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BARGAINING WITH THE RULERS : THE POLITICS OF CONSTITUENCY–BASED DECISIONS IN FIFTH–CENTURY GAUL

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Statement of originality

This is to certify that the content of this thesis is my own work.

This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or purpose.

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No generative AI was used in my research or in any part of the preparation of the thesis.

Nelson Chen

25/02/2025

Author Attribution

The work contained in the body of this thesis, except otherwise acknowledged, is the result of my own investigations.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the careers of three separate Gallic rulers of the fifth century: Constantine III, Theoderic II and Euric. Although the past forty years has witnessed a renewed scholarly interest in the local aspects of rule and leadership in this period, there has been no detailed study that accounts for the various stakeholders themselves which surrounded the Gallic rulers.

This thesis will argue that, while the personal ambitions of rulers were important, policies were not shaped by them. Rather, four constituencies – a ruler's army, the imperial court, the local aristocracy, and the local episcopate – determined a ruler's decision. Moreover, it will demonstrate that these four groups swayed rulers in their own ways, but that each reign can be best understood by examining the ebb and flow of each constituency's ever-changing influence. As the importance of local constituencies grew over the course of the century, Gallic bishops and aristocrats had greater say in the policies of Theoderic and Euric, than they had under Constantine III. Conversely, the ability of civilian and military office-holders at the imperial court in Italy to affect the Tolosan kings' decisions waned. As the central Italian administration grew distant from Gallic affairs, the local constituencies seized control. This dissertation aims to cast new light upon the people within these constituencies, as well as the communities they represented. It will show how a constituency consisted of ambitious individuals and parties who formed loose alliances with each other in order to pressure a ruler into enacting a particular policy.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient authors and works follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* and the *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity* (sometimes slightly adapted). The following list of abbreviations may also be helpful.

Ausonius. – Decimus Magnus Ausonius

Prof. Burdig. – Commemoratio Professorum Burdigalensium.

Chron. *Gall*. 452 – *Chronica Gallica* 452.

Chron. *Gall*. 511 – *Chronica Gallica* 511.

CE – Codex Euricianus.

Gennadius. – Gennadius of Marseille.

*Vir. Ill. – Viris Illustribu*s, ed. J.P. Migne (1844–65).

Greg. Tur. – Gregory of Tours.

Glor. mart. – Liber in Gloria Confessorum.

Glor. mart. *– Liber in gloria martyrum*.

Hilary of Poitiers.

De Synod. *– De Synodis*.

In Const. *– In Constantium*, ed. A. Rocher (1987).

Hyd. – Hydatius.

Jer. – Jerome.

Con. Vigil. *– Contra Vigilantium*.

John. Ant. – John of Antioch.

John. Mal. – John Malalas.

Jordanes, *Getica*. *– De origine actibusque Getarum*, trans. C. Mierow (1915).

Paul. Nol. – Paulinus of Nola.

Paul. Perigueux. – Paulinus of Perigueux.

VSM. – *Vita Sancti Martini*: see Van Dam (1993).

Prisc. – Priscus of Panium.

Prosper. – Prosper of Aquitaine.

Salvian. – Salvian of Marseille.

De Gub. Dei. – *De gubernatione Dei*.

Sid. Ap. – Sidonius Apollinaris.

Soz. – Sozomen.

HE – Historia Ecclesiastica.

Sulp. Sev. – Sulpicius Severus.

Dial. – Dialogues of Sulpicius Severus, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace (1894).

VM. – *Vita Martini*, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace (1894).

Theoph. *am*. – Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. Mango, and R. Scott. (1997)

Thiel, *Ep*. – *Epistolae Romanorum Pontificum Genuinae,* ed. A. Thiel (1868).

VE. – *Vita Epiphanii*.

VEutropii. – *Vita s. Eutropii episcopi Arausicensis*, ed. P. Varin. (1849).

VLupicini. – *Vita Lupicini*, ed. F. Martine (1968).

VHilarii. – *Vita s. Hilarii episcopi Arelatensis*, ed. S. Cavallin. (1952).

VMarcelli. – *Vita s. Marcelli episcopi Deensis*, see F. Dolbeau (1983).

Vita Viviani – Vita Bibiani vel Viviani episcopi Santonensis, ed. B. Krusch (1920).

Contents

Introduction

First the soldiers rose in revolt and named Marcus emperor, and having killed Marcus, proclaimed Gratian. After no more than four months they killed him and raised Constantine [III] in turn…Constantine left Britain and crossed to Boulogne, a city on the coast of Gaul, and having won over the soldiers in Gaul and Aquitaine, he attached to his side the inhabitants of those regions right up to the boundaries which divide Italy from Gaul and which the Romans call the Cottian Alps. At that time he proclaimed Constans, his elder son, Caesar (he later advanced him to Augustus) sent him into Spain…[1]

You [Basilius] are surrounded by those most holy pontiffs, Leontius, Faustus, and Graecus; you have a middle place among them in the location of your city and in seniority, and you are the centre of their loving circle; you four are the channels through which the unfortunate treaties flow; through your hands pass the compacts and stipulations of both realms. Work, therefore, that this may be the chief article of the peace—that episcopal ordination being permitted we may hold according to the faith, though we cannot hold according to the treaty, those peoples of Gaul who are enclosed within the bounds of the Gothic domain.[2]

While one might expect Gaul's fifth-century rulers to exercise power however they pleased, it could shock some readers to see that it was not simply the ruler who dictated political action. Instead, soldiers, locals, and bishops were important actors in Gallic politics. Separated by just over seventy years, these stories also depict two different political realities. In the first case, as narrated by Zosimus' version of Olympiodorus, the armies and emperor determined Constantine's authority in Gaul at the start of the fifth century. Zosimus characterises Constantine as a ruler who required the support of soldiers in Gaul and Aquitania, as well as acceptance from the imperial court in Italy. At the same time, Constantine

[1] Olympiodorus fr. 13.2 = Zos. 6.3. (ed. Blockley 1983).
[2] *Ep*. 7.6.10. (William B. Anderson, ed. *Sidonius: Poems and Letters*, Loeb Classical Library [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963]).

needed to win the attachment of the provincial inhabitants in the regions between the Channel and Italy. In contrast, the second passage from the aristocrat and bishop of Clermont, Sidonius Apollinaris, describes the political reality of the last quarter of the fifth century. In Sidonius' account, an embassy of Provençal bishops in late 474 was undertaking a diplomatic mission on behalf of the Burgundian and Gallo-Roman communities in the Rhône Valley, to the Visigothic king Euric.[3] By this time, Gallo-Roman bishops and elites had the authority to conduct treaties and agree upon settlements with secular rulers.

It is evident that the Western Roman Empire, not least Gaul, had undergone substantial change between the reigns of Constantine III and Euric. The narrative regarding the transformation of Roman Gaul into barbarian Gaul is one over which scholars have thoroughly worked.[4] However, the political forces, or "constituencies", which challenged the agency of Gallic rulers during the fifth century remains a subject that has not been adequately examined thus far. These rulers had to deal with a range of both local and distant constituencies, which each consisted of a collection of individuals who generated their own agendas.[5] At the start of the fifth century in Gaul, those at the imperial court in Italy were more interested with Gallic affairs than they did at the end of the century. As the political action of the Italian court increasingly served to benefit Italo-Romans rather than Gallo-Romans, the local constituencies in Gaul increased in their importance. The vacuum which the central imperial administration had left behind was readily filled by local powerbrokers within the army, bishops, as well as the aristocracy. To understand how the imperial court went from a position of strength to weakness in less than a century, and congruently, how these local constituencies became political actors in Gaul, the selection of three Gallic rulers provides a clear view of this diachronic change.

[3] For the embassies to Euric between 474 and 475, see Delaplace (2015), 254–5.
[4] See especially Goffart (1980); Heather (2005); Halsall (2007); Delaplace (2015).
[5] For the description of the "loosely-allied organisations, each with a substantial life of its own" which inform a government's behaviour, see Allison (2008), 275.

In this thesis, I seek to demonstrate that Constantine III (406–411) dealt with the same four interest-groups as Theoderic II (453–467) and Euric (467–484). Although all three ruled over parts of Gaul, I acknowledge the principal difference between the latter two and the former: Constantine aspired to imperial rule in Italy, whereas the latter two aspired to become political masters over Aquitania and beyond.[6] Yet, in their efforts to rule, it was the constituencies which determined the policies of Constantine, Theoderic, and then Euric, rather than the agency of rulers themselves. At the start of the fifth century, it was those at the imperial court in Italy who determined Constantine's ability to rule in Gaul. To track the noticeable decrease in importance of the imperial court as a political constituency in Gaul, a discussion of Theoderic II, rather than his father Theoderic I (418–451), is more appropriate.[7] Although it was under Theoderic I that a Visigothic kingdom of Toulouse emerged, the same political forces which had influenced Constantine III's rule persisted into the time of Theoderic I.[8] For much of Theoderic I's reign, the domination of Valentinian III's court by the generalissimo Flavius Aëtius meant that the central government continued to invest resources in Gallic affairs.[9] It was not until Aëtius' death in 454 and the Vandal attack on Rome the following year that those at the imperial court began to prioritise the security of Italy. Therefore, the gradual withdrawal of interest in Gaul by officials in Rome and Ravenna allowed for local Gallic interest groups to seize control. This shift can be detected more during the reign of Theoderic II than under his predecessor. Euric's reign also marked the start of another phase where the power of local constituencies began to rise even more, particularly as the imperial government ceased in the west after 476. By comparing Euric and his predecessor Theoderic II with Constantine III, this study intends to chart the rise of local powerbrokers as political actors over the course of the fifth century in Gaul.

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[6] "Master" or "domino" is a title used by Sidonius in his panegyric to Euric in 475. *Ep*. 8.9.19.
[7] For the suggestion that the Visigothic kingdom under Theoderic II and Euric was much different to that of their predecessors, see Heather (1992), 84.
[8] For a discussion of Theoderic I's reign in southwestern Gaul, see Kulikowski (2020), 203–6.
[9] On Aëtius and his generals' role in keeping Theoderic I in line with the imperial court, see Halsall (2007), 247; Kulikowski (2020), 204–5. The belligerent approach from Theoderic towards the imperial government did not last beyond 439.

Defining constituencies in late antiquity

The present study argues that we should see the emergence of the Visigothic power in Aquitania as a result of both Italy's increasing concern for its own security, as well as the rise of local powers in fifth-century Gaul. Within these parallel phenomena were the existence of political constituencies, each of which pressured the ruler to act or make decisions. In late antique studies, the term constituency is often used to define a party of supporters, who were subject to a ruler.[10] Scholars such as Drinkwater and Lenski have viewed the fourth-century army and its soldiers as a powerful constituency with the most potential to drive political action.[11] Lee has also described the loyalty of fourth-century generals as a valuable constituency to their emperors.[12] At the same time, the term constituency has also been applied to non-military interest groups.[13] Wijnendaele has recently used the term to describe the political agency of the Italian nobility in Stilicho's execution during the summer of 408.[14] Wijnendaele argues that Stilicho's military plans ignored the sensitivities of the aristocrats in Rome and Italy, who "took umbrage" over his "overambitious agenda". Moreover, McEvoy addresses the tenuous dynamic within Italian court politics in the fifth century.[15] Like Wijnendaele, McEvoy uses the term constituencies to describe a *magister militum* such as Ricimer and his place among the most influential constituency at a court that also included members of the imperial family. Scholars have also described the emergence of the city poor as an urban constituency in the ecclesiastical sphere, for which bishops ultimately came to be

[10] For the idea that constituencies aimed to "modulate their interactions with the ruler to fit as comfortably as possible with their own desires and expectations", see Lenski (2016), 228.
[11] Drinkwater (2022), 35–6; Lenski (2016), 233.
[12] On the usage of "political forces" as another term for constituencies in late fourth century Gaul, see Sivan (1993), 143–144. For the constituency of generals in a fourth century context, see Lee (2014), 109. These were the influential army and senatorial aristocracy, which combined to "stunt Ausonius' ascendency."
[13] There was inevitably crossover between each constituency. However, I use the term non-military to distinguish the army from organisations which comprised mostly non-military officials.
[14] Wijnendaele (2018), 273.
[15] McEvoy (2023), 183–4.

responsible.[16] Bell observes that as the traditional civic political structures weakened, the bishops formed an important constituency for the emperor's ability to influence urban life. At a provincial level, Halfond, who examines the episcopal election process in seventh-century Merovingian Gaul, argues that the local constituencies could affect the appointment of a particular candidate. Although the Frankish king or queen had the final say in proceedings, his or her support of a candidate had implications on the Merovingian court's relations with secular and ecclesiastical groups. These local secular and ecclesiastical parties belonged to a wider negotiation network between city and court and acted as a check to the decisions of the Merovingian monarch.[17] Despite the existence of these non-military constituencies, scholarship tends to understate the power of these groups to instigate political action, particularly in provincial regions.[18] No study has ordered different constituencies in a way to make sense of historical developments, such as the transformation of Roman Gaul, or the rise in influence of local Gallic elements. For a ruler of the fourth century, the army might have been the most potent of the constituencies. Through the army's cooperation with the imperial court, both organisations were powerful enough to drive political change.[19] Yet, this was not necessarily the case for a ruler in fifth century Gaul. Indeed, the four constituencies – namely the local Gallo-Roman aristocracy, the local episcopate, the Gallic armies, and the imperial court – remained the same as they had in the previous century. However, by the end of the fifth century, other constituencies had gained sufficient influence and become political actors, albeit at a much more local scale.

To trace the development of local constituencies, it is worth comparing the situation from the mid-fourth century to the start of the fifth century. The provincial Gallic aristocracy – which Drinkwater observed to have lacked influence – had burgeoned since Julian's residence in Gaul and reached its

[16] Bell (2013), 298. For the suggestion that late antique bishops served as "highly important urban patrons" and "community leaders and advocates" for impoverished urban populations, see Clark (2021), 25. Christianisation enabled "the poor" to emerge as a new constituency of the city.
[17] Halfond (2019), 76, 157. Halfond also briefly refers to the presence of aristocratic constituencies during the rule of Pippin II.
[18] Cf. Drinkwater (2022), 33. Drinkwater assigns greater importance to the aristocrats of Rome and Italy, who are able to voice their concerns in the Senate, and also access real power through the court and its civilian offices.
[19] For the idea that the imperial court plotted with the army to instigate the *coup de palais* which brought down Constans I, see Drinkwater (2022), 33–36.

apogee when Ausonius and his colleagues served high imperial offices at the imperial court in Trier.[20] Once the court relocated to Milan in 381, the central government continued to promote Gauls to important offices until 415.[21] Although there was no longer an imperial court in Gaul, the Gallic nobility of the fifth century had reached a stage in its development where it could influence imperial politics. Even if the Italo-Roman aristocracy continued to fill the offices of the imperial administration in Italy, the Gallic praetorian prefecture remained the one position that Gauls continuously occupied for the remainder of the century and into the next. So, while the Gallic aristocracy of the fifth century possessed limited sway over politics at the imperial level, it had matured enough to form a necessary constituency for any local ruler in Gaul.

Between the time of Julian and the start of the fifth century, the episcopal situation in Gaul had also changed. In 360, Julian had recognised the local influence of Gallic bishops and demonstrated his interest in conciliating them. Just before the death of Constantius II in 361, Julian ordered the return of all the bishops exiled by Constantius, including Hilary of Poitiers. In addition to his recall of exiled Gallic bishops, Julian also attempted to acquire greater political support against Constantius by sanctioning anti-Homoian synods in Gaul between late 360 and 361.[22] At one of these conferences, the excommunication of Saturninus of Arles by Hilary and his Nicene partisans represented a further erosion of political support in Gaul for Julian's opponent Constantius.[23] Episcopal adherence to the Nicene doctrine would continue to play a role in Gallic politics. During the 380s, Magnus Maximus' role in the trial of Priscillian indicates that the former was determined to win the support of the Nicene episcopate in Gaul to appear as their champion against the homoian "heretic" Valentinian II.[24] Despite the efforts of an opposition party led by Ambrose of Milan and Martin of Tours, Maximus' cooperation in the execution of

[20] Drinkwater (2022), 32–3. For a discussion of Ausonius' rise through the bureaucracy, see Sivan (1993), 20, 22, 144, and 145.
[21] For the circumstances around the court's relocation, see Sivan (1993), 138, 146; Drinkwater (2022), 32–33.
[22] For the circumstances of these synods, see Williams (1992), 11–12; Barnes (1993), 153–154; Potter (2013), 494.
[23] The removal of Saturninus was a significant triumph for Julian, as Hilary (*In Const*. 2.3–6) mentions that Saturninus alongside Valens and Ursacius were the most prominent Homoian supporters of Constantius. For the function of Valens of Mursa as an advisor for Constantius, see Drinkwater (2022), 44.
[24] For a discussion on Maximus' attempts to secure legitimacy, see Errington (2006), 205–6; McEvoy (2013), 88–9.

the Priscillianists with a recently-elected bishop of Trier named Felix was important. It suggests that Felix functioned as a quasi-political leader of his community and commanded a considerable network of influence.[25]

All the while, this period saw the army and the imperial court remain the most influential constituencies for a Gallic ruler, who had to respond to the pressures which both organisations could exert. Julian endeavoured to win the loyalty of Rhine legions, despite his lack of military experience. This can be seen during his campaigns against the Franks in 358, when he had to appease an unhappy section of his troops who had threatened mutiny.[26] However, victory against an Alamannic coalition at Strasbourg helped bind the rank and file even closer to Julian's cause. Not only did his soldiers shift their loyalties away from Constantius to him, their pressure for Julian to assume the imperial throne was driven by the potential riches an emperor could bestow upon them. As Augustus, Julian would have the authority to grant the soldiers donatives in gold, promotions, and other rewards.[27] As Heather states, this was the decisive reason that motivated the troops' proclamation of Julian as Augustus at Paris in 360. Twenty years later, the loyalties of the Gallic army were also crucial to Magnus Maximus' success after he crossed with his legions into Gaul. Even if his acclamation as Augustus in Britain was the doing of the British legions, considerable sections of the Gallic army, including the leading general Merobaudes and the Moorish cavalry, abandoned the emperor Gratian for Maximus in 383 near Paris.[28] Although Ammianus praises the character of Gratian and believed him to be a young man of great promise, the key factor which undermined the army's obedience to him at Paris was his neglect of the regular troops.

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[25] *Dial* 3.13. Despite Sulpicius Severus's opposition towards Felix, Severus' grudging respect of his adversary perhaps reflects that this was an attempt that some opponents of Felix expressed.
[26] Heather (2020), 91–2.
[27] Ammianus, 20.8.7: "...it is the soldiers, exhausting themselves without profit in many cruel wars, who have in rebellious fashion carried out a resolve of long standing, being impatient of a leader of the second rank, since they thought that no recompense for their unremitting toil and repeated victories could be made by a Caesar." For a discussion on the ways an emperor retained the loyalties of his troops, see Lee (2014), 100–1; Heather (2020), 99.
[28] Hebblewhite (2020), 69; Rodgers (1981), 96–7.

Instead, Gratian devoted more effort to recruit Alanic deserters and reward them with important tasks and lavish gifts.[29]

A Gallic ruler's need to adopt a policy of cooperation with the legitimate imperial court also retained its importance into the start of the fifth century. Although an imperial court had existed in Trier from the late third century, this was a court that appeased the local interests of the legions who were stationed along the Rhine as well as those in the consistory of the senior emperor.[30] During the later-fourth century, when the senior Augustus and his court was absent from Gaul, the ambitions of his ministers could influence the decisions of the ruler who had taken charge of the Gallic provinces. During his reign as Caesar, Julian's careful compliance with the instructions of his senior colleague Constantius without displaying any overt opposition between 355 and 360 suggests this. Julian's "refusal" to become Augustus in 358 likely belonged to the same strategy which sought to not antagonise Constantius' court, as much as it was a common feature of imperial accession.[31] In order to appease the influential bishop-courtiers who had obtained the ear of Constantius, Julian also concealed his pagan beliefs until only after Constantius had died in 361.[32] Similar strategies to appease the influential courtiers alongside the legitimate emperor would be repeated two decades later during Magnus Maximus' reign in Gaul.

The influence of bishop-courtiers in the presence of the legitimate emperor also informed Maximus' conciliatory policy vis-à-vis the consistory of Valentinian II. Since the Altar of Victory affair in 382 whereby Gratian had revoked funding from the Roman state priesthoods and removed the altar from the Senate house, Ambrose of Milan had gained a firm foothold at the Milanese court.[33] It is likely that

[29] Zos. 4.35.2–3 (trans. Ridley 1982). McEvoy (2013), 84–5.
[30] On the importance of the court at Trier, see Szidat (2014), 121. Gratian's relocation of the court from Trier to Milan in March 381 can only have precipitated feelings of disaffection amongst the units, who no longer saw their emperor on the western frontier. On the degree of interaction between the military and civilian spheres at the Treveran court, see Sivan (1993), 9–10.
[31] For the idea that Julian's *recusatio imperii* was a typical characteristic of an emperor since the time of Tiberius, see Ando (2000), 146–7, 195–9.
[32] Ammianus, 15.5.1–16, writes of the squabbles between factions who sought to gain influence with the emperor. On the court of Constantius, see Moser (2018), 214–276; Drinkwater (2022), 43. For the officials who Constantius sent to supervise Julian, see Bleckmann (2020), 107. On the ambitious homoian bishops such as Valens and Ursacius as advisors for Constantius, see Drinkwater (2022), 43–4.
[33] For the Altar of Victory affair, see Gassman (2020), 107–139. Along with Ambrose and the Italian bishops, pagan aristocrats such as Symmachus also formed an influential part of Valentinian's court.

Ambrose' powerful position pressured Maximus to present himself as an ally of Nicene powerbrokers behind Valentinian. As indicated by Ambrose's two embassies on behalf of Valentinian to Trier in autumn 383 and late 386, the bishop carried an important advisory function at the legitimate emperor's court, despite his doctrinal differences with Valentinian's homoian ministers.[34] Therefore, it can be seen that the imperial court community exerted significant pressures upon a Gallic ruler's policy, which in this case, sought to establish itself as a legitimate provincial authority. Therefore, as Julian had done before him, Maximus' policy acted to appease the influential men within the court community of the senior Augustus, as well as the emperor himself.

[34] *Coll. Avell.* 39 (ed. Otto Günther, *Epistulae Imperatorum, Pontificum, Aliorum*, *CSEL* 35 [Vienna: Tempsky, 1895] 88–9). McEvoy (2013), 69–70, 88–9.

Can these four constituencies be used to describe rulers in late Roman Gaul?

Scholarship on Gallic rulers in the third and fourth centuries has generally outlined the influence that certain constituencies had upon the leaders and their decisions. For instance, Hoyer has observed that Postumus' ability to usurp power from the central Roman state was contingent upon the pressures of local interest groups. Indeed, Postumus' promotion to Augustus had been instigated by the Roman troops who resided in the northwestern part of the Empire. However, Hoyer argues that Postumus' policy of legitimation relied on the support of wealthy senatorial families in Gaul.[35] In order to appease these senators, Postumus aimed to maintain several of the ideological and political traditions of previous emperors, such as the continued use of imperial titulature and Roman offices. Van Dam also demonstrates how an alliance between the troops and the Aquitanian aristocracy orchestrated the elevation of another Gallic Emperor, Tetricus, in 270.[36] Szidat notes that Gallic landholders had a significant role to play in Julian's march against the Chattuari near Xanten in the summer of 360.[37] Moreover, Szidat highlights the pressure exerted by provincials on Julian to negotiate a treaty with the barbarians that would benefit the Gallic landholders. Lee has also hypothesised that Magnentius and Magnus Maximus owed the progress of their usurpations to the lower ranks they had held as soldiers. Closer ties with officers further down the military hierarchy might have helped both individuals to persuade troops to support their cause.[38] Recently, Drinkwater has argued that alliances between senior civilian officials and soldiers were the driving factor behind Magnentius' proclamation and his subsequent march eastwards.[39] According to Drinkwater, the reliance of Magnentius upon others was so great that after the loss of his army and

[35] Harl (1996), 145; Hoyer (2016), 72–81. See also Drinkwater (2007), 55–7, who argues for involvement of Raetian elites in Postumus' march into Italy.
[36] Van Dam (1985), 29.
[37] Szidat (2014), 127. Ammianus, 20.10.
[38] Lee (2014), 103, n.17.
[39] Drinkwater (2022), 35–6. For the "instrumental" role of an aristocrat named Marcellinus in Magnentius' usurpation, see Sivan (1993), 18–9.

advisers at Mursa, he was unable to rule.[40] Horst has also seen a similar agency in these constituencies, particularly during the trial of Priscillian for heresy and his subsequent execution. For Horst, the pressures of a group of Nicene bishops in Gaul and Spain instigated Maximus' decision to sanction both the trial and execution.[41] Therefore, it has been long clear that the ambitions of individuals within constituencies exerted some degree of pressure on the Roman rulers of Gaul in the third and fourth centuries.

However, scholars have not heavily studied the pressures which all four of these interest groups exerted upon the power of Roman or non-Roman rulers to make decisions in fifth-century Gaul. This is striking given that research into individual constituencies in this period, particularly of a more local Gallic flavour, has proved remarkably fruitful.

Mathisen's book on the ecclesiastical politics behind the Gallic church does highlight the relationship between Gallic strongmen and local bishops, who developed an independence of action until the 470s.[42] However, Mathisen focuses his attention on ecclesiastical controversy, the relations of the Roman church in Gaul, and the general organisation of the Gallic church during the fifth century. In a separate book, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul: Strategies for Survival in an Age of Transition*, Mathisen deals with a different constituency, the Gallic aristocracy. Here, he argues that while many fled, a significant number pursued ecclesiastical positions, or service under the barbarians. Once again, Mathisen's central concern is to provide a socio-religious study of aristocrats who tried to preserve their local influence in the changing circumstances of fifth-century Gaul.[43] Similarly, in a study on the early career of Flavius Aëtius, Wijnendaele suggests that the composition of the general's troops, as well as his ability to satisfy his soldiers with resources and plunder, were instrumental to his Gallic victories between

[40] Drinkwater (2022), 61.
[41] Horst (2023), 277–8.
[42] Although there are brief mentions of episcopal involvement with Gallic secular strongmen, both Roman and Germanic, further work could be done to outline the exact nature of the relationship between a specific ruler and the local episcopate.
[43] For the suggestion that governments and landholding elites usually make "common cause with each other", see Mathisen (2023), 13. Mathisen states that this is the case now, as it was in antiquity.

425 and 432.[44] Even if Aëtius was not strictly a "Gallic" ruler, Wijnendaele's study nevertheless addresses the internal politics and logistical considerations of an army which a leader had to carefully manage. The fourth and final political constituency, that of the imperial court, has been discussed in the work of Christine Delaplace. In her monograph *La fin de l'Empire romain d'Occident. Rome et les Wisigoths de 382 à 531*, Delaplace focuses on the relations between the Visigothic rulers of Gaul and the functionaries of the imperial court in Italy. She discusses the careful management of relations by a Gallic ruler, albeit a non-Roman one, with the most legitimate power. Moreover, Delaplace provides a picture of an imperial court community which consisted of a number of important figures such as the patrician Ricimer, as well as his Burgundian successors.[45] The policies which Visigothic rulers adopted in Gaul and Spain were thus a response to the demands of important individuals at the imperial court.[46] Although these studies have emphasised the agency of separate constituencies in fifth-century Gaul, the personal initiative of a ruler is still often seen as the driving force behind his decisions.

Do local powerbrokers have more political influence than a Gallic ruler?

In the past forty years, specialised studies on topics relevant to Visigothic Gaul have shown that Theoderic II and Euric made their decisions with respect to their various constituencies, as well as personal ambition. These have laid the groundwork for the present thesis.

Peter Heather has acknowledged that both interest-groups and personal ambition play a role in the formation of policy by rulers in Visigothic Gaul. For Heather, factional divisions of important Gothic

[44] Wijnendaele (2017), 472–5.
[45] Delaplace (2015), 215–230. Delaplace assumes that Theoderic avoids interference in imperial affairs. Instead Theoderic makes a usurper (Avitus) who could allow Italy to recognise him and help him maintain his power in Gaul. Delaplace's treatment of the imperial court echoes the work of Meaghan McEvoy, whose recent chapter, "Sharing the imperial limelight" also identifies the dominance of generals alongside the emperor. For the role which other groups played at court, such as the Italo-Roman aristocracy as well as other military and civilian office-holders, see McEvoy (2023), 172–203. On the suggestion that different factions tried to have a turn at ruling the court, see Halsall (2018), 20.
[46] Delaplace (2015), 268–9. In 452, the Italian government entrusted Spain to Gothic protection.

nobles instigated the bloody accessions of Theoderic and Euric.[47] Although Heather acknowledges the agency of these nobles, he does not consider them as a factor in Euric's decision to proceed cautiously against the imperial court of Ricimer and Anthemius after his accession.[48] In his monograph *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, Heather argues that these Gothic warriors drove Theoderic's campaigns in Spain since he had to satisfy their interests.[49] Yet, Heather also believes that the king was led by his own ambition for an independent kingdom, particularly in the case of Euric. Heather's Euric ultimately seems to follow the Euric of Jordanes, who "took the initiative to seize the Gallic provinces on his own authority."[50]

Like Heather, Jill Harries has also shared the view that some decisions depended on both personal ambition, while others were a product of pressure from more immediate interest groups. In her monograph *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome, AD 407-485*, she writes that Theoderic's decision to appoint certain generals was a public relations strategy which attempted to court local Gallo-Roman elites. At the same time, Harries associates Theoderic's campaigns in Spain with his bid to "extend his power".[51] Similarly, Euric's policy to not replace bishops when their dioceses fell vacant after their deaths is explained as a product of his effort to expand the frontiers of the Visigothic kingdom.[52] Although Harries is aware of the importance of elites or bishops as political actors, Theoderic or Euric's personal ambition remain the primary contributor to their decisions.

Similarly, Mathisen and Sivan have noted that both interest-groups and personal ambition contributed to Euric's decisions.[53] While they are correct to argue that Euric's campaigns relied upon the king's ability to satisfy different groups of soldiers within his army, the policy to imitate Roman ideals of emperorship was the brainchild of Euric himself, rather than any other party.[54] Moreover, Mathisen and

[47] Heather (1992), 88.
[48] Heather (1992), 86. Similar to Kulikowski (2020), 211.
[49] Heather (2005), 313.
[50] Jordanes, 237 (trans. Mierow 1915). Heather (2005), 415–6.
[51] Harries (1994), 96–7. For Harries' suggestion that Euric's motives were a defensive reaction to expansion of other barbarian powers, see *ibid*, 223.
[52] *Ibid*, 233.
[53] Mathisen & Sivan (1999), 20–21, states that Euric's ambitions "knew no bounds".
[54] Mathisen & Sivan (1999), 21–22.

Sivan state that Euric's policy of episcopal bans against the Nicene church were the king's own self-driven attempts "to consolidate his own authority at the expense of Romans".[55]

Andrew Gillett also sees the importance of both personal ambition and local interests within a ruler's decision-making. Gillett has stated that the "pull" of at least part of the Roman population of Gaul was as important as the "push" of Euric's military ambition.[56] The agency of influential aristocratic stakeholders in Gaul, rather than "innate hostility" from Euric drove the Visigothic encroachment upon imperial territory.

Furthermore, Michael Kulikowski emphasises the role of personal initiative within the policies of Theoderic II and Euric. It was Theoderic's own assessment of the situation after Majorian's death which motivated the king's decision to ally himself with Ricimer and Severus. However, Kulikowski also sees the involvement of interest-groups in the kings' policies. Kulikowski argues that Theoderic's own accession occurred due to the assent of his brother Frederic.[57] Similarly, Euric relied upon the Gallo-Roman elite to "seize control of Gaul from Anthemius".[58] Kulikowski, along with each of the aforementioned scholars, have understood that some decisions of Theoderic and Euric were products of their own ambition, while others were due to initiative of the rulers' constituencies.

Yet, there is no lengthy study that has focussed solely upon the "pull" of the individuals and groups from these constituencies themselves in the decisions which these rulers made. Although the significance of personal ambition within a king's decision-making should never be discounted, it is an important aim of this study to restore visibility and agency to the individuals, communities, and societies who made up each constituency. These could not only inform a ruler's decision-making, but even pressure a ruler to act in a certain way. As Roman Gaul passed into Visigothic Gaul, I contend that the autonomy of local powers, that is of notable provincials and communities, increased as much as the Italian centre

[55] Mathisen & Sivan (1999), 42.
[56] Gillett (1999), 35.
[57] Kulikowski (2020), 206.
[58] Kulikowski (2020), 210.

lost the ability to manage its peripheral territories.[59] Where imperial administration failed or disappeared, local authorities and barbarian rulers jostled to fill the vacuum, over which the former rather than the latter seized control. Over the course of the fifth century, a slow and gradual process of decentralisation occurred whereby the local powerbrokers influenced the decisions of Gallic policymakers more and more. This was because barbarian rulers had little interest in disturbing the local alliances which already underpinned Gallic society.[60] In order to understand the transformation of the western Roman Empire in late antiquity, it is pertinent to view the locals of Gaul as agents of real political change. However, for fifth-century Gaul, this phenomenon is especially difficult to track because the extant evidence from the period often provides more problems than solutions.

The Ancient Sources

The fifth century is a problematic period to study, not least due to the scanty nature of the existing sources. There is no full, detailed political narrative of the whole period. As a result, it is difficult to find accounts which directly address a Gallic ruler's handling of his political constituencies, although this can be detected more easily with his army. For this reason, an analysis of the written evidence can often deliver greater insight into the background of an author, his sympathies, as well as his relationship with the individuals in the text. The following aims to provide a survey of the most important source genres which deal with each of the four constituencies of Constantine III, Theoderic II, and Euric.[61]

[59] For the idea of a localisation or "refocalisation" of politics to a limited Gallic sphere of activity, see Kulikowski (2013), 80. On the suggestion that the sway of the imperial government under Aëtius was both "narrower and shallower" than it had ever been in the past, see Kulikowski (2013), 85.

[60] For the suggestion that these figures included those other than aristocrats, see Van Dam (1985), 4–5, 309–10. As Van Dam writes, the decisions of leaders cannot be understood in isolation from the aspirations of communities and supporters. For the unwillingness of barbarian leaders to disturb the status-quo, see Stroheker (1937), 111–112.

[61] This study uses other sources outside those mentioned here.

The most important source for a political reading of the times are the letters and poems of Sidonius Apollinaris.[62] Although Sidonius claims to not write history, he nevertheless contributes the bulk of information particularly on each of the four constituencies.[63] Due to his literary connections with Gallo-Roman military officials, Sidonius shared correspondence with those who served in the Visigothic armies such as Euric's admiral Namatius, the *dux* Vincentius, and Calminius.[64] In addition, he was familiar with Victorius, who served as Euric's *dux* in the Auvergne at the same time as Sidonius' episcopate.[65] Although Sidonius was no soldier, he was a contemporary eyewitness to the military engagements of the Visigothic army in the Auvergne. However, Sidonius' account of Euric's military policies, particularly the incursions in that region, must be treated with suspicion. The image of a Gallo-Roman city, firm in its resistance against the onrushing tide of barbarism, was one that Sidonius wished to propagate.[66] Moreover, Sidonius' attempts to praise the deeds of his kin, such as the triumph of his brother-in-law Ecdicius over a band of Gothic warriors, overshadowed any attempt to comment on the morale or loyalties of the Visigothic army.[67] Aside from a brief comment on Theoderic's guard at the Tolosan court of the king, as well as his nobles, there is little attempt from Sidonius to distinguish between the different individuals and groups within the Visigothic armies.[68]

In addition to his information on the army, Sidonius is a source for the imperial court in Italy, to which he travelled at least twice, in 455, and again in 468.[69] It is evident that Sidonius knew of its influential figures and court intrigues even if he does not comment on it. Although his writings do not present much detailed information on either Theoderic's or Euric's policies vis-à-vis the imperial court or its officials in Rome, Sidonius' panegyric to Avitus describes Theoderic's decision to support Avitus as

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[62] For a reading of Sidonius as a reflection of political reality, see Harries (1994), 13–15; Gibson (2013), 343–4; Hanaghan (2019), 104.
[63] Mratschek (2020), 225.
[64] Namatius: *Ep*. 8.6. Vincentius: *Ep*. 1.7. Calminius: *Ep*. 5.12.
[65] *Ep*. 7.17.1–2. Mathisen (2020), 126–7.
[66] Mratschek (2020), 230.
[67] *Ep*. 3.3.2–7.
[68] *Ep*. 1.2.4; Mathisen (2020), 48. On the Visigothic chiefs, *Carm*. 7.399.
[69] For Sidonius' trips to Italy, see Mathisen (2020), 29–30.

emperor.[70] Sidonius is aware of Euric's decision to part from a treaty with Anthemius' court as well.[71] As the prefect of Rome in 468, there is no doubt that Sidonius would have been cognisant of the competing elements at the court of Anthemius, particularly influential individuals such as Ricimer.[72] Sidonius also offers a brief account of the Italo-Roman senatorial families of Basilius and Avienius, whose patronage he had sought.[73] Furthermore, Sidonius was friends with several praetorian prefects of Gaul at Arles. These include his acquaintances Magnus (458), Arvandus (464–8), Magnus Felix (469), Eutropius (470), and Polemius (471–2).[74] However, Sidonius does not mention who appointed these men to their offices. Sidonius' place in the court circles, particularly during the reigns of Avitus and Anthemius, meant that he was a contemporary observer to the political intrigues which caused the demise of both emperors in Italy. Sidonius' silence on either incident reflects the misfortune of his Gallo-Roman allies at the imperial court, which did not require further comment in his letters. It was not until Ecdicius' promotion to the rank of patrician under Nepos that Sidonius explicitly mentioned the imperial court in Italy again.[75]

As a bishop and former aristocrat, it is for the episcopate and aristocracy that Sidonius provides the most information. His letters describe traditional expressions of aristocratic power by himself and his circle of friends from the Gallo-Roman nobility during both the reigns of Theoderic and Euric. Examples of this behaviour include the cultivation of landed wealth, and the patronage of dependents. Consequently, Sidonius is determined to show himself and his acquaintances as custodians of old Roman traditions and lifestyle, who did not necessarily oppose Visigoths, but rather opposed a Visigothic leadership.[76] It is evident that Sidonius knew a large number of Aquitanian elites whom Theoderic and Euric depended upon as advisors at the court at Toulouse, and then at Bordeaux. Sidonius' disapproval of Arvandus and

[70] *Carm*. 7.522–4.
[71] *Ep*. 1.7.5.
[72] Hanaghan (2017), 631–649.
[73] *Ep*. 1.9.2.
[74] Magnus: *Carm*. 14.*ep*.2, 23.455, 24.90, *Ep*. 1.11.10. Arvandus: *Ep*. 1.7. Magnus Felix: *Carm*. 9.1–2, 24.91, *Ep*. 2.3, 3.4, 4.5, 4.10. Eutropius: *Ep*. 1.6, 3.6. Polemius: *Carm*. 14.*ep*.1, 15.118, 188–9, *Ep*. 4.14.
[75] *Ep*. 5.16.2.
[76] For a view that challenges the traditional interpretation of Sidonius' distaste of barbarians, see Egetenmeyer (2024), 367–380. Although Sidonius despises everything barbarian, he does so regardless of ethnic affiliation. Therefore, Sidonius associates anyone who behaves in an incorrect or uneducated manner as "barbarian".

Seronatus' collaboration with Euric only reveals the fact that Tolosan rulers were relying on Gallo-Roman counsel to resolve political issues.[77]

The works of Sidonius are also useful for a political reading of the bishops which formed the episcopal constituency. As a bishop himself, Sidonius was in frequent communication with other Gallo-Roman clerics, both inside and outside of the Visigothic kingdom. His letters offer detailed information into the functions of a bishop, who could organise liturgy in their respective communities, manage financial resources, as well as ordain other bishops.[78] Even if Sidonius is aware of it himself, there is little mention of the political powers which bishops had, nor the pressure they exerted upon a ruler. Sidonius' testimony casts Euric's policies against the Nicene bishops of Aquitania as an attack by an Arian heretic upon Nicene clergy. One must avoid seeing the exiles and bans on episcopal ordinations through Sidonius' polemic on barbarian heresy.[79] Instead, it is useful to view Sidonius' account as evidence for the increased political role of bishops in a community, whose authority Euric might have viewed as a challenge against his own in Aquitanian dioceses. Through this, Euric's policy towards certain episcopates can be explained as a result of the political challenge that bishops posed to the king. At the same time, Sidonius clearly avoids the representation of any of his episcopal contacts as Visigothic supporters, even if they were acting in this capacity.

This study also draws extensively upon the chronicle from the Galician bishop Hydatius, who presents an informative account into the military constituency of Theoderic II and Euric.[80] From his residence in Aquae Flaviae, a town in the northwestern corner of Spain, Hydatius is an eyewitness to multiple campaigns by the Visigoths against the Sueves. As a result, Hydatius supplies useful information about the identities of certain Gothic commanders and their warbands in Spain. Despite the bishop's

[77] Mathisen (1992), 125–6.
[78] Organisation of liturgy: *Ep*. 7.1.2. Management of resources: *Ep*. 6.12. Ordination of bishops: *Ep*. 4.18.4, 4.25, 7.9.
[79] For Sidonius' literary strategies which distinguish himself from the barbarian others, see Egetenmeyer (2024), 266–277.
[80] For Hydatius as a source for provincial leadership, see Muhlberger (1990), 199–200; Burgess (1993), 2–10; Gillett (2003), 37.

knowledge of these parties, he is no military historian. Hydatius' chronicle, as a continuation of Jerome's own world chronicle, intended to convey the turmoil of contemporary events as apocalyptic signs of the end of times. His chronicle represents these Gothic individuals as heretic invaders whose intentions consisted of plunder and violence to the Christian provincials of Spain. Because of this, there is little attempt to delve into the relations between the Gothic retainers and their king.

Other chroniclers which deal with the rulers of fifth-century Gaul offer less detail upon their constituencies, yet are still informative. The chronicles from the fifth century were the most popular forms of historical narrative during this period.[81] Along with Hydatius' *Chronicle*, these are Prosper of Aquitaine's *Epitoma Chronicon*, written c. 452, the anonymous *Chronica Gallica* of 452, and the *Chronica Gallica* of 511.[82] All are continuations of Jerome's *Chronici Canones* from the point where Jerome left off in 378. Chronicles were popular among those who wrote Latin histories in the fifth century because their writers could summarise recent events within a chronological framework. This chronology replaced the narrative structure of a literary history, as the Christian writers of histories no longer concerned themselves with detailed descriptions and analysis of political or military affairs. Instead, recent events only had meaning if they were relevant to God's plan for humanity.[83]

Prosper, who wrote from or near Marseille, completed his first continuation of Jerome in 431 as a slightly augmented version to replace the *Chronici Canones*. He then wrote another continuation in 445 and then again in 451. Although the authorship of *Chronica Gallica* of 452 is attributed to Prosper, its identity remains unknown. The anonymous author of *Chronica Gallica* of 511 wrote from southern Gaul, near Arles and derived his information from Hydatius, the *Chronica Gallica* of 452, as well as Orosius and a recension of the *Consularia Italica*. Another possible source was a now-lost chronicle of Arles and

[81] Muhlberger (1990), 2.
[82] On Prosper's chronicle, see Muhlberger (1990), 48–55. For the Gallic Chronicle of 452, see Burgess (2001), 52–84. For the Gallic Chronicle of 511, see Burgess (2001), 85–100.
[83] Muhlberger (1990), 2.

a source that parallels the sixth century works of Marius of Avenches, Isidore of Seville, and the *Consularia Caesaraugustana*. Although these chroniclers often lacked analytical detail of secular events, they nevertheless provided local southern Gallic perspectives on individuals who belonged to the different constituencies.

As a theologian, Prosper of Aquitaine did not intend his chronicle to be a lengthy discussion of contemporary political or military affairs. The description of secular events focussed on human morality. For Prosper, history was a collection of moral *exempla*, and he subsequently avoids the mention of events such as barbarian invasions. Instead, his chronicle is a parade of individual rulers and generals who display by their conduct the workings of particular vices and virtues.[84] Because of this, there is a brief mention of the ambitions of Constantine's *comes* Gerontius, who established his separate regime in Spain.[85] Despite the references to secular individuals and events, Prosper contributes little detail regarding the ambitions of military leaders and the groups they represented. Nevertheless, more information can be gleaned from him in regards to the political nature of the episcopate, particularly in Provence. Although the chronicle identifies a select few number of bishops, those who feature in Prosper's account reflect his own attitudes towards them, as well as their respective political leanings and the communities they led. For Prosper, the mix of politics and ecclesiastical affairs produced disunity within the church.[86] However, Prosper's own theological stance, particularly his anti-Pelagian sentiments meant that the bishops whom he praised might have shared a similar position to him and his patron, Augustine of Hippo. It is likely that Prosper's relocation to the city of Marseille would have placed him in a similar clerical circle as Proculus, who had been Constantine's ally. Thus, even if Prosper's writings show his aversion towards politics, he would have known of the political influence which episcopal circles held in southern Gaul.

[84] Muhlberger (1990), 76–7.
[85] Prosper, *Chron*., a. 411.
[86] Muhlberger (1990), 162.

Similarly to Prosper, the anonymous Gallic Chronicler of 452 also presents a Massilian-based account of the individuals who formed a episcopal constituency. For the chronicler of 452, he too praised the influence of Proculus and denounced Patroclus of Arles.[87] Because of his attitudes towards both bishops, it could be that the chronicler belonged to the same clerical circle as Proculus and Prosper. However, he was a younger contemporary of Prosper and was likely born after the regime of Constantine III. As a result, the chronicle vilifies Constantine as a typical vanquished usurper and regards him as just another one of Rome's enemies who threatened the legitimate government in Gaul. Therefore, his account might reflect the most important ecclesiastical affairs of the years, information about which he received in Marseille.[88] The praise of Proculus did not necessarily mean that the chronicler shared the same political leanings as the bishop nor his ambitions to extend the Massilian church's influence in Narbonensis II. Although the chronicler seemed to identify more with the Massilian church than that of Arles, it must be recognised that he had a less partisan view of ecclesiastical factions than Prosper did. Within these limitations, the chronicler supplements Prosper's account of the quasi-political tendencies of Provence's bishops during the early decades of the fifth century.

The anonymous chronicler who produced yet another Gallic continuation of Jerome in 511 differs from the previous two chroniclers in that he is less informative on the identities of bishops. Instead, the chronicler of 511 has more use with regards to the identification of individuals who formed the imperial court in Italy as well as the Visigothic army during the reign of Euric. Although he wrote his work in or near Arles, possibly then under Ostrogothic or Frankish rule, the chronicler had an interest in political events both in Gaul as well as north-eastern Spain.[89] There is a high possibility that the chronicler was either not yet born, or too young to recall the events of the 460s and 470s, which suggests that he depended on local traditions as sources of information. A variety of now-lost material could explain the

[87] On Proculus' renown, see *Chron. Gall.* 452, a. 408. On Patroclus' treachery, see *Chron. Gall.* 452, a. 411.
[88] Muhlberger (1990), 164–5.
[89] Burgess (2001), 87–8.

chronicler's account of Anthemius' son Anthemiolus and three other military officials, who do not appear anywhere else.[90] It is also likely that his Arlesian sources informed the chronicler on the names of several Visigothic commanders, who are otherwise unattested in other sources.[91] The lack of analytical information on these individuals might show that these commanders were passive actors, who followed the orders of Euric. Although the chronicler of 511 does not provide further detail, we can do better than to assume that the officers in the Visigothic army did not have their own ambitions to satisfy.

This study also uses narrative histories to supplement our knowledge from the chronicles. On the constituencies of Constantine III, I draw from the work of Spanish presbyter Orosius, *Historiarum Adversus Paganos Libri Septem*, as well as fragments of Olympiodorus' lost history, which feature in Zosimus' *Historia Nova* and Sozomen's *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

As a contemporary to the events during the first decade of the fifth century, Orosius presents a detailed narrative of the groups and individuals who formed Constantine's armies.[92] However, his denigration of Constantine is a product of what he views as disloyalty towards the legitimate imperial dynasty. Owing to Orosius' Christian-centred historical perspective, he displays particular admiration for Honorius and Nicene Christian emperors, who only feature in his seventh and final book, which covers the events from 395 to 418.[93] Orosius' favouritism towards the Theodosian dynasty, which he believed was sanctioned by God, explains his narrative's criticism of Constantine's armies. For Orosius, the army consisted of unreliable barbarian allies, treacherous commanders, and disloyal troops, all of whom were responsible for the plight of the author's native Spain. Orosius would have intended his narrative to portray Spain as a victim of Constantine's illegitimate regime, rather than a participant in it.[94] Yet, it is unlikely that the Hispano-Roman population was as unanimous in their opposition to Constantine as

[90] *Chron. Gall.* 511, a. 471.
[91] Gillett (2003), 49. n.49. *Chron. Gall.* 511, a. 472.
[92] On Orosius's historiography, see Van Nuffelen (2012), 145–169; Fear (2022), 75–6; Leonard (2022), 9–10.
[93] Kulikowski (2000), 343.
[94] Fear (2022), 76.

Orosius suggests. There is little attempt to explain the ambitions of the individuals and parties within Constantine's armies in terms of anything other than personal greed. Despite Orosius' negative account, the author is an exact contemporary of Constantine's reign. For these reasons, his work offers useful information for the various groups and individuals which formed Constantine's armies.

Like Orosius, Olympiodorus of Thebes was also a contemporary of Constantine III whose now-lost history accounted for the different groups and individuals within Constantine's army, as well as the imperial court under Honorius.[95] Much of the fragments of Olympiodorus' text can be reconstructed in parts of Zosimus' universal history, *Historia Nova*, and the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*HE*) by the church historian Sozomen.

Although Zosimus reflects Olympiodorus well, particularly for the years after 407, Sozomen might have made considerable amendments to Olympiodorus' account of Constantine III.[96] This difference can be attributed to the different intentions of both writers. Zosimus' history, which he wrote in Constantinople at the end of the fifth century, is a systematic explanation of the demise of Rome in a short space of time. While Sozomen wrote much closer to Constantine's period, the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*HE*) is a work that celebrates the Christian revolution and conversion of the pagan world into a Christian one.[97] It is probable that Sozomen embellished some parts of his narrative to emphasise Christian morals, even if its last book seemed to follow Olympiodorus. In particular, Sozomen's *HE* gives a specific yet unreliable perspective of the death of Gerontius, one of Constantine's commanders at the hands of his troops.[98] Sozomen pays attention also to Gerontius' wife, who died mercifully alongside him because of her faith.[99] This is an episode that is not accounted for by the pagan Zosimus. Nevertheless, both Sozomen and

[95] On Olympiodorus, see Gillett (2003), 1–29; Treadgold (2004), 709–733;Van Nuffelen (2013), 130–152.
[96] Van Nuffelen (2013), 130.
[97] Sozomen dedicated his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*HE*) to the Emperor Theodosius II in c.445. On Sozomen, see Gillett (1993), 6–7; Leppin (2003), 223–225.
[98] Soz. 9.13.4–7.
[99] Soz. 9.13.1–15.3 = Olympiodorus fr. 17.2.

Zosimus preserve Olympiodorus' interest in the different groups and individuals which made up Constantine's constituencies.

As an official envoy of the Eastern government in the early 440s, Olympiodorus seemed to advocate for stronger support from Constantinople towards Ravenna at a time when both halves of the empire were threatened by the rise of the Vandals.[100] For this reason, Olympiodorus uses the estrangement between Arcadius' eastern government and their western counterparts as an opportunity to underline court intrigue at Ravenna which resulted in Stilicho's execution. Due to Olympiodorus' sympathies for Stilicho's cause, the historian castigates the damaging involvement of ministers such as Olympius, who hindered efforts to reconcile the western and eastern courts. Nevertheless, Olympiodorus' contacts at the western court enabled him to present reliable information on the ambitions of the various officials who formed the imperial court during Honorius' regime. Through this, Olympiodorus leads the reader to recognise that Constantine did not just seek imperial recognition from an emperor, but rather from a wider court community.

Moreover, Olympiodorus provides a detailed account of the individuals and parties who were involved in Constantine's armies in Gaul. Unlike Orosius, Olympiodorus is more sympathetic towards Constantine's cause. This could be a product of the historian's use of Jovius as a correspondent for Gallic affairs, who had been Constantine's ambassador.[101] Through Jovius, Olympiodorus identifies the different officials within Constantine's troops, who are not mentioned elsewhere. In particular, Olympiodorus notes that the British troops proclaimed a reluctant Constantine as emperor.[102] There is a possibility that Constantine's unwillingness to assume the imperial crown was a public relations scheme from Jovius, who had led an embassy to Ravenna in 409. In order to appeal to an uncompromising imperial court, there is a possibility that Jovius crafted his message to emphasise the agency of the armies, who had assumed

[100] Gillett (1993), 1–2.
[101] Treadgold (2004), 725.
[102] Olympiodorus, fr. 13; Zos. 6.2.2; 6.2.3, 4.

responsibility and repaired Gaul's defences. It was potentially damaging to mention Constantine's own ambitions to usurp Honorius' authority. As a result, Olympiodorus appears to preserve Jovius' account of Constantine's proclamation. While Jovius might not have provided an accurate representation of Gallic affairs, Olympiodorus' account of Constantine's armies is nonetheless useful. Even if Constantine was the nominal "emperor", Olympiodorus saw his armies as an array of ambitious soldiers and officers.

Later histories such as Book 2 in *Liber Historiae Francorum* (*HF*) by the bishop Gregory of Tours, who wrote in the late sixth century also provide a brief account of the constituencies under Constantine, as well as Theoderic and Euric.

Gregory's narrative appears in six short fragments of a lost history from the fifth-century Gallic historian Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus, who Gregory cites in his work.[103] Gregory, through Frigeridus' witness, presents testimony to the promotion of aristocrats to high office during Constantine's reign.[104] This is a detail that does not appear in Olympiodorus. It is possible that Frigeridus included more individuals in his list of aristocrats, which Gregory shortened to only include Decimus Rusticus. This was likely a product of Decimus' ties to the Auvergne, where Gregory himself was also born. Despite Gregory's selective inclusion of Decimus, he may have preserved Frigeridus' sympathetic attitude towards Decimus and his fellow aristocrats, who were "cruelly put to death" by Honorian commanders at Narbonne.[105] If this is true, then Frigeridus' account suggests that either some of his acquaintances suffered the same fate or that he shared the same sentiments towards the legitimate imperial authority as many of these nobles. At the same time, it is difficult to conclude information on Frigeridus on the basis of his fragmented narrative. Nevertheless, Gregory's citations of Frigeridus indicate that a not insignificant number of elites centred around the Auvergne possessed office-holding interests.

[103] Wynn (1997), 99: Kulikowski (2000), 326.
[104] *HF*, 2.9.
[105] *Ibid.*

The hagiographies of saintly bishops also offer useful information on the parties which influenced a ruler's decision-making. In the narrative of *Vita Viviani*, the anonymous Gallic author intended to credit Vivianus, the bishop of Saintes, for his intercession on behalf of his local community to prevent the oppression of Visigothic bands.[106] Unfortunately, the text has several problems. Firstly, it is uncertain as to when the hagiographer compiled his narrative, which has been dated variously, from soon after the bishop's death to the Carolingian period. Moreover, there is no contemporary attestation of Vivianus' episcopate, nor are the dates of his episcopate known.[107] The absences of any dateable events, such as raids of Saxons (7), as well as uncertainty whether the Theoderic mentioned was Theoderic I or Theoderic II (4,6) pose further problems.[108] In addition, the text demonstrates that Vivianus had the power to influence Theoderic's decision to overturn an *intolerabilis iniunctio*, which had caused the impoverishment and slavery of both *mediocres* and *nobiles* around Saintes.[109] Similarly to Ennodius' *Vita Epiphani*, where Ennodius praised Epiphanius' role in securing a treaty between Julius Nepos and Euric, Vivianus' hagiographer indicates that the bishop was solely responsible for Theoderic's change of heart.[110] Given the absence of information on Vivianus or the bishops of Saintes during this period, it is unlikely that the hagiographer was correct in his account. However, the text is useful for a general understanding of some of the parties which formed an episcopal constituency under the Visigothic rulers. There is little reason to deny the Gallic hagiographer's account of a bishop's ties with both the ordinary people and nobles.[111] Even if the author of *Vita Viviani* overstated his hero's role in Theoderic's decision-making, he

[106] For the discussion of the *Vita Viviani*, see Gillett (2003), 143–8.
[107] Gillett (2003), 143–4.
[108] For the suggestion that Vivianus was invited to dine with Theoderic II at Toulouse, see Mathisen (2014), 185.
[109] *Vita Viviani* 4.4. Goffart (1980), 96.
[110] For the circumstances of *Vita Epiphani* and its authorship, see Gillett (2003), 148–171. Another account of Epiphanius exists in Ennodius' verse *dictio*, which he wrote a few years earlier than his *vita*. For a translation of this *dictio*, see Mulligan (2022), 55–60.
[111] Gillett (2003), 147–8.

could be correct in assuming that the alliances between Vivianus and Saintes' inhabitants gave the bishop political influence.

Thesis Outline

To track the growing influence of Gallic locals as political actors, my three chapters take the form of case studies of different fifth-century rulers of Gaul. Within each chapter, I provide four sections to delineate the ways in which a constituency's members influenced the ruler's policies; and I offer a broad order of importance for each constituency.

In the first chapter, I analyse the ways that Constantine III's decisions required the assent of his political constituencies. Constantine's armies, as the first and most important of the four constituencies for Constantine, were the driving force for his accession. The officers within British armies, such as Justinian and Nebiogast, as well as those from the Gallic troops, such as Gerontius led the initial phases of Constantine's accession. The involvement of these officers in the revolt aimed to fulfill obligations to the elites within their respective communities. The Gallic troops also consisted of Frankish groups along the Rhine, whose loosely-formed alliances with the British officers must be considered in terms of the Frankish leaders' own ambitions. Alongside the army, I also seek to identify the imperial court of Honorius as the second important constituency that could make or break Constantine's attempts to acquire a legitimate leadership in Gaul. Although the initial entreaties made with the Honorian governments were necessary, I argue that the competing ambitions of influential advisers at the imperial court undermined any policy by Constantine to legitimate his rule.

After the armies and the imperial court, I identify the Gallo-Roman aristocracy and episcopate as secondary, yet still important constituencies to Constantine's policies. The Gallo-Roman aristocracy which formed clusters of similarly-minded elites in various regions were also influential groups for

Constantine's rule. I argue that the decision to reside in southeastern Gaul aimed to appease a section of landowners in the Rhône Valley and in Provence, who were in general reluctant to support an illegitimate ruler. On the other hand, less effort was made to conciliate the Narbonensian aristocracy, who were quicker to support Constantine's regime. Each different cluster within the Gallo-Roman aristocracy urged Constantine in different directions. Alongside the aristocracy, the clergy who formed the Gallic episcopate were also political actors in Provence. Although the influence of bishops as political agents had not reached the levels that they would reach later in the century, certain individuals such as Proculus of Marseille remained powerful partners with the Gallic ruler. I will demonstrate that Constantine's alliance with Proculus of Marseille acknowledged the influence of the Massilian bishop over the dioceses in Narbonensis II and Viennensis. Yet, the nominal control in Provence which this alliance provided for Constantine was contingent upon the various sources of Proculus' own episcopal authority, such as his allies both within and beyond Gaul, and with the monastic community at Marseille. Moreover, the competition between Proculus and his ecclesiastical adversaries meant that these sources of episcopal leadership were by no means guaranteed.

My second chapter examines the same four constituencies which influenced the Visigothic king Theoderic II. Theoderic's army was not a single entity, but rather a host of individuals, who held different ambitions and represented different parties. It was the interests of these groups, namely the Gothic retainers, Roman officers, and allied individuals, that drove Theoderic's military-based decisions. While the support of the troops remained as important as it did under Constantine, there was a slight decrease in the capacity of the imperial court to confer recognition to a Gallic ruler. Nevertheless, each of the four groups remained similar in importance. In order to illustrate this, I demonstrate that Theoderic's awareness of the political intrigues at the Italian court remained important, but by no means fundamental to his policy to establish a lasting government centred on Toulouse. Although Ricimer, who represented

the influential Italo-Roman senatorial families, was the dominant figure at court, the administration of Avitus shows that there was an interdependence between the imperial court in Italy and Gallic rulers.[112] Theoderic still relied upon imperial allies, whether in Italy or at Arles, to support his decisions in Gaul. The Gallic prefect and his staff at the "Arlesian court" were increasingly the imperial courtiers with whom Theoderic negotiated, rather than those in Italy. I then argue that the aristocracy and episcopate were more important political constituencies for Theoderic than they were for Constantine. To demonstrate this, I contend that influential Gallo-Roman nobles formed social circles which facilitated the success of a politically-engaged aristocracy centred upon Bordeaux, as well as in Narbonne, and that these men could secure positions in Visigothic service under Theoderic. The burgeoning influence of the local aristocracy coincides with the rise of an episcopal faction which was based in Narbonne, but also had ties with other dioceses in southwestern Gaul, and even in Marseille. Although Theoderic's court had opposed the ordination of Hermes as the new bishop of Narbonne, this was an attempt to appease the interests of a powerful episcopal faction there, which consisted of clergy as well as local elites.

