MONTAILLOU

Cathars and Catholics in a French village 1294–1324

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie

TRANSLATED BY BARBARA BRAY

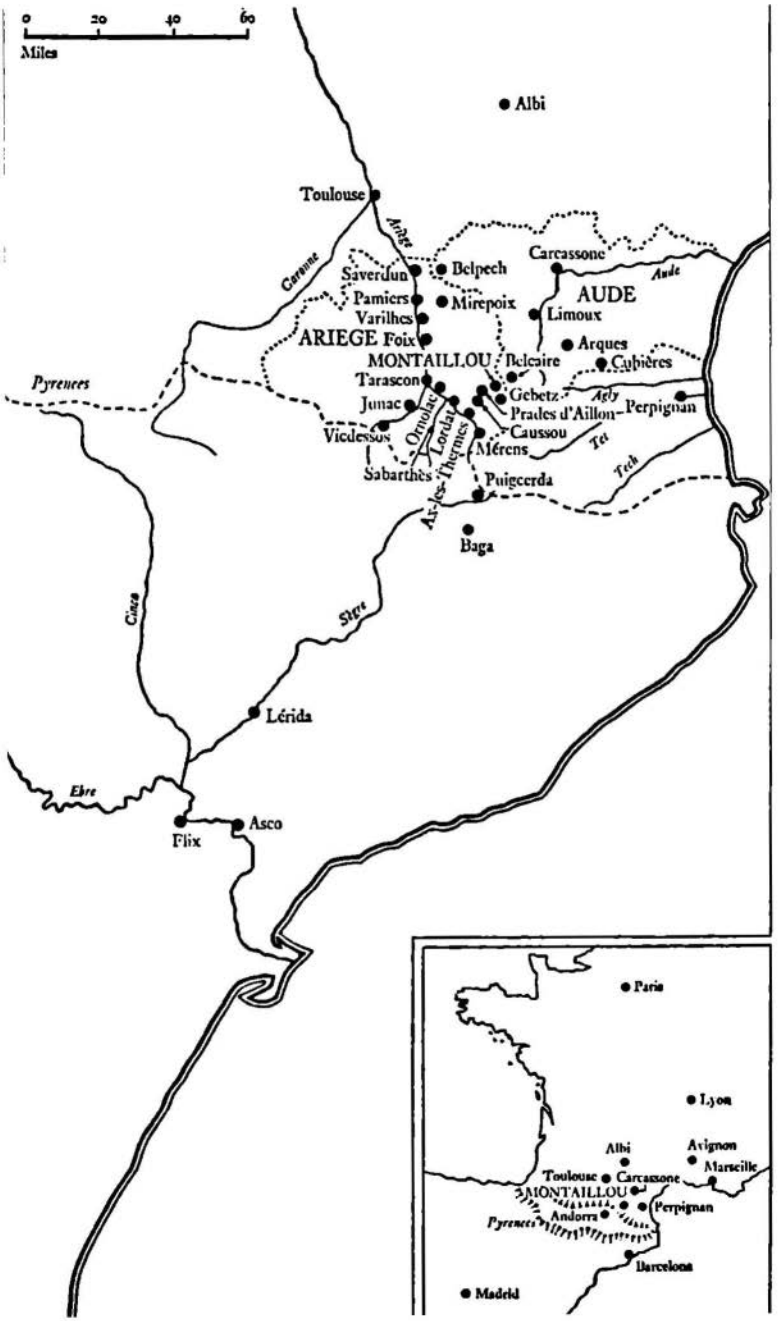
PENGUIN BOOKS

Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England
Viking Penguin Inc., 40 West 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010, U.S.A.
Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia
Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 2801 John Street, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 1B4
Penguin Books (N.Z.) Ltd, 182–190 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand

First published in 1978 by Editions Gallimard, Paris,
as *Montaillou: village occitan de 1294 à 1324*
This translation first published by the Scolar Press 1978
Published in Penguin Books 1980
Reprinted 1980 (three times), 1981
Reprinted in Peregrine Books 1984 (three times)

Made and printed in Great Britain by
Richard Clay (The Chaucer Press) Ltd, Bungay, Suffolk
Set in Monotype Ehrhardt

Contents


0 20 40 60
Miles
Albi
Toulouse
Ariège
Garonne
Carcassone
Aude
Saverdun
Belpech
Pamiers
Mirepoix
AUDE
Varilhes
Limoux
ARIEGE Foix
Arques
MONTAILLOU
Belcaire
Cabières
Pyrenees
Tarascon
Gebetz
Agly
Junac
Ornolac
Lordat
Prades d'Aillon
Perpignan
Vicdessos
Caussou
Têt
Mérens
Sabarthès
Tech
Puigcerda
Ax-les-Thermes
Baga
Cinca
Segre
Lérida
Ebre
Asco
Flix
Paris
Lyon
Albi
Avignon
Marseille
Toulouse
Carcassone
MONTAILLOU
Perpignan
Andorra
Pyrenees
Barcelona
Madrid

Introduction

This introduction was specially written for the English edition of *Montaillou*, which is a shorter version of the French.

Though there are extensive historical studies concerning peasant communities there is very little material available that can be considered the direct testimony of peasants themselves. It is for this reason that the Inquisition Register of Jacques Fournier, Bishop of Pamiers in Ariège in the Comté de Foix (now southern France) from 1318 to 1325, is of such exceptional interest.[1] As a zealous churchman – he was later to become Pope at Avignon under the name Benedict XII – he supervised a rigorous Inquisition in his diocese and, what is more important, saw to it that the depositions made to the Inquisition courts were meticulously recorded. In the process of revealing their position on official Catholicism, the peasants examined by Fournier's Inquisition, many from the village of Montaillou, have given an extraordinarily detailed and vivid picture of their everyday life.

Montaillou is a little village, now French, situated in the Pyrenees in the south of the present-day department of Ariège, close to the frontier between France and Spain. The department of Ariège itself corresponds to the territory of the diocese of Pamiers, and to the old medieval Comté de Foix, once an independent principality. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the principality, ruled over by the important family of the Comtes de Foix, became a satellite of the powerful kingdom of France. The large province of Languedoc, adjacent to Ariège, was already a French possession.

Montaillou was the last village which actively supported the Cathar heresy, also known as Albigensianism, after the town of Albi, in which some of the heretics lived. It had been one of the chief heresies of the Middle Ages, but after it had finally been wiped out in Montaillou

1 Latin MS. 4030, Vatican Library. The text has been published in its entirety by Jean Duvernoy as *Le Registre d'Inquisition de Jacques Fournier, evêque de Pamiers (1318–1325)*, Toulouse, 1965, 3 volumes. This edition is not without its faults but it has the great merit of existing. In the present text, quotations from the Fournier register are set in italic type, and references in parentheses before quotations refer to the Duvernoy edition.

between 1318 and 1324 it disappeared completely from French territory. It appeared in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries in Languedoc in northern Italy, and, in slightly different forms, in the Balkans. Catharism is not to be confused with Waldensianism, another heretical sect which originated in Lyons but which hardly affected Ariège. Catharism may have been based on distant Oriental or Manichaean influences, but this is only hypothesis. However, we do know a great deal about the doctrine and rites of Catharism in Languedoc and northern Italy.

Catharism or Albigensianism was a Christian heresy: there is no doubt on this point at least. Its supporters considered and proclaim themselves 'true Christians', 'good Christians', as distinct from the official Catholic Church which according to them had betrayed the genuine doctrine of the Apostles. At the same time, Catharism stood at some distance from traditional Christian doctrine, which was monotheist. Catharism accepted the (Manichaean) existence of two opposite principles, if not of two deities, one of good and the other of evil. One was God, the other Satan. On the one hand was light, on the other dark. On one side was the spiritual world, which was good, and on the other the terrestrial world, which was carnal, physical, corrupt. It was this essentially spiritual insistence on purity, in relation to a world totally evil and diabolical, which gave rise retrospectively to a probably false etymology of the word Cathar, which has been said to derive from a Greek work meaning 'pure'. In fact 'Cathar' comes from a German word the meaning of which has nothing to do with purity. The dualism good/evil or God/Satan subdivided into two tendencies, according to region. On the one hand there was absolute dualism, typical of Catharism in Languedoc in the twelfth century: this proclaimed the eternal opposition between the two principles, good and evil. On the other hand was the modified dualism characteristic of Italian Catharism: here God occupies a place which was more eminent and more 'eternal' than that of the Devil.

Catharism was based on a distinction between a 'pure' élite on the one hand (*perfecti*, *parfaits*, *bonshommes* or *hérétiques*), and on the other hand, the mass of simple believers (*credentes*). The *parfaits* came into their illustrious title after they had been initiated by receiving the Albigensian sacrament of baptism by book and words (not by water). In Cathar language, this sacrament was called the *consolamentum* ('consolation'). Ordinary people referred to it as 'heretication'. Once he had been

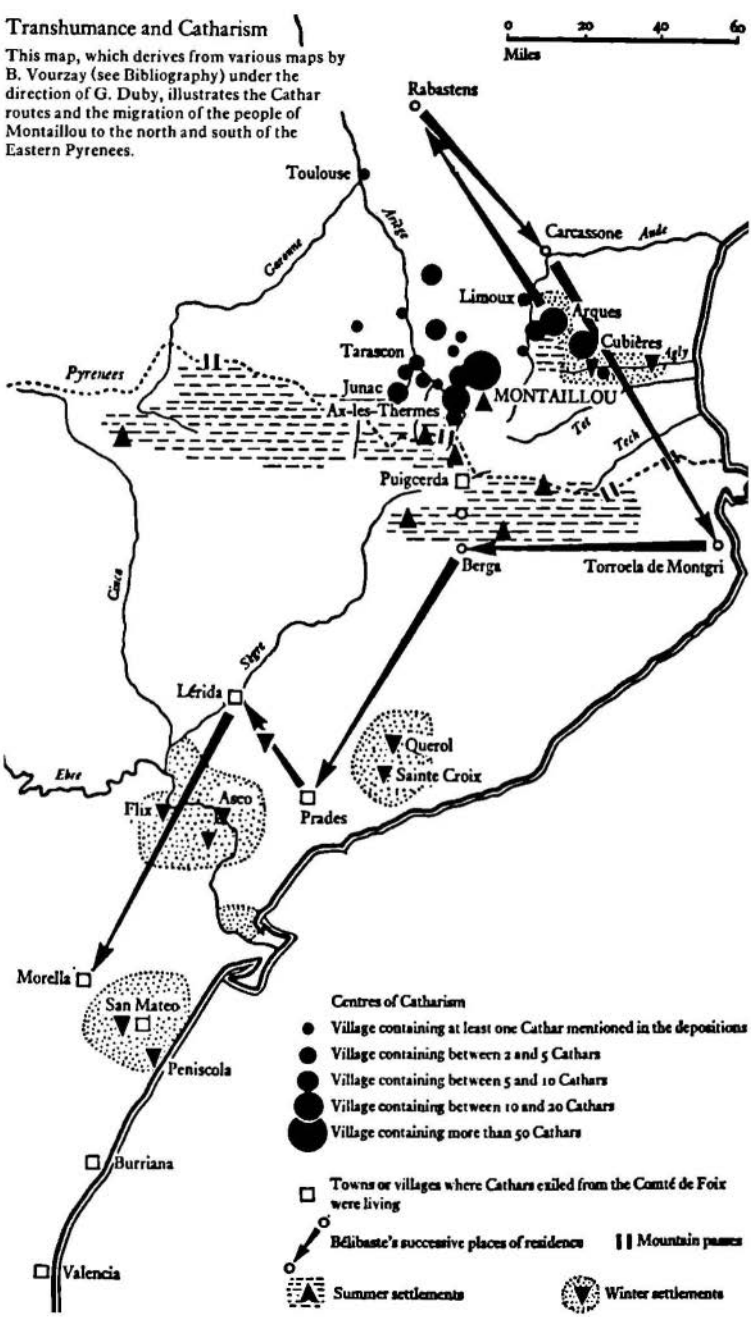
hereticated a *parfait* had to remain pure, abstaining from meat and women. (Catharism, though not entirely anti-feminine, showed no great tolerance of women.) A *parfait* had the power to bless bread and to receive from ordinary believers the *melioramentum* or ritual salutation or adoration. He gave them his blessing and kiss of peace (*caretas*). Ordinary believers did not receive the *consolamentum* until just before death, when it was plain that the end was near. This arrangement allowed ordinary believers to lead a fairly agreeable life, not too strict from the moral point of view, until their end approached. But once they were hereticated, all was changed. Then they had to embark (at least in the late Catharism of the 1300s) on a state of *endura* or total and suicidal fasting. From that moment on there was no escape, physically, though they were sure to save their souls. They could touch neither women nor meat in the period until death supervened, either through natural causes or as a result of the *endura*.

Around 1200, Catharism had partly infected quite large areas of Languedoc, which at that period did not yet belong to the kingdom of France. Such a state of affairs could not be allowed to continue. In 1209 the barons of the north of France organized a crusade against the Albigensians. The armies marched southwards in answer to an appeal from the Pope. Despite the death in 1218 of Simon de Montfort, the brutal leader of the northern crusaders, the King of France gradually extended his power over the south and took advantage of the pretext offered by the heretics to annex Languedoc *de facto* in 1229, by the Treaty of Meaux. This annexation left lasting traces of resentment in what later became the south of France. These were revived in the twentieth century by the renaissance of Occitan regionalism. In 1244 Montségur, in Ariège, the last heretic fortress, was taken. The Albigensians who had long held out there were sent together to the stake in Montségur itself or in Bram.

But even after 1250 Catharism still showed signs of life. In the mountains of upper Ariège the Albigensian heresy even had a modest revival between 1300 and 1318. One of the centres of this revival was the village of Montaillou. Partly responsible for the recrudescence of heresy was the militant and energetic action of the Authié brothers, formerly notaries in Ariège who had become heroic missionaries of Albigensianism. But the Inquisition of Fournier and his colleagues, based in Carcassonne (Languedoc) and chiefly in Pamiers (Ariège), finally

Transhumance and Catharism

This map, which derives from various maps by B. Vourzay (see Bibliography) under the direction of G. Duby, illustrates the Cathar routes and the migration of the people of Montaillou to the north and south of the Eastern Pyrenees.



succeeded in flushing out this last pocket of resistance, by means of a detailed inquiry followed by some burnings at the stake, many sentences of imprisonment and still more penalties in the form of yellow crosses. (Just as medieval Jews wore the yellow star, so condemned heretics were forced to wear on their backs big crosses made of yellow material sewn to their outer garments.) Catharism never recovered from this final blow in 1320. The prisoners of Montaillou were the last of the last Cathars. But it was not an absolute end. For the brave fight put up by the peasants of Ariège to preserve the remains of their heterodox beliefs after 1300 foreshadowed the great Protestant revolt two centuries later.

Jacques Fournier, the person responsible for our documentary sources, seems to have been born some time during the decade which began in 1280, at Saverdun in the north of the Comté de Foix, a region which is now part of Ariège. The precise status of his family is not known, but Fournier himself was of fairly humble origin. So conscious was he of his undistinguished lineage that when he became Pope he is said to have refused to give his niece in marriage to a brilliant aristocrat who sought her hand, saying, 'This saddle is not worthy of this horse'. But even before Jacques Fournier, there were several instances of social advancement in the family. One of his uncles, Arnaud Novel, was Abbot of the Cistercian monastery at Fontfroide. Encouraged by this model, the young Fournier also became a Cistercian monk. He went north for a while, first as a student, then as a doctor of the University of Paris. In 1311 he succeeded his uncle as Abbot of Fontfroide. In 1317, already known for his learning and severity, he was made Bishop of Pamiers, and in this new role he distinguished himself by his inquisitorial pursuit of heretics and other deviants. In his diocesan seat he kept up correct relations with the agents of the Comte de Foix and of the King of France. (Up to this point in his life, though living in Languedoc, he was pro-French.) In 1326 Pope John XXII congratulated him on his successful heretic hunt in the region of Pamiers, the congratulations being accompanied by a sheaf of indulgences. But Fournier's activities were not confined to ideological persecution. He also managed to make agricultural tithes more onerous, imposing them on cheese, beets and turnips, which hitherto had been exempt.

In 1326 Fournier was made Bishop of Mirepoix, east of Pamiers, a move that might be interpreted as a fall from favour. He had in fact made himself unpopular in his previous diocese through his obsessional,

fanatical and competent pursuit of all kinds of suspects. But the see of Mirepoix contained more parishes than Pamiers, so his new appointment seems to have been a promotion rather than a disgrace. It was followed by even more dazzling advancement. In 1327 Fournier became a Cardinal. In 1334 he was elected Pope of Avignon under the name of Benedict XII. 'You have elected an ass', he is supposed to have said, with his usual self-effacement, to the College which voted him into office. But, modest or not, once he had begun to wear the tiara Fournier soon showed his not inconsiderable abilities. He reacted against nepotism. Himself a monk and an ascetic, he tried to improve the morals of the monasteries. Like many intellectuals he was unskilled in practical matters, and met with little success in foreign policy. But he was at home in the field of dogma. He corrected the theological fantasies of his predecessor, John XXII, about the Beatific Vision after death. On the subject of the Virgin, he was a maculist, opposing the theory (which later triumphed) of the immaculate conception of Mary. His various pronouncements on dogma were the crown of a long intellectual career: throughout his life he engaged in vigorous, though somewhat conformist, controversy against all kinds of thinkers whom he considered to have strayed from Roman orthodoxy; his opponents included Giacomo dei Fiori, Master Eckhart and Occam. It was Fournier who initiated the building of the Palace of the Popes in Avignon, and he who invited Simone Martini there to paint the frescoes.

But it is the Pamiers period which interests us in the life of the future Benedict XII, and particularly his activity there as organizer of a formidable Inquisition court. Outbreaks of heresy even after the fall of Montségur led Pope Boniface VIII to create, in 1295, the diocese of Pamiers, including both the north and the south of the Comté de Foix, with the object of making it easier to check religious deviance. After a comparative lull there were two new inquisitorial offensives, one in 1298–1300 and another in 1308–09. In 1308, Geoffroy d'Ablis, the Inquisitor of Carcassonne, arrested the whole population of the village of Montaillou with the exception of young children.

