Condé issued a fresh manifesto attacking the crown for failing Protestants. In response, the *conseil privé* revoked the Longjumeau edict, rescinding all clauses that legitimised toleration. By September, the two sides were again at war. At Bordeaux, the Catholic government eased back onto a combat footing. The town's Catholic 'bourgeois, marchans et habitans' were required to present themselves for guard duty, without exception, and strangers were ordered to leave the town within twelve hours or face arrest.²⁹ An *arrêt* was issued by the *parlement* ordering

²⁵ Tamizey de Larroque, 'Jean Lange, conseiller', pp. 687-88.

²⁶ O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 243.

²⁷ AD Gironde, 1B 314, *Arrêt du parlement* (5 November 1568), fo. 4.

²⁸ AD Gironde, G 42, 29 January 1569, no folio.

²⁹ AD Gironde, 1B 313, *Arrêt du parlement* (8 September 1568), fo. 198.

Protestants to adhere to a curfew between 6pm and 6am,³⁰ reinforced the following month by an associated law forcing them to carry a passport when moving about the city in daylight hours.³¹ In late December, Monluc decided to replace Tilladet as governor of Bordeaux with the ultra-Catholic baron de Montferrand.³² Historians have offered several reasons for this change, ranging from allegations of ineptitude to political infighting within the administration. Whatever the motive, it was met with resounding approval by the Catholic hierarchy, who were well acquainted with Montferrand's zeal in confronting Protestants. The new governor's first duty was to settle the dispute over the absence of the *premier président*. Monluc had indicated a willingness to support the clergy of Bordeaux's *requête* demanding that Lagebâton be exiled in perpetuity from the *parlement* for vacating his post, and Montferrand endorsed this decision.³³

With such a cavalcade of Catholic protagonists holding high office, control of the governance of Bordeaux was assured. The *parlement* could now initiate further crackdowns: all vagabonds and potential troublemakers were to be expelled, as were any apprentices who refused to serve Catholic masters, while the activities of the *régents* and *écoliers* of the *collège de Guyenne* were more rigorously curtailed.³⁴ Provincial concerns were broached too. In January 1569, Roffignac and Baulon ordered that those Catholics chased from their homes after the rioting at Blaye should take possession of houses belonging to Huguenots currently absent from Bordeaux, adding that, should the need arise, Reformers would be evicted to make room for

³⁰ AD Gironde, 1B 313, *Arrêt du parlement* (10 September 1568), fo. 201.

³¹ AD Gironde, 1B 315, *Arrêt du parlement* (11 November 1568), fo. 55.

³² AD Gironde, B 38, fo. 74. Montferrand would head the six companies of soldiers that massacred Huguenots at Bordeaux in October 1572. See Benedict, 'The Saint Bartholomew's Massacres', pp. 205-25.

³³ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, III, fo. 118.

³⁴ For expulsion of apprentices who refused to serve their Catholic master, see AD Gironde, 1B 318, *Arrêt du parlement* (10 February 1569), fo. 69. For restrictions of the activities of the *régents* and *écoliers* of the *collège de Guyenne*, see AD Gironde, G 287, fo. 267.

Catholic refugees.³⁵ In March, the *parlement* dismissed those Protestant magistrates serving on the *présidial* court at Bézas, replacing them with known Catholic *conseillers*.³⁶ Meanwhile, the town councils at Castillon, Lamerque and Guitinières were ordered to disarm their Huguenot populations, and to distribute the collected weaponry to the Catholic inhabitants.³⁷ Monluc was also active, urging the council at Casteljaloux to keep firm control over its town guard, and to ensure that its membership was trustworthy and well organised. Should they require extra manpower, the council was to contact him immediately.³⁸

As the fighting intensified across the south-west, Montferrand tightened his grip over affairs in Bordeaux. In September 1569, he issued a decree condemning any Catholic caught giving asylum to itinerant Reformers, and commissioned the *procureur-général* to compile a report into the activities of all Huguenots still resident within the town.³⁹ The result saw over one hundred suspects, including many notable military, administrative and clerical personalities of Bordeaux, sent by Montferrand to appear before the *parlement* for prosecution.⁴⁰ Catholic domination of Bordeaux was soon complete. Their success was evident at the arrival of fellow member of the Catholic elite, the baron de la Garde, on 9 October 1569, whose fleet of eight galleons had brought much needed supplies of food and armaments to the town. On mooring, de la Garde was welcomed by a committee consisting of Montferrand, Roffignac, d'Escars, Prévôt, Vaillac, Malvin, Baulon and Lange, with the remaining Catholic officials of Bordeaux forming an honorary guard to escort the baron to a reception at the *maison de ville*. Only Monluc was missing, his arrival

³⁵ 'Arrêt du parlement de Bordeaux en faveur des catholicques de Blaye' (15 January 1569), *AHG*, 12, fos. 77-80.

³⁶ AD Gironde, 1B 319, *Arrêt du parlement* (12 March 1569), fo. 74.

³⁷ AD Gironde, 1B 319, *Arrêt du parlement* (19 March 1569), fo. 88.

³⁸ J.-F. Samazeuilh, *Histoire de l'Agenais, du Condomois et du Bazadais* (2 vols., Auch, 1847), II, p. 149.

³⁹ AD Gironde, 1B 325, *Arrêt du parlement* (24 September 1569), fo. 140.

⁴⁰ AD Gironde, 1B 326, *Arrêt du parlement* (29 October 1569), fo. 110.

delayed by continuing military operations in Béarn.⁴¹ This triumph would be maintained well into the following decade - despite the publication of the edict of Saint-Germain in August 1570 ending the third war - as throughout the early 1570s the Bordeaux *parlement* would insist that only Catholics held office, manned the gates, patrolled the streets and carried arms within the town.⁴²

Return of the Jesuits to Bordeaux

A final, intriguing footnote to the success of Catholic activism during this period concerns the return of the Jesuits to Bordeaux. While Catholics dominated the political and administrative functions of the town, Protestant academics still controlled its three important institutes: the *collège de Guyenne*, and the chapter *collèges* of Saint-André and Saint-Seurin. This left the town without a major Catholic school, a lacuna that the *parlement* viewed as an affront.⁴³ In response, Baulon proposed that a number of Jesuits be invited to return to Bordeaux to establish and oversee a Catholic school, to be supported by the local clergy, but out of reach of the *collège de Guyenne* and the moderates within the *parlement*. A consortium of Catholic magistrates was formed to coordinate this endeavour, led by Baulon and Lange, both of whom had been in contact with Jesuit dignitaries during the previous months.⁴⁴ Lange, in fact, had played host to François Borgia, *général* of the Society of Jesus, and cardinal Alexandre, nephew and papal legate to Pius V, on their recent visit to Bordeaux in 1569, and was subsequently commended to Rome by the

⁴¹ *AHG*, 13, p. 266.

⁴² AD Gironde, 1B 336, *Arrêt du parlement* (25 August 1570), fo. 227.

⁴³ Even at the height of the sectarian struggle, in 1563, the Bordeaux *parlement* seemed aware of the importance of the *collège de Guyenne* for the town, granting additional payment for its upkeep despite its ongoing problems with Protestant *écoliers*. AD Gironde, 1B 262, *Arrêt du parlement* (22 September 1563), fo. 207.

⁴⁴ Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, pp. 291-92.

delegation as a ‘personnage sçavant, éloquent, et catholique fort zélé’.⁴⁵ What is remarkable about the make up of this consortium was that it echoed almost exactly the faction that helped establish the Catholic *syndicat* nine years earlier: Roffignac, Malvin, Lange, Baulon and Cazeaux, with Prévôt, and his nephew, Charles Dusault, second *avocat-général* to the *parlement*, lending support.⁴⁶

Prévôt would be key to subsequent events, persuading the leading Jesuit theologian in the south-west, Edmond Auger, to leave Toulouse to head this new college at Bordeaux, which was to be created within the archbishop’s palace.⁴⁷ Baulon secured an initial *rente* of 2,000 *livres* to facilitate Auger’s move, and soon acquired an additional 24,000 *livres* to finance his annual keep.⁴⁸ The Catholic consortium, however, had yet to inform the crown of their plans, wary no doubt of the traditional mistrust between the French monarchy and the Jesuit order. In early May, Baulon petitioned Catherine de Medici for authorisation, only for his application to be rejected the following week.⁴⁹ Dom Devienne recounts that, as a result, there would be no Jesuit school at Bordeaux until the late 1580s, when the Catholic League assumed control of the town.⁵⁰ However, an analysis of archival material at Bordeaux points to a less clear-cut verdict. The proposal to re-establish the Jesuits may well have been denied by the crown, but, on 20 May, the Bordeaux *parlement* agreed to allow Baulon to continue with his scheme.⁵¹ Shortly afterwards, Auger and several of his followers are recorded to have arrived within the town, and

⁴⁵ Darnal, *Chronique Bordelais, Supplément*, p. 81. Lange was also cited by Arnauld de Pontac, bishop of Bazas, as one of the ‘bons catholiques’ of Bordeaux, in a letter to Rome concerning the possibility of a Jesuit college being established in Bordeaux in 1569. *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, p. 296.

⁴⁷ The Jesuit Edmond Auger was also known in the south of France as Charles Sager. See Dom Devienne, *Histoire de l’église de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1862), p. 95.

⁴⁸ AD Gironde, H 2,512, fo. 5. It would later transpire that Baulon had diverted these funds from the *parlement*’s financial expenditure, and not collected from Catholic benefactors as he claimed.

⁴⁹ AD Gironde, H 2,380, liasse 68-2, *Actes de Grandes Personnages* (4 May 1572).

⁵⁰ See, for example, Devienne, *Histoire de l’église de Bordeaux*, pp. 95-96.

⁵¹ BM Bordeaux, ms 828, 5, fo. 32. See also AD Gironde, H 2,512, fos. 1-4.

to have founded a small hospice for the poor and a refuge for pilgrims.⁵² Worthy of note, here, is the date: 20 May 1572, the day after the feast day of Saint-Yves. It would be interesting to postulate that, just as the applications for the creation of the *syndicat* had been presented before the magistrates during the confraternity's festivities of May 1558, 1560 and 1561, so this same ceremonial was chosen as the appropriate occasion to re-establish that most Catholic of sixteenth-century groups, the Jesuits.

Summary

Part I of this thesis has illustrated the myriad forces driving the Catholics of Bordeaux to organise in defence of their faith, and in opposition to the Reform movement. Jacques-Auguste de Thou noted that Catholics clearly recognised the grave threat posed to their traditional political, economic and social structures as early as the 1540s, believing their church to be at imminent risk of annihilation from Protestantism.⁵³ They were equally as dismayed at the crown's equivocal, sometimes erratic, approach to this menace. To Catholics, the many royal edicts published during the 1560s were simply experiments in expediency, attempts to accommodate and tolerate that merely allowed the Reformers to consolidate and expand, while forcing Catholics into numerous concessions. When substantial numbers across the region embraced these initiatives, militant Catholics felt that their best option of opposing such policies lay in their disengaging from crown and provincial authority, and the commencement of a private struggle to redress the balance.

⁵² AD Gironde, H 2,380, liasse 68-2, *Personnel* (August 1572); AD Gironde, H 2,380, liasse 68-2, *Collège de Jesus*, (17 November 1572).

⁵³ De Thou, *Histoire universelle*, IV, pp. 370-71.

Yet success in this endeavour would require the consent and support of the local clergy, nobility and sympathetic municipal officials, a consensus that was extremely rare within the towns of France at this time. Traditional jealousies and political infighting had long precluded most attempts at mutual cooperation within the urban setting, as recent studies of have confirmed. Philip Benedict states that ‘contention was more evident than compromise’ in local government relations during the sixteenth century, especially in those centres where political authority was divided between crown and local officials.⁵⁴ Robin Briggs adds that rivalries and antagonism between urban and regional interest groups resulted in a ‘kaleidoscopic series of internal tensions and conflicts... with the crown seen as the guarantor of local and sectional privilege, and the arbiter when such privileges clashed’,⁵⁵ while David Parker contends that the preoccupation of urban oligarchies with the defence of their privileges and interests saw them regard themselves more as ‘rivals rather than as members of a class bound by common economic interests’.⁵⁶ Timothy Watson’s study of the town council minutes at Lyon notes a similar absence of concord from deliberations, as local institutions blamed ‘co-existing and overlapping jurisdictions’ for the stalemate in governance there,⁵⁷ while Konnert shows that, despite concerted efforts by the councillors of Châlons-sur-Marne to unite in their embracing of religious toleration – even in the face of extreme pressure from representatives of the local Catholic Guise family - dissent and belligerence still marked civic agendas throughout the period.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Philip Benedict, ‘French cities’, p. 20.

⁵⁵ Robin Briggs, *Early Modern France 1560-1715* (Oxford, 1977), p. 60.

⁵⁶ David Parker, *The Making of French Absolutism* (London, 1983), p. 40.

⁵⁷ Timothy Watson, *The Lyon City Council c. 1525-1575: Politics, Culture, Religion* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Magdalen College, 1999), p. 73.

⁵⁸ Konnert, *Civic Agendas and Religious Passion*, esp. Chapter 2: ‘Portrait of a city council’, pp. 40-50.

Urban relations in Bordeaux were no less fractious. Powis has observed how a 'tradition of rivalry' marked relations across the Bordelais during the mid 1500s, with magistrates competing with *jurats*, crown officials against municipal councillors, and the urban elites vying for pre-eminence with the *noblesse du païs*.⁵⁹ Yet the onset of the religious wars altered these dynamics significantly at Bordeaux. Now, rivalries were aligned along confessional lines, with many traditional jealousies set aside so as to forge consolidated alliances against the 'enemy'. Powis claims that these tensions were most significant among the town's magistrates, who found themselves continually challenged by a need to reconcile their obligations as arbitrators of royal and local authority with their support of either the Protestant or Catholic cause.⁶⁰

By 1562, a discernible breach between militant Catholic, and crown and provincial, policy had appeared, reflecting the clashing ideologies of the protagonists, but also revealing the disharmony that resulted when religious dogma and conciliatory policies attempted to coexist within an urban administration. The question now seemed to be: would the crown's determination to implement religious toleration force the militants - who by now were no longer Powis's 'isolated bureaucratic caste' of previous decades, but a homogenous entity intent on standing their ground - onto the defensive? This homogeneity of Catholic activism at Bordeaux, while rare across France, would become a feature of militant responses in the south-west during the 1560s. Support from a broad Catholic consensus was forthcoming across the Bordelais almost immediately: from the Bordeaux *syndicat* to Candalle's *ligue* at Cadillac; from the enterprises of d'Escars, Malvin, Baulon and Lange to the intervention of Monluc and his captains, and from the ad-hoc defensive

⁵⁹ Powis, 'Order, religion and magistrates', pp. 185-88.

⁶⁰ Powis, 'Order, religion and magistrates', p. 192.

measures of the early 1560s to the later ordered Catholic coalition administrations under Roffignac and Montferrand after 1568.

The *syndicat* of 1561 is, in fact, a prime example of just how successful Catholic activism could be when it received the backing of the wider community, with the confraternity of Saint-Yves, the lesser official and higher magistrates of the court, and the urban and local elites, all rallying to support Lange and his venture. But the *ligue* at Cadillac was equally adept at harnessing the collaborative propensity of Catholics of the south-west, securing support from both administrators and nobility of the region. It would prove a most robust bloc, with Thompson pointing out that, while the *ligues* at Agen and Toulouse were dismantled in 1563, in accordance with the Amboise edict, Candalle's organisation at Cadillac continued to expand during the decade, attracting such widespread backing that it would eventually be termed 'the league of Guyenne'.⁶¹

But although Catholic *associations* could profit from the usurpation of government, they could also be frustrated, and even censored, by the moderate consensus within the local centres. Lagebâton and his allies within the Bordeaux *parlement*, for example, were instrumental in resisting the *syndicat*, and constant thorns in the plans of Candalle, Roffignac and other Catholic protagonists. Thompson recognises this feature, or rather its absence, when stating that the *ligue* at Cadillac owed as much to the crown's inability to censure it, as it did to the tenacity of its Catholic proponents in defending it.⁶² The controversy at Bordeaux, though, was by no means restricted to discord over religious policy, but encompassed arguments over political jurisdiction, economic and social prerogatives, and the struggle to validate identity. For Catholics, for instance, the defence of social and

⁶¹ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 216.

⁶² Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 254.

religious traditions was paramount, while for Protestants, a desire for legitimacy, often in opposition to Catholic customs, fuelled their passion. In the middle of this were the moderates, keen to uphold royal and provincial authority, to keep the peace, and to maintain the status quo across the communities of the south-west. Mark Greengrass's précis that jurisdiction conflict during this period meant that the struggle between the faiths was shaped 'by *rights* as well as by *rites*', is thus a most accurate assessment.⁶³

⁶³ Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot', p. 390.

PART II: AGEN AND THE AGENAIS

Chapter 5. Catholic activism at Agen, 1560-1563

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Part II will concentrate on the second major arena of Catholic activism in Guyenne: Agen. Chapter 5 will examine the rise to prominence of an ad-hoc, pan-Agenais coalition of Catholic delegates, drawn from the secular and clerical institutions of the region. Historians have tended to overlook Catholic reaction to the events of the early 1560s at Agen, content to focus instead on the efficacy of Protestant coups within several local towns. So while the aggrandisement of the Reform movement in the south-west, and especially the assaults by Huguenot forces during 1560 and 1561 on Agen, Montauban, Castres and other centres, is well documented, the response of Catholic authorities and inhabitants to the insurrection is rarely broached. Even the leading commentators in this subject: Jules Andrieu, Abbé Joseph Barrère, Labenazie and J-F. Samazeuilh, have inclined to detail Catholic rejoinders merely as a counter-weight to their narrative of Protestant endeavours.¹ Only Georges Tholin provides an account of independent Catholic activities at this time, analysing the confrontation that occurred within the administration as Huguenot officials attempted to infiltrate the corridors of power at Agen, and the military battles that took place between Protestant and Catholic forces across the Agenais.² The following two chapters aim to explore the veracity of Tholin's commentary, and to expand on his limited study of Catholic resistance by providing new insights into their military and political

¹ Jules Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais* (2 vols., Agen, 1893); Abbé Joseph Barrère, *Histoire religieuse et monumentale du diocèse d'Agen, depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours* (2 vols., Agen, 1855-1856); Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen et pays d'Agenais*, I, (Montauban, 1888); J-F. Samazeuilh, *Histoire de l'Agenais, du Condomois et du Bazadais* (2 vols., Auch, 1847).

² Georges Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen pendant les guerres de religion du XVI^e siècle', *Revue de l'Agenais et des anciennes provinces du sud-ouest*, XIV – XVI (Agen, 1887-1889).

recovery of the region. They will reveal how officials from within the *jurade* and *présidial* at Agen, and from the *sénéchaussée d'Agenais*, would amalgamate with pro-active senior figures from the town's Catholic church to form a coalition administration. This body aimed to resurrect Catholic fortunes within the Agenais: coordinating the military recovery of defeated towns, restoring Catholic officials to office, securing political alliances to maintain Catholic ascendancy in the face of sectarian and crown pressure for greater liberties for Protestants. At Agen, just as at Bordeaux, Catholic hegemony would be achieved by uniting sympathetic urban magistrates and disparate local nobles, creating concord among an affiliate usually characterised by contestation, jealousy and rivalry. But as the coalition became the fulcrum of Catholic activism in the region, its debt to the military weight offered by Blaise de Monluc was immeasurable. The organisational and martial skills employed by this experienced campaigner frequently exposed deficiencies in the policy and performance of Protestant forces. An independent stalwart of Catholic security during 1560 and 1561, Monluc's appointment to the post of *lieutenant-général* of Guyenne in January 1562 formalised Catholic military superiority throughout the decade. Now, Monluc was able to deploy his troops, and to enforce punitive measures against Huguenot communities, under the tacit authority of the crown, although the extent to which these actions concurred with or went against royal dictate will need to be qualified at each step. Also an advantage for the Catholic party at Agen was Monluc's awareness of urban defensive strategy, specifically the primacy of concerted resistance that utilised the entire community. This ethos had been fine-tuned during his service in the Italian campaigns of the 1550s, and would prove invaluable in limiting Protestant successes to a minimum after 1562.

Chapter 6 will assess what can be seen as a 'second phase' of Catholic activism at Agen: the definitive support of the local nobility and committed clergy of the *états d'Agenais*. This originated in the promulgation of sympathetic dictates by the *états* in support of the coalition and continued with the formation of an oath-bound, elite-led *ligue* at Agen, engineered by Monluc and endorsed by all significant local Catholic activists. With the coalition augmented by wider participation of the elites of the Agenais, the Catholic *modus operandi* - employing punitive legislation to denigrate Huguenot resources - looked to incorporate overt military action, executed by noble retinues, into its remit. The crown, though, was quick to see the potential dangers in such developments and censured all such *associations* through the edict of Amboise in March 1563. But, while Monluc and the Catholic nobility were forced to comply, the die had been cast. Even though the *ligue* was disbanded, the *esprit de corps* generated among Catholic adherents over the preceding months served to underpin and define Catholic activism for the coming years. The period 1564-1570, then, sees the domination of events by Monluc and his military forces, with coalition legislation, confirmed and supported by the *états*, continually eroding Huguenot potential within the towns. The Catholic leadership of the Agenais was thus able to maintain control of urban government, defending their prerogatives with a vigour and resourcefulness that perplexed both crown and Reform movement alike. The final years of the decade would see a concerted attempt by Condé and the Huguenot grandees to triumph in the south-west of France, moving much of its forces into the region under the *comte* de Montgomery. Key to this strategy was control over the towns of the Agenais, and the conflict would be fierce. Yet the homogeneity of Catholic parties by this point was complete, and, under the guidance of Monluc, the key centres of the region held out against the Protestant onslaught.

The success of Catholic resistance epitomised the progress that Catholic activism had made over the decade. While Monluc and his captains deployed their professional forces to the front line of urban defences, the Catholic population was now roused into joining the struggle, with whole communities energised by the coalition into manning the barricades in the defence of their religion, their towns, their lives and livelihoods.

Jurisdictional conflict and concord between Agen and Bordeaux

Situated 110 kilometres south-east of Bordeaux, the town of Agen had a population of nearly 7,000 by 1560.³ Its robust walled defences and commanding position at the bend of the Garonne river offered strategic superiority to whoever controlled the town, while its location, midway between the two Catholic bastions of Bordeaux and Toulouse, ensured it would play a pivotal role in the ensuing struggles. Both faiths viewed Agen as a vital asset: for Catholics, it would provide a secure base from which to oversee control of the surrounding countryside, and an important staging post in the reciprocal flow of troops, munitions and resources between the two capitals; for Protestants, Agen offered the promise of severing this umbilical cord, and of creating a vital satellite for the support and revictualling of its forces across Guyenne. Agen was thus the logical choice as command centre for military generals serving in Guyenne. Troops stationed there could be deployed rapidly across the province, and its compact nature offered certain advantages over the sprawling capital, Bordeaux, as its later adoption as headquarters for Henry of Navarre, and marshals Biron, Villars, and Matignon attests. Monluc, too, had little

³ Boutrouche, *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, p. 243.

hesitation in residing at Agen during his tenancy as *lieutenant-général*, setting up camp at the town's *hôtel de ville*. Paul Courteault suggests that Bordeaux's large Huguenot population, which posed a threat to internal security, was a factor in this decision, as was the propensity of the Bordeaux elite to fragment into disparate alliances and conflicting interest groups, whose insidious webs of patronage and faction repeatedly frustrated local government and exasperated its commanders.⁴

The beginnings of Catholic activism at Agen can also be found within this contrast with the provincial capital, specifically a desire of the town's councillors to defend their civic prerogatives against the increasing demands of their superiors at Bordeaux. The argument centred on the ability of urban councils to legislate against Protestant activity, independent of the sovereign court. The dramatic growth of the Reform movement in Guyenne during the late 1550s had fuelled an intense debate within the *parlement*, which attempted to unify the policy responses of Catholic magistrates across the province. Initially, the Agen council had been content to be directed in all such legislation: in July 1558, the *jurade* confirmed an *arrêt du parlement* banning all *prêches* that had failed to secure the consent of the royal court or local bishop, and enforced a fine of 10,000 *livres* for those contravening it.⁵ Importantly, the *jurade* also confirmed new extradition procedures, whereby all locally incarcerated heresy suspects were to be transported to Bordeaux for trial and punishment.⁶ In return for their cooperation, the town council expected the *parlement* to approve reciprocal legislation, allowing them greater remit to confront Huguenot activity. Thus, on 13 March 1559, the *jurade*'s request to be allowed to arrest anyone

⁴ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 404-05. See also Powis, 'Order, religion and magistrates', p. 192.

⁵ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 26v.

⁶ Such was the case for Pierre Lachèze, a *cordonnier* at Agen, who had been arrested in December 1558 for having 'voleu ruer ung coup de pierre et ung coup de poing a ung ymage du crucifix en pappier'. Where Agen magistrates would previously have interrogated Lachèze themselves, under the new agreement he was now dispatched to Bordeaux for trial. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 31.

‘qui parle mal de la foy et religion chrestienne’ was ratified by the *parlement*.⁷ The following month, a complementary ordinance was endorsed, requiring the *lieutenant-criminel* of the *sénéchaussée d’Agenais*, Antoine de Tholon, ‘proceder par une pugnition exemplaire contre les hereticques d’Agen qui ont profané des images’.⁸

There was even consensus between Agen and Bordeaux over the censuring of the more general communal assemblies which, on occasion, resulted in disorder. The *parlement* had long been aware of the potential for unrest at feast day celebrations and public gatherings such as burials, processions and the *charivari*, and had successfully legislated against many such activities within the capital. Where these ceremonies continued, however, and especially when sectarian congregations came into close proximity with one another, hostility often led to fighting.⁹ The *parlement*, in cooperation with the *jurade* at Agen, moved to end these violent outbreaks. In May 1559, it revised a previous *arrêt*, which simply banned illegal Huguenot gatherings, to make it ‘défense de faire des assemblées et charivaris... avec son de taborin, insolances et chalibari soyt pour le premier, second et troisieme mariage; et ce à peine de dix mil livres’.¹⁰

Yet there would be an unexpected opponent of this essentially anti-Protestant legislation: the provincial governor, Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre. Navarre had been absent from Guyenne for some time, attending court in Paris, so it was only in March 1559 that he learned of the *parlement*’s crackdown. He immediately made his reservations clear, ordering the suspension of all relevant legislation until his return. This missive further charged Tholon and Bernard d’Aspremont, *lieutenant-*

⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 35v.

⁸ 21 April 1559. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 43. For Antoine Tholon’s career, see Tholin, ‘La ville d’Agen’, XIV, p. 214.

⁹ Claude Haton blamed the massacre at Sens in 1562 on Protestant refusals to acknowledge the feast day processions and masses as per the terms of the Edict of January, instead openly taunting and later firing upon the Catholic worshippers. Claude Haton, *Mémoires de Claude Haton (1553-1582)* (2 vols., Paris, 2001), I, pp. 403-06.

¹⁰ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 20.

particulier of the *sénéchaussée*, to ensure the compliance of the *jurade* in this matter, requiring them to suspend all heresy trials subject to the recent *arrêt*.¹¹ The first to gain from this was a *cordelier* from Agen named Melchior, who was removed from prison and placed under the jurisdiction of Navarre's entourage.¹² Navarre's intervention is surprising, considering his subsequent staunch defence of Catholicism. Indeed, at his death in late 1562, Navarre was widely regarded as the epitome of orthodoxy in France.¹³ There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, Antoine's religious standpoint during the late 1550s appears to have been equivocal, more in tune with the overt affiliation shown by his wife, Jeanne d'Albret, to Calvinism in Béarn and Navarre. Paul Courteault certainly adheres to this theory, stating that, at this time, 'il favorisait alors ouvertement les réformés'.¹⁴ Secondly, Navarre was simply asserting his prerogative as governor over Guyenne, making it clear that the various over-mighty councils of the region should have consulted him before employing such vigorous anti-Protestant legislation.

Catholics were exasperated at the governor's stance, especially as it coincided with a most dramatic period of Protestant expansion across the region. Analysis of the records of the *parlement* reveals the explosion in complaints reaching the courts from anxious Catholics, concerned at rising levels of intimidation, civil unrest, illegal armed gatherings and violence against their priests, churches and communities.¹⁵ At Agen, Catholics were further alarmed by the insurrection at nearby Montségur in

¹¹ Antoine de Bourbon to *jurade d'Agen* (24 March 1559), Marquis de Rochambeau, *Lettres d'Antoine de Bourbon et de Jehanne d'Albret* (Paris, 1877), pp. 175-76.

¹² Rochambeau, *Lettres d'Antoine de Bourbon*, p. 176.

¹³ For a history of Navarre's convoluted religious affiliation in the 1550s and early 1560s, see Sutherland's chapter, 'Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre and the French crisis of authority, 1559-1562', in Nicola Sutherland, *Princes, Politics and Religion 1547-1589* (London, 1984), pp. 55-72.

¹⁴ Paul Courteault, 'Notes et Variations', in *Commentaires*, p. 1, 178, note 7.

¹⁵ The *registres du parlement* at Bordeaux highlight the numerous reports of illegal *prêches* and illicit and armed assemblies. See AM Bordeaux, ms 766, fos. 1-68 for November 1559; fos. 69-77 for December 1559; fos. 178-256 for January 1560; fos. 257-326 for February 1560; fos. 327-373 for March 1560; fos. 374-427 for April 1560; fos. 428-554 for May 1560; fos. 555-632 for June 1560; fos. 633-707 for July 1560; and fos. 708-89 for August 1560.

February 1560, where a commune had been proclaimed.¹⁶ With allegations that partisans sympathetic to the rebels were active within Agen, civil unrest became a genuine concern for the *jurade*. Even Navarre appeared to cool his support for the Reformers at this, ordering the *consuls* of Agen and neighbouring Condom to place their guard on the highest alert in case Protestants troops tried to take advantage of the situation.¹⁷

The deteriorating situation forced magistrates across the Agenais to address the defence of Catholic interests as a matter of priority. Determined leadership was called for, and two prominent Catholic councillors, Martial de Nort, *consul* of the *jurade*, and Clément de Lalande, canon of the church of Saint-Caprais, stepped forward to direct the Catholic response. Their first success was in persuading the *jurade* to recall Monluc, then in retirement at his château at Estillac, to Agen as advisor on military security. Monluc arrived on 19 February and immediately urged each *jurat* to take a turn guarding the gates to ensure that all agitators were kept out. He then advised the council, now dominated by Catholics, to maintain a watchful eye over all activities within the town so as to pre-empt any unrest. At a separate meeting, the council determined to reclaim its prerogative to impeach heresy suspects so as to allow itself greater scope in prosecuting Huguenot rebels across the Agenais.¹⁸ That such action risked distancing Agen from the Bordeaux *parlement*, thereby weakening ties with Lange and the Catholic *syndicat*, shows the importance placed on securing jurisdiction over independent prosecution by the council. The results were immediate. That same day, Philippe Levi, a local schoolmaster, arrested ‘pour l’avoir trouvé chargé de faire assemblées et presches secretz en maisons

¹⁶ See Nakam, *Montaigne et son temps*, p. 46.

¹⁷ Andrieu, *Histoire de l’Agenais*, I, p. 211.

¹⁸ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 55.

privées dans ladite ville de Villeneuve', was brought before the Agen for sentencing, and not transferred to Bordeaux, as was required by statute.¹⁹

If the *jurade* expected a torrent of complaints from Bordeaux at this decision, they never materialised. Buoyed by this apparent success, the Agen magistrates presented an application to the king requesting that jurisdiction be formally transferred back to the council.²⁰ But the *jurade* would soon find that authority over heresy trials could also be a major inconvenience. In May 1560, two high-profile Calvinist ministers, Jean Voisin and Jacques Lafontaine, were arrested, accused of over-zealous preaching and of inciting followers to assault members of the *présidial* court at Agen. On imprisonment, an armed mob assailed the jail demanding their release. Lalande and de Nort were forced to deploy Catholic guards to maintain control, but in the furore, both ministers managed to escape, although Lafontaine was quickly recaptured.²¹ Monluc was recalled to Agen to quell the unrest, and to adjudicate over the controversial imprisonment of the ministers.²² He determined that the original judgement was correct, as the inflammatory rhetoric of the two had clearly contravened a recent royal edict.²³ This judgement not only aggravated the mob, who now besieged Monluc's home at Estillac, but also incurred the wrath of the provincial governor, Navarre, who, aware that the *jurade* had acted without crown authority, rebuked them for acting outside their jurisdiction. When Navarre informed the king of his grievances, Monluc deemed this to be a most serious rupture

¹⁹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 13 (16 March 1560).

²⁰ To validate this, the council proffered detailed interrogation techniques proving their competence, promises of exhaustive searches to track down all accomplices, and an assertion that any Protestant acquaintance of an accused would be treated as a suspect until proven innocent. To demonstrate their zeal in such matters, a case report on the successful trial of Pierre Brune, a Huguenot charged with possessing the banned book, *La Légende Dorée*, was included. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (1 June 1560).

²¹ *Commentaires*, p. 473.

²² Tholin, 'La ville d' Agen', XIV, p. 435.

²³ *Commentaires*, p. 473. Burie had similar occasion to admonish a Protestant minister, La Teulade, in November 1561 for excessive proselytising in Béarn in contravention of the Edict of July. See Ruble, *Jeanne d' Albret*, p. 22.

between the two.²⁴ Yet despite Navarre's diatribe, the Agen council proceeded with the prosecution of the ministers, pending a verdict from the crown.²⁵ On 10 June, the matter was taken out of their hands, with the arrival of royal *lettres* ordering Lafontaine's immediate transportation to Bordeaux for trial before a commission of 'ung des presidens et cinq des plus anciens conseillers de la court de *parlement*'.²⁶

Beginnings of Catholic consensus at Agen

While the prevalence of anti-Protestant legislation and contention over jurisdiction of heresy trials may indicate the presence of a pro-Catholic consensus within the magistrature of Agen, and, while de Nort and Lalande certainly began assuming greater authority within council meetings, there is, to this point, little evidence of any formal Catholic *association* having been established within the town. This was about to change. On 1 June 1560, the *jurade* at Agen received intelligence claiming that a Protestant force from Nérac was approaching the town, intent on gaining entry and desecrating the churches and cathedral.²⁷ The *jurade* consulted with members from the *présidial* court, and decided that an urgent meeting of all local Catholic notables be held to determine a response. De Nort and Lalande convened this assembly at the *maison commune* on 4 June. Monluc was again called to attend, as were prominent Catholic officials from the region.²⁸ Also present were

²⁴ 'Le roy de Navarre me sentit si mauvais gré de ce que je fis qu'il m'en voulut mal mortel, et escrivit au Roy que je l'avois despossédé de l'estat de lieutenant de roy, le priant de luy mander s'il m'en avoit donné la charge; de quoy il deliberoit de se venger, à quelque pris que ce fust'. *Commentaires*, p. 473.

²⁵ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 435.

²⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fos. 67v-68.

²⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (1 June 1560).

²⁸ The more prominent Catholics *jurats* were Antoine de Nort, de Goudilh, Bourgoignon, Cambefort, de Cahusières, Bérard, Michel, and Galdemary. Also in attendance were Tholon, d'Aspremont and Pierre Redon, officers of the *sénéchaussée d'Agenais*. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (4 June 1560).

Nadal and Lobatery, senior canons of the cathedral of Saint-Étienne, representing the clergy - the first explicit cooperation between secular and clerical institutions of the Agenais in opposition to the Reform movement. As Georges Tholin correctly states, this was a pivotal moment: it witnessed the creation of a pan-Agenais coalition of Catholic delegates, an alliance that would define Catholic activism for the coming decade.²⁹

The first directive issued by the coalition was the formation of a committee to oversee the defence of Agen.³⁰ The panel was drawn from the attending delegates, with Lalande appointed to its chair. Based within the *maison commune*, its primary concern was the surveillance of all Huguenot activity within Agen. The coalition also determined that a sizeable force of Catholic townsfolk be made available to Lalande in emergencies. Experienced Catholic captains were to be sought to command these new units, with arms and artillery made available as necessary from the town arsenal.³¹ This clearly contravened the recent royal edict prohibiting the carrying of firearms, a consequence of the recent Conspiracy at Amboise. But evidently the coalition felt the scale of the Protestant threat justified such an expedient policy; yet mindful of crown sensitivities, it simultaneously registered the disarmament edict as a precaution.³²

Monluc, too, was keen to stress the importance of ensuring Catholic actions remained legitimate where possible and advised the coalition to seek permission from the crown for its recent initiatives.³³ Lalande concurred, and dispatched his delegate, d'Aspremont, to Paris to inform the king of events. Two letters of reply were received, from Francis II and the Cardinal of Lorraine, both revealing

²⁹ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 435.

³⁰ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (4 June 1560).

³¹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (4 June 1560).

³² AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 60.

³³ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 212.

overwhelming crown support for Catholic actions at Agen.³⁴ The letters thanked the magistrates for their zeal in tackling sedition across the region and their defence of the towns against the threat of insurrection. The king then remarked that in order to preclude any further contentious Protestant activity within Guyenne, Navarre would soon lead a royal force into the province. In this, the officers of the *sénéchaussée d'Agenais* would be required to assist the governor fully, with Tholon named personally as liaison between the two parties.³⁵

Yet despite its support of the Catholic coalition, the crown continued to employ a conciliatory tone in its dealings across the country. Attempts to implement dual-faith council chambers, or *chambres mi-parties*, within the town councils of France were stepped up throughout 1560, although many resulted in disputes over power sharing and degenerated into sporadic violence.³⁶ At Agen, Protestant demands for a *mi-partie* chamber had been so frequent that, in January 1561, the coalition sought to end the matter once and for all. Rather than simply rejecting the latest petition, they voted to revert instead to the terms of the Edict of Châteaubriant of 1551, an intolerant edict that severely limited Protestant conduct.³⁷ This incensed the Reformers at Agen, who accused the Catholic leadership of bias. They claimed the decision was an act of open provocation and took to the streets, attacking Catholic homes and forcing their way into the church of Saint-Fiary to destroy its statues.³⁸ François Raffin, the *sénéchal de l'Agenais*, struggled to restore order with his limited resources. He advised the coalition that such large-scale unrest could only

³⁴ Francis II to *Consuls d'Agen* (20 June 1560), AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 67; Cardinal of Lorraine to *Consuls d'Agen*, *Ibid.*, fo. 67v.

³⁵ Francis II to Antoine Tholon (10 June 1560), AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 66v.

³⁶ For a detailed analysis of the *chambres mi-parties* of France during the religious wars, see Eckart Birnstiel, 'Les chambres mi-parties: les cadres institutionnels d'une juridiction spéciale', Jacques Poumarède and Jack Thomas (eds.), *Les parlements de province. Pouvoirs, justice et société de XVe au XVIIIe siècle* (Toulouse, 1996), pp. 121-38.

³⁷ *AHG*, 29, p. 22.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

be effectively confronted by an experienced military officer, and recommended his old friend, Monluc, under whom he had served ‘with honour’ at Thionville in June 1558.³⁹

So Monluc was once more recruited to Agen, despite holding no official position within local or crown government. His first act was to deploy the *consuls* to guard the gates.⁴⁰ This was far more than a gesture. By employing the elites as well as the citizens in the defence of a town, Monluc was emphasising the value of collective responsibility that had proven so successful in his military operations in the Italian Wars, epitomised in the coordinated defence of Siena against overwhelming odds in 1555.⁴¹ His affinity for communal defence would, in fact, become a hallmark of Catholic activism across the Agenais during the 1560s, and would serve to energise the clergy, noblesse, bourgeoisie, and townsfolk alike. The coalition cooperated with Monluc’s requests, expanding the militia and arming the new recruits from the arsenal. This force was then divided into smaller units, with members of the coalition appointed to act as captains for the patrols of the streets and gates.⁴² Lalande, who had personally established a garrison of troops at the collegial church of Saint-Caprais the previous year, was able to deploy these in the first instance to guard the numerous churches of Agen. Lalande also assigned members of his personal guard to remove the treasures of Agen’s cathedral and other decorated churches, and to hide them at his nearby chateau for safekeeping.⁴³

Once the town had been re-secured, the coalition launched a scathing condemnation of crown policy, which, it claimed, had allowed Protestants time and

³⁹ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 363.

⁴⁰ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (no folio).

⁴¹ For Monluc’s actions at the siege of Siena in 1555, see *Commentaires*, pp. 280-358; A. W. Evans, *Blaise de Monluc* (London, 1909), pp. 194-365; Roy, *Blaise de Monluc*, pp. 132-78.

⁴² AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (no folio).

⁴³ Tholin, ‘La ville d’Agen’, XIV, p. 444; Abbé Joseph Labrunie, ‘Abrégé chronologique des antiquités d’Agen’, *Revue de l’Agenais et des anciennes provinces du sud-ouest*, XV (Agen, 1888), pp. 174-77.

freedom to consolidate their military presence in Guyenne. Specifically, it cited the organisational reforms implemented by the Synod of Clairac as the main factor behind Huguenot military strength at this time. Clairac has been widely discussed in Chapter 1, but its impact on the balance of confessional potential across the Agenais should not be overlooked. The division of Guyenne into seven colloquies had left the Agenais with nineteen constituent centres, by far the largest number within the province, while the policy of appointing experienced military veterans to captain these communities ensured that each benefited from superior strategic organisation.⁴⁴ The coalition was unequivocal in its concern over the threat posed by the impact of Clairac:

il a esté créé vingt nouveaulx ministres, lesquels ne font jour et nuict que courir pour prescher et séduire le peuple... ceux de ceste religion ont commandement de quelque grand de prendre les armes... le synode a esté résolu de faire mourir ledit sieur de Monluc.⁴⁵

The emergence of such well organised Protestant forces threatened to destabilise the Agenais. The crown responded by imposing a general truce on the region. At first, this declaration was accepted with little complaint. Raffin agreed to stand down the militia in Agen, Protestant delegates were allowed to attend meetings of the *jurade* and *présidial*, and Monluc withdrew with his men to his *château* at Estillac. Other coalition members, however, were far from happy at the inclusion of

⁴⁴ The seven colloquys were: Condommois, les Landes, Béarn, Agenais de la Garonne, Agenais vers Sainte-Foy, Bourdellais et Bazadois, Quercy et Rouergue. The nineteen constituent towns of the Agenais were: Agen, le Port, Tonneins, Marmande, Gontaud, Grateloup, Saint-Barthélemy, Verteilh, Laparade, Monclar, Montflanquin, Villeneuve, Castelsegen, Cassenel, Sainte-Livrade, Castelmoro, Laffite, Clayrac and Lemousin-sur-Lades. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 1.

⁴⁵ 'Instruction au cappitaine Monluc de ce qu'il dira à la Royne et au Roy de Navarre, de la part du sieur de Monluc, touchant l'estat de la Guienne (25 March 1562)', BN Dupuy, 588, fo. 106. The coalition concluded this letter by leaving little doubt as to who they suspected of orchestrating the recent Protestant insurrection: 'l'abbé de Clairac soutient toute la sédition d'Agenois et de Périgort'. Ruble suggests the *abbé* in question was the *protonotaire* of Caumont, whereas the *Mémoires de Condé* claim it was Gerard Roussel, the former bishop of Oloron. See Ruble, *Lettres et Commentaires*, IV, p.118; *Mémoires de Condé*, III, p. 186.

an amnesty within the *lettres de cachet*, which ordered the Agen council ‘mettre en liberté tous les prisonniers détenus pour cause de la religion’.⁴⁶ So when the Reformers renewed their demands for the instigation of a *mi-partie* chamber at Agen, the coalition revived its surveillance committee, forwarding all incriminating evidence to the crown to support their claim that *mi-partie* government would prove impossible at Agen while illegal Huguenot activity continued unabated. Two such reports were particularly damning. The first detailed numerous illegal gatherings at the house of Jehan La Salle, a wealthy Reformer at Agen, where it was observed that ‘telles assemblées et preschemens sont continués et y font baptesmes et nopces’.⁴⁷ The second reported numerous Protestant assemblies across the region, at which armed nobles and their retinues were frequently present.⁴⁸ The crown had little option other than to accede to Catholic demands, and on 14 May validated an ordinance that banned all *prêches* and large gatherings at Agen under pain of a fine and imprisonment.⁴⁹ Protestant demands for *mi-partie* representation were thus buried under the weight of Catholic remonstrations to Paris.

By August, though, complaints of armed assaults by Huguenots were still dominating affairs at Agen. The crown was forced to intervene further, instructing Herman de Sevin, *juge-mage* of the *présidial*, and Gratien Delas, *procureur du roi*, to issue an *ordonnance* banning the carrying and use of all firearms in the *sénéchaussée d’Agenais*, even those used for hunting.⁵⁰ Burie was also ordered into the region, a move that initially placated Catholic anxieties.⁵¹ Tholin suggests that the coalition fully expected Burie to exact ‘une justice exemplaire’ against the rebels, and Lalande

⁴⁶ Paul Courteault, ‘Notes et Variations’, in *Commentaires*, p. 1,178, note 3.

⁴⁷ *Jurade d’Agen* to Charles IX (17 February 1561), AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 72v.

⁴⁸ 1 April 1561. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 79v.

⁴⁹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 79v.

⁵⁰ Tholin, ‘La ville d’Agen’, XIV, p. 448.

⁵¹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 83v.

certainly seems to have anticipated a major disarmament of Protestants, as he organised a committee of 24 'hommes de bien' to expedite the confiscation and storage of illicit arms within the *maison de ville*.⁵² But Burie was following his own, very different, agenda. Instead of proceeding directly to Agen, he criss-crossed the Agenais, halting frequently for talks with representatives of both faiths, not arriving at the town until 3 October. Accompanied by an up-and-coming councillor from Bordeaux, Etienne de la Boëtie, Burie counselled conciliation rather than confrontation, and where direct intervention was necessary, he ensured that it was the forces of the *sénéchal d'Agenais*, Raffin, that were deployed, rather than his own, mindful perhaps that both communities continued to accuse the crown of intervening on behalf of their opponents.⁵³ Yet this approach encountered two problems. Firstly, Catholic patience with official policy was rapidly running out as more and more churches and priests came under attack. Secondly, Burie made a major diplomatic blunder by appointing a renowned local Protestant captain, the *sieur* de Mesmy, to head one of his patrols. Mesmy was so despised by Catholics that many rejected Burie's intervention out of hand. Indeed, when Mesmy was captured the following year in Béarn, he was summarily executed by order of the Bordeaux *parlement*.⁵⁴

Burie's efforts to pacify and accommodate would fail, and the violence across the Agenais intensify. The communities at Clairac, Tonneins, Montflanquin and Sainte-Livrade all reported their local Catholic priests to have been chased from their parishes, while at Villeneuve, Penne and Nérac the *cordeliers* were evicted from their monasteries, which now became sites of Reform worship.⁵⁵ The crown was once more forced to act. But instead of bolstering its military presence in the region,

⁵² Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, pp. 449-50; AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 75.

⁵³ Estienne de la Boëtie, *Mémoire sur la pacification des troubles* (ed. M. Smith, Geneva, 1983), pp. 11-12.

⁵⁴ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 217.

⁵⁵ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 213.

it gambled on pursuing its policy of accommodation to break the impasse. Instructions were sent to Agen ordering the creation of a *mi-partie* chamber, causing consternation among Catholic magistrates. Burie, who had finally reached Agen, needed ten days of debate with the council to elicit agreement, but eventually succeeded.⁵⁶ Such acquiescence by the coalition is surprising, especially considering the levels of recent violence endured by the Catholics of the Agenais. Also unexpected was the coalition's acceptance that the *mi-partie* chamber would fall under the jurisdiction of the *sénéchaussée* and not the *jurade*, although it can be argued that Catholic domination of each body was equally extensive. So, on 20 October, after two years of continually refusing all Huguenot appeals regarding *mi-partie* government at Agen, the motion before the council was passed by a majority verdict.⁵⁷

Yet whatever the rationale behind Catholic compliance, the following months saw many lose patience with proceedings. By 27 December 1561, some of the leading magistrates of the *jurade* and *présidial* court felt compelled to protest to the king that Protestants were continuing to contravene royal edicts.⁵⁸ They also complained that the *mi-partie* experiment was failing Catholics, as the split-chamber was too lenient on Huguenot suspects. But while the crown pondered its position, local leaders sought alternative means by which to end this experiment. In mid-January 1562, the coalition, backed by Monluc - newly appointed as *lieutenant-général* of Guyenne - appealed to the *sénéchal*, François Raffin, for a judgement. To his credit, Raffin, who was a known devotee of the Catholic cause at Agen, appears

⁵⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 83.

⁵⁷ 'Monsieur le seneschal estant en la present ville pour recepvoir vingt-quatre hommes pour tenir la main forte à la justice, suyvant ordonnance de monsieur de Burye, desquelz vingt-quatre il entand prendre douze de ceulz quy ce disent de l'eglise reformée et les autres douze de l'eglise romaine, a présenté ausdits sieurs consulz ung rolle que ceulz de ladite eglise reformé luy onct nommés et lequel a presenté ausdits sieurs consulz pour en choisir douze'. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 31 (20 October 1561).

⁵⁸ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 83v.

to have examined the case before him with exemplary neutrality. His demand that the coalition should validate its policy of excluding Protestants from office before *mi-partie* government could be rejected was met by Lalande, who replied that the council was simply adhering to royal policy, employing 'la costume de ladicte ville qu'est très sainte, catholicque et chrestienne, escripte et confirmée par les feuz roys de France de bonne memoire'.⁵⁹ Raffin was won over, and declared that all 'personnaiges nottés d'aulcungs vices ni de religion differante' were excluded from serving in the *jurade* or *présidial* courts.⁶⁰ This insistence that only 'loyal' and 'orthodox' candidates could be considered for local and crown office would become another feature of coalition rule over subsequent years.⁶¹

Catholic nobility and the *états d'Agenais*

The appraisal of Catholic activism to date has largely concerned the struggle for pre-eminence within town government and regional council. It has shown that it was the local administrators and royal officials themselves - Lalande, de Nort, Raffin, Tholon and others - who had assumed the mantle of activists. But to what extent were the Catholic nobility of the Agenais involved in these developments? The first evidence of their participation in the defence of Catholicism can be seen in the minutes of the regional *états*. Tholin has shown that, in general, the *états d'Agenais* were quite unlike the traditional tri-party gatherings in other provinces. Here, the nobility had such a stranglehold on affairs that the assemblies were little

⁵⁹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 84v.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 86v. It would also become a feature of wider Catholic domination. Similar exclusions were carried out at Bordeaux in March 1562, where the *parlement* passed an ordinance preventing any non-Catholic from standing for, or holding, office. At Toulouse, following the uprising of April 1562, similar injunctions were implemented, though in many cases suspected Protestant councillors were not only expelled from government but were also chased from the town.

more than a forum for elite grievances.⁶² It is evident from the *cahiers généraux* of the *états*, however, that wider issues were concerning the delegates in 1560. Of chief concern was the threat posed to noble prerogatives by Protestant incursions across the Agenais. A remonstrance, addressed to the queen mother, urged the crown to boost its forces in the south-west, to be paid for by diverting royal taxes into a military fund.⁶³ The *états* also complained that Burie was doing little to safeguard Catholic lands, churches and communities in the Agenais, as he rarely ventured outside his base at Bordeaux.