The third chapter turns to Euric. I argue that local constituencies influenced Euric's reign more than they had under Theoderic or Constantine. To make this point, I emphasise the association between Euric's commanders with their respective clients and communities, as well as the financial needs of the regular troops under Euric. Also responsible for the towns and communities under Euric's rule were the local Nicene bishops, many of whom participated in the king's program to maintain harmony and stability. The more forceful measures against the episcopate were actually necessary policies against certain bishops who exercised their local eminence to create social disturbances. Another influential constituency was the secular Gallo-Roman aristocracy, which during the later fifth century had retained its

[112] For the usual interpretation of Avitus' reliance upon Theoderic' support, see Gillett (1999), 22–3; Halsall (2007), 261–2; Kulikowski (2008), 335–6.

influence such that Euric relied on them to bolster both his administration as well as the economic output of his kingdom. By this time, the weakest constituency was the imperial court in Italy, whose ability to sway Euric's policies had dwindled even further. At the same time, this is not to say that the individuals behind the imperial court did not influence the Gallic ruler at all. Despite the dominance of an Italo-Roman senatorial group at the court, the fleeting attempts by Gallo-Roman senators could inform Euric's treaties with the imperial court, particularly from the mid-470s onwards. Yet, it is evident that Euric's policies for Gaul relied more and more upon the interests of local parties.

Through the case studies in these three chapters, I contend that the individuals within these four constituencies, many of whom with their own agendas, abilities, and ambitions, played a considerable role in the decisions of fifth-century Gallic rulers. The recurring theme of this study are the ambitions of individuals and communities within their ruler's policies. This study will also examine the rise in importance of local structures of political power as the century progressed, such as the officers in a ruler's "Gallic armies", the local bishop and his community, as well as the Gallo-Roman elites and their dependents. This phenomenon went hand-in-hand with the imperial court's increasingly Italo-centric character, whose courtiers had less and less of a bearing on a Gallic ruler's decisions after the time of Constantine III.

Constantine III and his constituencies

Introduction

Modern scholarship tends to treat Constantine III as the actor responsible for the policies made during his usurpation between 406–411.[113] However, the decision to establish his Gallic rule was simply not a task that he could undertake single-handedly. Instead, we should see that Constantine had to face a range of interest-groups in order to carry out any decision.

The first of these were his army. In the first section, I argue that Constantine's army consisted of three different groups, each of whom had their respective agendas. In Britain, certain officers, namely Justinian and Nebiogast, drove the revolt and engineered the promotion of Constantine to Augustus. However, Constantine's accession was not just contingent upon these military officers. There is reason to suggest that these two officers were also serving the interests of the influential Romano-British elite and their communities. The second group within this constituency were the Gallic armies led by the *comes* Gerontius, who was responsible for Constantine's crossing into Gaul. Here I outline Gerontius' close ties with the elite landowners of northern Gaul, who feared for the threat of barbarian incursions upon their property. This sheds light on the collaboration between Gerontius and the British officers before the crossing, as they worked together to gather military support against the Alans, Sueves, and Vandals, who had invaded Belgica II. Owing to Gerontius' experience as a Gallic commander, the field units which came under Constantine's command remained allied to Gerontius, rather than to other officers. I also identify the Frankish groups of the Lower Rhine as a significant, yet unreliable, branch of Constantine's

[113] On the suggestion that Constantine instigated the British army's crossing from Britain into Gaul, see Seeck (1900), 1029: "Gleich nach seiner Thronbesteigung setzte er nach Boulogne über." Similarly, Drinkwater (1998), 275–6, writes that "Constantine quickly crossed the Channel…won widespread recognition in Gaul, and then moved south." On the crossing as part of Constantine's intention to fight barbarians and "secure a firmer base for his usurpation", see Kulikowski (2000), 333. Most recently, Halsall (2007), 212, also notes the agency of Constantine in the occupation of Gaul. Constantine "took what was left of the British field army", and "rapidly acquired control of most of Gaul."

army. As federates, they contributed military support through their manpower, but the Frankish leaders of the early fifth century were known for frequently shifting their allegiances in search of an imperial authority that could grant consistent donations. Consequently, these tribal leaders allied with Constantine's forces not out of genuine loyalty. Rather, they did so in exchange for Roman gold and treasure, which they used to reward their own followers.

The next most important constituency was that of the imperial court in Italy, which forms the subject of the second section. Given the western emperor Honorius' young age, it is hardly surprising to find that his court community was full of individuals who were competing for influence.[114] As a result, Constantine's policy of conciliation with Honorius was contingent upon the influential courtiers at Ravenna, as much as the emperor himself. The aggressive policy which Stilicho's court assumed against Constantine until 408 was linked to a need to generate funds to pay Alaric and his Gothic army in Italy. The subsequent purge of Stilicho and his ministers led to the emergence of Olympius, who used his ties with disgruntled senators to form a court that aimed to reverse policies made by the previous Stilichonian administration. Under Olympius, Constantine could reach an agreement with Ravenna as Olympius' court accepted Constantine's collegiality with Honorius at the start of 409. However, Olympius' own political agenda meant that this was a partnership in name only. After Olympius' fall from favour, his successor Jovius struggled against other courtiers to impose himself as Honorius' chief adviser. Owing to the lack of one distinct strongman at court, efforts for conciliation between Ravenna and Constantine's regime were unsuccessful until the tenure of Allobich, whose alliance with the Gallic ruler was informed by a desire to distinguish his policies from that of his predecessor Eusebius. Yet, this rapprochement did not last. I also discuss the rise of Constantius, who championed a return of Stilicho's belligerent policy against Constantine. At the instigation of Constantius, Honorius' advisors ordered a campaign against Constantine, under the pretext of rescuing Provence's loyalist population from a usurper.

[114] Davenport and McEvoy (2023), 2–3.

Constantine also followed the lead of other more local constituencies. In particular, the Gallo-Roman aristocracy had emerged at the start of the fifth century as an important ally for a Gallic ruler. However, it is important to note that the Gallic nobility consisted of different region-based groups, each of whom urged Constantine in different directions. I identify one of these groups as the wealthy and influential landowning elites of the Rhône Valley, some of whom such as Apollinaris and Decimus Rusticus were quick to ally themselves with Constantine. Despite Apollinaris and Rusticus' support for Constantine, they were likely in the minority, as most families would have followed their counterparts in Provence and remained loyal to the legitimate regime. I propose that the aristocracy which was centred upon Arles, perhaps owing to its proximity to Italy, offered the most resistance to Constantine's efforts to establish a foothold in Provence. The Provençal aristocracy was also different to the elites of Narbonne, who formed a group that was most prepared to cooperate with Constantine. In examining the Narbonensian aristocracy, the existence of a "radical" and a more "moderate" section of elites means that the city's support for the Gallic ruler can be nuanced even further.

Although the weakest constituency at the start of the fifth century in Gaul was the Church, individual bishops of Gallic cities were contributors to Constantine's rule. While bishops emerged as quasi-political leaders for their communities, their authority was never a guarantee. To show this, I argue that the primacy of Proculus of Marseille relied on three main aspects of the episcopate in southeastern Gaul. At the start of the fifth century, the connections that Proculus had with prominent churchmen in northern Italy enabled him to emerge victorious in any disputes against his neighbouring bishops in Narbonensis II. At the same time, I emphasise the reliance of Proculus' primacy in Provence upon the establishment of ascetic communities. The ability of monasteries such as Lérins to educate and produce future episcopal candidates away from Proculus' leadership had the potential to undermine his metropolitan authority. Yet, with his own monastery at Saint-Victor, Proculus sought to create a Massilian-led institution that could produce potential episcopal allies for him in the surrounding

countryside. I also highlight the importance of Proculus' links with Lazarus and Heros, all of whom shared a similar position on doctrinal issues, such as their mutual condemnation of Pelagianism. For Proculus and Constantine, the ordinations of dependable allies to important dioceses in Provence was important given that its inhabitants were reluctant to support the Gallic ruler.

1.1. *Military*

This section is a discussion of Constantine's interaction with his most powerful political constituency: the armies. Although Constantine's forces were indispensable to his occupation of Gaul, it was by no means a uniform entity. This meant that the army's various branches had their own interests, with each urging the ruler to act in a particular way.[115] To support this argument, I identify three main groups. The first of these were the British officers, who at the instigation of the Romano-British elite, engineered the acclamation of Constantine. Second were the armies in Gaul, whose *limitanei* and *comitatenses* were led by the *comes* Gerontius. Finally, I discuss the unreliability of Constantine's Frankish allies, who consisted of *foederati* beyond the Rhine, as well as those who had settled on Roman territory.

1.1.1. The British Armies

Despite the challenges faced by Britain, including troop withdrawals and disruptions in coin shipments, there appears to have been little disgruntlement among the British forces at the time of Constantine's acclamation. The instigators of the revolt had to make sure that their acclamation of

[115] There has been a tendency to assume that the Gallic army had a similar interest to the forces led by Constantine. For the suggestion that the Gallic forces automatically rallied with the British army following Constantine's arrival, see Seeck (1900), 1029; Drinkwater (1998), 275–9; Kulikowski (2000), 333.

Constantine satisfied the different elements within Britain's military organisation. These men would have served in the small contingent of frontier troops and field units that Stilicho had stationed in Britain. The scant number of the British soldiers at the start of the fifth century was largely due to Magnus Maximus' departure from Britain, in which he had withdrawn the majority of its field legions to support his rule in Gaul.[116] It is likely that Maximus' soldiers never returned to their original service on the island. Indeed, when Theodosius defeated Maximus in 388, it was the victorious emperor who absorbed a large contingent of the latter's British troops.[117] These continued to serve under Theodosius during the civil war against Arbogast and Eugenius. Therefore, due to the mass withdrawal of troops for civil war by Maximus, it is unlikely that there was a considerable number of troops in Britain at the time of Constantine's acclamation in 407. Even if in 395 Stilicho sent several units under the *Comes Britanniarum* to the island, these cannot have been a significant number.[118] This suggests that at the turn of the fifth century, imperial authorities in Italy had not expected any visible form of dissension from the British forces. Given that large numbers of troops were no longer stationed in Britain, it is unlikely that a cessation of coins in bulk shipment was the direct cause of mass dissatisfaction amongst the British ranks. As the recent numismatic finds have shown, Theodosian coins continued to arrive in Britain before the revolt.[119] Only after the first part of Constantine's reign did Roman coinage cease to make its way to the island in bulk.[120] Even after the Italian government ceased the shipment of coins to Britain around 403, new imperial issues still found their way to select places on the island. At the same time, however, the confidence to prepare for an eastern campaign could also reflect Stilicho's satisfaction with the general

[116] Drinkwater (1998), 275, suggests that Constantine took a substantial force from Britain, on the basis that he and his backers would not have made for Gaul without adequate forces to secure their initial landing. Sivan (1998), 197, also suggests that descendants of these troops had populated Armorica.
[117] Collins and Breeze (2014), 66; Hebblewhite (2020), 139.
[118] Southern (2004), 405.
[119] Fleming (2021), 177–8, argues that the imperial government continued to supply the armies of Britain with coins until 402–3.
[120] For an outline of the coinage in late and sub-Roman Britain, see Moorhead and Walton (2014), 101–4. Very few bronze coins arrived after the cessation of bronze production at Western mints in 395. Silver disappeared soon after 402, and gold after 408. There was no major influx of Roman coinage after the first part of Constantine's reign.

military situation in the northwestern provinces.[121] While one might have expected disgruntlement here, there actually appears to have been none.

It is likely that the first indication of British military disgruntlement stemmed from the disruption to the usual duties of officers and soldiers, which took effect in the years after Stilicho's withdrawal of the Rhineland troops by 403. At the start of the fifth century, soldiers in the British army formed a number of garrisons, who manned the forts in coastal areas near the Channel, as well as in the north. As recent studies have observed, the forts of the so-called "Saxon Shore" appeared to suit a more civilian purpose, rather than a military one.[122] Soldiers who occupied sites at Portchester or Richborough seemed to oversee the organisation, processing, guarding, and transport of goods collected in Britain by the annona system to the Rhineland. Following Stilicho's withdrawal of a large number of troops from the Rhine, the military provisioning systems which connected Britain to Gaul and the Rhineland, seemed to grind to a halt. However, it is possible that trans-channel mechanisms of exchange continued to function for a short-while beyond 403, even under the auspices of local stake-holders.[123] The troops who were responsible for the Saxon Shore forts may not have continued to operate in their same roles as before. In addition, a garrison under a *dux Britanniarum* monitored the northern frontier, between York and Hadrian's Wall against the Picts.[124] The continued occupation of and activity at sites, as well as similarities in coin and ceramic assemblages, suggest that the *dux* directed supply to his troops until 410 from his residence at York.[125] It appears then, that large sections of the army in Britain were at least content and there was not enough reason for a large-scale revolt. There is no suggestion that the dissatisfaction of the army was approaching outright anger.

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[121] Drinkwater (1998), 271–2; Cf. Scharf (1990), 473, who argues that Stilicho reorganised the northern armies because of his planned invasion of Illyricum and the east in 407.
[122] On the "disordered occupation" at these forts, see Collin and Breeze (2014), 67; Cunliffe (1975), 425. At Richborough, large amounts of Roman bronze coinage have been found as well as the remains of a church. On the site of Richborough, see Brown (1971); Reece (2010), 62.
[123] On the presence of Frankish groups in lowland Britain and their maintenance of trans-channel links, see Fleming (2021), 178.
[124] For a summary of the deployment of British soldiers in Britain during the fourth century, see Lee (1998), 216–7. On the protracted menace of the Picts through the fourth century, see Collins and Breeze (2014), 69–70.
[125] Collin and Breeze (2014), 68.

There are grounds to include the local British elite as part of the forces which pushed the army into revolt. It is possible that the British officers collaborated with disgruntled landholders, who no longer profited off their agricultural surplus in the same way as before.[126] Even though the rural aristocracy of Britain may have already felt some effects of economic decline since the mid-fourth century, the Rhineland armies still relied on British grain. As Ammianus Marcellinus suggests, Julian had to commission the construction of granaries in order to store the plentiful amounts of grain which were arriving from Britain.[127] If Ammianus envisaged a surplus of British grain during the late 350s, this is evidence for the privileged economic position of the Romano-British landowners, who profited both from the Rhineland demand and also any grain surplus they had raised. Throughout the fourth century, Romano-British aristocrats controlled and kept some proceeds from surplus, which could be then converted into *annona* or "tax-in-supplies".[128] However, from 403, the heavily reduced demand of British grain which came from the mass withdrawal of troops along the Rhine appeared to end the fortunes of the elite landowners for good.

It is also possible that the efforts to preserve their economic status caused the Romano-British elite to form closer supply ties with the troops in Britain, who continued to demand grain as well as other products which the *curiales* supplied.[129] Another instance of an intertwining of elite and military interests appears at the estate of Ingleby Barwick, whose owner served as a high-ranking military official. The association of at least one aristocratic resident of the Tees Valley with the army indicates that rural elite families, particularly in the north, were providing prospective officers.[130] A similar phenomenon seems to have occurred in the lowland communities of the southeast. The belt-sets and weapons alongside buried

[126] Fleming (2021), 177, reminds of the interest of elite landowners, whose continued prosperity and way of life hinge upon Britain's connectivity with other northwestern Provinces.
[127] Ammianus, 18.2.
[128] Halsall (2013), 96.
[129] On the *curiales* as patrons for urban artisans and professionals, see Esmonde Cleary (1989), 122–3.
[130] For the villa at Ingleby Barwick and the discovery of a rare crossbow brooch on the site, see Collins (2022), 253–4.

individuals at sites such as Richborough and Pevensey are now understood as evidence for native Romano-British elites or officials. Their acquisition of material, similar to those found in the burials of northern Gaul, attests to their well-connectedness and determination to portray their tenuous connections to Roman officialdom.[131] If the Romano-British elite remained self-conscious of their aristocratic status into the early decades of the fifth century, it could be that an economic downturn led some members to voice their discontent through a partnership with the local soldiery. This provides a useful context for the conspirators' acclamation of a Gratian, who Orosius describes as a townsman of Britain.[132] Given the shared interests between the military and aristocracy in Britain, Gratian appears to have represented other disgruntled *curiales*, who wished to raise an army to demand financial concessions. Even if Gratian ultimately fell to the violence of the troops, the fact that he was able to reign for four months suggests that elite interests were strong enough to drive the revolt for a considerable length of time.

These conspirators consisted of officers within the soldiery, who resided in Britain but had ties with northern Gaul and the Rhineland. Of these, the *magister militum* Justinianus or Justinian was likely a member of Britain's military elite. An inscription from Ravenscar attests to a *praepositus* of the same name, who along with a lower ranking soldier, fortified the coastal defences in the later fourth century.[133] The inscription places Justinian alongside other military elites of North Yorkshire, in particular, with the owner of the villa at Ingleby Barwick. If this is the case, then Justinian represented an aristocratic section of the army who sought after concessions from the central government and had initially sided with Gratian. Although Zosimus' version of Olympiodorus mentions that Constantine had entrusted the command of the Celtic legions to Justinian and Nebiogast, this promotion indicates that both men already

[131] Fleming (2021), 179–180.
[132] Orosius, 7.40. Stevens (1957), 321–2, argues that Gratian was a curious choice, if indeed he was a municipal senator, or *curialis*.
[133] *RIB* I 721: "Justinianus, commander; Vindicianus, magister, built this tower and fort from ground-level." See in Collins (2022), 248. On the *magister militum* Justinianus: *PLRE* II, Iustinianus 1, 644. On the suggestion that the *praepositus* Justinianus was the same as Constantine's officer, see Martindale (1971), 644; Portaencasa (2020), 221, n.18.

were senior figures within the British military hierarchy.[134] By 407, the senior officers were still the main drivers of the rebellion alongside their elite allies. If the Ravenscar inscription is evidence for Justinianus' service in the late fourth century, by the time of the army's revolt, Justinianus had probably held a high-ranking command in Britain for several decades.

Similar to Justinian, Nebiogast also held a senior position within the British army. Despite the "Frankish" association of his name, Nebiogast could have served as a Roman officer along the coastal forts of the southeast. Recent mortuary evidence at these lowland sites, which show the presence of decorative belt-sets and weapons, argue for the settlements of high-status Franks at the start of the fifth century in Kent.[135] At these coastal forts, Frankish groups and the native Romano-British seemed to share a mutual interest in organising local defence as well as trans-channel exchange with northern Gaul. This could lend weight to the sixth-century account of Gildas, who lamented the invitation of barbarian *foederati* into Britain during the early post-Roman period.[136] For an individual of Frankish-origin such as Nebiogast, a military career in southern Britain was hardly unusual. Zosimus describes Edobich as a native of Britain who, at the same time, was of Frankish descent. Edobich's association with Frankish groups along the Rhineland might speak to the trans-channel connections of an elite Frank, who also assumed the identity of a Romano-British military official.[137] Given that Edobich was to succeed Nebiogast's position, it was likely that the former held a lower rank at the outset of the revolt. If Gildas' words are true, men such as Nebiogast and Edobich seemed to be welcomed by the elites of Kentish communities, who supplied the Frankish *foederati* with provisions. Both Justinian and Nebiogast can be identified as officers who held commands of soldiers in coastal fortresses, which explain their later inability to deal with Sarus' ambush in the Rhône Valley.[138] However, it is also possible to see that these two officers had ties with the Romano-British elite, whose interests the *curialis* Gratian seemed to

[134] Zos. 6.2.2 = Olympiodorus fr. 13.
[135] On the Frankish presence in lowland Britain, see Welch (1991), 261–269; Fleming (2021), 178–9.
[136] Gildas, *De excdio*, 23.5.
[137] Soz. 9.13.
[138] Zos. 6.2.3–4.

represent. Therefore, the accession of Constantine in Britain was contingent upon the ambitions of influential military officers such as Justinian and Nebiogast, who also had the duty to defend the interests of their communities and dependents.

1.1.2. Gerontius and the Gallic armies

The decision to cross the channel also required the assent of the Gallic armies, which I contend was under the leadership of the *comes* Gerontius, who was based at Boulogne-sur-Mer. There is evidence that Gerontius was not only a commander, but a member of the northern Gallic military aristocracy as well. According to Zosimus' reading of Olympiodorus, Gerontius was a Briton, which suggests that he hailed from either Britain or Brittany.[139] However, this provides a clue as to the whereabouts of Gerontius during the British army's revolt. Given that an earlier *comes* of the same name had supported Magnentius' revolt in mid-fourth century, it is possible that the fifth-century Gerontius was a descendant.[140] Additionally, a relative of Gerontius' wife Nunechia, namely the prefect Nunechius, had also been a supporter of Magnentius.[141] Gerontius' marriage with Nunechia or Nonnechia, who belonged to the northern Gallic Nonnechii, makes sense as both families of Gerontius and Nunechia seemed to support usurpers. Given that later Nonnechii also remained in northwestern Gaul, this indicates that they and the Gallic Gerontii occupied lands between Brittany (Lugdunensis III), Lugdunensis II, and Belgica II.[142] As a result, Gerontius' protection of their lands from barbarian invaders was of paramount importance.

Whether Gerontius held the same title of *comes* as his ancestor is difficult to determine. However, the recognition of his military experience even by his enemies suggests that he occupied an eminent

[139] Gerontius: *PLRE* II, Gerontius 5, 508; Heinzelmann (1982), Gerontius 2, 616. Cf. Martindale (1971), 508.
[140] Gerontius (the elder): Heinzelmann (1982), Gerontius 1, 616. Ammianus, 14.5. See also Mathisen (1979), 503, n.1438.
[141] On Nunechia, see *PLRE* II, 788; Heinzelmann (1982), 658. On Nunechius (the elder): Heinzelmann (1982), Nunechius 1, 658.
[142] Another *nobilis*, Nunechius, became the bishop of Nantes in the second half of the fifth century: Heinzelmann (1982), Nunechius 2, 658.

position in the Gallic military hierarchy.[143] Given his ties to northern Gaul, it is possible that he was a duke of Belgica II, whose local landowners would have depended on the various units under his command.[144] At the start of 406, these provincials relied on Gerontius to supply protection against a large coalition of Vandals, Alans, and Sueves who had breached the Rhine frontier. The peoples within this party consisted of women and children, as well as warriors, whose leaders would have plundered the farms of northern Gaul for resources.[145] If Jerome's report of their raids of cities in Germania I, Belgica I, and then Belgica II is to be believed, the barbarians threatened the region whose landowners Gerontius was directly responsible for defending.[146]

Given the dire position of Belgica II's landowners, Gerontius was the one who allowed the British conspirators to establish their initial headquarters at the port city of Boulogne. It is usually assumed that the Gallic troops automatically recognised Constantine as their commander once the British forces crossed the channel.[147] However, this interpretation ignores the role that Gerontius and his units had before Constantine's recognition in Gaul. In face of the imminent threat upon Boulogne from the Alans, Sueves, and Vandal forces, Gerontius would have communicated his concerns to the officers of Britain's garrisons for urgent military reinforcements in early 406. It has been suggested that soon after Constantine's army crossed and disembarked in Boulogne, it also won a victory.[148] Yet, others have also proposed a scenario whereby Constantine established his headquarters there peacefully.[149] The former theory would be more probable: a combined army of garrison units from Britain, alongside Gerontius'

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[143] Zos. 6.2.5.
[144] For the *Dux Belgicae secunda*e, see *Not. Dig.* 38 (ed. Seeck 1867).
[145] Kulikowski (2000), 327, argues that the Rhine crossing began on 31 December 405. See also Modéran (2014), 70, who supports Kulikowski's dating. For the peoples within the invading party, see Heather (2009), 175.
[146] Jerome, *Ep*. 123.16. Kulikowski (2000), 331, follows Jerome, who had precise knowledge of barbarian devastations in northern Gaul through his Gallic letter correspondents. Barbarian tribes had seen Gallia Belgica as a rich province since the second century, see Dhaeze (2009), 1231–2.
[147] Seeck (1900), 1029; Drinkwater (1998), 275–6; Kulikowski (2000), 333.
[148] Both Stevens (1957), 318–9 and Frye (1991) suggest that Constantine's British forces had to fight the Sueves for Boulogne. Constantine's troops won the battle and subsequently settled their defeated foes nearby. Contrary to Wijnendaele (2018), who assumes that his armies could not defeat the barbarians, but instead struck treaties with them.
[149] Drinkwater (1998), 275; Kulikowski (2000), 333.

own Gallic armies was likely enough to defeat the Alan, Suevic, and Vandal forces. Victory of the barbarians enabled Gerontius and his forces to lend greater support for the conspirators' cause.

In his decision to cooperate with Constantine and his co-conspirators, there are grounds to believe that Gerontius recruited much needed reinforcements from the British garrisons for the defence of Belgica II's frontier region.[150] Since the late third century, Boulogne had a major military significance to northeastern Gaul. It was the western terminus of the road towards Cologne, via Bavay and Tongeren, which was crucial for the transport of soldiers, supplies and goods from the Channel to the lower Rhine frontier.[151] To protect this road from raiders, a series of small forts and ditches had been constructed alongside it, which would have suffered damage when the Alan, Suevic, and Vandal forces passed through during 406.[152] It is possible to see that Gerontius' arrangement with the British forces provided a greater number of *limitanei* who could patrol the fortifications along the Boulogne-Cologne road.

The repair of these fortifications was likely to enable Gerontius' own *limitanei* to settle the Vandals, Alans, and Sueves in Belgica II. According to Zosimus' account, Constantine's army had decided to not pursue the invading force. This is evidence for a settlement with some of the barbarian groups in northern Gaul.[153] When Zosimus wrote that Constantine established garrisons to prevent the tribes from passing freely into Gaul, this was a reference to Gerontius' settlement of these barbarians.[154] Moreover, it may have suited the interests of his landowning associates to recruit the Vandals, Alans, and Sueves as frontier soldiers, who also received an allocation of nearby land.[155] The toponymy of modern place names in what was formerly Belgica II such as Allaines (Somme), Alaincourt (Aisne) or Alincourt

[150] On the functions of the late Roman *limitanei*, see Lee (1998), 230.
[151] Drinkwater (2023), 26.
[152] On the fortifications along this road, see Dhaeze (2009), 1239; Van Thienen (2016), 6.
[153] Zos. 6.3.2. For a contrary view, see Bachrach (2020), 101, who writes that Constantine's army slaughtered the Vandals, Alans and Sueves in large numbers at the start of 407.
[154] Zos. 6.3.3.
[155] For the settlement of fifth-century *limitanei* with an allocation of land close to their stations, see Liebeschuetz (1993), 275; Whitby (2005), 366–7.

(Ardennes) might attest to Alan settlements during this time.[156] According to the studies of Bernard Bachrach, the fifth-century colonies of the Alans were established in close proximity to the Sarmatian military settlements of the previous century. Since the Alan settlement was intended by the empire as a second line of defence for the Rhine, this brought the Alans and their leader Goar in contact with the Burgundians, who were being used by the empire for a similar function. This would explain an Alanic alliance with the Burgundians, who raised Jovinus as Augustus in 411.[157] If Gerontius had ties to the local landowners around these areas, he would have been the most appropriate individual to settle the barbarian tribes. Gerontius' settlement of these peoples could explain his later activity when he persuaded the leaders of the coalition to migrate into the Iberian Peninsula in 409.[158] According to Sozomen, the mention of a certain Alanus, who served alongside Gerontius indicates that the *comes* managed to enlist the support of several Alan retainers.[159] Whether this occurred before or after Gerontius' "revolt" against Constantine is uncertain. However, Constantine's decision to send Gerontius to accompany Constans into Spain at the start of 408, suggests that the British officers were aware of the former's ties with the leaders of the barbarian coalition. Therefore, the potential dangers of Gerontius' access to the barbarian recruiting grounds of northern Gaul caused Constantine to keep Gerontius in Spain.

Gerontius' command consisted of several units from the Gallic field army, or *comitatenses*. While it is difficult to assess the condition of these troops at the start of the fifth century, the strength of Gerontius' field army was likely not particularly strong. Stilicho's reorganisation of the western forces in 395, which intended to compensate for the huge losses suffered during the civil wars against Maximus and Eugenius, had prioritised the condition of the field army units of Italy over those of Gaul. Although Stilicho had made good the total number of Gaul's field-army regiments, just under two-thirds of these

[156] On the Alan settlements, see Bachrach (1967), 477–8.
[157] Olympiodorus fr. 18. On the Burgundian involvement in Jovinus' accession, see Drinkwater (1998), 288; Wood (2011), 44.
[158] See López Sánchez (2015), 200–1, who agrees that there was a pact between Gerontius and the barbarians.
[159] Soz. 9.13.

units were simply hastily-recruited *limitanei*, instead of proper, newly-recruited *comitatenses*. Nevertheless, the Gallic field army still existed as a coherent military force into the time of Constantine III, albeit in the form of pseudo-*comitatenses*. Yet, even a few years later in 413, Constantius, as *magister militum per Gallias*, was still drafting *limitanei* into the ranks of the mobile field army. Evidently, the contingent of frontier troops within the Gallic *comitatenses* of the early fifth century was considerable.[160] Despite a decrease in the fighting quality of these units, the loyalty of these troops to Gerontius remained.

The association of the Gallic field army with Gerontius is evident from their inefficacy in battle under other British officers, namely Justinian and Nebiogast. Since two-thirds of the field regiments were essentially former frontier-based personnel, the patrol and reconstruction of forts was not too challenging of a task.[161] However, this meant that they were likely inexperienced as field soldiers and unready for pitched battle. A combination of inexperience in field combat, as well as poor leadership would explain the defeat of Justinian's troops to an imperial army sent by Stilicho in the Rhône Valley during the autumn of 407.[162] As Sarus is unlikely to have commanded a large force, the failure of the Gallic field units speaks to their ill-prepared character, at least under the leadership of Justinian and Nebiogast. Hence, the slaughter which Sarus inflicted on Justinian and his units resulted from the inexperience of two officers who were more accustomed to the static nature of their duties in Britain's coastal forts than pitched battle.[163]

Yet, under the proper leadership of an experienced field general such as Gerontius, it was still possible for these Gallic pseudo-*comitatenses* to conduct successful military operations. As Zosimus reports, the withdrawal of Sarus' troops after their siege of Valence in late 407 belonged to the initiative of the newly-promoted *magistri militum*, Gerontius and Edobich, whose relief force likely consisted of the

[160] On Stilicho's division in 395, see Heather (2016), 30–32. On the pseudo-comitatenses, see also Wijnendaele (2017), 480.
[161] Between early 407 and the spring of 408, they sought to restore the defences along a stretch of the Rhine, perhaps between Mainz and Strasbourg.
[162] Zos. 6.2.3. Wijnendaele (2019), 474.
[163] Wijnendaele (2019), 475, states that Sarus could not have commanded a large force, as the bulk of the Italian field army was under the control of Stilicho.

comitatenses which had remained in northern Gaul.[164] The swiftness through which Gerontius attacked Sarus at Valence indicates that these troops were mobile units of the Gallic *comitatenses*. After they had relieved Sarus' siege, their ability to perform a successful pursuit and harry of the enemy troops towards the Alps suggests that these units had already seen field combat under Gerontius' command.[165] Their previous service for Gerontius would certainly give him confidence to deploy previously successful tactics again. This is true for the course of 410, when he and the Gallic field units performed a similar pursuit of Constans from Tarragona into Gaul.[166] It is likely that Gerontius' previous leadership of the Gallic field units ensured that a significant proportion of these troops were loyal to Gerontius, rather than to the rest of Constantine's commanders. The loyalty of the Gallic soldiers towards Gerontius may explain the remarks of Sozomen, who mentioned that his Spanish soldiers developed an "utter contempt" towards the general when he ordered a retreat.[167] The fact that Sozomen mentioned that the disdain came from the Spanish soldiery, rather than the Gallic ones, insinuates the possible acquiescence of Gerontius' *comitatenses* in the general's decision. These field units, as well as those who belonged to the *limitanei* demonstrate that the Gallic army formed their own unique branch within Constantine's forces. These Gallic troops followed the lead of Gerontius, rather than other officers.

1.1.3. Frankish allies

The alliance with the Frankish groups along the Rhine was a decision which Constantine made based on the former's ability to provide military support to their Roman patrons. Yet, the alliance was never guaranteed, and clearly contingent on several factors. Frankish support was always conditional upon the ambitions of their leaders to secure material rewards from Roman officials. The first factor was

[164] Zos. 6.2.4.
[165] Zos. 6.2.5–6.
[166] Soz. 9.13. Cf. Kulikowski (2000), 339–340, who sees that Gerontius set out from Spain to fight Constantine at Arles, rather than Constans.
[167] Soz. 9.13. Similarly, Orosius 7.42 also seems to reflect a disdain towards Gerontius.

the agreements which the Frankish groups made with Stilicho at the start of the fifth century. As part of Stilicho's withdrawal of the Rhine troops during 401–2, imperial authorities seemed to allow Frankish groups from the Elbe-Weser triangle to migrate into the Demer-Scheldt-Meuse region.[168] Because of these arrangements with Stilicho, Frankish groups would assume the responsibilities of the previous *limitanei*, who formed the first line of defence against the advance of invaders or raiders into the empire.[169] These Franks may have formed part of the frontier troops in Belgica II who manned the forts on the Boulogne–Bavay–Cologne road. As further excavations of military sites in this region reveal, Frankish groups also received settlements close to existing Roman fortifications. The presence of sunken-featured houses suggests that the Franks who had settled on the west of the Rhine consisted of not just warriors, but families as well.[170] The archaeological record corroborates with Orosius, who writes that some Franks were on hand to resist the coalition of Vandal, Alan, and Suevic invaders.[171] Despite the resistance of the Frankish *limitanei*, the invading force prevailed, crossed the Rhine, and entered Gaul. At first glance, Orosius' evidence might show that Frankish federates had only stationed themselves near to where the invading barbarians had crossed the Rhine. However, it is more likely that he was referring to the defence of forts by the Frankish soldiers who had taken over the duties from the previous *limitanei*. In any case, Orosius hints that certain Frankish *limitanei* were fulfilling their federate obligations, just as Stilicho had wanted them to. As hinted by the archaeological evidence of their homes, their service for Stilicho supplied the Frankish groups with formal land allotments in Germania Secunda.

Furthermore, the Alan, Vandal, and Sueve crossing indicates that although some Frankish federates upheld their agreement with Stilicho, others might not have. As the presence of solidi of Constantine in and around the sites of Frankish settlements suggests, certain federates could easily have

[168] Roymans and Heeren (2021), 140, 145.
[169] Perhaps Frankish federates also assisted the Gallic *comitatenses* and *limitanei* with the restoration program that Justinian and Nebiogast undertook. Heather (2009), 35, describes these Franks as "hired-in bands".
[170] See Heeren (2016), 167, for the clustered settlements characteristic of the sites at Wijchen-Tienakker or Gennep.
[171] Orosius, 7.40. See also Renatus Profuturus' account of a war between the Franks and Vandals in *HF* 2.9.

switched their allegiance to Constantine once the diplomatic payments from Italy thinned out.[172] It is possible that Frankish leaders recognised the potential riches that came from an alliance with Constantine and his treasury. After Gerontius and Edobich's victory against Sarus at the end of 407, Frankish groups along the Lower Rhine may have begun to benefit from Constantine's fisc.[173] Edobich's mission to the region on behalf of Constantine could be viewed in the context of the wavering loyalties of these tribes. Edobich's transrhenane ties to his Frankish kinsmen suggests that Constantine trusted him as the most appropriate individual to navigate the potentially difficult ambitions of the tribal leaders.[174] Sozomen also attests to the shifting loyalties of Frankish federates to Roman authorities. In his account of the battle between Edobich's Franks and the imperial forces of Constantius and Ulfila, Sozomen mentions that while some Frankish warriors were killed in battle, others surrendered or fled.[175] This is evidence that not all Franks were loyal to Constantine's cause, despite Edobich's efforts to recruit their services. Although the ability of Roman authorities to grant regular donations of mobile wealth to the Frankish federates was important, this did not always guarantee their support.

The alliance of the Franks with Constantine's army was also contingent on the ambitions of certain Frankish leaders, who had to satisfy their clients.[176] For the less-Romanised leaders of Frankish groups, Roman service was a means of acquiring more material wealth to appease their followers. Their primary concern was not so much the political success of Constantine's regime, as it was the pursuit of Roman gold and silver treasure. The discovery of fifth-century gold and silver hoards in the Lower Rhine suggest that Constantine's army arranged regular payments of treasure to Frankish warlords, who would

[172] Heather (2009), 181; Roymans and Heeren (2021), 146.
[173] Zos. 6.2.6. Wijnendaele (2019), 478.
[174] Soz. 9.13. On transrhenane ties of the late-fourth century officers of Frankish descent, Bauto and Arbogast, see Barlow (1996), 235–7. However, as the case of Silvanus shows, Franks who joined the Roman army did not have amicable relations with the tribes they had left. For Silvanus' "tragic" portrayal by Ammianus, see Barlow (1996), 127.
[175] Soz. 9.14.
[176] On the clientship in northern Gallic societies during the late Iron Age, see Royman (1990), 39–43.

then arrange internal distribution to their followers.[177] The hoarding of gold coins suggests that these Frankish leaders resided beyond Roman administration, where the mechanisms for the recovery of imperial gold through taxation no longer functioned.[178] Areas around which the hoards appeared reveal that Roman gold flowed in one direction only, that is, into the hands of a tribal warlord. Hoards with Roman cut silver or *Hacksilber* indicate that Frankish warlords had received entire silver plates from the imperial authorities, which they then cut up at a later stage to distribute to their clients.[179] Frankish warlords could exploit their connections with Roman authorities to express their dominance in the social hierarchy of their communities. The distribution of reward allowed Frankish warlords to acquire more followers in their warbands, and thereby more influence vis-à-vis other competing tribes.[180]

The regular influx of Roman currency, whether through the payment of gold or *Hacksilber,* also ensured that Frankish clients remained content with their leader. In the last decade of the fourth century, the murder of the Frankish leader Sunno at the hands of his own retainers is evidence for the consequences when a warlord did not appease his clients.[181] The appearance of coin hoards from Honorius' early reign suggests that Stilicho had arranged generous payments to Frankish groups of the Lower Rhine as part of a peace.[182] Given the steady supply of Roman gold that Stilicho had promised, Sunno's retainers might have viewed their leader's attempts to avenge the exile of his brother Marcomeres as damaging to their alliance with the empire. Disturbance to the internal distribution of regular Roman donations, such as the absence of an alliance with imperial authorities, forced both leaders and clients to take action. This explains Renatus' description of Frankish plunder in Trier after the death of Jovinus, who had also arranged gold payments to the federates in the Lower Rhine.[183] In the absence of a figure

[177] According to Roymans (2017), 69, this was different to the Roman payment to individual mercenaries.
[178] Roymans and Heeren (2021), 146–7.
[179] On the fragment of a silver imperial *largitio* plate from Groß Bodungen and a gilded silver plate from Echt, see Roymans (2017), 69.
[180] Roymans and Heeren (2021), 145–9.
[181] Claudian, *Cons. Stil*. 1.241–5.
[182] On the coin hoards dating to the mid-390s, see Roymans (2017), 67. For Marcomeres and Sunno' engagements against the Romans, see Drinkwater (2007), 318–19.
[183] On discovery of coins from Jovinus in the Lower Rhine, see Roymans (2017), 67–8. *HF* 2.9.

who could arrange a consistent supply of gold or silver, Frankish leaders raided Roman cities for booty, in order to satisfy the demands of their followers. It was not only until 428, that the Frankish leaders received imperial payments once again, through their alliances with Aëtius.[184] This agrees with the archaeological record, which indicates that solidus hoards with coins of Valentinian III emerge in the Lower Rhine during the period between 428–432.[185] Whether Frankish leaders made alliances with Stilicho, Constantine's forces, or Aëtius, they sought after a regular supply of treasure, which they could distribute to their clients.

While the value of Constantine's armies were indispensable to their occupation of Gaul, we should see that it was by no means a uniform entity. Rather, Constantine relied upon three main arms of its military: the armies and officers of Britain, Gerontius and the Gallic armies, as well as the Frankish allies. I have argued that the decision to raise Constantine to Augustus was not so much a product of Britain's garrisons, which would not have had enough reason to march into Gaul on its own accord. Instead, it was the Romano-British elite who appeared to act as the main drivers of the revolt. Stilicho's withdrawal of troops from the Rhineland, as well as Britain, would have ended the economic fortunes of the island's landholders, whose wealth and status had previously depended on the exchange of British grain and other produce to the Rhine frontier. The British officers such as Justinian and Nebiogast, who were involved in the revolt, also were likely connected to these landholders.

It is also important to consider the role that Gerontius and his Gallic armies played in Constantine's decision to cross the channel into Gaul. I have discussed the possibility that the *comes* Gerontius had close ties with the elite landowners of northern Gaul, who would have feared the threat of barbarian incursions upon their property. This would explain the cooperation between Gerontius and the

[184] Prosper, *Chron*, a. 428.
[185] On the coins of Valentinian III and the activities of Aëtius, see Roymans (2017), 74. However, Roymans argues that alliances with the Franks and local Germanic warlords were made to control the military potential of Frankish groups.

British officers prior to the crossing, which sought to recruit military support against the Alans, Sueves, and Vandals, who had breached into Belgica II. Following Gerontius' settlement of these barbarians, they would have formed a section of his army as federates. It should also be noted that the Gallic field units which came under Constantine's command remained allied to Gerontius, rather than to other officers.

Finally, the Frankish groups of the Lower Rhine formed an important, but unreliable component of Constantine's army. Although, as federates, they provided military support through manpower, the Frankish leaders of the early fifth century consistently shifted their allegiances, which looked for an imperial authority who could supply donations and rewards. Therefore, these Frankish leaders made their alliances with Constantine's army, not out of any genuine support for the regime. Rather, they did so in exchange for Roman gold and treasure, which they distributed to their clients.

1.2. *Imperial Court*

Along with Constantine's military, the individuals within the imperial court of Honorius formed an equally important constituency for a Gallic ruler. Here, I emphasise the influence of senior officials at the court of the western emperor Honorius through their role in dictating the policy of non-hostility by Constantine. Ammianus has provided insight into the machinations of Constantius II's court and the various influences the emperor had to manage.[186] Similarly, the Honorian court community should be regarded as a collection of individuals who allied themselves with the consecutive parties of Stilicho, Olympius, Jovius, as well as Constantius.[187] Therefore, when we speak of Constantine's entreaties towards the imperial court, it would be more correct to describe a court community under the influence of

[186] Ammianus, 21.16: "He [Constantius II] was to an excessive degree under the influence of his wives, and the shrill-voiced eunuchs, and certain of the court officials, who applauded his every word…."
[187] For scholars who regard Honorius as the principal figure at court, see Seeck (2000), 1029–30. The current consensus is that the imperial court was under the influence of Stilicho. Kulikowski (2000), 326; Wijnendaele (2018), 266–7, both of whom state that Stilicho ran the Western government, rather than Honorius himself. However, there has been little treatment upon the stance of the chief advisors who followed Stilicho towards Constantine until the emergence of Allobich.

ministers with different and competing objectives. The ambitions of these imperial courtiers, rather than Honorius himself, directed the reconciliatory policy which Constantine took vis-à-vis the Italian court – whether Constantine and his fellow officers realised it or not.[188]

1.2.1. Stilicho's courtiers

Constantine's policy to cast their Gallic regime as a partner of the imperial court, rather than its enemy, was contingent upon the willingness of Stilicho and his officials to comply. However, as suggested by the latter's sanction of Sarus' ambush on Constantine's forces in autumn 407, the Stilichonian court wished to pursue a belligerent stance towards the Gallic ruler. Given the bleak condition of the state treasury, the courtiers hoped that the attack could recover some of the revenue that the state had lost after Constantine's occupation of Gaul, Britain, and Spain. The Stilichonian court during this time were Honorius, Stilicho, as well as a host of the latter's own appointees. It was these senior officials, along with the *magister militum* Stilicho himself, who would have favoured an early assault upon Constantine's troops, who had arrived in the Rhône Valley sometime in the summer of 407. This is because Honorius' court consisted of Stilicho's own appointments.[189] We see that the *magister militum per Gallias*, praetorian prefect of Gaul, *magister equitum per Italiae*, *comes domesticorum*, *magister officiorum*, *comes sacrarum largitionum*, *comes rerum privatarum*, praetorian prefect of Italy, as well as other officials belonged to Stilicho's carefully-constructed court community.[190] An assessment of the state finances from the *comes sacrum largitionum*, Patroinus, may have persuaded the Stilichonians to assign Sarus as *magister militum*, in order to make the mission official.[191] It is unknown what the Stilichonian

[188] On this policy, see the argument of Drinkwater (1998), 275–6, who claims that Constantine wanted to project himself as a partner, rather than an enemy of the ruling Theodosian dynasty. Also, Kulikowski (2000), 333–4, has suggested that a period of cohabitation between the governments of Constantine and Honorius prevailed before Sarus' attack.
[189] McEvoy (2013), 174.
[190] Zos. 5.32.4–7. For the identity of the Stilichonian officials killed during the mutiny in Pavia, in August 408, see McEvoy (2013), 182.
[191] *PLRE* II, Patroinus, 843–4. On the appointment of Sarus as *magister militum*, see *PLRE* II, Sarus, 978.

court intended Sarus' attack to achieve. The nature of Sarus' forces suggests that the Stilichonians did not expect Sarus to win an outright victory against Constantine's army. Yet, a more likely possibility is that the state funds had sunk to the point where Stilicho's court sought after the gold in Constantine's treasury, in order to pay Alaric and his Goths for the planned invasion of Gaul.[192] As Zosimus reports, Sarus' initial victories against Justinian and Nebiogast provided him with a baggage of war booty, which he was almost successful in bringing back to Italy.[193] Only when Sarus returned to Ravenna empty-handed, did some palace officials begin to question both the strategy and Stilicho's authority. Yet, in late 407, the Stilichonian court was adamant that Sarus' attack would succeed and that it would help to restore the treasury.

In addition, the courtiers' belligerent policy against Constantine likely had the assent of the Roman Senate. Prior to 408, Stilicho had the support of Roman senators through his careful attempts to consult with them before any decision. Stilicho's reverence for the senate is evident in the fact that he gave the Senate the privilege to declare war on Gildo in 398. However, by 408, it might appear as though dissatisfaction was slowly creeping into the senate. Stilicho's decision to use Sarus and his barbarian allies in Gaul – rather than the state-funded Roman field armies – might represent the senate's reluctance to support a new campaign against Constantine from their own finances. However, as McEvoy has argued, the senate always seemed hesitant to fund wars, not just for Stilicho but also for previous regimes.[194] The promise of a larger treasury from a successful raid meant that the Italian aristocracies would potentially raise less funds to pay Alaric and his army. It was not until the following year, after complaints from the influential senator Lampadius regarding a large payment to the Visigoths, that the Senate showed its dissatisfaction towards the Stilichonian court.[195] Yet, Lampadius' complaints indicate that the policy of belligerence towards Constantine did not have the support of all the Italo-Roman

[192] For the suggestion that Constantine's treasury possessed a significant amount of gold, see Drinkwater (1998), 275. For the financial considerations of Stilicho, see Wijnendaele (2018), 265–6.
[193] Zos. 6.2.3–5.
[194] McEvoy (2013), 178–9.
[195] Zos. 5.29.9. See Matthews (1970), 92, who writes that Lampadius was reflecting the silent opinion of many other senators.

senators, who might have favoured a more conciliatory approach with the Gallic ruler. This raises the possibility that the failure of the Stilichonian policy of aggression towards Constantine, along with the inability to acquire booty, was damaging to the reputation of Stilicho and his team of officials. If this is true, then the failure to acquire funds from Sarus' mission simply gave another reason for other ministers at court such as Olympius to plot against the incumbent faction of Stilicho. It is apparent that this aggression which the Stilichonian court had shown to the Gallic regime hindered any attempts from Constantine to reconcile themselves with the ruling dynasty. At the same time, the unpopularity of Stilicho's decisions reflected a change in the imperial attitude which aligned more with Constantine's conciliatory disposition towards the imperial court.

1.2.2. Olympius' court and Constantine's consulship

Scholars have usually held the position that at the start of 409, Constantine seized the initiative to exploit Honorius' weakened position.[196] Indeed, after the fall of Stilicho in August 408, Olympius' court faction allowed Constantine to pursue a conciliatory policy towards Honorius. However, given the lengths to which Olympius went to expunge all traces of the Stilichonian regime, greater weight should be placed on his political ambitions in determining Constantine's policy towards the imperial court.[197] Zosimus mentions that after the purge of all Stilichonian officials, Olympius had the power to manage Honorius' consistory as he pleased, and could both control all court affairs, as well as issue imperial decrees.[198] Olympius' influence over court legislation extended into a range of different matters, particularly with the issuing of stricter measures against the heathens and heretics who had supported Stilicho. As part of his

[196] Drinkwater (1998), 281–2; Kulikowski (2000), 336. Constantine's regime may have found itself in a good position to bargain with the Honorian court, after Constans had secured the hostages of the emperor's relatives Didymus and Verenianus. Zos. 5.43.1–2.
[197] On Olympius' purge of Stilicho and his followers, and the attempts to reverse earlier Stilichonian policies, see Matthews (1975), 286; McEvoy (2013), 188–9.
[198] Zos. 5.35.1–2. On Olympius' imperial decrees on religion, see McEvoy (2013), 190–2; Wagner (2021), 137–8, n.116. On Olympius' cooperation with Augustine of Hippo, see Mratschek (2001), 224–232.

program to distinguish himself from the policies of the Stilichonian court, Olympius seemed to favour a less belligerent stance towards the Gallic regime. However, there is little to suggest that this policy of appeasement with Constantine was a genuine attempt to reconcile with the Gallic ruler. Following Constantine's embassy from Gaul to Ravenna in the winter of 408/9, Olympius' staff agreed to dispatch the imperial insignia to Arles and award Constantine with an honorary consulship for the rest of 409.[199] Yet, it is more likely that the imperial entreaties represented an attempt by Olympius to appease his senatorial supporters who opposed the financial repercussions of military intervention. Permanent mutual recognition of co-rulers, who were unconnected by blood or marriage never had and never would be acceptable within the Empire.[200]

It is likely that the decision to recognise Constantine was a political one, which aimed to secure military reinforcements from Gaul against Alaric and his Goths.[201] If this was the case, it represents another attempt from Olympius to distance himself from the Stilichonian policy of cooperation with Alaric's forces against Constantine's armies. For Olympius and his supporters, a conciliatory attitude with Constantine accompanied Ravenna's decision to refuse any agreements with Alaric, to whom the senators under the Stilichonian regime had to pay off. As a result, the Honorian court under Olympius aimed to champion the senatorial cause by implementing financial measures such as tax concessions to favour the Italian landowning elite.[202] Even though Stilicho was no longer in charge of Honorius' court, Constantine's entreaties with the imperial court were reliant upon Olympius' own political agenda, which aimed to separate himself from his predecessor's policies.

1.2.3. Jovius' court

[199] *IG* 14. 2559.
[200] Drinkwater (1998), 294.
[201] On the movement of Alaric and his Goths into southern Italy, see Drinkwater (1998), 281. This could be the reason that Constantine led an expedition to Italy in early 410.
[202] *CTh*. 11.28.4. (13 Sept. 408).

The machinations at the Italian court ensured that the imperial recognition which Constantine achieved through the measures of Olympius were not lasting. According to Zosimus' edition of Olympiodorus, Olympius lost his position as *magister officiorum*, regained it, and then lost it again.[203] Following a mission in which Olympius personally led a legation to meet Athaulf, he suffered a fall from favour at court and fled to Dalmatia in March 409.[204] Given the nonlinear nature of Olympius' demise, it could be that discontent was already brewing amongst his fellow courtiers at Ravenna. Other ministers such as the praetorian prefect Jovius, who was both a supporter of Stilicho's policies and a former client of Alaric, seemed to represent a faction that wished for a more conciliatory attitude towards Alaric.[205] If Olympiodorus' description of Olympius and his tumultuous end is correct, it is likely that at the start of 409, the *magister officiorum*'s aggressive policy against the Goths grew increasingly unpopular with those who had been his supporters.

Hence, by the summer of 409, Constantine no longer carried out his conciliatory policy with Olympius, but rather a court under the lead of Jovius. This is evident by Jovius' efforts to replace several of Olympius' staff with his own, including the appointment of Priscus Attalus as the prefect of Italy, Demetrius as *comes sacrum largitionum* and Allobich as *magister militum*.[206] It is unlikely that Jovius instigated the same violence that Olympius had during Stilicho's demise because he did not have the same time to construct a court community with the same degree of thoroughness nor influence as his predecessors. Nevertheless, Jovius seemed to possess enough influence over Honorius to sanction the deaths of two *magister militiae* named Vigilantius and Turpilio.[207] Although these two individuals were soldiers, their respective roles at the imperial court of Honorius attests to the presence of other ministers who appeared to challenge Jovius' primacy. According to Olympiodorus' account of negotiations between

[203] Zos. 5.43–51 = Olympiodorus fr. 8.
[204] Doyle (2018), 141, suggests that Olympius led this mission without the permission of Honorius. I follow the dating of McEvoy (2013), 193–4. Cf. Matthews (1975), 292–3.
[205] Jovius: *PLRE* II, Iovius 3, 623–4. On Jovius' relationship with Alaric, see Zos. 5.48.2.
[206] Matthews (1975), 293.
[207] Zos. 5.47.2–3. Wijnendaele (2017), 433–4, suggests that Vigilantius and Turpilio were examples of officials who had struggled to impose themselves at the imperial court and were subsequently deposed.

Jovius and Alaric's Goths, Honorius condemned the temerity of Jovius' terms to Alaric, which had proposed the award of imperial command on the Visigothic leader. Jovius, who had "feared that the emperor would suspect him of favouring Alaric", subsequently took an oath with the emperor and other officials to never make peace with Alaric.[208] Even if Olympiodorus refers to Honorius' agency in opposing Jovius' terms, this episode suggests that other officials could have shared a similar opinion. While it is possible that Honorius was responsible for his message to Jovius, it could also have come at the instigation of others at the imperial court while its chief advisor was absent.[209]

Indeed, Jovius' defection to the Visigoths in July 409 might reflect that the influence of other courtiers had already risen at his expense.[210] It is important to situate Constantine's decision to march into Italy within the context of court intrigues after Jovius' departure. Olympiodorus writes that one of Honorius' generals, Allobich, plotted to hand over the "sovereignty of all the west" to Constantine.[211] This is the same Allobich whom Jovius had appointed as *magister militum*. Although Olympiodorus is correct to suggest an alliance between Allobich and Constantine, Allobich's conspiracy was not simply an attempt to betray the western empire. Instead, one needs to look at his entreaties with Constantine alongside the factional disputes which were occurring at the court. It is likely that in their willingness to cooperate with Constantine, Allobich and his party were reversing the policies of the court chamberlain named Eusebius.[212] During Eusebius' term as Honorius' advisor, Eusebius might have instigated the decision not to offer Constantine an ordinary consulship of 410 after the murder of Honorius' Spanish relatives.[213] Although the ways that Eusebius influenced Honorius are unclear, Allobich's alliance with Constantine suggests that Allobich had to represent a different position from the chamberlain, just as Olympius had tried to separate himself from Stilicho. If Eusebius sought to dissuade the Honorian court

[208] Olympiodorus fr. 8.1. = Soz. 9.7. See also Zos. 5.49.1.
[209] On the dangers of leaving the ear of the emperor as a minister at court, see McEvoy (2013), 185.
[210] Olympiodorus. fr. 13.
[211] Olympiodorus. fr. 15.2 = Soz. 9.12.4–6. Allobich: *PLRE* II, Allobichus, 61. Allobich's non-Roman name might suggest that he had ties to Alaric, or members in Alaric's army as well.
[212] Olympiodorus. fr. 14. Eusebius: *PLRE* II, Eusebius 9, 429.
[213] Olympiodorus. fr. 13.2 = Zos. 6.1–5.

from negotiations with the Gallic regime, his death at Allobich's orders indicates that it was a policy that Allobich opposed.[214] Therefore, Allobich's rivalry with Eusebius should be regarded as a factor in Constantine's ability to secure an agreement with fractious imperial court by the late summer of 410.

1.2.4. Constantius' court

Even then, the rise and fall of influential courtiers at the Italian court continued to make it difficult to guarantee any lasting success for the Gallic ruler's policies. Despite Allobich's efforts, Constantine's alliance with the imperial court was undermined by his inability to manage the ambitions of other officials.[215] In the context of court intrigue, Olympiodorus indicates that the emperor promoted a military official named Constantius as *magister peditum praesentalis*.[216] Although Olympiodorus is vague on the reasons behind Constantius' appointment, his quick rise makes sense in the context of conflict between a faction led by Olympius, who had returned to the court, and one led by Jovius' *magister militum* Allobich. That Constantius could only sanction the execution of Olympius in late 412, or early 413, suggests that a section of influential Italian senators remained in support of the latter.[217] Despite Olympius' return to court and Allobich's overtures to Constantine, it is clear that by 411, Constantius had the ear of the emperor. Olympiodorus' suggestion of Constantius' swift rise raises the possibility that the *magister peditum* was the one responsible for uncovering Allobich's alliance with the Gallic ruler.[218] Yet, it could be that the tide was already turning against Allobich. The secrecy which Olympiodorus records of

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[214] Olympiodorus. fr. 14.
[215] On a narrative of court intrigues in the lead up to the promotion of Constantius, see McEvoy (2013), 193–4.
[216] *Ibid*. A review of Lütkenhaus (1998) from Mathisen (2000) has placed Constantius' appointment to a date as early as 409. Wijnendaele (2019), 484, suggests that Constantius started to assert his authority over the court in 410.
[217] Matthews (1975), 302, indicates that Constantius' ascendency restored political stability to the court. However, it is likely that he needed time to appoint his own men in positions. On the death of Olympius in 412/413, rather than 410, see Lütkenhaus (1998), 66; Wagner (2020), 138–9.
[218] Olympiodorus, fr. 15.2.

Allobich's overtures indicates that rapprochement with Constantine was an unpopular policy amongst an increasing majority at the imperial court. It is likely that his removal represented the commitment of large sections of Honorius' consistory towards hostility against Constantine.[219] Therefore, the demise of Allobich, as well as the rising fortunes of Constantius, informed the decision by Constantine to reconsider a conciliatory policy vis-à-vis the imperial court.

The emergence of a Constantius-led party that was hostile towards the Gallic regime informed Constantine's decision to recruit reinforcements from the Rhine. Olympiodorus indicates that Constantine had sent Edobich to the Rhine in response to the discovery of Gerontius' promotion of Maximus to Augustus at Tarragona.[220] Yet, it is possible that a belligerent stance from the imperial court under Constantius also motivated Constantine to appeal for reinforcements. Following Alaric's death in late 410, Constantius' faction may have convinced Honorius that it was the right time to march against Constantine's armies. The timing of Constantius' march from Italy suggests that the court knew of the civil war between the forces of Gerontius and Constantine. With this knowledge, Constantius' faction urged the emperor and the senate to support a war effort in Gaul not too dissimilar to the one undertaken by Sarus in the winter of 407/8.

Although Constantine occupied Provence, it is also likely that a section of elites there who were loyal to the imperial government also endorsed Constantius' intervention. Despite the departure of the praetorian prefect of Gaul Limenius to Italy in 408, there is reason to believe that a number of Honorian officials remained in Arles during Constantine's occupation of Provence. One of these officials was Claudius Postumus Dardanus, whom the Honorian court had appointed as praetorian prefect of Gaul twice, the first of which came before 406/7.[221] An inscription from Dardanus' fortified estate, "Theopolis", to where he retreated after he left public life, commemorates his previous service for the

[219] Soz. 9.12; Olympiodorus, fr. 15.1.1–5; 15.2.5–10.
[220] Olympiodorus fr. 17.2 = Soz. 9.13.1, 15.3. On Maximus' promotion, see Kulikowski (2000), 337–8.
[221] On Dardanus' career, see Drinkwater (1998), 291–2.

Honorian government.[222] This inscription described not only his term as prefect, but also mentioned that Dardanus was the head of the petitions department. If Dardanus had erected the inscription at the end of his second prefecture in 414, his role as master of petitions would have occurred before this date. Even if Dardanus held this office before the emergence of Constantine's regime, it is still likely that he continued to communicate with his colleagues in Ravenna after Constantine came to power. As a result, Constantius and the chief advisors at Honorius' court may well have relied on informants such as Dardanus to provide updates on Gallic affairs, in addition to Constantine's embassies.[223] Constantine's prolonged residence in Arles suggests that there was indeed communication between the Honorian loyalists in Provence and Ravenna between 406 and 411. The presence of Constantine aimed to provide a figurehead for his regime in a region whose population was still loyal to the Honorian court. At the instigation of the now popular Constantius, the court and emperor would have sanctioned an assault on Constantine, under the pretext of rescuing Arles' loyalist population from a usurper.

In summary, Constantine's policy of conciliation with Honorius was contingent upon the agenda of influential courtiers at Ravenna, as much as the emperor or Constantine themselves. The ambitions of these ministers, from Stilicho through to Constantius, were the main drivers of court policy. From 407 until August 408, Constantine's efforts to portray himself as a partner of the Theodosian dynasty was undermined by the aggressive policy formed by Stilicho's court. Because of Stilicho's efforts to pay Alaric and his Gothic army, the Stilichonian court sanctioned Sarus' assault against Constantine's armies in a bid to secure more funds. Yet, this policy appeared to change in August 408 when Olympius instigated a plot to eliminate Stilicho and all traces of his carefully-constructed court. With Olympius as Honorius' chief advisor, Constantine reached an agreement with Ravenna as the latter accepted

[222] On the translation of Dardanus' inscription (*ILS* 1279), see Connolly (2006), 145.
[223] For Constantine's embassy in autumn 408, see Zos. 5.43.1–2. For the embassy of summer 409, see Zos. 6.1.1–2. For the embassy of 410, see Olympiodorus, fr. 15.1, Soz. 9.12. See Drinkwater (1998), 286, who suggests the possibility that the legitimate government was forging links with Constantine's enemies.

Constantine's collegiality with Honorius at the start of 409. However, Olympius' own political agenda meant that this collegiality was a partnership in name only. Following Olympius' fall from favour, the court intrigue which emerged under the tenure of Jovius ushered in a period when Constantine could not find an ally at the court. As a result, efforts for conciliation between Ravenna and the Gallic regime were unsuccessful until the tenure of Allobich, whose secret alliance with Constantine was informed by a desire to distinguish himself from that of his predecessor Eusebius. The policy of rapprochement with the Gallic regime was already an unpopular one amongst those at the imperial court, which after Allobich's demise, came under the influence of the newly promoted *magister militum* Constantius. At the instigation of Constantius, Honorius' advisors ordered a campaign against Constantine, under the pretext of rescuing Provence's loyalist population from a usurper. In what follows, I address the ambitions of Gaul's regional elites, who although were not as influential as those at the Italian court, nevertheless played no minor role in the formation of Constantine's policy.

