



A Clash of Cultures

The Impact of Disinheritance in the Early Years
of the Albigensian Crusade

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Abbreviations:

- Cain* = Innocent III. *Ut esset Cain*. RELMIN. 18.05.20. Link:
<http://telma.irht.cnrs.fr/outils/relmin/extrait30493/>
- Canon 27* = Lateran III. Canon 27. ewtn. 19.05.20. Link:
<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/history-and-text-1464>
- CT* = *La Cartulaire dit de Trencavel, La Société Archéologique de Montpellier*, MS 10
- Doat* = *La Collection Doat à la Bibliothèque nationale de France*. vol. 168
- HGL* = Vic, Claude and Vaissète, Joseph. *Histoire Générale de Languedoc*. vol. VIII, E. Privat. Toulouse. 1872. Digitalized 19.06.2008.
<https://archive.org/details/histoiregnra08viccuoft/page/xii/mode/2up>
- Gaules* = *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 19. Ed. Brial. M.J.J., Daunou, P.C.F., Naudet, J. Paris : Imprimerie royale. 1833. Link :
<https://archive.org/details/RecueilDesHistoriensDesGaules191833/page/n9/mode/2up?q=periculis+fluminium>
- History* = Vaux-de-Cernay, Peter. *The History of the Albigensian Crusade*. Translated by W.A. Sibly and M.D. Sibly. The Boydell Press. Org. 1998, reprint 2002.
- Puylaurens* = Puylaurens, William. *The Chronicle of William of Puylaurens. The Albigensian Crusade and its Aftermath*. Translated by W.A. Sibly and M.D. Sibly. The Boydell Press. 2003.
- Chanson* = Tudela, William, and Anonymous Continuer. *The Song of the Cathar Wars*. Translated by Janet Shirley. Routledge. 2016.

PL 215 = *Patrologiae cursus completus : sive bibliotheca universalis, integra uniformis, commoda, oeconomica, omnium SS. Patrum, doctorum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum qui ab aevo apostolico ad usque Innocentii III tempora floruerunt ... [Series Latina, in qua prodeunt Patres, doctores scriptoresque Ecclesiae Latinae, a Tertulliano ad Innocentium III]* Ed. Migne, Jacques-Paul. Paris 1844. Digitalized 15.06.2009. Volume 215. Link: <https://archive.org/details/patrologiaecurs133unkngoog>

PL 216 = *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina: Sive, Bibliotheca Universalis, Integra, Uniformis, Commoda, Oeconomica, Omnium SS. Patrum, Doctorum Scriptorumque Ecclesiasticorum Qui Ab Aevo Apostolico Ad Usuque Innocentii III Tempora Floruerunt.* Ed. Migne, Jacques-Paul. Volume 216. Paris. 1855. Digitalized 05.03.2014, University of California. Link: https://books.google.no/books?id=3BpAAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA215&dq=Patrologiae+Cursus+Completus:+Series+Latina+innocentii+III+volum+216&hl=no&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiZqpaF5tjwAhWFi8MKHZMfA_MQ6AEwAHoECA_MQAg#v=onepage&q=Patrologiae%20Cursus%20Completus%3A%20Series%20Latina%20innocentii%20III%20volum%20216&f=false

Trésor = *Layettes du trésor des Chartes.* Ed. Taulet. A. Paris: Plon 1863. Link: <https://archive.org/details/layettesdutrso00teuluoft/page/290/mode/2up>

Introduction

From the time of the Gregorian reforms¹ the Catholic Church begun asserting more and more direct control over the Christian world. The dispatch of papal legates through which the Pope could micromanage² the affairs of his spiritual Kingdom became more common. This practice begun as a way of asserting the new reforms, and would later be used to curtail Christian dissidence. During the 12th century in the Occitan region³, which today comprises Southern France, the reports of a dualistic heresy that competed with the authority of the Church became an increasing concern to the Papal See. An effort on behalf of the Church, that intensified towards the end of the century, sought to destroy this heresy by using the sword of the spirit⁴. Meaning; the word of God to shepherd these misled sheep back on the “right path” of orthodoxy⁵. These shepherds were often members of the Cistercian order, and would be increasingly influential in the Midi during the Albigensian Crusade. Massive preaching campaigns ensued in the various Counties and Viscounties of the Midi⁶. One of their weapons was the papal decree *Vergentis in senium* that was issued in March 1199 at Viterbo⁷; the land of heretics could be legitimately confiscated and redistributed⁸. Even their descendants would be disinherited⁹. The local lords, despite excommunications and threats had been insufficient in controlling the situation themselves. And when Peter of Castelnau, one of the legates, was murdered in 1208 allegedly at the hands of the Count of Toulouse, it became clear to the legates and the Pope that a more literal sword¹⁰ was needed to successfully battle heresy in these territories. In the spring of 1209, after a call to arms by Cistercian monks in France and Burgundy, a massive force of crusaders gathered in Lyon. Their aim was to attack the Count

¹ A series of new reforms regarding the nature of the men of the Church. Focusing to a large degree on Simony and apostolic living. ca. 1050 – 1080.

² Micromanaging is when the head of an organization controls every part of a situation, even small details. This organization style gives less freedom to subordinates as it is the head of organization that makes the calls.

³ I will refer to this region mostly as the Midi in this dissertation, but also Occitania. See Map II, p. 93.

⁴ “To stand firm against the enemy, take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” Ephesians 6:17b

⁵ It is important to note that heresy was not the only dispute between the lords of Occitania and the Church. The prevalent use of mercenaries that led to a disrespect of the God’s peace movement, the anti-clerical sentiment shared by many nobles in the various lordships even at the highest level, the poor state of the Church in these territories and the tolls used by the noblemen to assure themselves levies were all factor that contributed to the poor relations between nobility and clergy. However, the main goal of the Crusade was to eradicate heresy. See the *History*, Appendix G p. 313 – 320 for a discussion on the intimate relationship between the peace movement and the anti-heresy campaign.

⁶ For a detailed description of the Cistercian efforts in the Midi see Kienzle. *Cistercian* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press. 2001) s, p. 78 – 173.

⁷ Moore, *War on Heresy* (London. Profile Books Ltd. 2014.) p. 238

⁸ Claster. *Sacred Violence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 2009), p. 220

⁹ See a further discussion on the *Vergentis in Senium* in p. 28

¹⁰ See Bonde. *Fortress-Churches* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 1994), p. 20 – 27 for an introduction of the developments that led to Church sanctioned violence.

of Toulouse. However, the Count of Toulouse was reconciled with the Church, leaving the army, that had been promised their indulgence, without a clear target. Their massive potential for violence was thus directed towards the lands of Raimond Roger Trencavel, the Viscount of Carcassonne, Béziers, Albi and Razés (1194 – 1209). He surrendered after the fall of Béziers and Carcassonne in the summer of 1209, and died two months later in his own dungeon. After several attempts of rebellion from his vassals, the areas were finally controlled by the leader of the Crusade and new Viscount of the former Trencavel territories; Simon V of Montfort.

After the fall of the Trencavel dynasty, naturally, society needed to be re-organized under the new lord of the territory. However, the re-organization of the Trencavel lands in this case was problematized by the way in which it had been acquired, firstly Montfort did not have a familial claim to the territory in question, secondly his legitimacy came solely from the Church and not the vassals themselves which was a big problem in a Viscounty which was largely lay, politically speaking¹¹. Thirdly, the honour had been acquired without the proper legal foundation. The *Vergentis in senium* only applied to heretics, and Raimond Roger Trencavel had not been verified as a heretic, there is in fact no mention of accusations even. Cheyette has argued that the Occitan society was largely governed by trust, because of their reliance of the oath¹². However, after the first wave of rebellion after the death of the Viscount, Montfort found it increasingly hard to trust his vassals. A consequence of this was that he employed a strategy of increased violence and disinheritance of local nobility. Normally in scholarly literature the fall of Lavaur in 1211 marks the end of resistance in the Trencavel lands, and the campaigns are seen as a success.

Historiography

There are three main fields of research that is relevant to the Albigensian Crusade that should be mentioned: scholarship specializing in heresy, scholarship with a focus on vassalic bonds in the Midi and scholarship specializing in the Albigensian crusade, often with a focus on military and political history. These three represent the bulk of scholarship in the field.

Scholarship on heresy today can mainly be characterized by two directions; traditionalists and de-constructivists. The sources mainly used in this study are the Inquisitional records created post-crusade, but also narrative sources, anti-heretical treatises,

¹¹ See below on p. 68

¹² Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne*, (New York: Cornell University Press 2004), p. 187 - 199

letter correspondence and other sources. The traditionalists, take into consideration that the inquisitorial records and polemic texts have been distorted, compromised and shaped by the context in which the information is derived and formatted. However, through various forms of critical analysis they believe it is possible to peak behind the veil of polemics in order to build a coherent understanding of the phenomena that has been called Catharism¹³. Proponents of this view are scholars such as J.H. Arnold¹⁴, C. Bruschi¹⁵, L.J. Sackville¹⁶, and M. Barber¹⁷. This view has in recent years been criticised by what has been called the de-constructivists, which is a term they themselves do not like. R.I. Moore and M.G. Pegg are the most prominent scholars within this historiographical tradition. They question the validity of the information we receive from the Inquisitorial records to a larger extent than the traditionalists, and the assumptions made by the Catholic church on the nature of heretics. Pegg¹⁸ argues that what the Church saw as heresy was simply a misunderstanding of a very localized form of adoration or curtesy. And that the image we are left with through their recordings was a result of the church's own prejudices towards people whom they did not understand. Leaving us with material that is at best a source to understand what they assumed heretics were. R.I. Moore¹⁹ argues that the idea of heresy was created as a result of the more radical elements of the reform movement being ostracized as the more traditional take on the reforms solidified into a new orthodoxy. The radical forms became what we today see as heresy, and was unfairly represented by the narrative sources and the inquisitorial records. In addition to this, he maintains that the accusation of heresy could also be used as a political tool, to discredit one's political enemies or rivals. For a discussion on the nature of heresy see the collection of essays debating the subject; *Cathars in Question* edited by A. Sennis²⁰.

The Albigensian Crusade has been of great interest to military historians because of the rich descriptions of siege warfare used during the Crusade. Many works have been done on the nature of this warfare and the political and religious climate in which they occurred.

¹³ The heresy allegedly common in the Midi.

¹⁴ See for instance Arnold. *Inquisition and Power* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2001)

¹⁵ See Bruschi. *Wandering Heretic*. (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2012)

¹⁶ See for instance Sackville. *Heresy and Heretics* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press. 2014)

¹⁷ See Barber. *The Cathars*. (New York: Routledge. 2017)

¹⁸ See Pegg's book *The Corruption of Angels* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 2001) for his analysis on the subject.

¹⁹ See Moore's books *The War on Heresy* (London: Profile Books Ltd. 2014) for his analysis.

²⁰ Sennis. *Cathars in Question* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press. 2016)

this collection of essays was the result of a conference called "Catharism: Balkan heresy or Construct of a Persecuting Society?" held at the University College London and at the Warburg Institute on 18 – 19 April 2013. It is a good introduction to understand the current debates on Catharism. All the scholars mentioned among the historians writing about heresy are represented in this book.

This genre of history on the Albigensian Crusade usually describe the nature of the warfare, and analyse the different political protagonists of the time in order to create a more or less chronological narrative description of the Crusade. Some scholars who have done this is L.W. Marvin²¹, Roquebert²², or Z. Oldenbourg²³. M.G. Pegg has also written a book about the Albigensian Crusade, which focuses a lot on the lived experience during the crusade²⁴. Making it hard to place historiographically.

Which brings me to the third field: the anthropological. The history written from this angle that is relevant to the Albigensian Crusade, is either mainly focused on the charter evidence collected by the higher strata in the Midi before the Albigensian Crusade and the troubadour literature that made Occitania a cultural center in the middle ages. Cheyette, Paterson and Débax has written extensively on the local nobility, particularly about the Trencavels and the Narbonnais lords and ladies. However, their work usually only mentions the Albigensian Crusade, and only as the end of the period of their study. Or anthropological scholarship on the Midi after the Crusade, by for instance E. Le Roy Ladurie²⁵. M.G. Pegg²⁶ and C. Sparks²⁷. These largely base themselves on inquisitorial records. There is little anthropological work using the narrative sources from during the Albigensian Crusade. Graham-Leigh has in some ways mended this gap by using a mixture of the narrative sources and the charter evidence, in order to assess the position of the Trencavel family up until the Crusade.

The Topic Question:

In this dissertation I wish to contribute to the latter. But by primarily focusing on the narrative sources, as opposed to the charter evidence. The first campaigns of the Albigensian Crusade mainly occurred in the Trencavel lands. These are often seen as a military success and as being concluded with the fall of Lavaur in 1211. Using a liberal interpretation of the Vergentis in Senium the legates and crusaders slowly but surely disinherited large amount of the native lords. The Viscount of Béziers, the first of these, died in the dungeon of Carcassonne in November 1209. An event that scholars have seen as inconsequential.

²¹ Marvin. *The Occitan War* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2008)

²² Roquebert. *L'épopée cathare 1198 – 1212: l'Invasion*. (Toulouse: Privat. 1970)

²³ Oldenbourg. *Massacre at Montségur* (London: Phoenix Press. 2000)

²⁴ Pegg. *Most Holy War* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2008)

²⁵ Ladurie. *Montaillou* (London: Penguin books. 1990)

²⁶ Pegg. *The Corruption of Angels* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 2001)

²⁷ Sparks. *Life Cycle in Medieval Languedoc* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press 2014)

In this dissertation I will attempt to nuance our perception of the first years of the Crusade, and assess whether or not the attempts of the Church and the Crusaders led by Montfort to gain control over these territories should be deemed a success, as indeed many scholars claim²⁸. In short; using the lens of disinheritance and its consequences, rather than looking at territorial gain from a purely militaristic point of view, I wish to show that the victory of the early campaigns during the Albigensian Crusade was only a partial victory.

What does this dissertation add to the current historiography?

Débax and Cheyette have both written impressive analyses of the Trencavel family. Most of their work is based on charter evidence and troubadour literature. However, due to the nature of the charter evidence the Crusade represents a break as the last charters in the Trencavel cartulary is 1214²⁹, and thus most of their scholarship is written about the Trencavel lands before the Crusade. The history written with a focus on the political and military aspects of the crusade is usually about the crusade as a whole, which naturally means that the description of first three years in a 20 yearlong war is very limited. Naturally this means that what is written about the Trencavel's are short chronological narrative descriptions of the events, rather than a deep analysis. Those who do offer an analysis, however, often focus their causal explanations on the presence of heresy in the Trencavel lands, for which much of the information is derived from polemic sources. This is of course problematized by the current debate on the nature of the Albigensian heresy. Between these two, we have Graham-Leigh. Who partially uses the narrative polemic sources and partially uses charter evidence. In her book on the *Southern French Nobility* she analyses the demise of the Trencavel family by using their family history. This however is problematic, she uses a full chapter to discuss sources, the larger part of which is devoted to the narrative polemic sources. Graham-Leigh along with many other scholars, argues that because the sources describe the same events when juxtaposed, and because for instance Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay³⁰ seems to be comfortable with describing events that comes across as less flattering for the crusaders, this means the sources are trustworthy³¹. She then uses the polemic sources without much further discussion. This is problematic, firstly because there are situations and people that the authors can be expected to know a great deal about, for instance Peter knows many of the legates and

²⁸ See Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 44 – 6 and Lippiatt. “Simon V of Montfort (University of Oxford. 2015) p. 206.

²⁹ However, with Raymond Roger dying in 1209, anything after this says little about the Trencavel family.

³⁰ The author of the *History*.

³¹ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 10 – 41.

Montfort personally, so it is fair to assume that his information in regards to them is reliable. But there are situations where this is not the case, for instance the motivations of the local nobility. Which means that each situation needs to be analysed separately, it is not enough to declare the sources believable and then use them indiscriminately³². Many scholars, including Graham-Leigh, conclude that the first campaign of the Albigensian Crusade was a success, and that Montfort successfully managed to control the former Trencavel lands. Graham-Leigh concludes that Raimond Roger Trencavel's death and disinheritance was inconsequential due to his lack of control over his vassals. However, the conclusions about the significance of the first campaigns in the Crusade has been, in my humble opinion, underestimated. In this dissertation I wish to try to bridge the gap between the anthropological scholarship of Débax and Cheyette, and the more conventional political and military scholarship about the Albigensian Crusade. Hopefully this will be a modest contribution to our understanding of the Trencavel lands in the early 13th century, and of the Crusade as a whole.

Method

This dissertation will mainly focus on three narrative sources from the Albigensian Crusade

- The History of the Albigensian Crusade by Peter les Vaux-de-Cernay
- The Chanson by William de Tudela and the anonymous author who completed the text.
- The Chronicle of William of Puylaurens

There are no narrative sources from Occitania before the Albigensian Crusade. Therefore, most scholarship on Occitan society before the Albigensian Crusade has been based on Troubadour literature and charters. The only narrative sources are thus written about the Albigensian Crusade, and by polemic writers. Some of the sources frequently used when writing about the Trencavel family or the Crusade in general are from the Trencavel Cartulary or from the Doat collection³³, unfortunately due to the current situation, the Corona pandemic, it has been impossible to travel to the archives and read the sources first hand. However, these are mentioned and transcribed in numerous secondary sources. In this dissertation I have therefore added both the reference to the secondary sources, and the sources they have used.

³² For a full discussion of the sources see below; p. 14 – 19.

³³ The Trencavel Cartulary is a cartulary commissioned by the Trencavel family, it preserves several hundred charters from between 1028 – 1214. Many of which are oaths of fidelity. The Doat collection is a collection of later copies of such documents, that have gone missing from the cartulary. See Graham-Leigh. *Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 10 – 17.

Because of the obvious problems that arises from using polemic sources, it is important to separate the purely chronological description of events such as; dates, places and people, from what must be considered the authors opinions and personal reflection around these events and the motivations of the various protagonists. Therefore, I will build the chronology using the sources, without any further analysis, except when the sources diverge. While the information about what can only be described as the authors subjective opinion of events will be subject to two modes of analysis to examine if we can draw different conclusions about the protagonists than the chroniclers of the polemic sources have. On the one hand I will apply the information available about the protagonists and use them to contextualize them, to perhaps get a more nuanced understanding of their motivations and goals. On the other hand, I will use the only contemporary source written by the southerners themselves, the second part of the Chanson, written by Tudela's anonymous continuer. These sources will be discussed separately below.

The mode of analysis will base itself on the idea that if we apply the perspective of disinheritance in the Trencavel lands, largely legitimized by the Vergentis in Senium beginning with Raimond Roger Trencavel and then many of his vassals, we might be able to assess whether or not these initial years of the Crusade was a success. When we look at these campaigns from a purely militaristic perspective, it is easy to see them as such, because the crusaders led by Montfort clearly were more competent military strategists than their targets. The Southern French nobility come across as disorganized, timid and reluctant engage the Crusaders in open battle. Thus their strategy is defensive, rather than offensive leading to a long line of sieges that picked them apart one by one. After the first two years of the campaign, scholars have pointed out that there is hardly any resistance in the Carcassès or Biterrois³⁴. However, if we look away from the military victories of the Crusaders and the direct control over castra, and assess the diplomatic choices made in regards to the local lords during these years, a different image emerges. We are left with a long string of diplomatic and cultural faux pas, that had deep reaching implications not only for the control Montfort had over the Trencavel regions, but also later in the Crusade as the massive displacement of people, due to early decisions, scattered to other areas of the Midi where they continued the resistance. The vassals he demanded fealty from sooner or later betrayed him, as did their predecessors. In a war that is more similar to partisan or guerrilla warfare, we need to look at

³⁴ Carcassès and Biterrois are the areas which had Carcassonne and Béziers as their centres. Both regions were under Trencavel overlordship. See Map III, p. 94.

the people, not the buildings themselves to see whether control over an area has been reached successfully. As Débax rightly points out “Sovereignty is built on a territory and subjects.”³⁵

The Term Heresy

With the current schism regarding how we understand heresy in the Midi, it is useful to clarify what is meant by the term in this particular dissertation. There are many theories surrounding what the nature of the Albigensian heresy was, which I have outlaid in the historiography. Many historians use the presence of heretics as a way of explaining the actions of the Occitan nobility. However, in this dissertation I wish to deliberately avoid this, in order to focus on the relationship between an overlord and his vassals as a causal explanation. When the term heretic is used in this dissertation it will be a reference to those accused of heresy by the catholic church, and not a reference to a specific sect or group of people. The narrative sources have a tendency to conflate heretics, supporters, receivers and those generally opposed to the crusade for their own reasons³⁶, in that way heretic becomes an umbrella term, rather than a specific one. This has far-reaching implications when one aims to use the presence of heretics among the Occitan nobles as causal factor for their actions. Of course this does not mean that we should discard the scholarly analysis’ employing this perspective, but purposefully setting this type of analysis aside to focus on other aspects of the life and decisions of the nobility can help us nuance and complement our view of the events in the Midi in the beginning of the thirteenth century.

The sources

The Song of the Albigensian Crusade by William de Tudela³⁷

Chanson de la croisade albigeoise, or as it is known in English; the Song of the Albigensian Crusade or the Song of the Cathar Wars is a poem written between 1204 and 1218. It has two authors, the first is William De Tudela. He introduces himself as a clerk in holy orders who was educated in Tudela in Navarre. From there he went to Montauban, where he stayed for eleven years. He goes on writing that he left after that because he could foresee the great tragedy that was about to befall the Midi. When he left Montauban he went to Count Baldwin, the youngest son of Count Raymond V of Toulouse, and thus Raymond VI of Toulouse’s

³⁵ Débax *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books 2020), Chapter 6, §96

³⁶ This is also pointed out by Graham-Leigh. *Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) on p. 61 – 68.

³⁷ For the description of Tudela and the anonymous continuer I have relied on the Introduction in the *Chanson*, p. 1 – 6.

younger brother. During the crusade Baldwin betrays the Count of Toulouse and hands his lands over to Montfort and joins the Crusade, until he is captured and hung at the orders of the Count of Toulouse in February 1214. Before his death however, he appoints William to a canonry at Bourg Saint Antonin. This is where he composes this poem³⁸. William is seen as a strong supporter of the crusade, the northern French and their allies. He disapproves of heresy and sees the Crusade a necessary evil.

The Chanson is a poem, which carries several genre specific considerations. The part written by William de Tudela seems to be written for a broad audience and probably meant to be performed in the courts of the Midi. However, with the courts of the Midi being a mixed bag due to the Crusade, it seems more diplomatic than for instance his anonymous continuer or Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay's narrative. The poem seems more nuanced than for instance the *History*, in the sense that it aims not to offend either side of the conflict. It has favourable descriptions of the local nobility as well as the crusaders. And although we need to be aware that the poem uses for instance excessive language, this does not mean that it is not a valuable source. For instance, the conversations between the various protagonists are most likely a figment of the authors imagination, however, they can be useful in saying something about the author, and by extension the times he lived in.

The Chanson by The anonymous continuer

The second part of the Chanson is written by Tudela's anonymous continuer. The poem is supposed to be performed in the great halls of barons and princes, and the narrative of the anonymous continuer gives us a clue as to who the poem is aimed at. The main character, the one who is supposed to bring balance and *paratge*³⁹ back to the Midi is Raymond VII, which suggest that the author is connected to Toulouse, either to Raymond VII's court or one of his vassals. However, this source describes Montfort and many of the legates in a negative light.

³⁸ This is all described in the *Chanson* p.11 laisse 1, for information about Count Baldwin see 43 – 45, laisse 73 – 77.

³⁹ *Paratge* is a term constantly used in the second half of the Chanson, roughly it translates to peerage. However, in the Occitan context the term means much more. Débax. *La seigneurie collective* (OpenEdition Books: 2019) sums it up like this: “*The paratge of which they speak ensures social domination, merges with kinship and nevertheless goes beyond it, crystallizes in vassalic service and defines a height of nobility, is nourished by common possessions and is enriched by a parity which is inscribed well beyond the condominium. It is a dream, a time that never really was, a time that is already gone. And yet this is the reality of an era. The paratge expresses a vivid but ideologically secondary reality: the unity of the dominant group, which gives way to the principle of feudal hierarchy on the one hand, to the assertion of territorial units on the other.*” Chapter 5, §51, and “*[Paratge]... emphasizes in turn equality, sharing, lineage, social domination, nobility and hierarchy, benefit and service. Paratge is love and exceeds love, it is lordship and exceeds lordship, it transcends itself in service and is nourished by domination, it is collective dignity and personal nobility, it is rooted in kinship and allows for exceed...*” Chapter 5, §49.

Which suggest that the author had made the song for an audience that is predominately Occitan. The audience it caters to, at least if the poet wishes to earn a living, must accept and like the contents of the text. It is fair then to assume that the ideas presented in this text, is a reflection of the ideas held by the southern nobility. Albeit it might be a glorified representation, we can at least assume that these were ideals to aspire to. Statements that would arouse accepting nods and a sense of moral superiority from its audience. Because this is the only narrative source written purely from a Southern French perspective, which is evident from the negative description of the crusaders and its focus on local culture, especially the ideal of *paratge*, it is invaluable to the historian who wishes to see past the polemic narrative. Unfortunately for this particular analysis, the events described by the anonymous continuer begin in July 1213 right before the battle of Muret, and ends in 1219 when prince Louise approaches Toulouse with his army. Which means that this is after the events I wish to analyze, however, this does not mean that it is useless. The narrative structure of the second part of the *chanson* uses specific events to describe and explain general reflections on for instance vassalic bonds and proper conduct, the limits of overlordship and general moral considerations between the Southern Lords and the Crusaders. Because of this, we can apply these general ideas to gain an understanding of the events in the beginning of the crusade from a southern French perspective. In addition to this, there is a very detailed description of the participation of a variety of knights from the former Trencavel lands, and their position in the resistance. Which is very useful when we are looking at the broader consequences of disinheritance in the Trencavel lands. There are of course genre specific considerations to be aware of, several tropes used in this part of the *Chanson* are recognizable from earlier troubadour literature, the use of contrast is sometimes exaggerated and the moral and social ideas represented in the text should be seen more as an ideal, than a reality. However, keeping in mind that the audience was clearly the southern French nobility, it seems likely that they approved of the ideas represented in the text. Presumably, at least aiming to live up to these ideals. The source seems to be largely contemporary, not only based on the scope of the narrative, which ends right before the siege of Toulouse, but also because of the familiar tone used when referring to Southern knights. For instance during one of the battles outside Toulouse when Montfort laid siege to it the author writes “Up rode Peter, took it by the rains and cried, Toulouse!”⁴⁰, this Peter is not formally introduced to the listener/reader, and it is clear that the audience for whom this was written would know who Peter was.

⁴⁰ *Chanson* p. 149, *laisse* 194.

The History of the Albigensian Crusade by Peter les Vaux-de-Cernay

The History of the Albigensian Crusade is a chronicle written by Peter of Les Vaux-De-Cernay, henceforth referred to only as Peter. The chronicle is a contemporary source, written between 1212 and 1218. Peter himself was a young monk at the Cistercian abbey of le Vaux-de-Cernay, which lay approximately 35 km south-west of Paris. His uncle, Guy, was the abbot of Vaux-de-Cernay, and had been since at least 1181. Guy was heavily involved in the preaching missions in Languedoc in 1207, and would later be involved in the leadership of the Crusade and eventually become Bishop of Carcassonne. Peter, would later accompany him in the Midi during the Crusade, where he would witness many of the events he describes in his chronicle. In addition to this, Guy and Peter had close connections to Simon de Montfort and his family as they were one of the major patrons of the abbey. This was also the case for many of the other nobles who accompanied Montfort on the crusade. In addition to this Peter refers to his uncle as “*nobilis genere*” or “of noble birth”⁴¹ which would suggest his own noble background. This links him even closer to the secular leaders of the crusade. His favourable opinion of Simon de Montfort is testament to this, and stands in sharp contrast with his consequent unfavourable description of the local nobility of Languedoc.

One of the weaknesses of Peter’s chronicle as a source is in fact his one sidedness when it comes to describing events. He usually glorifies the crusaders or excuses their actions, or on the other side demonizes the Southern French nobility and gives them base motives for their actions. To Peter there seems to be no grey area, something is either evil or good. He seems also to have had little understanding of the social system in the Midi, which becomes clear in his confusion of heretics, those who support or protect heretics or those who are simply opposed to the crusade. The idea that there can be different reasons to oppose the Crusade seems daunting to him. It is clear that he has a hard time understanding that the culture and values in the Midi are different from Ile de France. However, Peter describes himself as very young, and his lack of understanding for the southerners is probably result of his position within the church, his uncle’s history with the area and his naiveté and religious convictions.