That a second appeal was issued by the *états* of 12 March 1561 suggests that Catholics were far from satisfied with the crown's initial response. But this document would prove more than a simple remonstrance. It was a manifesto of Catholic demands, in the form of an open letter to the crown, laying out the administrative and military counter measures that should be forced upon all Huguenot communities threatening civil disobedience.⁶⁴ It would become a blueprint for elite Catholic activism in the Agenais, signed as it was by many of the region's more prominent Catholic nobles: Monluc, the *comte* de Villars, and the *sieurs* de Lauzun, d'Estissac, de Caumont, de Negrepelisse, de Toneins, and de Biron. The opening address would become a standard feature of Catholic *association* oaths during this period, promising that 'tous les gentilshommes emploieront leurs biens et leurs vyes pour leur faire très humbles services'. It continued by emphasising the desire of the authors to dictate events themselves. The crown would be far better served, the *états* claimed, utilising the local Catholic nobility to maintain stability than by sending in a royal army. As such, if the king would grant Monluc 400 *arquebusiers à pied*, with full authority to deploy them as necessary against any Huguenot activist, then order

⁶² Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 213.

⁶³ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, AA 43.

⁶⁴ BN Dupuy, 588, fo. 106.

would be restored within 'deux ou troys moys'. As an exemplar, the letter urged all leading *seigneurs* to return to their *châteaux*, to disarm their subjects, and to arrest and hunt down Protestant rebels. They ended by advising the king to expel all ministers, 'lesquels sont la source et origine de tout ce malheur', and to punish those disloyal towns currently harbouring evangelists.

Within months, the fears expressed at the *états* were realised, with a series of violent assaults on leading Catholic noblemen. On 20 October 1561, the *seigneurs* de Coq and de la Montjoie were murdered at Astafort, near Agen, while five days later the *seigneur* de Rouillac was besieged at his *château* at Saint-Mézard, only rescued when a force of Catholic neighbours charged his assailants. But it would be the murder of Fumel in late November that would shock Catholics into a new sense of urgency. When the two Paris commissioners appointed to investigate the affair, Compain and Girard, complained at the lack of objectivity from Catholic officials assigned to the case, Monluc dismissed them and subpoenaed eight coalition members from Agen to judge the case. Tholon would preside over the trial, with d'Aspremont, Gervais Heraudeau, the *prévôt-général*, and fellow Catholic *présidial* councillors, Robert de Raymond, Jean Jourdan, Florens du Repaire, Antoine de Nort, and Saux Dupin, also serving on the panel. There would be no room for 'moderate' politics here. All eight judges had known Fumel and, in late March 1562, returned fifteen guilty verdicts. Monluc's personal guard summarily executed the men, while orders were given that the houses of 200 others suspected of taking part in the killing were razed to the ground. The town of Fumel suffered too. Stripped of all privileges and ordered to pay an indemnity of 320,000 *livres*, its gates and walled defences

were dismantled, as if to warn offenders that there was no place to hide from Catholic ire.⁶⁵

Catholic responses to the outbreak of war

Six days after the executions at Fumel, the prince of Condé raised the Protestant banner at Orléans. Huguenot communities across France rose in support, and quickly gained control of important centres such as Toulouse and Lyon among many others. At Agen, the Catholic magistrates were taken completely by surprise:

le vandreuy 17 apvril 1562, la presente ville et cité d'Agen fut prinse, saisiee par ceulx de la nouvelle pretendue religion, lesquels ledict jour levarent et prindrent les armes contre le Roy, les catholicques bon et loyaux subjects et serviteurs de Sa Majesté, ce emparent des clefs des portes de ladicte ville, firent prisonniers les magistrats.⁶⁶

Only Lalande among the members of the coalition evaded capture, having fled to his fortified *château*. The scale of Protestant successes bore grim reading for Catholics. At Agen, seventeen churches had been sacked and occupied by the Reformers within the first week; all Catholic ceremonial had been prohibited, and the cathedral was now used as a site for numerous *prêches*. The situation was little better across the Agenais, with Lectoure, Toneins, Villeneuve-d'Agenais, and Nérac all falling to the Protestant forces of Caumont and Duras.⁶⁷ The town of Condom, however, managed to resist, due to the initiative of its *lieutenant-sénéchal*, Dufranc. Dufranc had spent the weeks leading up to the coup at Agen trying to persuade Monluc that wide scale

⁶⁵ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 220. For the original sentence of the royal commissioners regarding the murder of Fumel, see *AHG*, 8, pp. 207-21.

⁶⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 87v. A comprehensive Catholic account of the seizing and occupation of Agen by Protestants in April 1562 exists in the records of the *jurade*, written in November of that year. See AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fos. 96-99.

⁶⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fos. 88-91.

unrest was imminent. In lieu of a response, he had taken the precaution of arming the Catholic elite of Condom in the name of the king and had closed the gates to all Huguenots. Such pre-emptive action undoubtedly saved the town from falling to the rebels, a deed Monluc was especially impressed by. He subsequently often cited Dufranc's initiative at Condom as the model for Catholic governance of a town under threat.⁶⁸

The crown's response to these uprisings required that Bordeaux be secured first and foremost. Monluc and Burie were thus ordered there, a move that did not sit well with the nobility of the Agenais. In his *Commentaires*, Monluc describes how a delegation of Catholic notables, including François de Durfort, baron de Bajaumont, and the *sieurs* de Cancon and Montferrand, petitioned him to remain at Agen.⁶⁹ While such testimony oozes self-importance, it should not be dismissed lightly. Tholin certainly has no doubt that this meeting saw a resurgence in Catholic fortunes across the Agenais in Guyenne, both in securing Monluc's continuing presence in the region, and in the formulating of Catholic responses to the coups.⁷⁰ As a result of this meeting, messengers were dispatched to inform the king of this change in events. Monluc ordered six new commissions to be distributed among his captains to boost troop numbers. Many of the nobles placed their personal retinues at Monluc's disposal, and a council of war was called for 22 May. Alongside Monluc, Bajaumont, Cancon and Montferrand, the council was attended by the *sieurs* de Terride, Tilladet, Besoles, Gondrin, Jean de Narbonne, the *marquis* de Fimarcon and 'plusieurs autres gentilzhommes'. This 'bonne compagnie de noblesse' would prove the backbone of

⁶⁸ *Commentaires*, p. 499.

⁶⁹ 'La noblesse d'Agenois catholiques s'estoyent rendus auprès moy... et en la salle commansarent à murmurer les uns et les autres que, si je les abandonnois, ils estoit perdus, et leurs femmes, enfans et leurs maisons en ruine et perdition'. *Commentaires*, p. 498.

⁷⁰ 'Le concours de la noblesse facilita sa tâche; ce fut à deux heures de marche d'agen, au chateau de Lafox, qu'il s'aboucha avec toute une assemblée de gentilshommes du pays. Affolés, isolés et menacés dans leurs domaines, ceux-ci se jetaient dans ses bras, ne voyant salut qu'en lui'. Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, pp. 506-07.

elite Catholic activism in the Agenais for the coming decade, of which, Monluc noted: 'et comme nous y fusmes, les fismes bons amis'.⁷¹

The significance of this testimony is the undertaking of Catholic nobles to 'faire amis', an act that alludes to the formalising of relationships between attendees. This would also be observed the following day at a meeting hosted by Monluc and Gondrin at Sampoy, where the two 'conclusmes de faire amis tous les gentilshommes catholiques, afin que nous fussions tous unis ensemble'.⁷² Samazeuilth has concluded that these were formal events in which the nobility swore to unite in the defence of Catholicism, essentially witnessing the constitution of an 'association de noblesse' in the Agenais.⁷³ While this may be too stark an analysis, there are clearly antecedents in the act of 'faire amis' that appear in the soon-to-be-introduced oath-bound *associations* of the following year. But there should be a qualification too. Gatherings of esteemed local noblemen were rarely straightforward affairs. Traditional rivalries could often surface, and conflicts over precedence marred even the most cordial of encounters. So where Monluc depicts the assembly at Faudoas as harmonious, Courteault states that contention and dissension in the ranks were never far away: 'Le seigneur de Gondrin et luy [Terride] estoient bons amis et de bonne intelligence; mais le marquis de Fimarcon ne luy voulut point deferer'.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, with the coalition temporarily powerless, Catholic activism in the Agenais was sustained as a consequence of the council at Faudoas. And once Monluc's forces had relieved Agen, in August 1562, the coalition and the nobility were able to combine to greatly enhance Catholic potential across the region. The repercussions were immediate and effective. At Agen, Lalande was appointed the

⁷¹ *Commentaires*, p. 499.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Samazeuilth, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, II, p. 99.

⁷⁴ Courteault, in *Commentaires*, p. 1,198, note 4.

town's military governor, and set about implementing a series of reprisals. Under the auspices of Monluc's *prévôt*, Hélié de Penchéry, *sieur* de la Justinie, Lalande ordered over one thousand Protestant suspects be arrested and tried for insurrection, with around half hanged on town gibbets between 13 August 1562 and 12 March 1563.⁷⁵ The coalition then turned its attention to the sequestering of Protestant goods. On 9 September 1562, the *jurade* met to compile a list of prominent Huguenots whose houses were to be searched. This meeting, recorded in the council register as 'Délibération du conseil de guerre d'Agen sur la saisie des récoltes des Prétendus Réformés', was attended by the usual coalition members, with new delegates Gratien Delas, *procureur du roy*, and Dominique Cabasse, *vicaire-général* to the bishop of Agen, present for the first time.⁷⁶ These sequestrations do not seem to have been illegal, as the magistrates closely imitated a recent ordinance promulgated by Burie and Monluc, which authorised the seizing of Protestant rebels' harvests so long as it was 'mys et employé pour les affaires du Roy... et reparation et fortification de ladite ville'.⁷⁷ In January 1563, the order was extended to encompass 'la vente des meubles et des fruits des vigne appartenant à ceux de la Religion Pretendue Réformé', with Lalande and fellow coalition members de Nort, Thibault and Miramond in charge of its implementation.⁷⁸

The coalition also revived its policy of expelling all suspicious persons from the towns. This had recently become a contentious issue, with the edict of Amboise permitting anyone accused of a crime to remain at their place of residence until trial. At Agen, Bordeaux and Toulouse, though, Catholic councils were less than enthusiastic about implementing this, preferring instead to adhere to Monluc's

⁷⁵ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 226.

⁷⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 65 (9 September 1562). For list of prominent victims of this confiscation, see AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 304 (Comptes des Consuls).

⁷⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 65 (9 September 1562).

⁷⁸ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 302 (1563).

'communal defence' ethos, which demanded the expulsion of any threat to internal security. This was also the case at Casteljaloux, a sizeable town 30 kilometres north-west of Agen. Once Catholic forces had defeated its Protestant garrison, on 14 August 1562, Monluc appointed his captain, Xaintrailles, as town governor, and ordered that the entire population be immediately disarmed. A force of Spanish troops was billeted within the walls to bolster Catholic military presence, and all Protestant suspects were expelled.⁷⁹ Yet Catholic domination of Casteljaloux was rarely absolute. There remained a fairly robust Huguenot presence within the administration, its *consuls* refusing to hand over the keys to the gates until their appeal had been heard at Bordeaux. They argued that the defence of Casteljaloux had traditionally been the prerogative of the town council, and that external military commanders held no authority there, adding that the billeting of Spanish troops within their houses had caused more harm than good.⁸⁰ In response, Xaintrailles accused the *consuls* of not paying their dues to the crown, but of diverting taxes to the Protestant cause. The reply stated that as Casteljaloux was technically within the *sénéchaussée* of Albret, a territory of Jeanne d'Albret, financial matters were a concern for the queen of Navarre, and not Monluc.⁸¹

This standoff was characteristic of many disputes facing the coalition as it sought to reassert Catholic hegemony across the Agenais. The creation of a formal *ligue* at Agen in February 1563 did weaken Huguenot belligerence somewhat, as Casteljaloux came under intense pressure from neighbouring towns to sign up to the Catholic *association*.⁸² But the publication of the edict of Amboise vented this pressure, with Casteljaloux designated as a specific site for Reform worship in the

⁷⁹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (August 1562).

⁸⁰ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (December 1562).

⁸¹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (1563).

⁸² AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, 2,429 (March 1563).

sénéchaussée of Albret. This allowed Jeanne d'Albret to offer formal protection to the Huguenot community there, much to the chagrin of Monluc and the Catholic garrison forces.⁸³

The polarisation of attitudes of town councils is to be expected at this time, for the first months of 1563 were to witness both a zenith for Catholic activists across the Agenais, and the victory of crown intentions to pursue its policy of toleration across France. It would be a watershed for Catholic urban and regional organisation. Catholic activism at Agen had developed from meagre beginnings, an ad-hoc alliance of disparate factions, through to the creation of a formal, authoritative coalition. It would now culminate in the participation of the *états d'Agenais*, and the formation of an oath-bound, elite-led Catholic *ligue* in February 1563, energising the wider nobility of the region, and complementing the work of the administrative councils of Catholic magistrates and clergy.

⁸³ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, 2,385 (9 March 1563); E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (June 1563); 2,386 (21 August 1563).

Chapter 6. Catholic activism at Agen, 1563-1570

In October 1562, the French crown issued several *lettres de grâce et pardon*, granting an amnesty to all religious prisoners captured during the recent conflict.¹ These were greeted with derision by Catholics of the south-west, who were outraged at a policy which not only seemed biased towards Protestants (only a minority of prisoners eligible for the amnesty were Catholic), but which also appeared to blame Catholic excesses for much of the troubles. Many feared the crown was distancing itself from its loyal, Catholic servants in favour of the Huguenot faction at court. Catholic invective against the *lettres* was expressed most vehemently at the assembly of the *états de l'Agenais*, which met on 3 January 1563, with delegates drafting a *procès-verbal* to the crown, expressing their sense of anger and betrayal at royal policy.² The remonstrance derided the amnesty as little more than the appeasement of Protestants, demanding that those guilty of sedition and rebellion be tried once more before the courts. Exception was also taken to the wording of the amnesty, arguing that its address made no distinction between communities, and so tarred the Catholic population with the brush of Protestant sedition.³ Further, the assembly pointed out that by pardoning prisoners already held in custody, the *lettres* denied the victims of the crimes their right 'demander reparation et satisfaction de faire poursuite desdites

¹ *HE*, III, pp. 48-54.

² This document, the 'Procès-verbal des délibérations de l'assemblée des états du pays de l'Agenais', survives in its entirety within the archives at Agen, allowing historians to access directly contemporary Catholic sentiment. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 2. For secondary sources discussing these deliberations, see *AHG*, 39, pp. 28-29; Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XV, pp. 196-7; Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 471.

³ 'La plus grande et saine partie d'icelle en corps... comme les gens d'église, nobles, les officiers du roi, et de la justice, consulz, juratz, et la plus grand et saine partie des aultres habitanz dudit pays n'ayent commis ledit crisme... soyent et veullent estre bons et loyaux soubjetz et obeyssans au Roi'. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 2.

despences, biens prins, transportés, gastés, baptemens, homicides, injurmes, pilleries, sacagemens des eglises, maisons, et autres tortz et grefz faict par lesdites seditieux et rebelles'. This process of recompense had traditionally been the remit of the Bordeaux *parlement* - another reason, Catholics claimed, why the trial of prisoners in provincial courts should be reinstated and the amnesty, with its legal implications, be retracted.

The *états* then moved to bolster unilateral Catholic jurisdiction within the Agenais, enabling local officials to by-pass crown restrictions and recommence prosecution of suspects. It confirmed the practice whereby Catholic magistrates could confiscate Huguenot possessions to finance urban defences, and voted to withhold all *gages* due to the *prévôt-général de l'Agenais*, whose sympathy for the Reformers was well known to Catholics.⁴ Hélie de Penchéry, Monluc's own *prévôt*, was given control over 'l'estat et l'exersise de justice que ledit prevost general devoit faire', with the redirected *gages* diverted to finance Catholic defensive measures at Agen.⁵ Jules Andrieu suggests that some delegates were concerned at the degree to which these measures rejected royal authority and usurped the jurisdictional prerogatives of the Bordeaux *parlement*, but Catholic domination of the *états* was such that no controversies arose, and all motions were carried unanimously.⁶ A brief look at the roll call of delegates attending the January 1563 *états* will explain this, with Lalande and de Nort once more presiding over proceedings, and fellow coalition members Berard, Michel, Thibault, de Nadal,

⁴ Monluc had, in fact, urged the *états* of 1561 to seek royal approval for the limiting of the judicial powers of the *prévôté* in the Agenais. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 65 (17 November 1561).

⁵ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 2. Penchéry and his staff were renowned Catholic zealots, and had been hand picked by Lalande the previous August to oversee the execution of suspects found guilty at Fumel. The *états* wrote of them: 'ils exercent une répression active dans le pays de l'Agenois... [lequel] ordinairement a vacqué et vacque encorez avec deux ou troys ses lieutenans, greffiers et archiers, tant dans la presente ville que par tout ledit pays d'Agenois'. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 65 (3 January 1563).

⁶ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 227.

Galdemary, Boissonade and Daube, joined by leading Catholic nobles, de Lausun, de Montferan, Montegut, de Carbonniers, de Mouthefer, de Cadres, de Cours, Castelgalhard, and de Paulliac.⁷ Combined with Monluc's military ascendancy, and the control exerted by the coalition, the participation of the *états* in provincial affairs meant that Catholic hegemony in the region was even more extensive.

'Confédération et association entre les habitants de la ville et cité d'Agen, et des autres villes et juridictions d'Agen', (February 1563)

The culmination of Catholic sentiment, however, would arrive in the form of the 'confédération et association entre les habitants de la ville et cité d'Agen, et des autres villes et juridictions d'Agen'. This Catholic *ligue*, founded by Monluc, and validated by his ordinance of 4 February 1563, would be the first example in the period of an oath-bound Catholic *association* that fully incorporated both the provincial nobility and the urban bureaucracy in its structure.⁸ It had the full support of all key Catholic protagonists of the Agenais: noble, clergy and bureaucrat, who each countersigned the contract and swore an oath of allegiance at the altar of the cathedral of Saint-Étienne at Agen. A standard preamble, declaring the unswerving loyalty of all adherents to the crown, was followed by a lengthy assault on the machinations of the Reform party across the region, with Catholics pledging to defend the king, province and the Catholic Church with their lives.

The significance of this *ligue* has largely been downplayed by commentators, mirroring the contention over the validity of the *syndicat* at Bordeaux. Historians

⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 3.

⁸ 'Ordonnance de Blaise de Monluc, chevalier de l'ordre et lieutenant du roy en Guyenne, sur l'opinion qui devoit estre entre les sujets fidèles à sa Majesté en la sénéchaussée d'Agenois et sur l'ordre qu'ils devoient tenir pour résister aux enterprises des sujets rebelles (4 February 1563)', Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 190-95.

have tended to dismiss both as political non-entities, knee-jerk reactions to specific Protestant threats, although the *Agen ligue* is further decried as a whim of Monluc, or a trial run for the more high profile *association* created at Toulouse the following month. Those that have examined its formation more closely, however, such as Andrieu and Tholin, believe that Monluc was making a conscious effort with this body to create an infrastructure capable of imitating, if not surpassing, the military model established in 1561 by the synods of Clairac and Sainte-Foy.⁹ Specific terms within the ordinance tend to support this supposition, with the Catholic population urged to be ready to report for pre-determined duty at a moment's notice. By placing each cell, district and town within a well-administered, quasi-military network, with experienced captains assigned to each locality, Monluc aimed to harness the vast potential of disparate Catholic communities, previously too dispersed to guarantee a unified force.¹⁰ The intention may well have been to oppose further Protestant aggression without recourse to crown intervention, and it is arguable that the *ligue* ordinance read much like a blueprint for the foundation of Catholic defensive and offensive strategy in the Agenais: its basic premise was to energise noble retainues, civil militia and government officials into a homogenous entity, thus combining Catholic resources and facilitating cooperative action where none had existed before. Monluc's core ethos - communal, integrated urban defence - was as prevalent as ever, and came with a warning to those who declined to be involved or failed to

⁹ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 227; Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XV, p. 198.

¹⁰ 'Les dits habitans d'Agenois fairont garder et accomplir et observer, chacuns en son endroit... si donnons permission et mandement aux dits habitans d'Agennois soy assembler, chacun en son viguier, et prester commandement à faire et tenir la dite association et confédération, jurer et garder les dits articles, constituer capitaine, lieutenant, sergens de bande, corporaulx, et autres estats requis à les conduire en armes, tant que besoing sera, créer en chacune des dites juridictions d'eux ou autres nobles des notables personnages, pour venir avec bonne et suffisante charge des habitans d'icelle'. 'Ordonnance de Blaise de Monluc', in Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 191.

support their Catholic neighbours.¹¹ However, while the *ligue* claimed to exist ‘sous le bon plaisir de sa Majesté’, in reality, the crown had little control over its function. It was Monluc who held authority, with jurisdiction over administrative functions assumed by Lalande and the coalition at Agen in his absence.¹²

It would be difficult to conclude, then, that the *ligue* was anything other than a pivotal moment in the development of Catholic activism in the Agenais. It would be the first oath-bound *association* of the period to unite Catholic nobles and urban councillors under a single banner, and to provide a forum for the concerns of the *états*. As such, it would define the political and military relationships between these disparate groups for the coming decade. It should not be forgotten, either, that the *ligue* was a profoundly religious entity, its ceremonial subsumed within the Catholic traditions of Agen’s historic cathedral, its ethos exhorting the defence of the ‘true’ religion in the south-west.¹³ Further, was the *ligue* wholly a result of Catholic anxiety at the crown’s apparent rush towards coexistence - a manifestation of the *états* of January 1563 - or were there broader motivations urging it into being? Ruble has concerns over the chronology here. He agrees that the deliberations of the *états* certainly influenced the coalition to expedite the creation of a defensive *ligue* at Agen, but suggests that Catholics had been thirsting for such a body ever since

¹¹ ‘Que toutes fois et quantes que les dits associés et confédérés seront advertis que les dits rebelles et séditieux au roy se assembleront avec armes ou autrement, pour troubler le repos public, invader, soy saisir aulcungz des villes, églises, bourgs, bourgades, chateaux, maisons des dits confédérés, commes ils ont fait cy-devant, en advertiront chacun en son quartier, les autres quartiers plus proches, pour s’assembler en armes, résister et courir sus aux dits sédicieux et autres conturbateurs de la dite république, empêcher leurs enterprises, afin que le meilleur en demeure aux dits confrères pour le service du roy... Et où les dits séditieux voudroyent résister aux dits confédérés, estans assemblés lesdits confédérés pour le service du dit seigneur, comme dit est, où marcheront le jour ou nuit en armes, et seront défaits et mis en pièces par les dits confédérés’. ‘Ordonnance de Blaise de Monluc’, in Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 193.

¹² ‘Ordonnance de Blaise de Monluc’, in Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 191.

¹³ Nowhere was this more clearly stated than in the opening clauses of the ordinance: ‘Premièrement qu’ils seront bons, fidelles sujets au dit seigneur et ses lieutenans et officiers; qu’ils tiendront et vivront selon la religion du dit seigneur, église Catholique Romaine, et selon icelle feront administrer les sacrements, dire messe et célébrer le devin service’. ‘Ordonnance de Blaise de Monluc’, in Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 192-93.

Condé's rising in April 1562, long before the controversial amnesty of November.¹⁴ It seems more probable, though, that the *ligue* was born out of secret meetings between Monluc and the Catholic hierarchy of Toulouse in December 1562 and January 1563, at which it was determined that an *association* at Agen would be part, if not the vanguard, of a Catholic counter attack, to stem Huguenot aggrandisement, and to defend orthodoxy and traditions in the south-west. Such a strategy would require a number of *ligues* to be formed across the region, with each extending jurisdiction across its hinterland. Such was the case at Agen, where its articles of association were distributed to, and published in, every neighbouring town.¹⁵ The response from sympathetic councils was positive, with Quercy, Périgueux, and Condom affiliating with the Agen *ligue*. Even at troublesome Casteljaloux, Catholics were permitted to ally themselves with the *ligue*, although at Bazas, Monluc was forced to send in the *sénéchal* of Bazadais, the *vicomte* d'Uza, to supervise this compact.¹⁶

Yet, with the *ligue* promising to regenerate the Catholic position in 1563, and with Monluc extending his authority across the region as a result, it is ironic to note that this innovation was to last a mere two months, censured by the terms of the edict of Amboise.¹⁷ While the coalition accepted this missive, and terminated their project immediately, it can be argued that the *ligue* had already achieved a major objective: facilitating the unification of disparate bodies (the *états*, noble retinues, civic

¹⁴ Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 190 note 1.

¹⁵ 'Mandons à tous les seigneurs justiciers, juges, consuls, capitaines, et autres administrateurs des villes, villages des dites juridictions, faire faire les dites assemblées et en faire leurs procès verbaux, et au premier huissier ou sergent royal publier nostre présente ordonnance et article par tous les bourgs et villes d'Agenois, icelle signifier à tous seigneurs et autres, dont est requis, leur faisant commandement de par le roy de faire garder et entretenir, ni donner aucun empeschement, sur peine de désobéissance et d'estre declarés rebelle à sa Majesté'. 'Ordonnance de Blaise de Monluc', in Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 192.

¹⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, 2,429. A15 (February 1563).

¹⁷ Monluc wrote to Catherine de Medici in April 1563 that he had ended this *association* at Agen. See Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 205.

corporations etc) under Monluc's schema of communal, inter-dependent defence. The machinery of activism had thus been cemented in place, and the ethos impelling loyalty to the Catholic cause reinforced by the various oaths of allegiance. Whether or not the vehicle that allowed these achievements survived or not, the blueprint had been drawn up. The Catholic leadership simply had to maintain a momentum to benefit from these events.

Opposition from moderate officials

To what extent, though, were the Reformers and moderate royal officials able to resist this seemingly inexorable march towards Catholic hegemony at Agen? The edict of Amboise had dictated that Huguenot *consuls* should be free to return to office, and that *chambres mi-parties* should be installed to accommodate Protestant voices with the administration. When Monluc reconvened the *présidial* in April 1563, though, consensus over policy and procedure stalled, with the court divided along confessional lines. There were now effectively two bodies within the *présidial*: the Catholic *mi-parti* council, headed by Antoine de Tholon, and backed by the coalition, the Bordeaux *parlement*, and by Monluc; and the Huguenot delegation, led by Sevin, and sponsored by Duras and other Protestant nobles of the area.¹⁸ Each embarked upon policies quite contrary to the spirit of the edict. Catholics sought to prosecute those guilty of attacks on their clergy and churches over the previous months, while Protestants attempted to secure recompense for the vast sums and property confiscated by the coalition.

¹⁸ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 217.

The result of this dual-track system was a glut of fines and imprisonments, with appeals and counter-claims directed through sympathetic *mi-partie* chambers. This choked the courts and caused bureaucratic chaos. Monluc and Lalande informed the crown that orderly governance was threatened by the actions of the Huguenot magistrates, who were bypassing many of the functions of the *présidial* court, often judging in favour of their co-religionists despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.¹⁹ Sevin retorted that the coalition should not monopolise jurisdiction within Agen, and that the *mi-partie* chambers should be free from the *jurade's* interference. He continued that Monluc and the Bordeaux *parlement* were too influential at Agen, to the detriment of equitable justice, and accused Monluc of corruption, mismanaging affairs across the Agenais, and of repeatedly arming the Catholic militia, in disregard of the recent edict.²⁰ Sevin was also angered at Monluc's continuing support of Lalande, who had been confirmed as governor of Agen on 17 April 1563. This, he claimed, was an abuse of Monluc's powers, as the exercising of military prerogatives was no longer valid following the peace. Sevin demanded a new governor be appointed, and suggested several highly placed Huguenot nobles for the office.²¹

Catholic attempts to counter these accusations were dealt a blow when Sevin left Agen for Paris to present his complaint personally to the king's council. Across the region, tensions once again rose between the faiths, resulting in episodes of sporadic violence. In May, Monluc informed Catherine de Medici that he had evidence detailing Protestant plans to assault the town, and urged Lalande to place

¹⁹ 'Procès-verbal des États' (27 to 28 June 1563), AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (28 June 1563).

²⁰ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 217. See also AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 32 (no folio).

²¹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (17 April 1563).

the guard on twenty-four hour alert as a precaution.²² Lalande also re-formed the coalition committee, and resumed the confiscation of suspect Huguenot property. Monluc then attempted to break the administrative impasse by recalling the *états de l'Agenais*. The assembly met on 28 June at Agen, although Catholic delegates refused to address the issue of bi-partisan conflict within the administration.²³ Instead, they began compiling a *cahier*, detailing recent Protestant violence, to be delivered to the king as proof that *mi-partie* politics was untenable in the Agenais. Of immediate concern was the activity of several Huguenot *prévôts*, recently reinstated by the edict, but now accused of impeding the course of local justice at Agen.²⁴ The delegates demanded that each suspect be removed from office, citing Monluc's recent revocation of the commissions of four Protestant *prévôts de maréchaux de l'Agenais* as a precedent.²⁵

The *états* concluded by returning to the dispute between Sevin and Monluc over the governance of the Agenais. The assembly offered a glowing endorsement of Monluc's administration during the conflict, by which 'ledit pays auroit esté remis en la vraye et legitime obeissance du Roy'.²⁶ By contrast, they highlighted the 'picques et contention' that marked the dealings of the *présidial* since Sevin's appointment, claiming that 'despuys qu'il est absent il y a en ladite ville grand paix, union et concorde entre tous lesdits habitans, de quelle religion que ce soyt'.²⁷ An enquiry

²² Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 255-62.

²³ The usual coalition leaders were in attendance: Lalande, de Nort, de Nadal, Michel, Thibault, and Galdemary, with Hermant de Mothes and Jehan Sendat representing the consuls of Villeneuve, and Gabriel de Lausun, *visconte* de Lausun, Jehan de Montferand, *sieur* de Cancon, François d'Aspremont, *sieur* de Labarthe, and la Chapelle, Carbonniers and Causac swelling the ranks of the Catholic noble signatories. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (28 June 1563).

²⁴ 'Ils ont prins et posé quelque prevost de leur secte, lesquels, en vertu du certaines pretandues commissions, entreprennent contre lesdits bons et fidelles subjects du Roy... plaira à sa majesté revocquer toutes telles commissions et leur interdire la cognoissance'. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (28 June 1563).

²⁵ The four *prévôts de maréchaux* dismissed were: de Fourneau, Courillaud, de Combes and de la Courade. Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 256.

²⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (28 June 1563).

²⁷ *Ibid.*

was then initiated to investigate the extent of Sevin's misdemeanours, to be headed by Estienne Thibault. It is hardly surprising that Sevin was found guilty in his absence of abusing his office, and of calumny against Monluc, seeing as Thibault had been a leading force in the Agen coalition for the past year.²⁸ Catholic claims that Sevin had used his position as *président du présidial* to acquire the office of *lieutenant-criminel de la sénéchaussée*, previously held by his chief rival, and head of the Catholic *mi-partie* chamber, Antoine de Tholon, were also investigated. The enquiry found against Sevin, and ordered that he be stripped of his status, and censured for libel. Tholon should then be re-instated to his former post as soon as possible.²⁹ Georges Tholin, however, believes that the *états* erred in their judgement here. He claims that Sevin had indeed usurped the office of *lieutenant-criminel*, but by quite legitimate means. The Catholic *états* were simply wary that Sevin now held two of the more powerful offices in Agen; that of *lieutenant-criminel* and *président du présidial*, placing him as a serious threat to Catholic schemes across the Agenais. To prevent Sevin from interrupting Catholic plans, the *états* had no option other than to move against him and secure his disgrace.³⁰

Thibault's report stands as an overt example of how the various Catholic bodies of the Agenais could combine to further their mutual aims. Georges Tholin concurs: 'le consulat d'Agen, les états du pays, les trois états, furent absolument dévoués à la cause catholique'.³¹ As a cooperative, they were able to dominate the region's institutions and attack any threat to their hegemony. This is reminiscent of affairs at Bordeaux, where Catholic magistrates united to minimise the attacks by moderate voices within the *parlement* on Lange and the *syndicat*. In both instances,

²⁸ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 3.

²⁹ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (30 June 1563).

³⁰ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, pp. 214-16.

³¹ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 213.

relations between Catholics and moderates were characterised by vitriolic exchanges, complaints and counter-complaints to the crown. By contrast with Bordeaux, though, where Lagebâton had successfully negated Catholic expansion, the coalition at Agen, supported by the nobility and the *états*, was victorious. The main distinguishing factor here was the explicit support offered by Monluc to the Catholics at Agen: his dual role as defender of the town and as *lieutenant-général* of the province adding an extra degree of legitimacy to the coalition's actions. At Bordeaux, by contrast, his influence was always diluted by the presence of Burie and Lagebâton. With Sevin's continuing exile, there would be no prominent opposition voice within the administration at Agen. This meant that few challenges to the coalition's authority would succeed. Huguenot complaints over Catholic interference in their daily lives thus tended to be dismissed well before they ever reached the chambers of the *jurade*, *présidial* or *sénéchaussée* courts, while those that were heard were usually judged by a majority Catholic bench.

By early 1565, however, intelligence that illegal Protestant military activity had resumed became the prime concern of the courts. In February, the regional synod of the Agenais convened and named new ministers for its churches at Sainte-Foy, Clairac, Tonneins and Nérac. Such appointments had been outlawed by the edict of Amboise, and Catholics feared the imminent return of hostilities. Lalande recalled Monluc to Agen to bolster the town's defences, doubled the town guard, and prohibited the carrying of all weapons, 'a penne de cinq cens livres et autre esmende corporelle'.³² With armed incidents increasing at Agen, Lalande was forced to appeal directly to Bordeaux for assistance. On 22 June, the *parlement* issued an *arrêt*

³² AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 138.

prohibiting further Protestant activity, openly blaming them for recent clashes.³³ Reports that Protestant communities were stockpiling weapons further exasperated Catholics, and when d'Aspremont delivered a letter to the *jurade* from Domein Rochon, *consul* at Tonneins, detailing a large arms cache discovered there in August 1565, Catholic leaders were forced to consider their next moves.³⁴

With Monluc absent from the region, the coalition decided to delay any response. It was thus November before a 'conseil de guerre' was convened to determine Catholic counter measures.³⁵ Georges Tholin states that this is the first time the term 'conseil' is used to denote such an extraordinary Catholic committee. He claims it is a significant moment in the configuration of Catholic organisation at Agen, a refined version of the coalition, comprising only of select, trusted magistrates.³⁶ There may be some validity to this, as only Monluc, Lalande and five other coalition magistrates attended the 'conseil'. Its resolutions, though, were little different from previous meetings. The full machinery of Catholic authority was deployed to defend the town, with Monluc's captain, Jehan Gasc, appointed to oversee military control.³⁷ Lalande revived the special committee, which had been dormant since 1563, ordering its consuls 'faire et tenir bonne garde aux portes... davantage de visiter les maisons de ceux de la nouvelle religion pour savoir quelles

³³ 'La court... a faict et faict inhibition et deffiances soubz les pennes contenez par lesdites edicts à ceux de la religion qu'on dict reformée de non chanter psaulmes en lieux publicz, rues ny en boutiques ouvertes, ains seulement en leurs maisons privées, avec leur familhe et sans assemblée, et à tous de non chanter chanssons de malediction ny impudiques et non blasphemer, renier et jurer le nom de Dieu. Et, pour le regard de l'observation des festes, faict parelhes inhibitions et deffiances suyvant lesdites edictz de non besoigner ny travailler aucunement le jour des dimanches et festes solemnes ne autres jours de festes moins solemnes à huys et boutiques ouvertes'. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 156v.

³⁴ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 32 (25 August 1565).

³⁵ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 32 (16 November 1565).

³⁶ Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XV, p. 215. There had been previous Catholic collectives which had been tilted as 'un conseil de guerre', but these do not appear to have had the formal structure of this latter *association*. See, for example, 'Délibération du conseil de guerre d'Agen sur la saisie des récoltes des Prétendus Réformés', AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 65 (9 September 1562).

³⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 32 (16 November 1565).

armes ilz auront et icelles prendre et saisir'.³⁸ The following week, Monluc issued a further ordinance requiring the police to expel all vagabonds and to fine anyone guilty of blasphemy, playing games or debauchery.³⁹

This pre-emptive posturing by the coalition appears to have paid off, with the towns of the Agenais remaining secure temporarily, despite continuing tensions. But the peace would not last. In September 1567, a Protestant army under the *comte de Montgomery*, boosted by reinforcements for Condé and the leading Huguenot nobles at court, took to the countryside. Hostilities were resumed, and the Catholic defences across the Agenais braced themselves to resist Montgomery's forces. It would be at this point that the coalition turned to Monluc to influence affairs. His subsequent actions to defend Agen and the Agenais would prove unequivocal.

The Second war, 1567-1568

In September 1567, hostilities were renewed across France, following Condé's unsuccessful attempt to seize the king at Meaux. Catherine de Medici wasted no time in authorising Monluc to convoke the *arrière-ban* in the Agenais, to stave off immediate Protestant aggression,⁴⁰ while Lalande, now governor of Agen, was ordered to draw up a rota of the twenty-four trusted *consuls* to accompany the nightly patrol of the town.⁴¹ Those guarding the gates were ordered to admit only those with valid identification passes, and who could be vouched for by recognised Catholic inhabitants.⁴² Such integration of Catholic *consuls* with the town guard would also be witnessed at Bordeaux and Toulouse during this time, revealing that

³⁸ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, FF 32 (24 November 1565).

³⁹ December 1565. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 140.

⁴⁰ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 194.

⁴¹ Barrère, *Histoire religieuse et monumentale du diocèse d' Agen*, I, p. 305.

⁴² AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 147.

the Catholic authorities of the south-west had clearly learnt from their experiences during 1562.

By late September, the Reformers were in open rebellion. A report to Lalande from François de Caumont, baron de Lauzan, testified that fierce fighting had broken out across the region. Bergerac, Montauban, Moissac and Lectoure had already fallen into Protestant hands, it claimed, while the lands of the *marquis* de Trans, one of Candalle's right-hand men in the Bordelais, were currently under siege.⁴³ Lalande informed Monluc, who despatched his two nearest captains, Mauriez and Jean d'Agen, to Agen, with Tilladet and la Cassaigne ordered to Lectoure with orders to quell the unrest there.⁴⁴ In the countryside, though, the Catholic nobility had rallied. On 29 September, the *sénéchal* of Bazadois, the *sieur* de Verduzan, dispatched 'plusieurs autres gentilshommes ses voisins' to secure the lands around Bazas, where reinforcements under the captain Tibauville, and a band of local nobles from the Sampoy region, soon joined them.⁴⁵ On 2 October, Monluc ordered one hundred Catholic soldiers to garrison Casteljaloux, demanding they be housed and fed by the town's Huguenot population.⁴⁶

With the tide stemmed momentarily, Monluc returned to Agen to organise its defences. On 7 October, the new coalition *conseil* met to decide the Catholic response. It determined that the nobility of the Agenais should be mobilised and put into the field to augment Monluc's forces.⁴⁷ In his *Commentaires*, Monluc claims that to facilitate this as rapidly as possible he, Antoine de Nort and Gratien Delas, together with a *greffier* and two *secrétaires*, sat up all night writing and signing over

⁴³ *Commentaires*, p. 596.

⁴⁴ Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen*, I, p. 263.

⁴⁵ *Commentaires*, pp. 596-98.

⁴⁶ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (2 October 1567). Monluc further strengthened Catholic control of Casteljaloux in December 1567, ordering the *jurade* to hand over the town's keys to his captain, Sendat, and requiring all inhabitants to swear on oath that they would not harbour Protestants within the town. AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (December 1567).

⁴⁷ Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen*, I, p. 264.

two hundred dispatches containing the orders for mobilisation, while Pierre de Naux, Antoine's elder brother, spent the evening searching for sufficient numbers of messengers to deliver them.⁴⁸ As well as targeting the leading nobles of the Agenais, copies were also addressed to the *parlements* at Bordeaux and Toulouse to inform their Catholic allies of the mobilisation.⁴⁹

The *conseil* met again the following day, and ordered the sequestration of 'plusieurs meubles, fruitz, betailz, armes et autres choses en leurs maisons' of those Protestants who had recently left Agen to join forces with their co-religionists at Montauban and Bergerac.⁵⁰ This council was attended by all Catholic magistrates of the coalition, rather than just the elite *conseil* members, a sign that the Catholic hierarchy sought consensus from all delegates before proceeding with such a harsh policy. Monluc and Lalande chaired the congress, and confirmed the validity of such a move, stating that all funds raised from the sale of confiscated goods would be used to buy munitions for Catholic troops in the town and to finance repairs to the defences. As such, engineers were instructed to begin an immediate survey of the current state of the town's fortifications.

At a third meeting of the *conseil*, two days later, a further ordinance was passed, authorising a one-off fine of 500 *écus* on all wealthy Huguenots of Agen, and the introduction of a new tax, to be paid by all other Reformers of the town, to finance the recently arrived garrison soldiers' pay.⁵¹ An analysis of surviving archives reveals that the total raised from sale of sequestered Protestant goods during

⁴⁸ *Commentaires*, p. 606. For transcript of the letter, see Paul Courteault, *Douze lettres inédites de Blaise de Monluc, publiées et annotées* (Toulouse, 1898), pp. 12-17.

⁴⁹ Of the actions of his trusted friends, de Nort and Delas, at this juncture, Monluc later wrote: 'ils me servirent tousjours en toutes mes despeches, et estoient de mon conseil en toutes choses'. *Commentaires*, p. 606.

⁵⁰ Ordinance of 8 October 1567. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 202, fo. 2.

⁵¹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 202, fos. 2v-5.

the period October to December 1567 amounted to 1,178 *livres*,⁵² while the confiscation of grain and wine realised 1,014 *livres*, 7 *sous*.⁵³ These same records also confirm that the majority of the sequestered money did go towards the strengthening of the town's fortifications, and was not, as Sevin later claimed, diverted into the pockets of Catholic generals. Unfortunately, the sources do not detail the totals raised from the fining and taxation of Protestants, although the fact that the *jurade* was able to vote a gift of 200 *écus* to Monluc in December 1567 - for 'services to the Catholic cause' - suggests that the coalition had access to fairly substantial sums.⁵⁴

With the policy of sequestering goods and property greatly enhancing the funds available to the Catholic leadership, it was predictable that when Monluc and the coalition reconvened in early January 1568, they authorised a continuance of this policy for the foreseeable future.⁵⁵ The defence of Agen was the most obvious beneficiary. On 10 March, Monluc was able to increase the garrison there by eighty per cent, employ a professional soldier, captain Raphael, to command them, and to pay the troops' wages directly from such income.⁵⁶ Similar schemes were implemented across the smaller towns of the Agenais, but often met with fierce opposition. The dissent, though, was not always from the expected source. At Casteljaloux, it was the Catholic council that was forced to intervene, urging Monluc to repeal his edict as soon as possible. When the Huguenots had refused to pay the new tax, Monluc had ordered the council to dismiss all Huguenot officials within the town, to appoint Catholic officials to the vacant posts, and to commence the forced

⁵² AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 202, fos. 2v-5.

⁵³ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 302 (1567).

⁵⁴ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 195.

⁵⁵ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 195v.

⁵⁶ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 199v.

collection of all unpaid revenues. As a consequence, the Huguenots withdrew all contributions to the *gages*, thereby compromising the town's administrative budget.⁵⁷

At other centres, the 'tax and sequester' policy brought different problems. At Francescas, an important strategic town close to the Calvinist citadel of Nérac, a one-off tax of Reformers in January 1568 generated sufficient funds to allow Monluc to garrison a large force of Catholic troops within the town, ostensibly to secure the main road south from the Agenais to Béarn. Within two months of its deployment, however, the Catholic council at Francescas pleaded with Monluc to remove the troops, claiming that the soldiers were causing havoc in the town. The town fathers seemed unconcerned at losing any financial advantage the policy had offered, so long as order was restored. They even offered to buy back the town's 'freedom', informing Monluc that, should the garrison be withdrawn, they would continue to collect the tax, but would forward the funds to Agen.⁵⁸

The boon of such financial expedients came to a temporary end with the peace of Longjumeau in March 1568. Despite Catholic domination of the administration of the Agenais, the terms of the peace required that restraint be employed towards Protestants. The immediate result was that some towns now struggled to meet their high expenditure on manpower and fortifications. Without the income from emergency taxation and sequestration, councils found their budgets overstretched. At Agen, the coalition was forced to borrow to maintain its expenditure at pre-peace levels. The *registres de jurade* for April 1568 reveal that Lalande and his fellow Catholic consuls, Boissanade and de Nort, obtained a total of 1,423 *livres* from two loans: the first, from Madame l'Infanta de Portugal, of 1,000

⁵⁷ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (1568).

⁵⁸ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, 2,630 (*jurade* of January 1568).

livres,⁵⁹ the other from a local merchant, Jean de Vaus, of 423 *livres*.⁶⁰ The *registres* also list the destination of some of the outgoings from these loans: ‘fournitures aux corps de garde... soldes des messages... établissements des gabions... restauration des fossés... construction de murailles’, showing that military matters were still a high priority for the coalition.⁶¹

That Catholic towns continued to garrison and fortify despite the truce says much about the negative perception of the peace held by contemporaries. Both Catholics and Protestants seemed dismissive of its ability to secure accommodation and end conflict, expressing especial concern over the clause declaring the crown’s willingness to forget past misdemeanours, so long as ‘tous les sujets du roi se trouvassent réunis dans la profession d’une seule et même religion’.⁶² For Huguenots, the reference to ‘One Religion’ proved unacceptable. They would agree to demands for a cessation of hostilities, but realised it would only be a matter of time before their theorists called for its rejection. Catholics met the peace with the same mixture of anger and resignation that had characterised their response to the Amboise edict five years earlier. The Bordeaux *parlement* ridiculed the treaty as ‘la petite paix’, claiming that it resolved nothing, and predicted a resurgence of the conflict within the month.⁶³ Monluc, who was assisting the royal expedition to retake the Ile de Ré when the peace was published, was similarly dismissive of its ability to reconcile the faiths and bring stability to France, believing it to be nothing more than ‘une paix pour prendre halaine et temps pour se pourveoir d’autres choses nécessaires pour la guerre, et non pour la faire durer’.⁶⁴ Indeed, several historians

⁵⁹ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 199.

⁶⁰ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, CC 306 (April 1568).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² De Thou, *Histoire Universelle*, V, p. 416.

⁶³ *Commentaires*, p. 629.

⁶⁴ *Commentaires*, p. 628.

have even viewed the Longjumeau edict as a catalyst for further conflict rather than a mediatory event. Paul de Félice is especially damning of any pretensions the edict may have had of securing a cease-fire or resolving the warfare: 'la guerre ne cessa pas... elle devint guerre cachée... on encouragea les ligues des ultra catholiques; on voulut, enfin, diviser les protestants'.⁶⁵ Similarly, Mack P. Holt suggests that by continuing in its adherence to accommodation - deemed by Catholics to be little more than a ruse to defend Protestant grandees at court - the crown was in fact 'fuelling the flames of civil war'⁶⁶ Holt continues that the most visible sign of Catholic unease at this strategy was the 'burgeoning number of lay confraternities that emerged in the towns throughout the kingdom' after Longjumeau.⁶⁷

While the growth of the confraternities and their impact on this study is addressed in Chapter 9, Félice and Holt's observations, that the peace served to encourage ultra-Catholic groupings to greater political and military activism, certainly find resonance at Agen. By mid 1568, the coalition was so inundated with complaints over continued Huguenot violence that Lalande felt obliged to draft a lengthy remonstrance to the king. In it, he complained of the failure of the peace treaty, and detailed the 'pillage et incendie des maisons... destructions des esglises... interruption du service divin... assemblées en armes des Protestants' as evidence of the turbulence of affairs across the Agenais.⁶⁸ The threat appears to have been so great that Catholics soon embarked upon unilateral action to reinforce their defences at Agen, irrespective of the edict and crown requests for moderation in attitudes towards Protestants. In a confidential ordinance, dated 18 May 1568, Monluc and Lalande ordered that the town guard be vetted, so that only 'hommes de qualité' were

⁶⁵ Paul de Félice, *Procès-verbaux de la prestation du serment de fidélité au Roi Charles IX par les Huguenots d'Orléans en 1568* (Orléans, 1882), p. 6.

⁶⁶ Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, p. 67.

⁶⁷ Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, p. 68.

⁶⁸ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, EE 56 (1568).

deployed at the gates. Strict new routes and schedules for patrols were dictated, and no strangers or Huguenots were to be allowed to enter the town, regardless of their objective.⁶⁹ This was both a contravention of the terms of the edict and a blatant disregard for Protestant liberties.