1.3. *Gallic aristocracy*

This section argues that the aristocracy, who resided within the great estates of central and southern Gaul played a considerable role in Constantine's policies. Within the Gallic aristocracy, there were three distinct groups each of whom had different interests.[224] In order to show this, I maintain that the aristocracies in the Rhône Valley, Provence, and Narbonne urged Constantine in different directions.

1.3.1. Mixed reception in the Rhône Valley

[224] On the notion that Constantine recruited from leading Gallic nobles, see Salway (1981), 435–6; Drinkwater (1998), 288; Van Waarden (2020), 19. Cf. Frye (1991), 353–4; Delaplace (2015), 152. Frye notes the presence of Narbonne's aristocracy under Jovinus. Frye's observation that a region's aristocracy acted differently to others has similarities to the thoughts of Delaplace, who suggests that Apollinaris' promotion reflected the Arvernian aristocracy's affiliation with the Gallic regime. Apart from Frye and Delaplace, little attention has been paid to the regional differences of the Gallic aristocracy under Constantine.

At the start of the fifth century, aristocrats within the extended region of central and southern Gaul were not unanimous in their assent for Constantine's regime. For this reason, at the end of 407, Constantine pursued a policy to win the support of the aristocracy who resided in this area.[225] The relocation of his administration to Lyon sought to create ties with the wealthy families of the city and the adjacent Rhône Valley region.

With certain families, this conciliatory policy was successful. As Zosimus mentions, one of these individuals was Apollinaris, the grandfather of Gaius Sollius Sidonius Apollinaris, a native of Lyon.[226] In a letter, Sidonius mentions that Apollinaris' tomb was located within the territory over which a bishop of Lyon had jurisdiction. One must exercise some caution in their reading of this letter. Sidonius' glowing treatment of his grandfather is one that clearly attempts to rehabilitate the image of an immediate relative who had served under usurpers through "expert story-telling".[227] Nevertheless, Sidonius' testimony for Lyon as the site of Apollinaris's burial is useful evidence for the family's residence there during the early years of the fifth century. As Horváth has demonstrated, the Apollinarii had their centre in this part of the Rhône Valley. From as early as the second century, the Sollius clan – who adopted the name Apollinaris during the third century – established their wealth largely through their expertise in the textile industry as well as their control over riverine trade and shipping.[228] Although Apollinaris relocated away from Lyon to assume the office of prefect under Constantine in 408–9, his family continued to reside there. Two generations later, his grandson Sidonius could also call himself a native of Lyon, before his own relocation to serve as the bishop of Clermont.[229] If the Apollinaris family continued to reside at their ancestral home in Lyon during the early fifth century, they would have formed an important aristocratic

[225] Sivan (1993), 50–1.
[226] Zos. 6.4.2. Apollinaris: *PLRE* II, Apollinaris 1, 113; Heinzelmann (1982), 556. For the suggestion that Apollinaris was from the Auvergne, see Martindale (1981), 113. Cf. Heinzelmann (1982), 556; Mathisen (1982), 366, who maintains that Apollinaris was from Lyon.
[227] *Ep*. 3.12. On the circumstances of Apollinaris' death or return to Lyon, see Hanaghan (2019), 2–3, n.12. On Sidonius' role in the public rehabilitation of Apollinaris, see Van Waarden (2024), 1–6.
[228] Horváth (2023), 154–162.
[229] *Carm*. 13.23; *PLRE* II: Apollinaris Sidonius 6, 115.

interest-group for Constantine's decisions. It makes sense that Constantine sought to forge an alliance with this influential family through the appointment of Apollinaris to prefect under Constans.

Alongside the Apollinaris clan, Constantine's conciliatory policy was successful with other influential elites who resided in Lyon and Vienne at the time. Apollinaris' replacement as praetorian prefect appeared to be his hometown acquaintance, Decimus Rusticus.[230] Rusticus' grandson Aquilinus was born in Lyon, where Aquilinus and Sidonius grew up together and shared a similar education at the same schools.[231] Decimus Rusticus was also likely the great-grandfather of another Rusticus whose career was based around Lyon. This Rusticus would eventually serve in a high administrative position under the Burgundians before he assumed the bishopric of Lyon in the late fifth century.[232] Therefore, it is likely that the family of Rusticus occupied a place amongst the wealthy elite in Lyon during Constantine's regime.

In addition to the families of Apollinaris and Rusticus, other families lived within the region as well, including the Syagrii of Lyon and perhaps also the Mamertini of Vienne. It is probable that the former, though not explicitly mentioned in cooperation with Constantine, remained an influential presence at Lyon at the time of Constantine's residence there. These were the descendants of Flavius Afranius Syagrius, the consul of 382, who was buried in the city.[233] According to Sidonius, another Syagrius, the great-grandson of Afranius, owned an estate at Taionnacus near Lyon. Like the younger Rusticus, Syagrius seemed to earn a position at the nearby Burgundian court. During the late fifth century, Ennodius praised the generosity of Syagria, a wealthy widow who lived in Lyon.[234] The association of these Syagrii to the same family indicates that they continued to occupy an ancestral estate near Lyon between the late-fourth into the late-fifth century. It is also possible that descendants of Claudius Mamertinus, consul

[230] Zos. 6.13.1. For Decimus Rusticus: *PLRE* II: Rusticus 9, 965; Heinzelmann (1982), Rusticus 3, 684–5.
[231] Sidonius' letter to Aquilinus: *Ep*. 5.9.1–3. As John (2022), 264–5, states, the bonds that were formed during school would help to secure connections that were crucial for status, reputation, and careers of Gallo-Romans of the governing class. On Aquilinus: Heinzelmann (1982), Aquilinus, 557.
[232] For Rusticus (younger): *PLRE* II, Rusticus 5, 964; Heinzelmann (1982), Rusticus 8, 686–7.
[233] In *Ep*. 5.17.4, Sidonius mentions that the location of Syagrius' tomb was in Lyon. Fl. Afranius Syagrius: *PLRE* I, Syagrius 2, 862; Heinzelmann (1982), 699; Mathisen (2020), 122.
[234] *Ep*. 8.8.1. On the Syagrii, see Mathisen (1979), 608–9. Contrary to Heinzelmann (1982), 699, who has the family estate near Autun. Syagria: *PLRE* II, 1041; Heinzelmann (1982), Syagria 2, 698. Ennodius' account: *VE*, 173.

of 362 and praetorian prefect of Italy, resided either in Lyon or in nearby Vienne. Even though Mamertinus himself hailed from Autun, the subsequent disappearance of his family from the political stage might suggest a move away from Autun towards the Rhône Valley. It could be that Mamertinus' descendants reemerge a century later in Vienne, where the poet and rhetorician Mamertus Claudianus lived.[235] His brother, Mamertus of Vienne, assumed the bishopric of the city.[236] Although, by the 460s, both brothers seemed to steer towards a religious disposition, their grandfather may have been a contemporary aristocratic colleague of Apollinaris and Rusticus. Sidonius' suggestion that the brothers' unknown grandfather belonged to the same generation as the elder Apollinaris is evidence for an elder Mamertus' contemporaneity to Constantine's residence in Lyon.[237] Given the aristocratic ties and friendship between Sidonius and the Mamertus brothers, it would be unsurprising if their grandfathers had been acquaintances as well. Hence, it is possible to associate the Mamertini alongside the families of Apollinaris and Rusticus, who assented to the occupation of the Rhône Valley by Constantine's regime.

The existence of aristocratic families in Lyon at the beginning of the fifth century also appears in the archaeological record. Recent excavations in Lyon, on both sides of the Rhône, have shown the presence of at least two large estates. These villa sites of "Goiffieux" in Saint-Laurent-d'Agny and "Le Vernai" at Saint-Romain-de-Jalionas indicate the continued residence of elites in the nearby countryside around Lyon during the end of the fourth and the start of the fifth centuries.[238] It must be noted that these large villa-type establishments during this period were rare. However, this might not preclude the existence of an aristocratic cluster in this area. At the sites of "Le Trillet" at Meyzieu, or "Le Pilon" at Marennes, excavations have also shown the existence of more marginal forms of land occupation and exploitation.[239] The tenants, who had long abandoned the main residential section or *pars urbana*,

[235] Sivan (1993), 20–1. On the relationship between Cl. Mamertinus (cons. 362) and Claudianus Mamertus, see Patzold (2010), 132–3. Mamertus Claudianus: Heinzelmann (1982), 585; Mathisen (2020), 88.
[236] Mamertus of Vienne (bishop): Heinzelmann (1982), 644; Mathisen (2020), 106.
[237] *Ep*. 7.1.7. "...you [Mamertus] have been granted a privilege unique in the western world within the memory of our grandfathers…"
[238] On "Goiffieux" and "Le Vernai", see Poux, Silvino, et al, (2010), 435, 456–7.
[239] On "Le Trillet" and "Le Pilon", see *ibid*, 438.

occupied the fringe buildings of the estate, either for housing or the operation of artisanal and agricultural activities. At "Les Vernes", the discovery of lead sarcophagi inside a funerary site in close proximity to the main *pars urbana* reflects the high social standing of the occupants. While the evidence from excavations are by no means conclusive, they nevertheless agree with the literary and prosopographical accounts.[240] Members of the wealthy elite continued to reside in the surrounding countryside around Lyon during Constantine's occupation of the city. His residence required the appointment of aristocrats such as Apollinaris and Decimus Rusticus to their respective offices in exchange for increased access to riverine trade or share of the profits from local production, over which the local elites had control.[241]

It is likely that the large majority of these Lyonnais elite continued to pursue high offices, while their children passed through the same schools to prepare them for similar careers in the imperial bureaucracy. During the second half of the fourth century, members of aristocratic families from Lugdunensis I managed to find their way to high offices at the imperial court in Trier. Although Gratian had relocated the imperial court to Milan in 382, Constantine's residence at Lyon was an attempt to appease the interests of ambitious members of the Lyonnaise aristocracy. Since then, there had been limited opportunities for Gauls to acquire high administrative positions. Even in 407, Stilicho and Honorius appointed a non-Gaul, Limenius, to the praetorian prefecture of the Gauls.[242] For aristocrats such as Apollinaris, and then Rusticus soon after, Constantine's regime represented a convenient avenue for like-minded aristocrats to pursue high offices in Gaul, as opposed to travelling to Italy. However, it should not be assumed that others followed suit. The largely anonymous presence of the Syagrii or Mamertini during this time suggests that there were families which did not offer their services to the Gallic ruler. Given the paths that future generations of Syagrii or Mamertini took, aristocrats would

[240] On "Les Vernes", see *ibid*, 443.
[241] This might have provided a steady stream of gold which Constantine's administration could exploit to mint their first coins at Lyon. For a general overview of Constantine's coinage, see Drinkwater (1998), 276–7.
[242] Given Limenius' ties to the Italian senator Symmachus, he was likely an Italian. He had also served as the *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum* under Stilicho in 400–1. *PLRE* II: Limenius 2, 684. Although, as the career of Rutilius Namatianus shows, socially mobile Gallo-Romans were still present in Italy for work during the first decades of the fifth century. *PLRE* II: Rutilius Claudius Namatianus, 770–1.

eventually use their education to pursue local expressions of power, whether that be under barbarian masters, or as bishops of their communities.[243] Yet, at the start of the fifth century, it is unlikely that many of the influential families around Lyon and Vienne followed the path of Apollinaris and Rusticus. A large section of the aristocracy here would have simply shown a reluctance to support Constantine, just as their colleagues to the south in Provence did.

1.3.2. Provence's reluctant elites

Indeed, Constantine's decision to establish a residence at Arles in early 408 was an attempt to gain greater support from the local Provençal aristocracy. However, the evidence suggests that the aristocratic families of Provence were staunchly loyal to the legitimate government. If the inscription at "Theopolis" reflects the position of Claudius Postumus Dardanus, his brother Claudius Lepidus, and their family against Constantine's regime, then other nearby elites must have followed suit.[244] It is possible that Dardanus, through his wife, Naevia Gallia, was a relative of another elite family of southeastern Gaul, namely that of Eucherius of Lyon.[245] Since Eucherius was a relative of one Flavius Eucharius, the uncle of Theodosius I, this would explain the fierce loyalty that the family of Dardanus, the *Claudii*, had towards Honorius and the Theodosian dynasty. Members of both the families of Eucherius and Dardanus may have also had ties of friendship with the Italian senatorial aristocracy.[246] Another possible link to these two families was Eventius, the former consular governor of Viennensis, who departed Provence before the arrival of Constantine.[247] It is not certain whether Eventius was a Gaul or an Italian. However, the

[243] Constantine's usurpation may have accelerated this process.
[244] *ILS* 1279. On the inscription, see Drinkwater (1998), 291–2; Connolly (2006), 145.
[245] On the family of Dardanus and his ties to that of Eucherius, see Twyman (1970), 496–498. Eucherius' wife was also a Galla. *PLRE* II, Heinzelmann (1982), Galla 2, 612.
[246] Twyman (1970), 497–8.
[247] "Here lies buried one [Eventius] who once, with a distinguished name, pled cases and deserved to be enrolled in the Senate, and not long afterward he spoke law at Vienne and then, a journey to Italy in order to be loaded with great honor." *CIL* 6.41377 = *AE* 1953.200. Translated by Mathisen (2013a), 285. On Eventius' "flight", see Drinkwater (1998), 276. Machado (2019), 155, suggests that he was an Italian who travelled to Gaul for his role.

funerary epitaph which dates his death to August 407, indicates that Eventius had travelled from southeastern Gaul to Rome, where he likely hoped for further advancement in the imperial bureaucracy. Because of Eventius' name and the possible connection with a contemporary Italian governor of the same name, Eventius might have travelled to Gaul as an Italian for his office in Provence.[248] Even if Eventius was indeed a native of Provence with some Italian ancestry, this is further evidence that the region was one where local elites had close ties with their Italian colleagues.[249] The presence of wine amphorae of Calabrian/Sicilian origin (Keay 52) at sites in Arles and Marseille also attests to close bonds between the elites of Provence and Italy during the first half of the fifth century.[250] At the very least, during the start of the fifth century, an exclusive group of aristocrats in southeastern Gaul retained access to high civil offices. Yet, these opportunities were offered to Gauls who either shared ties of kinship with the ruling dynasty in Italy, or had connections with prominent Italians.[251]

It is hard to say whether the efforts of Constantine to appease the local aristocracy of Provence were successful or not. Other "uncooperative" aristocrats, such as that of the landowner Ecdicius may easily have switched their loyalties at the last second when it appeared that Constantine's defeat was inevitable. This could explain the general Edobich's misguided confidence when he fled to the Provençal estate of Ecdicius, whom he assumed was either sympathetic to Constantine, or not a supporter of the Honorians.[252] Ecdicius' subsequent murder of Edobich suggests that the allegiance of Provençal elites remained firmly aligned to Italy. A similar attitude is further outlined by a fragmentary account from the mid-fifth century historian Renatus Profuturus Frigeridus, who may have been a relative of the wealthy

[248] Evanthius: Mathisen (1982), 372. At the same time, Eventius' name also bears similarities with a similarly-named contemporary landowner of the Tourraine.
[249] Eventius: *PLRE* II, Eventius 1, 413. Eventius could have been related to C. Marius Eventius (*PLRE* II, Eventius 2, 414), the defensor of Fanum Fortunae (Fano).
[250] Reynolds (2010), 88–9; Le Bomin (2014), 46–7.
[251] Twyman (1970), 497–8. For this reason, Gauls such as Rutilius Claudius Namatius could also hold important offices at a time when opportunities might have been limited.
[252] Soz. 9.14. Ecdicius: Heinzelmann (1982), Ecdicius 1, 594; *PLRE* II, Ecdicius 1, 383. See also Petersen (2013), 66, who suggests that Ecdicius was a relative of the Arverni aristocrat who organised the military resistance against the Visigoths during the early 470s.

family of Remigius.[253] It is certainly difficult to determine the background of Frigeridus, given how little we know about him or when he wrote. But, if his account reflects an aristocratic perspective of Constantine's reign in Arles, this could agree with the general sentiment of the southeastern Gallic elites towards the usurper.[254] Gregory of Tours, who preserves a fragment of Frigeridus' text in his *History of the Franks*, writes that Constantine gave himself up to gluttony, before he sent Constans to Spain for the second time. If Frigeridus was writing his work in northern Gaul, it is possible that he relied on an earlier aristocratic tradition from Provence, who emphasised the more debaucherous aspects of Constantine's administration.[255] At the same time, the hostility towards Constantine could easily have come from the hasty additions of Gregory, who summarised Frigeridus heavily.[256] A more reasonable assumption would be that a large proportion of elites in Provence supported Honorius and resisted Constantine. The unanimity of Provençal elites might be a reason for Constantine's decision to ally himself with the bishop of the city instead.[257]

1.3.3. Aristocratic support from Narbonne

The situation in Provence and Lyon can be contrasted with Narbonne, where there was a more "radical" section of aristocrats who were quicker to support Constantine and urged him to depose Honorius.[258] A large number of these elites either resided in Narbonne, or had ties to the city. The decision to use Lyon and Arles, rather than Narbonne as a stronghold also suggests that Constantine trusted the Narbonensian elites to support their cause.[259] Since Narbonne lay on the *Via Domitia* between Arles and

[253] The unique nomen "Profuturus" suggests a link to the Profuturus family, who I acknowledge had their origin in northern Gaul, perhaps near Reims, rather than in Provence. According to Heinzelmann (1982), 675, 9, they were relatives of the wealthy Remigius of Reims.
[254] For Frigeridus' imperial perspective and positive image of Honorius, see Van Hoof & Van Nuffelen (2020), 103.
[255] *HF* 2.9.
[256] Van Hoof & Van Nuffelen (2020), 102.
[257] This is an aspect which I discuss at greater length in the sub-section on Constantine's episcopal constituency.
[258] This is evident by the Narbonensian elites who supported Jovinus' usurpation in 411. Jovinus: *PLRE* II, Iovinus 3, 621.
[259] Constans would have stopped in Narbonne when he travelled between Arles and Spain.

Tarragona, it is inevitable that Constans' Spanish expeditions required the support of Narbonne's aristocracy for an easier access into Spain. According to Frigeridus, Narbonne was the site where many Gallic supporters of Jovinus' revolt were executed by Dardanus.[260] In late 413, Dardanus' decision to use Narbonne as the site for the purge of Jovinus indicates that the city contained several nobles who would have backed Jovinus as a candidate to replace Honorius. It is difficult to determine the background of Jovinus. On one hand, the marriage of his daughter to Consentius, a member of Narbonne's aristocracy is evidence of his ties to the city.[261] At the same time, Jovinus' connections with the Burgundians and Alans suggests that he acquired estates near the Rhine, even though he was likely not of the area. Nevertheless, Jovinus had an association with Narbonne's elite, who wished for the overthrow of Honorius. It is probable that most of the elites who served Constantine's regime went on actively to support Jovinus as well. Amongst the men whom Dardanus captured and executed, Frigeridus mentions Jovinus' prefect Decimus Rusticus, a chief secretary named Agroecius, along with many other nobles. Although Rusticus came from Lyon, Agroecius hailed from an influential family who owned estates in Narbonne.[262] Both Rusticus and Agroecius' active service for Jovinus suggest that at the start of the fifth century, certain individuals within Narbonne's aristocracy were urging Constantine to replace Honorius.

There is also reason to believe that Narbonne's aristocracy consisted of another group of "moderate" elites, who supported Constantine, yet wished him to make terms with Honorius. Dardanus would have conducted the public executions in front of other members of the city elite. The grim sight of severed aristocratic heads were intended to frighten a "moderate" group of nobles, who were willing to throw their weight behind illegitimate Gallic rulers, but only in hope that a Jovinus or a Constantine would come to an agreement with the emperor. This might be the policy that Constantine's former prefect

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[260] *HF* 2.12.

[261] Heinzelmann (1982), 586, believes Jovinus "...kommt aus dem gallischen Adel" and was the father-in-law of Consentius (Consentius 1), who was a member of the Narbonese elite. I am grateful for the suggestions from Drinkwater, who believes that Jovinus was likely a "stranded imperial official" on the Rhineland.

[262] Agroecius: Heinzelmann (1982), Agroecius 1, 548. His descendent may have provided funds to help the bishop of Narbonne during the 440s to build a church. (Agroecius 2, 548; *PLRE* II, Agroecius 2, 39) For a possible fourth-century ancestor who worked as a rhetorician in Bordeaux, see Censorius Atticus Agricius: Heinzelmann (1982), 547.

Apollinaris had endorsed and a possible reason that Constantine demoted him in favour of a more radically-minded Rusticus in 409.[263] Sidonius attests later to Consentius as one of these "moderate" survivors, who could live peacefully on his Narbonese estates until the 460s.[264] Yet, the continued acquiescence of Narbonne's elites with Honorius' adversaries suggests that the imperial message did not have its intended effect. Only a few months later, in January 414, the Narbonese noble Ingenius provided his villa to host the wedding between Athaulf and Honorius' sister Galla Placidia.[265] Since Placidia was a member of the Theodosian dynasty, it is possible that these aristocrats were supporting what they felt was a "legitimate" cause, which had not been the case for Jovinus or Constantine. However, in the planning of the wedding, Athaulf and Placidia would have deliberately held the ceremony at a Gallic city, whose elites were the most prepared to support them, even if they did not actively seek the overthrow of Honorius. Other southern Gallic cities did not have figures such as Consentius or Ingenius, and were not prepared to entreat with imperial pretenders. As insinuated by Olympiodorus, the urban elite in Marseilles clearly remained loyal to the emperor, when they prevented Athaulf's attempts to take the city early in 413.[266] This is a clear contrast to the Narbonensian elite, who seemingly welcomed Athaulf's forces into the city during the vintage of that same year.[267] The apparent willingness of Narbonne's aristocracy to side with illegitimate regimes was no new phenomenon, as they would have also cooperated with Constantine.

During his occupation of southern Gaul, Constantine advocated for a policy which granted the local elites with traditional incentives such as high offices in exchange for the control of a city and its resources. As I have demonstrated, there were different regional-based clusters within the Gallo-Roman aristocracy, each of whom urged Constantine in different directions. Constantine's decision to move down

[263] On Apollinaris' demotion, see Zos. 6.13.1. Apollinaris' early end to his career under Constantine could have enabled him to escape the fate of his colleague Rusticus.
[264] Heinzelmann (1982), Consentius 1, 586.
[265] Olympiodorus, fr. 24. Ingenius: Heinzelmann (1982), 628. *PLRE* II, 591. On Ingenius' villa and its similarity to other excavated estates in Septimania and Aquitania, see Sivan (2011), 15–6.
[266] Olympiodorus, fr. 22.1, 22.2, 23.
[267] Hydatius, 47 (55).

the Rhône Valley aimed to exploit Lyon for its mint. Despite his alliances with Apollinaris and Rusticus, it is unlikely that Constantine was ever able to win the support of the entirety of the Lyonnais aristocracy. When Constantine established his capital at Arles, his regime ran into greater difficulty against the elite of Provence. The only location in which Constantine could secure the support of the local aristocracy was Narbonne. With Narbonne's aristocracy, we should see the presence of two groups. The first was a radical section who supported Constantine and urged him to overthrow Honorius. Then there was another more moderate section of elites who supported Constantine, but persuaded him to make terms with the imperial government. All in all, Constantine never won acceptance from the entire Gallo-Roman aristocracy. This is nowhere more evident than in Provence, where the elites at the start of the fifth century clearly opposed imperial pretenders. In order for Constantine to control these cities, he sought to make alliances with the bishops, who acted as political leaders within their respective communities.

1.4. *Gallic episcopate*

Constantine's advance into Provence also came from the need to ally himself with influential members of the Gallic church. Marseille, Arles, and Aix-en-Provence seemed to be where Constantine aimed to forge alliances with the local bishops because large sections of the aristocracy there found it difficult to accept the imperial pretenders. The reluctant support of both Provence's aristocracy and the imperial court as well as the preoccupation of Constantine's field armies in Spain indicates that Constantine's most lively constituency during his residency in Provence was the Church. In Provence, the main player in ecclesiastical politics at the start of the fifth century was Proculus of Marseille, a bishop who became Constantine's primary ally.[268] However, Constantine's alliance with Proculus was contingent

[268] For Constantine III's decision to act in concert with Proculus of Marseille, see Mathisen (1989), 28–30; Frye (1991); 352; Drinkwater (1998), 295; Natal and Wood (2016), 48. However, there has been little attempt to describe the forces which challenged Proculus' primacy in the context of his alliance with Constantine.

upon the bishop's ability to maintain his own primacy, which in turn relied upon three aspects. First, Proculus' victorious position in the ecclesiastical disputes at the turn of the fifth century distinguished him as a leader with ties to the influential bishops of northern Italy, who supported his claims of episcopal primacy in Narbonensis II and Viennensis. I argue that Proculus exploited Marseille's Mediterranean economic and religious connections to strengthen his authority. When Constantine arrived in Provence, he immediately established an alliance with Proculus. Second, Proculus' influence was challenged by the Christian communities beyond his city such as the establishment of the monastery at Lérins in 410. Lérins' standing as the principal centre of religious education in southeastern Gaul inhibited Proculus' ability to install like-minded clerics into rural sees. Third, Proculus' influence also depended on his shared doctrinal position with Gallic clerics such as Heros and Lazarus. Through his installation of both men into the nearby bishoprics at Arles and Aix-en-Provence, Proculus relied on trusted allies to maintain his primacy in Narbonensis II and Viennensis.

1.4.1. Proculus and Marseille

The alliance with Proculus of Marseille was one that Constantine made on the basis of the bishop's network of powerful supporters, which Proculus cultivated both in Provence and in northern Italy. At the end of the fourth century, these supporters – notably Ambrose of Milan – would help to ensure the stability of Proculus' position. The Masillian bishop's friendship with Ambrose had sanctioned the former's participation at the Council of Aquileia in 381, where Proculus was one of the bishops from Viennensis and Narbonensis I and II in attendance.[269] Proculus' relationship with Ligurian bishops suggests that he continued to buttress his claims of primacy over the episcopal sees of Provence. In 398/9, at the Council of Turin, Proculus' claims to the status of metropolitan bishop of Narbonensis II were

[269] Mathisen (1989), 11. For the participants at the Council of Aquileia, see Griffe, *Gaule*, 1.342–3; Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.92.

challenged by a team of bishops from the same province, led by Remigius of Aix.[270] Despite the valid claims of Remigius, who was the legitimate metropolitan authority of Narbonensis II, Proculus could draw upon his northern Italian supporters to influence the verdict. Even against the backlash from Remigius and other Provençal opponents, the bishops of Milan (which was then the imperial capital) as well as those of other northern Italian cities confirmed Proculus' metropolitan authority for a lifetime over Narbonensis II. It is unknown whether other bishops in Provence decided to support Remigius' claims, or those of Proculus. Yet, by the opening years of the fifth century, Proculus' experience at synods in Italy, his seniority, and his ties with Ligurian bishops indicates that he intended to flaunt the episcopal authority centred upon his diocese at Marseille. The large Christian baptistery in Marseille, which archaeologists have dated to Proculus' episcopate (c.381–428), might have stood as an authoritative symbol of his prominence over other nearby bishops and sees.[271] Larger than baptisteries at Aix, or the imperial capital of Milan, its size reflects the way that Proculus envisaged his influence, not just over Gallic churches, but over those in northern Italy. Owing to its elaborate design and decorations, the baptistery might also testify to the wealth and resources that the bishop managed to acquire from both his and Marseille's position at the start of the fifth century.[272] The city's Greek roots and strong ties to the east meant that the Massilian church did not just benefit from exchange with Greek and Levantine traders. These connections facilitated the arrival of eastern monks and clerics, with whom Proculus had close links. Around 412, Jerome referred a young Gallic cleric who wished to learn about ascetic life to Proculus for further instruction.[273] It is uncertain whether Proculus and Jerome had actually met or were in correspondence. Yet Proculus' ties with the monastic traveller and author John Cassian suggest that the bishop exploited his city's maritime networks to communicate with religious figures from the east as well. As a result of his contacts with Cassian, Proculus instigated Cassian's arrival at Marseille in 415. In what follows,

[270] For Remigius' leadership of an episcopal group in Narbonensis Secunda against Proculus during the 390s, see Griffe, *Gaule*, 1.336–339.
[271] On a comparison of its size to other Provençal baptisteries (at Aix-en-Provence, Riez, Cimiez, Fréjus), see Guyon (2006), 114.
[272] Loseby (1992), 167–8; Esmonde Cleary (2013), 159.
[273] Jerome, *Ep*. 125.20. On the background of this letter, see Leyser (2000), 43, n.40.

Constantine would have viewed Proculus' endorsement of ascetic forms of Christianity as beneficial for the regime's rule in the Provençal countryside as well.

1.4.2. Proculus' authority beyond the city

As the unofficial leader of an ascetic group in Gaul, Proculus quickly found favour with Constantine, and possibly with Constans who was formerly a monk.[274] Yet, Proculus' primacy in Provence was contingent on the advances of certain monastic groups, who seemed to undermine the Massilian church. There is reason to believe that Proculus, who had ties with Martin of Tours, envisaged the establishment of a monastic community centred on Marseille as an institution for education for Gaul's elites. Through a monastery's discipline and clerical training, it could provide more bishops of Proculus' ilk.[275] Yet, such an institution required a suitable abbot, one that Proculus struggled to find. According to a later account by Hilary of Arles, Proculus' unsuccessful attempts to convince a Lyonnaise cleric named Honoratus to stay at Marseille demonstrates the bishop's intent to establish an ascetic community near the city. Sometime in 410, Honoratus' establishment of Lérins, a monastery on two Mediterranean islands near the city of Cannes, represented a loss of influence for Proculus and Marseille. The creation of a monastic centre which did not include Proculus as a member threatened to undermine his ability to appoint his companions to bishoprics in Provence. Lérins offered an opportunity for the Gallic elite to receive clerical training under the auspices of a figurehead other than Proculus.

Because of the foundation of Lérins under Honoratus in 410, it is likely that Proculus sought after monastic allies from the east, who could create a similar ascetic community for Marseille. The arrival of John Cassian to Marseille in 415 brought a new idea of ascetic living, inspired from Egyptian ideals of

[274] Oros. 7.40.
[275] Heinzelmann (1992), 243–4, remarks that a Gallic monastery served both as a nursery for the 'new aristocratic-ascetic spirituality' and as recruiting agencies for appointments to the higher clergy.

monasticism. Cassian's establishment of a monastery for men at Saint-Victor, as well as one for women (Abbey St. Salvador), hint at Proculus' efforts to distinguish the Massilian monastic community from that of Lérins. Moreover, Cassian's teachings on spiritual discipline might inform us on the tussle for authority between Proculus and Honoratus. Cassian, who dedicated his second set of *Conferences* to prominent Lérinsians, including Honoratus and Eucherius, sought to impress upon his readers that the deserts of the east were important places where true ascetic living could take place.[276] However, Cassian insinuates that ascetic sanctity came not through a journey to the east, but through the abbot's own expertise. It is possible that Proculus, as Cassian's patron, wanted Cassian to incite his readers not to travel to the deserts of the east, but to Saint-Victor instead. In response, Eucherius' promotion of Lérins as an ascetic site to rival those in the east represents the Lérinsian opposition to Cassian, and by extension to his patron Proculus.[277] The rivalry between Saint-Victor and Lérins provides insight into Proculus' attempts to create a distinct centre of clerical education at Marseille. With the foundation of Marseille's monastic community, Proculus may have intended its "graduates" to help him to extend his authority into the local environs as well. Later, this policy enabled him to repel the attempts of the church at Arles to elect their own episcopal nominees to the parishes at Cytharista and Gargaria, both in the east of Marseille.[278] The necessity to ordain his own appointees, namely Ursus and Tuentius, as bishops of rural communities indicates that insignificant sees within Marseille's orbit contained clergy who had owed their careers to Proculus.[279] However, these developments arose from Proculus' ambition to create a monastic institution that was distinct from Honoratus' foundation of Lérins.

Under Proculus, the extension of Marseille's authority into the city's environs and the immediate hinterland may have involved the occupation of hilltop sites such as that at Saint-Blaise, near the Étang de Berre. It must be recognised, firstly, that the archaeological record of the Provençal countryside remains

[276] Leyser (2000), 44.
[277] Eucherius, *De laude eremi*, 42 = *CSEL* 31.177–194.
[278] MGH Ep. 3.6.
[279] MGH Ep. 3.7–8. For other notable Ursi, see Mathisen (1989), 54, n.53.

poor. Moreover, there is uncertainty whether this particular site, due to its location between Marseille and Arles, came under the influence of Arlesian or Massilian bishops. Although the site belonged to Arles' orbit during the later episcopate of Hilary of Arles, Proculus' determination to appoint his own churchmen in the bishoprics around Marseille indicates that he had control of the rural church at Saint-Blaise as well. The construction of a basic church on the lower plateau of Saint-Blaise's rocky outcrop would have been visible to the surrounding countryside and the optimal location to display the authority of the Massillian church.[280] Proculus' control over rural sites is evidence for the city of Marseille's access to resources in the countryside as well. Similar to Hilary a few decades later, Proculus likely exploited the church at Saint-Blaise for its proximity to the nearby salt pans, a resource that could have benefitted Massilian trade.[281] Despite Proculus' associations with Constantine, the unsuccessful strategies employed by imperial authorities to remove him from Marseille suggests the deep-rooted relationship of the bishop not just within his city, but also beyond.[282]

1.4.3. Proculus' allies in Aix and Arles

Proculus' influence in Provence, despite the hostility of bishops in neighbouring cities, enabled Constantine to see him as a suitable ally. Even though the Felician controversy had subsided by the start of the fifth century, it formed the pretext for disagreement between former Felician bishops – who favoured a Gallic independence in the management of episcopal affairs, and their anti-Felician adversaries – who favoured external involvement. While Proculus belonged to the latter group, his opponents such as the former Felician, Remigius of Aix had already tried to garner support in Provence to undercut

[280] Esmonde Cleary (2013), 401–2; Valenciano (2019), 119–121; Constant and Segura (2020), 41–2.
[281] Life of Hilary, 15. Valenciano (2019), 121.
[282] On the unsuccessful attempts by Zosimus of Rome and the bishop of Arles to remove Proculus, see Mathisen (1989), 57–59, 62. Mathisen argues that some bishops could resist attempts to unseat them if they were a native of their episcopal see, or if they had previously been a secular official.

Proculus' influence.[283] In 398/9 at Turin, Remigius and three other bishops from Narbonensis II had complained about the legality of Proculus' ordinations in Provence, despite the nominal metropolitan powers which the bishop of Aix held. Given the presence of these four appellants at Turin alongside a host of legates from unnamed Felician bishops, it seems that the several churches from Narbonensis II used the council to outnumber Proculus. Their attempts to challenge Proculus suggest that Narbonensis II and Viennensis consisted mostly of former Felician bishops such as Remigius, who wished for an ally of theirs to occupy the Massilian episcopate.[284] This remained the case even a decade later, when Constantine arrived in Provence. However, Proculus' links to the ascetic disciples of Martin of Tours indicates that his episcopal allies seemed to be influential churchmen who resided not in Provence, but rather in northern Gaul.

While we do not know of the conflict between Remigius and Proculus between 399 and 408, Constantine's arrival in Provence gave an opportunity for Proculus to oust his adversary. As reported by the Gallic chronicler of 452, Proculus undertook an investigation into the alleged adultery of Remigius.[285] Whether or not Remigius was guilty is unknown. However, the anonymous chronicler, who was a resident of Marseille, considered Proculus a "man of renown", and casts the investigation of Remigius as praiseworthy. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that the chronicler's favourable view of Proculus conceals the bishop's ulterior motives. In all likelihood, Proculus fabricated the charge to make Constantine aware of Remigius' moral shortcomings, and thereby a potentially unreliable candidate for the episcopate at Aix. In 417, a letter from the Bishop of Rome, Zosimus, recalled a violent confrontation in which Proculus had procured Remigius' removal when the latter had refused to step down from his position.[286] It is not quite clear whether Zosimus was referring to a physical altercation between Proculus

[283] On the Felician schism, see Mathisen (1989), 11–17.
[284] Frye (1991), 351–2.
[285] *Chron. Gall.* 452, a. 408: "Proculus, bishop of Marseilles, was considered a man of renown: he agreed to an extensive investigation being conducted into the suspected adultery of bishop Remigius." Trans. Murray (1999).
[286] MGH Ep. 3.3–5, *CSEL* 35, 103–8: "After the bishop of the city of Aix [Remigius] had been struck down when he objected, [Lazarus] rushed into the very sanctuary and episcopal throne which was, so to speak, sprinkled with innocent blood." Translation in Mathisen (1989), 29.

and Remigius, or the former's employment of armed men.[287] Once again, the author, an opponent of Proculus, may have embellished the account to emphasise Proculus' violent behaviour. Yet, there is also reason to believe that the letter reflected a cooperation between the episcopate and secular powers to remove Remigius. When the charge of adultery failed, Proculus may have enlisted the support of Constantine's troops to remove the bishop of Aix by force. Indeed, Proculus' use of secular aid to strengthen his influence would be a precedent to those means deployed by Hilary of Arles during the 440s.[288] In the eyes of Proculus' opponents, the bishop associated himself with certain men, who were "suited for creating disturbances."[289] The difficult nature of Remigius' removal is further evidence for the Massilian bishop's mobilisation of armed men to help him in achieving his aims. As the later letters from the Bishop of Rome suggest, Proculus relied upon similar means to remove Ingenuus of Arles as well, in the city where Constantine would make his capital and residence.[290]

Following the removal of Remigius and Ingenuus, Constantine depended on Proculus to place trusted clergy in the important dioceses of Aix and Arles, who shared similar doctrinal leanings as the Massilian bishop. These clerics, namely Lazarus and Heros, had strong ties to the ascetic community at Tours and sided with Proculus in contemporary church debates.[291] Proculus' decision to recruit Lazarus must have been based on Lazarus' ascetic training under Martin of Tours. However, the letters from Zosimus of Rome claim that Lazarus had attacked Brictius' ordination to the Turonensian episcopate. In response, Proculus had accused and condemned Lazarus of calumny at the Council of Turin.[292] Even if Zosimus implies a personal enmity between the bishop of Marseille and Lazarus, Zosimus' veracity is not a guarantee especially after his efforts to vilify the character of Proculus. At the same time, Zosimus had

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[287] MGH Ep. 3.3–5.
[288] For a summary of fifth-century involvement of soldiers in episcopal affairs, see Mathisen (1989), 155–6.
[289] MGH Ep. 3.12.
[290] MGH Ep. 3.10. For Arles as the capital of Constantine, see Seeck (1900), 1029; Demougeot (1974), 103; Matthews (1975), 309–313; Drinkwater (1998), 275–9.
[291] On Heros' ties to Marmoutier in Tours, see Heinzelmann (1992), 244. Constantine did not have agency over appointments at Aix and Arles.
[292] *CSEL* 35.103–108.

reason to denounce Lazarus' character as well. In 417, Zosimus was writing in the context of the Pelagian controversy, within which he and Lazarus stood on opposing sides of the debate.[293] The sympathy that the bishop of Rome showed towards Pelagius' teachings on the insignificance of God's grace in human salvation informs his denunciation of Lazarus, who defended Augustine's opposition to the Pelagian doctrine.[294] Zosimus' tendentious claims should throw into question whether Proculus and Lazarus were actually enemies.[295] It would be unlikely that Proculus allowed Lazarus to occupy Aix, a city whose bishop was still the nominal metropolitan authority of Narbonensis II, if his Massilian patron doubted his loyalty. Despite Zosimus' efforts to slander the bishop of Marseille and his supporters, Proculus was not the figure responsible for Lazarus' condemnation. Rather, Lazarus, as well as his companion Heros belonged to a group of anti-Pelagian supporters at Tours, who shared a similar doctrinal position as their patron, Proculus of Marseille.

In addition, Proculus' ordination of Heros at Arles was part of a programme to keep his trusted allies in important dioceses with potentially difficult populations. Like Lazarus, Heros was a "disciple of the blessed Martin."[296] Prosper of Aquitaine, who describes the treatment the bishop received at the hands of the people of Arles in 412 reports that Arles' inhabitants drove him out of the city, even though "he was guiltless and not subject to any charge."[297] Prosper's account of the unruliness of the Arlesian population is not surprising, as he was a resident of nearby Marseille. However, the sympathy that Prosper shows for Heros' departure from Arles indicates his admiration for the fugitive bishop, which must stem from their mutual support of Augustinian predestination and opposition to Pelagius. The chronicle's account cannot be analysed without reference to Prosper's own agenda. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that Prosper's account of Heros' unpopularity at Arles was genuine. A similar picture of Arlesian discontent also exists in Zosimus of Rome's letters, who notes that Proculus' ordinations of the "unknown

[293] Mathisen (2013a), 279–80.
[294] Dunn (2014), 19, n.71.
[295] Cf. Mathisen (1989), 29–30, who suggests that Proculus could embrace his "old enemy Lazarus, whom he accused at Turin."
[296] Prosper, *Chron*., a. 412.
[297] *Ibid*.

and foreign born" Lazarus and Heros occurred against the wishes of the people.[298] Zosimus clearly overstates the obscurity of both appointees in order to vilify his adversary, Proculus. Yet, both accounts highlight an unruliness within Aix and Arles, whose inhabitants were hostile to the attempts by Constantine to win them over. As mentioned previously, the allegiance of the Provençal aristocracy to the legitimate authority in Italy may have motivated the urban population to not support Constantine. From 408 onwards, Constantine's occupation of Viennensis and Narbonensis II required the installation of Proculus' episcopal allies at the important cities.[299] It was in the interests of Constantine to allow Proculus to ordain his allies, namely Heros and Lazarus, to provide the best chance of control over the people in Aix and Arles, who from the outset, remained unreconciled to the new regime.

An alliance between Constantine and Proculus was responsible for the episcopal organisation of Narbonensis II and Viennensis. Yet, Proculus' primacy was contingent on three main aspects of the episcopate in southeastern Gaul. At the start of the fifth century, the connections which Proculus had with prominent churchmen in northern Italy, particularly Ambrose of Milan, enabled him to emerge victorious in any disputes against his neighbouring bishops in Narbonensis II. However, Proculus' primacy in Provence depended upon the establishment of ascetic communities as well. The ability of monasteries such as Lérins to educate and produce future episcopal candidates away from Proculus' leadership challenged his metropolitan authority. Cassian's later teachings offer an insight into the ways that Proculus sought to create a Massilian-led institution that could produce potential episcopal allies for him. Proculus also benefited from his close alliances to Lazarus and Heros, both of whom he ordained as bishops to the important sees of Arles and Aix. These were men with whom Proculus shared a similar position on doctrinal issues, such as their mutual condemnation of Pelagianism. For Proculus and

[298] MGH Ep. 3.7–9; *CSEL* 35.99–103.
[299] Cf. Mathisen (1989), 30–1.

Constantine, the selections of Lazarus and Heros made sense, as the unruliness of the populations in Arles and Aix required dependable allies.

Conclusions

In comparing the army of Constantine III to that of Magnus Maximus, there is no discernable departure. Similar forces which instigated Maximus' accession and drove his military decisions were at play a few decades later with Constantine. While the officers of the army stationed in Britain followed the lead of Maximus, Constantine's proclamation was not so much a product of Britain's garrisons, which would not have had enough reason to march into Gaul on its own accord. Instead, it was the Romano-British elite who appeared to act as the main drivers of the revolt. Stilicho's withdrawal of troops from the Rhineland, as well as Britain, no doubt contributed to the deterioration of economic fortunes for the island's landholders, whose wealth and status had previously depended on the exchange of British grain and other produce to the Rhine frontier. The British officers such as Justinian and Nebiogast, who were involved in the revolt, may have had ties to these landholders. The success of Maximus' usurpation also relied upon the defection of Gratian's *magister militum* Merobaudes and almost the entire western army. In a similar way, Gerontius and his Gallic armies were another important branch of Constantine's military, who were responsible for the decision to cross the channel into Gaul. However, a key difference from Merobaudes' forces is that the *comes* Gerontius had close ties with the elite landowners of northern Gaul, who would have trusted him to deal with the threat of barbarian incursions upon their property. Merobaudes' ties to the Frankish groups finds similarity with Edobich's relations with the Rhine frontier. While the Frankish groups of the Lower Rhine formed an important component of Constantine's army,

their leaders consistently shifted their allegiances, which looked for an imperial authority who could provide a regular supply of donations. This occurred under Constantine as it did under Maximus. However, a clearer contrast between the reign of Constantine III and the Gallic rulers of the late fourth century can be seen through the other three constituencies.

The imperial court in Italy to which Constantine III adopted his conciliatory policy was also different to the one which faced Magnus Maximus. When Maximus took charge of Gaul in 383, the court of the legitimate emperor, Valentinian II, in Milan was under influence of two squabbling factions: On one side there were pagan senators such as Petronius Probus, Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, and Quintus Aurelius Symmachus. On the other side, there was Ambrose of Milan. However, in the 380s, there was not a Stilicho, who could both represent the different parties and seize control of the court. During the reign of Constantine III, Stilicho, Olympius, Jovius, and finally Constantius won the privilege to act as the emperor's chief adviser. Honorius' age made it possible for these ministers to not only dominate the Italian court, but dictate relations with the Gallic ruler.[300] Therefore, Constantine's policy of conciliation with Honorius was contingent upon the influential courtiers at Ravenna, as much as the emperor himself. The interests and ambitions of Honorius' officials, from Stilicho through to Constantius, were the main drivers of court policy.

Another notable change from fourth-century Gallic rulers exists with the Gallo-Roman aristocracy. Under Magnus Maximus, it is more appropriate to speak of a Gallic aristocracy who held similar office-holding intentions, irrespective of region. Before Gratian moved the imperial residence from Trier to Milan in 381, most Gallo-Roman aristocrats pursued a career at the Treveran court. Yet once the court was based in Milan, aristocrats had to choose whether they wanted to relocate to Italy, or follow Ausonius and his colleagues into retirement. Maximus' reestablishment of the Treveran court in 383 posed questions for elites who, despite their desire to hold offices, were unsure if they wished to serve an

[300] Valentinian was also twelve when he was proclaimed Augustus in 383.

illegitimate regime. However, only in the reign of Constantine III does the picture of a more region-specific Gallic aristocracy emerge, where local clusters of elites seem to have more in common with each other. As I have outlined, there were different factions within the Gallo-Roman aristocracy, who urged Constantine in different directions. The first group were the wealthy and influential landowning elites of the Rhône Valley, some of whom such as Apollinaris and Rusticus were quick to ally themselves with Constantine. Their families were likely in minority, as most would have followed their counterparts in Provence and remained loyal to the legitimate regime. The aristocracy which was centred upon Arles, perhaps owing to its proximity to Italy, offered the most resistance to Constantine's efforts to establish a foothold in Provence. In comparison, the aristocracy of Narbonne formed a group that was most prepared to support Constantine. The existence of a "radical" and a more "moderate" section of elites should emphasise that Constantine's ability to create alliances with the Gallo-Roman aristocracy was even more difficult than it had been under Maximus.

During the 380s, Magnus Maximus' reimposition of an imperial residence at Trier had established a relationship with the bishop of the city, Felix. However, Felix's affiliation with Maximus was a byproduct of Maximus' primary alliance with the Treveran aristocracy. Although Felix had his supporters throughout Gaul, there is little to suggest that Maximus relied upon Felix's episcopal influence during his occupation of the city. Maximus' position during the trial of Priscillian was to assert his orthodoxy vis-à-vis the homoian Valentinian II rather than an attempt to create alliances with the Aquitanian bishops who were appealing for his intervention against heresy. This stands in contrast to Constantine's alliance with Proculus of Marseille, which did exploit Proculus' wide-reaching networks in Gaul and beyond. The influence of Proculus at Marseille stemmed from his own exploitation of the city's wealth and resources. Moreover, the establishment of the monastery at Saint-Victor was a strategy to maintain his primacy in the Provençal countryside. By positioning his monastery against Lérins, Proculus held the ability to install like-minded clerics into rural sees. Proculus also exploited his association with monastic allies at Tours to

install Heros and Lazarus into the nearby bishoprics at Arles and Aix-en-Provence. With trusted allies in key Provençal dioceses, Proculus' ordinations speak to his ability to retain order through the pacification of unruly people and clergy. Once his troops advanced towards Provence, Constantine's efforts to utilise the political aspects of Proculus' episcopate represented one significant departure from fourth-century Gallic rulers.

Theoderic II and his constituencies

Introduction

As we have previously seen, Constantine's armies and the imperial court had greater sway over his decisions than the Gallic aristocracy and episcopate. However, this was not the case for Theoderic. By the mid-fifth century, the episcopate and aristocracy near the regions in which the Visigoths settled had also grown in political influence. The conventional interpretation on Theoderic's rule emphasises his agency to pursue a particular course of action.[301] However, I will show that any policy could not be undertaken without the assent of his constituencies. In particular, the demands of his army, bishops and elites of Gallo-Roman communities, as well as those of the imperial courtiers in Italy informed Theoderic's policies in a significant way. While Theoderic had to navigate the interests of the same four constituencies as Constantine III, the emergence of the Gallic episcopate and aristocracy ensured that these two groups played just as important a role as the king's army and the imperial courtiers in his decisions. Here, I focus upon the different individuals and groups which formed each of Theoderic's constituencies.

Firstly, I argue that Theoderic's army must be viewed not as a single entity, but as a collection of different individuals. The ambitions of Gothic nobles and retainers in the service of Theoderic instigated the campaign in Spain, which promised riches through plunder and material wealth. Moreover, Theoderic had to rely upon the interests of his Roman *magistri militum* as well. Nepotianus's service in the Visigothic army demonstrates Italian interest within Theoderic's Spanish campaigns. Even after the

[301] For the suggestion that Theoderic could simply appropriate the Roman right to appoint officials, see Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 31. Börm (2013), 119, categorises Theoderic as an independent actor with his own sphere of influence, after the reign of Majorian. Delaplace (2015), 219, also emphasises Theoderic's own ambition to exploit the mandate he had acquired from Avitus for greater freedom of movement in Spain.

replacement of Nepotianus with Arborius, this was a decision which recognised the influence of the Aquitanian elites, who had concerns over local security in southwestern Gaul rather than in Spain. Another Roman general who was allied with the Visigothic armies was the *comes* Agrippinus, who struck an agreement with Theoderic in 462. However, Agrippinus' loyalty to Theoderic's army was not a guarantee. The personal feud between Agrippinus and the influential general Aegidius, along with Agrippinus' patronage of Narbonne's nobles highlights the unpredictable nature of his alliance with the king.

Once again, it is important to consider the ambitions of individuals within the imperial court during the time of Theoderic's reign. Although Theoderic was responsible for the promotion of Avitus to emperor, he would have dealt with a conflicted court in Italy, which consisted of several Gauls as well as influential Italo-Roman senators. Despite Avitus' efforts to supply offices for his Gallo-Roman colleagues, it is likely that the latter group retained the most influence. The alliances between these Italo-Roman senators and Ricimer, who emerged as the principal figure within the court community, informed the negotiation of a treaty between Majorian and Theoderic in 458. As the ambitions of these Italo-Roman senators grew more distant from Theoderic, an imperial court at Arles emerged whose prefectural offices represented an extension of the emperor's authority. Hence, Theoderic's visits to Arles were attempts to acquire the support of the prefect and the Gallo-Roman officials who represented the prefect's staff at the Arlesian court. This forms the second section of the chapter.

After this, the third section discusses the ambitions of the elites who formed Theoderic's aristocratic constituency in Aquitania and Narbonne. As the appointment of Arborius to *magister militum* in 461 demonstrates, certain members of Bordeaux's aristocracy did not experience a decrease in their pursuit of traditional means of aristocratic expression. By linking Arborius' promotion to a network of friends led by the wealthy and influential Pontius Leontius, I establish that Pontius continued to exercise his patronage over his dependents and ensure that his friends advanced their careers under Theoderic's

administration. Just as the influential circle of Bordeaux's aristocracy under Pontius gave its assent to Theoderic, a similar circle existed among the aristocracy of Narbonne, who formed an alliance with the *comes* Agrippinus and the Tolosan court. Through this examination of the Narbonensian families and their ambitions, I identify the departure of a section of aristocrats for Provence in pursuit of Roman offices under the Italian government. At the same time, a majority of elites saw Theoderic's court as a means to pursue their own office-holding opportunities in order to sustain their wealth without imperial service. Hence, I emphasise the instigation of Narbonne's aristocracy as the major factor for the handover of the city in 462.

The rise of local constituencies can also be seen through the increased agency of the episcopate in Theoderic's decisions. To illustrate this development, the fourth section examines the political influence of a party that supported Rusticus of Narbonne, which included allied clergy as well as lay elites. These individuals would have opposed the ordination of Hermes, whose allies, particularly in Arles and elsewhere in Provence, seemed to inhibit Narbonne's metropolitan privileges. The efforts by this "Rusticus faction" to preserve Rusticus' spirit of independence motivated an alliance with Frederic and the Tolosan court in 461. Rusticus' determination to protect an independent and localised episcopate at Narbonne mirrored similar efforts to do so in Aquitania. I argue that the Narbonensian episcopate shared similar interests to the Nicene church in Aquitania II and Novempopulana, where clerics used their connections with eminent nobles to acquire land.

2.1. *Military*

Recent scholarship has tended to overlook the role of the individuals which formed the Visigothic troops during the reign of Theoderic II. Instead, there is a tendency to assume that imperial directives

instigated the campaigns which Theoderic's army undertook.[302] Only a few scholars have considered the military operations during Theoderic's reign as a response to the ambitions of Gothic nobles and retainers within his ranks.[303] In a similar way, there has been little attention to the agency of Roman officers who served alongside Theoderic's troops, either as commanders or as allied individuals.

The following section treats Theoderic's army not as a single entity, but rather as a host of soldiers and officers, who held different ambitions and represented different parties. In order to demonstrate the contending elements within Theoderic's army, I identify three contingents within it. I begin by establishing that Theoderic had inherited a collection of troublesome nobles and their respective warbands from his predecessors. The potential dangers of these individuals at the Tolosan court formed part of Theoderic's decision to sanction a campaign in Spain against the Sueves. In the second subsection, I address the pressures exerted by the Roman officers who commanded the Visigothic armies such as Nepotianus and Arborius. Their appointments under Theoderic were not necessarily a reflection of Theoderic's authority. Rather, I see that Nepotianus and Arborius represented the interests of the Italo-Roman and Gallo-Roman elite respectively. These groups were drivers of the Visigothic operations over which Theoderic supposedly had control. The third subsection addresses Agrippinus, the unpredictable *comes* of Narbonne with whom Theoderic made an alliance. Agrippinus' personal feud with Aegidius and his representation of a party at Narbonne was the motivating factor for an alliance with Theoderic. Hence, it was the influence of these groups that instigated Theoderic's military-based decisions.

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[302] Gillett (2003), 65–8; Van Dam (1985), 52; Sivan (1989), 90–1; Harries (1994), 79, 85; Heather (2005), 384; Halsall (2007), 260, 264; Jäger (2017), 151.

[303] Wolfram (1988), 181, has noted that Theoderic's campaigns served to satisfy more local interests, namely the appeasement of the king's warriors, and also the preservation of the social order in Aquitania Secunda. Similarly, Kulikowski (2004), 199, has questioned the degree of control exercised by Theoderic II over his Gothic commanders who were campaigning in Spain. For the fraternal discord between Theoderic II and his brother Frederic, see Kulikowski (2008), 349–352.

2.1.1. "Gothic" nobles and their retainers

The Gothic army which operated under Theoderic II consisted of different individuals and factions, whose interests the king had to accommodate. At his accession in 453, it is hard to believe that all nobles at the Tolosan court were unanimous in their assent for the new king's decisions.[304] The evidence suggests that the wavering loyalties of Gothic nobles had been a constant issue, even for Theoderic's predecessors. The earliest instance of this occurred in 430, when Hydatius attested to a band of Goths who were wandering around the vicinity of Arles under the leadership of a chieftain named Anaulfus. Anaulfus' departure from the main group of Goths suggests that he was a Gothic noble who either had a disagreement or fallen out of favour with the king.[305] Jordanes' *Getica* also mentions that one Beremud and his son Veteric, of noble Amal descent, arrived at Balthi court in Toulouse to seek new opportunities under Theoderic I.[306] Given their noble background, it is plausible that Beremud and Veteric, just like Anaulfus, commanded a band of Amal retainers as well. Yet their service for the Visigothic king did not last. If Jordanes' Veteric is the same individual whom Prosper reports had fought with distinction for the Romans, this hints at a link between Anaulfus and the Amal nobles.[307] For one reason or another, the Tolosan court could not satisfy these men and their retainers with military office and the associated rewards which accompanied it.

However, it is apparent that not all dissatisfied "Goths" departed from the main body like Anaulfus and Veteric. The Tolosan court under Theoderic II also consisted of non-Gothic elements, as indicated by Aioulfus, whom Jordanes states was a Varnian retainer of the king.[308] Although in 457 Theoderic made Aioulfus *rector* in Gallaecia, the latter's attempts to acclaim himself as King of the

[304] On the mixed ethnic origins of the Goths, see Schwarcz (2001), 19.
[305] Hydatius 82(92). Anaolsus: *PLRE* II, 76; Heinzelmann (1982), 553.
[306] Jordanes, 33.174–5. As a proponent of Theoderic's Ostrogothic regime in the 6th century, Jordanes could have merely created this fictive name to establish the far-reaching connections of Theoderic's Amal descendants. Beremud: *PLRE* II, 224–5; Heinzelmann (1982), 571. Veteric: *PLRE* II, 1157; Heinzelmann (1982), Vetericus, 712.
[307] For Veteric's service for the Romans, see Prosper, *Chron*., a. 439.
[308] Jordanes, 44.233–234. Aioulfus: *PLRE* II, 39–40. For a similarly named Agiulfus, see Claude (1978), Agiulfus 2, 654.

Sueves indicates that even the king's own retainers did not always share the same aims as their patron. According to Jordanes, Aioulfus' Varnian ancestry, which placed him far below the nobility of Gothic blood, caused him to act unfaithfully towards Theoderic. Jordanes explained Aioulfus' disloyalty to the Tolosan throne as inevitable because of his low birth. However, this interpretation of Aioulfus reflects more of Jordanes' determination to glorify the Gothic monarchs about whom he was writing a history. It is more likely that the reason behind Aioulfus' attempts to seize the Suevic throne was little different from the wealth-driven ambitions of Anaulfus and the Amal nobles. Aioulfus' promotion to *rector* in Gallaecia was unlikely to satisfy these ambitions.[309] Indeed, a few years later, Hydatius observed that the independent character of Gothic nobles still existed. In his eyes, Theoderic's army consisted of a "multitude of various nationalities", each with their own commanders.[310] In addition to Aioulfus, Hydatius provides the identities of other officers of Theoderic such as Cyrila and Sunieric. These may also have been Gothic nobles at Theoderic's court, who led their respective groups of armed followers.[311] Their appearance later in Spain as leaders of detachments of the Gothic army suggests that Theoderic recognised the need to keep these men in the field on campaign.

Theoderic was undoubtedly aware of the troublesome reputations of these nobles. Jordanes mentions a client of Thorismund named Ascalc, who likely served the king in some military capacity.[312] In 453, Ascalc abandoned his allegiance to Thorismund, in favour of Thorismund's younger siblings Theoderic II and Frederic, who conspired against their older brother. We can not be sure of the reasons behind Ascalc's involvement with the instigators of Thorismund's death. However, Thorismund's opposition to the Romans suggests that this stance alienated himself from his followers, who viewed the *foedus* with the Empire as essential for their continued prosperity.[313] Whether Ascalc and other retainers

[309] Hydatius 173(180), 180(187).
[310] Hydatius, 179(186).
[311] Hydatius, 185(192), 188(193), 192(197), 196(201), 201(206), 207(212). On Cyrila, see Heinzelmann (1982), 589. Cf. Martindale (1980), 334, who suggests that his name was not of Germanic origin. Mathisen (2014), 164–5, identifies another Germanic individual (a Vandal bishop) of the same name. On Sunieric, see Heinzelmann (1982), 698.
[312] Ascalc: *PLRE* II, 158. Jordanes, 43.228 mentions that Ascalc had told Thorismund's foes that his weapons were out of reach.
[313] Prosper, *Chron*., a. 453.

of the king genuinely believed that a regime change would improve their financial situations, the capacity of the Gothic soldiers to influence the Tolosan court cannot be overlooked.[314] It is evident that Theoderic II inherited similar tensions at his court, whose chieftains and nobles did not always support their ruler.[315]

Theoderic's brother, Frederic can be included amongst these individuals whose loyalty to the throne was not guaranteed.[316] As his involvement in the murder of Thorismund suggests, Frederic had been allied with Theoderic. However, there is reason to see their cooperation as a necessity because Thorismund had plotted against his brothers.[317] Even though Frederic had helped Theoderic to win the kingship in 453, it is possible that he maintained quiet aspirations for Theoderic's position. As Kulikowski has suggested, Frederic's victory against the Bagaudae in Tarraconensis enabled him to stake a claim for the Tolosan throne once he returned to Gaul in 454.[318] In order to stage an effective rebellion against Theoderic, Frederic would have had to win the support of his retainers and a group of soldiers. Frederic's success in the rich Ebro Valley and acquisition of loot from the Bagaudae hints that the campaign gave Frederic's troops confidence in their leader.[319] Given that bands of warriors had supported the activities of Anaulfus and possibly those of Veteric, it would be strange if Frederic had not led a similar group of Gothic soldiers in Spain. These may have been the same "followers" of Frederic who, as Hydatius writes, served and died alongside him against Aegidius' army several years later.[320] While the exact size of Frederic's troops remains unknown, these warriors would have provided him with enough manpower to fight Theodoric's own forces in a Gothic conflict in 455.[321] Whether Frederic actually used his warriors against Theoderic is also uncertain. However, the fact that the *magister militum praesentalis*

[314] Hydatius, 148(156)
[315] Burgess (1992), 23–4, suggests that the hostile actions of Theoderic's *dux* and *comes* Suniericus against the Lusitanian city, Scallibis in 460 resulted in his recall from Spain.
[316] Frederic: *PLRE* II, Fredericus 1, 484; Heinzelmann (1982), Fredericus, 611.
[317] Kulikowski (2008), 350–1. Hydatius, 148(156), is a proponent for Thorismund's plot against his brothers.
[318] Hydatius, 150(158). Kulikowski (2008), 351–2.
[319] On the prosperous villa economy of the Ebro Valley, see Van Dam (1985), 50; Wickham (2005), 220.
[320] Hydatius, 214 (218).
[321] On the circumstances surrounding the civil war between Frederic and Theoderic, see Kulikowski (2008), 335–352.