These drives against the heretics were the work of the Dominican court at Carcassonne, which as such had nothing to do with the new see of Pamiers or the traditional Comté de Foix. The Bishops of Pamiers, although in principle they were supposed to seek out religious unorthodoxy, for a long while preferred to lie low and not utter a word

against heresy among their flock. Bishop Pelfort de Rabastens (1312–17) was so busy squabbling with his canons that he did not have time to watch over the orthodoxy of his diocese. But with Jacques Fournier, who succeeded him in 1317, things changed: the new Bishop took advantage of a decision of the Council of Vienna (1312) which stipulated that henceforward, in the courts of the Inquisition, the powers of the local Bishop were to be used in support of the Dominican official who had up till then been in sole charge of repression. So in 1318 Fournier was able to set up his own inquisitorial 'office'. He ran it in close association with Brother Gaillard de Pomiès, delegate of Jean de Beaune, who was the representative of the Inquisition of Carcassonne. Pomiès and Beaune were both Dominicans.

The new court at Pamiers was very active all the time its founder was in power locally. Even when Jacques Fournier was made Bishop of Mirepoix in 1326 the 'office' at Pamiers did not disappear. But his successors did not believe in overdoing things, and repression on the local level slumbered, leaving the people of the Comté de Foix in peace. So it is only during Fournier's episcopate that the tribunal at Pamiers gives us detailed information on peasant life in Occitania.

At the head of the 'office' was of course Jacques Fournier himself, a sort of compulsive Maigret, immune to both supplication and bribe, skilful at worming out the truth (at bringing the lambs forth, as his victims said), able in a few minutes to tell a heretic from a 'proper' Catholic – a very devil of an Inquisitor, according to the accused. He proceeded, and succeeded, essentially through the diabolical and tenacious skill of his interrogations; only rarely did he have recourse to torture. He was fanatical about detail, and present in person at almost all the sittings of his own court. He wanted to do, or at least direct, everything himself. He refused to delegate responsibility to his subordinates, scribes or notaries, as other more negligent Inquisitors often did. So the whole Pamiers Inquisition Register bears the brand of his constant intervention. This is one of the reasons why it is such an extraordinary document.

Brother Gaillard de Pomiès was his assistant (*vicaire*), relegated to second place by the strong personality and local prestige of the Bishop. Occasionally high-ranking Inquisitors from outside the diocese, like Bernard Gui, Jean de Beaune and the Norman Jean Duprat, would honour the weightier sessions of the 'office' at Pamiers with their pre-

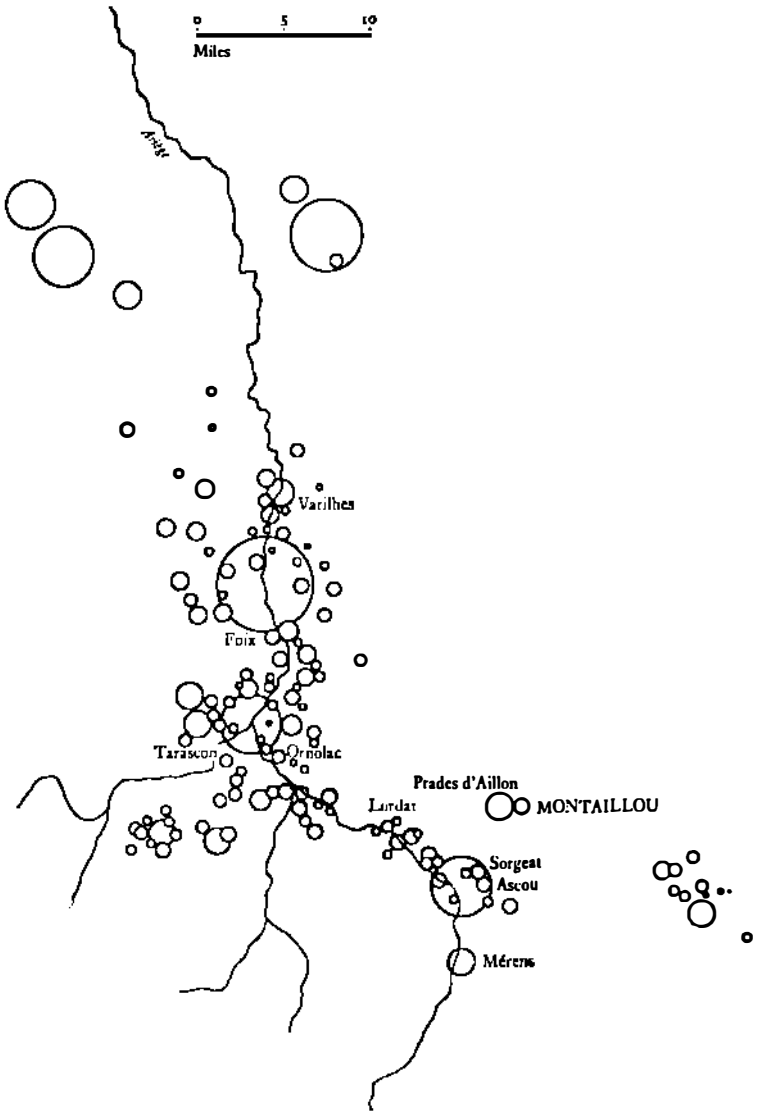
sence. Also among the assessors was an assortment of local and regional worthies: canons, monks of all kinds, judges and jurists. At a lower level came fifteen or so notaries and scribes, there to record the proceedings but never to take part in the making of decisions. At their head was the priest-cum-scrivener Guillaume Barthe, followed by Jean Strabaud, Bataille de la Penne and a group of quill-pushers from the Comté de Foix. Sworn in last of all were the minor staff-sergeants described as 'servitors', messengers, jailers with their inevitable wives and, also among these lower depths, informers, some of them as distinguished as Arnaud Sicre.

A few details will suggest how our dossier was built up.[1] The Inquisition court at Pamiers worked for 370 days between 1318 and 1325. These 370 days included 578 interrogations. Of these, 418 were examinations of the accused and 160 examinations of witnesses. In all, these hundreds of sessions dealt with ninety-eight cases. The court set a record for hard work in 1320, with 106 days; it worked ninety-three days in 1321, fifty-five in 1323, forty-three in 1322, forty-two in 1324, and twenty-two in 1325. The court sat mostly at Pamiers, but sometimes it met elsewhere in the Comté de Foix, according to the movements of the Bishop.

The ninety-eight cases involved 114 people, most of them heretics of the Albigensian persuasion. Out of the 114, ninety-four actually appeared. Among the group 'troubled' by the court were a few nobles, a few priests and some notaries, but above all an overwhelming majority of humble folk: peasants, artisans and shopkeepers on a very small scale. Out of the 114 accused or otherwise involved, forty-eight were women. The great majority, both male and female, came from the highlands of Foix, or Sabarthès, a region worked on by the propaganda of the Authié brothers. This majority from Sabarthès was made up of ninety-two people, men and women. Our village of Montaillou alone, also in Sabarthès, supplied twenty-five of the accused and provided several of the witnesses. Three more of the accused came from the village of Prades, which adjoined Montaillou itself. In all twenty-eight people, of whom each one supplied substantial and sometimes very detailed evidence, came from the tiny region of the Pays d'Aillon (Prades and Montaillou), with which our study is concerned.

1 See J. M. Vidal (1906). Full references to sources cited only by author and date in footnotes are to be found in the Selective bibliography (pp. 357–8).

Canonical procedure against an accused person was generally set off by one or several denunciations. These were followed by a summons to appear before the court at Pamiers. The summons was conveyed to the suspect, at home or in church, by the priest of the place where he lived. If the accused did not present himself voluntarily at Pamiers, the local *bayle* (the officer of the count or of the lord of the manor) acted as the secular arm, arresting the accused and if necessary escorting him to the chief town of the diocese. The accused's appearance before the Bishop's tribunal began with an oath sworn on the Gospels. It continued in the form of an unequal dialogue. Jacques Fournier asked a series of questions, pursuing various points and details. The accused would answer at length – a deposition might easily cover ten, twenty or even more big folio pages in the Register. The accused was not necessarily kept under a state of arrest throughout the trial. Between interrogations he might be shut up in one of the Bishop's prisons in town. But he might also be let out under house arrest, bound to keep within the limits of his parish or of the diocese. When the accused was imprisoned, various pressures were brought to bear to make him confess. Apparently these pressures usually consisted not so much of torture as of excommunication or confinement either 'strict' or 'very strict' (the latter consisting of a small cell, fetters and black bread and water). In only one instance did Jacques Fournier have his victims tortured: this was in the trumped-up case which French agents made him bring against the lepers, who brought forth wild and absurd confessions about poisoning wells with powdered toads, etc. In all the other cases which provide the material of this book, the Bishop confined himself to tracking down real deviants (often minor from our point of view). The confessions are rounded out by the accuseds' descriptions of their own daily lives. They usually corroborated each other, but when they contradicted, Fournier tried to reduce the discrepancies, asking the various prisoners for more details. What drove him on was the desire (hateful though it was in this form) to know the truth. For him, it was a matter first of detecting sinful behaviour and then of saving souls. To attain these ends he showed himself 'pedantic as a schoolman' and did not hesitate to engage in lengthy discussion. He spent a fortnight of his precious time convincing the Jew Baruch of the mystery of the Trinity, a week making him accept the dual nature of Christ and no less than three weeks of commentary explaining the coming of the Messiah.



Montaillou and the population of the upper and middle regions of the Comte de Foix at the end of the fourteenth century

The circles represent the density of population (number of fires) (source: Dufau de Maluquer — see Bibliography). The population in 1390, was half that in 1320, but the relative distribution of people was roughly the same as at the beginning of the century.

When the trials were over, various penalties were inflicted: imprisonment of varying degrees of strictness, the wearing of the yellow cross, pilgrimages and confiscation of goods. Of the five guilty who ended their lives at the stake, four were Waldensians from Pamiers and the other a relapsed Albigensian, Guillaume Fort, from Montaillou.

All these procedures and interrogations were written down in a Register, two volumes of which have been lost. One of the missing volumes contained the final sentences, but these are known to us, by chance, through the compilation of Limborch.[1] The surviving document now in the Vatican consists of one big folio ledger, written on parchment. This document was originally written in three stages. First, at the actual hearing of the interrogation and deposition, a scribe quickly wrote down a *protocol* or draft. This scribe was Guillaume Barthe, the episcopal notary, replaced in cases of absence by one of his colleagues. Then from these hasty notes the same Guillaume Barthe would compile a minute, written 'in a paper ledger'. This 'was submitted to the accused, who could have alterations made in it'. Finally, and at leisure, several scribes copied these 'minuted' texts out again on to parchment.[2]

The surviving volume was not entirely completed in a fair copy until after Jacques Fournier had been made Bishop of Mirepoix in 1326. This shows how anxious he was to preserve the evidence of his work as Inquisitor in Pamiers. When he became Benedict XII, the ledger followed him to his residence in Avignon and from there it passed into the Vatican Library.

1 C. Limborch (1962).

2 The final Latin text of the Fournier Register raises various problems of translation. The accused usually spoke in Occitan (or in some cases, probably very few, in Gascon). So at some point the scribes translated the words of the accused into Latin. This operation took place either at the first stage, when the first notes were being taken, in a kind of 'simultaneous translation', or, at the latest, when the minute was written (the second stage of the process). The minute was roughly the same as the final text or third stage, which was in Latin. A spoken translation back into the 'vulgar tongue' was made when the accused had the text of the minute read out to them so that they could have alterations made in it if they wished.

CHAPTER II The domus

Whether friendly or oppressive, the nobility, the lords and the Church existed mainly outside Montaillou, away from the village itself. If we exclude the case of Béatrice de Planissoles and the little-known *vice-châtelain* who replaced her dead husband as commander of the local fortress, all the inhabitants of the village, including the priest, belonged to local peasant families. Even the few artisans in the parish still had some agricultural activities and relationships. The distinction between farmers and day-labourers which gave the village its characteristic segmentation in the north of France here took on particular forms. Despite the pre-eminence of two or three families who were comparatively rich or at least less poor (the Clergues to begin with, followed by the Belots and the Benets), there were certain factors which somewhat diminished inequality. Poor young men who in the Paris basin would have stayed where they were and formed a proletariat or semi-proletariat of day-labourers, in Montaillou were, so to speak, expelled from the social structure of the village and became shepherds in the nearby mountains or in distant Catalonia.

This being so, the best way to understand Montaillou is to abandon temporarily the problems of social stratification within it and go straight to the basic cell which, multiplied a few dozen times, went to make up the village. This basic cell was none other than the peasant family, embodied in the permanence of a house and in the daily life of a group co-resident under the same roof. In local language this entity was called an *ostal*; and in the Latin of the Inquisition files it was called a *hospicium* or, more often, a *domus*. It should be noted that the words, *ostal*, *domus* and *hospicium* all and inextricably mean both family and house. The term *familia* is practically never used in the Fournier Register. It never crosses the lips of the inhabitants of Montaillou themselves, for whom the family of flesh and blood and the house of wood, stone or daub were one and the same thing.

Many passages show the crucial role – emotional, economic and lineal – played by the house-cum-family in the preoccupations of the average inhabitant of the Pays d'Aillon. One of the most illuminating on this subject is a conversation between Gauzia Clergue and Pierre Azéma of Montaillou. Gauzia, the wife of Bernard Clergue the second, proposed

to confess to Bishop Fournier certain heretical facts which she had witnessed or been an accomplice to.[1] Pierre Azéma answered Gauzia, saying: '*Vain and foolish woman! If you confess all these things, you will lose all your possessions and put out the fire of your house. Your children, their hearts full of anger, will go and beg for alms . . . Let the sleeping hare lie, take another path so as not to wake him, or he will wound your hands with his feet . . . I can see an even better way to keep your house standing. For I, as long as the Lord Bishop shall live, will be of his house; and I can do much good; and I can give my daughter as wife to one of your sons. And so our house will be more successful, more comfortable. But if you confess to have meddled in heresy, you, your house and your sons will be destroyed.*' Gauzia Clergue added: *These words were exchanged without witnesses between Pierre Azéma and myself. And because of that, I gave up the idea of confessing anything.*

Everything is contained in this dialogue, positing as a supreme value the prosperity of houses, whether or not allied to each other by marriage. The essential concept of the *domus*, the domestic group of co-residents, involved various central and subordinate elements: the kitchen fire, goods and lands, children and conjugal alliances. It was a fragile reality, threatened and sometimes destroyed in each generation by epidemics, bereavements, remarriage. It could also be broken up by the Inquisitors. Nonetheless, for the average inhabitant of Montaillou the idea of the *domus* was a core reference.

The same text shows Pierre Azéma using the term *domus* in a derived and somewhat distorted sense, that of relationships (*parentela*). When Azéma speaks of being of the Bishop's house, he does not mean that a mere peasant such as he lives in the Bishop's palace in Pamiers; he merely claims to be a sort of distant relative of Jacques Fournier.

Nothing shows more clearly the importance of the *domus* as a unifying concept in social, family and cultural life than the key role it played in the construction or reconstruction of Catharism in upper Ariège and in Montaillou itself.

One day, says Mengarde Buscailh of Prades d'Aillon, the next village

1 iii.366, 367. This Bernard Clergue was the son of Arnaud Clergue, and not to be confused with the Bernard Clergue who was the son of Pons Clergue and *bayle* of Montaillou.

to Montaillou (i.499), *I met my brother-in-law, Guillaume Buscailh, on the way to my parish church.*

'Where are you going?' asked Guillaume.

'I am going to church.'

'What an excellent ecclesiastic you are!' answered Guillaume. 'You would do just as well to pray to God in your own house as in the church.'

I answered that the Church was a more suitable place to pray to God than one's own house.

Then he simply said to me: 'You are not of the faith.'

Thus for Guillaume Buscailh, so zealous a supporter of Cathar ideas that he one day tried to make his sister-in-law stop feeding her baby and let it die in *endura* (i.499), the Albigensian faith was something which existed and was practised at home, unlike the Roman faith, properly celebrated in the parish church. This was a generally held idea. One peasant told Jacques Fournier that when heresy entered into a *domus* it was like leprosy and entrenched itself there for four generations or for ever (ii.100). Aude Fauré of Merviel, a neurotic, lost faith in the Eucharist and confided her doubts to her neighbour and relative Ermengarde Garaudy. The latter, horrified, warned her against the evil consequences her scepticism might have for the house and village she lived in. *'Traitress!'* said Ermengarde (ii.87). *'This village and this* ostal *have always been pure from all evil and heresy. Beware lest you bring evil upon us from another place, lest you make our own place accursed.'* Conversely, the violence of the Inquisition was regarded by its victims as an act of aggression against the heretical *domus*, and only secondly as an attack on the liberty or life of the individual. When the priest of Montaillou was arrested after being denounced by two spies (ii.281), Bernard Clergue exclaimed: *These two traitors have brought misfortune upon our house and upon my brother the priest.*

People might be converted to heresy house by house, rather than individual by individual. Pierre Authié, the Cathar missionary, preferred the group method. To the assembled family of Raymond Pierre he said (ii.406): *'It is God's wish that I come into your house to save the souls of those who dwell in it.'* Pierre Maury of Montaillou quotes the case of a *domus* at Arques which was converted 'like one man'. He says (iii.143): *I believe that Gaillarde, sister of Guillaume Escaunier and wife of Michel Leth, and Esclarmonde, Guillaume's other sister, who might well have been twelve years old, were believers* [*credentes*] *in the heretics. And*

in my opinion the same was true of Arnaud, Guillaume's brother. All these people were converted at once, the whole household at a blow, together with Gaillarde, the mother of Guillaume Escaunier and Marquise, her sister. In Montaillou itself the missionary work of people like Authié was based on a network of certain houses. Béatrice de Planissoles relates: *When I lived in Montaillou and Prades d'Aillon the rumour among the believers in heresy had it that the heretics frequented the houses of the brothers Raymond and Bernard Belot, who at that time lived together; also the house of Alazaïs Rives, sister of Prades Tavernier the heretic. Also the house of Guillaume Benet, brother of Arnaud Benet of Ax. All the people of these various houses came from Montaillou.*[1] Béatrice was shrewd enough to see one of the secrets of heresy's success in her village: dangerous ideas crept like fleas from one *domus* or domestic group to another. Once heresy was implanted, the *domus* acted as a kind of conservatory, a barricade limiting compromising contacts with houses which were not heretical. The secrecy of the new faith was preserved to the utmost when whispered beneath the door of the *domus* (ii.10) or, preferably, when shut up in the damp fug of the *ostal*'s four walls. In Montaillou itself, Alazaïs Azéma spoke heresy only in her own house, with her son Raymond (i.319). But she also did so with the members of the house of Belot (the three brothers – Raymond, Bernard and Guillaume – and their mother, Guillemette) as well as with the members of the house of Benet (Guillaume, his son Raymond, and Guillemette, Guillaume's wife) related by marriage to the house of Belot. (Note how, in the list given by Alazaïs Azéma, the men, whether young or old, regularly take precedence over the women, even when the women are old.) Similarly, Raymonde Lizier, later to become Raymonde Belot by another marriage, and end in prison for heresy, *entertained a great familiarity with Guillemette Belot and with Raymond, Bernard and Arnaud Belot; she frequented their house and spoke much in secret with them.*[2] Both in Montaillou and in the other villages one could go on indefinitely giving

1 i.233, and iii.161. Heresy was introduced to Montaillou by the Authiés in 1300, in the house of Guillaume Benet (or rather re-introduced, for heresy had already been present to a modest degree during the last decade of the thirteenth century, according to Béatrice de Planissoles's evidence about Raymond Roussel, I, 219). The fact that Guillaume Benet was the brother of Arnaud Benet of Ax, himself the father-in-law of Guillaume Authié, clearly made contacts easier between town and village.
2 ii.223. Arnaud was Raymonde Lizier's future husband.

examples underlining the special social links between houses belonging to the heretical movement.