This ordinance, though, was important for a further reason. One of its clauses gave Lalande authority to ‘interdict et deffandeu au jugement et juges presidiaux dudict Agen et à tous autres prendre aulcune jurisdiction ny cognoissance de ladicte police et reiglement par nous fait’.⁷⁰ Monluc had not only set out the parameters of Catholic authority at Agen, but also sought to legislate against external interference from other administrative bodies in Agenais, regardless of their legitimacy.⁷¹ It is evident that the spectre of the incumbent, if still absent, *juge-mage*, Sevin, worried the Catholic government at Agen to the point that they were willing to exclude legitimate *présidial* officials in an attempt to retain political control over the town. By following such protectionist policies, the coalition clearly flew in the face of royal policy, which sought to re-integrate Huguenots within local government. The position of Monluc, then, is pivotal here. It was one thing to exclude Protestant officials during times of conflict, as he did in 1562-63, and would do again in November 1568, but during the peace Monluc, as the king’s chief official in the Agenais, should have been promoting crown policy - that is, accommodating Protestants rather than supporting the exclusionist policies of the coalition.⁷² By facilitating the removal of all opposition to Catholic control at Agen at this juncture, Monluc was treading a fine line between the employment of acceptable initiative,

⁶⁹ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, BB 60, fo. 210.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ The ordinance was revised in July 1568 to include a one thousand *livres* fine for anyone countermanding the order. AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 216.

⁷² Monluc’s ordinance of 29 November 1568 stripped all Protestant ‘magistrats, avocats, procureurs, huissiers, sergents, notaires et receveurs’ of office, revoking all acts and pronouncements made by them, in line with the similar exclusionist ordinance published by the Bordeaux *parlement* on 10 November, 1568. See AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, GG 201, fo. 5.

and stepping outside of the channels of legitimate authority. Of course, the remit of his office of king's lieutenant allowed a degree of independent action. Monluc could, and did, claim that any expedient that preserved the security of the region - and the exclusion of Protestants from government fell into this category - was well within his prerogative.

Yet if Monluc was deliberating over his actions at this point, there is no reference to it in his writings. If anything, archival material suggests that Catholic unity became more coherent after this episode. At the assembly of the *états de l'Agenais*, between 12 and 30 June 1568, Catholic delegates reinforced the coalition's domination of the political arena by fully endorsing all recent pronouncements, offering to increase their contributions to the fortification of Catholic-held towns of the region as a gesture of solidarity.⁷³ Their unity had become more overt too. In March 1568, the full paraphernalia of Catholic pageantry had been on display at Agen, as local Catholic captains were presented with honours from the king. All the leading coalition members were present for this ceremonial, held in the town's cathedral of Saint-Étienne, with Monluc and Lalande distributing the awards. The festivities lasted ten days. On 9 March, Monluc's right-hand man, Tilladet, and two of his captains, de Laussan and de Pausas, were awarded *l'ordre du roi*. The following day, two more captains, de Cassaniels and de Cieurac, received the same honour, with captains de Labories and de Cancon, and de Berdusan, the *sénéchal* of Bazadois, honoured on the 18 and 19 March respectively.⁷⁴

⁷³ Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 241.

⁷⁴ Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen*, I, pp. 264-65.

The Third war and its ramifications, 1568-1570

At hostilities resumed in September 1568, the coalition benefited greatly from the strong ties created between the Catholic institutions of the Agenais. They were also assisted by astute military leadership. With Protestant forces in the south-west boosted by Condé's personal involvement in affairs, Monluc was forced to re-evaluate Catholic strengths. He determined that a large Catholic force would be maintained at Agen, one capable of meeting the Protestant army in the field. By concentrating his available forces, though, Monluc realised that many towns across the countryside would be defenceless. In an attempt to bolster these weak points in Catholic defences Monluc divided the region into individual cells, with small units of experienced soldiers coordinating local Catholic militias. He spelled out his strategy to Lalande in a letter, dated 16 February 1569:

Monsieur mon cousin, si vous avez eu jamais besoing de faire bon guet dans Agen, il est à présent temps que vous le faictes, pour vous garder de surprinse. Par ainsi, je vous pryé, incontinent la présente receue, advertir toutes les villes et villages que incontinent que l'ons verra que ceulx des ennemis qui font ainsin des courses sont en campagne, que l'on face le tocsing partout, et leur courir sus, et leur mander que chaque paroisse esglise ung chef, afin que, quand l'on viendra à faire le tocsing, ils ne s'esprisent point, et que leur chef leur donne courage.⁷⁵

This emphasis on community-based defence was most practical, and in many ways echoed the Huguenot tactics devised at Clairac in 1561 - although, as has been stated repeatedly, Monluc's predilection for invigorating the wider community into defensive postures, and not simply relying on experienced soldiers, had been a favoured tactic of his during the Italian campaigns of the 1550s. On 27 February 1569, the ordinance detailing these developments was read before the coalition

⁷⁵ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 210.

council and confirmed.⁷⁶ In May, a similar edict was authorised, permitting Catholics ‘thuer, massacrer, et tailler en pieces aultant ceux de ladicte pretendue religion... les faire rançonner et prendre leurs biens’.⁷⁷ This effectively signalled an escalation in affairs at Agen. Where previously, the sequestration of Huguenot goods had been the remit only of Catholic magistrates, Monluc was now granting all Catholic citizens the authority to seize and ransom unruly Protestants. While the consent of the coalition was still preferred, the wider elements of Catholic society were being energised in the confrontations between the faiths.⁷⁸

As the war intensified during 1569, Protestant troops acquired a substantial numerical advantage over Catholic defenders for the first time since 1562. Their defensive networks began to buckle under the strain as the south-west became the focal point of the conflict. The Catholic nobility were subdued by the Protestant forces under Montgomery and the *vicomtes*, and by mid-November Agen was on the brink of being overwhelmed. Monluc, at Lectoure with his old captain, La Mothe-Gondrin, preparing to confront Montgomery’s forces at Condom, received an urgent communiqué from Lalande stating that ‘toute la ville estoit en effroy’, and that many were fleeing the town for the safety of Toulouse and Bordeaux. Lalande claimed that the situation was so dire that ‘les marchans commençoient à vouloir tirer

⁷⁶ ‘Blaise de Monluc... à tous chefs et conducteurs de gens de guerre, maires, jurats, consuls, justiciers, officiers, communes de villes, bourgs, villages et communaultés, tant d’Agen que Gascogne, salut. Comme nous soyons dernièrement advertis qu’il y a plusieurs des ennemis de sa Majesté qui sont venus du camp de M. le prince de Condé, se retirant deça en plusieurs endroits, pillant, saccageant, et exerçant plusieurs excès sur les bons subjects de sadite Majesté, nous, pour ces causes, vous avons permys que en quelque lieu où vous sçaurez que lesdits ennemys seront, vous assembler et faire le toquesin partout, leur courir sus, mectre et tailher en pièces sans nulle rémission; et pour ce faire, commétrez en chasque paroisse ung cappitaine tel que adviserez, pour conduire ladite commune. De ce faire vous avons donné plein pouvoir, auctorité, puissance et mandement par ces présentes’. AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fo. 211.

⁷⁷ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, BB 30, fos. 238-40.

⁷⁸ A similar phenomenon occurred at Bordeaux, where a number of the Catholic populace were assigned civil guard duties, thus freeing experienced soldiers to join Tilladet’s main units outside the walls. Monluc even closed down the *parlement* for 8 days (4-12 November 1568) to allow all court officials to take a turn guarding the town gates. *Commentaires*, pp. 652-53.

leurs marchandises dehors', forcing the governor to deny many permission to leave the town to prevent the economy from imploding.⁷⁹

Monluc left at once for Agen, placing the main Catholic army under La Mothe-Gondrin's command. He arrived at Agen in mid-November, short of troops and facing a population on the verge of flight. His subsequent actions epitomise the extent to which Catholic unity had been cemented over the previous years. Certainly, care must be taken in reading Monluc's personal version of events, but his account of the measures employed by the coalition to secure the town at such a critical point is accepted by Courteault. It reveals a synthesis of key developments in Catholic activism to this point: the utility of close relations between the hierarchy and institutions of Agen; an affirmation of the merits of 'communal defence'; and the realisation that mutual support and concerted action could succeed in the face of overwhelming odds.⁸⁰ On arrival, Monluc convened an assembly of 'tous les principaux, et toute l'église, et la justice d'Agen', at which 'tout le monde y courroit pour me veoir et pour entendre quel conseil je leur donneroies'. In this, Monluc seemed to be employing the medieval tradition whereby a leader would make a personal appearance before the citizens in order to confirm his presence among them, or, as he himself had done at Siena, to stem the fears of the troops and galvanize them into action. He then dismissed rumours that the leaders of Agen had deserted the town, urged the populace to be diligent and resolute, and swore 'vivre et mourir avec vous autres'. This pledge, made in the face of such adversity, gained Monluc instant renown across the region, and was reported before the Bordeaux *parlement* within the week.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Commentaires*, p. 739.

⁸⁰ The following account of the securing of Agen in November 1569 is taken from Monluc own words, see *Commentaires*, pp. 738-47.

⁸¹ BM Bordeaux, ms 369, III, fo. 316.

Following Monluc's address, Lalande and Bertrand de Lacombe, *abbé* of Blasimon, offered the support of the clergy, pledging 'leurs vies et biens pour se deffendre et pour accomplir ce que je [Monluc] demanderois'. This seems to have invigorated the assembly, for the bourgeoisie, town guard and 'messieurs de justice' all followed suit in declaring their allegiance to the defence of the town, with Martial de Nort, one of Monluc's oldest allies at Agen, assuring the general that 'tous ceux de la ville, riches et pauvres, femmes et enfans, et sans espargner, y mettroient la main'. Even if this statement is embroidery on Monluc's part, it still reflects his belief in the validity of defending an urban centre by energising the whole community rather than simply deploying troops.

Of particular importance was Monluc's creation of an extraordinary *conseil de guerre* to oversee the mechanics of defence. This would comprise 'huict de vostre ville, que vous obeirez entierement', to be chosen by Monluc.⁸² The same measure had been tried at Casteljaloux the preceding January, to stave off Huguenot unrest. Under the auspices of Monluc's captain, Sendat, the *conseil* at Casteljaloux had been granted extensive, autonomous powers to organise the town's defences, even to the point where Sendat was able to refuse a request from the governor of Bordeaux to dispatch two companies from the town to bolster Catholic forces in the provincial capital, although Sendat did offer to pay 150 *écus* in compensation to sweeten any displeasure within the *parlement*.⁸³ But at Casteljaloux, there had been an obvious need for the creation of such a *conseil de guerre*: Huguenot sympathisers were still active on the town's civic council, and a sizeable Protestant party existed within the locality, with the result that internal security was often compromised. What is surprising about the establishment of the new *conseil* at Agen is that the town already

⁸² *Commentaires*, p. 742.

⁸³ AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (19 January 1569). For Sendat's attempt at conciliation with the Bordeaux *parlement*, see AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, 2,386 (3 April 1569).

had such an entity: the coalition. This had proven a triumph for Catholicism in the Agenais, maintaining tight control over the region's affairs, and raising Agen to the status of bastion of Catholicism, similar to that of Bordeaux and Toulouse. Why, then, would Monluc require an additional body to coordinate Catholic defiance in 1569, especially when many of his assembled audience were veterans of the coalition? The answer lies in Monluc's *modus operandi* when defending a besieged urban centre. It was an idiosyncrasy of his operations in Italian towns during the 1550s to entrust authority to an elite cell of dependable companions, irrespective of the presence of any established urban councils. This was a logical move, aimed at reducing the number of officers with authoritative power to a minimum, to obviate miscommunication. At Agen, it appears the Catholic hierarchy did not resist this new corpus, nor question its independence from the coalition, as the gathered delegates confirmed the *conseil* that same day, and swore an oath of support to its officials.⁸⁴

If the command structure of the *conseil* was more focussed than the previous Catholic consortium, its dictates adhered to standard Catholic defensive principles. The townsfolk were enlisted to man the guard, with magistrates taking turns to head the patrols and secure the gates. Monluc's engineer, captain Toppiac, was ordered to demolish a number of houses and internal walls so that existing defensive works could be reinforced, and several new forts built around the town's perimeter. Catholics whose homes had been knocked down during this programme of reconstruction were authorised to seize the houses belonging to fugitive Huguenots, while those Reformers that remained in the town were forced to share their home

⁸⁴ Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen*, I, p. 268. Although there does not appear to be any surviving record of the oath referred to by Labenazie within the archives, in view of the tendency of Catholic *associations* and alliances to seal their compacts with such pledges, it is certainly feasible that a ceremony to celebrate the unity of delegates at Agen followed Monluc's address.

with garrison soldiers and construction workers.⁸⁵ These were standard coalition practices, repeated many times over the previous years. The *conseil* may well have added a tighter grip on authority at Agen, but in its determinations and routines it preferred to make use of the tried and trusted methods that had been employed with efficacy by the coalition for the previous six years.

Summary

The establishment of an extraordinary military *conseil* at Agen in November 1569 exemplifies the progress made by Catholic activists across the region. Such ascendancy would have seemed a distant goal in 1560. Then, Catholic activism was a rarity, practised only by a few determined individuals. Over the following years, ad-hoc, if disparate, bodies would be formed, eventually unified under a coalition of magistrates, clergy and representatives of the wider institutions of the Agenais. In mid 1562, Catholic officials from the *jurade*, *présidial* and *sénéchaussée* united in opposition to continuing Huguenot incursions. They were boosted by the support of the *états de l'Agenais*, dominated at this time by the Catholic nobility and clergy and nobles who, as major landholders, were just as eager to halt Protestant attacks on their property. The *états* would prove an important buttress for the Catholic leadership at Agen, supporting their political decisions, and endorsing the diversion of regional finances into Catholic coffers. The following year, in February 1563, a formal oath-bound *association* was created at Agen, formally unifying these parties - magistrates, clergy, and nobility - for the first time. Although the crown successfully banned this *ligue*, it could not proscribe Catholic sentiment. Collective action to

⁸⁵ AD Lot-et-Garonne, E Sup. Agen, EE 16 (16 December 1569).

facilitate communal defence became the new catholic ethos, inspired by Monluc's previous experiences of rearguard action.⁸⁶ Agenais Catholics of every social standing were expected to rise to the challenge, to forge protective cooperatives capable of rallying to any threat. And rise they did.

Catholic successes were also founded on the *amitié* shared by key individuals within the institutions of the Agenais, whose *association* allowed them to dominate the machinery of local government. Three of the most prominent of these officials were Clément Lalande, Martial de Nort and Antoine Tholon, each the leading Catholic representative of the clergy, *jurade* and the *sénéchaussée* respectively.⁸⁷ The de Nort family, in fact, appears to have spawned a quasi-dynasty of Catholic activists at Agen: Martial, an old and trusted friend of Monluc, held offices in the *jurade* and *présidial* courts throughout this period; his eldest son, Pierre, followed his father onto the *jurade*; Antoine, the second son, served with distinction as an officer of the *sénéchaussée de l'Agenais*, while the husband of Martial's eldest daughter also served on the *présidial*. Martial and Antoine were often cited as members of Monluc's 'inner circle', while Pierre was trusted subordinate of the general's household staff.⁸⁸ Protestant sources, however, vilified the de Nort for their zeal. Théodore de Bèze denounced Martial as a 'tres mauvais homme... sans foy ne conscience... capital ennemi de ceux de la religion', while Pierre was accused of committing numerous excesses against Protestants at La Plume during 1561.⁸⁹ While

⁸⁶ Abbé Joseph Labrunie encapsulates Monluc's decade at Agen: 'Il se retire à Gascogne, où il emploie à pacifier les differents de la noblesse catholique, qu'il enrôle dans un sorte de ligue pour la défense commune'. Labrunie, 'Abrégé chronologique des antiquités d'Agen', p. 174.

⁸⁷ Labrunie also identified Lalande, Tholon and Martial de Nort as 'les conseillers les plus estimes de Monluc'. Labrunie, 'Abrégé chronologique des antiquités d'Agen', p. 177.

⁸⁸ Labenazie cites a dedicational epistle of 1581, penned by the Jacobin writer, Lacoste, which states: 'MM. de Nort... ayant été les appuis de la religion catholique dans la ville d'Agen'. Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen*, I, p. 275.

⁸⁹ *HE*, I, pp. 874-77. The *Histoire Ecclésiastique* also had stern words for the bishop of Agen, Frégose, who was berated for his repeated provocation of Protestant citizens at Agen, while Lalande was alleged to 'portoit sous sa longue robe de damas une épée et une rondelle'. *HE*, I, pp. 238; 367.

there is little doubt that the de Norts were at the centre of Catholic activism at Agen, there is one important qualification: the household had its very own black sheep of the fold - Odet, Martial's third son. Odet had turned to Protestantism in 1558, preaching regularly at local *prêches* across the region. In 1560, he was appointed minister at the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle, where he gained a reputation as a charismatic orator. His ability to rouse Protestants troops before battle brought condemnation from Catholics at Agen: Burie claimed that the unrest of January 1561 in the Agenais had been 'émué par les prédications de Odet de Nort', while Tholin would later assert that 'la jurade d'Agen avait son Brutus'.⁹⁰ In April 1561, Odet's brother, Antoine, reported his sibling to the Bordeaux *parlement*, requesting that action be taken to silence such provocative activity, even claiming that his brother had been active in the sacking of several churches at Agen.⁹¹ This family split proved that even the most devout Catholic families could be divided along confessional lines by this struggle, an example that would be repeated many times across France during the religious wars.

The role of Monluc in these developments was, as ever, central to Catholic affairs. His support of Catholic luminaries during the initial troubles, his military intervention, and the reinforcing of coalition authority through accommodating ordinances, all proved vital. And it was Monluc who provided the impetus and channels of communication that allowed the fusing of the local nobility with the Catholic body politic at Agen. His evolution from a utilitarian military officer into a zealous defender of Catholic rationale within a few short years is remarkable. There is little doubt that the general maintained a 'chameleon-like profile' in his dealings with the crown during the decade, but by 1563, the speculation that had surrounded

⁹⁰ Burie to Catherine de Medici (24 January 1561), *AHG*, 13, p. 151; Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen', XIV, p. 442.

⁹¹ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 366.

his Calvinist sympathies in the late 1550s was long gone.⁹² Now, Monluc was named regularly alongside militants such as Lange, Candalle, Roffignac and Prévôt as a belligerent influence on the stability of the province,⁹³ and derided by Protestants as the 'king's butcher', a label he appears to have delighted in, if the tone of his *Commentaires* is anything to go by.⁹⁴ A. W. Evans has defended Monluc's reputation here, stating that brutality was a necessary expedient of a military leader: 'He was constrained, contrary to his own nature, to use not only severity, but even sometimes to be cruel'.⁹⁵ For Evans, this was a degenerate civil war, a world turned upside down, and the king's lieutenant was quite legitimate to employ both the carrot and stick as necessary. Monluc reflects on such themes himself:

Ce n'est pas comme aux guerres estrangères, où on combat comme pour l'amour et l'honneur; mais aux civiles il faut estre ou maistre ou valet, veu qu'on demeure sous mesme toit. Et ainsi il faut venir à la rigueur et à la cruauté; autrement la friandise du gain est telle que on desire plustost la continuation de la guerre que la fin.⁹⁶

Ruble, however, has detected incongruities within these texts. He shows that in the early editions of the *Commentaires*, *Livre V* begins: 'Je me délibéray d'uzer de toutes cruautés...'. However, the original manuscript reads: 'Je me délibéray d'uzer de toutes les craintes...'. The replacement of the word *cruautés* for *craintes* - cruelty

⁹² Monluc had remarked of Calvinism in 1557, that: 'il n'estoit pas fils de bonne mere qui n'en vouloit gouter', and was known to have attended a Reformed service at Nérac, under de Bèze, during 1560. See *Commentaires*, p. 481.

⁹³ See especially two anonymous letters from Huguenots at Bordeaux to Catherine de Medici, claiming that Monluc, Prévôt, Lachassaigne, Candalle and Lange intended to re-arm the Catholics of Guyenne, and to systematically victimise the Huguenot communities around Cadillac. Anon to Catherine de Medici (11 April 1563), BN ms fr, 15,879, fo. 173; Anon to Catherine de Medici (13 April 1563), BN ms fr, 15,879, fo. 195.

⁹⁴ The *Histoire Ecclesiastique* talks of the savagery of the 'Monlucoise', after the massacre of the defenders of Montségur on 1 August 1562. *HE*, II, pp. 910-11. Monluc wrote of his military conduct in 1562: 'on pouvoit cognoistre par là où j'estois passé, car par les arbres, sur les chemins, on en trouvoit les enseignes. Un pendu estoit plus que cent tuez', and, 'mon naturel tendoit plus à remuer les mains qu'à pacifier les affaires, ayant mieux frapper et jouer des cousteaux que faire des harangues'. *Commentaires*, pp. 529; 579. Roy iterates that the anger of the Reformers at Monluc should be seen in the widest context. After all, he had once worshipped in their church; now he was their great enemy. To Bèze, in fact, Monluc was an 'apostate'. Ian Roy, *Blaise de Monluc* (London, 1971), p. 7.

⁹⁵ Evans, *Blaise de Monluc*, p. 19.

⁹⁶ *Commentaires*, p. 519.

for fear - fundamentally alters the tone of Monluc's argument, a modification probably made by later editors keen to spice up the *Commentaires*.⁹⁷

Monluc's skills as a leader - his organisation of urban defences, chiding of town councils over security matters, maintaining of local Catholic under arms, garrisoning strategic centres with large complements of soldiers, and his liking for judicial tours to reinforce authority - were important attributes, but were undoubtedly assisted by Catholic domination of the political and administrative infrastructure of the region. His predilection for the sequestration of goods and lands from Huguenot rebels also helped the Catholic cause. Not only did it diminish Protestant resources, but it also secured financial bonuses that would fund additional garrison troops and militia patrols across the Agenais, and allow extensive fortification of gates, walls and ramparts. And when the once-disparate Catholic bodies of the Agenais had melded into a unified corpus by 1569, it was under Monluc's protective umbrella that they were placed.

The extent to which the lower classes were active in Catholic designs here is difficult to assess. The deliberations of the *états* could have offered a window into the popular, representative voice in the Agenais, but its domination by the nobility and clergy precluded such consensus from being recorded. This is in contrast to events at Bordeaux, where significant surviving paperwork on the *basoche* and confraternity of Saint-Yves allows the historian access to the sentiment, as well as the activities, of these lesser officers of the *parlement*. The Huguenot perspective at Agen is also less apparent. Protestants had few opportunities to express their dissatisfaction within the town, and where their voices are heard within the archives, it is usually as appellants or defendants in litigation. Debate between the two faiths

⁹⁷ Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, I, p. iv.

was minimal, with the exception of a brief interlude after the peace of Amboise in 1563, where the re-introduction of *mi-partie* chambers within the *présidial* offered the Reformers a momentary platform from which to speak out or raise issues ordinarily suppressed by Catholic censorship. This success depended greatly on the indomitable spirit of Herman de Sevin, *juge-mage* and *président* of the *présidial*, whose defence of Huguenot rights at Agen mirrored Lagebâton's struggle to protect moderates within the Bordeaux *parlement*. Both men were harassed as 'enemies of the state' for their position, but both countered that they were simply adhering to crown dictate.

Finally, the coalition's success in securing Catholic hegemony in the Agenais during the 1560s is impressive: administrative monopoly was maintained by Lalande, de Nort, Tholon and others, the *états* were effective in validating Catholic policy and financial assistance, while Monluc and his captains repelled the military designs of the Reformers. Given the high concentration of Huguenot communities within the region, and that the Reform ministers and Protestant nobility specifically targeted the area after 1567, this achievement appears all the more notable. Historians tend to marginalize Agen when analysing proceedings in the south-west during the religious wars, deferring to the impact of events at the major citadels of Bordeaux and Toulouse. With the level of Catholic successes at Agen, its strategic position, its military and political significance for both communities, and the omnipresence of Monluc, the leading personality of the region throughout the decade, it is justified to proclaim Agen as the third bastion of Catholicism in the south-west, a complementary sanctuary to the two more illustrious custodians of orthodoxy: Bordeaux and Toulouse.

PART III: TOULOUSE

Chapter 7. Wider Catholic activism: Toulouse, 1560-1563

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This study now turns to the third centre of Catholic activism in the south-west during the 1560s: the Languedocian city of Toulouse. Catholic intrigues in and around Toulouse would prove just as significant as its counterparts at Bordeaux and Agen; extensive networks and alliances were forged across the region, some predating the religious wars, others underpinning Catholic exploits throughout the decade, with a high degree of reciprocity existing between the centres. Four main episodes of Catholic activism will be addressed here. The first mirrors the initial study of Bordeaux by exploring possible antecedents to the formal *associations* of the 1560s: the growth of an active confraternity representing minor officials within the *parlement*; a pro-active group of street performers affiliated to the confraternity, who energised the Catholic community on the streets of the town; and the growing involvement of royal officials in the defence of Catholicism in the face of pressure from the crown to implement toleration of the Reformers. The second examines events during the initial stages of the war: the Protestant coup of May 1562, which forced the Catholics of Toulouse into military action; and the *ligue* of March 1563, by which Catholic elites of the region consolidated their successes. Here, the close ties of the Catholics of Toulouse with their Guyenne allies will be exposed; both fought at the barricades to eject Protestant forces from the town, and both were party to the formal *association* formed at the cathedral of Saint-Étienne the following year, under the auspices of Monluc, cardinal Armagnac and members of the Toulouse *parlement*. The third theme analyses the reinvigoration of Catholic activism at

Toulouse following the resumption of hostilities across France after September 1567. This focuses on the bureaucratic weapons employed by a now dominant Catholic party: the sequestration of Protestant goods and property; the surveillance of Huguenot movements across the town and countryside; and the use of taxation and fines both to penalise the Reformers, and to finance the Catholic war effort. The fourth and final aspect to be examined is the somewhat anachronistic phenomenon of the crusade at Toulouse in August 1568, validated by the papacy, backed by the *parlement*, and supported by leading nobles of the *sénéchaussée*. Although the crusade will be shown to have been enigmatic at best, the fact that it was considered and created by Catholics in the first place reveals the depth of sentiment felt by many to protect their faith from the ever-present threat of Protestantism. These two chapters, then, will examine these instances of resident and external activism at Toulouse, assess their composition and contribution to subsequent events, and detail the extent of the various networks and alliances involved in securing Catholic hegemony across the region.

Toulouse: city and government

To begin with, a review of the demographic and administrative make up of Toulouse at 1560 will be made, revealing the milieu in which the ensuing sectarian conflict was played out. The first thing that strikes the historian of the south-west is the similarity between Bordeaux and Toulouse. The comparisons existed on many levels; each was sited strategically on the Garonne river, protected by immense walls and fortifications, with analogous population estimates of 40,000 by 1560.¹ As the

¹ Boutrouche, *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, p. 243; Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot', p. 368.

two great trading centres of the region, both towns boasted a diverse social and ethnic demography, although Toulouse tended to accommodate more Catholic merchants from Spain and Italy than did Bordeaux. There were parallels, too, in their reception of the Reform movement: both towns opened their gates freely to Protestants during the 1550s, only to slam them shut at the commencement of sectarian conflict in 1562. However, both Bordeaux and Toulouse maintained a resident Huguenot community of between 7-9,000 throughout the 1560s, although as each became a haven for local Catholic refugees, fleeing from persecution, the Protestant inhabitants faced ever-increasing levels of punitive taxation, harassment and discrimination.²

The structures of core government of each town were also similar, with traditional families, staunchly provincial in their attitude, dominating local offices. The civic corporation of Toulouse comprised eight elected city fathers, or *capitouls*, representing each of the town's eight *capitoullats*: Daurade, Saint-Étienne, Pont-Vieux, la Pierre, Dalbade, Saint-Pierre, Saint-Barthélemy, and Saint-Sernin. Its jurisdiction over finance, justice, security, and police dated back to royal consent granted in the early thirteenth century, the only significant change being the creation of a parallel body, the *conseil de seize*, or *conseil de bourgeoisie*, in 1515, to deal with petty matters and relieve the town authorities of a growing administrative burden. As at Bordeaux, however, the city councillors of Toulouse were renowned for their sympathy towards Reform ideology, and were often perceived as being innovators of religious change within the town.³

Catholic interests within Toulouse were centred on the town's *parlement*. The *parlement* had been established in 1444, following a decree by Charles VII that a

² See especially, Robert A. Schneider, *Public Life in Toulouse* (London, 1989), pp. 12-43.

³ By 1650, the *conseil de seize* numbered over one hundred officials. Henri Ramet, *Le capitole et le parlement de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1926), pp. 28-29.

sovereign court be established within the château Narbonnais to ensure royal justice was administered, and royal authority upheld, in this most distant outpost of France. As at Bordeaux, it began life as a single chamber, in 1451, formally titled the *première chambre des enquêtes*. Between 1491 and 1519, a *chambre criminelle*, or *tournelle*, was instituted, followed by a *chambre des requêtes* in 1543, and a *seconde chambre des enquêtes* in 1553.⁴ By 1560, though, the rising number of cases dealing with religious offences forced the creation of a new, temporary chamber at Toulouse, the *chambre extraordinaire*, which, at times, sat during vacations to clear the backlog of pending prosecutions.⁵

As the *parlement* grew in size and prestige, it began to encroach inexorably upon the jurisdiction of the town council.⁶ Initially this was limited to hearing appeals against the verdicts of the *capitouls*, and intervening in the nomination and election of civic councillors. But as the *capitouls* began to reveal sympathetic tendencies to the Reform movement during the 1550s, it placed them at odds with the generally censorial policies of the *parlement*, provoking a volatile reaction from Catholic magistrates that would exceed even the turbulent relationship between *jurade* and *parlement* at Bordeaux. By 1562, the *parlement* was challenging the *capitouls*' sympathies directly, and it was of little surprise that it commandeered jurisdiction from the council following the Protestant coup of May 1562, removing suspect officials from office, and replacing them with trustworthy Catholics. Ramet

⁴ Ramet, *Le capitole et le parlement de Toulouse*, p. 137. In 1549, the old château Narbonnais was dismantled to make way for a new *grand palais*, constructed under the guidance of Nicolas Bachelier.

⁵ 'Sur la requeste verbalement faicte par le procureur général du Roy, a ce que attendu les grands troubles que sont par tout le royaume pour le fait de la religion, emotions et seditions du peuple en plusieurs villes et lieux de ce ressort, et le craincte qu'estoit en ceste ville d'en y avoir, feust le bon plaisir de la cour que, outre messieurs ordonnez pour servir en la chambre criminelle durant les vacations, demeurast une autre chambre pour pourveoir au fait desdites troubles, emotions et seditions', (16 September 1560), AD Haute-Garonne, B 53, fo. 969.

⁶ By 1547, the *parlement* boasted four *présidents*, fifty-six *conseillers* (among them one George d'Armagnac, bishop of Rodez, soon to be cardinal and lieutenant of Toulouse), a *procureur-général* and two *avocats-généraux*. See Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 324.

shows that by 1563, the *parlement* had redefined the town council as a tool of the Catholic party, rather than the irritant it had tended to be previously.⁷

Three further bodies moved towards Catholic consensus at Toulouse during the 1560s: the courts of the *sénéchaussée* and *viguerie*; and the *états de Languedoc*. By the sixteenth century, the office of *sénéchal* at Toulouse was no longer restricted to independent royal officials, but open to local *noblesse de robe*. As a result, Catholic militants such as Pierre de Saint-Lary, baron de Bellegarde, would hold the post, an important cog in Catholic attempts to dominate the administration at Toulouse. The *viguerie*, a court subordinate to the *sénéchal*, dealing with petty civil and criminal cases at local level, was also important for Catholic fortunes, as it assisted in matters relating to policing and security around the region. The officers of the *viguerie* would become important supporters of the *ligueurs* at Toulouse after 1563.⁸ The third body, the representative assemblies of the provincial *états de Languedoc*, comprised largely of the *sénéchaussées* of Toulouse, Carcassonne and Beaucaire, also tended to be dominated by Catholics, in this case mainly members of the local clergy and nobility. As they met only infrequently during the religious wars, however, their influence was not as dramatic as it could have been, given the overwhelming Catholic consensus expressed at most assemblies during this period.⁹

There was one body, though, that was rarely dominated by Catholic sentiment at Toulouse: the *présidial*. These new royal courts were introduced in 1552 to augment the work of the *parlement*. The *ressort* of Toulouse contained seven *présidiaux*, dealing ostensibly with criminal cases, appeals of royal judges, and civil

⁷ Ramet, *Le capitole et le parlement de Toulouse*, p. 29.

⁸ The *viguerie* at Toulouse comprised the *viguiers*, two *lieutenants*, several *conseillers*, a *procureur*, two *avocats du roi*, and numerous *docteurs* and *greffiers*. See Ramet, *Le capitole et le parlement de Toulouse*, p. 120.

⁹ For the role and influence of the *états de Languedoc* during the religious wars, see Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, pp. 57-70.

litigation up to 2,000 *livres*, though lacking any jurisdiction in appellate litigation. Much like its counterpart at Bordeaux, the *présidial* at Toulouse tended more towards moderate than militant politics, and would be the focal point of numerous clashes between advocates of each faith during the decade. Its importance to both faiths is evident from the ferocity of the struggle for ascendancy within its chambers, and it is telling that, at the height of Catholic hegemony in Toulouse, between 1563 and 1568, Catholic officials gained control of the region's *présidiaux*, albeit temporarily.¹⁰

Such was the demography and administrative structure at Toulouse. They reveal a conurbation initially receptive to Reform ideology and innovation, but one that would come to engage in the defence of Catholicism following the insurrection of 1562. There are many points of comparison with Bordeaux, and it would be intriguing to see whether the Catholic community of Toulouse also had a history of engagement with Protestants preceding the conflict of the 1560s. A study of the activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves at Toulouse between 1530 and 1560 will thus be undertaken, in order to examine the nature and evolution of Catholic activism at Toulouse during these early years, and to assess the extent to which the endeavours of the *confrères* influenced the ability of Catholics to respond to events during the religious wars.

Confraternal and *basochien* activism at Toulouse

There was, indeed, an active confraternity of *avocats* at Toulouse dedicated to Saint-Yves, and a vibrant defence of the Catholic faith on its streets during the 1540s

¹⁰ Zeller, *Les institutions de la France*, pp. 175-77. The *présidial* at Toulouse was well staffed, consisting of a *juge-mage*, seven *conseillers*, a *lieutenant-principal* and *lieutenant-particulier*, a *juge-criminel* and his lieutenants, around thirty serving *avocats*, *procureurs* and *huissiers*, a *procureur du roy*, an *avocat du roy* and six *greffiers*. See Ramet, *Le capitole et le parlement de Toulouse*, p. 120.

and 1550s by performers of the *basoche*. But there was a subtle difference too. At Bordeaux, the *basoche* shared a symbiotic relationship with the confraternity of Saint-Yves, intertwined in its affairs through its monopoly on performing at feast day ceremonials. At Toulouse, though, the *basoche* was independent from the corporation of *avocats*, having been established as a feature of town life long before the birth of the confraternity. They had instituted their own traditions and ceremonies, separate from the confraternal environment, so that, while they were still the sole performers at the festivities surrounding Saint-Yves' feast day, they were far from a subsidiary group of any corporation.¹¹

There was a further important distinction between the *basoche* at Bordeaux and Toulouse: at Toulouse, there were two discrete groups of players. Until 1908, historians of the *basoche* had presumed that the various performers of Toulouse were bound to a single governing body. The discovery, by Abbé Cau-Durban, of *Statuts* governing *basochien* protocol within the Toulouse archives, however, changed this view. Cau-Durban discerned that two distinct corporations of *basoche* existed within the town: the *basoche du palais*, represented only by *procureurs*, *clercs du greffe* and *secrétaires des conseillers* of the *parlement*, and the *basoche de la sénéchaussée et de la viguerie*, composed mainly of lesser 'clercs... et stagiaires impatientes de prendre robe et d'être enfin praticiens'.¹² Further research by Boyer has suggested

¹¹ As stated above, it was traditional that the *basoche* of French towns provided the music, performances, and even cakes and hats of flowers for those attending the festivities surrounding Saint-Yves. This tradition was adhered to at Toulouse. See AD Haute-Garonne, E 1,013, pièce 1. For an informative history of the corporations of *avocats* and *procureurs* within the *parlement* of Toulouse, see André Viala, *Le parlement de Toulouse et l'administration royale laïque, 1420-1525 environ* (Albi, 1953), pp. 301-57. For informative histories of the *basoche* at Toulouse, see G. Boyer, 'La basoche Toulousaine au quinzième siècle, d'après les archives du parlement', *Mémoires de la société archéologique du midi de la France*, 18 (1932), pp. 64-71; Abbé Cau-Durban, 'Statuts de la basoche du sénéchal de Toulouse', *Mémoires de la société archéologique du midi de la France*, XVI (1908), pp. 166-84; René Glangeaud, *La basoche de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1912); E. Vaïsse-Cibiel, 'Notes rétrospective sur la basoche Toulousaine', *Mémoires de l'académie impériale des sciences, inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse*, 6 (1868), pp. 221-43.

¹² Cau-Durban, 'Statuts de la basoche', p. 168.

that this differentiation was perpetuated by the exclusionist sentiments of the *basoche du palais* who, having a high concentration of 'bonne bourgeoisie' and rising nobility among their corpus, were keen to maintain separation between themselves and the lower ranking officials of the *sénéchaussée* and *viguerie*.¹³

While both corporations of *basoche* were able to trace their formation back to the registration of the Toulouse *parlement* itself in 1444, their customs and devotions had developed in quite varied ways. The *basoche du palais* were based within the *parlement* chapel, and were dedicated to *la Sainte-Trinité*, celebrating their feast day on Trinity Day, at the end of Easter. The *basoche de la sénéchaussée* held Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste as their patron, taking mass at *l'église collegiale de Notre-Dame de la Carce* in the *couvent des Grand Carmes*. Its feast day had initially been 27 December, but was changed by decree after 1516 to 25 November, the feast of Sainte-Catherine.¹⁴ As at Bordeaux, the *basoche du palais* elected a *roi* annually, to represent his corporation before the *parlement*, an office the *basoche de la sénéchaussée* had been refused. Instead, they were allowed to nominate a titular *sénéchal* each year, who would speak on behalf of his members before the court, but who lacked the cachet associated with the *roi de la basoche*.¹⁵ Despite these differences, the two corporations were governed by remarkably similar regulations, or *statuts*, which standardised practices and performances at religious ceremonies, masses, and *grandes fêtes*, and ensured that any affiliate who required counsel would receive representation from his corporation.¹⁶

¹³ Boyer, 'La basoche Toulousaine', p. 64.

¹⁴ The *basoche du palais*, in fact, claimed an unbroken lineage back to king Dagobert. See Boyer, 'La basoche Toulousaine', p. 64; Glangeaud, *La basoche de Toulouse*, p. 5.

¹⁵ Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 311.

¹⁶ The *statuts* also ensured that any affiliate who had fallen on hard times would be looked after temporarily from a central fund. See Cau-Durban, 'Statuts de la basoche', pp. 169-74.

Another feature that mirrored the *basoche* at Bordeaux was the numerous reprimands against the Toulouse players for 'over-exuberance'. As early as May 1478, and again in May 1480, the farces and morality plays of the *basoche* were censored for insulting the *parlementaires*,¹⁷ while in February 1524, the *roi* was summoned before the *Grand'Chambre* to explain recent disturbances by unruly *basochiens* on the parquet of the court during a feast-day ceremony.¹⁸ In January 1537, the *parlement* took the unusual step of issuing an *arrêt* against Bernard de Laroche, the incumbent *roi de la basoche*, to prevent his leading of the *charivari* through the town, as recent *sorties* had ended in violence.¹⁹ Yet overall, the *parlement* treated the *basochiens* lightly, a temperate approach that Glangeaud attributes to the magistrates' affinity with such a 'jeunesse exubérante'.²⁰ Dubédat concurs, arguing that many *parlementaires* had been *basochiens* in their youth, and thus had been guilty of this same high-spiritedness, and so were generally lenient regarding their misdemeanours.²¹

But, as the Reform movement began to make inroads across Languedoc, other important factors began to influence the pro-Catholic *parlement's* acceptance of the *basoche* in Toulouse. As a cumulative body, the two corporations offered much to the court in terms of manpower, additional militia in times of danger, and, of course, finance from the various contributions paid by their affiliates. And, as a Catholic body, the *basoche* could counter-balance the overt aggression of Protestant groups within Toulouse, such as the *écoliers* of the local university. Again, as at Bordeaux, the *écoliers* of the university of Toulouse had gained a reputation for

¹⁷ AD Haute-Garonne, B 4, fo. 421 (17 May 1478); AD Haute-Garonne, B 5, fo. 320 (2 May 1480). 'La Farce de Maistre Pierre Pathelin' was a particular favourite of the *basoche* during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a cutting satire and caricature of royal magistrates. See Harvey, *The Theatre of the Basoche*, pp. 144-72.

¹⁸ AD Haute-Garonne, B 20, fo. 73 (8 February 1524).

¹⁹ AM Toulouse, FF 609, II, (*Arrêt du parlement*, 28 January 1537).

²⁰ Glangeaud, *La basoche de Toulouse*, p. 4.

²¹ Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 314.

religious agitation within the town. In fact, the *parlement* had been forced to issue an *arrêt* abolishing their confraternities as early as February 1531 to prevent any further rise in confrontations with the *basoche*, followed three years later with a ban on *écoliers* from carrying arms.²² By the 1540s, the activities of the *écoliers* were causing real concern for the *parlement*. Despite a long-standing *arrêt* that condemned all those culpable of ‘sedition, violences et boutement de feu aux estudes’, gangs of *écoliers* would frequently fight running battles with Spanish residents of Toulouse.²³ On one occasion, in 1542, the scale of the violence was so great that the armed *huissiers* from the *palais* failed to halt the unrest. It was only when a band of aggrieved artisans, intent on seeking revenge for the damage done to their homes during the fighting, joined the guard that the *écoliers* were subdued, but at a cost: two of the town’s gates were badly burned and needed replacing, and many facades on the nearby houses were ruined.²⁴

It was during the 1550s, though, that the *écoliers* became a veritable threat to the stability of Toulouse. In 1555, four young students were condemned to be burned for inciting riots in the name of Calvinism.²⁵ Then, in May 1556, the *parlement* was informed that the *écoliers* had organised themselves into ‘nations’, and had elected ‘prieurs, sous-prieurs, capitaines et autres officiers’ to coordinate their defences,

²² *Arrêt du parlement* (27 February 1534), AM Toulouse, AA 17, no. 55. The 1530s would also see the first of numerous *écoliers* burned alive for heresy. See Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 174.

²³ *Arrêt du parlement* (14 May 1540), AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 35.

²⁴ Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, pp. 192-93. In the subsequent inquiry, the *parlement* ordered several students to be executed, with many more exiled from the town, but within two years, the court was once more forced to ban *écoliers* from congregating in numbers, from carrying weapons, and from disseminating sedition among the population. AD Haute-Garonne, B 37, fo. 458v (31 May 1544). For similar confrontations between *écoliers* and Catholics at Avignon, see Venard, *Réforme protestante*, pp. 438-41.

²⁵ AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 74. Joan Davies has shown that the university of Toulouse had been an important seat of Huguenot learning since the 1540s. Davies, *Languedoc and its Gouverneur*, p. 28; Wolff, *Histoire de Toulouse*, pp. 264-69.

discipline and rearmament, just as their counterparts in Bordeaux had done.²⁶ The court immediately ordered they desist from such activity, and disassemble their 'nations'. Instructions were also sent out to the clergy of Toulouse requiring that they refrain from accommodating gatherings of *écoliers* within their churches, and demanding that all hoteliers and innkeepers report similar activity as a matter of urgency.²⁷ As the archives reveal, these orders met with only limited success. Throughout 1560, armed bands of *écoliers* roamed the streets of Toulouse with impunity, disrupting Catholic ceremonies and damaging property.²⁸ In September, the full menace of the *écoliers* was brought home to Jean de Mansencal, the *premier président* of the *parlement*, when over four hundred *écoliers* gathered outside his house, demanding they be granted a specific place of worship within Toulouse.²⁹ The *capitouls* and *parlement* responded with a series of *arrêts* aimed at restricting the movement of the *écoliers*. But these had little effect. The town guard also struggled to cope with such congregations, requesting that the *basoche* militia be co-opted to help disperse the crowds on more than one occasion.³⁰ Even with a more militant Catholic government in power after 1562, the *écoliers* remained an irritant to the authorities. In January 1563, cardinal Armagnac informed the crown that numerous villains were 'vestus de la robe scolastique', making use of the *écoliers*' poor reputation by disguising themselves as students before breaking the law,³¹ while at the *Pré des Études*, in July 1563, it was most definitely the *écoliers* who gathered in

²⁶ AM Toulouse, AA 17, no. 210. For the organisation of *nations* at the University of Toulouse, and an overview of student life there, see John Charles Dawson, *Toulouse in the Renaissance* (New York, 1966), pp. 95-140; Philippe Wolff, *Histoire de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1974), pp. 266-67.

²⁷ AM Toulouse, AA 17, no. 210.

²⁸ For the unrest of 4 May 1560, see AM Toulouse, CC 1705, fo. 22. For the unrest during the Toulouse *jour des jeux floral* in 1560, see AM Toulouse, BB 11, fo. 182v. For the illegal assembly of *écoliers* at a *prêche* on rue des Vigoreux on 10 March 1560, see Germain de Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse* (2 vols., Toulouse, 1687; 1701), II, p. 207.

²⁹ HGL, 11, p. 333.

³⁰ Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 208.

³¹ AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 89v.

their hundreds to fight with members of the *basoche*.³² Such activity continued intermittently throughout the decade, with further reprovving *arrêts* issued in 1565 and 1568, and numerous *écoliers* brought before the courts for assembling under 'nations', electing *prieurs*, carrying weapons, and various other illegal activities.³³

With the *écoliers* ever ready to defend the Reform movement, it would be important for the Catholic cause to find an effective champion to combat such resilience. As at Bordeaux, this role fell to the *basoche*, who fought the Catholic corner, often quite literally, on the streets of Toulouse. To counter the Calvinist propaganda, the *basoche* saturated their performances with Catholic doctrine. By contrast with Bordeaux, though, the Toulouse *basoche* were not drawing on the religiosity of the confraternity of Saint-Yves for such statements of Catholic dogma. Here, the players were very much their own masters; indeed, the *basoche de la sénéchaussée* had possessed its own dedicated confraternity of the Holy Trinity since 1516.³⁴ The *basoche du palais* would follow suit somewhat later, being granted permission by the *conseil privé* to establish its own brotherhood in 1560. Vaisse-Cibiel claims this was an overt attempt by the *basoche* to confirm their obedience to the Catholic religion before the Toulousains, presumably a response to the increasing threat of the Reform movement across the south-west.³⁵

³² Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 259.

³³ *Arrêt du parlement* (1565), AD Haute-Garonne, B 58, fos. 461-62; *Arrêt du parlement* (18 January 1568), AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 173.

³⁴ This confraternity of the Holy Trinity was established in November 1516, and was registered by the *sénéchal* of Toulouse, Antoine de Rochechouart. See AD Haute-Garonne, B 20, fo. 110. See also Cau-Durban, 'Statuts de la basoche', p. 167.

³⁵ Vaisse-Cibiel, 'Notes rétrospective sur la basoche Toulousaine', p. 227. Dubédât reports that the *basoche du palais* did, however, frequent the ceremonies of the confraternity of Saint-Yves from time to time. They were, in fact, instrumental in decorating the chapel walls of *l'église de Notre-Dame de Nazareth*, just inside the *Porte de Montgaillard*, the focal point of the veneration to Saint-Yves. One inscription, signed by *clercs de la basoche*, reads: 'Sanctus Yves erat Brito, Advocatus et non latro, Res miranda populo'. Dubédât, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 263. In an eighteenth-century sermon dedicated to the greatness of St-Yves and his work, an *avocat* of the Toulouse *parlement* revealed that the *avocats* of the *confrérie de Saint-Yves* were still using the church of Nazareth for their ceremonials in 1760. See N. Ricard, *Panégryrique de Saint-Yves, Patron de MM. les Avocats* (prononcé dans l'église de Nazareth) (Toulouse, 1764).

A further important distinction to be made between the character of *basochien* and confraternal activism at these two citadels is the absence of any overt politicisation of the confraternity of Saint-Yves at Toulouse. While Catholic sentiment at Bordeaux was very much orchestrated by the *confrères*, with the *basoche* essentially a cog in their machinery, the *avocats* at Toulouse were not so prominent. The strong reciprocity between *parlement* and confraternity, so evident at Bordeaux, was lacking; indeed, the last time the court sessions were halted for officials to attend and participate in the Saint Yves festivities was May 1544. During the 1560s, it would be the feast days of Saint-Joseph and Saint-Nicolas that saw the court retire in respect.³⁶ Thus, at Toulouse, there would be no Jean de Lange figure, no direct intervention by the *confrères* in the town's affairs, and little confraternal militancy. It would be the *basoche*, then, that energised the Catholic community, that opposed the Reformers of the town, and that augmented the guard as necessary.

Conflict 1561-1562

The management and deployment of the town guard was always a contentious issue for urban authorities during the religious wars. At Toulouse, control over policing, security and guard patrols had traditionally been the remit of the *capitouls*. Throughout the 1550s, the size of the guard at Toulouse had remained constant: between forty to seventy men, commanded by a *capitaine du guet*, two *lieutenants*, and eight *sergents*, each lodged in permanent accommodation near the

³⁶ The feast day of Saint-Nicolas fell on 9 May each year. For *parlement* observing these feasts, see AD Haute-Garonne, B 40, fo. 333; AD Haute-Garonne, B 54, I, fo. 282. For the last recorded suspension of the court to respect the feast of Saint-Yves (17 May 1544), see AD Haute-Garonne, B 37, fo. 406v.

town's prison and treasury.³⁷ Lamouzèle states that this was organised 'sur le modèle de l'armée royale', in that the *capitouls* selected the *capitaine du guet*, but trusted in his judgement to elect suitable subordinates and capable soldiers.³⁸ By September 1560, though, the guard was struggling to cope with the rising instances of violent confrontation on the streets of Toulouse. The *basoche* had proved helpful in emergencies, but the *capitouls* realised that a larger 'official' force would be required to stave off further disorder. Thus, a subsidiary force of one hundred townfolk was raised, still placed under the jurisdiction of the *capitaine du guet*, but to be selected by the *dizainiers*, twelve of which would accompany the guard in its duties each day.³⁹ As the scale of the unrest accelerated, though, even this measure failed to meet the demands. By March 1561, over eighty men were being dispatched each evening to augment the patrols, with a committee of two *capitouls* and several *dizainiers* forced to oversee their deployment from the *maison de ville*.⁴⁰

The Catholic *parlementaires*, however, took issue with these developments. It complained to the crown that Protestant *capitouls* were co-opting a disproportionate number of Huguenot citizens into the guard, who were, in turn, allowing greater numbers of their co-religionists through the town gates.⁴¹ They claimed that the crown's *arrêts*, which aimed to prevent illicit preaching, armed assemblies, and the distribution of seditious propaganda across Toulouse, were being compromised by these activities, and requested that the council be forced to vet more carefully those deployed to guard the town.⁴² In response, the crown appointed a local Catholic noble, Antoine de Lomagne, the *sieur* de Terride, as military governor of Toulouse

³⁷ AM Toulouse, CC 1,705, fos. 16; 26.