Avitus had to intervene indicates that both parties derived their strength from their respective groups of nobles and armed followers.[322]

Frederic might have used Avitus' presence in Toulouse to verify his claims to a legitimate military office. According to Hydatius, who was not a partisan of the Goths, Frederic had slaughtered the Bagaudae of Tarraconensis as an imperial representative in 453. Hydatius' report of an imperial sanction behind Frederic's military expedition insinuates that the Visigothic prince held a legitimate authority.[323] It is possible that Frederic held a position similar to Vitus, the *magister militum* who had campaigned in Spain with Gothic troops in 446.[324] If Frederic had indeed held an official Roman appointment under Flavius Aëtius in 453, the latter's death in 454 may have meant that Frederic no longer had the support of his imperial patron. Aëtius' death, around the time that Frederic was campaigning in Spain, would have made his claims to legitimacy ambiguous. While we may only speculate as to whether Frederic really held the position of *magister militum* in Spain, it cannot be a coincidence that Avitus, the successor to Aëtius, arrived at Toulouse in 455. Whether Avitus successfully reconciled Frederic and Theoderic in the manner that Sidonius' panegyric illustrates is difficult to say. However, it can be said with more certainty that Frederic's claims to power are another example of the potentially unruly elements within the Gothic army which challenged Theoderic's military decisions.

Further unruly elements within Theoderic's army can be seen during the Gothic campaigns in Spain between 456 and 457. Although Theoderic may have conducted a campaign against the Sueves as a nominally imperial operation, it was an opportunity to send potentially troublesome nobles and retainers

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[322] "No sooner had the moon seen this through three monthly courses than he (Avitus) set out en route to the peoples and lands held by the fierce Goth…Here the Gothic nobles were now letting loose the war they had planned; suddenly they cease from their anger: the news comes that Avitus, bearing an official message, has already entered the Gothic lands, an ambassador now having put aside for a time the adornment of the magisterium. The Gothic leaders and senate were stupefied, and feared lest he deny them peace…" *Carm*. 7.388–404.

[323] As suggested by Martindale (1980), 484.

[324] Hydatius, 126(134). Contrary to Collins (1983), 21–2, who argues that Vitus was the last master of the soldiers in Spain.

away from Gaul for the promise of riches and plunder.[325] The largely ad hoc nature of Gothic engagements which Hydatius reports suggests that they did not belong to any strategic plan set by Theoderic himself. Yet, we must be careful in our assessment of Hydatius' account. His description of the Gothic armies in Spain sought to emphasise their violence against Christian communities and their sacred buildings. Nevertheless, Hydatius is both the sole authentic contemporary witness to the activities of Gothic armies and an indispensable source for our understanding of the troublesome nobles and retainers who fought under Theoderic.

Their involvement can be seen through the largely unorganised nature of the Gothic campaigns. Aside from the initial battle at the Órbigo river in October 456, subsequent military operations by the Goths were not pitched battles in set locations.[326] For instance, Hydatius' description of the Gothic sack of Braga indicates an aggression by blasphemous Arian Goths towards the Nicene Christians in the city.[327] At the same time, the focus upon the places of worship could reflect the location of Braga's valuable treasure, which the Goths came to discover and target. Hydatius continued to note the ad hoc raids by the part of the Gothic force who remained in Spain after Theoderic's return to Gaul on March 31, 457. The violent sackings of Astorga and Palencia allowed Gothic nobles and their retainers to plunder treasure from the churches, as well as to take Romans as hostages for ransom. This passage also alludes to the plunder of resources from the surrounding farms when the Goths "laid waste parts of the fields."[328] It must

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[325] Hydatius 166 (173): "Soon Theoderic, king of the Goths, in obedience to the wishes and command of the emperor Avitus, entered Spain with his own vast army." It is possible that Avitus himself represented the interests of the Italian imperial court, as well as that of the Arvernian aristocracy.

[326] *Ibid*. "King Rechiarius and a horde of Sueves met him twelve miles from Asturica [Astorga] at the river which is called Urbicus [Órbigo], on Friday, 5 October, but soon after the onset of the engagement, they were defeated. The Suevic rank and file were slaughtered, some were captured, but most were put to flight. Rechiarius himself, wounded and in flight, barely managed to make good his escape to the farthest inhabited areas of Gallaecia." On the informality of Gothic military engagements in the 450s in the Iberian Peninsula, see Dias (2020), 295.

[327] Hydatius 167(174): "With his army, King Theoderic made for Bracara [Braga], the most distant city of Gallaecia, and on Sunday, 28 October he sacked it, an action which, although accomplished without bloodshed, was nevertheless tragic and lamentable enough. A great many Romans were taken captive; the basilicas of the saints stormed; altars thrown down and broken up; virgins of God abducted from the city, but not violated; the clergy stripped right down to the shame of their nakedness; the whole population regardless of sex along with little children dragged from the holy places of sanctuary; the sacred place filled with the sacrilegious presence of mules, cattle, and camels. This sack partially revived the examples of heavenly wrath written about Jerusalem."

[328] Hydatius 179(186).

also be realised that their raids upon cities were successful because of ineffectual defence. At Braga and Astorga, Hydatius indicates that the civilians, bishops, and farmers did not put up much of a fight. However, the Gothic nobles appeared to struggle against more organised forms of resistance. At the fort of Coviacum, a military garrison withstood all the advances made by the Gothic warband and managed to slaughter a considerable number of them. The unorganised forms of combat which the Gothic warbands seemed to favour suggests that their respective leaders, such as Aioulfus, operated independently of each other. In addition, Hydatius hints that loot and plunder were primary goals of Theoderic's expedition, rather than any concerted effort to cull Suevic expansion. Although Hydatius intended the reader to attribute this to the vices of the Gothic king, as well as of his nobles and their retainers, this is evidence for Theoderic's efforts to satisfy these warbands with material wealth from plunder.

2.1.2. Roman officers in Theoderic's army

Another element of the Gothic military organisation were Theoderic's Roman commanders. The service of Nepotianus and Arborius for Theoderic suggests that the Gothic armies represented the interests of imperial officials outside of Aquitania, as well as local elites.

Nepotianus' ties to an influential circle of men made him a powerful ally.[329] His connection with Majorian, who had succeeded the western imperial throne in 457, suggests that the new emperor intended to exercise a degree of influence upon the Visigothic army.[330] It is likely that Nepotianus was Sidonius' unnamed *magister militum praesentalis* who accompanied Majorian into southern Gaul at the end of 458.[331] For Sidonius, Nepotianus was an eminent figure in Majorian's army as well as a trusted member of the emperor's consistory. As Mathisen has argued, Nepotianus was the officer whom Majorian sent on his

[329] Nepotianus: *PLRE* II, Nepotianus 2, 778; Heinzelmann (1982), Nepotianus 2, 656.
[330] Majorian: *PLRE* II, Fl. Iulius Valerius Maiorianus, 703–4.
[331] *Carm*. 5.553–7. Mathisen (1979), 607–8, suggests that by late 458, Majorian had two *magistri militum praesentales*: Nepotianus and Ricimer.

behalf to relieve Arles from a Visigothic "siege".[332] If this is so, then Nepotianus may have had a hand in arranging the subsequent peace between Theoderic and Majorian. The very absence of Majorian from Arles could explain Hydatius' comments that it was Nepotianus and Suniericus, rather than the emperor, who had sent envoys to Gallaecia.[333] A combined embassy from Theoderic and Majorian's respective second-in-charges in Gallaecia indicates that Majorian's administration was issuing a statement of solidarity to those who questioned imperial control of the western armies. Indeed, it seems that Majorian's involvement in the deposition and murder of Theoderic's patron Avitus in 456 alienated himself from the Visigothic armies.[334] Yet, through Nepotianus' intervention at Arles and subsequent command of a part of Theoderic's army, Majorian could acquire some control over Visigothic activity in Spain.[335] Majorian's plans to invade Vandal Africa required not just solidarity between the armies of Italy and Gaul. The involvement of Nepotianus alongside Theoderic aimed to prevent the Sueves or other informants from disrupting Majorian's preparations of a fleet in Carthaginiensis.[336] As Hydatius suggests, it was not only until May 460 that Majorian finally entered into Spain. Before this time, one can be sure that Nepotianus acted as Majorian's representative in both the ranks of Theoderic and in Spain. Once again, after Majorian had departed from Spain, Nepotianus remained there.[337] The close association between Nepotianus and Majorian ensured that so long as the emperor was alive, the former could keep a stake in the Visigothic armies of Aquitania. This is evident because not long after Majorian's execution in 461, Theoderic replaced Nepotianus with another general.[338]

Moreover, it is possible that Nepotianus had familial ties to the Italian senatorial aristocracy. This can be gleaned in his relation with one Julius Nepotianus, a relative of Constantine I, who had staged a

[332] Mathisen (1979), 620, n.91. Cf. Delaplace (2015), 251, who warns against the characterisation of a "siege", particularly at Clermont during the 470s.
[333] Hydatius, 192(197).
[334] Hydatius, 176(183). For the narrative of Avitus' demise, see Demandt (2007), 171. Cf. Delaplace (2015), 218–219, who argues for the tenuous nature of Theoderic's alliance with Avitus.
[335] Schwarcz (2001), 22.
[336] Mathisen (1979), 620. On the location of the fleet, see Hydatius, 195(200).
[337] Hydatius, 196(201).
[338] Hydatius, 205(210), 208(213). MacGeorge (2000), 84–5, does not think that Nepotianus was an imperial commander, given that if he was, he would never have willingly accepted Arborius as his successor. Cf. Schwarcz (1995), 50.

short-lived revolt against Magnentius at Rome in 350.[339] Nepotianus himself was the son of an illustrious senator Virius Nepotianus which, given his senatorial heritage, indicates that the support of the Roman Senate endorsed his acclamation as Augustus.[340] It is not too far-fetched to suggest that the family of Nepotianus had ties with the Italian aristocracy, both in the fourth and fifth centuries. The name of the son of the fifth-century Nepotianus, the future emperor Julius Nepos, might reflect his fourth-century senatorial ancestor. Furthermore, Nepotianus' post as *magister militum praesentalis*, an office that Majorian bestowed upon him, seems to align with the emperor's efforts to win the favour of the senate and the Italo-Roman aristocracy.[341] This, along with Nepotianus' senatorial ancestry, would reaffirm the suggestion that Nepotianus was a member of the Roman Senate. The promotion of one of the Senate's own, to serve alongside Majorian in Gaul emphasised Italian investiture in the Visigothic army. Indeed, the sack of Rome in 455 by Geiseric and his followers was still fresh in the memories of Italy's leading men.[342] As the alliance with Theoderic intended to secure Spain for an invasion against the Vandals, Nepotianus represented the interests of the Italo-Roman aristocracy, who continued to feel the effects of Vandal raids.

There is also reason to believe that Nepotianus' involvement in Spain satisfied the interests of the influential *comes*, Marcellinus.[343] As another one of Majorian's generals, Marcellinus sought to extend his influence from Dalmatia into Sicily, where Majorian had appointed him with the title of *magister militum*.[344] After Valentinian's murder of Aëtius in 454, it is likely that Marcellinus rebelled against the emperor and seized Dalmatia for himself. Marcellinus' Sicilian campaign and his defeat of the Vandals suggests that he had an interest in extending his powerbase to Sicily as well.[345] These intentions inform

[339] Julius Nepotianus: *PLRE* I, Iul. Nepotianus 5, 624.
[340] *PLRE* I, Virius Nepotianus 7, 625.
[341] Salzman (2017), 249.
[342] This was a big concern because Anthemius would assemble a large force to invade Africa. For this expedition, see Hydatius 232 (236); Heather (2005), 399–406; Merrills and Miles (2010), 121–3; Wijnendaele (2023), 96.
[343] Marcellinus: *PLRE* II, Marcellinus 6, 708–10.
[344] On Marcellinus' career, see MacGeorge (2002), 32–63. Marcellinus wanted Sicily to defend against the Vandals, who posed a real threat to his territory in Salona and on the Dalmatian coast. Cf. Kulikowski (2002), 186, who indicates that Marcellinus acted on his own initiative.
[345] Hydatius, 223(227).

the alliance that Marcellinus had with Nepotianus, who married Marcellinus' sister. It is possible that the alliances between Nepotianus, Marcellinus, and Majorian were because they had all served together under Aëtius. However, another former soldier of Aëtius, Ricimer, was hostile to the latter two generals.[346] Another interpretation could be that Nepotianus and Marcellinus were rival officers, whose hostility towards each other subsided with a common interest in defeating the Vandals. Both men then ratified their partnership with the marriage between Marcellinus' sister and Nepotianus.[347] Therefore, although Nepotianus served in Theoderic's army, his affiliation with Marcellinus and Majorian, as well as with the Roman Senate meant that he ultimately was satisfying the needs of the Italian senators and imperial government, rather than local Gallic interests.

However, Nepotianus' successor, namely the *magister militum* Arborius, used his military office to serve the interests of the Aquitanian elite under Theoderic. Unlike the Italian Nepotianus, Arborius and his family were Gallo-Romans who belonged to the aristocracy of Bordeaux and rural Aquitania.[348] The late antique Aquitanian Arborii had ties to Narbonensis as well as the important urban centre of Toulouse.[349] Their tendency to favour the schools of teaching and rhetoric in Toulouse during the late fourth century continued into the fifth century. The family's proximity to Toulouse suggests that they were in contact with Theoderic. It is likely that the Arborii continued to pursue administrative and bureaucratic service at a time when the assumption of imperial offices in Italy by Aquitanians was no longer an option.[350] Nevertheless, the fact that a fifth-century Arborius found himself as a *magister militum* for Theoderic remains strange. Indeed, the rhetorical skills possessed by Arborius' past relatives indicates that they were well-equipped for diplomatic tasks such as embassies. If this is the case,

[346] Ricimer: *PLRE* II, Fl. Ricimer 2, 942–5.
[347] Wijnendaele (2017), 442–3.
[348] Arborius: *PLRE* II, Arborius 1, 129; Heinzelmann (1982), Arborius 5, 559. Mathisen (1979), 600, n.12, argues that Nepotianus was not a Gaul. On the Arborii's ties to Aquitania, see Sivan (1993), 59–60.
[349] Sivan (1993), 54.
[350] Sivan (1993), 64.

Arborius' education helped him to undertake at least one embassy to the Sueves on behalf of Theoderic.[351] At the same time, it is unlikely that the Arborii had a great deal of military experience.[352] According to Hydatius, Arborius replaced Nepotianus as *magister militum*, which suggests that between 461 and 465, Arborius commanded a part of the Visigothic army in Spain.[353]

The last attested member of the Arborii before 461 was Magnus Arborius, who was *praefectus urbis Romae* in 380.[354] It is possible that the Arborii underwent a career transformation sometime during the first half of the fifth century, at a time of the Visigothic settlement of Aquitania. Although the family lacked military experience, their wealth and influence hints that they acquired control of a body of trained *foederati*, who had settled near their estates around Bordeaux. The family may have developed some form of authority over Gothic soldiers, at least by the time of Theoderic II. This was likely in response to concerns of other Aquitanian elites over the security of their estates.[355] Another possibility follows the suggestions of Salvian of Marseille, who emphasises that educated men, of which Arborius was one, turned to a military career under Visigothic leadership because of financial pressures.[356] A military command brought along with it the promise of plunder and treasure, which could have helped satisfy both Arborius' immediate troops, as well as his own financial needs.[357] Arborius earned his appointment not simply because his rhetorical skills were best suited to undertake embassies to Gallaecia. As Hydatius describes, other envoys, perhaps without Arborius' capabilities, also travelled to the Sueves on behalf of the Tolosan court.[358]

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[351] Hydatius, 226 (230).
[352] Sivan (1993), 122, states that Ausonius, who was a relative of the Arborii, had no allies in the army.
[353] Hydatius, 208 (213).
[354] *PLRE* I, 97ff.; Heinzelmann (1982), 558–9.
[355] Paulinus, *Eucharisticus* 285.
[356] Salvian, *De Gub. Dei*, 5.5. However, due to Salvian's criticisms of greed, his evidence of the employment of educated Romans in barbarian service should be treated with caution. For a nuanced reading of Salvian's commentary on this process, see Heather (1992), 89–90.
[357] Ammianus criticises wealthy officers in the late Roman army for their greed and corruption. (31.4.9–10) For the excessive luxuriousness and indulgent behaviour of the *comes rei militaris per Thracias* Lupicinus, see Sánchez–Ostiz (2023), 279–80.
[358] Hydatius, 215(219), 216(220).

Moreover, Arborius' command in Spain seemed to coincide with the recall of the experienced commander, Suniericus in the same year. The decision to appoint Arborius as the sole commander of the Visigothic armies in Spain makes little sense if he had limited military experience. However, Hydatius' mention of Suniericus' recall in 461 suggests a withdrawal of the Visigothic armies from Spain.[359] Following Majorian's death, there may have been little need to station Gothic troops to protect the imperial preparations for an African invasion at Carthaginiensis. In addition, it seemed that a temporary treaty between courts of Theoderic and that of the Suevic king Remismund precluded the need for a Visigothic military presence in Spain.[360] Hydatius does not once mention that Arborius commanded troops against the Sueves, as Nepotianus once had.[361] Between 461 and 465, Hydatius' testimony insinuates that Theoderic opted to use envoys to dissuade the Sueves from violence in Gallaecia.[362] All this indicates that Arborius did not command a Visigothic army in Spain. If anything, the activities of Majorian's former general Aegidius north of the Loire indicates a shift in attention by Theoderic's armies towards northern Gaul. A more plausible scenario is that Arborius held the position of *magister militum*, not in the Iberian Peninsula, but in Aquitania.

Regardless of whether one puts stock in Arborius' military expertise, there is more to suggest that Theoderic's army was enmeshed with the interests of the Aquitanian elites. In 461, the appointment of Arborius to an office that an Italian *magister militum praesentalis* had once held could have been a policy to recruit the services of more Gallo-Romans into the Visigothic army. As Nepotianus' command had proved, Theoderic's army had previously depended too much on the directives of imperial officials.[363] Around 465, the presumed replacement of Arborius with another Gallo-Roman general seemed to also appease local stakeholders.[364] By this stage, it is apparent that the Visigothic armies had shifted their

[359] Hydatius, 207(212).
[360] Hydatius, 222(226).
[361] Only that Arborius set out to Gallaecia on a mission to the Sueves on behalf of Theoderic.
[362] Embassies between Toulouse and Braga between 461 and 465: Hydatius, 215(219), 216(220), 222(226), 226(230).
[363] Schwarcz (1995), 50, who states that Theoderic's decision to replace Nepotianus with Arborius was his own choice.
[364] Vincentius: *PLRE* II, Vincentius 3, 1168. Schwarcz (1995), 51; Zerjadtke (2018), 103–4.

attention to Gaul instead of Spain. Just as the appointment of Arborius to *magister militum* had shown, Agrippinus' involvement in the Visigothic army reflects the potential for Gallo-Roman stakeholders to influence Theoderic's military decisions.

2.1.3. Alliance with Agrippinus

Theoderic's decision to cooperate with Agrippinus was also contingent on the self-interests of his Gallo-Roman ally. First and foremost, the feud that Agrippinus had with Aegidius indicates the deterioration of Agrippinus' own reputation in Gaul.[365] According to Hydatius' account of 463, a Visigothic army under the leadership of Theoderic's brother, Frederic, fought a campaign near the Loire against the *magister militum* Aegidius.[366] It is possible to see this conflict as a result of Aegidius' efforts to seize Agrippinus' command of a region north of Lyon, where the latter had close ties. As Hydatius notes, Agrippinus was in correspondence with the bishop of Autun, Euphronius.[367] Another Agrippinus was bishop of Autun in the mid-sixth century.[368] Therefore, Agrippinus' Aedean ties suggests that there was a group of supporters who endorsed his promotion from *comes Augustodunum* to *magister militum per Gallias* in the last month of Avitus' reign. Agrippinus' feud with Aegidius was because of the accession of Majorian, who replaced Agrippinus with Aegidius as *magister militum per Gallias* in early 458.

Aegidius' efforts to undermine Agrippinus' military authority relied on the interests of different individuals. The obvious one was Majorian, who sanctioned Aegidius' promotion to *magister militum* at the expense of Agrippinus, a partisan of Avitus. This promotion would have come from Aegidius' previous service with Majorian under Aëtius.[369] However, there were other local factors at play. Since Aegidius was an uncommon name in Gaul, it is likely that he was a soldier of either barbarian or Greek origins.[370] Priscus' identification of Aegidius as a native of Gaul could be misleading. Although scholars treat Priscus' fragmentary accounts as largely reliable, he is an eastern observer whose view of Gallic

[365] Hydatius, 212(217). Agrippinus: Heinzelmann (1982), Agrippinus 1, 548; *PLRE* II, Agrippinus 2, 39.
[366] Hydatius, 214(218). Cf. *Gallic Chronicle 511*, a. 461.
[367] Hydatius, 143(151).
[368] On Agrippinus, the bishop of Autun: Duchesne, *Fastes*, 2.178, who writes that he participated at two councils at Orléans, in 533 and 538; Heinzelmann (1982), 548.
[369] Prisc. fr. 30. Although as suggested by MacGeorge (2002), 82–3, this does not mean that they were personal friends.
[370] Cf. Liebeschuetz (2007), 487, who states that Aegidius was a Gaul and "almost certainly a Gallic noble".

events came from unknown western sources.[371] A potential Frankish ancestry for Aegidius could explain the account from the "Annals of Angers" of his involvement within the tribal politics of northern Gaul, as preserved by Gregory of Tours.[372] Whatever Aegidius' background, it is apparent that he made a concerted effort to win the support of interest groups between the Loire and Lyon in order to bolster his own influence. Both the praise by Hydatius and Paulinus of Perigueux for Aegidius' faith hints at Aegidius' connections with local clergy in central Gaul.[373] Moreover, the marriage between Aegidius and the noble Syagrii family, who were native to Lyon, could have also reflected his attempts to build up a network in the region.[374] However, this indicates that this marriage occurred long before his feud with Agrippinus. Aegidius was already in Gaul no later than the 440s because his son Syagrius had to be old enough to lead his troops when Aegidius was killed in 463.[375]

Another aspect of Aegidius' powerbase was his ties to the *foederati* in Belgica II. Given his service under Aëtius, it would be unsurprising if Aegidius had some connections with the Frankish groups, whom Aëtius had settled along the Lower Rhine in 432.[376] As the chronicler of 511 attests, the Visigothic campaign was fought against the Franks, rather than Aegidius.[377] Both accounts can be true if we assume that Aegidius had served long enough for Aëtius to foster ties with the leaders of these Frankish *foederati* in Belgica II. It is likely that Aegidius had already seen the importance of private forces in the Gallic field army first hand through Aëtius' personal following of Huns.[378] If this was the case, the "Annals of Angers", as preserved by Gregory of Tours, could be correct to describe Aegidius' alliances with certain Frankish leaders for the support of their warbands.[379] The discovery of a coin hoard

[371] Pris. fr. 30. MacGeorge (2002), 77.
[372] *HF* 2.12 states that Aegidius was made king by the Salian Franks. Frye (1991), 5–6, states that Aegidius was not born Frankish.
[373] Hydatius, 214 (218); *VSM.* 6.111–12.
[374] Aegidius was the father of Syagrius, who fought and was defeated against Clovis in 489.
[375] Syagrius: *PLRE* II, Syagrius 2, 1041–2; Heinzelmann (1982), Syagrius 4, 699.
[376] Halsall (2009), 178–82, argues that there was no "alliance". Rather, Aegidius took the vacant title of "king of the Franks", and led a Gallic field army that already had a large Frankish contingent. For the suggestion that Aegidius enlisted the support of the Franks, see Elton (1992), 172; MacGeorge (2002), 155.
[377] *Chron. Gall*. 511, a. 462.
[378] On Aëtius' Huns, see Liebeschuetz (1993), 270–3.
[379] Halsall (2009), 181.

at Lienden, in southern Netherlands, which contains a solidus of Majorian suggests that at some point during Majorian's reign, a Roman official such as Aegidius sent Roman gold to Salian Franks in exchange for their military backing.[380] Even before his promotion at the hands of Majorian at the start of 458, Aegidius may have had access to both military and financial resources, which enabled him to stake a claim for Agrippinus' relatively new office.[381] Certainly, the extent of Aegidius' military influence by 461 was such that it allowed him to successfully defame Agrippinus, and instigate the latter's imprisonment and trial in Rome.[382] Therefore, Aegidius' ability to establish ties with local stakeholders undermined Agrippinus' military position in Gaul.

Agrippinus' eventual return to Gaul and reinstatement of his position as *comes Augustodunum*, albeit in Narbonne, relied upon the instigation of Ricimer and Libius Severus.[383] Yet, in all likelihood, Agrippinus had few soldiers at his disposal, given that the units formerly in his command had passed into the service of Aegidius. Any response against the increase of Aegidius' reputation in central eastern Gaul would require that Agrippinus win the support from the armed groups of Theoderic. The decision to allow the Visigothic armies to enter Narbonne in 462 rested not only upon Agrippinus, but also on the consent of the leaders of the city. Hydatius' attestation that the Vandals set their sights on Gaul as well as Italy suggests that Narbonne's nobles realised the need to acquire military support.[384] Despite Ricimer's victory against the Vandals on Corsica in 456, the island seemed to fall back under Vandal occupation soon after.[385] The contemporary establishments of permanent Vandal garrisons upon the Balearic Islands, as well as the capture of Majorian's Spanish fleet in 460 is further evidence for an urgency from Agrippinus

[380] Roymans and Heeren (2017), 398–409
[381] This reaffirms the suggestions of MacGeorge (2002), 92, who has tentatively seen a personal dimension to the Aegidius/Agrippinus feud.
[382] *VLupicini.* 11.
[383] Wijnendaele (2017), 430.
[384] Hydatius, 169(176).
[385] As suggested by Merrills (2017), 502, the Vandals may have undertaken some shipbuilding in Corsica. See also Victor of Vita, 3.20.

and Narbonne's nobles to turn to Theoderic's troops for military support. These, along with the purported correspondence of Geiseric's court in Carthage with Aegidius would have further alarmed Agrippinus.[386] As a representative of Narbonne, Agrippinus had to take his city's security into account. Therefore, the increasing maritime presence of the Vandals in the western Mediterranean was an important factor in Agrippinus' alliance with Theoderic.

In order to counter his rival Aegidius, Agrippinus initiated contacts with Theoderic and the Visigothic armies. The decisive reason to do so was the access to manpower which he had lost in his feud with Aegidius. As I have outlined, Aegidius' own alliances with the various interest groups of central and northern Gaul, including the Franks, benefitted his military position vis-à-vis Agrippinus. In response, Agrippinus, after his reinstatement as a military official in Narbonne, had to rely upon Theoderic's Visigoths to provide an effective challenge to Aegidius. The threat which the Vandals posed to the western Mediterranean allowed the nobles of Narbonne, the city for which Agrippinus was responsible, to assent to an alliance with Theoderic's troops. Therefore, Agrippinus' ambitions to defeat his rival Aegidius motivated him to cooperate with Theoderic, an agreement that permitted the entry of the Visigoths into Narbonne in 462.

As I have outlined, the policies of Theoderic II relied upon various groups and individuals. The first of these were the nobles and retainers who formed the Visigothic court. Theoderic's efforts to accommodate the unruly elements near to him could be seen in his exploitation of imperial missions. The Gothic raids and often ad hoc conflicts seen in Spain during the 450s and 460s allowed Theoderic to secure the favour of warbands through plunder and material wealth. Then, as the cases of Nepotianus and Arborius demonstrate, Theoderic had to rely upon the interests of his Roman *magistri militum*. However, both individuals represented different parties. Nepotianus's service in the Visigothic army reflected the

[386] Hydatius, 220(224).

imperial and Italian investment in Spain. In contrast, the replacement of Nepotianus with Arborius indicated an attempt to appease the Aquitanian elites, who had an interest in more local affairs in southwestern Gaul. Lastly, the self-interests of Agrippinus must be emphasised in Theoderic's cooperation with him. The alliance allowed Agrippinus to strengthen his position with soldiers in his personal feud with Aegidius. Agrippinus' possession of Visigothic troops was a response to Aegidius' own alliances with the Franks, as well as other local interest groups of central and northern Gaul. I have also identified that Narbonne's nobles, whose interests Agrippinus served, agreed to an alliance with the Visigothic troops in the context of the rising maritime presence of the Vandals. Therefore, Theoderic's army was in no way a uniform entity. Rather, it must be thought of as an army of differing parties with contending interests.

2.2. *Imperial Court*

Recent scholarship assumes that Theoderic II decided either to support or adopt a particular stance with the emperor in Italy.[387] While this perspective is by no means incorrect, there is a tendency to attribute Theoderic's dealings with a single figure, such as a Majorian or a Ricimer. Less effort has been made to nuance the imperial court further by investigating its constituent groups and individuals in relation to Theoderic's own policies. In order to reach this conclusion, the following section identifies three main groups in the imperial court. The first of these looks at the court which emerged in the wake of Aëtius' fall. Here, I examine the conflicted interests of the senatorial elite who formed the courts of

[387] On the suggestion that Ricimer was responsible for an alliance between Theoderic and the imperial authorities in 462, see Flomen (1995), 15. Flomen argues that Ricimer handed Narbonne over to the Visigoths. According to Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 19–20, the deaths of Aëtius, Valentinian III, Petronius Maximus, and Avitus were crucial to Theoderic's decision to abandon his adherence to the old agreement with the Empire. Thereafter, Theoderic pursued a policy of Gothic "self-identity." Gillett (2003), 66, has also referenced Theoderic's reconciliation with Majorian. Halsall (2007), 259–262, has argued that Theoderic pursued a policy which grew increasingly independent from that of *imperial authorities*, particularly during his campaigns in Spain. Delaplace (2015), 219, argues that Theoderic abandoned his alliance with Avitus on the basis that the latter was viewed as a usurper. Most recently, Kulikowski (2020), 206, has defined Theoderic's Gothic *regnum* as a de facto independent kingdom on imperial soil.

Theoderic's "puppet" emperor, Avitus. Although Avitus' court consisted largely of Gallo-Roman appointments, an influential and everpresent Italo-Roman elite existed close by, who sought for the protection of their property and wealth against the attacks of the Vandals. The idea that Avitus favoured the Gallic rather than the Italo-Roman elite is of course not a new suggestion.[388] However, I make a case that Avitus required the appointment of his Gallo-Roman allies, whom he knew personally and trusted. Nevertheless, the alliances which the Italo-Roman senatorial elite made with another court figure, namely the *comes* Ricimer, indicates their withdrawal of support for the incumbent emperor. This forms the first subsection.

The next subsection addresses the establishment of a court under Ricimer's term as patrician, which was reminiscent more of the court under Stilicho or Aëtius. The senatorial alliances built by Ricimer dictated the success of Theoderic's own alliance with Majorian. The primary argument outlined here is that the officials in Majorian's court were actually the appointments of Ricimer, who prioritised the interests of the Italo-Roman senatorial families by preparing an imperial fleet against Vandal Africa.[389] I also emphasise that Ricimer's appointments came from senatorial families elsewhere in the western Mediterranean, who retained ties with North Africa. Ricimer's alliances with these individuals were preventative measures to ensure their cooperation with the Italo-Roman senators and their preparations for an invasion of North Africa. Therefore, Theoderic's relationship with Majorian relied upon the latter's ability to carry out the wishes of both Ricimer and the senatorial elite.

The third subsection argues that Theoderic depended upon the individuals who constituted the imperial court at Arles. As an extension of the emperor's authority, Arles functioned as both an imperial residence away from Italy, as well as the seat of the praetorian prefect of Gaul. As Theoderic's visit to the

[388] Mathisen (1981), 232–47; Salzman (2017), 246–8.
[389] Cf. Salzman (2017), 249, who writes that Majorian strove to win the senate and of the Italo-Roman aristocracy.

city in 458, and then his role in Avitus' accession to emperor indicate, his decisions required the support of the prefect and the Gallo-Roman officials who formed the prefect's staff.[390]

2.2.1. The conflicted court of Avitus

Theoderic's alliances with Avitus depended on figures resident at the emperor's court, rather than the emperor himself. Following Aëtius' death at the hands of Valentinian III in 454, the absence of one prominent general at the Italian court created an environment in which the senatorial aristocracy and courtiers jostled for influence.[391]

Petronius Maximus, a member of the Anician family, belonged to this Italo-Roman senatorial elite and relied upon their support to ascend to the imperial throne.[392] All but one of the urban prefects of Rome who served under Aëtius and Valentinian were rich landowning senators from the city, where they held property and practised euergetism on a large scale.[393] The political influence of the senatorial families suggests that the Italo-Roman aristocracy continued to monopolise control over various high administrative posts. Moreover, the senatorial elites also occupied a position as courtiers of the emperor as well.[394] The alliances which Aëtius had formed with Rome's aristocracy had satisfied their demands for high office holding even after his death. Petronius' own accession to the imperial purple relied upon the support of his fellow Roman senators. Valentinian's assassination, in which Petronius played a part, is an indication that the senatorial alliances with the imperial court had been established with Aëtius, rather

[390] For the accession of Avitus, see Demougeot (1979), 577–9; Stroheker (1948), 53, 153; Harries (1994), 54; Gillett (2003), 88–9.
[391] McEvoy (2023), 176–7, 195–6. Aëtius had spent twenty-one years at the court, during which he established extensive patronage networks within the court administration.
[392] Petronius Maximus: *PLRE* II, Maximus 22, 749–750. Salzman (2017), 245.
[393] Humphries (2012), 175–6.
[394] On the blurring of lines between Rome's Senate and the court, see Heather (2016), 19.

than Valentinian. Hence, the removal of Valentinian presented the Roman senators under Petronius with the opportunity to realise their political ascendency at court.[395]

This would have changed under Avitus. While there has been a tendency to believe that Avitus relied on his Gallic supporters, this is not to say that he disregarded the Italo-Roman aristocracy altogether.[396] Indeed, the appointments which he made as Petronius' successor suggest that senatorial elites of Gaul, rather than those of Italy, occupied a large proportion of the imperial administration's high offices. Under Avitus, two Narbonensian individuals, namely Consentius and Magnus occupied the coveted office of *cura palatii* and *magister officiorum* respectively. The deployment of Consentius as an envoy to acquire the recognition of the eastern emperor Marcian in Constantinople indicates that Avitus preferred to use Gauls as his representatives in important missions.[397] Consentius' mission to the east was similar to that of the tribune Hesychius, whom Avitus commissioned in 456 to bring the news to Theoderic in Gallaecia of Avitus' withdrawal from Italy to Arles.[398] The deployment of individuals whom Avitus knew and trusted could ensure his demands would be represented effectively. In addition, Avitus sought to recognise the very group which had instigated his promotion by prioritising them over the Italo-Roman senators for undertaking important delegations.[399] Although Avitus' reliance upon Gauls to conduct negotiations on his behalf might reflect his disregard for the Italian aristocracy, this is not the case. We are uncertain as to who held the Italian prefecture under Avitus. However, the promotion of Iunius Valentinus, a member of the Symmachus family, as the urban prefect of Rome, insinuates that

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[395] For Petronius and the closeness of senatorial aristocrats to imperial power, see Salzman (2017), 245–6. As evidenced by Petronius' marriage with Valentinian's widow Eudoxia, as well as his attempts to marry his son Palladius to the eldest daughter of Valentinian and Eudoxia. This occurred despite Valentinian's engagement of one of his daughters to Huneric, the son of the Vandal king Geiseric.

[396] For the suggestion that Avitus never tried to court the support of the Italian senators at all, see Hanaghan (2017), 272–3. On the interests of Avitus' Gallic supporters, see Halsall (2007), 261. Although the Gallic aristocracy had been at the centre of politics during the fourth century, Halsall states that in the fifth century, this position belonged to the Italian aristocracy, who were unwilling to relinquish it.

[397] Mathisen (1981), 245–6.

[398] Hydatius, 170(177).

[399] For Avitus' need to recognise his Gallic supporters through promotions to high secular office, see Salzman (2017), 247–8. It is possible that the appointment of two Narbonensian aristocrats to high administrative positions in Italy indicated Avitus' attempts to reconcile with eminent nobles from Narbonne.

Italo-Roman senators were not entirely absent from Avitus' court.[400] If an Italian such as Valentinus could hold an office under Avitus, it should not rule out the possibility that other Italo-Roman senators formed part of Avitus' team. But, in general, the occupation of offices by Avitus' Gallic allies seems to favour a general reduction in advancement for the Roman senatorial elite, many of whom remained important figures around the imperial court. The immediate assumption of the praetorian prefecture of Italy by Fl. Caecina Decius Basilius under Avitus' successor Majorian suggests that Rome's leading families continued to be influential whether they held office or not.[401] It is likely that Avitus' decision to promote Gallic elites into offices which Italo-Roman aristocrats had usually held represented an unwelcome challenge to their status.[402] Even though Avitus' administration awarded Valentinus with the urban prefecture, Valentinus' office seemed to be an outlier; it may have done little to win the support of the other leading Italo-Roman families.

Sidonius, in his observation of the two influential families of Italy, indicates the disruptive potential of the senatorial elite behind Avitus' court as well. As Sidonius notes, Gennadius Avienus, a member of the Corvini, demonstrated an eagerness to promote his relatives over outsiders. On the other hand, Sidonius thought that Basilius, who belonged to the Decii clan, did not exhibit the same zeal to protect his own family members.[403] Sidonius' preference for the latter senator might explain his account of Basilius' patronage to outsiders, even when he was "out of office". Yet, it is hard to believe that Basilius and his family did not take measures to ensure that their own relatives retained prestigious offices.[404] The fact that Basilius held the Italian prefecture under the reigns of Majorian and Libius Severus suggests that the Decii did not relinquish their aspirations for high office holding, particularly of the Italian prefecture. Basilius seems to follow in the footsteps of an ancestor, Caecina Decius Acinatius

[400] *PLRE* II, Valentinus 5, 1140. Salzman (2017), 247, Salzman (2021), Table. 4.1.
[401] Salzman (2017), 261–2. *PLRE* II, Fl. Caecina Decius Basilius 11, 216–7. On Sidonius' remarks on the influence of senatorial families such as that of Basilius both in and out of office, see *Ep*. 1.9.2–5.
[402] Salzman (2017), 247–8.
[403] As suggested by Matthews (1967), 504, the marriage of Basilius' son with a daughter of Avienus could indicate an alliance between two of Italy's most prominent senatorial clans.
[404] Weber (1989), 477–8.

Albinus, who had served as *Praefectus Praetorio Italiae, Africae et Illyriae* for a similarly lengthy period between 443–449.[405] Although Sidonius represents Avienus as the more protective of his family's status, he reflects a political reality where Italian senatorial families such as the Corvini and Decii jostled for opportunities to distinguish themselves from their counterparts at the emperor's court.[406] Since Avienus himself had accompanied the bishop of Rome and the prefect Trygetius in the legation to Attila in 452, it is unlikely that he and his family viewed Consentius' embassy on behalf of Avitus to Constantinople favourably. Ultimately, Valentinus' prefecture under Avitus seemed to reward the Symmachi, but did little to appease the leading senatorial families of the time.

Moreover, the ongoing Vandal raids in Sicily and southern Italy provided reason for the landowning elite there to make alliances with those who could protect their agricultural estates.[407] Given the ties between the Lucanian aristocracy with Ricimer, senators from southern Italy, namely Libius Severus, may have cooperated with military officials. If we identify Severus and his senatorial colleagues as those Italo-Roman families who had either suffered from Vandal raids, or lost their properties in Africa Proconsularis and Byzacena following the Vandal occupation, it is possible to conceive of a potential alliance between these elites and Ricimer. At the same time, we could associate Libius Severus as an owner of a large estate, who used his alliance with Ricimer to protect his own economic interests in southwestern Italy. As the archaeological surveys have shown, the increased demand of food for Rome owing to the ongoing Vandal blockades and attacks might have benefitted the owners of large property and farms in Italy and in Sicily. The conversion of grain fields in the Middle Tiber Valley into large estates indicates that wealthier senators such as Basilius, Avienus, or even Libius Severus were supplying Rome's urban population with grain and foodstuffs from their properties.[408] This would certainly confirm literary evidence from Sidonius, who writes of the "mass of clients" who followed Basilius and Avienus

[405] *Ibid*, 482–3. *PLRE* II, Albinus 10, 53.
[406] *Ep*. 1.9.3. *PLRE* II, Gennadius Avienus 4, 193–4.
[407] Victor of Vita, 1.13. On the concentration of Vandal raids to southern Italy, see Merrills and Miles (2009), 118.
[408] Hydatius, 169(176). On the archaeology and economic fortunes of Italian senatorial aristocracies after 455, see Salzman (2021), 168–172.

around.[409] The desire for these senatorial families to preserve their extensive influence and patronage meant that they made alliances with military officials, instead of Avitus. Figures such as Ricimer were more attractive allies than the Gallic emperor because they possessed the means to defend the senators' economic interests in Italy.

2.2.2 Ricimer and the senators behind Majorian's court

The treaty that Theoderic struck with Majorian in 458 also depended on Ricimer's ties with those at the Italian court. However, Ricimer only emerged as the primary official at court through his alliance with Majorian, as well as those with the senators, at the end of Avitus' reign in 456.[410] Around this time, Ricimer's promotion from the rank of *comes* to that of a *magister militum* and *patricius* would have enabled him to hold more influence at court.[411] As mentioned previously, Ricimer's alliance with the Decii instigated the appointment of Basilius to assume the praetorian prefecture of Italy under Majorian. A novella issued by Majorian's administration stipulated that neither Roman senators, nor the church would have to donate to the imperial treasury anything that had been left to them in a will.[412] This suggests that the concerns of senators was a priority for the court of Majorian.

It is possible that Ricimer also appointed Fulgentius to a position at Majorian's court because of Fulgentius' senatorial ties.[413] Sidonius, who briefly refers to Fulgentius in a letter, does not indicate under which emperor the *quaestor sacri palatii* served, even if Fulgentius seemed present at the court of Petronius Maximus. However, Sidonius notes that Fulgentius had risen to the office of quaestor on his own merits and had played a leading role in the "good party."[414] Given Sidonius' travels to Rome, he was

[409] *Ep*. 1.9.3.
[410] On Ricimer's career, see Anders (2010).
[411] Through the involvement of the eastern Roman emperor Leo, Ricimer obtains the rank of *patricius*. For Ricimer's promotion and alliance with Majorian in early 457, see Demandt (2007), 172. Cf. Oswald (2020), 22.
[412] *NovMaj.* 10.
[413] Fulgentius (QSP): Heinzelmann (1982), 612; *PLRE* II, 487; Mathisen (2020), 97.
[414] *Ep*. 2.13.5.

aware of Ricimer's role in the downfall of his patron Avitus, and the *magister militum*'s eminence in Italy. Yet, Sidonius had to conceal any criticism of Ricimer's leadership and appointments. Therefore, it is likely that Sidonius obscured the reality of Fulgentius' appointment to quaestor.

The reason for Ricimer's appointment of Fulgentius lies in the quaestor's senatorial background. Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, during his office as the urban prefect of Rome, mentions a senator named Fulgentius who owned property in the city during the last decade of the fourth century.[415] On the basis of Symmachus' evidence alone, this might show that the Fulgentii were members of a Italo-Roman senatorial family. However, Sidonius' quaestor shared the same name as the later bishop of Ruspe, who belonged to a senatorial family of Carthage.[416] Following the Vandal occupation of Carthage in 439, Fulgentius' father and grandfather had fled to Italy, where their family also seemed to own estates.[417] If the Fulgentius whom Symmachus mentions was a relative of Fulgentius of Ruspe, it could be that the family of Fulgentius were owners of property in North Africa, as well as in Italy. This is evidence for the ownership of estates in both regions by the quaestor Fulgentius, whose family would have favoured any campaign against the Vandals which promised to restore imperial authority in North Africa. In light of the Fulgentii's interest to protect its landed wealth, it is possible that they supported Ricimer, who was promoting his senatorial allies to high offices at Majorian's court. Given the dwindling resources of the state treasury, the wealth of Ricimer's senatorial allies must have funded the fleet that would embark against the Vandals in Carthage. Hence, there is reason to suggest that Ricimer's alliance with Fulgentius was a product of Fulgentius' ties with North Africa.

A similar example can be seen in Ricimer's alliance with Rusticius Helpidius Domnulus, who served as another of Majorian's *quaestores sacri palatii*.[418] Although Sidonius describes Domnulus as a

[415] *PLRE* I, Fulgentius, 375. *Rel*. 23.6–13. Machado (2019), 257.
[416] On the senatorial background of Fulgentius of Ruspe, see Conant (2012), 145. *PLRE* II, Fulgentius 2, 487.
[417] Fulgentius of Ruspe's father and grandfather: *PLRE* II, Claudius 1, 300; Gordianus 1, 517–8. The Fulgentii can be considered as one of Ricimer's senatorial allies, who, like the Decii, owned large estates and also endorsed the execution of Majorian following the Vandal attack upon the imperial fleet at Carthaginiensis.
[418] On the role of the *quaestor sacri palatii* as a communicator of the emperor's decisions, see Barnes (2013), 157.

native of Africa and a resident of Gaul, Domnulus might have been a member of the senatorial Helpidii who owned estates in Spain, as well as in North Africa during the late fourth century.[419] The quaestor Domnulus was likely a descendent of the Spaniard Helpidius, who belonged to the family of Theodosius I.[420] Another Helpidius was proconsul of Africa, who owned estates in Spain.[421] If we identify Domnulus as a member of the Spanish Helpidii, his quaestorship may have resulted from Ricimer's ambitions to build a fleet against the Vandals. Ricimer could well have appointed Domnulus as quaestor in exchange for the material and financial resources provided by Domnulus' senatorial relations in Spain. At the same time, Domnulus' ties to North Africa indicate that certain Hispano-Roman elite remained in contact with those Helpidii who had remained there. There is a chance that Ricimer anticipated either the potential of his relatives, or other Hispano-Roman elites to inform Vandal authorities of imperial plans. Although Hydatius does not identify the traitors who supplied information to the Vandals on the imperial fleet at Carthago Nova, it is possible that they were Hispano-Roman senators.[422] Given Hydatius' identification of other Hispano-Roman informants, it is also likely that he knew the identities of those who had betrayed the imperial fleet at Carthago Nova.[423] Although Hydatius' knowledge of affairs in Tarraconensis and Carthaginiensis is less detailed than his reports of Gallaecia, parts of Carthaginiensis' inhabitants were prone to collusion with non-Roman parties for their own ends.[424] Whether Hispano-Romans such as the Helpidii belonged to this group in Carthaginiensis is difficult to say, as is the continued ownership of property by the Helpidii under the Vandals. The presence of African ceramics along the Mediterranean coast of Spain suggests that a market between both regions persisted beyond the fifth century, but there is no way to know if this reflects landowning or not.[425] While it cannot be said for certain that Domnulus

[419] Fl. Rusticius Helpidius Domnulus: Heinzelmann (1982), 593. *PLRE* II, Domnulus 2, 374. *Ep*. 4.25.5. On his residence at Lyon, see Mathisen (2020), 90. For the African origins of the Helpidii Domnuli, see Barnish (1988), 133–4.
[420] *PLRE* I, Helpidius 9, 416.
[421] *PLRE* II, Helpidius 1, 535–6; Helpidius 2, 536.
[422] Hydatius 195(200).
[423] Hydatius 196 (201). The informers named as Dictynius, Spinio, and Ascanius, were likely separate to those who had colluded with the Vandals.
[424] Hydatius 126 (134). For the collusion of Carthaginiensis' provincials with the Sueves, see Kulikowski (2004), 183–4.
[425] On the ties between the locals of Spain and the North African coast, see Arce (2005), 352–4.

belonged to the fifth-century Helpidii, scraps of both archaeological and textual evidence makes a case for his ties with senatorial relations in Spain, perhaps in Carthaginiensis. Hence, Domnulus' promotion to quaestor by Ricimer aimed to ensure that his relatives and their clients would not undermine naval preparations at the docks in Carthago Nova.

The real possibility that the elites of the Mediterranean port communities could exploit their maritime connections with North Africa played a role in Ricimer's appointment of prominent Gallo-Romans to Majorian's court. As mentioned above, Domnulus' appointment had reflected Ricimer's awareness of a reluctant group of Hispano-Roman elites who threatened to undermine imperial plans. In a similar way, the appointment of Magnus to *magister officiorum* was likely to appease the elites of Narbonne who had previously shown a reluctance to support imperial authorities.[426] These were the same elites who had remembered Ricimer's involvement in Avitus' demise, which had spelt the end of the offices for his Narbonensian confidants, Consentius and Magnus. Ricimer's appointment of Magnus to Majorian's court indicates his awareness to keep the elites of Narbonne on his side. It is worth noting that the family of Magnus, like Domnulus, had contacts with Africa as well. His anonymous brother's office as proconsul of Africa, sometime before 439, suggests that the family had African connections.[427] Similarly, Ennodius' office as *comes rei privatae* in 458 came from an effort to reconcile with the Arlesian elite. Two relatives of Ennodius had previously served as proconsuls of Africa, just as Domnulus' ancestors had.[428] It is likely that the Ennodii either had property there, or maintained business with merchants from North Africa. If this is true, we can group the families of Ennodius, Magnus, and Domnulus together as Gallic senators, who Ricimer viewed as potential collaborators with the Vandals.

The members who made up the imperial court under Majorian should be seen as senatorial allies of Ricimer. His efforts to protect the interests of the Italo-Roman senators instigated the construction of an

[426] In 461 or early 462, Ricimer's decision to appoint his ally Agrippinus to the post of *comes* of Narbonne might have also followed the same policy.
[427] Mathisen (2020), 136.
[428] Ennoius (proconsul of Africa in 395/6): *PLRE* I, 278. Felix Ennodius (proconsul of Africa in the first quarter of the fifth century): Heinzelmann (1982), Felix Innodius 1, 596; *PLRE* II, 393. See Kennell (2000), 129–30.

imperial fleet against the Vandals. Since these senators funded the preparations, Ricimer's murder of Theoderic's ally Majorian was a response against the figure who had wasted senatorial resources. As Ricimer's appointments show, these alliances were made in order to reduce the possibility that elites with ties to North Africa would sabotage the fleet.

2.2.3 Development of an imperial court at Arles

The following subsection will outline the ways in which Avitus and Majorian relied on the prefectural offices at Arles. As Theoderic's visits to the city show, his decisions required the support of the praetorian prefect of Gaul and the Gallo-Roman staff who represented the imperial court in the absence of an emperor.[429]

The celebration of consuls at Arles highlighted their involvement in elevating the emperor's profile in Gaul.[430] Sidonius' account of Majorian's second visit to the city reveals the accompaniment of Severinus, consul of 461, and the ex-consul Magnus in the emperor's retinue. As Sidonius reports, Majorian presided over the city's circus games that year.[431] Although Severinus was not a Gallo-Roman, his visit alongside Majorian reflected a rare case of a non-Gallic official in Arles.[432] It is likely then that Severinus was an influential official who had travelled as part of Majorian's court from Italy. In addition, the games at Arles' circus served as opportunities to secure popular and elite assent for the emperor.[433] As a result, the occasional presence of Majorian in the city would have emphasised Arles' association with imperial authority. However, the consular retinue who accompanied him, such as Severinus, could help

[429] For Theoderic (I)'s involvement in the deliberation of the Council of the Seven Provinces at Arles, see Kulikowski (2020), 201–2. Even during Sidonius' day, the council served as a forum for Gallic interests in interactions with the imperial court in Italy: see *Ep*. 1.3.3.
[430] On the coveted nature of the consulship, Sivonen (2006), 25; Sivan (1993), 5–6.
[431] *Ep*. 1.11.10. Van Dam (2014), 85–6. On the continuation of the Arlesian circus during the fifth century, see Loseby (2009), 150–1.
[432] Severinus: *PLRE* II, Fl. Severinus 5, 1001; Heinzelman (1982), Flavius Severinus 2, 693. Heinzelmann suggests that Severinus was probably not a Gaul.
[433] Grig (2024), 68–9.

the emperor to increase support from Arlesian crowds as well. Majorian would also have relied on Magnus, his consul of 460, to maintain the imperial allegiance of the members who attended Arles' *Concilium septem provinciae*. It is likely that Magnus received a celebration in Arles in a similar way to the ceremony which had accompanied Flavius Astyrius' entrance into his consular year of 449.[434] According to Sidonius, who witnessed the festivities at Astyrius' consular acclamation, the ceremony in front of the praetorian prefect and an Arlesian assembly reinforced the appreciation for the consulship by the Gallo-Roman elites.[435] The consular ceremony of Astyrius appeared to inspire younger audience members such as Sidonius to attain the coveted consular robe.[436] A parallel here can be observed between Sidonius' enthusiasm and that of Magnus' nephew Camillus. Given the eagerness of Camillus to aspire to the consulship, we may assume that he was in attendance for his uncle's entrance into his consular year in 460.[437] This suggests that Camillus had a similar experience to the one Sidonius had in 449. Moreover, the appointment of Magnus as the consul of 460 hints at Majorian's attempts to conciliate the elites of Narbonne, who had recently expressed anti-Italian sentiments.[438] Magnus' consulship could be evidence that the Narbonensian elites who had previously held high office under Avitus formed an important group at the Arlesian councils, where they continued to express their dissatisfaction towards the emperor.[439] Although the celebration of consuls in Arles was important to its reputation as an imperial court, the city's association with the emperor also manifested itself through the prefectural offices.

According to Hydatius, Arles housed the officials of the imperial administration.[440] Avitus' return to Arles in late 456 was an attempt to recruit as much military support as possible for a return to Italy

[434] Hydatius, 135(143).
[435] Grig (2024), 64, n.172.
[436] Sidonius had "recently emerged from boyhood." *Ep*. 8.6.5.
[437] *Ep*. 1.11.11.
[438] Mathisen (1979), 601–2.
[439] Magnus himself was a former *magister officiorum* of Avitus.
[440] Hydatius 170(177). Mathisen (1979), 603.

from his *magister militum*, a native of Lyon by the name of Messianus.[441] Avitus' return to Arles is evidence for his efforts to recruit other officials, including his praetorian prefect in Gaul, for a show of strength against the *comes domesticorum* Majorian. While some travelled with Avitus to Italy, some of the Arlesian court remained. For this reason, a certain Paeonius could assume the Gallic prefecture in early 457 only because of the death of Avitus' prefect in Placentia.[442] Sidonius' hostility towards Paeonius emphasises the irregularity of his accession to the prefecture. However, Paeonius might have occupied an office associated with the prefect, such as the *vicarius septem provinciarum*, before he claimed the vacant office.[443] Sidonius' mention of the various offices attached to the prefect's court at Arles, such as the tribunes, official cashiers and the advocates suggests that other positions at the prefect's court existed.[444] Sidonius attests to the success of an advocate named Pragmatius, whose oratory skills won acclaim in the law courts at Arles.[445] His promotion to the consilium of Priscus Valerianus, the prefect of 456, indicates the presence of a highly capable staff amongst the prefectural court. During a visit of Majorian to Arles in 461, Sidonius described an individual by the name of Athenius, who was involved in the production of legislation. It is not certain whether Athenius travelled alongside the emperor's court, or was based in Arles as one of the prefect's officials. However, Majorian's visit intended to reconcile himself with eminent Gauls, one of which would have been administrative officials such as Athenius. It is possible to link a legislative official such Athenius with another advocate for the prefect, Flavius Nicetius, who helped his prefect to introduce a piece of legislation into Gaul in 449.[446] The promulgation of laws required talented bureaucrats such as Athenius, Nicetius, and possibly also Pragmatius to publish them to the crowded Gallic tribunals at Arles. Given the presence of the "contending parties" at these tribunals, the ties between these officials and their audience must have played a significant role in the publication of

[441] For Messianus, a Gallo-Roman from near Lyon, see Mathisen (1979), 617, n. 81; Heinzelmann (1982), Messianus 1, 653. For Messianus as Avitus' messenger and lieutenant, see Kulikowski (2008), 343.
[442] Paeonius: *PLRE* II, 817; Heinzelmann (1982), 660. *Chronica Minora*, 1383.
[443] Mathisen (1979), 603–4.
[444] *Ep*. 1.11.7
[445] *Ep*. 5.10. 2. Pragmatius: *PLRE* II, Pragmatius, 904; Heinzelmann (1982), Pragmatius 1, 672.
[446] Fl. Nicetius: *PLRE* II, Fl. Nicetius 2, 782–3; Heinzelmann (1982), Fl. Nicetius 2, 657.

laws as well.[447] As Sidonius suggests, the prefect's office consisted of various staff who worked to extend authority of the emperor from Italy into Gaul. The individuals who occupied the prefectural court may have followed the lead of the prefect, as did most of Paeonius' court during his office from 456 to 457.[448]

It is apparent that the emperor's imperial representatives at Arles conducted negotiations with Visigoths in the absence of an actual emperor. In 455, the peaceful entrance of Theoderic, his brothers, and his army into Arles suggests that the officials of the prefecture had entered into an agreement with the Visigoths to instigate the acclamation of Avitus as emperor.[449] Although the interregnum after Maximus' death necessitated the Arlesian court to act independently of the emperor, it seems that the prefect and his staff negotiated with the Visigoths by themselves. Sidonius mentions that the Gallic *honorati*, rather than the prefect, were compliant with the Visigothic appointment of Avitus. However, given the panegyrical nature of Sidonius' narrative, it is likely that he deliberately omitted details from his account to suit the genre. Even if Sidonius does not mention the prefect, it is likely that the "senate's devoted throng" required prefectural approval to legitimate Avitus' accession to emperor, alongside the Visigothic host.[450]

The powers of the Arlesian court to deal independently with barbarians also informed the action of the prefect when Theoderic and his armies marched again to Arles in 458. In the late fifth century, Paulinus of Perigueux' verse life of St. Martin describes a Visigothic siege of Arles and attests to the resistance of *magister militum* Aegidius, whose efforts repelled Theoderic's armies.[451] However, Paulinus would have omitted certain details from his account as he aimed to emphasise Aegidius' efforts in combat through the intervention of the blessed St. Martin. The poet also neglects the role of Nepotianus, who as

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[447] *Ep*. 8.6.7: "This law, hitherto unknown in Gallic territory, our orator first introduced into legal proceedings, published to the tribunals, expounded to contending parties…"
[448] *Ep*. 1.11.9.
[449] Marius of Avenches, *Chron*., a. 455. Marius states that Theoderic and his army entered Arles peacefully. Similarly, Hydatius 156(163) might also suggest Theoderic's presence at the acclamation of Avitus in front of the Gallic *honorati* in Arles. Kulikowski (2008), 335–6, n.7, believes that the Gothic army and royal court were present with Avitus at Arles.
[450] *Carm* 7.572–579.
[451] Paul. Perigueux. *VSM.* 6.111–12.

Hydatius indicates, played a part in the treaty negotiations on behalf of an absent Majorian at Arles.[452] A more likely scenario is that Majorian's prefect and his staff played a role in the negotiations of Theoderic's withdrawal as well. If Magnus was the prefect during the conflict in 458, Sidonius' praise for Magnus' abilities as a "wise mediator" could have been a tacit acknowledgement to his role in the agreement of terms with Theoderic's armies.[453] Magnus' potential involvement in the withdrawal of the Visigoths in late 458 mirrors a similar intervention of Tonantius Ferreolus against Thorismund's incursions against Arles in 453.[454] According to Sidonius, Ferreolus' decision to throw a banquet removed Thorismund from the gates of Arles, something which even the patrician Aëtius could not achieve. Sidonius' claims of Ferreolus' role in the withdrawal of Thorismund's army may overstate the agency of the former. The author's own friendship with Ferreolus means that Sidonius sought first to praise the oratorical skills of the prefect. However, this should not discount the involvement of the Gallic praetorian prefect in treaty negotiations with the Visigoths. Ferreolus, as well as the *magister militum* Aëtius may have played a joint role in the settlement of terms with Thorismund.[455] In a similar way to Ferreolus, the treaty-negotiating function of Magnus highlights the ways in which the emperor continued to depend on the Gallic prefecture to administer the region despite the emperor's absence.

