**Political Justice and the Outbreak of the Wars of Religion**[[1]](#footnote-1)

In June 1561 the lieutenant-general of Guyenne, Charles de Coucis, seigneur de Burie, wrote a letter to the Queen Mother and regent, Catherine de Medici, complaining about the collapse of order in the region. He warned her of the ‘vermin’, who ‘are resolving, Madame, to no longer pay the tithe and church dues, nor the king’s taxes, and even less rents to their lords, attributing to themselves in several places political justice.’[[2]](#footnote-2) The term ‘political justice’ is an unusual one. The concept was taken from the *Nichomachean Ethics*, in which Aristotle’s explains that political justice canexist only in a community among free and equal persons (1134a26–8). More precisely, it applies to those who are naturally suited for law, and those who have equality in ruling and being ruled (1134b8–15). It seems unlikely that Burie was conversant with the latest in political thinking. He was an old soldier, born in the early 1490s, and seems to have had no formal education.[[3]](#footnote-3) The answer to the likely provenance of the term comes in a letter Burie wrote to king Charles IX a month later. Burie, it turned out, was being counselled by Etienne de la Boétie, one of the founders of modern political philosophy and, in the *Discours de la servitude volontaire*, author of the first modern treatise on freedom and resistance to tyranny.[[4]](#footnote-4) Burie expressed on several occasions the esteem and affection he had for his counsellor, ‘a very learned man of worth.’[[5]](#footnote-5)

Burie/La Boétie were joining a vigorous contemporary debate over the extent to which the breakdown order in 1560-1 was the consequence of religious schism or political upheaval. More recently historians have come down decisively in favour of the former. The debate has most recently been revived by William Cavanaugh, who argues that the very idea of religious war is a foundational myth of liberalism. The distinction between secular rational violence and irrational religious violence was first made, he claims, at the end of the seventeenth century. The idea that the previous century was characterized by ‘wars of religion’ was an attempt to distinguish the religious from the political. Since 9/11 the myth has taken on a more sinister purpose: internally it can be used to create the sense of an ‘other’, distinguishing friend and foe; externally it supports the interventionism of liberal empire against non-western and non-secular societies, which as inherently irrational and prone to violence require restraining by the use of rational force. The separation of the categories the ‘religious’ and the ‘political’ is, he argues, bound up with creation of modern state, which redeployed violence to different ends.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Cavanaugh’s argument is unlikely to convince many historians of the Reformation. Sixteenth-century commentators were clearly able to distinguish between politics and religion, engaged in a lively debate about the relationship between the two and made nuanced assessments about the relative weight that needed to be given to political and religious considerations when examining different events. For these reasons Cavanaugh claims have come in for stinging criticism.[[7]](#footnote-7) However, before we dismiss Cavanaugh for disinterring an outmoded view the of the religious wars, it is worth considering his point that a better way of looking at the question of religion and violence is to ask under what circumstances do ideologies and practices of all kinds promote violence? While the dominant trend of the last forty years has been to put the religion back into the Wars of Religion, there has been little reflection on what constituted politics in the sixteenth century. Politics is invariably taken to mean the events caused by the struggle for power and the personalities and ideas that shaped the contest. Cavanaugh is to be congratulated therefore for reminding us of Carl Schmitt’s claim in the *Concept of the Political* that enmity is the essence of the political. While religious history has been transformed by anthropological approaches, political history has yet to receive the same treatment. The idea that politics was the realm of enmity and religion of peace was still commonplace in the sixteenth century. It underpinned the sacrament of penance, which mediated the peace in the feud, and the Mass, which symbolised union and concord. The concept of the political began to change in the sixteenth century as the Protestants attacked the Mass and popularized humanist ideals of political justice, as a means to broaden the appeal of their cause. Burie/La Boétie’s identification of political justice as a cause of the trouble in 1561 was therefore highly perceptive. It is worth exploring at some length.

An exploration of political justice and what it meant in sixteenth-century Guyenne is especially significant given its preponderant role in the outbreak of the French Wars of Religion. The role of Guyenne, with the Agenais at the epicentre, as the crucible of violence is well attested. It produced France’s most intense campaign of iconoclasm and the cycle of retaliatory violence killings anticipated the general explosion of 1562. It was the ‘laboratory’ of violence, a region marked by its ‘avant-garde radicalism’.[[8]](#footnote-8) Explaining why this should have been so has proved more difficult. Traditional explanations centred on the role of Antoine de Navarre, governor of Guyenne, and especially his wife Jeanne d’Albret, a major landowner in the region. But there is no evidence to suggest that they were controlling the violence. Like most princes, Navarre abhorred disorder.[[9]](#footnote-9) Crouzet traces the roots of the violence to the eschatological preaching of a Franciscan, Thomas Illyricus. But Illyricus, who spent most of his time as a hermit at Arcachon before moving to Dauphiné, never made it to the Agenais and died in 1528. [[10]](#footnote-10)

The other argument is that the intensity of violence was the result of social conflict that pitted peasants against their lords. Supporters of this thesis point, in particular, to one episode of Protestant violence that stands out above all others during these years: the murder of François de Seguenville, baron of Fumel, by a Protestant crowd on 24 November 1561. Fumel was attacked in his château by 2,000 people drawn from 15 or so surrounding villages and his corpse was horribly mutilated. It was an event that shocked public opinion throughout France, because of his high status. Fumel was a gentleman of the privy chamber, chevalier of the order of Saint-Michel, a former of ambassador to Constantinople, and a captain in the royal guard. This bloody episode became an essential component of Catholic propaganda, demonstrating that Protestantism was nothing more than a mask for subversion. The ‘class war’ thesis was the basis for the most widely read and admired memoirs of events in the region, Blaise de Monluc’s *Conmmentaires*. The official Protestant version of events offered a different perspective on the same theme: Fumel was a tyrant getting his just reward from the oppressed.[[11]](#footnote-11) Serge Brunet has recently nuanced and updated the argument, demonstrating that the Fumel murder was part of a wider anti-seigneurial uprising that shook Guyenne in the period 1560 to 1562.[[12]](#footnote-12) The violence, he argues, was a consequence of resistance to seigneurialism, which was being aggressively asserted from the 1550s.

The social interpretation rests on the assumption that attacks on noblemen were the work of peasants. But the assailants who attacked Fumel were not, on the whole, peasants. They were cross section of the rural community. Our best source for the events surrounding Fumel’s murder is the judgment issued by the sénéchaussée of Agen on 1 April 1562.[[13]](#footnote-13) Of the 209 named suspects, there were 44 artisans and 14 notables.[[14]](#footnote-14) There were nobles present too: of the fifteen or sixteen executed for the murder three were beheaded, as their social status dictated.[[15]](#footnote-15) Social tensions were ubiquitous in sixteenth-century France, but these did simply pit lord against peasant in a neat binary divide. Rural social relations were much more complex: within villages population growth and economic expansion in the sixteenth century started a process of social differentiation separating a small group of wealthier landowning peasants, who were more likely to be literate, and a growing number of those with insufficient plots. The interminable lawsuits that were feature of the struggle between a lord and his subjects in the sixteenth-century Agenais are evidence not only of assertive seigneurialism, but also of the fact that villagers were adept at using the law to defend their rights. The battle to assert lordship was a continuous one and there seems nothing particularly remarkable about the 1550s in this regard. The estates of the most aggressive landlord in the region, the baron de Madaillan, were left untouched by the violence.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Today it is proverbial that religious division causes violence. Judith Pollman has shown persuasively from the evidence of the sixteenth-century Netherlands that this is not necessarily the case: ‘it takes more than the existence of religious division for people to start lynching each other.’[[17]](#footnote-17) The same can be said of social antagonisms, which are ubiquitous, but by themselves do not engender bloody violence. Both religious division and social antagonism require instrumentalizing. This paper offers an alternative explanation for the violence in the Agenais. It argues that the intensity of the violence in the Agenais was a manifestation of the ways in which the religious and social had become political. The violence was directly caused by politicized factions and was not the result of a spontaneous inter-communal eruption. This was precisely what well-informed local observers said was the cause of the violence. When Burie/La Boétie spoke of political justice, they was criticising the ways in which the locals were taking the law into their own hands. In August 1561 Burie reported the pillaging of several noble châteaux in the Agenais by as many as 5,000 men. As he went on to explain, this was the result ‘more of individual enmities than of religion.’[[18]](#footnote-18)