³⁸ Edmond Lamouzèle, *Essai sur l'organisation et les fonctions de la compagnie du guet et de la garde bourgeoise de Toulouse au XVIIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Tulle, 1906), p. 14.

³⁹ *Délibérations du conseil* (26 September 1560), AM Toulouse, BB 11, fo. 199v.

⁴⁰ AM Toulouse, BB 11, fo. 224v; CC 1708, fo. 31; CC 1,699, fo. 462.

⁴¹ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 80.

⁴² Specifically the two *arrêts* of 15 January 1561, AD Haute-Garonne, B 54, I, fo. 72, and 2 May 1561, AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 71.

on 1 September 1561. His remit was twofold: to act as mediator in the dispute between *parlement* and *capitouls* over policing and security, and to bolster royal authority by ensuring that the crown dictates were implemented fully.⁴³ By October, Terride had garrisoned his entire force within the walls of Toulouse, and assumed complete authority over the town guard until further notice. The *capitouls* were outraged at such an affront to their traditional prerogatives. Two of their number, Jehan de Therunde and Bernard Puymissin, argued that the civic charter of Toulouse placed the right to deploy and manage the town guard irrevocably in the hands of the *capitouls*, and had even precluded the appointment of a town governor, or the garrisoning of royal troops, without the consent of the town council itself.⁴⁴ They were unhappy, too, about the appointment of such a staunch Catholic to the governorship. Terride had been an active supporter of the Catholic party at Bordeaux, had served as a captain under Monluc since 1560, and had frequently attended the councils held by cardinal Armagnac during 1561. So, with opposition from Protestant voices within the administration growing daily, the crown was forced to recall Terride in December 1561. His replacement, the *comte* de Crussol, proved equally unpalatable to Catholics, his defection from royal office to assume the role of Huguenot military protector in Languedoc the following year an unmitigated disaster for the crown's reputation.⁴⁵

One factor that had made Terride's tenure at Toulouse so untenable was the constant vitriol emanating from the polemicists of the Reformed church. With Calvinist ministers expounding their rhetoric from the market squares, ably supported by the chanting and parades of the *écoliers*, the authorities had been forced

⁴³ AD Haute-Garonne, B 54, II, fos. 760-61; 802.

⁴⁴ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 76.

⁴⁵ Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 371; Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 210.

to step up the policing of the streets. When Catholic polemicists responded in kind, censorship was deemed necessary to preclude widespread violence breaking out across the town. Here, Catholics complained that the *capitouls* were showing bias in their decisions, for while very few Protestant ministers were reproached during this time, many vocal *basochien* speakers were arrested for incitement, along with several renowned Catholic preachers, such as Jean de Lana, Antoine Finêt, Melchior Flavin, and the Jesuit, Jean Palatier.⁴⁶ The *parlement*, meanwhile, countered in support of the Catholic cause, accusing the Huguenots of holding illegal *prêches* and armed assemblies across the region, some of which attracted crowds so large that the town guard could not possibly police them effectively. In an attempt to standardise the town's responses to such infractions, Catholic magistrates proposed that a meeting of the *parlementaires* and *capitouls* be convened to resolve these controversies. But the assembly, held on 3 February 1562, was hijacked by militant Catholics who refused to debate with known 'heretics'. Instead, a remonstrance was presented before the delegates, drawn up at a secret meeting of the Catholic magistrates four days previous, listing their grievances against the Huguenot community of Toulouse.⁴⁷ The moderate officials at the meeting condemned this deception, and registered their objections. The following day, however, two of the leading *capitouls*, Lanta and Montesquieu, and much of the town guard, were sighted attending an illegal *prêche* near a *faubourg* of Toulouse, confirming Catholic suspicions over the religious affiliation of certain officials. Further, it supported Catholic concerns over changes determined by the recent royal edict of January, which had removed jurisdiction over the siting of Huguenot assemblies from the *parlement*, and transferred it into the

⁴⁶ *HE*, I, pp. 903-904. See also Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 208.

⁴⁷ For 'Remonstrances faites aux capitouls sur les excès commis par les protestants' (31 January 1562), see AD Haute-Garonne, B 55, fo. 174. For meeting of *parlement* and *capitouls* of 3 February, see AD Haute-Garonne, B 55, fo. 178.

hands of the *capitouls*. As their surveillance had borne out, how could justice be served in this matter when those determining policy were attending the *prêches* themselves?⁴⁸

Several commentators have suggested that a *syndicat*, similar to that operating at Bordeaux, was established within the *parlement* of Toulouse at this time as a result of Catholic frustrations. This hypothesis is based exclusively on two references within the *Histoire Ecclésiastique*. The first, dated March 1562, reports ‘un conseil, où ils feirent un enrroulement secret des syndique, solliciteurs, capitaines, diseniers et soldats, avec resolution d’extirper tous ceux de la religion’.⁴⁹ Headed by two Catholic *présidents*, Latomy and du Tournoir, and boasting eleven *conseillers*, four *avocats* and seven *procureurs*, this *conseil* was, to the *Histoire*, as real a *syndicat* as Lange’s corporation at Bordeaux had been the previous year. The second reference concerns a letter, dated April 1562, purportedly from the duke of Guise, reporting that the king had decided to revoke the edict of January; as such, all adherents of the Reformed faith were now to be viewed as guilty of *lèse majesté*. The *Histoire* alleges that the missive was addressed to the Catholic *conseil* within the *parlement* of Toulouse, and carried from Paris by a militant *conseiller* of the court, Pierre de la Costa.⁵⁰ Philippe Tamizey de Larroque believes this *association* existed only on paper, while Mark Greengrass cautions that it may well have been ‘constructed with an element of hindsight by the author of the Toulouse section of the *Histoire*’.⁵¹ He argues that any such entity at Toulouse was more likely to have been a response by disenchanted judges and lawyers to the proposed alienation of church property in late 1561, than a concerted effort to energise Catholic activists

⁴⁸ AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 81 (4 February 1562).

⁴⁹ *HE*, I, p. 911.

⁵⁰ *HE*, I, pp. 824-25; 911.

⁵¹ Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, ‘Lettres inédites du Cardinal d’Armagnac’, *Collection Méridionale*, V (Paris, Bordeaux, 1874), p. 26; Greengrass, ‘The anatomy of a religious riot’, pp. 370-77.

against the Huguenots in 1562. Also, the realisation of such an overt organisation would require widespread support from the officers of the *parlement*, but this study has already indicated a reluctance among many *avocats* to engage in systematic Catholic activity during this time. So while they may have been prepared to resist the alienation of church lands, they would have been less willing to support the *syndicat* in its confrontation with the Reformers. Denis Crouzet, though, is more emphatic in his evaluation of events. For Crouzet, the *syndicat* not only existed, but it was very much a manifestation of Catholic angst at the concessions granted to the Reformed church by the edict of January, the subsequent exclusion of the *parlement* from jurisdiction over the sites of Reformed worship, and the establishment of a Huguenot *consistoire* within the town in February. Further, he sees the *syndicat* as a milestone in the evolution of Catholic activism at Toulouse, the first step in a progression through ever-increasing levels of militant Catholicism that would culminate in the hegemony of the Sainte Union after 1584.⁵²

Unfortunately, there is a paucity of surviving archival material at Toulouse to endorse Crouzet's theory. At Bordeaux, the political and financial machinations of the *syndicat* left a discernible trail within the *registres du parlement* and assorted administrative paperwork of the period. Similar records, such as litigation, contestation versus the *capitouls*, accounts and correspondence, are nowhere to be found at Toulouse. In fact, as stated, the *Histoire Ecclésiastique* is the only work that makes any mention of a *syndicat* here. This would suggest one of three possibilities: that the *syndicat* did not exist, and was constructed at a later date by commentators keen to validate or decry Catholic actions in early 1562; that the *syndicat* existed, but was far less vocal than the demonstrative entity so discernible at Bordeaux; or that it

⁵² Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, pp. 380-81.

did exist, but evidence of its activities, like so much archival material relating to Catholic activities during the religious wars, was destroyed by defeated *Ligueurs* in the late 1590s, keen to erase any references to their past misdemeanours. The *syndicat* at Toulouse, then, can be justifiably described as a chimera, the tag so incorrectly applied to Lange's *association* within the *parlement* at Bordeaux.

Insurrection of 1562

The arrival of Easter, with its numerous provocative confessional festivities, ensured that the spring of 1562 would see an explosion of sectarian tension at Toulouse. The first critical event occurred on 2 April, with the appropriation of a corpse from a Reformed burial service by a Catholic procession. Their aim was to bury the body within the local Catholic cemetery, but the ensuing confrontation between the congregations meant that the town guard was needed to restore order. When several Huguenots later attempted to seize the *maison de ville*, the situation in Toulouse seemed in danger of racing out of control. The *capitouls* and *parlementaires* managed to effect a truce, though, by offering each side significant military concessions: the Huguenots were allowed to maintain two hundred unarmed guards to protect their communities; the Catholics a similar force, commanded by four professional captains.⁵³ But these concessions failed to secure détente, as the four Catholic captains were unwilling to take orders from the *capitouls*, and refused to allow their men to assist in the search of Catholic houses for hidden weapons.⁵⁴ In May, further contestation flared between the faiths, with the decision by the *sénéchal* and *parlement* of Toulouse to convoke the *ban-et-arrière ban* to secure the town

⁵³ This account is taken from Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot', pp. 373-74.

⁵⁴ *HE*, III, p. 8.

against the threat of insurrection. As they had with Terride's garrison troops, the *capitouls* of Toulouse objected vehemently to the presence of the *ban* within the town, citing clauses within the civic charter that prevented armed soldiers gathering within Toulouse without their consent. The *parlement*, though, ignored these protests, and on 10 May, over two hundred, mostly Catholic, armed nobles gathered in the streets of Toulouse.⁵⁵ But it would be the Huguenots that seized the initiative first. In the early hours of 13 May, barricades were erected at strategic junctures of the town, and Protestants overran the *maison de ville*. For Catholics, there was a very real possibility that control of Toulouse would soon be lost to the rebels. Subsequent events have been well documented in recent years, so will not be detailed here.⁵⁶ The response of the Catholic leadership, however, does need to be examined, to evaluate its capacity to organise and counter the insurrection.

The first reaction of the Catholic magistrates within the *parlement* was to send for the leading Catholic captains of the region: Monluc, Terride, Negrepelisse and Bellegarde. While Monluc and Bellegarde moved to intercept a Huguenot relief army travelling south, Terride and Negrepelisse arrived at Toulouse the following day and deployed their troops.⁵⁷ Requests for help had also been dispatched to neighbouring Catholic nobles, and within twenty-four hours Fourquevaulx, Gaston de Foix, and the *sieurs* de Cauni, Bazordan, Dandofielle, Verdale, Gardouch, Ricaud

⁵⁵ AM Toulouse, BB 104, fo. 530.

⁵⁶ For contemporary material relating to the insurrection at Toulouse in May 1562 see AD Haute-Garonne, B 55, fos. 414v-15. For *procès-verbal* written in October 1563, see AM Toulouse, GG 824, fos. 22-27. For contemporary Catholic version of events see AM Toulouse, GG 1022 (Georges Bosquet, *Sur les troubles advenus en la ville de tolose l'an 1562*). For later Catholic version of events, see Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, pp. 217-43. For later Protestant version, see *HE*, III, pp. 1-37. Two further accounts cover the uprising in varying degrees of detail: E. Connac, 'Les troubles de mai 1562 à Toulouse', *Annales du Midi*, 3 (1891), pp. 310-39; and Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot', pp. 367-91. The Greengrass article has an excellent overview of historiographical material relating to the uprising, see especially pp. 367-71.

⁵⁷ BN nouv. acq. fr, 6,001, fos. 136-37. Ironically, Terride and Negrepelisse had been ordered by the crown to secure Toulouse only five days earlier, but could not travel to the town in time to prevent the insurrection.

and Savignac had all entered Toulouse along with their armed retinues.⁵⁸ The Catholic response was directed from the *parlement* building by the *premier président*, Mansencal, and *présidents* Latomy and de Paulo, from which, according to Bosquet and the *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, ad hoc committees were set up to collect finances, to oversee the distribution of arms and artillery, and to interrogate suspects.⁵⁹ The town guard was also reorganised to make it more effective. Firstly, the main body was divided into smaller sections, to allow each unit to be deployed more rapidly, and to target more specific areas of the town. Sixty additional Catholics were then levied to boost the numbers, and experienced military veterans appointed as captains and sergeants to command each division, replacing the civilian officers who had led the guard in peacetime. Precise routes were devised for each patrol, passwords were required at each checkpoint or barricade, and all Catholics of the town were required to wear a white cross, sewn onto the garments to indicate their confession. Finally, strict regulations were drawn up to govern the conduct and discipline of the guard, with disobedience punishable by death.⁶⁰ Then, on 19 May, the Catholic leadership summarily dismissed those Huguenot *capitouls* and magistrates who had not yet fled the town, filling their offices with trusted Catholics.⁶¹ Even moderate Catholics came under suspicion, the most prominent being the *président*, Dufaur, who was accused of aiding and abetting the insurrectionists. Dufaur was only saved from the ignominy of arrest and prosecution

⁵⁸ Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, pp. 226-28.

⁵⁹ Again, the *Histoire Ecclésiastique* attributes this response to the Catholic *syndicat*, *HE*, III, p. 20-40. Bosquet also alludes to this Catholic collective, but does not give it a formal title. See AM Toulouse, GG 1,022 (15 May 1562).

⁶⁰ AM Toulouse, EE 26 (May 1562). See also AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 4.

⁶¹ The *parlement* appointed Guillaume La Laine, bourgeois, Jehan de Borderia, *avocat*, Pierre Madron le jeune, François de Saint-Felix, *docteur*, Ramon Alies, *avocat*, Etienne de Rabestans, *seigneur* de Colomiers, Gaston du Pin, *bourgeois*, Laurent de Puybisque, *seigneur* de la Landelle. Their oath of office was sworn the same day, 19 May, before the *premier président* Jehan de Mansencal, and *présidents* Antoine de Paulo, Jehan Daffis, Nicolas Latomy and Michel Dufaur. AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 88.

by the personal intervention of Monluc, who vouched for his long-time friend's orthodox beliefs.⁶²

Retribution followed recrimination. On 16 June, the *capitoul*, Adhemar Mandinelli, was condemned for his part in the unrest, his goods confiscated and sold off to contribute towards the repair of the town.⁶³ More purges followed in July, with the Huguenot *capitouls*, Pierre du Cedre, Guillaume Dareau, Pierre Hunault, *seigneur* de Lanta, Ramond de Vignes, *seigneur* de Montesquieu, Pierre Assezat, Antoine Ganelon and Olivier Pastorel, all condemned in absentia, their effigies hung in the Place Saint-George before a vociferous Catholic crowd. Each was banished from Toulouse in perpetuity, fined 100,000 *livres*, and excluded, along with their heirs, from the nobility.⁶⁴ As a warning, the court ordered that their sentences be read out each 17 May to remind people of the ever-present dangers posed by the presence of Huguenots within society.⁶⁵ The replacement of suspect *capitouls* with trusted Catholics had an immediate benefit. Before the insurrection, any sizeable deployment of Catholic troops or militia onto the streets of Toulouse would elicit complaints from the *capitouls*, who referred appellants to the relevant clause of their ubiquitous civic charter. Now, though, as most of the *capitouls* were new appointees, orthodox in their religious stance, the protestations against Catholic troops on the streets fell away.⁶⁶

⁶² Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 398. Dufaur had served as a *juge au présidial* at Toulouse (1531-1535), *juge-mage* at Toulouse (1535-1547), *président du parlement* at Toulouse (1557-1572), and was appointed *conseiller au Grand'Conseil* in May 1556. See *Commentaries*, p. 1,249 note 3. For accusations and subsequent enquiry into the role of Dufaur in the insurrection of May 1562, see AM Toulouse, GG 826 (17 May 1562).

⁶³ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 89. The sale of Mandinelli's property raised 1,000 *livres*.

⁶⁴ AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 1.

⁶⁵ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 96.

⁶⁶ AD Haute-Garonne, B 55, fo. 569. It should be noted that as soon as the Huguenot officials were reinstated at Toulouse, by royal decree in November 1562, they demanded that all Catholic troops vacate the town immediately, and that the privileges of the civic corporation be respected once more in full.

The Catholic victory over the insurrection of May 1562 owed much to the willingness of the nobility, magistrates, bourgeoisie and minor officials of Toulouse to unite in defence of the town. This chapter has revealed that the Catholic community had great experience in being energised by elements within society, with the activities of the *basoche*, during the 1540 and 1550s, and the militant officers of the *parlement* during 1560-1562. While the presence of a definitive *syndicat* is difficult to prove, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that a *conseil* of leading Catholics of the court coordinated affairs at Toulouse during this time, and was thus well placed to formulate a response to the insurrection of May 1562. Certainly, the *parlement* was effusive in its praise of leading activists: acclaiming the actions of its Catholic magistrates to the crown, and commending the *sénéchal*, Bellegarde, for his participation in the defence of the town. Interestingly, the court urged the king to grant Bellegarde certain ecclesiastical benefices as a reward for his actions, as such a move would ‘stimuler le zèle des défenseurs de l’église’.⁶⁷ The nobility were also praised, especially Monluc, of whom Raymond de Pavie, baron de Fourquevaux, wrote: without Monluc’s actions, ‘ledicte ville de Tholose estoit perdu’.⁶⁸

In Chapter 8, the consequences of such solid foundations will be examined, assessing the three most significant episodes of Catholic activism at Toulouse during the decade: the oath-bound *ligue* of March 1563, the Catholic coalition administration of 1567-1570, and the *croisade* of September 1568. Although quite diverse in their nature and ambitions, these bodies all show characteristics common in their sister *associations* at Agen and Bordeaux at this time. They also reveal a maturation of Catholic responses, both to the Protestant threat, and to contention with

⁶⁷ *Parlement* of Toulouse to Charles IX (18 July 1562), AD Haute-Garonne, B 1,906, fo. 75v; *Parlement* of Toulouse to Pius IV (13 November 1562), AD Haute-Garonne, B 1,906, fo. 84.

⁶⁸ Fourquevaux to Saint-Sulpice (17 June 1562), Cabié, *Guerres de religion dans le sud-ouest*, pp. 4-5.

the crown over religious toleration, so that, by 1570, Toulouse would be established as an unassailable Catholic stronghold of the south-west.

Chapter 8. Wider Catholic activism: Toulouse, 1563-1570

Following the drama of the Protestant coup in May 1562, Catholics at Toulouse could be forgiven for thinking that their control of the town had been re-established. By August, the *parlement* and town council had been purged of Huguenot sympathisers, the town guard had been bolstered, and Catholic nobles and their retinues patrolled the hinterland. In September, they received further good news, with the promotion of their leading militant stalwart, cardinal Armagnac, to the office of *lieutenant pour le roi en la ville et sénéchaussée de Toulouse*.¹ But, as would happen many times during the religious wars, this would be a false dawn. Across Languedoc, the army of Symphorien de Durfort, the *sieur de Duras*, one of the most able Protestant captains of the period, won a series of stunning victories, securing Montauban, Pamiers and Castres for the Huguenots. Toulouse was now more isolated than ever and, in October, Armagnac informed the crown that Catholics were preparing for the imminent assault by Duras.² News that the crown intended to grant an amnesty to all prisoners taken during the recent sectarian conflict only added to the sense of disbelief at Toulouse, as the town's prisons held a number of defeated Protestant captains.³

¹ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 103 (1 September 1562); AD Haute-Garonne, B 55, fo. 512. George, cardinal d'Armagnac. Born 1500. Bishop of Rodez (1529), bishop of Vabre (1536), bishop of Lescar (1555), cardinal of Toulouse (1544), archbishop of Toulouse (17 August 1562). See Abbé Cayre, *Histoire des évêques et archevêques de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1873), pp. 329-31.

² Cardinal d'Armagnac to Catherine de Medici (14 October 1562), AM Bordeaux, ms 299, fos. 127-29. Things got even worse for the Catholic party at Toulouse in October 1562, when it was reported that the *lieutenant-général* of the province, Antoine de Crussol, had defected to the Huguenot cause.

³ The crown declared its amnesty in September 1562, ordering the release of all religious prisoners captured during the wars. The *parlement* of Toulouse refused to validate this, sending a *conseiller*, François de la Garde, to the crown to report Catholic disenchantment at such a policy. The king refused to be moved, and confirmed the amnesty via a second *arrêt* of Rouen, 9 November 1562. Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 401.

In early December, rumour was rife that Duras and Crussol intended to 'hijack' the *états de Languedoc*, due to open later that month at Carcassonne, to extort yet more concessions on behalf of the Reformers. Armagnac convened a secret assembly of Catholic leaders at Toulouse to decide on a response.⁴ Present at the congress were the region's leading Catholics: Armagnac; cardinal Lorenzo Strozzi, bishop of Albi, and *lieutenant du roi* in the Albigeois; three *présidents* of the *parlement*, Jean Daffis, Antoine de Paulo and Michel Dufaur, now back in favour; and many of the recently-appointed Catholic *capitouls* and magistrates.⁵ The Catholic military were represented too, with Monluc and the *sieurs* de Terride, Negrepelisse, Joyeuse and Forquevaux in attendance.⁶ The delegates agreed that Monluc and his troops should be called from Agen to guard Toulouse and its environs for the duration of the *états*.⁷ While Monluc boasts in his *Commentaires* that Armagnac 'ne me falloit pas semondre deux fois',⁸ in reality, he may well have been reluctant to launch military action from Toulouse; Monluc's military jurisdiction lay in Guyenne, authority for campaigns initiated from Toulouse would need to be sanctioned by the provincial governor, Anne de Montmorency, who Monluc had already fallen foul of on several occasions.

Monluc obliged, though, and the arrival of his troops was sufficient to force Duras to cancel his interjection at the *états*, allowing the assembly to proceed without disruption. Free from this threat, Catholic delegates dominated the proceedings. After

⁴ Monluc informed the crown that he had been called to the *états* at Carcassonne at the request of Armagnac and the *parlement*. Monluc to Catherine de Medici (10 December 1562), BN ms fr, 15,877, fo. 446.

⁵ On 1 June 1562, Strozzi was given responsibility for keeping the peace in Languedoc during the absence of the provincial governor, the *duc* de Montmorency. AD Haute-Garonne, B 1,906, fo. 57.

⁶ Monluc to Catherine de Medici (10 December 1562), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 182-85.

⁷ The mayor of Bordeaux, Antoine de Noailles, wrote that Monluc had been summoned to Toulouse by Armagnac to 'surveiller les agissements de Crussol pendant la tenue des États de Languedoc à Carcassonne', Antoine de Noailles to Catherine de Medici (7 December 1562), *AHG*, 17, p. 284.

⁸ *Commentaires*, p. 576.

venting their frustration at the crown's recent bias towards the Reformers, a motion calling for the raising of 300,000 *livres* to fund the reclamation of Catholic lands lost during the fighting was passed by a large majority, the sum to be amassed through donations from the clergy, the sale of sequestered Huguenot property, and a new tax on non-Catholic citizens.⁹ To facilitate this, a register of all those attending Easter mass across Languedoc was to be compiled, with those absent required to pay a tax contribution or face expulsion from the province. The *états* elected Armagnac and Joyeuse as co-chairmen of the fund, with proven 'bons catholiques' appointed as commissioners to run the day-to-day collection and distribution.¹⁰

In a letter to Catherine de Medici, Monluc related how recent Catholic initiatives had forged a close bond between the leadership at Toulouse, a unity that would, in his opinion, greatly enhance the prospects for security among the Catholic towns of Languedoc.¹¹ Monluc also informed the regent that Armagnac, Daffis, de Paulo and Dufaur were sponsoring the campaign of Bellegarde, to be elected to the office of *sénéchal* of Toulouse. Although the alternative candidate, Jacques de Peyrusse, *sieur* de Merville, was an equally staunch Catholic, and, as the brother of the Bordeaux governor, d'Escars, was known to many across the region, the Catholic leadership felt Merville to be politically inexperienced, and preferred to promote one of their own trusted captains to serve in this extremely important office.

Armagnac's authority at Toulouse was increasing, as his closest allies gained promotion to the important offices: in January 1563, Bellegarde was elected *sénéchal*, and Jean Daffis was appointed *premier président* of the *parlement*, to

⁹ Armagnac to Charles IX (22 December 1562), BN ms fr, 15,877, fo. 468.

¹⁰ For text of deliberations of *états de Languedoc* at Carcassonne (11 to 27 December 1562), see AD Haute-Garonne, C 2,281, fos. 113-56.

¹¹ Monluc wrote that he would remain in Toulouse to assist Armagnac, Joyeuse and the *parlement*, under Daffis, in their organisation against the Reformers. Monluc to Catherine de Medici (28 December 1562), BN ms fr, 15,877, fos. 473-74.

replace the deceased Jean de Mansencal.¹² Further empire building occurred in February, with Armagnac and Monluc presenting *l'ordre du roy* to two prominent Catholic captains, Negrepelisse and Forquevaux, at a lavish ceremony at Toulouse cathedral.¹³ Later that same month, Jean Barthélemy, *président aux enquêtes*, ordered that 500 *livres* be employed 'à la construction et à l'entretien du college des Jésuites'.¹⁴ Barthélemy was undoubtedly working under orders from Armagnac, as the re-establishing of Jesuit influence at Toulouse had long been a priority for the cardinal. In 1561, he had permitted a number of Jesuit refugees fleeing from Pamiers to reside in the old Augustinian monastery on rue Saint-Jérôme, and supported their petition for permanent residency before the *parlement*.¹⁵

It was sometime in January 1563, too, that Armagnac and Monluc held secret talks over the state of Catholic affairs in Languedoc.¹⁶ Little is known about this meeting, but immediately afterwards the Catholic party at Toulouse was preparing for all-out war. The *registres du parlement* show that Monluc was awarded a monthly payment of 500 *livres* to coordinate Catholic defensive strategy at Toulouse,¹⁷ while Strozzi and Forquevaux were each charged with procuring large quantities of cannon balls and gunpowder, from Marseille and Narbonne respectively, to be stockpiled at a location of the general's choosing.¹⁸ Monluc busied himself with the organising of his military forces. He appointed Terride and

¹² Bellegarde was appointed *sénéchal* of Toulouse on 14 January 1563, AD Haute-Garonne, B 1,906, fo. 83v. Daffis defeated fellow Catholics Antoine de Paulo, *président*, and Bertrand Deygua, *avocat-général*, in the December 1562 elections AD Haute-Garonne, B 55, fo. 575v.

¹³ The bishops of Castres and of Tarbes, and many leading Catholic nobles of the region were present at the ceremony. AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 89v.

¹⁴ AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fo. 178.

¹⁵ AD Haute-Garonne, B 58, fo. 79. This application would be granted on 20 January 1563. For the history of the Jesuits in Toulouse, see Jules Chalande, 'Les établissements des Jésuites à Toulouse au XVIe et XVIIe siècle', *Journal de Toulouse*, 29 (August 1926), pp. 1-35; Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, I, pp. 278-280; P. Delattre, *L'établissement de Jésuites en France* (5 vols., Engheim, 1949-57), IV, p. 1,274.

¹⁶ For these secret meetings, see *HGL*, 5, p. 249.

¹⁷ AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 89v.

¹⁸ *Commentaires*, p. 576.

Gondrin as his seconds-in-command, and signed an *ordonnance* that guaranteed Catholic garrisons of Guyenne one month's pay, allowing his captains to remain in Languedoc to levy the local *gens de pied* at Toulouse and at Périgueux, and himself time to concentrate on affairs at Toulouse.¹⁹

Monluc also spent a great deal of energy bolstering Catholic defences at Agen during this time. On 4 February, he oversaw the 'Association et confederation entre les manans et habitans de la dite ville d'Agen'.²⁰ This represented a definite shift in Catholic sentiment, reflecting disillusionment with the crown's perceived sympathy towards the Reformers, its amnesty to Protestant prisoners, and its determination to pursue accommodatory policies despite recent heavy defeats of the Huguenot army. The following week, intelligence gathered at Bordeaux and Madrid suggested that Armagnac intended to reproduce the Agen *ligue* at Toulouse, placing it under the auspices of the *parlement*, with Monluc as its military chief.²¹ Certainly, all indications intimated that Catholic patience had finally run out with the Huguenots at Toulouse. On 3 February, the *parlement* requested, and was granted, crown permission to confiscate all goods and property from any Reformer found guilty of causing unrest within Toulouse.²² In the town, the *capitouls* consented to increased patrols of the town guard, the expulsion of all vagabonds and known troublemakers, and the deployment of spies to watch the houses of suspect Huguenots.²³

¹⁹ *Ordonnances de Monluc* (4-6 March 1563), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 199-201; 201-202.

²⁰ *Ordonnance de Monluc* (4 February 1563), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 190-95.

²¹ The captain Peyrot announced Monluc's participation in the creation of a *ligue* at Toulouse to the Bordeaux *parlement* as early as 9 February 1563. Ruble, *Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 347, note 1. Armagnac's secretary, la Rivoire, reported to the Spanish ambassador that the cardinal and Monluc were at work together in Toulouse during mid-February 1563. La Rivoire to Saint-Sulpice (14 February 1563), Cabié, *Guerres de religion dans le sud-ouest*, p. 23.

²² Catherine de Medici to *parlement* of Toulouse (3 February 1563), AM Toulouse, AA 44, no. 22; Charles IX to *parlement* of Toulouse (3 February 1563), AM Toulouse, AA 44, no. 23.

²³ AM Toulouse, BB 107, fos. 178-80.

Armagnac's plan to remove jurisdiction over the town guard from the town council did not sit well with the *capitouls*. The cardinal no longer had confidence in this body, as the crown had forced the Toulouse government to reinstate those suspect *capitouls* evicted from office after the insurrection of the previous year. Armagnac intended to restructure the guard, employing six Catholic captains, each with a corps of one hundred armed men, to patrol the streets.²⁴ The *capitouls* attempted to stall over the issue, but were forced to comply in early March, when the *premier président*, Daffis, sent troops to remove the keys to the town gates and hand them over to the cardinal's captains.²⁵ That the *capitouls* conceded to both requests is testimony to the authority of the Catholic party in Toulouse at this time, but it may also point to a tacit willingness of the more moderate civic officials to comply with Catholic directives in order to ensure the security of the town, even if that came at the price of temporary loss of prerogatives.

The reports concerning Armagnac's intention to establish a *ligue* at Toulouse were correct. On 2 March 1563, leading Catholics gathered in the cathedral of Saint-Étienne to endorse the 'Traite d'association et ligue de ceux de Toulouse pour la deffense de la religion Catholique'.²⁶ All the usual suspects were present - Armagnac, Strozzi, Daffis, de Paulo, Dufaur, Monluc, Terride, Negrepelisse, and Bellegarde - as were most of the town's officials and leading bourgeoisie, and many from the Catholic *noblesse du pais*. Unlike the contracts at Agen and Cadillac, which were ostensibly blueprints for Catholic counter-action against the Reformed church, the *traite d'association* at Toulouse also outlined expected standards of social

²⁴ AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 89.

²⁵ AM Toulouse, BB 107, fo. 296.

²⁶ 'Traite d'association et ligue de ceux de Toulouse pour la deffense de la religion Catholique', AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 110. For secondary material relating to the Toulouse *ligue*, its oath and the pledge to take up arms to defend Catholic religion wherever necessary, see *HE*, III, pp. 60-65; *HGL*, 5, p. 249; Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 254; II, *Preuves*, p. 62; Lecler, 'Aux origines de la Ligue', p. 196.

behaviour and religious observance for Catholics. It was stark, too, in its assertion that all Catholics were to sign up to and support the *association* without delay and without exception. Anyone that contravened its directives would be heavily fined.²⁷

With so many magistrates in attendance at the oath-taking ceremony, there was little trouble ratifying the *ligue* before the *parlement*. This occurred on 20 March, with orders that copies of the *traite d'association* be distributed across the province to be 'proclamer vois de trompe et cri public par toutes les villes et lieux notables dudit ressort'.²⁸ This appears to have been a deliberate attempt by the Catholic hierarchy to legitimise its *association* by employing the protocols usually reserved for the publication of royal edicts. Of course, the standard clauses had been written into the text to protect the Catholics from charges of subversion: that the *ligue* had been 'faite par grande necessité pour conserver ledit ressort et pays de l'invasion de toutes parts des ennemis', and that it existed only 'sous le bon plaisir du roy'.²⁹ In reality, though, the *ligueurs* at Toulouse paid little attention to the wishes of the crown. Soon after its registration, Armagnac and Daffis imposed a new tax on the Huguenot population to finance the stockpiling of arms and munitions, despite such tariffs requiring royal consent.³⁰

Yet, just as at Agen, Bordeaux and Cadillac, Catholic aspirations were negated by the arrival of the Peace of Amboise, on 8 April 1563, with its clause banning all local *associations* from the towns and countryside of France.³¹ Although the edict was not fully ratified until the arrival of the new governor of Languedoc,

²⁷ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 110.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ For details of spending and taxation imposed by Cardinal d'Armagnac, the Toulouse *parlement*, and fellow Catholic sponsors of the March *ligue* during this period, especially for funding of troops for Monluc, Terride, Gondrin and other captains, see AM Toulouse, CC 1,939 (War taxation and spending in Toulouse, 16 May 1562 – 30 April 1563).

³¹ The edict of Amboise was dispatched to Toulouse on 19 March 1563, carried by the *seigneur de Caylus*. It arrived on 8 April, and was provisionally registered by the *parlement* the following week, on 15 April. AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 19.

Henri de Montmorency-Damville, on 21 July 1563, the Catholic leadership at Toulouse, most of whom were crown officials themselves, had little option other than to dissolve their *ligue* with immediate effect.³² Reaction to this setback was mixed. Armagnac spared little time in warning Catherine de Medici of the dangers further concessions to the Huguenots would have on the fragile nature of affairs in Languedoc.³³ Monluc, on the other hand, was more reserved. With one eye on the possibility of promotion, his main concern at this time was to be seen to be towing the royal line, even if it meant compromising his militant tendencies temporarily.³⁴ He thus retreated to his home at Estillac while the edict was debated, involving himself with affairs at Agen. Interestingly, while the court ratified the Peace of Amboise in April 1563, Armagnac refused to publish the edict or display it anywhere in the province, claiming it to be so unpopular that it would rile the Catholic populace into civil disobedience. This was in contrast to the *traite d'association*, which had been widely distributed and proclaimed from the street corner of every Catholic town in the *gouvernement* of Toulouse.³⁵

³² AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fo. 472v.

³³ 'Nous étions en grand dangier d'une sedition populaire... et maintenant que les adversaires ont occupé ce pays, tous se mettent en armes pour les en chasser et exterminer de tout, sans que je ny puisse remédier, de tant que le peuple crie tout hault contre moy que soubz ombre de cette paix je leur veux laysser couper la gorge aux champs et permectre aux ennemys de venir prendre ceste ville, qu'ils tiennent desja comme assiégée'. Cardinal d'Armagnac to Catherine de Medici (13 April 1563), AM Bordeaux, ms 299, fos. 116-19.

³⁴ Monluc alluded to this expedient approach in his *Commentaires*, reporting that the king 'me commandèrent m'en retourner et faire bien observer les edicts de la paix, ce que j'ay tousjours fait', adding that, 'et ne fut point qu'on die que la guerre ait jamais commence par mon gouvernement'. *Commentaires*, p. 589.

³⁵ Armagnac informed the crown on 16 April 1563 that 'les messieurs de ceste court de parlement, lacquelle ce matin, en audience, a fait lire, publier et enrigistrer la patente de sa majesté sur le fait de la dicte paix, sans restrictions ou modifications'. Cardinal d'Armagnac to Catherine de Medici (16 April 1563), AM Bordeaux, ms 299, fos. 120-22.

Historiography of the *ligue* at Toulouse, March 1563

The premature censoring of the *ligue* at Toulouse ensured that it has been treated in the historiography of the religious wars with much the same diffidence as the *associations* at Agen and Cadillac. This is puzzling considering the tangible revisions that were made to the town's taxation and militia-levying structures by the Catholic leadership, and especially the controversial punitive measures taken against local Huguenot communities to finance the Catholic war effort. Such legislative clout was certainly not available to the activists at Agen and Bordeaux, nor to the Catholic nobles at Cadillac. Several commentators have explored these events in greater detail. Ruble, for example, has speculated that the *ligue* at Toulouse (equally the *ligue* at Agen of the previous month) was born out of a maelstrom of Catholic disenchantment at crown policy. He sees the exasperation of militant delegates at the *états de Languedoc* of December 1562 as the breeding ground for both *associations*, and claims that Armagnac, Strozzi, Daffis and Monluc drew up templates for the *ligues* during this assembly. For Ruble, this sheds new light on the secret meeting between Armagnac and Monluc earlier that month, and explains why the two *ligues* were so similar in structure, oath and intent.³⁶ If this is correct, then perhaps the mobilisation of troops and armaments under Monluc in January and February 1563, which was coordinated and funded from Toulouse, was also part of this plan, to create an independent Catholic army able to be deployed in the interests of the *ligueurs* throughout the south-west.

De Lamar Jensen, on the other hand, points out that the text of the *traite d'association* encouraged participation from a broad spectrum of the community, and

³⁶ Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 190, note 1; *HGL*, 5, p. 249.

should not be seen entirely as a tool of the Catholic elite. For Jensen, the involvement of the middle and lower orders, even if they were ultimately directed by the elites, is an important characteristic of the early *ligues* of the south-west, suggesting that social and communal motivations drove Catholic activism at grass roots level just as much as the political and religious controversies that devoured Armagnac, Daffis and the other Catholic magistrates.³⁷ The involvement of the *basoche* in the defence of Catholicism in Toulouse tends to bear out Jensen's theory. Here, street performances by minor and apprentice officials of the court were able to energise the wider community, and to force their superiors to instigate organised activity, all in the name of protecting the Catholic religion.

Mark Greengrass, in his study of the later *Sainte Union*, accepts that a broad spectrum of society was involved in the activities of this early *ligue*, but suggests that confraternal activism, and leadership from the clergy, were at best minor elements of Armagnac's corpus.³⁸ He argues that contributions to Catholic *associations* were rarely autonomous, due to the rigid infrastructure of governing bodies:

Individuals from the *parlement* of Toulouse played a leading part in their organisation, and the *ressort* of the *parlement* was regularly used to delineate their region. The *parlement* legalised them and encouraged neighbouring towns and nobles to join movements, which it saw as self-defensive organisms to supplement the efforts of the local governors and seneschals.³⁹

Denis Crouzet, in contrast, places far more emphasis on the penitential ethos driving the *ligue* at Toulouse. For Crouzet, Armagnac's *association* was an amalgam of

³⁷ 'Il est utile et expedient d'ordonner que confederation et association sera faite entre l'etat ecclesiastique, la noblesse et le commun du tiers estat des habitans des villes, dioceses, senechaussees, vigueries, et juridictions du ressort du parlement de Toulouse, soit du pays de Languedoc ou de Guyenne, sous le bon plaisir du Roy et de ladite cour'. AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 110. See De Lamar Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism. Bernadino de Mendoza and the French Catholic League* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p. 39.

³⁸ Mark Greengrass, 'The *Sainte Union* in the provinces: The case of Toulouse', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, XIV, 4, (1983), pp. 471-72.

³⁹ Greengrass, 'The *Sainte Union* in the provinces', p. 471.

sorts, possessing both an elite head and a more inclusive body, with magistrates, nobles, clergy, bourgeoisie and citizens all active in their own way, each empowered to fulfil their respective, if disparate goals. Contemporary visions of its nature were far from cohesive: some desired the *association* to defend their traditions and prerogatives; others that it protect their space and property; others that it inflict violence upon, or bring to justice, heretics and villains. The *ligue*, then, had to be strong, yet malleable, able to cater for various interested groups, but also to unify Catholics under a single banner. To Crouzet, it was even a precursor to later crusading ideology at Toulouse, its *raison d'être* no longer simply the defence of the Catholic faith and the curtailment of Huguenot injustice, but the reinvigoration of the Catholic Church across France, and the rest of Europe if possible.⁴⁰

It would be wrong, however, to suppose that Catholic activism was only effective through formal oath-bound organisations. This study has already shown that Catholic solidarity was possible outside the confines of affiliation to a particular *association*, with independent activists prominent at Bordeaux and Agen throughout the 1550s. At Toulouse, although Catholics were now denied their structured *ligue*, they still continued to dominate political and military affairs within the town. After all, the highest offices were still held by Catholics, and the Catholic nobility still patrolled the immediate countryside, even if Monluc had retired to Agen. As if to reinforce this continuing hegemony, the Catholic leadership at Toulouse ordered all serving officials to profess their faith publicly before cardinal Armagnac. On 10 May 1563, those willing to comply filed up to the altar of the town's cathedral to swear 'vivre et mourir en l'observation des constitutions et foy de la sainte mère esglise catholique et romaine'.⁴¹ Those that refused were duly ostracised from government.

⁴⁰ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, pp. 380-86.

⁴¹ AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fos. 285-96v (10 May 1563).

Dubédat reports that, once more, all the leading Catholics of the region were in attendance to add weight to the proceedings.⁴² This caused consternation at the royal court, as the terms of the March edict had clearly specified that all town administrations should no longer discriminate over the confession of its serving officials. The crown immediately dispatched two *maîtres des requêtes* from Paris to force Armagnac and Daffis to refrain from excluding non-Catholics from office.

The Catholic leadership, however, refused point blank to allow those Huguenots forcibly reinstated by the amnesty of December 1562 - many of whom had fled the province to avoid reprisals following their participation in the failed uprising of the previous May - to serve in office once more. Rather than confront the *maîtres des requêtes*, though, the *parlement* chose to frustrate them, much like their Bordeaux counterparts would do at the arrival of royal commissioners, Antoine Fumée and Jehan Angenoust, the following month. Daffis ordered that the procedure for appellants claiming wrongful dismissal from office as a result of the profession of faith be changed. Instead of receiving a single hearing before an appeals panel and judge, each appellant would now be heard before a special committee of magistrates. This committee was to review the evidence and determine a decision, but was also granted facility to transfer any contentious material to Paris for re-examination.⁴³ This was a perfect means of procrastinating, as once the verdict from Paris was received, the appeal would be reopened and proceedings resumed from scratch. Catholic *conseillers* made especially good use of this tactic, with each appeal taking, on average, six months to resolve. Another feature of the commissioners' work was

⁴² Attending were: Armagnac, Daffis, de Paulo, Latomy, Barthélemy, Reynier, Boyer, de Molinier, du Solier, d'Alzon, Hébrard, du Tournoer, Coignard, Forest, Fabry, Papus, Bonald, de Lauselergie, d'Aussonne, d'Arjac, Boisson, de Gargas, Bruet, de Guilhemette, d'Ouvrier, de Nupces, de Murel, Ambes, de Montfort, Richard, de Prohenques, du Luc, de Lagarde, Rudelle, d'Anticamareta, d'Hautpoul, Benoit, Vezian, de la Chassaigne, de Salluste, Rangouse, de Sabatier, Burnet, Masencal, Hellet, Durand, la Mamy, Laissac and Lacroix. See Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 409.

⁴³ See, for example, AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fos. 347v; 472v.

to ensure that restitution of Huguenot property or objects ‘pris par forme d’hostilité’, was being carried out fairly. The *maîtres des requêtes* discovered, at length, that Catholics were refusing to countenance appeals concerning articles or property that had ‘changed in their nature or usage since confiscation’.⁴⁴ Further, the facility to allow the families of deceased Huguenots, including those executed for their crimes, to reclaim inherited offices, was also found to be inappropriately administered, with Catholic magistrates demanding indisputable first-hand testimony be presented before the case could even proceed to court.⁴⁵

The Catholics of Toulouse continued to test the patience of the crown. On 17 May 1563, a grand procession took place through the town’s streets to mark the anniversary of the defeat of the Protestant coup the previous year.⁴⁶ The royal court deemed this provocative, given the current political climate, and subsequently issued an *arrêt* banning the procession from being staged in the future.⁴⁷ The crown was also forced to intervene in July, after the *parlement* issued several *arrêts*, on the advice of Armagnac, ordering the Catholic *capitouls* and *basoche* militia to resume their role within the town guard.⁴⁸ This was a show of blatant disregard for the terms of the edict of Amboise, and the king demanded that such popular elements be removed from street patrols.⁴⁹

A period of relative calm followed, as the crown and the Catholics of Toulouse backed off from overt confrontation, until the *grande entrée* of the new

⁴⁴ AM Toulouse, AA 16, no. 104.

⁴⁵ Lafaille notes, sardonically, that for some of those fortunate to have ‘fut rétabli en sa bonne fame et renommée... la tête ne luy fut pas renduë’. Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 256.

⁴⁶ AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fo. 307v.

⁴⁷ The Catholics of Toulouse appealed against this decision, but the crown’s verdict was upheld in May 1564, AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 41. Attempts were made to revive the procession by the Catholic leadership of Toulouse in May 1569, in order to reinvigorate Catholic morale following the recommencement of hostilities with the Huguenots. See AD Haute-Garonne, B 63, fo. 224. But it would only be under the auspices of the militant *ligueurs* in May 1589 that the procession was formally reinstated within the town.

⁴⁸ AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fos. 383; 554; 584v-85.

⁴⁹ Charles IX to *parlement* of Toulouse (14 July 1563), AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 11.

governor of Languedoc, Damville, into Toulouse in October 1563, threatened to re-ignite the situation. Damville's arrival had raised the spirits of the town's Catholics, who seemed certain he would champion their cause.⁵⁰ The governor was escorted into the province by Monluc, and greeted by Armagnac, Strozzi, Terride, and over four hundred Catholic nobles at Grenade, before moving on to the château Terride for a celebratory banquet.⁵¹ The *entrée* into Toulouse was pure Catholic theatre: Damville was met at the town gate by a guard of honour, comprising members of the *basoche* and confraternity of Saint-Yves, replete in full regalia. The company then processed through the streets to the *palais du parlement*, where the assembled magistrates and bourgeoisie of the town welcomed the governor with a lavish reception, followed by a solemn mass at the cathedral.⁵² This was the opportunity many had been seeking to underline the triumph of Catholicism at Toulouse, and the scale of the proceedings certainly did this justice. Few could argue that the massed ranks of assembled dignitaries, magistrates, officers, merchants and inhabitants, and the splendid paraphernalia of the event, merely confirmed the strength of Catholic sentiment within the town.⁵³

Renewal of war: 1567-1568

But Damville's tenure as governor would not, as many had hoped, revive the halcyon days of Catholic hegemony at Toulouse. Instead, the governor employed an

⁵⁰ Joan Davies has shown that, at this point in his career, Damville was widely regarded as an 'extreme Catholic'; his reputation as a chameleon in religious matters only being applicable to his attitude during the 1570s. Davies, *Languedoc and its Governor*, pp. 50-51.

⁵¹ Monluc to Charles IX (8 October 1563), Ruble, *Commentaries et Lettres*, IV, p. 278.

⁵² Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 256. The registration of Damville's governorship was not actually ratified until 1 October 1563. AD Haute-Garonne, B 56, fo. 639v.

⁵³ For full details of Damville's arrival at Toulouse in October 1563, see Franklin Charles Palm, *Politics and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France: A Study of the Career of Henry of Montmorency-Damville, Uncrowned King of the South* (Gloucester, Mass., 1927), pp. 50-52.

unequivocal approach to the administration of the province, a policy grounded in explicit adherence to the royal edicts in order to secure stability as a matter of urgency.⁵⁴ This was a big disappointment to Catholics, who had expected a degree of leniency, if not complete partiality, from their compatriot. Such a setback, combined with the withdrawal of Monluc to Agen, and the increasing orientation of Armagnac towards the papal enclave at Avignon, threatened to diminish Catholic hegemony at Toulouse.⁵⁵ But it would be a temporary waning, as the renewal of hostilities in September 1567 ended such dalliances with détente. Monluc was recalled to Toulouse, from where he issued a chilling indictment on the dangers facing the Catholics of the region: 'les affaires sont plus graves qu'aux derniers troubles'.⁵⁶ The defence of the town was the immediate priority. In conjunction with the *capitouls*, Monluc assigned control of the guard to his second-in-command, Terride, with orders that eight Catholic captains be appointed, each with a retinue of fifty soldiers, to secure the districts of Toulouse.⁵⁷ As at Agen and Bordeaux, arrangements were also made for Catholic magistrates and *capitouls* to take their place on the guard, to show the citizens that the administration stood with them in their time of crisis. Members of the clergy were ordered to remain in their churches, and women in their homes, in order to prevent fires breaking out that could draw off much needed manpower from the guard.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Joyeuse was commanded by the *parlement* 'd'avertisser toutz voz voisins, gentilshommes et communautés de prendre les armes

⁵⁴ Damville's *ordonnance* of 18 October 1563, for example, required that Huguenots and Catholics adhere to the letter of the edict of Amboise in equal measure. AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 15.

⁵⁵ Armagnac was appointed *gouverneur d'Avignon* in November 1565 and papal legate to the enclave in May 1566. See Venard, *Réforme protestante*, pp. 491-92. Armagnac would be raised to *vicaire-général* at Avignon on 30 March 1568. See AD Haute-Garonne, B 62, fo. 131.

⁵⁶ Monluc to Charles IX (31 September 1567), AM Toulouse, AA 48, no. 15.

⁵⁷ AM Toulouse, BB 269, fo. 93. In December 1567, Monluc ordered that the soldiers be lodged in Protestant houses, and that Protestant goods be confiscated to fund the war effort. AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 125.

