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Article

Regional networks in revolt: opposition to the Valois in Gascony at the end of the Hundred Years' War, c.1452–1453

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ABSTRACT

This article offers a reassessment of late medieval resistance to the Valois monarchy, through examining south-western France in the mid-fifteenth century as a case study. Whereas modern scholarship has often foregrounded Valois success and treated Gascony as sliding inexorably into the maw of the French state, it is shown here that a deep-rooted revolt against King Charles VII occurred in the south-west in 1452–53, in conjunction with Gascon exiles and the English. Influential and durable networks under the leadership of regional nobles were fundamental throughout the movement, and these entities remained a potent force even after it was defeated. Overall, this is indicative of how backing for, and cooperation with, the English in France around the end of the Hundred Years' War has traditionally been underestimated, and of how noble-led networks retained the ability to underpin and inspire resistance to the French monarchy.

On 17 July 1453, the last great Anglo–French battle of the Middle Ages was fought some thirty miles to the east of Bordeaux. Today, the Battle of Castillon is most famous as a crushing Valois victory, which brought centuries of Plantagenet dominion in Gascony to a decisive end and the Hundred Years' War to a close. The engagement is likewise renowned for the effective use of cannonry by the French artillery-master Jean Bureau and for the death of the grizzled English lieutenant John Talbot, who perished after charging at a Valois stockade that was besieging the town of Castillon-sur-Dordogne.[1] Yet, a key aspect of the battle that has attracted far less attention is how and why Talbot was supported not only by English forces, but also by Gascon troops comprising up to a third of his army.[2] These Gascons were led by regional nobles and may have mostly

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1 Michel de Lombares, 'Castillon (17 juillet 1453), dernière bataille de La Guerre de Cent Ans, première victoire de l'artillerie', *Revue historique des armées*, 6 (1976), 7–31; Anthony Pollard, *John Talbot and the War in France, 1427–1453* (London, 1983), 1.

2 For the numbers at the battle, see Jonathan Sumption, *The Hundred Years' War*, vol. 5, *Triumph and Illusion* (London, 2023), 743, 885 n. 39.

operated from the rear of Talbot's host, from where they were unable to turn the tide of the fighting. Nonetheless, their participation in the battle assuredly indicates that a large-scale revolt against the Valois King Charles VII (r. 1422–61) took place in Gascony across 1452–53, after the region had been conquered by Valois forces, and the English expelled once already, in 1451.

This large-scale revolt against Charles VII in 1452–53 ought to impinge on any analysis of politics, power and conflict in France during the fifteenth century. However, in modern scholarship, the movement has remained understudied and depreciated. At most, researchers such as Robin Harris have acknowledged that Gascon nobles and their clienteles offered valuable support to the English, without any systematic attempt to reconstruct these groupings' composition, influence or agency.[3] Furthermore, historians such as Malcolm Vale have contended that vigorous Gascon backing for Talbot came only from minor exiles and from a predominantly mercantile clique of conspirators who helped the lieutenant to take Bordeaux in October 1452.[4] Within this paradigm, wider cooperation with the English outside of Bordeaux and London has been overlooked—or dismissed as simply enforced, subaltern service to an occupying power.[5]

Such indifference to most Gascons' roles and agency in rebellion can in part be attributed to a general shortage of interest in late medieval revolts under noble leadership, which have seldom attracted the same levels of research or sympathy as 'popular' uprisings.[6] At the same time, national and imperial frameworks in British scholarship have further helped to shape views of south-western France during the Hundred Years' War and at its end. The idea that Gascony was occupied or browbeaten by the English in 1452/53, for example, accords with a wider understanding of the French territories ruled by the Plantagenet-Lancastrian kings as colonial possessions, in a viewpoint that overtly de-emphasizes the importance of local elites and their choices in Gascony and beyond.[7]

Additionally, historiographical narratives about the development of the French polity have moulded perceptions of south-western France and of opposition to the Valois as a whole. Across anglophone and francophone research, it is significant that the period from the mid-fifteenth century onwards in France has been characterized as a time of consolidation, state growth and increasing unity under Charles VII and his successors.[8] This framework has encouraged historians to foreground the development of institutional and ideological aspects of Valois power, within narratives that have often been very centralized in outlook and inflected by anachronistic and teleological assumptions about the origins of absolutist rule and of the modern nation-state.[9] For instance, scholars such as Philippe Contamine have suggested that centralizing reforms in

3 Robin Harris, *Valois Guyenne: A Study of Politics, Government and Society in Late Medieval France* (Woodbridge, 1994), 6, 153–56, 182–86; Françoise Bériac and Franck Legrand, 'D'une fidélité à l'autre: la noblesse bordelaise de la domination anglaise à celle du roi de France', in *Les Ralliements: ralliés, traîtres et opportunistes du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne et contemporaine*, ed. Marc Agostino, Françoise Bériac and Anne-Marie Dom (Bordeaux, 1997), 45–46; Sumption, *Triumph and Illusion*, 740–41. In the nineteenth century, Gascon resistance was explored at greater length by Henry Ribadieu, *Histoire de la conquête de la Guyenne par les Français* (Bordeaux, 1866), 257ff., but within a framework emphasizing 'national' feeling and that was reliant on published sources.

4 See the works cited in n. 5 below, as well as Malcolm Vale, *English Gascony, 1399–1453: A Study of War, Government and Politics during the Later Stages of the Hundred Years' War* (London, 1970), 143–45; Malcolm Vale, 'France at the end of the Hundred Years' War (c.1420–1461)', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, Volume 7, *c.1450–c.1500*, ed. Christopher Allmand (Cambridge, 1998), 402.

5 Malcolm Vale, 'The last years of English Gascony, 1451–1453', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 19 (1969), esp. 131–32, 138; Pollard, *John Talbot*, 135–38; Gerald Harriss, *Shaping the Nation: England, 1360–1461* (Oxford, 2005), 584.

6 For an explanation of attitudes towards late medieval rebellion in earlier historiography: John Watts, *The Making of Polities: Europe, 1300–1500* (Cambridge, 2009), 29–30. For modern focus on 'popular' revolt, see e.g. Justine Firnhaber-Baker and Dirk Schoenaers (eds), *The Routledge History Handbook of Medieval Revolt* (Abingdon, 2017).

7 For imperial narratives, see e.g. David Green, 'Imperial policy and military strategy in the Plantagenet dominions, c.1337–c.1453', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 14 (2016), 33–56; Harriss, *Shaping the Nation*, 577–85.

8 For recent examples, see Tracy Adams, 'Overview: Valois France, 1328–1498', in *The Routledge Handbook of French History*, ed. David Andress (Abingdon, 2024), 102–04; Philippe Contamine, *Charles VII: une vie, une politique* (Paris, 2017), 474–78.

9 For further discussion of the centralized and institutional focus of most scholarship on fifteenth-century France, see Jean-Philippe Genet, 'The government of later medieval France and England: a plea for comparative history', in *Government and Political Life in England and France, c.1300–c.1500*, ed. Christopher Fletcher, Jean-Philippe Genet and John Watts (Cambridge, 2015), 9; Gareth Prosser, '"Decayed feudalism" and "royal clienteles": royal office and magnate service in the fifteenth century', in *War, Government and Power in Late Medieval France*, ed. Christopher Allmand (Liverpool, 2000), 175–76.

the 1430s/40s placed permanent taxation and a standing army in Valois control, thence laying the foundations for 'absolute monarchy' and for what Barthélemy-Amédée Pocquet du Haut-Jussé famously termed the 'unilateral subjection' of the nobility.[10] Narratives of this kind have proven to be remarkably durable, even as research on other periods of French history has increasingly emphasized the crown's reliance on partnership with the nobility.[11]

Against the backdrop of all this, the influence and agency of many French elites have remained underexplored and undervalued in the fifteenth century, at least outside of institutional contexts and beyond great princes such as the dukes of Burgundy. Similarly, political society in the localities of late medieval France has received less attention than its counterparts across the Channel, whilst resistance to the Valois crown has been dismissed as increasingly exceptional, reactionary and even foredoomed. Transregional uprisings such as the Praguerie (1440) and Guerre du Bien Public (1465) have thus been depicted as lacking 'credible alternative projects' to those of the Valois 'state', just as ongoing support for the English monarchy in areas such as Gascony and Normandy at the end of the Hundred Years' War has again been depreciated.[12] As a case in point, Malcolm Vale's seminal ideas about the events of 1452/53 seem to have been informed by a belief that Gascony was 'as good as lost' for the English by the early 1440s, since in his eyes, a growing disparity in resources between the Lancastrian and Valois crowns ensured that backing for the former collapsed on the continent.[13]

The dissonance between such claims and the scope of Gascon backing for Talbot at Castillon makes the revolt of 1452–53 all the more worthwhile to re-examine now. This article will therefore offer a revisionist view of the rebellion, of Gascon agency within it and the interlinked English return, and more broadly of political structures and opposition to the Valois in France. It will do so through exploring the influence of regional networks, which were led by Gascon nobles, and which underpinned the movement of 1452/53. After some brief context on previous events and structures in south-western France in section I, the analysis in sections II–IV will focus on the activity and power of Gascon networks—and especially of a network centred around a cadet branch of the Foix family—at different stages of 1452/53 and its aftermath. The discussion in section V will then consider the major implications for reassessing French backing for the kings of England, as well as networks' wider influence and centrality to revolt in the realm of Charles VII and his heirs.