This article presents new archival evidence which illuminates the dynamic of the violence in the Agenais. It shows that the kernel of factionalism was a feud, which led to the creation of rival militias well before the outbreak of the full-scale military campaigns in 1562. This dynamic is significant because recent studies of civil war show that militias ‘influence the length and outcome of civil wars, levels and types of violence’, demonstrate that civilian agency has a significant impact on how ‘macro cleavages are projected at the local level’, and underline ‘the transformative power of civil wars with respect to social networks and political institutions.’[[19]](#footnote-19) The paper shows how social networks coalesced in 1557-61 and formed into armed factions. It argues that, contrary to what is usually claimed, Protestant violence was not confined to iconoclasm, but was from its inception a movement prepared to use force against identified enemies in order to establish its right to worship. Sixteenth-century France was a legalistic society and the Protestants were always careful to marshal legal arguments and obtain writs in support of their rights. The Agenais was also deeply marked by the political fighting that emerged at court in 1560. I conclude with some observations about the wider implications of my case study for rethinking the outbreak of the Wars of Religion.

**The Montpezat Feud**

Traditional interpretations of events in the Agenais lean heavily on the famous account left by Blaise de Monluc written ten years after the events he purports to describe. Monluc represents events in the region as a class war, or ‘the covert war against the nobility’. According to Monluc:

The ministers preached publicly that, if one adopted their religion, one would no longer have to pay dues to gentlemen, nor royal taxes…others preached that king’s had no power above that which pleased the people, others that the nobility was nothing more than anyone else.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Monluc could not ignore the fact that many nobles supported the Protestant cause, but he argued that they refrained from active involvement. Like their Catholic neighbours, they were afraid to leave their château for fear of attack. Monluc’s purpose in constructing this narrative ten years after the events was to magnify his own role and justify his recourse to summary executions. This permitted him to don the heroic mantle of ‘Conservateur de Guyenne’.[[21]](#footnote-21) Facts that did not fit this story were altered.[[22]](#footnote-22)

But there are other reasons for being sceptical about Monluc’s version of the events. Strip away the rhetoric and he was remarkably coy about events in the Agenais in 1560-1.[[23]](#footnote-23) He preferred to concentrate on the civil wars after 1562 and to justify why ‘against my nature, I used not only rigor, but cruelty.’[[24]](#footnote-24) In fact, Monluc only received a commission to go to the region in July 1561 when order had already broken down. There are other reasons for the gaps in Monluc’s account. His sympathies were more ambiguous than he cares to mention. At the time he was close to the House of Bourbon in its conflict with the Guise and he was intimately connected to the local Protestant leadership.[[25]](#footnote-25) When he was secretly approached by the Protestants at the end of 1561 Monluc responded, as he reports it, with furious indignation. But the fact that he approached at all is instructive.[[26]](#footnote-26)

In fact, the disorder in the Agenais was already three years old by the time Monluc received his commission. It began, as family feuds so often did, with a disputed inheritance. The story of the feud only came to light when the participants began to apply for royal pardons following the termination of the first war of religion in 1563. These pardons tales recount that in 1557 the elder line of the House of Montpezat died out in the male line, leaving only a woman, Gabrielle, married to Jean-Georges de Rochechouart, seigneur de Plieux, whose claim to the inheritance was contested by the cadet line of the Montpezat represented by Alain de Montpezat (d.1561) and his two sons Antoine, seigneur de Savignac de Thouars, and François, seigneur de Laugnac.[[27]](#footnote-27) In his pardon tale Antoine de Montpezat recounted how, at the beginning of 1558, he travelled to Lectoure to meet his brother, François, and Rochechouart, in order to settle the matter.[[28]](#footnote-28) As soon as the meeting was finished, Rochechouart ‘with a great number of armed men’ seized the château of Laugnac and expelled the garrison that the brothers had placed there. Reckoning that he was within his rights to use the same means, Antoine summoned inhabitants from the surrounding region and engaged soldiers and retook Laugnac with little difficulty. Rochechouart obtained a judgement from the seneschal of Agen outlawing his enemy and, accompanied by the royal *prévôt des maréchaux*, returned with cannon and set up a gallows outside the castle. This ‘guerre et hostilité’ involved a number of killings and the burning and destruction of local farms. There was a failed attempt to make peace by Antoine de Bourbon, King of Navarre, in April 1559. Later that year Rochechouart was killed in a skirmish or ambush.[[29]](#footnote-29)

This feud was of immense significance in the locality because the Montpezat were the most powerful family in the region between the Lot and the Garonne – Laugnac lies 20 kilometres north of Agen. The Montpezat had built their authority on a fearsome reputation. The uncle of Antoine and Francois de Montepzat, Guy (d.1520) was, according the family historian ‘one of the most violent…and most cruel of the barons.’ Murder was a routine weapon of Montpezat rule in the Agenais. When a priest publicly criticized their conduct, Guy, who was popularly known as the ‘Maltese dragon’, had him murdered at the altar.[[30]](#footnote-30)

What Antoine de Montpezat’s letters of pardon do not make clear is that soon after Rochechouart’s murder, he and his brother also fell out over the inheritance. Although Antoine, was the elder, his father, Alain, refused to accept him as his heir. He altered his will, making the younger son, François, his sole heir. His reason for doing so was that Antoine was a Protestant [[31]](#footnote-31) His disinheritance most likely explains why Antoine took the unusual step of taking a double toponymic, ‘Savignac de Thouars’, for his sobriquet, dropping his family name in favour of the names of two seigneuries, the inheritance of which he had just been stripped. The sources are hostile to Antoine. He was ‘unscrupulous, violent and hot-headed’. This was because he gave succour to heretics, encouraged those who broke images in the church at Laugnac and mimicked priests.[[32]](#footnote-32) His neighbours, however, did not find this behaviour reprehensible and he attracted substantial local support. He managed to hold onto the fortress at Savignac, a seigneury which he shared with two other Protestant families. He protested to the Parlement of Bordeaux about the dispossession.[[33]](#footnote-33) With the force of the law behind him, he set about attempting to recover his rights. There was a clear overlap between his quest to regain his property and the outbreak and intensity of the Protestant violence in the Agenais. What better way to bring about Reformation than to ensure that Antoine de Montpezat regained his rightful place as the leading seigneur in the region? Antoine’s co-seigneur, François des Cours, was denounced for heresy in 1552, but was protected as a man-at-arms in the company of the King of Navarre, which mustered in Agen during the 1560-1 crisis. Wearing the badge of the House of Bourbon gave men like des Cours immunity and meant that they could literally get away with murder. The husband of Marguerite des Cours, Francois d’Albert, seigneur de Lamaurelle, was another Protestant supporter; involved in an attempt to spring a Protestant minister from prison in March 1560, he was executed in absentia by the Parlement of Bordeaux in 1563 for his part in the murder of Rochechouart.[[34]](#footnote-34) The overlap between the Montpezat feud and the Protestant insurgency is confirmed by the pardon issued to Pierre de Labay, sieur de Lescalle. Labay was another faithful servant of the House of Bourbon and archer in the company of the King of Navarre. Labay agreed to help Antoine de Montpezat, because he was a ‘friend and neighbour’ and ‘could not refuse him’, and he was also impressed by the fact that Antoine was accompanied ‘by several distinguished gentlemen reputed men of worth.’[[35]](#footnote-35)