⁵⁸ AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 135.

de se rendre forts et mettre en pieces tous ceulx qui resisteront',⁵⁹ and on 7 October 1567, the king ordered that the *parlement* 'fermer la palais et ne s'attendre à autre chose qu'à la guerre'.⁶⁰

With Damville occupied in eastern Languedoc, Bellegarde was appointed *chef militaire de Toulouse* in November 1567, although Monluc still commanded much of the Catholic forces defending the town.⁶¹ The *parlement* ordered that any minor official suspected of being involved in the recent troubles be removed, and replaced with a suitable Catholic candidate.⁶² Then, on 17 January 1568, it banned all 'dances et jeux public... faux visages, masques, fausses barbes, crèpes, taffetas, ou autre linge devant la figure, sous peine de 500 livres'.⁶³ Dubédat suggests that this was not simply a police measure, aimed at preventing rioters from disguising their appearance during the troubles, but 'un acte d'expiation et un signe de penitence' by an increasingly militant Catholic leadership.⁶⁴

Despite a brief interlude in the conflict, between March and August 1568, Catholic consolidation at Toulouse continued unabated. The town guard was once more revised, with Bellegarde assuming full jurisdiction over the militia, the eight new captaincies now reduced to four, each to be filled by a trusted Catholic military veteran.⁶⁵ The *parlement* also ordered two *conseillers* to accompany the captain of the guard on his rounds each day - a further attempt to convince the population that only cooperative defence would ensure the town remained secure.⁶⁶ Then, on 5 May, the *parlement* moved to put its own house in order, repeating the requirement that all

⁵⁹ AM Toulouse, AA 48, no. 16.

⁶⁰ Charles IX to Bordeaux *parlement* (7 October 1567), AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 120.

⁶¹ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 191; AD Haute-Garonne, B 62, fo. 9v.

⁶² 21 November 1567, AD Haute-Garonne, B 62, fo. 3.

⁶³ AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 194. This edict was repeated on 19 February 1569, see AM Toulouse, AA 18, no. 228.

⁶⁴ Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 432.

⁶⁵ AM Toulouse, AA 15, no. 5.

⁶⁶ Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 432.

magistrates swear 'vivre catholique selon les constitutions et determinations de l'eglise catholique romaine'.⁶⁷ Those that refused, which by now was only a small number, were expelled from office. In June, the *capitouls*, once the epitome of moderate government in Toulouse, pinned their colours to the mast, granting all Catholics of the *sénéchaussée* permission 'mectre en pieces' any Huguenots caught attending illegal gatherings,⁶⁸ while the inhabitants of Toulouse also sought to declare their Catholic allegiance, drafting a remonstrance to the crown requesting that the town remain solely under 'l'auctorité de l'eglise catholique Romaine', to the exclusion of all other religions.⁶⁹

The outbreak of the third religious war in late-August 1568 provoked the Catholic leadership at Toulouse to reiterate their mantra of the previous decade: 'il seroit impossible de vivre en paix avec diversité de religion... il n'y a eu que schisme, division et contradiction en votre royaume, de manière que tous les liens de nature et d'amitié ont esté rompus et violés'.⁷⁰ This outburst, which struck at the heart of the crown's ideology over toleration, did not bode well for a speedy resolution of the current conflict, and by September, Toulouse was once more in the iron grip of militant Catholics. Bellegarde's military jurisdiction was extended to encompass the *sénéchaussée* of Toulouse as well as the town, while further purges cleared those remaining moderates from the *parlement*.⁷¹ Punitive measures against the Huguenot community were again implemented, with new taxes levied, property

⁶⁷ AD Haute-Garonne, B 62, fo. 145v.

⁶⁸ AM Toulouse, BB 173, fo. 65. The *parlement* confirmed these moves, granting Catholics permission to sound the *tocsin* at the first sign of trouble, and to employ any level of force deemed appropriate in the face of Huguenot violence. See AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fo. 49.

⁶⁹ 'Remonstrance fait par les magistrats et habitans de Toulouse contre ceux de la nouvelle religion', (3 July 1568), AM Toulouse, GG 825.

⁷⁰ AM Toulouse, BB 12 (27 August 1568).

⁷¹ For Bellegarde's new military remit, see AD Haute-Garonne, B 62, fo. 431. For a full list of officials removed from office during this purge, see 'Remonstrances présentées au Roi par les délégués de la ville de Toulouse, avec les réponses de Sa Majesté', AM Toulouse, BB12 (28 August 1568).

confiscated, and arbitrary fines for misdemeanours commonplace.⁷² Such was the increase in litigation caused by these impositions, that on 18 September, Daffis, Dufaur and de Paulo were forced to extend the court sitting through into vacation, and to increase the number of *conseillers* serving in the chambers, simply to allow the cases to be dealt with effectively.⁷³

La Croisade

September 1568 was also to witness the purest manifestation of Catholic intent to extirpate heresy: the *croisade*. The exact sequence of events here is unclear, although the igniting of crusading fervour at Toulouse can be traced to three main factors: Catholic concerns over the recent military successes of the Protestant *vicomtes*; the revival of confraternal activism; and the influx of mendicant preachers to the region, keen to disseminate the new post-Trent penitential ethos. The number of preachers active in Toulouse had grown steadily during the past year, with the Jacobin friar Melchior Flavin, the Jesuit Jean Palatier, and two Catholic theologians, Cérès and Laleine, among the more vocal. Catholic domination of the *parlement* meant that few restrictions were placed on these speakers, with each allowed to preach with impunity from the cathedral, even when their sermons called for a war

⁷² For a role of tax levied against Protestants of Toulouse in 1568, see AM Toulouse, GG 825 (1568). For lists of goods seized from seventy-one Protestant suspects in Toulouse, and the profits of the sale of these items, see AD Haute-Garonne, B 63, fos. 172-99. For confiscation of private Huguenot wheat supplies, see AM Toulouse, AA 15, no. 25. For more general deliberations of the *parlement* of Toulouse concerning confiscations of Huguenot property during this period, see 'Affaires de Michel Dufaur', AM Toulouse, GG 826 (1568; 1569). For general legal arguments concerning confiscation of Huguenot property relating to charges of treason and heresy, see Kathleen A. Parrow, *From Defence to Resistance. Justification of Violence during the French Wars of Religion* (Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 33-37.

⁷³ AD Haute-Garonne, B 62, fos. 423-24.

against heresy.⁷⁴ The *parlement* itself showed signs of being gripped by this fervour, modifying previous *arrêts* to further curtail dances, masques, public games and unauthorised music within the town.⁷⁵

In early September 1568, the *avocat*, Jean de Cardonne, preached a sermon against heresy before the *parlement*, but ended by urging the Catholics leadership of Toulouse to revive its sacred *ligue* of 1563, and to lead this force against the Huguenots.⁷⁶ Cardonne's call must have been taken seriously in Rome, because on 12 September papal emissaries confirmed that the Holy See had consented to a Catholic *croisade* being launched from Toulouse.⁷⁷ In fact, two papal Bulls were issued: the first confirming 'une ligue et croisade faite à Toulouse contre les hérétiques'; the second 'une croisade faite à Toulouse contre ceux de la nouvelle religion'.⁷⁸ Prospective adherents were ordered to meet at the cathedral of Saint-Étienne the following day to profess their Catholic faith, attend high mass, and be allocated to a specific captain for duty.⁷⁹

If historians have distanced themselves from the Catholic *associations* of the 1560s, they have positively neglected the *croisade*. Even the commentators of the *ligues*, such as Lecler, Thompson, Ramet, and Devic and Vaissète, barely

⁷⁴ As a further example of the close-knit Catholic network being created at Toulouse, Laleine would soon be promoted to the office of Inquisitor at Toulouse, serving under cardinal Armagnac. See Dubédât, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, pp. 432-33.

⁷⁵ For problems of civil disturbances during 'la ville en fête' in sixteenth-century France, see Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes de France*, pp. 263-85.

⁷⁶ Dubédât, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, I, p. 434.

⁷⁷ *Preuve* 31, *HGL*, 9, pp. 534-35.

⁷⁸ Both were registered before the Toulouse *parlement* on 12 September 1568. For the papal Bull confirming 'la ligue et croisade faite à Toulouse contre les hérétiques', see *Preuve* 31, *HGL*, 9, pp. 535-36. For the papal Bull confirming 'la croisade faite à Toulouse contre ceux de la nouvelle religion', see *Preuve* 32, *HGL*, 9, pp. 536-37. The 'Publication de la croisade faite à Toulouse contre ceux de la nouvelle religion (12 September 1568)', is also presented in 'Preuves de l'histoire de Languedoc', *HGL*, 12, pp. 885-86.

⁷⁹ The *croisade* was solemnised under the device: 'Eamus nos moriamur cum Christo'. *HGL*, 9, p. 48. Harding suggests that the Bordeaux *parlement* offered financial assistance to the *croisade* at its birth, see Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, pp. 63-64. Harding also infers that Monluc organised a similar *croisade* at Bigorre, on 30 September 1568. Here, the town's governors were charged with organising the militia, holding weekly mass and processions, and rebuilding the crosses and churches destroyed during the recent fighting. The Bigorre *croisade*, though, would be dismantled only two months later, on 22 December 1568. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

acknowledge its existence, most deeming it a non-entity. Only Crouzet and Souriac see the *croisade* as having any relevance to affairs at Toulouse during the period, stating that to dismiss it out of hand would be to fail to acknowledge its impact on contemporaries. After all, it was sanctioned by a papal bull, promulgated through the *parlement*, and supported by the magistrates, *capitouls*, clergy and local Catholic nobility. Crouzet suggests that the *croisade* reflects the prevailing penitential sentiment of the period, a direct result of ‘l’angoisse eschatalogique’ that crippled French society during the second half of the sixteenth century. It was thus ‘une sainte armée de la foy’, an expression of Toulouse’s staunch Catholicism, and the ultimate manifestation of Catholic activism.⁸⁰ Crouzet’s notion is engaging, but it should be stated that the *croisade* was also a political animal, the spawn of a Catholic hierarchy at Toulouse clearly at odds with crown policy on accommodation, unhappy about being forced to register unwanted royal dictates, but needing a vehicle through which the urban population could be energised in support of their cause.

Why, then, have historians so neglected the *croisade* of 1568? The answer lies in the fact that, despite sizeable financial investment and the patronage of numerous elites, there never actually was a *croisade*. The whole episode began quite legitimately, with the *parlement* appointing the *capitoul*, d’Hispanie, a dependable Catholic, to initiate the levy of troops.⁸¹ The initial source of funding was to be ‘voluntary’ contributions from the Catholic nobility and clergy of Toulouse, but this proved inadequate. With the *parlement* unwilling to contribute directly, this was to be an entirely autonomous operation, making no demands on crown revenue. D’Hispanie was thus charged with implementing a one-off ‘crusade tax’ on the

⁸⁰ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, pp. 386-96; René Souriac, *Décentralisation administrative dans l’ancienne France. Autonomie Commingeoise et pouvoir d’état, 1540-1630* (2 vols., Toulouse, 1992), I, Chapter 11.

⁸¹ AM Toulouse, BB 12, fo. 195.

town's population, a move that proved most successful. Records reveal that over 60,000 *livres* were raised to fund the *croisade* in October 1568 alone, although, as a mere 6,000 *livres* was contributed by Catholic inhabitants of Toulouse, the bulk of the tax burden clearly fell, as ever, on the town's Huguenot community.⁸²

While d'Hispanie continued with the levy of troops, the *parlement* proposed an initiative that recalled the crusader mythology of previous centuries: ordering all Catholics to distinguish themselves by wearing a white cross on their garments, and painting a white cross onto their doors.⁸³ Whether this was intended to mimic tradition, or was merely a coincidence, is hard to ascertain, but the use of identifying or distinguishing marks would be a common feature of sectarian conflict within close-knit and crowded communities during the religious wars. At Agen, for instance, Monluc would frequently order the Catholic population to display white crosses throughout the decade to delineate between the faiths, as did the Bordeaux *parlement* during the insurrection of 1562, while the post-1567 confraternities also sported similar symbols to identify their brotherhood.⁸⁴ Later, and more celebrated instances include the Saint-Bartholomew massacres of 1572, when the leadership of many towns urged their Catholic population to wear white crosses on their garments to distinguish them from the intended victims of the slaughter, and the adherents of the Catholic League after 1584.⁸⁵ While Huguenots found such tactics both divisive and ominous, they were not averse to employing variants on this theme themselves. At Bordeaux, the *registres du parlement* reveal that, during the night of 8 December,

⁸² AM Toulouse, BB 12, (October 1568).

⁸³ *HGL*, 9, p. 48.

⁸⁴ For the wearing of white crosses by the *Confrérie de la Sainte-Croix* at Limoges, see Cassan, *Le temps des guerres de religion*, p. 238; Jean-Marie Constant, *La Ligue* (Paris, 1996), p. 57.

⁸⁵ See Luc Racault's chapter on Catholic violence during the 1572 Saint-Bartholomew riots, 'The problem of violence during the French Wars of Religion', in Racaut, *Hatred in Print*, pp. 23-37. Mark Greengrass has shown how the wearing of emblems such as white crosses and the swearing of oaths were regular features of the Catholic League in the 1570s and 1580s, and an excellent way of defining loyalties within the community. Greengrass, 'The Sainte Union in the Provinces', p. 472.

‘plusieurs portes des habitans de cette ville catholiques avoient eté marqués de marques blanches en forme de potences’.⁸⁶ The court ordered the *sieur* de Candalle to investigate. He concluded that the marks were a precursor to an attack, and advised the occupants to arm themselves in readiness.⁸⁷ A similar episode occurred two months later, with several doors of houses belonging to the leading Catholics of Bordeaux marked with various portentous symbols: a gallows, a portcullis, and a white cross.⁸⁸ This phenomenon must have been fairly common across the south-west of France during the 1560s, for when Charles IX wrote to Damville in August 1564 to enquire about the state of the peace in Languedoc, he told the governor that there could not be stability within the province until all ‘echaufauds et potences dresses durant les desordres’ were taken down or removed from sight.⁸⁹

At Toulouse, the raising of the crusading army made steady progress. In December 1568, d’Hispanie informed the *parlement* that the *grand-prieur* de Toulouse, Pierre de Beullac-Tresbons, *sieur* de Fronton, ‘ont pris la charge et conduit les soldats soubz compagnie de la croisade pour marcher et aller combattre l’ennemy’.⁹⁰ Fronton had chosen as his captains the *comte* de Martigues and the *seigneur* de Montlau, and the *capitouls* requested that the court ratify these appointments as soon as possible. The appointment of Fronton would prove to be most astute. The office of *grand-prieur* at Toulouse was steeped in crusader mythology, and had been filled continuously since its inception in the twelfth century

⁸⁶ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 116.

⁸⁷ AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 138.

⁸⁸ ‘la porte dudit de la Chassaigne et Fauguerolles, presidens, l’on y avoit mis des potences; à la porte d’icelui de Roffignac un echaffaut et une potence; à la porte de l’archevêque de Bordeaux une grille; à la porte de maitres Jean de Alesme, Antoine de Belcier, Antoine de Gautier, conseillers, Lescure, procureur general et de Pontac greffier, une potence, en aucuns lieux des lettres le tout fait de croise blanche’ (19 February 1563), AM Bordeaux, ms 771, fo. 463.

⁸⁹ AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 51.

⁹⁰ AM Toulouse, BB 12, fo. 195v.

to oversee the operations of the Knights Hospitaller.⁹¹ So by linking this new *croisade* to its historic ancestor, was the *parlement* attempting to redefine the defence of the 'Catholic' church in its traditional, universal sense?

There was a further motivating factor here for Catholics. The *grand-prieur* was a major landowner at the nearby town of Fronton, midway between Toulouse and Montauban, an important Catholic stronghold throughout the 1560s. Its famous *donjon des Hospitaliers* housed a large Catholic garrison, and its defences made the town a tough proposition for assailing forces. On 17 October 1567, however, the Protestant *vicomtes* de Paulin, Montclar and Caumont, together with the *comte* de Bruniquel, had laid siege to the town with an army approaching 7,000 strong. Eventually, Fronton's defences had been breeched and the Protestants broke through into the town. The *grand-prieur* had requested that Damville intercede, only for the crown to reject this plea, confessing that it could not allow its forces to be drawn away from other areas of conflict.⁹² The *grand-prieur* would have to recover the town independently, a design he had been nurturing for several years. Fronton's appointment as head of the *croisade* at Toulouse could thus be seen to symbolise Catholic intentions to redress many inequities and to finally triumph over Protestantism.

The *croisade* continued its steady progress. In January 1569, the clergy of Toulouse agreed a new *demande* of 1,000 *livres* to finance the acquisition of further supplies for the troops;⁹³ in February, a consignment of fresh gunpowder had been

⁹¹ M.A. du Bourg lists the holders of the office of *grand-prieur* de Toulouse during this period: Claude de Gruel de la Bourehl, 1552-1555; Pierre de Beaulac-Tresbons, 1555-1569; Balthazar des Comtes de Vintimille, 1570-1575; Mathurin de Lescur-Romegas, Prieure d'Irlande, 1575-1581; Antoine-Scipion de Joyeuse, 1581-1589. M. A. du Bourg, *Histoire du grand-prieur de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1883), p. 25.

⁹² Bourg, *Histoire du grand-prieur de Toulouse*, p. 272.

⁹³ AM Toulouse, BB 12, fo. 196.

delivered to the *tour Saint-Jean* in the name of the *grand-prieur*.⁹⁴ The continuing military successes of the Protestant *vicomtes*, however, would force the Catholic leadership to alter their plans and deploy the crusading army prematurely. Bellegarde had been campaigning in the *comté* of Foix against the Huguenot army, but had become trapped at Mazère by the forces of the *vicomte* d'Arpajon.⁹⁵ On 15 April 1569, the *parlement* ordered d'Hispanie 'assembler la compagnie de la croisade et la conduire au comté de Foix au camp de Bellegarde'.⁹⁶ The *croisade* was armed and dispatched, and reached Bellegarde by 25 April. The *capitouls* put the best gloss possible on this premature posting:

pour maintenir sa querelle à extirper et anéantir les ennemys de nostre sainte foy, ayant esté ung des premiers pour mettre la main aux armes et estre aydant à conduire la compagnie de la croisade au camp en la comté de Foix et au Carla, au grand contentement de tout le pays.⁹⁷

But the mission was not to be the glorious campaign of Catholic hopes. The *comte* de Montgomery had relieved d'Arpajon, and Bellegarde's retreating forces were heavily defeated outside Foix. The *croisade* disappears from the archives at this point, presumably routed in the battle. It did, though, make one final contribution to the saga, as it was a single shot from a musketeer of the *croisade* that ended the career, and life, of the d'Arpajon.⁹⁸

Summary

The history of Catholic activism at Toulouse, then, reveals much the same motivations and responses as witnessed at its sister citadel of Bordeaux: during the

⁹⁴ AM Toulouse, BB 12, fo. 213v.

⁹⁵ *HGL*, 9, p. 32

⁹⁶ D'Hispanie to *Grand Conseil* at Toulouse (15 April 1569), AM Toulouse, BB 12, fo. 229v.

⁹⁷ *Capitouls* of Toulouse to Armagnac (25 April 1569), AM Toulouse, BB 173, fo. 121.

⁹⁸ AM Toulouse, BB 173, fo. 121v.

1540s and 1550s, confraternal and *basochien* activity within the town energised the population, though in inversely proportional ways, with the players showing a greater propensity for supporting the Catholic cause than the more reluctant *avocats* of the *parlement*; while the 1560s saw similar participation from the magistrates of the *parlement* and, after a series of purges, from the *capitoulat* too. Again, the interconnectedness of Catholic activism is evident, with Monluc and his captains extremely forceful in defending orthodoxy in Languedoc, despite many of their tasks falling outside their official jurisdiction. Here, long-standing friendships, affiliations and alliances, and networks of association played a big part, with most of these Catholic elites acting as co-signatories of the Toulouse *ligue* in March 1563. The response of the Catholic administrators of Toulouse to the threat of Huguenot violence also mirrored that at Bordeaux and Agen: usurpation of authority; redefining of the town guard; taxing of Protestants and confiscation of property to finance the Catholic war effort; and the use of symbolism to identify Catholics in the community. And just as at Bordeaux and Agen, by the late 1560s, a coalition of Catholic leaders would emerge to unite with the Catholic bourgeoisie and populace in creating an urban defensive union, whereby all parties would come to play a role in the protection of the town. At Toulouse, the coalition was led by the *capitouls* and *parlementaires*, even though its ambitions blatantly contravened the king's orders of the previous year, whereby popular elements were to be kept separate from the town guard.⁹⁹ Monluc would initiate a similar ethos across the Toulouse hinterland, ordering the disparate Catholic nobility and Catholic town councils 'assembler en armes toute la communauté de votre ville et juridiction' - again, quite contrary to royal dictate.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ 8 August 1569. AM Toulouse, AA 15, no. 49.

¹⁰⁰ *Revue d'Aquitaine*, I, (Auch, 1857), p. 559.

Toulouse also featured a potent Jesuit presence, just as at Bordeaux. And similarly, it was the militant Catholic element within the *parlement* at Toulouse that facilitated this. In July 1566, the Catholic *président*, Duranti, sponsored a debate within the court, urging that Jesuit refugees be allowed to enter the town and establish a college 'à l'instruction de la jeunesse'.¹⁰¹ With the vote won, the magistrates moved to provide accommodation. Three Catholic *capitouls*, Pierre Delpach, Jean Gamoy and Pierre Madron, were charged with this task and, on 4 September, the *hôtel de Bernuy* on rue Gambetta was presented to the Jesuits for their use.¹⁰² Two days later, Armagnac pulled off a major coup by securing the services of the leading Jesuit of the south-west, Edmond Auger, to head the new college.¹⁰³ Despite the fact that Auger was tempted to leave Toulouse for Bordeaux by Baulon and Lange, Armagnac was able to report in March 1569 that the Jesuit college at Toulouse was doing extremely well.¹⁰⁴ It is interesting to note that when the Jesuits were once more expelled from France in 1594, following the accession of Henry IV, their companies at Toulouse and Tournon were the only two to be allowed to remain.

But there was one aspect of Toulouse's response that was unique: the calling of a *croisade* to extirpate heresy. This echoed the traditions of Languedoc in responding to religious threats, and made use of many relevant facets still active in Toulouse: the office of the *grand-prieur* of the Knights Hospitaller; the influence of Armagnac as the papacy's representative in the south-west; and the prerogative of Catholics to act unilaterally to defend themselves against heresy. However, the

¹⁰¹ AM Toulouse, BB 173, fo. 51.

¹⁰² AD Haute-Garonne, B 1,907, fo. 69v.

¹⁰³ See 'Contrat passe entre le syndic de la ville et M. Edmond Auger, principal de la religion et congregation des Jesuites en la province d'Aquitaine, pour l'establissement d'un college a Toulouse, destine a l'instruction de la jeunesse' (6 September 1566), AM Toulouse, AA 14, no. 113.

¹⁰⁴ AM Toulouse, BB 173, fo. 111.

croisade, a scheme clearly anathema to its attempts to inculcate toleration across France, stands as an overt reminder of the crown's weakness during the late 1560s. For had the crown been stronger at this time, it would surely have opposed such unilateral and overtly papal-inspired actions, and instead intervened to prohibit this particular Catholic instrument. In light of the pre-eminence of such wider influences, the final part of this thesis will examine the national and European dimensions behind Catholic activism in the south-west.

PART IV: NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN DIMENSIONS

Chapter 9. The Guise, the Triumvirate, and later confraternal activism

Chapter 10. Spain and the papacy

Chapter 11. Wider Catholic activism: Béarn and Navarre

Chapter 9. The Guise, the Triumvirate, and later confraternal activism

Any study of provincial Catholic activism during the French Wars of Religion must take into account wider political and religious considerations. It should determine the extent to which national and European dimensions influenced events, and the roles played by peripheral protagonists on affairs. This is particularly pertinent to a survey that deals with conflict in Guyenne and Languedoc, where local issues were often subsumed beneath concerns associated with the governance of a border province. This situation would be further confused during the 1560s, with the Catholic leadership of the south-west being offered and requesting support from national or international powers such as the Guise, Spain and the papacy. Now, traditional concerns over external interference in jurisdictional prerogatives, or threats to the integrity of border security, would be compromised on occasion to facilitate dialogue between the various Catholic bodies. Chapter 9 will address these themes, beginning with an examination of the influence of Catholic grandees at the French court, specifically the Guises and Montmorencies, on the course of Catholic activism in the south-west. It will consider the extent to which these figures determined the actions of Monluc, Armagnac and the Catholic leadership at Bordeaux and Toulouse, and the extent to which their patronage contributed to Catholic successes. It will then evaluate the impact on affairs of the Triumvirate, the union of elite Catholic nobles in 1562 that boasted financial and military backing from Madrid and Rome. The Triumvirate had promised to amalgamate the many provincial *associations* under its leadership, and to create a truly pan-European Catholic entity capable of confronting

the French crown and forcing it to end its adherence to tolerant religious policies. The veracity of this assertion will be explored. Finally, the influence of the Catholic *grande*s and of the lesser Catholic captains of the provinces on the explosion of confraternal activity across France after 1567 will be examined. Driven by the resurgence in popular piety across Europe and the revitalisation of the Catholic Church following the final decrees of the Council of Trent in 1563, the increase in confraternities would immeasurably bolster Catholicism and militant activism within the communities of France. Catholic generals were quick to take advantage of this phenomenon, boosting their garrison forces and urban militias by recruiting large numbers of these highly motivated *confrères*.

In Chapter 10, the influence of Spain and the papacy will be scrutinised in greater detail. The role of Spain and its king, Philip II, is of primary importance here. Philip was a vociferous opponent of the French crown's policy of toleration, and many of his foreign policy decisions during the 1560s can be seen as attempts to disrupt Catherine de Medici's determination to accommodate Protestants within France. By supplying arms and financial aid to Catholic captains such as Monluc and Terride, Philip sought to interdict the growth of the Reform movement in the region, and to establish a buffer zone between the Protestant armies that roamed the southwest and the Spanish border. The degree to which the Catholics of the region came to rely on Spanish investment and reinforcements will also be assessed, for if their relationship was based more on dependency than on reciprocity, then pressure exerted from Madrid, not independent thought, may well have shaped Catholic policy there. This chapter will then examine the part played by the papacy in proceedings. There is little doubt that papal backing provided important succour for the *ligues* of Guyenne and Languedoc, both in terms of material benefits, such as

finance and manpower, but also in terms of validating the *associations* and offering papal sanction for the various oaths, unions and crusading ideals. The endeavours of cardinal Armagnac, the papal inquisitor for the region, are key here. In general, the inquisition is viewed as an anachronism by the 1560s, but there is evidence to show that Armagnac used the office of Inquisitor General as a weapon to combat Huguenot lawlessness. His contribution to the Catholic cause, and the efficacy of the papal Inquisition in confront Protestant aggrandisement, will be explored.

Finally, Chapter 11 reveals that the sphere of influence of the *ligueurs* of the south-west was far wider than their native Guyenne and Languedoc. It is now evident that featured militants, such as Monluc, Armagnac, Terride and Negrepelisse, were in constant communication with the Catholic rebels at Oloron and Lescar, providing assistance where possible in their struggles to overthrow the Calvinist administration of Jeanne d'Albret, queen of Navarre. Historians view the *ligues* that drove these rebellions as isolated entities, unconnected with Catholic activism around Bordeaux and Toulouse. This is most surprising considering their similarities with the oath-bound *associations* of France, the overt military assistance provided by the *ligueurs* of the south-west, and the repeated intervention of the *parlements* of Bordeaux and Toulouse, and, on occasion, the French crown. Concerted diplomatic and military pressure against Jeanne was also exerted by Spain and the papacy in an attempt to purge the territories of Calvinist faith. By assessing the dynamic between these groups, the scale and intensity of cooperation will reveal a rarely studied aspect of Catholic activism here: that *ligue* activity in the south-west was far more diverse than has been yet thought.

The Guise

The machinations of the powerful Guise family are integral to most studies of the French Wars of Religion. Military successes had seen the Guise's star rise throughout the 1550s: the duke, François, was a leading light in the Italian campaigns against the Spanish; his brother, Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, had been just as successful in the diplomatic sphere. But the defining moment for Guise ascendancy came with the defeat and capture of the constable of France, Anne de Montmorency, by Spanish troops at Saint-Quentin in August 1557. Until this point, the Montmorencies had edged the rivalry between the two houses. Now, with François promoted to *lieutenant-général* of France in the constable's absence, and the cardinal of Lorraine appointed to oversee domestic and foreign policy affairs, the brothers were the dominant force at court.¹

Throughout this period, Monluc and cardinal Armagnac served the Guise with distinction. Monluc rose to the rank of captain under François, excelling as a field commander in the duke's army. Armagnac, meanwhile, acted as diplomatic envoy for many of the Guise's foreign campaigns, also serving on several diplomatic missions for the cardinal of Lorraine. It was in the early 1550s, in fact, that Monluc and Armagnac began their long acquaintance, with the newly appointed cardinal of Toulouse informing Henry II of his 'excellent relations' with Monluc during their Italian campaign in 1555. This long-standing friendship would later prove a

¹ Knecht, *Catherine de' Medici*, p. 48.

fundamental factor in ensuring cordial relations between the Catholics of Guyenne and those at Toulouse.²

After a short sabbatical back in Guyenne, Monluc was recalled by François in May 1558 to take up the post of *colonel-général des gens de pied* of the royal army. Two stunning victories over the Spanish army at Thionville gained both men great renown across France, but this success had been bought at a cost.³ The office of *colonel-général* had become vacant as a result of renewed hostility between Guise and Montmorency at court, with François removing the incumbent, François de Châtillon, *seigneur d'Andelot*, the nephew of the constable, to spite his adversary. Courteault believes that Monluc was a pawn in the manoeuvrings of the Guise; insignificant enough in court circles to prevent civil war breaking out at his appointment, but the perfect fall guy should the French military offensives of 1558 ultimately fail.⁴ Monluc was most equivocal about the d'Andelot affair. He claimed to have requested not to be considered for the office, aware that it would offend the constable, only accepting the role after being urged to do so by the king and the cardinal of Lorraine.⁵ As it turned out, the fortunes of the two great behemoths changed once more in November 1558, with Montmorency reinstated as constable. Monluc wisely resigned his commission immediately, allowing d'Andelot to resume his office without recrimination. He requested permission to leave the royal army and join the king of Navarre's military expedition against rebel forces in Béarn and lower

² Armagnac to Henry II (30 April 1555), Tamizey de Larroque, 'Lettres inédites du Cardinal d'Armagnac', pp. 66-68. See also letter from pope Pius IV to Monluc reporting that cardinal Armagnac had informed Rome of the brave deeds achieved by Monluc in Guyenne in defence of the Catholic faith (April 1562), *Mémoires de Condé*, III, pp. 317-18. In fact, Armagnac also attempted to boost Monluc's profile with the Montmorency circle at court, writing a letter of recommendation to the constable praising the Gascon captain's endeavours in March 1555. See Cardinal Armagnac to Constable Montmorency (March 1555), *Revue d'Aquitaine*, V, (Auch, 1861), pp. 559-60.

³ Monluc's career had seemingly reached a new height - from archer in the Gascon regiments of Francis I, to *colonel-général* of Henry II's royal army. For further details of his military service under the Guise at Picardy in 1558, see Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, I, p. 211.

⁴ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc, Historien*, p. 349.

⁵ *Commentaires*, p. 424.

Navarre. This was granted by the *conseil privé*, and Monluc headed south in January 1559, leaving Guise and Montmorency to resume their power struggle.⁶

Two incidents drew Monluc back into the political arena. The first was the death of Henry II, in July 1559, which saw François de Guise seize power, thereby isolating Catherine de Medici, Montmorency and Antoine de Navarre, the prince of the blood, who most expected would assume the role of regent for the boy king, Francis II. Monluc, who was by now settled at Navarre's court at Pau, thus found himself at the centre of the new Guise-Navarre rivalry. To sever ties with either party would have been political suicide, so Monluc became a pragmatist, serving Navarre in the south-west, but staying in contact with the duke of Guise through his brother, Jean, bishop of Valence.⁷ The second incident occurred the following year, in May 1560. Monluc had been called by the council at Agen to quell unrest generated by the prosecution of two Calvinist ministers, Jean Voisin and Jacques Fontaine, each accused of over-zealous preaching. His participation in the trial, however, was deemed provocative by local Huguenots, who complained to Navarre of Monluc's alleged bias towards the Catholic plaintiffs. A reprimand followed from Pau, admonishing the captain for presiding over the case without official jurisdiction. Sanctions were also mooted, though the intercession of the duke of Guise spared Monluc further censure.⁸

Courteault suggests that Guise's mediation had an ulterior motive: to secure a spy in the south-west to watch over Navarre. Monluc appeared the perfect man for the job, and this new role may account for his recall to the royal court in August 1560, and for his flurry of correspondence with the cardinal of Lorraine later that

⁶ Evans, *Blaise de Monluc*, p. 19.

⁷ For rivalry between Navarre and Guise in the late 1550s, see Sutherland's chapter: 'Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre and the French crisis of authority, 1559-1562', Sutherland, *Princes, Politics and Religion 1547-1589*, pp. 55-72.

⁸ Courteault, *Un Cadet de Gascogne*, pp. 148-49.

same year.⁹ It would be a short-lived reconciliation, though, as the death of Francis II, in December 1560, released Monluc from his obligations. This time, Catherine de Medici wasted no time securing the reins of power, promoting Montmorency and sending for Navarre so as to counter the Guise element within the royal council. With the Guise ostracised from court, Monluc was able to return to Guyenne, only recalled at his appointment as *lieutenant-général* in December 1561.

The Triumvirate

If the Guise were excluded from power, they were never far from the centre of wider Catholic activity during this period. When Philip of Spain proposed the Compact of Péronne in May 1558, an attempt to secure an alliance between Spain, the papacy and the Catholic grandees of France to ensure the triumph of Catholicism across Europe, it was the Guise who championed French involvement.¹⁰ Whether they were prepared to undertake a concerted campaign to extirpate Protestantism from France at this early stage is open to question. Robert Harding certainly doubts the Guises' commitment to such a policy, despite their bluster and belligerence. He suggests that a more circumspect approach was being employed by the Catholic grandees, and points as evidence to a debate within the minutes of the Assembly of Fontainebleau, in August 1560, in which the provincial governors and local officials were cautioned that immediate repression of the Reform movement would be more of a threat to public order than a cure.¹¹ Harding also cites a royal directive of early 1561 that warned the militant duke d'Étampes, governor of Brittany, that:

⁹ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 390.

¹⁰ Marthe W. Freer, *Jeanne d'Albret* (London, 1862), p. 237.

¹¹ Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 50.

As long as Protestants, in praising God make no scandal for others and assemble in small numbers and peaceably, they should not be prevented... In the times we are in, we must conduct all things cautiously with reason, great calmness, and moderation, precipitating nothing.¹²

Other commentators support this view. Powis reports that in late 1560 Burie warned the *parlement* at Bordeaux that ‘at this moment royal ministers may be unwilling to proceed with a policy aimed at the total annihilation of Huguenot supporters’,¹³ while Yardeni refers to the view of Jean de Monluc, bishop of Valence, who wrote in 1562 that:

le nombre de sectateurs de ceste religion est si grand et ils sont si fermes et constans en leur opinion que celui qui voudroit les avoir par force, il faudroit les faire tous mourir; autrement celuy qui restoroit en vie avec cendres des mortes, on feroit ressussister d’autres.¹⁴

But if the Guises did not seek to defeat the Huguenots on the battlefield, they did endeavour to deny the Protestant elites of France access to the corridors of power.¹⁵ It was to achieve this purpose that François de Guise reconciled with Montmorency in 1561, and, together with marshal Saint-André, formed a cabal to further Catholic military potential.¹⁶ This Triumvirate found many prominent Catholics willing to support its cause, including the duke of Montpensier, the cardinal of Tournon, and the marshals Brissac and Termes, all of whom opposed the crown’s policy of toleration.¹⁷ Even Navarre converted to the Catholic cause and

¹² Charles IX to Étampes (March 1561), quoted in Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 51.

¹³ Powis, ‘Order, religion, and magistrates’, p. 183.

¹⁴ Yardeni, *La conscience nationale*, p. 89.

¹⁵ Benedict has suggested that the Guise may have been plotting to exterminate all Protestants in 1560, but adds that there is little proof to confirm this theory. Benedict, ‘The Saint Bartholomew’s Massacres in the Provinces’, p. 214.

¹⁶ Jacques d’Albion, *sieur de Saint-André, maréchal* of France since 1547, was a long time acquaintance of Monluc, having supported his nomination to the governorship of Siena in 1554. See Roy, *Blaise de Monluc*, p. 234. For general history of the formation of the Triumvirate, see Jouanna *et al*, *Histoire et dictionnaire*, p. 100; Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 16.

¹⁷ Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 47; Sutherland, *The Massacre of Saint-Bartholomew*, p. 350.

joined the Triumvirate in mid-1562. That his two erstwhile patrons were no longer sworn adversaries must have been a relief to Monluc.

A driving force behind this alliance was Thomas de Perrinot de Chantonnay, the Spanish ambassador. Chantonnay had made an art of garnering intelligence and policy details from senior authority figures in France, repeatedly outmanoeuvring the Gallican majority at the French court with his 'informed' rhetoric.¹⁸ Of especial service in this regard were successive French ambassadors to Spain, Claude de l'Aubespine and Saint-Sulpice, the bishops of Limoges and Rennes, who represented Catherine de Medici before the papal and imperial courts respectively, and Hippolyte d'Este, cardinal of Ferrara, the papal legate in France, who became an important conduit between Rome and the Guise.¹⁹ Chantonnay saw the Triumvirate as far more than an anti-Protestant force in France. He envisaged a pan-European Catholic army, funded and provisioned by Rome and Spain, and directed by his master, Philip II, and worked tirelessly to ensure that enmity and jealousy were not allowed to splinter the union. It was through Chantonnay's efforts that the pope agreed to ratify the Triumvirate as *une grande ligue*, and to dispatch 2,500 soldiers, together with sufficient funds to hire several companies of Swiss and German mercenaries, to the Guise in mid 1562.²⁰ In fact, the scale of the support from Rome has led Nicola Sutherland to paint the duke of Guise as a *knight-errant* of the papacy, rather than as

¹⁸ For analysis of the Gallican liberties/tendencies of the French court and various *parlements*, see Jonathan Powis, 'Gallican liberties and the politics of later sixteenth-century France', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 26 (1983), pp. 515-30.

¹⁹ For analysis of Chantonnay's espionage network in France, see Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II*, I, p. 218. For correspondence between d'Este and Guise, see Hippolyte d'Este, *Négociations ou lettres d'affaires ecclésiastiques et politiques écrites au Pape Pie IV et au cardinal Borromée par Hippolyte d'Este, Cardinal de Ferrara, legat en France au commencement des guerres civiles* (Paris, 1658).

²⁰ Edouard Frémy, *Essai sur les diplomates du temps de la Ligue, d'après des documents nouveaux et inédits* (Paris, 1873), esp. Chapter 1, pp. 1-56. See also Holt, *French Wars of Religion*, p. 56; Louis Pierre Anquetil, *L'esprit de la Ligue, ou histoire politique des troubles de France pendant les XVIe et XVIIe siècles* (2 vols., Paris, 1818), I, pp. 77-81.

a religious appellant of France.²¹ However, Chantonay also secured sizeable assistance from Spain too, with troops sent north to Guise, and south to boost Monluc's garrisons in Guyenne. Accusations that the Triumvirate was being funded directly from Madrid now proliferated, though the Huguenot grandees struggled to prove these claims.²² The English ambassador to France, however, was in no doubt about who the driving force behind the Triumvirate was: 'which enterprise is pushed forward by the Spanish ambassador here and Spanish threatenings'.²³

Guise patronage in the south-west

With the duke and cardinal of Guise undoubted champions of Catholicism in France during this period, the extent of their influence over events in the south-west was more indeterminate. It is not at all clear that Monluc was still an active client of the duke after his departure from court in December 1561. Communications between the two are extremely rare during this period, and, perhaps because the Guise were so occupied with affairs in the north and north-east, there is thus little evidence of their direct involvement in Catholic intrigues in Guyenne or Languedoc. There are indications, though, that relations were not entirely severed. In December 1563, Monluc wrote to Damville to congratulate the new governor of Languedoc on his overt Catholicism. Included with this document was a letter from Claude, duke d'Aumale, Guise's brother, which had been sent to Monluc for safekeeping until it could be delivered securely to Damville.²⁴ More significantly, Mark Greengrass has

²¹ Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition*, p. 144.

²² For Huguenot accusations of Spanish financing of the Triumvirate, see *Mémoires de Condé*, III, p. 395.

²³ See *Recueil des choses mémorables passées et publiées pour le fait de la religion et état de la France* (Strasbourg, 1566), in Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 51.

²⁴ Monluc to Damville (28 December 1563), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 308.

examined the August 1563 indentures of a client of the Guise, Guy de Daillon, *comte de Lude*, and found that this official not only ‘promes et jure par le dieu vivant de randre toute telle obeissance et loial servince a Monsr le ducq de Guise, a messieurs les cardinaus ses oncles, et madame sa mere’, but that he also promised ‘obeir a ce que sera commande par Monsr de Monluc comme a selui que je reconnais lieuten general et chef de lentreprinse en la guienne’.²⁵ There is certainly little doubt that Lude was an active supporter of Catholic activism at Bordeaux; he would subsequently be identified by Lagebâton and the Parisian commissioners as one of those Catholic nobles accused of attempting to usurp power at Bordeaux.²⁶ Lude may well have been a conduit between the Guise and Monluc, but the dearth of relevant archival survivals at Bordeaux fail either to confirm or reject such a supposition.

What should be remembered, though, is that Monluc had served under François de Guise in the Italian campaigns of the 1550s not his son, Henri, who had assumed the title of duke at the death of his father at Orléans in February 1563. Therefore, any Guise involvement in the Catholic *ligues* at Agen, Toulouse and Cadillac after this date would have been orchestrated by Henri, whose bond with Monluc could not have been as strong as had that between the two veteran campaigners. Evidence of these weakened relations may be seen in the events of February 1565. With the royal court lodged at Toulouse as part of its tour of the provinces, Monluc was approached by d’Aumale and the marquis d’Elbeuf to garner support for the creation of a national Catholic *ligue* in France, to be headed by Henri de Guise. Monluc declined to be involved, instead reporting the information to Catherine de Medici, claiming, rather mischievously, considering his participation in

²⁵ Greengrass, ‘Functions and limitations’, p. 79.

²⁶ D’Escars to Catherine de Medici (6 September 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 20,598, fo. 197.

the *ligues* at Agen and Toulouse, that 'ce n'estoit pas viande de mon goust'.²⁷ Perhaps aware that the Guise would not take kindly to having their plans exposed, Monluc openly credited the duke with the inspiration for such an organisation, though he did acknowledge that a national *ligue* was feasible if the king himself headed it.²⁸ Michel de Castelnau, the royal diplomat, reported in his memoirs that the king gave the proposal serious thought, but decided against such an overt institution, as the risk of inciting further sectarian conflict was too great.²⁹ It would be fair to say, then, that while François de Guise was a major influence on the careers of Monluc and cardinal Armagnac during the mid 1550s and early 1560s, his son, Henri, played little part in the development of Catholic activism in the south-west after 1562. Other notables of France, however, would have an impact on the course of Catholic affairs across the provinces, as a new arena of activism established itself in 1567: the militant confraternity.

Confraternal activism (post 1567)

Across Europe, communal, 'popular' piety had been rejuvenated by the missives of the Council of Trent, which finally concluded its business in 1563. Spanish military successes in the Netherlands helped raise Catholic spirits also, following a period of sobering reversals. But it was within the towns that the revitalisation of Catholicism was most evident. Here, townsfolk enrolled in the confraternities in ever increasing numbers, boosted by support from the reinvigorated

²⁷ *Commentaires*, p. 586.

²⁸ *Commentaires*, pp. 587-89. See also Manfred Orlea, *La noblesse aux états généraux de 1576 et de 1588* (Paris, 1980), p. 33.

²⁹ Michel de Castelnau, *Les mémoires de Messire Michel de Castelnau, seigneur de Mauvissiere et de Concessaut, ausquelles sont traictées les choses plus remarquables qu'il a veues et négociées en France, Angleterre, et Escosse, sous les rois François II et Charles IX, tant en temps de paix qu'en temps de guerre* (Paris, 1671), pp. 314-15.

local guilds. Some areas witnessed more activity than others: Crouzet shows that across Provence during the 1550s a level of confraternal activism similar to that of the confraternity of Saint-Yves at Bordeaux was evident; Venard states that in the ecclesiastical province of Avignon there were fifteen *confréries pénitentes* by 1560; Benedict reports that 1,241 *confrères et consoeurs* assembled to swear an oath to the confraternity of Saint-Sacrement at Rouen, on 15 June 1561; and Galpern shows that confraternal membership at Champagne remained robust, and rose in certain parishes, through the first decade of the religious wars.³⁰ Across Burgundy, the Catholic governor, Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, was able to deploy militia drawn from the many confraternities of the region throughout the early 1560s, under the pretext that they were necessary for the defence of a 'frontier province', while at Dieppe, Daval describes how, in April 1561, 'quelques gens mécaniques firent une confrairye ou plutost une ligue... pour exterminer les fidèles, se qualifiant de gentilshommes de la confrairye de St Goistan'.³¹ At Paris, though, the crown censured a nascent Catholic fraternity in June 1561 after allegations that it was sponsored by the cardinal of Lorraine came to light.³²

Given the restrictions placed on many traditional Catholic observances, in order to placate Huguenot sensitivities, the renaissance of widespread confraternal membership should not be that surprising. Jensen has shown, for example, that many urban craftsmen remained staunchly orthodox during the 1560s, their guilds offering

³⁰ For Provence, see Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 357; For Avignon, see Venard, *Réforme protestante*, p. 1,175; For Rouen, see Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion*, pp. 83-88; For Champagne, see Galpern, *The Religions of the People*, pp. 204-13. For a general overview of confraternal activity during the early 1560s, see Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, pp. 218-24; Chevalier, *Les bonnes villes de France*, pp. 76-83; 248-55; Christopher F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1989).

³¹ For Burgundy confraternities in 'frontier province', see Robert J. Knecht, *The Rise and Fall of Renaissance France* (2nd Edition, Oxford, 2002), p. 323; Henri Druout, *Mayenne et la bourgogne: Étude sur la Ligue, 1587-1595* (2 vols., Paris, 1937), II, p. 132. For Dieppe, see Guillaume Daval and Jean Daval, *Histoire de la réformation à Dieppe, 1557-1657* (ed. E. Lesens, Rouen, 1878), p. 19.

³² Orlea, *La noblesse aux états généraux*, p. 33.

both an outlet for Catholic sensibilities, and a communal refuge for those ostracised from traditions and customs recently censored by royal edict. They also provided a focal point for anger at continuing Protestant abuses, with many *confrères* and guildsmen forced to endure the ridiculing of their patron saints, and the smashing of chapels and statues by iconoclasts.³³ The growing affiliation to confraternities and guilds thus ensured that Catholic sentiment retained a militant edge within the towns, despite the crown's continuing attempts to silence its leadership - a development that Thompson suggests would have important ramifications for the *ligueurs*: 'the identification of the guilds and confraternities with the Catholic party gave them great and unexpected support... under the new order of things, they became the nuclei of local and provincial Catholic leagues'.³⁴

The French crown, however, was stronger in 1566 than it had been for many years, and it moved quickly to counter this threat. In February, it issued the *ordonnance de Moulins*, laying down strict guidelines governing the structure and conduct of all guilds and confraternities. All such bodies were now to be audited, with those that transgressed the new rules suppressed. To achieve this, the crown commissioned a number of *maîtres des requêtes* to visit the provinces, much to the disgust of the local Catholic clergy, who claimed that the crown was once more pampering to the whims of the Protestant *grandees* at court.³⁵ Catholics were even more aggrieved when royal edicts of 11 December 1566, and 4 February 1567, restricted, and in some instances banned entirely, certain guild and confraternal banquets, festivals and celebrations.³⁶ The memorialist, Jacques-Auguste de Thou,

³³ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 39. For a broad study of the interaction and balance between guilds and confraternities in urban centres in sixteenth-century France, see Howell A. Lloyd, *The State, France and the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1983), pp. 37-41.

³⁴ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, pp. 222-23.

³⁵ For the commissions of the *maîtres des requêtes* in 1566, see *AHG*, 13, pp. 157-250.

³⁶ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 222.

whose writings attempt to validate the moderate consensus at court, claimed that this legislation was justified, as it weeded out those confraternities that threatened the stability of the town, or whose popular elements were deemed too unruly:

qu'on abolisse entièrement les confréries établies sous prétexte de religion parmi le petit peuple, les festins, les répas, les bâtons (bâtons de confrérie, qui servent à porter aux confréries l'image de quelques saints, ou la représentation de quelque mystère) et autres choses semblables, qui donnent lieu à la superstition, aux troubles, à la débauche, aux querelles, et aux monopoles.³⁷

A parallel aim of the *ordonnance* was to stem the flow of adherents to the confraternities at source. One of its clauses prohibited the guilds from affiliating to any of the local fraternities, while another denied them the right to remodel themselves as confraternities, a prerogative that many guilds had previously taken advantage of.³⁸

Crown censure of the guilds, though, was hardly innovative. Michel de l'Hôpital had used the *ordonnance d'Orléans* to restrain the excesses of the guilds as early as January 1561, supplementing this with further punitive legislation in February 1562 and December 1565.³⁹ Hauser has contended that the crown's repeated attacks on the guilds in the 1560s were not simply to limit militant Catholicism, but aimed to also dissolve their political power and loosen their stranglehold on economic enterprise within the towns. For Hauser, this persistent legislation backfired, though, as it aggravated the guilds, and drove them into the arms of the Catholic leadership: 'the trade unions fell under the sway of the religious brotherhoods, which excluded the non-Catholics, and were soon to lead the

³⁷ De Thou, *Histoire Universelle*, V, p. 183.

³⁸ Anquetil, *L'esprit de la Ligue*, I, p. 213.