This communicating yet exclusive network acted as a logistic support to Cathar clandestinity. But the role of the network derived from prior social links between the *domus*; it made use of these social links, it did not create them. Certain other *domus*, just because they were not Cathar, served as a structured social outlet for people who were good though perhaps vacillating Catholics. Jean Pellissier, a shepherd in the village, declared that he was not a heretic, at least in his youth (iii.75): *I used to visit four houses in Montaillou, and not one of them was heretical.*

In Montaillou the usual collective organization, the assembly of heads of families, was perhaps not entirely absent, but, if it functioned at all, seems to have enjoyed a somewhat ghostly existence. It was probably paralysed by the internal division of the village into religious factions and antagonistic cliques. As for the confraternities, societies of penitents, and other usual ingredients of Occitan social life, they were absent, if not from the period in general, at least from the mountain communities with which we are concerned. This being so, I see Montaillou first and foremost as an archipelago of *domus*, each one positive or negative in terms of the currents of heterodox beliefs.

The peasants and shepherds of Montaillou were conscious of this situation. The farmer Guillaume Belot and the brothers Pierre and Guillaume Maury, both shepherds, out one day for a walk together, made an informal census of the village, dividing it up into houses of believers and houses of unbelievers – the belief in question being, of course, heresy. Among the houses which the two Guillaumes expressly described as 'believing' were the house of Maurs, the house of Guilhabert, the house of Benet, and those of Bernard Rives, Raymond Rives, Maury, Ferrier, Bayle, Marty, Fauré and Belot.[1] The eleven 'believing' houses often corresponded to nuclear families each formed of two parents and their children. One of the eleven heretical *domus*, however, departs from this model, consisting of an aged mother (Guillemette 'Belote') and her four grown-up sons, all still bachelors at that period. The eleven 'believing' houses, according to this list, consisted of thirty-six heretics in all; but this total must be regarded as incomplete since for many of the couples listed Belot and the Maury brothers mention

1 iii.161. The list is incomplete: Maury and Belot do not mention the important house of Clergue.

only the names of the husband and wife and not those of the children, the latter probably being considered a negligible quantity.

The rest of the enumeration shows that the *domus* was not always coextensive with the opinions of its members. Maury and the two Belots mention a certain number of maverick heretics in Montaillou not attached to a *domus* (which would then, ipso facto, be considered as 'believing'). The 'houseless' heretics (iii.162) were nine in number, and included two married couples (the Vitals and the Forts), who probably lived in houses belonging to other people; two married women (whose opinions perhaps differed from those of their husbands); an illegitimate daughter; and two men, members of families but mentioned separately.

Other houses in Montaillou which were not regarded as 'believing' adopted a collective attitude of benevolent neutrality towards Catharism. One of these was the *domus* of the Liziers (iii.162, 490). Maury and the Belot brothers said there was nothing to fear from the Lizier *domus* since the murder of Arnaud Lizier, an anti-Cathar. After his death, the house of Lizier came into the sphere of influence of the Clergues, and even into the personal harem of the priest, since Pierre Clergue took Grazide Lizier as his mistress.

In Montaillou, Catholicism also went by houses. Jean Pellissier, farm servant and shepherd, said there were five houses in the village which were not heretical. These were the house of Pellissier itself, probably 'non-nuclear' because it included five brothers of whom some at least were grown up; the house of Na Carminagua, Madame Carminagua, mother of the Azéma brothers (the brothers sometimes showed something more than reserve towards heresy); the house of Julien Pellissier; the house of Pierre Ferrier, which according to Maury and Belot afterwards went over to Albigensian sympathies; and finally the house of a woman called Na Longua, mother of Gauzia Clergue, herself related by marriage to the Clergues, but not a heretic as they were.

So among the houses listed there were in all eleven heretical *domus*, five Catholic *domus*, some houses which changed sides (for example, the Clergues) and a few mixed, neutral or divided houses, sometimes containing people with 'split' hearts, volatile and treacherous (ii.223). The list is incomplete, since in the decade beginning 1300 Montaillou probably contained over 200 inhabitants, in other words at least about forty houses. But out of these forty houses the majority at one time or another showed some weakness in favour of heresy. In all, according to

Guillaume Mathei and Pons Rives, two well-informed witnesses, there were in Montaillou only two houses *untouched by heresy* (i.292). As for Guillaume Authié, the Cathar missionary who enthused about Montaillou, about Clergue the priest and about the house of the Clergues (*No*, he said, *I have nothing to fear from Clergue the priest nor from the house of the Clergues. If only all the priests in the world could be like the priest in Montaillou*), he confirms what Mathei and Rives say about the two anti-Cathar houses: *In Montaillou there are only two men whom we have to be careful about.*[1] (Rives and Mathei speak of two anti-Cathar houses, i.e. one anti-Cathar individual for each house.)

All the evidence we have emphasizes the mystical, religious and central significance of the *domus* for the people of Montaillou. Conversely, *as one measly pig contaminates the whole sty*, an individual infected with dogmatic deviation soon spread the disease to all his *domus*. Though there were exceptions, a person's belief was generally that of his house. It took the great waves of repression after 1308 to break up the network of Cathar *domus* in Montaillou, and to turn the village into a tragic rat-race where everyone worked to encompass his neighbour's ruin, thus, mistakenly, hoping to avert his own.

Whatever the dénouement, it is certain that for the people of Montaillou the house (*ostal*) occupied a strategic position as regards worldly possessions. Here is Jacques Authié addressing the shepherds of Arques and Montaillou and adapting for their benefit the Cathar myth of the Fall (iii.130; ii.25): '*Satan entered into the Kingdom of the Father, and told the Spirits of that Kingdom that he, the Devil, owned a much better Paradise . . . "Spirits, I will bring you into my world", said Satan, "and I shall give you oxen, cows, riches and a wife for company, and you will have your own* ostals, *and you will have children . . . and you will rejoice more for a child, when you have one, than for all the rest which you enjoy here in Paradise."* ' In the hierarchy of essential possessions, then, the *ostal* comes after the cow and the wife, but before the child.

From the ethnographic point of view the juridical-magical significance of the *ostal* of Ariège, just like the *casa* of Andorra, was greater than the sum of the perishable individuals who went to make up the household. The Pyrenean house was a moral entity and its goods were indivisible. It possessed a certain number of rights, rights which were expressed in

i.279. One of these is Pierre Azéma and the other is not named.

ownership of land and in rights of usage in the forests and common pastures of the mountains, the *solanes* or *soulanes* of the parish. The *ostal* or *casa* 'continued the personal existence of its dead master'; it was regarded as 'true mistress of all goods which go to make up the heritage'. All the more so because in the village of Montaillou the peasants, well-to-do or otherwise, all owned some possessions. They might even be said to be de facto proprietors of the fields and meadows which, if one excludes forests and commons, made up the major part of the cultivated land.

In Montaillou the house had its 'star', its 'luck', *in which the dead still had a share* (i.313–14). Star and luck were protected by keeping in the house bits of fingernail and hair belonging to the deceased head of the family. Hair and nails, which went on growing after death, were regarded as bearers of especially intense vital energy. Through this ritual the house 'was imbued with certain magic qualities belonging to the deceased', and could subsequently convey those qualities to other people belonging to the same line. *On the death of Pons Clergue, father of the priest at Montaillou*, said Alazaïs Azéma (i.313–14), *Mengarde Clergue, his wife, asked me and Brune Pourcel to cut some locks of hair from around the forehead of the corpse, together with fragments from all his finger- and toe-nails; and this so that the house of the dead man might remain fortunate; so the door of the house of the Clergues, in which the dead body lay, was closed; we cut his hair and nails; and we gave them to Guillemette, the servant of the house, who in turn gave them to Mengarde Clergue. This 'abscission' of hair and nails was performed after water had been sprinkled on the dead man's face (for in Montaillou we do not wash the whole of the corpse).*

The person behind these practices was a peasant woman of Montaillou, Brune Vital. '*Madame*,' she had said to Mengarde, Pons's widow (i.313–14), '*I have heard that if you take locks of hair and bits of finger- and toe-nail from a corpse, it does not carry away with it the star or good fortune of the house.*' Fabrisse Rives, another woman of Montaillou, gave further details (i.328). *When Pons Clergue, the priest's father, died, many people from the Pays d'Aillon came to the house of the priest, his son. The body was placed in the 'house within the house', called the* foganha [kitchen]; *it was not yet wrapped in a shroud; the priest then sent everyone out of the house with the exception of Alazaïs Azéma and Brune Pourcel,*

the bastard daughter of Prades Tavernier; these women remained alone with the dead man and the priest; the women and the priest took the locks of hair and bits of finger- and toe-nail from the corpse . . . Later there was a rumour that the priest had done the same with the corpse of his mother. Thus the heirs, to prevent the dead person carrying away with him the good fortune of the *domus*, sent away the many visitors come to express their condolences, shut the door and barricaded themselves in the kitchen, the 'house within the house'. They did not wash the body for fear of rinsing away some precious qualities attached to the skin and the accumulated dirt. These precautions may be compared with those Pierre Bourdieu mentions in connection with Kabylie in Algeria: there too every possible precaution is taken to prevent the dead person, while being washed and buried, from taking away with him the *baraka* of the house.[1]

One day, to the south of the hill where the local château stood, Alazaïs Fauré of Montaillou, carrying an empty sack on her head, met Bernard Benet of the same village (i.404). Bernard proposed to denounce to the Inquisitor at Carcassonne the 'heretication' before his death of the late Guillaume Guilhabert, Alazaïs's brother. Alazaïs was horrified. She said at once that she was ready to do anything to protect her brother's memory; when that was retrospectively threatened, so was his *domus. I told Bernard Benet*, said Alazaïs, *that I would give him half a dozen sheep, or a dozen sheep, or whatever else he wanted, to avoid this affliction which would bring down harm and malediction on my dead brother and on his* domus.

The use of bits of the human body to preserve simultaneously the continuity of the family and that of the house relates to other, similar magic rites belonging to Occitan folklore. Béatrice de Planissoles kept the first menstrual blood of her daughter to use as a love potion to bewitch some future son-in-law. She preserved the umbilical cords of her grandsons as talismans to help her win her lawsuit. These two examples again involve the family line and the family prosperity. Until quite recent times the girls of Languedoc used to put a drop of their blood or a nail-paring into a cake or a potion in order to make a boy fall in love with them.

The fragments taken from the body of the chief of a family in Mont-

1 P. Bourdieu, *Esquisse d'une theorie de la pratique* (Towards a theory of practice), Geneva, 1972.

aillou were linked to the *domus* in which they were preserved by a relationship analogous to that between the relics of a saint and the shrine which contains them. Theories on the indestructibility of a king's body and the continuity of the royal house are equally relevant. A few fragments were enough to maintain the physical permanence of the family line and the sacred fire of the *domus*. Both conceptions, royal and peasant, noble and common, must have germinated at some period unknown to us, in the same magical subsoil.

Pierre Clergue the priest, according to Fabrisse Rives, preserved locks of hair and nail-parings not only of his father but also, afterwards, of his mother. He even went so far as to have her buried beneath the altar of the Virgin in Montaillou parish church.

The preoccupation with the *domus* was not 'patrilocal' or 'matrilocal', but ambivalent. True, the citizens of Montaillou and other places speak with emotion about the paternal *ostal* or *domus*: *It would be better*, said Clergue the priest, thinking expressly of the house of his own father (i.255), *for a brother to marry his sister rather than to receive a wife who was a stranger, and similarly, for a sister to marry her brother, rather than to leave the paternal house taking with her a large amount of money as a dowry in order to marry a husband who was a stranger: under such a system, the paternal house is practically destroyed.* The paternal house was also the house where a daughter of Montaillou, married elsewhere and then falling incurably ill, came back to die: *Esclarmonde, daughter of Bernard Clergue (the son of Arnaud and Gauzia Clergue), was married to a man in Comus* [near Montaillou]; *she fell mortally ill; she was brought back to the house of her father, where she remained bedridden for two years before she died. When she was on the point of death, the other Bernard Clergue – brother of the priest – brought into the house the heretic who hereticated Esclarmonde.* The paternal house might also be the infected cell suspected of having transmitted heresy to a daughter who had left to marry elsewhere. Jacques Fournier asked one informer (ii.92), '*Does the witness know whether the paternal* ostal *of the woman Fauré, at Lafage, was ever in the past dishonoured by heresy?*' The maternal *ostal*, very important in the Basque region, could also play an important part in the mountains of Ariège. It was in order to get back the maternal *ostal*, confiscated by the Foix authorities because of the heretical acts of his mother, who was burned for them, that Arnaud Sicre embarked on his

career as an informer (ii.21). When it existed as such, the maternal *ostal* created matriarchal structures: the son who inherited it and lived in it tended to take his mother's name, attached to the house itself, rather than that of his father. And the son-in-law who came to live with his wife in her home often took his wife's name instead of the other way round.

Whether it derived from the mother or, as happened more often, from the father, the house in Montaillou, like every self-respecting Pyrenean *domus*, had a head: *cap de casa* in the Andorran region, *dominus domus* in the Latin of the scribes concerned with upper Ariège. The *dominus domus* had jurisdiction over his wife and children; also, in certain circumstances, over his mother. Alazaïs Azéma shows this clearly (i.308): *My son Raymond once used to carry victuals to the* parfaits *in a scrip or a basket; and he never asked my permission to do so, for he was the master of my house.*

Alazaïs Azéma did not feel badly done by in this; she too was a friend of the *parfaits*. But it often happened that the head of the house, peasant or noble, tyrannized over his mother. Stéphanie de Chateauverdun threw herself at the feet of her old friend the heretic Raymond Pierre, a stock-breeder, and said (ii.417–18): '*I am ruined, I have sold my possessions and enslaved my dependents, I live humbly and miserably in my son's house; and I dare not move.*'

Oppression on the part of the head of a *domus* might affect both his wife and an elderly father. Pons Rives of Montaillou ruled his *ostal* with a rod of iron (i.339–41). He drove his wife, Fabrisse, out of the house, saying the devil had sent her to him: ever since she had been there it had been impossible to invite the *parfaits*! As for Bernard Rives, Pons's old father, he did not carry much weight now that the house he lived in was ruled over by his son. One day his daughter Guillemette, wife of the other Pierre Clergue (not the priest), came to borrow a mule to go and fetch corn from Tarascon. But Bernard Rives could only say: '*I dare do nothing without my son's approval. Come back tomorrow, and he will lend you the mule.*' Alazaïs Rives, wife of Bernard and mother of Pons, was equally terrorized by her son, and slipped away.

When the head of a house had a sufficiently powerful, attractive or diabolical personality, submission to him might turn into a personality cult. When Bernard Clergue, in prison, learned of the death of his

brother the priest, who even before the death of old Pons Clergue had become the real head of the fraternal house, he collapsed in front of four witnesses, lamenting (ii 285). '*Dead is my god. Dead is my ruler. The traitors Pierre Azéma and Pierre de Gaillac have killed my god.*'

It should be noticed, despite the undeniable predominance of the male sex, that when a woman in Montaillou was mistress of an *ostal* of some importance she had the right to the title of 'Madame' (*domina*). Alazaïs Azéma, a simple peasant, was called 'Madame' by a woman selling cheese. True, the woman hoped to help sales by doing so. Mengarde Clergue, wife of a rich peasant and leading citizen, was also addressed as 'Madame' by the lesser women of her village (i.312–14).

As the mortal ruler of an entity if possible immortal, each head of a family was invested with the right of designating his own successor, at the expense of other descendants or rightful claimants. This seems to have something to do with the Occitan and Roman traditions of the supplementary portion (*preciput*). The power exercised in this respect by heads of houses in Ariège was in contrast to the egalitarian traditions of Normandy and Anjou, where equitable division of an inheritance between all the brothers – and in the case of Anjou, even between all the brothers and sisters – was ferociously insisted upon. But in upper Ariège it is probable that the will of the father usually prevailed: *There lived in Tarascon two brothers called d'Aniaux or de Niaux, and one of them was a friend of the heretics. He had two sons, and one of these sons was a sympathizer with heresy. His father left him a large part of his possessions and gave him in marriage to the daughter of Bertrand Mercier, because her mother was a heretic* (ii.427). The customs of Ariège and Andorra were based on the testamentary freedom of the head of the family: it was the best way of preserving the *domus* against parcelling up into small divisions. But there remained the vexatious problem of the other children, who would not succeed the head of the family. When they left the family house they merely took with them a dowry or 'legitimate portion'. The dowry was eminently personal; it was detached from the original *domus* of the young woman when she got married, but did not disappear into the undivided mass of the couple's possessions. If the husband died first, the dowry remained the property of the widow, and not of the husband's or the wife's heirs. As Béatrice de Planissoles said after her first widowhood (i.233), *Pierre Clergue the priest sent me a messenger with a document relating to my first marriage, containing the assignation of my*

dowry. I had once deposited this document with the priest. I did not care a jot whether he gave it back to me or not, because I had already left the heirs of my first husband! No doubt she meant she had left them with her dowry under her arm.