Information about the rank and file comes from an order from the Parlement of Bordeaux ordering the release of several defendants arrested as members of Montpezat’s private army.[[36]](#footnote-36) These included a Philippe Leonard, *avocat* in the sénéchaussée court at Agen, a royal sergeant, three other men with the title *maître*, three priests and a monk. At first sight this seems a rather odd assortment to be involved in a siege. However, it would be less unusual if they were partisans of reform, whose ranks were drawn disproportionately from the educated middling sort. It was this notability, officered by the gentry, that formed the backbone of the Protestant cause in the Agenais.

**The Organization of Protestant Violence**

Between the attack on the château of Laugnac in 1559 and the seizure of Agen on 1 December 1561 the Protestant violence that characterized the Agenais was not sporadic and spontaneous, but highly organized and targeted. Alongside the more common outbreaks of iconoclasm, tactics consisted of terror, murder and intimidation. It was a remarkably successful campaign, which earned the respect of the experienced captain, Burie. It forced him to recognize that some form of accommodation with heresy was necessary. It is worth examining the dynamics in more detail because Protestant violence has received much less attention than Catholic violence. The debate was dominated until recently by the idea that Catholics made war on the body of the heretic, while Protestants, in accordance with scripture, targeted idols and images. While, in general, there is some truth in this claim, it is important to keep in mind that it was an essential element of Protestant propaganda, which juxtaposed the rationality of Protestant violence rooted in scripture with the irrationality of Catholic cruelty.[[37]](#footnote-37) In the Agenais the attempt to differentiate between attacks on persons (Catholic violence) and attacks on images (Protestant violence) is less easy to sustain.

In Guyenne there was a strong tradition of municipal independence characterized by its numerous bastide towns, which nourished the belief that religious affairs should be subject to civic authority. Here the Reformation was enacted by tightly-knit oligarchies, which controlled local office. Protestant churches had employed armed guards to protect their congregations from at least 1557, but the Conspiracy of Amboise in March 1560 marked a significant stage in the mobilization of militias funded and controlled by the consistory.[[38]](#footnote-38) The precise relationship between Antoine de Montpezat, seigneur de Savignac de Thouars, and the Protestant churches in the Agenais remains speculation. The militia was not founded by the consistory, but by 1560 they were co-operating with and probably funding him. The oft-made distinction between urban bourgeois and rural nobles, one providing the finance and the other the muscle, can be overstated. The composition of the militia in the Agenais reveals them as comrades in arms. Most studies of Protestantism concentrate on the larger towns and cities. But the Agenais indicates the considerable mobilization of the rural notability and the close ties that bound the numerous small towns and bourgs of the region to their rural hinterland. The existence of Protestant militias was justified in terms of defensive measures. But in the Agenais this was merely a cover. Here the Protestant militia learned quickly how to live off its enemies.[[39]](#footnote-39)

In January 1561, following the death of Francis II and the fall of the House of Guise from power, lieutenant-general Burie was sent on a pacification mission into the Agenais to put a halt to the escalating violence. This involved administering oaths of obedience from consuls and *jurats*, the elected officials who managed the affairs of communities large and small in the Midi, representing the towns which had revolted against the previous regime.[[40]](#footnote-40) The submission of Villeneuve d’Agenais provides clues as to how the revolt was organized. Its citizens proclaimed that they were ‘good and faithful servants and subjects of the king’. They also insisted the town was a ‘Republique’, that is a Commonwealth, with all the rights that this entailed.[[41]](#footnote-41) But this was not a particularist urban or social uprising, it was a broad political movement led by the local nobility. The leader of the Villeneuve Protestants, Guillaume d’Hébrard, seigneur de Bonrepos, had a château just to the south-east of the town and was elected consul in 1561-2. The Protestant nobility in the town was closely tied to the des Cours kin network. The Protestant captain, Francois d’Albert, seigneur de Lamaurelle, outlawed for his part in the Montpezat feud, served as consul of Villeneuve in 1558 and 1564. It was these noblemen who presented a petition to the judge at Villeneuve on 19 January 1561 requesting a formal place of worship, in the meantime the congregation continued to meet in one of their houses.[[42]](#footnote-42)

It was not just towns which offered to submit to Burie. There was also the ‘consuls, tenants and inhabitants’ of François de Nompar baron de Caumont.[[43]](#footnote-43) This should come as no surprise as the Caumont were one of the leading Protestant families. It is significant, however, that the baron himself did not submit. There were two reasons for this. First, the high nobility tended to remain in the background; they could employ others to carry out dangerous tasks. Second, they did not consider themselves rebels; it was their duty to defend the Commonwealth against tyranny.[[44]](#footnote-44) This is not to suggest that tenants and vassals blindly followed their lords. The consuls and *jurats* of Tonneins, Grateloup and Villeton – whose lord was a Catholic - also had their submission recorded. [[45]](#footnote-45) But they could defy him safe in the knowledge that they enjoyed armed protection. Nevertheless, it was this defiance of established hierarchy that fuelled accusations that the Protestants were ‘levellers’ intent on establishing Republics on the Genevan model.

The fact that these these towns and villages swore an oath of obedience was not an indication that they had turned their backs on the Reformation – they did not agree to stop Protestant worship. Rather, their reason for seeking written assurances was that they had been rebels. They had been ‘confederez’, taking up arms to resist tyranny and oppose the Guise, who had usurped the constitutional rights of the House of Bourbon, as Princes of the Blood. There has been much dispute over the origin of the word Huguenot. In the Agenais, at least, the word clearly meant a ‘confederate’, referring to those who had sworn to join a league or covenant. But in the Agenais it was not just applied to Protestants. The Catholic faction in Agen was referred to as the ‘papistes’ or ‘hugoneaulx du pappe.’[[46]](#footnote-46)

