

This book offers a survey of the great families (counts or viscounts) which dominated Aquitaine or Languedoc from the ninth to the eleventh century, notably in the Toulousain, Périgord, Limousin, Poitou and Auvergne. For each of these regions, the author focuses on problems linked to the study of the dominant families. Hence one will find a detailed study on the alliances of the counts of Toulouse, with a particular attention to the succession and on distinguishing between the various homonyms who succeeded one another as head of the family during the tenth century. For Périgord, the author painstakingly re-examines the complex issues surrounding the establishment of the filiation of the counts, as well as paying detailed attention to the previously neglected issue of the origins of their wives. Limousin is examined in terms of the links between the various viscomital families between which the region was divided. The opportunity is taken to examine in detail the genealogy of saint Gerald of Aurillac, whose contemporary biographer linked him with certain great saints of the Merovingian era, as well as to analyze the value of a twelfth-century genealogy which allegedly describes the ancestry of one of these saints over ten generations. The study of Poitou offers, in anticipation of the publication in this same collection of J. H. Prell's thesis, an account of the viscounts of the families of Thouars, Chatellerault and Aulnay, their alliances and their links with the other great families. Finally, the author revisits some little studied questions relating to the principal families of Auvergne: the relations between the families of Brioude and Polignac, the genealogy and the ancestry of the counts of Clermont, the alliances of certain branches of Mercours.