³⁹ See especially the *lettres patentes* restricting the activities of the *confréries de métiers* in 1565. Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 222.

revolutionary movement of the League'.⁴⁰ This argument is valid to some extent, but if, as Hauser contends, social tensions and politico-economic stresses within urban centres were the engine driving the empowerment of the guilds and confraternities at this time, it does not explain why many emerging Catholic fraternities after 1567 were centred on the 'quieter' towns of the Limousin, Burgundy, Comminges and Franche-Comté, rather than within vibrant economic centres such as Lyon, Marseille and Rouen. It would suggest that religious motivation was a decisive factor in the rise of these urban bodies, with radical and revolutionary political and economic factors serving to agitate the milieu further.

The development of the confraternities was helped noticeably by the return to favour of Henri de Guise, in 1567. Now reconciled with the king, Guise was able to soften the crown's position regarding the confraternities, advocating an oath of allegiance as a means of securing the loyalty of the populace, rather than the current harsh, punitive legislation. In light of this relaxed sentiment, several new confraternities sprang up across France. At Roussillon, the confraternity of Saint-Esprit was founded in early 1567; the Burgundian confraternity of Saint-Esprit, an innovation of the province's Catholic *lieutenant-général*, Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, was formed in June 1567, while the confraternity of the *Sainte-Croix* at Limoges was established the following month, its affiliates identified by the cross of pewter worn on their hats.⁴¹ The resumption of hostilities in September 1567, however, turned the political picture in France on its head. Catholic elites now petitioned the king to end all sanctions against the confraternities, arguing that the Protestant army was now so strong that Catholic generals would welcome the

⁴⁰ Hauser, 'The French Reformation and the French People', p. 227.

⁴¹ For the creation of the Roussillon confraternity, see Orlea, *La noblesse aux états généraux*, p. 33. For the creation of the Burgundian confraternities of Saint-Esprit, see Druout, *Mayenne et la bourgogne*, II, pp. 130-35. For the birth of the confraternity of the Saint-Croix at Limoges, see Cassan, *Le temps des guerres de religion*, pp. 237-38.

additional manpower these brotherhoods could provide. Consequently, a number of more militant bodies were created; at Autun, another confraternity paying homage to the famous crusading confraternity of the *Sainte-Croix* of the twelfth century was established,⁴² while at Angers the bishop, Gabriel Bouvery, headed a coalition of *confrères*, clergy, nobles and bourgeoisie, all pledging ‘courir sus contre tous perturbateurs, innovateurs et contrevenants à la religion catholique et l’État de Sa majesté... le tout jusqu’à la mort inconclusivement’.⁴³ Orlea has detailed the rise of confraternities at Châlons, Bourges, Troyes and Berry during the first months of 1568, while Castelnau reported similar bodies forming across Anjou, Touraine and Maine during the same period. At Maine, the *confrères* were reported to have combined with a local Catholic *association*, formed by the *lieutenant-général*, Talon, so as to harass the nearby Huguenot communities more effectively.⁴⁴

The militant confraternities of Saulx-Tavannes and Monluc

With the crown still adamant that any sanctioning of formal Catholic *ligues* would only exacerbate matters, the Catholic generals of France jumped at the opportunity to co-opt the highly motivated, well-organised manpower offered by these confraternities. It is no coincidence, then, that two of the most important militant Catholic *associations* of the late 1560s were just such bodies, commanded by the two leading Catholic generals of the time: Saulx-Tavannes, who headed the Burgundian *confrérie du Saint-Esprit*, and Monluc, who directed the establishment

⁴² Lecler, ‘Aux origines de la ligue’, p. 198.

⁴³ E. Mourin, *La réforme et la Ligue en Anjou* (Paris, 1888), pp. 86-88.

⁴⁴ Orlea, *La noblesse aux états généraux*, p. 34. For Catholic association at Maine (18 July 1568), see BN ms fr, 15,547, fos. 66-72, 194; at Troyes (25 June 1568), see BN ms fr, 15,591, fos. 1-2; at Boulogne (18 August 1568), see BN ms fr, 15,547, fo. 278; across Brittany (20 August 1568), see BN ms fr, 15,547, fo. 279; across Provence (26 August 1568), see BN ms fr, 15,547, fos. 329. See also Joanna et al, *Histoire et dictionnaire*, p. 152; *Mémoires de Condé*, VI, pp. 327 on.

of a confraternity at Comminges, in Guyenne, in June 1568.⁴⁵ That two such prominent leaders were the driving forces behind these *associations* raises an important question: were the Catholic generals merely beneficiaries, profiting from a rejuvenation in confraternal ethos in France; or were they instigators, recreating their *associations* under a different guise, and re-establishing their power bases by allying themselves to these new symbols of Catholic piety? If the latter is true, their intention may well have been to side step crown censure by involving themselves with bodies generally perceived to be 'less illegal' than the *ligues* of the early 1560s.

Thompson suggests that Saulx-Tavannes' confraternity was based on observations made of similar Catholic groups active in the Flemish revolts of 1565-67, especially the *confrérie de la Sainte-Barbe* in neighbouring Franche-Comté.⁴⁶ Saulx-Tavannes would apparently scrutinize their structural, organisational, and financial strengths, then incorporate these into his Burgundian enterprises. It seems that the *lieutenant-général* also tailored the 'articles of association' to suit this purpose, with the oath of allegiance, in which members pledged to fight to the death for the defence of the Catholic Church, leaving little doubt over its militant tendencies, while Saulx-Tavannes himself was most explicit in its *raison d'être*: 'Rien n'étonna jamais tant les Huguenots que cette confrérie; c'était les battre de leur

⁴⁵ For details of Saulx-Tavannes' *confrérie de Saint-Ésprit* in Burgundy, see Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, pp. 383-84. For Monluc and *confrérie* at Comminges, see J. Lestrade, *Les Huguenots en Comminges* (Paris, Auch, 1900), p. 19; Lecler, 'Aux origines de la ligue', p. 203; Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc*, p. 512; Joanna *et al*, *Histoire et dictionnaire*, pp. 174-75.

⁴⁶ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 313. For analysis of the structures of confraternities of 1567 and 1568 at Dijon, Angers, Le Mans, Chalons-sur Saône and Mâcon, see Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, pp. 383-91; Robert Harding, 'The mobilisation of confraternities', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 11 (1980), pp. 85-107. Mariéjol notes that each confraternity was dedicated 'au nom de notre seigneur Jésus-Christ et par la communion de son précieux corps et sang [contractaient] une fraternité pour de tout leur pouvoir, soutenir l'Église de Dieu, maintenir la foi ancienne et le roi, souverain naturel et très chrétien seigneur'. Jean Hippolyte Mariéjol, 'La réforme et la Ligue. L'édit de Nantes (1559-1598)', in Ernest Lavisse (ed.), *Histoire de France depuis les origines jusqu'à la Revolution* (9 vols., Paris, 1903-10), VI, ii, p. 103.

même invention de fraternité, opposer d'intelligence contre intelligence, ligue contre ligue'.⁴⁷

The establishment of the confraternity at Comminges had a different history, a product of the convoluted political climate of mid 1568. The Peace of Longjumeau may have ended the second religious war in March 1568, but it did little to solve the overriding sectarian crisis. Despite the continuing presence of the Guise at court, the crown decided to once more temper Catholic ambitions. Reiterating its ban on all *associations* across France was seen as a gesture of goodwill to the Protestant *grandeues*, who had complained bitterly of the insidious nature of these Catholic compacts. Possibly aware that such a directive would not be entirely successful, or that certain allegiances would be difficult to terminate, all citizens were required to swear an oath of fidelity to the crown, and to proclaim they had rejected all illegal affiliations. This very much mirrored the crown's policy of May 1565, but with one important distinction. Then, the focus of attention was the proscribing of Catholic militancy. Now, the crown desired popular consensus and acknowledgement of its authority, which required that Huguenots as well as Catholics agreed to pledge their loyalty. The expedient answer was to draft two oaths: one to be sworn by Catholics, one by Protestants, each draft containing an identical body of text, save for the last sentence. Thus, Catholics pledged observance to 'une seule esglise romaine et un seul souverain', while Protestants promised 'vivre en bonne intelligence avec les catholicques'.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, *Mémoires de plusieurs choses advenues en France es guerres civiles* (8 vols., eds. J. Michaud and J. Poujoulat, Paris, 1838), VIII, p. 289. For articles of confraternity of Saint-Ésprit, see Holt, 'Burgundians into Frenchmen', p. 359.

⁴⁸ For text of royal oath of allegiance of May 1565, see BN ms fr, 20,461, fo. 57. For text of the Catholic oath of allegiance of April 1568, see AM Toulouse, AA 15, no. 2; for text of the Protestant oath of allegiance of April 1568, see AM Toulouse, AA 15, no. 4.

The crown's expectation over the efficacy of the oath does not appear to have been that great, however, for while it pressed the population to pledge their fidelity, it also initiated a plan to augment the royal army with volunteers from the provinces. In June 1568, the leading generals around the kingdom received the following directive:

Pour ce que sa Majesté désire sçavoir de quel nombre de ses subiectz aptes à porter armes elles se pourra ayder en cas de nécessité, à ceste cause nous vous mandons et ordonnons par ces présentes d'en faire la discution par toutes les villes et lieux de vostre diocèze, et sçavoir en quel équipage ilz sont, soit d'armes ou cheval, et en dresser les rolles lesquelz vous nous envoyerez au plus tost que fère ce pourra, mettant à part et séparment ceulx de la religion catholique, et en ung autre rolle ceulx de la religion pretendue reformée.⁴⁹

Monluc received his orders in early July, and delegated the *sénéchal* of Guyenne to start the count. Significantly, though, he ordered only that a 'dénombrement des catholiques' be made, with no facility to list the potential Huguenot forces of the province.⁵⁰ Monluc then instructed Pierre de Lancau, the bishop of Lombez, to undertake a 'description' of all Catholics within the jurisdiction of Comminges, a town that Monluc had long been closely associated with, having been a confidant of the former bishop, Pierre d'Albret.⁵¹ On 10 August, he added a further twist, requesting that Lancau 'faire la description et confederation en forme de confrérie en la ville'.⁵² This effectively ordered the bishop to draft a number of those Catholics counted into the new confraternity, to be based within the town. Lancau complied fully with Monluc's request, summoning the *états* of Comminges

⁴⁹ Joyeuse to consuls at Comminges (July 1568), Abbé Jean Lestrade, 'Les Huguenots en Comminges. Documents inédits, II', *Archives Historiques de la Gascogne*, 14, (Paris, Auch, 1910), p. 81.

⁵⁰ *AHG*, 19, p. 323.

⁵¹ Monluc to Pierre de Lancau, bishop of Lombez (26 July 1568), AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fos. 3-4. Pierre d'Albret served as an emissary of the French king to the Spanish and papal courts during the early 1560s, and was present at the infamous 'secret meeting' of Catholic nobles of Guyenne at Grenade in 1563, at which, claimed Jeanne d'Albret, the Catholic leadership of the south-west agreed to hand over the province to Philip II of Spain. See Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 331, esp. note 2.

⁵² AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fo. 31.

on 11 August to validate this innovation. The delegates were unanimous in their support, pledging their affiliation to the confraternity, and vowing ‘vivre et mourir dans la religion de ses predecesseurs’.⁵³

The results of the count are recorded in the ‘rolle et description des chefs de maisons et habitans catholicques romaines du comté de Comminges’, a voluminous account listing the name, age, occupation and weaponry possessed by each Catholic of the region.⁵⁴ Incredibly, the majority of those questioned admitted to owning some form of weapon, despite the numerous disarmament edicts of the preceding years, the most common being an *arquebus*, *hallebarde*, *pique* or *arbalète*. Anyone whose Catholic credentials were questioned was required to provide a testament from local ‘bons et fidelles catholicques’, usually office holders or town councillors, otherwise their name would not be entered into the roll.⁵⁵ It seems evident, then, that Monluc and Lancrau were not simply counting heads, but recreating the *associations* that had served Catholics so well in 1563. That it took the form of a confraternity seems to have been an expedient, a devious way re-establish Catholic power bases and augment local militias while avoiding censure from the crown, as confraternities were not yet as strictly censured as the many other forms of Catholic *association* were. But these were *ligues* by any other name; organised by a Catholic captain, unified through a sacred oath, and manned by civilian militia sworn to live and die in the defence of the Catholic church. Souriac is forthright in stating that: ‘[Monluc] cherche encore une fois à mettre le pays en état d’alerte sous la forme d’une association des catholiques’. Courteault concurs; noting that in its structure and

⁵³ *États de Lombez, maison épiscopale de Pierre de Lancrau, évêque de Lombez (9-11 August 1568)*. AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fos. 44-47. For full text of the Catholic oath sworn at Comminges, see AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fos. 11-18.

⁵⁴ AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fos. 60-62. A similar dossier exists giving a ‘description’ of Catholics of the *châtellenie* of l’Isle-en-Dodon. See AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fo. 37.

⁵⁵ AD Haute-Garonne, C 3,498, fos. 41-44.

purpose, the confraternity at Comminges imitated Monluc's 'ligues campanères' of the Agenais extremely closely, while Crouzet and Lestrade have no doubt this was a 'confédération militaire' rather than a pious union.⁵⁶ Monluc was not alone in spotting this loophole in crown legislation. Within months, similar Catholic bodies were established at Anjou, Touraine, Champagne, Périgueux, Agen and Limoges, each the result of the local Catholic hierarchy's usurpation of the directive.⁵⁷ In Burgundy, Saulx-Tavannes appears to have taken the orders to initiate a count of Catholics within his jurisdiction as a validation of the *associations* that had already been established - the *lieutenant-général* maintained his militia under arms at all times, claiming that Burgundy, as a 'frontier province', required a strong, permanent military presence - and simply accelerated the growth of these Catholic bodies.⁵⁸ Lecler, however, notes that Saulx-Tavannes was astute enough to distance himself from the leadership of many of these confraternities, appointing Jean Bégat, *conseiller* at the Dijon court, to head them, so as not to be seen to pose too great a threat to crown authority.⁵⁹

This chapter has revealed that, while the Catholic grandees within the French court had little influence on events in the south-west of France during the 1560s, they were integral to wider Catholic activism across the kingdom throughout this period. The dukes and cardinal of Guise, for example, were instrumental in securing Spanish and papal military and financial assistance for the Catholic cause, and, during their participation in the Triumvirate, it seemed for a brief moment in 1562 that Catholic

⁵⁶ Souriac, *Décentralisation administrative*, I, p. 405; Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn*, p. 229; Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 386; Lestrade, 'Les Huguenots en Comminges', pp. 76-80.

⁵⁷ At Agen, the archives reveal that the *états de l'Agenais* met in September 1568 to allocate 4,000 *livres* to allow Monluc and Martial de Nort to make a 'description' of Catholics across the region. AD Lot-et-Gironde, E Sup. Agen, CC 67 (27 September 1568).

⁵⁸ Protestants in Burgundy had complained repeatedly to the king that Tavannes's *confrères* were actively (and illegally) involved in maintaining order and policing the towns of Burgundy. Maurice Wilkinson, *A History of the League or Sainte Union 1576-1595* (Glasgow, 1929), p. 4.

⁵⁹ Lecler, 'Aux origines de la ligue', pp. 201-202.

consensus might be capable of forcing the crown to overturn its adherence to toleration. The military generals played a role in supporting the Catholic cause too, especially Saulx-Tavannes and Monluc. Monluc's involvement in the explosion of confraternal activity across France after 1567 revitalised Catholic activism, which had been effectively censored by this time. The generals took advantage of this phenomenon, and of a loophole in crown legislation that seemed to deem the confraternities 'less illegal' than the preceding *ligues*, to usurp the leadership of these bodies, and to employ the *confrères* in the defence of Catholic towns. Anquetil has little doubt about the importance of these episodes, seeing in the confraternities of 1568 a mirror image of the militia-based *ligues* of 1563, and a precursor to organisational elements adopted by the Catholic League after 1576:

La jalousie entre les deux religions ne se borna pas à l'émulation d'une plus grande régularité; elles cherchèrent à s'appuyer l'une contre l'autre de la force des confédérations et des serments. Depuis long-temps la romaine entretenoit dans son sein des associations connues sous le nom confréries. Elles avoient des lieux et des jours d'assemblée fixés, une police, des repas, des exercices, des derniers communs. Il ne fut question que d'ajouter à cela un serment d'employer ses biens et sa vie pour la défense de la foi attaquée. Avec cette formule, les confréries devinrent comme d'elles-mêmes, dans chaque ville, des corps de troupes prêtes à agir au gré des chefs, et leur bannières, des étendarts militaires.⁶⁰

The role of Spain and the papacy will now be examined in greater detail, to determine the full extent of external influences on Catholic activism in the south-west, and to assess more accurately the roles played by individuals in these affairs.

⁶⁰ Anquetil, *L'esprit de la Ligue*, I, p. 183.

Chapter 10. Spain and the papacy

If the influence of the Guise has been shown to be limited at best, what, then, of the part played by foreign powers such as Spain and the papacy in affairs at Bordeaux, Agen and Toulouse? With Catholic militants of the south-west ever eager to gain leverage against the crown and its policy of accommodating Protestantism, the intrigues of Madrid and Rome could only muddy the waters of an already volatile region. By offering financial and military support, these two potentates had a prime opportunity to manipulate the Catholics of Guyenne and Languedoc, and to destabilise the French crown's waning authority there yet further. Both of these eventualities will be shown to have occurred during the 1560s. The question, then, would be: if the *ligueurs* of the south-west did, in fact, commit themselves to these foreign agencies, were their subsequent motivations a reflection of their personal beliefs or grievances, or were they acting as puppets of their new patrons? And if financial and military assistance was forthcoming, to what extent were their agendas free from any constraints placed on them by their foreign paymasters? This chapter will explore these issues by examining the relations between the *associations* of the south-west and the Catholic powers of Europe, and by determining the extent to which the *ligueurs* were independent entities, free from obligations to peripheral bodies, or tied to specific policies as a result of their commitments to these external powers.

Although France and Spain negotiated the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559 to end decades of conflict, the *détente* failed to re-establish amicable relations.

Madrid was especially perturbed at the degree of leniency being granted by the French crown to its Huguenot population. For the Spanish king, Philip II, religious plurality was anathema, and religious toleration should be opposed unreservedly. His intent to combat such a conciliatory stance was clear as early as 1561: 'le premier point est de se détacher de la reine mère, qui manque ou de fixité dans les idées, ou d'honnêteté dans les intentions: il faut donc encourager les pratiques de Montluc et des catholiques'.¹ Courteault suggests that the French crown was well aware of this hostility, and appointed Monluc as *lieutenant-général* to Guyenne in December 1561 specifically to reassure Philip of its commitment to pacifying the south-west, thus forestalling any Spanish military intervention across its borders.² If so, the ploy seemed to have worked, for Chantonay, the Spanish ambassador, informed his sovereign that, in Monluc: 'Guyenne has found its saviour'.³

For the moment, Philip seemed content to menace France rather than intervene directly. Spanish gold lined the pockets of the Triumvirate, while his soldiers reinforced Catholic armies throughout 1562. In Guyenne, Spanish troops under Don Carbajal were integral to Monluc's successes at Castelvieux (3 July), Penne (August), Realville (9 September), Lectoure (2 October), and at the battles of the Dordogne (5-8 October), and Vergt (9 October).⁴ Indeed, the Catholics at Bordeaux were so keen to secure further reinforcements that the French ambassador at the Spanish court, Saint-Sulpice, became inundated with requests for additional units to be dispatched north. So much so, in fact, that in one reply to Burie, the

¹ Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II*, I, p. 327.

² For Monluc's role in reassuring Philip, and his general relations with Spain during this early period, see Courteault, *Un cadet de gascogne*, pp. 208-212.

³ Chantonay to Philippe II (December 1561), in Nancy Lyman Roelker, *Queen of Navarre. Jeanne d'Albret 1528-1572* (Cambridge, MA., 1968), p. 193.

⁴ *Commentaires*, pp. 517-69.

ambassador retorted, rather irritably, that: 'les gens de guerres n'assemblent pas comme chanoines en chapitre'.⁵

Early in 1563, however, Spanish foreign policy towards France received two setbacks. First, its attempts to prevent further concessions being granted to the Reformers failed, as the Peace of Amboise enshrined explicit, if limited, rights of worship for Protestants within French law. Chantonay was blunt in his condemnation of the edict, fearing Catherine had been intimidated by Protestant powers across Europe:

Si les hérétiques obtiennent ce qu'ils désirent avec l'appui de la reine d'Angleterre... les catholiques se soulèveront à leur tour, et ils seront soutenus par le roi mon mature et par tous les princes catholiques; leur cause serait sainte et conforme aux intérêts de Dieu.⁶

Secondly, when the Council of Trent closed in January 1563, promises of reform and revitalisation of Catholicism were forthcoming from all European affiliates; all, that is, except the Gallican delegates, who refused to register its dictates, or to accept its ideological development within France. Spain now faced a conundrum. Should it intervene to prevent Protestantism becoming irrevocably established within the kingdom that bordered its northern reaches?

Spain and Monluc

One possible course of action lay in offering support to the numerous Catholic *associations* that sprang up across France during 1563. This would allow

⁵ Saint-Sulpice to Burie (20 July 1562), Edmond Cabié, *Ambassade en Espagne de Jean Ébrard, seigneur de St. Sulpice de 1562 à 1565* (Albi, 1903), p. 53. For communications and requests from Burie, Monluc, and Noailles to Saint-Sulpice for additional Spanish troops, see Cabié, *Guerres de religion*, pp. 8-15; Cabié, *Ambassade en Espagne de Jean Ébrard*, pp. 61; 84-86.

⁶ Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II*, I, pp. 276-77.

Spain to apply pressure on the crown from within. The obvious choice for such attention was Monluc, whose military reputation and known commitment to the Catholic *ligues* had recently been augmented by promotion to the lieutenancy of south-west Guyenne, with the more moderate Burie reassigned east of the Lot river. Both Forneron and Ruble are convinced that Monluc was to become, if he was not already, an agent of Philip, and quote his voluminous correspondence with Spanish intermediaries such as Jean de Bardaxi, a Spanish agent living in Guyenne, as evidence.⁷ While archival remains fail to corroborate accusations of overt collusion between Spain and Monluc, several of the letters between the two do discuss the state of Catholic hegemony in Guyenne, the progress of the Reform movement in the south-west, and the need for Spanish reinforcements or finances to be sent to Bordeaux.⁸ Even Monluc's biographer, Courteault, notes the close relationship between Monluc and Bardaxi, reporting that at one meeting, in February 1564, Bardaxi enquired how Spain could gain the confidence of the governor of Languedoc, Henri de Montmorency-Damville, and the extent to which the Catholic nobility of Guyenne would support Spanish attempts to oust the Calvinist Jeanne d'Albret, queen of Navarre, from her capital at Pau.⁹ Courteault adds that Philip promised great rewards to those that helped, with safe haven in Spain and a pension from the crown as a safety net should their campaign fail.¹⁰ While Courteault's version of this meeting is speculative at best, a later letter from Philip reveals that the

⁷ See Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II*, I, pp. 293-330; Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 317-71; V, pp. 76, 77, notes. Bardaxi had gained the ear of Monluc through his cousin, Felipe, who had served for two decades as a loyal captain of the veteran general. Ironically, Felipe Bardaxi was accused of blasphemy by the inquisition in 1558 while his force was camped at Saragossa. He only escaped punishment when Monluc intervened and managed to rescind all charges. Felipe was still hung in effigy at Saragossa, though, in October 1563, and his name only cleared from the warrant book of the Inquisition in 1567, on the orders of the king of Spain. See Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 318 note 1.

⁸ See, for example, Monluc to Philip II (February 1564), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 319-27; Monluc to Philip II (March 1564), *Ibid.*, pp. 333-37.

⁹ Courteault, *Un Cadet de Gascogne*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Spanish king was most pleased with Monluc's cooperation at the time, thanking him personally for his influence in rousing a strong force to invade Béarn.¹¹

It is difficult to know Monluc's mindset at this juncture. It is doubtful that he ever considered ceding French soil to Spain, as his detractors later claimed, or that he would allow Spanish troops to invade France from the Pyrenees, simply to secure stability within his province. As regards the accusations of bribery and improper financial dealings, they are impossible to validate due to the loss of relevant accounts. It would be naïve to presume that Monluc was never involved in financial irregularities, though. They were common practice in this period, and, for some, a perk of nobility. Roy, for example, has said of Monluc, that he 'sold commissions, pardons and exemptions, accepted gifts, and falsified musters', and that as *lieutenant-général* in Guyenne he was 'able to corner the market in essential military supplies, which he then resold at great profit. His house at Agen was a kind of bank, for he lent money, at high rates, to intending purchasers'.¹² But, again, without surviving financial records, much of this is mere speculation. What appears to be certain, though, is that Monluc was quite willing to have the king of Spain help him and other generals re-establish stability and security in France, even promoting, in October 1564, the idea of a meeting between Philip and Charles IX to collaborate over the restoration of peace.¹³ But his uneasiness over the Peace of Amboise, and concern that accommodation was having a negative influence on Catholic communities, caused Monluc to use his relations with the Spanish court more as a political weapon within his own government, implying that he had the full support of Philip to gain leverage against the moderates at court.

¹¹ Philippe II to Monluc (13 September 1566), see Pierre Honoré Champion, *Charles IX, la France et le contrôle de l'Espagne* (2 vols., Paris, 1939), I, p. 33.

¹² Roy, *Blaise de Monluc*, p. 24.

¹³ Monluc to Bardaxi (27 October 1564), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 361-64; 365-71.

Jeanne d'Albret and the Catholic leadership

It is evident, nevertheless, that Monluc did share a concern with Philip of Spain over their troublesome neighbour, the Calvinist queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret. Jeanne had commenced the Protestantising of Béarn and Navarre in 1561, banning Catholicism from her territories and using its churches as temples for Reformed services. By 1563, the extent of this conversion began to alarm Catholics in Spain and Guyenne, more so when it was confirmed that Huguenot grandees, such as admiral Coligny and Odêt de Châtillon, bishop of Beauvais, were known to support Jeanne's Calvinist state within the French court. It is alleged that Monluc actually warned the queen of Navarre, in early 1563, that if she continued to favour the Reformers, then he would be forced to intervene in affairs.¹⁴ When Condé heard of this, he complained to the crown over Monluc's insolent behaviour to a monarch. Both the king and the regent, Catherine de Medici, felt compelled to reprimand Monluc for his audacity: 'vous entretenir doucement avec la Royne de Navarre, sans l'offencer ny l'irriter de parolles ny d'autres choses',¹⁵ and ordered that the Spanish troops garrisoned within the region be maintained under close control.¹⁶ In late November 1563, Monluc felt compelled to ignore this curb, warning his fellow Catholics at Bordeaux that Jeanne: 's'en va faire perdre entièrement nostre religion'.¹⁷

As a result of these tensions, the relationship between Monluc and the queen of Navarre deteriorated rapidly. Jeanne repeatedly accused the Catholic leadership of Guyenne of biased governance of the south-west, and of repealing the terms of royal

¹⁴ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 470.

¹⁵ Charles IX to Monluc (June 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 6,001, fos. 42-43.

¹⁶ Charles IX to Monluc (May 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 6,001, fos. 7-8.

¹⁷ *Mémoires et instructions de Monluc* (November 1563), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 294-301.

edicts that validated Huguenot rights of worship, while confirming those that reproached Protestant practices. In October 1563, she added collusion to these accusations, alleging that Monluc, Damville, Armagnac, Terride, Negrepelisse and Pierre d'Albret, bishop of Comminges, had plotted against her and the French king at a secret meeting at Grenade, and that Monluc's son, Jean, had already been dispatched to Madrid to secure Spanish troops for a coming confrontation.¹⁸ Monluc rejected these accusations out of hand in December, claiming they were a slight on the good name of the Catholic nobility of Guyenne. He reiterated his devotion to the crown, and commended the good behaviour of his captains to Catherine.¹⁹

In February 1564, however, the allegations resurfaced. The Protestant captain, Marchastel, baron de Peyre, presented six articles before the French crown, each signed by Jeanne d'Albret, four *vicomtes* and many other leading Protestant dignitaries of the south-west, claiming that a Catholic cartel was active in Guyenne, its aim to deliver the province over to the king of Spain.²⁰ Apparently, the *sénéchal* de Quercy, François Séguier, *seigneur* de la Gravière, had overheard Monluc discussing the cartel's activities, and had dispatched the captain Rapin to inform Marchastel.²¹ On hearing these new accusations, Monluc was furious. In a blunt letter to Catherine de Medici, he denied all knowledge of such a cartel, and rejected assertions that he, or any other Catholic captains in Guyenne, were intent on

¹⁸ Jean had, in fact, recently visited Spain, but merely as a stopping off point on his journey to Malta. See Courteault, *Un Cadet de Gascogne*, p. 210.

¹⁹ Monluc to Charles IX (27 December 1563), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 302-305. Monluc to Catherine de Medici (27 December 1563), *Ibid.*, pp. 305-307. Monluc cites that Candalle, de Trans, d'Estissac, de Lauzan, de Montpezat, Gondrin, Terride and Negrepelisse were slighted by Jeanne, though only the latter two appear in the queen's initial accusation.

²⁰ In a letter to Philip of Spain, Pierre Albret, bishop of Comminges, warned the king that accusations from Jeanne d'Albret and the Protestants of Béarn had been delivered by Rapin, a Protestant cavalry captain, to Catherine de Medici, alleging that Monluc, Damville, Terride, *vicomte* d'Orthe, de Luxe, cardinal Armagnac, and himself 'se sont réunis et ont résolu de donner à votre majesté toute la Guyenne, et ils ont envoyé leur décision à votre majesté par un fils du dit Monluc'. Pierre d'Albret to Philippe II (15 April 1564), in Raymond Ritter, 'Jeanne d'Albret et les troubles de la religion en Béarn, Bigorre, Soule et Navarre, 1560-1572', *Revue de Béarn*, 4 (1929), p. 82.

²¹ Courteault, *Un Cadet de Gascogne*, p. 214.

delivering the province into Spanish hands: 'Je n'ay ni n'auray jamais aucune intelligence avec le roy d'Espagne ny autre prince que ce soit pout luy bailer la Guyenne, ny faire aucune chose qui soit contre le service du roy'.²² Armagnac similarly rejected any involvement in such affairs, claiming that the meeting at Grenade had witnessed nothing more sinister than the funeral obsequies for the baron de Clermont, and the marriage of the son of Mirepoix to Terride's daughter.²³ This, he continued, accounted for the presence of Monluc and so many Catholic nobles within the town, adding that he and the bishop of Comminges had performed the ceremonies personally.

The affair dragged the Catholic-dominated *parlements* at Bordeaux and Toulouse into the fray. Jeanne d'Albret's evidence was scrutinised openly before the courts, while Rapin was arrested at Toulouse, and la Gravière and Marchastel summoned before the Bordeaux magistrates to explain their accusations. When Jeanne complained to the *conseil privé* that mere provincial courts were challenging her testimony, the crown intervened and ordered the processes against the three to be dropped.²⁴ Catholics, though, were far from content. In May, Monluc went on the offensive. In a letter to the king, he wrote: 'ceulx qui ont dit et escript que j'ay intelligence avec le roy d'Espaigne... et que [nous] avons fait ligue ensemble et sommes resolluz de rendre ladite paix de Guyenne entre les mains du roy d'Espaigne, ont menty'.²⁵ The crown received similar, individual remonstrations from all prominent Catholic captains of Guyenne, followed by a joint letter, written at the abbey of Belleperche, near Montauban, which denounced the lies of la

²² Monluc to Catherine de Medici (5 March 1564), BN ms fr, 15,879, fo. 111.

²³ 'Madame, j'ay esté adverty... que ledict sieur de Monluc et moy avions quelque intelligence ensemble, pour mectre le Roy d'Espaigne dedans vostre pays de Guyenne...et pour ce, madame, que ces calomnies ne doibvent estre tollerées à l'endroit des bons serviteurs du Roy et vostres'. Cardinal d'Armagnac to Catherine de Medici (5 March 1564), BN ms fr, 15,879, fo. 112.

²⁴ Rapin though remained in prison for several more months. See Courteault, *Un Cadet de Gasgogne*, p. 211.

²⁵ Monluc to Charles IX (5 May 1564), BN ms fr, 15,879, fo. 113.

Gravière and Marchastel, and demanded reparation from those involved in such slanderous accusations.²⁶ Damville, meanwhile, wrote a separate letter to Catherine, expressing his dismay at being accused by such 'imposteurs', claiming he had not even been present at Grenade during the period stated.²⁷

The Catholic elite of the south-west then rallied to the defence of their co-religionists. At Bordeaux, a *requête* was drafted by Prévôt, Lange, Bourdin, and many leading members of the clergy of Bordeaux, and presented to the *parlement* in May 1564, condemning Jeanne's accusations as falsehoods.²⁸ At Toulouse, the *premier président* of the *parlement*, Jean Daffis, informed the crown that continuing suspicions against the Catholic leadership of the region would be viewed as a direct slight against the *parlementaires* too.²⁹ The situation, however, soon become entangled with the ongoing controversy at Bordeaux between Lagebâton and Lange, with the *premier président* insisting that Candalle's *ligue* remained a threat to the stability of the province, but that Monluc and the Catholic nobility were actively supporting this illegal compact.³⁰ The *Mémoires de Condé* make much of this allegation, claiming that Monluc, Prévôt and the clergy of Guyenne had urged

²⁶ See, for example, Monluc to Catherine de Medici (5 May 1564), BN ms fr, 15,879, fo. 113; Armagnac to Catherine de Medici (15 May 1564), *HGL*, 9, *Preuves* 13, p. 512; Terride to Catherine de Medici (27 March 1564), BN ms fr, 15,880, fo. 11; Terride to Charles IX (27 March 1564), BN ms fr, 15,880, fo. 13. For joint letter signed by Armagnac, Monluc, Negrepelisse, Mirepoix and Terride (15 May 1564), see Tamizey de Larroque, 'Lettres inédites du Cardinal d'Armagnac', p. 37.

²⁷ Damville to Catherine de Medici (30 May 1564), BN nouv. acq. fr, 6,013, fo. 31. As if to prove his loyalty to the crown, Damville added that he had received secret information on the arrival, incognito, of the Spanish Ambassador, Chantonay, to Avignon that month.

²⁸ Devienne, *Histoire de la ville de Bordeaux*, I, p. 154.

²⁹ Daffis to Charles IX (17 May 1564), *HGL*, 9, *Preuves* 14, pp. 512-14.

³⁰ Lagebâton to Charles IX (20 August 1564), *Mémoires de Condé*, V, pp. 182-85. A second letter, written the following week, named Candalle, de Trans, Savignac, Lanssac, the *sieur* de Merville, Candalle's brother, Lange, and other Catholic *gentilshommes* of Guyenne, as continuing to arm and assemble men to patrol the local countryside, their numbers swollen by the participation of many locals, and even several royal officials from the *sénéchaussée*. Lagebâton to Charles IX (28 August 1564), BN ms fr, 15,880, fos. 246-47.

Candalle and the *ligueurs* at Cadillac to continue armed resistance in defiance of the royal edicts, and offered them succour as necessary.³¹

The allegations against the Catholic leadership of Guyenne and western Languedoc of conspiring with Spain have become the bedrock of chronicles that try to prove a link between the *ligues* of the 1560s and the intrigues of Philip II. Thompson, for example, suggests that much of Monluc's activity in the south-west was determined by Spanish ambition: 'Monluc was the military, the cardinal of Lorraine the diplomatic, agent of Philip's purpose'.³² But the subject has also been influenced by the numerous Protestant histories, many written in hindsight in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which claim that the Catholics of the south-west met secretly with Spanish officials at Bayonne in 1565 to plan the later Saint-Bartholomew massacres of French Huguenots of 1572. De Thou certainly had little doubt that this meeting was both a logical progression from the Compact of Péronne, and a precursor to massacre:

It is a well known fact that... the matter under discussion was the means to deliver France from the Protestants, whose faith was regarded as pestilential. The conference ended in the adoption of the opinion expressed by the duke of Alba, which coincided with that of Philip; namely, that all the most illustrious heads should first fall; and that the plan of the Sicilian Vespers should be followed, and all Protestants massacred indiscriminately.³³

While much of the hysteria surrounding a 'Spanish plot' as the genesis of the 1572 massacres has been de-bunked by recent historiography, there is no doubt that contemporaries were extremely concerned about Monluc's standpoint in Franco-

³¹ See 'Délibération du sieur de Candalle et autres de sa ligue contre le Roy et ses edits faits au mois d'août 1564', *Mémoires de Condé*, V, pp. 170-76; 'Ligue, confédération et alliance du sieur de Candalle et autres sieurs papistes de Guyenne, bons fideles sujets du Roy catholique, voulans vivre et mourir en la religion ancienne Romaine et Catholique, au mois d'août 1564', *Mémoires de Condé*, V, pp. 177-81.

³² Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 351.

³³ Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 247.

Spanish affairs.³⁴ Jeanne d'Albret's warning that the Catholic general was planning to 'sell' Guyenne to Philip in return for significant military aid has been noted above, but Condé also alleged that Monluc might facilitate a Spanish invasion into Navarre in order to secure military reinforcements, while Catherine de Medici hinted that she was well aware of: 'ceux qui veulent estre estimez obéyssans ne peuvent soustenir sans encourir le mesme crime de rebellion dont ilz ont accusé leurs adversaries'.³⁵ If this is correct, Monluc was playing an exceedingly dangerous game, for affiliation with a foreign power was a treasonable crime. Certainly, Monluc's correspondence does refer to a meeting of Catholic nobles taking place at Grenade in late-1563, but there is no evidence to support claims that such 'subversive' projects were discussed there.³⁶ And it should be noted, as Sournia does, that the allegations against Monluc were nothing compared to the accusations of high treason levelled against Coligny (and for that matter Condé too), for conspiring to deliver Le Havre to Elizabeth of England: 'Coligny a livré à l'étranger une partie du territoire français, Monluc a écrit une correspondance qui n'a eu aucune conséquence historique'.³⁷

One thing worth noting here, however, is that despite the French crown's awareness of Monluc's 'friendliness' with Spain, it never once moved to oust its general from power in Guyenne. In fact, throughout the 1560s, Monluc was only ever promoted, and rarely officially rebuked. The reason can only have been one of

³⁴ Bourgeon thinks the 1572 massacres were not coordinated events, but merely an interruption of Charles IX's plans. Jean-Louis Bourgeon, *Charles IX devant la Saint-Barthélemy* (Geneva, 1995), pp. 181-84. For debate surrounding Catholic meetings at Bayonne in 1565 and discussions over premeditation of massacre, see Denis Crouzet, *La nuit de la Saint-Barthélemy. Un rêve perdu de la renaissance* (Paris, 1994), pp. 142-78. For wider discussions of Saint Bartholomew's massacres, see Sutherland, *The Massacre of Saint Bartholomew*; Géralde Nakam, *Au lendemain de la Saint-Barthélemy. Guerre civile et famine* (Paris, 1975); Alfred Soman (ed.), *The Massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Reappraisals and Documents* (The Hague, 1974); Robert M. Kingdon, *Myths about the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre 1572-1576* (London, 1988).

³⁵ For Condé's accusation, see Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc, Historien*, p. 470 note 4. For Catherine's quote, see Catherine de Medici to Monluc (31 March 1563), *Lettres de Catherine de Medici*, I, p. 552.

³⁶ Monluc to *protonotaire* of Sainte-Gemme (5 March 1564), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, p. 331.

³⁷ Jean-Charles Sournia, *Blaise de Monluc. Soldat et écrivain (1500-1577)* (Paris, 1981), pp. 293-94.

expediency: Monluc had successfully maintained the peace in what had previously been the most fractious of French provinces. Catherine was certainly not about to allow Guyenne to explode into uncontrollable civil war or to remove the main buttress against almost certain Protestant hegemony of the south-west, so long as Monluc remained loyal - if only tacitly - in his duties. In March 1565, there was an official inquiry into the general accusations against the Catholic leadership of the south-west. This inquiry was conducted by marshal Bourdillon, on the orders of the *conseil privé*, currently resident in Bordeaux as it accompanied the king on his tour of the kingdom. Numerous witnesses were interviewed, including Monluc, Candalle and Lange, but no recriminations were forthcoming.³⁸ Moreover, Catholic advisors to the king, such as Vieilleville, warned that the south-west was now a powder keg, ready to explode at the smallest of provocations. It would be wise, they suggested, for the crown to lean more towards the Catholic party for the time being, at least until the king had returned safely to Paris. As such, all complaints against Monluc and the Catholic hierarchy were dismissed, and the general ordered to ready his forces to support the crown at a moment's notice, should civil strife erupt once more.³⁹ In general, then, the allegations that the *ligueurs* colluded with Spain prove inconclusive. It is certain that Spanish troops did play an important role in Monluc's defence of Guyenne during 1562, and that he and his co-activists, Armagnac, Candalle, Terride, Roffignac, d'Escars, and others, all had favourable relations with Madrid. But accusations of duplicity, such as the secret meetings at Grenade in 1563, and Bayonne in 1565, and of Monluc's intention to 'sell' Guyenne to Philip, remain fragmentary and ambiguous, more supposition and speculation than fact.

³⁸ Samazeuilh, *Histoire de l'Agenais*, II, p. 126; O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, pp. 236-39.

³⁹ Charles Weiss, *Papiers d'état du Cardinal de Granvelle (1516-1565)* (9 vols., Paris, 1841-1852), VIII, p. 632.

The papal inquisition

That certain of the region's Catholic elites acted as agents of papal aspirations in the south-west during this period is, however, more evident. The main protagonist here was cardinal Armagnac, with much of the focus falling on the campaign of European powers to reverse the policy of Jeanne d'Albret, queen of Navarre, to establish Protestantism within her lands. With the important Bourbon territories of Béarn and Navarre sandwiched between south-west France and northern Spain, the Catholic parties of Guyenne and Madrid were understandably nervous of these Calvinist enclaves, so close to their own lands. Concerted efforts to dissuade Jeanne had begun from an early stage. In November 1559, the cardinal of Lorraine urged the military captains of the south-west, Monluc and de Termes, to cooperate fully with the Spanish viceroy to Navarre, who was attempting to unite the Catholic forces of the region so as to intimidate the king and queen of Navarre.⁴⁰ A breakthrough of sorts was reached in early 1562, with the Spanish ambassador, Chantonnay, cajoling Antoine de Navarre into acquiescence, wooing the king with the offer to join the compact of Catholic grandees (the Triumvirate) against Condé and the Huguenots. Attempts to secure the denunciation of his wife, and a promise to void all recent legislation validating the Calvinist faith in his lands failed, with Jeanne stiffening her resolve to push ahead with further religious reform.⁴¹ But the queen of Navarre was now isolated and surrounded by baying Catholic powers. Spain, keen both to eradicate Protestantism and to regain the territory it had lost to the Bourbons in 1517, moved large numbers of troops to its borders, while the French crown put its forces on alert, for fear the presence of these enclaves might destabilise the region. In May

⁴⁰ See Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 107.

⁴¹ De Thou, *Histoire Universelle*, IV, pp. 124-26; Ruble, *Antoine de Bourbon et Jeanne d'Albret* (4 vols., Paris, 1881-86), III, pp. 225-27, 255-58.

1563, with Antoine now dead, Catherine de Medici warned Monluc to watch Jeanne closely, 'de ne tolérer ni prédication ni exercice de la religion nouvelle dans votre gouvernement, sinon comme il est contenu dans l'édit'.⁴²

The papacy also sought the removal of Jeanne d'Albret from power. To Rome, the queen was a heretic who had escaped censorship for too long. Papal dismay at the spread of Calvinism across this region and the inactivity of Catherine de Medici can be seen in a series of letters between Chantonnay, François Vargas, the Spanish ambassador to Rome, the pope and the Spanish king, dated September 1561 to February 1562, with the papacy informing Philip:

que le temps de la douceur était passé, et combien l'on eût gagné en procédant dès l'origine avec vigueur et sévérité; que pour tout marchait désormais vers une ruine générale... que le seul remède possible, indépendamment du concile universel, était votre majesté.⁴³

The ambassador continued with stark information on the prospects for French neutrality in this matter:

si la reine mère de France refusait l'appui qui lui est offert par votre majesté pour protéger la foi catholique dans la royaume... vous êtes disposé... d'employer la force et d'en venir aux mains... [et] de former une ligue.⁴⁴

But while Rome encouraged Spain and its Catholic allies to intimidate Jeanne with massed armies and holy *ligues*, it pursued its own more legalistic approach to prising the queen of Navarre from her throne: the papal inquisition. The inquisition had been revived in France during the 1550s to confront the rising numbers of heresy

⁴² Catherine de Medici to Monluc (28 May 1563), Ritter, 'Jeanne d'Albret', p. 60.

⁴³ Chantonnay to Vargas (7 November 1561), Weiss, *Papiers d'état du Cardinal de Granvelle*, VI, pp. 399-401. See also Vargas to Philip II (30 September 1561), *Ibid.*, VI, pp. 342-68; Vargas to Philip II (3 October 1561), *Ibid.*, pp. 369-96; Vargas to Philip II (7 November 1561), *Ibid.*, VI, pp. 401-08; Vargas to Philip II (15 November 1561), *Ibid.*, VI, pp. 413-18; Vargas to Philip II (22 February 1562), *Ibid.*, VI, pp. 511-27.

⁴⁴ Chantonnay to Vargas (7 November 1561), Weiss, *Papiers d'état du Cardinal de Granvelle*, VI, pp. 399-401.

accusations brought before the courts. The cardinal of Lorraine was instrumental in this, overseeing the implementation of the *chambres ardentes*, judicial bodies with exclusive jurisdiction over heresy trials within the regional *parlements*.⁴⁵ Lorraine was also charged with nominating the various prelates who would investigate heresy within the provinces and, in 1557, he appointed cardinal Armagnac to the office of inquisitor general for the south-west, with jurisdiction over Guyenne and Languedoc, extended in 1560 to include Jeanne d'Albret's territories of Béarn, Navarre, Foix and Albret.⁴⁶ It is important not to view the inquisition as an anachronism at this time. Despite hostility from the French crown to papal interference, the inquisitor general possessed two potent weapons in the fight against miscreants: the inquisitorial visitation and tribunal, and the papal *monitoire*. Inquisitorial tribunals were infrequent, but effective, during the 1560s, possessing papal dispensation to enter any town in southern France, and to accuse or arrest a heresy suspect, regardless of rank. In early 1564, for example, even though the peace of Amboise now defined relations between the faiths within the community, Armagnac was able to assert this prerogative to seize two merchants at Roussillon in the name of the inquisition. The two had been served with warrants to face charges of heresy the previous year, but had evaded arrest by royal officials and fled to Jeanne d'Albret's lands for protection. Armagnac, however, entered the town supported by a force of Spanish infantry, enlisted from a nearby border garrison, and arrested the men.⁴⁷ Such a bold enterprise elicited outrage from the courts of France and Navarre. Armagnac was vilified for invading sovereign territory, while Philip II was accused of meddling in

⁴⁵ Lorraine would preside over the infamous trial and execution of the Toulouse *parlementaire*, Du Bourg, in December 1559). For the reintroduction of the Inquisition into France in the 1550s, see Venard, *Réforme protestante*, pp. 329-39; Sutherland's chapter: 'Was there an Inquisition in Reformation France?', in her *Princes, Politics and Religion*, pp. 13-29.

⁴⁶ Abbé Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn et au pays basque* (Pau, 1905), p. 57.

⁴⁷ Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 244.

foreign affairs by supplying the troops. Philip denied all knowledge of the affair, but added that any act carried out in the name of the inquisition was not illegal, as its commission allowed it 'to act without respect to nation, quality, or person... privileged to chastise those guilty of heresy'.⁴⁸

The benefit of being able to call on military support from Spain and the established Catholic networks and alliances of Guyenne was an asset for the inquisition in the south-west. The French court was certainly aware of this, with Saint-Sulpice noting that Spanish military aggression now provided the backbone to Armagnac's inquisitorial dealings.⁴⁹ This, of course, was a most troubling development for Huguenot communities of the region, already forced to live under the shadow cast by the various Catholic *associations*. Now, many Reformers faced the possibility that the itinerant inquisitorial court might visit their town to interview suspected heretics.

The papal *monitoire*

The Protestant nobility, however, tended to ignore the demands of the visitations. In such cases, the inquisitor had recourse to an additional tool: the papal *monitoire*. The *monitoire* was essentially a summons, ordering the accused to appear in person before the papal court in Rome, usually within a given time period, to answer specific charges. Should the recipient of the *monitoire* fail to attend, excommunication could be threatened.⁵⁰ Armagnac employed this sanction against

⁴⁸ Saint-Sulpice to Charles IX (31 December 1564), Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 244.

⁴⁹ Saint-Sulpice to Lanssac, French ambassador at Council of Trent (July 1562), Cabié, *Ambassade en Espagne de Jean Ébrard*, p. 28.

⁵⁰ Robin Briggs has shown that a version of this *monitoire* had, in fact, been frequently employed by the French church during early sixteenth century, to force witnesses to testify on pain of excommunication. Briggs, *Communities of Belief*, p. 190.

Jeanne d'Albret and Louis d'Albret, the bishop of Lescar, on 28 September, only to receive a terse rebuff from the queen.⁵¹ At this, Jeanne was given six months to appear in person before Pius IV to explain her actions, with excommunication the penalty, her lands to be deemed forfeit, and given over to the 'first despoiler', should she refuse.⁵² The *parlements* of Bordeaux and Toulouse followed the papal lead, issuing decrees that negated Jeanne's sovereign rights to Béarn, declaring her principalities the property of the king as *suzerain-paramount*. This meant that the queen's abolition of Catholicism was now effectively illegal and could be rescinded.⁵³

For the French crown, however, the serving of the *monitoire* against Jeanne d'Albret was seen as a step too far, yet another instance of papal interference in the government of France. Early in 1563, for example, the inquisition had investigated the alleged heretical tendencies of the French bishops, in direct violation of the agreed Gallican liberties of the French clergy. Catherine de Medici complained vociferously to Rome over this intrusion, but received little reassurance from the Holy See.⁵⁴ Further, the French crown also protested against the papal declaration that deemed Jeanne's lands open to the 'first despoiler', which at this juncture seemed likely to be the troops of Philip of Spain. Catherine argued that, as the queen of Navarre was technically answerable to her suzerain lord, the king of France, then Rome had no power to cede her lands to a third party. In a stern letter to Saint-Sulpice, Charles IX deemed the *monitoire* invalid, and reiterated that France would

⁵¹ See *Mémoires de Condé*, IV, p. 594; Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, pp. 211-15.