But the activities of the Protestant confederates amounted to more than just resistance. In December 1560 there was a widespread bout of iconoclastic fury in the region: in Monflanquin the images were smashed by ‘persons unknown’, in Monclar they smashed a cross; in Porte Sainte-Marie an oratory was broken by persons unknown at night; in Tonneins images were burnt and smashed.[[47]](#footnote-47) The inspiration for these attacks was the inaugural meeting of the Colloquy of the Protestant Church in Guyenne, which met for two weeks at Clairac in November. Clairac, dominated by its abbey, was chosen specifically because Geoffrey de Caumont was the abbot and his brothers could provide security. The involvement of the Protestant nobility in the iconoclastic violence can be traced in the trajectory of the rural attacks which followed the Colloquy. One was in the vicinity of Clairac itself and affected churches in a contiguous group of villages that stretched for about 15 kilometres northwest of the Caumont lordship at Castelmoron. The second took place between the Lot and the Garonne and damaged half a dozen churches in the vicinity of the château of Frégimont, one of the lordships contested by Antoine de Montpezat.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Caumont and Montpezat were bringing the Reformation into the villages. This was not the work of professional soldiers, but of flying columns of militiamen, a motley collection of ex-priests, notables, lawyers and artisans. On 17 January 1561, for example, more than twenty Huguenots from Monclar, armed with ‘arquebuses, halberds, crossbows, swords and other harness’, led by a priest and part-time physician dressed in disguise, tried to gain access to the neighbouring town of Saint Livrade and its church.[[49]](#footnote-49) The militiamen provided security, protecting worshippers, preventing the arrest of heresy suspects, and planning and carrying out the rescue of those imprisoned for the faith. In June 1560 3-4,000 men, led by the seigneur de Lamaurelle, were mustered in an initial attempt to rescue Minister Fontaines, who had been imprisoned in Agen. A second attempt in October was successful.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Another aspect of Protestant violence was intimidation. In July 1560 eight men, ‘their faces masked, armed with swords, bucklers, “gebellines” and light lances’, attacked the *procureur du roi* at Villeneuve. [[51]](#footnote-51) In 1559 the Franciscans at Sainte-Foy complained to the Parlement of Bordeaux of an attempt to set fire to their monastery in revenge for complaints they had made about heresy in the town.[[52]](#footnote-52) In the autumn of 1560 a Catholic was shot at Monheurt and the curé was attacked when he refused to hand over his keys. His vicar was struck with a sword.[[53]](#footnote-53) In December the iconoclasm at Monclar was accompanied by threats to the kill the priests should they intervene.[[54]](#footnote-54) At Gontaud in the same month, a preacher had his habit cut off and was paraded around the village ‘ignominiously in broad daylight’.[[55]](#footnote-55) A Franciscan preacher was assaulted and punched at Cancon in December 1561.[[56]](#footnote-56) During the expulsion of the Franciscans from Villeneuve the priests complained of ‘woundings, broken images, burnt vestments and books, and the plundering of their larder.’ When the priest of Saint Catherine’s Church attempted to halt a Protestant burial in his cemetery he received a sword cut to his head for his pains.[[57]](#footnote-57) There was organized resistance to the tithe. In March 1562 curé François Belot complained that he was unable to return to his benefices at Castelnaud, Senezelles and Montclar due to ‘greats threats’ made to him over the tithe.[[58]](#footnote-58) Those accused of immoral behaviour ran the risk of being run out of town. The consuls of Mezin ‘seeing the lubricious life of the monks and priests expelled (*extirpé*) the whores they found in their rooms.’[[59]](#footnote-59) At Villeneuve these women were whipped.[[60]](#footnote-60)

In 1560 and early 1561 Protestant violence was carefully targeted against priests, public enemies of the Reform movement and in concentrated bouts of iconoclasm. Intimidation was effective in projecting Protestant power. But the tactics changed dramatically in the summer of 1561 when there was a sudden and bloody escalation of violence. This was significant because in Paris there was much optimism about public order. The spring riots that had broken out in towns across France had ebbed. The public reconciliation of the duke of Guise and the prince of Condé healed the main factional cleavage. But in the Agenais things went from bad to worse. An instruction from Paris recognized the wider significance of events there: ‘It is imperative that they remain in peace as do others in a great many places in this kingdom.’[[61]](#footnote-61)

**‘Hugoneaulx du Pappe’: The Genesis of the Catholic Party in the Agenais**

In the summer of 1561 civil war broke out in the Agenais. It was the direct result of Catholic resistance to the Reformation. The early role played by Guyenne in the establishment of the Catholic League has long been recognized.[[62]](#footnote-62) Fresh archival evidence presented here tells us a great deal more about the genesis of this movement and explains why the baron of Fumel, in particular, was targeted by the Protestants. The baron emerged as among the first active opponents of Protestantism in the region following the Conspiracy of Amboise in March 1560. The Guise accused Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, of being the instigator of the plot to overthrow them and civil war briefly threatened to break out between the rival princely Houses. In June, Condé’s eldest brother, Antoine, King of Navarre, arrived in the Agenais. He made common cause with the Protestants and listened to Protestant preachers. Those who dared oppose the House of Bourbon in the region were few - it was these few who formed the nucleus of the Catholic party. One of them was François de Montpezat, who was already fighting his brother and the Protestants threatening his inheritance. François was paid 1,050 *livres* for his part in the policing operation in the region that followed the Conspiracy of Amboise.[[63]](#footnote-63) He received a commission to arrest rebels and those suspected of plotting against the Guise. In June he arrived in Agen to meet with other Catholics. These men were royal judges and lawyers, aldermen of the town and two canons, brothers called Lalande, one of whom, Clément, canon of Saint Caprais, was described by the Protestant historian, Bèze, as ‘carrying a sword and buckler under his robes.’[[64]](#footnote-64) They established a *conseil militaire* to monitor Protestant activity in the region and set about organizing a militia furnished from the town’s arsenal. Michel de Montaigne was one of three judges of the Parlement of Bordeaux requested by Navarre to investigate their activities.[[65]](#footnote-65)

Fumel also identified with this Party. The extent of the animosity that existed between him and his opponents at this time can be gauged by a lawsuit that Fumel brought against Antoine de Lanusse, sieur de Lachappelle. All that survives from the case are the ‘justificatory facts’ presented to the Parlement of Bordeaux by the defendant to vindicate himself. [[66]](#footnote-66) Lanusse was *lieutenant de robe courte* of the sénéschaussée of Armagnac, and therefore responsible for policing the region immediately to the south of the Agenais. In April 1560 he recorded that masked men, sent by the *receveur des tailles* in the Agenais, came to his house in order to arrest two suspects. It appears that Lanusse was in the Protestant Party and accused of aiding and abetting their escape. Lanusse’s testimony drips with enmity: the complaint against him was an act of ‘vengeance’ brought by his ‘mortal and capital enemies’. These included Fumel and the Canons Lalande ‘great friends, servants and familiars of Fumel, solicitors and go-between in all his business.’ [[67]](#footnote-67) The suit makes it clear that Fumel and his colleagues considered they were hunting down public enemies suspected of involvement in the Conspiracy of Amboise.

The Protestants retorted that their enemies were driven by private interest. Lanusse’s ‘capital enemy’ was the *receveur des tailles*, Guy de Godailh. They insisted that he was a Guise spy and had obtained his office by denouncing the previous incumbent, his own cousin, for heresy. This is a spin on real events.[[68]](#footnote-68) In fact, Godailh’s role in anti-Protestant activity went all the way back to 1538 when he was a witness to an investigation into the spread of heresy in Agen. This investigation touched the city elite, including Guy’s cousin and employer, Robert, *receveur des tailles*. Nothing, however, came of this investigation. Indeed, the inquisitor himself was so impressed that he converted to Protestantism.[[69]](#footnote-69) What the 1538 investigations revealed was not enmity, but civilized conversations at dinner parties among the city elite, which included the Godailh family and the Canons Lalande, about religious matters. These were debates among the pious and between friends.[[70]](#footnote-70) What happened in the interim was the transformation of the political environment. In 1560, former friends had to choose for or against the Guise regime. Guy Godailh became an agent of the regime, a ‘pratiqueur’ seeking out evidence against Condé and his insurgents in the region.