It has been commonly argued that Peter does not wilfully deceive the reader, he writes the history as he sees it. One of the arguments for this is that he does not omit information about atrocities and the way the clergy twists circumstances in their favour. He

⁴¹ *History* p. 28, §51

does excuse these actions, but he does not leave them out. In addition to this he does not hesitate to criticize the actions of the French nobles such as the Count of Nevers⁴². It should be pointed out that this “honesty” in describing events that would potentially put the Crusaders in a bad light, does not necessarily equate honesty on Peter’s part. It could equally be an attempt to control the narrative by explaining what happened, and then excusing it. Or it could be an expression that Peter does not in fact find these actions problematic, but sees them as justified. Hence, he does not understand why it would be beneficial to hide them. However, many of the events he describes are matched by the other sources, and the events that he describes are reliable. Which means that for chronology and structure, this is a very good source, and in a lot of cases the most detailed. However, when it comes to Peter’s description of the intent of the local nobility or the general culture in Languedoc we must be critical and try to lift the veil of polemics, in order to read this source in a more neutral way. In addition to this Peter did not arrive personally in the Midi until March 1212, which means that he did not witness the events I will be analysing in person, like many of the later events he describes. Which naturally means that his accounts of the conquest of the Trencavel lands will have been from Arnold Amalric, Simon de Montfort or other participants from their circles.

The Chronicle of William of Puylaurens

Master William, the author of this chronicle, was rector at the church of Puylaurens, according to Bernard Gui, a Dominican historian of the early fourteenth century. He also writes that William was of Toulousian origin. His name appears in numerous acts between 1237 and 1245, where he is described as rector, prior or chaplain of Puylaurens. His date of birth is unknown, but it is estimated to be around the year 1200, give or take.

His writing suggests that he would have been well taught in Church circles from an early age. References in the chronicle seems to suggest that he might have been present in Toulouse during many of the events he describes. Although we cannot know this for sure. From 1228 – 30 he was in the entourage of Bishop Fulk, and it is clear from his writing that Fulk had quite an impression on him. Between March 1245 and February 1248 he appears as in various acts for Raymond VII of Toulouse as chaplain. Puylaurens is thus to be considered a local, it is hard to estimate how sympathetic Puylaurens would be to the crusade, on the one hand he worked for Bishop Fulk who was staunch supporter of the Crusade and very opposed to

⁴² I have based the information about this source on the introduction to *the History* by Sibly and Sibly, see p. ix – xxvi.

heresy, on the other hand he worked as chaplain for the Count of Toulouse who, along with his father, had been vigorously opposed to the crusade⁴³. The value of this source is that it spans further than both the Chanson and the History, however, the it is subsequently less detailed. However, it is not as contemporary as the other narrative sources, as he was probably around 9 years old when the crusade was initiated. He died sometime around 1275, and much of his narrative is written from the perspective of hindsight. However, he seems generally understanding of the Southern French nobles, even though it is clear he is against heresy.

⁴³ The information about this source is derived from the introduction of the translation of Puylaurens, see p. xx - xxviii

Names and Short Biography:

I will be mentioning several members of the nobility, clergy and kings in this dissertation and for the sake of the reader I will supply a register with a short bio:

The Counts and Viscounts of the Midi⁴⁴:

The Viscount of Béziers: Raimond Roger Trencavel was Viscount of Carcassonne, Béziers, Albi and Razés. Born in 1185, he was only 24 years old when he died in 1209. He was also the nephew of Raymond VI of Toulouse, through his mother Adelaide. Adelaide's mother was Constance of France, and thus he was related to the French crown. Raimond Roger was married to Agnes of Montpellier, and they had one son Raymond II Trencavel.

Raymond II Trencavel: Was the son of Raymond II Trencavel, he was only 2 years old when he was disinherited by the crusaders, but would later fight to regain his patrimonial lands. This failed.

The Trencavel Vassals: Peter-Roger of Cabaret⁴⁵ (co-soigneur of Cabaret, with his brother Jordan), William of Lord Minerve⁴⁶, the Raimond the Lord of Termes⁴⁷, Giraud de Pépieux⁴⁸, Aimeric of Lord Montréal⁴⁹, Berengar the Lord of Puisserguier⁵⁰. These are the most prominent Trencavel vassals to be featured in the narrative sources and in this dissertation. The sources all single out Termes, Cabaret and Minerve as the strongest fortresses and the biggest threat to the Crusaders after the fall of Carcassonne in 1209⁵¹.

Count of Foix: Raymond-Roger of Foix was the son of Roger Bernard I of Foix and Cecilia Trencavel. Cecilia Trencavel was the half-sister of Roger II Trencavel, Raymond Roger Trencavel's father. He took guardianship of Raymond II Trencavel, after Raymond Roger died, allegedly at the hands of the crusaders. He held fiefs from the King of Aragon. He was also a close relative and staunch ally of Raymond VI of Toulouse. He was married to Philippa of Montcada, who bore him Roger Bernard, his heir.

⁴⁴ See genealogies on p. 95 – 6 for the nobles of the Midi.

⁴⁵ *History* p. 68 – 9, §123

⁴⁶ *History* p. 82 – 85, §151 - 154

⁴⁷ *History* p. 97, 185

⁴⁸ See below p. 65 – 7.

⁴⁹ *History* p. 81, §148

⁵⁰ See below p. 65 – 7.

⁵¹ *Chanson* p. 33, laisse 49, *History*, p. 60, 108, *Puylarens*, p. 35 XIV

Bernard Roger of Foix: was the son and heir of Raymond-Roger of Foix. He was in staunch opposition to the crusaders in the south and fought alongside Toulouse, Comminges and Trencavel. He succeeded his father in 1223, and died in 1241.

Count of Toulouse: Raymond VI was Count of Toulouse and Marquis of Provence from 1194 to 1222. In addition; he was the Count of Melgueil from 1173 to 1190. He was the son of Raymond V of Toulouse and Constance of France, making his maternal grandfather Louise VI of France, and his maternal uncle Louise VII of France. Upon succeeding his father in 1194, he immediately made peace with Alfonso II of Aragon and the Trencavels. The Counts of Toulouse and the Trencavels had been in conflict on and off, or part of competing alliances for nearly two centuries, with few exceptions when they had briefly been allies⁵².

Raymond VII: was the heir to the County of Toulouse: he succeeded his father Raymond VI in 1222, and became Count of Toulouse. He spent most of his rule defending his patrimony from the Church, the crusader and the French crown.

The Count of Comminges: Bernard IV was the Count of Comminges between 1176 and 1225. He was also Count of Bigorre by marriage. He was the son of Bernard III of Comminges. His family was intimately connected with that of Foix through marriage.

Crusaders

Simon V of Montfort: Simon V of Montfort, although slightly above the petty nobility was before 1209 a small baron, his title Count came from the earldom in Leicester which he lost within a short amount of time when King John of England confiscated it. He was only Count in name, and it was mostly used by mistake by other's referring to him. He was, a Lippiatt writes a baron of "not quite first-rank" status before his venture in the Midi in 1209. Simon of Montfort had a long standing close relationship with the house of les-Vaux-de-Cernay. Simon IV had exempted Cistercian houses from all tolls, customs, and exactions throughout his lands, his family's patronage of the order continued with his son. Simon V received his education at Les-Vaux-de-Cernay, where Guy the abbot was his tutor he may also have been charged with Simon's care during his minority⁵³.

⁵² For the history of alliances between Trencavel and the Count of Toulouse see Graham-Leigh, *Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 98 – 103.

⁵³ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (London: Oxford University Press. 2017): For information about his comital title see p. 108, for more information about his economic and social standing see also p. 116 – 121 and p. 17 for

Guy of Montfort: Was Simon de Montfort's brother, he was actively supporting Simon during his campaigns in the Midi from around Christmas 1211⁵⁴.

Amaury of Montfort: The son of Simon de Montfort, he succeeded his father when he died during the siege of Toulouse in 1218⁵⁵.

Count of Nevers: Hervé de Donzy was one of the higher lords to partake in the first campaign in 1209. He was offered the Viscounties of the Trencavels after the surrender of Carcassonne, which he rejected. He left shortly after⁵⁶.

Duke of Burgundy: Odo III was one of the great lords who came on the initial campaign to the Midi in 1209. He was also close to Simon de Montfort. He also declined the offer of becoming Viscount of Carcassonne and Beziers⁵⁷.

The Count of St. Pol: Gaucher III of Châtillon was also one of the lords who partook in the initial campaign, also declined the Viscounties of Carcassonne and Beziers⁵⁸.

Montfort's men: Guy de Lévis was Montfort's Marshal⁵⁹, Bouchard the Marley⁶⁰.

Kings and Popes

King of France: Phillip II of France, also called Phillip Augustus. Was King of France from 1180 to 1223. Innocent III tried tirelessly to convince him to take charge of the anti-heretical movement in the Midi and the Crusade. However, the King of France refused. He was not personally engaged in the Crusade, but he did allow his vassals to go⁶¹. The correspondence between Innocent III and the King suggest that the latter found the interference of Innocent III inappropriate, this will be further discussed in the dissertation.

King of Aragon: Peter II, was King of Aragon and Count of Barcelona, but also Lord of Montpellier through his marriage with Maria of Montpellier. Maria was the sister of Agnes of Montpellier, the wife of the Viscount of Béziers which made them brothers-

citation. For more about Simon V of Montfort's spiritual conviction and connection to the Cistercian order see p. 1 - 2 and p. 79 - 92.

⁵⁴ See the *History* p. 144, §290, for his arrival in the Midi.

⁵⁵ See the *History* p. 195 - 7, §425 for his dubbing.

⁵⁶ See the *Chanson*, p. 14 laisse 8, 16 laisses 12, 26 laisses 33 - 34; the *History* p. 41 §72, 47 §82, 55 §101 and 59 - 61 §108.

⁵⁷ See the *Chanson* p. 14 laisse 8, 16 laisses 12; the *History* p. 41 §72, 47 §82, 55 - 6 §101, 59 §108.

⁵⁸ See the *Chanson* p. 16 laisse 12, the *History*, p. 47 §82.

⁵⁹ Lippiatt. "Independent Baronial Power". (University of Oxford. 2015) p. 243, 301

⁶⁰ Lippiatt. "Independent Baronial Power". (University of Oxford. 2015) p. 100 - 103.

⁶¹ Britannica. "Phillip II". 20.05.20. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Philip-II-king-of-France>

in-law. He was nicknamed Peter the Catholic after being crowned by the Pope in 1205, thus accepting the feudal supremacy of the papacy⁶². He was the overlord of the Trencavels, who had held their lands from his family for generations. From the beginning of the Crusade he became more and more involved, until he died at Muret in 1213 fighting alongside the Southern Resistance.

Pope Innocent III: his original name was Lothar of Segni. He was Pope between 1198 and 1216. He was very invested in the anti-heresy effort in the Midi and was the one who proclaimed the crusade⁶³. He was also promulgated the papal decree *Vergentis in senium* in March 1199.

Representatives from the Church:

Arnold Amalric: was the Abbot of Cîteaux. Earlier in his career Amalric had been abbot of Poblet in Catalonia, before becoming abbot at Grandselve in the diocese of Toulouse, until he became abbot of Cîteaux until 1212 when he would become the Archbishop of Narbonne⁶⁴. Arnold Amalric had been chosen by Innocent III to be his legate in the Midi in 1204, along with Brother Peter of Castelnaud and Brother Ralph⁶⁵. Arnold Amalric was the leader of the Albigensian Crusade both spiritually and martially until Montfort was elected as the new Viscount of Carcassonne and Beziers in August 1209, after which he continued to offer advice and spiritually guide the efforts against heresy.

The Bishop of Osma: on a trip home from the Curia in 1206, he stopped by Montpellier and met the papal legates Arnold the Abbot of Cîteaux, Brother Peter of Castelnaud and Brother Ralph. He briefly accompanied the legates on some of their debates in 1206⁶⁶.

Brother Peter of Castelnaud: was a native from Castelnaud-le-Lez, near Montpellier, where he was a canon from 1182, and later became archdeacon of the church of Maguelonne from 1197. He became a monk of the Cistercian abbey of Frontfroide in 1202, just South of Narbonne. He was elected papal legate alongside brother Ralph in the autumn of 1203. He was murdered in the Midi on the 14th of March 1208⁶⁷.

⁶² Britannica. "Peter II". 20.05.20. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Peter-II-king-of-Aragon>

⁶³ Britannica. "Innocent III". 20.05.20 <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Innocent-III-pope>

⁶⁴ Poblet (1196 – 1198), Grandselve (1198 – 1202) and Cîteaux (from 1202 – 1212). After this, and because of his central position in the Crusade he became the Archbishop of Narbonne. See *Chanson* laisse 2 – 4, p. 12 for his career and also for description of him preaching across Occitania. For more information about Arnold Amalric see Kienzle. *Cistercians* (Woodbridge. York Medieval Press. 2001) p. 138 - 161

⁶⁵ First mentioned in the *History* p. 16, §20, however for a short biography see footnote 4 on the same page.

⁶⁶ See the *History* p. 16 - 19, §20 – 24, and p. 26 - 27, §48

⁶⁷ See the *History* p. 16 - 22, §20 – 29 for his preaching effort and p. 31 – 38, §55 – 65 for his murder and the declaration of the Crusade.

Brother Ralph: was a Cistercian monk from Frontfroide. He was appointed papal legate in the autumn of 1203. He died in July 1207⁶⁸.

Master Milo: was Innocent's notary and was appointed papal legate on the 1st of March 1209. He died He died in December 1209⁶⁹.

Master Theodosius: Was a canon at the church of Genoa by 1203, and is said to have been a native of Pisa. He was sent to accompany Master Milo in Mach 1209. He died in December 1209⁷⁰.

Guy of les Vaux-de-Cernay: Was the Abbot of les Vaux-de-Cernay and the uncle of the author of the History. He also had close ties to Montfort and was the one who had at the behest of the Duke of Burgundy convinced him to partake in the Albigensian Crusade⁷¹. According to Lippiatt he had also been the ward and teacher of Montfort before he reached his majority.

Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay: Describes himself as a monk of the abbey of les Vaux-de-Cernay. He is the author of the History and was himself eyewitness to many of the events he describes. He joined his uncle Guy in the Midi between 1212 -1218⁷².

⁶⁸ See the *History* p. 7 – 8, and footnote 8 on p. 9.

⁶⁹ See the *History* p. 40 – 43, §69 – 76.

⁷⁰ For the description of him in the *History* see p. 40, §69, and for his death see p. 89 – 90, §165.

⁷¹ The *History* p. 56, §103

⁷² The *History* p. 5, §1 and footnote 2 and 7.

Timeline:

In this dissertation I will be covering several years and a wide range of events, some of which I will jump between. For the benefit of the reader I include a short timeline with important events many of whom I will discuss later, hopefully this will offer an overlook and make the analysis more comprehensive⁷³. The period between 1209 and 1218 will be significantly more detailed as this period is the main focus of this dissertation.

1147 – 1204: Several anti-heretical attempts aimed at the Midi fail. After his election in 1198 Pope Innocent III tries to pressure the local lords of the Midi and the King of France to take action.

1204: Brother, Peter of Castelnau, Brother Ralph and Arnold Amauri are appointed papal legates in the Midi. A measure to deal with heresy in the region.

1207: Peter of Castelnau excommunicates Raymond VI, the Count of Toulouse as a protector of heretics.

1208: Raymond VI tries to be reconciled with the church, but suddenly Peter of Castelnau is murdered on the 14. January and Raymond VI is suspected, Innocent summons the Crusade in a letter dated 10 March, where he announces that the Count's land can be seized⁷⁴.

1209: The Pope appoints master Milo as papal legate on the 1st of March. The Abbot of Cîteaux; Arnold Amalric goes to see the King of France and his vassals, among them the Count of Nevers, the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of St. Pol, at Villeneuve on the 1st of May., Raymond VI is reconciled on the 18th of June and takes the cross on the 22nd of June. The Crusaders arrive in Lyon in early July and leaves for Beziers by the 7th or 8th. The crusaders arrive at Beziers on the 21st of July and city falls and the inhabitants are slaughtered. The crusaders besiege Carcassonne on the 1st of August and the Viscount of Béziers surrenders on the 15th of August and is taken hostage. Montfort V is elected as the new Viscount of the former Trencavel lands. The Count of Nevers leaves with the majority of the crusaders. Montfort continues to conquer the castra of the Carcassès, Biterrois, Albigeois and Razés. He also attacks the lands of Foix. Raymond Roger Trencavel dies in captivity on the 10th of November, meanwhile Montfort tries to secure the overlordship of the King of Aragon to cement his position,

⁷³ I will rely on the Chronology from the translations of the *Chanson*, p. 195 – 197 and the *History* p. 2 – 4. However, I will add elements that are relevant to this dissertation more specifically. The additional information used in this chronology will be from the *Chanson*, the *History* and *Puylarens*.

⁷⁴ For Innocent's letter given at the Lateran on 10 March 1208, see the *History* p. 31 – 38, §56 – 65.

as the King of Aragon is the overlord of Raymond Roger Trencavel. A general uprising threatens Montfort's control over his new territories. Cabaret, Termes and Minerve, all former vassals of Raymond Roger Trencavel, are particularly singled out as the biggest threats to his overlordship. And by Christmas Montfort has lost most of his territorial gains in the Trencavel lands⁷⁵.

1210: Montfort is re-enforced by a new contingent of crusaders. He begins to retake the territories he lost in the rebellion, beginning with the atrocities at Bram⁷⁶. In a short space of time Montfort regained the entire area of Minerve. Montfort continues to harass the Count of Foix. During the second half of May the Lords of the Trencavel territories, Peter-Roger of Cabaret, Raymond lord of Termes, the lord of Montreal and "... other knights opposed to the Church and our Count [Simon of Montfort]..."⁷⁷, are trying to become the King of Aragon's vassals. However, the negotiations fail. Minerve falls to the crusaders, after the siege between June and July⁷⁸. So does Termes, after a siege that lasted from August to November⁷⁹. Montfort regains many castra in the Albigeois.⁸⁰

1211: On the 22. of January the conference of Narbonne where Peter of Aragon, the counts of Toulouse and Foix discuss peace with Montfort, Foix is given back all his lost territory save Pamiers. Here the King of Aragon accepts homage from Montfort. During the Council of Montpellier on the 22. of January, Raymond VI is excommunicated again. Cabaret surrenders to the Crusaders in March. The siege and fall of Lavaur happens between the second half of March until 3rd May⁸¹. This marks the end of what scholars consider resistance in the former Trencavel lands. Around April/March the crusaders begin to attack the Count of Toulouse openly. The crusader overrun the Toulousian part of Albigeois and lays siege to Toulouse. The Albigeois rises against Montfort led by Raymond VI. The Southerners lay siege of Castelnaudary late September or early October 1211. During which Montfort devastates the areas of Foix. Many of the

⁷⁵ The crusaders were left with only Carcassonne, Fanjeaux, Saissac, Limoux, Albi and Ambialet. In the lands of Foix he was left with only Pamiers and Saverdun. The *History*, p. 74, §136

⁷⁶ At Bram they cut out the eyes and tongues of a hundred defenders. One of them got to keep an eye, and was sent to lead the mutilated men to Cabaret. For description see the *History* p. 78 – 9, §142

⁷⁷ For citation and description of this meeting see p. 81, §148.

⁷⁸ For the siege of Termes, its overlord and description of castrum see the *History* p. 82 – 85, §151 – 157

⁷⁹ For a description of Termes, its overlord and the siege see the *History* p. 91 – 100, §171 – 191. For additional information see the footnotes 73 and 74 on p. 91.

⁸⁰ For the events of 1210 see the *History* p. 78 – 101, §141 – 193.

⁸¹ For the siege of Lavaur, see the *History* p. 111 – 117, § 215 – 227, for more information about the lordship of Lavaur see footnote 9 p. 111.

- Southern castra that had been taken by the crusaders in the lands of Raymond VI, defects to the Southern side. Simon of Montfort's brother Guy arrives from Outremer⁸²
- 1212: Reinforcements arrive, enabling Montfort to counterattack the resistance. The siege of Hautpoul is in early April, one of the last castles not taken by the Crusaders in the Trencavel lands. The crusaders regain a lot of lost territory in Toulouse, and Albigeois. Meanwhile the King of Aragon is preoccupied at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in Spain. Guy, Montfort's brother attacks the County of Foix. Arnaud Amalric becomes the archbishop of Narbonne. The crusaders conquer Gascony, e.g. the lands of Comminges. Toulouse is overfilled with refugees and dispossessed knights from the Toulousian, Albigeois, Carcassès and Biterrois. The Statues of Pamiers is written, instigated by Montfort: now the customs of Northern France will replace those of the South⁸³.
- 1213: Peter II of Aragon takes the Southern Lords; Raymond VI, the Count of Foix, the Count of Comminges and Gascon de Béarn under his protection and declares war on Montfort and the Crusaders. Peter is killed at Muret.
- 1214: Simon de Montfort devastates Foix.
- 1215: The Fourth Lateran Council: Raymond VI loses his lands to Montfort, his son is only entitled to his matrimonial heritage in Provence. Montfort becomes Count of Toulouse and Duke of Narbonne. The other Southern Lords are given back their respective fiefs.
- 1216: Innocent III dies, and is succeeded by Honorius III. Raymond VI goes to Spain to get help, and Montfort lays siege to Beaucaire and Raymond VII, the son of Raymond VI Count of Toulouse. Montfort abandons the siege and returns to Toulouse. There is a revolt at Toulouse which is suppressed. Montfort razes and sacks the city of Toulouse, takes many hostages to pay for his continued campaign against Raymond VII.
- 1217: Montfort devastates Ariège and goes to make war in Provence. Raymond VI returns from Spain and in secret goes to claim Toulouse and defends it against the Crusaders and Montfort. Montfort leaves Provence and besieges Toulouse.
- 1218: Simon de Montfort dies at the siege of Toulouse. His son Amaury is chosen as his successor. Prince Louise of France takes the cross. Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay narrative ends in December of this year.
- 1219: Louis' army marches south. Marmande surrenders and is slaughtered. Louis approaches Toulouse. This is where the narrative of the Chanson ends. After two months, prince

⁸² For the events of 1211 see the *History* p. 101 – 145, §195 – 291.

⁸³ For the events of 1212 see the *History* p. 143 – 171.

- Louis returns to France. Raymond VII along with the dispossessed lords recapture many strongholds.
- 1222: Raymond VI dies. Raymond VII continues to resist the crusaders. He writes a letter to the King of France demanding his inheritance.
- 1223: Raymond Roger Count of Foix dies and is succeeded by his son Roger Bernard. Phillip Augustus the King of France dies and is succeeded by his son Louis VIII of France.
- 1224: Amaury de Montfort leaves Carcassonne, and hands over all his rights in the South to the King of France. Young Trencavel recovers Carcassonne with the help of the Count of Foix and Toulouse. The conference of Montpellier: Raymond VII asks the pope to recognise him as the Count of Toulouse. In return he promises to fight heresy in his lands, as does the Count of Foix and the Viscount of Carcassonne.
- 1225: Council of Bourges: Raymond VII and Amaury de Montfort argue over their rights over the County of Toulouse.
- 1226: In Paris the Church declare that Raymond VII cannot prove his orthodoxy, and grants his lands to the King of France. Louise VIII takes the cross again and marches for the Midi. Only Avignon resists, he takes all the major strongholds, save Toulouse. Louise VIII dies at Montpensier. Imbert de Beaujeu, the French captain-general, continues the campaign.
- 1227: The Archbishop of Narbonne excommunicates Raymond VII, the Count of Foix and the “so-called” viscount of Béziers. Guy de Montfort, dies besieging Varihes, Ariège. The French forces devastates the South.
- 1229: The Treaty of Paris: Raymond VII submits to the Church and to the King of France. He keeps his title.
- 1230: The Inquisition is established.
- 1240: Raymond Roger, exiled Viscount of Beziers and Carcassonne, returns from Spain; he and his dispossessed lords try to throw off the French yoke, but fail.
- 1244: Fall of Montsegur
- 1271: Deaths of Jeanne of Toulouse, daughter of Raymond VII, and of her husband Alfonse of Poitiers, leaving no children. The French crown inherits the county of Toulouse.

Part I: The Foundation of Montfort's Overlordship

In the summer of 1209 Beziers and Carcassonne fell, and a new Viscount was elected. His assumption of the title presented problems in the territories, made evident by the local resistance in the winter of 1209, and more sporadic local resistance after that.

I will give a brief introduction of the developments in canon law, which led to the *Vergentis in senium* that was used to legitimize the disinheritance of the local nobility in the Midi. In turn I will analyse the events surrounding the election of Montfort as the new Viscount of Béziers. I will examine how this incident was received by the other crusaders and how the disinheritance of the Viscount of Béziers impacted the first campaign of the Crusade.

I.I. The *Vergentis in Senium*

After the fall of Carcassonne, Simon de Montfort accepted the title of Viscount and the respective fief. The shift of power and the acquisition of new lands was nothing new to the knights and lords of the 13th century. It is important to remember that lordships were not fixed positions, but were constantly challenged and changed over time. There can be many claims to the same lordship, for instance the struggle between Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Count of Toulouse for the lordship of Provence in the mid 1100s⁸⁴. In short; the nobles of Occitania quarrelled over lordships that they could claim through marriage or other relatives, no matter how dubious these claims were. As indeed most nobles of Europe did⁸⁵. However, Montfort had no familial claim to these territories as he had no relatives through whom they could be legitimately claimed.

The *Vergentis in senium* was a papal decree that was promulgated in March 1199 and sent to Viterbo. It concluded that heresy should be equated with high treason and punished as such. It drew upon Roman Law which stated that high treason should be punished by death, and dispossession. Thus depriving both the guilty and his descendants of their property. However, the *Vergentis in Senium* called for a metaphorical death in the form of excommunication. The procedure for which would be to identify and condemn the heretic, and then hand him over to his overlord for the proscribed punishment. The *Vergentis* built on earlier anti-heretical efforts. During the third Lateran Council of 1179, the 27th canon⁸⁶ was

⁸⁴ See Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 30 – 35 for details on the struggle for Provençé between the Counts of Toulouse, and the house of Aquitaine.

⁸⁵ See the sub-chapter;” Heiresses, widows and matriarchs” in Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004), p. 25 – 30 for more examples of how intermarriage connected areas in Occitania, but how they also complicated inheritance and dominance.

⁸⁶ See *Canon 27*

promulgated to deal with heretics and their receivers and supporters. The canon specifically mentions the heresy in Gascony, Albi and Toulouse. The heretics, their supporters and defenders should be put under anathema. It also mentions that the same penalty is to be given to those who hire mercenaries and disturb the peace. Unless, that is, they abjure their wicked ways. Their goods were to be confiscated and they could duly be subjected to slavery by their overlord. The decretal *Ad abolendam* from 1184 added to this Canon, heretics were to be handed to the authorities, while the supporters or receivers was deprived of privileges; the right to a trial, the right to draft a will, the right to hold public office, and to inherit their ancestor's fiefs and offices. This was incorporated in Canon 3 at the Fourth Lateran Council by Innocent III. The ideas of these bulls and canons were further developed by Innocent after the death of Peter of Castelnau when he sent out letters to the Phillip Augustus and the barons of France. Where Innocent III himself proclaimed that Raymond VI was a heretics and that his lands were liable to seizure⁸⁷. This was done without the consent or interference of Phillip Augustus, which represented a break with earlier canon law. This doctrinal change would be developed further throughout the crusade to fit the needs of the crusaders, this is clear when we see the general blurring of lines between heretic, receiver, protector or those opposed to the crusade for other reasons in the narrative sources.⁸⁸

When the Count of Toulouse was reconciled with the Church and joined the crusade, the mission lacked a clear target. They then turned towards the lands of the Trencavel family. However, the Viscount of Béziers was never suspected of heresy, he was not even excommunicated. The narrative sources give us no justification for his dispossession and there is no evidence that there was a larger occurrence of heresy in his lands as opposed to those of the Count of Toulouse. In addition to this, when we look at for instance Canon 27 of the third Lateran council there is always the opportunity to reconcile. However, this was not afforded to the Viscount of Béziers, in fact he was denied an audience with the papal legates. Sibly and Sibly has argued that throughout Innocent's pontificate, reconciliation with the Church was the preferred outcome⁸⁹. And Graham-Leigh has argued convincingly that when Innocent proclaimed the crusade, this was meant to pressure the local nobles into taking the

⁸⁷ Promulgated at the Lateran on the 10th of March 1208.

⁸⁸ For a full analysis of the *Vergentis in Senium* and the *Ad abolendam* see Rust. "Bulas Inquisitoriais" (Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso. 2012) and for a transcript of the two see p. 150 – 161, see also the *History*, Appendix G, p. 313 – 20 for a full discussion by Sibly and Sibly of the development of the anti-heretical measures implemented during the crusade.

⁸⁹ *History*, Appendix G, p. 313 – 320.

anti-heretical measures that the Church believed was their duty, not to disinherit them⁹⁰. It is not really clear why the Viscount of Béziers was targeted in the first place, as the Viscount of Béziers is not subjected to the same scrutiny as for instance the Count of Toulouse and the Count of Foix, whom Peter accuses at length of heresy and misdemeanours towards the church. There is in fact very little mention of the Viscount of Béziers until the siege of Carcassonne, when accusations are laid out it is usually against the citizens of the Trencavel lands, not the Viscount⁹¹. Tudela assures the reader that the Viscount of Béziers was a good catholic, and that his only vice was allowing heresy to flourish by being too friendly with his vassals⁹². How were these doctrinal changes in canon law and their application in the Trencavel lands received by the crusaders?