I

As a contextual and theoretical framework for analysing the influence of Gascon networks in 1452/53 and beyond, it is first necessary to discuss power structures and politics in the region beforehand. Across the major centres of Bordeaux and Bayonne, the Médoc and Entre-Deux-Mers

10 Contamine, *Charles VII*, esp. 474–77; Philippe Contamine, *Guerre, état et société à la fin du Moyen Âge: études sur les armées des rois de France, 1337–1494* (Paris, 1972), 275ff.; Barthélemy-Amédée Pocquet du Haut-Jussé, 'Une Idée politique de Louis XI: la sujétion éclipse la vassalité', *Revue historique*, 226 (1961) 383–98. See also Malcolm Vale, *Charles VII* (London, 1974), 154; Anne-Brigitte Spitzbarth, 'De la vassalité à la sujétion: l'application du traité d'Arras (21 septembre 1435) par la couronne', *Revue du Nord*, 349 (2003), 43–72; Valérie Toureille, *Robert de Sarrebrück, ou l'honneur d'un écorcheur (v.1400–v.1462)* (Rennes, 2014), 227–28; Sumption, *Triumph and Illusion*, 800–09.

11 For recent work emphasizing partnership, see n. 88 below.

12 For Lancastrian France, see the works cited in nn. 13 and 81 below. For depreciation of transregional uprisings, see e.g. Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin and Valérie Toureille, 'Servir ou trahir: la réaction des grands féodaux face aux innovations étatiques, au temps de la Praguerie', *Publications du Centre Européen d'Études Bourguignonnes*, 60 (2020), 19–20 (quoted); Marie-Thérèse Caron, *Noblesse et pouvoir royal en France, XIII^e–XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1994), 214, 286–87; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Royal French State, 1460–1610*, trans. Juliet Vale (Oxford, 1994), 63–66, 72, 76. Cf. James B. Collins, *The French Monarchical Commonwealth, 1356–1560* (Cambridge, 2022), 147ff., 272; Neil Murphy, 'Towns and princely rebellion in fifteenth-century France: The War of the Public Weal, 1465', *The English Historical Review*, 139/600 (2024), 1,027–58.

13 Vale, *English Gascony*, 217–19.

regions and swathes of western Périgord and the Landes, King Henry VI of England (r. 1422–61, 1470–71) was accepted as the hereditary duke of Aquitaine and king of France during the years up to 1451. Much like his predecessors in the Hundred Years' War, Henry VI never visited these territories in person, but they were formally governed on a day-to-day basis by an English seneschal, who was supported by a small administration. Armed reinforcements from England were also stationed in, and sent to, the duchy, although their numbers were far more limited than in Henry VI's northern French lands, which consumed the majority of English resources and attention prior to the Valois conquests of Normandy and Gascony in 1449–51. This left Lancastrian rule in the south-west up to 1451 all the more dependent on the support, manpower and cooperation of regional elites, and, above all, on networks centred around leading Gascon nobles.

The concept of networks is, to be sure, a familiar one across many historiographies. It has gained traction in research on late medieval politics ever since the mid-twentieth century, when K. B. McFarlane underscored the importance of 'affinities' made up of lesser nobles who offered military service to their superiors in England.[14] McFarlane's work has subsequently inspired a great deal of interest in aristocratic networks in this kingdom, and for all that comparable work has been much rarer in a French context, a handful of scholars have still suggested that greater magnates in France were supported by networks that were held together by a plurality of ties.[15] These ties involved mutual obligation and could for instance revolve around land and lordship, office-holding and the household, alliances and written contracts, kinship and friendship, and other forms of association. Different bonds often overlapped with and supported one another, and many were further reinforced by oaths. This all meant that leading figures and lesser members of networks had a range of compelling incentives for working together—which spanned pragmatic, emotional and ideological concerns—even if membership of a network was never an exclusive or deterministic influence on behaviour. Equally, bonds within networks were not restricted to acting in vertical or hierarchical contexts, as networks also included many lateral interconnections between members, who might act as points of overlap with other groupings, too. In the present author's view, any given network could likewise be diverse in composition and could span social strata and urban–rural boundaries. Indeed, a single network under the leadership of a magnate or noble family in France had the potential to connect people from many backgrounds, including not only further noblemen and women, but also townspeople, clergy and even peasants.[16]

In a Gascon context, it is often easiest to perceive the activity and vertical bonds of higher-ranking individuals within networks, since the extant local sources are extremely sparse and fragmentary. This also makes it difficult to use mathematical models in any meaningful way here, as has been popularized by a recent wave of historiography that has employed social network analysis in other settings. However, one can still follow the approach of scholars who have used a focus on networks in British imperial history to shift attention beyond formal mechanisms of power which have traditionally monopolized attention, and towards more informal forms of brokerage which could be drawn on by a wider range of actors.[17] This article will similarly suggest that a breadth of Gascons exercised political influence and agency as part of

14 Kenneth Bruce McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 111–13; Christine Carpenter, 'Political and constitutional history: before and after McFarlane', in *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society*, ed. Richard Britnell and Anthony Pollard (Stroud, 1995), 189.

15 For England, see e.g. Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401–1499* (Cambridge, 1992); Michael Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London, 1995) and for France: Prosser, 'Decayed feudalism', esp. 178–79; Émilie Lebailly, 'Le Connétable d'Eu et son cercle nobiliaire: le réseau d'un grand seigneur au XIVe siècle', *Cahiers de recherches médiévales*, 13 (2006), 41–52.

16 These issues are all discussed further in the author's PhD thesis on 'Resistance and Rebellion against King Charles VII of France (1422–1461): A Study of Noble Networks and French Politics in the Fifteenth Century' (Durham, 2023), which the author plans to develop and publish.

17 Eliza Hartrich, 'Networks', in *Using Concepts in Medieval History: Perspectives on Britain and Ireland, 1100–1500*, ed. Jackson W. Armstrong, Peter Crooks and Andrea Ruddick (Cham, 2022), 156–57; Joanna Innes, '"Networks" in British History', *The East Asian Journal of British History*, 5 (2016), 66.

networks (including both the heads and lesser members of these entities), even whilst operating beyond formal governmental institutions and in defiance of them.

Before turning to Gascony in c.1452–53, though, it is finally worth outlining how relations between leading networks and the Valois and Lancastrian monarchies evolved in the region in the preceding period. Traditionally, the years up to Charles VII's conquest of 1451 have been depicted in terms of decline and defections in the Lancastrian south-west.[18] However, the reality was more complex, as several major networks prospered and strengthened their links with the English court during a period of Anglo–French truce in the later 1440s, setting the stage for these groups to play key roles in resistance to the Valois in 1452–53. The allied heads of the most powerful network in Lancastrian Gascony, Gaston de Foix captal de Buch and his son Jean de Foix viscount of Castillon (respectively the uncle and cousin of the Valois-supporting Gaston IV count of Foix), for instance benefited from extensive grants in the south-west and in England.[19] The young viscount Jean also joined his father as a member of the Order of the Garter in 1446, alongside making a favourable marriage alliance with Margaret Kerdeston, the niece of Henry VI's leading councillor, William de la Pole Marquess of Suffolk.[20] Comparably, one of the Foix cadets' main rivals, Gaillard IV de Durfort seigneur de Duras, travelled to England and wedded Suffolk's illegitimate daughter Anne, whilst Pierre de Montferrand Soudic de la Trau, who was from another leading family in northern Gascony, again spent time in England.[21] This latter lord was already married to Henry VI's illegitimate cousin Mary of Bedford, and he also seized the lordship of Lesparre in the Médoc before 1451.[22] For the Soudic and his peers, profits and patronage of this kind would have bolstered the material and ideological incentives for remaining in Lancastrian allegiance, as well as providing them with a means to offer fresh rewards to members of their networks. As one illustration of this, the Soudic appointed an esquire from his household, Jean 'Pochin' d'Abzac, as his captain of Lesparre and granted him property there, typifying how subordinate figures might benefit from a noble patron's successes.[23]

Nonetheless, the renewal of war from 1449 reshaped the fortunes of these networks and of Gascony as a whole. Despite vigorous resistance in 1450, many of the Foix cadets' possessions and other Gascon territories were overrun by Valois forces in the following year, and Gaston de Foix therefore opted to broker a deal with Jean count of Dunois for the submission of the Bordelais.[24] Gaillard IV de Durfort was amongst those who assented to the surrender agreement, and by this time, the key fortress of Blaye had also been seized and Pierre de Montferrand captured. Further south, Bayonne was defeated soon afterwards and its Iberian captain Jean de Beaumont chancellor of Navarre was taken prisoner in August.[25] This left Charles VII and his new seneschal Olivier de Coëtivy in command of the entirety of the south-west.