**From Feud to Civil War**

This political context allows us to understand the violence that erupted in 1561. Its intensity is usually ascribed to peasants attacking Catholic lords. In fact, the attackers were not peasants and the victims were not all Catholics. The failure to maintain the peace in the Agenais, despite the measures taken by the crown, was due to the determination of Catholic confederates to resist the advance of the Reformation. Hitherto confined substantially to the region downstream of the Lot and its confluence with the Garonne, Protestantism was advancing inexorably up the Lot and Garonne valleys in the summer of 1561. On 4 July 1561 Burie reported that Protestants near Agen: ‘sacked the Church of Lyrolles, where they killed the rector, and they did the same at Serignac and burnt the church at Brax, and killed those who tried to sound the alarm.’[[71]](#footnote-71) He reported the mustering of up to 4,000 armed men. On the Feast of Saint Jacques (25 July 1561), the seigneur de Casseneuil reported coming under attack from hundreds of heavily armed men, who also insulted priests and shot at the stained glass in the local church.[[72]](#footnote-72) Casseneuil was no innocent victim. He was Fumel’s nephew and a leading member of the Catholic Party.[[73]](#footnote-73) On 19 August 1561 the seigneur de Lévignac reported the ‘pillaging and ransacking of his house and killing of several of his servants’ by a force of 2,000.[[74]](#footnote-74) Nor was Lévignac a random target. Often misidentified, he was in fact Germain-Gaston de Foix-Candale, friend and patron of Montaigne, and leader of the Catholic Party, whom the Protestants referred to as the ‘sieur de Scandale’. His claims to lordship in the area were contested by the bastide town of Lévignac and the area was affected during the iconoclastic fury of December 1560.[[75]](#footnote-75)

It seems that the Protestants had got wind of a Catholic plot – they regularly intercepted post in the region – and summoned Antoine de Montpezat, seigneur de Savignac de Thouars, to mobilize his militia. The Parlement complained about this vigilante force. Burie’s refusal to intervene fuelled rumours that he was favouring the Protestants.[[76]](#footnote-76) Rather than punishing Savignac de Thouars, Burie rewarded him with the command of thirty mounted arquebusiers. He reported this to the Royal Council with the recommendation that he was ‘a man of worth and well known to the King of Navarre.’[[77]](#footnote-77) And wrote a further letter:

Sire, monsieur de Savignac de Thoaurs begged me write you that he heard that several of his enemies have had things said to you which are not true and which have put him in your ill grace. Assuring you, sire, that he is an honest gentlemen who registers complaint herewith of the insults he suffers.[[78]](#footnote-78)

The Protestants were emboldened, seizing and fortifying the Jacobin convent in Agen for their services. Catholic forces counter-attacked and on 19 August Savignac de Thouars was himself besieged at Frégimont by 4-5,000 men.[[79]](#footnote-79) The violence turned murderous: on 28 August the sieur de Courdeloups was assassinated in a tavern in Cadillac.[[80]](#footnote-80) We are particularly well informed about events near Tournon-en-Agenais, because of a letter sent on 26 August by the Minister of Agen, requesting help from Burie. The previous Sunday two gentlemen entered the Protestant temple in the town (which belonged to King of Navarre); they shot one worshipper and wounded several others before taking the rest as prisoners to the neighbouring château of Lestelle. The Protestant militia responded by attacking Lestelle. In the assault a Protestant and a Catholic gentleman were killed.[[81]](#footnote-81)

There were three points that the Minister in his report wished to make clear to Burie. First, the Protestants were acting in accordance with the law. Having taken Lestelle, they arrested six gentlemen and, ‘although it was in their power to kill them’, no harm was done to them. They were taken to Nérac to face justice. Secondly, these men were not just persecutors of the faithful, they were oppressors of the people, having committed ‘two murders and several abductions [of girls] which is cause that they should be killed rather than brought to [Nérac].’ Thirdly, the present trouble was fomented by a Catholic conspiracy, which fortunately had been betrayed by a ‘nicodemite’ in their ranks.[[82]](#footnote-82) In the summer of 1561 both sides believed they had justice on their side and were intent on enforcing competing interpretations of royal legislation. One the one hand, the Catholics were adamant that royal edicts outlawed public worship. The Protestants, on the other hand, had no intention of giving up their places of worship. And they had the backing of the crown. Burie was told to ensure that all royal officers turned a blind eye to Protestant worship.[[83]](#footnote-83) This helps to clarify why the baron de Fumel was so brutally murdered on 24 November 1561. Fumel was a very unpleasant character. He was getting his just desserts for the barbarous tyrannies that he had brought back from Constantinople. The official Protestant account reported the killing as a ‘singular providence.’ This construal of divine vengeance was commonly used by Protestants to justify their acts of violence. But Fumel was not the only cruel lord in the region and there was nothing remotely unusual about his behaviour as a landlord. Of more immediate significance was the fact that Fumel was a leader of the Catholic Party. By the summer of 1561 the rebellion had reached the gates of his château. There were clashes between the parties in the environs of Fumel as the baron tried to stop his tenants worshipping. The local courts and judges were largely hostile to him and he was served with interdictions. A petition was sent to Bordeaux on 6 August requesting an investigation into his activities.[[84]](#footnote-84)

Burie travelled to Agen to put a stop to the disorder. He took Etienne de la Boétie with him. In October they summoned the leaders of both parties and forced them to sign a peace treaty in which they agreed to cease the fighting.[[85]](#footnote-85) Fumel was one of the signatories. But Burie went much further. He ordered that, in places where there were several churches, Protestants should be provided with the smaller of these. In Agen, the Protestants agreed to leave the convent of the Jacobins for a smaller parish church. A bi-confessional commission was established to enforce the accord. Burie was declared to the King a month later that ‘among the people there I see only obedience.’[[86]](#footnote-86)

But Burie’s orders transformed the legal justification for Protestant violence. In order to prevent further attacks consuls and *jurats* were permitted to sound the tocsin and arm the people. The use of force to uphold the public peace had been clearly ordained. On Saturday 22nd November Fumel breached the peace treaty to which he was signatory; coming across a group of Protestants there was an altercation in which insults were exchanged and he hit a deacon over the head with his pistol.[[87]](#footnote-87) The Protestants had right on their side. The presence of the judge and officials from Penne-en-Agenais among the accused is significant.[[88]](#footnote-88) The following day there were two attempts to arrest Fumel, first as he left Sunday Mass and second as he returned home from his afternoon hunt. But with Fumel safe inside his château it was clear that reinforcements would be required. The leader of the Protestants in Fumel, a merchant called Balthazar Vacquié, took care to consult the Consistory before ringing the bells to summon the surrounding villages.[[89]](#footnote-89) This summons was in accord with the October settlement, and unsurprisingly many Catholics turned out against a hated landlord who had broken the law.

It is little reported that there was another victim on 24 November. The baron’s servant, Laville, was also murdered and his brothers were co-plaintiffs in the lawsuit against the 209 defendants. This killing was not happenstance either. The Laville brothers were ‘directors, go-betweens and negotiators’ of the baron and involved in carrying out his dirty work in the region. They were identified as ‘capital enemies’ of the Protestants and had been closely involved in hunting down those suspected of taking part in the Conspiracy of Amboise in 1560.[[90]](#footnote-90) Laville was, like his master, a victim of political justice.