Dowries presented a major problem in a rather poor society. The prevailing degree of economic stagnation turned every daughter's marriage into a tragedy for the *domus*, which was threatened with a loss of substance. The problem caused Pierre Clergue sleepless nights, so attached was he to the indivisibility of the *ostal*. His preoccupation even drove him to the justification of incest: '*Look*,' said the priest to his mistress in a moment of affectionate abandon and ideological ferment (i.225), '*we are four brothers* (*I am a priest, and do not want a wife*). *If my brothers Guillaume and Bernard had married our sisters Esclarmonde and Guillemette, our house would not have been ruined because of the capital* [*averium*] *carried away by those sisters as dowry; our* ostal *would have remained intact, and with just one wife brought into our house for our brother Bernard, we would have had enough wives, and our* ostal *would have been richer than it is today*.'

Incidentally, this apology for incest also explains the (non-chaste) celibacy of churchmen, and the concubinage frequent in Montaillou. The argument derives from the fear inspired in every aware and organized *domus* by the thought of losing its 'detachable adjuncts', among which were the dowries taken away by the daughters. Also involved was the *fratrisia*, fraternal portion, due to each son who, because he was not the eldest or for some other reason, did not become head of the household. He was thus disinherited except for the *fratrisia* accorded to him by way of compensation by the *domus* or the head of the *domus*: '*I lost my fraternal portion* [fratrisia] *in Montaillou, and was afraid* [because of the Inquisition] *to return to the village to claim it*', said Pierre Maury, in Catalonia, in a conversation with Arnaud Sicre (ii.30).

All the evidence, then, suggests that the primacy of the *domus* was highly characteristic of Occitan and mountain liberty. It is significant that in the thirteenth century, when some traces of serfdom still survived in Languedoc, the settlers at Mas d'Azil, and probably those in many other country farms, became free automatically once they had built their own house.

Central though it was in the culture of upper Ariège, the *domus* was more notable for its material and emotional investments than for its

market value: a village house was worth 40 *livres tournois*, i.e. only twice the price of a complete Bible, twice the wages of a team of hired assassins, and almost twenty times less than the amount of money Bernard Clergues spent to free his brother the priest from the clutches of the Inquisition. The dowries and fraternal portions detached from it, small as they were, and despite the compensation represented by dowries brought into the family, always threatened to impoverish the *domus*, if not ruin it altogether. Moreover, the forces of repression, which well understood local ethnographical structures, used to destroy the houses of heretics, burning them or razing them to the ground. It only needed a woman with a long tongue to look through a crack in the door and see Pierre Authié converting a sick person to heresy, and lo and behold the paternal or maternal *domus* at Prades d'Aillon was demolished by the Inquisition (i.278). This being the case, the law of silence was observed as far as possible. Raymond Roques and old Guillemette 'Belote' were united in their advice to women who were too talkative (i.310): *If you don't want the walls of your house knocked down, keep your mouth shut.* If the house of a convicted heretic was not reduced to ashes, at the best it would be confiscated by the Foix authorities, now obedient to the Inquisition's every whim.

Despite its notional durability the Montaillou house was in reality a flimsy and fragile construction. The central and essential part of the *domus* was the kitchen (*foganha*), its rafters covered with hams hung out of reach of the cat. It was here that the neighbours came, like Alazaïs Azéma, a simple body despite her title of 'Madame', to borrow a light for the fire, the precious fire which was covered up at night for fear an accident might reduce the *ostal* to ashes (i.307, 317). The fire was watched over by the housewife (*focaria*), the 'woman at the hearth', as the priests' concubines were called in the diocese of Palhars.[1] But the man of the house did not leave the women in sole charge of the fire: it was his job to break sticks for kindling (*frangere teza*). The hearth was surrounded by cooking utensils – earthenware pots, pans, cauldrons, jugs and basins, the latter sometimes decorated. There were never enough utensils, particularly of metal, but what was needed could, in the traditional Montaillou way, be borrowed from the neighbours. Near

1 i.253. Apparently the fire did not burn in a chimney but in a hearth in the middle of the room. Was there a hole in the roof?

the hearth stood, by way of dining furniture, a table and benches, the latter also used for sitting round the fire in the evening. Sometimes, but not always, the use of this furniture corresponded to a fairly rigorous segregation by sex and by age, such as still existed until quite recently in lower Languedoc and in Corsica. The shepherd Jean Maury, son of a Montaillou peasant, tells of an evening meal in his father's *foganha*, a somewhat more distinguished meal than usual because the *parfait* Philippe d'Alayrac was a guest (ii.471): *It was winter. Montaillou was covered with a thick layer of snow. My father, Raymond Maury, my brother Guillaume, the heretic Philippe d'Alayrac, and Guillaume Belot* [invited as a neighbour] *dined at the table. I and my other brothers, my mother and my sisters, ate sitting round the fire.* The kitchen, as our documents expressly say, was the house within the house, the *domus* within the *ostal*, where people ate, died, were converted to heresy and told each other the secrets of the Faith and the gossip of the village (i.268–9). *In those days*, says Raymonde Arsen, a servant in the house of the Belots (i.372), *Bernard Clergue* (*the* bayle, *brother of the priest*) *used to come to the house of Raymond Belot and talk to his mother-in-law Guillemette Belot in the house called the kitchen* ['in domo vocata la foganha'] *and they used to send me away for a while* (*so that I should not hear their conversation*).

So the most intimate part of the house, the *foganha*, fitted inside the larger house, or *ostal*, like one of a set of Russian dolls.

Sometimes people slept in the kitchen. But more often they slept, in several beds, in rooms surrounding the kitchen or on the first floor (*solier*). Was a Montaillou house usually a roomy one, up there in the spaciousness of the mountains? It seems to have been slightly larger, anyhow, than its counterpart in Burgundy, which archaeological evidence has shown to be so small.

Excavations would very likely soon reveal the layout of medieval houses in Montaillou, vestiges of which can still be discerned at the foot of the château. Until these are undertaken we must rely on documentary evidence throwing light on the way the rooms were arranged. In Prades d'Aillon, a village analogous to Montaillou because it was so close and shared the same way of life, Raymonde Michel describes the house of her father Pierre: *In the cellar of our house there were two beds, one where my mother and father slept and the other for any heretic passing through. The cellar was next to the kitchen and had a door leading into it. No one slept on the floor above the cellar. My brothers and I slept in a room on the*

other side of the kitchen, so that the kitchen was between the children's room and the cellar where our parents slept. The cellar had an outside door opening on to the threshing floor.[1]

It was in a cellar (*sotulum*) of this kind, containing both beds and barrels, that Béatrice de Planissoles, then living with her second husband, Othon de Lagleize, made love for the last time with Clergue, the priest of Montaillou, who had come to her house under an assumed name. The servant, Sybille Teisseire, Béatrice's fellow countrywoman from Montaillou and her accomplice, kept watch at the door of the cellar while Béatrice, between the casks, *mingled her body with that of the priest.*

Many passages confirm the existence of a cellar beside the kitchen, and also of bedrooms which could be locked and contained beds and benches. Each room was intended for one or two people, who might sleep together or in separate beds. In the house of the Maurys, simple peasants who were weavers and shepherds, the elder brother Guillaume Maury had a room of his own; similarly old Guillemette 'Belote', the widowed mother, in the house of the Belot sons. Clergue the priest had a room of his own in the big family house, which was large enough to have an antechamber on the first floor as well. The bedrooms had windows, without glass but with wooden shutters. At night, anyone wanting to attract the attention of the people inside would throw a pebble at the shutters. More important people, and intellectuals such as notaries and doctors – there was neither the one nor the other in Montaillou – also had an office (*scriptorium*) in their houses, and it was there that they slept.

In general, the fact of having a *solier* (the first floor above the kitchen, communicating with the ground floor by means of a ladder) was an external sign of wealth. To build a *solier*, as did the shoemaker Arnaud Vital, showed that you were going up in the social scale, or at least that you thought you were. As far as we know, only the Clergues, the Vitals (though they weren't all that rich) and the Belots had a house with a *solier*. The *foganha*, heart of the *domus*, was built of stone. The *solier*, and the offices on the ground floor, were lightly built of wood and daub.

But kitchen, *solier*, bedrooms and cellar were not all. The farmers of Montaillou set aside part of the house for the animals. *Eighteen years*

1 i.401. The richer houses, such as that belonging to the Clergue family, and perhaps the Belots also, had one or two bedrooms on the first floor.

ago, said Alazaïs Azéma (i.311), *when I had just brought my pigs out of my house, I met Raymond Belot leaning on his stick in the square in front of the château. He said to me: 'Come into my house.'*

I answered: 'No – I have left my door open.'

This passage suggests that people and pigs lived together in the same house; they may even have used the same door. Similarly, Pons Rives, son of Bernard Rives, kept his mule and his ass in his house. Guillemette Benet shut up her oxen in her house when they had been brought home from ploughing in the evening. Guillaume Bélibaste thought of bringing up a lamb *in domo sua*. Every morning Jean Pellissier, a small shepherd from Montaillou, brought his sheep out of the house. When they were ill, men used to sleep with the animals, perhaps because of the warmth they gave out. *Guillaume Belot*, says Bernard Benet (i.401), *brought Guillaume Authié the heretic to the place where my father, Guillaume Benet, lay ill; it was in the part of the house where the cattle slept.*

The house had various offices, including an adjacent yard or poultry yard, where people could sit among the chickens and take the sun. The yard was generally decorated by a dung-heap, on which an inquisitive servant might climb to spy on what her employers and the *parfaits* were saying to each other in the *solier*. Beyond the yard was the threshing-floor. The biggest farms, like that of the Martys at Junac, and some others, possessed both yard and garden, a stable for oxen (*boal*), a dove-cote, a pigsty near the garden, and barns (*bordes*) for straw on the other side of the yard or near a spring; also a sheep-pen (*cortal*), either adjacent to or at some distance from the *domus*. But these big farms were hardly typical of Montaillou. On the street side there was often, just as today, a bench or table set in the open air beside the door, for people to sit and warm themselves in the sun or chat with their neighbours. The problem of how to shut up the house was not always satisfactorily resolved: when there was only a ground floor, which was often the case, you could lift the edge of the shingle roof with your head and look in to see what was going on in the kitchen (ii.366). (The roof-cum-balcony was flat, or almost, and so could be used for keeping sheaves of corn or as a platform for the women to shout to each other: in the Catalan Pyrenees it did not become a sloping roof until the sixteenth century.) To enter the house one sometimes had only to move aside a plank or a slat. The walls were so thin that everything could be heard

from one room to the next, including heretical conversations between a lady and her lover (i.227). When two houses were adjacent a hole might be made to enable people to pass from one to the other. *Guillemette Benet must know a good deal about heretics*, alleged Raymond Testanière (i.463), *because in the days when the people of Montaillou were rounded up by the Inquisition of Carcassonne there was a hole between the house of Bernard Rives (where the heretics had their chapel) and the house of Guillaume Benet. By means of this hole the said heretics passed from one house to the other.* Montaillou was a veritable ant-hill. Another direct passage had been made, enabling the *parfaits* to slip unseen from the house of Bernard Rives, mentioned above, to that of Raymond Belot.

Over and above these not always impressive material appearances, what interests us chiefly here is the *ostal*'s content of people, of souls. The population of the *domus* often and in various ways went beyond the strict framework of the family of the parental couple and their children. First of all, there were the servants. Jean Pellissier, a shepherd from Montaillou, lived away from the village with various people at various times in order to learn or establish himself in his trade. Then he came home again, but instead of living in the house where he was born he dwelt for three years as a shepherd in the house of Bernard and Guillemette Maurs, a married couple. We do not know what wages he was paid. In the same *domus* lived Jean's brother Bernard, not a shepherd but a ploughboy (*labarator vel arator*). There were also Bernard Maurs's two children and his mother, Guillemette Maurs the elder, now a widow (iii.161). So this was not a strictly nuclear family: it consisted of a couple, two children, a grandmother and two servants. The structural mixture did not end there. Next to Bernard Maurs's house was that of his brother Pierre Maurs, another house with Cathar sympathies living in a state of open warfare with Pierre Clergue. (It was Pierre's wife, Mengarde Maurs, who was to have her tongue cut out for speaking ill of the priest.) The two Maurs houses, at once fraternal and neighbourly, formed a unit of friendship and sociability: *A the time when I lived with Bernard Maurs*, said the servant and shepherd Jean Pellissier (iii.76), *I often used to visit the house of Pierre Maurs.*

In addition to the husband and wife, the children, the other descendants, forebears or collaterals and the male domestics, the house might be

extended to include one or more female servants. Some of these were simply illegitimate children, such as were employed regularly in the Clergue *domus*. Thus the illegitimate Brune Pourcel was the daughter of Prades Tavernier, a heretic weaver who became a *parfait* and did not hesitate, from time to time, to let his daughter worship him, according to the Cathar rite. After her service in the Clergue household, from which she brought away several spicy details for the Inquisition, Brune Pourcel married and was left a widow. She then lived in her own very indigent *ostal*, where she spent her time begging, cadging or borrowing hay, wood, turnips or a sieve to bolt the flour. Brune Pourcel was riddled with superstition: when she worked for the Clergues she took hair and nail-parings from the corpses of her employers; she was afraid of owls and other night birds, devils flying over the roof to carry away the soul of Na Roqua ('Madame' Roques), recently dead. But it is only fair to add that many other inhabitants of the village shared Brune's beliefs.

Another servant who was an illegitimate child was Mengarde, the natural daughter of Bernard Clergue. She lived with her father, and was in charge of making bread and washing the shirts of the *parfaits* in the brook – they were made of finer linen than that worn by the simple peasants of Montaillou (i.416–17). She later married a farmer.

The servant maids (not illegitimate) who worked in the house of the Belots are better known to us than those of the Clergue *domus*: a good example is Raymonde Arsen, sentenced in 1324 to wear a double yellow cross because of her connections with the heretics. Young Raymonde came from a poor but not destitute *ostal* in Prades d'Aillon and was the sister of Arnaud Vital, a cobbler in Montaillou who was also parish guardian of the harvests (*messier*). In her early youth, around 1306, she went to work as a servant in town, in the house of Bonet de la Coste in Pamiers (i.379ff.). Here she met one day Raymond Belot of Montaillou, her first cousin (i.458); he had come to market to buy a load of grain. Raymond suggested to Raymonde that she should come and work in his house as a servant. The Belot house, which was considered very wealthy (i.389), included Raymond himself, his brother Guillaume, his sister Raymonde, and another brother, Bernard, who was about to be married to Guillemette, née Benet, the daughter of Guillaume Benet, whose house stood a few yards away from that of the Belots. Once again the links of neighbourhood, marriage, cousinship and domestic service

mutually reinforced one another. Also in the Belots' house lived Raymond's mother, Guillemette, a widow. So in all the house contained a married couple, their children, the husband's grown-up brothers and sister, all unmarried, his old widowed mother and a servant girl. There were also several others, of whom we shall speak later.[1]

Raymonde Arsen explained to Jacques Fournier why the Belots took her on as a servant (i.370): '*Raymond and his brothers wanted to give their sister Raymonde in marriage to Bernard Clergue, the priest's brother.*' To ally the Belot brothers to the Clergue brothers by means of a sister was to weld together two of the most influential groups of brothers in Montaillou. It also supplemented the Belot-Benet axis already mentioned, and turned it into a triple alliance of the Benets, Belots and Clergues. To the old links of friendship were joined the even stronger bonds of marriage. Mengarde Clergue, Bernard's mother, and Guillemette Belot, Raymonde's mother, were old friends long before their children got married (i.393). Once again, as in the case of the Belots and the Benets, marriage sprang out of neighbourhood: the Belot house was only across the street from the Clergue house (i.372, 392). But despite these favourable beginnings, the triple alliance (which was also a quadruple alliance – with heresy – since the Benets were allied to the Authiés) did not stand up well to the attacks of the Inquisition.[2] It tells us something, however, about the local attitude to marriage.

So the Belots took on a servant, Raymonde Arsen, to make up for the departure of a sister, Raymonde Belot. The functions of the sister before she left must have closely resembled those of a maid of all work. The taking on of Raymonde Arsen occurred at a special point in the family cycle (the departure of a sister), just as the Maur family's engagement of a ploughman and a shepherd (Jean Pellissier) took place at a time when the children of the young farming couple, who lived with the husband's mother, were still too young to work in the fields.

So the proposal made by Raymond Belot to Raymonde Arsen in

1 The evidence on the structure of 'more than nuclear' families concerns chiefly old widowed mothers living with their sons; but there were some cases of 'matrilocal' affiliation where a mother-in-law lived with her son-in-law (i.260 and *passim*).

2 We may recall that it was through the *domus* of Guillaume Benet that heresy was re-introduced into Montaillou around 1300, by the Authiés, back from Lombardy (i.471). The Authiés and the Benets were closely linked by a marriage between the two families (i.233).

Bonet de la Coste's house in Pamiers that day stood at the intersection of several strategies: strategies of family, marriage and business. Raymonde Arsen gave an evasive reply (i.370): '*I cannot accept your offer for the moment, for I have made a contract with my master Bonet up to the next Feast of St John the Baptist* [24 June] *and now it is only Easter . . . I will see, at the Feast of St John, whether or not I shall come to your house.*'

This little dialogue illustrates the modernity of the contractual bond in upper Ariège: serfdom was non-existent or at the most insignificant, and feudal dependence did not weigh very heavily. At the end of June, Raymonde Arsen made up her mind; she gave notice to her master, Bonet, and went to fetch her natural daughter, Alazaïs, whom she had put out to nurse at Saint-Victor. Then, with her bundle over her shoulder and her baby in her arms, she went up into the mountains which overlooked Pamiers from the south. When she reached Prades, near Montaillou, she entrusted her daughter to another nurse, also named Alazaïs, who took the child to the village of Aston (now in Ariège). Raymonde Arsen herself then went down again into the present department of Aude, to help get in the harvest in the Arques valley.[1] After that she went back to Prades d'Aillon, which, being higher up, gathered the harvest later. So during one short summer Raymonde Arsen lived as an itinerant child-mother, harvester and outsider; she only left this wandering existence to settle as a servant in the house *of Raymond Belot and his brothers*,[2] which Raymonde Belot had just left, as arranged, before the harvest, to marry Bernard Clergue.