18 The most influential analysis here is Vale, *English Gascony*, 211–19. For discussion of deepening ties with England, cf. Bériac and Legrand, 'D'une fidélité à l'autre', 40–43.

19 N[ational] A[rchives] C 61/135/14; Charles Higounet, *La Seigneurie et le vignoble de Château Latour: histoire d'un grand cru du Médoc (XIV^e–XX^e siècle)* (Bordeaux, 1974), 181–82; George Cokayne, *Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland*, vol. 4 (London, 1892), 340; cf. Vale, *English Gascony*, 133–35.

20 John Anstis (ed.), *Register of the Order of the Garter* (London, 1724), 121, 127–28; Charles Hansen, 'Suffolk's niece: the identity of Margaret, the wife of Jean de Foix, earl of Kendal', *Genealogists' Magazine*, 22/10 (1988), 373–77.

21 For Durfort: Nicole de Peña (ed.), *Documents sur la maison de Durfort* (Bordeaux, 1977), 907–08, 912–13; François-Alexandre Aubert de La Chesnaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la noblesse*, 15 vols (Paris, 1770–86), 5:712–13. For Montferrand: NA C 61/138/19.

22 NA C 61/137/15, C 61/138/83.

23 B[ibliothèque] N[ationale de] F[rance] Duchesne 31, pp. 167, 176; Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Jullien de Courcelles, *Histoire généalogique et héraldique des pairs de France*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1828), 'd'Abzac', 94.

24 For resistance in 1450: A[rchives] N[ationales] JJ 185 no. 184; 'Registres des comptes du consulat de Périgueux: archives municipales E dep. 5021 Série CC, transcrits de l'occitan par Jean Roux: CC 84', http://www.guyenne.fr/Site_Perigord_Occitan/Paleographie/AM%20Px%20Comptes/AM%20Px%20CC%2084%20tr.htm. For conquests of Foix lands: Jean Chartier, *Chronique de Charles VII, roi de France*, ed. Auguste Vallet de Viriville, 3 vols (Paris, 1858), 2:242–43, 250, 67. For the surrender: ibid., 279–99; Mathieu d'Escouchy, *Chronique*, ed. Gaston du Fresne Beaucourt, 3 vols (Paris, 1863–64), 1:337–39.

25 For Bayonne and Blaye: Chartier, *Chronique*, 2:254–61, 318–19. For Beaumont, see also Carlos Barquero Goñi, 'Juan de Beaumont', *Diccionario Biográfico Español*, https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/32136/juan-de-beaumont.

However, Valois power in the region remained insecure and unstable. Chroniclers such as Thomas Basin bishop of Lisieux notably suggest that Gascon feeling became inflamed amidst rising taxation and a perceived loss of liberties associated with Lancastrian rule.[26] This is corroborated by the emergence of protests against Valois interference in the Gascon church in 1452, by the reported claims of a tailor in Bordeaux that Olivier de Coëtivy's government had brought 'dishonour' to the Bordelais, and later by the raising of the Anglo–Gascon war cry of 'St George!' at the Battle of Castillon.[27] Following the initial conquest of 1451, though, it was also crucial that the Valois crown struggled to broker sustainable agreements with major networks. Whilst most Gascon elites swore fealty to Charles VII and kept the majority of their property in return, this shift in allegiances still entailed problematic trade-offs. To take one example, Pierre de Montferrand Soudic de la Trau made an agreement after his capture for his ransom to be waived and for the majority of his titles to be confirmed, but he and his subordinates were still threatened with the loss of his key lordship of Lesparre. Equally, they were perhaps tainted by the dishonour of having yielded to Charles VII, despite the Soudic being Henry VI's kinsman by marriage.[28] Meanwhile, a minority of elites such as Gaston and Jean de Foix refused to pledge their loyalty to Charles VII. These two magnates instead sold many of their lands and departed into exile in Maella in Aragon, in a choice that is alleged by French and Burgundian chroniclers to have protected their honour as knights of the Garter.[29] Yet, their decision created an uneasy situation whereby they were in a different allegiance to most of their former adherents, who had to deal with new lords and impositions in towns such as Castelnau in the Médoc.[30]

In the context of all of this, the circumstances were ripe for a revolt of leading networks in the south-west. The Anglo–Gascon campaigns of 1452–53 were dependent on just such a revolt, in that they saw networks and elements of networks use force to defy Valois authority which they had previously recognized, even as many of their members probably saw themselves as restoring traditional rule, in co-ordination with exiled Gascons and the English.[31] In fact, it can be demonstrated that Gascon agency and networks were crucial at every stage of the episode, beginning with the inception of the revolt and the retaking of Bordeaux.

26 Thomas Basin, *Histoire des règnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI*, ed. Jules Quicherat, vol. 1 (Paris, 1855), 259–61; Amedée Hellot (ed.), *Les Cronicques de Normendie: 1223–1453* (Rouen, 1881), 176.

27 For the Gascon church: Robert Blackmore, 'The Political Economy of the Anglo–Gascon Wine Trade, c.1348–c.1453' (PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 2018), 189–90. For the tailor Bernard de Castaings: AN JJ 198 no. 293; Pierre Prétou, 'Le Déshonneur d'être "gouverné de par Bretons": gouvernements et identités allochtones en Guyenne française, 1451–1462', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest* (2010), 165–73. For the war cry and its significance: Escouchy, *Chronique*, 2:39; Guilhem Pépin, 'Les Cris de guerre "Guyenne!" et "Saint Georges!": l'expression d'une identité politique du duché d'Aquitaine anglo–gascon', *Moyen Âge*, 112 (2006), 273ff.

28 For the threat to Lesparre: AN JJ 182 no. 139. For the agreement: Chartier, *Chronique*, 2:259–61; and see also Ribadieu, *Histoire de la conquête*, 208–11, 269.

29 For the departure into exile: 'Expedientes Casa Ducal de Híjar: ES/AHPZ P/1–17–27', https://dara.aragon.es/opac/app/item/doma?dt=1485&vm=nv&df=1400&ob=re:1&q=foix&p=0&i=203775; NA C 61/138/101; 'The Gascon Rolls Project (1317–1468)', https://www.gasconrolls.org/edition/calendars/C61_138/document.html. For the link to the Order of the Garter: Chartier, *Chronique*, 2:292, 309; Gilles Le Bouvier, *Les Chroniques du roi Charles VII par Gilles le Bouvier dit le Héraut Berry*, ed. Henri Courteault and Léonce Celier (Paris, 1979), 373; Jean de Wavrin, *Recueil des croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grant Bretaigne*, ed. William Hardy and Edward Hardy, vol. 5 (London, 1891), 184; Jacques du Clercq, 'Mémoires', in *Collection complète des mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France*, vol. 11, ed. Claude-Bernard Petitot (Paris, 1820), 24.

30 At Castelnau, Charles VII was forced to intervene in a dispute over watch duties in November 1451: A[rchives] D[épartementales de la] Gironde 1 E 17, 'Inventaire des titres' (1703), fos 31–31v.

31 This article's use of the term 'revolt' follows that of Christian Liddy and Jelle Haemers, who suggest that the term is valuable for describing 'collective action' that both involved force and occurred in defiance of (previously recognized) authority, even whilst it does not reflect how 'participants … perceived and understood their own motives and those of their opponents': Christian Liddy and Jelle Haemers, 'Popular politics in the late medieval city: York and Bruges', *The English Historical Review*, 128/533 (2013), 785.

II

In the space of a fortnight after 22 October 1452, John Talbot and forces arriving from England entered Bordeaux and numerous other towns and castles in the Médoc and Entre-Deux-Mers. The speed and ease of this process will be shown here to have relied on advance co-ordination between the English and many Gascon elites, who laid the groundwork for revolt against Charles VII and for the associated Lancastrian restoration. Whereas scholars such as Malcolm Vale have portrayed this Gascon activity as dependent on minor conspirators in Bordeaux and exiles who had been present in England since c.1450, the analysis in this section will suggest that members of two noble-led networks were integral to plotting. One of these networks was centred around the Foix cadets, and the other around Pierre de Montferrand and his family, in a sign of how traditional Gascon groupings and power structures remained influential in opposition to the Valois.

In the summer of 1452, Gaston and Jean de Foix themselves sent an embassy from Aragon to the Lancastrian court at Westminster. This previously overlooked delegation obtained a confirmation of the pair's rights to their lands in France on 29 July, in a document that states that the family had lobbied the English for a new campaign in the south-west and had pledged to support the venture.[32] These overtures may even have been decisive in persuading Henry VI's government to send troops to Gascony instead of Normandy, as was settled between 18 July and 2 September.[33] At a minimum, the Foix cadets' offers must have seemed attractive to the Lancastrian regime, since, in seeking to reclaim their familial lands, the nobles would have been well placed to attract backing both from old adherents in south-western France and from the minority of their supporters who had joined them in exile.