Theoderic's relationship with the emperors Avitus and Majorian, and to a lesser extent Libius Severus, was contingent on the groups and individuals who formed the imperial court. As I have outlined, the senatorial elite of Italy had immense political influence and challenged the position of Theoderic's candidate Avitus. The senatorial support for the *comes* Ricimer, whom they felt could better satisfy their

[452] Hydatius 192(197). On Nepotianus' relief of Aegidius at Arles, see Mathisen (1979), 627.
[453] *Carm* 23.461.
[454] *Ep*. 7.12.3. For the suggestion that Thorismund's actions acted contrary to Roman peace and Gothic tranquility, see Prosper, *Chron.*, a. 453. On Thorismund's negotiations with Ferreolus, see Mratschek (2020), 223; Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 29; Wolfram (1988), 178.
[455] Western delegation to barbarians often required a prefect to arrange terms and a settlement, just as Trygetius had in the bishop of Rome's embassy to Attila in 452. See Prosper, *Chron*., a. 452. For the ambassadorial experience which prefects had during the fifth century, see Vitiello (2021), 127–8; Gillett (2003), 114–5.

economic interests, caused Avitus to lose favour in Italy. Likewise, Theoderic's alliance with Majorian in 458 also relied upon senatorial consent. However, Ricimer's own alliances with the members of imperial court, in Italy as well as in Gaul, continued to protect the interests of the Italo-Roman senatorial elite. The senators' support of Majorian depended on whether the emperor could end Vandal attacks on their property in Italy. Towards the end of Avitus' reign and during that of Majorian's, we can observe a tightening of relations between the senatorial elite of Italy and Ricimer, whom the senators regarded as their champion at court. A third aspect of the imperial court I have addressed was the extension of the emperor's authority into Gaul through the city of Arles. It is apparent that Arles functioned as both an imperial residence away from Italy, as well as the seat of the Gallic praetorian prefect. As Theoderic's visits to the city show, his decisions required the support of the prefect and the Gallo-Roman officials who formed the prefect's staff. The next section further investigates the local Gallic elites and Theoderic's relationship with them.

2.3. *Gallic aristocracy*

Modern scholarship has acknowledged that some form of rapprochement occurred between the Gallo-Roman aristocracy and Theoderic II. However, most scholars underplay the agency of local elites in Theoderic's decisions.[456] Only a few have suggested that the Gallo-Roman aristocracy played a role in the policies which Theoderic and his Visigoths made. Mathisen, in his article on Majorian's conciliation of the Gallic aristocracy, has noted that hostility of Narbonne's aristocracy influenced the turnover of their city to the Visigoths.[457] For Drinkwater, Gallo-Roman aristocrats were not passive or apathetic observers

[456] Burgess (1992), 25, also notes the unexceptional promotion of Arborius to *magister militum*. For Burgess, Arborius was a typical Gallo-Roman who was selling his services to the Visigothic court under Theoderic. Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 17–18, assumed that the Gallo-Roman aristocrats attempted to cooperate with the Goths under Theoderic on the basis that the aristocracy did not possess an army. Kulikowski (2008), 336–7, emphasises the importance of Theoderic over the Gallic *honorati* in Avitus' accession. For the suggestion that the Gallic aristocracy was forced into accommodation with the Visigoths because "there was no alternative", see Riess (2013), 91.
[457] Mathisen (1979), 602–3.

under non-Roman rule. Rather, as indicated by their holding of military offices, they continued to involve themselves in the transfers of political power.[458] Although I intend to focus on the civil aspects of elite identity and leadership rather than the exercise of martial skills, the idea of a politically-active Gallo-Roman aristocracy under Visigothic rule is one that is important to develop.

Clearly an influential and politically-engaged Gallo-Roman aristocracy existed in the territories ruled by Theoderic, as well as in Narbonne. In order to argue my case, I provide two case studies. In the first subsection, I examine the aristocracy at Bordeaux. As the appointment of Arborius to *magister militum* in 461 indicates, certain members of Bordeaux's aristocracy retained enough influence to affect Theoderic's appointments. I demonstrate here that Arborius' promotion was instigated by his ties with Pontius Leontius, who led a circle of influential Aquitanian aristocrats centred upon Bordeaux. At Bordeaux, Aquitanian aristocrats and their families preserved their authority through expressions of patronage and elite competition against each other. This subsection focuses upon the more localised aspects of authority by Pontius Leontius, whose aristocratic associates, through friendship or kinship with him, could procure the advancement of their careers under the Visigoths.

Following this, the second subsection discusses the Visigothic occupation of Narbonne in 462 as evidence for the autonomy of the city's aristocracy.[459] The shared political leanings of the Narbonensian elite and Agrippinus, through their support for Avitus in 455 suggests a readiness by the former to promote their own "Gallic rulers." Yet, the independent attitude of the Narbonensian aristocracy was not without its problems. Without imperial service, it is likely that the aristocracy turned to alternative means to sustain its wealth and status. Owing to our scant information about the behaviour of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy under Theoderic II, it is difficult to qualify aristocratic cooperation in the king's policies with

[458] Drinkwater (2013), 60–1. Cf. Halsall (2007), 10.
[459] For the circumstances surrounding the Visigothic occupation of Narbonne, see Schwarcz (1995), 50–1; MacGeorge (2002), 91–4; Halsall (2007), 268.

any degree of certainty. Nevertheless, a case can still be made for the political influence of elites from Bordeaux and Narbonne through their attempts to express their aristocratic status during this period.

2.3.1 The circle of Pontius Leontius near Bordeaux

As Hydatius reports, the appointment of Arborius as Theoderic's *magister militum* in 461 reflected the Visigothic king's recognition of an influential circle of Aquitanian aristocrats which was centred upon Bordeaux.[460] For these elites, there was no longer a need to travel outside Aquitania to fulfil ambitions for imperial office in Arles or Italy. Rather, Aquitanian aristocrats and their families preserved their authority through expressions of patronage and elite competition against each other. Since I have already mentioned Arborius and his family above, the more localised aspects of authority by another aristocrat from Bordeaux, Pontius Leontius will be emphasised. For Pontius' aristocratic associates, their ties, whether through friendship or kinship with Pontius, could enable the advancement of their careers under the Visigoths. This is to show that both Pontius Leontius and Arborius belonged to a circle of Aquitanian elites who continued to express their influence through lavish displays of wealth and patronage under Theoderic's rule.

The evidence from Sidonius, written during the reign of Theoderic, indicates the patronage that Pontius Leontius seems to have exercised in Aquitania II.[461] In a letter to the *vir clarissimus* Trygetius, Sidonius berates his friend for not travelling from his property at Bazas to visit him in Bordeaux during the winter.[462] The remarks by Sidonius of the "short distance" between Bazas and Bordeaux insinuates the frequency with which Trygetius made the journey. A reference to Trygetius' reluctance as he stood at the

[460] Hydatius, 208 (213). On Arborius' own family, see section 2.1.2.
[461] *Ep*. 8.12. For the dating of *Ep*. 8.12 to 463, see Loyen (1943), 91, n.217; Heinzelmann (1982), 707. For a date of 461/2, see Stevens (1933), 66–67. On the challenges which accompany the dating of Sidonius' letters in general, see Mathisen (2013b), 221–248.
[462] *Ep*. 8.12.1. Trygetius: Heinzelmann (1982), 707; *PLRE* II, Trygetius 2, 1129. Kelly (2020), 173.

harbour of Langon could be evidence of his frequent use of the riverine route to Bordeaux as well.[463] Trygetius' links to Bordeaux indicates a friendship with a circle of elites from a region near the city. Moreover, Sidonius provides reference to Trygetius' connection with a Visigothic army that had travelled to Cadiz in 459.[464] Trygetius' service in the Visigothic military hierarchy hints at his service alongside another aristocrat-turned-soldier of Bordeaux, Arborius, who also served at Theoderic's court. Although Sidonius is vague on the nature of Trygetius' service during the campaign, it is possible that Trygetius served as a functionary for the Visigothic court. Indeed, Sidonius' inclusion of battle language might reflect that Trygetius was a soldier.[465] However, the letter's mention of the leisurely activities which awaited Trygetius such as elaborate gaming-boards imply an aristocratic background. Regardless of Trygetius' office under the Visigoths, the letter indicates that Trygetius had social ties in Bordeaux.

The letter presents Sidonius as a guest of the *vir illustris* Pontius Leontius, who continued to live undisturbed on his fortress-like estate near Bordeaux named *Burgus*.[466] Sidonius describes the lavish seafood banquet that awaited Trygetius there, which included "richly stocked larder, filled to overflowing with masses of costly delicacies".[467] As demonstrated by a seafood selection of "oysters of the Medoc", "fish of the Adour" and "Bayonne lobsters", Sidonius wanted the aristocratic display of wealth to induce Trygetius to visit him.[468] However, Sidonius' words reflect a reality where it was not only he who was imploring Trygetius to visit Bordeaux. It is possible to read this as an example of Pontius' invitation of Aquitanian elites to his estate, such as Sidonius and Trygetius.[469] If this is true, then the feast which Pontius organises indicates that he was projecting his elite status vis-à-vis Trygetius, as well as other local

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[463] *Ep*. 8.12.3–4.
[464] *Ep*. 8.12.2: "Where, pray, has the memory of Calpis so quickly gone from your mind, Calpis lately conquered by your feet? Where has gone the memory of your camp pitched on the western bounds of Cadiz? Where the memory of those travels which my dear Trygetius ended at the same place as Hercules?" For Trygetius' involvement in a Visigothic campaign to Cadiz, see Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 32, n.107. See also Hydatius, 188 (193).
[465] *Ep*. 8.12.3.
[466] Pontius Leontius: *PLRE* II, Pontius Leontius 30, 674; Heinzelmann (1982), Pontius Leontius 2, 636. For *Burgus*, see *Carm*. 22.126.
[467] *Ep*. 8.12.6.
[468] *Ep*. 8.12.7. For the competitive edge to *hospitium*, see Hanaghan (2020), 117–136.
[469] *Ep*. 8.12.5, 8.12.8. Even though Sidonius was an aristocrat from Aquitania I, rather than Aquitania II.

aristocrats. The occasion would have permitted Pontius to flaunt his access to expensive seafood. At Pontius' estate, Sidonius also marvels at the "spacious colonnades" and baths which connected to a nearby river.[470] Although no archaeological evidence exists of Pontius' estate, its proximity to the Dordogne and the Garonne might be justified.[471] *Burgus* belonged to a series of late Roman *villae*, particularly in Aquitania Secunda which lay along rivers.[472] Access to Aquitania and Novempopulana's connected riverways enabled convenient transport of resources such as Pyrenean marble to the villas for the construction of columns or sarcophagi. Therefore, Pontius' *Burgus* might have reminded visitors of his family's ease of access to the region's natural resources.

It is possible that Pontius acted as the patron for the literary activities of a circle of Aquitanian aristocrats.[473] The testimony of Sidonius describes the *vir clarissimus* Anthedius, a distinguished writer from Périgueux, as the leader of the literary circle in Bordeaux.[474] Although Anthedius' education in philosophy and rhetoric might have placed him ahead of other learned elites at Bordeaux, it is not certain whether he owned property in the city. Anthedius' relations to Valerius Anthidius, a native of Périgueux who had relocated to Rome to serve as a *vicarius* in 381 suggests that the family of Anthedius owned property in the Dordogne region.[475] However, it is possible that Anthedius' travels from Périgueux to Bordeaux for work required him to lodge at the estate of Pontius. This could follow the example of Sidonius, who lodged at Pontius' estate since he too did not own property in Bordeaux. Pontius' patronage also extended to the *vir clarissimus* Lampridius, who was an owner of property along the Garonne, perhaps near Bordeaux.[476] It is perhaps through his association with Pontius that Lampridius

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[470] *Carm*. 22.204–210.
[471] *Carm*. 22.101–116. For the suggestion that Burgus lay on the site of the modern town of Bourg-sur-Gironde, see Sivan (1992), 138.
[472] Sivan (1993), 70. Although Sidonius' own estate *Avitacum*, near the modern day Lac d'Aydat, contained significant marble, the cost of its transport from the Pyrenees might have been more expensive than marble for *Burgus*. For the location of Sidonius' estate near the modern church of Saint Sidoine on the western shore of the lake, see Collis (2022), 332–341.
[473] Mathisen (1993), 109–110.
[474] Anthedius: Heinzelmann (1982), Anthedius 3, 554; Mathisen (2020), 79. Mratschek (2020), 31. *Carm*. 22.2; *Carm*. 9.312.
[475] Valerius Anthidius: Heinzelmann (1982), 554; *PLRE* I, 69.
[476] Lampridius: *PLRE* II, Lampridius, 656–7; Heinzelmann (1982), 634; Mathisen (2020), 104. Stroheker (1948) does not see Lampridius as an aristocrat.

could travel to Lyon in late 458 for a literary party with several of Majorian's officials including Domnulus and Severianus.[477] Since an alliance between Majorian and Theoderic had not yet been struck, it might seem odd that Lampridius managed to procure an audience at Majorian's court. However, the picture changes if Lampridius had travelled to Lyon for a reason other than a literary party. Lampridius' appearance in Lyon suggests that Pontius' circle served in Theoderic's detachments to negotiate new terms of a peace with Majorian.[478] According to Sidonius, Majorian had summoned individuals from "widely scattered cities" in Gaul, of which Lampridius was one.[479] Yet, Sidonius' account only mentions those who engaged in literary activities, such as Lampridius. It is likely that Majorian's gathering included eminent representatives from other Gallic cities. Nevertheless, Lampridius' presence at Lyon in late 458 reflects his own eminence, perhaps through his ties to Pontius' circle.[480] The favour that Lampridius could later attain at the Visigothic court hints at his role in the negotiation of favourable terms from Majorian in 458.[481] Although there is no direct evidence of Lampridius' involvement, it may have taken a similar form to Sidonius' performance of a panegyric to Majorian, which requested leniency for Lyon's tax burden.[482] It is not too far-fetched to assume that Lampridius used his oratory skills to deliver a similar request on behalf of Theoderic. If this is so, it further reinforces Lampridius' position in the Visigothic court as a result of his association with Pontius' circle of friends in Bordeaux.

The fact that Pontius' wife and son continued to live at the estate suggests that there was enough opportunity in Bordeaux to express their elite status.[483] Sidonius does not provide much evidence for what occupation Pontius' son might have pursued. However, the testimony from Paulinus of Pella, who wrote his *Eucharisticus* in 459 could fill in the gaps.[484] According to Paulinus, both of his sons departed from

[477] For the political background of the dinner party, see Mathisen (1979), 611–614. For the suggestion that literary education was necessary for an aristocrat to participate in elite activities and social life, see John (2022), 257–8.
[478] Hydatius 192 (197) dates the arrival of news of peace between Theoderic and Majorian to 459, which means the terms were agreed at least a few months earlier.
[479] *Ep*. 9.13.4–5.
[480] Mathisen (1979), 612.
[481] *Ep*. 8.9.5.
[482] *Carm*. 5.574–578.
[483] For the wife of Pontius Leontius, see *Carm*. 22.194–6. For the son of Pontius, see *Ep*. 8.12.5.
[484] On the dating of the Eucharisticus, see McLynn (1995), 461–486.

the family estates in Bazas to Bordeaux in search of greater opportunities.[485] At Bordeaux, Paulinus claims that one son could initially experience the friendship of a certain Gothic king.[486] Although Paulinus gives no indication of his son's role or the name of the king himself, it is likely that he served at the court of Theoderic II. Pontius' own son, Paulinus, may well have pursued a similar career in Bordeaux, even if Sidonius does not specify.[487] Sidonius' silence on Paulinus' role suggests that he found employment at the court of Theoderic, just as Trygetius, Arborius, and Lampridius had. During this period, the influence of local Gallo-Roman architecture upon the Visigothic court is evident and the designs of the nearby Aquitanian estates likely played a role in the construction of royal palaces under Theoderic and his predecessors. Similarities between the plan of the villa at La Garenne de Nérac and the fifth-century complex on the Hôpital Larrey site at Toulouse, which is associated with a Visigothic palace might be further evidence for a local influential aristocracy.[488] Sidonius' impression of the riverside entrance and colonnaded reception at the *Burgus* suggests that the home of Pontius' family belonged to this group of imposing structures. If the Visigothic rulers were modelling their palaces off the estates of influential families in Aquitania, this also demonstrates the extraordinary patronage of Pontius Leontius.

[485] *Eucharisticus*, 514: "...gradually sharing with me of their own will the income of our property…"
[486] *Eucharisticus*, 289–290: "Moreover, he also, who was left as though to console me, ill-starred alike in his course and its consequence, experienced both the king's friendship and his enmity, and after losing almost all my goods came to a like end."
[487] *Ep*. 8.12.5. Paulinus (Son of Pontius Leontius): *PLRE* II, Paulinus 10, 847; Heinzelmann (1982), Paulinus 11, 666. See also Mathisen (1982), 371, who argues that Pontius' grandson Eminentius also lived in Bordeaux.
[488] Cazes (2020), 305–325. On the plan of Nérac, see Lappart (1991), 115.

2.3.2 The Narbonensian aristocracy

Just as the influential aristocracy under Pontius gave its assent to Theoderic, so did the Narbonensian aristocracy demonstrate its political influence through its alliance with the *comes* Agrippinus. I argue that the Visigothic occupation of the Narbonne in 462 did not come from what Hydatius assumes as the betrayal of Agrippinus. Rather, the instigation of Narbonne's wealthy and influential aristocracy was the main driving force for the handover of the city.[489] This is evident through the shared political leanings which the Narbonensian elite already had with Agrippinus in their support for Avitus. Second, I examine the tendency of Narbonne's aristocracy to promote Gallic rulers as a product of an individual's familial relations with past usurpers who had come from the city. The third point addresses the determination of Narbonne's aristocracy to sustain its wealth without imperial service.

There is reason to believe that the Narbonensian elite already had ties with Agrippinus before his appointment as *comes* in 461. Due to the service of Consentius and Magnus in Avitus' administration, a portion of Narbonne's aristocracy may have made an alliance with Agrippinus due to his loyalties to the Gallic ruler. As discussed above, Agrippinus owed his appointment as *magister militum* to Avitus. It could be that all three were among the *honorati* and army at Arles who gave their assent to Theoderic during Avitus' proclamation as emperor in 455. Although Sidonius' panegyric to Avitus at Rome might reflect the congregation of the "senate's devoted throng" at Arles or Beaucaire before Avitus, there is little to suggest that the Arlesian aristocracy had actually supported the Visigothic regime of Toulouse.[490] It is more likely that some of the Narbonensian elite had travelled with Theoderic to proclaim Avitus at Arles, where the *comes Augustodunum* Agrippinus may also have been present. Therefore, Sidonius' reference

[489] Hydatius, 212 (217). Cf. Riess (2013), 91–2. Similar to the occupation of Lyon under Majorian. As suggested by Wood (2021), 118, it was the city's senatorial elites who approved the handover. On the conflict between Agrippinus and Aegidius, and the occupation of Narbonne in 462, see Mathisen (1979), 617.
[490] *Carm*. 7.572–3.

to a gathering between the "lords of the lands" and soldiers is evidence that both the Narbonensian aristocracy and Agrippinus supported a common cause.[491]

Ties of loyalty to Avitus might have compelled both Narbonne's nobles and Agrippinus to oppose those who plotted their patron's demise, namely Majorian, Ricimer, as well as their appointments. The *Coniuratio Marcellana* following Avitus' death in 456 represented the Narbonensian aristocracy's support of a local political figure from Narbonne, instead of Avitus' murderers.[492] We are uncertain as to the identity of this individual. However, it is possible that Marcellus, who had served as prefect between 441 and 443, had attempted to usurp the imperial throne. Other than a brief mention of the *Coniuratio Marcellana* in a letter to his friend Montius, Sidonius' general silence on the conspiracy indicates his friendship with those who were involved.[493] It is possible that this conspiracy gained the support of Marcellus' Narbonensian colleagues such as Consentius. Marcellus' appointment as prefect under Valentinian's administration represented a time when Narbonne's aristocracy were serving in the imperial government. Consentius was also a member of Valentinian's court, which suggests that both he and Marcellus had served in the imperial bureaucracy at the same time.[494] Hence, the acquaintance between Marcellus and Consentius hints at Consentius' participation in Marcellus' usurpation in 456.

Since Sidonius intended to present Avitus not as a Gallic usurper to the Roman audience who had gathered for Avitus' consulship on January 1, 456, it made political sense to downplay the involvement of Narbonne's aristocracy in his accession. Sidonius had to explain that it was a senatorial assembly near Arles, rather than the Narbonensian aristocracy, which had raised Avitus to the throne.[495] The more senior members of Sidonius' Roman audience cannot have forgotten the role of Narbonne's aristocracy in

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[491] *Carm*. 7.571–2.
[492] For the circumstances of the *Coniuratio Marcellana* and possible participants in it, see Mathisen (1979), 598–604; Mathisen (2020), 51, 54, 107, 110.
[493] *Ep*. 1.11.6.: "*cumque de capessendo diademate coniuratio Marcelliana coqueretur.*"
[494] *Carm*. 23.215.
[495] This is similar to the way that Sidonius had to explain the role of the Goths in Avitus' accession. For the efforts of Sidonius to persuade the Roman senatorial audience of Avitus' legitimacy, see Kulikowski (2008), 335–6.

Jovinus' usurpation against Honorius in 413, as well as Athaulf's marriage with Galla Placidia later that year. However, Sidonius would have known that several of Narbonne's leading families continued to harbour support for Gallic rulers, rather than for the legitimate emperor, because elites such as Consentius were related to the same elites who had supported Gallic rulers. In Sidonius' praise of Consentius, the poem emphasises Consentius' ties to a Jovinus, who "lives on by the lustre of his dignities".[496] Given that Sidonius elsewhere had denounced the usurper Jovinus for his "pliability", it is likely that he was referring to the consul of 367, Flavius Jovinus.[497] However, this does not preclude Consentius' association with another senatorial Narbonensian family of the consul Jovinus, to whom the younger Jovinus could have also belonged. Although evidence of Olympiodorus suggests that Jovinus revolted against Honorius in Mainz, a link to Narbonne is possible.[498] In addition, the presence of Sallustius, one of Jovinus' two brothers, suggests a connection between Jovinus and the aristocracy at Narbonne.[499] As suggested by an inscription from 445 which celebrated the restoration of a Narbonensian basilica, Sallustius was related to the *vir illustris* Salutius, who had contributed to the project alongside others from the city's elite.[500] If this Salutius was a descendent of Jovinus' family, this implies that he was a wealthy aristocrat from a prominent family in Narbonne. It is evident that the city continued to act as a stronghold for resistance against imperial authorities. According to Hydatius, Narbonne was the site which Honorius' *duces* chose for the execution of Jovinus and his supporters.[501] As descendants of Jovinus, both Consentius and Salutius would have turned against the Italian government when it appeared that it denied the Narbonensians their office-holding interests. Given the consulship that his namesake could procure, Jovinus' revolt provides a glimpse into the continued aspirations of his Narbonensian descendants for

[496] *Carm*. 23.177.
[497] *Ep*. 5.9.1. Fl. Jovinus: Heinzelmann (1982), Iovinus 2, 630; *PLRE* I, Iovinus 6, 462.
[498] Olympiodorus fr. 17. On the location of Jovinus' revolt, see Drinkwater (1998), 288.
[499] Prosper, *Chron*, a. 413; *Chron. Gall.* 452, a. 413.
[500] Salutius: Heinzelmann (1982), Sallustius 2, 687; *PLRE* II, Sallustius 2, 971. On the inscription, see Riess (2013), 82–3; Mathisen (2020), 53.
[501] Hydatius 46(54). Cf. *HF* 2.9.

high office, which Consentius managed to secure under Valentinian and Avitus.[502] However, when opportunities to do so diminished, Consentius' aristocratic allies in Narbonne possessed the capacity to take an independent course of action, just as Jovinus had.[503] The inscription also attests to the existence of Agroecius, who alongside Salutius, had donated a sum of 200 *solidi* towards the new church at Narbonne.[504] According to Renatus Frigeridus' account, one Agroecius had also participated in Jovinus' revolt as the latter's *primicerius notariorum*.[505] It is possible to see a link between the younger Agroecius and Jovinus' chief secretary. The inscription's listing of Agroecius and Salutius alongside each other is evidence that this Agroecius also belonged to the Narbonensian aristocracy who had supported Avitus' accession.[506]

It must be acknowledged that not all of Narbonne's aristocracy favoured cooperation with a Gallic ruler. A silver disk uncovered at Toulouse, with the inscription *Thaumastus Agroecio*, is an example of a typical gift exchange between aristocratic friends such as Agroecius and Thaumastus. Although both had ties to Narbonne, Agroecius' connection with Thaumastus did not mean that the latter shared the same support of local Gallic rulers as Agroecius.[507] Despite Thaumastus' ownership of an estate near Narbonne named *Tres Villae*, Sidonius indicates that his children were living in the Rhône Valley during the later 460s.[508] This suggests that Thaumastus had relocated there for greater opportunities near the prefecture at Arles. Given the bearded visage of Theodosius II, who features at the centre of the disk, Thaumastus' gift to Agroecius might have occurred during the reign of Valentinian III, well before the Marcellan conspiracy of 456. As Consentius and Marcellus show, this was a time when members of Narbonne's aristocracy could attain high office in the imperial administration. Despite the lack of evidence, it is likely that Thaumastus also held a position in the bureaucracy, as he continued to do so

[502] Consentius' previous office as *tribunus et notarii* under Valentinian III suggests that he expected promotion to higher offices.
[503] Scharf (1993), 6.
[504] *CIL* 12.5336 = *ILCV* 1806 (445). Mathisen (2020), 53; Riess (2013), 85–6.
[505] *HF* 2.9.
[506] *Oresi CC[...] / Agroeci i[dem…] / et Deconia[ni…] / Saluti [...]*.
[507] Cf. Mathisen (2020), 53–4.
[508] Mathisen (2020), 59.

after 456. Indeed, Thaumastus' role in the prosecution of Arvandus at Rome for treason in 468 indicates his desire to not share the same inclinations for Gallic rule as his Narbonensian colleagues.

A similar case can be made for Magnus' distance from the mainstream of Narbonne's aristocracy. As Magnus was the only member of Narbonne's elites to serve in Majorian's court, it is likely that he shared a similar position to Thaumastus in his support for the Italian regime, even if the majority of the Narbonensians including Consentius did not support Majorian's regime. Magnus' marriage into the Ennodii family, who were connected to the praetorian prefecture at Arles, provides a clue towards his inclinations. Magnus did not share the same level of animosity towards the regime of Majorian and Ricimer as Consentius and other Narbonensian aristocrats.[509] It could be that those within Narbonne's aristocracy who agreed to handover their city to Visigothic rule in 462 were elites such as Consentius, rather than a Magnus or Thaumastus. Certainly, the relocation of the latter two from Narbonne to the Rhône Valley casts doubts on Sidonius' belief that Magnus still remained in the circle of Consentius, even after Majorian's reign.[510] Whether Sidonius' writings truly reflected sentiments between the Narbonensian aristocracy after the Marcellan conspiracy is questionable. It could be that Sidonius' inclusion of Magnus in his panegyric to Consentius intended to reflect his own ties to the great figures of Narbonne. Sidonius might have overlooked a reality where the families of Magnus and Thaumastus no longer shared the same political leanings as the rest of Narbonne's aristocracy.

The increasing need of Narbonne's aristocracy to sustain its wealth facilitated closer ties between themselves and the nearby Visigothic administration. One example of this is Leo, who Sidonius describes as an owner of a house near Narbonne.[511] However, Sidonius does not specify whether Leo's house was in Narbonne or in its environs. Recent funerary evidence from the late antique settlement at the site of Saint

[509] Yet, it is possible that the military expedition to Spain under Majorian in 460 required a stop at Narbonne. An alliance between the imperial government and the city's elites must have been struck before then.
[510] *Carm*. 23.455.
[511] Leo of Narbonne: Heinzelmann (1982), Leo 2, 635; *PLRE* II, Leo 5, 662. Leo's house: *Carm*. 23.446–454. *VE*, 85.

Martin-le-Bas in Gruissan has shown the habitation of elites along Narbonne's Mediterranean coast between the fifth and sixth centuries.[512] While this site appears to be a non-villa settlement, the presence of seashells, bone material from marine animals, as well as hooks and net weights indicates the exploitation of coastal resources. Moreover, the site also attests to the cultivation of grape vines and olive gardens. This represents the economic exploitation of modest sites by Narbonne's elites in the city's rural surroundings. Their increased interest in production seems to agree with the observations of Sidonius who, in 463, noted the more functional aspects of Consentius' estate, especially its "fields and springs, vineyards and olive-groves".[513] In the same passage, the mention of Consentius' busy toil with the ploughshare could refer to the increasingly agricultural purpose of his estate, since Sidonius' account seeks to juxtapose Consentius' farming endeavours with his literary exploits. Whether or not Sidonius perceived an increased interest in agricultural production is difficult to ascertain from this passage. However, Sidonius' words might reflect the economic concerns of elites such as Consentius, who no longer sourced their wealth from imperial service. Other members of Narbonne's aristocratic families such as Leo may have viewed service at the nearby Visigothic court in Toulouse as a viable means to sustain their wealth.

We know that Leo served as a *consiliaris* at the Visigothic court in Toulouse. Yet, in order to make the move away from Narbonne, it is likely that he either owned property in Visigothic Aquitania, or stayed at the home of a friend there. One such friend could be Agroecius. According to the 445 inscription at Narbonne, Agroecius' donation of at least 200 *solidi* hints at his procurement of the necessary economic resources to assist with the city's church building.[514] Moreover, as suggested by the discovery of Thaumastus' disk in Toulouse, Agroecius, though a resident of Narbonne, was wealthy enough to own property along the Garonne. A relocation from Narbonne to either Toulouse or Bordeaux did not depart

[512] Granier, Sperandio, and Duperon (2023), 335–352.
[513] *Ep*. 8.4.1. See Esmonde Cleary (2013), 409, who notes that Languedoc's late antique villas were increasingly occupied as functional estates, rather than luxury residences. Loupian (Hérault) seems to be the exception. See Sivan (2011), 35–6.
[514] *CIL* 12.5336, = *ILCV* 1806 (445). Mathisen (2020), 53; Riess (2013), 85–6.

from aristocratic norms during the fourth and fifth centuries.[515] The name of Agroecius insinuates a connection with the fourth-century rhetorician Censorius Atticus Agricius, who would have owned property near to where he practised in Bordeaux.[516] Agroecius' departure to his estates in Aquitania could explain the absence of his name upon a second inscription, which relates to the donors who contributed to the construction of the Basilica of St Felix in 455.[517] Another explanation for Agroecius' reluctance to donate that year when he had done so ten years earlier suggests a change of economic fortunes. His relocation to the Garonne seemed to belong to the same financial challenges which instigated Consentius' increased agricultural activity and Leo's search for employment at the Tolosan court.

Nevertheless, it is likely that some of the aristocrats who assented to the Visigothic occupation of their city in 462 featured on the 455 inscription. Given that Salutius, one of Agroecius' co-contributors in 445, appears again as a benefactor in 455 suggests that he and his family possessed substantial economic resources as well. Similarly, another contributor to the cathedral was Lympidius, the same noble who had welcomed Sidonius into his home.[518] Sidonius' panegyric to Consentius indicates that Lympidius was present in the city around the time of the Visigothic takeover in 462. However, the absence of Consentius from both inscriptions should not preclude his patronage to the church buildings in Narbonne. As it is unlikely that Consentius would have missed an opportunity to publicise his name for posterity, a more probable scenario is that the stone inscription had broken away where his name had originally been. As Sidonius alludes in a letter to Consentius, the latter also donated to the construction of church-building near his estate.[519] Although one may only conjecture, donations from Consentius, as well as Lympidius or Salutius is evidence that several from Narbonne's aristocracy still had enough wealth and influence. At

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[515] Sivan (1993), 83–4. On the Garonne-Aude corridor of Late Antiquity, see Underwood (2020), 376–419.
[516] Censorius Atticus Agricius: Heinzelmann (1982), 547; *PLRE* I, 30. Ausonius, *Prof. Burdig.* 14. Cf. Sivan (1993), 86, who states that Agricius was an ancestor of Agroecius of Sens.
[517] See Riess (2013), 85.
[518] Lympidius: Heinzelmann (1982), 642; *PLRE* II, 695. *Carm*. 23.475.
[519] *Ep*. 8.4.4.: "... for whatever you scatter for the churches you gather for yourself. To the exercise of this virtue the following reflection could be your main incentive: though we are surrounded by never so much wealth (and wealth is falsely termed by the foolish a blessing), yet it is only what we give away that is our own; whatever we hold, passes to our heirs." See Riess (2013), 100, n.25.

the very least, these elites had ties to Narbonensian aristocrats such as Leo or Agroecius, who might have relocated to bolster their economic fortunes in Visigothic Aquitania. If so, the Narbonensian aristocracy had already established connections with members of the Visigothic court prior to 462.[520]

In discussing Theoderic's cooperation with the Gallic aristocracy, I have aimed to outline the agency of both Bordeaux and Narbonne's elites. Theoderic's appointment of Arborius as *magister militum* in 461 and then his occupation of Narbonne in 462 was not simply a result of his own actions. Instead, they were decisions which followed the directives of each group of aristocrats. At Bordeaux, Theoderic's promotion of Arborius recognised the localised authority of nearby influential families. These elites had connections with Pontius Leontius, who acted as a literary patron as well as a wealthy magnate. Through the case study on the circle of Pontius Leontius, I maintain that an Aquitanian aristocracy centred on Bordeaux continued to find opportunities for service at Theoderic's court through their ties of friendship or kinship with Pontius. If Pontius and his elites from Bordeaux had enough agency to instigate Theoderic's promotion of Arborius in 461, a similar parallel can be found in the aristocracy of Narbonne, who had also had similar autonomy during the handover of the city in 462. I have argued that it was not necessarily Agrippinus' actions which led to the Visigothic occupation of Narbonne. Instead, Agrippinus acted as a figurehead for the Narbonensian aristocracy, who favoured a Gallic leader such as Avitus. As indicated by the familial links between Consentius and Agroecius to Jovinus' usurpation, Narbonne's aristocracy consisted of families who had shown a proactiveness to promote local rulers in the past. Given the pursuit for advancement in the imperial bureaucracy by Magnus and Thaumastus, not all of Narbonne's aristocracy subscribed to the same political inclinations as Consentius or Agroecius. Nevertheless, the majority of Narbonne's elites continued to share the same political leanings. The increasing need of the Narbonensian aristocracy to sustain its wealth facilitated closer ties between

[520] Riess (2013), 91.

themselves and the nearby Visigothic administration. In the absence of the wealth which came from imperial service, greater interest in agricultural production suggests that Narbonne's leading families required alternative means to preserve their wealth and status. It is within this background that one can envisage a cooperation between the city's elites and Theoderic in 462.

2.4. *Gallic episcopate*

Modern scholars have generally acknowledged that Theoderic II adopted a mild policy towards the Nicene episcopate, particularly with regards to the intervention of his brother Frederic against Hermes' ordination as Narbonne's bishop in 462.[521] While this is true, less attention has been paid to the reasons why some clerics at Narbonne chose to support the intervention of Theoderic and his brother in ecclesiastical affairs. Although Mathisen has alluded to the existence of a faction at Narbonne, which viewed the ordination of Hermes as illegal, there is scope to examine the ambitions of those parties within Narbonne's episcopate.[522] I explore Mathisen's "faction" further in order to demonstrate that the party who opposed Hermes' ordination was a series of different groups, who endorsed the decision of Frederic, and by extension Theoderic.

Frederic's decision to oppose Hermes' efforts to appoint himself as the metropolitan bishop of Narbonne reflects several aspects about the local episcopate under Theoderic's reign, which I discuss in three subsections. The first subsection addresses the support of the city's community for a bishop like Rusticus, rather than Hermes. Rusticus' efforts to integrate the clergy and laity at Narbonne represent a

[521] Wolfram (1988), 197–8, writes that the Goths under Theoderic and his predecessors acted with "pronounced respect" for the Nicene episcopate and did not view them as an enemy. Although Harries (1994), 136, notes a policy of restraint shown by Theoderic and his brother Frideric, she believes that there remained some degree of hostility under Theoderic's relations with bishops in Aquitania and Narbonne. According to Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 41, Theoderic did not hinder the "corporate freedom" of the Gallic episcopal establishment, something which perhaps developed later under Euric. Similarly, Stadermann (2023), 233, argues that Theoderic and his brother recognised the Nicene Church as an institution in its own right. On the other side of the argument, see Poveda Arias (2023), 48–9, who suggests that early Gothic leaders may have attempted to isolate the bishops of Aquitania from the rest of Gaul. Gothic occupation "led to the decomposition of the current ecclesiastical and administrative order" within their territories.

[522] Mathisen (1989), 206–11, draws attention to the existence of a faction at Narbonne, which opposed the ordination of Hermes.

model from which Frederic seemed reluctant to depart. In the second subsection, I argue that the opposition of Frederic reflected the concerns of the church community with whom he and Theoderic had cooperated. These may have seen that Hermes' allies, particularly in Arles and elsewhere in Provence, inhibited Narbonne's metropolitan privileges. The third subsection deals with the previous independent attitude of Narbonne's former bishop, Rusticus. Through Rusticus, Narbonne's episcopate had ties with a party of independent-minded Aquitanian bishops, who maintained an interest in Hermes' ordination in 462. I demonstrate that Narbonne and Aquitanian churches shared a similar ambition to separate themselves from the bishop of Arles, whose episcopate sought support from either the state or the bishop of Rome. Like Rusticus and his Narbonensian supporters, these Aquitanian bishops seemed to draw their influence and patronage from local sources, namely eminent landowning nobles.

2.4.1 The partisans of Rusticus

Although Rusticus of Narbonne (427–461) had died in 461, there are grounds to believe that under his successor Hermes, a party which favoured Rusticus' policies continued to exist. These consisted of a mix of clergymen and laity who had formed alliances with Theoderic before the Visigothic takeover of Narbonne in 462. In addition, it seems likely that Rusticus' partisans favoured the continuation of relations with the monastic circle at St. Victor in Marseille. This party would have also wished to continue Rusticus' opposition to the metropolitan authority of the Arlesian episcopate, as evident in the attempts by Hilary of Arles and his Lérinsian allies to extend their influence. Therefore, the Visigothic intervention in the ecclesiastical affairs of Narbonne was an attempt to champion those who had supported Rusticus' episcopate, and opposed Hermes' activities.

The group of elite laymen and clergy who opposed Hermes' episcopate seemed to form an alliance with Theoderic's court. This explains the intervention of the Visigothic prince Frederic in 462, who represented this group. As suggested by the two stone lintel inscriptions of 445 and 455, a rich laity around Narbonne assisted the bishop at Narbonne with benefactions in the form of money, land, or labourers.[523] The inscription of 445 notes the collaboration between Rusticus and his clergy, notably the presbyter Ursus and the deacon Hermes. In addition, the inscription attests to the 2,100 solidi which the praetorian prefect of Gaul, Marcellus had contributed. Its reference to Marcellus' contribution suggests that the prefect was acting in an official capacity and contributed the money out of public funds. However, it is also possible that the inscription reflects the donations from other eminent members of Narbonne's elite who had contributed to the work.[524] Marcellus' contribution, alongside those from the landed elite such as Oresius, Agroecius, Deconia, and Salutius, indicates the close links between church and community at Narbonne. From the mention of these individuals upon the stone lintel, it is evident that secular individuals were benefactors of the church. The inscription of 455, dated to the twenty-ninth year of Rusticus' episcopate, noted the same partnership between church and city elites. The same Salutius had contributed again, as had Lympidius, albeit for the first time. Yet, the mutilated nature of the lintel has cut out an entire list of donors. As the complete list would have documented the involvement of Narbonne's elites, the condition of the lintel reveals only a portion of the laymen who formed part of the church faithful under Rusticus.

In Sidonius' letter to Consentius, the mention of the chapel upon Consentius' rural estate near Narbonne provides evidence for the extension of the local bishop's influence into the countryside beyond the city.[525] Whether Consentius' estate contained a chapel is uncertain. Sidonius, who intended for

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[523] The 445 lintel: *CIL* 12.5336 = *ILCV* 1806. On the circumstances of this inscription, see Shriki–Hilber (2019), 41–2, n.19. See also Mathisen (2020), 53.
The 455 lintel: *ILCV* 1806. For the text (455), see Heinzelmann (1982), 642; Marrou (1970), 340–343.
On the contributors for both lintels, see Riess (2013), 81–5; Griffe (1933), 49; Mathisen (2020), 53, 105.
[524] Cf. Loseby (1992), 150–1.
[525] *Ep*. 8.8.1.

Consentius to join the Church, referred to the chapel-like features of Consentius' home, but there is reason to believe that the elites of Narbonensis Prima were designing their estates in a way that advertised their Christian ties. Sidonius' claim of Consentius' chapel could mirror the case of the site at Loupian (Hérault), where a thirty-five-metre-long basilica lay some eight hundred metres from a villa.[526] It is important to recognise that Loupian's basilica could be evidence for the practice of rural Christianity independent of episcopal involvement, as is the possibility that it fell under the jurisdiction not of Narbonne, but Béziers. Given that Narbonne's bishop was responsible for the see at Béziers, it is possible that Rusticus exercised his influence on rural estates outside his immediate church. As suggested by the contribution of Dynamius of Béziers upon the stone lintel, Rusticus also expected the assistance of neighbouring dioceses for Narbonne's church buildings.[527] It could be that Rusticus' episcopate at Narbonne was responsible for the consecration of church buildings around the adjacent countryside of the city. An inscription of Rusticus' name upon an altar stone near the town of Minerve (Hérault) suggests that the bishop was extending his influence into the countryside of Narbonensis Prima, close to where elites would have owned properties.[528] If this is true, then it provides further support for Rusticus' efforts to incorporate rural laymen into Narbonne's ecclesiastical community. As the stone lintel inscriptions attest, there was no shortage of lay and clergy who formed Rusticus' party.

Furthermore, the inscriptions indicate Rusticus' connections to episcopal connections further afield, namely with Venerius of Marseille and the monastic circle at Saint-Victor.[529] As noted by the inscription of 445, the inclusion of a bishop from Marseille demonstrates that Rusticus' partisans included other bishops in southern Gaul. Venerius' donation of at least 100 *solidi* hints at his support towards

[526] Esmonde Cleary (2013), 185–6, 249. See Bowes (2007), 158, who suggests that Loupian's baptistery would render it a "more natural object of episcopal attention" since the villa lay near the bishoprics of Beziers and Nîmes.
[527] Dynamius of Béziers: Heinzelmann (1982), 594; Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.309, n.3. See Mathisen (1989), 207.
[528] *CIL* 12.5337: "*+RVSTICVS ANN XXX EPTS SVI FF*" or "*Rusticus anno XXX episcopatus sui fieri fecit*". On the altar inscription, see Riess (2013), 87–89.
[529] Venerius of Marseille: Heinzelmann (1982), 711.

Rusticus, which as the inscription emphasises, came from their shared experience together as fellow presbyters in the monastery at Marseille.[530] The inclusion of this monastery, which presumably is that of Saint-Victor, underlines Rusticus' determination to display where his ascetic allegiance lay. Rusticus' connection with Venerius also insinuates that both bishops were educated as presbyters under the tutelage of Proculus of Marseille. Whether Venerius was still alive at the time of the Visigothic takeover of Narbonne in 462 is improbable. However, it is possible that the inscription alludes to Rusticus' ties with not only Venerius, but several influential members of the southeastern Gallic episcopate.[531] One of these was Venerius' own successor, Eustasius of Marseille, who could have belonged to the monastic circle of Saint-Victor as a presbyter before his ordination.[532] In a letter which lists the attendees of a Gallic synod in November 463, Eustasius' prominence above other more senior bishops suggests that he held the same irregular metropolitan rank as his predecessors Proculus and Venerius.[533] Eustasius also had connections with Eutropius, who was likely a member of the Massilian monastic circle. Although Eutropius had served some time in a secular office, the author of his *Life* suggests that Eustasius had forcibly ordained him as a deacon, perhaps at Marseille.[534] The appearance of Eustasius and Eutropius at this same council alongside bishops from Viennensis, who were suffragans of the absent Leontius of Arles is informative.[535] Since bishops were unlikely to attend councils with their adversaries, it is possible that both of Venerius' protegees belonged to an anti-Leontian faction in Leontius' own province of Viennensis. If this is true, then Eutropius and Eustasius might have continued to uphold Rusticus' independence against the bishop of Arles, even after the Narbonensian bishop's death in 461.

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[530] *CIL* 12.5336 = *ILCV* 1806 (445).
[531] On the monastic circle at Marseille and its alumni, see Mathisen (1989), 119–120.
[532] Eustasius (or Eustachius) of Marseille: Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.274.
[533] Hilary of Rome, *Ep*. 3.30–32.
[534] Eutropius of Orange: Heinzelmann (1982), Eutropius 3, 604; *VEutropii*, 54. For the context of this council, see Mathisen (1989), 212–4; Poveda Arias (2023), 45–6.
[535] These bishops were Fonteius of Vaison and Paulus of Trois Châteaux. Leontius of Arles: Heinzelmann (1982), Leontius 3, 636.

In 462, Rusticus' partisans at Narbonne and in southeastern Gaul formed a group that sought to exploit the passive metropolitan authority held by the bishop of Arles over Viennensis. This is evident in the increasing autonomy of the church at Narbonne under Rusticus at the expense of its counterpart in Provence. As the inscription of 445 indicates, Rusticus' party had shown its support for Venerius and his opposition towards Hilary of Arles, who had exercised Arles' metropolitan rights beyond his province.[536] In a letter which Leo, the bishop of Rome addressed to the bishops of Viennensis, he berated those who had yielded their precedence as metropolitans.[537] In the context of unlawful ordinations by Hilary in Viennensis and Narbonensis Secunda, Leo's letter reflects the attitudes which some bishops, such as Rusticus and his partisans would have towards the extraordinary powers of the bishop of Arles.

With the exception of Constantius of Uzès, the absence of Rusticus and his suffragans from Hilary's councils at Riez (439), Orange (441), and Vaison (442) suggests that Narbonne's bishop remained opposed to Hilary's party.[538] Rusticus' opposition to Hilary also manifested itself through the control that Rusticus exercised over his bishops in Narbonensis Prima. As the aforementioned inscription of 445 illustrates, Rusticus dated the construction of church buildings in the region from his years as bishop. Hilary's death in 449 presented an opportunity for Rusticus and the bishops whom Leo had addressed in his letter to restrict the rights of Arles' new metropolitan. Despite Rusticus' non-attendance at Hilary's councils, his involvement as a consecrator of Hilary's successor Ravennius that year hints at the attempts by Narbonne's bishop to select a candidate who was not as ambitious as Hilary.[539] The role of Rusticus in Ravennius' succession to the bishopric at Arles indicates his burgeoning influence beyond his own province, as is the restricted authority of Ravennius under Rusticus. At the end of 451, Ravennius and forty-three Gallic bishops had forwarded a letter of support to Leo in Rome.[540] The appearance of

[536] Mathisen (1989), 115–116.
[537] Leo, *Ep*. 10.6. = PL. 54.628–635.
[538] For the position of Uzès within Narbonensis Prima and Constantius' support for Hilary of Arles, see Poveda Arias (2023), 41; Mathisen (1989), 113, 167.
[539] Leo, *Ep*. 40. = MGH Ep. 3.15. For the suggestion that Rusticus should not have taken part at all in Ravennius' ordination, see Mathisen (1989), 173–4.
[540] *CCSL* 148.107–110. Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.369.

Venerius of Marseille alongside Ravennius and Rusticus as the leading bishops upon the list of subscribers is evidence for Ravennius' concession of some of his authority in Provence. It is possible that his recognition of Venerius' claim to extraordinary metropolitan status reflects an increase in Rusticus' own metropolitan powers outside of Narbonensis Prima. A letter from the bishop of Rome to Rusticus around 456 refers to a rebellion against the latter, led by two presbyters named Leo and Sabinianus sometime between 455 and 456.[541] According to this letter, Rusticus' ability to mobilise both Narbonne's clergy and his *honorati* allies brought about the withdrawal of the rebellious clergymen. Although this episode insinuates that some form of dissension existed amongst the ranks of Rusticus' episcopate, his ultimate triumph attests to the clerical and lay networks at the bishop's disposal.[542] The temporal proximity of Leo and Sabinianus' rebellion to the Marcellan controversy suggests that the presbyters had attempted to use secular means to usurp Rusticus' episcopate. However, Rusticus' suppression of the revolt could also be construed as evidence for his episcopal primacy in Narbonensis Prima and Provence while the influence of the bishop of Arles diminished.

2.4.2 Hermes' alliances with Arles

Frederic, as a representative of Rusticus' party, opposed Hermes' ordination in 461 because the new bishop had established an alliance with the bishop of Arles and his own partisans.[543] These alliances in turn damaged the influence which Rusticus' episcopate had exercised in Narbonensis Prima, as well as in Provence.

[541] Leo, *Ep*. 167.1. = PL 54.1195–1209.
[542] Rusticus could have mobilised secular authority in a way that was similar to Hilary's own use of armed soldiers at Arles. Leo, *Ep*. 10.6. = PL. 54.628–635.
[543] Cf. Mathisen (1989), 208–10, who believes that Hermes belonged to Rusticus' party.

After the death of Rusticus in 461, Leontius of Arles' inability to prevent Hermes' assumption of the episcopate at Narbonne suggests that Hermes had struck an alliance with the Arlesian episcopate.[544] According to the letter from the new bishop of Rome, Hilarus, Leontius had either chosen not to prevent Hermes' accession, or was unable to.[545] It is unclear whether Rusticus had made Hermes his successor. However, Hilarus' letter indicates that Hermes, who was the bishop of Béziers around the time of Rusticus' death in 461, "presumed to the episcopate of the city of Narbonne with an execrable rashness".[546] If Hilarus can be believed, the ease with which Hermes assumed the episcopate at Narbonne hints at Leontius' inability to stop him. At the same time, Hilarus could also allude to some form of cooperation between Leontius and Hermes. We have already seen that Ravennius' ordination at Arles required the assent of multiple bishops in Provence, as well as that of Rusticus, even though his jurisdiction was for Narbonensis Prima. It is possible that the decision by Leontius not to prevent Hermes' ordination demonstrates that Leontius had assented to Hermes' assumption of the vacant Narbonensian episcopate. Given Ravennius' concessions of his own metropolitan authority to Venerius and Rusticus, Leontius may have viewed his support for Hermes' ordination as an opportunity to increase the influence of the episcopate at Arles, which had diminished under Ravennius. Leontius' appearance at the council of Vaison, which Hilary of Arles had organised in 442, indicates that Leontius was a partisan of Hilary and also strove to extend Arles' metropolitan jurisdiction.[547] His name might even reveal a relation to Leontius of Frejus, who was a member of Hilary's circle on the island monastery of Lérins.[548] Although we cannot be certain of Leontius' ties with Lérins, his affiliations with its alumni suggests that he was a partisan of the community, even if he had not been educated there.

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[544] Leontius of Arles: Heinzelmann (1982), Leontius 3, 636; Mathisen (2020), 104.
[545] MGH Ep. 3.22–3.
[546] *Ibid*.
[547] *CCSL* 148.102.
[548] Leontius of Fréjus: Heinzelmann (1982), Leontius 1, 636. Mathisen (1989), 206, n.2, suggests a connection between him and Leontius of Arles. On his ties with other prominent Lérinsians, see Mathisen (1989), 79–80.

Hermes' alliance with Leontius indicates that the former was not popular with Frederic; nor was Hermes popular with the Narbonensian clergy who he was championing. Hilarus mentions that an archdeacon by the name of John had travelled to Rome on behalf of Frederic to report Hermes' illegal ordination. John's involvement in the affair seems to represent the opposition of Narbonne's clerics against Hermes. Moreover, Hilarus refers to Hermes' own account, which claimed that the inhabitants of Béziers had expelled him from the city.[549] If Sidonius is correct in attesting the literary ties between his Narbonensian friend Consentius and those in neighbouring Béziers, Narbonne's inhabitants might have opposed Hermes' transferral from Béziers to their city.[550] Sidonius, who refers to his visit of a bishop in his panegyric to Consentius, provides a vague mention of Hermes.[551] However, Sidonius' decision to allude to Narbonne's bishop without directly stating his name does not necessarily mean that Hermes was associated with the elite circles of Narbonne. Given Sidonius' efforts to entice Consentius into a clerical career, allusions to the church and bishop suited the goals of the panegyric.[552] If Hermes did not have many secular or clerical allies at Narbonne, then it makes sense that he turned to Leontius to support his claims. Hilarus' letters also attest to Leontius' own alliances with the bishop of Vienne, Mamertus, who violated canonical regulations when he installed his own candidate to the episcopate at Die in 463.[553] Through this episode, Hilarus suggests that Leontius had once again shown his inability to prevent the actions of Mamertus. These successive incidents, namely the assumption of the episcopate at Die, as well as Hermes' transferral from Béziers to Narbonne are evidence for Leontius' attempts to preserve Arles' own influence through cooperation with other metropolitans such as Hermes. Therefore, Hermes' alliance with Leontius placed Hermes in direct conflict with an episcopal faction at Narbonne, who saw cooperation with the bishop of Arles as a departure from Rusticus' policies.

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[549] MGH Ep. 3.25–26.
[550] *Ep*. 8.4.2.
[551] *Carm*. 7.443: "...our way led to the Bishop…".
[552] Cf. Mathisen (1989), 210.
[553] MGH Ep. 3.30–32. On a narrative of the affair, see Mathisen (1989), 211–212.

The appearance of Faustus of Riez and another Gallic bishop named Auxanius at Rome is further indication that Hermes had made alliances with the bishop of Arles and his allies in order to buttress his own episcopate.[554] Hilarus shows Faustus and Auxanius as appellants for Hermes' claims in a letter to the bishops of Viennensis, Lugdunum, Narbonensis Prima and Secunda, and Alpes Poeninae on December 3, 462.[555] Although Faustus and Auxanius acted as regular delegates from the Gallic dioceses to the bishop of Rome, this does not preclude the possibility that they had a personal interest in Hermes' transferral. Whether Auxanius was the bishop of Aix or Apt is difficult to determine.[556] Yet, Auxanius had an interest in the extension of his own metropolitan authority as is evident in his promotion of a bishop in Nice, which lay in Alpes-Maritimae rather than his own province of Narbonensis Secunda. It could be that Auxanius was acting as the bishop of Aix when he travelled alongside Faustus to Rome. Auxanius' own ambitions in Provence hints at his personal interest in Hermes' ordination at Narbonne. Auxanius seemed to favour Hermes' transfer to Narbonne on the basis of the former's rivalry with the bishop of Marseille.[557] Auxanius' role in Hermes' consecration suggests that the bishop of Narbonne no longer played a threatening role as a supporter for the Massilian episcopate against Aix's metropolitan claims in Narbonensis Secunda. However, more can be gleaned from Faustus' role as an appellant.

Faustus' service as a former abbot of Lérins under Hilary's episcopate at Arles also raises the possibility that he had ties with not only Hilary, but also his Lérinsian partisans. In a poem which Sidonius dedicated to Faustus, he praised Faustus' ties with prominent members of the Lérinsian community including Maximus, Hilary, and Eucherius.[558] Faustus' membership of this circle indicates that he shared Hilary's view of Arles' metropolitan supremacy. The association with Lérins seemed to motivate Faustus' cooperation with Leontius to re-extend Arles' influence into Narbonensis Secunda

[554] Faustus of Riez: Heinzelmann (1982), Faustus 2, 607; Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.284.
[555] MGH Ep. 3.29–30. Cf. Mathisen (1989), 209–210.
[556] Auxanius: Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.282, n.5. For Auxanius as the bishop of Aix, see Griffe, *Gaule*, 2.174, n.11. See Mathisen (1989), 208, n.19, who suggests Apt. Cf. Poveda Arias (2023), 47.
[557] Cf. Mathisen (1989), 222. On Auxanius' rivalry with Marseille, see Mathisen (1989), 224.
[558] *Carm*. 17.104–115.

through an alliance with Hermes.[559] These existing ties between Leontius and his suffragan Faustus may have also manifested themselves later when both bishops were delegates of Julius Nepos to Toulouse in 475.[560] Moreover, Leontius' role as the commissioner of Faustus' work, *De Gratia*, is evidence for the support that the episcopate of Arles gave towards Faustus.[561] Sidonius attests to Faustus' frequent visits to Lérins: this suggests that he maintained his connections with the island monastery.[562] It is likely that Faustus encouraged Leontius' role in Hermes' appointment since it represented an extension of the Arlesian episcopate's influence at Narbonne. If Hermes' alliance with Faustus can be believed, the Narbonensian lay and clergy would have been unhappy to see their bishop in association with the Arlesian episcopate as well as the Lérinsian faction which supported it. As evident under Rusticus' episcopate, Narbonne's clergy and laymen had ties with Eustasius and the monastic circle of Marseille. Opposition from Rusticus' partisans against Hermes' alliances with Faustus and Auxanius seemed to exist in Marseille, as well as in Narbonne, since it represented a restriction of Narbonne's metropolitan authority vis-à-vis that of Arles and Aix.

Hermes' alliances with Leontius, Faustus, and Auxanius suggests that these played a part in Hilarus of Rome's decision to grant Constantius of Uzès with metropolitan authority. In Hilarus' letter to Leontius and the Gallic churches, the bishop of Rome decreed that though Hermes could remain as Narbonne's bishop, he no longer had metropolitan status. Yet, this decree was an arrangement which favoured the jurisdiction of Leontius and his allies within Narbonensis Prima, as it restricted the powers of Narbonnne's episcopate. It is likely that Leontius or Faustus negotiated for Constantius to receive extraordinary metropolitan status, which included "the right of ordaining bishops" in Hermes' province.[563]

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[559] Both may have viewed Hermes' willingness to cooperate with the bishop of Arles as an opportunity to cull the metropolitan authority of Narbonne's bishop.
[560] For Sidonius' views on this embassy, see *Ep*. 7.6.10.
[561] *De gratia, prol*. (*CSEL* 21.3–4).
[562] *Carm*. 16.104–106.
[563] MGH Ep. 3.26.

Moreover, Hilarus claims that he had granted metropolitan authority to Constantius due to his "his tenure in office", which indicates that the bishop of Uzès was the most senior bishop in Narbonensis Prima.[564] However, it cannot be a coincidence that Constantius was an old partisan of Hilary of Arles. As suggested by Constantius' presence at Hilary's three councils, he was also an opponent to Rusticus and his suffragans in Narbonensis Prima.[565] Despite Constantius' age, it is possible that the Lerinsians and the Arlesian episcopate continued to back his metropolitan status against Narbonne.[566] The decision to appoint Constantius as the metropolitan bishop of Narbonensis Prima in 462 indicates that Leontius and his Lérinsian allies exercised their influence in a province which Rusticus and his partisans had once controlled. As I have shown, after Rusticus' death in 461, those who supported his policies cannot have disappeared. Rather, Frederic's appeal to the bishop of Rome represented a group who opposed the efforts of Hermes to cooperate with the Arlesian episcopate. As I argue next, the independent attitude of Rusticus mirrored that of Aquitanian bishops, with whom Theoderic's court already had ties.

2.4.3 Rusticus and Aquitania

Another group which endorsed Theoderic's intervention at Narbonne was a party of Tolosan and Aquitanian clerics, who had ties with Rusticus. It is possible to view Rusticus' spirit of independence from the Arlesian episcopate in a similar way to the localism which characterised the Aquitanian episcopate of the fourth and early fifth centuries. In 314, the first church council held in Gaul saw both bishops from Bordeaux and Eauze in attendance.[567] However, by the mid-fourth century, the unity of

[564] *Ibid.*
[565] For Constantius of Uzès, see Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.314–5. On his opposition to Rusticus, see Poveda Arias (2023), 41; Mathisen (1989), 113, 118, 167.
[566] Cf. Mathisen (1989), 211, who assumes that Constantius was no longer backed by the Lerinsians and had little opportunity to exercise the metropolitan authority which Hilarus had granted him.
[567] *CCSL* 148.14–22. For a brief discussion on the purpose and wider religious implications of the council of Arles (314), see Hen (1995), 7–8.

bishops in southern Gaul appeared to wane. According to the Aquitanian cleric Sulpicius Severus, there was a distinction between Aquitanian and other Gallic legates at the Council of Rimini in 359.[568] It must be noted that Sulpicius' reference to Aquitanian separatism was likely an attempt to associate himself with Hilary of Poitiers, who had championed a group of Nicene legates at Rimini. Yet, Sulpicius' account does not preclude the existence of Gallic bishops outside of Aquitania who subscribed to Hilary's Nicene beliefs.[569] Hilary's own writings emphasise that a southwestern clique had allied with him against the heretical episcopates in Provence. In *De Synodis*, Hilary recalls that at least one other bishop from southwestern Gaul, Rhodanius of Toulouse, had aligned with his cause against an Arian party headed by Saturninus of Arles.[570] Hilary's exclusion of the bishops from Viennensis and Narbonensis in his address to his allies is further evidence of the resistance against Saturninus and his partisans, which was centred upon Poitiers and Aquitanian dioceses.[571] According to Hilary, his partisans resisted the "powers and assaults" of Saturninus, who had allied himself with the emperor Constantius II.[572] Given Saturninus' reliance upon Constantius, Hilary's account hints at the Aquitanian opposition to the Arlesian episcopate's cooperation with imperial authorities.

Another aspect of Aquitania's episcopal independence is evident in its attitudes towards Gallic bishops who used imperial intervention to deal with local ecclesiastical disputes. As a result, an episcopal network in Aquitania grew around a shared desire to deal with its own affairs. According to the

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[568] Sulp. Sev. *Chron*. 41: "...four hundred and rather more Western bishops were summoned or compelled to assemble at Ariminum; and for all of these the emperor had ordered provisions and lodgings to be provided. But that appeared unseemly to the men of our part of the world, that is, to the Aquitanians, the Gauls, and Britons, so that refusing the public supplies, they preferred to live at their own expense." For the Italian contemporary Philastrius of Brescia's distinction between Aquitania and Gaul, see *CSEL* 38.45.

[569] Paulinus of Trier: Heinzelmann (1982), Paulinus 2, 665.

[570] On Rhodanius of Toulouse's stance with Hilary, see Beckwith (2008), 45–6. For the conflict between Saturninus of Arles and Hilary of Poitiers, see Beckwith (2005), 21–38. On Saturninus, see Duchesne, *Fastes*, 1.90–1

[571] Hilary, *De Synod.* 1: "To the most dearly loved and blessed brethren our fellow bishops of the province of Germania Prima and Germania Secunda, Belgica Prima and Belgica Secunda, Lugdunensis Prima and Lugdunensis Secunda, and the province of Aquitania, and the province of Novempopulana, and to the laity and clergy of Tolosa [Toulouse] in the Provincia Narbonensis, and to the bishops of the provinces of Britain, Hilary the servant of Christ, eternal salvation in God our Lord." Mathisen (1989), 11–12, alludes to a rift between southwest and southeast when Saturninus and his "southern clique" developed an unsavoury reputation from Aquitanian clergy.