⁵² For full Latin version of papal *monitoire* against Jeanne d'Albret (28 September 1563), see Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn*, pp. 27-38.

⁵³ Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, pp. 220-25.

⁵⁴ This programme would continue into 1566, and would only be concluded when Pius V issued the papal bull of 11 December that condemned six French bishops for heresy: Jean de Gelais, bishop of Uzès; Antoine Caracciolo, bishop of Troyes; Charles Guillart, bishop of Chartres; Jean de Monluc, bishop of Valence; Louis d'Albret, bishop of Lescars, and Claude Régin, bishop of Oloron. See Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, p. 240.

not accept papal interference in or close to its territories.⁵⁵ As a result, the *conseil privé* and Paris *parlement* ordered that the specific 'first despoiler' decrees, still extant at Bordeaux and Toulouse, should be rescinded immediately and in their entirety.⁵⁶

The Catholic powers were determined to entrap Jeanne d'Albret, though. In the summer of 1564, a plan was hatched for a military incursion to arrest the queen and bring her to justice. Pierre Olhagaray claims that the scheme originated in the correspondence of Philip II and Pius IV, and required that Armagnac, Monluc, d'Aspremont, d'Escars and the *vicomte* d'Orthe, governor of Bayonne, move their forces into Navarre from Guyenne and Languedoc, driving Jeanne and her entourage from the security of Pau into the arms of an invading Spanish army, assembled at Barcelona under the pretence of manoeuvring to expel a nearby Moorish community.⁵⁷ Significantly, Freer claims that once captured, the queen would be delivered to the inquisition in Spain, not to Armagnac's papal inquisition, no doubt to serve as a bargaining chip for Madrid in its relations with the papacy.⁵⁸ The waters become muddied at this point regarding the exact nature of the plot. Dubarat intimates that a formal *ligue* was established between the Catholics of Guyenne, Spain and the papacy, to facilitate the capture of the queen, with d'Orthe, Depart, the governor of the château Hâ at Bordeaux, and Dominge, a Béarnais captain,

⁵⁵ Charles IX to Saint-Sulpice (30 November 1563), in Cabié, *Ambassade en Espagne de Jean Ébrard*, pp. 186-87. See also Pierre Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix, Bearn, et Navarre, diligemment recueillie tant des precedens historiens, que des archives desdites maisons* (Paris, 1629), p. 554.

⁵⁶ Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn*, pp. 38-43.

⁵⁷ Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 559.

⁵⁸ See Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, pp. 230-40. Two independent inquisitorial systems existed in southern Europe at this time: the papal Inquisition and the Spanish Inquisition, which thrived as a tool to subdue heresy across the Iberian peninsula. Philip II had removed the Spanish Inquisition from papal control in the late 1550s, assuming leadership of its many sections, validating all appointments and determining its activities thereafter. See Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition. An Historical Revision* (London, 1997). Forneron has shown that Philip rejected any interference from Rome in the running of his Inquisition, and was especially dismissive at attempts to censor its activities through the issuing of papal bulls. See Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II*, I, pp. 187-88.

coordinating the military wing of this organisation.⁵⁹ D'Aubigné, on the other hand, believes this to have been a Jesuit plot, an assertion rejected out of hand by Mirasson, who states the whole episode was nothing more than an artifice, Catholic propaganda concocted to intimidate Jeanne and force her to reintroduce Catholicism within her lands: 'cette prétende conspiration, imputée aux Jésuites par d'Aubigné, ne fut qu'un projet chimérique, imaginé par quelque factieux ou faux zélé et abandonné aussitôt qu'on connut les dangers'.⁶⁰ Monluc is cagey about these events in his *Commentaires*, hinting at the existence of a Catholic alliance against Jeanne d'Albret, but distancing himself from any involvement:

je sentis donc le vent qu'une ligue s'estoit dressée en la France, là où il y avoit de grands personnages, princes et autres, lesquels je n'ay affaire de nommer, bien engagés de promesse. Je ne sais au vray à quelle fin ceste ligue se faisoit.⁶¹

Regardless of the veracity of these observations, what is apparent is that the Catholic powers arrayed against Jeanne d'Albret at this time were extensive. They involved not only Spanish diplomacy and military might, the intrigues of the papacy, and its authoritative arm in France, the inquisition, but also the Catholic noble leaders of Guyenne and Languedoc, and the two provinces' respective *parlements*. The disparate networks and alliances that comprised Catholic activism across the region, then, merged here, presenting the Calvinist governors of Béarn and Navarre with a formidable opponent. The role of cardinal Armagnac typifies the multifaceted nature of the Catholic counteraction: cardinal; papal legate; inquisitor general;

⁵⁹ Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn*, p. 79. Dubarat suggests that the plot failed because it was discovered by one of Jeanne's officials, Vespie de Nérac, and passed on to the queen of Navarre by d'Evrard, Saint-Sulpice's secretary. Freer, on the other hand, claims that the conspiracy only failed because of a lack of care by a Spanish messenger, Dimanche, who mislaid his delivery of secret plans, discovered by Huguenots and sent to Pau to warn Jeanne d'Albret. See *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁶⁰ 'Il y eut de ce temps un dessein proposé par les jésuites'. D'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle*, II, p. 295; P. Mirasson, *Histoire des troubles du Béarn, au sujet de la religion, dans le XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1768), p. 480.

⁶¹ *Commentaires*, p. 586.

supporter of Monluc's defence of Guyenne in 1562; a key signatory of the *ligue* at Toulouse in 1563; and a stout defender of Catholic prerogatives during the second and third wars. He would prove just as pivotal a figure in the course of Catholic activity during the decade as his long-time friend and ally, Monluc.

Jeanne d'Albret, however, would escape this kidnap attempt and flee to the security of the Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle. But there was one final piece to add to this puzzle. Throughout the decade, Catholic militants within Jeanne's lands had been resisting the proselytising of region. Centred at Oloron, Lescars and Pau, the Béarnais and Basse-Navarrais rebels were quickly recognised by the *ligueurs* of the south-west as having the potential to act as fifth columnists to Catholic designs. The rebels would thus play an integral role in subsequent Catholic policy against Jeanne, being supported and financed in 1563 in their insurrection of 1563, becoming involved in mounting guerrilla operations within their homelands after 1565, before finally joining up with a Catholic force under captain Terride, to launch a final assault in 1569. It says much about the strength of Catholic hegemony at this time that the rebels were resourced by the *parlement* and elites of Bordeaux, by the *ligue* captains of Guyenne and western Languedoc, and by Spanish and papal military and financial might. The course of these rebellions, and the outcome of this clash of confessions, will be examined in the following chapter.

Chapter 11. Wider Catholic activism: Béarn and Navarre

Before the nature and degree of success of the Catholic rebellions in Béarn and Navarre are assessed, it is worth re-visiting the confused political situation in these lands during the early 1560s. Jurisdiction over Jeanne d'Albret's various territories was rarely free from contention. The French crown, for example, frequently asserted its military prerogative over Béarn and Navarre during the sectarian crises; in June 1562, Monluc was ordered by the *parlement* of Bordeaux to end the unrest at Lectoure by removing jurisdictional prerogatives from Jeanne's officials into the hands of the *sénéchal* of Armagnac, with a Catholic captain, the *sieur* de la Chapelle, appointed as military governor of the town.¹ The unitary duchy of Albret was another contentious region. Created by Henry II in 1556 as a sop to appease Antoine de Bourbon, its removal from the remit of the *sénéchaussée* of Guyenne, and the influence of Jeanne's courts at Nérac, Tartes and Casteljaloux, into the hands of the Bordeaux *parlement* caused great consternation at Pau.²

Confusion over religious matters had been equally divisive. As early as October 1558, cardinal Armagnac had cause to visit Béarn and Navarre repeatedly to resolve significant religious disturbances, and to re-establish ecclesiastical discipline in some parts of the region.³ But this was merely the forerunner of things to come. On Christmas Day 1560, the queen of Navarre formally legalised the Reformed

¹ 'Les articles accordés par monseigneur de Monluc, lieutenant pour le Roy en son pays et duché de Guyenne, aux manans et habitans de la ville de Lectoure et estrangiers...' (2 October, 1562), Ruble, *Commentaires et Lettres*, IV, pp. 162-67.

² Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 251.

³ Cardinal Armagnac to Montmorency (15 October 1558), Tamizey de Larroque, 'Lettres inédites du Cardinal d'Armagnac', pp. 99-102.

church across her territories, ordering all Catholic practices to desist immediately.⁴ However, several towns refused to comply. At Navarrenx, a Catholic captain, Bassilhon, informed the Bordeaux *parlement* that he had unilaterally armed local Catholics with the intention of repelling any advance against their churches.⁵ At Lescar, Pau, Monein, and Nay, the clergy, supported by the Catholic communities, organised resistance to Jeanne's *ordonnance*, while the disturbances at Lescar during October 1562 were especially violent, as Catholics focussed their rage against the town's Reformed bishop, Louis d'Albret, the queen's uncle.⁶

The pivotal moment for the area was reached in 1563. In July, Jeanne ordered two thousand armed men to cleanse the cathedrals and churches of the region of all idolatry, ready to be used by Reformed congregations.⁷ But the purges quickly deteriorated into widespread iconoclasm, forcing the *états de Béarn*, now consisting almost exclusively of disenchanting local Catholic nobles, to meet later that month to formulate a remonstrance against such destruction.⁸ Leading this assembly was Antoine de Montesquiou, *sieur* de Sainte-Colomme et d'Aydie-en-Béarn, a respected Catholic from a renowned family of Béarn.⁹ Saint-Colomme had been one of Jeanne's key advisors at court, and Catholics hoped his influence would sway the

⁴ Mark Greengrass, 'The Calvinist experiment in Béarn', in A. Pettegree, A. Duke, G. Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 125.

⁵ AM Bordeaux, ms 767, fo. 341.

⁶ Charles Dartigue-Peyrou, *Jeanne d'Albret et le Béarn* (Mont-de-Marsan, 1934), p. 43. The following year, Cardinal Armagnac also took exception to Louis d'Albret's governance of his bishopric at Lescars, warning him in August 1563 that unless he brought his see back into the Catholic church, he would forfeit his office and bring disaster onto his flock. See Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn*, pp. 24-27.

⁷ Ritter, 'Jeanne d'Albret', p. 65.

⁸ The *procureur-général* of Béarn refused to allow this remonstrance to be accepted as it opposed the will and government of her majesty. *Preuve* 62, Pierre de Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn. Manuscrit de Pierre de Salefranque, Conseiller du roi, Secrétaire et Darde-sacs du Parlement de Navarre', in *Bulletin de la société des sciences, lettres et arts de Pau*, IIe Série, XLIII-XLVI (ed. Abbé Dubarat, Pau, 1920-1923), XLIV, p. 199.

⁹ It was Saint-Colomme who presented the Peace of Amboise before the Bordeaux *parlement* on 10 April 1563. BM Bordeaux, ms 370, fo. 710.

queen. By the close of the *états*, however, the queen had conceded little ground, while Saint-Colomme had been forced to retire to his lands.

Insurgency at Oloron

In December 1563, these simmering tensions finally exploded at Oloron, a town 18 kilometres south-west of Pau. Oloron had been one of the initial hotbeds of Reformed activity in Béarn in the 1550s, a site of numerous *prêches*, and the seat of the renowned Calvinist bishop, Roussel.¹⁰ But on the arrival of Jeanne's officials to begin the removal of Catholic imagery from the cathedral of Sainte-Marie, the Catholic population rebelled. Under the leadership of Abbadie, a canon of the cathedral, barricades were erected and the royal officers were turned away. Military assistance was provided by Charles, *comte de Luxe*, the leader of Catholic resistance in Basse-Navarre, who rallied a number of troops in support of his co-religionists at Oloron.¹¹ In response, Jeanne personally led a military unit to the town's gates, demanding that the cleansing of the churches be allowed to commence. Jaurgain explains the queen's surprising presence at the head of the troops as a necessity, to forestall any intervention from the Catholic governor of Oloron, Jacques de Saint-Colomme, *seigneur de Escoarrabaque*, the nephew of her estranged advisor.¹²

¹⁰ Greengrass, 'The Calvinist experiment in Béarn', p. 123. Dartigue-Peyrou states that of all the d'Albret lands, Oloron was the first to witness significant levels of radical Protestantism before 1555. Charles Dartigue-Peyrou, *La vicomté de Béarn sous la règne d'Henri II d'Albret (1517-1555)* (Paris, 1934), pp. 478-80.

¹¹ For details of the Oloron rebellion in 1563, see Dartigue-Peyrou, *Jeanne d'Albret et le Béarn*, p. 80.

¹² There is much confusion over the correct identity of individuals referred to as Sainte-Colomme in the archival and secondary material of the 1560s at Béarn and Navarre. This centres on the fact that there were five individuals, all related, who shared the same name. Antoine de Montesquiou, *sieur de Sainte-Colomme*, *seigneur de Escoarrabaque*, was the head of the family. His son, Jacques II de Sainte-Colomme, *seigneur de Escoarrabaque*, became a key player in the Catholic *ligue* of 1568 at Oloron, while his two sons, Jacques III de Sainte-Colomme, *abbé de Sauvelade*, and Tristan de Sainte-Colomme were prominent in Terride's invasion of Béarn in 1569. A fifth family member, Antoine's brother, Bernard de Sainte-Colomme, is less conspicuous, but he did hold great authority within the region. For the purposes of accuracy, then, this thesis will delineate the family as follows: Antoine de

Escoarrabaque had yet to deploy his forces at this time, and was thus courted by both sides during the ensuing standoff.¹³ As it transpired, the governor declined to intervene in the matter and withdrew his troops.

It seems probable that Escoarrabaque was not yet ready to stand and be counted alongside his Catholic compatriots at Oloron, and openly oppose Jeanne's will, nor did he feel comfortable siding with the crown in its purgatorial policy. Raymond Ritter offers an intriguing, if largely anecdotal, précis of this event, suggesting that the proselytising of Béarn and Navarre had not been as successful as Jeanne would have liked by this point. He claims that a conversation took place between Escoarrabaque and Jeanne before the gates of Oloron, in which the queen demanded to know whether the governor's troops were loyal to her. The reply was yes. Jeanne then enquired as to the number of these men that were 'of her religion', to which Escoarrabaque replied that in the whole of the queen's lands, there were only a thousand such people, and in his company, perhaps only thirty. At this rebuttal, the queen ordered the governor out of her sight, to play no more part in the subsequent assault on the barricades.¹⁴ There is, however, scant evidence to confirm or deny that such a poignant dialogue ever occurred.

Oloron would eventually fall to the royal army, but in an attempt to reduce the fallout from such an episode, Jeanne issued a *Simultaneum*, in February 1564, a declaration of liberty of conscience for all subjects, essentially legitimising coexistence between Calvinists and Catholics, who would now share usage of religious sites, such as churches and burial grounds.¹⁵ But neither faith welcomed

Montesquiou will be referred to as Sainte-Colomme, Jacques II de Sainte-Colomme will be referred to as Escoarrabaque, while the remaining will be given their full titles at all times.

¹³ See J. de Jaurgain, 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon', in *Revue de Béarn, Navarre et Lannes* (1884), p. 313.

¹⁴ Ritter, 'Jeanne d'Albret', p. 65.

¹⁵ Ruble, *Jeanne d'Albret et la guerre civile*, I, p. 69; Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, p. 267.

conciliation, and the *Simultaneum* did little to lessen the sectarian violence in Béarn and Basse-Navarre. Although an uneasy truce lasted for two years, Catholic activity was once more censured in May 1566 with the *parlement* of Navarre ordering that:

tous ceux de la religion romaine...de plus faire aucunes processions publiques, de porter en publicq des croix, bannières et austres bastons, mais, sy bon leur semble, les fairont en leurs cloistres et temples et non ailleurs, leur enjoignant de se contenir modestement, sous peine de punition exemplaire.¹⁶

The Catholic clergy of Béarn were exasperated at this, and formally opposed the publication of the patent.¹⁷ They were further aggrieved the following month when the Synod of Nay voted to renew the suppression of idolatry, and to introduce a Calvinist, puritan code of morals for the population of Jeanne d'Albret's territories.¹⁸

These restrictions forced Catholics to reassess their position within the region once more. At the *états de Béarn*, in early 1567, delegates decried these attacks. Not only were their rights of worship being impinged upon, but also the right to nominate to benefices, a major source of income and patronage for many Catholic nobles and clergy, was under threat from the synod's reforms. At Oloron, this outrage manifested itself in the formation of a *ligue*, headed by Gabriel de Béarn, *sieur* de Gerdrest, and supported by leading local dignitaries such as Escoarrabaque, Jean de Bordenave, baron de Monein, François de Béarn, *sieur* de Bonasse, Henri de Navailles, *sieur* de Peyre, his son-in-law Guy de Biran, *sieur* de Gohas, Jean, *sieur* d'Armendaritz, and two *avocats* of the civil courts at Pau, Guillaume Tasta and Jean de Supersantis. The principal canons of the cathedrals of Oloron and Lescar

¹⁶ 'Extraits des ordonnances de Registres du Parlement de Navarre' (1566), Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLIV, p. 193.

¹⁷ Those writing in opposition included Martin de Lacu, *avocat et procureur* to the bishop of Lescar (*Preuve* 57); Pierre Arbusio, *avocat et procureur* to the bishop of Oloron (*Preuve* 58); Bernard de Sorberio, *avocat et procureur* to the cathedral chapter at Lescar (*Preuve* 59); Martin de Luger and Jean de Supersantis, *avocats et procureurs* to the cathedral chapter at Oloron (*Preuve* 60), Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLIV, p. 196.

¹⁸ Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, p. 268.

promised to finance the *ligue*, while Charles, *comte de Luxe*, offered his services once more.¹⁹ The involvement of Charles de Luxe in their cause was a major coup for the Catholic party. As the brother of the murdered noble, Tristan de Moneins, who died during the Gabelle riots at Bordeaux in 1548, Luxe was an important political and military figure in the south-west. He had served under Monluc in the campaigns of 1562-64; he was named as one of the Catholic cartel that included Monluc, Armagnac, Terride and others, accused of attempting to 'sell' Guyenne to Spain in 1564; he had modelled the defence of his lands in Basse-Navarre on Monluc's initiatives at Agen.²⁰ Luxe's son, Valentin de Domezain, baron de Moneins, was also present in this force; a proven captain who had served both his father and Monluc in Guyenne and at Oloron during 1563.²¹

Catholic consensus and Jeanne d'Albret

The *ligueurs* of Oloron were to receive an immediate boon, with the defection of two of Jeanne d'Albret's key advisors: Armand de Gontaut, *seigneur d'Audaux*, *sénéchal* of Béarn, and Claude Régin, bishop of Oloron. Audaux had masterminded the military successes of Jeanne's forces against the Catholic rebels in 1563, being appointed *lieutenant-général* of the kingdom, along with Louis d'Albret, bishop of Lescar, while the queen visited the French court in 1564. Régin's contribution to Jeanne's successes, meanwhile, lay in the religious field, most notably supervising the implementation of Calvinist reform across Béarn and Navarre. The precise reason for their desertion is not evident, although the alienation of elite prerogatives to

¹⁹ Dartigue-Peyrou, *Jeanne d'Albret*, p. 80.

²⁰ Ritter, 'Jeanne d'Albret', p. 82.

²¹ The Luxe/Moneins family had strong bonds with many of the great Catholic families of the region, including marriage ties with the houses of Saint-Colomme and Terride. See *Commentaires*, p. 944 note.

nominate benefices may have been at the root of the dissent. What is clear, though, is that the *ligueurs* could now claim a good deal more legitimacy for their cause now that Jeanne's chief ministers were supporting it.²² The significance of these developments can be seen in the fact that the Béarnais crown tried to reconcile with the various parties immediately. In November 1567, Jean d'Etchart, the *procureur-général* of Béarn, was dispatched to Oloron to lure Audaux back to court, but failed. He then sought to separate Luxe and Domezain from the *ligueurs* by feigning an assault into Basse-Navarre to rally support for the queen's cause, only to find that Luxe had guarded his homeland well.²³

If Jeanne's manoeuvrings were stalling, Catholic activity was proving more fruitful. The presence of Luxe, Audaux, Régin and Gerdrest at Oloron meant that Catholic forces could be moved from a defensive to offensive orientation. Olhagaray states that:

Alors, ceux de la Ligue se voyant pressés, s'assemblent en la maison de Gabriel de Bearn, *sieur* de Gerdrest, où se trouverent Henry de Navailles, seigneur de Peyre, avec aultres gentilshommes, Jean de Bordenave, conseiller, Jean Supersantis, avocat à Pau, Guillame Tasts à Oloron, et aultres delegués des chapitres de Lescar and d'Oloron, et vallées de Bearn, esperat en se saisissant de la Royme et monseigneur son fils, venir aisément au bout de leur desseins, n'ayans affaire qu'a une femme; conclusion qu'ils prindrent et iurerét devant leur depart, et signerent de leur propre sang.²⁴

The capture of Jeanne d'Albret, and the revocation of the religious reforms, were now the goals of the *ligueurs*, who set about expanding their network of alliances to

²² For the defection of Régin and Audaux, see Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, pp. 279-80.

²³ Bordenave states that: 'les chefs de la ligue ne furent plustot advertis de ces remonstrances et des promesses de la Royme qu'ils ne taschassent de divertir le peuple... et pour ce faire firent une convocation de la noblesse, villes et vallées du pais'. Nicolas de Bordenave, *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre* (ed. P. Raymond, Paris, 1873), p. 145. See also 'Manifeste des gentilshommes de la Basse-Navarre et du peuple, qui ont pris les armes pour la défense de la religion catholique...', in A. Communay, 'Les Huguenots dans le Béarn et la Navarre. Documents inédits', *Archives historiques de la Gascogne*, 6 (Paris, Auch, 1885), pp. 129-39.

²⁴ Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 565.

reinforce their position. Domezain was dispatched to meet with Monluc at Agen to request reinforcement from Guyenne, while a similar petition for aid was sent to Madrid.²⁵ Escoarrabaque, meanwhile, journeyed to Paris to seek consent from the French crown for the *ligue* at Oloron,²⁶ while in January 1568, Navailles attempted to convince d'Albret to defect through a series of letters which relayed news of various Catholic victories under Anjou and Guise.²⁷

At Pau, Jeanne d'Albret was becoming increasingly perturbed by Monluc's role in affairs, and complained to the Bordeaux *parlement* that his interference was compromising her ability to defend her borders.²⁸ Monluc countered by stating that he was merely patrolling his own territory and, in any case, it was illegal for the queen of Navarre to mass troops in Foix and Albret, as only the king's lieutenant had authority to levy such soldiers. In this, Monluc was supported by the new *premier président* of the *parlement*, Christophe de Roffignac, Monluc's long time Catholic associate, who dismissed Jeanne's claim. The French crown, however, was less than happy with the *parlement's* response. It was more concerned at the build up of Spanish troops on the southern borders of Béarn than the queen's activities, and rebuked Roffignac for his interference.²⁹

The *ligue*, though, was about to be betrayed before it could press home its advantage. In early March 1568, a Catholic noble, Jean de Belzunce, *seigneur* de Monein, informed one of Jeanne's spies that the forces at Oloron intended to march towards Pau that week.³⁰ At nearby Ossau, another Catholic noble still loyal to Jeanne, Armand de Saint-Geniès, baron d'Audaux, rallied the queen's forces and

²⁵ Jaugain, 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon', II, p. 265.

²⁶ Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 566.

²⁷ Navailles to Louis d'Albret, bishop of Lescar (15 January 1568), *Preuves* 79-80, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, pp. 32-34.

²⁸ Jeanne d'Albret to Bordeaux *parlement* (February 1568), BN ms fr, 22,373, fo. 308.

²⁹ Charles IX to Roffignac (25 February 1568), BN ms fr, 22,373, fo. 373.

³⁰ Olhagaray wrote of Monein's betrayal of his fellow Catholics: 'Ce fut un eschec et mat au dessein de ces ligues'. Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 566.

moved to cut off the rebels' path.³¹ The *ligue* army was thus encircled by royal troops and forced to surrender. Its leaders were spared execution, however, when Charles IX intervened, ordering Bertrand de Salignac, *seigneur* de La Mothe-Fénelon, to negotiate a truce between the two parties. In a public show of reconciliation, many of the *ligueurs*, including Luxe, Audaux, Domezain, Sainte-Colomme, Antin, and Gabriel de Béarn, were awarded the highest honour possible, the *colier de l'ordre de Navarre*, in return for a commitment to respect Jeanne's authority.³²

This mollification of the Catholic rebels would rankle with Protestant commentators for decades after the event. Olhagaray, a Basse-Navarrais himself, was especially outraged by the award made to Charles de Luxe, who he saw as the arch enemy of many Reformed communities of the lower Pyrenees, and a traitor to the queen of Navarre: 'ce fut un coup donné mal à propos qui fit gronder toute la noblesse de Gascogne, qui avoit plus mérité que ce renard de montagne'.³³ Indeed, it soon became apparent that Jeanne's olive branch had failed to secure the loyalty of the *ligueurs* and, with the resumption of sectarian conflict across France in September 1568, and the re-emergence of a Catholic coalition force within Béarn and Navarre, the queen saw fit to flee with her advisors to the security of La Rochelle. This was a most astute decision, as Jeanne managed to evade capture by converging armies of Monluc, Sainte-Colomme and Fontenilles by a single day.³⁴

³¹ Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, p. 59.

³² Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 585.

³³ Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 574. Luxe later received numerous rewards for his services to the French crown during the 1560s; an outright gift of 20,000 *livres*, an annual pension of 800 *livres*, the *vicomté* of Soule, and *l'ordre royale de Saint-Michael*. See Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, p. 287.

³⁴ Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 513.

Rebellion and invasion

With the government of Béarn and Navarre in turmoil once more, many of its territories rose against the queen's rule. One, the *comté* of Foix, was immediately garrisoned by Spanish troops who claimed to be supporting the fledgling Catholic rebellion there. This move perturbed the French crown, which, on 18 October, ordered the *parlements* of Bordeaux and Toulouse to issue edicts authorising the seizure of all lands, castles and towns of Béarn, Foix, Navarre, Armagnac and Bigorre by royal troops before Spain could consolidate its forces.³⁵ The crown also ordered the *parlements* to promote Charles de Luxe to the office of *lieutenant pour le roi de France*, to assume authority over Jeanne's government in the name of the French king.³⁶ Moves were then put in place to make this campaign self-financing. On 2 November, the Bordeaux *parlement* ordered the seizure of all Jeanne's properties, goods and supplies in Guyenne to pay for troops and supplies.³⁷ Two weeks later, on 15 November, the *parlement* at Toulouse claimed jurisdiction over Béarn and dispatched a number of officials to Pau. But it soon learned that Monluc, in consultation with Roffignac at Bordeaux, had formulated a similar claim over this realm, arguing that as Jeanne had fled as a traitor, her lands were now forfeit to any

³⁵ Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, pp. 578-80. On 19 November 1568, the Toulouse *parlement* ordered a *conseiller*, Pierre Ferrandier, to begin seizing lands belonging to Jeanne d'Albret in the *comtés* of Rodez and Rouergue. *HGL*, 9, p. 48. Freer has transcribed a letter from Charles IX to the Toulouse *parlement* (18 October 1568), which reveals the political intrigues of the crown in claiming to be merely 'looking after' Jeanne's territories until her return; 'We have found no remedy better calculated to obviate the evil designs of those who would do the said queen disservice, than to take possession of her territories'. Freer, *The Life of Jeanne d'Albret*, pp. 299-300.

³⁶ 'Lettres du roi de France au parlement de Toulouse, portant commission à Charles de Luxe de se saisir des terres de la Reine de Navarre (18 October 1568)', in Jaurgain, 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon', II, pp. 310-11.

³⁷ AD Gironde, 1B 314, *Arrêt du parlement* (2 November 1568), fo. 2.

legitimate party. The dispute was referred to the French crown, which ordered that, for the moment, Luxe was to remain in control of these lands.³⁸

In December 1568, the Bordeaux *parlement* dispatched *conseillers* Belcier and Malbrun to act as advisors to Luxe, promising the new leader the full support of the administration and the Catholics of Guyenne.³⁹ From his headquarters at Oloron, Luxe promoted his former *ligue* compatriots, Domezain, Sainte-Colomme, Bonasse and Guy de Gohas to serve on a temporary council. He also opened communications with Monluc, at that time leading a company of Catholic nobles from Guyenne, including Leberon, Savignac, Caumont, Lauzun, against the Protestant *vicomte*, Piles, whose forces had besieged several Catholic Béarnais towns.⁴⁰ Luxe then attempted to lure Jeanne's key advisor, Louis d'Albret, to the Catholic side, dispatching Régim to tempt the bishop away from his queen by arguing that Luxe's commission had already seen the re-establishment of order across the troubled lands. But d'Albret was not for turning.⁴¹

Despite this flurry of activity, by February 1569, much of Béarn and Navarre still remained outside the control of Luxe and French royal authority. Charles IX was forced to raise the stakes, instructing the *parlements* and Catholic generals of the south-west to prepare for a full-scale invasion. On 4 March, Roffignac confidently assured Luxe that 'la justice sera exercée en terres de la Reyne de Navarre, soulz le nom et autorité du Roy'.⁴² The choice of commander to lead the royal army into Béarn and Navarre was, however, controversial. Monluc was the obvious choice, but the duke of Anjou, the crown's *lieutenant-général*, and overall military commander

³⁸ Bordenave, *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre*, p.166.

³⁹ *AHG*, 13, p. 253.

⁴⁰ O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, II, p. 249.

⁴¹ Bishop of Oloron to bishop of Lescar (24 November 1568), *Preuve* 94, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, p. 69. Louis d'Albret was such a pivotal figure in events that the Catholic party tried again in April 1569 to tempt him to their cause, away from Jeanne d'Albret, *Preuve* 106, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, p. 111.

⁴² AD Gironde, 1B 319, *Arrêt du parlement* (4 March 1569), fo. 42.

at the time, decided upon his former captain, and co-signatory of the *ligues* at Agen and Toulouse: the *sieur* de Terride.⁴³ The official reason was that the duke of Anjou thought it pragmatic to keep Monluc in Guyenne, which was still threatened by the Protestant *vicomtes* at this time. Monluc, though, suspected the hand of his rival, Damville, in the appointment, and was most aggrieved at this 'slight'.⁴⁴ Terride entered Béarn on 28 March 1569, at the head of a strong army, to be greeted by Luxe and the Béarnais captains Sainte-Colomme, Bonasse, Escoarrabaque, Gerdrest, Domezain, Eschaux, Armendaritz and 'la plus grand part de la noblesse de Béarn', all pledging allegiance to the French general, and swearing to fight 'pour la conservation du pays'.⁴⁵

Serving as *commissaire des vivres* in Terride's army was Monluc's former adjutant, the Béarnais captain, Jean de Fleurdelis, *sieur* de Lannevielle et de Gallos.⁴⁶ This was an astute appointment by Terride. Fleurdelis was a proven organiser of men and a successful commander in the field. He was also well known to the Catholic parties of the south-west, having served as *commissaire de guerres* in Monluc's forces in Guyenne between 1562-65, as *commissaire ordinaire* under Negrepelisse in the Agenais during 1568, and had carried the controversial edict of Amboise to the Toulouse *parlement* in April 1563.⁴⁷ Fleurdelis had also served under Charles de Luxe during the Catholic rebellions in Basse-Navarre between 1564 and 1567, commanding three companies of Basque *gens de pied*, and so knew the geographical

⁴³ 'Commission de Monsieur d'Anjou frere du Roy, à monsieur de Terride, pour saisir le pays de Béarn', in Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, pp. 585-88.

⁴⁴ For Courteault's analysis of the hostility between Monluc and Damville in 1569, see Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, pp. 534-553.

⁴⁵ *Preuve* 106, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, p. 111.

⁴⁶ Communay, 'Les Huguenots dans le Béarn et la Navarre', pp. 127 note 1; 131.

⁴⁷ For Fleurdelis' service as *commissaire de guerres* under Monluc, see Muster Rolls of Blaise de Monluc (7 December 1562), BN ms fr, 25,800, fo. 58. For appointment as captain under Monluc, see Charles IX to Monluc (May 1563), BN nouv. acq. fr, 6,001, fos. 7-8; Lestrade, 'Les Huguenots en Comminges. Documents inédits, II', pp. 40-41. For his service under Negrepelisse in 1568, see BN nouv. acq. fr, 8,627, fo. 63. For his delivery of the edict of Amboise, see Courteault, *Un cadet de gascogne*, p. 200.

and political pitfalls facing Terride's army as it moved into Béarn.⁴⁸ But this would also be a most astute appointment for Monluc, as the former pupil maintained frequent communication with his master throughout Terride's assault, a relationship confirmed in the testimonial of Valentin de Domezain and Bernard de Sainte-Colomme, at Paris on 27 October 1570, in which both attest that: 'le capitaine Fleurdelis... a esté employé tant par M. de Monluc que par le feu sieur de Tarride au fait et maniemment des affaires et guerres du pays de Béarn et des environs'.⁴⁹

Terride's army was tested immediately at Orthéz, where combined action from his troops and the Béarnais nobility won the day. His first objective was to establish an interim military administration capable of reinforcing the government being put in place by Luxe from Pau. To ensure that the Béarnais and Navarrais nobility saw these moves as legitimate, Terride called the *états* de Béarn, and received overwhelming support for his policy.⁵⁰ The delegation of offices began immediately, viewed by many, especially the Protestant commentators, as little more than a rewards system for those Catholic leaders active in the rebellions and *ligues* of recent years: Audaux was reappointed *sénéchal* of Béarn; Navailles received the governorship of Pau; Escoarrabaque was reinstated as governor of Oloron; Sainte-Colomme was given command of Terride's *gens de pied*, with Du Tilh made his chief adjutant; Régin became Terride's *commissaire des finances*; Bordenave the *président du conseil militaire*; Luger was charged with enforcing legislation; while the *avocat*, Jean de Supersantis, who had served under Terride as a delegate of the

⁴⁸ BN ms fr, 25,803, fos. 314-16. It would be from the Béarnais captain, Fleurdelis, that Monluc learned of Terride's defeat at Orthez in 1569. See Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc. Historien*, p. 548.

⁴⁹ BN pièce orig. vol. 1,010, dossier 23,011, Domesain no. 2.

⁵⁰ Present at the *états de Béarn* in May 1569 were: Jean de Cassanave, *abbé* of de la Reule, represented the clergy of Navarre, Gerdrest, Audaux, Sainte-Collome, Bonnasse and Seridos appeared for the nobility, while Jeannot de Gramont, a *jurat* at Morlaas, Raimond de Nabera, de Laruns, and Peyrouton de Pauyadie, from Ossau, and Bernard de Medalon and Arnaud de Croharé, from Nay, represented the third estate. Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn*, p. 107; Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, pp. 593-96.

Catholics of Béarn to the Toulouse *parlement* during 1563, was made *procureur-général* of the royal army.⁵¹ In fact, such was the magnitude of the administrative changes made by Terride in April 1569, that when Jeanne d'Albret returned to power in September it required three specific *ordonnances* to remove the rebels and reinstate her legitimate government officials.⁵²

The next major test of Terride's army came at the end of May, as his forces prepared for the assault on the fortified defences of Navarrenx. Terride was joined in this operation by his former Catholic *ligueur* from Toulouse, Negrepelisse, and by most of the Béarnais nobility. It soon became apparent, though, that the Catholic attacks were being too easily blunted. Amid recriminations over Terride's competence, Charles IX ordered Monluc to send reinforcements from Comminges. The baron de Fontenilhes, Monluc's captain, was dispatched to facilitate this. But by late July, despite numerous meetings with the councillors and nobles of Comminges, no reinforcements were forthcoming, and only small quantities of wheat and munitions sent.⁵³ Such inactivity infuriated Monluc, who was already embroiled in a heated debate with Damville over the course of the campaign. Monluc had long sought permission from Damville, now notional commander of the royal forces of the south-west, to lead his forces into Béarn to relieve Terride, only to be rejected at each request. Damville argued that a second Catholic force at Navarrenx was too great a gamble, especially given the potential instability that Monluc's absence from Guyenne would pose to the security of the region as a whole.⁵⁴ Monluc was outraged at Damville's reticence to assist Terride. On 9 August, he met with Catholic captains

⁵¹ Dartigue-Peyrou, *Jeanne d'Albret et le Béarn*, p. 121. See also *Preuve* 112, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, p. 142. For promotion of Jean de Supersantis, see AM Toulouse, BB 172, fos. 147; 165.

⁵² *Preuve* 119, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, pp. 149-50.

⁵³ Lestrade, *Les Huguenots en Comminges. Documents inédits*, I, p. 69.

⁵⁴ *HGL*, 9, p. 56.

Arné, Larboust, and Campagne to express his concern at Damville's intransigence.⁵⁵ Perhaps keen to set the record straight in case Damville's plan saw the defeat of the royal forces in Béarn and Navarre, Monluc spelled out his helplessness to Terride and Luxe in a series of letters, including copies of Damville's restriction on his movement as evidence that his hands were tied.⁵⁶

Ironically, one week later, on 15 August 1569, Terride's bedraggled army succumbed to the inevitable and surrendered before Navarrenx to the *comte* de Montgomery. Terride, Gerdrest and Gohas did manage to escape the field, only to be recaptured at Orthez three days later. The rest of the Catholic nobility were taken prisoner, including Sainte-Colomme, Escoarrabaque, Bordenave, du Tihl, and many other Catholic *ligueurs* from Oloron and Lescaur.⁵⁷ On 21 August, Terride, Gerdrest and Gohas were transferred back to Navarrenx where they, along with captains Candau, Salies, et Pordéac, were stabbed to death for having taken flight.⁵⁸ The defeat of the rebellion allowed Jeanne d'Albret to return to Navarre in September. A list of Catholic rebels was drawn up, with orders that their lands and wealth be confiscated and a warrant issued for their arrest.⁵⁹ As a result, the Catholic coalition melted away. Some, like Luxe, Domezain, Peyre, and Bonasse fled to Basse-Navarre to rejoin Catholic forces there. Others, like Escoarrabaque, who was released from

⁵⁵ *Commentaires*, pp. 691-92. Campagne's son, Odet de Monlezun, would become an infamous general of the *ligue* at Toulouse in the 1580s.

⁵⁶ One missive in particular captures Monluc's frustration best: on 14 August, he informed Henry de Navailles, governor of Pau, that while the conflict raged in Béarn he intended to join up with the *sénéchal* of Toulouse, Bellegarde, where the two 'joueroient des ongles'. Bordenave, *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre*, p. 265.

⁵⁷ Other Catholic nobles captured at the siege of Navarrenx were Francis, *sieur* de Méritaing; Bertrand de Béarn, dit le capitaine Salies; Henric, *sieur* d'Abidos, Joanot, *sieur* d'Abère; Jacques de Lassalle, *sieur* de Candau; Domecq de St-Abit, Jean de Suus; Jean de Puy, *soliciteur*; Jacques de Vispalier, *contrôleur* de Navarrenx; Forticq de Lasalle, and Frère Jean de Navarrenx. See *Preuve* 118, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, p. 149.

⁵⁸ Jaurgain, 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon', pp. 317-18.

⁵⁹ See 'Ordonnance de Jeanne d'Albret sur la justice, les rebelles, les ecclésiastiques et la confiscation des biens (29 September 1569)', *Preuve* 130, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, pp. 176-79; 'Ordonnance de Montgomery, confisquant les biens ecclésiastiques (2 October 1569)', *Preuve* 129, *Ibid.*, XLV, pp. 175-76; 'Ordre de confisquer les biens de certains personnages (5 November 1570)', *Preuve* 134, *Ibid.*, XLV, p. 185.

incarceration after Navarrenx, d'Idron and Tristan de Sainte-Colomme, continued to fight against Montgomery's forces, each subsequently killed at the siege of Tarbes in 1570.⁶⁰ De la Torte, one of the chiefs of the Catholic *ligue* at Lescar, was later captured by Montgomery's forces and hanged for his part in the rebellions,⁶¹ while only Audaux and Supersantis reconciled with Jeanne, both returning to serve in her government.⁶²

The following years saw only intermittent contact between these Catholic allies of the south-west. In November 1569, the continuing, though sporadic, violence along the Guyenne – Béarn/Navarre border saw the French diplomat, Lanssac, urge the king to send a great noble to unite the disparate factions in Guyenne.⁶³ Charles declined to act, though, content to leave Monluc and Damville to iron out their dispute and administer royal authority throughout the region. Then, in July 1570, Monluc and his captains held council with Luxe, Moneins and Bernard de Saint-Colomme at Rabestens, near Tarbes, to discuss the possibility of a joint assault on Jeanne d'Albret. Luxe proposed that should Monluc assist in their struggles against the queen of Navarre, he could count on a large Catholic force from Basse-Navarre.⁶⁴ But with Luxe now a resident in Paris, a fixture of the royal court, Monluc hesitated at such an offer. He knew that Luxe had become embroiled in a legal battle with Jeanne d'Albret, which precluded his return to head an army of Basse-Navarrais, and so doubted his commitment to this endeavour. As such, the plan was shelved, and Monluc returned to his 'official' duties as *lieutenant du roi*. Whether or not Luxe ever intended to retake the field, he continued to work tirelessly for the

⁶⁰ Dubarat, *Histoire de Béarn*, pp. 282, 303; Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix*, p. 625.

⁶¹ Bordenave, *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre*, p. 281.

⁶² See 'Entérinement des lettres de grâce de Jean de Supersantis (23 June 1571)', *Preuve* 143, Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn', XLV, pp. 191-92. Audaux later became a favourite of Jeanne's heir, Henri de Navarre, receiving the governorship of Béarn from him in 1584.

⁶³ Lanssac to Charles IX (21 November 1569), *AHG*, 10, p. 346.

⁶⁴ Monluc to Catherine de Medici (9 July 1570), *Commentaires*, pp. 770; 1,378 note. Monluc's captains at the meeting were Gondrin, Saint-Orens and d'Orthe.

Catholic cause in the south-west from Paris. In August 1571, Luxe secured a stay of execution from Catherine de Medici for those Catholics held prisoner for their part in the rebellions of the 1560s, claiming that they were merely following the directives of the French *parlements* in 'securing' Jeanne's lands in her absence.⁶⁵ In September 1571, the queen of Navarre even offered Luxe a compromise, urging him to bury his past and return to his lands as a loyal subject to oversee the rebuilding of the government there.⁶⁶ Luxe refused, preferring the relative safety of the capital to recriminations in his homeland.

Summary

This final section of the thesis has examined the national and European dimensions to Catholic activism in the south-west during the 1560s, and has shown that wider political and religious considerations did play an important role in events at Bordeaux, Agen and Toulouse. Spanish military and financial support to Monluc, for example, was crucial to the Catholic forces' successes between 1562 and 1563, while papal advocacy of Armagnac's inquisition, and its validation of the numerous oaths and codes promulgated by the *ligues*, benefited the Catholic party immensely throughout the decade. It would be wrong, though, to suggest that such initiatives were undertaken simply to bolster French Catholicism. Both Madrid and Rome had ulterior motives: Spain needed its northern borders secured against the Protestant armies of the *vicomtes*, a feature the presence of numerous armed Catholic *associations* in Guyenne would facilitate; the papacy sought to infiltrate France and re-establish a degree of authority – something the inquisition would allow to a

⁶⁵ Luxe to Catherine de Medici, (August 1571), Roelker, *Queen of Navarre*, p. 287.

⁶⁶ Jeanne d'Albret to Luxe (29 August, 11 September, 25 September, 1571), Rochambeau, *Lettres d'Antoine de Bourbon et de Jehanne d'Albret*, pp. 323-27.

limited extent without overtly aggravating the Gallican consensus within France. Yet the receipt of such contentious succour left the *ligueurs* open to accusations of colluding with foreign powers, 'treasonous activities' that Huguenot officials and later Protestant commentators alike made great play of. The archival remains of the region, though, fail to prove such allegations one way or another, leaving historians to sift through the propaganda to determine the extent and nature of their complicity.

Conversely, this study has also shown that certain figures were less influential in the region than previously thought. The Guise, for instance, made scant impression on the course of affairs at Bordeaux and Toulouse during the 1560s, and little impact on the patronage networks of the south-west either, despite their position as the dominant Catholic family of the national arena. Furthermore, the office of provincial governor at both Guyenne and Languedoc was conspicuous by its vacancy during this decade. These are surprising features of this study, especially given the close relations of the *ligueurs* of the south-west throughout the period. In fact, this inter-connectedness of Catholic activists provides the final theme of the thesis, revealing that men such as Monluc, Armagnac, Terride, Negrepelisse, Candalle, Bellegarde and others, were involved with a wide variety of concerns, covering many different arenas. Their enterprises across the Agenais, Bordelais and Toulouse plain have been detailed above, but their support of Spanish and papal intervention in Béarn and Navarre shows a far broader tapestry of activity than has been previously acknowledged. Integral to this were the intentions of Madrid and Rome, and to a lesser extent Paris, which sought to remove Jeanne d'Albret, the Calvinist queen of Navarre, from her throne and re-establish Catholicism across her lands. Here, the *ligueurs* of the south-west would join forces with the Catholic rebels of Béarn and Navarre, and with the Basse-Navarrais forces of Charles de Luxe, the bane of

Protestant military efforts throughout the decade. Cardinal Armagnac, meanwhile, was active in his capacity of inquisitor general of prosecuting heresy suspects across Jeanne's territories of Foix, Albret and Navarre, while Monluc and Armagnac both targeted the queen on numerous occasions to maintain the pressure on her and her administration. With a number of Monluc's captains actively assisting the Béarnais rebels, and Luxe, Gerdrest, Domezain, Saint-Colomme and other leading Catholic rebels serving under the *lieutenant du roi* at various times, the network of Catholic alliances grew ever more extensive during the decade. By 1570, Catholic activism in the south-west thus encompassed not only the close-knit *ligues* and *associations* examined in the first three parts of this study, but now embraced Catholic protagonists from Béarn and Navarre in a collective ethos that, potentially, could deploy sufficient resources across a wide power base so as to ensure the successful defence of the Catholic faith, and, perhaps, the defeat of the Reform movement across the region too.

Conclusion

This thesis has shown that Catholic activism in the south-west of France during the 1560s was a significant, multifaceted phenomenon. The various *ligues* and *associations* there were potent forces within provincial affairs, shaping the course of events by usurping authority and dictating local policy, or by simply providing a dissenting voice against the detractors of Catholic consensus. Five distinct forms of *association* have been identified here. The first is the *syndicat*, formed at Bordeaux in the late 1550s by Jean de Lange and disenchanted *avocats* of the *parlement*, aggrieved at the leniency shown by the crown to escalating levels of Huguenot violence across the Bordelais. This study has refuted standard interpretations that position the *syndicat* as a novelty of May 1561, a response to Protestant aggression against the château Trompette. Instead, it reveals it to have been a product of wider Catholic activism at Bordeaux, specifically the activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves and the players of the *basoche*. The *confrères* and *basochiens* are shown to have begun the defence of the Catholic faith within the town as early as 1540, rousing Catholic sentiment and energising their co-religionists through their rituals, ceremonies, plays and polemic. The discovery that the confraternity was also supported and legitimised by leading magistrates of the *parlement*, and that these figures were fundamental to its administrative proceedings, revises traditional perceptions of the structure of relationships between local and crown officials at Bordeaux. That the meetings of the confraternity played host to the inception of the *syndicat* is equally important, as it shows the *syndicat* to have been a culmination of

Catholic sentiment within the town, but also reveals that local *associations* were being considered by Catholics as a means of responding to the growth of the Reformed church as early as the 1550s, well before the outbreak of the religious wars in 1562. Current historiographical debate concerning the chronology of, and motivation behind, Catholic activism at Bordeaux must, therefore, be modified in light of these findings.

The second form of *association* encompasses the elite-led, oath-bound *ligues*, most evident at Agen, Toulouse and Cadillac in 1563. Here, it was the principal Catholic nobles and high ranking military and church officials of the region that directed operations, with the lesser classes affiliated through a formal ceremony in which they pledged loyalty at the altar of the local cathedral. Again, these *ligues* have been marginalized in the historiography of the religious wars, overlooked as spontaneous, transitory affairs, created only as an expedient, and then dismantled by royal order within weeks of their inception. This thesis has shown that this is also an inaccurate assessment of events. The *ligues* were, in fact, extremely important phenomena within the political constitution of the south-west during the early years of the conflict. Not only were they potent vehicles with which Catholics could confront the Huguenot threat militarily, but they also sought to augment Catholic domination of the localities by serving as a police force and town guard as necessary. Further, it has been shown that the *ligues* at Agen and Toulouse were planned in December 1562, months in advance of their nascence. This was the height of the first war, with little prospect of a peace being agreed to any time soon. As such, it would seem logical to assume that these were intended to be permanent institutions, carefully structured to facilitate military, policing and guard roles, and maintained under constant preparedness by a Catholic leadership and membership dissatisfied

with the crown's management of the sectarian conflict. In essence, they were to be important tools of the Catholic war effort. This contradicts the numerous evanescent labels ascribed by commentators and historians to the *ligues*, with the longevity of Candalle's *association* at Cadillac eliciting the following testimony from Thompson:

[It] exhibited a strength of organisation and an audacity which foreshadows that of the Holy League of 1576, in whose genesis, indeed, it represents an evolutionary stage. What made the league of Guyenne so peculiarly formidable was not so much its perfection of organisation and its wide expansion, as the fact that it was organised and existed without the knowledge or consent of the crown, and in transgression of the royal authority which forbade such *associations*.¹

The third manifestation of Catholic militancy was confraternal activism. Harding identifies the 1560s as the moment when 'lay brotherhoods became bases for political mobilisation that were illegal or aimed to change official policies',² as does Crouzet, who sees the rise of the confraternities in France during the 1560s as a defining moment in Catholic sentiment, a shift onto a more aggressive, offensive footing.³ That Catholic military commanders such as Blaise de Monluc and Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes were keen to bolster their forces by co-opting highly motivated *confrères* into their urban militias and local garrison troops after 1567 suggests that the resurgent confraternities were viewed as less illegal by the crown, which had legislated against former Catholic bodies in the edict of 1563. The generals were thus simply adapting their strategies accordingly.⁴

The fourth distinct phenomenon, the urban coalition administrations formed by elite Catholics throughout the decade, are the least explicit model of *association*,

¹ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 254.