Amongst the former subgroup, it is likely that even before Talbot established a bridgehead in the Bordelais, significant figures from the Foix cadets' old network were in contact with them and the English. One such individual was Pierre de Béarn abbot of Sainte-Croix in Bordeaux, who was a kinsman of the Foix cadets and whose abbey was under the family's protection. Tellingly, this churchman was charged by Charles VII in 1454 with having violated his oaths to the Valois, through sending intelligence to the king's enemies and through aiding them 'during … the damnable entry' into Bordeaux.[34] The abbot then fled to the count of Foix's lands after the defeat of the Anglo–Gascon cause, suggesting that he had little hope of being able to refute the allegations against him.

Meanwhile, other traditional adherents of the Foix cadets in Gascony were also singled out for banishment by Charles VII in 1453, or were accused by French chroniclers such as the Saint-Denis chronicler Jean Chartier of conspiring against the crown prior to the start of the revolt.[35] These rebels included Jean V seigneur de la Lande, who was Gaston de Foix's son-in-law after 1427, and Jean seigneur d'Anglade and François de Montferrand seigneur d'Uza, both of whom had made multiple marriage alliances with the family.[36] La Lande and Anglade had witnessed multiple documents for the Foix cadets as well. Most significantly, they joined Pierre de Béarn and Gaston seigneur de l'Isle—another relative and future rebel—in attesting a charter

32 NA C 61/138/101.

33 For the timing of the Lancastrian decision: Vale, *English Gascony*, 141–42.

34 For the charges against the abbot, his subsequent flight, and his familial connection to the house of Foix: *Archives historiques du département de la Gironde* [hereafter *AHG*], 1 (1859), 49–53; Robert Boutruche, *La Crise d'une société: seigneurs et paysans du Bordelais pendant La Guerre de Cent Ans* (Paris, 1947), 294 n. 1, 416. For other links to the Foix cadets, see nn. 37 and 52 below.

35 For banishments in 1453: Marcel Gouron, *Recueil des privilèges accordés à la ville de Bordeaux par Charles VII et Louis XI* (Bordeaux, 1938), 46–47. For the conspirators named by chroniclers: Chartier, *Chronique*, 2:330; Le Bouvier, *Les Chroniques*, 385–86; Escouchy, *Chronique*, 2:28–29.

36 For familial ties with La Lande: Maurice Meaudre de Lapouyade, *La Maison de Bordeaux et les premiers captaux de Buch* (Bordeaux, 1939), 143–44; BM Bordeaux MS 2805 F 3; and with Anglade: La Chesnaye-Desbois, *Dictionnaire de la noblesse*, 1:279–80; BM Bordeaux MS 2805 F 4; and with Uza: Jacques Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 4 vols (Bordeaux, 1876), 3:230–31; Arnaud Communay, *Essai généalogique sur les Montferrand de Guyenne* (Bordeaux, 1889), xlvii–l.

for Gaston de Foix in his town of Cadillac in August 1450.[37] This suggests that La Lande and Anglade had enjoyed the Foix cadets' confidence, that they would have been counted on to support the family's restoration alongside that of the English, and that chroniclers such as Jean Chartier may well be right that they were complicit in plotting. Notwithstanding the fact that pardons under Louis XI (r. 1461–83) attempted to exonerate Anglade and La Lande's heir Jean VI by employing the stock trope of a lack of premeditation in revolt, old loyalties to Gaston and Jean de Foix thus appear to have remained alive in Gascony during their absence in 1451–52—just as other members of the family's support base also rallied behind them from exile.[38]

In the summer and autumn of 1452, members of this latter subgroup acted as intermediaries between the family and the English government, before helping to guide John Talbot's descent to the south-west and the beginnings of revolt there. Gaston and Jean de Foix's main delegation to England for instance appears to have been led by two Gascon esquires and brothers-in-arms who were attached to Gaston's household, since on 29 July, Louis de Bruthails and Jean de Castandet also obtained grants from Henry VI within which they are described as Gaston's 'servants'.[39] Both esquires, moreover, went on to accompany Talbot on his initial expedition to Gascony. Here, Jean de Castandet became captain of Benauges, which was one of the Foix cadets' familial castles, on 28 October, and Louis de Bruthails helped to capture the Valois seneschal in a residence in Bordeaux.[40] This exemplifies how members of the Foix cadets' network worked to facilitate, stoke and profit from rebellion in the south-west from the outset, whilst the group may also have incorporated other Gascons who had been present in England during the summer. The case of Louis Despoy seigneur de Montcuq is suggestive here, as although this nobleman has generally been seen as a self-interested exile, he had in the past exchanged lands with Gaston de Foix and acted as a witness to agreements on his behalf. He may hence have worked alongside the Foix family in offering his support to the English in August 1452 and then in travelling to Gascony.[41] Likewise, another nobleman who accompanied Talbot from England, Pierre-Arnaud de Saint-Cricq, was at least on familiar terms with Gaston after selling lands to the magnate a decade earlier. This Gascon esquire went on to become the Lancastrian captain of the town of Langon, which was another place with long-standing ties to the Foix cadets, on 4 November, only to be banished by Charles VII less than a year later.[42] Once again, this all suggests that loyalties to the Foix cadets remained impactful, since members of the family's network played a prominent role in fomenting opposition to the Valois even after being scattered across different jurisdictions in 1451–52.

At the same time, there are strong indications that further Gascon elites were active in plotting with the English, and that a network centred around Pierre de Montferrand Soudic de la Trau was of particular importance here. Testimony from an interrogation of an alleged brigand in February 1454 suggests that Pierre de Montferrand himself helped the English to enter Bordeaux through treason, and, similarly, the nobleman is singled out as a 'Judas'-like figure by writers such as Jean

37 For the 1450 charter: *AHG*, 45 (1910), 521–22. For other documents witnessed by La Lande: NA C 61/135/3 (1439); AD Gironde G 2775 (1448); and by Anglade: Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 2:184 (1447/48). For Isle, see nn. 54 and 55 below.

38 For the pardons: AN JJ 198 no. 292, JJ 199 no. 170; cf. Harris, *Valois Guyenne*, 154–55. The idea of a lack of premeditation also recurs in pardons for opposition to Charles VII elsewhere (e.g. AN U 446, fs. 76–77; AN JJ 186 no. 61), as well as in pardons for other crimes (for which see e.g. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford, 1987), 11–12).

39 NA C 61/138/103, 109. For the esquires' brotherhood-in-arms: Samuel Bentley (ed.), *Excerpta Historica* (London, 1831), 214–15.

40 For Castandet: NA E 101/193/14 no. 47; Vale, *English Gascony*, 240. For Bruthails: Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 1:135–37; Paul Marchegay, 'La Rançon d'Olivier de Coëtivy, seigneur de Taillebourg et sénéchal de Guyenne, 1451–1477', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 38 (1877), 32–33.

41 For Despoy's activity in 1452: NA C 61/138/107, E 101/193/15 no. 7; Vale, *English Gascony*, 144. For his exchanges with Gaston: NA C 61/130/13 (1440); Baurein, *Variétés Bordelaises*, 2:183–84 (1447/48). For other documents he witnessed: A[rchives] D[épartementales du] Gers I 1588 no. 9646; AD Gironde G 2775 (both 1448).

42 For Saint-Cricq's activity in 1452 and later banishment: NA C 76/134 m. 6, E 101/193/14 no. 44; Gouron, *Recueil des privilèges*, 46. For his sale to Gaston: *AHG*, 15 (1874), 560–62. For the Foix cadets and Langon: NA C 61/125/35, C 61/132/50; AD Gironde 1 Mi 93–1–22, f. 64v.

Chartier.[43] Such accounts of course need to be treated with caution, especially since they were written against the backdrop of legal proceedings against the Soudic in 1454. Furthermore, Malcolm Vale is justified in pointing out that there is nothing to substantiate chroniclers' claims that Pierre de Montferrand travelled to England in 1452, and neither is there any mention of collaboration prior to Talbot's arrival in a pardon from Henry VI to the Soudic in July 1453.[44] However, it can be countered that collaboration of this sort might not have been advertised by the English given the Soudic's likely concerns about his reputation for oath-breaking, and that there are other grounds for suspecting that he and members of his network were influential in plotting against Charles VII.

For a start, the testimony of 1454 is leant credibility by its geographical detail and focus. Specifically, it alleges that the Soudic conspired alongside residents of the parish of Saint-Michel in Bordeaux (including individuals who have since been connected to a local fraternity), that a meeting took place in the Les Salinières district of this parish in October 1452, and that around three hundred men then went to break down the nearby Beyssac gate in order to let the English into the city.[45] What is significant here is that other records show that Pierre de Montferrand and his family possessed extensive influence and connections within the Saint-Michel area, strengthening the likelihood that they were the main driving force behind the English entry and that many of their confederates were pre-existing supporters. The Soudic himself is attested as a key local landowner who possessed buildings and wine cellars near to the Beyssac gate, as living in a house adjacent to the Les Salinières district, and as conducting business in the parish in June 1452.[46] He and rebel kinsmen such as Bertrand IV seigneur de Montferrand were also descended from and related to other property holders in the area, and it is patent that the kin group possessed strong support within the local community, since merchants from Saint-Michel witnessed two extant documents for the family in the 1440s.[47] This all supports the case that the Montferrand family and their network were active from the earliest stages of revolt in 1452, and the same can also be said about testimony from an esquire named Bernard d'Abzac in 1505.