In the Belot family, where she remained for a year (the traditional length for a contract of employment), Raymonde Arsen was relegated outside the house in the strict sense of the term. Her bed, which she got ready every evening, was set amongst the straw in the little barn on the far side of the courtyard. Her daily work consisted chiefly in looking after the bread in the family oven and in washing the clothes. True, Guillemette 'Belote', the old mother, undertook part of these tasks: with her own hands she made the fine bread for the visiting *parfaits*, as

1 i.370–71: Arques and Montaillou–Prades complemented each other in seasonal harvest work and transhumance; also in the exchange of Cathar ideas.

2 The house was also referred to (i.458) as *the house of Bernard Belot and his brothers*. The headship of the family was thus spread over or divided between the two brothers.

in the case of Guillaume Authié, a faithful frequenter of the Belot house who made long stays in the *solier*, clad in dim blue and dark green (i.458). Guillaume Authié's presence was the occasion for a veritable family group. The gathering took place on the occasion of the marriage between Bernard Belot and Guillemette Benet (i.371) which, as we have seen, crystallized a whole network of previous relationships: Guillaume Benet, father of the bride and neighbour of the Belots, was also, and had been for a long time, godfather of Guillaume Belot, brother of the bridegroom (i.389). Guillaume Authié descended from his perch in the *solier* and came down into the kitchen where all the rest of the party were met. The brothers Belot were sitting on a bench. The women of the *domus* sat apart on another, lower bench. Raymonde Arsen sat a little way off by the fire, holding the baby belonging to the young Alazaïs, Raymond Belot's other sister, married and living elsewhere but come for the wedding (i.370–71). Raymonde Arsen later left the Belots' house and married Prades den Arsen, taking his family name, the one by which we know her. She settled in Prades d'Aillon in her husband's house, thus completing the circle and returning to her original village (i.370–77). Note the fact that her having had an illegitimate baby was no obstacle when it came to finding a husband.

After Raymonde Arsen had left, there remained another 'female domestic' in the Belot house, who also served as a concubine. Raymonde Testanière, otherwise known as Vuissane, of Montaillou, remained for three years (1304–1307) in the Belot house (i.455–70). She was mistress to Bernard Belot, her employer, and had at least two children by him, one of them named Bernard also. Apparently this subsidiary liaison, made official by co-residence, did not shock anybody, either in the *domus* or in the village. (Bernard Belot, Vuissane's lover, was a very enterprising fellow in general: he tried to rape the wife of his fellow-citizen Guillaume Authié of Montaillou, for which attempt he was imprisoned (i.411) and only released on payment of a 20-*livres* fine, paid to the officers of the Comte de Foix.[1] This incident caused an understandable, if not lasting, cooling off in the relationship between Bernard Belot and Guillaume Authié.)

Vuissane Testanière certainly did not have much luck with Bernard Belot, her lover, landlord and employer. She gave him children, and

1 Twenty *livres* was equivalent to the value of 40 sheep, or half a house. This Guillaume Authié should not be confused with Guillaume Authié the *parfait*.

literally worked herself to death for the family in the hope that its head would marry her. But Bernard would only marry a heretic from Montaillou whom he could trust, such as the daughter of the Benets. And Vuissane, unfortunately for her, had no Cathar tendencies in those days. Also, it need hardly be added, the Testanières were much less well off than the Belots.

As well as domestics of both sexes, a house in Montaillou, especially if it was rich, might also contain a lodger, usually unmarried. The house of the Belots, which was large and full of people, at one time sheltered Arnaud Vital, a cobbler in the village, brother of the servant girl Raymonde Arsen. Arnaud was a heretic and used to guide the *parfaits* through the mountains, wearing a blue overtunic for the purpose. In exchange for rent or some domestic duties, he had a bedroom in the Belots' house, or perhaps just a bed which he might have had to share with someone else. His workshop was in another house in the parish. Like many cobblers, he was a village Don Juan. He was the lover of Alazaïs Fauré, who loved him and whom he instructed in the heretic faith. She then undertook to convert her father and brother. One day in the Belots' house, where he was a lodger and she a servant, Arnaud played the 'hen trick' on Vuissane Testanière. He gave her a hen to kill – a deed which from the point of view of the Cathars, who believed in metempsychosis, was a crime. Vuissane tried to kill the fowl, but could not bring herself to do it. Having thus established his power, Arnaud tried to rape Vuissane there and then in the Belots' house. She easily stopped him, objecting that this would be incest (i.457–8). '*Are you not ashamed? You forget that I am mistress to your first cousin (and landlord) Bernard Belot, and that I have children by him.*' Arnaud nevertheless continued to live under the same roof, and even married another servant of the *domus*, also named Raymonde. It was an unhappy marriage. Arnaud, in the tradition of certain husbands in the Pyrenees, was strangely silent with his young wife, but would stay away whole nights visiting new mistresses, such as Raymonde Rives and Alazaïs Gavela.[1] But at least this marriage marked the end of Arnaud's residence as lodger or tenant with the Belots. Two months after they were married, the Vital couple left the Belots' house and set up in their own *domus*,

1 This Raymonde, when Arnaud Vital died and left her a widow, married Bernard Guilhou. She became delouser to Mengarde Clergue and her son Pierre, and even, temporarily, the latter's mistress (ii.223–5).

which prospered. One of the unwritten rules of the Montaillou *ostal* was that it might harbour all kinds of adults but, in the long term, it generally contained only one married couple.[1]

With this one restriction, the Belots' *ostal* was Liberty Hall. Maidservants, lodgers and *parfaits* rubbed shoulders with the family; some fornicated or even committed rape; others converted as many people as they could to heresy. It was a rich and complex *domus*. Like other important *domus* in Montaillou, including that of the Maury family, it was noted for its sense of hospitality, which implied duties on both sides. To utter threats under the roof of someone who had received you in his house was considered boorish: '*You dare to threaten me in my own* domus!' cried Guillemette Maury, addressing her young cousin, Jean Maury from Montaillou, who though he was her guest had quarrelled with her and threatened to have her locked up (ii.484–5). Guillemette tried to revenge herself for this impoliteness by poisoning her cousin with salts of mercury – an attempt which failed.

Montaillou contained some truncated nuclear families (widows living alone, or with one child), some nuclear couples with children, some couples with several children and one parent (a widowed grandfather, or, more often, grandmother) and some groups of brothers, sometimes together with an elderly mother, sometimes with both parents, in which only one of the brothers would be married (the other brothers and sisters, even if they were grown up, would remain unmarried all the time the group continued to live together). The purely nuclear family was perhaps the most common, but it did not have a local monopoly.

Family structure, in fact, varied chronologically. The same family was successively extended, then nuclear, then extended, and so on. Let us take an imaginary family called Vidal, which resembles as closely as possible the families Clergue, Belot, Benet, Rives and others in Montaillou which are known to us. To begin with the family is nuclear, consisting of the Vidal couple and their children. At the death of the father we have a truncated nucleus, which soon becomes a phratry, the position of the brothers gaining in importance as the surviving parent, Guillemette, withdraws to the position of respected widow-matriarch living half apart in a room specially assigned to her. She still keeps an

1 This general but not absolute rule derives from the chronological structure of the family cycle.

eye on the household, but one of her grown-up sons succeeds to the position of head (*chef d'ostal*).

Then the family becomes again more or less extended: one of the brothers, Bernard, marries, and the new couple live for a while with the other brothers and the elderly mother. Subsequently the *domus* becomes nuclear once more: old Guillemette dies and all the brothers except Bernard leave the family house. They either try to build their own *ostal* elsewhere or they enter into another household, probably through marriage. Or again, they might become shepherds – or prisoners of the Inquisition. Bernard Vidal, his wife and their children remain alone as a simple and complete nucleus.

The taking on and dismissal of servants coincides with turning-points in the family cycle, such as the moment when the children become old enough to work, or the time when a daughter leaves home to get married. In some very rare cases we have a fully extended family, a multi-generational group including both mother and father and a younger couple who are their successors. In Montaillou only the Rives family corresponds to this arrangement, and even here a quarrel broke up this group when the daughter-in-law was turned out because of temperamental incompatibility.

Another version of the fully extended family was the multi-fraternal group. This included two brothers, or a brother and sister, with their respective spouses. They lived in a group of four, together with their children (there is no instance of this arrangement in Montaillou itself, though I have come across several true *frérèches* – sibling groups – in other localities in upper Ariège at the period with which we are concerned).

Although these forms of family extension were conceptually possible, they were not very frequent in Montaillou. Elderly adults, especially the men, died too soon to form a 'quadriga' with a younger couple. And neither custom nor the somewhat restricted scope of agriculture encouraged *frérèches*. They did become more common later, during the fifteenth century in the southerly estates enlarged through depopulation, and, at the beginning of the Renaissance, in the big share-cropping areas of Tuscany and the Bourbonnais.

Finally, the *domus* cannot be understood without its genealogical links, which connected it with other related, living *domus* through con-

sanguinity (*parentela*). These bonds also linked the *domus* with the past, under the auspices of the lineage (*genus*) of the family, which was the *domus* looked at against the background of the past four generations at the most.

Some authors have seen lineage as one of the most important values of ancient societies. This is certainly true in the case of the nobility. But, as regards Montaillou, the sense of lineal continuity was a local and rural one, not of primary importance. It was subordinate to the value embodied in the *domus* itself, in its restricted sense of a family and domestic group of living people residing under the same roof. In Montaillou, and in upper Ariège in general, the sense of *genus* was quite vivid, but no more than that: the peasants spoke of someone belonging to a race of priests, a race of liars, a race of heretics, a race of curmudgeons, or a race of lepers. (*Genus* is here translated by the word 'race', though it would be more correct and scientific to talk of '*lines* of priests' etc.) The inhabitants of the Comté de Foix regarded leprosy as an example of genetic or lineal continuity extending over four generations, though in fact, with leprosy, the continuity was only pseudo-genetic, arising as it did through infection. Even the humblest were aware of lineal continuity. The shepherd Pierre Maury of Montaillou implied that a lineage was either all good or all bad, all Cathar or all spy; but Raymond Issaura of Larnat, a leading citizen and a *parfait*, answered philosophically, referring to the *genus* of the Baille-Sicres, which had produced an outstanding spy, that: *In every lineage there are some decent people and some bad people.*

In general, the *genus* (or, as our villagers sometimes saw it, the *domus*, taken in the long-term sense of lineal continuity) was the bearer of the family name, transmitted in the paternal, sometimes the maternal, line.

More present or influential than the *genus*-lineage aspect was consanguinity, made up of cousins and relations of all kinds living in other *domus* in the same village or other localities near or far. When the shepherd Pierre Maury of Montaillou successfully kidnapped his sister Guillemette (with her consent) from her bullying husband he soon began to wonder anxiously (iii.149–53), *What should we do if some of the husband's relations followed us to get Guillemette back again?*

The *domus* was thus at the centre of a whole network of links of varying importance: they included alliance through marriage, family relationship, friendship arising out of common hatreds and sometimes

embodied in invitations to be godmother or godfather to children. Last but not least the network included relationships of neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood could work for the destruction of a neighbour, against whom all the others might unite: *Four of my neighbours, including a woman and a priest, plotted against me to make me lose my possessions and to denounce me to the Inquisition as a heretic*, said Arnaud de Savignan, a plasterer from Tarascon (iii.432). But family solidarity, often inseparably linked with neighbourhood structures, seems to have been very important. When Pierre Casal accused the Cathar missionaries Pierre and Guillaume Authié of having stolen a cow, and threatened to denounce them, the whole clan of Belots and Benets, connected with one another and with the Authiés by marriage, were up in arms and threatened with death any man or woman who denounced the missionaries. '*Take care!*' said Guillaume Benet to Alazaïs Azéma of Montaillou (i.318). '*If you denounce them, you are dead!*' Raymond Belot was even more blunt. '*One of these days*,' he told Alazaïs (ii.64), '*they'll find you with your head separated from your body*.'

A typical example of family solidarity was the vendetta of Guillaume Maurs. He was the son of a *domus* in Montaillou which the Clergue family determined to destroy. Guillaume Maurs, his father and his brother were all arrested by the Inquisition in August 1308, together with the rest of the population of the village. The mass arrest was the result of denunciations in which Clergue the priest, changing course and renouncing his former Cathar friendships, was implicated. Guillaume was subsequently let out of prison, though two other members of his family remained there. One day, near Montaillou, he came face to face with the priest, and seized the occasion to reproach him vehemently for his conduct (ii.171). Pierre Clergue, who knew all about family solidarity, replied with equal vehemence: '*I will see that you all rot in Carcassonne prison – all the Maurs, you, your father, your brother, all that belong to your* domus.'

He more than kept his word: it was because of him, acting through his brother the *bayle*, that Mengarde Maurs, Guillaume's mother, had her tongue cut out for 'false witness'. He and other members of the Clergue family hunted Guillaume Maurs up hill and down dale in an attempt to get him arrested (ii.176, 178). He conducted a veritable vendetta against the whole Maurs *ostal*, a vendetta more 'domiciliary' than the true

Corsican vendetta, later, which was more a matter of general blood relationship.

The exchange between Pierre Clergue and Guillaume Maurs ended symmetrically with Maurs threatening reprisals. '*I will be revenged*,' he cried, '*so beware of me and of all my supporters!*' They went their separate ways, Guillaume to search for aid among his brothers and friends and the allies of his friends.

In 1309 Guillaume Maurs took refuge in Ax-les-Thermes. His brother, Raymond Maurs, and Jean Benet, from another *domus* victimized by the Clergue family although linked to them by marriage, joined him there. The three of them all swore on bread and on wine to be revenged; they would kill the priest, pooling their meagre resources in order to do so (ii.171). This was a genuine pact of brotherhood, with its oath on bread and on wine and its pooling of possessions. Between 1309 and 1317 the conspirators made several attempts to murder Pierre Clergue, either themselves or through hired assassins. Guillaume Maurs, the outlawed shepherd, was so eager for revenge that when he went to confession the priests refused to give him communion because of the hatred he nourished in his heart against Pierre Clergue (ii.173). Even if he had forgotten it, his friends and fellow shepherds would have reminded him. One day when Guillaume was quarrelling with Pierre Maury, the latter reminded him (ii.178), '*Fight against the priest of Montaillou and not against us. He will give you plenty to think about.*' Only the waning enthusiasm of one of the conspirators (Pierre Maurs) and the lack of suitable opportunity caused the final murder attempt against Pierre Clergue to fail. It was not for want of trying: Guillaume Maurs had hired two Catalan assassins and brought them specially from Gerona, promising them 500 *sous*, all included, if they succeeded (ii.190).

The Maurs vendetta was an extreme example. But family solidarity played a part even in the most prosaic cases. Two examples will suffice. A relation by marriage interceded with the Foix officials and activated networks of friends in support of one of his relatives who had been accused of rape (i.280). When Pierre Maury wanted to buy a hundred sheep which he did not wish to pay for straight away, he offered his own brother Jean as security and guarantee (ii.185).

But although the *domus*, in certain circumstances assisted by its relations, could assemble all its forces against a person, a cause, or another *domus*, it could also be subject to internal conflict and tension.

This was especially serious when mother and son, or mother and daughter, were separated by the barrier of heresy. Arnaud Baille-Sicre, for example, railed against the memory of his mother, Sybille, since it was because of her heresy that the maternal *ostal* had been confiscated by the Inquisition. As for Emersende, Guillemette Maury's heretical sister, she took part in a conspiracy against her daughter Jeanne Befayt, a good Catholic, a plot by which the mother's faithful friends were to kill the daughter by pushing her off the bridge of the Mala Molher (ii.64, 65).

These two cases of disintegration of the *domus* were the result of family disintegration caused by the exodus of the heretics to Catalonia. In upper Ariège, before the great departure to the south, Jeanne Befayt had practised Catharism with her mother and father, like an obedient daughter. In Montaillou, the Inquisition might somehow succeed in ranging one *domus* against another even though they were connected by a series of marriages: Jacques Fournier managed to set the Clergue family against the Benets. But blood relationship held out better than marriage relationship; the authorities in Carcassonne and Pamiers could not turn brother against brother. The break-up of the Montaillou *domus* was only a hypothesis; Pierre Clergue played with the idea only to amuse himself and for the edification of Béatrice de Planissoles during one of their fireside chats (i.225). '*When the world began brothers knew their sisters carnally, but when many brothers had one or two pretty sisters, each brother wanted to have her or them. Hence many murders. That is why*', concluded the Rousseau of Montaillou, '*the sexual act between brother and sister had to be forbidden.*' But Pierre Clergue could sleep soundly: the Montaillou *domus* might be threatened with destruction by the activities of Bishop Fournier, but there was no possibility of its being broken up from within.

CHAPTER VII The shepherds' mental outlook

We must now go beyond these descriptions of economic and professional links and try to decipher, through the appealing personality of Pierre Maury, the social position and mental outlook of a migrant shepherd of Montaillou in the early decades of the fourteenth century.

In the first analysis, Pierre Maury and those like him seem to be at the bottom of the relevant social scale. Their situation is similar to, but not the exact counterpart of, that of the skilled labourers in the north of France during the last years of the *ancien régime*. Their life was full of discomfort and even danger. '*You were forced to leave Bélibaste's house during a hard winter; you came to a mountain pass where you almost died of cold*', said Emersende Marty to Pierre Maury one day, reminding him both of the holy man's ill-treatment and the hardships inherent in Pierre's own profession (iii.198). Bélibaste himself had called his friend's attention to these (ii.177). '*Pierre, your life is made up of disagreeable nights and disagreeable days.*' The daily round of a shepherd like Pierre Maury, especially in winter, was almost as hard and sometimes as dangerous as the life of a woodcutter like Bernard Befayt, victim of an accident at work (ii.190). *Bernard Befayt* [husband of Jeanne Marty of Montaillou] *died in the forest of Benifaxa* [in Spain]. *He was digging up the stump and roots of a tree, when the roots and the rocks above it collapsed on him. He was killed outright.*

Despite passing phases of prosperity, Pierre Maury regarded himself as a poor man, and for that reason unable to found a family. More often than not he went to bed wifeless, on the same couch as two or three other men. The following is one example of many (iii.202). *That night we slept, I, the heretic Bélibaste and Arnaud Sicre, all three in the same bed.*

For Pierre Maury, poverty was not only a frequent fact and a cheerfully accepted companion, but also an ideal and a system of values. Of course, this ideal was one transmitted in various ways by the neo-evangelical culture spread through Occitania by the diverse advocates of voluntary poverty, including the Franciscans. But in Pierre, and in many another Cathar shepherd of Montaillou, this ideal found a receptive audience. As far as one could be in the fourteenth century, Pierre Maury was a

democrat through and through. He had only hatred and contempt for ornament and the pleasures of the table, at least when those pleasures emanated from the Church. Though he could be caustic enough on occasion, he was more indulgent towards the gluttonous or well-to-do when they were not clerics. He was hostile to the Minorites, whom he accused of feasting, against all the rules, after a funeral. All these roisterings and gormandizings, he said, were harmful to the dead person's soul, and prevented it from reaching Paradise (ii.30). He uses the same terminology as Saint Matthew, referring to the camel which cannot pass through the eye of a needle. This is evidence of a certain degree of evangelical culture, which had reached him through the good-men or through the preaching monks to whom he listened despite his gibes. If Pierre loved the *parfaits* it was because, among other reasons, they put into practice an ideal of industrious poverty denied by the mendicant friars, although they had once ardently preached it.