² Harding, 'The mobilisation of confraternities', p. 85.

³ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, p. 356.

⁴ At Mâcon, for example, in Burgundy, Tavannes' confraternity of Saint-Ésprit was ten times larger in 1568 than its earlier sixteenth-century original, with the number of affiliated *confrères*, which now contained a complete cross-section of the local society, outnumbering the Huguenot population of the town by twenty-four to one. Harding, 'The mobilisation of confraternities', pp. 87-88.

and also the most difficult to define, as formal concords were rarely drawn up between these activists. Yet their concerted efforts to override extant governmental policy and protocol in favour of directives partial to the Catholic cause did leave a paper trail within the archives, a result mainly of their desire to validate their governance and ensure that all dealings were promulgated through legitimate channels. Thus, at Agen, in 1561-63, 1567-69; at Bordeaux, in 1562-63 and 1568-69; and at Toulouse, in May 1562, 1563, 1567-70, control of local government institutions was usurped by the various coalitions of Catholic magistrates, councillors, senior members of the clergy, and leading nobles and military captains of the region. These juntas were augmented in their ambitions by Monluc, whose preferred method of securing isolated urban centres against a belligerent enemy was to install an emergency council to assume authority, remove any suspicious officer from power, contain all hostile elements, and then energise the population to defend the town as a homogenous unit. This had proven a spectacular success at Siena in 1555, and throughout the 1560s, he would urge the leaders of numerous towns across the south-west to adopt a similar approach to defending against the Protestant threat.⁵ Such policies dovetailed nicely with the ambitions of the juntas, and provided solid foundations for the coalition regimes.

The fifth expression of Catholic zeal, and without doubt the most ephemeral, was the *croisade* at Toulouse of 1568. Again, most historians have neglected the

⁵ In April 1562, Monluc urged the *lieutenant-général*, du Franc, to prevent insurrection at Condom by taking arms and assuming personal command of the town in the king's name. *Commentaires*, p. 499. At Toulouse, following the unrest of May 1562, Monluc advised the *parlement* to clear the town of any potential 'dangerous elements' and to vet all visitors so as to prevent a repeat of the unrest: 'Il vaut mieux se tenir au dehors pour y faire acheminer le secours, sachant bien que ceste canaille n'estoient pas pour forcer si tost votre ville; que, s'ils m'eussent attendu, jamais entrepreneurs n'eussent esté mieux accomodez. Puisque Dieu vous a delivrez, c'est à present à vous à faire des vostres et faire puyr les cantons des charognes de ces meschans traistres à Dieu, au Roy et à leur patrie'. *Commentaires*, p. 506. At Bordeaux, in March 1563, he urged the magistrates to maintain stability by governing with strictness, using force as necessary, and advocating the population sign a written accord acknowledging that any deviation or delinquency would be severely dealt with. *Commentaires*, p. 578.

croisade as a non-entity given that, despite detailed preparations, it would fizzle out without ever achieving its purpose. Denis Crouzet and René Souriac have recently countered this conception, claiming that to dismiss the *croisade* out of hand would be to fail to acknowledge the groundswell of Catholic sentiment from which it evolved. After all, the *croisade* was sponsored by the *parlement*, sanctioned by the papacy, and patronised by numerous Catholic elites of the region.⁶ This echoes the controversy surrounding the *ligues* of 1563 where, arguably, the mere fact that an organisation was formed in the first place makes its existence important to the history of the period. For Crouzet and Souriac, the relevance is in the way in which the *croisade* reflects the prevailing penitential ethos of the period, and confirms the staunch Catholicism of Toulouse. It also reveals the increasing slide into militancy of the town's ruling corpus, which sanctioned this most fêted of Catholic traditions in an attempt both to engage the Huguenot rebels and to energise the population into supporting the defence of their town.

Several wider political and religious influences on Catholic activism at this time were also examined to determine the impact of national and European affairs on the course of events in the south-west, and the degree of interaction between 'external' Catholic protagonists and the region's *ligueurs*. Surprisingly, the thesis found that national figures, such as the Guise and the Triumvirate, made little impression on events at Bordeaux and Toulouse during the 1560s, despite their dominance in the broader political forum. The roles of Spain and the papacy, though, were far more overt, with financial and military succour flowing freely from Madrid and Rome to Monluc, Armagnac and their captains. The support of the papacy was especially important for the *associations* of the south-west in terms of validating the

⁶ Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, I, esp. 'Premières expériences d'association: un lien renoué avec l'imaginaire de la croisade?', pp. 378-96; Souriac, *Décentralisation administrative*, Chapter XI.

various oaths, unions and crusading ideals, while the presence of the papal inquisitor added yet another weapon to the Catholics' arsenal against the Reform movement.

The final theme examined, the support proffered by activists such as Monluc, Terride and Negrepelisse to the Catholic rebels at Oloron and Lescar in their struggles to overthrow the Calvinist government of Jeanne d'Albret, proves that the sphere of influence of the *ligueurs* reached far wider than their native Guyenne and Languedoc. Such connections have rarely been assessed by historians: the *ligues* formed by the Béarnais rebels are usually viewed as isolated entities, unconnected with Catholic activism at Bordeaux and Toulouse; reciprocal engagement in *ligue* affairs has never been appraised; the role of the inquisition in the 1560s is generally dismissed as an anachronism; and Armagnac's dual roles as papal inquisitor and leader of the Catholic *ligue* at Toulouse have not been correlated before. The findings of this study are important, therefore, as they not only set the influence of Spain, the Guise and the Triumvirate in context with events in the south-west of France, but they link the various *associations* of the wider region and indicate that the phenomenon of Catholic activism of the 1560s was more diverse than has been hitherto acknowledged.

The thesis has also broached the marginalizing of the *ligues* and *associations* in the historiography as little more than belligerent mechanisms of the elites; instruments with which the noble, clerical and administrative Catholic hierarchies of Guyenne could more easily fulfil their ambitions.⁷ Certainly, an inner circle of Catholic elites did control many of the *associations* of the period, and the upper echelons of Catholic society held greater sway in the enterprises of the activists than did the bourgeoisie or *menu peuple*. But the study has shown that a delicate

⁷ See, for example, Wilkinson, *A History of the League*, p. 3; Jouanna, *La devoir de la révolte*, p. 181.

interaction existed between the different social strata of the south-west. At Bordeaux and Toulouse, there was substantial input from the lesser officials of the *parlements*, while at Agen, it was the Catholic councillors of the towns and the local clergy that formed the main body of resistance to the Reformers in the early 1560s. Additionally, and most significantly, it has shown that 'grass roots' activism, through the confraternities of Saint-Yves and the *basoches* at Bordeaux and Toulouse, had a major impact on elite Catholic policy during the period. Filtering up from the streets, parishes and districts into the administrative and judicial institutions, this 'popular' sentiment served to bolster Catholicism within the community, and to support and further the aims of those Catholic superiors seeking to enter the political fray. In return, the communal activists received protection from their new patrons, with the magistrates attending their ceremonies and sitting in as administrators on their committees. This allowed them to pursue their devotions (and their assaults on the Protestants of the towns) with a greater degree of confidence and security. Only such levels of patronage could have allowed the *confrères* and *basoches* to deploy such vitriolic polemic against the moderate and Reformed parties of Bordeaux and Toulouse, for without the support of leading *parlementaires*, their performances and rhetoric would have been quickly silenced by the administrations. These motifs have been promoted before; Jensen noted in 1964 that: 'it is important to call attention to the fact that the nucleus of many of these provincial leagues was not the nobility, nor even the clergy (although they did play a key role), but the local guilds or fraternities of middle- and lower-class artisans'.⁸ But it is within current research, such as Ramsey study of Catholic relations in Paris, Galpern's overview of religiosity in

⁸ Jensen, *Diplomacy and Dogmatism*, p. 39.

sixteenth-century Champagne, and Crouzet's *Les guerriers de Dieu*, that these themes are finding most resonance.⁹

Reciprocity - another notable feature of Catholic activism – also crossed social barriers in the south-west. In fact, the *ligueurs* seem to have made a conscious resolution to establish as homogenous a support base as possible, enfranchising many from the disparate social, economic and political Catholic bodies of the region. From the outset, they sought to gain and maintain power by subsuming themselves within the political infrastructure of town and province, a *modus operandi* that required the co-opting or manipulating of crown and provincial officials in order to usurp control of the local institutions. The participation of sympathetic *parlementaires* and municipal councillors in support of Catholic policy would thus be a prerequisite for their success, and a staple of the various *associations* initiated in the 1560s, but the backing of the *menu peuple*, and especially the urban Catholic populaces, would also prove of immense benefit.

But such levels of cooperation would come at a price. On occasion, consenting magistrates and councillors would demand a tightening of traditional urban and provincial prerogatives against centralised interference in return for ceding control over the machinery of local government. Contention over such parochial concerns had long been a feature of the political scene of the south-west, with much of the debate centred on the internecine conflict and fractious relations between the *parlements*, *présidiaux* and local councils, at odds with one another over acceptable levels of crown 'interference' in local jurisdiction. Hanlon states that fractured relations within the administrations of the south-west meant that 'complicities and compromises might have been normal in local contexts, even during the most

⁹ Ramsey, *Liturgy, Politics and Salvation*; Galpern, *The Religions of the People in Sixteenth-Century Champagne*; Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*.

paroxysmal phases of the wars of religion',¹⁰ while Powis reveals that a mild schizophrenia affected the Bordeaux *parlementaires*, uneasy in their role as royal officials when it compromised their position as notables of Guyenne: 'was the magistrate an agent of the king's will – or a local notable struggling to reconcile the responsibility of office with the network of loyalties and interests which bound him to his province?'¹¹

The outbreak of sectarian conflict in 1562 tended to polarise these controversies, hardening the stance of Catholic magistrates who became more and more disgruntled at the crown's determination to deviate from traditional, conservative religious attitudes, and implement a policy of limited toleration of Protestantism. Courteault believes that the *parlementaires* were urged on here by the local Catholic nobility and clergy, concerned at the equivocal nature of royal legislation, which seemed (to Catholics) to condone the consolidation of Huguenot religious, political and military structures, while maligning Catholic responses and ordering their forces to disengage. As such, Courteault sees the *syndicat* and subsequent *associations* not simply as Catholic zealots, irked by confessional controversies, but as manifestations of provincial independence, concerned with regional miscarriages of justice.¹²

It is worth reiterating, then, that the *ligueurs'* grievances were ranged just as much against the crown and its policy of conciliation, as they were against their Huguenot enemies. Many among the provincial magistrature clearly felt betrayed by the crown, which, they claimed, had failed to protect Catholics from rising levels of Huguenot violence. Schneider and Parker, in fact, show that Catholics believed the

¹⁰ Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France. Catholic and Protestant coexistence in Aquitaine* (Philadelphia, 1993), p. 5.

¹¹ Powis, *The Magistrates of the Parlement of Bordeaux*, p. 297. See also Powis, 'Order, religion and magistrates', p. 196.

¹² Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn*, p. 223.

crown to have become so insipid during the early 1560s that many viewed themselves as the true defenders of royal authority, and the sole protectors of Catholic traditions and prerogatives in the localities.¹³ This meant that those crown officials who were active in the defence of Catholicism were faced with a stark choice: continue their obligation to the *ligues*, and risk being accused of dereliction of duty, or conform to crown dictate, and be vilified by their co-religionists for deserting the cause. The edict of Amboise, in 1563, made matters yet more acute. Now, the magistrates themselves were charged with implementing the crown's accommodatory policies in the province, and with policing any contraventions. This placed Catholic officials in a most awkward position, as the edict also declared that maintaining links with any outlawed *associations* would be deemed a treasonable offence.¹⁴

The crown's ambiguous management of its military forces in the region further confused this situation. Tholin has shown that, throughout the 1560s, the *lieutenants du roi*, *lieutenants-généraux* and *sénéchaux* of Guyenne and western Languedoc were mostly left to their own devices where the raising and deployment of troops and the levying of urban militia was concerned.¹⁵ Harding concurs, stating that Catherine de Medici granted her generals 'considerable liberty to interpret and execute the law', adding that the crown was invariably tardy or negligent in meeting its financial military obligations too, forcing the various captains to transfer the burden of maintaining their troops onto the surrounding towns and countryside, thus creating greater resentment in the process.¹⁶ The size of the forces deployed by Burie, Monluc, Armagnac, Terride et al thus greatly depended on the wealth,

¹³ See especially Schneider, *Public Life in Toulouse*, p. 96; Parker, *The Making of French Absolutism*, p. 37.

¹⁴ Stegmann, *Édits des guerres de religion*, p. 36.

¹⁵ See especially Tholin, 'La ville d' Agen', XIV, pp. 204-07.

¹⁶ Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite*, p. 52.

resources and personal standing of the individual captain. Such licence had three significant ramifications for the south-west. Firstly, with the majority of royal military officers subsequently committing themselves to the Catholic cause, contradictions over obligations abounded. Allied with their autonomy in decision-making, this meant that a coherent strategy for the provinces was rarely, or inconsistently applied. Secondly, there was seldom any sense that these forces were neutral in character, ambivalent to sectarian issues. Instead, they are reported as merely armed retinues of biased Catholic captains.

There is little doubt that the absence of grandee patronage exacerbated this situation, to the benefit of the Catholic party. With no significant Guise, Montmorency, Châtillon or Bourbon influence throughout the 1560s, the *ligueurs* of the south-west were forced to and, in fact, were free to nurture their own networks. This would prove integral to Catholic abilities to form *associations* in the early part of the decade, with most bodies initially constituted of collectives of co-workers or acquaintances. In fact, Jean Marie Constant suggests that while the grantees at court may well have desired to influence political strategies during this period, it would actually be the second layer of elites - the military commanders, leading magistrates and prominent provincial noblemen - that had the greatest say in the form and degree to which elite prejudices were disseminated into the provinces.¹⁷ Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that these networks and local *amitiés*, so successful in allowing Catholics to fend off early attempted usurpations of town councils by quasi-official Protestant bodies, would remain in place despite the censoring of the formal *ligues* by royal edict. Their continued presence within the community would,

¹⁷ Constant, 'The Protestant nobility in France', p. 69.

therefore, facilitate considerable independent and concerted opposition to the Reform movement throughout the decade, regardless of the current national political climate.

A final point draws this debate back to the inconsistencies within the historiography of the wars, specifically the lack of consensus within the commentaries as to whether the *ligues* and *associations* of the 1560s can be regarded as precursors to later Catholic activism under the League. Many of the leading authorities on the *Sainte Ligue* fail to acknowledge these early bodies: Labitte, Anquetil and Jouanna commence their studies of Catholic activity at the St. Bartholomew's massacres of 1572; Barnavi, Constant, Mariéjol, Frémy, Gilbert and Wilkinson all begin their surveys of the League at 1576, with the birth of the noble-led rising at Péronne, in which Catholics expanded their opposition to the crown to include discontent at fiscal and religious policies.¹⁸ Only a few make any reference to these formal *associations*, with even fewer remarking on their potential as provincial antecedents. Of these, Vaissière and Valois are brief. Vaissière writes:

En face des Protestants, qui s'associaient et s'organisaient contre les Catholics, ceux-ci avaient de bonne heure formé des unions locales pour résister aux entreprises des hérétiques. Ces premières ligues ont seulement un but religieux. Elles sont généralement composés de bourgeois dévoué à la royauté et sincèrement émus des dangers auxquels est exposé la catholicisme.¹⁹

Similarly, Valois notes their variety of purpose: 'une ligue de religion, une ligue social, une ligue pour conserver la religion catholic, une ligue pour opposer à la ligue anti-protestant, ...une ligue d'état, le dessien... le secret duquel Dieu seul connoit'.²⁰

While both are astute in their commentaries, their analyses are too stark, and they fail

¹⁸ Charles Labitte, *De la démocratie chez les prédicateurs de la ligue* (Paris, 1865); Anquetil, *L'esprit de la Ligue*; Jouanna, *La devoir de la révolte*, esp. pp. 181-89; Elie Barnavi, *Le parti de Dieu. Etude social et politique des chefs de la Ligue parisienne 1585-1594* (Louvain, 1980); Constant, *La Ligue*; Mariéjol, *La réforme et la Ligue*; Frémy, *Essai sur les diplomates du temps de la Ligue*; Wilkinson, *A History of the League*.

¹⁹ Pierre de Vaissière, 'Ligue', in *La grande encyclopédie*, (Paris), XXII, p. 234.

²⁰ Charles Valois, *Histoire de la Ligue. Oeuvre inédite d'un contemporain. I*, (Paris, 1914), p. 4.

to explore the complexities of the *ligues* fully. A more emphatic correlation is provided by the Protestant noble, Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, who in his *Histoire universelle* reflects that the *ligue* created at Toulouse in March 1563 was: 'le prototype et premier exemple de toutes les ligues qui ont depuis paru en France'.²¹ This view is shared by Lafaille, who notes that: 'Il est vray que la grande Ligue, que se forma sous la regne suivant, qui bouleversa le Royaume et le porta à deux doigts de sa ruine... ce fut sur le modèle de la ligue de Tholose',²² and James Westfall Thompson, who states that: 'In 1568... a process of federation is to be observed by which the provincial leagues are gradually welded into one whole - in a word, the mighty *Sainte Ligue* of 1576 exists now, potentially'.²³ Mark Greengrass's suggestion that the revolutionary part committees and juntas established by the *ligueurs* in Paris after 1584 'had ample precedent in the civic and confraternal institutions on which they were partly modelled' invites closer scrutiny.²⁴ Were the manifestations of Catholic activism present during the Holy Union truly the successors of the *associations* of the 1560s? Denis Richet and Robert Descimon are not so certain. Richet argues that concerted Catholic Reform only commenced with the birth of the League in the 1580s, while Descimon suggests that it was the force of the League's impact on France that actually: 'provoqua l'éclosion provinciale d'associations diverses ('confréries', 'fraternités', 'syndicats', 'unions', 'ligues'...) pour la défense d'un catholicisme exclusif'.²⁵ Robert Harding disagrees, however. For Harding, it was the other way round, with the renaissance of the confraternities in the 1560s serving to create a fertile environment for the birth of the Catholic

²¹ D'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle*, II, p. 137.

²² Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, II, p. 254.

²³ Thompson, *Wars of Religion*, p. 351.

²⁴ Greengrass, 'The Sainte Union in the Provinces', p. 470.

²⁵ Denis Richet, 'Socio-cultural aspects of religious conflicts in Paris during the second half of the sixteenth century', in Robert Forster and Orest Ranum (eds.), *Ritual, Religion and the Sacred: Selections from the Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* (Baltimore, 1982), p. 200; Robert Descimon, 'La Ligue à Paris (1585-1594): Une révision', *Annales*, 37 (1982), p. 73.

League after 1584.²⁶ Certainly, the explosion of Catholic piety and devotion that accompanied these ‘reborn’ confraternities helped to buoy Catholic activism during the late 1560s, but can we say that this religiosity was subsequently inherent within, and parallel to, the *Sainte Union* too? Harding argues it was intrinsic and that the experiences of the confraternities in these early years of conflict provided the foundations for League stratagem: ‘the creation of a politically active confraternity meant an effort to organise, politicise, and sometimes to arm social groups that were traditionally disorganised, politically passive and disarmed’.²⁷

Two historians have advanced this debate considerably, proposing that antecedents to the League can actually be found in Catholic polemic and propaganda of the 1540s and 1550s. Ramsey’s suggestion that the basic symbolism and significance of the League’s post-1584 rituals and processions can be traced to Catholic activism within the capital during the 1540s and 1550s, and Denis Crouzet’s assertion that: ‘La Ligue est préexistante à la crise de la Ligue. Elle est déjà vers 1550 en gestation dans la pensée d’Artus Desiré’, are both intriguing, and should be born out with further localised research.²⁸ This study, with its examination of the activities of the confraternity of Saint-Yves and the players of the *basoche* at Bordeaux and Toulouse, tends to support their findings. The fact that these episodes of Catholic activism are finally receiving attention is significant for our understanding of Catholic responses to the Protestant threat, and to crown attempts at imposing confessional toleration during the first decade of the wars of religion. This detailed survey of militant Catholic activity across the south-west of France and its environs should, therefore, make a valuable contribution to the expanding historiography of this intriguing facet of the sectarian conflict of the 1560s.

²⁶ Harding, ‘The mobilisation of confraternities’, pp. 85-107.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

²⁸ Ramsey, *Liturgy, Politics, and Salvation*, pp. 14-29; Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*, II, p. 434.

Appendix. Discussion of the sources used in the thesis

As there are so few religio- or socio-political models and little secondary material relevant to the study of Catholic activism in the south-west of France during the 1560s, a detailed discussion of the archival, printed primary and secondary sources used in this thesis has been provided below.

This thesis is very much driven by primary material. The bulk of the resources consulted are drawn from the departmental and municipal archives at Bordeaux, Toulouse and Agen, the main centres of Catholic activism during the period. The richest vein of source material concerning the *ligues* and *associations* of the 1560s is to be found in the *registres du parlement* at Toulouse and Bordeaux, voluminous tomes that report explicit details of events, participants, behaviour and arguments within the chambers of the sovereign courts. They also reveal more nuanced insights into Catholic relationships, both with one another and with royal and provincial structures of authority. Amongst other important material examined are documents containing information on military affairs, town council deliberations, ecclesiastical records, financial transactions and, of course, correspondence. Occasionally, these contain overt references to *associations* and their adherents, or at least allow the researcher to trace them through their oaths of allegiance or the royal *arrêts* that censored them. But mostly they are more oblique citations that allude to Catholic activity: troop muster, demand for munitions, provisioning of towns, and the punitive taxing and fining of Huguenot citizens. That such references are

circuitous is understandable, of course, given the *ligueurs*' reticence to declare themselves as such, especially after the edict of pacification of 1563 made such revelations a potentially treasonous matter. This means that it is also particularly problematic to distinguish who among those cited was actually an activist, an affiliate of the *ligues*, rather than simply a supporter of their cause, a *ligue* sympathiser. Much attention, therefore, needs to be paid to the finer points of these prosopographical studies to determine accurately the extent and the nature of relations between the various Catholic officers and nobles.

Access to material relating to events in Béarn and Navarre, however, is more problematic. The Navarrais archives were completely destroyed by fire in 1716, taking with it the entire collection of manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹ Fortunately, we have access to a number of these documents thanks to Pierre de Salefranque's *L'histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn et de Navarre*, a late seventeenth-century work that includes many transcriptions of these records in its appendices.² Nancy Roelker believes Salefranque, a minor official from an important *robin* family in Béarn, may have written his history in preparation for the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685.³ His work was never published, though, and lay undiscovered for centuries after his death in 1687 until Abbé Dubarat unearthed the manuscript in 1910, and published it in four parts in the *Bulletin de la société des*

¹ The same can be said of the *Registres de la jurade* at Bordeaux for the period 1560-1580. It is thought that these documents were either burned in the numerous fires that plagued the town's archives over the centuries - a fire in the *palais de justice* on 11 January 1597 devoured most of the *papiers du greffe*, while fires at the *hôtel de ville* in December 1657, and at the current archives, on 13 June 1862, also consumed large amounts of material - or were destroyed by later officials keen to eradicate certain events from history.

² Pierre de Salefranque, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn. Manuscrit de Pierre de Salefranque, conseiller du roi, secrétaire du parlement de Navarre', in *Bulletin de la société des sciences, lettres et arts de Pau*, IIe Série, XLIII-XLVI (ed. Abbé Dubarat, Pau, 1920-1923).

³ Nancy Roelker, *Queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret 1528-1572* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), p. 128.

sciences, lettres et arts de Pau.⁴ Dubarat seems to have been aware of the contentious nature of such a find as he used his editorial preface to provide an extensive and convincing account of the reliability of Salefranque's work and of the veracity of the copying of the *registres du parlement*. As expected, the *preuves* caused considerable debate among historians at their appearance, and it required a second expert in the history of Béarn, C. Dartigue, to confirm the veracity of the *preuves* before they were finally accepted as reliable.⁵ It is these documents that have formed the basis of the study of the Catholic activists in Béarn and Navarre, and of the reaction of the queen, Jeanne d'Albret, to the rebellions and invasions across her lands.

While the provincial archives of south-west France are the staple of primary research for this study, the centralised resources of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris are also valuable, especially for crown documentation such as royal edicts, letters of commission, and correspondence with its representatives in the localities. Numerous printed primary sources are also indispensable here, such as the collections of letters of various monarchs of the period, and the correspondence of the crown with its provincial governors and urban magistrates.⁶ Lawrence Stone has shown how the incorporation of personal correspondence into the analysis of the

⁴ Abbé Dubarat, 'Histoire de l'hérésie de Béarn. Manuscrit de Pierre de Salefranque, conseiller du roi, secrétaire et Darde-sacs du parlement de Navarre', *Bulletin de la société des sciences, lettres et arts de Pau*, IIe Série, XLIII (Pau, 1920).

⁵ Charles Dartigue-Peyrou, *La vicomté de Béarn sous le règne d'Henri II d'Albret (1517-1555)* (Paris, 1934), pp. 455-75.

⁶ For example, Charles IX, *Lettres de Charles IX à M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur en Espagne (1565-1572)* (ed. C. Douais, Paris, 1897); Catherine de Medici, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis* (10 vols., eds. H. de la Ferrière and G. Baguenault de Puchesse, Paris, 1880-1909); Marquis de Rochambeau, *Lettres d'Antoine de Bourbon et de Jehanne d'Albret* (Paris, 1877); Henri Forneron, *Histoire de Philippe II* (4 vols., Paris, 1881-87); Philip II, *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas (1558-1577)*, (5 vols., ed. L. P. Gachard, Brussels, 1848-79); Gustave Baguenault de Puchess, 'La politique de Philippe II dans les affaires de France: 1559-1598', *Revue des questions historiques*, 25 (1879), pp. 5-66. Unfortunately, much of the long and numerous communications between the Guise and Philip II of Spain, especially those relating to the early 1560's, were burnt by the Paris Commune when the Louvre was stormed in the nineteenth century, and its prized collections destroyed.

largely legalistic and administrative archival material adds a greater variety of bibliographical detail to the survey, resulting in stronger prosopographical perspective on the issues.⁷ Catholic accounts are best appraised through the memoirs and correspondence of active military commanders such as Blaise de Monluc and Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, with important contemporary Catholic testimony also found in Tamizey de Larroque's 'Lettres inédites du Cardinal d'Armagnac', Claude Haton's *Mémoires*, Cabié's publication of the letters of Saint-Sulpice, and the *Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roi Charles IX en Espagne*.⁸ The most important Protestant account of this period is the *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, a chronicle of the rise of the Reformed church in France, written by Calvin's right-hand man in Geneva, Théodore de Bèze. Bèze's personal correspondence is most illuminating too, while other important contemporary Protestant commentaries are recorded in Castelnau, d'Aubigné, Brantôme, Simon Goulart and, of course, the *Mémoires de Condé*, a beautifully crafted, if utterly biased, account of the role played by successive princes of Condé in the religious wars.⁹

⁷ Lawrence Stone, 'Prosopography', in Felix Gilbert and Stephen R. Graubard (eds.), *Historical Studies Today* (New York, 1972), p. 124.

⁸ *Commentaires*; Gaspard de Saulx-Tavannes, *Correspondance des Saulx-Tavannes au XVIe siècle* (ed. L. Pingaud, Paris, 1877); Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, 'Lettres inédites du Cardinal d'Armagnac', *Collection Méridionale*, V (Paris, Bordeaux, 1874), pp. 1-134. Claude Haton, *Mémoires de Claude Haton (1553-1582)* (2 vols., Paris, 2001); Edmond Cabié, *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. Documents transcrits, classés et annotés* (Paris, 1906); Edmond Cabié, *Ambassade en Espagne de Jean Ébrard, seigneur de St. Sulpice de 1562 à 1565* (Albi, 1903); Raymond de Rouer Fourquevaux, *sieur de, Dépêches de M. de Fourquevaux, ambassadeur du roi Charles IX en Espagne (1565-1572)* (3 vols., ed. C. Douais, Paris, 1896-1904).

⁹ Théodore de Bèze, *Histoire Ecclésiastique des églises réformées au royaume de France* (3 vols., eds. W. Baum, E. Cunitz, Nieuwkoop, 1974); Théodore de Bèze, *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze* (26 vols., ed. H. Aubert, Geneva, 1960-2002); Michel de Castelnau, *Les mémoires de Messire Michel de Castelnau, seigneur de Mauvissière et de Concressaut, ausquelles sont traictées les choses plus remarquables qu'il a veues et negotiées en France, Angleterre, et Escosse, soubz les rois François II et Charles IX, tant en temps de paix qu'en temps de guerre* (Paris, 1671); Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle* (10 vols., ed. A. de Ruble, Paris, 1886-1909); Brantôme, *Oeuvres complètes de Pierre de Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme* (2 vols., ed. L. Lalanne, Paris, 1864-82); *Mémoires de Condé, ou recueil pour servir à l'histoire de France, contenant ce qui s'est passé du plus mémorable dans le Royaume* (6 vols., London, Paris, 1743).

However, while these tracts offer valuable perspectives on the roles played by leading figures in the conflict, their intensely personal nature dictates that most are also a minefield of deceit, misinformation, and prejudice. Pierre Daniel has a particular warning for historians who make use of memoirs containing accounts of civil wars, advising them to exercise particular caution with sources liable to ‘partialité et animosité’.¹⁰ In some instances, it is the author’s omissions that are more of a dilemma for the reader than the simple inaccuracies: Monluc’s *Commentaires*, for example, omit any reference to the period 1559-1561, a time during which, the Reformers claimed, Monluc dabbled with Protestantism; similarly, the correspondence of Bèze and Calvin were both doctored at their death to eradicate similar faux-pas, references to activities that may well have compromised the Calvinist church at a later date.

Interestingly, Monluc’s *Commentaires*, often dismissed as blatant Catholic propaganda, have recently undergone something of a revision. Monluc’s biographer concludes that the *Commentaires*:

méritent de conserver leur place au premier rang des sources narratives de l’histoire de France et d’Italie au seizième siècle. Monluc est presque partout admirablement informé; ce qu’il raconte est exact; sa minutieuse précision n’est pas un leurre; ses jugements sont modérés et circonspects.¹¹

Similarly, Pierre Michel sees no reason to dismiss Monluc as an unreliable source: ‘the objectivity of Monluc is remarkable... generally the Protestant historians and memorialists confirm his versions of events’.¹² As this thesis draws from the *Commentaires* for a number of Monluc’s (and his Catholic captains’) activities

¹⁰ Pierre Daniel, *Histoire de France* - quoted in J. Héritier, *Catherine de Medici* (London, 1963), p. 122. See similar caveats on the use of memoirs in Robert J. Knecht, ‘Military autobiographies in sixteenth-century France’, in J.R. Mulryne, and M. Shewring (eds.), *War, Literature and the Arts in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Basingstoke, 1989), pp. 3-21.

¹¹ Paul Courteault, *Blaise de Monluc, Historien* (Geneva, 1970), pp. 618-19.

¹² Pierre Michel, *Blaise de Monluc* (Paris, 1971), pp. 128-29.

during the 1560s, this is satisfying to know. Two printed editions of the *Commentaires* will be used in this study: the nineteenth-century five-volume set edited by the baron Alphonse de Ruble; and Paul Courteault's more recent edition, featuring extensive notes and variants.¹³ Monluc only began writing his *Commentaires* after his retirement in 1570, and although he finished them by 1572, they were amended and added to over the following years. It seems evident that many of these revisions were borrowed from the memoirs of Guillaume and Martin du Bellay, in an attempt by Monluc to augment his more vague recollections of early events. The result, however, was not only a commentary on his life's deeds, but a vindication of his proud reputation in the face of recent allegations of corruption and malpractice.¹⁴

Historians have drawn from three distinct versions of the *Commentaires* for their editions: the extant original manuscript; the 1592 text, published by Florimond de Raemon; and a later incomplete edition held by Monluc's nephew, Jean de Monluc de Balagny, which featured Jean's additional notes in the margins. Ruble used Balagny's manuscript as the framework for his edition, with the other two employed to fill the gaps as required. Although much of the original text and grammar are retained, Ruble did correct many of Florimond's alterations, and restored proper names throughout. Courteault, on the other hand, preferred to use the original manuscript as his basis, with Florimond's and Balagny's texts added where necessary. Where the different editions offer supplementary original information, Courteault supplies multiple versions, something Ruble does not, highlighting text

¹³ Blaise de Monluc, *Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires 1521-1576* (eds. P. Courteault and J. Giono, Paris, 1964); Blaise de Monluc, *Commentaires et Lettres de Blaise de Monluc, Maréchal de France* (5 vols., ed. A. de Ruble, Paris, 1864-72).

¹⁴ For the influence of Guillaume and Martin du Bellay on the text, and Monluc's desire for vindication through his *Commentaires*, see Robert J. Knecht, 'The sword and the pen: Blaise de Monluc and his *Commentaires*', *Renaissance Studies*, 9 (1995), pp. 104-18.

from alternate editions by the use of italics, parentheses and footnotes. He corrects the pre-1564 calendar, by which New Year began at Easter, to the modern equivalent, an amendment that Ruble also ignored. In fact, Courteault is extremely critical of Ruble's editorial methodology, describing it as '*un amalgame perpétuel, impossible à contrôler*'.¹⁵ For Courteault, Ruble interchanged the different texts too often and too readily, with the result that a less than authentic complete work is created from less than complete materials. For all references within this thesis, therefore, Courteault's more complete edition of 1964 will be used. Ruble's edition, though, will be cited for all references to Monluc's correspondence, as it contains two additional volumes of transcribed letters sent and received by Monluc during his career, something Courteault was unable to complete.

A further feature of the research material consulted in this survey will be the numerous local histories of south-west France. The 58-volume *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde* (1858-1932) is invaluable for matters pertaining to Guyenne, as are Ducourneau's *La Guienne historique et monumentale*, and Souriac's *Décentralisation administrative dans l'ancienne France*.¹⁶ For Bordeaux, Devienne's *Histoire de Bordeaux*, Boutrouche's *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715*, Julian's *L'histoire de Bordeaux depuis les origines jusqu'à 1895*, and O'Reilly's *Histoire complète de Bordeaux*, are the most informative for this period.¹⁷ For histories of the *parlement* at Bordeaux, the researcher is spoiled for choice, with Métivier's *Chronique du parlement de Bordeaux*, Boscheron-Desportes' *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux*

¹⁵ *Commentaires*, p.xxx.

¹⁶ *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde* (58 vols., Bordeaux, 1858-1932); Alex Ducourneau, *La Guienne historique et monumentale*, II (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1844); René Souriac, *Décentralisation administrative dans l'ancienne France. Autonomie commingeoise et pouvoir d'état, 1540-1630* (2 vols., Toulouse, 1992).

¹⁷ Dom Devienne, *Histoire de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1771); Robert Boutrouche, (ed.), *Bordeaux de 1453 à 1715* (Bordeaux, 1966); Camille Julian, *L'histoire de Bordeaux depuis les origines jusqu'à 1895* (Bordeaux, 1895); Abbé Patrice-John O'Reilly, *Histoire complète de Bordeaux* (6 vols., Bordeaux, 1863).

depuis sa création jusqu'à sa suppression, Communay's *Le parlement de Bordeaux, notes biographiques sur ses principaux officiers*, Gaullieur's *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux et dans le ressort du parlement de Guyenne*, Hauchecorne's article 'Le parlement de Bordeaux pendant la première guerre civile', and Tamizey de Larroque's study 'Jean Lange, Conseiller au parlement de Bordeaux', all most instructive.¹⁸ For Agen, the *Revue de l'Agenais* (1871 on) is a valuable reference source, as are Andrieu's *Histoire de l'Agenais*, Barrère's *Histoire religieuse et monumentale du diocèse d'Agen*, and Tholin's study, 'La ville d'Agen pendant les guerres de religion du XVI^e siècle'.¹⁹

For a general survey of Languedoc during the religious wars, Privat's 15-volume *Histoire de Languedoc* (1872-90) is indispensable, as it also contains numerous transcriptions of original sixteenth-century *preuves*. Devic and Vaissète's *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (1872-92) is also useful, although this life-work of two Dominican monks needs careful reading as it often overstates Catholic sensibilities and is prone to denigrate any and all Calvinist thought or actions. Arnaud's *Histoire des protestants du Vivarais et du Velay, pays de Languedoc* (1888) and Gachon's *Histoire de Languedoc* (1921) offer a Protestant counter-perspective to these works, while the *Revue d'Aquitaine* (1857-68) offers a fairly neutral viewpoint on the sectarian conflict.²⁰ General surveys of Toulouse can be

¹⁸ Jean de Métivier, *Chronique du parlement de Bordeaux* (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1886); C. B. F. Boscheron-Desportes, *Histoire du parlement de Bordeaux depuis sa création jusqu'à sa suppression (1451-1790)* (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1877); A. Communay, *Le parlement de Bordeaux, notes biographiques sur ses principaux officiers* (Bordeaux, 1898); Ernest Gaullieur, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux et dans le ressort du parlement de Guyenne* (2 vols., Bordeaux, 1884); F. Hauchecorne, 'Le parlement de Bordeaux pendant la première guerre civile (décembre 1560-mars 1563)', *Annales du Midi*, 62 (1950), pp. 329-40; Philippe Tamizey de Larroque, 'Jean Lange, conseiller au parlement de Bordeaux', *Revue Catholique de Bordeaux*, 1883 (Bordeaux), pp. 685-97.

¹⁹ Jules Andrieu, *Histoire de l'Agenais* (2 vols., Agen, 1893); Abbé Joseph Barrère, *Histoire religieuse et monumentale du diocèse d'Agen, depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours* (2 vols., Agen, 1855-1856); Georges Tholin, 'La ville d'Agen pendant les guerres de religion du XVI^e siècle', *Revue de l'Agenais et des anciennes provinces du sud-ouest XIV - XVI* (Agen, 1887-1889).

²⁰ Claude Devic and Jean Joseph Vaissète, *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (10 vols., ed. Lacour, Toulouse, 1994); Arnaud, *Histoire des protestants du Vivarais et du Velay, pays de Languedoc*

found in Lafaille's *Annales de la ville de Toulouse*, Schneider's *Public Life in Toulouse 1463-1789*, Gaches's *Mémoires sur les guerres de religion à Castres et dans le Languedoc*, and Ramet's *Histoire de Toulouse*, while access to the *parlement* is through Mentzer's 'Calvinist propaganda and the Parlement of Toulouse', Dubédat's *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse*, and Viala's *Le parlement de Toulouse et l'administration royale laïque*.²¹ There is a wealth of historiography focussing on the insurrection of the 1560s, with the most accessible being Connac's 'Troubles de mai 1562 à Toulouse', Davies' 'Persecution and Protestantism: Toulouse, 1562-1575', Greengrass' 'The anatomy of a religious riot in Toulouse in May 1562', and Roschach's 'Documents inédits concernant l'édit de pacification de 1568 et le régime des suspects à Toulouse'.²²

The historiography of Béarn and Navarre during this period is divided along confessional lines far more than for most regional studies. Protestant sources are mainly Olhagaray's *Histoire de Foix, Béarn et Navarre*, Dartigue's *Jeanne d'Albret et le Béarn*, Communay's *Les Huguenots dans le Béarn et la Navarre*, and Bordenave's *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre*.²³ Several Catholic narratives exist;

(Toulouse, 1888); Gachon, *Histoire de Languedoc* (Toulouse, 1921); *Review d'Acquitaine* (16 vols., Auch, 1857-68).

²¹ Germain de Lafaille, *Annales de la ville de Toulouse* (2 vols., Toulouse, 1687; 1701); Robert A. Schneider, *Public Life in Toulouse 1463-1789. From Municipal Republic to Cosmopolitan City* (Ithaca, 1989); Jacques Gaches, *Mémoires sur les guerres de religion à Castres et dans le Languedoc (1555-1610)* (Geneva, 1970); Henri Ramet, *Histoire de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1935); Raymond A. Mentzer, 'Calvinist propaganda and the Parlement of Toulouse', *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte*, 68 (1977), pp. 268-83; Jean-Baptiste Dubédat, *Histoire du parlement de Toulouse* (2 vols., Paris, 1885); André Viala, *Le parlement de Toulouse et l'administration royale laïque, 1420-1525 environ* (Albi, 1953).

²² Emile Connac, 'Troubles de mai 1562 à Toulouse', *Annales du Midi*, 3 (1891), pp. 310-39; Joan Davies, 'Persecution and Protestantism: Toulouse, 1562-1575', *Historical Journal*, 22 (1979), pp. 31-51; Mark Greengrass, 'The anatomy of a religious riot in Toulouse in May 1562', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 34 (1983), pp. 367-91; Ernest Roschach, 'Documents inédits concernant l'édit de pacification de 1568 et le régime des suspects à Toulouse', *Mémoires de l'académie des sciences, inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse*, 10 (1878), pp. 318-57.

²³ Pierre Olhagaray, *Histoire des comptes de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre, diligemment recueillie tant des precedens historiens, que des archives desdites maisons* (Paris, 1629); C. Dartigue, *Jeanne d'Albret et le Béarn* (Mont-de-Marsan, 1934); A. Communay, 'Les Huguenots dans le Béarn et la Navarre. Documents inédits', *Archives Historiques de la Gascogne*, 6 (Paris, Auch, 1885); Nicolas de Bordenave, *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre* (ed. P. Raymond, Paris, 1873).

Dubarat's two works on Protestantism in Béarn, Labenazie's *Histoire de la ville d'Agen and pays d'Agenois*, and Lestrade's 'Les huguenots en Comminges', which examines extant documentation.²⁴ The more impartial texts, though, are found in Bourgeon's *La réforme à Nérac*, Jaurgain's 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon', Mirasson's *Histoire du Béarn*, Ritter's 'Jeanne d'Albret et les troubles de la religion en Béarn, Bigorre, Soule et Navarre, 1560-1572', Roelker's *Queen of Navarre. Jeanne d'Albret 1528-1572*, Ruble's *Jeanne d'Albret et la guerre civile*, Greengrass's 'The Calvinist experiment in Béarn' and Courteault's *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn*.²⁵

Finally, for reference to the general state of the Catholic church in the southwest, Cayre's *Histoire des évêques et archevêques de Toulouse*, Devienne's *Histoire de l'église de Bordeaux*, Gaullieur's *Histoire du collège de Guyenne*, and Du Bourg's *Histoire du grand-prieure de Toulouse* are essential.²⁶ For articles relating to the influence of the Jesuits in Catholic activism during the 1560s, see especially Chalande's 'Les établissements des Jésuites à Toulouse au XVIe et XVIIe siècle', Delattre's *Les établissements des Jesuites en France depuis quatre siècles*, Picot's *Les Italiens en France au seizième siècle* (Rome, 1995) and Piaget's *Histoire de*

²⁴ Abbé Dubarat, *Le Protestantisme en Béarn et au pays basque* (Pau, 1895); Abbé Dubarat, *Documents et bibliographie sur la réforme en Béarn et au pays basque* (Pau, 1905); Labenazie, *Histoire de la ville d'Agen et pays d'Agenois*, I, (Montauban, 1888); Abbé Jean Lestrade, *Les Huguenots en Comminges. Documents inédits*, I, (Paris, Auch, 1900); 'Les Huguenots en Comminges. Documents inédits, II', *Archives Historiques de la Gascogne*, 14 (Paris, Auch, 1910), pp. 1-160.

²⁵ G. Bourgeon, *La Réforme à Nérac. Les origines (1530-1560)* (Toulouse, 1880); J. de Jaurgain, 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon. Appendice', *Revue de Béarn, Navarre et Lannes*, III (1885), pp. 13-81; 'Les capitaines châtelains de Mauléon', *Revue de Béarn, Navarre et Lannes*, II (1884), pp. 241-341; P. Mirasson, *Histoire du Béarn* (Paris, 1770); Raymond Ritter, 'Jeanne d'Albret et les troubles de la religion en Béarn, Bigorre, Soule et Navarre, 1560-1572', *Revue de Béarn*, 3-6 (1928-1933); Nancy Lyman Roelker, *Queen of Navarre. Jeanne d'Albret 1528-1572* (Cambridge, MA., 1968); Alphonse de Ruble, *Jeanne d'Albret et la guerre civile* (Paris, 1897); Mark Greengrass, 'The Calvinist experiment in Béarn', in A. Pettegree, A. Duke, G. Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 119-42; Paul Courteault, *Histoire de Gascogne et de Béarn* (Paris, 1938).

²⁶ Abbé Cayre, *Histoire des évêques et archevêques de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1873); Dom Devienne, *Histoire de l'église de Bordeaux* (Bordeaux, 1862); Ernest Gaullieur, *Histoire du collège de Guyenne* (Paris, 1874); M. A. du Bourg, *Histoire du grand-prieure de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1883).

l'établissement des Jésuites en France (1540-1640) (Leiden, 1893).²⁷ With regards to the phenomenon of urban confraternal and *basochien* activism, it is fortunate that several nineteenth-century antiquarian studies survive as they explore many facets of religiosity within the towns of the south-west.²⁸

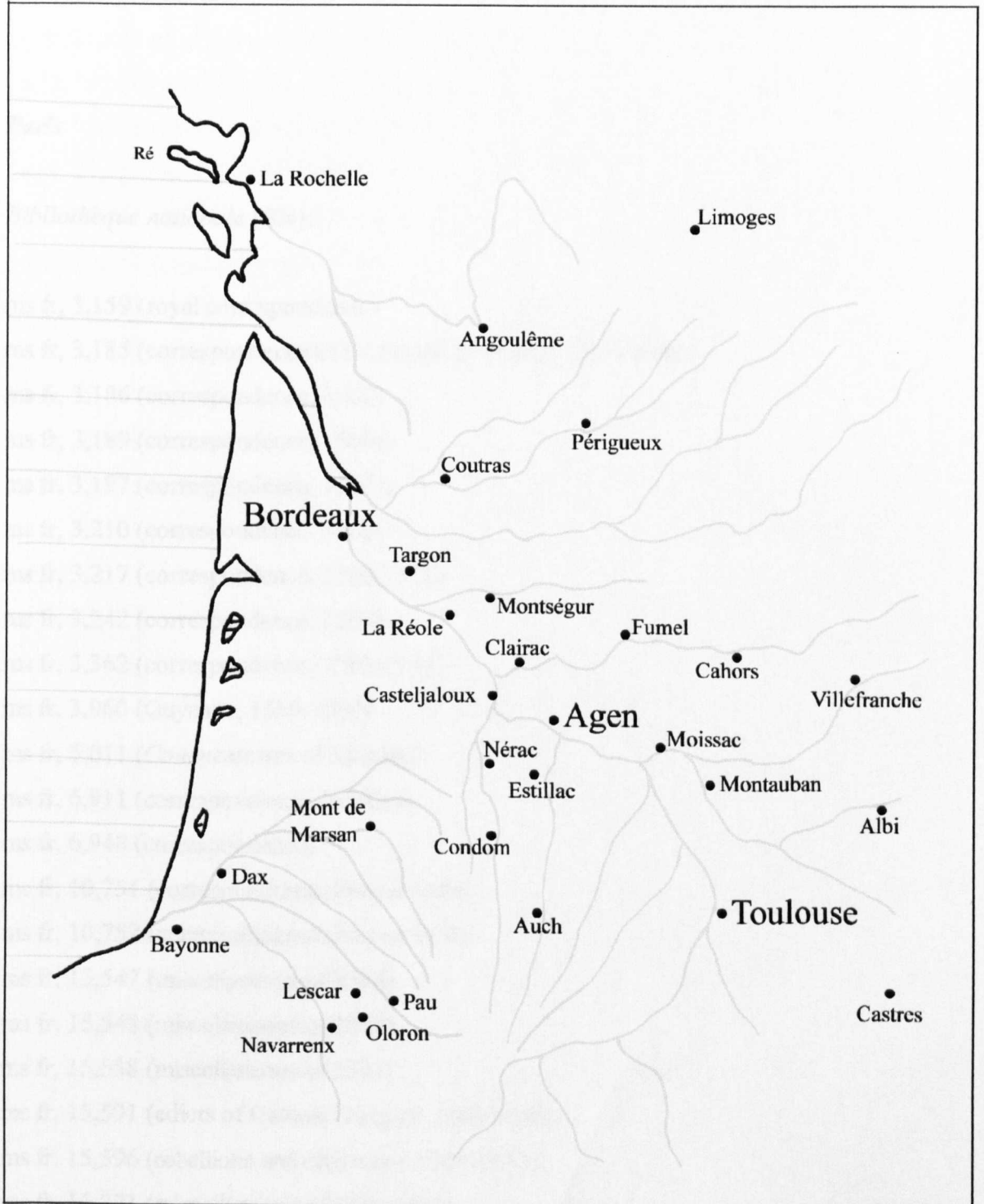
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²⁸ For confraternities of the south-west, see A. de la Borderie, *Monuments originaux de l'histoire de Saint Yves* (Saint-Brieux, 1887); Christian Chavanon, *Béatification professionnelle de Saint Yves* (Bordeaux, 1936); N. Ricard, *Panegyrique de Saint-Yves, Patron de MM. les Avocats (prononcé dans l'église de Nazareth)* (Toulouse, 1764); S. Ropartz, *Histoire de Saint Yves, patron des gens de Justice* (Saint-Brieux, 1856). For general study of the confraternities of France, see Robert R. Harding, 'The mobilisation of confraternities against the Reformation in France', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 11, 2 (1980), pp. 85-107. For the *basoche*, see M. Brives-Cazes, *Notices Historiques sur la basoche de Bordeaux du XVe au XVIIIe siècle* (Toulouse, s.d.); G. Boyer, 'La basoche Toulousaine au quinzième siècle, d'après les archives du parlement', *Mémoires de la société archéologique du midi de la France*, 18 (1932), pp. 64-71; Abbé Cau-Durban, 'Statuts de la basoche du sénéchal de Toulouse', *Mémoires de la société archéologique du midi de la France*, 16 (1908), pp. 166-84; René Glangeaud, *La basoche de Toulouse* (Toulouse, 1912); E. Valsse-Cibiel, 'Notes rétrospective sur la basoche Toulousaine', *Mémoires de l'académie impériale des science, inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse*, 6 (1868), pp. 221-43.

Map 1. France in the Sixteenth Century



Map 2. The South-West of France, c.1560



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