I.II. The Election of Montfort as the New Viscount

When Servian, Beziers and Carcassonne, had fallen and the Viscount had been taken hostage it was soon decided that a new Lord needed to be appointed for the confiscated territory. Simon de Montfort as we know was chosen for this post. However, he was not the first choice made by the legates. The first person that had been asked was the Count of Nevers, “... *but he refused to stay in that country on any terms*”. The next candidate was the count of St Pol, he also refused. “*They both said they had plenty of land in the kingdom of France, where their fathers were born, however long their lives might be, and they did not wish to take another man’s inheritance.*”. “*There was no one present who would not feel himself utterly disgraced if he accepted the fief.*”⁹³ Belperron has argued that the offer made to the Count of Nevers and the Count of St. Pol and/or the Duke of Burgundy was only a matter of courtesy, and that the description of the unwillingness to accept despoiled land is simply poetic drama⁹⁴. It seems strange then, that William Tudela who is positively disposed towards Montfort and the crusade, would in the next *laisse* have Montfort accept this allegedly dishonourable position without any qualms. It seems unlikely that Tudela, who clearly wishes to portray Montfort

⁹⁰ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 49 – 50, she writes that the crusade was meant to be a vehicle of secular anti-heresy effort, not a tool to disinherit the lords of the Midi.

⁹¹ The *History* does not mention Carcassonne or Beziers as particularly heretical places before the redirection of the Crusade in the spring of 1209. Peter uses a few pages each on the Count of Toulouse (*History* p. 22 – 25, §28 – 45) and the Count of Foix (*History* p. 103 – 107, §197 – 209) to convince the reader of their alleged heresy and wrongdoings. In addition, there are constant reminders throughout the main narrative of the bad behaviour of the Count of Toulouse and the Count of Foix. This sort of attention is never given to Raymond Roger of Beziers.

⁹² *Chanson* p. 18 – 19, *laisse* 15

⁹³ *Chanson* p. 26 – 27, *laisse* 34 and 35.

⁹⁴ Belperron. *La Croisade* (Paris. 1942) p. 175

beneficially would invent a situation where he chooses to act in a manner that his peers would find dishonourable. We should be careful in dismissing the idea that the redistribution of the Trencavel lands would be frowned upon. In order to examine whether or not it could be seen as dishonourable to accept the former Trencavel lands we need to examine the way in which they had been acquired.

I.II.I Stealing Another Man's Land

When the Viscount of Béziers came to negotiate the terms of his surrender⁹⁵ he was led to the tent of the Count of Nevers, which was where the discussions about his surrender were held. The fact that the Count of Nevers' tent was the natural place for such discussions is telling of his position in the Crusade. It is reasonable to assume that the Duke of Burgundy was also present. As the *Chanson* describes the “knights and sergeants”⁹⁶ watching the Viscount of Béziers from all sides as he entered the tent, as French and Burgundian. The fact that he, along with the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of St. Pol, are titled “the most powerful leaders of the army”⁹⁷ and were the natural first choice for the position of Viscount of Béziers is testament to this.

Peter writes:” *On advice of the barons the basis of the peace was determined as follows: it was ruled that the inhabitants should come out of the city naked and should then be allowed to go free; the Viscount would be imprisoned and all the contents of the city would be kept for the designated future lord of the territory.*”⁹⁸ William of Puylaurens has a slightly different description of these terms; the agreement was that the inhabitants would leave the city, the control over the city would be granted to the crusaders and the Viscount would be held hostage until this had been carried out.⁹⁹ Although the description of terms seems very similar, there are two major differences: In Peter's version Trencavel would be held prisoner indefinitely, and he would be disinherited as his territories would be given to the “future lord of the territory”. In Puylaurens account the conditions that Trencavel agreed to was to be held hostage until the city had been evacuated and the control over the city had been handed to the crusaders. E.g. that he would only be held hostage for a short amount of time and he would not necessarily be disinherited as giving control over his castrum is not the same thing as foregoing his title as Viscount. Which actually, even though it is not given any attention in the

⁹⁵ The surrender happened on the 15th of August 1209, see the *History*, p. 54, footnote 55.

⁹⁶ *Chanson* p. 25 – 26, laisse 32.

⁹⁷ *Puylaurens* p. 34.

⁹⁸ *History* p. 54.

⁹⁹ *Puylaurens* p. 34.

various scholarship on the crusade, are two very different positions. It is difficult to tell which of these versions are correct. But not impossible.

Firstly, we must build the chronology based on the communalities in the sources, and address the differences¹⁰⁰. In Tudela's and Peter's version the terms are negotiated and agreed upon, then the citizens leave Carcassonne. Puylaurens only verifies that it has been agreed that they should be evicted, but does not write when this happens. After the citizens have been evicted Puylaurens and Peter both write that a council has held, Peter writes that it is the barons who hold this council, while Puylaurens writes that it is prompted by Arnold Amalric. The position is offered to The Count of Nevers, and also the Duke of Burgundy according to Peter, or the Count of St. Pol according to the Chanson. According to all three sources they all decline. In the chanson this first council is described as a public event, in which Arnold Amalric addresses the masses and announce the terms of surrender. He threatens to excommunicate anyone who tries to loot the city, which is in line with the description of the terms, as it will be given to a "... powerful lord who... will hold and keep this country so that the wicked heretics can never retake it."¹⁰¹ In Peter's and Puylaurens' narratives it is not explicitly stated that this council is public, however, the description from the Chanson seems to be accurately depicting the event based on two things; after describing the public proclamation and offering of the position to the Counts of Nevers and St. Pol and/or the Duke of Burgundy, Tudela writes in the next *laisse* "... One member of that council... [was Montfort] ..."¹⁰² which suggest that the public proclamation was considered a council in the presence of the whole army. This is further collaborated in Peter's narrative when he writes that after the Count of Nevers and the Duke of Burgundy decline "... two bishops and four knights were selected from the whole army..."¹⁰³ who would together with Arnold Amalric choose a leader. Which suggest that the events leading up to this moment had been in the presence of the whole army, and now they needed to downsize to be able to effectively choose a leader. After the smaller council has assembled they agree to offer the position to Montfort. According to Puylaurens and Peter Simon de Montfort refuses as the others have done, but after being urged he finally accepts. In Peter's version it is the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Nevers, along with Arnold Amalric who approach Montfort and implores him to take the charge of the crusade. It is made very clear in this version that Arnold Amalric

¹⁰⁰ The events discussed below can be found in the *Chanson* p. 25 – 27, *laisse* 30 – 35; *History* p. 54 – 55, §98 – 101; *Puylaurens* p. 33, XIV.

¹⁰¹ *Chanson* p. 26, *laisse* 33

¹⁰² *Chanson* p. 27, *laisse* 35

¹⁰³ *History* p. 55, § 101

basically uses his papal authority to coerce him into doing so. It is also clear that the Duke of Burgundy is far more engaged in persuading Montfort than the Count of Nevers. In Puylaurens' version it merely states that he refuses but is persuaded by the prelates and the barons. In the *Chanson* he accepts without persuasion, he only asks that the other barons will swear an oath to aid him. In both Tudela's and Peter's narrative it is Arnold Amalric who offers Montfort the position.

The re-construction we are left with is thus; the negotiations take place in the tent of the Count of Nevers, when the negotiations are concluded Arnold Amalric addresses the troops and announces that the territory will be given to a new lord, he calls to him the Count of Nevers, the Duke of Burgundy and/or the Count of St. Pol and offers them the position. They all decline. Arnold Amalric then assembles a smaller council that select Montfort. Arnold Amalric, the Count of Nevers and the Duke of Burgundy approach him and offers him the position.

Now that we have a chronological frame, we can analyse the more specific aspects of these events. We have two different descriptions of the exact terms of negotiation, it is Peter's and Puylaurens'. They are identical apart from two things; Puylaurens writes that the Viscount of Béziers is to be held hostage until the terms are carried out, while Peter writes that the Viscount is to be taken prisoner, and that his territory will be given to a new lord. In Puylaurens' description the terms are transitory, in Peter's they are permanent. In the *Chanson* it is described that Arnold Amalric proclaims that the territory will be given to new lord. However, in the *Chanson* this is mentioned as a description of what happens after the negotiations are concluded. It is not written that this was what had been decided when the Viscount of Béziers agreed to give himself up as hostage. In order to assess which one of these versions is the most believable we need to look closer at the negotiations. As Peter describes; the barons all agreed that from a military perspective, it was wise to keep the city's wealth intact, not only because this would be needed to maintain the sergeants and garrison that was to keep Carcassonne, but also because the anti-heresy campaign was not concluded yet. Thus the funds would be needed to further the business of Christ. For the same purpose the citizens would be evicted wearing only their "... shifts and breeches..."¹⁰⁴, this way they would not bring with them anything of value and the wealth of the city would be left intact. This part of the negotiation is mentioned in both Puylaurens' and Peter's accounts, and duly carried out according to all three sources. This naturally also means that all the leaders of the

¹⁰⁴ *Puylaurens*, p. 33, XIV

Crusade and the legates, led by Arnold Amalric had agreed that further funding and action was needed in the Midi. And the idea that someone would have to lead this campaign, in a military sense, had probably already been alluded to. There is evidence to suggest that Puylaurens account is more accurate than Peter's in when it comes to the position of the Viscount of Béziers. The language attributed to the Count of Nevers and the Lord of St. Pol in the *Chanson* in regards to the offer of lordship over the former Trencavel lands, suggests that these territories were stolen. Which seems strange as these lords had all been part of the negotiations, and had all agreed on the terms. The marked shift in their attitude seems to come after the public proclamation from Arnold Amalric; where he states that the Viscount of Béziers will be disinherited permanently and his lands will be handed to someone else. This suggests that when Arnold Amalric proclaimed this, this had not been an explicit part of the negotiations, but an improvised modification of the terms. Rather than someone being given charge of the military aspect of the anti-heresy effort in the Midi and control over the conquered castrums as a means to further the business of the Church, they would be given the territories indefinitely. Most likely inspired by the *Vergentis in Senium*, which was commonly accepted among the legates and by Arnold Amalric, but which would have been less acceptable to the French barons, which is evident from the letter written by Phillip Augustus in April 1208, when Innocent wanted to proclaim Raymond VI's lands open for seizure due to his crimes. Phillip wrote "... I must tell you that I have been advised by learned and eminent men that you cannot legally do this until he is condemned for heresy."¹⁰⁵ Another indication that Puylaurens account might be more reliable in this regard is the fact that the Viscount of Béziers gave himself up as hostage "... deliberately and of his own free will..."¹⁰⁶. In Débax's analysis of the various methods of mediation and conflict resolution in the Midi, she has pointed out that a common security measure during conflict was giving oneself up as hostage, this was a way of guaranteeing that you would uphold your end of the agreement¹⁰⁷. This aligns with the way in which Puylaurens describes the terms for peace, the Viscount would be held hostage until the agreement had been carried out. This was deliberately done by the Viscount, proscribed by his customs, and as an act of good will. Perhaps hoping he could create good terms with the legates and save his lands from further damage. However, this act does not make sense if we accept Peter's version, it seems unlikely that the Viscount would offer to give himself as hostage if the agreement was that he would be kept indefinitely

¹⁰⁵ *HGL* VIII, 558 – 9, for translation see *History* p. 305 – 6.

¹⁰⁶ *Chanson* p. 26, laisse 32

¹⁰⁷ Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020) Chapter 5, §55

while some French or Burgundian crusader was given his lands and titles, and the possibility to conquer the rest of it, while he sat in chains.

In order to understand why Arnold Amalric might suddenly proclaim that the Viscount of Béziers should be disinherited we need to examine the events that led up to the attack on the Trencavel lands. Before the siege and subsequent massacre at Béziers, the Viscount rode out to see the papal legate Milo, in the hopes that he could be reconciled as his uncle had been. However, Milo refused to see him. Tudela writes that this was because Milo hated him so much¹⁰⁸. Though there is no explanation for why this is the case. Milo's presence in the Midi, was originally facilitated after a request by the Count of Toulouse, who had complained that the legates Innocent had sent was treating him unfairly. More specifically these complaints were about Arnold Amalric, and his alleged harshness and unjust behaviour against him. However, the new legate did not eliminate Raymond VI's issues with the church, as Innocent had instructed Milo to consult with Arnold Amalric in all matters relating to the business of faith, "... and especially in anything concerning the Count of Toulouse"¹⁰⁹. In fact, as Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay writes the Pope had expressly instructed Milo; "*The Abbot will do everything, you will be his instrument. The Count is suspicious of him, you he will not suspect.*"¹¹⁰ This was initially directed towards the Count of Toulouse, but as he was reconciled the attention of the legates were directed towards the Trencavel lands. According to Tudela Arnold Amalric was present the first time Trencavel reached out to the Crusaders, and it seems much more likely that it is Arnold Amalric, who is acting through Milo. Most likely the decision to attack the Trencavel lands was simply that the crusade needed to be directed somewhere, and because of the preaching campaign of 1206 – 07 during which Arnold Amalric participated, their attack on the Trencavel's could be excused. Arnold was not present during the debates and preaching at Servian, Béziers and Montréal between June 1206 and April 1207¹¹¹, but he re-joined the legates right after the debate at Montréal close to Carcassonne. Which means that he, as one of the legates probably was given a report on the experiences of Peter of Castelnau and Brother Ralph¹¹². There had also been a debate at

¹⁰⁸ According to William de Tudela *Chanson* p. 16, laisse 11.

¹⁰⁹ *History* p. 39 – 41, §68 – 71.

¹¹⁰ *History* p. 40 – 41, this quote is stated as a quote from Innocent III by Peter.

¹¹¹ *History* footnote 19, p. 19.

¹¹² Innocent III had sent an appeal to the general chapter of Cîteaux to help the legates preach in Languedoc. After the meeting at Montreal between all the legates, Occitania was divided up between them. For instance; Dominic, the later St. Dominic was given Montreal and Fanjeaux, Abbot Guy, the uncle of Peter le Vaux-de-Cernay was given Carcasses. For the description of these events see the *Chanson* p. 12, laisse 3 – 4, and the *History* p. 16 - 20, §20 – 26, and for additional information see also footnotes 1 – 65.

Carcassonne in February 1204¹¹³. Which means that Arnold Amalric was already familiar with the Trencavel family and their territories. Milo on the other hand, was sent as legate to the Midi in March 1209, he was Innocent's personal priest and thus did not have the same insight into the situation as his colleague; Arnaud Amalric. From what I have discussed above it seems likely, that Milo's opinions of the Viscount of Béziers was a reflection of Arnaud Amalric's.

A further indication of this is that after the massacre at Béziers, and during the siege of Carcassonne the King of Aragon arrived and tried to parlay on Trencavel's behalf¹¹⁴. There is no mention of him meeting Milo, however, he speaks with the Abbot of Cîteaux, Arnold Amalric, who was sent for, "...**as nothing could be settled without him**"¹¹⁵. The terms offered to the King of Aragon was that the Viscount would be allowed to leave with some of his men and none of his possessions. These terms offered by Arnold, were so outrageous, that according to Tudela the King of Aragon replied "... between his teeth"; "That... will happen when donkies fly."¹¹⁶ This is a lyrical composition, and it is therefore highly unlikely that this is a direct quote, however, one can argue that this is a contemporary expression for how ridiculous it would be for a lord to accept such terms. Not only did this mean that the Viscount of Béziers was denied the opportunity to reconcile, but that his lands had been attacked without the consent of his overlord the King of Aragon. Which was unprecedented. This is testament to Arnold Amalric's general sense of entitlement as papal legate. In addition to this, there are several examples of Arnold Amalric acting in a similar fashion to what I have outlined above. Firstly, during the siege of Minerve, when Montfort is willing to accept the surrender of William of Minerve, Peter writes "Hearing this, the Abbot was greatly troubled; he wanted the enemies of Christ to die but as a monk and priest, he did not dare condemn them to death. He therefore looked for some means of inducing the Count or William... to go back on the agreement..." he then tells Montfort that they should write down their proposed terms, "... hoping that when the conditions were set down on paper one or other of them would find the proposals unacceptable..."¹¹⁷. However, in the end William of Minerve agrees to surrender unconditionally. Another example is when Arnold Amalric wishes to deny Raymond VI reconciliation in 1210, even though the pope has explicitly

¹¹³ *Chanson* p. 11 – 12, laisse 2

¹¹⁴ The Viscount of Béziers was King Peter II of Aragon's vassal, and his family had been for several generations. The relationship between these two is described as very warm in the *Chanson* p. 23 – 24, laisse

¹¹⁵ *Chanson*, p. 24, laisse 29.

¹¹⁶ *Chanson* p. 24, laisse 29

¹¹⁷ Both citations are from *History* p. 84, §154

instructed the legates to do so. Thedisius contacted Arnold Amalric to get his advice on administering purification to Raymond VI. Arnold then thinks of a way in which he can deny purification, by citing an earlier letter sent by the Pope with instructions for the Count of Toulouse, since in their opinion he had not succeeded in these instructions they would use this older letter to deny him purification. However, as Peter writes since they wished to avoid giving the impression that they were being unfair or wanted to do the Count of Toulouse any wrong, they set up a day for his purification at St. Gilles, without the intention of going through with it¹¹⁸. These examples show that Arnold Amalric did not hesitate to use his position to tilt the balance in his favour, nor was he above using papal decrees, or in this example letters, to manipulate the situation to fit his own agenda. Therefore, when the Count of Nevers, and the other great lords were offered the Viscounties, not only was this a direct negation of the terms negotiated, but the Viscount was still held captive despite the fact that the peace terms had been carried out. In which case it is completely comprehensible that there was no one present who would not feel disgraced by accepting the honour. And perhaps, no coincidence that the only one who did accept it was a man who was intimately tied to the same religious beliefs and religious circles as the legates¹¹⁹.

I.III. The Case of the Count of Nevers

I have argued that the reason the Counts of Nevers and St. Pol, and/or the Duke of Burgundy declined the offer was because of the way the Viscount of Béziers was treated. The Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Nevers was then asked to stay, the latter refused. Peter writes that this is due to the hostile nature between the Count of Nevers and the Duke of Burgundy. Montfort and the Duke of Burgundy had travelled together and were close friends. This in turn made the Count of Nevers leave after Montfort was elected and the Duke of Burgundy decided to stay.¹²⁰ He then suggests that his aversion for staying was due to the close relationship between Montfort and the Duke of Burgundy. This is largely accepted and unquestioned by scholars. However, it can be useful to examine the relationship between the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Nevers a bit further. There is no reason to doubt the hostile relationship between the Count of Nevers and the Duke of Burgundy. To understand their relationship one needs to look into the history and circumstance of the Count of Nevers, originally Hervé IV of Donzy. Hervé IV of Donzy had become the Count of Nevers as a result

¹¹⁸ *History* p. 88 – 9, §163 – 164.

¹¹⁹ See footnote 44, p. 20.

¹²⁰ See the *History* p. 59 – 60

of a conflict between himself and Peter II of Courtenay; Count of Nevers, Auxerre and Tonnerre, who was also Phillip Augustus' cousin. The conflict was the result of a dispute in which Peter II of Courtenay claimed rights to parts of Hervé of Donzy's patrimony, the latter refused and the result was that Hervé took up arms against Courtenay. Phillip Augustus sent his own mercenaries to his relative's aid, but to no avail. In 1199 the two made peace, the conditions for which was that Hervé IV would marry Peter II of Courtenay's daughter Mathilda and become Count of Nevers while Peter would keep Auxerre and Tonnerre until his death, upon which both would be united with the County of Nevers¹²¹. This arrangement was proposed by Phillip Augustus himself, who negotiated the terms while Peter II of Courtenay was imprisoned in Hervé's dungeon. Hervé and Mathilda married at the end of the year 1199¹²². Hervé of Donzy had thus risen from obscurity to one of the most prominent and wealthy lords of Ile de France, unintentionally and by coincidence¹²³. However, after a short period of time, the Pope was notified that Mathilda and Hervé was related within four degrees, too close for canonical standards¹²⁴. The letter sent Innocent III in 1205 concerning the relations of Hervé and Mathilda was written by no other than the Duke of Burgundy¹²⁵. The subsequent investigation took considerable time, and the papal dispensation for their marriage was not granted until 27th of December 1213¹²⁶. So when the Count of Nevers went to the Midi in 1209 his marriage, for which he owned the majority of his holding, was under threat of being annulled. There is no reason to doubt the close relationship between Montfort and the Duke of Burgundy either. As Lippiatt has convincingly argued Montfort and the Duke had known each other from the time of the Fourth Crusade, it was the Duke of Burgundy who had persuaded Montfort to attend the Albigensian Crusade to begin with and he continued to

¹²¹ See Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 44 – 46, and 78, and Moore. “Count Baldwin” (The University of Chicago Press. 1962) p. 87 – 89.

¹²² This was an elegant solution to Phillip II of France's problem: Peter II of Courtenay had promised his daughters hand in marriage to Baldwin IX of Flanders' brother Phillip, which meant that upon his death the whole county of Nevers would pass to one of Phillip II's rivals. Phillip II had already tried to manipulate the situation and make sure this did not happen. But the Pope, Innocent III, had threatened him with excommunication if he tried to sabotage it. By proposing the marriage between Hervé of Donzy and Mathilda of Nevers, he not only circumvented the detested marriage, but he made sure that Nevers continued to stay a dependency of the French Crown, see Baldwin. *Government of Phillip* (Oxford: University of California Press. 1986)

p. 99 – 100. and Moore. “Count Baldwin” (The University of Chicago Press. 1962) p. 86 – 89.

¹²³ There is evidence that Hervé of Donzy had any plans other than protecting his patrimony. The decision to grant him the County of Nevers seems to have been the King of France, Phillip II's idea. See Lespinasse (1868), p. 7 – 8, see transcribed letter from Hervé of Donzy on p. 8, and Moore. “Count Baldwin” (The University of Chicago Press. 1962), p. 87 – 88.

¹²⁴ Bouchard. *Sword, Miter, and Cloister* (New York: Cornell University Press. 1987) p. 350; Appendix A: Family Trees

¹²⁵ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 38 – 39

¹²⁶ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868)p. 45.

support Montfort's efforts in the Midi long after he himself left. Montfort's son also married the Duke's niece, thus consolidating the friendship between their families¹²⁷.

However, we should not overstate the hostile relationship between the Count of Nevers and the Duke of Burgundy. A few years before the Crusade, Guillaume de Champlitte, one of the vassal's dependant on the County of Nevers, who also had many possessions in Burgundy, had refused to pay homage to Hervé after his accession. The Duke of Burgundy, lent a hand to Hervé by confiscating the lands that Guillaume held in Burgundy, and promised not to receive him in his lands until the matter was resolved¹²⁸. Hervé had also promised his son's hand in marriage to the Duke of Burgundy's daughter. However, as the aforementioned son was only mentioned in one charter, he most likely died very young and the marriage alliance was thus never concluded¹²⁹. Sometime after the Crusade the Duke of Burgundy gave his daughter's dowry to the Count of Nevers in exchange for lands in the County of Nevers¹³⁰. This shows that the two noblemen worked together before and after the Crusade, in addition they were both important members of Phillip Augustus' court¹³¹. Also, the Count of Nevers and the Duke of Burgundy both knew they would be going to the Midi, if their hostile relationship was the reason for his departure, it seems strange that he would go at all. Thus we should be careful to trust Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay's explanation. Especially since Peter attributes this information to mere rumours among the men remaining after the departure of the Count of Nevers¹³². Could there be other possible reasons for his departure? Marvin writes; the sources give several good reasons for not taking the position the new Viscount of Carcassonne and Béziers, and subsequently leaving after the fall of Carcassonne. The Count of Nevers, the Count of St. Pol and the Duke of Burgundy all had large patrimonies in Ile de France, they had received their indulgence and they did not need dubious land titles that would certainly be fought for by the locals. In short the risks were greater than the gains¹³³. These explanations have largely been accepted by scholars, and been left unquestioned. There

¹²⁷ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017), p. 56 – 57 for their connection before the Fourth Crusade, p. 59 for marriage between Amalric Montfort and Beatrice of Vienne; the niece of Odo III of Burgundy, and p. 74 – 78 for the Duke of Burgundy's patronage of Montfort and his efforts in the Midi.

¹²⁸ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868), p. 15

¹²⁹ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868), p. 22

¹³⁰ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868), p. 29 - 31

¹³¹ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868), p. 24; this is evident by their participation in meeting at Villeneuve-le-Roi, near Sens, on May 1, 1209.

¹³² *History*, p. 60, §108; “***It was believed by our people that there was a lack of good will on the part of the Count of Nevers towards the Count of Montfort because the latter was on good terms with the Duke of Burgundy and had come with him from France***”

¹³³ Marvin. *The Occitan War* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2008), p. 54.

has, to my knowledge, never been written a full analysis on the Count of Nevers' motivation for going on the crusade, and subsequently why he refused the title and left when he did. In this section I will address all the classic reasons for his refusal and departure, I will analyse his motivations for going on the crusade and argue that he left because he disapproved of the direction the crusade had taken under the leadership of Arnold Amalric, and disliked that Montfort had accepted it.

I.III.I The Indulgence

According to Marvin; the Count of Nevers, the Duke of Burgundy and/or the Count of St. Pol already expected their indulgence. Thus the act of refusing the honour and leaving, can be attributed to the fact that they had fulfilled their spiritual aspirations. During the Albigensian Crusade there was issued an indulgence that lasted forty days. Which coincides neatly with Marvin's statement. The first contingent of crusaders had assembled in Lyon on the 24th of June and Carcassonne surrendered on the 15th August, which means that the initial campaigners had already been there for fifty-three days when the terms of surrender were negotiated. Which would mean that they had stayed well over the forty days. But as Marvin himself points out in an article from 2002 Peter does not mention whether or not these knights had fulfilled their forty days of indulgence. Which is strange considering that Peter has a tendency to either criticise crusaders for not completing their indulgence, or comment when they did. As Marvin points out; there is no consistent mention of the forty days until 1210. Which in turn suggests that it was only after the initial campaign that the forty days was decided upon¹³⁴. Thus, we cannot be sure whether or not the nobles could claim their indulgence after the fall of Carcassonne.

I.III.II Material Incentives

The possibility of gaining material wealth through looting, or potentially gaining territory by right of the *Vergentis in senium* could be seen as an incentive. The Count of Nevers, the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of St. Pol were all very wealthy noblemen, and it seems unlikely that economic gain would be the prime mover for their decision to join the Crusade. As opposed to lesser barons. However, we need to entertain the possibility. Going on a crusade to the Midi did acquire the expenditure of resources, not by far as much as a crusade to the Holy

¹³⁴ Marvin. "Impact of the Indulgence" (Taylor & Francis, Ltd. 2002) p. 88 – 9.

Land though,¹³⁵ which is probably one of the reasons the crusade in the Midi was so popular. According to Tudela, after a brief report on the good material conditions during the siege of Carcassonne like cheap bread, he goes on to write that “no one recovered his costs, all of them suffered loss.”¹³⁶ According to Tudela by the time they laid siege to Carcassonne they had all already lost considerable resources. If this is the case it is unlikely that the prime reason for the departure of the Count of Nevers after the fall of Carcassonne was that he had satisfied any economic ambitions.

There are two reasons that one can argue such a position. Firstly, by the time of the Count of Nevers’ departure the Crusaders had only really captured two big castra, Béziers and Carcassonne. They had taken castra such as Servian and other smaller ones that had been left empty on their way to Béziers¹³⁷, but these were hardly a big catch for an army the size of the one that had gathered in Lyon early spring 1209¹³⁸. When Beziars fell it was the *ribauds*¹³⁹ that stormed the city and carried out the massacre. Subsequently they believed that they would be given the right to loot. However, the French and Burgundian barons wanted the loot for themselves and started chasing the *ribauds* out of the city with clubs. This provoked them so much that they burned the city down¹⁴⁰. As Tudela writes; “When they felt the scorching heat, everyone drew back and the houses and all the palaces were burned, and with them many helmets and padded jerkins and jackets made in Chartres, in Blaye or Edessa and many fine things that had to be abandoned”¹⁴¹ In the next section he writes “My Lord it was tremendous, the booty the French and the Normans captured at Béziers, and would have made them rich all their lives long but for the chief of the servants and his wretched lads who burned the town...”¹⁴² Which means that the French and Burgundian barons were left with

¹³⁵ For more about the expenditure of going to the Holy Land on Crusade see Claster. *Sacred Violence* (University of Toronto Press. 2009), p. 46 – 50.

¹³⁶ *Chanson* p. 23, laisse 25.

¹³⁷ There was a contingent of crusaders that had travelled apart from the main host, but they had not taken any castra either, Casseneuil which they failed to take, Villemur burned down their castrum before the crusaders arrived, *Chanson* p. 17 – 18, laisse 13 – 14.