In her pursuit of the murderers, Madame de Fumel initially argued that the crime was motivated by religion. She reported that the insurgents were taking their revenge on a ‘cruel persecutor’.[[91]](#footnote-91) She demanded the same: ‘Je crie vengeance a dieu toutes les heures du jour’.[[92]](#footnote-92) In spite of Monluc’s boast in his memoirs, this was not fully carried out. The reason for this was that the ringleaders were men of substance with connections. They had good claim to have acted justly. It was only in the autumn of 1565 that Balthazar Vacquié and his accomplices were finally tracked down to a house just 10 kilometres from the murder scene. The house was fortified and defended with cannon.[[93]](#footnote-93) The defenders sallied out. Vacquié on a horse, wearing a armour and carrying a pistol, was taken prisoner. Gerard Fricheteau, one of the ‘leaders of the faction and homicide’, was killed. But their valour permitted four or five accomplices to escape. Vacquié could still count on the support of the surrounding countryside and the posse and their prisoner were harried all the way back to Agen.

However, Vacquié does not seem to have been executed. In 1566 Fumel’s widow submitted a petition to the royal council against the issuing of pardons to the murderers.[[94]](#footnote-94) In the petition Madame Fumel changed her story. She now claimed that the killing had nothing to do with religion, rather it was committed ‘under cover of religion…out of hatred for the lawsuits that the said subjects had had continuously with the deceased for the past twenty years.’[[95]](#footnote-95) The widow, who once complained that the killers had marched out of her château singing psalms, now chose to ignore religious motives. The reason for her change of mind was tactical. The pardons, which were issued in May 1566, referred to the fact that the murder had ‘happened for and because of religion’ and, though they had occurred before the outbreak of civil war, therefore fell under the rubric of religiously motivated crimes which were pardoned under the terms of the peace which brought the first civil war to an end in 1563.[[96]](#footnote-96) The Protestants, who had once claimed the cause of political justice and the public good, now claimed to have been acting out of religious fervour.

The deployment of religious rhetoric and the manner with which it was so effortlessly inverted is significant. The ‘religious’ was not some immanent unchanging category, but liable to interpretation, to be employed instrumentally or even disregarded. Both sides were aware of the multiple causes of violence and chose to stress the factors that suited their case at different times to mobilize support. In short, for the educated at least views of the religious were always refracted through the lens of politics. This ambiguity of motive is endemic to all civil wars and explains why they are so complex and difficult to unravel.[[97]](#footnote-97)

**Conclusion**

This paper has argued that that identification of political justice has important things to tell us about the outbreak of the Wars of Religion and the causes and nature of the violence that characterised the beginning of the conflict. Politics transformed longstanding religious divisions in the Agenais into violent confrontation between 1559 and 1562. The civil debates that had characterised dinner parties in the homes of the social elite in Agen in the 1530s were transformed by a bloody feud between two competing lines of the Montpezat clan, one Protestant and one Catholic. Private enmities were rapidly transformed into public ones. Rival militias were already in existence when two distinct parties formed in the Agenais for and against the constitutional claims of the House of Bourbon in 1560. This transformation is contrary to what Carl Schmitt supposed when he defined the category of the political. He made a clear distinction between private enmity (*inimicus*) and public enmity (*hostis*). In fact, a clear division between public and private enmity is not at all appropriate for pre-modern societies and never during civil wars when the distinction between the two becomes blurred.[[98]](#footnote-98) As Stathis Kalyvas explains ‘civil war cannot be reduced to a mere mechanism that opens up the floodgates to random and anarchical private violence. Private violence is generally constrained by the modalities of alliance…It is the convergence of local motives and supralocal imperatives that endows civil war with its particular character and leads to joint violence that straddles the divide between the political and the private, the collective and the individual.’[[99]](#footnote-99) Instead of a binary opposition between public and private, it would be more fruitful to highlight the ways in which public and private enmities interacted, how private enmities became a public cause, and how the extirpation of private quarrels can underpin the public peace. In the Agenais public and private enmities were deeply entangled by 1560. But the level of violence was constrained by the desire to be seen acting according to right. The use of force was invariably backed up with legal claims, which were facilitated by the plethora of competing courts.

The civil wars of the 1560s were described and represented as public acts of vengeance.[[100]](#footnote-100) It was virtuous to fight for a higher cause. This concealed the fact that much of the violence was generated by private hatreds.[[101]](#footnote-101) But we should not wish to distinguish too closely between the two, because in the sixteenth century enmity was not just an emotion; it was a public state of affairs which had a strong legal aspect. Going to law was interpreted as a sign of enmity. This included accusations of heresy. In 1558 the Parlement of Bordeaux reviewed the sentence against two defendants from Agen because the witnesses were their ‘mortal enemies’.[[102]](#footnote-102) Another defendant in a heresy trial complained in 1560 that one witness, a priest, ‘was his enemy and had tried to kill him and sworn vengeance and given him the lie’; a second witness had been his mortal enemy for seven years and attacked him with halberd; another priest had stabbed him twelve years ago; all of them stood to gain financially from his execution.[[103]](#footnote-103) Feuds were not interminable because there are strong community and familial pressures towards peace. There were continuous efforts to put an end to the Montpezat feud. In March 1562 the two brothers appointed arbiters, a mix of Catholics and Protestants, who rendered their decision on 8 May 1564. [[104]](#footnote-104) This deal permitted Antoine de Montpezat to register the pardon he had received for killing Rochechouart. Civil war made such deals harder to reach.

This article also lends support to recent attempts to rethink Protestant violence. The French Reformation was, as Denis Crouzet has argued, an ideological revolution because it legitimized the politics of revenge in defence of the constitution and the Commonwealth (*République*).[[105]](#footnote-105) The Protestant violence in the Agenais fits into the paradigm. It was rarely spontaneous and did not simply target images, as is often claimed. Neither was Fumel’s killing unique. It fits into a pattern of politicized assassinations of opponents of the Reform movement. The duke of Guise, for example, was ‘exterminated’ in 1563 in the ‘service of God, the conservation of the kingdom and the Commonwealth.’[[106]](#footnote-106) Assassination was not new nor confined to Protestants, but the claim to be doing it in the cause of political justice was new. These secular claims broadened the appeal of the Protestant movement. Anti-clericalism, too, had broad appeal. In an influential lecture to the court in 1561 that was widely circulated in pamphlet form the Catholic, Etienne Pasquier, denounced the ‘depraved’ practices and institutions that should not be ‘permitted in any well-ordered Commonwealth.’[[107]](#footnote-107) He went on to argue that unless the King granted liberty of conscience many of his audience were likely to die at the hands of assassins. Individual assassins, Pasquier went on to argue, may be motivated by the prospect of martyrdom and the rewards of the afterlife, but history taught that it was civil war and faction that offered the fanatic possibilities normally denied them. Protestant violence also needs to be seen in the context of the de-sacralization of monarchy caused by the Calvin’s insistence on the strict separation between the city of God and the earthly city. Iconoclasm and tyrannicide were part of the same dynamic. It even became possible to imagine the king’s death - an attempt was made on the life of Henri II in 1557. Two years later Bèze wrote to Bullinger that France ‘does not lack for Scaevolas (the legendary Roman assassin) who would be prepared to purchase a true liberty even at the price of their own certain death.’[[108]](#footnote-108)

The claim that the Conspiracy of Amboise was in defence of the ancient constitution and motivated by a concern to bring the Guise to justice had a particular resonance in the Agenais.[[109]](#footnote-109) Here traditions of civic independence ran deep and the defence of the Commonwealth was not hollow rhetoric. Memories of the 1548 rebellion against the salt tax, the *Gabelle*, were still fresh. The order was eventually rescinded on the payment of an extraordinary levy. A tax of 20 *livres* was placed on every church bell and parishioners had to take them down, a considerable disruption to community life in world without clocks, until the sum was paid. By 1558 scurrilous verses denouncing the profligacy of the king’s mistress and his favourites, including the Guise, were circulating in the region.[[110]](#footnote-110) This explains the commitment in the Agenais in 1560-1 to a reinvigorated concept of the monarchical Republic, where justice would reign. The singling out of immoral priests and oppressive lords made the Reformation understandable to the illiterate and the many who were unable to grasp the finer the points of doctrine. This appeal beyond the faithful and the pious explains why the pejorative word ‘Huguenot’ did not become associated with Protestants in the region. It was the ‘Hugoneaulx du pappe’, who were the enemies of the public peace and ‘the ancient constitution’, supporting the foreign Guise, who were intent on usurping the throne and overthrowing Gallican liberties.