During an enquiry into the earlier ownership of the lordship of Lesparre, Bernard d'Abzac testified that as a young man he had been attached to the Soudic's household, only to travel to England after the first Valois conquest of Gascony. According to his testimony, and a pardon for him in 1501, he then accompanied Talbot on his initial voyage south, making it more than plausible that he was acting as an intermediary between Pierre de Montferrand, his adherents and the English.[48] This appears even more likely when one considers that three of Bernard's brothers were also part of the Soudic's network by 1452, having departed from Périgord at various times following the execution of their father Bertrand d'Abzac seigneur de Montastruc by Charles VII in 1439. The eldest brother was accused by Valois commissioners in December 1453 of being another of 'the principal leaders of the rebellion in the company of the Soudic', whilst the second—Jean 'Pochin' d'Abzac—continued to captain Lesparre during the revolt, and the third remained in the Soudic's service as well.[49] The Abzac family therefore again appear to have played a major role in co-ordinating opposition to the Valois from within the Soudic's support base, in another sign of how regional involvement in plans for revolt was more extensive, and far more closely tied to networks under noble leadership, than has customarily been assumed. Such opposition to Charles VII would then snowball further after Talbot's position in the south-west was established and networks rallied more widely behind the Anglo–Gascon cause, as will now be explored.

43 Malcolm Vale, 'A fifteenth-century interrogation of a political prisoner', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 43 (1970), 82; Chartier, *Chronique*, 2:331; Hellot (ed.), *Les Cronicques de Normendie*, 177.

44 Vale, *English Gascony*, 143–44; NA C 61/139/69.

45 Vale, 'A fifteenth-century interrogation', 81–82; Vale, 'The last years', 129–30.

46 For the Soudic's house (near La Crabeyra): BNF Duchesne 31, p. 153. For his other property: Léo Drouyn, *Bordeaux vers 1450: description topographique* (Bordeaux, 1874), 469; see also Léo Drouyn, 'Plan de Bordeaux vers 1450' (1874), https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53030004x. For his presence in the parish in June 1452: AD Gers I 2067 no. 11846.

47 For documents witnessed by local merchants: Higounet, *Château Latour*, 162 (1443); AD Gironde G 1095 (1449). For other property-owning by the Montferrands in the parish: BNF Duchesne 31, pp. 185–86; AD Gironde G 1095 (1449).

48 For Bernard's testimony: BNF Duchesne 31, pp. 174–79. For his pardon: AN JJ 235 no. 126.

49 For the charges against Bernard's eldest brother: BNF Fr. 26082 no. 6627. For the family's wider activity: BNF Duchesne 31, pp. 145, 165–70; cf. Harris, *Valois Guyenne*, 182–83.

III

Between the arrival of Talbot at Bordeaux and his death at Castillon, a multitude of Gascons supported the English and rebelled against Charles VII. With the exception of a few forts such as Blaye and Belin, most of northern Gascony went over to the Lancastrian side, before fresh reinforcements also arrived from overseas. This section will demonstrate that networks under the leadership of regional nobles were more active than ever during this period, with the Foix cadets and their support base particularly central to resistance to the Valois.

The elderly Gaston de Foix himself never left Aragon, but his son Jean was present in Gascony by the summer of 1453 at the latest. Here, he resumed control of many of his family's former possessions, and many members of his house's old network rallied to assist him.

One glimpse into this process and into the vitality of the Foix cadets' network can be obtained from documents preserved in a register of the abbey of Sainte-Croix. These reveal that, in June, Jean appointed two supporters of his house in the Médoc to represent him as procurators at the abbey. One of the pair, Janicot de Lahet captain of Lamarque, had held the same captaincy for Jean prior to the first Valois conquest, and the other, Pierre de Grailly seigneur de Saint-Genès, was Jean's kinsman, past vassal and a member of his retinue in earlier conflict and naval voyages.[50] Interestingly, however, Pierre de Grailly was declared by the English to be a traitor who had sworn fealty to the Valois and whose lands were declared to be forfeit in summer 1452.[51] As a result, his appointment illustrates how allegiances to the Foix cadets were able to be reactivated in the revolt of 1452–53, in a way that again testifies to the resilience of traditional structures in Gascony. Even if individuals such as Pierre de Grailly had a plurality of reasons for rebelling, it can be presumed that prior loyalties and support for Foix cadets' restoration at least factored into their choices—as well as being shared widely enough in the Médoc for the two procurators to be secure in conducting business in Bordeaux.

This business itself is also of interest for analysing the role of the Foix cadets and their supporters in the revolt, since the abbatial register shows that the procurators were tasked by Jean de Foix, as the protector of Sainte-Croix, with overseeing the dismissal and replacement of the abbey's *vicaire général* Bernard Robbert.[52] This clergyman must have refused to support his abbot and his noble patron in opposition to Charles VII. However, the fact that he was replaced is still revealing, as it demonstrates that Jean de Foix was concerned with the operation of his support base at a very local level. Against this backdrop, it is worth observing, too, that Pierre de Grailly was assisted by other Foix agents such as a parish priest from Cadillac, and that lesser clergymen with ties to the abbey of Sainte-Croix had previously worked to further the Anglo–Gascon cause. In one case, a priest associated with the abbey even persuaded a labourer from Mornac to swear oaths recognizing Henry VI as king of France.[53] This all indicates that political consciousness and agency in opposition to Charles VII stretched far down into, and right across, Gascon society. Yet, crucially, it also suggests that individuals operating within and below the Foix cadets' network were again influential in the revolt, which occurred in conjunction with the family's aims and was aided by established bonds to them.

The reach and centrality of the Foix cadets' network in the movement of 1452/53 is likewise reflected in the breadth of the family's former possessions that joined the rebellion and acted as bastions of support for them. Even in the face of fragmentary evidence, at least nine such towns and castles are identifiable throughout northern Gascony and its environs, as depicted in Figure 1 below.

50 For the 1453 appointment: AD Gironde H 735, fs. 11v–12v. For past ties to Jean: Higounet, *Château Latour*, 181–82; *AHG*, 56 (1925), 34 n. 1.