¹³⁸ As Cheyette rightly points out the first contingent of the crusade in 1209 was probably the largest army that had assembled in the Midi, since the days of the Frankish reconquest, Cheyette. “Castles of the Trencavel” (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1976) p. 266. This also seems apparent from the fact that, as we have seen, people would rather leave their castra behind than try to defend them, as Arnold Amalric wrote to the Pope in 1209 the army was “greater... than has ever before been gathered together among Christian people...” and that a number of the castra that fled from the crusaders in the initial campaign in the summer of 1209 “... were so well defended... that it seemed they would easily have been able to withstand the attack of our army for a very long time.” Despite this, they chose to flee. See PL 216, cols. 137 – 41, for translation see *Puylaurens* Appendix A, p. 127.

¹³⁹ Paterson. *World of the Troubadours* (Cambridge University Press. 1998) p. 56 and 59; Ribauds are menial attachments to the army, eager for booty and sometimes beyond the control of their leaders.

¹⁴⁰ *Chanson* p. 20 – 22, laisse 19 - 23

¹⁴¹ *Chanson* p. 22, laisse 22.

¹⁴² *Chanson* p. 22 laisse 23

little to nothing after the siege of Béziers. Carcassonne was not looted as it was decided that the wealth of the castrum should be used to further the agenda of the Crusade. Hence, after the two largest sieges the crusaders had little to show for their endeavours. Thus it would not make sense to abandon the crusade right after the fall of Carcassonne, but rather to stay until one could leave with at least as much as one set out with. In short, by the time the Count of Nevers left, he had probably suffered economic loss as opposed to having satisfied any economic aspirations.

I.III.III A Burden and an Honour: Did the Risk Outweigh the Gain?

Peter refers to the newly vacant position of Viscount as both “a burden and an honour”¹⁴³. However, he does not specify what that means. One analysis could be that the person who accepted the task would be bound to continue the conquest of the territory and possibly drain his own resources in the process. Béziers had been reduced to the burned shell and thus had become more of an economic burden, than the vibrant commercial city it had been before the massacre. The continued warfare, ravaged countryside and destroyed castra and villages sought to an economic ruin in the former Trencavel lands. In 1210 Peter describes the economic position of Montfort as rather bleak, having to pay mercenaries from his own coffers¹⁴⁴. Lippiatt has made an estimate of the expenses the first year of conquest to be 1,213 sol. a day in regular military operations. In addition, he had to pay siege engineers and mercenary troops¹⁴⁵. Montfort was also quite eager to award his French vassals and the Cistercian orders with the land confiscated from heretics and disinherited local nobility¹⁴⁶. Gifts he sometimes had to re-claim in order to maintain his army¹⁴⁷. He also abolished the taxes that the church had condemned in the decades before the Crusade¹⁴⁸.

However, Montfort was much less economically secure than for instance the Count of Nevers or the Duke of Burgundy. Montfort’s family’s sphere of influence was around the forest of Yveline¹⁴⁹. This was not a great commercial centre and its main value lay in sylvan agriculture. These resources however were often difficult to render in monetary exactions. Some deforestation increased revenues that were more convertible to money, among other

¹⁴³ *History* p. 55

¹⁴⁴ *History* p. 95, §180

¹⁴⁵ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 146

¹⁴⁶ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 88, 138, 141.

¹⁴⁷ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 138

¹⁴⁸ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p.145

¹⁴⁹ See *History*, Appendix C, p. 294 - 298 for more information about Montfort’s background, and Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 17 – 27, 38 – 39, 108, 116 – 121.

measures for monetary economic advancement¹⁵⁰. Lippiatt describes Montfort's richest fief, Saint-Léger as a "significant but not fabulously rich fief"¹⁵¹. If Saint-Léger is representative for the other four fiefs in Montfort's French holding, the lordship of Montfort was worth as much as the honor of Leicester, which he had lost when King John confiscated it¹⁵². Lippiatt notes; "... on the eve of the Albigensian Crusade [Montfort's holdings were] a much more modest income than that enjoyed by the great magnates."¹⁵³

There was no way of knowing in 1209 that the Crusade would last for 20 years or that the resistance would be as strong as it ended up being, and the striking victories at Béziers and Carcassonne would probably have emboldened the crusaders. In addition, Peter seems to believe that had the Count of Nevers stayed after the fall of Carcassonne the continued efforts in the Occitania would have been carried out swiftly¹⁵⁴. If Peter was right in this assessment, the ravaging of the countryside in the Trencavel territories might have been much less severe, and lasted for a shorter period. The Trencavel lands were rich territories, not only from commerce, but from mining, agriculture, tolls and justices¹⁵⁵. Carcassonne with its wealth intact, in addition to other potential grains in the Trencavel territory had huge potential for economic advancement. In addition to this, Montfort was quite generous with his newly gained territory, especially towards the Church. As we shall see below, it seems unlikely that the Count of Nevers would have distributed his gains a par with Montfort. In short, it is hindsight that allows us to make the assumption that the territories would be more of a burden than a potential gain. Besides the Count of Nevers, and the other magnates who were offered the title, would be able to draw from much more significant resources in order to maintain their army, than Montfort ever could. Thus we should be careful to assume that the financial difficulties Montfort suffered during his reign in the Midi would have been suffered by the Count of Nevers, the Count of St. Pol or the Duke of Burgundy, had they accepted. Or that they foresaw these difficulties when they refused the honour. The reference to the position as a burden and an honor, is most likely a reflection of the disgrace it is described as in the *Chanson*.

¹⁵⁰ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 116 – 117. For more information about Simon of Montfort's economy before 1209 see p. 99 – 104 and p. 116 – 121.

¹⁵¹ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 118.

¹⁵² The estimate and numbers come from Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 118 – 119.

¹⁵³ See the History, Appendix C for more Information about the confiscation of Leicester. Citation from Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 119.

¹⁵⁴ *History* p. 60, §109

¹⁵⁵ For more information about the economic situation in the Trencavel lands see Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020), Chapter 6, § 44 – 79.

I.III.IV Why Did the Count of Nevers go to the Midi?

If the Count of Nevers did not leave because he had realized any economic ambitions or received an expected indulgence, then why did he leave? In order to answer this question, we need to take a look at his motivation for going to the Midi in the first place. There is no evidence to suggest that the Count of Nevers went on the Albigensian Crusade for personal religious reasons. The only evidence to suggest a personal religious motive is that the Count of Nevers referred to his proposed campaign as the “Albigensian pilgrimage”¹⁵⁶ as opposed to the Albigensian Crusade. This however can be a reference to doing penitence for his illegitimate marriage and other indiscretions towards the Church, rather than going on a spiritual journey.

When the Count of Nevers went to the Midi in 1209 his marriage was under investigation and had been since 1205. In short; the Count of Nevers legitimacy and position was on shaky ground, and his “rich patrimonies”¹⁵⁷ were not secure at the time. Not only did he stand to lose the status and fiefs belonging to the title; Count of Nevers, but in exchange for the honour he had transferred his lordship over Gien to Phillip Augustus as part of the agreement in 1199¹⁵⁸. Gien being one of his largest holdings before being given the title Count of Nevers. Now he risked losing them both. His participation in the Crusade probably had more to do with the potential acquisition of the dispensation he so sorely needed from Innocent III to cement his marriage with Matilda Countess of Nevers.

The Count of Nevers, although he had only had this title for 10 years before he went to the Midi, had already partaken in disputes with the Pope. During the Norman conquests¹⁵⁹, which the Pope had desperately tried to stop. The Count of Nevers and several other barons including the Duke of Burgundy, wrote to Phillip II in May 1203 urging the King to defy the Pope and promising that they would not befriend the pope again until the King also did so¹⁶⁰. In addition to this, in June 1205 at Chinon, Phillip Augustus along with the Count of Nevers and other barons, refused the Pope further; "*The Pope and the clergy demand from the King of*

¹⁵⁶ Power. “Who Went” (*The English Historical Review*, 2013) p. 1071

¹⁵⁷ The main bulk of his lands were not in fact patrimonies, but property and title he had acquired by marriage.

¹⁵⁸ Lespinasse (1868) p. 7 and 9; his title before becoming the Count of Nevers was Hervé IV of Donzy and Lord of Gien. Which suggests that this was a large part of his original patrimony.

¹⁵⁹ I am referring to the French invasion of Normandy between 1202 and 1204.

¹⁶⁰ *Trésor*, 243. Translation from Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 18: « *J'ai engagé Monseigneur Philippe, illustre roi de France, à ne faire ni paix ni trêve avec le roi d'Angleterre, d'après les instances ou les menaces du pape ou d'un cardinal. Dans lequel cas j'ai promis au roi, mon seigneur lige, et lui ai juré, sur tout ce que je tiens de lui, que j'emploierai toutes mes forces à le secourir, et que je ne ferai la paix avec le seigneur pape sans Monseigneur le roi.* »

France, from us and our lands, taxes that were not demanded in the days of our ancestors. We want the Pope to come within the limits of his right, otherwise we refuse to obey him."¹⁶¹

This suggests that the Count of Nevers saw it as his and other nobles, including the King's right to defy the Pope, and that the Pope acted outside of his jurisdiction. In addition, that he adhered to the sentiment that the Pope should not interfere with business that was, in his opinion, lay. Thus, the Count of Nevers had already been a thorn in the side of Innocent III when the latter received the letter from the Duke of Burgundy regarding the illegitimacy of the union between the Count and Countesses of Nevers.

This is further backed by the fact that this was not the only offerings of consolidation he made to the church in this period; He founded the monastery of Bellary in 1209 and two other monasteries around the same time in order to receive Innocent III approval¹⁶².

The incidents during the Norman conquest was not the only instances in which the Count of Nevers had trouble with the Church. The Count of Nevers attitude towards the Church are especially clear in two feuds with two different abbeys. For generations the Counts of Nevers had been in disputes with the Abbey of Vézelay. During the Gregorian Reforms the nobility had lost its grip on the local bishoprics and abbeys. The Counts of Nevers believed that they had been deprived of their hereditary rights over the Abbey Vézelay, and its men and revenues. This usurpation had been aided by outside powers and the Pope, in their opinion. To achieve these rights they had waged war on the abbey several times and even occupied it and cast out the monks¹⁶³. The last right Count William of Nevers¹⁶⁴ gave up, was the right of hospitality at the abbey for himself and his men. Or at the very least compensation for it. In 1166 an agreement was reached, by the help of the French King, the Pope and several local bishops; instead of hospitality the Count would receive a fixed sum, which continued to be honoured by William's predecessors. Until the Hervé of Donzy became Count of Nevers in 1199. Hervé, the new Count of Nevers demanded the rights of hospitality twice a year, one at Easter and one at the Feast of Saint Mary-Magdalene. The cost for which was too high for the abbey, according to its abbot. When the Abbot of Vézelay arrived in Rome around November 1211, he claimed that in the four years he had been in charge of the

¹⁶¹ *Trésor*, p. 291 – 2. Excerpt translated in Lespinasse. Hervé de Donzy (P. Fay. 1868), p. 20: « *Le pape et les clercs exigent du roi de France, de nous et de nos terres, des impôts qui n'étaient pas exigés du temps de nos ancêtres. Nous désirons que le pape rentre dans le limites de son droit, sinon nous refusons de lui obéir.* »

¹⁶² Branner. *Burgundian Gothic Architecture* (A. Zwemmer. 1961) p. 5 and p. 114.

¹⁶³ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 39 – 40; Moore. *War on Heresy* (Profile Books Ltd. 2014) p. 173 – 175. The struggle between the Counts of Nevers and Vézelay also dominates the narrative of *The Vézelay Chronicle* by Hugh of Poitiers as Moore points out.

¹⁶⁴ He was Count of Nevers from 1161.

administration the Count of Nevers had never acted favourable. Which means that this dispute had been going on for at least two years before the Count of Nevers went to the Midi. Despite the large sums he had demanded from the abbey he harassed the lands surrounding it and used its equipment as he saw fit, without repairing it. He also claimed the justices of the area, disregarding ecclesiastic rights. He also allegedly used military force to guard areas he saw as rightfully his, such as the forests and the roads surrounding the abbey. One of his vassals even captured the convent of Dornecy¹⁶⁵ and kept it for half a year. The pope wrote to the King of France and the Count of Nevers, threatening them on pain of excommunication to resolve the matter in two months. However, it was not until 1213, when the Abbot of Vézelay suggested to give the Count of Nevers the dispensation for his marriage, in exchange for the rights of the Abbey, that the agreement from 1166 was restored¹⁶⁶.

In addition to this, Hervé got involved in a dispute between Cluny and his brother Godefroy, who after entering the order of Cluny became prior of La Charité-sur-Loire. After some disputes regarding Godefroy's alleged neglect of the duties of his office, the abbot of Cluny went to La Charité-sur-Loire to sort things out. However, when he arrived the prior and the monks had closed off the city and the convent. Godefroy asked his brother the Count of Nevers for assistance, which led to an armed assault on the Abbot's retinue and the continued fortification of La Charité-sur-Loire against the Abbot of Cluny. This quarrel lasted for some time, until the Pope and the King of France intervened. When the King of France offered to march against the Count of Nevers, the latter had to cut his losses and accept defeat¹⁶⁷.

Another unpopular episode that further blemished the reputation of the Count of Nevers was his association with heretics and Jews. The Viscount of Auxerre, Evrard de Châteauneuf, who was suspected of heresy and murder in a Church, was disgraced and withdrew to the Count of Nevers, who gave him the position of Viscount of Clamecy. After some time, the accusation arose again and he was condemned at Paris, and only given a few days to report on the administration of Clamecy, before he was burned at Nevers¹⁶⁸. This of course meant that technically, the Count of Nevers was also a supporter and receiver of heretics. Similarly, the Count of Nevers was criticised for allowing Jews to be part of his administration and protecting their property. Made evident by the letter sent from Innocent III to Hervé on January 17, 1208¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁵ A convent belonging to Vézelay.

¹⁶⁶ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 39 – 48

¹⁶⁷ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 34 – 37

¹⁶⁸ Lespinasse. *Hervé de Donzy* (P. Fay. 1868) p. 16 – 18

¹⁶⁹ See *Cain*

In short; the Count of Nevers most likely went on his Albigensian Pilgrimage in order to better his relationship with the Church, or more specifically Innocent III. In 1209 he did not necessary have rich patrimonies waiting for him in France, as his position was hanging in the balance, and he risked to loose not only the title of Count of Nevers if his marriage was annulled, but he would also have lost Gien one of his primary holdings before he became Count of Nevers. Defying the legates, not only by refusing the duty and honor of becoming the champion of the Church, but on top of this leaving despite the papal legate Arnold Amalric's pleads and putting the entire operation in jeopardy, does not seem compatible with his reasons for going to the Midi. Firstly, if he had accepted the position he might have been able to gain more territory, thus securing himself should his marriage be annulled. Secondly, he could have used this as a means of obtaining the Pope's blessing, thus securing his holdings in France and perhaps gain some in the Midi. Still the Count of Nevers refused to stay under any circumstances, and left with his men, which made up at least half of the original contingent that had travelled to the Midi. Whatever reason he had to leave, must have been something that made quite an impression on him.

What is interesting about the various examples of misdemeanour against the Pope and the Church is that his two disputes with Vézelay and Cluny respectively, shows a nobleman unwilling to accept the effects of the Gregorian reforms on the life of the nobility. In the first instance it is the rights to the properties now fully controlled by the Church, very similar to many of the struggles faced by the Occitan nobility. The second example shows us a glimpse of how the abbeys and bishoprics had been run before the Gregorian reforms. Noble families would make sure to place their own relatives in powerful positions within the Church hierarchy, thus controlling the massive fiefs and revenues held by the Bishops and abbeys, however, the ban on simony formulated by Gregory VII had put a stop to this practice. The reforms had aimed to separate lay and ecclesiastic life by making the Church the "main family" of the clergy, and severing their ties to their noble relatives. However, in this example we see how some nobles continued to be more attached to their lay family, than the family of the Church¹⁷⁰. These had all been major points of dispute between the nobles and bishops in the Midi for decades.

In addition to this, the acceptance of people who had been accused of heresy and his protection of the Jewish population in his own lands, shows that the Count of Nevers had no

¹⁷⁰ For a brief summary of the Gregorian reforms see; Kienzle. *Cistercian* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press. 2001) p. 20 – 31, for the reform movement and the relationship between the Occitan nobility see Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 103 – 123.

problem in supporting people that were frowned upon by the Church. In fact the Count of Nevers was guilty in a lot of the same crimes that the Viscount of Béziers and the other Southern Lords were criticized for; sacrilege, violence towards the Church and local population¹⁷¹, harbouring and aiding heretics and Jews¹⁷². The Count of Nevers, as many of his predecessors, had a clear idea of what was the jurisdiction of the nobility and what was the jurisdiction of the clergy. This is also made clear by his actions during the Norman conquests. In many ways, he shows the same anti-clerical sentiments as his contemporaries in the Midi.

The violence unleashed in the Midi, and the uncompromising treatment of the Viscount of Béziers must have been daunting to the Count of Nevers. To witness first-hand the might which the Church possessed and the destruction it could cause in the life of the nobility when unleashed. This time it was not directed to him, but surely it must have occurred to him that with his own track record, it could easily have been.

It is also interesting to examine the Count of Nevers's expectations of the Crusade. When the Crusade had been preached and the decision of the French nobles to join the effort was made, it was directed towards the Count of Toulouse; Raymond VI. Which means that when the Crusaders assembled in Lyon on the 24th of June 1209¹⁷³, they had a clear idea of their target, and they had the sanction of the overlord of the territory in question the King of France to engage in this military operation. The idea of being able to confiscate and redistribute the lands of heretics was outlined in a letter to Raymond VI, from Innocent III on the 29th of May 1207¹⁷⁴. And was further developed in a letter from Innocent III to Phillip Augustus and the barons of France on the 17th of November the same year calling for the Crusade. However, these letters to the King of France and the barons respectively, referred to the heresy in the lands of Raymond VI of Toulouse¹⁷⁵. Which means that the crusaders had a certain frame of conduct. However, on the 18th of June 1209 Raymond VI Count of Toulouse was reconciled with the Church¹⁷⁶ and on the 22 of June 1209, the Count of Toulouse took up the cross and joined the Crusaders¹⁷⁷. Which means that the expectation of the Crusade and its target, the foundation of the campaign, that had been built up by the legates for well over two years drastically changed in only a matter of days. On the 24th of June the crusaders arrived in

¹⁷¹ In his disputes with the Abbey of Vézelay he had also harassed the farmers working the lands surrounding the Abbey.

¹⁷² When the Viscount of Béziers left Béziers he took with him many Jews, see the *Chanson* p. 19, laisse 16

¹⁷³ The *History* cites the feat of the St. John the Baptist as the date, so this is a very approximate date.

¹⁷⁴ See *History*, Appendix G, p. 316 – 318, for discussion on the letter sent to Raymond VI and Appendix F, p. 304 – 5 for translation of papal letter sent to Raymond VI, 29th of May, 1207.

¹⁷⁵ *History*, p. 31 – 65 for a transcription of the letter given at the Lateran on the 10th of March 1208.

¹⁷⁶ *History* p. 44

¹⁷⁷ *History* p. 45, footnote 79 for date.

Lyon, now without a clear target, they met the Count of Toulouse at Montpellier 20th¹⁷⁸ of July before on the 21st of July they encamped outside Béziers¹⁷⁹. Which means that the decision to re-direct the Crusade at the Viscount of Béziers, who was not excommunicated, and had not been mentioned as a target of the Crusade or a heretic previously according to the sources available to us, was made within a relatively short amount of time. A letter sent to Phillip Augustus on the 3rd of February 1209 from Innocent III, requested that the King appointed a suitable leader of the Crusade. However, it is apparent that he did not. Peter writes that the crusaders themselves had to choose a leader, but many French nobles had declined¹⁸⁰, which would suggest that many of the nobles already had certain reservations in regards to the Crusade.

In short; the knights and nobles who had been assembled with a clear, sanctioned mission, was left with a mission targeting a noble that had not been sanctioned by the overlord the King of Aragon and that had not been excommunicated or suspected of heresy and thus by the popes own decree could not legitimately be disinherited. However, the crusaders accepted the new target in good faith, and attacked Béziers and Carcassonne. My argument is that the legitimacy of the whole crusade was already on shaky ground when they marched against the Viscount of Béziers. The treatment of the Viscount before the siege of Béziers, and before and after the siege of Carcassonne surely would not be seen as proper conduct, and would not answer to the expectations the crusaders had left Ile de France and Burgundy with.

I.III.V The Three Noblemen that Refused

In this section I have mainly concerned myself with the Count of Nevers, however, it is appropriate to say a few words about the two other noblemen who refused the title. The Duke of Burgundy and the Count of St. Pol also declined the offer, but continued to support the Crusade. St. Pol also returned home after the siege of Carcassonne, but returned to the Midi to fight alongside Prince Louise in 1215. He also witnessed the creation of the protectorate of Narbonne under Montfort's rule. The Count of St. Pol was not criticized, a par with the Count of Nevers by Peter for leaving, which suggests that his abrupt departure was less dramatic, and perhaps less a display of discontent with the turn the crusade had taken. However, he is specifically mentioned as one of the crusaders who speak out against Montfort in 1215, this is

¹⁷⁸ *Chanson* p. 18, laisse 14, and footnote 16 on p. 48 of the history for precise date.

¹⁷⁹ *History* p. 50, footnote 28 for the date.

¹⁸⁰ *History*, p. 41, footnote 64

written by the anonymous continuer of the *Chanson*, which means that much of the dialogue attributed to the Count of St. Pol is fictional. However, it might be an indication of his attitude towards the Crusade. The Count of St. Pol only participated in the Albigensian Crusade twice, and his efforts are thus to be considered lukewarm.

The Duke of Burgundy on the other hand had ties to Montfort that dated back to 1201. He also had close ties to Cîteaux and the Cistercian order in his territories, which he patronized. In 1209 before embarking on the Crusade he made a donation to Arnaud Amalric, abbot of Cîteaux. In addition, the Duke of Burgundy was the one who convinced Montfort to go to the Midi in the first place, via a letter sent through Guy of Vaux-de-Cernay, Peter of les Vaux-de-Cernay's uncle¹⁸¹. He, along with Arnaud Amalric, was the one who begged Montfort to take the position¹⁸². This of course took the pressure of himself, for publicly refusing the generous offer made by Arnaud Amalric, but it also made him responsible for Montfort's acceptance. Because of the Duke of Burgundy's close ties to Arnaud Amalric and Cîteaux, it is unlikely that he would be explicitly opposed to the actions of the legates in regards to the Viscount of Béziers in the same way the Count of Nevers was. And it seems his close ties to Montfort is the most likely incentive for his continued efforts in the Midi.

I.III.VI Summary

I am not suggesting that the distaste for the decision of Arnaud Amalric to disinherit the Viscount of Béziers was due to personal ties between the Count of Nevers and the Viscount of Béziers, however, the idea of the Church being able to disinherit a nobleman of the Viscount's calibre and giving his title to a lesser noble such as Montfort, especially on such dubious grounds, would have left a bad taste in the mouth of most nobles. The circumstances of his disinheritance, blatantly clear and visible to the nobles of France in the tent of the Count of Nevers would surely be a reminder that the rights of the nobility could easily be washed away in seconds at the Church's command. Especially in light of the similarities between the Count of Nevers and the Viscount of Béziers in regards to their position on the Church, heretics and Jews. The crusade surely must have been a sobering experience for the Count of Nevers, as the actions taken against the Viscount of Béziers could have easily been directed towards himself.

¹⁸¹ *History*, p. 56, §103

¹⁸² Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2017) p. 56 – 74, for more information about Montfort and his personal ties, and p. 74 – 78 for his patronage from the higher nobility; The Duke of Burgundy and Count of St. Pol.

The experience of the participants of the first contingent of the Albigensian Crusade was that the Church's interference with the local nobility was far from legitimate. An attitude that mirrors that of Phillip Augustus preceding the Crusade. When the expedition was prepared in May 1208 the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Nevers received a letter from Phillip Augustus limiting their forces to only 500 knights. He also forbade any recruiting apart from Burgundians. This has been attributed to the Kings concerns for the collapse of the truce with the English King, and the possible drainage of resources a crusade would mean to his own army. But judging from a letter sent to Innocent III in April 1208 it seems just as likely that his refusal to partake came, at least partially, from the fact that he saw it as an improper interference with his vassal; Raymond VI. In this letter King Phillip Augustus writes that Raymond VI is in fact his vassal, and reminds the Pope that if any declaration of seizure on his lands should be made, it should be made by the King, not the Pope¹⁸³. A concept of vassalage undoubtedly shared by many of his vassals, including the Count of Nevers. In short, the Church was demanding jurisdiction in regards to property and vassalage with which the King, and most likely also his vassals felt they had no business.

I am thus suggesting a solidarity based on the concept of nobility, though not yet defined as a legal status, but defined by the idea of birth right, as we have seen suggested in the chanson¹⁸⁴. This did not only leave Montfort to fight for the territory he had accepted, without support, but it also alienated one of the most prominent French nobles to partake in the first campaign and that would have been a major resource in the following years. In addition, it shows that the liberal use of the Vergentis in Senium potentially damaged the cause of the crusade more than it aided it.

¹⁸³ *HGL VIII*, 558 – 9 for papal correspondence with Phillip II, in regards to Raymond VI of Toulouse. Translation of letter see Appendix F, in the *History* p. 305 – 306: “*As to the matter of declaring the Count's territory open to seizure, I must tell you that I have been advised by learned and eminent men that you cannot legally do this until he is condemned for heresy. When he is so condemned, you should clearly indicate it and request me to declare the territory open to seizure, since it belongs to my domain.*”

¹⁸⁴ The anonymous continuer of the Chanson mentions disinheritance so often that it could almost be described as the theme. See p. 67, laisse 133, p. 72, laisse 141, p. 82, laisse 151, p. 84, laisse 153 etc.

Part II: The Nobility in the Midi and the Resistance

In the article “Catharism and the Occitan Nobility: The Lordships of Cabaret, Minerve and Termes” by Malcom Barber¹⁸⁵, he suggests that these three Lordships were highly independent, and that this suggests a weakness in the Government of the Trencavel family¹⁸⁶. A conclusion also reached by Graham-Leigh¹⁸⁷. Barber argues rightly that the link between the three lordships he studies were intermarriage and common anti-clerical heretical sympathies. However, he does not believe that their close knitted efforts during the resistance in the wake of the Viscount of Béziers’ death was due to a common overlordship, but rather their separate interconnectedness. Graham-Leigh, acknowledges that the level of organization between these lordships were sophisticated, and showed a deep solidarity between the castellans in the former Trencavel lands, this is also mentioned by J. Gordon¹⁸⁸. However, she argues that we must be careful to assume that this was in support of the Trencavel family¹⁸⁹. In short, meaning that a weakness of the Trencavel lands was a too high level of independence that created an unruly elite, that had represented a problem to the Trencavel, and that later would do the same to Montfort. In short Montfort only inherited a problem that already existed. It follows that the difficulties in establishing new ties of vassalage in these areas were already there, and not a result of failed policies from the Church and the crusaders.

In this section I will thematically analyse some key events during the early years of the Albigensian Crusade, by analysing southern sentiments as they are expressed by the anonymous continuer of the Chanson, in regards to inheritance and vassalage. All these events are from the first three years of the Albigensian Crusade and mainly focus on the lands of the Trencavels. I will conclude that the vassalic bonds between Trencavel and his vassals were stronger than suggested by for instance Graham-Leigh and Barber. That the disinheritance and death of Viscount of Béziers was not inconsequential and that the liberal appliance of the Vergentis in Senium and that the further disinheritance of the former Trencavel vassals were indeed more problematic than many scholars suggest.

¹⁸⁵ Barber. “Occitan Nobility” (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 1990), for all information on the article.

¹⁸⁶ Barber. “Occitan Nobility” (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 1990) p. 1 – 19.

¹⁸⁷ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 130 - 167

¹⁸⁸ Gordon. “Laity and Catholic Church”. D.Phil. (Oxford University 1992) p. 169

¹⁸⁹ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 123

II.I The King of Aragon: Mediator and Overlord

The King of Aragon refused to acknowledge Simon de Montfort as his vassal in the last half of November 1209. But must have felt quite a bit of pressure, as he was the vassal of Innocent III due to his coronation by the Pope¹⁹⁰. The King of Aragon and Montfort had planned to meet at Narbonne, and go together to Montpellier for a discussion in which Montfort would ask for his overlordship¹⁹¹. The sources do not mention if the King of Aragon had learned of the Viscount of Béziers' death during his negotiations with Montfort at Montpellier, however, there is evidence to suggest that he did. As Cheyette writes; in 1838 a commercial coach ride between Narbonne and Montpellier took twelve hours, while from Carcassonne to Narbonne it took only five and a half. The roads travelled by the King of Aragon and Simon de Montfort on horseback in 1209 were probably in the same state more or less as those of 1838¹⁹².