Political justice required the pursuit of enemies in the name of the public good, whatever their social position. The mobilization of priests, notaries, merchants, lawyers and artisans in the Protestant militia, permitted hostile observers to claim that events in the Agenais amounted to a social revolution. In fact, these notables were men of means capable of standing up to the nobility in the courts and, often heavily armed, equally capable of using force. The 900-strong contingent that seized Agen at the beginning of the first war of religion in April 1562 was officered by 4 merchants, but they were heavily outnumbered by 25 attorneys, 17 procurators and 5 notaries.[[111]](#footnote-111) This educated legal class, which had grown with and profited from the expansion of the monarchical state, was flexing its considerable political power for the first time. It was this power, capable of backing up its legal claims with force, that persuaded La Boétie and Burie that toleration was the only option in the autumn of 1561. It was an experiment that La Boétie, the first modern theorist of political liberty, would later come to regret. In several respects, therefore, the events in Guyenne are indicative of the conflicts that would shape the Ancien Régime, and even anticipate the violence that would attend its fall.

1. With thanks to Penny Roberts and Joe Clarke for organizing the workshop that led to this paper; to Michel Nassiet for sending me transcriptions of the original pardon letters; and to Tim Stanton for identifying the origins of political justice. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. BN MS Fr 3186 fo. 127, 10 June 1561: ‘Se deliberant madame ne paier plus de dixmes et debvoirs deleglise, ni les tailles au Roy et encores moings les rentes aulz seigneurs s’attribuant en plusieurs lieux la justice polliticque.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. M. Seguin, ‘Monsieur de Burie, un saintongeais lieutenant général en Guyenne (1558-1565)’ in J. Cubelier de Beynac et Cl.-G. Dubois eds., *Monluc, d'Aubigné. Deux épées, deux plumes* (Agen: Centre Matteo Bandello, 1999) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. La Boëtie does seem to use the term in his writings. But a passage in the *Discours* does seem to be related to the prevailing state of affairs in the Agenais in 1561: BN MS Fr 839, fos, 24-5. Here says that ‘injustice’ is what exists amongst evil-minded people who (because there is no love among them) assemble in bands and plot one against another, this being the origin of tyranny. See also: A.-M. Cocula-Vaillières, *Étienne de la Boétie et le destin du Discours de la servitude volontaire* (Paris: Garnier, 2019), pp. 135-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. BN Ms Fr 15875 fo. 190, 28 September, 1561. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. W. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. P. Benedict, ‘Were the French Wars of Religion Really Wars of Religion?’ Wolfgang Palaver, Harriet Rudolph, Dietmar Regensburger eds., *The European Wars of Religion: An Interdisciplinary Reassessment of Sources, Interpretations, and Myths* (London: Routledge, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. D. Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu: la violence au temps des guerres de religion (vers 1525*

   *- vers 1610)*, 2 vols., (Paris: Champ Vallon, 1990), i, 523-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. S. Carroll, ‘ “Nager entre deux eaux”: The Princes and the Ambiguities of French