51 NA C 61/138/105.

52 AD Gironde H 735, fs. 11v–12v.

53 AD Gironde H 735, fs. 3–3v (printed in *AHG*, 47 (1912), 337–38).

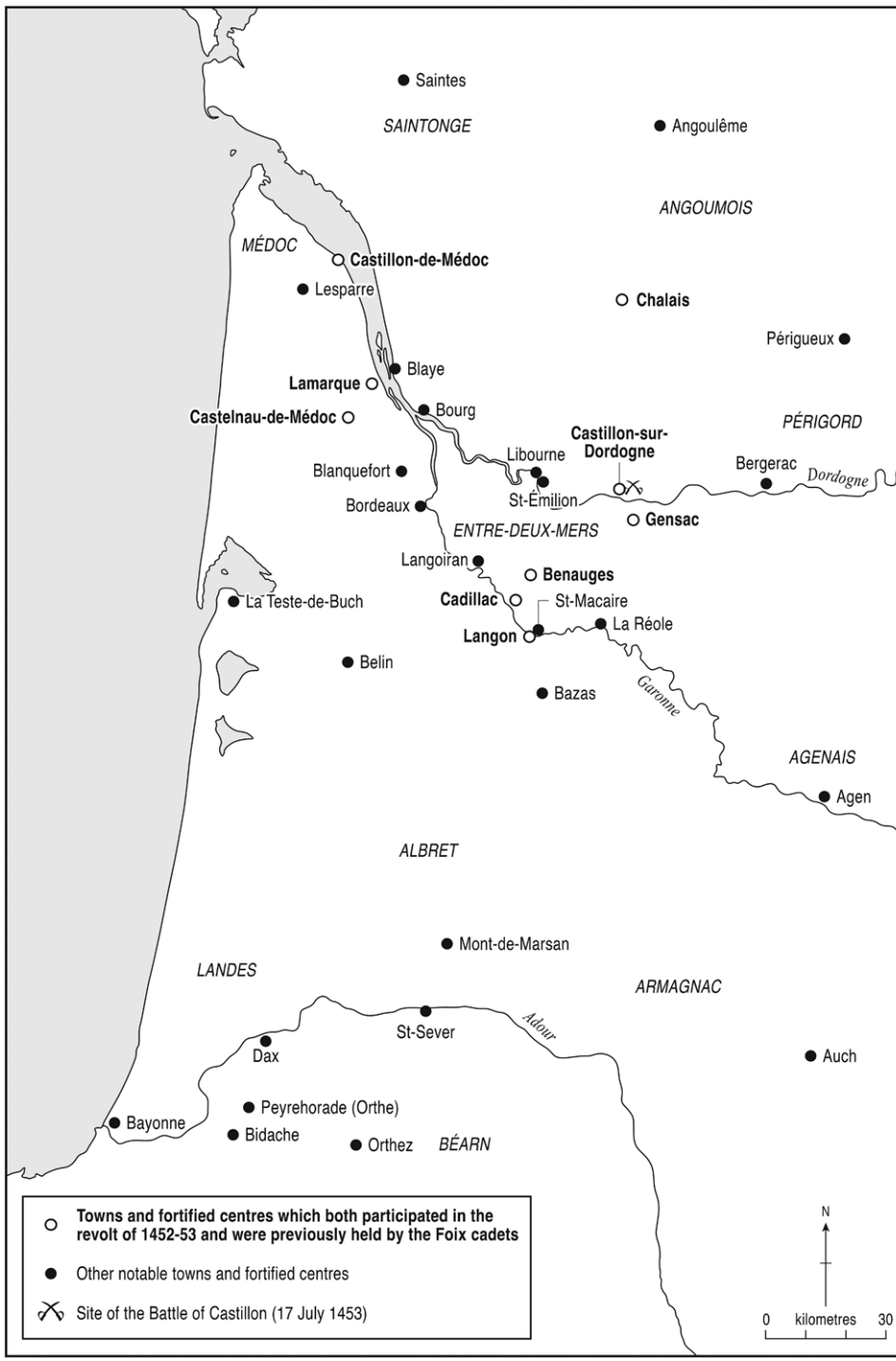

Figure 1. Map of late medieval Gascony and its environs, including towns and fortified centres which both participated in the revolt of 1452–53 and were previously held by the Foix cadets.

To the north-west of Bordeaux, the town of Castelnau-de-Médoc was amongst the long-standing familial possessions that opposed the Valois. In July 1453, its captain is attested as Gaston seigneur de l'Isle.[54] In addition to witnessing documents for Gaston de Foix such as at Cadillac in 1450, Gaston de l'Isle was the husband of Catherine de la Lande, who was the daughter of Jean V de la Lande and niece of Jean de Foix.[55] This makes it extremely probable that the seigneur de l'Isle was a lynchpin of Foix power during the revolt in the Médoc.

Meanwhile, in the Entre-Deux-Mers region, several places in the county of Benauges offered continuous support to the rebel cause from within days of Talbot's arrival, and, once again, loyalties to the Foix cadets appear to have been a pivotal factor here. In the county's main town, for example, extant accounts show that the *jurats* of Cadillac swore oaths of fealty to Jean de Foix as soon as he appeared in Bordeaux, before they later made enquiries into his fate, as their lord, following news about the defeat at Castillon.[56]

Even as far afield as the borderlands of Angoumois and Périgord, there are signs that traditional allegiances to Gaston and Jean de Foix were important in sustaining rebellion up to the summer of 1453. In the former region, the castle of Chalais fell to a Valois force in June, and despite it being situated almost fifty miles to the north-east of Bordeaux, around eighty Gascon defendants of the fort were then executed.[57] These Gascons were supported by an English contingent, but they can most plausibly be identified as adherents of the Foix cadets, considering that Chalais had previously been in Gaston de Foix's hands for over a decade, and considering that an unsuccessful effort to relieve the castle in 1453 was led by the Foix loyalist Jean seigneur d'Anglade.[58] Further south, the town of Gensac, which Gaston had again controlled before 1451, fell next to the captors of Chalais in early July, and the titular town in Jean de Foix's *vicomté* of Castillon was also besieged.[59] This latter settlement played a still more fateful role in events, since the Anglo–Gascon garrison inside Castillon-sur-Dordogne appealed for relief from Bordeaux. It was this plea that prompted John Talbot to lead his host to the outskirts of Castillon and into battle there. The Picard chronicler Mathieu d'Escouchy suggests that the lieutenant was compelled to do so against his better judgement, but it is likely that he would have had little alternative due to pressure from Jean de Foix and his supporters to avoid a repeat of the falls of Chalais and Gensac.[60] In light of what unfolded at Castillon, the breadth and vitality of the Foix cadets' network thus not only buttressed the movement of 1452/53, but also contributed to both its making and undoing.

This does not mean, however, that the Foix cadets and their adherents were by any means alone in driving opposition to the Valois in Gascony in the months leading up to July. An array of other prominent Gascons and their networks also backed the rebel cause and restoration of Lancastrian rule, and this support was particularly pronounced in the hinterland of Bordeaux. Characteristically, Gaillard IV de Durfort seigneur de Duras assembled supporters in Lancastrian allegiance at his castle of Blanquefort to the north of the city, whilst Pierre de Montferrand's nephew Bertrand IV de Montferrand gathered adherents such as Claude de Chezau seigneur de La Mothe to the south at Langoiran.[61] In addition, at least one major

54 AN JJ 182 no. 14; Chartier, *Chronique*, 3:11.

55 For the family connection: Meaudre de Lapouyade, *La Maison de Bordeaux*, 143–44; Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 3:30; ibid., 1:298. For documents witnessed: ibid., 3:231 (1435); *AHG*, 45 (1910), 521–22 (1450).

56 AD Gironde 1 Mi 93–1–22, fos 113, 115. For early support for the Anglo–Gascon cause from Cadillac, see also Guillaume Leseur, *Histoire de Gaston IV*, ed. Henri Courteault, 2 vols (Paris, 1893–96), 2:5–6.

57 Le Bouvier, *Les Chroniques*, 388; Escouchy, *Chronique*, 2:31; Chartier, *Chronique*, 2:334.

58 For Anglade: ibid., 335; Le Bouvier, *Les Chroniques*, 388; Martial d'Auvergne, *Les Vigilles de la mort du feu Roy Charles septiesme* (Paris, 1493), 189. For past links to Chalais: NA C 61/128/28; *AHG*, 16 (1878), 291–93.

59 Escouchy, *Chronique*, 2:31–33; Gaston du Fresne de Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1890), 271. For past links to Gensac: Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 2:183–84; NA C 61/138/26.

60 Escouchy, *Chronique*, 2:33–35. For Castillon's initial appeal, see also Le Bouvier, *Les Chroniques*, 389; Leseur, *Histoire de Gaston IV*, 2:13–14.

61 For Durfort: Thomas Rymer (ed.), *Rymer's Foedera*, vol. 11 (London, 1739–45), 348, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rymer-foedera/vol11. For Montferrand: AN JJ 182 no. 101, JJ 191 no. 36.

network participated in the movement despite being isolated from any of the regions mentioned previously. To the south of Dax in the Landes, according to pardons issued by the Valois crown in the early 1460s, Louis d'Aspremont viscount of Orthe and his vassal Jean seigneur de Gestède gathered troops in their lordships following Talbot's arrival at Bordeaux. They were set upon by distrustful Valois forces under the Scotsman Robin Petit Lo, and Louis d'Aspremont allegedly appealed in vain to Talbot before fleeing into exile.[62] Yet, Gestède and other nobles from the *vicomté* of Orthe are described as travelling to the Bordelais and as fighting on the Lancastrian side at Castillon.[63] This offers an atypical, but again striking, example of sustained opposition to Charles VII from a Gascon network, which once more shows how these entities could prove durable and impactful in rebellion. It is now worth considering, though, what the consequences of the Battle of Castillon and its aftermath were for different groupings in the south-west.

IV

For everyone invested in the Lancastrian cause and revolt against Charles VII, the events outside Castillon on 17 July 1453 were a shattering blow. With a second Valois army already active in the Médoc under the counts of Foix and Clermont, and a third on the way under Charles VII, John Talbot and his Anglo–Gascon force of around seven thousand men were under pressure to secure a quick victory. However, the lieutenant proved too reckless in gambling on a shock attack, and so despite the efforts of nobles such as Jean de Foix (who may well have commanded a portion of the army), a rout ensued. Fifteenth-century authors such as Guillaume Leseur, the biographer of Gaston IV count of Foix, suggest that, overall, more than half of the Anglo–Gascon troops were captured or killed.[64] The fallen included many regional nobles according to Leseur, amongst whom was Gaillard de Gout seigneur de Puyguilhem, whose lands at the western edge of Périgord were subsequently confiscated by Charles VII.[65] Other Gascons such as Jean de Gestède and Pierre de Montferrand were more fortunate and managed to flee westwards or southwards, with the Soudic's escape bemoaned by Jean Chartier as 'a pity, considering that he was the guiltiest of all'.[66] Yet, these elites probably remained in the minority, and the networks of which they were part must have been decimated by the fighting. Jean de Foix was at first reported to have perished, too, and in the event, he and many of his leading adherents were captured when the town of Castillon surrendered following the battle. The viscount would then remain imprisoned for over six years before being forced to raise money for an exorbitant ransom, just as Jean V seigneur de la Lande and his son Jean were also ransomed, and Jean seigneur d'Anglade was kept incarcerated until after Charles VII's death.[67] As a result, the Foix cadets' network was left decapitated as well as devastated by the defeat. This may in turn have encouraged family adherents operating elsewhere—such as Gaston de l'Isle at Castelnau—to surrender hurriedly in return for pardons, as Bertrand IV de Montferrand also did.[68]

62 AN JJ 192 no. 71, JJ 198 no. 544; Henri Courteault, 'Un Épisode de la conquête de la Guyenne sous Charles VII', *Annales du Midi*, 6 (1894), 201–14.