[572] For Saturninus and his faction's involvement in the exile of Hilary to Phrygia, see *De Synod.* 2–3, and Jerome *Vir. ill*. 100; Beckwith (2005), 29, 32 suggests that Saturninus and his followers had sacrificed the Gospel faith for imperial favour.

contemporary Sulpicius, a group of Aquitanian bishops including Delphinus of Bordeaux and Phoebadius of Agen appeared at a council at Zaragoza in response to the spread of Priscillianism in Spain.[573] Although Sulpicius indicates that Delphinus was the one who forced the Priscillianists away from Bordeaux, the same Aquitanian party at Zaragoza might have assisted Delphinus' efforts.[574] At a subsequent council in Bordeaux, Sulpicius suggests that Priscillian decided to appeal directly to the emperor Magnus Maximus.[575] Priscillian's decision to avoid the assembly at Bordeaux could be evidence that the unity of the region's bishops had made it difficult for Priscillian to obtain a favourable hearing. In Sulpicius' account of Priscillian's trial and execution at Trier, Martin of Tours' leadership of the Aquitanian opposition towards heavy-handed imperial intervention in ecclesiastical matters is shown.[576] Because of Sulpicius' friendship with Martin, his account reflects a very Aquitanian outlook towards Felix of Trier's cooperation with Maximus, which stresses the sanctity of Martin and his monastic friends. According to Sulpicius, Martin never attended another synod, and "kept carefully aloof from all assemblies of bishops."[577] Despite Sulpicius' biases, some bishops such as Delphinus and Phoebadius could very well have shared Martin of Tours' disgust towards Felix's associates and their readiness to seek imperial support in their persecution of heretics.[578] In addition, the precedent of Saturninus' exile of Hilary and Rhodanius provides further evidence for the development of a southwestern episcopal group who preferred to settle ecclesiastical matters on their own terms. If this is true, then it raises the possibility that Aquitanian bishops followed Martin, in order to demonstrate their stance against imperial involvement in ecclesiastical debates.

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[573] I agree with Sivan (1992), 43, who suggests that after 314, Bordeaux's episcopate would display less enthusiasm for activities beyond their immediate province. Delphinus' involvement at Zaragoza may have aimed to prevent the spread of Priscillian teachings into Aquitania. For the Council of Zaragoza: Sulp. Sev. *Chron*. 47; Hefele–LeClerq, *Conciles*, 2.66–8.
[574] Sulp. Sev. *Chron*. 48.
[575] Sulp. Sev. *Chron*. 49; For the teachings of Priscillian, Maximus' involvement, and the "Felician schism" that followed, see Mathisen (1989), 12–18; Sivan (1992), 45; Hunter (1999), 414.
[576] Sulp. Sev. *Dial*. 3.11–13; Mathisen (1989), 14.
[577] Sulp. Sev. *Dial*. 3.13.
[578] As Mathisen (1989), 14–15 says, Martin did not go to another council of Gallic bishops, but remained interested in what occurred in them. It is possible that other Aquitanian bishops reacted in a similar way.

The anti-Felician group of Aquitanian bishops which Martin championed finds agreement in the letters of Paulinus of Nola, who in 407 praised a select group of bishops for their Christian piety.

> "If indeed you today look at bishops worthy of the Lord such as Exsuperius of Toulouse, or Simplicius of Vienne, or Amandus of Bordeaux, or Diogenianus of Albi, or Dynamius of Angoulême, or Venerandus of Clermont, or Alethius of Cahors, or now Pegasius of Périgueux, you will immediately see them to be, however great the evils of this age, most worthy guardians of all faith and religion."[579]

As is evident from Paulinus' correspondence with Delphinus of Bordeaux, and his successor Amandus, Paulinus had close ties to the city of his birth and also southwestern Gaul, where all but one of these bishops occupied seats.[580] It could be that Paulinus, despite his residence in Campania, was listing the bishops whom he knew through his own Gallic network. However, Paulinus' testimony could also reflect a reality in which the anti-Felician bishops of Aquitania drew together through their mutual ascetic leanings. Another of Paulinus' correspondents, Desiderius, appears to be the same figure to whom Sulpicius dedicated his *Life of Martin*.[581] As alluded to by the writings of Jerome, Desiderius was a presbyter at Toulouse under the episcopate of Exsuperius, who was denouncing the actions of another Tolosan cleric named Vigilantius for his teachings against the cult of relics and asceticism.[582] If Sulpicius was writing for individuals such as Desiderius, it suggests that a circle of clerics in Toulouse as well as in nearby Aquitania shared Martin's ideas on monastic isolationism. Whether presbyters such as Desiderius subscribed to all of Sulpicius' writings is unclear. However, Jerome's letter to another cleric of Toulouse indicates that his addressee, namely the presbyter Rusticus, sought to join a monastic community in pursuit of an episcopate.[583] Given Jerome's ties with Proculus of Marseille, it is not a coincidence that

[579] Paul. Nol. *Ep*. 48 apud *HF* 2.13.
[580] Trout (2016), 255–6.
[581] Preface of *VMartini*. Hunter (1999), 411.
[582] Jerome, *Con. Vigil.* 3. On Vigilantius' teachings regarding the cult of relics, see Hunter (1999), 408–10.
[583] Jerome, *Ep*. 125.17.

Rusticus joined Proculus' circle of ascetics.[584] Rusticus' decision to join a monastery led by the anti-Felician Proculus insinuates a preference by the Tolosan clergy, and perhaps those from Aquitanian dioceses to associate themselves with like-minded individuals. Proculus' own connections to the disciples of Martin is also evidence for his similar view on asceticism and the cult of relics, one that united many of the Aquitanian clergy.[585] If the Tolosan presbyter Rusticus belonged to the same clerical circle to which Paulinus' list alludes, it is possible that the future bishop of Narbonne shared the same spirit of independence as his Aquitanian counterparts.

Just as Narbonne's wealthy landowners had contributed to Rusticus' church buildings, so too did the Aquitanian landowners. Both the material and documentary evidence suggest that bishops in southwestern Gaul relied upon their connections with rich, landowning individuals to establish church buildings in the city and in the countryside. This sets them apart from the episcopate in parts of Provence, whose bishops tended to inherit land through state patronage.[586] In the decades prior to the arrival of the Goths, the bishops of Bordeaux, Delphinus and Amandus, already possessed the backing of former senatorial officials such as Paulinus of Nola. Although Paulinus had by this time renounced his Aquitanian properties for a monastic life in Campania, it is possible that he had not fully yielded his proprietary interests, particularly around Bordeaux.[587] Paulinus' correspondence to Amandus indicates that he charged both the bishops and the clergy with distributing grants of land to dependents in and around Bordeaux.[588] Paulinus' evidence of a local elite, who funded church buildings, finds agreement in the *Passion of St. Saturninus*, dated to the early fifth century. Although the text mentions that the construction of a basilica in Toulouse came at a great cost, it provides no indication of the previous

[584] Mathisen (1989), 119. Since Proculus was a partisan of Constantine's regime, it is possible that he educated his monks and presbyters in an anti-Felician manner.
[585] Mathisen (1989), 30–1.
[586] Cf. Esmonde Cleary (2013), 179, has shown that there is no consistent pattern in the appropriation of former civic monuments or space as they were not always the foundation for episcopal buildings.
[587] On Paulinus' continued interest in Aquitania, see Trout (1999), 148–9.
[588] Paul. Nol. *Ep*. 15.4

owners of the land upon which the city's bishop Sylvius intended to commission the project.[589] However, if we believe the text's account of the new basilica's costliness, this hints at some form of cooperation between the Tolosan clergy and wealthy laity either to supply land or lend financial assistance to fund the project. Jerome's letter to Rusticus demonstrates that the cleric belonged to a wealthy aristocratic family.[590] If Rusticus was a native of Toulouse, it is possible that he or other clerics of aristocratic background had access to landed property around the city. Moreover, the existing ties between Toulouse's bishop Exsuperius and Paulinus could raise the possibility of aristocratic investment in the construction of a new basilica.[591]

However, one must rely upon more than just the textual evidence to understand the wealthy laity's involvement in the church buildings of Toulouse and indeed elsewhere in southwestern Gaul. When we turn to the archaeology of Gaul, there appears to be a distinction between these and episcopal structures from Provence. A comparison of church buildings erected in the towns of the southeast shows that a number emerged upon the foundations of state-owned public spaces. At Aix-en-Provence, the development of an episcopal group retained the walls of a forum complex.[592] In Arles, the relocation of a church from the peripheral intra-mural space to a more central position in the town suggests that the necessary space for ecclesiastical buildings were provided not by an individual, but by the state.[593] The

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[589] *Passio* 6: "Then the bishop, Saint Silvius, who had attained the episcopate of the aforementioned city, was preparing a beautiful and fine-looking basilica at great cost, in order to transfer the remains of the venerable martyr there—but he departed from the world before the completion of the work he had begun. After his death, Saint Exuperius, who had been elected into the highest priesthood—a man entirely free of [the desire to do] harm to any of his forebears, entirely free of envy towards any of those who were seen to be ruling the churches at that time; not only second to none, but even worthy of comparison with the blessed martyr himself, in the merits of his virtues—most industriously completed the basilica that his predecessor had faithfully begun, and auspiciously dedicated it."

[590] Jerome, *Ep*. 125.6. The letter mentions that Rusticus' mother possessed enough wealth to fund his education in the "flourishing schools of Gaul" and then also of Rome. On Rusticus' desire to enjoy the senatorial ideal of *otium*, see Griffe, *Gaule*, 2.196; Mathisen (1989), 203, n.114.

[591] Paulinus wrote a letter to Exsuperius when the latter was a priest at Bordeaux. Paul. Nol. *Ep*. 12.12; On the collaboration between bishops and rich laity at Narbonne, see Marrou (1970), 331–349, who suggests that bishops received donations so that they could fund the construction of churches.

[592] See Loseby (1992), 152, who suggests that the presence of an emperor could "facilitate and accelerate" provision for large tracts of lands to be used by the church in the urban area at Arles.

[593] Loseby (1992), 152–3; Underwood (2019), 21. Patronage from the state could have enabled Hilary of Arles to dismantle the city theatre for marble, which was used to build a new Christian basilica. *VHilarii* 20: " … qui basilicis praepositus construendis, dum marmorum crustas et theatri proscenia celsa deponeret, …"

fact that both date to the early fifth century makes sense in the context of collaboration between the members of the southeastern episcopate and secular authorities during this time.[594] Although the evidence is tentative, the continued usage of *fora* at Bordeaux, Perigueux, and Cahors beyond the late Roman period indicates that state-owned land and buildings in urban areas were not appropriated by Aquitanian bishops.[595]

In the countryside, the evidence of episcopal acquisition of land from a rich local laity in Aquitania and Novempopulana is slightly more apparent. The superimposition of Christian buildings over the late Roman villas at Séviac, as well as in Lamarque, Castelculier (Lot-et-Garonne), Moncrabeau-Bapteste (Lot-et-Garonne) and Taron (Pyrénées-Atlantiques) show the gradual spread of Christianity over the Aquitanian countryside between the fifth and sixth centuries.[596] It is likely that the spread of Christianity beyond urban communities originated from the Aquitanian bishops' desire to replicate the efforts of Martin of Tours, who was the first to do so in Gaul.[597] However, the primary issue with this evidence is that we are unsure as to whether these rural Christian communities had any attachment with the bishops in urban communities. The discovery of a fifth-century baptistery at Séviac and a baptismal basin found near the large villa at Chiragan is evidence for a bishop's presence in the countryside, particularly as they were the only clergy who could administer baptism at this time.[598] In addition, shared artistic tropes between the decorations on mosaics in rural Aquitanian villas and the sarcophagi found in urban cemeteries at Bordeaux and Toulouse alludes to a religious affinity between the countryside and city as well.[599] Although the dynamic between rural and urban areas still needs work, the bishop's ability to administer towns and countryside alike is important for our understanding of the

[594] In the early fifth century, collaboration between members of the Gallic episcopate and state in the southeast was largely centred on Arles. On Heros of Arles and his patronage under Constantine III, see Mathisen (1989), 30. For Patroclus of Arles and his ties with Constantius, see *ibid* 35–37.
[595] Esmonde Cleary (2013), 114.
[596] On Séviac, see Esmonde Cleary (2018), 62; On Lamarque, Castelculier, and Moncrabeau-Bapteste, see Jacques (2006), 9–92; On Taron, see Colin (2008), 171–177.
[597] Wightman (1985), 294.
[598] Esmonde Cleary (2013), 187
[599] For the similar geometric patterns and designs between sarcophagi found in rural areas and Bordeaux, see Février (1980), 471–3; Balmelle (1980); Sivan (1993), 137–142.

involvement by elites in the church buildings of southwestern Gaul. It is tempting to see a parallel between the baptistery at Séviac or Chirigan's baptismal basin, and the examples of Christian structures upon the villas near Narbonne. As the inscription upon the altar in Minerve demonstrates, Rusticus also managed to extend his jurisdiction into rural areas, adjacent to where Narbonne's aristocracy would have owned estates. This suggests that the contributions of Narbonne's wealthy landowners to Rusticus' church buildings mirrored similar instances of elite patronage in the dioceses of Toulouse and Aquitania.

To summarise, Fredericus' appeal to Hilarus in 462 represented a party of clergy and laymen who were supporters of Rusticus' episcopate. During Rusticus' lengthy tenure as the bishop of Narbonne, his supporters advocated for a firm metropolitan jurisdiction of Narbonensis Prima and the restriction of the Arlesian metropolitan's own authority. The "Rusticus party" opposed Hermes' ecclesiastical policies, which countered those which Rusticus had previously made. As demonstrated by the ambitions of Leontius of Arles as well as his Provençal allies, Hermes presented an opportunity for the Arlesian episcopate to reassert its metropolitan influence into Narbonensis Prima. The proud independence from the Arlesian episcopate which Rusticus' partisans endorsed mirrored the localism which characterised the Aquitanian episcopate of the fourth and early fifth centuries.

Conclusions

In Theoderic's reign there was a noticeable shift in the hierarchy of constituencies for a Gallic ruler since the time of Constantine III. The army, which was the most important constituency for Constantine, formed just as integral a part of Theoderic's decision-making. At the outset of his reign, "Gothic" nobles and their retainers dictated his policy to advance into Spain for loot. This is similar to the agency of the British army, whose leading officers orchestrated the decision to cross into Gaul soon after Constantine's accession. Further similarities can be drawn between the armies of Theoderic and Constantine as seen through the self-interested agendas of Theoderic's Roman officers. Gerontius' ambition to protect his community in northern Gaul influenced Constantine's decisions as much as the command of Nepotianus over the Visigothic armies represented Italo-Roman interests in Spain. Likewise, the appointment of Nepotianus' successor Arborius demonstrated the influence of local Aquitanian stakeholders upon Theoderic's military policy, who wished for greater protection for their communities against the threat of Aegidius north of the Loire. A final comparison between the armies of Theoderic and Constantine is evident in the unreliability of their respective allies. Agrippinus' desire to use Visigothic troops in his feud against Aegidius informed his alliance with Theoderic. Theoderic's decision to ally himself with the unpredictable *comes* echoes the transactional relationship of Constantine's alliance with the Frankish tribes, whose military support depended on Roman gold rather than ties of loyalty to the Gallic ruler. While the importance of Theoderic's military constituency remained similar as it had under Constantine, this was not necessarily the case for the imperial court.

The machinations of influential courtiers in Italy continued from Constantine into the time of Theoderic albeit to a lesser degree. A key difference between the court under both rulers was that under Theoderic, there existed a party of Gallo-Romans who were more involved in imperial affairs. Avitus' selection of his consistory in Italy showed a greater desire to appease the Gallic senators who had

supported his accession than the eminent Italo-Roman senators. Moreover, the appearance of an imperial residence at Arles also highlighted that the southeast of Gaul existed as a capital for those Gallo-Romans who wished to pursue a career in the central administration. However, these men were content to serve a Gallic appointee in Italy. Once Ricimer emerged, he ensured that the courts of Majorian and Libius Severus served the interests of his Italo-Roman senatorial allies who sought after greater protection from the Vandal raids for their properties. Although Ricimer's accession mirrors the dominance of influential courtiers such as Stilicho, Olympius, Jovius, and Constantius, the imperial court under Ricimer grew distant from the interests of Theoderic and Aquitania.

However, more local constituencies started to take precedence under Theoderic than they had during the reign of Constantine III. The main difference between the aristocracies during Theoderic's time to that of Constantine was that the former could secure the support of a larger proportion of elites in his territory than the latter. Due to the larger area which fell to Constantine, the regions of the Rhône Valley, Provence, and Narbonne contained a considerable number of aristocrats who sought after a career in the imperial administration. By the mid-fifth century, those Narbonensian and Aquitanian aristocrats who wished to do so such as Magnus or Thaumastus had already departed. This left a majority who were more accepting of the local government under the Visigoths. Indeed, Theoderic was more of a native to Aquitania than Constantine was to Provence. As observed from the aristocratic clusters at Narbonne and Bordeaux, the influential elites of southwestern Gaul expressed their status chiefly through their local political standing in society through displays of their wealth, as well as the patronage of clients.

Like the aristocracy, an increase in the importance of the episcopate as a political constituency in southwestern Gaul can also be observed. During Constantine's reign, Proculus of Marseille utilised his ties with the monastery at Saint-Victor to create an episcopal network of like-minded allies in the urban and rural dioceses of Provence. Although Rusticus and his faction also achieved a similar level of primacy as Proculus, their ability to do so was not a result of monastic alliances. Rather, the strength of the

episcopate in the Visigothic territory existed through Rusticus' close ties with the local elites, especially in Narbonne and possibly in Toulouse. As the opposition by the "Rusticus party" to the ordination of Hermes showed, the coalition between laymen and clergy was founded on a desire to combat the Arlesian episcopate's efforts to extend its authority into Narbonensis Prima. Frederic's cooperation with the incumbent episcopal faction at Narbonne is evidence for the political influence it exercised. Therefore, Theoderic's policies were driven by local armies, aristocrats, and bishops in Gaul as much as the officials around the emperor's court in Italy.

Euric and his constituencies

Introduction

As discussed in the previous chapter, each of the four constituencies were just as important to Theoderic's activity. However, under Euric, the local episcopate and aristocracy, as well as his armies, dictated his decisions more than the imperial court could. By the last quarter of the fifth century, local interest groups influenced a Gallic ruler's ability to enact policies to a greater extent.

As with Theoderic, the military officers who led the Visigothic armies played a decisive role in his actions. This is particularly clear during Euric's accession, which achieved success under the directives of Salla and Vincentius. The landholding interests of Salla and Vincentius, both of whom had served under Theoderic, motivated their collaboration with Euric to oppose Theoderic's entreaties with the neighbouring kingdoms of Remismund and Geiseric. Euric's army also consisted of individual military leaders and their armed followers, who influenced his campaigns in the Auvergne. Through the deployment of private armies led by the Gallo-Roman noble Calminius, as well as the Ostrogoth Videmer, these campaigns were a policy to acquire funds to alleviate the financial demands of Euric's regular troops. During the peaceful later years of Euric's reign, the ambitions of other military officers such as the admiral Namatius and the *dux* Victorius, played a part in the king's policy to keep order within the kingdom as well. In order to keep a stable state of affairs, Euric's commanders relied upon the support from the communities in which they served.

The individuals which formed the second constituency, that of imperial court in Italy, had less of a say upon Euric's policies. While the court of Ricimer could still somewhat influence Theoderic's decisions, this was not the case under Euric. Nevertheless, the individuals and parties at the imperial court under Anthemius, Olybrius, Glycerius, and Nepos still played a role in Euric's actions, particularly in the

negotiation of treaties and alliances. I demonstrate that Anthemius' court consisted of an eastern contingent who arrived in Italy on the orders of emperor Leo and the Constantinopolitan court. The military-minded officials within Anthemius' court caused Euric to pursue an aggressive, rather than a diplomatic approach towards Anthemius in 471. Just as the officials of Anthemius influenced his imperial court, a similar case emerged under Ricimer's patrician successors. Through Gundobad and Ecdicius, both patricians could appoint their allies to the courts of Glycerius and Julius Nepos respectively. Even though the appearance of Gallo-Roman senators at the imperial court was fleeting, certain individuals, particularly from the Auvergne, contributed to the negotiation of an *amicitia* between Euric and Nepos in 475.

Just as influential to Euric's decisions were the individuals who formed the Aquitanian aristocracy. I argue that they also played a considerable role in his accession. Theoderic's inability to protect the landowners of northern Aquitania motivated a significant section of the aristocracy to support Euric instead. At the same time, the same wealthy and influential circle of aristocrats associated with Pontius Leontius under Theoderic appeared to continue their pursuit of traditional expressions of patronage. Through their vast networks of dependents, the local authority of certain members of the Aquitanian aristocracy possessed enough influence to procure their promotion to offices under Euric. In addition, his appointments attest to the influence of the Aquitanian aristocracy, who occupied a central role in maritime trade, as well as local systems of resource exchange. A decision to relocate the Visigothic court to Bordeaux recognised the importance of the city to a flourishing Aquitanian economy, which the aristocrats controlled.

Similar to the local aristocracy, the bishops both within and adjacent to Euric's expanding kingdom had emerged as the main powerbrokers of towns and communities. Against this background, I investigate the bishops' role in instigating Euric's policies vis-à-vis certain bishops in southern Gaul. What is striking is that, despite Sidonius' lamentations about the condition of the Nicene dioceses in

Aquitania, a coexistence between king and bishop was certainly possible. The role which certain Aquitanian bishops played as local administrators in their communities during Euric's supposed "persecution" reflects the king's reliance upon Perpetuus of Tours, Nonnechius of Nantes, and Ambrosius of Cahors. The interest of townsfolk and their communities took precedence once again in the negotiation of a treaty with Euric in 474. Although Leontius of Arles, Graecus of Marseille, Basilius of Aix, and Faustus of Riez were responsible for the legation to Euric, the lay dependents of each bishop in Provence required their legates to protect their own business enterprises. Moreover, Leontius and Basilius, as metropolitans of Viennensis and Narbonensis II respectively, sought to secure a favourable outcome with Euric to consolidate their control over suffragan sees.

3.1. *Military*

The bulk of modern studies on Euric's army focus on its military function in relation to external parties, such as imperial armies or other barbarian kingdoms.[600] Due to the tendency by scholars to group the king's army as one whole entity, Euric's own interactions with his army have largely gone unnoticed, particularly at decisive moments of regime-change, campaigns, or times of peace. There has been some consideration of Euric's army as a conglomerate of different groups and individuals, with differing interests and ambitions. Among these, Peter Heather, Ralph Mathisen, and Hagith Sivan have suggested that Gothic rulers felt a need to keep their warriors "fully engaged" on the battlefield.[601] However, the ways in which an army whose loyalties had previously lain with Theoderic II could now support Euric has yet to receive attention.

In order to understand the various elements within Euric's army and the role they played in the decisions which he made, this section unpacks the idea of military loyalty further in the context of Euric. I outline this here through three main points. The first of these focuses on the differing groups of Theoderic's army during Euric's accession in 467. I establish that there was a section of disaffected soldiers, who under Salla and Vincentius instigated a conspiracy against Theoderic. Euric's alliance with these two figures ensured the "smooth" transition of power by the new ruler. In the second section, I address the use of the private armies in the Auvergne as a means to appease the financial concerns of Euric's regular troops. The third and final section considers the relations which the commanders Namatius and Victorius had with their local communities as key to Euric's policy of non-aggression after 477. The

[600] Gillett (2003), 72–3, has attributed Euric's military action in western Iberia in reference to the recalcitrance of the Sueves. Halsall (2007), 267–282, who comments on Euric's campaigns in Gaul, notes that a "Gothic force" fought against Anthemius and his allied commanders such as Riothamus and Anthemiolus. In regards to Euric's deployment of an army under Vincentius in 473, Börm (2013), 124–5, associates this to Euric's attempts to increase influence in Italy. Delaplace (2015), 250–1, has also suggested that Euric used his army to support Anthemius during the imperial "civil war" with Ricimer.

[601] Heather refers to Theoderic II in particular, and argues that the Gothic king has warriors to satisfy. However, Euric would have felt a similar need to his predecessor to send his warriors on campaign. See Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 21–2; Heather (2005), 313.

interests of these officers, who formed alliances with the inhabitants of the towns in which the troops resided, determined the lack of warfare during Euric's later years.

3.1.1. Salla and Vincentius: military landowners in Spain

Few scholars have addressed Euric's seamless transition to power in 467.[602] I argue here that the smooth operation required Euric's cooperation with the various participants within Theoderic's army who also desired a change.

I examine first the participation of Salla, whom Hydatius describes as Theoderic's ambassador to the Suevic king Remismund.[603] Given that Hydatius did not generally identify Tolosan envoys, the mention of Salla indicates that he was a figure of importance under Theoderic. Indeed, Salla's mission to Braga suggests that he was a close confidant of Theoderic. According to a later inscription, Salla held the rank of *dux*, which raises the possibility that he had served as a military officer or advisor under Theoderic.[604] The inscription, which commemorated Salla's involvement in the urban refortifications in Mérida, also provides evidence of his desire for glory and a place in the city's history. Although this inscription dates to the latter years of Euric's reign, Salla's ambitions appeared to remain unchanged in 467. As Hydatius observes, the determination of a band of Goths to reach Mérida could reflect Salla's interest in the city.[605] If Goths such as Salla already had settlements around Lusitania, it makes sense that Theoderic charged Salla with a mission to negotiate some agreement of peace with Remismund and his Sueves. However, Salla represented a group of soldiers who realised that a treaty with Remismund would not prevent Suevic plundering and instead favoured greater military intervention in order to protect the pockets of Visigothic settlements in Spain.[606] The determination of Theoderic's party to act as

[602] Heather (2005), 415–6, suggests that Euric had organised a coup against Theoderic.
[603] Hydatius 229 (233).
[604] Osland (2019), 596–8.
[605] Hydatius 239 (245) refers to the determination of a band of Goths, to reach Mérida in 468.
[606] Kulikowski (2004), 204–5, who argues that the Visigoths did not occupy the entire peninsula.

representatives of the western emperor Severus, by entering into diplomatic relations with its neighbours is corroborated by Hydatius, who writes of Theoderic's peace with Remismund.[607] After Severus' death, the absence of a western emperor hints at a scenario whereby Theoderic sought an alliance with the Vandals. Indeed, Hydatius' reference to a crushing Vandal defeat to Marcellinus in Sicily indicates there was some form of peace treaty between Carthage and Toulouse.[608] The existence of this treaty would explain the fear which Hydatius observed from the Gothic envoys following reports of a renewal in imperial military strength between 465 and 467. According to Hydatius, an embassy from Toulouse had travelled to Carthage, only to return home quickly after hearing rumours of an imperial invasion of Africa.[609] It is unclear as to what made these Gothic envoys so terrified. However, the reaction of Gothic envoys to the imperial expedition of Africa is evidence for the concerns by Salla and others at the Tolosan court who realised the futility of Theoderic's entreaties towards the neighbouring kingdoms.[610]

Salla's opposition to this position was likely to instigate his cooperation with Theoderic's brother Euric. Hydatius' account indicates that Theoderic's murder had occurred during Salla's mission to Braga because it was only upon his return to Gaul that Salla learnt of the news. However, if Hydatius obtained his information regarding the Tolosan court everytime a Gothic embassy arrived in Braga, he would not have known of Theoderic's murder until the next group of envoys. There is a greater chance that Hydatius acquired his knowledge of Tolosan affairs in the round of envoys which Euric had sent after his accession.[611] Since Hydatius does not identify Salla's involvement in Euric's first embassies, it is possible that Salla had not travelled to Braga again. Instead, it was a new envoy who informed Hydatius' account of Salla's return to Toulouse and discovery of Theoderic's death at the hands of his brother. If this is the

[607] Gillett (1999), 2–3. The period around 468 may have witnessed "some diplomatic contact" between both courts. Merrills and Miles (2010), 123; Conant (2012), 25. We may see a cooling-off of tensions between the Goths and Vandals. For relations in general between the Gothic and Vandal courts during the fifth century, see Wolfram (1990), 182. On Theoderic's peace with Remismund, see Hydatius 222 (226).
[608] Hydatius 223 (227).
[609] Hydatius 236 (240).
[610] Cf. Gillett (1999), 21–2, who argues that Euric's policy to send embassies to the Sueves represented no break from the policy of Theoderic. For the suggestion that Euric's envoys did not want to become involved in a conflict between Rome and the Vandals, see Stadermann (2023), 237, n.129.
[611] Hydatius 234 (238); Gillett (1999), 1–2.

case, it could be that Salla himself had participated in a coup against Theoderic after he had returned from his mission in Braga.

There is also reason to believe that Salla allied himself with other landowning officers in Theoderic's army such as Vincentius, who opposed Theoderic's peaceful arrangements towards his neighbours. Although Hydatius himself never attests to the replacement of Theoderic's *magister militum* Arborius by Vincentius, a letter from Hilarus of Rome indicates that the *vir illustris* Vincentius was in correspondence with the bishops of Tarraconensis in 465. Vincentius' rank of *vir illustris* suggests that he succeeded Arborius as Theoderic's *magister militum* shortly before Hilarus' letter.[612] Another letter, namely that of the intercepted message from the praetorian prefect of Gaul Arvandus to Euric, provides evidence of Vincentius' allegiance to the party of Salla. Although the original content of Arvandus' message to Euric is not extant, Sidonius offers a summary in a letter to Vincentius. According to Sidonius, Arvandus advocated for Euric to oppose a treaty with Anthemius. Whether Sidonius' addressee Vincentius was the same Vincentius who was serving under the Visigoths is unclear. Yet, it could be that Vincentius was one of Arvandus' "Gothic" military correspondents on the Loire. As Delaplace has recently stated, Sidonius, Arvandus, and Vincentius were all associates.[613] If this was the case, then Sidonius had a good reason to pen a letter that reported Arvandus' incarceration to Vincentius. Sidonius, who had served at Anthemius' court in Rome, wrote to dissuade Vincentius from supporting Arvandus' position against Anthemius. Sidonius' omission of a "great deal more mad stuff in the same vein" alludes to Vincentius' familiarity with Arvandus' proposals.[614] An alliance between the party of Vincentius and Arvandus, and Euric's court would make sense since the Gallic Chronicle of 511 reports that Vincentius later commanded armies on behalf of Euric in coastal Tarraconensis. It could be that Vincentius' family owned property in Aquitania as well as in Spain because, according to the late fourth-century Italian

[612] On Arborius' last attested mission to the Sueves: Hydatius 226 (230). On Vincentius' accession as *magister militum*, see Thiel, *Ep*. 14 = PL 58.16; Mathisen (1992), 127; Panzram (2015), 638–9; Delaplace (2015), 241–2.
[613] Delaplace (2015), 242.
[614] *Ep*. 1.7.5. *PLRE* II, Vincentius 3, 1168. Delaplace (2015), 241–2 suggests that Arvandus, Sidonius and the addressee of his letter, Vincentius were acquaintances.

senator Symmachus, the praetorian prefect of Gaul named Flavius Vincentius was responsible for the purchase of several race horses from Spain.[615] Although Symmachus wanted Vincentius' approval for Symmachus' agents to pass through Gaul into Spain to acquire the horses, it is possible that Symmachus also recognised the landholdings of the prefect's family in Spain. The prefect's relation to Theoderic's *magister militum* Vincentius suggests that Vincentius' family continued to own property in Spain into the second half of the fifth century. As indicated by a letter from the bishop of Rome in 465, Vincentius seemed already to have ties with the communities in Tarraconensis.[616] A determination to use arms to defend landholdings in the Iberian peninsula could place Vincentius in the same camp as Salla. Indeed, the chronicler of 511 does not mention Salla's involvement in these later campaigns. Moreover, the campaigns which his chronicle describes took place in Tarraconensis, rather than further west in Lusitania. While this may be the case, Vincentius' service alongside another Visigothic noble named Heldefred suggests that both men shared an interest in intervening against Suevic bands in Spain, as Salla did. Nor does the chronicler's failure to name Salla necessarily preclude his involvement with Vincentius during this campaign. It is not too far-fetched to assume that the campaigns of Vincentius, Heldefred, as well as another Visigothic noble named Gauterit represented the same policy which Salla was advocating. If Vincentius had the same intentions in 465 as he did later, it is possible to associate him with Salla's party. This would mean that Vincentius also sought for an increased Visigothic military presence in the Iberian Peninsula to protect his family's property in Tarraconensis: a departure from Theoderic's diplomatic entreaties with his neighbouring kingdoms.

Following Euric's accession in 467, the presence of various Gothic bands in Lusitania suggests that men such as Salla, Gauterit, Heldefred, or even Vincentius had travelled into Spain. In early 468, Hydatius records that a Gothic band was pursuing returning Suevic envoys from Gaul. These Sueves were

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[615] *Chron*. *Gall*. 511., a. 473. On Vincentius' ancestor, the PPO Galliarum (397–400) Vincentius, see *PLRE* II, Vincentius 6, 1169. On Symmachus' letter, see *Ep*. 9.25.
[616] Thiel, *Ep*. 14 = PL 58.16.

not merely envoys, but also raiding parties themselves. This is because when Hydatius describes the return of Suevic envoys from Carthage to Braga, he mentions that they had dispersed themselves "in their usual manner throughout various places in search of booty".[617] The band's attack on Sueves and Romans in territory near Lisbon suggests that their actions were not officially sanctioned by the king. Moreover, if the band of Goths was reliant upon pillaging and booty to sustain itself, this indicates that the Tolosan treasury was not funding their expedition. Nevertheless, the campaigns are evidence that Euric was answering to those from Salla's party who sought greater military presence against the Sueves in Spain.[618] Indeed, the fact that these bands did not operate under a known leader like Cyrila or Nepotianus, reflects Euric's lack of control over their actions. Yet, despite the absence of a clear objective for these raids into Lusitania in 468, the unsanctioned violence of these parties particularly against the Sueves was important for the loyalty of the troops towards the new king. It showed Euric's willingness to support the demands of Salla and Vincentius, whose concerns over the protection of their lands in the Iberian peninsula required a more proactive military presence than Theoderic had advocated.

3.1.2. Calminius, Ostrogoths, and Euric's private armies

Euric's efforts to satisfy the demands of his regular troops can be seen during his campaigns in Aquitania Prima and the Auvergne. There, the deployment of private armies in this region was for Euric a result of financial burdens, which the king had already made attempts to alleviate. The chronicler of 511 indicates that Euric personally commanded troops during a battle against an imperial army who had marched towards Arles in 471.[619] Although the chronicler offers a brief and nondescript account of Euric's battle against the imperial forces under Anthemiolus, it is likely that his concise writings came from

[617] Hydatius 236 (240).
[618] Hydatius 239 (245).
[619] *Chron. Gall.* 511, a. 471.

well-informed Gallic sources.[620] The scant details which the chronicler presents are both accurate and important to our understanding of Euric's decisions in 470/1, even if it offers little in the way of the reasons behind Euric's operations in the region prior to the battle. The chronicler's mention of Euric's personal attendance near Arles suggests that he sought to pressure the praetorian prefect at Arles as a way to protest the demise of tax collection.[621] Euric's troops, who had depended on two-thirds of Gallo-Roman tax revenue as their pay, may have grown increasingly discontented.[622] According to Sidonius, the Gallo-Roman governor Seronatus had introduced new taxes on behalf of the Goths.[623] Sidonius' information for Seronatus must be viewed in light of the former's efforts to denigrate the latter. Although Sidonius does not specify the exact nature of Seronatus' measures, his account might accurately reflect the dire economic circumstances which affected the Tolosan court's ability to pay its regular troops. The novel forms of taxation which Seronatus had enforced were likely motivated by the king's desperate response to generate more revenue since the curial system which supported the federate army was failing.[624] There is reason to suggest that Euric and his court might have favoured the use of private armies to acquire new lands in Aquitania Prima and the Auvergne, which was a cost-effective means of financing the main bulk of the Visigothic army. As Sidonius notes, their operations were not sustained year-round, which is evidence for an effort to avoid an expensive campaign.[625]

A letter from Sidonius to his friend and Arvernian noble named Calminius records that the latter was participating in a skirmish against his own countrymen.[626] Although Sidonius describes Calminius as a reluctant member of Euric's army, this and any assumption about the forced recruitment of

[620] Burgess (2001), 86–8, suggests that the chronicler lived and wrote in Arles, a city which gave him access to both Gallic and Spanish sources on Germanic activities in Gaul and north-eastern Spain.
[621] Another possible reason for Euric's march on Arles was a shortage of grain. On the collapse of the imperial *annona* system during the mid-fifth century, see Bonifay and Pieri (2020), 863. Cf. Kulikowski (2020), 211, who writes that Euric besieged Arles.
[622] Halsall (2007), 427–8.
[623] Seronatus: Heinzelmann (1982), 692; *PLRE* II, 995.
[624] *Ep*. 2.1.3; 5.13.2. Grig (2024), 22–3; Wolfram (1990), 226–7.
[625] *Ep*. 3.7.4.
[626] *Ep*. 5.12. Calminius: Heinzelmann (1982), 573; Mathisen (1982), 368.

Gallo-Romans by the Goths requires more thought.[627] Sidonius himself hints at a willingness from Arvernian nobles and their retinues to join the ranks of the Tolosan army. Moreover, legislation under Euric indicates that the king showed an interest towards the recruitment of private soldiers by local landowners.[628] Whether the original iteration of this particular clause pertained to Roman or Gothic command of dependents is uncertain. During the 470s, Sidonius suggests that Gallo-Roman notables such as Ecdicius used their own means to finance a highly loyal and capable group of soldiers.[629] This may mirror Calminius' command of his own private army. Euric would have seen these notables, with their private retinues as reliable and self-funded auxiliaries for his own army and worked to formalise their recruitment procedure through law. These legal processes seemed genuinely to secure the allegiance of Arvernian nobles and their dependents, as they continued to serve alongside the Gothic ranks up until the Battle of Vouille over a generation later in 507.[630] An even later source attests to a relative of Calminius, who the emperor Justinian appointed as the *dux Aquitaniae* in the early 530s. As Gregory of Tours suggests, this office was held by Victorius during the 470s.[631] If Calminius or his relative inherited Victorius' office, it is possible that the *dux Aquitaniae* was a noble who could fund his own private army as well. While Sidonius states that Calminius managed to avoid the ire of the Arvernians for his service for the Visigothic army, there were sections who were hostile towards Victorius. Gregory's account of animosity from inhabitants of Clermont towards Victorius might reflect the controversial nature of his command. It is likely that Victorius' assumption to the office of *dux Aquitaniae* recognised Victorius' popularity with certain members of the Arvernian community such as Calminius, who were willing to bring their own retinues under the dux's command. At the same time, Victorious' recruitment of Arvernians into his forces might have angered other inhabitants of the town such as Eucherius.[632]

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[627] Cf. Mathisen (1982), 368–9.
[628] *CE* 310; See Petersen (2013), 66–7.
[629] *Ep*. 3.3.7. Wickham (2005), 201–2.
[630] Mratschek (2020), 231.
[631] *Vita Calminii* 4–7 = *AASS*, Aug. III 760. On Victorius as *dux Aquitaniae*, see *HF* 2.20.
[632] *HF* 2.20.

Nevertheless, it is evident that Calminius was not the only Arvernian who had allied himself with Euric's forces.[633] For nobles like Calminius and Victorius, cooperation rather than opposition was possibly a natural response to the incursions of Euric's army into the Auvergne. Sidonius' account of the savage ways in which the Visigoths buried their dead could actually refer to a Gallo-Roman contingent in Euric's army. Hence, Sidonius insinuates a scenario whereby Calminius and Victorius' men beheaded their own dead to prevent their posthumous identification by their Gallo-Roman adversaries.[634]

The reasons for Calminius and Victorius' decisions to join forces with the Visigothic army is unclear. However, there are grounds to suggest that economic considerations played their part. Arvernian landowners were likely aware of the recent Visigothic blockade at Arles, the destruction of Anthemiolus' army, as well as the subsequent suffering which Provence's countryside endured. The military success of Euric's forces hints at its significant psychological impact which forced Arvernian nobles such as Calminius and his armed retinues to ally themselves with Euric's army. Nobles who resided in the suburbs of a city, or in the surrounding countryside would have lent their services to a victorious army faster than those whose livelihoods remained more secure behind the town walls.[635] Although Sidonius reflects an image of widespread devastation in the Auvergne, it is possible that only the towns or properties which resisted Visigothic advances suffered damage.[636] As a result, Sidonius' account did not represent those Arvernian landowners who managed to keep their assets intact by allying themselves with Visigothic forces. The alliances which Calminius, Victorius, and others forged with Euric's army indicate that they preserved swathes of arable land for their own exploitation. It appears, therefore, that these Gallo-Romans were content to lead private armies from their own expenses, under the banner of the Euric's army.

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[633] Jäger (2017), 198–199. Cf. Mathisen (1984), 166.
[634] *Ep*. 3.3.8. Cf. Petersen (2013), 477.
[635] The houses of the suburbs. *Ep*. 3.3.9.
[636] *Ep*. 3.2.1; 7.7.3. The archaeological picture of the Auvergne during this period is far from conclusive. However, there is evidence that Gallo-Roman *villae* in this region displayed a remarkable longevity. For the continuity of the largest *villae* in the Auvergne and Grande Limagne Plain from the early empire into the medieval period, see Trément, Baret, et al. (2018), 193–213. Like other Gallo-Roman poets of the fifth century, Sidonius was also an exponent of literary hyperbole. Cf. Orientius, who remarked that "all Gaul smoked as if a funeral pyre." (*Commonitorium* 2.184)

Another group of auxiliaries who helped to alleviate financial burdens were a band of Ostrogoths in the service of Videmer. According to Jordanes, the emperor Glycerius persuaded an Ostrogothic party to travel to the kingdom of the Visigoths in Gaul.[637] These Ostrogoths, who under the leadership of Videmer had arrived in the Italian peninsula from the Balkans. However, there are problems with Jordanes' information. Jordanes, who was himself of Gothic descent and a native of Constantinople, compiled and wrote his "Gothic history" on the eve of the Byzantine invasion of Ostrogothic Italy, some eighty years after Euric's campaigns in Auvergne. The *Getica* was a summary of Cassiodorus' much longer but now lost history of the Goths, which itself must have drawn from a late fifth-century Visigothic source.[638] Given Glycerius' connections with the Gibichungs and the tense state of affairs between the Goths and Burgundians during the 470s, it is odd that Gundobad's imperial court would replenish Euric's army with reinforcements. Therefore, it is more likely that Glycerius was merely a place holder and Videmer's Ostrogoths travelled on their own accord through Italy to Gaul.[639] There is difficulty in determining the intentions of Videmer and his own troops as well. In the years following the Arvernian campaigns, Sidonius remarked of the presence of Ostrogothic troops at Euric's court in Bordeaux.[640] While Sidonius' words intended to showcase the universality of Euric's hegemony through the subordination of different peoples, Videmer might have had reason to ally himself with the Tolosan king. A decade after Sidonius' praise for Euric, Ruricius of Limoges addressed a letter to a landowner named Vittamerus, who owned an estate in Aquitania.[641] The letter's mention of the pears which Vittamerus grew suggests that he exploited his property for agriculture. If this Vittamerus is the same Videmer who had led an Ostrogothic party from the Balkans, he and his followers could have offered their services to the

[637] Jordanes, 56.283–284. On Videmer: *PLRE* II, Videmer 2, 1165; Heinzelmann (1982), Videmer, 714.
[638] On the lost Visigothic source of Cassiodorus and Jordanes, see Heather (1994), 64.
[639] Cf. Wolfram (1990), 192–3, who suggests that Italy had experienced an Ostrogothic invasion in 473. As a result, Glycerius deported these Ostrogoths, under the leadership of a Videmer, to the Visigoths in Gaul.
[640] *Ep*. 8.9.5.: "...the Ostrogoth crushes the Huns… his proud spirit towards them is due to his humble obedience to his [Visigothic] patrons."
[641] Ruric. *Ep*. 2.61, 63. Schwarcz (2011), 270.

Tolosan court in exchange for settlements in Aquitania. There is a possibility that their involvement in the acquisition of Arvernian territory, alongside other auxiliary forces, allowed Euric's court to reward Videmer and his followers with new lands. The occupation of an estate in Aquitania Prima by Videmer hints at Ostrogothic involvement during the Visigothic acquisition of new territories in the Auvergne under Euric's rule.[642] Hence, in Aquitania Prima and the Auvergne, the deployment of private and self-funded armies such as those led by Videmer and Calminius should be seen as part of Euric's policy to acquire new lands. This formed a cost-effective means of financing the main bulk of the Visigothic troops.

3.1.3. Namatius, Victorius, and policy of non-aggression

The decision by Euric to pursue a policy of non-aggression relied upon the naval commander Namatius, as well as the *dux Aquitaniae* Victorius.[643] Alliances between these figures and the local communities in which they were stationed formed an important part of the Visigothic army's ability to maintain its discipline outside of campaign.

In a letter from Sidonius to an officer of the Visigothic navy, Namatius, Sidonius praises him as a model for discipline both within the barracks and on the seas.[644] Sidonius provides evidence for Namatius' commitment to his tasks as he is "kept busy by the war-trumpet and orders of the day".[645] The spare time of a naval officer such as Namatius is dedicated to weapon-cleaning and the duties of the watch.[646] However, Sidonius was intent on characterising Namatius as a Gallo-Roman noble who continued to distinguish himself through his love for literature, despite his busy naval service for the Goths. Because of this, Namatius might not have been as efficient an admiral as Sidonius describes. Even if Sidonius'

[642] Cf. Wolfram (1990), 228.
[643] On the stability which Euric was able to achieve in the last years of his reign, see Kulikowski (2020), 213.
[644] On Namatius, see Heinzelmann (1982), Namatius 2 & 3, 655; *PLRE* II, Namatius 1, 771.
[645] *Ep*. 8.6.18.
[646] *Ibid*.

account of Namatius is exaggerated, there is more to suggest that Namatius' ties with the local community contributed to the army's upkeep of stability. According to Sidonius, Namatius' father lived on an estate on the island of Oléron, around the stretch of Atlantic coast where Namatius and his troops would have patrolled.[647] However, it is probable that Namatius, his wife Ceraunia and their family lived there too. Sidonius' intrigue regarding Namatius' pursuit of hunting and building insinuates the admiral's opportunity to return to a leisurely habitation at his estates.[648] This reflects Namatius' close ties with the communities of the Atlantic coast. The shore forts at Blaye and Nantes, or the walled towns at Bordeaux and Saintes may have also provided Namatius with manpower or resources to finance the costs of a standing navy.[649] Sidonius' reference to Namatius' service alongside capable crewmen, among whom he was rightfully classed, suggests that Namatius possessed a crew who ensured that accidents on the sea would not happen.[650] It is possible to envisage a scenario where Namatius' associates, who belonged to the local communities of the Atlantic coast, formed part of his crew. The relations between Namatius, his crew, as well as the communities near to his service allowed this particular arm of Euric's forces to maintain its discipline during peacetime.

The *dux Aquitaniae* Victorius also provides evidence of another military official who benefitted from the ties he made with the local community in which he served. Sometime after 475, Euric's garrisons and their retinues undertook civilian duties in Clermont in order to remain occupied during peacetime. One of these garrisons would have followed the *dux* Victorius, who served in a military as well as an administrative capacity. Sidonius, in a letter to a priest Volusianus, praises Victorius for his generosity

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[647] *Ep*. 8.6.12. "...if you have any sense of decency you will give up shaking the plains with your free-ranging gallopings and lying in wait for the hares of Oléron; indeed, as they will rarely be caught when you are in pursuit, it is hardly worth while to disturb them by unleashing the packs in the open—unless perhaps when our friend Apollinaris drops in on you and your father, making it more fitting that they should be exercised."
[648] *Ep*. 8.6.10.
[649] On the distribution of forts in Gaul, see Drinkwater (2023), 278.
[650] *Ep*. 8.6.16. "I incline to think that with provident men, among whom you are rightly classed, there is less opportunity for accidents to happen."

regarding the funeral of a prominent abbot.[651] According to Sidonius, Victorius, who out of his reverence towards the servants of Christ, had made "complete provision of the overmounting cost [of the funeral]."[652] Sidonius' letter highlights Victorius' contribution to the local church at Clermont as a reflection of his faith and devotion to the local church at Clermont. Almost a century later, Gregory of Tours shared a similar view to Sidonius when he wrote that Victorius gave orders to build and repair churches in Clermont.[653] Although genuine faith may have instigated his contributions to the church, Victorius' efforts to win the favour of Arvernian clergymen seemed to carry a pragmatic motive as well. It is possible that the construction of these new Christian buildings were part of a larger construction programme which included the repair of secular infrastructure. Gregory's evidence of Victorius' construction suggests that these were an attempt to appease Victorius' detractors.[654] The aforementioned inscription at the Mérida bridge could provide a parallel to Victorius. Salla, on behalf of Euric, gave orders to renew the city's walls and repair its bridge.[655] However, the inscription also attests the patronage of a local notable, namely the bishop Zeno, who had persuaded Salla to undertake the building projects. It is possible to assume that Salla was responding to not only Zeno, but a request from other local elites to repair the city's ruined fortifications. Whether Salla was responsible for a permanent garrison in Lusitania is unknown. Zeno's requests to Euric's court in Toulouse might have represented a form of petition-and-response communication which Hydatius saw as common.[656] Even if Salla's presence in Mérida was sporadic and contingent upon the requests of the local notables in the city, the inscription reinforces the notion that Euric's *duces* relied upon the assent of the community in which they served.

Yet, if we read Salla's inscription at Mérida as an indication of a permanent garrison troops in Spain, it presents further insight into the interactions between Euric's *duces* and the local notables of the

[651] On Volusianus' ownership of property near Bayeux and later ordination as Bishop of Tours, see Kelly (2020), 54.
[652] *Ep*. 7.17.1–2.
[653] *Glor. mart*. 44. On Victorius' flight to Rome, see *HF* 2.20.
[654] Given the intermittent skirmishes that had taken place around the city and its suburbs, the repair of existing secular buildings was especially necessary. Fernández (2016), 122.
[655] *ICERV* 363 = *CICM* 10; Kulikowski (2005), 67–8.
[656] Osland (2019), 623–4.

city. It is likely that Salla and his garrisons monitored the route between Mérida and Toledo, and onto Tarraco, and then also the coastal route from Tarragona towards Gaul.[657] Although there is no archaeological evidence to prove this, Salla's Spanish garrison may have functioned similarly to Roman garrisons in Judea and Palestine as troops who manned small fortified stations along the roads, which were often a source of money from traders and others who used them in travel.[658] It is possible that the renewal of urban defences in Mérida restored the city's access to the rich Mediterranean ports and markets of southern Baetica.[659] The building projects in Mérida which Salla had undertaken can be seen through the *dux*'s efforts to win the favour of local magnates who relied upon the exploitation of business.[660] Therefore, the Mérida inscription, which highlights the negotiations between Salla and local notables, contributes to our understanding of Victorius' interactions with the community at Clermont. In order to achieve stability, Euric's commanders, such as Salla or Victorius, as well as Namatius, relied upon the support from the communities in which they served.

This section has treated Euric's army not as a single body of troops, but rather a collection of different individuals and groups with their own separate interests. In the first subsection, I emphasised that Euric's accession came from disaffected individuals within Theoderic's army. The alliances which Euric formed with Salla and Vincentius enabled him to secure a smooth succession to the throne. During these years, a mutual interest to depart from Theoderic's pacifist policies instigated the formation of alliances between Salla, Vincentius, and Euric. Following this, the second subsection argued that Euric had to rely upon the interests of individuals within his army again during his campaigns in Aquitania Prima. Euric's decision to ally himself with private and self-funded armies in the Auvergne aimed to find

[657] For the suggestion that the Goths in the 480s had not established permanent rulership over the entire peninsula, despite their military successes in Gaul and Spain, see Kulikowski (2020), 213. Osland (2019), 613. Cf. Stroheker (1937), 81–2, who claims that Euric had brought "den größten Teil der spanischen Halbinsel unter seine Herrschaft..."
[658] Roth (2002), 389–90.
[659] Zerjadtke (2018), 105–6. For the economic advantages (and disadvantages) that troops brought to the cities they were residing in, see Lee (1998), 231.
[660] Fernandez (2016), 114–6; Osland (2019), 613–4.

cost-effective means to finance the main bulk of the Visigothic army. In this context, the deployment of private armies under Calminius and Victorius, as well as Videmer's Ostrogoths helped to relieve the economic burden of Euric's regular troops. These campaigns in the Auvergne also served both to protect land for the likes of Calminius and Victorius, as well as provide land for Videmer and his troops. The third and final sub-section looked at the individuals in Euric's army who were responsible for the peacetime during the king's later years. Alliances between these individuals and the communities in which they were stationed formed the bedrock of stability. Namatius, for instance, relied upon his ties with his associates who resided near the fortified communities of the Atlantic coastline. Similarly, Victorius strove to ally himself with the clergy at Clermont, even if he struggled to win the favour of the local population. Nevertheless, Victorius' dedication to civil tasks such as construction, repairs, and policing reflects the importance of alliances between Euric's *duces* and the inhabitants of the locales where they were serving. As the parallel building programs of Salla in Mérida indicate, these *duces* were responding to the petitions of local notables. The common thread that exists between Euric's accession, the campaigns in Aquitania Prima, and his army's non-active service in his later years is the existence of different personalities within the Visigothic army. His decisions and policies followed the interests and agendas of these individuals and the communities which they represented.

3.2. *Imperial Court*

Recent studies have assumed that Euric negotiated treaties or alliances with an emperor in Italy who was the primary actor in negotiations with Euric's Tolosan court.[661] However, a more nuanced picture of the diplomatic interactions of Euric with the imperial court from the reigns of Anthemius to Julius Nepos is required. The main premise of this section is that Euric's relations with the Western Roman Emperor depended not upon the emperor himself, but upon those individuals who formed the emperor's court. I outline this in two main points. In the first subsection, I argue that Anthemius' court contained a strong eastern influence.[662] It is evident that in the context of the political intrigues at the Constantinopolitan court, the emperor Leo orchestrated Anthemius' appointment as Augustus in the west. Euric's policies towards Anthemius had to factor in the elements of a court which consisted of Anthemius' eastern allies and family members. The second subsection addresses the influence of Ricimer's patrician successors, namely Gundobad and Ecdicius. Gundobad's appointment of senators from the Rhône Valley to Glycerius' court, along with the involvement of Ecdicius' Arvernian allies at the court of Nepos suggests that Gallo-Romans formed an important element of the Italian court. However, the continued influence of the Italo-Roman senatorial families contributed to the end of Ecdicius' term as patrician and thus a cessation of Gallic involvement at the imperial court in Italy. Nevertheless, Gallo-Roman senators, particularly from the Auvergne, played a role in Euric's *amicitia* with Nepos in 475.

3.2.1 Eastern faction under Anthemius

[661] For the suggestion that Nepos purchased Gothic aid, see Harries (1994), 238. Delaplace (2015), 250, asserts that Euric agrees a treaty with Anthemius in 472. Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 21, state that Nepos ceded the Auvergne to Euric in 475 in exchange for reduction of Visigothic pressure on Provence. Börm (2013), 125, writes that Nepos came to an understanding with Euric through the emperor's promotion of Ecdicius to patrician and magister militum. Wood (2021), 127–8, has also argued that Nepos opened up negotiations with Euric in order to curtail the authority of the Gibichungs.

[662] I have already acknowledged elsewhere that the patrician Ricimer remained the primary figure at the Italian court.

The belligerent stance that Euric took against Anthemius stemmed from Euric's recognition of the eastern interest groups which formed the emperor's court.[663] The primary instigator of Anthemius' arrival in Italy was the eastern emperor Leo I (457–474). After this, there was Anthemius himself, who harboured dynastic ambitions for the imperial throne. The third group consisted of Anthemius' own courtiers, consisting of military officials and family members who had accompanied him from Constantinople to Rome.

We should see Anthemius's elevation as Augustus at Rome in 468 as the product of the complicated court politics in Constantinople. After the removal of potential opponents at Leo's court, Anthemius' travels to Italy formed part of a policy to create a court community which was loyal to Leo.[664] Although Leo was the imperial nominee of the *magister militum praesentalis* Aspar, who expected Leo to comply with his directives, others at the Constantinopolitan court influenced the ear of the emperor as well.[665] According to the *vita* of Daniel the Stylite, an imperial courtier named Zeno had uncovered letters from Aspar's son Ardaburius, which had incited the Persian king to attack the eastern empire, and notified Leo.[666] Daniel also reports that Leo appointed Zeno as his *comes domesticorum* in reward for his loyalty. It is likely then, that Leo formed an alliance with Zeno, which aimed to restrict the authority of Aspar and his Gothic faction at the court. A further attempt to act against Aspar is evident through Leo's betrothal of his daughter Ariadne with Zeno.[667] The account of Constantine Porphyrogenitus' *On the Ceremonies* describes Aspar's plan to marry another of his sons, Patricius, to Leo's daughter. Although Constantine's account is very late and dates to the tenth century, his book records Leo's own response to political

[663] *Ep*. 1.7.5.
[664] Croke (2021), 79.
[665] Croke (2021), 54–55.
[666] *VDanStyl.* 55.
[667] *VDanStyl.* 65.

events.[668] *On the Ceremonies*, which derives from the account of the sixth-century Byzantine diplomat Peter the Patrician, attests to an oath which Aspar agreed with the newly crowned Leo to "not plot against him [Aspar] or the state."[669] Leo's decision to reverse his agreement with Aspar indicates his intention to ensure a path of succession for his family, amidst the contending personalities at court.

Leo's concerns for the safety of his position might also have involved the senator Anicius Olybrius, who had fled Rome for the Constantinoplitan court sometime before the Vandal attack on the city in 455.[670] Olybrius' ties to both the Theodosian dynasty as well as the Vandals suggests that Leo suspected Olybrius as a potentially dangerous figure. According to the chronicle of John Malalas, who writes in the mid-sixth century, Olybrius' Theodosian relatives were responsible for the arrival of Geiseric and his Vandals in Rome. Malalas associates Rome's demise to Theodosius' daughter Eudoxia, who urged the Vandal king "to move against Maximus, the emperor of Rome."[671] On Eudoxia's involvement in Geiseric's sack of Rome, Malalas indicates that Theodosius exiled his daughter to Carthage. There are of course issues with Malalas' account. It must be recognised that Malalas was not a contemporary observer of events. Moreover, it is possible that his Chronicle borrowed propaganda from Justinian's reign, which sought to portray previous imperial dynasties in a negative light.[672] Nevertheless, Malalas' service in the office of the *Comes Orientis* at Antioch indicates that he had access to contemporary chronicles, documents and other eyewitness accounts of Leo's reign.[673] If Malalas provides an accurate representation of Olybrius and his Theodosian relatives, this would explain the decision by Leo's court, who sent the senator to Italy in 472. Olybrius' ties to the Theodosian dynasty through his marriage to Placidia suggests that Leo continued to view Olybrius as a potential claimant for the eastern throne. Olybrius' case would

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[668] McEvoy (2014), 258.
[669] *On the Ceremonies*, 1.91.
[670] *PLRE* II, Olybrius 6, 796–8. For Olybrius' career, see Demandt (2007), 174. For Geiseric's political agenda behind his sack of Rome in 455, see Merrills and Miles (2009), 116–118. Merrills and Miles also suggest that Geiseric acted as a patron for Olybrius, who was to be appointed emperor in 472.
[671] John. Mal. 366.
[672] Scott (2012), 11–12.
[673] Scott (2012), 165.

be similar to Leo's concerns towards others at the Constantinoplitan court who may also have harboured dynastic ambitions such as Anthemius.

Along with Olybrius, Aspar, and Zeno, Anthemius was another member of the Constantinoplitan court who was vying for influence under Leo.[674] Although it could be misleading to speak of Anthemius' relationship with Leo as a rivalry, Anthemius might have harboured aspirations for the eastern throne himself.[675] As *magister militum praesentalis* and patrician of the east, Anthemius already occupied a position of influence at Leo's court before he travelled to Italy.[676] In 468, Sidonius' panegyric to Anthemius on the occasion of his consulship at Rome celebrated Anthemius' connections to the Constantinoplitan court. Sidonius recalled Anthemius' relation to the praetorian prefect of the east and consul Anthemius, who had previously served as the regent of Theodosius II.[677] Anthemius shared the consulship of 455 with Valentinian, which had secured a marriage to Marcian's only daughter Aelia Marcia Euphemia.[678] Despite these credentials, Sidonius writes that Anthemius had no ambitions for the vacant throne after the death of Marcian in 457.[679] However, the claims of Anthemius' rejection of the crown might have suited the tastes of the senatorial audience at Rome, to whom Sidonius was performing. Whether Sidonius even knew about the court intrigues behind the eastern throne is uncertain. What is more concrete is that Sidonius had to construct an appealing image of Anthemius to the ears of Roman senators. When Leo selected Anthemius for the western imperial throne in 467, it was because of

[674] Anthemius: *PLRE* II, Anthemius 3, 96–8.
[675] As suggested by McEvoy (2017), 270, Anthemius' journey to Italy was in line with the policy from eastern emperors, who sent dangerous rivals to the west.
[676] McEvoy (2019), 122.
[677] *Carm*. 2.94–5. Anthemius (PPO): *PLRE* II, Anthemius 1, 93–5.
[678] *Carm*. 2.194–7, 216, 481–2; John. Mal. 368.
[679] *Carm*. 2.210–212.

Anthemius' capabilities as a leader, rather than inheritance.[680] It is possible that Sidonius overlooked the political reality of Anthemius' aspirations for the eastern throne.