As to the laity, Pierre denounced those he called *the riders of fat mules* (ii.58). These were people with false consciences, who pretended to forget their heretical past. After they had half retracted, their powerful connections saved them from prison: *I know many people in Sabarthès who ride fat mules, no one bothers them; they are sacrosanct and yet they have dabbled in heresy.* Pierre contrasted this earthly injustice with the ideal of a democratic Cathar paradise, *where great and small live together* and rub shoulders freely (ii.179).

This egalitarian ideal is a hundred miles away from the rapacity of people like Pierre Clergue or Arnaud Sicre, men who wanted to promote or to recover their *domus* at any price. Pierre Maury laughed at such greed: he had no house, he lived anywhere, detached from the goods of this world. His outlook as a wandering shepherd was very different from that of the village stay-at-homes, wealthy or otherwise, who remained muffled up in their *domus* and on their lands at Montaillou until the Inquisition came to flush them out.

We can guess one of the reasons for the shepherds' attitude to poverty, acquired through experience and accepted quite simply. This reason lay in the fact that they were nomads. The shepherds might well, from time to time, have a mule and a muleteer to go back and forth with wool and food, and to carry some luggage during the migrations. But basically the shepherds carried their fortunes on their own backs. Their physical strength and endurance were such that the burden might sometimes be

quite heavy: Pierre Maury forded a fairly wide river carrying Arnaud Sicre and Bélibaste on his shoulders, one after the other. So he could take a considerable amount of baggage with him from the Pyrenees to Catalonia. But there were limits to what one individual could manage. A bundle of clothes and an axe did not leave much room for other impedimenta (ii.337).

For a shepherd to accumulate wealth like the permanent residents of Montaillou, he would need his own *domus*. But this he did not have. During the summer pasturing and especially during the winter, the shepherds usually slept in other people's houses: with their employer, with a friend, with a fellow-sponsor or, perhaps, with some house-owner, who made them pay rent as occasional tenants who spent most of their time in the pastures. At worst, they might take refuge in a *maison du berger*, a shepherd's hut on wheels, but I have not come across this kind of mobile dwelling among the Pyrenean shepherds of the fourteenth century – there were no roads suitable for carts and wheeled traffic in those mountains. Even in the following centuries the *maison du berger* was more common in northern France than in Occitania.

The migrant shepherd of Montaillou, with no *domus* of his own except during brief visits to elderly parents at home, developed a very different notion of wealth from that of his sedentary contemporaries. The shepherd might be comparatively well off in terms of flocks and even money, but he was necessarily poor in terms of objects, clothes, crockery, furniture, stores of grain and so on.

This was probably one explanation, though not the only one, of the extreme detachment as regards the goods of this world which Pierre Maury manifested when confronted with the problems of wealth. He liked it well enough to enjoy it when he had the chance; but he was never attached to it. One day in Spain the shoemaker Arnaud Sicre, the as yet undetected informer, complained to the emigrant colony from Montaillou that he had been impoverished because of his mother's heresy: she had been burned by the Inquisition, after her property and *domus* had been seized. Pierre Maury immediately replied (ii.30): '*Don't you worry about your poverty. . . . There is no disease easier to cure! Just take my case. Three times I have been ruined, and yet now I am richer than I have ever been. The first time it was in the valley of Arques, when Raymond Maulen and many others went to the Pope to repent* [of their Catharism]; *and I had perhaps the equivalent of 2,000 sous, and I lost everything*

Afterwards I lost my share of the fraternal inheritance [fratrisia] that I had at Montaillou; for I did not dare [for fear of the Inquisition] *to go and collect it. Later I hired myself out as a shepherd to people in Ax and Puigcerda. With them, I earned 300 sous; I entrusted the money to one of my friends in Urgel; and afterwards he refused to give it back to me. And yet now I am rich, because our custom, thus ordered by God, is as follows: if we have but one farthing, we must share it with our poor brothers.* At various times Pierre had owned a hundred sheep and some asses (ii.57), and once as much as 300 sous. On another occasion he had as much as 2,000 sous. Quite a tidy sum, but much less than the amount owned by a big local landowner like Bernard Clergue, who could spend 14,000 sous to get his brother out of the clutches of the Inquisition (iii.282–3). Anyhow, when Pierre Maury, our goatskin philosopher, said he was 'rich', he was aware that this was very relative. A really rich man was not a wage-earner like himself but a farmer and landowner with enough wealth to be able to use others to work for him (iii.122). Moreover, Pierre knew very well (he said so to Bélibaste on various occasions) that despite his assertions of wealth he was too poor – financially, materially and because he had no house of his own – to maintain a wife properly, with any children she might give him. He remained faithful to the teachings of his master Jacques Authié, in the valley of Arques (iii.130–31): '*With the riches Satan shall give you will never be satisfied, however much you possess. He who has will always want more. And you will have neither pause nor end, for this world is not the realm of stability; and all that is of Satan is only passing and doomed to destruction.*' These stinging words applied very well to people like Pierre Clergue and Arnaud Sicre, obsessed with domestic cares and frustrations; but measured by this yardstick Pierre Maury was sure to find grace, so liberated was he by his shepherd's outlook from the ordinary laws of village lumpishness.

And yet, if we set aside material objects, undesirable because too difficult to transport, Pierre Maury was rich, at least in terms of the satisfactions which came his way. His life was interesting, full, exciting. His flocks browsed in pastures not exhausted by over-grazing. He used his own wool. From the social and economic point of view he was, like all his colleagues, almost completely outside the scope of feudal oppression. From time to time he might have to pay some toll or due to a feudal lord, for grazing or for going through a pass. But on the whole the

'relations of production' in which he was involved were by nature contractual and mobile, salarial or cooperative. Though there is no need to talk of modernity (we must not forget that this pastoral world derived from the early Neolithic age, and its basic principles were laid down well before the fourteenth century), it is plain that Pierre Maury and his like lived outside the purely subsistence economy on which the residents of old Montaillou continued more or less to thrive. Maury, because of the final destination of his flocks, was part of the market economy of the transhumance. Needless to say, this does not mean that he was subject to the pitiless timetable of capitalist organization, far removed from the easy norms of the century before the Black Death. Everyone who has studied the daily life of the people of Montaillou, whether locals or emigrants, has been struck by the relaxed rhythm of their work, whether they were shepherds, farmers or artisans. Like the rest of them, Pierre Maury had his leisure moments. When necessary he got his friends to look after his sheep for him while he went down to the neighbouring town, to take, or to collect, money (iii.166). Or he might absent himself for purely personal reasons, without any problems of time-keeping or supervision, to go and visit friends, mistresses (unless they came up directly to see him in his *cabane*) or fellow-sponsors, friends acquired at baptisms recently or long ago. There was nothing parochial or even provincial about Pierre Maury. Like the Maurs and all the other shepherds from Cerdagne and Ariège, he stood at the intersection of a whole news network stretching from one mountain pass to another, thanks to which they were in touch with everything that was going on in Catalonia, the Pyrenees and their own native region. And Pierre made frequent visits home, despite the dangers of the Inquisition.[1]

Pierre Maury, a wage-earner, not alienated, informed, informal, and sociable, enjoyed parties and entertainment, and even just a good meal among friends. There was nothing outstanding about his ordinary meals, but he had plenty of solid, nourishing food – meat, goat's liver, pork, mutton, eggs, fish, cheese and milk – in people's houses, in taverns and in the open air, with brothers, relatives, friends, comrades, enemies or bravos who had been sent to confiscate his flock and whom he had got round by making a big pie which they all devoured together.[2] Pierre Maury was one of the chief stalwarts of the room serving as salon,

1 iii.186, 187 and *passim*.
2 ii.158, 184; iii.139, 140, 141, 148, 151.

dining-room and kitchen in the house of Guillemette Maury, the small farmer in exile from Montaillou who had re-settled with her family in San Mateo, in the street reserved for agricultural workers. People crowded there at midday or in the evening for meals distinguished by the number of guests and the liveliness of the conversation, if not always by the quality of the food. *At Eastertime, in the house of Guillemette Maury in San Mateo*, said Guillaume Maurs (ii.183–4), *I have seen Pierre Maury, Guillemette Maury herself, her sons Jean and Arnaud and her own brother, also called Pierre Maury, and Arnaud Sicre of Ax* [the informer] *and many others, almost a dozen or fifteen. And they all ate their midday meal together there. And they ate fish. But I don't like fish. And anyway it wasn't the right time of year for it. So I was surprised. And I sent one of Guillemette's sons to buy a goat's liver. And I ate that; and I gave some of it to the other guests who sat at table with us that day.* Even in times of famine or shortage (e.g. 1310), Pierre Maury managed to find enough flour to feed not only himself but also the other shepherds in his team and his friend Bélibaste: they had a quarter of a quintal of flour per week per person.[1] At holiday times, as far as his modest means allowed, and with the help of his friend and enemy Arnaud Sicre, he used to subsidize the festivities of Guillaume Bélibaste and Raymonde, Bélibaste's concubine. Arnaud Sicre (ii.69) tells how *Pierre Maury and I agreed to pay the Christmas expenses fifty-fifty: I was to pay for myself and for Bélibaste; Pierre Maury for himself and for Raymonde.*

Pierre Maury owned no real estate nor many permanent possessions, but he had plenty of friends. These friendships were based in the first instance on family relationships. Maury no longer had a house which belonged to him personally, but the paternal *domus* and links of relationship and lineage still represented for him cardinal values and sources of loyalty. This loyalty extended to ideology. Pierre Maury said to Guillaume Maurs (ii.174): '*Three times the house of my father and mother was destroyed for heresy; and I myself cannot cure myself of heresy, for I must hold the faith my father held.*' This short passage, together with others, shows that in Montaillou heresy was not a subject of conflict between fathers and sons or ancients and moderns.

If Pierre was a good son, he was even more a good brother. As we shall see, his highly developed sense of friendship was merely the expression of a fraternity not based on ties of blood. The possibilities

1 ii.176. One quintal equals approximately one hundredweight.

of fraternal attachment are evident in the kind of system which prevailed in Montaillou, with its strong stress on lineage. Pierre demonstrated this very early, when he kidnapped his sister, with her consent, to save her from a brutal husband.[1] As for Pierre's affection for his brother Jean, also a shepherd and a fellow-worker, this never failed, despite passing tiffs, like the one which occurred one summer in the Isavena Pass (iii.195). In the course of this argument, Jean called his brother a heretic. Pierre relates how he answered: '*You're not so far removed from heresy yourself!*'

But the quarrel was nothing serious. Pierre later showed how attached he was to his brother. One day when Jean was ill and delirious, he threatened to have all the heretics taken prisoner: he had never been a complete believer. Guillemette Maury, who was nursing him, said in alarm (iii.206), '*We must kill him; otherwise, if he gets better, he will send us all to prison and the stake.*'

Pierre at once replied: '*If you have my brother killed, I will eat you alive with my teeth, if I can be revenged no other way.*' Guillemette soon changed the subject.

The love of brother for brother could be metamorphosed into profound friendship towards someone who presented no links of blood and who was known as a 'friend in the flesh' (*ami charnel*). As Pierre Maury said (ii.182), *I love Guillaume* [Bélibaste] *more than any of my brothers; although I have four brothers in the flesh. For those who are of the faith practise concord in everything. So they are more one another's brothers than those born of the same father and mother in the flesh: such brothers are always quarrelling with one another! And I shall never let Guillaume down: for all that we possess we pool, half and half.*

Either Pierre Maury deluded himself or he deliberately turned a blind eye to Bélibaste's feelings towards him. The fifty-fifty arrangement was strictly one way. But this unrequited friendship was not only the result of individual magnanimity. It belonged to a general background of Occitan culture and artificial relationships in which total brotherhood between friends unlinked by blood, who shared everything equally without hesitation, was institutionalized in the ritual forms of fraternity (*affrèrement*), recorded from the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Another form of artificial relationship which affected the Pyrenean

1 iii.148, 151, 154, 155. See above, Chapter IV.

shepherds of the early 1300s was that which linked man to man, man to woman or woman to woman in the relationship of fellow-sponsor (*compère* and *commère*). The institution of baptism gave godfathers, godmothers and the parents of the infant baptized a common responsibility in the education and future of the infant. The pure friendship between Pierre Maury and those he loved and was beloved by was often not simply an affection in itself, as it would be nowadays. It was frequently based on a precise relationship of compaternity. In an interesting passage, Bélibaste actually reproaches Pierre Maury for having interested motives in this connection. '*You make yourself many* compères *and* commères *because you take part in so many baptisms; you spend all you have in this kind of festivity; and yet these baptisms and compaternities are good for nothing except to establish friendships between people.*'[1]

Pierre replied: '*I earn my money and fortune myself; and I mean to spend them as I like; I will not give it up either for you or for anyone else, because in that way I acquire many people's friendship.*' An additional philosophy underlies this attitude: '*If I try to acquire so many friends in this way, it is because I think I should do good to everyone; if someone is good* [i.e. a heretic] *I shall be rewarded; if someone is bad, at least he will try to return the good he receives at my hands.*'

It was to an unnamed *compère* that Maury entrusted his money when, fearing the Inquisitors, he sold all his sheep (ii.175). As this and other incidents show, a fellow-sponsor would sometimes act as trustee, though not always a worthy one. *At one time*, said Pierre (ii.30), *I had earned 300* sous *working as a shepherd for employers in Ax-les-Thermes and Puigcerda. I entrusted the said sum to a fellow-sponsor of mine who lived in the region of Urgel. He never gave me the money back.* Not only money but also an individual might be deposited with a fellow-sponsor – a woman, for example, some relation through blood or marriage, whose virtue or safety the depositor hoped thus to preserve. A *compère* might also be used as a landlord, especially if he had a large house. The great thing was to choose the right person in the first place. *That winter*, says Pierre (iii.194–5), *my brother Jean Maury and I wintered at Casteldans. We both stayed in the house of the notary, Bérenger de Sagria, who was none other than Jean's* compère *. . . Later I took Blanche Marty to Casteldans; and installed her in Bérenger's house.* (Blanche Marty was the sister of

1 iii.185. See also iii.209.

Raymonde Piquier, Bélibaste's concubine and for a brief period Pierre Maury's wife.) Lastly, as we have already seen, the testimony of a fellow-sponsor might provide a useful alibi.

His life as a migrant provided Pierre Maury with many opportunities to be invited to baptisms and acquire fellow-sponsors as friends. He might have several fellow-sponsors in one parish, and this, especially in winter, would often be an excuse for absenteeism, especially when Bélibaste was living in the neighbourhood. Under the pretext of going to see his fellow-sponsors, Pierre could visit his friend. *Pierre Maury and I and seven other shepherds*, says Guillaume Maurs (ii.177), *were wintering with Pierre Castel's sheep in the pastures at Tortosa. And just before Lent, Pierre Maury took leave of me and the sheep, saying: 'I want to go and see one of my fellow-sponsors called Eyssalda in the village of Flix* [near Tarragona]. *I have many other fellow-spunsors in the same village, including one called Pierre Ioyer.'*

And indeed, Pierre Maury was away three weeks or thereabouts, staying in Flix. When he came back to our pastures in Tortosa he brought with him the heretic Guillaume Bélibaste, whom he got Pierre Castel to take on for a month as a shepherd.

In addition to all these other relationships, Pierre Maury and his colleagues often established associations in which it is difficult to separate the practical element from the emotional one. When he was in Fenouillèdes, spending the summer in the Pyrenean pass of Orlu, Pierre Maury, together with his team of shepherds, took service with Pierre André, a farmer from Planèzes (iii.159–60). The team of shepherds included Pierre André's two sons, Bernard and Guillot. Moreover, the team, apparently quite independently and without expressly consulting their employer, associated themselves with another team of shepherds employed by Master Roquefeuil, a farmer from Saint-Paul-de-Fenouillèdes. For at least two summers and one winter all the André team and all the Roquefeuil team were associates (*socii*) among themselves, without their association involving their employers as such. Such informal workers' associations could lead to the exchange of medieval-type vows of loyalty. Here again, it is hard to distinguish between emotional impulse and the pressures of work. Bélibaste tells Pierre Maury of three migrant shepherds from north of the Pyrenees (iii.168): *'On the way from Servière to Montblanch, I passed three people, Raymond Maurs* [of Montaillou], *Bernard Laufre* [of Tignac], *and Raymond*

Batailler [of Gébetz]; *they had sworn loyalty to each other and were going to Montblanch to earn their living.*'

These forms of social relationship were typical of the mountains of Ariège, but reinforced by the needs of exile and migration. They are to be found not only among the shepherds but also among the women – widows, or those separated from their husbands – whom the exodus had carried to Catalonia: *Blanche Marty* [from a family of wealthy blacksmiths in Junac] *had associated herself*, says Pierre Maury (iii.197), *with old Esperte Cervel* [from Montaillou, widow of a blacksmith from Tarascon]. *They lived together, with Mathena, Esperte's daughter, in a house near the bridge in Lérida.* Both in Montaillou and in Sabarthès, association could lead to some form of vendetta. The men of the Maurs family had long been members of associations concluded for better or worse, i.e. either to earn a living together or to avenge themselves as a family group. Reference has already been made (see p. 51) to the way three men from Montaillou, two of them shepherds belonging to the Maurs family, entered into association, sworn *on bread and on wine*, the object of which was to murder the priest.