63 AN JJ 192 no. 71.

64 Leseur, *Histoire de Gaston IV*, 2:19–20.

65 Ibid., 19; Patrick Bouvart, 'Le Site de la châtellenie de Puyguilhem à Thénac (Dordogne)', in *Châteaux, livres et manuscrits, IX–XXI^e siècles: actes des rencontres d'archéologie et d'histoire en Périgord*, ed. Anne-Marie Cocula and Michel Combet (2005, Périgueux), 278.

66 Chartier, *Chronique*, 3:8; AN JJ 192 no. 71.

67 For Jean de Foix: Marchegay, 'La Rançon d'Olivier de Coëtivy', esp. 23–26, 32–34; 'Lettre sur la bataille de Castillon en Périgord (19 juillet 1453)', *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, 8 (1846), 247. For the La Landes: NA C 76/139 m. 15; AN JJ 199 no. 170. For Anglade: AN JJ 198 no. 292.

68 For Isle: AN JJ 182 no. 14. For Montferrand: AN JJ 182 no. 101.

Nevertheless, what is remarkable and will be emphasized here about the Battle of Castillon is that it still did not bring an immediate halt to the rebellion of 1452/53, preclude the possibility of further revolt in Gascony or destroy the power of networks under the Foix cadets and other vanquished nobles.

For a start, Charles VII required another three months to reconquer the entire south-west. According to the king's own complaints in a letter to the town of Saint-Flour on 28 October, this delay arose because: 'despite the victory of Castillon, our enemies, both those of the region and the English, recovered their courage greatly to resist'.[69] This resistance most famously endured in Bordeaux, but it was also fierce in other strongholds in the Médoc and Entre-Deux-Mers, where elements of Gascon networks remained active. At Blanquefort, for example, Gaillard IV de Durfort fought on into the autumn before he escaped to England, whilst at Cadillac, the municipal *jurats* supported opposition even when under siege, including by supplying wine to English members of the *ville*'s garrison.[70] Eventually, Cadillac's castle was forced to yield once the town was taken by storm in September, and the garrison's Gascon captain and a number of his followers were executed. This captain is described by chroniclers only as an esquire from Béarn named Gaillardet, but a probable identification is with the Foix cadets' established supporter Gaillardet de Domezain seigneur de Saint-Aubin, who had earlier witnessed charters for Gaston de Foix, and who may have been related to the disgraced Louis seigneur de Domezain of Béarn.[71] Close by to Cadillac, the Foix cadets' castle of Benauges also resisted Charles VII for still longer. The chronicler Mathieu d'Escouchy claims that English troops were the main influence here and even battled with Gascon members of the garrison after Cadillac's fall, but a Valois pardon suggests—albeit formulaically—that 'churchmen, nobles, and other residents and inhabitants' of Benauges supported rebellion up to September.[72] What is more, a surrender agreement dated 25 September 1453 reveals that the captain at this stage remained Jean de Castandet, who is still described as being in the service of the Foix family.[73] Even in the face of catastrophe, parts of Gascon networks thus continued to be determined and resilient in revolt over many weeks.

The Valois hold on the south-west clearly became more secure after the second fall of Bordeaux in October, whilst the kingdom of England became beset by protracted instability. However, the possibility of a further rebellion of Gascon networks in conjunction with exiles and overseas troops was by no means eliminated. Against the backdrop of divisions between King Louis XI and his brother Charles duke of Aquitaine (d. 1472), Edward IV of England laid plans for a new campaign in the early 1470s, with the exiled Gaillard IV de Durfort charged with leading an expeditionary force to France and granted the lordship of Lesparre.[74] In the event, Durfort's army travelled only as far as Brittany in September 1472, but Gascon networks still participated in separate resistance to the Valois led by Louis duke of Orléans in the 1480s, before rebels from Bayonne attempted to facilitate a new English restoration in the name of Henry VIII as late as 1512.[75] Even in the

69 'Non obstant lad[ite] victoire de Castillon noz ennemis tant ceulx du pais que les anglois … avoient reprins ung très grant courage de résister': Archives Municipales de Saint-Flour ch. 4 art. 2 no. 4.

70 For Blanquefort: *Rymer's Foedera*, 11:348, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rymer-foedera/vol11. For Cadillac: AD Gironde 1 Mi 93–1–22, fs. 115, 116v.

71 For Cadillac's fall and executions: Leseur, *Histoire de Gaston IV*, 2:24–26; Arnaud Esquerrier, *Chroniques romanes des comtes de Foix*, ed. Félix Pasquier and Henri Courteault (Foix, 1895), 74; Chartier, *Chronique*, 3:14; Le Bouvier, *Les Chroniques*, 395. For Gaillardet's identification: AD Gers I 1588 no. 9646 (1448); AD Gironde G 2775 (1448); Hubert Lamant-Duhart, *Armorial du Pays Basque* (Biarritz, 1997), 153.

72 Escouchy, *Chronique*, 2:77–78; AN JJ 182 no. 13.

73 AN JJ 182 no. 1.

74 *Documents sur la maison de Durfort*, 948–49; *Rymer's Foedera*, 11:761, https://www.british-history.ac.uk/rymer-foedera/vol11. See also *Lettres de Louis XI*, ed. Joseph Vaesen and Étienne Charavay, vol. 4 (Paris, 1890), 358; Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (New Haven, 1997), 206.

75 For the 1480s: Harris, *Valois Guyenne*, 165–71. For 1512: Neil Murphy, 'Henry VIII's first invasion of France: The Gascon Expedition of 1512', *The English Historical Review*, 130/542 (2015), 42, 50.

immediate aftermath of the campaigns of 1452/53, moreover, Pierre de Montferrand was accused of fresh treason by Charles VII. The Soudic was reportedly arrested whilst trying to flee from Gascony with an expired safe conduct in early 1454, but just beforehand, he had been received by his sister Isabeau de Montferrand and her husband François seigneur de Gramont in their castle of Bidache to the south of the *vicomté* of Orthe. According to charges subsequently levelled against Gramont, this couple had repeatedly exchanged messages with the Soudic and supporters of his house in the Bordelais such as Heliot de Frontignan. They had also hosted the Soudic and other banished rebels by their own admission, at which point arrangements were allegedly made for the towns of Dax and Bayonne to be seized on behalf of Henry VI.[76] The veracity of this conspiracy is questionable, and only Pierre de Montferrand appears to have suffered for it through execution as a traitor at Poitiers. Yet, the charges offer a reminder that the situation in Gascony at least remained febrile, as well as providing a rare glimpse into how noblewomen could participate in regional networks acting in opposition to the Valois.

The ongoing power and reach of these networks in the aftermath of Castillon can finally be seen in their ability to withstand and outlast periods of fragmentation and exile. Taking the Foix cadets' network as an example, it is clear that although some members of this group reached accommodations with other nobles, settled in England or died overseas (as was the case with Gaston de Foix in c.1459), many supporters retained loyalties to the family. Nobles such as Pierre de Grailly and Jean de Castandet for instance continued to serve Jean de Foix, who became embroiled in the Wars of the Roses in England in 1460/61, and his wife Margaret Kerdeston, who acted as lord of Maella on his behalf.[77] Likewise, Jean de Foix was able to rally leading members of his network when he was restored to many of his Gascon lands under Louis XI in 1462, after changing allegiances 'without dishonour' following Henry VI's deposition in England.[78] Jean de Castandet thus reappears as his patron's captain of Benauges by 1473, whilst Jean d'Anglade continued to witness many documents for the family, and Jean VI de la Lande also returned from exile at his uncle's instigation.[79] Comparably, even as late as 1505, it is telling that the septuagenarian Bernard d'Abzac and one of his brothers testified about the events of 1452/53 in order to support a case over the ownership of Lesparre advanced by Pierre de Montferrand's restored heir François.[80] For all that Bernard d'Abzac had spent most of his life away from France until being pardoned in 1501, old bonds therefore died hard. This signifies that, even though membership of a network was never the only influence on individuals' behaviour, these structures continued to exert substantial power at a regional level. When considered alongside the ongoing potential for revolt in Gascony, there are significant, wider implications here for analysing politics in the French kingdom.

V

Hitherto, this article's discussion of the campaigns of 1452/53 and their aftermath has shown that Charles VII was forced to suppress a deep-rooted Gascon revolt, which was underpinned

76 For all the charges: AD Gers I 1600 no. 9873; Harris, *Valois Guyenne*, 155. For past ties between Frontignan and the Montferrand family, see also Higounet, *Château Latour*, 162.