Meaning that the news of the death of the Viscount of Béziers on the 10th of November most likely had reached the King of Aragon during the 15 days he stayed at Montpellier, if he did not already know by the time he met Montfort at Narbonne. After the Viscount of Béziers' death, there were widely circulated rumours that he had been murdered by the crusaders, the far reaching scope of these are made evident by the fact that both Puylaurens and Tudela sees it as necessary to vehemently deny them¹⁹³. It is fair to assume that King Peter believed these rumours as he informed the Pope about them, which is reflected in the letter sent to Arnold Amalric, the Bishop of Riez and Theodosius on the 18th of January 1213, when he refers to the Viscount as having been slain.¹⁹⁴

Innocent III sent two letters to Montfort in November, one written on the 10th and another on the 11th, these letters gave Montfort papal recognition as overlord over the territory taken by the Crusaders up until this point¹⁹⁵. These, however, would take longer to arrive in Montfort's hands. If the ride from Carcassonne to Montpellier took 12 hours and was approximately 150 km, then the ride from Rome that was approximately 1028km by land

¹⁹⁰ *History*, Appendix F p. 302 – 303.

¹⁹¹ *History* p. 67 – 68, §121 – 122

¹⁹² Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 44

¹⁹³ See; *Chanson* p. 28, laisse 37 and *Puylaurens* p. 34, XIV.

¹⁹⁴ For the letter written by Innocent III to Arnaud Amalric in 1213 see *PL* 216, 739 - 40. For translation see *The History* p. 309 – 311, Appendix F: " *Although it is necessary to cut off putrid flesh, lest the contagion of corruption spread to healthy parts, the hand of the surgeon must be applied cautiously so that the corrupt parts are removed with sufficient care to ensure that the healthy parts are not harmed through carelessness. We have received reports from.... Peter, the illustrious King of Aragon... They referred to the time when the crusaders invaded the territory of the Viscount of Béziers... The Viscount appealed to the King as his overlord for help, but the King gave him no help and denied him the remedy of council; and to ensure that the Church's purpose should not be hindered decided to refuse help to some Catholics, rather than appear to be helping heretics who were mingled with them. As a result, the Viscount lost his territory and in the end was wretchedly killed...* "

¹⁹⁵ *PL* 216, 151 – 3.

assuming the messenger rode for 12 hours each day the journey would last 7 days. However, it was winter, and it is more likely that the trip would have taken much longer. It is, however, possible that it reached Montfort and the King of Aragon at the end of the 15 days at Montpellier. Either way, this letter seems to have had little impact on the King of Aragon's decision, as he continued to refuse to acknowledge Montfort as his vassal until 1211¹⁹⁶.

Graham-Leigh has suggested that the reason why the King of Aragon only offered to parlay on the Viscount of Béziers' behalf, while later offering military support to the Count of Toulouse and the Count of Foix¹⁹⁷ is indicative of the state the Trencavel government was in, at the time. She also writes that it was more important to the King of Aragon to remain on good terms with the papacy than to protect his vassal¹⁹⁸. However, if the King of Aragon was indifferent to who governed his interests in Occitania and he cared more about his relationship with the papacy, then why did he not accept Montfort's homage?

It has been suggested that the reason he decided to refuse Montfort, was because Montfort was a vassal of the King of France. And thus the King of Aragon thought this might inspire dynastic ambitions in the French King. This seems strange, as Phillip Augustus had showed nothing but uninterested for the Crusade; he refused to participate in the Crusade, he had ignored Innocent III's pleas on the 17 November 1207 and 10 March 1208 after the death of Peter of Castelnau. He allowed his son to take the cross in February 1213. However, Peter describes that the Phillip Augustus grieved when his son did, and soon prevented him from going due to another campaign he had planned against John of England. It was not until 1215 that his son prince Louise was finally able to go to the Midi¹⁹⁹. Even after the death of the King of Aragon at Muret in 12th September 1213 his ambition in the Midi must be seen as lukewarm. Around the time of the Council of Montpellier in April 1215 the consuls of Montpellier asked Phillip Augustus to take the city under his protection. He agreed on the terms that the Pope would designate King James I of Aragon, Pere II of Aragon's son, as heir to the Lordship²⁰⁰. As his father the King of Aragon had been Lord of Montpellier through his

¹⁹⁶ *Chanson*, p.37 – 8, laisse 59, describes the council of Narbonne as being around the time of the feast of St. Vincent which is on the 22. January.

¹⁹⁷ The King of Aragon took the counts of Foix, Toulouse and Comminges under his protection on the 27th of January 1213 according to *PL* 216, 845 – 9. See *History* p. 180 – 1, §389 for description. He fought alongside them at Muret, the siege began on the 10th of September 1213, the King died in battle 12th September. For transcript of the letter sent by the legates to Innocent III detailing the battle see *History* p. 213 - 17, §468 – 83.

¹⁹⁸ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 113 – 129.

¹⁹⁹ For the letter of 17 November 1207 see; *PL* 215, 1266 – 7 and the letter from 10 March 1208; *PL* 215, 1358 – 9. For the events in February 1213 see *History*, p. 191 – 2, §417 – 21, and for Louise's arrival in the Midi see *History*, p. 246 – 7, §550 - 2.

²⁰⁰ *HGL* VIII, 642

marriage with Maria of Montpellier. Thus, even with the King of Aragon dead, and the city being handed to the King of France on a silver platter, he still finds it appropriate to give the lands to its rightful heir. Which would suggest that there was no significant competition for the lands that the King of Aragon had overlordship over. We, as historians, must resist the urge to assume that because the Midi to a large extent was incorporated into the French crown by the end of the Crusade, that this was a conscious strategy from the beginning of the Crusade. In fact; the attitude of the French King in the early Crusade, was more likely the bare minimum effort acquired to not create problems with the Church, not an expression of dynastic ambition. Thus; assuming that the King of Aragon was afraid of the French ambitions in the Trencavel lands, seems informed by our knowledge that the French crown ended up controlling this area a couple of decades later. It is thus more likely that the King of Aragon had other reasons for not accepting Montfort's homage;

During the meeting between the King Aragon and Montfort at Montpellier, the Trencavel dynasty was fragile; the Viscount of Béziers had died, his son and heir was only two years old, and years away from being able to claim his inheritance. Montfort's overlordship over Carcassonne had been sanctioned by the legates and by extension the Pope himself. In addition to this Montfort had excellent military skills and proved more than capable of gaining territory through martial means. At this point it is important to remember that the lords of the former Trencavel lands had not yet rebelled²⁰¹ and Montfort's position was quite strong. The sensible thing would have been to accept Montfort's homage. Nevertheless; the King of Aragon chose to continue his support for the Trencavel dynasty and sent out secret messages to the former vassals of the Viscount of Béziers in order to cast out the crusaders from the territory. Only when the larger castra of the territory had surrendered to Montfort and the widow and son of the Viscount had given up their claims²⁰² to their territories did the King of Aragon accept Montfort's homage²⁰³.

So if the King of Aragon was more interested in his relations with the papacy than with his overlordship over the Trencavels. Why would he then be so reluctant to accept Montfort's homage?

One reason was the treatment of the King of Aragon during the negotiations on behalf of the Viscount of Béziers. The refusal to give Trencavel good terms, even when asked by the King of Aragon, who held a high star in the Christian world for his efforts to expulse the

²⁰¹ They rebelled during the meeting and throughout the winter of 1209, see the *History* p. 68 - 77, §122 – 140.

²⁰² See discussion below p. 67 – 8.

²⁰³ The King of Aragon accepted Montfort's homage in 1211; *History* p. 107, §210.

Muslims from today's Spain, showed an impotence of the Crown of Aragon that surely would be a blemish on his reputation. It also showed the papacy's unwillingness to compromise even with their closest secular allies. In effect the King of Aragon's relationship with the church did not aid him at all. Vassal and overlord was a quid pro quo²⁰⁴ arrangement, as a vassal you were given protection from your overlord²⁰⁵. This is clearly illustrated in the Chanson "When the Viscount saw him [the King of Aragon, arriving at the siege of Carcassonne], he and all his men ran forward to meet him in great joy, for they thought he was going to help them, as they were his vassals and his friends..."²⁰⁶. Friendships were beneficial because they were rewarded. The fact that he could not even produce semi-acceptable terms for his vassal, must surely have been a disgrace to his image as a capable overlord. At the same time, the fact that his presence was inconsequential must surely have been a bitter realization that his influence over the Church was very limited. The intervention of the King of Aragon in itself, suggests that he did believe he would be able to sway the crusaders and protect his and his vassal's interests. However, the terms he was able to negotiate was marginally better than what had already been offered the Viscount of Béziers. Which was nothing. The Viscount was allowed to leave with a few of his men and none of his possessions²⁰⁷, which is probably the same that would have happened had the castrum fallen. As it was not custom to kill nobility of the Viscount of Beziers' calibre during a siege²⁰⁸. This is evident from the treatment of the other lords who refused to surrender, such as Cabaret and Minerve. The Viscount of Béziers was taken prisoner, but this seems to have been his own idea. So the King of Aragon in reality achieved nothing and had to ride back to Aragon empty handed²⁰⁹. The man who had been greeted as a saviour, left defeated.

Additionally, the fact that his vassal was dispossessed without any legitimate reason, and that he died, or as the King of Aragon and many others believed, was murdered without the King being able to hinder it, surely added to his embarrassment. And on top of that, that lesser noble such as Montfort could militarily take control over the lands of his vassal, and have the audacity to expect the King of Aragon to accept his homage. Again the King of Aragon was torn between two decisions; should he appease the Church by accepting Montfort

²⁰⁴ Quid pro quo is Latin for "something for something", in this specific context it refers to the mutual nature of vassalage.

²⁰⁵ Moore. *Obedience and Revolt* (New York: White Plains. 1978) p. 15 – 25, 438, and 503 – 11.

²⁰⁶ *Chanson*, p. 23, laisse 27

²⁰⁷ *Chanson* p. 24, laisse 29

²⁰⁸ For more information about the employment of violence in local feuds in the Midi see Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020), Chapter 5.

²⁰⁹ *Chanson* p. 24, laisse 30

as his vassal. Montfort had after all the blessings of the legates led by Arnold Amalric. And thus the Pope's theoretical and later real consent to take charge of the former Trencavel lands. On the other hand, he had the relationship with the lords of the Trencavel territories to consider, after arriving with a hundred knights, only to leave without really aiding the Viscount of Trencavel he had shown his limitations as an overlord. It would probably not look good to the people of the former Trencavel lands with an overlord who could so easily be controlled and curtailed by the Church and the Crusaders. So although it might seem beneficial for the King of Aragon to accept Montfort, it seems that the prospect of appearing weak and impotent in front of the former Trencavel vassals seemed like a bigger threat to his overlordship over the territory than refusing Montfort.

The secret messages sent by the King of Aragon to the vassals of the Viscount of Béziers from Montpellier in late November 1209²¹⁰, indicates that he believed them capable of resisting the Crusade, and even saw the possibility of being able to restore the territory to its pre-crusade status. Thereby, remaining in control over the area, and maintaining his dignity and his reputation as a capable overlord. Graham-Leigh is probably right that the King of Aragon was hesitant to intervene militarily during the siege of Carcassonne because of the effort he had put into his relationship with the Church. However, this changed after the murder of the Viscount, when he refused Montfort and tried to rally his former vassals. Because of the secret nature of this encouragement it seems like the King of Aragon wanted to fight against the Crusade, but not in an obvious way. Perhaps thinking he could bake his cake and eat it too if he played his cards right. When he returned to Aragon during the siege of Carcassonne he did not know that the Viscount would die. However, when he did die, it was important to the King of Aragon to show the lords of the territory that he did support them and would aid them against the crusaders, as he had failed to do for the Viscount of Béziers.

The treatment of the King of Aragon forced him to maintain his good name and position in the Midi by supporting the lords of the former Trencavel lands and embolden resistance. The reasons for his refusal of Montfort's homage was due to the treatment he had received during the siege, but also the perceived injustices that had happened to his vassal. In order to keep his credibility as overlord and maintain his interests in the area he needed to show that he was capable of fulfilling his end of the vassalic bonds. This was a misstep by the Crusaders because it alienated the Aragonese crown and emboldened the King to take the side

²¹⁰ *History*, p. 67 – 8, §121

of his vassals rather than that of the Church. Which in the end resulted in the direct military intervention of the King in 1213. It also emboldened the lords of the Midi to continue the fight against the Crusaders.

II.I.I The Peculiar Meeting Between the Occitan Knights and the King of Aragon

In the second half of May 1210 the lords of Termes, Montréal and Cabaret, and other knights opposed to the Crusade from the former Trencavel domains, reached out to the King of Aragon, offering to pay homage to him directly. Thereby, trying to bypass Montfort all together in the vassalic hierarchy, in the hope of becoming vassals directly under the King of Aragon²¹¹. This shows that Montfort was not accepted as overlord by Trencavel's former vassals, just as he was not by the King of Aragon. This arrangement would, as Sibly and Sibly points out²¹², have been advantageous both for the King and the Lords. Should this be seen as an expression of the alleged opportunistic nature of the Occitan nobility? That with Trencavel out of the picture, the road to relative independence was paved? The Lord that according to Graham-Leigh was not missed and whose death had no impact²¹³. I would argue no, based on the following; an agreement was not reached and all the parties left "in confusion" as Peter writes²¹⁴. The reason an agreement could not be made is because the King of Aragon refused to accept their homage unless they promise to hand over the castrum of Cabaret to him, and in addition promise to hand over their castra whenever he asked. The knights refused these terms. Barber has suggested that this is a clear indication of the independence these vassals had enjoyed during the Trencavel regime²¹⁵. However, Barber does not take into consideration that these lords had been the vassals of the Viscount of Béziers, which meant that they would have sworn on oath to "... *hand over the castle of [insert castle] to you without fraud and without deceit.*"²¹⁶ Which means that the terms demanded by the King of Aragon, was a common part of the oath of fidelity in these territories and had been accepted by these Lords when they swore an oath to the Viscount of Béziers. If anything this occurrence shows a distrust of the King of Aragon. This could be because of his connection to

²¹¹ *History* p. 81, §148 – 9.

²¹² *History* p. 81, footnote 21

²¹³ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p.122 – 124.

²¹⁴ *History* p. 81, §149.

²¹⁵ Barber. "Occitan Nobility" (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 1990) p. 9 - 10

²¹⁶ I inserted the brackets, the quote is from an oath given to Ermengard of Narbonne, translated in Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 187. The oaths given from vassal to overlord in Occitania in general are generic and identical. So it is reasonable to assume that this was the oath these knights had given to Raymond Roger Trencavel. For more about the oath see Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 187 - 199

the Church, his nickname was Peter the Catholic and after the dispute of 1204 between the legates and the heretics in Carcassonne, the King had written a letter to the Pope where he condemned them as heretics. This meeting had been arranged by the Lord of Cabaret who was vicar at Carcassonne at this time. During which the Lord of Cabaret had insisted on receiving more heretics than first intended, making the ordeal last longer than planned²¹⁷. The King of Aragon had also taken strong measures against heretics in Aragon and Barcelona, just as his father had before him²¹⁸. Roquebert has argued that the reason nobility in the Midi was hesitant to accept this arrangement was that they were anxious about exposing the heretics that had sought refuge in their castra²¹⁹. Which might hold some level of truth, however, it is more likely that they were afraid of exposing themselves. The Lord of Cabaret, Peter Roger, had been at Carcassonne when the King of Aragon came to aid his vassal, the Viscount of Béziers²²⁰. He had seen first-hand what little the King of Aragon was willing to offer in terms of help to the people who held him as their overlord. Peter II of Aragon had been trying to please the Church and his own interests in the Midi at the same time. In turn, this had led to the alleged murder of the Viscount of Béziers and a general strong position of the Crusaders in the Midi, via control of Carcassonne. Naturally, Peter Roger of Cabaret could not be sure whether or not the King of Aragon would prioritize the southerners cause, or his own agenda. If the King of Aragon decided to hand the castrum of Cabaret over to the crusaders, the latter would have a stronghold in the Montagne Noir from which they could attack and harass the surrounding castra who resisted. This is exactly what Cabaret had been doing up until then, for instance when they attacked and captured Bouchard de Marley in November 1209. They were able to swoop down from Cabaret, attack and retreat to their almost impregnable mountain castrum²²¹.

The failed negotiations between the nobles and the King of Aragon shows how dependant the King of Aragon was on his vassal the Viscount of Béziers. Débax has argued convincingly that in the Midi if you had a vassal, his vassals were not necessarily your vassals²²². All the lords attending this meeting had paid homage to the Viscount of Béziers, in which they had promised to hand over their castles at will. However, faced with the threat of

²¹⁷ *Chanson* p. 12, laisse 2, see also Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 64 – 5 for more information about this incident.

²¹⁸ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 113 – 14.

²¹⁹ Roquebert. *L'épopée cathare 1198 – 1212: l'Invasion*. (Toulouse: Privat. 1970) p. 351 – 2.

²²⁰ Peter Roger of Cabaret was present and giving the Viscount council during the siege; *Chanson* p. 22, laisse 24.

²²¹ Bouchard de Marley was one of Montfort's men, for the details his capture; see the *Chanson* p. 30, laisse 41, and the *History* p. 67 – 68, §121

²²² Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020), Chapter 6, §106

disinheritance and maybe even death at the hands of the Crusaders, they still refused to swear the oath of fidelity and hand over their castra to the King of Aragon.

An argument could be made that the oath was more of a formality, and that even though they had sworn to hand over their castra to the Viscount of Béziers, there is no way of knowing that they would do so if asked. In short; that the giving of the oath of fidelity was practically meaningless. However, the fact that they refuse to swear an oath to the King of Aragon that they might not be able to keep, due to their disagreement of terms shows that even in the face of a very real threat; facing the crusaders with no real support, they refused to do so. This confirms Cheyette's argument that the oaths in Occitania was considered sacred to the nobles of the Midi²²³ and that the oaths given to the Trencavel's were in fact taken seriously. By extension this suggests that the Viscount of Béziers was an important Lord to his subordinate lords, but also an important vassal to the King of Aragon.

II.II The Case of Giraud de Pépieux

In this section I wish to examine the betrayal of Giraud de Pépieux. This was one of the first cases of betrayal by the southern lords, and by far the one that made the biggest impression on Montfort, at least up until this point. Which is evident not only by the way it is described by Peter, but also how extensively it is described. This happened right after Montfort had returned to Carcassonne from his meeting at Montpellier, where he had tried to secure the King of Aragon's overlordship in November 1209. He had returned emptyhanded only to find that many of his new vassals had betrayed him. It is usually only mentioned briefly, and never thoroughly discussed in the literature on the Albigensian Crusade. Graham-Leigh has argued that the death of the Viscount of Béziers was not a major event, and that the rebellion in the wake of his death was motivated by other factors²²⁴. However, I will argue that when we examine the case of Pépieux and contextualize it, there is evidence to suggest that the rebellion in fact was linked to the death of the Viscount of Béziers.

Pépieux was, according to Peter, a knight from Béziers who became close friends with Simon de Montfort and ended up "... forswearing his given word..." and rejected "... the promises of fealty he had given."²²⁵, this is confirmed in the *Chanson*²²⁶. In the literature on the Albigensian Crusade²²⁷, Giraud is usually only referred to as a knight, holding a small fief

²²³ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 187 - 198

²²⁴ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 113 – 129

²²⁵ *History*, p. 69, §125

²²⁶ *Chanson* p. 29 – 30, laisse 41.

²²⁷ For instance, in Bauer. "Ideological War" (United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, 1995) p.

from Viscount of Béziers. Alvira refers to him as a Occitan Lord, which is perhaps the most grandiose description of him in the sources²²⁸. However, Ferrer writes that there was a knight called Géraud de Pépieux, who was married to Blanche de Minerve, and who was dispossessed by Simon of Montfort²²⁹. In all likelihood this is the very same Giraud we meet in the narrative sources, which makes him the brother-in-law of William of Montpellier. This is corroborated by his close connection to William of Minerve and his brother-in-law Berengar of Puisserguier, as we shall see below. Further, Peter writes that as a punishment for betraying Montfort, the latter had several of his castra razed to the ground. This is an ambiguous piece of information, because as the sources tells us; Montfort had been quite generous with Giraud and “heaped honours upon him”²³⁰. Thus, it is hard to tell whether these were his castra before the crusade, or honours given to him by Montfort. However, it is unlikely that a knight holding only the castrum of Pépieux would be a suitable match for William of Minerve’s sister Blanche. It is much more likely that the castra referred to were places already belonging to Giraud before the Crusade. Making Giraud a much more prominent member of the Southern nobility than he is usually given credit for.

In July 1209 Pépieux declared his alliance to the Crusaders and was awarded by Simon de Montfort accordingly. According to Peter he had been entrusted the duty of defending certain castra near Minerve²³¹. Which might suggest that he had been allowed to keep his castra, because he had surrendered to the Crusaders without opposition. However, after Montfort’s return from Montpellier Giraud betrayed Montfort and broke his oath²³². How do we understand this sudden change of heart? The Chanson offers an explanation; Giraud’s uncle was murdered by a French knight and he was not content with the manner in which Montfort punished the murderer²³³. This story seems to be largely accepted as reason for Giraud’s defection by scholars²³⁴, however, it is unsatisfactory when one takes into account that Simon de Montfort had the guilty knight buried alive for the murder. This was an exceptionally harsh punishment for a nobleman and should have been sufficient in pleasing the lust for revenge felt by Giraud, as Tudela himself points out. Thus, to understand why

57, Marvin. *The Occitan War* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2008) p. 65, and Pegg. *Most Holy War* (New York: University of Oxford Press. 2008), p. 99,

²²⁸ Alvira. “Prisoners of War” (E-Strategica. 2017) p. 279

²²⁹ Ferrer. *d’histoire de Minerve*. (J.-P. Ferrer. 1998) p. 48.

²³⁰ *Chanson* p. 30, laisse 41.

²³¹ *History* p. 69, §125

²³² *History* p. 69, §125

²³³ *Chanson* p. 30, laisse 41.

²³⁴ By for instance Lippiatt. “Independent Baronial Power”. (University of Oxford. 2015) p. 234, Marvin. *Occitan War* (Cambridge University Press. 2008) p.65, Pegg. *Most Holy War* (Oxford University Press. 2008). p. 99

Giraud de Pépieux defected one must examine the circumstances under which his oath was taken and broken.

To begin with we must examine under what conditions this oath was taken. Giraud surrendered to the crusaders in July 1209²³⁵. This was before the siege of Carcassonne that happened between 1. August – 15. August 1209²³⁶. The sources are not clear when in July Giraud defected to the crusaders, but it is likely that it happened after the slaughter of Béziers 21st of July 1209²³⁷. It seems highly unlikely that Pépieux would travel over 50 km to Béziers or beyond to swear fealty to the crusaders. As Peter writes in the *History* “The people living in the castra between Béziers and Carcassonne fled in fear of the army, leaving their homes deserted, although a few who were not marked down for heresy surrendered to us.”²³⁸ or Arnold Amalric in his letter to Innocent III “As the army approached the city the lords of some neighbouring castra, uneasy in their hearts, fled before the crusaders, but some knights and others of the faithful from these places came trustingly to the army and handed them to the crusaders, promising their loyalty and to pay homage.”²³⁹ It is much more likely that Pépieux belonged to the latter group. There has been some dispute as to which road the crusaders used, the traditional view is that the Crusaders route was that of the modern D11/D610, which does not pass Narbonne but goes directly westward along the Aude River, while Graham-Leigh argues that the tolls levied on the other road between Béziers and Carcassonne, that passed through Narbonne, was the most profitable, thus the most used by its contemporaries, hence; the most likely road for the Crusaders to take²⁴⁰.



Map from Marvin. *The Occitan War*

(New York: Cambridge University Press. 2008), xvii. Edited by me.

²³⁵ *History*, p. 69, footnote 19

²³⁶ A letter sent by Arnaud Amalric dated the arrival at the feast of St. Peter, which was the 1st of August, for specific dates see *History*, p. 52, footnote 42 and p. 54, footnote 55 for the end of the siege.

²³⁷ *History* p. 50 – 51, §89 – 91, see also p. 50, footnote 28 for date.

²³⁸ *History*, p. 51, §52

²³⁹ *PL* 216, cols. 137 – 41.

²⁴⁰ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 52.

However, because Pépieux defected after the siege of Béziers and before the siege of Carcassonne, it seems likely that his defection would be a result of the Crusaders approaching his castrum. The Crusaders would not have been anywhere near his castrum had the crusaders taken the route Graham-Leigh suggests.

One can imagine the terror felt by the communities between Béziers and Carcassonne during the march of the crusader army. Words of the massacre spreading with the fleeing masses from the areas between these two cities seeking refuge in Carcassonne, as Peter explains most of the castra had already been abandoned. As Arnold Amalric wrote to Innocent III when describing the first few weeks of the crusade, it had "... produced such fear amongst the hypocrites that – almost miraculously – they fled before their pursuers. This was especially so after the fall and ruin of Béziers."²⁴¹ The pressure to surrender must undoubtedly have been immense and it is fair to assume that Giraud decided to forsake the oath he had given his overlord the Viscount of Béziers and swear an oath of fealty to Simon de Montfort on basis of this very real threat. Thus the oath was not genuine in nature, and was given unwillingly and based on fear. The anonymous continuer of the *Chanson* offers us perspective on the Southern French perception of the nature of oaths. During the siege of Beaucaire Hugh de Lacy allegedly speaks against Montfort:

*"When they swore on a missal, it was because they were forced to it and could do nothing else. Force and wrongdoing triumph where law is helpless, and in law a forced oath had no validity. If a man conquers lands and seizes another man's home, if he debases law and employs deceit, he'll lose the fief he has conquered and all its revenues as well."*²⁴²

Now that we know the motivations for taking this oath in the first place, one must contextualize the act of breaking it. Giraud breaks his oath and defects from Montfort and the crusaders shortly after the death of his former overlord the Viscount of Béziers. Now, Giraud had initially betrayed his oath to him as a necessity and had kept his oath to Montfort even after, or maybe especially after, the fall of Carcassonne and the imprisonment of the Viscount of Béziers. We have to remember that Giraud did not know that the Viscount would die in captivity. As Cheyette argues; the oaths kept society together, if the system of oaths crumbled, one needed to glue it back together as soon as possible²⁴³. The case of Giraud is a perfect example of this; when threatened to have his land attacked he seizes the opportunity to

²⁴¹ *PL* 216, cols. 137 – 41. For translation see *Puyllaurens*, Appendix A, p. 127 – 129.

²⁴² *Chanson*, p. 29, laisse 40, *Puyllaurens* p. 34, XIV; Both sources state that he died of dysentery.

²⁴³ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004), p. 198

create new structures in order to maintain his own position and protect his holdings from the destruction seen at Béziers. This seems opportunistic at first glance, but if Giraud betrayed his overlord to begin with, as an act of opportunism for advancement, rather than an act of desperation and self-preservation, then why would he all of the sudden change camps when Trencavel died? Because of the suspicion of foul play. As historians we cannot be sure whether Trencavel died of dysentery or at the hands of the crusaders, but it matters not, what matters is what the people of the Midi thought. It is not necessarily facts we act upon, but convictions, and as Giraud lived close to Carcassonne these rumours surely would have reached him soon after Trencavel's death. The nature in which Carcassonne had been taken over and the way in which Montfort had acquired the lands of the former Viscount would probably also have been known among the local nobility as the Viscount of Béziers had brought with him his entourage to the negotiations²⁴⁴, and since there is no evidence that they gave themselves up as hostages it is fair to assume that they returned to their respective castra. Which means that the rumour of murder, was probably accompanied by rumours of the nature of the negotiations as outlined above.

We should therefore see Giraud's defection not as revenge for a relative that already had been avenged, but rather a sign of loyalty and friendship²⁴⁵ with his overlord. The family of Pépieux had been an ally and part of the Trencavel entourage, as well as that of Narbonne for decades. They had sworn fidelity to the Trencavels for their castra throughout the 12th century²⁴⁶. Meaning that Pépieux had close ties to both the Trencavels and the Narbonnais. There are very few narrative sources from Occitania before the chronicles of the Albigensian Crusade. It was, as Graham-Leigh notes, a community with a rich oral tradition²⁴⁷. The stories told from parents to their offspring about past alliance has not been recorded, but were surely impressionable, the oath given by Giraud for the castrum of Pépieux²⁴⁸ would have been given in person and it is likely that he had met the Viscount of Béziers. And as the anonymous author of the second part of the *Chanson* writes "A man who robs and kills a fief's natural lords must expect anger, fire and pain."²⁴⁹ If we look at the oaths given from castellan to overlord in the Midi, in vernacular, given in the same manor and the same

²⁴⁴ According to Tudela he brought one hundred knights to the crusader camp, and "... nine of the most distinguished of his household."; *Chanson*, p. 25 – 6, laisse 31 – 3.

²⁴⁵ Loyalty and friendship in the medieval context, see Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 233 – 50.

²⁴⁶ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 60; Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020) Chapter 6, §24.

²⁴⁷ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 10 - 18

²⁴⁸ See map for castrums sworn to the Trencavel's on p. 92

²⁴⁹ *Chanson* p. 143, laisse 192

phrasing from generation to generation, one might understand why a man like Giraud might be willing to stake his possessions to revenge his overlord.