Filial, fraternal, compaternal and associative friendships combined with ordinary friendships and complicity, heretical or anti-heretical, to form each individual's and each *domus*'s circle of friends. '*Say hallo to all our friends*,' says Raymond Pierre to Pierre Maury when the latter goes off to visit a house sympathetic to the Cathars (iii.129). '*Be off with you; because of you, misfortune could come upon all our friends*,' says Guillaume Belot to Pierre Maury in Montaillou itself, speaking for Arnaud Fauré, Pierre Maury's uncle (ii.174). At this, Pierre Maury bursts into tears. He realizes that through fear of the Inquisition the Belots and the Faurés, his relatives and fellow-citizens, no longer number him among their friends. They now refuse him the sacred gift of hospitality. They implore him to be on his way, if necessary throwing him a crust of bread to buy his departure. Even when its laws were broken, friendship among the shepherds of Aude and Montaillou in the old days, as among the Corsicans and the Andalusians still, remained a relationship of the utmost importance, much stronger than in the individualistic societies of the modern industrial world.

In general, the shepherds remained unmarried and without children, for rightly or wrongly they regarded themselves as too poor to take a

wife. The exceptions to this rule were sufficiently rare to be mentioned explicitly: *I was a shepherd with Guillaume Ratfre, of Ax, who had taken a wife in Caudiès*, says Pierre Maury one day with some astonishment.[1] But on the whole professional shepherds did not marry, and external recruiting was necessary if their profession was not to atrophy or disappear.

The shepherds' attitude towards the rest of the world was easy-going, often friendly. One of them might, like Guillaume Maurs, pitilessly seek revenge against the Clergues, but that was because they had persecuted his family and destroyed them. The cross-section of shepherds in the Fournier Register, quite a large one, does not contain any characters as despicable as one finds without difficulty in the amoral world of non-shepherds (for example, Pierre Clergue, or Arnaud Sicre, or Bélibaste, a shepherd in emergencies but sedentary by vocation).

Among this society of shepherds, more attractive as a whole than the stable group of *domus*-dwellers, Pierre Maury is the easy-going hero par excellence, the embodiment of cheerful openness towards the world and other people. When he greets anyone, even someone he scarcely knows and whom he has good reason to mistrust, he welcomes him with a ringing shepherd's laugh. Arnaud Sicre, the secret informer, is greeted like the rest. *When I went into Guillemette Maury's house*, he says (ii.28), *Pierre Maury, who was sitting on a bench, stood up and showed me a smiling face, and we greeted one another in the usual manner.*

Pierre Maury saw his relationship with Sicre and the other members of Bélibaste's colony as one of cheerful conviviality: speaking of the meeting shortly to take place in Guillemette Maury's house, he said (ii.30), *We shall all talk together and enjoy ourselves, because we ought to enjoy ourselves among friends.*

Pierre could also inspire enjoyment, though his friends' feelings were often contradictory. '*When we saw you again*,' said Guillaume Bélibaste to Pierre one day, after his return from summer pasture in the mountains (iii.183), '*we felt both joy and fear. Joy, because it was a long time since we had seen you. Fear, because I was afraid lest the Inquisition had captured you up there: if they had, they would have made you confess everything and come back among us a spy in order to bring about my capture.*'

1 iii.159. See also the case of Jean Maury, who got married in a Catalan village in order to acquire the right to use the pasture. In his case, the only one of its kind recorded, marriage was a step on the way to sedentarization.

Bélibaste was wrong about the informer's identity, but not about the procedure. The man who was to bring about his capture exactly as he had foreseen was not Pierre Maury but Arnaud Sicre. Pierre Maury only smiled, up in the pastures, when Guillaume Maurs talked of how the Inquisition would treat him one day (ii.181). '*You will be revealed, denounced and captured, like Bélibaste*,' said Guillaume. '*And they will crush your nails.*'

After listening to me speak like that, continued Guillaume, *Pierre Maury began to smile.*

Guillaume Maurs was met with the same smile when he criticized Pierre one day for his heterodox connections. '*Pierre*,' said Guillaume (ii.185), '*you are always collecting for the wrong causes, and you visit many bad men; there are no wicked devils in the world that you don't know.*' *At these words, Pierre smiled and said nothing.*

We see the same smile in Béatrice de Planissoles. During the frequent domestic quarrels between the ageing Béatrice and her young lover, Barthélemy Aurilhac, the latter threatened to denounce her to the Inquisition. *And I said to Béatrice*, says Barthélemy, *that if I found myself in the diocese of Pamiers or somewhere where there was an Inquisitor, I would have her taken . . . and then she smiled and said: 'The priests who belong to the sect of the good Christians*[the heretics] *are better than you are.*'

Psychological details on the subject are fragmentary and scattered, but if we want to know how the people of Montaillou saw the meaning of their lives, and what their awareness was of their own identity, answers are supplied by Pierre Maury himself.

An early discussion on the subject took place near Ax-les-Thermes. Pierre Maury had been living in Fenouillèdes, but had come to Ax to convoy a mule from Roussillon laden with salt. Near the local baths at Ax-les-Thermes, reserved partly for lepers, he met two other people from Montaillou, Guillaume Belot and Guillaume Maury, his own brother. The three men went for a walk together and talked about philosophy. Their conversation was tinged with anxiety. Rumour had it that there was to be a big round-up of heretics, thought to be plentiful in Montaillou and Sabarthès. The two citizens of Montaillou, who were experts on the subject, asked Pierre Maury (iii.161), '*How is it that you dare to live in Fenouillèdes when you are being sought for heresy?*'

Pierre replied: '*I might as well go on living in Fenouillèdes and*

Sabarthès; for no one can take away my fate [*fatum*]. *And I must bear my fate, whether it be here or there.*'

Fate: the word was often to be met with in Pierre Maury's conversation, at table, in the pastures or when he had been drinking with his friends.

This idea of ineluctable fate pursued Maury in all his subsequent travels, even as far as Spain. He referred to it when Bélibaste wanted to find him a wife and bitterly reproached him for his wandering life. '*You go away from us, Pierre,*' said Bélibaste (iii.183). '*Your regular returns to the Comté de Foix for the summer pasturing may make you fall into the hands of the Inquisition; remember that once you are out of our presence some accident might bring about your destruction, without any possibility of your being hereticated, received or consoled on the eve of your death.*'

Pierre replied, '*I cannot live otherwise than the way I was brought up. If I lived all the time in Morella* [a traditional place of winter pasturing in Spain], *I should die during the summer. I must follow my fate. If I am allowed to be hereticated on the eve of my death, I shall be. Otherwise, I shall follow my destined path.*'

On another occasion, when Guillaume Maurs criticized him for his life as a hunted heretic, Pierre Maury said (ii.184), '*I cannot do otherwise. That is how I have lived up till now. And that is how I shall go on living.*'

From where could Maury have got this idea of fate? From his friends the Cathars? Yes and no. They certainly had a firm belief in necessity.[1] But they also contradicted themselves. Bélibaste, always somewhat ambiguous, occasionally referred to the old subject of free will (ii.183): '*A man may well help himself*', said Bélibaste, '*to obtain some end which may be either good or bad.*'

If we set the Albigensian influence aside, we may easily compare Pierre Maury's idea of fate with similar notions popular among the various cultures of the western Mediterranean. The people of the Maghreb and the Moslems of Africa and Spain also had a sense of fate, and Pierre Maury's many contacts with Saracen shepherds could only have reinforced his thoughts on the question.[2] Even if we do not seek quite so far, medieval Christianity (influenced in this by the pre-Islamic North African, Augustine) possessed a very comprehensive theory of Grace, which in its crudest versions might also be regarded as

1 See below, Chapter XVIII.

2 Pierre Maury's first mention of the idea of fate comes after his first visit to Spain.

destiny. Finally, we may recall that Pierre Maury was a mountain shepherd, and that it was just these 'great shepherds of the high mountains' who, before the Renaissance, gave in their calendars the most complete version of the relationships uniting macrocosm and microcosm. Astrology, through the twelve signs of the zodiac, ruled the twelve months of the agricultural year and the twelve periods – seventy-two years in all – into which the life of a man was divided. We should also note that Pierre Maury's sense of destiny had no connection with absurd superstition One day Guillaume Bélibaste was anxious because he had seen a magpie cross his path three times. (He might well have been anxious – for him the stake was not far off.) Pierre laughed at him (iii.210): '*Guillaume, take no notice of signs of birds and other auguries of that kind. Only old women bother about such things.*'

Pierre Maury's sense of fate was thus not vulgarly magical but loftily philosophical. In him as in others it is simply a very old peasant idea quite natural in societies where there is no growth and, where people literally have no choice. We have seen how Clergue the priest preserved the hair and nail-parings of his father in order to protect the star or good fortune (*eufortunium*) of his family house. The same term, fortune, is found, reversed, in Guillaume Maurs's reproaches to Pierre Maury on the subject of his evil communications (ii.184): '*Pierre, you meddle in bad business* [*borias*]; *and you will all endure misfortune* [*infortunium*] *as a result; and one day the Devil will carry everything off.*' Pierre answers by referring to his own fate as a homeless migrant: he can do nothing about it, he cannot do otherwise, for thus he has lived so far, and thus he will live in the future. But we should note a nuance between Pierre Clergue's idea of fate and that of Pierre Maury. For Pierre Clergue, a man of the *domus*, astral fortune is above all connected with the common fate of his line and his household. But Pierre Maury's motto is 'without hearth or home'; for him, fate and fortune are primarily individual entities, affecting the life of one person rather than the future of an *ostal*.

Pierre Maury's awareness of *fatum* also reflects a deep sense of occupational continuity. To fulfil one's destiny is to keep one's place and not depart from one's condition or profession. And one's profession is seen as a source of interest, a fount of vital energy, not a cause of unhappiness and alienation. Guillaume Maurs, Pierre Maury and Guillaume Bélibaste had a very revealing discussion one day on this subject as they were all guarding their sheep in the pastures at Tortosa. '*Pierre*,' said

Bélibaste to Maury (ii.177), '*stop leading that dog's life of yours; sell all your sheep, and we shall spend the money you get from them. I for my part will make combs. And then both of us can manage to live.*'

Pierre immediately replied: '*No, I do not want to sell my sheep. A shepherd I have been. A shepherd I shall remain as long as I live.*'

Fate, which underlies this phrase as it does so many others, is thus seen as the shepherd's vocation; and mountain liberty is the happy counterpart of the migrant's destiny, even if he has to sleep under the trees, to freeze almost to death in winter and be soaked to the skin by autumn showers (i.178; ii.15). This fate is inseparable from the young shepherd's upbringing, seen in terms of the daily bread received from his parents. One day at Beceite, near Teruel, Emersende Befayt of Montaillou attacked Pierre Maury on the subject of his journeys to the mountains of Ariège. She told him how anxious it made all his friends, the 'believers' as well as the *parfaits*. Pierre answered (iii.182): '*I cannot do otherwise, for I cannot lead a life different from that for which I was brought up.*' (The word he used was translated as *nutritus*, which implies the notions both of nourishment and of education.) Behind the commonplace idea that a man is the product of his education lies the more complex notion of a physical link with the bread which built the body, and, through the bread, with the land which produced the grain and to which the man will one day return. *The soul of man is bread*, as a materialistic peasant of upper Ariège remarked; his heretical words were to attract the attention of Jacques Fournier. *What one has kneaded, that one must bake*, said one of Pierre Maury's friends, thus trying to justify Emersende Befayt's continuing to live with her daughter Jeanne, despite the fact that the latter kept attacking her (iii.174). Guillaume Fort of Montaillou recalled that, in spite of all the doctrines about resurrection, that which comes from the earth must go back to the earth. *After death*, he said (i.447), *the human body dissolves and is transformed into earth.* Thus man's destiny, though directed from afar by the stars, still remains, for the thinkers of Montaillou, strongly carnal and terrestrial. The physical link between a man's destiny and his native soul is referred to in a conversation when Emersende Marty affectionately reproaches Pierre Maury for his constant voyages home (iii.183). '*My son, you should not go back there. Why not stay here with us? You have no son or daughter or anyone to look after except yourself. You could live here without too much effort. But if you are captured there, you are lost.*'

Pierre replied: '*No, I could not live here* [in Catalonia] *permanently; and anyhow, no one can take away my fate.*'

Maury and his peers, great voyagers, had neither wife, nor children nor household. Despite their comparative wealth in terms of money and flocks,[1] they could not accumulate much in the way of objects, limited as they were by considerations of mobility which prevented them from acquiring all the possessions with which those who were sedentary systematically surrounded themselves. So Maury chose instead to desire few objects, and to transfer his wants to other kinds of wealth, which for him took the place of family: temporary unions with mistresses in the pastures or the taverns; a full network of human relationships based on both artificial and natural fraternity, on compaternity, on pure friendship or friendship through association. He liked this life-style, based on fate freely accepted – but is this not the very definition of Grace? His destiny was a destination. For him, sheep meant liberty. And he would not trade that liberty for the plate of gritty lentils often held out to him by friends, employers or parasites, offering to marry him, to help him settle down, to have him adopted into a rich family. But he saw his destiny as travelling over hill and dale, with friends everywhere and temporary sweethearts. Material wealth would have been literally a burden to him. Maury had few possessions, but he was not destitute. And when he lost those few possessions he lost them with a smile, for he knew that by working he could easily get them back again. Well shod for his long journeys in a pair of good shoes of Spanish leather – the only luxury he allowed himself (i.20) – detached from the goods of this world, careless of the almost inevitable certainty of being arrested at some time by the Inquisition, leading a life that was both passionate and passionately interesting, Pierre Maury was a happy shepherd.

1 Bélibaste, who was kept by Pierre Maury, even said on occasion – for interested reasons, it is true – that Maury was 'rich' (ii.42).

CHAPTER XVII Concepts of time and space

In an important article, Jacques Le Goff has contrasted the two enemies, 'the time of the Church' and 'the time of the merchant'.[1] But where does the special time of the farmer, the shepherd and the craftsman come in? The first thing to be noticed is that the time of the humble people had been only partially annexed by the Church. Arnaud Sicre of Tarascon speaks of *the time it takes to say two Paternosters* (ii.27), but he is referring specifically to religious rites (heretical ones, as it happens). Normally, to indicate a brief lapse of time in Sabarthès, people used some vague expression like 'a short moment', 'a brief pause', 'a long pause' and so on. Or, less frequently, time was measured in terms of motion (*the time it takes to travel a league*, or *the time it takes to travel a quarter of a league*). This method was common with a great walker like the shepherd Bernard Marty (iii.257, 260 and *passim*).

Fixed points in time were indicated by references to meals (*prandium* or *cena* – that is, lunch or dinner), or to liturgical hours such as terce, nones or vespers. These liturgical references were mostly used by priests, *parfaits* and a few women of Catholic faith or leanings.[2] So daytime chronology was only partly Christianized. Nights remained an entirely lay matter, except in the case of a bigot like Bélibaste, who got up six times during the night to say his prayers. The people of Montaillou and Ariège in general indicated the divisions of the night by means of visual, aural or physiological references such as *after sunset*, *at nightfall*, *at the hour of the first sleep*, *at the hour half-way through the first sleep*, *at cock-crow*, or *when the cock had crowed three times*.

Church bells are scarcely ever referred to except when they ring for funerals or for the elevation of the Host during Mass; they seem not to have been used in Montaillou simply to mark the passage of time. Time was not money in the Comté de Foix. The people of Montaillou were

1 J. Le Goff (1960).

2 i.335; ii.38, 338; iii.51, 67, 360, 364. Among the women who used such expressions were Gauzia Clergue, Raymonde d'Argevilliers, Guillemette Clergue (all of Montaillou) and Bernadette de Rieux of Ax. The Waldensians of Pamiers also indicated time by means of the liturgical hours (i.104, 121), but in their case this corresponded to prayers which they actually said. The shepherd Pierre Maury refers occasionally to 'nones' (iii.135).

not afraid of hard work and could make an effort when necessary. But they did not think in terms of a fixed and continuous timetable, whether in their own fields or, in exile, in the workshops of Catalonia. For them the working day was punctuated with long, irregular pauses, during which one would chat with a friend, perhaps at the same time enjoying a glass of wine. *At those words*, said Arnaud Sicre, *I folded up my work and went to Guillemette Maury's house.* And Arnaud Sicre indicates several other similar interruptions: *Pierre Maury sent for me in the shop where I made shoes . . . Guillemette sent a message to ask me to go to her house, which I did . . . Hearing that, I left what I was doing.*

So work was not so absorbing that one couldn't bear to leave it. And this relaxed attitude was found generally, not only in the case of a distinguished shoemaker like Arnaud Sicre. The time of a craftsman seems still to have been very close to that of a farmer or shepherd. Pierre Maury, who had a reputation for competence, was always ready to leave his flock in the charge of his brother or a friend, perhaps for hours, perhaps for days or weeks. A good deal of time in Montaillou and upper Ariège was spent walking or taking a siesta, especially when it was hot.

At first sight it seems that there was a weekly division of time. Arnaud Sicre, a woman of Ax, Béatrice de Planissoles and the shepherds Bernard Benet and Bernard Marty all use the word, and the idea, of a 'week'. But in ordinary rural circles the term was avoided, as were references to the lunar calendar and the names of the days of the week, except occasionally for Sunday.[1] People spoke of eight days or fifteen days rather than one or two weeks. This usage corresponds to the idea of a quarter or half of a month. The people of Ariège were used in general to dividing things up into halves: they often referred to a 'half year' (ii.196; iii.283, 289). This had the additional advantage of lending itself to the usages of transhumance, which divided the year up into winter and summer pasturage.

The rhythm of the year was that of the twelve months and the four seasons, but these were not referred to very frequently. Dates were often

1 ii.201. Gauzia Clergue for example, does not say 'Monday', but 'the day after Sunday' (iii.360). It is an exceptional occurrence when the sheep-farmer Raymond Sicre of Ascou says 'Thursday' (ii.364). On the other hand, the scribes of the Inquisition, in their preambles, often use the names of the days of the week. Barthélemy Amilhac uses the term 'Monday' (i.256); but he was a priest.

fixed by reference to purely natural phenomena, not necessarily agricultural. *We were sitting, Guillemette Benet and I, under the elm*, says Alazaïs Munier,[1] *at the season when elms have put forth their leaves. It was on this occasion that Guillemette Benet said to me: 'My poor friend, my poor friend, the soul is nothing but blood.'* Harvests and other agricultural work also provided points of reference. *Raymond de la Côte*, said the Waldensian Agnès Francou, referring to the man who was later burned at the stake with her (i.125), *remained in Pamiers from the wine-harvest in 1318 to the Feast of Saint Laurent in 1319*. There are many specific references in Montaillou to the wheat and turnip harvests.