In contrast to the claims of Sidonius' panegyric, Malalas indicates that it was the senate who crowned Leo as emperor in 457.[681] Although Sidonius does not mention the Constantinopolitan court, Malalas' reference to the senate provides evidence for the opposition to Anthemius' succession from a party of influential courtiers. If this was the case, Aspar and the court seemed to have genuine concerns over Anthemius' ambitions to claim the throne for himself. Indeed, the marriage to Euphemia might have already underlined Anthemius as a possible candidate to the throne. However, whether Anthemius expressed any genuine aspiration for Leo's throne is uncertain. As Anthemius' military service during the 460s indicates, Anthemius showed an ostensible loyalty to Leo.[682] Sidonius praises Anthemius for distinguishing himself during a campaign in the Balkans against a group of Goths.[683] It is possible that this very campaign was a result of the refusal by Leo's court to pay the annual subsidies to the Goths, who were allies with Aspar.[684] In all likelihood, Anthemius faced a choice to support either Aspar and his Gothic supporters, or Leo and his attempts to curb Aspar's influence at court. Aspar's involvement in denying Anthemius the crown in 457 hints at Anthemius' decision to side with Leo. Indeed, Anthemius' victory against the Goths reflects his loyalty to Leo's camp. Sidonius provides further evidence for Anthemius' loyalty in a victory against Hormidac's Huns. Despite the treasonous behaviour of one of Anthemius' commanders, Sidonius emphasises the loyalty of Anthemius, his victory, and ability to dictate terms of peace, which were likely on behalf of Leo.[685] It could be that the decision to send Anthemius to Italy represented a genuine attempt from Leo's court to place a trusted official upon the western throne.

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[680] *Carm*. 2.213–219.
[681] John. Mal. 369.
[682] On Aspar's connections with the Gothic forces during the second half of the fifth century, see Knox (2024), 266–273.
[683] Campaign against the Ostrogoths: *Carm*. 2.223–226.
[684] Heather (1994), 254–5, 256. On the annual subsidies, see Jordanes, *Get*. 270–1.
[685] Campaign against Hormidac's Huns: *Carm*. 2.235–296.

At the same time, Anthemius' prestige and marriage ties to Marcian, along with his military reputation indicates that Leo and his advisors saw Anthemius as a potential threat to Leo's position.

Anthemius' court in Italy consisted of a group of military officials who accompanied him to Italy from Constantinople as well. As Hydatius recalls, Leo had dispatched Marcellinus and other picked men as *comites* to accompany Anthemius to Italy.[686] Sidonius also notes of the "bustling doors of the Emperor [Anthemius] and his courtiers."[687] We can ascertain the identities of some of Anthemius' courtiers through the Gallic Chronicler of 511, who attests to the commands of Hermianus, Everdingus, and Thorisarius. However, their Germanic names suggest that these were members of Aspar's staff. As Knox mentions, the Goths of the Balkans could use their ties with Aspar to integrate themselves into state offices and strengthen their relations with the emperor at Constantinople.[688] However, the assumption of a conflict between Anthemius and Aspar complicates matters. It is unlikely that Aspar's supporters joined forces with a general who may have still felt spiteful towards Aspar for his role in denying Anthemius the eastern crown. Yet, Hermianus, Everdingus, and Thorisarius may have already been naturalised as Romans and owned property in Constantinople. According to Malchus of Philadelphia, Goths who had ties to the court, such as Theoderic Strabo, could own property in the city.[689] Others such as the *comes* Ostrys or the *magister militum per Thracias* Anagastes seemed to owe their advancements to Aspar.[690] These men show that it was possible to forge a career in Roman service through Aspar's patronage. Although both eventually fell out of favour with the court, there might have been officials of Gothic descent who were not partisans of Aspar. As suggested by Theophanes' evidence of the commanders in

[686] Hydatius, 230 (234). Cf. Gillett (1999), 33–4.
[687] *Ep*. 1.5.10.
[688] Knox (2024), 266–268, 272.
[689] Malchus fr. 18.4: "When the envoys arrived, Theoderic the son of Triarius made peace on condition that the Emperor supply pay and food for thirteen thousand men chosen by Theoderic; that he be made commander of two scholae;" that he receive back such of his property as he had formerly held;? that he receive one of the two generalships in the presence; and that he enjoy the honours to which he had been already advanced by Basiliscus." Theoderic Strabo: *PLRE* II, Theodericus 5, 1073–6. On Strabo's relations with the court, see Heather (1994), 251–263.
[690] Ostrys: *PLRE* II, 814–5. Anagastes: *PLRE* II, 74–5.

the eastern invasion fleet of 441, there were already plenty of high-ranking Gothic or Germanic officials around the Constantinopolitan court.[691] If this is the case, then an alliance between military men of Gothic descent and Anthemius is more than likely.

We must also consider the roles of two of Anthemius' family members at court, his eldest son Anthemiolus and his daughter Alypia. The Gallic Chronicler of 511 attests to Anthemiolus' leadership of Hermianus, Thorisarius, and Everdingus in an expedition to Gaul.[692] However, Anthemiolus' youth indicates that the three Gothic generals were more responsible for the campaign.[693] If this is the case, then Anthemiolus might have carried less of a military role and more of a ceremonial function as Anthemius' representative to appease sections of discontented Gallo-Romans at Arles.[694] As Sidonius remarks, Anthemius' Greek heritage was unpopular amongst certain groups in the west.[695] Yet, like Anthemius, Anthemiolus would have aspired to have a similarly illustrious career as his father and his ancestors had. The claims of Anthemiolus to the imperial throne through his maternal ties to Marcian hints at Leo's enthusiasm for Anthemiolus' departure from Constantinople as well. On the other hand, Alypia's role is more obscured. Whether she played an influential role at Anthemius' court is unlikely. There is evidence that Anthemius relied upon Alypia's marriage with the patrician Ricimer to reconcile himself with the court in Rome. Even though Leo had sanctioned Anthemius' proclamation, Alypia was not a relative to the incumbent emperor in Constantinople and the Italo-Roman senators may have viewed her with disdain. Nevertheless, Anthemius' decision to marry Alypia to Ricimer was an attempt by the emperor to ally himself with the western court.[696] Her ceremonial function in Italy might have mirrored that of Anthemiolus. It is important to realise that Anthemius' own imperial court consisted of family members

[691] Theoph. *am*. 5941. McEvoy (2016), 500–1.
[692] *Chron*. *Gall*. 511. a. 471.
[693] Martindale (1980), 93.
[694] Halsall (2007), 277, suggests that Anthemiolus arrived in Gaul with troops as well as diplomatic proposals.
[695] *Ep*. 1.7.5. *VE*, 54. Kulikowski (2020), 210, who states that the silent majority of the provincial elite of Gaul was against Anthemius.
[696] It is possible that the interregnum in the west between Libius Severus and Anthemius was probably caused by Leo's reluctance to back Ricimer as emperor in the West, and possibly, by the need to wait until Anthemius' daughter was old enough to marry Ricimer. I am grateful for Michael Hanaghan, who brought these suggestions to my attention.

such as Alypia and Anthemiolus, to partisans of Leo's court in Constantinople. Even if the Gallic Chronicler of 511 does not mention it, Anthemius' decision to engage in conflict against Euric must have won the agreement of his immediate family, as well as the military officials who formed the bulk of his consistory. Anthemius' own military background in the east suggests that the policies of the imperial court under Anthemius pursued a belligerent stance against Euric. Therefore, the threat of Anthemius' own ambitions, as well as his military-minded courtiers could be regarded as the catalyst for Euric's decision to pursue a front-footed policy against Anthemius in 471.[697]

3.2.2 Gauls at the imperial court of Glycerius and Julius Nepos

The agenda of imperial courtiers – namely the influential Gallic individuals who had emerged at the emperor's court since the reign of Glycerius, – played an important role in Euric's *amicitia* with Julius Nepos in 475.[698] Under Glycerius, the Gibichung patrician Gundobad alongside the Gallo-Roman senators of the Rhône Valley would have formed an important party at the Italian court. The influential Gallo-Roman contingent from Glycerius' administration continued under the reign of Julius Nepos, who through the patrician Ecdicius also appointed senators from the Auvergne to high offices at his court.

Under the brief administration of Glycerius, the imperial court included the Burgundian Gibichungs, who were functioning as imperial officials. Gundobad's status as a patrician for Glycerius meant that he operated in a similar way to his predecessor Ricimer. According to John Malalas, Ricimer's nephew Gundobad murdered Anthemius at a church in Rome in 472.[699] Even though Malalas indicates

[697] Delaplace (2015), 250, sees Euric's march to Arles as an attempt to negotiate a new *foedus* with imperial authorities, which was nothing out of the ordinary. However, in 471, the Euric's military pressure ended with a crushing defeat for Anthemius' imperial army.
[698] Stadermann (2023), 237–8, suggests that the Nepos had continued Anthemius' policy to appoint Gallo-Romans to high civil and military offices. Delaplace (2015), 254–5, argues that this agreement was the first of two treaties which Euric made in 475. The second was with the bishops of Provence, who were representing the Burgundians. See also Börm (2013), 125.
[699] John. Mal. 374.

that Gundobad resided in Gaul, it was evident that he was an extended member of Anthemius' court, through his relation to Ricimer.[700] Whether Gundobad held an office at the same time that his brother Chilperic was *magister militum per Gallias* is unlikely. However, Anthemius' attempts to replace Chilperic with Bilimer suggests that sections of the senate had already recognised the Gibichungs as established members of the imperial court.[701] If Malalas' report is correct, it could be that Gundobad accompanied the unsuspecting Anthemius into the church as a member of the emperor's bodyguard.[702] The chronicler of 511 indicates that Gibichung retainers formed the retinue of Glycerius when Euric sent Vincentius to Italy in 473.[703] Although the chronicler does not mention Gundobad himself, it is possible that the Chronicle's attestation of two individuals with Germanic names, namely Alla and Sindila, alluded to an imperial court which consisted of Gundobad's Burgundian allies.[704] Nevertheless, Gundobad secured for himself a position of high standing at the imperial court in Italy. Although Gundobad had acquired the rank of patrician under Glycerius' predecessor Anicius Olybrius, it could be that blood ties with Ricimer played a role in Gundobad's succession of Ricimer's position. At the same time, Gundobad's swift accession suggests that he was already a recognised member of Olybrius' own court.[705] It is possible that Olybrius' senatorial friends viewed Gundobad as an ally in the same way as they had for Ricimer and sanctioned Gundobad's promotion to patrician. According to the seventh-century narrative from John of Antioch, who followed Priscus' *Historia*, Gundobad promoted a *comes domesticorum* named Glycerius to emperor not long after the deaths of Ricimer and Olybrius.[706] Although Priscus was an eyewitness to the affairs of the 470s, he wrote his work from Constantinople. At the same time, Priscus' precise knowledge of western court intrigues indicates that he had contacts in Rome.[707] If Priscus had preserved a correct

[700] John. Mal. 375.
[701] Paul the Deacon, *Historia*, 15.3–5; Wood (2021), 174; Delaplace (2015), 250. Bilimer: *PLRE* II, 230; Heinzelmann (1982), 571.
[702] On armed bodyguards as part of the imperial retinue, see Whitby (2007), 520.
[703] *Chron. Gall*. 511. a. 473.
[704] Henning (1999), 100, suggests that Sindila, as Glycerius' *comites rei militaris*, was ranked higher than Alla.
[705] Cf. Wood (2021), 126–7, who suggests Gundobad had occupied himself in Liguria.
[706] Blockley (1983), 51.
[707] Prisc. fr. 62, who reports Romanus' alliance with Ricimer in 471. On Priscus' knowledge of events in Rome, see Gillett (2001), 157–8.

account of events, then it can be assumed that Glycerius had served as a *comes domesticorum* under Olybrius.[708] For Priscus, Gundobad's subsequent elevation of Glycerius to emperor incurred no reaction from Rome's senators. Rather, it was Leo who immediately sent a force under Julius Nepos to replace Glycerius. It could be that the lack of opposition from the Roman court towards Glycerius reflected the acquiescence of the Italian senators at the new patrician's decision. Priscus' contacts at Rome suggests that he would have reported senatorial opposition to Glycerius' elevation if it had indeed occurred. However, the silence on the matter indicates that Gundobad used his blood ties to Ricimer to secure the support of Olybrius' senators, who in turn endorsed Gundobad's elevation of Glycerius in March 473.

In addition, Glycerius' court may have consisted of the senators from the Rhône Valley as well.[709] At the instigation of Gundobad, Protadius was appointed as praetorian prefect of Gaul. The heading of a prefectorial edict from April 23, 473 lists Protadius, alongside Aurelianus and Felix Himelco.[710] Although Himelco can be identified as the new emperor's Italian prefect, one of Aurelianus or Protadius could have served as the praetorian prefect of Gaul, while the other was the praetorian prefect of Illyricum. Both Aurelianus and Protadius share the same name of individuals who lived in the Burgundian kingdom during the early-sixth centuries.[711] Aurelianus and Protadius' connection to the same senatorial families from the Rhône Valley who had allied themselves with the Gibichungs suggests that either Gundobad or his brother Chilperic promoted Gallo-Romans to various positions at Glycerius' court. The appointment of both men demonstrate that the senators in regions adjacent to Burgundian-occupied territory managed to secure high offices during Glycerius' reign. It is also possible that Glycerius and Gundobad retained the same Victor, who had served as Anthemius' *quaestor sacri palatii*.[712] According to Sidonius' panegyric to

[708] Glycerius: *PLRE* II, 514; Prisc. fr. 65 = John of Antioch, 209.2.
[709] Wood (2021), 127.
[710] Haenel, *Corpus Legum*. 1226, 260. Salzman (2021), Table 5.2. Protadius (PPO of Gaul or Illyricum): *PLRE* II, Protadius 2, 927; Heinzelmann (1982), Protadius 3, 676. Aurelianus (PPO of Gaul or Illyricum): *PLRE* II, Aurelianus 5, 199; Heinzelmann (1982), Aurelianus 2, 564.
[711] Protadius: *PLRE* II, Protadius 3, 927; Heinzelmann (1982), Protadius 4, 676. Aurelianus: *PLRE* II, Aurelianus 7, 200; Heinzelmann (1982), Aurelianus 5, 564.
[712] *Carm*. 1.25–8. Victor: Henning (1999), 93; *PLRE* II, Victor 4, 1158–9. Cf. Mathisen (2020), 126, who suggests that Victor was a Roman poet.

Anthemius, Sidonius hints that Victor had been his teacher at Lyon. While Victor's name suggests that he did not belong to the senatorial families of the Rhône Valley, those Gallo-Roman officials who did hail from the region appeared to retain their positions at court due to Gundobad's patrician rank.

Families who resided in the Rhône Valley such as that of Thaumastus and Apollinaris, would have also given their support to the Gibichung allies of Ricimer for hopes of advancement. However, the friendship between men such as Thaumastus and Apollinaris, and probably also Protadius and Aurelianus with Chilperic was contingent on the Gibichungs' connections to the imperial court. In a letter from Sidonius to his uncle Apollinaris, Sidonius refers to several aristocrats around Vaison who had attached themselves to the "party of the new emperor [Julius Nepos]."[713] According to Sidonius, his uncle's involvement in the plot had incurred the anger of Chilperic. It is possible to explain Chilperic's anger as a consequence of the shifting loyalties of Apollinaris, as well as his brother Thaumastus, who had previously allied themselves with the Gibichungs. Yet, once Nepos ousted Glycerius from Italy, senators from the Rhône Valley no longer could use their ties with the Gibichungs to access high imperial offices. Nevertheless, Glycerius' court community consisted of Gallic-based parties, such as Gundobad and a group of Rhône Valley senators. Although it is uncertain whether Thaumastus and Apollinaris won positions at the court of Nepos, there is evidence for Nepos' reliance upon a Gallic faction from the Auvergne at his court.

Just as Gundobad had appointed the senators of the Rhône Valley, Ecdicius might have used his title of patrician to appoint his Arvernian relatives and friends to civic offices at the court of Nepos.[714] In a letter from Sidonius to his wife Papianilla, he claimed that Ecdicius' efforts in the battlefield had secured his promotion to patrician, which Anthemius had already promised him.[715] Under Nepos, Sidonius reports that Ecdicius had finally been rewarded with the title. Whether Nepos made a concerted effort to honour

[713] *Ep*. 5.6.2.
[714] *Ep*. 5.16.1–4. Ecdicius (Nepos' *MVM*): *PLRE* II, Ecdicius 3, 383–4; Heinzelmann (1982), Ecdicius 2, 594.
[715] *Ep*. 5.16.2.

his predecessor's arrangement is uncertain. Indeed, Sidonius' own praise for Ecdicius must be viewed in light of his own kinship with the newly-promoted patrician, who was Papianilla's brother. Moreover, Sidonius' episcopal responsibility for the inhabitants of Clermont indicates that he valued Ecdicius' efforts to defend the Auvergne from the incursions of Visigothic troops.[716] It is more likely that the elevation of Ecdicius, an ally of the Burgundians, was an attempt by Nepos' administration to cooperate with the *magister militum* Chilperic against Euric's Goths.[717] Nevertheless, Sidonius' account shows that during Ecdicius' service at Nepos' court, Ecdicius represented a section of Arvernian senators and communities who wanted the emperor to provide greater support in Aquitania I.

Ecdicius' presence at the imperial court hints at his attempts to secure the promotion of his brother Agricola to praetorian prefect of Gaul. A letter of Ruricius of Limoges to the *vir illustris* Agricola attests to an office which his addressee had fulfilled during the reign of Nepos. Agricola's office at this time suggests that he succeeded Aurelianus or Protadius, and acquired the prefecture at a similar time to Ecdicius' promotion to patrician status.[718] Nepos might have also been aware of the illustrious family of Agricola, whose father Eparchius Avitus and grandfather Agricola had both served as praetorian prefects of Gaul.[719] Indeed, Sidonius' letter to Papianilla refers to the promotion of Ecdicius, which Nepos' quaestor Licinianus brought. There is no explicit mention of Agricola's office.[720] However, this does not preclude the possibility that Agricola's appointment to prefect came soon after Ecdicius' own promotion. Ecdicius' involvement in Agricola's prefecture could explain the attempts by Thaumastus and Apollinaris, who were also relatives of Sidonius and Ecdicius, to seek employment at Nepos' court.[721] It is possible that Ecdicius' replacement as *magister militum* and patrician by Orestes during the summer of 475

[716] *HF* 2.24.
[717] Cf. Wood (2021).
[718] Ruricius, *Ep*. 2.32. Salzman (2021), Table 5.3.; Henning (1999), 101, n.168. Agricola (Nepos' *PPO Galliarum*): *PLRE* II, Agricola 2, 37; Heinzelmann (1982), Agricola 2, 547; Henning (1999), 101; Mathisen (2020), 77.
[719] *Ep*. 5.16.4. Mathisen (2020), 60–1.
[720] *Ep*. 5.16.1.
[721] *Ep*. 5.6.2.

reflected the influence of the everpresent Italian senatorial elite at Nepos' court, who appealed to the emperor to prioritise Italy rather than Gaul.

The deposition of Ecdicius indicates the opposition of the Italian senators to a Gallo-Roman court. Yet it was not only Nepos who was responsible for Ecdicius' demotion.[722] According to Jordanes, Ecdicius' unsuccessful attempts to repel the Visigoths from the Auvergne led to his recall to Nepos' court, where the emperor replaced him with Orestes. However, it is likely that Jordanes does not tell the whole story of the decision to replace Ecdicius as patrician. From his residence in sixth-century Constantinople, Jordanes' account epitomised the now-lost *Gothic History* from the Italian senator Cassiodorus, who was writing his work for the Ostrogothic king Theoderic the Amal.[723] Although Cassiodorus had access to official documents, he would have overlooked the political intrigues at Nepos' court in order to fit his propagandistic narrative of the Ostrogothic dominion of Italy. It is more probable that Jordanes and Cassiodorus provided a short-hand account of Ecdicius' recall to Italy and replacement. However, if Jordanes is silent on the influence of the Italo-Roman families between the reigns of Anthemius and Nepos, Sidonius is not. Despite the appearance of Gallo-Roman senators under Gundobad and Ecdicius at the imperial court, there remained those such as Fl. Caecina Decius Basilius from whom Sidonius sought patronage during his journey to Rome in 468.[724] That Basilius' son Fl. Caecina Decius Maximus Basilius was the consul of 480 under the administration of Odoacer, and then the praetorian prefect of Italy in 483 suggests that the Decii family retained their influence around the Italian court.[725] This was to remain the case even into the reign of Theoderic the Amal, who awarded the consulship to Caecina Faustus Albinus in 493.[726]

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[722] Jordanes. *Get*. 241.
[723] Vitiello (2022), 161–2.
[724] *Ep*. 1.9.2–5.
[725] Fl. Caecina Decius Maximus Basilius iunior: *PLRE* II, 217; Henning (1999), 107. On the officeholders of Odoacer, see Salzman (2021), Table 5.4.1.
[726] Caecina Faustus Albinus: *PLRE* II, 51–2; Henning (1999), 182.

Another was the Anicii family, who may have been represented through Anicius Acilius Aginantius Faustus, at the court of his relative Olybrius. In addition to Faustus' office as the urban prefect of Rome under Olybrius, his appearance again at Odoacer's court suggests that his family remained a key interest group at the Roman court.[727] An inscription of Faustus' name on seats at the Flavian amphitheatre suggests that the family was prominent enough to reserve a row of four seats.[728] Faustus might have also wanted other senators to recognise that Roman prosperity relied upon his and his family's patronage. A dedication to Faustus for the restoration of the Atrium of Minerva, which Augustus had founded at the entrance of the Senate House in the Forum attests to the family's contribution towards the "happiness of the times" at Rome.[729] Although these inscriptions date to the period of Odoacer's administration rather than Nepos', Rome's senatorial elite might have already formed alliances with some of Nepos' courtiers, such as the commander of the imperial bodyguard Odoacer.[730] It could be that Odoacer and his senatorial allies endeavoured to curtail Ecdicius' influence at Nepos' court and force his replacement by Orestes. With the end of Ecdicius' term at the imperial court, the hopes of his Arvernian and other Gallo-Roman peers for high officeholding in Italy came to pass as well.

There is a compelling case to be made that Euric dealt with an imperial court which consisted of various parties. Euric was likely aware of the eastern investment behind the court of Anthemius, who represented the interests of the Constantinopolitan court.[731] Anthemius' departure from Constantinople to Rome was likely a result of political intrigues at the court of the emperor Leo, who sought to rid himself of potential claimants upon the eastern throne. I have argued that along with Zeno, Olybrius and Aspar, Anthemius harboured ambitions for Leo's position. Euric might have also known that Anthemius' consistory included family members such as Alypia and Anthemiolus. Through Alypia's marriage with

[727] Faustus: *PLRE* II, Faustus 4, 451–2.
[728] On the seat inscriptions: Jewell (2018), 22; Chastagnol (1992), 35–6.
[729] On the Minerva Statue: *CIL* 6.526; Machado (2021), 653.
[730] On Odoacer's presence at the Italian court, see Procopius, *Wars*, 5.1.6; Salzman (2021), 221–223.
[731] *Ep*. 1.7.5.

Ricimer, as well as Anthemiolus' diplomatic mission to Arles, both may have helped Anthemius to form alliances with the Italo-Roman and Gallo-Roman senators respectively. These alliances posed a threat to Euric's Gallic authority. Therefore, Anthemius' own ambitions as well as the military-minded courtiers which accompanied him from Constantinople to Italy forced Euric to take a belligerent stance against the new emperor.

Euric's *amicitia* with Nepos in 475 also was informed by the different Gallic strongmen who, as patricians, had occupied an influential position at the Italian court. Under Glycerius, Gundobad's succession to the role that his uncle Ricimer had previously occupied enabled him to appoint senators from the Rhône Valley such as Aurelianus or Protadius into high civic offices. During Ecdicius' term as patrician for Nepos, it is possible that he orchestrated the appointment of his brother Agricola to praetorian prefect of Gaul. The Gallo-Roman presence at the Italian imperial court, particularly from the territories which Euric's forces intended to occupy, played a role in any negotiations between Euric's administration and the courts of Nepos or Glycerius. However, Ecdicius' deposition would have resulted in his and Agricola's withdrawal from the Italian court, which continued to serve the interests of Italo-Roman senators and the Constantinopolitan court exclusively.[732] It is possible that the departure of Gallo-Roman senators from the imperial court helped to facilitate Euric's decision to abandon the *foedus* with the Italian government and announce its sovereignty sometime in 477.[733]

[732] Salzman (2021), 223–4.
[733] Delaplace (2015), 256. Cf. Kulikowski (2020), 211–213.

3.3. *Gallic aristocracy*

Scholarship on the Gallo-Roman aristocracy during the late fifth century in Gaul has emphasised that the elites appropriated ecclesiastical authority in an attempt to retain both their standing vis-à-vis their peers, and preserve their supremacy within their localities.[734] While there were indeed many aristocrats who pursued a clerical career, the pursuit of non-ecclesiastical, military or bureaucratic options were no less common.[735] The topic of aristocratic pursuit of secular positions under the Visigothic kings of the late fifth century, of which there existed quite a few, has also drawn attention.[736] However, there has been less focus on the motives behind the tendency of Aquitanian aristocrats to pursue non-ecclesiastical options. In fifth-century Aquitania, the ownership of land, as well as the patronage of clients to operate it and exploit landowning benefits was a primary tenet of aristocratic practice. This remained the case under the reign of Euric, as the regional aristocracy continued to play a central role in the Tolosan court's policy-making. The seemingly close relations between the king and the landed Aquitanian aristocracy was contingent on Euric's ability to guarantee the protection of property. Consequently, it is tempting to assume that the Gallo-Roman aristocrats who had pursued non-ecclesiastical careers were struggling to maintain their social pre-eminence in the last decades of the fifth century.[737] While many aristocrats pursued episcopal offices, there is little to suggest that the Aquitanian aristocracy diminished as an influential landowning class. Rather, a desire to retain their landed wealth informed their efforts to make a common case with Euric.

The opening subsection of this discussion investigates the apparent influence of the Aquitanian aristocracy at the outset of Euric's reign. A case study of the well-known collaboration between the

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[734] Van Dam (1985), 171, refers to a Christian Gallic society, which by the later fifth century, had already absorbed the local aristocracy. Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 37, state that when aristocrats became bishops, their "power, prestige, and wealth" transferred to their new circumstances. Most recently, see Mratschek (2020), 225–6.
[735] Halsall (2005), 52.
[736] Mathisen (1992).
[737] Mrathschek (2020), 217–8.

aristocrat Arvandus and Euric in 469 reveals much about how Aquitanian landowners expected their ownership to function and their response whenever their proprietary rights were threatened. I argue that the concerns of the Aquitanian landowners in 469 over the status of both their property and patronage of clients could explain their decision to support Euric at the outset of his reign. It is apparent that a significant number of Aquitanian aristocrats and their families continued to enjoy their rural estates unopposed, while they served in Euric's administration. Second, I discuss the ways in which aristocrats continued to preserve their status, through public displays of their wealth to dependents. Despite the pressures of clerics, who consistently persuaded their lay friends to undertake ecclesiastical careers, the allure of an aristocratic lifestyle and patronage of clients remained considerable into the final decades of the fifth century. From here, the third subsection investigates Euric's decision to establish an imperial residence at Bordeaux as part of the king's recognition of the Aquitanian economy to which the local aristocracy continued to contribute. While scholars have mostly used textual sources to explain the development of the Aquitanian aristocracy of the late fifth century, recent archaeological studies and material evidence from Aquitania and Novempopulana around a similar time can help us even further. The continued participation in production and distribution by the secular aristocracy, in both regional and inter-Atlantic trade, could provide a more complete picture of their local influence under Euric.

3.3.1 The influential Aquitanian aristocracy at the outset of Euric's reign.

Although the sources describe few details of Euric's succession, the smoothness in which it occurred indicates some degree of collaboration between a group of land-owning aristocrats and the new king. These aristocrats, who owned properties near the Loire, may have grown discontent from the illegal acquisition of land by Gothic settlers. After the death of Aegidius in 465, Hydatius remarked that since the general "no longer offered his protection [of the landowners], the Goths soon invaded the territory that he had been guarding in the name of Rome."[738] Unfortunately, it is not known what or who Aegidius was protecting. However, it is likely that the settlement of *foederati*, in a way that did not encroach upon existing properties held by landowners, was one aspect of it. Under the reign of Euric's predecessor Theoderic, several traditions record the illegal appropriation of land by bands of Goths. Yet, because of the distance between Hydatius' home in Gallaecia and the events he describes in northern Aquitania, his account of the Gothic seizure of land near the Loire is allusive. Despite these issues, Hydatius' account is reminiscent of the tradition described by Vivianus' hagiographer, who describes a similar expropriation of landowners near Saintes at a similar time.[739]

While two vague references are by no means representative of a widespread expropriation of landowners in Visigothic Aquitania, they indicate that certain Goths were not following appropriate protocol with regards to their acquisition of land. The details which Sidonius offers for the secular deeds of Simplicius, who later became the bishop of Bourges, provide additional evidence. If we look beyond Sidonius' praise for Simplicius' secular career, the aristocrat's frequent petitions to the Gothic court suggests that he was a disgruntled landowner, who protested against the illegal dispossession of his property near Bourges. Yet it also appears that Simplicius represented the landowning interests of other

[738] Hydatius, 224 (228).
[739] On the expropriation of Gallo-Roman nobles near Saintes, see *VViviani*, 4.4. For the dating of Gothic expropriation of nobiles near Saintes, refer also to the section on Theoderic and the aristocracy.

families too, especially those properties which belonged to his wife Palladia and her family. The residence of fifth and sixth-century Gallo-Roman Palladii (namely the son of the prefect Exuperantius, a wealthy aristocrat named by Gregory of Tours, and a later bishop of Saintes (c.573-c.595)) conglomerate in a region between Saintes and Poitiers.[740]

In all likelihood, Euric was not the ruler who was responsible for Simplicius' incarceration. Since Simplicius' ordination occurred in 469, his non-cleric status on the eve of the episcopal election suggests that he was a secular official at Bourges a few years earlier in 465.[741] While one cannot rely on Sidonius to provide a concrete chronology, Simplicius' incarceration in a barbarian prison was an event which appears to have occurred sometime before the episcopal election at Bourges in 469.[742] This hints that Simplicius was acting as a spokesman of aristocratic landowners not to Euric, but to his predecessor Theoderic. It is tempting to view Theoderic's incarceration of Simplicius as a trigger for aristocratic sentiment against the king, particularly from those who owned properties between Saintes and Bourges.[743] These aristocrats held Theoderic responsible for the illegal expropriation of land by his Gothic dependents and Simplicius' imprisonment perhaps severed the ties of support from several families for the king. Although the evidence remains scarce, it is still possible to suggest a tradition of dissatisfied landowners in the central northern corner of Aquitania I and II during the later years of Euric's predecessor.

The accounts of Hydatius, Vivianus' hagiographer, and Sidonius document a general trend of property-related discontent by aristocrats in both northern Aquitania and the Loire region during the late 460s. It is possible to view the well-known Arvandus episode as one which reflects an aristocratic

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[740] According to *Ep*. 7.9.24, Sidonius mentions that Simplicius's wife "descended from the illustrious stock of the Palladii." On the Palladii who resided within this region, Palladius 4, *PLRE* II, 819; Heinzelmann (1982), 661. On the Palladius (an ancestor of Palladius of Saintes) from Gregory of Tours, see *Glor. Conf*. 60.

[741] For Simplicius' government rank, see *Ep*. 7.9.14. Mathisen (2020), 122, dates Simplicus' ordination as bishop of Bourges to c.469/470.

[742] After one of his embassies to the Gothic court, Simplicius was confined in a "dark dungeon" of a barbarian prison. *Ep*. 7.9.19–20.

[743] This agrees with the account from Vivianus' hagiographer.

response towards the improper settlement of foreign peoples. Although scholars tend to regard Arvandus as a prefect rather than an aristocrat, there is reason to believe that he also had concerns regarding his own landholdings in northern Aquitania. Arvandus' call for Euric to attack the Bretons, who had settled to the north of the Loire, was no spontaneous decision. Issues related to settlement on the Loire were ongoing since the start of Arvandus' first term in 464, while Euric's predecessor Theoderic was still on the throne.[744] If one sees the Arvandus episode as representative of landowning concerns in northern Aquitania, it would highlight their discontent over the way the Bretons, and indeed other peoples were settling in the region. Despite the availability of *agri deserti* in fifth-century Aquitania and adjacent regions, Sidonius' account insinuates that the Bretons were not settling simply on deserted land.[745] Even if the details which Sidonius offers for Arvandus' pact with Euric are intentionally brief and incomplete, they are instructive to understand the aristocratic attitude against the illegal settlement of peoples on Gallic soil.[746] Moreover, scholars have understood that Arvandus was no solitary actor, but rather that he represented a wider group of discontented aristocrats.[747] What began as mere frustrations from Aquitanian landowners near the Loire would have escalated into threats of violence by the time of Arvandus' trial in 469.

We can detect some of these complaints in a letter from Sidonius to the Breton warlord Riothamus. Here, Sidonius explains the claims of a certain decurion, whose property had experienced first hand the depredations of the Breton settlement near the Loire.[748] The Bretons had apparently swindled slaves from the decurion's possession with the use of "underhanded measures".[749] Sidonius' letter provides evidence for the settlement of Bretons that was close enough to properties of existing landowners to force the displacement of their slaves. It might be incorrect to treat the case of Sidonius'

[744] Mathisen (2020), 82. Arvandus serves from 464–8.
[745] As suggested by Mathisen (2023), 27–8. *Agri deserti* were state-owned lands which lay vacant.
[746] *Ep*. 1.7.5.
[747] Drinkwater (2013), 64–5; Kulikowski (2019), 224.
[748] Mathisen (2020), 140, seems to agree that this individual was a decurion.
[749] *Ep*. 3.9.2.

decurion as representative for a general trend of slave dispossession in northern Aquitania. Even if Sidonius himself is tight lipped as to whether the claims of the decurion were justified or not, he seems to side with the plaintiff. Sidonius' message to the Breton leader perhaps hints at the independent correspondence which was occuring between aristocratic landowners and the Bretons, particularly in light of Theoderic's unwillingness to intervene in the issue. We could view *Epistle* 3.9 as a precursor to Arvandus' collaboration with Euric. As Arvandus' eventual request to Euric showed, these exchanges appeared to do little to prevent the dispossession of aristocratic property by the Bretons in northern Aquitania.

It is unlikely that the aristocrats who served in Theoderic's administration viewed the apparent inability of their king to support the interests of fellow landowners favourably. Arvandus' concerns for landowners near the Loire were shared by aristocrats such as Vincentius, who wrote to Sidonius to request an explanation of the Arvandus case.[750] His interest in the illegal settlements of the Bretons on the Loire indicates his ownership of properties in northern Aquitania as well.[751] In 465, Theoderic apparently replaced his *magister militum* Arborius with Vincentius, who continued to hold the same office under Euric.[752] The continuity of Vincentius' office during Euric's reign not only suggests that Vincentius found favour with the new ruler. It could also be that Vincentius belonged to a section of discontented but influential aristocrats such as Arvandus and Simplicius, both of whom wished for Euric to protect their interests better than Theoderic had.

There is a case to be made that aristocratic frustrations towards Theoderic grew from his inability to protect their properties. Theoderic's lack of intervention in landowning affairs appeared to cause certain aristocrats to withdraw their support for him, and turn to other Gothic candidates, one of whom was his

[750] *Ep*. 1.7.3. "You [Vincentius] asked me to tell the story of his condemnation."
[751] Cf. Delaplace (2015), 242, who suggests that Vincentius belonged to the aristocracy of southern Gaul. It is difficult to pin down possible relatives of a *Vincentii* family to a fixed location in Gaul.
[752] Martindale (1981), 1168.

brother Euric. This explains why several Gallo-Roman officials such as Vincentius could keep their offices under both rulers. It is a step further to suggest that Euric cooperated with the Aquitanian aristocracy to orchestrate a smooth coup at Toulouse. However, we can glean from the decisions which Euric pursued early in his reign (467–470), that he sought to accommodate the landholding interests of aristocrats in northern Aquitania.

We must not underestimate the influence of the aristocrats in Euric's decision to attack the Bretons. By the time of Arvandus' trial, Breton settlements did not just lie north of the Loire, as assumed by Sidonius' remarks. Rather, the site of the battle near Déols, a small town sixty kilometres southwest of Bourges, suggests that the Bretons had continued to occupy lands beyond their original settlement.[753] It is unknown as to whether these lands were *agri deserti*, Gallo-Roman farms, or lands upon which Visigoths had settled. However, it is almost certain that the southward movement of the Bretons placed them in close and threatening proximity with concerned Aquitanian landowners. Anthemius' endorsement of the ongoing Breton encroachment upon Aquitanian properties, particularly around Bourges, motivated the local aristocracy's appeal to Euric to oppose any of the emperor's activity in Gaul.[754]

In addition, Arvandus' letter-bound instructions to Euric encouraged the king to settle Goths amongst the *agri deserti* of the Auvergne. Sidonius' misinterpretation of Arvandus' correspondence with Euric indicates that Sidonius deliberately obscured this particular detail. Even if fratricide was part of Visigothic succession, he may have seen Arvandus' suggestions as far too scandalous to include. Instead, Sidonius described the arrangement in vague terms, as a division of the Gallic provinces with the Burgundians in accordance with the law of nations.[755] It is possible to see Arvandus' petition to Euric in 469 as a precursor to the king's decision to deploy armies in the Auvergne from 471. More importantly, there is reason to believe that the assumption that Arvandus and fellow landowners were lobbying for the

[753] *HF* 2.18; *Getica*, 237–8.
[754] On the cooperation between Anthemius and Riothamus, see Halsall (2007), 276; Henning (1999), 225.
[755] *Ep*. 1.7.5.

settlement of Visigoths upon vacant lands in the Auvergne according to the same terms as the Aquitanian settlement of 419. If this was the case, curial aristocrats of Aquitania I such as Seronatus would have displayed their support for Arvandus' motion.[756] Behind Sidonius' invective of Seronatus lay a process whereby Arvernian landowners aided the settlement of Visigoths through the enforcement of a tax-system. It is probable that the new taxes which Seronatus had instituted only applied for the new settlers, rather than for the existing landowners.[757] From Euric's perspective, it made little sense to provoke the anger of Arvernian landowners through expropriation or excessive taxing. Hence, Sidonius' suggestion that Seronatus was settling Goths on lands which aristocrats had already occupied is hard to believe.[758] Although Sidonius attests to Seronatus' settlement of individuals "in a sparsely populated country, not in a compact township" near the town of Javols, there may have been enough vacant land in Aquitania I, as there was in Aquitania II.[759] This presents some evidence to identify these individuals as the Visigoths whom Seronatus and local curiales were helping to settle in Aquitania I.

The eventual ceding of the Auvergne to Euric in 475 also indicates that the bulk of aristocrats in Aquitania I had to approve the decision, as their approval entailed their payment of taxes to the royal fisc at Toulouse, rather than to that of the imperial government at Arles or Rome.[760] Without the formal approval of a majority, it is unlikely that the local landowners in the region would have willingly supported the cession. However, the Aquitanian aristocrats did not just agree to coexist with their Visigothic neighbours so that they could retain their estates. For more influential landowners, their cooperation with Euric allowed them to maintain their status and use their estates to exercise their

[756] As defined by Hitchner (1992), 130; Wickham (2005), 155–6. For the assumption that curiales continued to collect taxes under Gothic regimes, see Grig (2024), 22–3.
[757] According to Sidonius, Seronatus crowded "the woods with fugitives, the farms with barbarian occupants." *Ep*. 2.1.3.
[758] Refer to the entirety of *Ep*. 2.1.
[759] *Ep*. 5.8.2.
[760] That is, if one assumes that the tax collection system continued to operate within Visigothic Aquitania by 475. See Wolfram (1990), 225. On the tax system in post-Roman states in general, see Jones (2009), 89–90; Heather (2005), 421. Heather argues that landowners needed to stay in business so they could extract the surplus of their peasants. They would then keep some of the surplus for themselves, while they pass the rest to the state (or to the Tolosan royal fisc) as revenue.

patronage over dependents. As the next subsection discusses, a considerable number of the Aquitanian aristocracy became secular officials under Euric in a bid to retain their local influence.

3.3.2 Visigothic secular office as a means of expressing their local patronage

Despite the persuasions of their episcopal colleagues, some Aquitanian aristocrats continued to view secular office under Euric as a more attractive way to retain their local standing than the pursuit of a clerical career. When Sidonius attempted to persuade Elaphius to become a priest, the latter appeared to expend his wealth through his patronage of the church at Rodez. In this community, Elaphius' building of a new baptistery on his estate reminded the local population of his capacity to dispense wealth and patronage over that of the church. Sidonius remarks that Elaphius was building "new church-roofs", at a time when scarcely anyone was repairing old ones.[761] Elaphius' building-activity indicates that at least in certain communities in Aquitania, aristocrats viewed a clerical career as one that did not truly reflect their status as a local powerbroker.

The supplication that some clerics showed to Visigothic secular officials is suggested by a letter from Ruricius of Limoges to a public official named Praesidius, where the former was interceding on behalf of two members of his congregation. Here, Ruricius expresses his client status by approaching Praesidius "as a suppliant, so that you [Praesidius] might impart and yield."[762] Since Ruricius followed a similar rhetoric in his letters of intercession to other Visigothic officials as well, we cannot rely solely upon a standard address to a lay official as evidence for episcopal supplication to secular offices.[763]

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[761] *Ep*. 4.15.1.
[762] Ruricius to Praesidius: Rur. *Ep*. 2.12. Given that Ruricius was already a bishop at the time of writing, between 490 and 500, Praesidius served Alaric, rather than Euric. However, a subsequent letter seems to indicate that Praesidius was close to retirement, as the bishop encouraged him to adopt a religious lifestyle. (*Ep*. 2.13.) If Praesidius served a fifteen year career until the midpoint of this range in 495, it is not unreasonable to see him as an official for Euric as well.
[763] See also *Ep*. 2.7 (to Elaphius); 2.20 (to Rusticus).

However, Ruricius' correspondence to Ceraunia, Namatius' wife, might offer another clue. Ceraunia adopted religious life only after Namatius' passing.[764] While Namatius served his office under Euric, it seems that Ceraunia expressed her local wealth and influence through her husband. Only once her status diminished, perhaps through the death of Namatius, and the subsequent depossession of his estate, did religious life become an option for her. However, until this occurred, an Aquitanian aristocrat's ability to express his or her exalted status came primarily through the exploitation of their secular office, or that of their relations. In Limoges as at Rodez, there were Aquitanian aristocrats who may have seen that a secular career under Euric remained the most effective way to preserve their local influence over the community. In what follows, other reasons that motivated Aquitanian aristocrats to remain in secular office rather than pursue a career in the Church must be considered.

Aquitanian aristocrats under Euric continued to pursue traditional ideals on their estates, which involved the display of influence and wealth to other aristocrats. In his letter to Namatius, Sidonius describes the appropriate activities which an Aquitanian aristocrat in the service of Euric could conduct upon a spacious property.[765] As Sidonius expects, hunting, agriculture, and construction were common pastimes which aristocrats such as Namatius and his relatives enjoyed upon the vast expanses of his estate.[766] Namatius' property on Oléron offered swathes of land for animals such as his own hunting-dogs, as well as wild boars, goats, deer, and hare. Sidonius also notes the "free-ranging galloping" which visiting aristocrats could do on Oléron.[767] Namatius' estate appeared well-suited not only to serve the needs of his family, but the needs of other journeying aristocrats as well.[768]

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[764] *Ep*. 2.15. Mathisen (1999), 159–160. Ceraunia's request to Ruricius for a painter and his apprentice seems to reflect her lack of relevant dependents (in this case, artisans). Mathisen also suggests that at the turn of the sixth century, the church at Limoges was growing in influence.
[765] On Namatius' secular office, see Mathisen (1992), 127; Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 31–2.
[766] *Ep*. 8.6.10-11.
[767] *Ep*. 8.6.12.: "...they [the hares of Oléron] will rarely be caught when you are in pursuit, it is hardly worth while to disturb them by unleashing the packs in the open—unless perhaps when our friend Apollinaris drops in on you [Namatius] and your father…"
[768] On Ruricius' visits to Namatius' property as a layman, see *Ep*. 2.1, 2.2.

Sidonius' letter to Elaphius alludes to his addressee's property near Rodez which was host to a banquet, festivals, and "numerous" crowds.[769] Elaphius' ability to build a baptistery upon his property reflects his access to both land and materials in order to construct imposing structures.[770] Although Sidonius' remarks on Elaphius' property occurred between 471 and 475, at a time when Euric had already occupied much of Aquitania Prima, some assume that Elaphius became a Visigothic official during the reign of Alaric II.[771] It is just as possible that Euric enlisted the services of Elaphius for strategic reasons, as he appeared to be a local man of influence, who had a familiarity with the villages and communities around Rodez.

Other landowners in office under Euric continued to possess estates which granted access to rivers. In a letter from Ruricius of Limoges to his friend Rusticus, Ruricius referred to Rusticus' exploitation of riverine activities in his estate near Uzerche. Aristocrats such as Rusticus could exploit the "delicacies of fishing" in the Vézère through the form of gift-giving to fellow elites as an expression of their wealth.[772] This is the same Rusticus to whom Sidonius had written earlier in the late 460s and who owned a home in Bordeaux which was comparable to Pontius Leontius' expansive estate, *Burgus*.[773] Like Elaphius, it is also uncertain when Rusticus assumed his Visigothic office. Mathisen dates Ruricius' correspondence to Rusticus between 490 and 500, by which time he had already worked in the royal administration for some time.[774] Selection of this later date meant that Rusticus was operating under the reign of Euric's successor. Rusticus' proprietary ties to Bordeaux, where Euric eventually established a court in the 470s, indicate that he spent a considerable time there, as well as in the countryside at Uzerche. It is safe to assume that Rusticus had ample opportunity to acquaint himself with the court in Bordeaux

[769] *Ep*. 4.15.1.
[770] Sidonius' references to its fortified nature also has a parallel with *Burgus*, the fortified estate of Pontius Leontius near Bordeaux. *Carm*. 2.22.
[771] Mathisen (2020), 91.
[772] Ruricius of Limoges, *Ep*. 2.54. The assumption that Rusticus was a Visigothic official comes from *Ep*. 2.20, where Ruricius was appealing to Rusticus to pardon the delict of a dependent. For Agricola, who offered to do a fishing excursion with Sidonius, see *Ep*. 2.12.1.
[773] *Ep*. 8.11.3. Sidonius saw that it was probable that Pontius Leontius or Rusticus would refuse him their lodgings since they were probably "already booked" by other aristocrats. For *Burgus*, see Mathisen (1992), 55.
[774] Mathisen (1999), 173.

and may well have acquired his position under Euric, who required the administrative expertise of aristocrats such as Rusticus.[775] Although these cases form a small sample size, they hint at the continued inhabitation of extensive and luxurious estates by the aristocrats who served in Euric's administration.

In displaying their extensive landholdings to other aristocrats, Euric's Aquitanian officials continued to exult their own status through the patronage of clients. As was the case in the earlier fifth century, lavish expressions of wealth on their properties enabled aristocrats to express their influence over the less affluent. During the consecration of a new baptistery at his estate, Elaphius exercised his patronage over the staff who work at his *castellum*, as well as the visitors.[776] Banquets such as the one he was preparing for a festival required the involvement of less-privileged staff such as cooks, slaves, messengers, and other domestic labourers on his estate. Sidonius remarks that during meals, his own head chef used a messenger to announce to the guests that the food was ready.[777] For Elaphius, as with other Aquitanian aristocrats, large gatherings were an opportunity to display his retinue of dependents, who performed the everyday duties required to operate their masters' property.

Euric's Aquitanian officials intended their dependents to reflect the status of their master. In particular, Sidonius mentions that Rusticus trained his messengers according to his own principles so that they could deliver letters with "due promptitude".[778] This was particularly impressive due to the potential inconveniences which threatened the travel of these messengers within Aquitania at the time.[779] Those who received Rusticus' letter-bearers could observe the "modesty" of their master. It is evident that the dispatch of dependents expressed the status of the patron, and stoked up approval from other aristocrats.

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[775] For the suggestion that Gallo-Roman aristocrats such as Paulinus and Sidonius had behind them "long-traditions of leadership of local society and vast amounts of accumulated know-how" of profitable lands, troublesome villages, or the best way to exploit rural properties, see Sarris (2011), 69.
[776] *Ep*. 4.15.1.
[777] *Ep*. 2.9.6. See also Mathisen (2020), 64.
[778] Sidonius also mentions the principles of Rusticus' "system", in which he trained his messengers. *Ep*. 2.11.3.
[779] *Ep*. 2.11.1-2.

However, it is also apparent that an aristocrat's assumption of office genuinely preserved his status and patronage over his dependents.

Secular officials, who did not seek Visigothic service under Euric, ran the risk of losing dependents. Sidonius' letter to a like-minded aristocrat named Eucherius shows that both men were staunch opponents to Euric's administration. However, by the 470s, this position was an increasingly marginal one and Eucherius' inability to provide effective patronage caused his own dependents to turn elsewhere. It is around this time that his son Calminius and other relatives may have "defected" to the Goths.[780] There is a chance that Eucherius' dependents perceived his gradual loss of status, and joined Euric to prevent a similar fate. Gregory of Tours refers to Eucherius' imprisonment and execution at the hands of Euric's *dux* Victorius at Clermont in the late 470s.[781] Unfortunately, neither Gregory nor Sidonius explicitly state Eucherius' position at the time of his trial. However, it is possible, given his previous sentiment, that Eucherius remained firmly against the Visigothic settlements in Aquitania. However, Gregory indicates that at the time of his death, Eucherius lacked the relevant connections to influential men to help him to overturn the charges which Victorius brought against him. The loss of status and lack of supporters may have played a larger role in Eucherius' failure to assume the bishopric at Bourges, than Sidonius' claim that Eucherius had twice married.[782]

The ability to protect one's support network and dependents therefore remained a crucial feature of an Aquitanian aristocrat's self-expression of status to their colleagues. As Rusticus and Elaphius showed, Euric's Gallo-Roman officials continued to exult their own influence through the ability to exercise patronage over dependents. The status and influence which Aquitanian aristocrats under Euric enjoyed not only came through benefactions which the king could confer upon his subjects. Rather, the

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[780] Cf. Jäger (2017), 197–9, who cites Eucherius' inability to support his entire family with food as the reason for Calminius' defection to Euric's side.
[781] *HF*, 2.20. One could make a comparison to Arvandus' trial and Simplicius of Bourges here. Arvandus apparently continued to have numerous influential supporters. Simplicius' ability to escape from a Visigothic prison may have come from his ties to influential men who could assist him out of his predicament. See also Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 36–7.
[782] *Ep*. 7.9.18. Given his lack of supporters, it is possible that Eucherius sought the safety of an ecclesiastical career at Bourges.

continuation of local trade and a flourishing Aquitanian economy could sustain their estates and traditional aristocratic lifestyle, even into the last decades of the fifth century.

3.3.3 Aristocrats and local prosperity in Aquitania during the late fifth-century

In the absence of an ecclesiastical presence in trade and commerce, the local aristocracy maintained its control in these affairs. As suggested by a letter from Sidonius, it was not uncommon for Gallo-Roman churches to employ laymen such as Amantius to purchase cargo on the docks of Marseille.[783] Although the nature of the goods which Amantius was purchasing are not specified, the letter reveals that he frequently made the journey to the Mediterranean ports on behalf of his ecclesiastical patrons in central Gaul.[784] However, their reliance on *curiales* to broker the traffic of maritime ports could preclude any direct involvement of the Gallic clergy in trade. The lack of control in maritime trade by Gallo-Roman churches seemed to exist in the sixth century as well. Gregory attests to the underhanded means to which Marseille's archdeacon resorted in order to acquire cargo from the docks: this is another indication of the episcopate's struggles to have independent control over trade.[785] While we do not have evidence for the behaviour of clergy at the Atlantic ports of Aquitania, there is little to suggest that Aquitanian dioceses controlled trade there either.[786] A letter from Ruricius of Limoges to Clarus of Eauze, dated to the last decade of the fifth century indicates that clerics also found it difficult to procure natural resources. In order for Ruricius to furnish a church at Limoges, Clarus had to find marble columns near Eauze.[787] While Ruricius does not mention the ways in which Clarus acquired the columns, it is likely that

[783] Sidonius, *Ep*. 7.7.1. Loseby (2023), 106; On late antique clerics in trade in general, see Eck (1980), 127–137.
[784] According to Sánchez-Pardo (2020), 92, it is likely that the late antique clergy required oil and wine for liturgy and church lighting, chandeliers, Eucharistic plates, patens and vases or "ampullae" for sacred oils. There is unfortunately no direct evidence for the exchange of these materials in late fifth-century Gaul.
[785] *HF* 4.43.
[786] Trade in sixth-century Gaul existed largely in private hands, as noted by Bonifay and Pieri (2020), 872. The involvement of the church was hardly noticeable in Gaul, even if bishops played an active role in the economic management of territories. In addition, it is likely that part of imported Mediterranean foodstuffs came from ecclesiastical estates in the east or in Africa.
[787] Ruricius, *Ep*. 2.64.

the marble was reused from an existing villa: this is probably not evidence for the ecclesiastical exploitation of marble quarrying in Novempopulana.[788] The lack of clear archaeological evidence for an abandonment of the villas in Novempopulana by their aristocratic owners suggests that Clarus required permission from Eauze's aristocracy in order to source the columns for Ruricius.[789] Although the quarrying industry seemed to continue into the sixth century, it is more probable that Aquitanian and Visigothic aristocrats exploited it for smaller-scale projects, such as the crafting of funerary sarcophagi.[790] Clerics such as Ruricius, nor Clarus did not necessarily have access to the source; they at least found it difficult to obtain marble directly from it. The paucity of contemporary evidence, particularly for the exploitation of other resources in Aquitania, means that it is difficult to argue for a struggle by ecclesiastical authorities to control maritime trade. However, there is enough to hint at the inconveniences which they encountered as they attempted to access resources. If this is true, it indicates a greater influence by secular aristocrats of Aquitania over the exchange of goods and materials through the Atlantic ports.

On the other hand, a more compelling argument can be made for the exploitation of Aquitanian agriculture by secular aristocrats during the last decades of the fifth century. In the late 460s, Sidonius wrote to Eutropius in an attempt to persuade the latter to pursue a public career, rather than to tend to his farm.[791] It is uncertain whether Eutropius had moved to Provence by this stage, where he seemed to own estates. However, Eutropius' relations to a previous consul of the same name, who was a native of Bordeaux, suggests that he owned land near the city as well. Sidonius refers to the profit of grain,

[788] Wood (1986), 76, suggests the failure of the quarrying industry in Novempopulana in the late fifth and sixth centuries.
[789] There is minimal clear evidence for a final abandonment of the region's villas, as assumed by Esmonde Cleary (2018), 61.
[790] Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 46–7; Esmonde Cleary (2018), 64.
[791] Sidonius, *Ep*. 1.6.3–4: "And now, for shame if you are to be left behind amongst bumpkin cowmen and snorting swineherds! If you can hold a shaky plough-handle and cut up the field, or if, stooping over the curved sickle, you can prune the flowery wealth of the meadow, or if as a down-bent delver you can turn up with your hoe the vineyard laden with heavy growth, that, forsooth, is the supreme happiness to which you aspire… Granted that your vats will foam with the produce of your extended vineyards, that your barns will show corn heaped in countless piles until they burst, that your well-fed shepherd will drive a crowded flock with full udders to the milking-pail through the odorous entrances of your sheep-folds." On Eutropius, see Eutropius 3, *PLRE* II, 444–5; Mathisen (2020), 94.

pastoralism, and viticulture, which Eutropius' estate produced. Whether the "heavy growth" from Eutropius' "extended vineyards", from his barns "heaped with corn", or "crowded flock with full udders" is evidence for a thriving Aquitanian economy is still uncertain. Sidonius' references to the wine stores and granaries in Leontius' estate near Bordeaux suggests that the productivity of Eutropius' estate was not merely an isolated incident.[792] Like Eutropius' estate, Sidonius also attests to Leontius' production of grain when he marveled at the installation of several granaries by Leontius, in anticipation of a productive harvest.[793] There are fewer references for the production of timber. However, Ruricius does mention that Visigothic aristocrats such as Freda owned an estate in the wooded forests of the Cevennes. In a letter from Ruricius to Freda, the latter had requested fir-tree shoots from Ruricius' own property near Limoges: an indication of a shared interest in forestry. Moreover, the letter also alludes to both the trees of the Cevennes on Freda's estate and their commercial use.[794] Indeed, the trees would have contained timber suitable for shipbuilding and other industrial and domestic uses.[795] While it is tempting to see the riverine transport of Cevennes timber along the Tarn and Garonne to the larger cities of Visigothic Aquitania, this theory is unlikely. It is more probable that source sites closer to Bordeaux, such as the considerable woodland on Ausonius' estate, continued to supply wood for the city.[796] Nevertheless, Ruricius' letter shows that aristocrats such as Freda had an eager interest in arboriculture and continued to exploit the forests in Aquitania for production into the last decades of the fifth century. Freda can be situated within the broader context of a secular aristocracy, who under Euric's rule, maintained an interest in agricultural

[792] Sidonius, *Carm*. 22. 219.
[793] Sidonius, *Carm*. 22.167-173, 187.
[794] Mathisen (1999), 122, n. 2. Ruricius, *Ep*. 1.11: "I have sent, as you enjoined, shoots from my fir trees, which are sure to please not by their beauty, but by their length, admirable not for their fruits but for their peregrinations, unfitted for use but delightful in charm…And this transpires among those most lustrous trees of a different kind, which excel as much by beauty as by utility: abundant with produce, distinctive in bloom, fragrant in smell. Indeed, your industry endows them with what the nature of the soil did not produce."
[795] Namely deciduous *quercus* (oakwood) and *abies* (firwood). On the types of timber ideal for Roman shipbuilding, see Allevato, Russo Ermolli, di Pasquale (2009), 33–42.
[796] Ausonius, *Carm*. 1.24–25: "My woodland is more than twice as much as my pasture, vineyard and tilth together." On the timber industry in late antique Novempopulana, see Esmonde Cleary (2018), 56.

production.[797] It is not certain whether Aquitanian aristocrats intended to exploit their agriculture for commercial purposes, or simply for private consumption. However, the control which certain aristocrats seemed to have over production, and likely distribution as well, speaks to their involvement in an Atlantic-based economy, centred on port cities.

Recent archaeological studies have proposed that only high status elites had access to the dynamic Atlantic trade system between the late fifth century and the end of the seventh century.[798] Given the Aquitanian aristocracy's involvement in the agricultural economy during Euric's reign, we may examine their role in maritime trade further. From the docks at Bordeaux, Aquitanian aristocrats were interacting with elites from other estates further inland, as part of a considerable commercial nexus in southwestern Gaul.[799] The similarities between the Atlantic and Languedoc groups of the *Dérivées des sigillées paléochrétiennes* (DSP) pottery suggests that Bordeaux's aristocracy did not merely trade in urban areas. Instead, they also had commercial ties with rural estates further along the Garonne Valley towards Toulouse. However, the presence of DSP kiln sites near Bordeaux and Saintes, show that these two cities were the primary centres of trade for Aquitanian aristocrats. Exported goods such as fine wares appear to travel up towards the Loire Valley and the Armorican coast, where deposits of Atlantic DSP are present.[800] In addition, the import of exotic goods into south and central western Gaul was principally an urban phenomenon and one that focused on places where potential private consumers lived.[801] Imports of African and eastern Mediterranean amphorae at Poitiers (just as in Bordeaux, Saintes, and Rezé) testify to the vitality of Atlantic trade in exotic goods.[802] Once again, Bordeaux appeared to play a role in the

[797] Namatius' interest in agriculture on Oléron may suggest that the region around Saintes continued to flourish in its produce as well.
[798] Sánchez-Pardo (2020), 104–5; Campbell (2007), 140.
[799] On the links of DSP production to Bordeaux, see Guitton (2020), 87. Guitton also notes the powerful Aquitanian *negotiatores*, who seemed to have controlled Atlantic trade throughout the early Empire. On the commercial nexus of southwestern Gaul, see Underwood (2020), 417–8.
[800] Guitton (2020), 87–8.
[801] Le Bomin (2020), 50–1.
[802] Guitton (2020) 56–7, states that as much as 9% of all wine amphorae at Poitiers came from the eastern Mediterranean.

reception of maritime cargo and its redistribution to inland towns and settlements. There is also textual evidence that aristocrats were also interacting with elites from other hubs of exchange across the Atlantic. It is possible that inter-Atlantic exchange of goods accompanied the letter correspondence of men such as Sidonius with elites outside of Aquitania. Sidonius' communication with the Romano-Breton warlord Riothamus, as well as elites in Spain such as Oresius and Fortunalis could have stemmed from connections made through trade.[803] While this remains an incomplete picture of elite involvement in an active Atlantic trade system of the late fifth and early sixth centuries, the role of secular Aquitanian aristocrats in the regional economy must not be understated. Euric's decision to establish an imperial residence in Bordeaux around 475 hints at his recognition of the influence wielded by the local aristocracy.[804] In light of the economic potential of Bordeaux as a centre of maritime trade in Visigothic Aquitania, Euric sought to utilise the aristocratic control over regional and Atlantic commerce.

To summarise, Euric's decision making relied upon an influential aristocracy in Aquitania. Although elites turned towards a clerical career, or became "more militarised", the continuation of traditional aspects of aristocratic self-expression should not be underestimated. In the last decades of the fifth century, it was still possible for secular members of the Aquitanian aristocracy to express their status through landholding, the patronage of dependents, as well as control of regional and maritime trade. This provided them with political influence. In the first subsection, I emphasised that the legal acquisition of land by foreign peoples, such as Goths and the Bretons remained a priority of landowners, particularly in central and northern Aquitania. The concerns of the Aquitanian landowners at the outset of Euric's reign over the status of both their property and patronage of clients could explain their decision to support the king, when he moved to defend their interests. Euric's decisions, that is, his accession and early

[803] To Riothamus: *Ep*. 3.9. To Fortunalis: *Ep*. 8.5. Sidonius' correspondence to Oresius in *Ep*. 9.12.1 also mentions the import of Spanish salt from Tarraconensis. Mathisen (2020), 110, dates this letter to 477/82.
[804] *Ep*. 8.9.5.