I, Bernard, son of Fida, will be true to you, Ermengard viscountess of Narbonne, daughter of the late Ermengard, by my true faith without deceit, as a man should be toward his lady to whom he has commended himself by his hands. From this moment forward I will not treacherously deprive you of your life or the limbs attached to your body, nor will any man or woman do so by my counsel or consent, nor will I deprive you of the castle of Durban or of the fortifications that are there or will be there in the future; and I will not take them from you nor will I have them taken from you, nor will any man or woman with my counsel or consent. And if any man or woman takes these from you or wants to take them from you I will come to your aid without deceit whenever you order me to do so by the terms of this oath or have me ordered to do so by your messenger, and I will neither associate nor make peace with that man or woman until I have recovered what they have taken from you and returned it to you without payment on your part and without deceiving you. And each time you order me to do so by terms of this oath or have me ordered by your messenger I will hand over the castle of Durban to you without fraud and without deceit. What is written in this charter and as one can hear and clerks can read I will hold and observe as God is my helper and these holy scriptures.¹

Example of the oath typically given by a castellan to his overlord.

This example is from an oath given to Ermengard of Narbonne for the castrum of Durban²⁵⁰.

One could argue that Giraud is not honouring his oath to his former overlord, but is rather being opportunistic again. However, this seems unlikely; When Giraud betrayed Montfort, he did not act alone. His accomplice was Berengar of Puisserguier, a dispossessed Trencavel vassal and the brother-in-law of William, Lord of Minerve. Together they attacked the latter's former castrum Puisserguier and captured several sergeants and two knights. When they heard that Montfort was on his way, they threw the sergeants into a ditch in a failed attempt to kill them, while the knights were taken to Minerve, where they were mutilated and sent back to Montfort at Carcassonne. Montfort retaliated by destroying several of Giraud's castra²⁵¹. We must ask ourselves what Giraud had hoped to gain from this, the fact that he left Puisserguier as soon as Montfort was on his way shows that he most likely did not think he could defend it against him. Thus, this act of rebellion was not in the belief that he could gain a castrum for his relative, through William of Minerve; Berengar of Puisserguier. In fact, he lost everything on this stunt, and became a *faidit*²⁵². If Giraud had accepted the fiefs from Montfort as an act of opportunism, this act of rebellion certainly makes little sense, especially if the honours

²⁵⁰ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 187

²⁵¹ For information about Berengar of Puisserguier see the History, p. 69, footnote 20. The description of the betrayal is on p. 69 – 70, §125 – 127.

²⁵² The *faidit* was a dispossessed knight, hostile to the Crusade. See Paterson. *The World of the Troubadours* (Cambridge University Press. 1998)

Montfort has heaped upon him were in addition to his former territories. As this was the winter, Montfort's army was small²⁵³, and a case could be made that Giraud believed there would be no more crusaders than currently stationed in the Midi, however, if the army at Montfort's disposal was so insignificant Giraud and Berengar would hardly have fled from it. Thus the only reasonable explanation for Giraud's actions must have been that he acted in affect, and perhaps a sense of obligation. The violence of his actions; the mutilation of Montfort's men is testament to this. Giraud continued to resist the crusade, and is perhaps one of the former Trencavel vassals who is mentioned most frequently in the narrative sources as we shall see. Graham Leigh has argued that the rebellion should be seen as a reaction to the promises of support from the King of Aragon, rather than a reaction to the death of the Viscount of Béziers²⁵⁴. However, the failed negotiations between the King of Aragon and the local nobility during the second half of May 1210²⁵⁵ shows that local nobles were generally suspicious of the King of Aragon. And though his promises of support could have emboldened them, the death of the Viscount is a much more likely motivator for the mass defection of November/December 1209, than the Kings letters.

When Montfort heard that he had been betrayed by Giraud, he asked Aimeric of Narbonne who was with him during his stay at Montpellier²⁵⁶, to help him attack Puisserguier. The Lord of Narbonne refused to help him²⁵⁷. Giraud still had strong bonds of friendship with the Trencavel as their families had been allies for over a century, but so had the family of Narbonne been²⁵⁸. This refusal to help Montfort suggests that these old alliances in fact held their ground against the Crusaders. It is not likely that it had anything to do with the involvement of Minerve or the Lord of Puisserguier, as Peter later writes it is Narbonne who urges the siege on Minerve and promises to aid the Crusaders, due to old disputes between the

²⁵³ According to the footnotes in the *History* p. 63, footnote 104, the last contingent of crusaders left in early September 1209, this was the army led by the Duke of Burgundy. His departure is described on p. 62 - 63, §115. The Count of Nevers had left right after the siege of Carcassonne. The *History* described Montfort as "... left alone almost unsupported.", p. 63 - 4, §115. Only left with about 30 knights. This is also mentioned in the *Chanson* p. 29, laisse 4. In a letter sent to Innocent III by Montfort he complains about this very problem, *PL* 216, 141 - 2.

²⁵⁴ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 122 - 23

²⁵⁵ *History*, p. 81, §148, footnote 20 for date.

²⁵⁶ When Montfort had tried to secure the King of Aragon's overlordship in November 1209, Aimeric of Narbonne and Simon de Montfort both witnessed a deed on the 24th of November 1209; Agnes of Montpellier signed away her ceded her rights to her dowry: Pézenas and Tourbes to Montfort for a yearly pension. See *HGL* VIII, 579 - 82.

²⁵⁷ *History* p. 69 - 70, §125, and footnote 21.

²⁵⁸ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004), p. 60

two²⁵⁹. Thus, it seems likely that their refusal has a direct link to the old but close alliance between the Trencavel, Lords of Pépieux and Lords of Narbonne.

Sibly and Sibly has written in their footnotes²⁶⁰ that it would have been convenient for Montfort to get rid of Trencavel, as the rebellion against him was beginning to mount, and he could become a rallying point. However, the assumption that someone can't be a rallying point post-partum is strange. In light of the spontaneous nature of the rebellion by Giraud and the close proximity to the Viscount's death, it seems more likely that his death ignited the rebellion and his death made him a rallying point. Thus, that the resistance of the local nobility was in fact at least partially due to the vassalic bonds between the nobles and their overlord the Viscount of Béziers. The treatment of Trencavel outraged his former vassals, and was far from inconsequential. This became problematic to Montfort who, who desperately tried to gain legitimacy in the area.

II.III The Dispossession of the Remaining Trencavel

An indicator of the struggles faced by Montfort in asserting his legitimacy in the former Trencavel territory is the way he conducted himself in regards to the legitimate heirs of the territory. On the 25th of November 1209 Agnes, Raymond Roger Trencavel's widow, handed over her rights to her dower lands to Montfort against an annual pension²⁶¹. This was right after the death of the Viscount of Béziers, and right around the time of the rebellion, most likely right after the meeting with the King of Aragon where he rejected Montfort as his vassal. The hurry and the timing of this agreement suggests that Montfort indeed was starting to fear the ramifications of gaining the lordship of Carcassonne and Béziers through what was surely seen, not only by some of his French contemporaries but also the local nobility, as dubious means. Further problematized by the untimely death of the Viscount of Béziers. This is further implicated by the fact that during the siege of Minerve on the 11th of June 1210, the Viscount's son and heir, the then three years old Raymond II Trencavel, signed away his rights²⁶², the lord of Narbonne was present and a witness to both these events. Before I continue the discussion of the significance of this incident to my argument, I recap the events that led to abjuration of Raymond II's rights; in November/December, the Viscount of Béziers

²⁵⁹ *History*, p. 82, §151

²⁶⁰ *History* p. 69, footnote 18.

²⁶¹ *HGL*, VIII, 579 – 82.

²⁶² *HGL* VIII, 609 – 11. It is dated to 1211, however, it also states that it was enacted during the siege of Minerve which was in 1210. Present was also Arnold Amalric, Thedisius, Folk the Bishop of Toulouse, the Bishop of Uzès and the Archbishop of Narbonne.

died and Montfort lost most of his gains in the area during a rebellion of the local nobility. The following spring, in 1210, Montfort had his troops re-enforced. Starting with the atrocities at Bram, he reconquers the areas lost during the winter. Cabaret, Montréal and Terms all try to bypass him in the hierarchy by swearing oaths of fealty directly to the King of Aragon. All these events leading up to the siege of Minerve, had shown made visible the major challenges to Montfort's overlordship and his legitimacy. The act of pressuring a 3-year-old child to give up his birth right, must be seen as a sign of desperation at the situation Montfort found himself in. He had been given the title of Viscount by the legates, under the authority of the Pope, however, it was clear that this legitimacy did not carry much weight in these areas. The secular²⁶³ nature of Occitania as a whole has been suggested by Débax and Cheyette. For instance Debax has argued that the oaths of fidelity was given in the castra, not in the church²⁶⁴ which was custom in Ile de France, and Cheyette has concluded that based on the absence of the Bishops as witnesses in documents, it is reasonable to believe that "... the true political class of the twelfth-century Occitania was resolutely lay."²⁶⁵ If we look at Montfort's lack of support in his newly conquered territories, even with the blessings of the Church, it becomes clear that the question of legitimacy in the Trencavel lands were most likely derived from the approval of the local lords, as opposed to the Church. The acts of legally gaining legitimacy from Agnes and the young Raymond II were attempts at securing such legitimacy, as the Church could not provide this.

The circumstances under which Montfort tried to secure this legitimacy, by disinheriting Raymond Trencavel II, is a testament to the precarious position in which Montfort found himself. Let me elaborate, when the Viscount of Béziers died the Count of Foix was appointed his guardian. However, when the young Viscount gave up his lands to Montfort, the Count of Foix was not present. Graham-Leigh has argued that this suggests that the circle around the remaining Trencavel was very small, which again confirms her argument that the family was indeed in decline and in a lack of strong connections²⁶⁶. However, I suggest an alternative understanding of this fact. That without his guardian present, it would be easier for Montfort to acquire the lands from the Young Viscount without opposition. In short; by isolating the young Viscount from his guardian, Raimond Roger of Foix, who had a

²⁶³ Secular for lack of a better term is in this context used to describe a society that relatively to the French had courts that were mainly lay, oaths were taken at the Vicomital residences, charters were witnessed by the other nobles rather than clergy. This however does not suggest that the people in question had a clear idea of the separation of state and Church that we have today.

²⁶⁴ Débax. "Serrement des Mains" (Carin.info. 2007) p. 18

²⁶⁵ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 122 – 3, citation on p. 123.

²⁶⁶ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 124 - 125

strong position in the Midi and also held several fiefs from King Pere II of Aragon, he would be able to secure the legitimacy he needed. This proved to be beneficial for Montfort, because half a year later on the 22th of January 1211 at the Council of Narbonne, the King of Aragon accepted Montfort's homage. The failure of the negotiations between the local lords in the Trencavel entourage and the weakened position of the Trencavel family after the two events described above, might have made King of Aragon feel like this was the only way he could maintain any form of presence in the Midi. However, it is clear from the sources that he was not happy about the arrangement²⁶⁷. These two events are often mentioned but their significance is often underestimated. However, even though Montfort had now secured legal legitimacy and the legitimacy of the overlord the King Aragon, it is clear that he was still not seen as legitimate by lords of the territory.

II.IV The Fortified Castrum: A Different Kind of Lordship

The Trencavels allowed their vassals to build strong fortified castra, so strong in fact that should the Trencavels indeed wish to attack their vassals to reassert control this would be rather difficult. In particular, the lordships of the Montaigne Noir. It has been argued by Graham-Leigh and Barber, that this could not possibly have been in the Trencavels best interest²⁶⁸. This obviously would mean that Montfort simply inherited a problem, that the Trencavels had struggled with themselves. And that the rebellions against Montfort was simply an expression of independence, rather than a reaction to the change in government. There are a few assumptions here that needs to be examined closer; Can we be sure that the Trencavels were opposed to the building of a new fortification? Could we see the fortifications of lordships as beneficial to the Trencavel government, and not necessarily a threat? Is power over one's vassals defined by unquestioned control or ability to assert violence? Or was the Trencavel government characterized by negotiation rather than brute force? And if so, how did these structures impact the new government of the crusaders, led by Montfort?

²⁶⁷ *History* p. 107, §210, "... at the meeting... the Bishop of Uzès and the Abbot of Cîteaux begged the King of Aragon to accept Montfort as his vassal... He refused... At length the King yielded... and accepted the Count as his vassal...".

²⁶⁸ Barber. "Occitan Nobility" (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 1990) p. 8 – 9; Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 133 – 134 and 151 – 154.

II.IV.I Topography, mercenaries, violence and defence

To begin with we need to examine what we know about the topography of the Montagne Noir and the conditions in the Trencavel lands. The various castra who owed their fidelity were ideally placed with strong natural defences, this was strategically done and a growing trend. The topography in these territories were dominated by mountains and difficult passages. Which is evident through the descriptions of these fortifications offered in the narrative sources. Tudela writes that “Minerve castle is not in a plain but stands... on a high spur of rock. There is no stronger fortress this side of the Spanish passes, except Cabaret and Termes at the head of Cerdagne.”²⁶⁹, equally Peter writes “The fortifications of Minerve were incredibly strong. It was surrounded by deep, natural ravines...”²⁷⁰. Termes is described as “... marvellously, indeed unbelievably, strong and in human estimation appeared to be quite impregnable. It was situated on the summit of a very high peak, overlooking a huge natural cliff, and surrounded on all sides by very deep and inaccessible ravines, with water flowing through them surrounding the whole castrum.”²⁷¹. But this was also true of smaller castra and villages, for instance the village of Moussoulens who requested to move to a hill which would be more easily defended²⁷².

The few reports available to us about the conditions in these territories show that this was an unruly land²⁷³, where travelling on the roads could be very dangerous. The Lords of Occitania depended on mercenaries, which in general added to the unlawful nature of these territories. This is best described by Stephen de Tournai, the Abbot of St Genevieve de Paris who journeyed through the Midi around 1203. He described the journey as undertaken with more dread than joy²⁷⁴. A testament to these conditions is the *Guidagia*²⁷⁵, which was a charge paid for protection from an armed guard, charged on major roads in the Trencavel lands and throughout the Midi²⁷⁶. This tax was outlawed by the Church, and along with the use of mercenaries contributed to the frequent disputes the lords of the Midi had with the

²⁶⁹ *Chanson* p. 33, laisse 49

²⁷⁰ *History* p. 83, § 152.

²⁷¹ *History* p. 91, §171

²⁷² Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 97, footnote 53, org. source: CT, fols. 156 – 156v, and Doat 168, fols. 107 – 8.: Moussoulens were allowed to do so by Roger II in 1175.

²⁷³ For an analysis of reasons to fortify in Occitania more broadly see: Bonde. *Fortress-Churches* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 1994), p. 53 – 65.

²⁷⁴ *Gaules*, p. 283 - 4. For discussion on violence in the Trencavel lands see also Graham-Leigh p. 96 – 97.

²⁷⁵ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 131 for more information about the *Guidagia*.

²⁷⁶ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 131

Church²⁷⁷. One could see this as an expression of a lack of control over the area, but as Barber rightly points out the unruly nature of the Trencavel territory, more likely had to do with topography, and not because it was less organized compared to for instance Ile de France²⁷⁸. As Elizabeth Brown has argued most lords did what they could to maintain control over the territory they had²⁷⁹. No wonder so many villages and castles saw the need to fortify themselves. With the conditions being as described above, one must wonder whether or not the fortifications erected by the Trencavel vassals could be seen as something positive for the Trencavel family. The Trencavel territory was large, and as mentioned above the Trencavel needed to keep mercenaries because of the many feuds they had fought with for instance the Count of Toulouse throughout the 11th and 12th century. The problems associated with this were still a part of the lived reality in the Midi as late as 1203, when Stephen de Tournai undertook his journey. This suggests that the Trencavel family's ability to personally defend all of their territories, from internal as well as external threats, was limited at best. However, as we can see from the descriptions from the narrative sources these castra were fortunately more than capable of withholding a siege successfully for a quite some time. In fact, mostly when these castra had to surrender during the Crusade it was due to illness or lack of supplies²⁸⁰. In short, if one could successfully acquire the fidelity of these vassals, control would be effectively asserted without the direct intervention of the Trencavels. E.g. it could potentially be more of an advantage than a disadvantage. As Cheyette points out the Carcassès and Biterrois regions centered around Carcassonne and Beziers were the heartland of the Trencavel domains, and the most densely populated. Even though these lands were filled with fortified castra, the Trencavel's had only required oaths from a few selected ones. Cheyette has argued convincingly that the Trencavel's saw castles as centres for controlling commercial and military traffic, not people. He has suggested that the principal purpose for these castra might have been relatively peaceful to extract tolls and dues for safe passage²⁸¹. In addition, he argued that the castra which the Trencavel collected oaths from were strategically positioned around the edges of their territories; The castles for which the Trencavel received oaths of fidelity were clustered around the Montaigne Noir, from where

²⁷⁷ The anti-heretical effort in Occitania was also intimately linked to the peace movement, see the *History*, Appendix G, p. 213 – 320.

²⁷⁸ Barber. "Occitan Nobility" (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 1990) p. 11

²⁷⁹ Brown. *The Tyranny of a Construct* (American Historical Review. 1974.) p. 1063 – 88.

²⁸⁰ For example, Termes had to surrender because of dysentery, after drinking rainwater after they had run out of water during the siege; *Chanson* p. 36 – 7, *laisse 57* and the *History* p. 96, §181. At Minerve; "The defenders were also short of provisions, so that they no longer had the will to resist." The *History* p. 83, §154. Carcassonne also fell because of a lack of water supplies see the *Chanson* p. 25, *laisse 30*.

²⁸¹ Cheyette. "Castles of the Trencavel" (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1976), p. 266

they could patrol the areas below the mountains. This is evident from the narrative sources; Cabaret patrolled the roads surrounding Termes during the siege, killing the crusaders they could find and attacking the siege engines from Carcassonne, and they also attacked and captured Bouchard de Marly then retreated to Cabaret²⁸². In short, they were able to swoop down from the hill fortifications and assert control in the areas below. On the western frontier, facing the lands of Foix and Toulouse we also see clusters of castra sworn to the Trencavels. Cheyette concludes that if these castrum had been for day to day control, they would have been more evenly distributed.²⁸³

II.IV.II Revisiting the case of Surdespine

The fortifications must therefore be seen as an instrument of the Trencavel government. Graham-Leigh and Barber both use the example of the building of Surdespine as an example of weak overlordship. Roger II and the lords of Cabaret had a dispute surrounding the building of the new castrum Surdespine, which would add to the already strong fortifications of Cabaret and Quertinou. Graham-Leigh writes that this possibly couldn't have been in the Trencavel's best interest; a statement she gives little justification for. She goes on to write that the fact that they had to agree to the existence of a new castle they resented is indicative of the fact that they had little power over their vassals²⁸⁴. Barber writes "Raymond Trencavel had little alternative but to accept this, even though it evidently strengthened an already powerful position."²⁸⁵ There is little information about the nature of the dispute in question, what we do know is that Roger II received two submissions from the Counts of Cabaret for Surdespine, when he accepted the fortification in 1143 and again in 1150. His son received the same promise in 1153. "*He [Raymond Trencavel] gave them license to build and have a castle in castlar Surdaspinga, as the Lord Roger formerly gave this castle to them, and if by chance they will have erected a fortification in this castlar, saving the fidelity and jurisdiction of Raymond Trencavel and his descendants they should make and hold it there, and putting aside all opportunities for harm, they should swear faithfully to him and his posterity for it.*"²⁸⁶ When we make the assumption that because this fortification naturally would strengthen the position of the Counts of Cabaret, the Trencavel's would naturally resent it and oppose it, we also

²⁸² *Chanson* p. 30, laisse 41 and p. 35, laisse 54; *History* p. 93, §173, p. 68 – 69, §123 and p. 90 – 91, §169.

²⁸³ Cheyette. "Castles of the Trencavel" (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1976) p. 269 – 270, see also Map I, p. 93 for a reconstruction of the castrums sworn to Trencavel in the Biterrois and Carcassès.

²⁸⁴ For her analysis on the disputes surrounding Surdespine see Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 152 - 153

²⁸⁵ Barber. "Occitan Nobility" (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 1990), p. 9

²⁸⁶ Translated in Barber. "Occitan Nobility" (The Boydell Press. 1990) p. 9

make assumptions about what kind of lordship was practiced in the Midi. I do agree with Graham-Leigh that the new addition to the already strongly fortified castra already possessed by the Lords of Cabaret surely could be a potential threat to the Trencavels, which is why such negotiations were necessary. There is a leap, however, from this acknowledgement, to the assumption that this negotiation was meant to stop the fortification. The fact that these negotiations were held and documented, indicates that the Trencavel did not hesitate to interfere, and ensure oaths of fidelity and establish the conditions for which the newly erected fortification would be accepted. It should be seen as a reassertion of the Trencavel's position in regards to the lords of Cabaret, rather than a failed attempt to stop it. In addition, Graham-Leigh points out that they swore to not defend the castrum and hold it against the Trencavels, which she argues meant that this was exactly what they had been doing. However, the promise to not hold a castrum against one's overlord is at the center of the Occitan oath of fidelity. To make this argument, we must be prepared to believe that this was the case for everyone who swore oaths of fidelity in the Midi. Débax has pointed out that this particular disagreement is a perfect example of how pragmatic agreements were reached in disputes in the Trencavel lands, in the absence of a neatly defined court system, in the traditional sense. She writes that in such disputes the lords of the Trencavel territories were : “... *less concerned with determining who is wrong and who is right, what is right and what is unfair, than... trying to find a pragmatic solution, where everyone gets something.*”²⁸⁷

In 1199 the Viscount of Béziers even donated land to Stephane of Servian for the erection of a new fortress in the Viscounty of Beziers²⁸⁸. This should be seen as an example of a vicomital family who took keen interest in the development of his vassal's estates, and who made sure that he had the proper reassurance from the lords in question. Because with these oaths of fidelity in place, these fortifications benefitted the Trencavel as well. But did they have a cultural significance in the relationship between overlord and vassal, as well as their practical significance?

²⁸⁷ Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020), Chapter 5, §13. “*Aucune cour n’a une autorité suffisante pour imposer un jugement, ni celle des comtes de Toulouse, suzerains théoriques et complètement absents, ni celle des vicomtes ou autres grands seigneurs qui ne constituent qu’une des instances de règlement parmi beaucoup d’autres. On ne renvoie non plus à aucun corpus juridique écrit ou non écrit. On cherche moins à déterminer qui a tort et qui a raison, ce qui est juste et ce qui est injuste, qu’on ne tente de trouver une solution pragmatique, où chacun obtienne quelque chose.*”

²⁸⁸ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 150, footnote 172: CT, fol. 243; Doat 169, fols. 75 – 8.

II.IV.III Trust and the oath

In the oaths of fidelity so carefully collected by the Trencavel, not only from the Montaigne Noir, but from all over their vast territory, there are two components that are particularly interesting concerning the fortifications of villages and castles. Firstly; they state that they will not hold the castle in question from the overlord, nor will they aid, consent or council anyone else doing so. It also promises to come to the overlord's aid without deceit should anyone try to take the castrum from them. Naturally what this oath of fidelity guarantees is that the castrum and its fortification past or future will be held from the overlord, the vassal also promises to defend it against anyone who should seek to take it²⁸⁹. Cheyette has argued convincingly for the central position of the oath of fidelity in the Occitan culture, and thus also the importance of trust. He distinguishes between two oaths of fidelity, one between equal lords of the higher strata, and one between a castellan and his overlord, which is distinguished by its subjugating nature. I will only concern myself with the latter in this dissertation²⁹⁰. Even though the oath given by castellans marks their subjugation to their overlord, there is evidence to suggest that this oath had an element of reciprocity. Trust goes both ways as the examples from the Chanson relays. During the Fourth Lateran Council in November 1215, the anonymous author explains through the Count of Foix's speech on behalf of the Count of Toulouse that he has put his castra Toulouse, Provence and Montauban in the hands of the Pope at Narbonne in April 1214. He explains that the Pope has betrayed the Count of Toulouse by allowing Montfort to destroy and devastate his castra²⁹¹. He then goes on to defend himself, who is in a similar situation having given up Foix, "*...And I myself, great lord, at your command surrendered the castle of Foix with its mighty battlements. That castle is so strong it defends itself, and there was bread there, and wine, meat and corn and sweet clear water under the hanging rock and my noble company and much shining armour; I feared no assault... If it is not returned to me in just the same condition as I surrendered it, let no one ever again trust in any fine agreement.*"²⁹² The language used here is indicative of the relationship between an overlord and his vassal when a

²⁸⁹ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004) p. 187 for translated oath of fidelity.

²⁹⁰ Cheyette. *Ermengard of Narbonne* (New York: Cornell University Press. 2004), p. 192 for the differentiation between the oath that bound the great magnates together, and that of the castellans. Often these are differentiated as oaths of fidelity and oaths of fealty. However, Cheyette uses the term fidelity for both, as I will.

²⁹¹ Chanson p. 73 - 74, Laisse 144. "*... The mighty Count, who is my overlord and lord of great honours, placed himself and his fief in your mercy, he put Provence, Toulouse and Montauban into your hands [at Narbonne in April 1214]. These where then given up to torture and death, to his worst and most cruel enemy, Sir Simon de Montfort, who binds and hangs there, who destroys and devastates, a man devoid of pity. It is only since they were placed in your care that they have come to danger and death.*"

²⁹² Chanson p. 74 Laisse 144

castrum is handed over. Although the counts of Toulouse and Foix were not castellans of the Pope, the concept of the proper conduct in regards to handing over a castrum will have been informed by what the southern nobility knew and were accustomed to in their own territories. Out of these lines we can read what is expected of an overlord when he has been handed a castrum and what is not. The overlord should return the castrum back exactly as he has received it. He should not purposely expose it to danger, as Foix argues has happened to the Count of Toulouse. The author ends the speech of Foix saying that if these conditions are not met, then trust is broken indicating that such an arrangement can never be trusted again. Foix continues to speak "... that I made it [the castle Foix] over to him [Peter of Benevento, cardinal and papal legate] readily and in good faith."²⁹³ The author has chosen to use the term "in good faith", which is not surprising because handing over your castrum and allowing someone else to fortify it and use its resources is a leap of faith indeed. Firstly, there is the possibility that your overlord will refuse to return it or defend it against you, the potential loss of resources should the overlord refuse to reimburse you when the castrum is returned or not repair potential damage, could be enormous. On the other hand, allowing your vassals to erect fortifications that were so strong that they could be held against you, also came with risks. There is a balance in the oaths, because both parties take equal risks. The mutual nature of the oath of fidelity is exemplified by the fictional reply Sir Alan gives Theobald at Simon de Montfort's council when he defends the decisions of Toulouse to rebel against Montfort in September 1216; "*Suppose I am your vassal and your loyal captain, giving you sincere affection and obedience, doing you no wrong or injury, wishing you no harm, but you are a bad lord to me, you break your oath and come to destroy me with sharp shining steel, am I not to defend my life? Indeed, I am! A lord has only this much due to him as lord: that his vassal must never make a first attack on him.*"²⁹⁴ When the oath of fidelity is given to an overlord for a castrum, it is a sign of subjugation as Cheyette has argued, however, interestingly enough here the author suggests that this oath which at first glance seem to be one-sided, is mutual. The overlord can also break the oath, by not upholding the proper conduct expected of the overlord. In this sense the oath of fidelity is both vertical and horizontal.

In addition, there has been very little focus on the significance of these fortified castra from the vassal's point of view. The control over fortified castrum was the core of

²⁹³ *Chanson* p. 75, Laisse 146

²⁹⁴ *Chanson* p. 117, Laisse 179, see also the *History* p. 261 – 263 for more information about this event.

overlordship in the Trencavel lands, as both Débax and Cheyette has argued. But this also naturally means that the fortified castrum was a necessary of the self-definition as a vassal. In this sense the trust between an overlord and his vassals is cemented and channeled through the fortified castrum. It is the medium with which relations between the overlord and vassals are created. The fortified castrum is not just a place of defense or commerce, but it is a symbol. The castra from which the Trencavel's acquired oaths of fidelity, as we have seen was those of strategic importance. It follows that being the seigneur or co-seigneur of such a castrum comes with considerable elevation of status. They would be more sought after than castra with fewer natural defenses or castra not placed at strategic positions. It is no conscience that the lord of Cabaret, who held perhaps the strongest castrum in the Trencavel lands, made evident by the fact that his castrum is singled out by the King of Aragon during their meeting in during the second half of May 1210, was the Vicar²⁹⁵ of Carcassonne and advisor of the Viscount of Béziers²⁹⁶. As Graham-Leigh has argued the position of Vicar was the chief instrument of Trencavel rule²⁹⁷. This position was not hereditary and did not last for life, making it an easy and flexible way to reward his vassals. Neither is it a coincidence that the Trencavel shifted their entourage from the areas around Ambialet in Albi, to the strongest castra in the Trencavel lands, Cabaret, Termes and Minerve²⁹⁸.