But these natural references are outnumbered by references to the Christian year. While the division of the day and of the night remained largely lay, the division of the year was largely ecclesiastical. All Saints, Christmas, Carnival and Lent, Palm Sunday, Easter, Whitsun, Ascension Day, the Assumption, the Nativity of the Virgin and the Holy Cross made up a universally known cycle. All Saints' Day was very important, naturally enough in a society much preoccupied with death and what came after death. Christmas was a family feast. Easter served as a pretext for feasts of lamb. The times between All Saints and Christmas and between Easter and Whitsun were referred to precisely as such.

Saints were honoured mostly during the period from the end of spring through summer to autumn. Both in the Pyrenees and in Catalonia there was a slack period between the beginning of November and the beginning of May. The reason for this seems to have been that the major feasts celebrated between Christmas and Whitsun were too numerous to leave room for much minor devotion. The year was divided up into one part dedicated to God and Christ and running from Christmas to Whitsun, followed by another part devoted to the Virgin Mary and the Saints and running from Whitsun to All Saints. The more Christian portion is clearly the first, given what we know about the pagan elements attached to the worship of the Saints and the Virgin.

Saints' days were linked to various collective activities, including cattle fairs. The Maury brothers were well-known visitors to the market at Ax-les-Thermes and the fair at Laroque d'Olmes, which occurred on Holy Cross and Saint Ciriac's Day respectively (ii.477–8; iii.148). Feast days meant holidays. The saints were the friends of the workers, including farmers and agricultural labourers. At the feasts which fell at

1 i.260. This Guillemette Benet is the namesake of the matriarch of Montaillou.

the end of the summer the shepherds came down from the summer pastures to join in the fun. Even the peasants who were Cathars did not dream of giving up these Catholic festivities. Only Bélibaste, an out and out Albigensian, carried heretic zeal as far as shutting himself up to work during holidays (ii.53).

Finally, it was the priest, who might possess a calendar, who was responsible, when necessary, for saying what day of the year it was. The day was defined not by a figure but by the name of a saint or a feast. The priest was thus the guardian of time.

The scribes of the Inquisition made use of a time expressed in figures, a modern time expressed to the exact day: *2 April 1320*, *26 December 1321* and so on. This contrast between the definite time of the scribes and the vague time of the peasants was more marked still when it came to the demarcation of a large part of the year, or a group of years. Guillaume Austatz, though he was a *bayle*, did not say 'in 1316' or 'in 1301' but *three or four years ago*, *seventeen or eighteen years ago*, *it may well have been twenty years ago*, *twenty or twenty-four years since* (i.202; i.499; iii.271; and *passim*).[1] Other common expressions were *at the time when the heretics predominated in Montaillou*, *before the round-up by the Inquisition in Carcassonne*, and so on, just as we say 'before' or 'after the War', 'before' or 'since May '68'. The farther back an event, the vaguer the reference. A child was not six or seven months old, but *half a year* old; not a year or eighteen months old, but *between one and two* (i.382; ii.17). A few examples suggest that women preserved a more exact idea of the past than men. Béatrice de Planissoles is very precise about dates: *nineteen years ago on Assumption Day*, *twenty-six years ago in August*, she says, referring to her own past (i.218, 223, 232). Béatrice was a noblewoman, but the same phenomenon is seen among the peasants. The shepherd Bernard Benet refers to the death of Guillaume Guilhabert as having taken place *sixteen or twenty years ago*, i.e. between 1300 and 1305 (i.398). But a peasant woman, Alazaïs Fauré, says more precisely that the event took place *eighteen years ago*, i.e. in 1303 (i.410).

Whether precisely given or otherwise, rural time was always vague. The prevailing mental attitude was Merovingian, like that of Grégoire de Tours or the pseudo-Frédégaire. We have seen above how Agnès

1 Although the villagers could not read or write, they could, of course, count. They were, after all, repeatedly having to count their sheep.

Francou referred to the actual years 1318 and 1319 (i.125), but she lived in Pamiers and came from more sophisticated circles.[1] Up in the mountains there is only one case of such an exact reference. During Lent 1318, Bernard Cordier, then living in Tarascon, told his fellow-citizens what he had heard in his native town of Pamiers: '*There will be catastrophes in 1318 because of the birth of Antichrist.*'[2]

In these circumstances, history was absent or almost absent from Montaillou culture. All the people knew on the subject were a few scraps of eschatology derived from Christianity and various other beliefs. The Cathar myth of the Fall was extremely popular among the heretical sympathizers of Montaillou, but as far as Catholic tradition was concerned, little was known of the time covered by the Old Testament. Familiar conversation in the *domus* produced a few references to Adam and Eve, but none to the Flood or the Prophets. Catholic time, in upper Ariège, mentioned the Creation only briefly, and began in earnest with Mary, Jesus and the Apostles. It ended in some distant future, *when the world has lasted many years* (i.191). Then came the Day of Judgment and the Resurrection. These final prospects, though sometimes called in question, were often referred to around the fire in the evening. *About four years ago*, said Gaillarde, wife of Bernard Ros of Ornolac (i.191), *I was in my house at Ornolac, together with my fellow-citizen the wife of Pierre Munier. Guillaume Austatz* (*the* bayle) *came in, with other people whose names I forget. We sat around the fire and began to talk about God and the general Resurrection.*

When the inhabitants of Montaillou referred to historical events in the modern sense of the term, they were usually concerned with things which occurred after 1290, if not after 1300. There is one unique reference to the 1240s. This evokes the moving story of Alesta and Serena, heretical ladies of Chateauverdun who were captured, who removed their make-up and were burned at the stake, one of them having left her infant behind in order to go to Lombardy. Raymond Roussel, who recounts this story to Béatrice, tells it without any date, as if it were simply an old tale from the past (i.220–21).

1 See P. Aries (1954), pp. 119–21. Merovingian chroniclers, like the Montaillou peasants, did not use precise figures to indicate years.

2 i.160. There is another example where a peasant woman of Montaillou appears to be referring to the year 1320 (iii.336). But the context suggests that it was the Inquisition's scribe who inserted this date into the evidence.

Allusions to history proper, whether ancient or modern, are almost entirely absent from the records, whether these deal with Montaillou itself or with Ariège in general. Roman antiquity was known only in Pamiers, and then only just. There were schools in Pamiers, and a text by Ovid was read there. But the memories of the farmers scarcely went back further than the previous Comte de Foix, who had been kind to his subjects but an enemy to tithes and the Church. He died in 1302 (iii.331). Apart from a few very rare passages about, for example, the great age of some *genus* or lineage (ii.367, 368; ii.110), the witnesses whom Fournier interrogated took no interest in decades earlier than 1290 or 1300. It should be remembered, of course, that there were few elderly people among these witnesses. So the people of Montaillou lived in a kind of 'island in time', even more cut off from the past than from the future. *There is no other age than ours*, said Raymond de l'Aire of Tignac (ii.132).

This absence of a historical dimension went with a general use, in speech, of the present indicative tense, without logical connections with past and future. The narratives of Pierre Maury, Bernard Marty and many others are quite flat, without any direct revelation of the individuals involved. For hours we listened to Pierre Maury's reminiscences. They show us Arnaud Sicre the shoemaker; but it is only suddenly, just before the end, that we learn that he was an informer, only at the moment when he actually appears as one in the narrative.

Space, whether immediate, geographical, sociological or cultural, was basically linked to physical perception, especially that of the hand and the arm. Guillemette Clergue says (i.341): *I saw Prades Tavernier reading in the rays of the sun a black book as long as my own hand.* Raymond Vayssière says (i.285): *I was sunning myself behind my house, and four or five spans away Guillaume Andorran was reading a book.* Guillemette Clergue again (i.341): *Prades Tavernier, who was carrying four or five lambskins round his neck, walked along keeping a constant distance of a crossbow shot between himself and the road.* Longer distances are measured in terms of a league (ii.27), a stage of a journey (ii.43) or a stage of the migration. In the mountain village of Montaillou, people did not go simply from point A to point B; they went up or down (i.223, 462; iii.296; and *passim*).

But the people of upper Ariège were not very deeply concerned with space. Their notion of it was bounded by the two philosophical concepts

of Montaillou, *corpus* and *domus*, body and house. The body was the measure of the world, in the first place, and when the world was too large to be measured by the body its place would be taken by the *domus*. '*If you want to have an idea of Heaven*,' said Guillaume Austatz (i.202), '*imagine a huge* domus *stretching from the Mérens Pass to the town of Toulouse*.'

Nor was space in Montaillou very definitely orientated. In later centuries the surveyors who drew up the land registers of Languedoc defined the fields in terms of the points of the compass, the prevailing winds, the positions of the sun, and so on. But in 1310 the people of Ariège did not describe a journey in terms of its general orientation but in terms of a series of towns along the way. '*To go to Rabastens*,' said Bélibaste to Pierre Maury (iii.151), '*you go first to Mirepoix, then to Bauville, and then to Caraman. And there you ask the way to Rabastens*.' The expressions rising sun, setting sun, north, south, east and west, are never used in the Register. The peasants of Montaillou spoke of going *towards Catalonia* (i.e. south), *towards the lowlands* (i.e. north), *beyond the mountains*, *towards the sea*, *towards Toulouse*, and so on.

Geographically, the basic perception was that of the locality or village – the *terra*. This word denoted both the manorial estate and the sub-region itself. We should not be misled by the word *terra*. The peasants and shepherds of Montaillou, preoccupied with their *domus*, were not obsessed with the land belonging to them in the way that farmers of all ages are sometimes supposed to be. Their method of production was domestic, and *terra*, for them, was not family land but the territory of the parish and, more generally, of the locality. People spoke of the *terra* of a village, or a group of villages or of any region with limits at once human and natural. *Terra* might also apply to a manorial estate, large or small, or even a whole principality. Everyone was conscious of the Comté de Foix as a political unit. But there was a clear distinction between, on the one hand, the uplands (centred not on Foix, the capital, but on Ax and Tarascon), and, on the other, the lowlands, dominated by the town of Pamiers, ecclesiastical, anti-Cathar and Dominican, surrounded by its rich cereal plains. The frontier between the upper regions, anti-tithe and pro-Cathar, and the lower regions, solidly Catholic, lay a few kilometres to the north of Foix along a transverse valley called the Labarre Pass. *The people of Sabarthès*, said Berthomieu

Hugon in 1322 (iii.331), *would like to come to an arrangement with the Comte de Foix whereby no cleric came up further than the Labarre Pass . . . If the Comte de Foix were as good a man as his predecessor, the priests would not come up and demand* carnelages.

This distinction was accepted by everyone in Montaillou. Clergue the priest warned Béatrice not to go down to the 'lowlands' of Dalou and Varilhes, infested with Minorite friars. In prison in Pamiers, Bernard Clergue looked up at the mountains which blocked the southern horizon: up there among them was his *terra* of upper Ariège, made up of Sabarthès and the Pays d'Aillon, and above all of the manor of Montaillou of which he was *bayle.*

Upper Ariège, bounded in the north by the Labarre Pass, was bounded in the south by the line of the Pyrenean passes. A Bishop of Pamiers, the spiritual arm of the King of France, tried to extend his inquisitorial control as far as this line. The people of Foix lived *citra portus* (on the hither side of the passes), on the northern slopes of the Pyrenees, under the influence of French imperialism. The Spanish slopes of the mountains were called *ultra portus* (beyond the passes). '*Flee beyond the passes,*' said Pons Bol, the notary of Varilhes, to Béatrice de Planissoles (i.257), '*because on this side of them you will be caught by the Bishop.*' For the exiles in Catalonia, the main axis of the Pyrenees, which corresponded with the line of the passes running from east to west, was the frontier of freedom, beyond which the Kingdom of France began, in terms of oppression if not according to the letter of the law. For it was there that the activity of the Inquisitors began. *When we go through the passes and re-enter the Kingdom of France,* said the emigrés (ii.71), *all our hair stands on end.*

There were varying degrees of contact between the different localities and sub-regions. Montaillou had a permanent relationship with Prades, the neighbouring parish, and was linked to it both by a path and by bonds of inter-marriage (i.462). Camurac, on the other hand, another neighbouring community, hardly any farther away than Prades, had only very slight links with Montaillou, apart from the occasional visit of the priest of Camurac, bringing the last sacraments to some dying inhabitant of Montaillou (i.462). Montaillou had frequent contacts – commercial, cultural, social and friendly – with Ax-les-Thermes, chief town of the upper valley of the Ariège. The women of the Prades valley went to Ax to sell their hens and eggs and to get their yarn woven.

Mules laden with wheat went from Montaillou to the mills on the River Ariège in Ax and then came back again to the village laden with flour.

One day, said Guillemette Clergue (i.343), *not long before the general arrest of the people of Montaillou (apart from that, I don't remember when it was), I went to gather grass in the place called Alacot. On my way, I met Guillaume Maury with his mule; he was coming from Ax, singing. I said to him: 'You've been drinking. You are so cheerful.'*

'I've been to Ax to have the flour ground; I'm bringing it back on my mule,' he said.

'And how is it,' I answered, 'that when my husband goes to Ax to have the flour ground, he comes back to our domus *completely exhausted with sleeplessness and flour dust?'*

'As a matter of fact,' said Guillaume, 'I didn't stay long at the mill. I took advantage of the journey to go and see the goodmen!'

The seasonal migration created links between Montaillou and places a long distance away. In Arques, for example, in the present-day department of Aude, Sybille Pierre, a sheep-farmer's wife, knew all the Montaillou gossip. The two villages were 40 kilometres away from one another as the crow flies, but in fact they were brought close together because one was the summer terminus and the other the winter terminus of the migration circuit. They also exchanged servant maids and seasonal workers for the harvest (ii.427). In a sense, the Fournier Register is a great dialogue across space between the winter pastures in Catalonia and the summer pastures in Sabarthès.

Montaillou and the *terre d'Aillon* (Prades and Montaillou) were a part of Sabarthès. *Pierre Clergue is priest of Montaillou in Sabarthès* (iii.182). There was a lesser Sabarthès, centred on Ax and Tarascon and the shrine at Savart, which gave Sabarthès its name. And there was a greater Sabarthès, corresponding with the southern, mountainous part of the Comté de Foix itself and including (south of the Labarre Pass and north of the axis of the Pyrenees) the environs of Ax, Tarascon, Foix and the region of Vicdessos. Many passages show how the inhabitants of the various villages regarded themselves as living in Sabarthès.

'Aren't you from Sabarthès?' a young man asked Pierre den Hugol in a tavern in Laroque d'Olmes (iii.375).

'Yes, I'm from Quié.'

As well as gastronomic and other specialities, Sabarthès had its own language or at least dialects. This linguistic unity favoured intermarriage. Mathena Cervel (ii.451): *My future husband Jean Maury had come to Juncosa* [in Spain] *to recover his sheep. When he learned that my mother and I were of the tongue of Sabarthès, he negotiated to marry me, although we did not even know each other.*

Goodmen and priests had at least one thing in common: they all preached, when necessary, in the vulgar tongue (i.454; iii.106). The people of Montaillou were very much aware of a local dialect spoken by about a thousand people at the most.

At San Mateo, says Arnaud Sicre (ii.21), *I was making shoes in the workshop of Jacques Vital, a local shoe-maker, when a woman came along the street, calling: 'Any flour to grind?'*

Someone said to me: 'Arnaud, here's a farm woman from your country.'

I asked the woman: 'Where do you come from?'

'Saverdun,' she said.

But as she spoke the tongue of Montaillou, I cut her short: 'You're not from Saverdun. You're from Prades or Montaillou.'

This exchange suggests that there was a difference between the language spoken in the lowlands (Saverdun, north of the Labarre Pass) and that of Sabarthès. Again, within the latter, there was something special about the dialects of Prades and Montaillou, which perhaps contained Catalan expressions. For the people of Montaillou, especially the shepherds, there was a sort of continuum between Occitania and Catalonia. No problem of comprehension was involved for them in going from Tarascon and Ax-les-Thermes to Puigcerda and San Mateo. Linguistically speaking, the Pyrenees scarcely existed.

People from Ariège took refuge in Lombardy, Sicily, Catalonia, Valencia and Majorca. Exile and the yearly migrations brought them into contact with the Moors of Spain. There were influences from the East, both Moslem and Christian. All the more remarkable, then, is the absence of 'French' influence in Sabarthès. The Inquisition at Carcassonne and Pamiers did undertake to act as the spiritual arm of France. France was far away, but its force was felt, hanging like the Sword of Damocles over the hot-heads of Sabarthès.

Apart from such indirect pressures, there was little French influence as such in the region. Many migrants continued to travel through the

mountain passes of Ariège and Roussillon, coming from the north and going to Spain. But they were Occitans, not French-speakers from the Paris basin.

More decisive in the demarcation of the cultural space of Sabarthès were the currents of heresy. Despite the various tentacles which Catharism extended from time to time towards the north of Europe, it was by origin an Italian, Mediterranean and Balkan heresy, and came to the *pays d'oc* by means of a journey from east to west. Upper Ariège remained almost unaffected by Waldensianism, coming from central and eastern France, and by the *pastoureaux*, or peasant rebels, from northern France.

As far as we know, only one inhabitant of Montaillou ever had even the opportunity of going to the Ile de France. In 1321 Guillaume Fort was sentenced by the Bishop's court in Pamiers to go northward as a pilgrim to Vauvert, Montpellier, Sérignan, Rocamadour, Puy-en-Velay, Chartres, Notre Dame de Paris, Pontoise, Saint-Denis and to the Sainte-Chapelle. But before this sentence could be carried out, a second sentence, promulgated the following day, condemned him to be burnt at the stake. And so he was (i.453).

In one respect at least France was definitely present, and that was through its money. About 71 per cent of the coins used in the Comté de Foix were either *parisis* or, more often, silver *tournois* made in mints in some way connected with the monarchy in Paris. This was the first of many annexations. The farmers and shepherds of Montaillou and Sabarthès had now got beyond the primitive stage of a subsistence economy. They had a growing need of coins, and these, more and more, were French.