77 For Grailly: AD Gers I 1588 no. 9682; 'The Gascon Rolls Project (1317–1468)', https://www.gasconrolls.org/edition/calendars/C61_138/document.html. For Castandet: *Excerpta Historica*, 214–15; NA C 61/143/53. For other supporters settling abroad: Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 2:413–16; Antoine Peyrègne, 'Les Émigrés gascons en Angleterre (1453–1485)', *Annales du Midi*, 66 (1954), 121. For Jean and Marguerite in 1460–61: ibid., 123; 'A short English chronicle, from Lambeth MS. 306', in *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles with Historical Memoranda by John Stowe*, ed. James Gairdner (London, 1880), 73–75; 'Expedientes Casa Ducal de Híjar: ES/AHPZ P/1–17–26', https://dara.aragon.es/opac/app/item/?dt=1461&vm=nv&df=1440&ob=re:1&q=foix&p=0&st=.2.6.100.522995.105.202491&i=203774.

78 AN JJ 198 nos. 355 (quoted), 363 and 442. These documents relating to Jean's restoration are all printed in Claude-Emmanuel de Pastoret (ed.), *Ordonnances des rois de France de la troisième race*, vol. 15 (Paris, 1811), 482–89.

79 For Castandet: AD Gironde H 240 no. 5. For Anglade: AD Gers I 1408 no. 8575 (1463), I 2747 no. 10972 (1475), I 1836 no. 10236 (1483). For La Lande: AN JJ 199 no. 170; Baurein, *Variétés bordelaises*, 2:413–16.

80 BNF Duchesne 31, pp. 165–82.

by durable and powerful networks under noble leadership. The rebellion was by no means destined to failure or to being an isolated event, and even when accommodations were ultimately reached with some of the main families involved, these were precarious and left many traditional bonds intact. In turn, all of this has consequences for understanding the French polity in the later Hundred Years' War and beyond.

For a start, the scope and ferocity of Gascon opposition to Charles VII suggest that traditional narratives of faltering support for the English monarchy on the continent have been overdrawn and exaggerated. In parallel with views of the south-west, the English have in the past been regarded as overseeing a failing 'occupation' of Normandy and northern France after the loss of backing from the duke of Burgundy in 1435.[81] Again, narratives of this kind have de-emphasized ongoing support for Henry VI as king of France from regional elites. These elites included the Picard Jean de Luxembourg count of Guise and many of his adherents, who remained in Lancastrian allegiance until his death in 1441, whilst his brother, Louis de Luxembourg archbishop of Rouen and bishop of Ely, did likewise until his own decease two years later.[82] Furthermore, for all that the greatest secular landowners in Lancastrian Normandy were Englishmen, many lesser nobles continued to be part of networks here. Exact numbers are difficult to estimate, but there were clearly plenty who did not change sides until the campaigns of 1449/50 and some who refused to submit for still longer. Amongst the former group, there was a network of Normans that was centred around the Aragonese Garter knight François de Surienne, whose son-in-law Richard aux Épaules seigneur de Sainte-Marie-du-Mont captained Longny-au-Perche, and whose escalade-master Thomassin Duquesne was involved in brief resistance at Verneuil.[83] Meanwhile, other nobles instead fled before Valois armies, as exemplified by Jean Carbonnel seigneur de Vauville in Manche, who retreated with English troops to Valognes and Cherbourg in c.1450, before crossing the Channel with his wife and children. He was pardoned in December 1450 and returned to France, but his conduct may hint that some nobles remained integrated in, and supportive of, Lancastrian armies right up to the end of the Valois conquest.[84] Indeed, even beyond this point, Valois monarchs continued to fear that local nobles were planning to support an English return, and Jean II duke of Alençon was arrested for this crime in both 1456 and 1473.[85] As in Gascony, the end of English continental rule outside of Calais was hence by no means a foregone conclusion or seen in those terms by contemporaries.

More broadly, the influence of Gascon networks in the revolt of 1452–53 and its aftermath is also symptomatic of the power of such structures across France and their ongoing potential to underpin opposition to the Valois. The south-west was atypical in its deep-seated tradition of rule from England, but it was by no means exceptional in how leading nobles formed the centre of wider networks, in how these entities reached down into society, or in how the structures were able to facilitate resistance to the Valois monarchy. Future scholarship can be expected to show that networks were just as important in other neglected late medieval rebellions, including movements that encompassed multiple regions such as the Praguerie of 1440, the Guerre du

81 Christopher Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy, 1415–1450: The History of a Medieval Occupation* (Oxford, 1983), esp. 40; Harriss, *Shaping the Nation*, 577; Sumption, *Triumph and Illusion*, 707.

82 Enguerrand de Monstrelet, *La Chronique d'Enguerran de Monstrelet*, ed. Louis Douët-d'Arcq, 6 vols (Paris, 1857–62), 5:454–56, 6:93–94.

83 AN JJ 185 no. 56, JJ 186 no. 12; Escouchy, *Chronique*, 'preuves', 3:374; André Bossuat, *Perrinet Gressart et François de Surienne, agents de l'Angleterre* (Paris, 1936), 256, 286–87, 340–42.

84 For Carbonnel: AN JJ 186 no. 61; Gareth Prosser, 'After the Reduction: Re-structuring Norman Political Society and the Bien Public, 1450–65' (PhD thesis, University College London, 1996), 152–53. For other nobles who chose to flee: NA E 404/67 nos. 177, 191, E 404/68 no. 183.

85 Joël Blanchard (ed.), *Procès politiques au temps de Charles VII et de Louis XI: Alençon* (Geneva, 2018), ix–xiii, 136–48, 185–95.

Bien Public of 1465 and the Guerre Folle in the 1480s.[86] Likewise, historians of the later Wars of Religion (1562–98) and the Fronde (1648–53) have observed that these events were again made possible by noble-led groupings.[87] All of this suggests that overly centralized narratives of French history focused on the rise of the royal 'state'—or even on rival princely 'states' such as Burgundy in the Later Middle Ages—continue to merit revisiting.

For all that it is undeniable that Valois power grew in France under Charles VII and his successors, the story of late medieval and early modern French history might just as well be told as one of the enduring potency of regional networks under the nobility. Of course, recent scholarship is in some ways moving in this direction, through placing greater emphasis on the enduring importance of cooperation between the French monarchy and aristocracy.[88] Yet, it remains essential to emphasize that networks retained the potential to offer a serious threat to the crown as well, and to consider continuities in resistance across the fifteenth century and beyond. Rebellions such as the Guerre du Bien Public were treated as an inspiring precedent for resistance to the Valois as late as the sixteenth century, and it may similarly be no accident that a tax revolt in Gascony in 1548 mimicked earlier resistance through the raising of the cross of St George in Bordeaux. This display was portrayed by the English deputy George Brooke as a tribute to the 'old liberty … receavyd of inglisshmen in tymes past', but it is just as likely to have drawn inspiration from the Gascon tradition of rebellion against the Valois that stretched back to 1452–53.[89]

86 For signs of the importance of networks in 1465 in research to date, see e.g. Prosser, 'After the Reduction', 216–25; Peter Lewis, *Later Medieval France* (London, 1968), 51; Olivier Bouzy, *La Révolte des nobles du Berry contre Louis XI: guerre et économie en 1465* (Paris, 2006), 25–27. For the Praguerie of 1440: Green, 'Resistance and Rebellion', 81ff.

87 Arlette Jouanna, *Le Devoir de révolte: la noblesse française et la gestation de l'état moderne* (Paris, 1989), esp. 65–79; Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power during the French Wars of Religion: The Guise Affinity and the Catholic Cause in Normandy* (Cambridge, 1998); David Parrott, *1652: The Cardinal, the Prince, and the Crisis of the 'Fronde'* (Oxford, 2020).

88 For the early modern period, see e.g. Robert von Friedeburg and John Morrill (eds), *Monarchy Transformed: Princes and their Elites in Early Modern Western Europe* (Cambridge, 2017). For the later Middle Ages and especially the fourteenth century, see also Justine Firnhaber-Baker, *Violence and the State in Languedoc, 1250–1400* (Cambridge, 2014); Georg Jostkleigrewe, *Monarchischer Staat und 'Société Politique': Politische Interaktion und Staatliche Verdichtung im Spätmittelalterlichen Frankreich* (Ostfildern, 2018); Erika Graham-Goering, Jim van der Meulen and Frederik Buylaert (eds), *Lordship and the Decentralized State in Late Medieval Europe* (Oxford, 2025).

89 For the 1548 revolt: Pépin, 'Les Cris de guerre', 278 and n. 85; and see also Murphy, 'Henry VIII's first invasion', 42, 55–56. For later admiration for the Guerre du Bien Public: *Brieve remonstrance à la noblesse de France sur le faict de la declaration de monseigneur le duc d'Alençon* (1576), 34–36.