The symbolic value of the fortified castrum is clearly expressed by the Count of Foix; *“Through you [the people of Toulouse that the Count of Foix addresses after they has handed Toulouse over to Raymond VI and abandoned Montfort] a flower has blossomed, has restored light and made the darkness shine, through you worth and paratge have been brought into the light of day instead of wandering the world, uncertain where to go, while you good men wept for them.”* Here paratge is a reference to the nobility that has become *faidits*, specifically in this instance the Count of Toulouse, as well as an allegory for paratge as a moral and political ideology which the nobility represents. The fortified castrum is at the center of the culture, when the nobility is situated in their castra, they are collected, bound together; the world is in

²⁹⁵ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), p. 64: In 1204 Peter Roger of Cabaret was vicar of Carcassonne.

²⁹⁶ During the siege of Carcassonne Tudela writes that Peter Roger of Cabaret was not only present at the siege, but also giving advice to the Viscount of Béziers, the *Chanson* p. 22, laisse 24.

²⁹⁷ For a thorough analysis of the vicar system in the Trencavel lands see Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020), chapter 6, §16, 74 – 78 and Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p.134 - 154

²⁹⁸ For a full analysis of the Trencavel entourage see Débax. *La Féodalité languedocienne* (OpenEdition Books. 2020) Chapter 6, § 87 - 95 and Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), 134 – 154.

order. But without their fortified castra they are scattered, “wandering the world” aimlessly, and the world is in disorder.

II.IV.IV Montfort, trust and disinheritance

The southerners that Montfort tried to instigate friendships with in the former Trencavel lands, mostly betrayed him sooner or later. Aimeric of Montréal for instance betrayed Montfort when he aided his sister the Lady of Lavaur during the siege in 1211²⁹⁹. William of Minerve aided Raymond VII during the siege of Beaucaire in the summer of 1216 and during the preparations for the defence of Toulouse in 1218³⁰⁰. Jordan of Cabaret, co-soigneur and possible brother of Peter Roger of Cabaret also fought against the Crusaders at Toulouse in 1218, but also as part of the Count of Foix host right before the siege of Toulouse in 1217³⁰¹. Peter Roger of Cabaret retook Cabaret in 1221³⁰². The only exception seems to be Stephen of Servian. This is often mentioned, but the current literature rarely attempts to analyse why. If we are to understand their betrayal, we need to examine their position after they made peace with Montfort. When Peter describes the surrender of Lord Aimeric of Montréal he writes that he was compensated with equivalent territory that was “planam”, or translated “level ground” and unfortified. This was due to the growing distrust Montfort had to the local nobility, and the threat these fortifications represented to him. This would mean that the territory was equivalent in size or perhaps revenue, but not equivalent in defensibility or status. The location of the new territory granted to the lords of Minerve and Cabaret, suggests that this was also the case for them. They all received land around Béziers which is close to the coast, with not many natural defences. If we accept the form of lordship I have outlined above—surely the act of evicting a vassal and relocating him to a territory with level ground and lack of fortification is at best a sign of distrust, and at worst a direct insult. Stephen of Servian is the only lord of any significance who continued to support Montfort, he was given back his patrimonial lands and held them as a fief from Montfort. Stephen had surrendered the castrum of Servian and several other castra belonging to him to the crusaders the day before the massacre at Béziers³⁰³. There are no indications that he was forced to give up his fortifications or that they were razed. While the lords who one by one went back on their oaths were the

²⁹⁹ *History*, p. 111 - 117, §215 - 227

³⁰⁰ For Beaucaire see; *Chanson* p. 101, laisse 167 and for Toulouse see; *Chanson* p. 191, laisse 214.

³⁰¹ *Chanson* p. 182, laisse 210 and p. 192, laisse 214.

³⁰² *History*, p. 111, footnote 8.

³⁰³ *PL* 216, cols. 137 – 41, this happened on the eve of the Feast of the Blessed Mary Magdalen, which is the 21st of July 1209.

ones who had been given unfortified land, or worse no land at all. In addition to this, as Lippiatt writes: “... *the old vicariate structure of the Trencavel administration seems to have been largely discarded, replaced by a hierarchy more characteristic of the lands north of the Loire.*”³⁰⁴ Which meant that two of the major incentives within the hierarchal structure of the Trencavel government were now discarded under Montfort’s new government. To Montfort it was inconceivable that an overlord through a certain pattern of behaviour could be annulling the oaths of fidelity given to him by the southern lords. Just like it was inconceivable for him that even though he compensated them with lands which were equal to the territory in revenues and size, they still hadn’t really been compensated in a meaningful way. What they had lost was not just economic or military, it was status and relevancy.

II.IV.V Summary

The specific topography and government in the Midi gave the fortified castrum a symbolic significance. It was a symbol of status and an important part of the self-definition of the nobility, as well as a means economic and military prowess. Montfort’s failure was that he only recognized the economic and military aspect. Because of the mistrust Montfort had for the local nobility, partially inspired by the rebellion in 1209, he discarded the customs and forced the nobility to abandon their fortifications. Thus rendering the oath meaningless to the southern nobles. The fortifications that had been seen as a benefit to the Trencavels and a part of their government and defence, was seen as a threat to Montfort. Because of this, it was impossible for him to secure meaningful and lasting bonds of friendship with the lords of the Trencavel lands.

³⁰⁴ Lippiatt. *Simon V of Montfort* (Oxford University Press. 2017), p. 158

Part III: The Far Reaching Result of the Disinheritance in the Former Trencavel Lands

III.I. The Displacement of the Nobility

Throughout the narrative sources it seems a common theme that during the movement of the crusaders in the Trencavel lands, the lords and defenders of the castra either fled or submitted without resistance³⁰⁵. With the exception of the larger and well defended castra like Cabaret, Minerve, Termes, Lavaur and Montréal. However, there is little information about the nature of the vassalic bonds between Montfort and the lords and knights of the smaller castra that surrendered. We do know that Montfort would place a garrison to defend the castrum, and usually appoint one or several knights to keep it for him³⁰⁶. What implications this would have had for his relationship with the vassals, who probably now had to yield to the wishes of the garrison and the knights of Montfort, we cannot know. Some of these Lords who had surrendered, would later rebel, and when Montfort would return, re-enforced with new crusaders many of these would flee. Knowing the punishment for their betrayal might be severe. In short; there was a large amount of nobles and knights who were dispossessed and found themselves without a home, and indeed without anything to lose. It is hard to tell which castra had been left empty and which had surrendered to Montfort due to the nature of the sources, thus it is hard to say which castra would continue to be run by the former nobles, with the leadership of Montfort's men as I have outlined above, and which would be left empty and thus mainly be run by Montfort's men. Although there are some detailed reports of whether a castrum had been left empty or surrendered, like Castres and Lombers³⁰⁷, most of the accounts are rather vague. However, if we analyse how Peter and Tudela explains the progress of the crusaders it is clear that after the fall of Carcassonne "*most of the most notable and strongest fortresses had been left empty through fear of the crusaders*" one of these was Fanjeaux³⁰⁸ and after the resistance in late 1209 Alzonne was found empty, after the fall of Termes in the winter of 1210 Peter writes that "*Almost all the castra in the territory of Albi to*

³⁰⁵ This became common in the lands of Foix and Toulouse too, when the crusaders begun attacking them after 1211. However, I will mainly be concerned with the Trencavel lands for this analysis.

³⁰⁶ *History*: Like for instance at Puylaurens, which Montfort gave to Guy de Lucy his marshal. Or for places he garrisoned, p. 118, §230, Fanjeaux in 1209 p. 61, §110, Limoux and Razes, p. 66, §119.

³⁰⁷ *History* p. 62, §112 for surrender of Castres and 65, §117 for Lombers, recapture of Castes and Lombers p. 101, §193: Castres and Lombers both offered their castrum to Montfort. Castres being one of the most notable castra in Albi. During the rebellion in Nov/Dec 1209 they both went back on their oath. In early 1210 when Montfort went back to Albi, re-enforced with new Crusaders, Castres again surrendered, while Lombers had been deserted.

³⁰⁸ *History* p. 62

*the South of the River Tarn were recovered*³⁰⁹, in the *Chanson Tudela* writes that there had been no need for sieges as the “*men who left the castles never supposed that the crusaders would get that far*”³¹⁰. In other statements such as after the atrocities at Bram Peter relays that they recovered almost all the region of Minerve. However, there is no specification of the nature of these conquests³¹¹. Judging from the examples though it seems clear that a substantial number of the castra were left empty, which meant a huge displacement of the knights of the former Trencavel lands. These local lords and knights would become *faidits* and sooner or later would either re-take their castra or join the fight against the Crusaders elsewhere, mostly under the leadership of Foix and Toulouse. Early examples of this were the castra that had been abandoned before the resistance of November 1209, for instance Montréal where the Lord Aimeric had left with his men, and returned during the period of resistance and reclaimed it, he was later compensated with other holdings³¹². The former Lord of Puisserguier who had been dispossessed, returned to Puisserguier with Pépieux during the resistance, and the Lord of Ventajou³¹³, helped Aimeric of Montréal re-gain his castrum and was subsequently disinherited by Montfort. In fact, Ventajou must have created quite the amount of trouble for Montfort in this period, as it is the only castrum re-claimed by the Crusaders in early 1210 that has its keep pulled down. A growing trend as it became increasingly clear to the Crusaders that the fortified villages could represent a huge threat to them if retaken.

After 1209, in the spring of 1210 when Montfort was re-enforced with Crusaders a new wave of abandoned castra, ensured that many of the rebels from the December/November resistance once again was roaming the countryside and fled to areas that were outside of Montfort’s control. During 1210 and 1211³¹⁴ this same pattern repeats itself, some clear examples are Castres and Lombers, when Montfort returns after their betrayal in late 1209, Castres surrenders immediately and the defenders of Lombers, some fifty knights, had fled³¹⁵. This flight must have been made quite hastily, as Lombers was filled with provisions when the Crusaders arrived. This was during the winter after the fall of Termes, as

³⁰⁹ *History* p. 101

³¹⁰ *Chanson* p. 37, laisse 58

³¹¹ *History* p. 79, §143.

³¹² For Aimeric’s reclaiming of Montréal see the *History* p. 73, §135, and for Montfort’s recapture of Montréal see *History* p. 90, §167.

³¹³ The Lord of Ventajou, Bernard-Raymond, had withstood the campaigns in the Minervois in the spring of 1210, but he had aided Aimeric of Montréal in recapturing his castrum. See the *History* p. 79, §143, p.90, § 166 and footnote 65.

³¹⁴ For these campaigns see p. 78 - 118, §141 – 230.

³¹⁵ *History*, for the defection of Lombers and Castres see p. 72, §132 – 33, for Montfort’s recapture see p. 101, §193

the fall of larger castra usually had a demoralizing effect on the lesser ones. Most areas in Albi south of the Tarn³¹⁶ was regained, again the sources are unclear but if this follows the pattern of 1209 there would have been a substantial amount of castra that had been left empty. During 1211 Cabaret surrendered and Lavaur fell³¹⁷. Because of the vague descriptions in the sources it is hard to assess exactly how many lords and knights became *faidits*. However, with the numbers from Lombers where 50 knights were present in 1209 one can assume that the amount of knights per castrum was rather big. From the mid-twelfth century urban knights was the rule, rather than the exception and were often notables in the city landscape and many consuls³¹⁸. Meaning that a substantial amount of knights that were now dispossessed, were dispersed throughout Toulouse and Foix, the territories Montfort was now going to conquer. Some specific names are available to us through the source: William of Roquefort for example who killed an abbot in 1209³¹⁹, is later seen in the entourage of Foix and is also present as a defender at Toulouse, where he falls in the summer of 1211³²⁰. Pépieux fights the crusaders until the end of the Crusade, when he returns to his lands to rebuild them. Olivier the son of the former Lord of Termes continues to fight for his inheritance for instance³²¹. The former lord of Capendu, who had been disposed by Montfort, Lord Bernard-Raymond became a *faidit*³²². Raymond-Ermengaud, the former lord of Montlaur was dispossessed and became a *faidit*³²³. The anonymous continuer of the *Chanson* describes the preparations for the defence of Toulouse under the leadership of Raymond VII in July 1219, he makes a full list of the defenders and which barbicans they are to hold when Prince Louise and Aimery Montfort were on their way to besiege them. The division of knights is mainly made by what area they are from and centered around one family or more families from the same area³²⁴. For instance the St Stephen barbican was held by mostly members of the Unaud family³²⁵,

³¹⁶ *History* p. 66, footnote 117: In the 12th century the Trencavel lands had reached both on the northern and Southern side of the Tarn in Albi, however, in the decades before the Crusade the areas on the North of the Tarn had become vassals of the Count of Toulouse. When I say South of the Tarn this refers to the Trencavel lands in Albi.

³¹⁷ For the surrender of Cabaret and the fall of Lavaur see the *History* p. 110 § 214 and p. 111 - 117, §215 – 227.

³¹⁸ Paterson. *World of the Troubadours* (Cambridge University Press. 1998) p. 40 - 41

³¹⁹ *History* p. 71 - 2, 130 – 131.

³²⁰ *History* p. 124, §240.

³²¹ Peal. “Oliver de Termes” (University of Reading. 1986) for more information about Olivier of Termes.

³²² The lord of Capendu; Bernard-Raymond, had been disinherited by Crusaders in 1209, *History* p. 78, footnote 4.

³²³ Raymond-Ermengaud, the lord of Montlaur was dispossessed by Montfort in the spring of 1210, they had rebelled during the winter of 1209. *History*, p. 78, §141 and footnote 5.

³²⁴ The information about the defence of Toulouse and those present is in *Chanson* p. 191 – 193, Laisse 214, information about the background of the knights on belonging footnotes.

³²⁵ Mentioned in the sources as the defenders are Gerald Unaud and Sir Raymond Unaud who were either brothers or cousins, Sir Jordan of Lanta who was related to the Unaud family. They were a wealthy and notable family in the Toulousian.

while the barbican by the old bridge was held mainly by members of the Montaut family³²⁶, the defence of the barbican by the new bridge was mainly from the family of La Isla³²⁷, the castle barbican by Lautrec³²⁸, while the Sir Arnold Bernard's barbican around the family of Villemur³²⁹. The Newly built barbican is dominated by the family of Comminges³³⁰. Some center around two families who were close geographically, like the Petrus Barbican held by the families associated with Pointis-Inard and Montaut³³¹, or the Matabiau barbican held by families from Rabastens and Caussade³³², or the Pozamila Barbican held by lords from Lomagne and Pestillac³³³. Or they were strictly mercenary troops like the one at the Montgaillard barbican³³⁴ or archers like the newly built Bazacle. Clearly, when preparing the defence of Toulouse, geographic proximity and familiarity had been taken into consideration.

One of the most interesting combinations though, is that of the Crosses barbican which was held by Sir Roger Bernard, son and heir of the Count of Foix, Sir Bernard Amiel; one of the principal vassals of Foix, with them is Jordan of Cabaret, Sir Chatbert and Sir Aimery of Roca Negada, both of whom were dispossessed knights of the former Trencavel lands. Sir Chatbert of Barbaira was a knight from Capendu, whose lord was Bernard-Raymond, who

³²⁶ Held by Sir Bernard of Montaut, Sir Gilbert his son, Sir Frézoul who is not identified and their friends and kinsmen. There were four Montaut brothers, Bernard, Robert, Isarn known as the abbot and Odo, Montaut castle stood on a hill above the Garonne 10 km NE of Carbonne.

³²⁷ By Bernard Jordan lord of La Isla, Sir Bertrand Jordan of Launac and Sir Odo lord of Gimoès who were both younger brothers of Bernard Jordan, Sir Estolt of Linars, who held his fief from La Isla. Also Sir Gerald of Gourdon who did homage for lands in Quercy in 1230 and Sir Bernard Beynac from Périgord. Along with their fine companies. Vassals of the Count of Toulouse.

³²⁸ Held by Viscount Bertrand who is most likely one of the co-suzerains of Lautrec, which is close to Castres and Sir Bartas, who is one of the southern knights who swear uphold the peace of 1229. The Lautrecs had been playing between the Trencavel's and the Counts of Toulouse during the 12th century. A Sicard Lautrec had been a part of the Trencavel entourage.

³²⁹ Sir Arnold of Villemur, two men with this name shared the lordship of Saverdun which was on the border between the lands of Toulouse and Foix, and had been a source of strife between the two respective lords, by the Albigensian Crusade was controlled by the Count of Foix. William Unaud who was the nephew of Sir Arnold of Villemur. William Bernard of Anave, a vassal of Foix was there. Sir William Arnold of Tantalou, who we know little about apart from the fact that he became seneschal of Agen between 1222 and 1247, and that he is known to have made siege weapons and strategies at the time of the first dispossessions. The defence of this barbican thus was mainly families from Foix.

³³⁰ Sir Bernard of Comminges, his cousins Sir Bernard of Comminges and Sir Raymond Bernard Aspet, with them the knights from Montaigon (a square in Toulouse).

³³¹ Sir Inard of Poitiers from Pointis-Inard and his uncle Sir Marestaing, along with Sir Roger of Montaut and Sir Roger of Noé, who shared ancestors with the Montauts. All of these were lordships on the north-eastern side of Toulouse.

³³² Held by Pelfort of Rabastens, who was the brother of Peter Raymond of Rabastens; co-suzerain of Rabastens and active adherent of Raymond VI. Sir Ratier lord of Caussade. Along with them was Sir Ratier of Bosna, who is not identified and John Martin, a mercenary who had long served Raymond VI. The lordships of Rabastens and Caussade were on the North-western side of Toulouse.

³³³ Sir Espanel of Lomagne, a younger son of Veizan of Lomagne; viscount of Lomagne, and Auvillar. Sir Amalvis, probably Amalvinus de Pestillaco, who witnessed a donation made by Raymond VII in 1219. Hugh of La Mota, perhaps in family with William of La Mota and his son Raymond from Montauban. Bertrand of Pestillac, which is situated 40 km north west of Cahors. All of these North West of Toulouse.

³³⁴ Bernard Meuder a mercenary captain, perhaps Catalan, with only his own men

had been dispossessed in 1209. The Montoulieu barbican was held by Sicard of Puylaurens, a former Trencavel vassal, and also Sir Padern, who might have been from the Corbières district in the former Trencavel lands³³⁵, also at this barbican is Sir Hugh of Monteils. Which means that apart from Monteils this barbican was dominated by former Trencavel vassals. At the Count's Barbican was Sir William of Minerve, William Belfar a dispossessed knight from the Carcassès and Arnold Feda a dispossessed knight from Béziers³³⁶. This delegation of men in their respective areas of defence suggest that the Trencavel knights still maintained their close ties, even after dispossession, but also that they had gravitated towards the sphere of Foix as opposed to that of Toulouse.

Alone this example is not convincing. But if we look at the Count of Foix's host during his campaigning in Lauragais in 1219 a pattern emerges. In addition to his two sons, Roger-Bernard and the "Wolf of Foix" as his illegitimate son is referred to, eight men are listed by name. Bernard Amiel lord of Pailhès and William Bernard of Arnave, both present later during the siege of Toulouse described above, Bernard Amiel by Roger Bernard of Foix's side at the Crosses Barbican and William Bernard with the co-seigneurs of Saverdun at the Sir Arnold Barbican. In addition, Sir Isarn Jordan; a dispossessed lord, who later fought to re-instate the Trencavels, Sir Robert of Tinhes; who is not identified but has come along with "... with men from the Carcassès...", Raymond Arnold of Le Pech; a dispossessed knight who had held land from Alzonne, Aude, and was a former Trencavel vassal, he also fought to re-instate Trencavel and became castellan of Carcassonne in 1226, Sir Aimery; a dispossessed knight, probably Clermont-sur-Lauquet, in the Carcassès, who was excommunicated in 1242 for helping Trencavel, Sir William of Niort; a vassal of the Trencavel's, from a prominent family and also the brother-in-law of Aimeric of Montréal³³⁷. He and his family was heavily involved in the resistance during the Albigensian Crusade³³⁸. In 1237 he was sentenced to life imprisonment for heresy, and Jordan of Cabaret who needs no introduction. In short, out of the eight men mentioned to be part of the Count of Foix's host during their campaigning in the Lauragais, six of them were former Trencavel vassals, and several of them would later help to re-instate the Trencavel family. In addition, the vague "... with men from Carcassès..." suggests that this might only be the tip of the iceberg. Raymond VII rides to aid

³³⁵ For more information about the strategic importance of the Corbières region see Peal. "Oliver de Termes" (University of Reading. 1986), p. 113

³³⁶ *Chanson* p. 191 – 193, Laisse 214, see footnotes to these pages for biography of the knights and nobles mentioned.

³³⁷ Wakefield. "The Family of Niort" (*Names*, 1970) p. 99

³³⁸ Wakefield. "The Family of Niort" (*Names*. 1970) p. 102 – 13.

them with his men of Toulouse as they are about to clash with Sir Focaud of Berzy and his men, and before battle Roger Bernard, the son and heir of the Count of Foix, “My lords, free knights, today will show who can fight! My heart fills with joy, for I can see here the flower of this land and the whole of Carcassès.”³³⁹ He does not address the men of Foix, but the men of the Carcassès which is indicative of the number of knights from Carcassès who is present in the host. The way in which they are addressed also suggest the vast amount of territory these knights have gathered from. Raymond VII adds “How near us they are, how dearly we can make them pay for our inheritance!”³⁴⁰ Then they make a clear distinction between the groups of knights who are present fighting; Sir Roger Bernard is to take the men from Carcassès and the men of his own fief³⁴¹, clearly making a distinction between the men from the former Trencavel lands in orbit of Carcassonne and Foix. In the description of the battle itself three knights from the former Trencavel territories are mentioned by name; Sir Chatbert, who we recognize from the Crosses barbican and Sir Aimery and Sir William of Niort, who was listed as part of the Foix host. If we exclude the two sons of the Count of Foix, who are leading this attack, out of the knights mentioned by name during the battle; three men are from the former Trencavel lands, four are from Foix and two from the Toulousian. This ratio is indicative of the numbers of dispossessed knights from the former Trencavel lands who were now in the orbit of the Count of Foix, the fact that they are mentioned by name by the author in such numbers not only suggests that the author knew well who these men were, but also their significance and their status within the group of fighting men during the resistance.

During the battle of St. Martin Lalande in September 1211³⁴², parallel with the siege at Castelnaudary, many southerners gathered to fight with Raymond VI. Among them; “... Giraud of Pépieux, riding with the count of Foix, one of the best of his knights.”³⁴³ He is not mentioned by name in the History, but Peter writes that the Count of Foix attacks with knights “...chosen from the best in his army...”³⁴⁴. He is described as one of Foix’s men, his position is further corroborated by the fact that when les Toulles is massacred his father Fredolius is ransomed against one of Foix’s captives³⁴⁵.

³³⁹ *Chanson* p. 183, Laisse 210.

³⁴⁰ *Chanson* p. 183, Laisse 211.

³⁴¹ *Chanson* p. 183, Laisse 211.

³⁴² *History* p. 135, §268

³⁴³ *Chanson* p. 52, Laisse 96

³⁴⁴ *History* p. 136, §270

³⁴⁵ *History* p. 144 – 145, §291

In 1214 the papal legates demanded that the Count of Foix swore an oath where the *faidits* were designated as enemies to Christianity and thus condemned³⁴⁶. The fact that they are mentioned in his oath and that they are declared enemies to Christianity would, suggests not only what massive impact these men had on the crusaders attempts at controlling the areas but, it is also indicative of the Count of Foix's association with dispossessed knights. Which seems clear from the examples above. Another indication of the more general threat of *faidits* is that when Countess Alice de Montfort travels to Paris to get help during the siege of Toulouse in 1216, the anonymous continuer writes that "They travelled through the wood for fear of the dispossessed knights."³⁴⁷

So why would these dispossessed men from the Carcassès gravitate towards the court of the Count of Foix, rather than that of Toulouse? Because the Count of Foix was the warden of young Raymond Trencavel. Roger the Count of Foix's mother was Cecilia Trencavel, who was Raymond's paternal aunt. And when Carcassonne was re-captured by the southerners in 1224 it was the Count of Foix that gave Raymond the fief³⁴⁸. Graham-Leigh had argued that the fact that Foix is the one who swears the oath to abandon control of Carcassonne to the King of France after he was no longer the warden of Raymond, indicates that Trencavel never really gained control over the fief, and that it was always Foix that had *de facto* held it³⁴⁹. However, in 1226 Raymond II Trencavel was only 19 years old, if there is any link between the practices of England and France in regards to the age of majority, Raymond II was in fact still a minor and Roger of Foix still his ward. Elaine-Graham Leigh argued that the Trencavel entourage was small since Roger of Foix for instance was not present when he signed away his inheritance in 1210, but as I argued this is more likely a situation devised by Montfort because the presence of Roger of Foix would surely not benefit him. The occurrence of the former Trencavel vassals, many of whom fought alongside Raymond VII later, suggests that Raymond II Trencavel still had an entourage and that these had followed him to the court of his ward and fought alongside him, as Raymond II was only a child at the time of the events described above. An example that is interesting in this regard is the interest the Count of Foix takes in the siege of Lavaur in 1211. Lavaur was held by the widow Giraude, but was helped by her brother Aimeric of Montréal, who had been given compensatory land and sworn fealty to Montfort. They were aided by both the Count of Foix and the Count of Toulouse. Lavaur

³⁴⁶ Paterson. *World of the Troubadours* (Cambridge University Press. 1998) p. 59

³⁴⁷ *Chanson* p. p. 147, laisse 194

³⁴⁸ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 125

³⁴⁹ Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005) p. 123

was part of the former Trencavel lands, but the control over the city was ambiguous, with Raymond VI asserting more and more influence. Thus, the interference from Raymond VI was quite natural, he was looking after his interests in the city. Knowing that if Montfort took control over the city, his influence would be minimal. However, it is less clear by Foix would interfere. Especially since he stood to lose a great deal. He had been given back all his lands, save Pamiers, during the Conference at Narbonne earlier in January 1211 and had thus secured his holdings from further attacks from the Crusaders. Breaking with the Crusaders would be against his own interest. However, with the large number of former Trencavel vassals in his army, and being the ward of Raymond II Trencavel, it could be that he was trying to secure the interests of Raymond II, rather than his own.

In conclusion; The disinheritance in the former Trencavel lands and the gain made in 1209 – 1211, often seen as a success, did not actually succeed in that it only moved the problem. When we are dealing with a partisan/guerrilla type of warfare, as the one in the Midi during the Albigensian Crusade, it is difficult to call the acquisition of land a success, when the people from that very same area continues to fight but from other parts of the territory. As my analysis has shown many of these knights became important during the resistance in, most prominently as men of the Count of Foix. Continuing to support their former overlord.

III.II Passive Resistance

In addition to the massive difficulties the former Trencavel vassals represented, as argued above, there has been little work on passive resistance in the Midi. It is often only mentioned, and is overshadowed by the active resistance and the military and political aspects of the Crusade. However, passive resistance, such as refusal of co-operate, is equally important when we are discussing the success of an occupying force. For instance, during the siege of Castelnaudary in the Autumn of 1211, the citizens of Cabaret send messengers to Toulouse and proposes to hand the castrum over to him. However, Cabaret being 35 km away from Toulouse, the Count is not able to get there in time³⁵⁰. At the same time Guy de Lévis. Montfort's Marshal was sent to fetch supplies from Carcassonne and Béziers, but as Peter writes he "... could achieve nothing, since the whole of that area had corrupted its way"³⁵¹. This suggest that is not only the city of Carcassonne and Béziers that did not wish to aid Montfort, but the surrounding areas of Carcassès and Biterrois. Then he was sent alongside

³⁵⁰ *History*, p. 132 – 133, §260.