"campaigns", were a necessary move to appease influential landowners of Aquitania. The following subsections then focused on patronage as a motivating factor for the assumption of Visigothic office by Aquitanian aristocrats. From their estates, it is apparent that secular aristocrats under Euric continued to express their status through their lavish lifestyles and influence over clients. The aristocratic pursuit of a career in Euric's administration seemed to offer protection over their property. On their estates, the ongoing involvement of secular aristocrats in agriculture and resource production ensured that they, rather than the clergy, remained in control of the Aquitanian economy. However, they achieved this not just in a regional context, but also in an Atlantic economic context as well. A combination of archaeological studies, as well as documentary evidence highlights the participation of aristocrats, particularly those who lived close to Bordeaux, in the maritime-based trade system; this connected them to elites from Brittany, Britain, and Spain. In establishing a residence in Bordeaux, Euric therefore acknowledged the potent influence held by the secular Aquitanian aristocracy, who could still express their status and elite identity through traditional means into the last decades of the fifth century.

3.4. *Gallic episcopate*

Recent studies of the episcopate under Euric has focussed on the vulnerability of Nicene bishops, who were victims of a politically-driven policy from the Visigothic ruler against the Nicene leadership.[805] Yet, this view assumes that Euric was the primary actor in all of his dealings with these bishops. It is hard to believe that members of the Nicene episcopate in Gaul did not also exert a certain degree of pressure upon the king.[806] There is a tendency to focus on Euric's measures against the broader episcopate, rather than to view his actions as a necessary response to the threatening behaviour of various bishops, who clearly acted against the king's expectations for a leader of a local community.[807] Indeed, Mathisen's suggestions regarding the formation of the Gallic ecclesiastical establishment as a "state within a state" reminds us that Euric had his own expectations for the bishops which made up the episcopate in Gaul.[808] A consequence of the search to understand the king's intolerance and measures against the Nicene leadership is that a study of collaboration between the Nicene bishops of Gaul and Euric has not yet been conducted.

This section places the bishops and their communities at the forefront of the study. The aim is to emphasise that a bishop's ability to limit dissension and maintain local harmony in their dioceses determined his suitability as an ally in the eyes of the king. This is particularly relevant to the first point of this section. Contrary to the evidence of Sidonius Apollinaris, who writes of the desolation of episcopal sees in the Aquitanian "heartland" of the Visigoths, a coexistence between king and bishop was certainly

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[805] Stroheker (1937), 37–61, has previously stated Euric's ecclesiastical measures were a product of political-power considerations, rather than from his religious fanaticism. Recent treatments of the king's behaviour towards the Nicene Church stem from Stroheker's arguments. For the suggestion that Euric exiled pro-Roman bishops, who challenged his own authority over towns and communities, see Mathisen (1993), 32. Similarly, Harries (1994), 233, argues that as the king pushed his frontiers outwards, he adopted a policy which chose not to replace bishops when their dioceses fell vacant by death. Most recently, Stüber (2019), 50–2, has assumed that Euric sought to disrupt the Gallic episcopate only after the "vast majority of the Catholic clergy" refused the king's request to enlarge his rule at the expense of the Western Roman Empire.

[806] For a similar study on the motives behind a ruler's exile of late antique bishops in Gaul, see Fournier (2019), 184–202.

[807] Fournier (2019), 195–6, refers to the exile of bishops during the Merovingian period as a "secular enforcement of an ecclesiastical sentence."

[808] Mathisen (2014), 39–44.

possible. This is what I discuss in the first sub-section. The following sub-section examines the cooperation between the bishops of Provence and Euric in 475. In order for bishops to serve the welfare of their immediate communities effectively, as well as to uphold their metropolitan rights, they had to negotiate various pressures to their authority. These local interactions indicate that local bishops such as Basilius, Leontius, Graecus, and to a lesser extent, Faustus were exercising their patronage over their ecclesiastical dependents. The third subsection provides an alternative explanation to the notion that the bishops' proximity or connections to other kingdoms motivated Euric's policy to remove them from their dioceses. Rather, the instability within the towns of newly occupied territories, that is the illegal episcopal elections, ecclesiastical factionalism, and disharmony amongst the townsfolk, had as much to play in the removal of a bishop. The bishop's involvement, voluntary or not, within these affairs hindered Euric's ability to create harmony between the king and the people, a process in which he expected bishops to play a role.[809] There is also evidence that troublesome bishops sought the patronage of the king while in "exile". The presence of these bishops near the royal court enabled opportunities for supplication to Euric, which reinforced their status as clients of the king. The short-termed durations of their "exiles" suggests that in the time it took for the tumult of their towns to settle, bishops quickly recognised Euric's patronage and returned to their communities as ostensibly "loyal" clerical ministers for the king.

[809] Euric seemed to want individuals to have a more localised and modest influence, rather than those who came from families of supraregional influence and wealth. See Halfond (2019), 8, whose study deals primarily with the bishops and politics of patronage in the context of Merovingian Gaul, argues that the Gallic episcopate in the late antique period came from these two categories.

3.4.1. Aquitanian bishops who kept their sees

The inward-oriented activities of bishops in Aquitania during the reign of Euric indicate that the king did not pursue a widespread persecution of Nicene bishops in Gaul. Sidonius' account of the king's refusal to allow a new bishop to fill vacant Aquitanian dioceses is perhaps exaggerated.[810] Rather, bishops who sought to address the local concerns of their immediate community experienced little disturbance from Visigothic authorities. As Euric established his northern frontiers in the Loire valley, it is likely that he valued the episcopacies of Perpetuus at Tours and Nonnechius of Nantes, both of whom sought to promote harmony within their respective communities.

Perpetuus of Tours

Perpetuus' community-oriented functions and role in the unity of his congregation made him a compatible bishop with Euric, who required harmony from the towns in the territories he came to occupy. Although Sidonius' letter to Perpetuus of Tours is evidence of a bishop who promoted an ostensibly anti-Arian program, his episcopate managed to attract the same suspicions, which his successors seemed to attract from the Arian-Visigothic rulers.[811] As part of Perpetuus' efforts to promote the cult of St. Martin, the bishop also emphasised the saint's opposition to the Arian sect.[812] The writings of Paulinus of Perigueux, whom Perpetuus commissioned to produce a revision on Martin's life, featured Aegidius' calls of help from the saint during the Visigothic "siege" at Arles in 458/9.[813] Despite the obvious opposition to the Homoian-Arian Goths on display by the bishop of Tours, Perpetuus retained his episcopal position under Euric's reign. Perpetuus' ability to keep his episcopate hints at his astute manoeuvres, which

[810] *Ep*. 7.6.7.: "Bordeaux, Périgueux, Rodez, Limoges, Javols, Eauze, Bazas, Saint-Bertrand, Auch…"
[811] On Volusianus and Verus (bishops of Tours during the 490s), see *HF* 2.26, 2.29, 10.31; Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 42–3.
[812] Heil (2014), 278.
[813] *VSM*. 6.111–15.

allowed him to use the cult of St. Martin as a beacon for harmony rather than as a seed for dissension in the community.[814] Through his efforts, Perpetuus employed various members of the community, from clergy to craftsmen to construct a new church over the tomb of Martin, and a host of new churches at Tours.[815] Sidonius, who composed a poem for the apse of the new church, credited Perpetuus for the elimination of a long-standing *invidia* between factions within the town.[816] In addition, Perpetuus' reforms to the liturgical schedule made the cult of Martin accessible to the entire community. Both the educated elite as well as the ordinary members of Tours could participate in the public vigils and festivals, which Perpetuus organised.[817] Indeed, Euric might not have appreciated Perpetuus' promotion of an anti-Arian cult. However, the king seemed to value the bishop's contribution to a harmonious Christian community in Tours. Moreover, Sidonius' suggestions that Perpetuus was absent from the episcopal election of Bourges reflects Perpetuus' preference to operate within his immediate community rather than to influence neighbouring ones. As the metropolitan bishop of Lugdunensis Tertia, Sidonius indicates that one of Perpetuus' responsibilities was to audit the election of certain bishops in adjoining church provinces.[818] However, Perpetuus perhaps decided it was in his best interests to avoid direct association with Sidonius' impromptu procedure and the election of the ineligible Simplicius as the metropolitan bishop at Bourges.[819] Perpetuus seemed to realise that Tours now lay within Gothic territory, and to avoid any suspicion from Euric, he kept his distance from the "dissensions, passions, and diversities of parties" which Sidonius had found at Bourges.[820] Instead, Perpetuus displayed close attention to the unity of his own immediate congregation.[821]

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[814] Van Dam (1993), 27–8.
[815] *HF* 2.14–15. *VMartini* 1.6. Van Dam (1993), 18. Perpetuus obviously did not rely on his immediate community alone. One bishop, namely Euphronius of Autun, provided marble for the cover over Martin's tomb.
[816] *Ep*. 4.18.5. Perhaps a reference to the factional disputes during the episcopate of Brictio. For a translation of the inscriptions, see Van Dam (1993), 315.
[817] Van Dam (1993), 19.
[818] Van Waarden (2011), 558.
[819] For Tours' position in Visigothic territory during the reign of Euric, see Heil (2014), 277; Mathisen (2012), 4–5. On Perpetuus, see Walter and Patzold (2014), 126; Duchesne, *Fastes*, 2.304.
[820] *Ep*. 7.9.2.
[821] For the suggestion that the office of bishop gave unprecedented levels of authority over the lives of his congregants, see Dodd (2016), 179.

Nonnechius of Nantes

Perpetuus may belong to a group of Aquitanian bishops who held local influence, yet also devoted their efforts to combat issues which were relevant to their communities. Another one of these bishops was Nonnechius of Nantes, who appears only as an addressee from Sidonius and one of the members at the Council of Vannes, which Perpetuus had convened for the bishops of Lugdunensis Tertia.[822] It is not certain whether Nantes lay within Visigothic territory during the reign of Euric. However, Gregory's claim that in 495/6 Nantes endured a sixty-day siege by Clovis' Franks provides evidence for the Visigothic occupation of the city by the reign of Alaric II.[823] Not only was Nonnechius on familiar terms with Sidonius' Jewish letter-bearer Promotus, the bishop likely was responsible for Promotus' conversion to Christianity.[824] When Sidonius mentions the prayers which Nonnechius offered for Promotus, this reflected the bishop's latent patronage of a community at Nantes which included Jews and perhaps other non-Christians as well. A contemporary canon from the Council of Vannes, which both Nonnechius and Perpetuus attended, assumes the occasional interaction between clerics and Jews, particularly in the communities of the Loire Valley.[825] The canon applied to clerics of the region, who either attended *convivia* of Jews, or who were inviting Jews to their own *convivia*, and Perpetuus may have aimed to protect the superiority of the Christian clergy.[826] However, there is reason to believe that Nonnechius used the meals as an informal opportunity to preach to non-Christians such as Promotus, increase the Christian congregation at Nantes, and thereby promote harmonious relations within his

[822] On Nonnechius, see Mathisen (2020), 109. Heinzelmann (1982), 657. On the Council of Vannes, see Duchesne, *Fastes*, 2.248–9. Duchesne does not associate Nonnechius to the bishop of the same name to which Sidonius writes to in *Ep*. 8.13.
[823] *Glor. Mart*. 60. On the dating of the siege of Nantes, see Mathisen and Sivan (1999), 54.
[824] *Ep*. 8.13.3.
[825] Halfond (2014), 37–8. On Canon 12 of the Council of Vannes, see *ibid*, n. 28. It is unlikely that the council occurred at a date later than 465, as the Visigoths had already incorporated Tours and Nantes into their realm. Other dioceses such as Rennes and Le Mans either lay outside the extent of Euric's territories, or from the later 480s, within Frankish territory. It is improbable that Perpetuus could convene a council with bishops from sees, which belonged to different kingdoms.
[826] Halfond (2014), 37, states with the support of a passage from 1 Corinthians 10.25, that clerics risked appearing inferior to Jews, when they shared meals together.

community. Given Sidonius' own relationship with Promotus, he and others would have known of Nonnechius' unconventional ministry.[827] Yet, Sidonius remained tight-lipped over the exact details of Nonnechius' interactions with non-Christians to protect the reputation of his friend. Despite the ambiguity with which Sidonius describes Nonnechius' actions, the letter also highlights the bishop's pursuit of charitable means to help him maintain patronage over his community at Nantes.[828] Whilst Sidonius does not reveal what this charity involved, it is unlikely that Nonnechius shared the same access to resources nor the widespread connections as Patiens of Lyon, who sent shipments of grain to multiple cities.[829] Instead, Nonnechius would have directed his almsgiving towards his immediate community. Through this, Nonnechius was not dissimilar to Perpetuus in the way that they both focussed their episcopal duties to preserve the harmony of their immediate communities.

Ambrosius of Cahors

Where Nonnechius attempted to create social stability between Christian and non-Christian communities, others tried to create social harmony through the protection of the quintessential Roman family. Ambrosius of Cahors represents one of several Aquitanian bishops who devoted their episcopate to the needs of their immediate communities and thereby could coexist with Euric's regime.[830] Once again, our evidence for the otherwise unknown Ambrosius comes from a letter written to him from Sidonius. Although the letter does not indicate Ambrosius' see, a later bishop of Cahors of the same name suggests that Ambrosius served in that same town.[831] Sidonius' letter does however indicate that

[827] A detail which Sidonius mentions: "It may be present to those at a distance the purposed aim of your actions." *Ep*. 8.13.2.
[828] *Ibid*: "...you outtop all these graces by the towering eminence of your charity."
[829] Sidonius alludes to Nonnechius' desire to not seek popularity. *Ep*. 8.13.2.
[830] Another bishop who did not go into exile was perhaps Bassulus of Angoulême, who Ruricius wrote to prior to the latter's ascension to the episcopate at Limoges. A later Bassulus appeared as Angoulême's bishop in the early 7th century. On Bassulus, see Duchesne, *Fastes*, 2.69.
[831] For Ambrosius' see at Cahors, Mathisen (2020), 66; Heinzelmann (1982), 552. For a later bishop Ambrosius of Cahors, see Bonnassie (1990), 209–217. Duchesne, *Fastes*, does not mention Ambrosius. However, Mathisen (1999), 113, has also previously suggested that Ruricius' addressee Bassulus was the bishop of Cahors at a similar time. (ca. 475/585) It could be that Bassulus was a bishop of a neighbouring see, perhaps of Angoûleme.

Ambrosius was acting as a patron for the members of his congregation, as seen through the bishop's pastoral relationship with a certain young layman.[832] Sidonius' recount insinuates the instrumental role of Ambrosius in the young man's pursuit of the "honourable love of husband for wife", instead of the "illusory attractions of concubinage".[833] The bishop's regulation of sexual behaviour in his community is a key aspect within Sidonius' anecdote, including the preservation of status, inheritance, and marriage. The counsel of the bishop would have played a role in the individual's decision to end his affair with the slave-girl, in favour of a woman from a noble and wealthy family. It is likely that Ambrosius used his ties with other families of Cahors to help secure a marriage with the appropriate woman as well.[834] Sidonius' belief that the bishop would continue to help the man refrain from "lawful pleasures" hints at the bishop's role in educating proper post-marriage behaviour to the couple.[835] It would appear that Ambrosius' pastoral care with his congregation sought to maintain the social stability of Cahors by regulating the lives of the families which made up the townsfolk of a community. Unfortunately, neither the letter nor Sidonius provide further details regarding the episcopal duties of Ambrosius. However, the case of Ambrosius' intercession with the young layman follows the examples of other bishops who resided within Euric's territory. Just as Perpetuus and Nonnechius used their episcopacies to create harmony within their communities at Tours and Nantes, Ambrosius' efforts to regulate the lives of Cahors' citizenry also reflected a similar commitment to social order. If these three individuals were installed in their communities at a time when Sidonius was lamenting the ruinous condition of the Nicene church in Aquitania, it could be that they represented a larger group of Aquitanian bishops who also retained their dioceses. Contrary to a policy of persecution, Euric viewed the pastoral commitment of these bishops within various Aquitanian communities as a proper exercise of their powers.

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[832] *Ep*. 9.6.1.: "Your Holiness, by the efficacy of your intercession, has prevailed with Christ on behalf of our dearly beloved brother…"
[833] *Ep*. 9.6.4.
[834] On a similar case, see Graecus of Marseille.
[835] *Ep*. 9.6.4.: "... that after the birth of one or two sons (and I have mentioned the extreme limit) this husband who before marriage had taken his lawless pleasures may for the future refrain from lawful pleasures."

3.4.2 Euric and cooperation with the interests of Provençal bishops

The following subsection examines how Euric recognised the bishops' primacy over their communities, and his efforts to collaborate with them in the pursuit of lasting stability. Due to Sidonius' own interest in the welfare of the Auvergne, his scathing denunciation of the bishops' actions ignores the quite valid needs of the four bishops involved in the treaty.[836] Euric's agreement with Basilius of Aix, Graecus of Marseille, Leontius of Arles, and Faustus of Riez inform us about how the king and the bishops collaborated with each other to protect both the security of the Gothic communities in Provence, as well as the bishops' own functions as metropolitans.[837] When Euric made a formal agreement with Basilius, Graecus, Leontius, Faustus in 475 to cede his control of Provence, it is likely that Gothic settlers remained in the region. Although Euric relinquished official possession of Provence to the bishops, both parties had good reason to collaborate with each other to maintain the security of the region's communities. In order to demonstrate this, I argue that the personal interests of each bishop took precedence in their negotiations with Euric.[838]

Sidonius may allude to the bishops' desire to protect their patronage of dependents when he suggests that they had bartered Clermont's freedom for the security of those communities in Provence.[839] From the perspective of Basilius of Aix, an alliance with Euric and his Gothic garrisons would have enabled the bishop to protect ecclesiastical property and dependents alike at Aix and elsewhere in Narbonensis II.[840] There is reason to believe that Basilius sought to prevent those dioceses and thereby his

[836] Mathisen (1989), 270–1.
[837] I follow the reconstruction of Delaplace (2015), 254–255, who places the embassy of the four bishops as separate from the one of Epiphanius. Epiphanius' embassy to Euric occurred on behalf of Nepos and also a year earlier in 474. Most scholars tend to see that these bishops acted on behalf of the Western emperor Julius Nepos. Although Nepos had sanctioned an episcopal embassy under Epiphanius of Pavia the previous year to Toulouse, he probably had no agency over the bishops' actions in 475. I argue that they were not and had plenipotentiary authority to make decisions. For the standpoint that the bishops were acting on behalf of Nepos, see Stüber (2019), 41–2; Mratschek (2020), 229.
[838] Poveda Arias (2023), 49.
[839] *Ep*. 7.7.2.
[840] *Ep*. 7.7.4.

patronage of the communities which lay along Durance from falling into Gibichung hands.[841] The disputed nature of the dioceses between Gibichung and Visigothic influence is shown by the fact that the bishop of Digne-les-Bains and Senez represented their sees at a Visigothic council whilst the nearby community at Sisteron remained under Burgundian influence. Evidence for the bishop's patronage of dependents is more pronounced in Sidonius' correspondence with Graecus of Marseille. Sidonius mentions that Graecus' predecessor Eustasius had personally procured accommodation for a young man who had travelled to Marseille in search of opportunity.[842] Moreover, Eustasius provided moral counsel for the individual and he even advised on the legal affairs of their family and assets.[843] Sidonius' reminder to Graecus of the duty of care he ought to carry for the young man suggests that bishops continued to undertake the role of patronage for their predecessors' dependents. At Arles, the bishop had a similar role in the community as well. There, Sidonius highlighted the legal responsibility of Leontius and the patronage of his dependents. In the event of legal cases, members of the community at Arles could rely on Leontius' influence in judicial circles to ensure that these disputes came to a swift and just conclusion.[844] Through the active involvement in the everyday lives of his dependents, Graecus and his episcopal colleagues in Provence retained a keen interest in the welfare of their congregations. The episcopal communities of Arles, Aix, and Marseille would have included traders, merchants, and businessmen who made their living from maritime and riverine trade, who no doubt welcomed Gothic support to ensure that their livelihoods continued unharmed. It is likely then that the Provençal bishops remained committed to their patronage for their immediate communities when they negotiated with Euric.[845] The reference by Sidonius to Graecus' access to these provisions makes sense given the proximity to Marseille's ports. It also alludes to a connection between the city's wealth and the church treasury. Moreover, the same letter

[841] Poveda Arias (2023), 48.
[842] *Ep*. 7.2.4.
[843] *Ep*. 7.2.7.
[844] *Ep*. 6.3.2. It is uncertain what Sidonius means when he says that Leontius would use the influence of his tonsure "to force a quick response from those negligent gentlemen."
[845] In his letter to Graecus, Sidonius might have referred to the possibility that the bishops intended to provide the Gothic settlers with these resources, rather than the exiles, captives, and refugees from Auvergne.

suggests that Graecus and his episcopal colleagues were present at a council.[846] It is not certain whether Sidonius refers to the *Conciliarum Septem Provinciae* or a synod of the bishops in Provence. However, the mention of a council indicates that the bishops' decision to negotiate with Euric belonged to a general consensus within their respective communities. If so, then Graecus, Basilius, Leontius, and Faustus were satisfying a party of local leading-men who represented the interests of their communities and saw collaboration with Euric as the best possible avenue to protect their assets.

Collaboration with Euric allowed Basilius and Leontius to enforce their jurisdiction as metropolitans of Aix and Arles respectively. Basilius, just as his predecessor Auxanius had done, may have sought to further his metropolitan influence not just in his immediate province of Narbonensis II, but also in the dioceses of the nearby Alpes-Maritimae.[847] Over the course of the fifth century, Aix's subordination to Arles meant that its bishop instead attempted to challenge the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of the Alpes-Maritimae at Embrun.[848] Despite the bishop of Rome's attempts to prevent Aix from its aspirations in Cimiez and Nice, Basilius may have realised that Rome could not enforce any effective intervention. Indeed, Basilius likely recognised that the support of Aix's suffragans and their communities was perhaps not enough to guarantee any lasting exercise of his metropolitan authority beyond Narbonensis II. However, the acquisition of support from Euric would surely overrule any intervention from Rome and enforce Aix's influence in the sees of the Alpes-Maritimae. Likewise, Leontius of Arles's lack of support from suffragan dioceses in Viennensis and the ability of Mamertus of Vienne to intervene in sees over which Leontius supposedly had authority caused him to appeal to Euric. Poveda Arias has recently argued that Leontius was impassive and less ambitious than his Arlesian

[846] *Ep*. 7.7.4: "You are not acting for the common weal; and when you come together into the council you are less concerned to relieve public dangers than to advance personal interests."
[847] Poveda Arias (2023), 43–4.
[848] On the competition between Basilius' predecessor Auxanius and Ingenuus of Embrun over the jurisdiction of Nice, see Thiel, *Ep*. 152–155; Griffe, *Gaule*, 2.167–168; Mathisen (1989), 221–228.

predecessors such as Ravennius and Hilary.[849] While this may be true, Ravennius already found it difficult to maintain Hilary's dense episcopal networks, since the change of head at Arles caused Ravennius to lose control of other suffragan sees.[850] Mamertus' greater ability to mobilise support from some of Arles' suffragans hints at Leontius' inheritance of the same issues which had afflicted Ravennius. Hence, in 475, the potential to form an alliance with Euric suggests that Leontius saw an opportunity to finally enforce his own rights of jurisdiction as the metropolitan authority of Viennensis.[851] Leontius' ambition to counter Mamertus' claims to metropolitan authority in Viennensis instigated his decision to agree a treaty with Euric.[852]

The attempts by Leontius of Arles and Basilius of Aix to enforce their jurisdiction as metropolitans, along with the bishops' interest in protecting their congregations were immediate concerns which played a role in their cooperation with Euric. In Provence, the bishops' efforts to unify and consolidate the various towns and communities seemed to align with Euric's desire to maintain stability in the territories that were coming under Visigothic influence. At the same time, their personal agendas took precedence in the agreement of a treaty with Euric.

3.4.3 Euric's policy of exile and return

This subsection looks at the bishops that went into exile during Euric's reign. It aims to highlight that the king sought to minimise unrest and promote stability in the towns that came under his control. The evidence suggests that the exile of a bishop only occurred when the stability of his town came under threat and the community's allegiance to the king was in question: there was never a systemic policy of exile from the Visigothic authorities. Once tensions in the area abated, the bishop could return. In order to

[849] Poveda Arias (2023), 46–7.
[850] Poveda Arias (2023), 42.
[851] The resolutions of Pope Leo had given the bishop of Arles metropolitan rights in Viennensis. Leo. M. Ep. 66.
[852] Wood (2023), 170. Poveda Arias (2023), 46, has suggested that Leontius was less ambitious and less interested in the pursuit of supra-provincial rights than his predecessors.

make a compelling argument, the following examines the case-studies of Simplicius of Bourges, Marcellus of Die, Sidonius Apollinaris, and Faustus of Riez, each of whom experienced exile under Euric. However, the policy of exile return also suggests that Euric recognised the bishops as local men of power and prioritised cooperation with them to ensure lasting stability within their respective communities.

Euric's removal of Simplicius was an attempt to combat an unrest at Bourges that resulted from the illegality of the city's episcopal election in the winter of 470/1.[853] The main episode appears in a letter, which Sidonius wrote to Perpetuus of Tours, who was absent in the proceedings, to justify the selection of Simplicius as the new bishop for Bourges.[854] It is unlikely that Euric was already attempting to prevent the arrival of Nicene clerics at Bourges and had plans to install an Arian bishop.[855] Rather, the presence of Arian clerics alongside the mass of Nicene candidates suggests that several Visigothic communities had perhaps resided in the nearby region, since the early 460s.[856] However, it is possible that these Arian candidates had little if any affiliation with the Visigothic royal court and belonged to the frenzy of contenders who were vying for the vacant diocese. Given the significance of Bourges as the metropolitan see of Aquitania Prima, the episcopal authorities responsible for the election were Sidonius, the provincial bishop of the nearby Clermont, and possibly Euphronius of Autun – both of whom already had ties with the leading members of the city.[857] Their nomination of Simplicius, despite his lack of clerical experience, is the first indication of a flawed electoral process. In his letter to Perpetuus, Sidonius states that

[853] As suggested by Dodd (2016), 174, who states that a man with the right connections could effectively bypass the electoral process.

[854] Perpetuus was a bishop of the nearby see at Tours, the metropolitan seat of Lugdunensis III, which bordered on Aquitania I. On the account of the election in the letter to Perpetuus, see *Ep*. 7.9. See also *Ep*. 7.8, in which Sidonius writes to Euphronius about the apparent popularity of Simplicius at Bourges. Both letters take upon a persuasive angle, which suggest that Sidonius was the driving-force behind Simplicius' nomination, even when other bishops were not fully onboard. Sidonius' responsibility for Simplicius' election at Bourges might also explain the former's later exile at the hands of Euric.

[855] Cf. Stüber (2019), 50–2. However, Stüber's suggestions may well have applied for other sees in Aquitania II at a later time.

[856] *Ep*. 7.9.2.; Hydatius 224 (228) alludes to the settlement of the Goths, perhaps in the region between Tours, Orléans, and Bourges following the death of Aegidius in 465. It could be that Simplicius was one of the figures who sanctioned the Gothic settlement, as Sidonius mentions that he, as a spokesman of Bourges, "stood before skin-clad monarchs". See *Ep*. 7.9.19.

[857] Sidonius speaks of his responsibility and duty as "instructor" for the election in *Ep*. 7.9.6. It seems as though the absent Perpetuus had granted Sidonius with the right to choose a bishop. Euphronius of Autun and Sidonius, himself the bishop of Clermont, reject Arian, as well as other Nicene candidates in favour of the layman Simplicius. For Sidonius' ties to the leading elite of Bourges, see *Ep*. 7.9.23.

Simplicius was the son and son-in-law of Bourges' two previous bishops, a connection which seems to have put the candidate at a great advantage over his peers. As Dodd suggests, Sidonius believed that Simplicius' family distinctions would vindicate their decision to ignore canon law and elect an ineligible candidate to bishop.[858] In addition, Sidonius may have attempted to convince Perpetuus that the appointment of a strong-willed bishop with a previous career in politics could protect his community better than one who meekly supplicated himself in the face of barbarian threat.[859] Although Sidonius speaks of Simplicius' popularity with Bourges' population, there undoubtedly existed a considerable number of local clergymen who opposed the new bishop's nomination.[860] After the election, Euric likely viewed the ensuing tensions between the unsuccessful candidates and Simplicius' supporters as a threat to the social order in Aquitania Prima. Another aspect of Euric's concern towards Simplicius might have come from the bishop's inability to cooperate with the king. Sidonius mentions that Simplicius had experience against "skin-clad monarchs" in the past, which suggests that he possessed enough influence amongst the community in Bourges to offer resistance against Euric.[861] Euric's capture of Bourges sometime between 471 and 475 hints at his awareness of the city's affairs, particularly the nepotism within the episcopal electoral process.[862] The vacant sees of Aquitania, which Sidonius bemoans, was not an attempt by Euric to replace Nicene structures with Homoian-Arian ones.[863] It was instead a measure against illegal episcopal nominations similar to that of Simplicius' at Bourges. Certainly, close-knit ties between clergymen within the Aquitanian dioceses favoured a nepotist arrangement.[864]

However, the exile of other bishops, such as Marcellus of Die, may have arisen as a consequence of his town's episcopal factionalism, rather than from Euric himself. The appointment of Marcellus by the

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[858] Dodd (2016), 173–4.
[859] Sidonius characterises Simplicius as a leader who can defend both the interests of fathers and their young children. *Ep*. 7.9.22.
[860] Stüber (2019), 50–2.
[861] *Ep*. 7.9.19.
[862] Stüber (2019), 53–4.
[863] *Ibid*, 56-8.
[864] On the close-knit ties of the Aquitanian episcopate during the earlier fifth century, see previous section on Theoderic's episcopal constituency.

influential Mamertus of Vienne seemed to stir up unrest between those in the community who either preferred the intervention of Vienne, against those who favoured the jurisdiction of Arles.[865] Marcellus' ordination occurred as a sign of Vienne's superiority over Arles, but after Mamertus' passing in 475, it is likely that the new bishop Hesychius did not have the same control over Die as his predecessor.[866] The death of Mamertus and the heightened Visigothic presence in Provence suggests that the conditions were ripe for the "Arles party" to gain the upper hand and instigate the removal of Marcellus and his supporters.[867] Contrary to the narrative in *Vita Marcelli*, it is likely that the king did not directly sanction the removal of Marcellus from his see. As Marcellus' hagiographer suggests, the bishop's subsequent stay in Arles might not come as a surprise given his accusers' ties to the city.[868] Euric, who endeavoured to maintain his nascent rule over Die, hoped that Marcellus' removal from his see was a necessary evil to satisfy the prevalent consensus of the town's inhabitants.

Similarly, questions over the stability of Clermont's community formed the core of Euric's decision to exile Sidonius. Scholarship has seen that Sidonius' exile came from his political affiliations with the Gibichungs in Lugdunensis Prima. Whilst this may still be true, we can also explain the bishop's exile in terms of his extensive contact networks and the role which he played in the resistance of the city against Euric. Although the see at Clermont had suffered from several years of warfare, Euric felt it necessary to remove Sidonius in order to prevent the community from rallying around a particular figure of authority. Sidonius' ability to mobilise support for the stricken community at Clermont through his acquaintances reinforced the bonds of dependence between the people and the bishop. Although it was Patiens of Lyon who shipped grain to the devastated areas of Gaul, provincial bishops such as Sidonius

[865] Several members of the community had appealed to the *magister militum* Gundioc, who then delegated the matter to Hilary of Rome. Stüber (2019), 80–3.
[866] On Hesychius as Mamertus' successor at Vienne, see Dodd (2016), 175.
[867] Cf. Stüber (2019), 85–6, who sees Marcellus' exile against the background of the Visigothic-Burgundian conflicts, which took place from 476 to 477. Local authorities may also have persuaded Euric to view Marcellus as the primary reason for Die's instability; The author of *VMarcelli* suggests that Euric deports the citizens of Die *en masse* to Arles (4–5).
[868] *VMarcelli* 4.

organised its distribution to the inhabitants of their respective towns.[869] It is hard to believe that the citizens of Clermont directed their praises solely towards Patiens.[870] Certainly, Sidonius' letter to Patiens aimed first and foremost to express Clermont's gratitude to the bishop of Lyon. In reality, the community at Clermont would have praised the efforts of their own bishop as well, and celebrated Sidonius as a protector of their welfare and livelihoods. In addition, Sidonius' organisation of a three-day procession, known as the Rogations hints at the opportunity to bind the ties of Clermont's community even closer to him.[871] During the Rogation Days, the bishop and his clergy sought to bring the town in a single mind and concord and observe a communal, yet highly solemn iteration of public prayer and fasting. Sidonius intended that the attendees prayed not against spiritual dangers, but rather against those portents which could affect the community as a whole, such as natural disasters or barbarian raids.[872] A contemporary Gallic cleric had warned that those who did not feel responsible to fast at the Rogation Days, were stealing from the collective.[873] At a moment when the king had just secured possession of the city, it is likely that the loyalties of Clermont's inhabitants remained firmly aligned with their bishop Sidonius, rather than with Euric.[874] In this particular context of local loyalties towards the bishop, Euric would have viewed Sidonius' patronage over the community at Clermont as a formidable obstacle to his attempts to create a harmony between himself and the town's people. Euric perhaps had little option other than to remove the figure who was most likely to organise resources and resistance against the king.[875] The mobilisation of manpower by Euric's *dux* Victorius to construct churches in the Auvergne alludes to his

[869] *Ep*. 6.12.5. Sidonius writes that Patiens had sent free supplies of corn to the devastated areas of Gallic at his own expense.
[870] *Ep*. 6.12.9.
[871] *Ep*. 7.1.2; *Ep*. 5.14.3. For the Rogations and Sidonius as a leader of a religious community, see Bailey (2020), 265; Rusticcia (2018), 47–54.
[872] *Ep*. 5.14.2–3. Sidonius jokes that before the Rogations, public prayers were "irregular, lukewarm, sparsely attended, and…full of yawns…". Different members of the congregation would also pray for different things: the gardener would pray for rain, whereas the potter would pray for dry weather. For the suggestion that Rogations applied for all members of the community, see Ristuccia (2018), 51–2.
[873] Eusebius Gallicanus, 25.15–16 = *CCSL* 101.
[874] For the notion that Patiens' almsgiving were not purely for religious reasons, see Jäger (2017), 203. Gregory also attests to Sidonius' charity towards the poor in Clermont. See *HF* 2.22.
[875] Stüber (2019), 60–2, believes that the Tolosan royal court knew of Sidonius' connections to Ecdicius, which meant that the bishop had access to a private army.

assumption of some of the exiled bishop's duties.[876] However, the ties of the community to Sidonius remained strong such that later generations of Arvernians honoured his service and charity.[877] In comparison, it seems that a number of people in Clermont had denounced and eventually drove out the man who had replaced Sidonius as the city's primary patron.[878]

After Euric's formal occupation of Provence in 476, he sought stability in an area which now housed both Nicene and Homoian-Arian communities, particularly within Viennensis and Narbonensis II.[879] Although it is indeed difficult to ascertain a reason for Euric's exile of Faustus of Riez, I suggest that it belonged to a program that aimed to curtail the divisive tendencies of certain bishops.[880] It would appear that Faustus belonged to this category. Similar to Sidonius, Faustus had an indispensable position over his community in Riez, and likely received praise from Sidonius for his organisation of food from Lyon to his town.[881] However, Faustus' threatening leadership emerged from his instigation of the intellectual controversies during the early 470s. In 470, Faustus had championed the prevalent side of a Gallic debate on the nature of the soul against the priest Mamertus Claudianus.[882] It is possible that Faustus' reputation as a fricative individual as well as his eagerness to encourage partisanship within intellectual controversies may have alarmed Euric.[883] Mathisen is correct to assume that Faustus' discussions of Pelagianism, at a time when it was not an issue, was an attempt to reintroduce problems where none really

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[876] *HF* 2.20.
[877] *HF* 2.22.
[878] Gregory attests to two instances when he suggests that Victorius had to flee from the city.
[879] On Euric's acquisition of Provence, see Sidonius refers to a theological debate between an Arian cleric named Modaharius and Basiliius at Aix, that may provide evidence for a Homoian-Arian community either near the city and/or in Narbonensis II. On the arrival of Homoian-Arians into the region surrounding Valence, see Wood (2019), 310–1. Whilst I agree with Wood's assessment of the Homoian population of the region, Riez perhaps lay in Gothic, rather than Gibichung hands. Although the Goths and the Gibichungs jostled for influence over the various towns and communities in this region, Riez was then in Gothic territory as it lay south of the Durance.
[880] Cf. Heil (2014), 282. This section challenges the arguments of Wood (2023), 171, who believes that the Gibichungs drove Faustus in exile.
[881] Riez was also one of the towns, which Patiens had delivered grain to. *Ep*. 6.12.8. Patiens of Lyons appears as a partisan of Faustus in theological debates. For the circumstances and attendees at the Council of Arles (470) – of which Patiens was a participant, see Griffe, Gaule, 3.370–373; Mathisen (1989), 246.
[882] On Faustus' debate against Claudianus regarding the corporeality of the soul, see Mathisen (1989), 235–241.
[883] As Mathisen (1989), 243–4, says, Faustus was particularly harsh in his criticism of Graecus' work and caused different bishops to take sides. On Faustus' campaign against Augustinian predestination at the Council of Arles (470), see Mathisen (1989), 259–261.

existed.[884] In 475, Faustus' role in the transfer of various Provençal towns into Visigothic hands indicates that the bishop held considerable influence in the lower Durance Valley. Through his role as a representative for these small towns, Faustus was exercising his patronage over the civic leaders and the inhabitants of the communities. Despite Faustus' ostensible acceptance of Visigothic rule, this apparently did not preclude the king from having any uneasy feelings towards him.[885] During the years following the treaty with Euric, Faustus' fervent stance against the Arian heresy hints at an escalation of tensions between Homoian-Arian and Nicene communities not only in Riez, but also in the lower Rhône and Durance valleys. Ian Wood is correct to state that Faustus' exile was not necessarily due to his theological stance.[886] However, the doctrinal disputes which the bishop seemed to instigate would have indirectly affected the social stability of the small towns in the region. In his *De spiritu sancto*, it appears as though Faustus was reacting to a contemporary discussion with Homoian-Arian scholars under Visigothic influence and wished to arm his Nicene colleagues with arguments in order to defend themselves in doctrinal debates. Given his recent past, it would not be surprising if Faustus had some responsibility in the instigation of some form of social unrest between the two religious groups in the region.[887] At least one other Nicene cleric followed Faustus into exile and could have attained the same punishment as the bishop for inciting local dissension.[888] Clearly, the bishop's antagonistic attitude towards Homoian-Arians in Viennensis and Narbonensis II – regions which Euric had recently occupied – was not conducive to collaboration. The bishop's divisive tendencies were likely an issue for Euric, who in 477 sought to secure the loyalties of the communities in the lower Durance valley and was more than aware of Faustus' influence over the nearby sees. Moreover, Faustus' episcopal connections in Lugdunensis I, a province mostly now under Gibichung influence, cannot have assured Euric of the bishop's loyalty to him and

[884] Mathisen (1989), 261. Neither predestinarianism, nor Pelagianism was rampant in Gaul during the 470s.
[885] Heil (2014), 282.
[886] Wood (2019), 310. In his *De spiritu sancto*, Faustus' ardent defense of the divinity of the Holy Spirit indicates the contemporary trinitarian debate.
[887] For *De sancto spiritu*, see Heil (2014), 283. Gennadius of Marseille refers to another treatise, which Faustus wrote against Arians and Macedonians. (*Vir. Ill.* 86 = PL 58.1109.)
[888] On the priest named Memorius, see Mathisen (1999), 104, n.4.

acceptance of his rule.[889] On consideration of Faustus' hostile behaviour, it seems logical that Euric sent the bishop of Riez into a two-year exile sometime in 477.

Euric's decision to exile these bishops was never a long-term solution and the king realised that he could only stabilise his rule if he did not act against the Gallic bishops.[890] Owing to their local influence, bishops undoubtedly formed an important part of Euric's administration and the long-term vacancy of episcopal sees perhaps did more harm than good to the king's control over towns. Although the sources offer us little about Simplicius' fate, it is possible that Euric never sanctioned the metropolitan bishop's return to Bourges.[891] However, the exiled bishops likely returned to their towns after a two-year vacancy.

There is also reason to link the renewed stability of Die's community with the king's decision to allow Marcellus to reoccupy his see in 477, once tensions between the Arlesian and Vienne parties abated. Euric's support of Leontius' metropolitan authority ensured that the Arlesian party established its influence over the community at Die. Under these stable conditions, Marcellus and his supporters could return and adapt themselves to the new situation. I argue that they were successful in their efforts. The fact that Marcellus seems to have remained in the seat even as Die passed soon after into Gibichung control suggests that he achieved considerable support and popularity both from his community as well as the secular rulers. Yet, there was no supplication on the part of the bishop to Euric.[892] When the *Vita Marcelli* describes Marcellus' miraculous healing of Euric's unnamed son, this indicates that the king and bishop interacted in some capacity as well.[893] This relationship perhaps took the form of Euric's informal

[889] On Faustus' ties to the north, see Mathisen (1989), 247–248. It seems that both Visigoth and Gibichung rulers were vying for control of the towns and communities of Provence between 476–7. On the details of this conflict, see Stüber (2019), 74–6. See also Wood (2023), 172–3, who writes that during times of tension, a bishop's connections to those in neighbouring kingdoms was dangerous. It was important to avoid contact across borders.
[890] Stüber (2019), 76–7.
[891] Perhaps Victorius remained the primary administrative official for both Clermont and Bourges.
[892] Gillett (2003), 147, n.136.
[893] *VMarcelli* 4.

patronage of Marcellus, which enabled the bishop to serve his community without ever becoming a direct client of the king. When Die eventually passed into Gibichung hands, Marcellus had enough distance from Euric to avoid hostility from the Burgundian rulers, despite the bishop's pursuit of tax concessions for the citizens of Die.[894] Instead, both Euric and the Gibichung rulers who ruled Die may have preferred to have a bishop who could represent both the interests of the community as well as alert them of potential social unrest.

Sidonius' return from exile in 477 occurred only once he had submitted himself to Euric's patronage. During Sidonius' exile, it seems that the king may have forced the bishop to acknowledge his lordship through some form of mandatory service.[895] In addition, Sidonius' attempts to recover some of his family's property hints at his rehabilitation under Euric. According to the *Codex Euricianus*, bishops had to obtain the consent of the entire clergy in order to manage assets.[896] In a letter to Lampridius, Sidonius engaged in a legal struggle to retain a portion of his family's property, which Euric had apparently confiscated soon after the bishop's exile.[897] Although Sidonius laments the tiresome process of meeting with the king, the bishop's petitions at the court in Bordeaux established his status as a client of Euric, and showed that he appeared to honour Euric's judicial authority. This, alongside the people's opposition to Victorius, may have prompted the king to reinstate Sidonius as the bishop of his city. Euric's post-conflict attempts to mitigate social unrest at Clermont mirror his efforts to address similar issues in the towns of Provence.

Although Faustus' return to Riez occurred some two years after Sidonius' return to Clermont, there are similarities in the ways in which both bishops fashioned their return from exile. During Faustus' exile in Aquitania, it is likely that the king forced the bishop to honour his patronage, similar to Sidonius' petitions for the return of his family's property. However, not all Gallic bishops had Sidonius' wealth and

[894] Duchesne, *Fastes*, 2.234.
[895] *Ep*. 8.3.1–2.
[896] *CE* 306 = MGH LL nat. Germ. 1, 17; Heil (2014), 280–1.
[897] *Ep*. 8.9.2.

possessions. Faustus' stay with Ruricius of Limoges in Aquitania suggests that Faustus acquainted himself with the same Visigothic officials as Ruricius.[898] Frequent communication to these officials may have enabled Faustus to procure some form of audience with the king, just as Sidonius had managed to in Bordeaux. Hence, Faustus' exile in Aquitania made him seek the patronage of Euric, which in turn made the king more assured of the bishop's loyalty and paved the way to a future return to Riez.

This section has placed greater emphasis upon the interests of Nicene bishops in the communities which Euric sought to extend his influence and eventually came to occupy. In the first subsection, I demonstrated that Nicene bishops coexisted with a Homoian-Arian king, so long as their episcopal duties focussed on the people within their congregations and towns. This aligned with Euric's pursuit of harmony within the communities of Aquitania. The section has also emphasised that the bishops of Provence, namely Leontius of Arles, Basilius of Aix, and Graecus of Marseille who were involved in the treaty with Euric had their own interests to satisfy. Each of the three bishops saw in their negotiations with the Visigothic king, an opportunity to acquire armed protection over the interests of their lay communities, such as trade and business. This, in addition to the pursuit from Leontius and Basilius to fulfil their metropolitan rights, motivated Provençal bishops to cooperate with the Visigothic king. Finally, the third subsection offered a reconsideration of Euric's policy of "exile" of several bishops. His policy was first and foremost one that sought to promote harmony and stability within the towns of the territories he came to occupy. Euric expected bishops to act as loyal and trustworthy episcopal collaborators, who resolved community disputes and dissensions rather than participate in them. The cases of Simplicius, Sidonius, and Faustus provide examples of bishops, who belonged to the latter and posed a threat to Euric's efforts to establish community harmony within their town. As the "exile" of Marcellus of Die showed, a bishop's removal from his see also occurred from the ecclesiastical

[898] On Ruricius and his Visigothic ties, see Mathisen (1989), 39–40.

factionalism within a town. It was this social instability that concerned Euric. Yet, there is evidence that he also permitted exiled bishops to reoccupy their sees once they sought the king's patronage through their supplication at his court. It is thus important to see Euric, not as the primary agent in his dealings with the Nicene bishops of Gaul. Rather, as quasi-political leaders of their communities, the agenda and personal ambitions of individual bishops played an important role as well.

Conclusions

It can be seen that during Euric's reign, the order of constituencies underwent a further shift. Continuities nevertheless remained. The Visigothic army remained similar in importance to Euric's decisions, as they had under Theoderic. The main difference between Euric's army and that of Theoderic's lay in the greater numbers of Gallo-Romans who had assumed important military positions. Although Theoderic had appointed Arborius as *magister militum* in 461, it seems that the presence of Gallo-Roman officers in the Visigothic army such as Vincentius, Namatius, and Victorius only increased during Euric's reign. Because of this, protection of the communities which they represented played a role in dictating the king's campaigns in Spain and Gaul. However, the locally-driven military initiative and the increasingly independent character of the army meant that monetary assistance was no longer forthcoming from Italy as it was during Theoderic's reign. These financial issues for the Tolosan treasury created the need for Euric to fund his own private armies to satisfy his regular troops. Euric's ability to find erstwhile allies such as Calminius and the Ostrogoths under Videmer seemed to stabilise the situation. Another difference from Theoderic's army exists through the loyalty of the Visigothic army under Euric. Where Theoderic had to deal with the unpredictable figure of Agrippinus, the officers in the Visigothic army during Euric's reign appeared to be more reliable allies. The ties which these officers had with the local inhabitants in the areas they were stationed helped Euric to pursue a policy of non-aggression in his later years.

A noticeable decrease in the ability of the imperial court in Italy to dictate Gallic affairs is observed under Euric. As was the case under Theoderic, Ricimer continued to ensure that his Italo-Roman allies maintained their status as the most influential group at court. However, the intervention of eastern Roman military officials under Anthemius instigated a factional struggle for power at court that was reminiscent of the earlier dispute between Ricimer's Italian and Avitus' Gallic factions. With the

introduction of Anthemius, Euric dealt with an Italian court that was thoroughly military in character. As a consequence, Euric's reversal of Theoderic's conciliatory policy with Ricimer's court occurred not as an action against the patrician and his Italian allies. Rather, it was an attempt to anticipate and counter the belligerent policy pursued by Anthemius' military advisers towards the Visigoths. Following the deaths of Anthemius and Ricimer in quick succession, the brief domination at court by Ricimer's patrician successors, namely Gundobad, and then Ecdicius, was a last throw of the dice for Gallic aspirants in Italy. However, so long as the everpresent Italo-Roman senatorial aristocracy existed, the Italian court represented Italian interests, rather than those elsewhere in Gaul. Yet the picture was different at Arles, where prefects and administrative officials continued to operate as they had during Theoderic's reign. It is hard to believe that the prefect's staff, such as jurists or legal advisers, ceased to function. Rather, Euric's formal occupation of Provence in 476 allowed him to employ these officials for the introduction of new legislation, just as a praetorian prefect would have.[899]

The imperial court's concern for Italian interests allowed the influence of local Gallo-Roman elites to increase even further. A noticeable difference from the time of Theoderic was that the Aquitanian aristocracy played a role in Euric's own succession. Where the aristocratic circles of Pontius Leontius and Constantius of Narbonne appeared to be the most influential elites at least until the final years of Theoderic's reign, they were unable to affect Visigothic court politics. However, it could be that by 466, Simplicius, Arvandus, and Vincentius had enough influence to collaborate with Euric to instigate the demise of his brother. The expression of aristocratic values by Aquitanian elites had also changed since the time of Theoderic. While a number of elites of Theoderic's era could still retain their wealth and status independent of the Visigothic ruler, this was not the case under Euric. By the end of Euric's reign, aristocrats such as Elaphius and Rusticus were using their positions in the Visigothic administration as an expression of their local influence and patronage of clients. Those elites who refused to assume secular

[899] For the suggestion that Euric was acting similar to a praetorian prefect, see Barnwell (1992), 74–5.

office under Euric faced the loss of supporters and thus their status in their communities. Another key difference between the aristocracies of Theoderic and Euric was the thriving regional economy that was centred upon Bordeaux, rather than Narbonne. Whether the Atlantic-Aquitanian trade system existed under Theoderic is unclear. However, there is evidence that the aristocratic control over local trade and exchange of resources drove the Aquitanian prosperity of the late fifth century, which Euric's relocation of his royal palace to Bordeaux acknowledged.

A further rise in the influence of the episcopate manifested itself in Euric's growing kingdom. The "Rusticus" faction at Narbonne that allied itself to Theoderic's regime had owed its political influence to both its clergy and local lay elites. Under Euric, however, the bishops of Aquitanian dioceses such as Perpetuus of Tours, Nonnechius of Nantes, or Ambrosius of Cahors functioned as local administrators through their pastoral duties in community life. It is under Euric's reign that a Gallic ruler effectively harnessed the ability of Aquitanian bishops to promote social harmony in the towns. Moreover, the episcopate that existed under Theoderic did not extend too far beyond Aquitania II and southwestern Gaul. Once new territories in the Auvergne and Provence came under Euric's control, alliances were created with bishops who represented dioceses which were not suffragans of Rusticus. Compared to the localised nature of Theoderic's episcopal constituency, Euric faced a greater challenge to keep onside those who did not subscribe to the king's picture of stability. The decision by Euric to exile Marcellus, Sidonius, and Faustus can be ultimately explained as a policy to reduce social insurrection by prominent community leaders.

Conclusion

The narrative of western successor kingdoms in Gaul is generally told as one of Roman withdrawal. As the central Italian government grew distant from Gallic affairs, this left a vacuum for the Visigothic rulers and local stakeholders to exploit. However, this vacuum was filled not by a Theoderic II nor a Euric. The overarching premise of this dissertation has countered the traditional view that Visigothic rulers were unopposed as they emerged as the most influential figures in fifth-century Gaul. Rather, the locals were the ones who seized control. To tell the story of transition between Roman Gaul into barbarian Gaul, it is necessary to consider Gallic rulers such as Constantine, Theoderic, and Euric not as primary agents of change. Rather, the constituencies with which each ruler bargained drove political decision-making. As the imperial court in Italy focussed more and more on Italian affairs, Gaul's transformation was a result of local powerbrokers, such as the aristocracy, episcopate, and to some degree, the military as well.

In the first chapter, I demonstrated the ways in which a Gallic ruler of the early fifth century had departed from a fourth-century equivalent such as Magnus Maximus. Between Constantine III and Maximus, the forces within the military remained largely unchanged. Similar to Maximus before him, Constantine's British army played an instrumental role in his accession, even if alliances between officers and the Romano-British elite were the main drivers. Gerontius and his command of Gallic armies had a fourth-century precedent in the case of Maximus' general Merobaudes and his troops as well. The legacy of Merobaudes' ties with Frankish groups also continued into the fifth century as Edobich's connections to powerful but potentially unreliable Frankish leaders formed another branch of Constantine's military constituency.

However, by the fifth century, the Gallic ruler's relations with the imperial court, and local powerbrokers had changed from its fourth-century predecessor. With regards to the imperial court in Italy,

the fourth-century system of contending factions underwent a transformation. At the start of the fifth century, Honorius' court was under the influence of a singular minister who represented a particular faction. This is the system that lay behind the courts of Stilicho, Olympius, Jovius, Allobich, and finally Constantius. The desire of each individual to satisfy their respective alliances in Italy were responsible for any of the "Honorian" responses to affairs in Gaul.

During this time, another significant change occurred with the Gallo-Roman aristocracy and their relations with a Gallic ruler. While Maximus had made alliances with a Gallic aristocracy, which in general continued to pursue office-holding, only in the reign of Constantine III does the picture of a more region-specific Gallic aristocracy emerge. While Apollinaris and Rusticus sought offices under Constantine's administration, a great deal of elites in the Rhône Valley, as well as in Provence continued to remain loyal to the legitimate regime. However, the support for Constantine by another cluster of elites at Narbonne suggests that pockets of the Gallo-Roman aristocracy, particularly in Aquitania, wanted a ruler who could defend local interests.[900]

As Constantine's army advanced towards Provence, his efforts to utilise the political aspects of Proculus of Marseille's episcopate represented yet another significant departure from fourth-century Gallic rulers. During Maximus' occupation of Trier, his relationship with the city's bishop, Felix, was not a matter of political necessity. It was the support of the local Treveran elites, rather than Felix, that enabled him to reestablish a court at Trier. In comparison, Constantine realised that an alliance with Proculus was important for his control of Marseille, as well as the surrounding countryside in Provence. Owing to the Provençal aristocracy's reluctance to support Constantine's regime, his alliance with Proculus' episcopate became even more important. Under Proculus, the bishop exploited his ties with Tours to install his allies in key dioceses such as Arles and Aix-en-Provence. Furthermore, religious education emerged as a tool to facilitate Proculus' exercise of power in Provence. Through the monastery

[900] The Aquitanian Rutilius Namatianus is a possible exception.

at Saint-Victor, Proculus ensured that like-minded bishops would be installed in the dioceses surrounding Marseille. Even if Proculus' episcopate and the different Gallo-Roman aristocracies did not challenge the rule of Constantine to the extent that local constituencies would with later rulers, they nevertheless retained a considerable degree of political influence.

As the fifth century progressed, the interests of local communities continued to inform the decisions of Gallic rulers, even as the Visigoths asserted themselves as political masters in southwestern Gaul. The army, which was the most important constituency for Constantine, played an equally important role in the policies of Theoderic II. Shortly after Theoderic's accession, the nobles and their retainers within the Visigothic army played a similarly influential role in the ruler's early military decisions, just as Nebiogast and Justinian were responsible for the crossing of Constantine's army into Gaul. Nepotianus and Arborius' commands, which aimed to serve their respective ambitions mirrored both Gerontius' own command and his protection of communities near the Channel. Theoderic's alliance with the unreliable Agrippinus also had an earlier precedent in Constantine's alliance with the Frankish warlords. Nepotianus aside, the nobles and their retainers, Arborius, and Agrippinus can be regarded as local strongmen who were representing their respective dependents in southwestern Gaul. While the importance of Theoderic's military constituency remained similar to the way it was under Constantine fifty years earlier, the policies of the Visigothic army were dictated by an increasingly local agenda.

To explain the rise of local powerbrokers in Gaul under Theoderic II, it is also important to outline the extent to which individuals at the imperial court dissociated themselves from Gallic affairs. Although the domination of the Italian court under a single influential figure continued into the mid-fifth century, it is clear that the court was serving Italian interests more and more. Avitus' attempt to install his Gallo-Roman allies into important offices did not stop the attempt of Italo-Roman senators to maintain their position of prominence at the Italian court. There is a similarity between the senators of the early

fifth century who turned to Honorius' advisers, with the senators half a century later who allied themselves with Ricimer. As a result, the senatorial group's importance for a Gallic ruler lessened. However, the development of an Arlesian court, parallel to its counterpart in Italy, ensured that administrative ties between the central government and Gaul were not entirely severed.

As with Constantine before him, Theoderic had to contend with the interests of an influential and wealthy Gallo-Roman aristocracy. However, the key difference from his earlier predecessor was that Theoderic relied on the support of an elite who preferred a Gallic ruler as opposed to a distant and disinterested emperor. We have previously seen that a considerable number of aristocrats whose territories Constantine's regime had occupied were loyal to the legitimate government. By the mid-fifth century in southwestern Gaul, influential elites within and around the territories under Visigothic control were forming alliances with Theoderic. Arborius' promotion to *magister militum* under Theoderic was instigated by his ties with Pontius Leontius, who led a circle of influential Aquitanian aristocrats centred upon Bordeaux. At Bordeaux, local aristocrats and their families preserved their authority through expressions of patronage and elite competition against each other. Elsewhere, at Narbonne, the independence of the city's aristocracy from the central government led to its closer relations with Theoderic.

Parallel with the aristocracies of Narbonne and Bordeaux, the bishop Rusticus and his partisans emerged as a politically influential interest group in a similar fashion to Proculus' episcopate in Marseille at the start of the century. Both Rusticus and his allies, as had Proculus before them, shared a similar ambition to remain independent from the bishop of Arles. However, where Proculus derived his authority from his links with monastic allies, the Narbonensian episcopate drew strength from Rusticus' close ties with local landowners, especially in Narbonne as well as farther afield in Toulouse. The tight association between clergy, elites, and communities gave the Narbonensian episcopate a political influence that the Visigothic court under Frederic sought to appease in 462.

By the time of Euric in the last third of the fifth century, locals and their communities had established themselves as the primary powerbrokers of political decisions. As Gallo-Roman landowners assumed important military offices in the Visigothic army, the protection of dependents became a priority of these individuals. Because of this, local elites such as Vincentius, Namatius, and Victorius played just as important a role in dictating military campaigns in Spain and Gaul as Euric himself. However, the locally-driven military initiative and the increasingly independent character of the army meant that monetary assistance was no longer forthcoming from Italy as it was during Theoderic's reign. These financial issues for the Tolosan treasury created the need for Euric to use private and self-funded armies to satisfy the demands of his regular troops. Euric's deployment of erstwhile allies such as Calminius and the Ostrogoths under Videmer in the Auvergne provided plunder for themselves, as well as for Gothic nobles and retainers who had formed the bulk of the Aquitanian army. By Euric's time, at least a full generation of nobles had grown up as residents of Aquitania and resided in the same communities as their Gallo-Roman counterparts.[901] It was inevitable then that the ties which these officers had with the local inhabitants in the areas they were stationed, Gallo-Roman or Gothic, enabled Euric to pursue a policy of non-aggression in his later years.

The rise of local powers in Gaul can also be explained through the imperial court's increasingly Italo-centric character during the time of Euric. This was a continuation of court politics in the aftermath of Avitus' reign, as Ricimer ensured that Italo-Roman allies maintained their status as the most influential group at court. Amidst the general trend of Italo-Roman senatorial influence in the final third of the fifth century, a group of eastern Roman military officials under Anthemius, as well as Ricimer's patrician successor Gundobad, and then Ecdicius all experienced stints of domination at the Italian court. However,

[901] For a similar case with the Sueves in Gallaecia, see Kulikowski (2015), 136.

so long as the ever-present Italo-Roman senatorial aristocracy existed, the Italian court represented Italian interests, rather than those of Gallic provincials and their communities.

In southwestern Gaul, the aristocratic circles at Bordeaux and Narbonne under Theoderic paved the way for even closer cooperation between local elites and the Visigothic court. By the final years of Theoderic's reign, Aquitanian landowners such as Simplicius, Arvandus, and Vincentius expected the king to provide sufficient protection for their proprietary interests. Theoderic's inability to meet their expectations gave the chance for these local elites to exercise their political influence and conspire with the king's brother Euric. Where Pontius Leontius could still retain his wealth and status independent of Theoderic, this was not the case under Euric. By the end of Euric's reign, aristocrats such as Elaphius and Rusticus continued to exercise their local authority, but only because they had positions in the Visigothic administration. An alliance with Euric enabled local elites to retain their network of dependents and thus their status in their communities. The aristocracy's partnership with Euric's court can also be seen through the thriving regional economy that was centred upon Bordeaux in which both the ruler and elites played a part to develop.

The local powers also persisted through the political influence of the Gallo-Roman episcopate during the final decades of the fifth century. In parts of Aquitania, the pastoral duties of Perpetuus of Tours, Nonnechius of Nantes, or Ambrosius of Cahors within their communities ensured a measure of stability. However, owing to the acquisition of new territory since the time of Theoderic, cooperation between Euric and bishops was not a guarantee, especially in newly occupied dioceses. Although Euric could harness the ability of bishops to promote social harmony in towns which had long existed within Aquitanian dioceses, those farther afield in Provence required greater effort to keep onside. It is unreasonable to expect that both the Provençal elite and non-elite which Leontius or Graecus were representing had shared the same interests as their counterparts in southwestern Gaul. The community-based unrest which Euric feared Sidonius or Faustus could galvanise indicates that the

strength of bishops lay in their local ties with the inhabitants of towns and surrounding areas. Behind Euric's exile of both Faustus and Sidonius was perhaps a veiled realisation that local soldiers, elites, bishops wielded more control over Gaul's communities than the Gallic ruler himself.

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