   Protestantism,’ *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 44 ( 2013), 985–1020. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, i, 525-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. S. Carroll, ‘The Rights of Violence’, Past & Present, 214, Supplement 7 (2012), 127–162. G. Baum and E. Caunitz eds., *Histoire ecclésiastique des églises reformées au royame de France*, 3 vols. (Nieuwkoop, 1974), I, 885–98; A. de Ruble, *Lettres et commentaires de Blaise de Monluc* 5 vols. (Paris, 1864-72), ii, 329–69, iv, 122–7; ‘Documents pour servir à l’histoire des guerres de religion dans l'Agenais’, *Revue de l'Agenais* , 9 (1882), 41–57. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Serge Brunet, ‘ “Haro sur le seigneur!” Affrontements religieux et résistances anti-seigneuriales dans le sud-ouest de la France (vers 1560–1562)’ in Ghislain Brunel and Serge Brunet, eds., *Haro sur le seigneur! Les luttes anti-seigneuriales dans l'Europe médiévale et* modern (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. M. de Mas-Latrie ‘Arret de Montluc après la révolte des Protestants de Fumel contre leur seigneur, en 1561’, *Mémoires de la société royale des antiquaries de France* , 2 sér. VII (1844), 319–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Y.-M. Bercé, ‘Retour sur le drame de Fumel, novembre 1561 – avril 1562’, *Revue de l’Agenais*, 132 (2006), 543-58. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. BN MS Fr 3186, fo. 62. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Brunet, “Haro sur le seigneur!”, 180. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. J. Pollman, ‘Countering the Reformation in France and the Netherlands: Clerical Leadership and Catholic Violence 1560–1585,’ *Past & Present*, 190 (2006), 83-120. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. BN Fr 15875 fo. 93, 30 August 1561. ‘Et croiz sire que tout cecy se faict plus pour les antiennes inimitiez particuliaires que por le faict de la Religion, Je craindz que tout a une coup il advienne quelques scandalle qui sont mal aise a Rabiller’ [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. S. Kalyvas, C. Jentzsch & L. Schubiger, ‘Militias in Civil Wars: An Emerging Research Agenda’, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2015), 765. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ruble ed., *Commentaires et lettres de Blaise de Monluc*, ii, 361. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Ibid., 367. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. His later boast in the *Commentaires* that he executed 30 or 40 of Fumel’s killers is contradicted by his contemporary correspondence, which mentions 15 or 16. He fails to mention the noblemen that were beheaded. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Je…ne me veulx mesler d’escripre les inimites et rebellions qui on esté faictes despuis, jusqu’à la mort du roy Francois second: *Commentaires*, ii, 334. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid., ii, 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ibid., ii, 349-50 and 359 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. J.-R. Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Savignac’, *Revue de l’Agenais*, 31 (1904), 520; J*. Hazon de St Firmin, Un Assassin du Duc Henri de Guise. François II de Montpezat, Baron de Laugnac, capitaine des Quarante-Cinq. 1566-1590* (Paris, 1912) ; A. de Bellecombe, *Histoire du château, de la ville, et des seigneurs et barons de Montpezat et de l’abbaye de Pérignac* (Auch, 1898). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. AN JJ 266 fo. 64, May 1568. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. R. Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Quissac en Agenais’, *Revue de l’Agenais*, 60 (1933), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Bellecombe, *Histoire…des seigneurs et barons de Montpezat*, 97. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Savignac’, 528 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. AD Gironde 1 B 265 fo. 317. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Michel Nassiet ed., *Les lettres de pardon du voyage de Charles IX (1565-1566)* (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 2010), p. 122; J. Noulens, *Maisons historiques de Gascogne, Guienne, Béarn, Languedoc et Périgord*, 2 vols. (Bordeaux, 1865-6), i, 290, 293-4; Jean des Cours, seigneur de Teyssonac and the seigneur de Cathus, husband of Anne de Cours, were also Protestants: BN MS FR 15871, fo. 115; Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Savignac’, 519-20; <http://gw.geneanet.org/mbelliard?lang=fr&p=jeanne&n=de+molere> (Accessed, August 2017); AD Gironde 1 B 265, fo. 264v. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Nassiet ed., *Les lettres de pardon*, p. 258. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. AD Gironde, 1 B 265 fo. 264v, July 1563. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Carroll, ‘The Rights of Violence’. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. P. Benedict, ‘The Dynamics of Protestant Militancy: France, 1555-63’ in P. Benedict et al eds., *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands, 1555-1585* (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 42-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. M. Greengrass, ‘Financing the Cause: Protestant Mobilization and Accountability in France (1562-1589)’, in Benedict et al, *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War*. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. These included Condom, Castelnaud, Mézin and Monflanquin: BN MS Fr. 15871, fos. 68-74 116, 118: [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid., fo. 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. For a list of consuls: <http://memoiredelivrade.canalblog.com/archives/2017/01/20/34826862.html> (Accessed, August 2017). Antoine du Vignal, sieur de Breuval, who was mentioned frequently as a Protestant leader, was married to Françoise des Cours: BN MS Fr 15871. fos. 113, 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. BN MS Fr 15871, fo. 66. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. A. Jouanna, *Le devoir de révolte: la noblesse française et la gestation de l'Etat moderne, 1559-1661* (Paris: Fayard, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Estuer de la Caussade [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. BN MS Fr, 15871, 110v. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Ibid., fos.122-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid. fo. 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ibid., fo. 76. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Savignac’, 520. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. BN MS Fr 15871, fo. 121v. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. AD Gironde 1B 209, fo. 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. E. Gaullier, *Histoire de la réformation à Bordeaux et dans le resort du Parlement* (Bordeaux, 1884), p. 215. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. BN MS Fr 15871, fo. 122v. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Ibid., 121v [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Ibid., 114 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. AD Gironde 1 B 239, fo. 430 : 4 oct 1561; BN MS Fr 15871, fo. 113v. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. AD Gironde 1B 243 fo. 105, 9 March 1562. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. BN MS Fr 15871, fo. 118 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Ibid., 121v. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. BN MS Fr 15875 fo. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. K. Gould, *Catholic Activism in South-West France, 1540-1570* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. AD Gironde 1B 210, fo. 501v, 18 March 1560. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. *Histoire ecclésiastique*, i, p. 367. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. AD Gironde 1B, liasse 151, fo. 88, 12 June 1560. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. AD Gironde 1B 223 fo. 308. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Ibid. fo. 311. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. *Histoire éccliastique,* i, p. 369; Robert was executed in 1551 for peculation and not heresy, Guy does seem to have inherited his office: R. Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Fontirou’, *Revue de l'Agenais*, 29 (1902), 93-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. O. Faillières et A. Durengues, ‘Enquête sur les commencements du protestantisme en Agenais’, *Recueil des Travaux de la Société d’Agriculture Sciences et Arts d’Agen*, 16 (1913), 70, 273-7, 287. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. H. Heller, *The Conquest of Poverty: The Calvinist Revolt in Sixteenth-Century France* (Leiden: Brill), 90-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. BN MS Fr 15875, fo. 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Ibid., fo. 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. On Francois II de Montferrand: *Histoire ecclésiastique*, i, p. 877; L. Massip, *Histoire de la ville et des seigneurs de Cancon en Agenais* (1891), pp. 145-60, Gould, *Catholic* Activism, pp. 79-81. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. BN MS 15875, fo. 164 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. P. Courteault ed., *Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires (1521-1576)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), p. 673: *Actes de l'Académie nationale des sciences, belles-lettres et arts de Bordeaux*, 39-40, (1877-8), p. 262; <http://levignac-de-guyenne.com/index.php/histoire-patrimoine/histoire-de-le-vignac> (Accessed, August 2017).A. Nicolaï, ‘Germain-Gaston de Fix, Marquis de Trans’, *Bulletin de la Société des Amis de Montaigne*, 19 (1956), 7-26; *Memoires de Condé* 6 vols. (London, 1743), v, pp. 177-82. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Gould, *Catholic Activism*, p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. BN MS Fr 15875, fo. 190, Burie to Charles IX, Bazas, 28 September 1561. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Ibid., fo. 341, Burie to Charles IX, Agen, 11 October, 1561: ‘monsr de savignac de thouars ma prye de vous escrire parce quil entendu quil y a aucunes des ses enemies que lont met en vostre mauvais grace vous faisant entrendre plusieurs choses de luy qui ne sont pas vray pouvant asseurer sire que cest ung tres honeste gentilhomme lequel faict des dolleances des Injures et cecy par luy soufferts.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Ibid. fos. 93, 328, [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Brunet, ‘ “Haro sur le seigneur!”’, p. 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. BN MS Fr 15875, fo. 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. ‘Lettre de M. de Burie…à Jacques André…sénéchal de Périgord, 4 November 1561 <http://www.guyenne.fr/ArchivesPerigord/SHAP/T39_1912/Varia_T39.htm> (Accessed August 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. AD Gironde, 1 B 239, fo. 189v, 6 August 1561. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. BN Fr 15875, fo. 330. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Ibid., fo. 293. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. *Histoire ecclésiastique*, I, 885. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. M. de Mas-Latrie ‘Arret de Montluc après la révolte des Protestants de Fumel contre leur seigneur, en 1561’, Mémoires de la societe royale des antiquaries de France, 2 ser. VII (1844), 338, gives details on local officials. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Ibid., 335 [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. AD Gironde 1B fo. 223, fo. 310v. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Mas-Latrie ‘Arret de Montluc’, 333. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. BN Fr 15875, fo. 417. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. AD, Lot et Garonne 1 J 344, Procès Verbal, 29 October 1565. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. AD Lot et Garonne 1 J 344, ‘Supplication de la veuve de Fumel’, n.d. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. AN JJ 264 fo. 196r-v, May 1566. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. S. Kalyvas, ‘The Ontology of “Political Violence:” Action and Identity in Civil Wars’, *Perspectives on Politics*, 1:3 (2003), 476. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. S. Carroll, ‘Thinking with Violence’, *History and Theory*, 55 (2017), 42-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. ‘The Ontology of “Political Violence”’, 487. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, i , p. 723. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. S. Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. AD Gironde 1B 209, fos. 119-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Ibid., 210, fo. 296v. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Marboutin, ‘Le Château de Savignac’, 530. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. *Les Guerriers de* Dieu, ii, pp 741-3; ‘Calvinism and the Uses of the Political and the Religious (France, ca. 1560-ca. 1572)’, in Benedict et al, *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War* [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. *Histoire ecclésiastique*, i, 409. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. *Exhortation aux princes et seigneurs du Conseil privé du Roy, pour obvier aux seditions qui occultement semblent nous menacer pour le faict de la Religion*, n. p., 1561 [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Crouzet, ‘Calvinism and the Uses of the Political’, p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. The *Complainte au peuple François* (1560) make no mention of religion, simply that the ‘Guise ranconennt le pouvre people de tailles, tributs & exactions intolerables.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. G. Tholin ed., *Le Livre de raison des Daurée d’Agen, 1491-1671* (Agen, 1880), pp. 131-9*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. G. Tholin, ‘Procès-verbal de la prise d’Agen par les Huguenots’, *Revue de l’Agenais*, 9 (1882), 51-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)