³⁵¹ *History* p. 133 – 134, §264

Matthew de Marly, another of Montfort's men, to secure aid from his vassals, presumably in the form of military service. There is no specific mention of where this is done, but it is fair to assume that it is the Biterrois and Carcassès, because after they have failed at this task they go to Narbonne to seek help from Aimeric, the Lord of Narbonne, who also refuses. They only managed to get three hundred men from the city Carcassonne and five hundred from the whole area, however, they all changed their mind dispersed and returned to their homes³⁵². Parallel with these events, William Cat defects from Montfort. He had been the most trusted vassal recruited from among the local men, he had been knighted by Montfort and was even the godfather of Montfort's new-born daughter³⁵³. Montfort sent him to Fanjeaux, to fetch military aid from the surrounding castra, however, while he was there he plotted with the locals to attempt to capture Guy de Levis, as we have seen above³⁵⁴. Around the same time, Peter writes that numerous castra swear secret oaths to Raymond VI of Toulouse, now it is not specified which ones, or in which areas these castra are, however if we take into account the level of civil disobedience during the siege in the area of Carcassès and Biterrois, it is likely that at least some of these were from the former Trencavel lands. During the siege of Muret, the Countess of Montfort was ordered by her husband to gather as many knights as she could from Carcassonne and join him at Muret, however, "... the few knights sent by the Countess to help the Count..." was not an impressive turnout from one of the most inhabited cities in the former Trencavel lands³⁵⁵. At the end of 1213, when Montfort is travelling to Provence, Montpellier refuse to let him and his men enter the city³⁵⁶, during the Council at Montpellier on January 8th 1215 Montpellier continues to refuse Montfort access to the city³⁵⁷. This suggest that even though there is no active resistance, as the massive defection during the winter of 1209/1210 or the smaller skirmishes by the former Trencavel vassals that continued regularly until the surrender of Cabaret in the spring of 1211, there was in fact a frequent occurrence of passive resistance. Especially during the larger sieges by the Count of Toulouse and Foix. Naturally during these sieges Montfort was particularly vulnerable and reliant on military aid and supply lines from the castra in his conquered territories. A collapse of a supply line or a military defection could be just as damaging to withholding a siege as a direct assault, and thus we should be careful in ignoring the significance these acts of passive

³⁵² *History* p. 133 – 134, §264 - 265

³⁵³ For the birth of Montfort daughter see the *History* p. 132, §258

³⁵⁴ *History* p. 134 – 135, §266 – 267

³⁵⁵ *History*, p. 205, §450

³⁵⁶ *History*, p. 220 – 221, §488

³⁵⁷ *History*, p. 242 – 245, §543 – 548

resistance. In addition to this the southern knights are able to make incursions deep into the former Trencavel lands, in late 1211 Roger-Bernard set up an ambushes on the local roads close to Fanjeaux³⁵⁸, at the end of 1212 Roger-Bernard, the son of the Count of Foix murders crusaders near Carcassonne³⁵⁹ and in November/December 1213 mercenaries from Aragon who were fighting on the southerners and other “enemies of the faith”, presumably *faidits*, began making incursions into the Count territories as far as Béziers³⁶⁰. There are no accounts that verify the direct help from the local lords of the former Trencavel lands, however, there are no accounts of local lords doing anything to stop it either. It seems very common that the southern knights would lay ambushes on roads they knew the crusaders would have to use, such as the example from 1211, and as Cheyette has argued, one of the main purposes of the *castra* were to control the roads. So although we cannot prove that the local lords in the former Trencavel lands of local origin, or their local subordinates allowed these incursions, it seems likely. Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration for those who argue that there were no more resistance in the former Trencavel lands is the nature of the narrative sources, most notably Peter of les Vaux-De-Cernay, from the arrival of the Crusader in the summer of 1209 until September 1213 he uses 173 pages and 404 sections³⁶¹. While from September 1213 until December 1218, he only uses 58 pages and 132 sections³⁶². Naturally this means that what he is able to include in the narrative describing the events between 1209 and 1213, is far greater, than that of the next four years³⁶³. It is therefore natural to assume that in the last half of the history Peter only refers to the most central events, which naturally would be sieges, diplomatic events and direct combat. Because of the nature of the sources, a scholar should be careful in assuming that the absence of evidence is the evidence of absence.

³⁵⁸ *History* p. 141, §284

³⁵⁹ *History*, p. 169, §361

³⁶⁰ *History*, p. 222, §493

³⁶¹ *History* p. 47 – 220, §82 - 486

³⁶² *History* p. 220 – 279, §487 - 619

³⁶³ It should be mentioned that I have been operating with a translated version of the *History*, this version also has footnotes, which might exaggerate or understate the variables. The sections have different length also. However, the amount of footnotes is more or less the same, and the variation from the Latin script should be minimal.

Part IV: Conclusion

Thematically looking at the disinheritance of the nobility in the Midi I have argued that the success of the early years of the Albigensian Crusade was only partial. When we look at the disinheritance of the Viscount of Béziers it is clear that there were major consequences. Firstly, that the nobles partaking in the initial campaign, especially Hervé the Count of Nevers, had reservations regarding the change in direction of the crusade and the more liberal application of *Vergentis in Senium* that the legates used to target and disinherit the Viscount of Béziers. This does not only show that the crimes for which the Viscount was disinherited was not that different from lords from other areas, but also that the crusaders were not as homogenous as they often appear in the narrative sources. The result of this was that the Count of Nevers left, along with his troops, which left Montfort with a much smaller force. And which made the continued efforts of the crusaders in the Midi more difficult.

The King of Aragon was humiliated by the treatment he received when he attempted to parlay on behalf of the Viscount and when he decided not to aid him militarily. Which in turn led to the Viscount's death. This impacted the way he was perceived by the former Trencavel vassals, which is evident when we look at the meeting between the King and the Trencavel vassals in 1210. Further, this humiliation made it necessary for the King of Aragon involve himself further, with the end result of him taking the counts of Toulouse, Foix and Comminges under his protection in 1213. Thus the early conduct of the papal legates and the crusaders, alienated the crown of Aragon. The official support of the King of Aragon legitimized the resistance to Montfort and the crusaders, and intensified the resistance.

Further the dispossession and perceived murder of the Viscount of Béziers was received by his vassals. This becomes clear when we look at the betrayal of Giraud de Pépieux, as this is one of the most detailed accounts of rebellion during the winter of 1209. Through a combination contextualisation and discussion of chronology I have argued that Giraud's participation in the rebellion was driven by his ties to his former overlord the Viscount of Béziers. Subsequently I have argued that the resistance during the winter of 1209 was intensified by the rumour of the Viscount's murder. Which again, suggests that the position of the Viscount was stronger than suggested by Graham-Leigh.

The continued disinheritance and relocation of the Trencavel vassals, made it impossible for Montfort to sustain lasting bonds of friendship with the former Trencavel vassals. Many of the vassals who had resisted Montfort initially were given compensatory lands around Béziers, but were not allowed to fortify them. Evidence suggest that the fortified

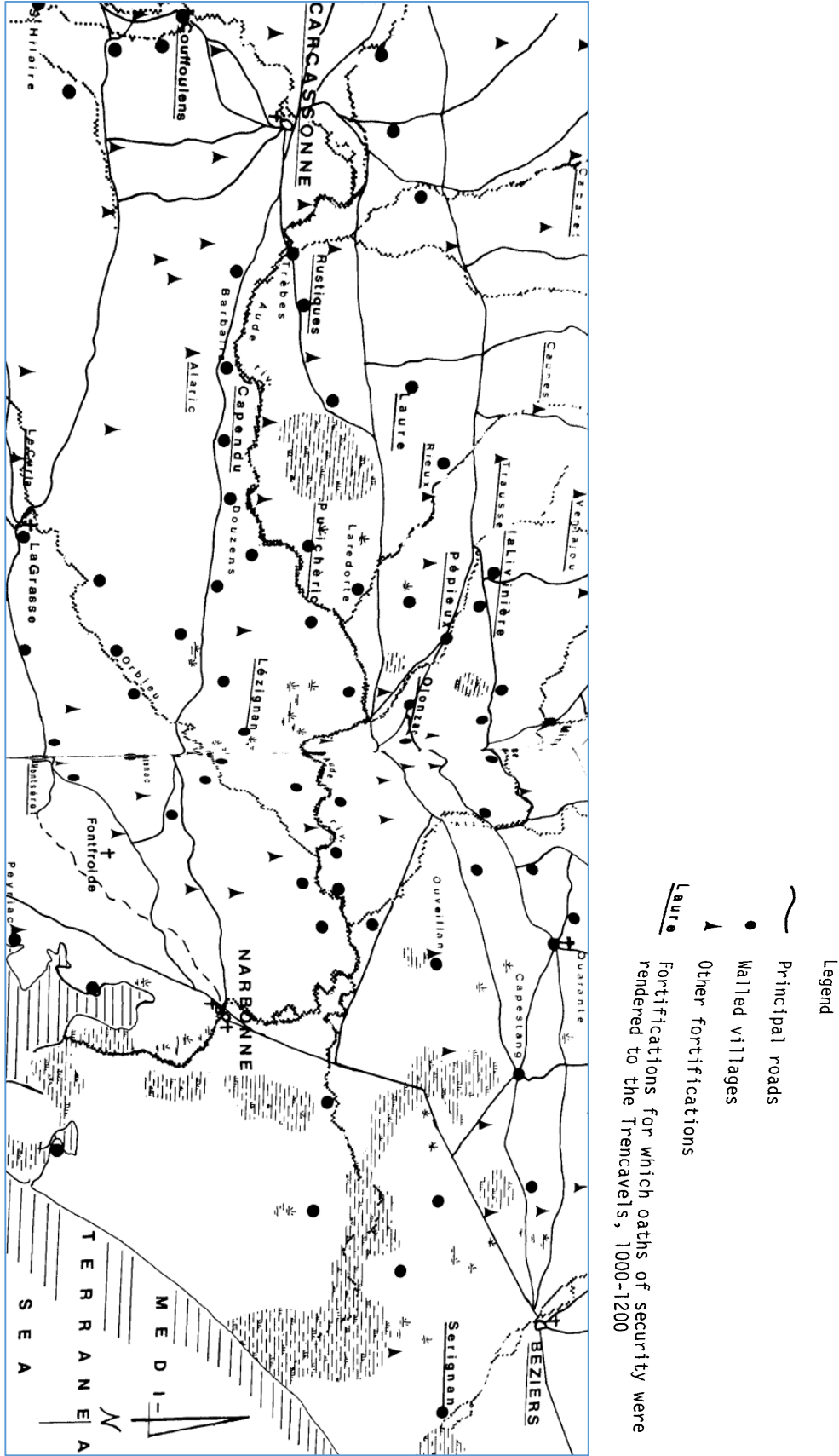
castrum held a much more central role in Occitan culture than their military and economic value entails. The fortified castra were at the center of the oath in the Midi, they were the medium in which vassalic bonds were created, which means that they had a symbolic value. In short; the role of overlord and vassal is rendered meaningless without the fortified castrum. In addition to this, the best fortified castra were the most central in the Trencavel government, which I have argued meant that being the lord these castra came with elevated status. Meaning that disinheriting these lords and displacing them in unfortified territories, was a significant demotion and negation of these lord's status and self-understanding as vassals.

Lastly, I have argued that the failed vassalic relationship between Montfort and the knights of the former Trencavel lands led to a displacement of the latter, which was quite extensive. These displaced knights, or *faidits*, continued the effort against Montfort and the Crusaders throughout the period, and was a force to be reckoned with which is made evident by their specific mention in the oath sworn by the Count of Foix. In this section I have tried to show that the military victory of the initial campaign in the Trencavel territories, was not a clear cut as it seems at first glance. An analysis of the narrative sources shows that many of the knights of these territories abandoned their castra as the crusaders approached them, some reconciled with Montfort, but many did not and was dispersed throughout the Midi. Further, many of these knights are mentioned by name in the narrative sources and can be identified. By focusing on the knights from the former Trencavel lands specifically, I have re-constructed their movements and engagements during after the so-called victory in the Trencavel lands. Evidence suggest that most of them ended up gravitating around the Count of Foix and son, the former being the ward of Raymond II Trencavel, the dispossessed heir to the Trencavel lands. I have argued that this is no coincidence. Which suggest that many of the former Trencavel vassals were in fact still attempting to reverse the initial gains made by Montfort. It also shows that the vassalic bonds to the Trencavel family was maintained, years after Montfort gained control over the Trencavel lands.

To further the argument that Montfort's victory in the Trencavel lands were only partial I have analysed the passive resistance in these territories, often overshadowed by the more active aspects of the resistance in the Midi. This study has shown that Montfort has considerable problems controlling the former Trencavel lands, and that the act of refusing cooperation of allowing *faidits* access to the territory, should be seen as equal to the more active forms of resistance. Further, because the most detailed narrative source becomes less detailed the further into the crusade it gets, it is very hard to argue that these forms of passive resistance did not continue.

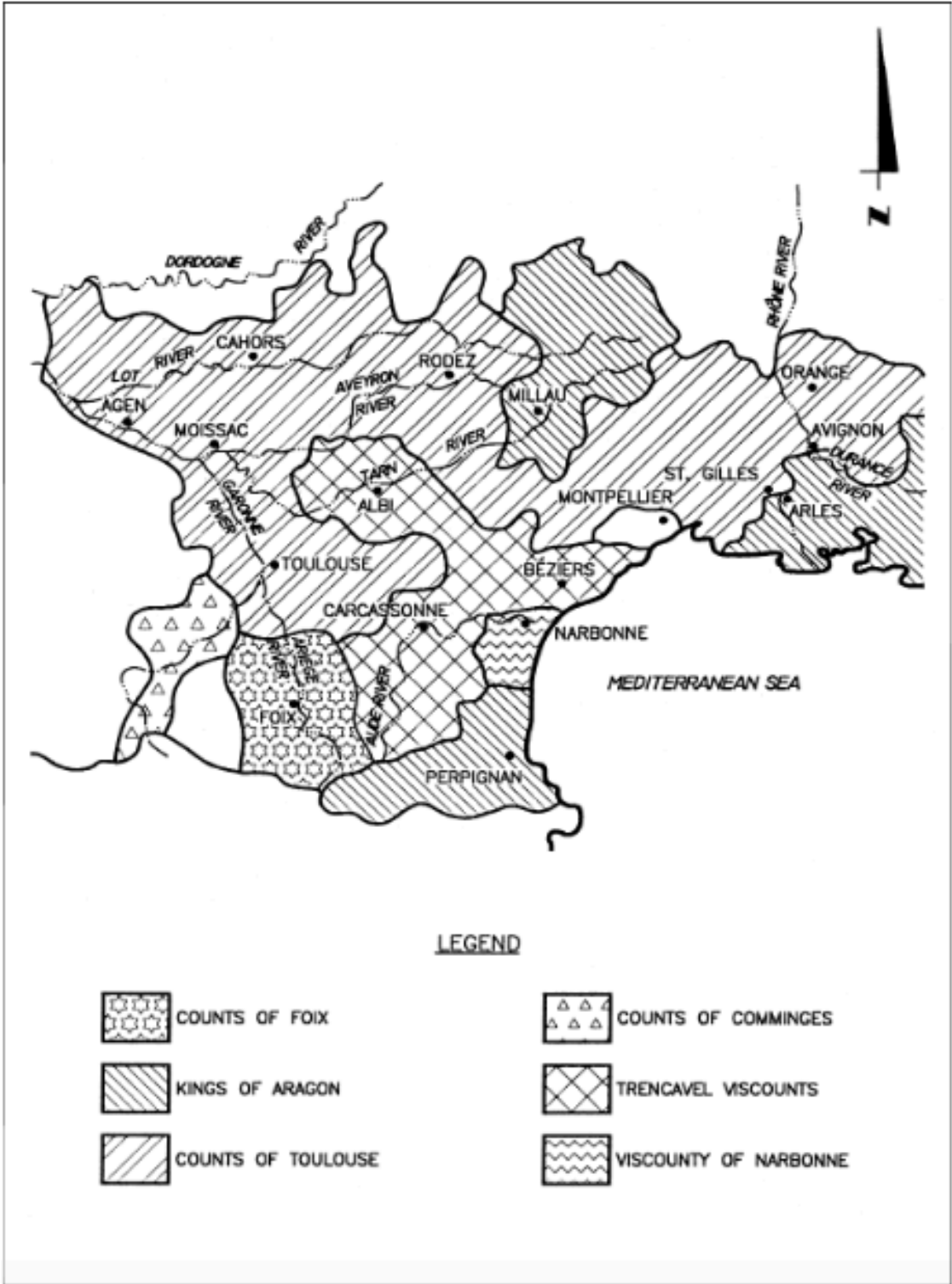
Together these various studies have shown that the use of Vergentis in Senium had far reaching consequences for the success of the crusade. An effort that was meant to push the local lords to adhering to the anti-heretic efforts from the church, became a 20 yearlong war that devastated the Midi. The decisions made in the initial stages of the crusade, e.g. in the occupation of the Trencavel lands, alienated not only elements of the French nobles, but also the lords of the Trencavel lands and the King of Aragon. The consequence of which was a Viscounty plagued by passive resistance, and the displacement of knights with nothing to lose who eagerly diminished Montfort's overlordship whenever they had the chance.

Map I: Map of Castra sworn to the Trencavel



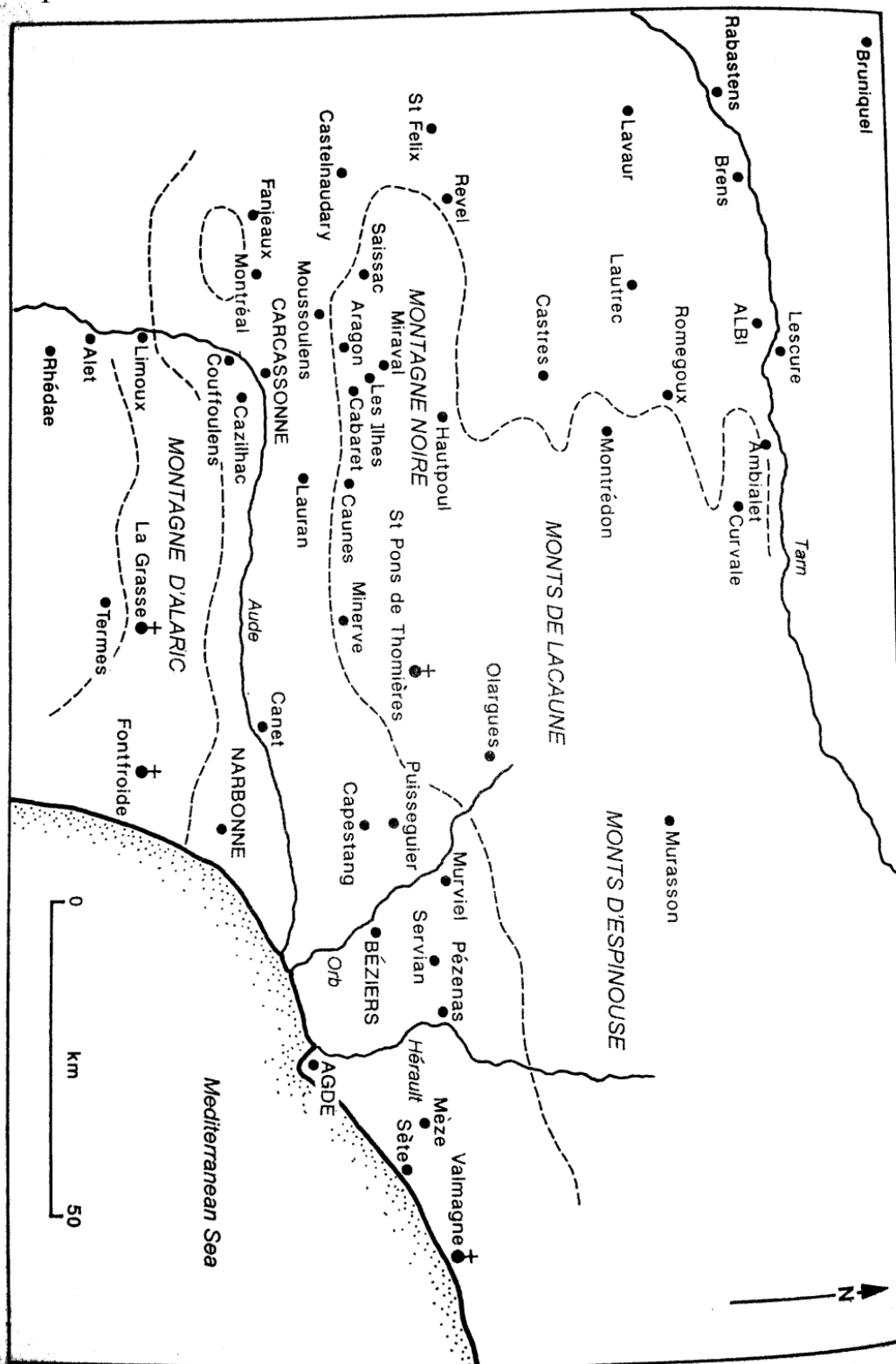
This map is an illustration of the castrums around Carcassonne and Béziers that has sworn oaths of fidelity to the Trencavel. Map from Cheyette. "The Castles of the Trencavels". Princeton University Press. 1976, p. 64 – 5.

Map II: Political Map of the Midi



From Marvin. *The Occitan War* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2008), xviii

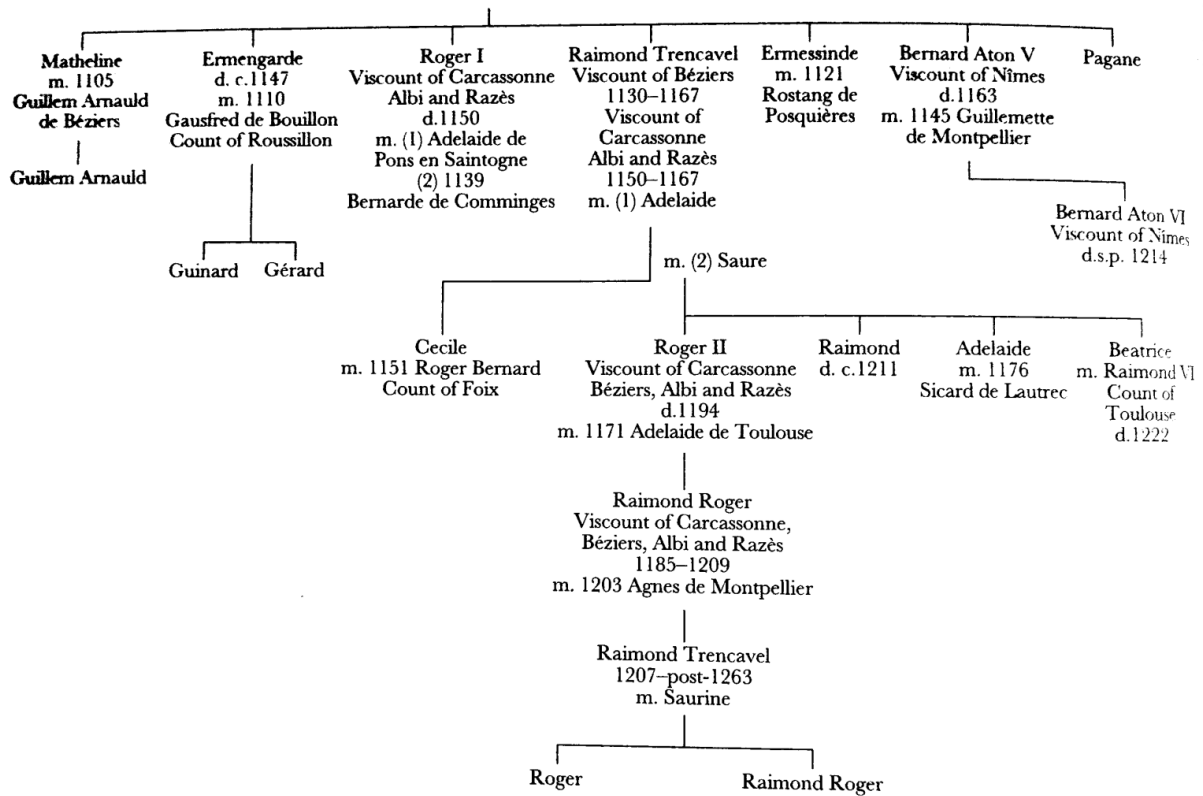
Map III: The Trencavel Lands



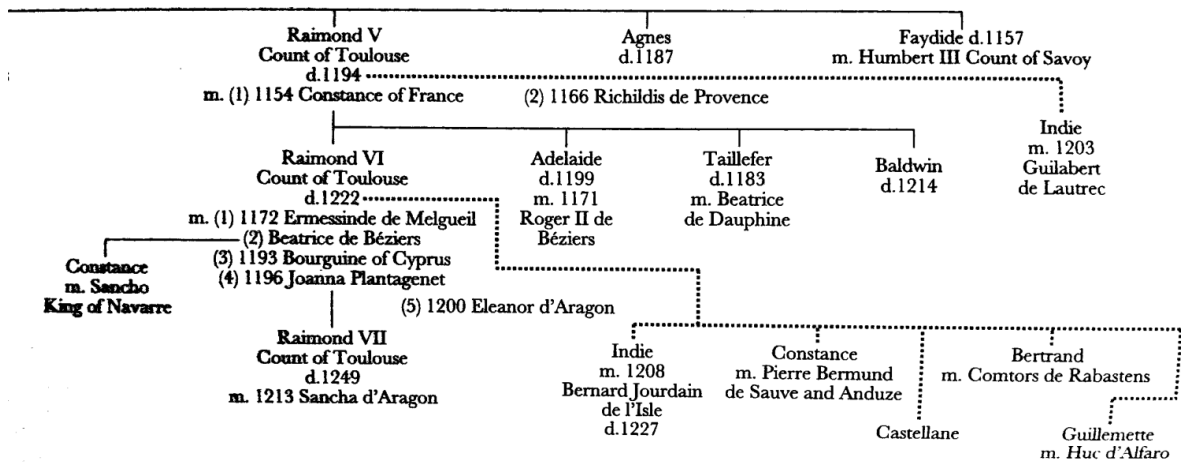
Map of the Trencavel lands from Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), no page number.

Genealogies

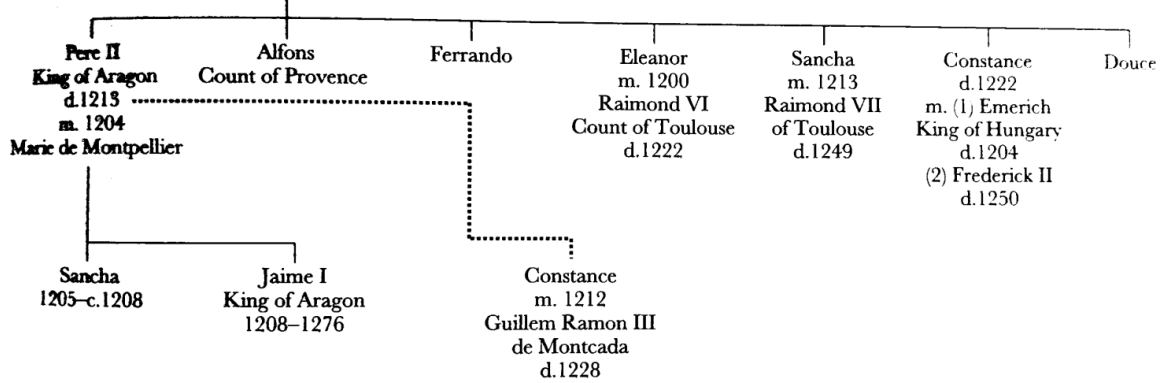
I. The Viscounts of Béziers, Trencavel



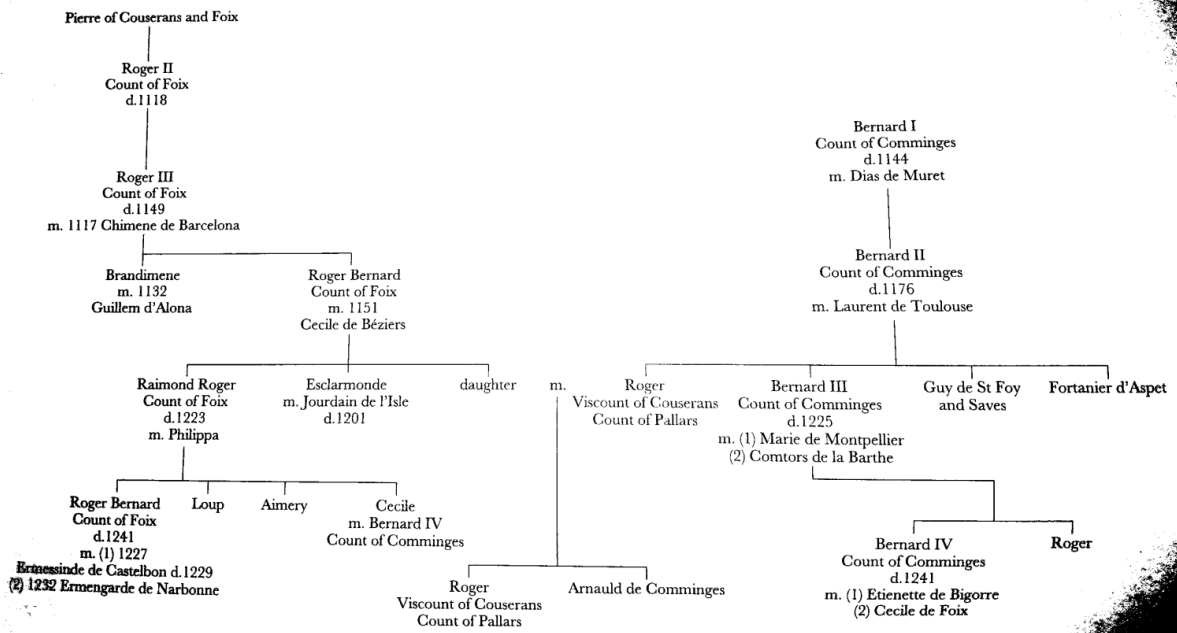
II: The Counts of Toulouse



III: Kings of Aragon, Counts of Barcelona



IV: Counts of Foix and Comminges



All genealogies are from Graham-Leigh. *The Southern French Nobility* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press. 2005), no page number.

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