The Last Horizons of Roman Gaul: Communication, Community, and Power at the End of Antiquity

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The Last Horizons of Roman Gaul:
Communication, Community, and Power at the End of Antiquity

A dissertation presented
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Abstract

In the fifth and sixth centuries CE, the Roman Empire fragmented, along with its network of political, cultural, and socio-economic connections. How did that network’s collapse reshape the social and mental horizons of communities in one part of the Roman world, now eastern France? Did new political frontiers between barbarian kingdoms redirect those communities’ external connections, and if so, how? To address these questions, this dissertation focuses on the cities of two Gallo-Roman tribal groups. The *Aeduans* and *Lingons* inhabited a strategic crossroads region in what is now Burgundy and Champagne, and between ca. 460-534 passed from Roman to barbarian rule – first under the Burgundians and then under the Merovingian Franks.

Close prosopographical study of the written sources and distribution-analysis of material sources – coins and ceramics – illuminate the region’s experience of the end of Empire. An unprecedented study of the distribution of Burgundian coins found in France revises the consensus model for the movement of gold coins across the post-Roman West. The dissertation’s multiple independent types of evidence reveal and mutually corroborate previously unrecognized communication patterns in late antique eastern Gaul. During the fifth and sixth centuries, Aeduan and Lingon communication horizons contracted sharply but unevenly. To the northwest, where Burgundians and Franks faced off across a sometimes-tense border, traditional socio-economic ties withered almost completely, only to resume after the Frankish conquests of the 530s. To the south, however, throughout the fifth and sixth centuries, Aeduans and Lingons more
easily forged long-range connections across a different but also frequently hostile political border, with the Goths.

The struggles of violent kings, then, could decisively reshape communication networks, but did not always do so. To explain the importance of politics relative to other influences – social, economic, and environmental – the dissertation turns to social gravity and network analysis theories. The study culminates in a multi-scalar model for the complex and dynamic communications of late antique Gaul. That interdisciplinary approach models new methodological possibilities for explaining pre-modern communication history.
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Introduction:

The Last Horizons of Roman Gaul
In 310, the emperor Constantine hurried an army south from the Roman Empire’s Rhine frontier. He was on his way to disrupt one of the many political coups that troubled the early fourth century, but first he and his soldiers had to reach Arles and Marseille, two cities along the Mediterranean coast of Gaul (an area that covered what is now France, the Low Countries, and parts of western Germany and Switzerland). To move south, the troops marched by road halfway down Gaul’s length, until they came to *Cabillonum*—Chalon-sur-Saône, in modern Burgundy. Chalon stood at the intersection of important road and riverine networks; there, Constantine’s men embarked into boats, and floated down the Saône and Rhône rivers to the coast. Even with soldiers’ rapid marching speeds, the journey likely required at least sixteen days, a testimony to the slow pace of “rapid” interventions in antiquity.\(^1\) After dealing with the usurper in southern Gaul—his own father-in-law—Constantine led his troops back north toward the Rhine. It was on this return journey that the emperor most likely witnessed the startling celestial vision that led him, in later years, to adopt the Christian faith.\(^2\)

If this particular journey involved both the high drama of violent court politics and the seeds of epochal religious change, there was nothing out of the ordinary about a trip spanning the length of Gaul, or even greater distances. Fourth-century Gaul’s roads and rivers were busy with movement, and the travelers who used those routes connected Gaul to distant points across the entire Roman world. A military officer serving at Trier might be a native of the Balkans, be


married to an Italian wife (perhaps wearing fine fabrics from Asia), drink wine from Palestine, eat off pottery fired in Africa, and discuss ideas from Jerusalem with a comrade from Britain. Indeed, one accurate way to think of the Roman Empire is as a giant network of political, social, economic, and cultural connections. That network linked millions of human beings from Britain to Mesopotamia; moreover, some of those connections branched still further, deep into northern Europe, the upper Nile basin, and central or south Asia—regions far beyond the reach of imperial administrators. The Roman network was not just a political unit; it was a complex world system. I do not mean, I should note, to apply wholesale here Immanuel Wallerstein’s World-System model, but rather to convey the massive network integration of far-flung territories across the Roman world, a kind of ancient “globalization.”

Over the fifth and sixth centuries, however, that world system fragmented. We see evidence of its passing in many accounts, including some from Gaul. Caesarius, a young man from Chalon—where Constantine’s troops had embarked on boats in 310—also moved south to the Mediterranean coast, late in the fifth century. This time, however, such movement was much less typical. For one thing, the journey south now crossed a political border between two barbarian kingdoms, ruled by Burgundians and Visigoths. Years later, after Caesarius had become bishop of the southern Gallic city of Arles, citizens of Arles accused him of plotting to hand the city over to the Burgundians, because he had come from their territory. Back north, within the Burgundian kingdom, a monastery in the Jura Mountains lost access to local salt

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3 Although Greg Woolf critiqued some aspects of World-System theory’s applicability for ancient society, he did grant that “in most respects the Roman Empire corresponds fairly well to Wallerstein’s conception of a world-empire” (ibid, “World-Systems Analysis and the Roman Empire,” Journal of Roman Archaeology 3 [1990]: 44-58, at p. 50). For the utility of “globalization” for describing Roman economic connections, see e.g. Ryan M. Geraghty, “The Impact of Globalization in the Roman Empire, 200 BC-AD 100,” The Journal of Economic History 67 (2007): 1036-1061.

4 See Chapter Two, pp. 72-4.
supplies because of violent Alamannic raids. When the local abbot sent two monks south to the Mediterranean coast to purchase salt, other monks grumbled that the abbot had assigned “not so much exile, as a foreign death.” The monks were surprised when the travelers returned safely. Constantine’s old route south now bridged different worlds.

But other anecdotes show a different side to Gallic communications and travel, even after the end of direct imperial rule. In 2001, Ralph Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer described the implications of a collection of academic essays on late antique Gaul. As revealed in these essays, Gaul did not “become an isolated cultural backwater, separate from the rest of the Mediterranean world.” To support that claim, Mathisen and Shanzer noted several anecdotes, e.g.:

In the early sixth century some of [Gaul’s] bishops looked to the Pope at Rome as a source of guidance and authority … Some of her barbarian rulers sought, and received, patronage further afield, in Byzantium. Relics were imported from Jerusalem and Constantinople … Golden church plate is said to have traveled (with some mishaps on the way) from Byzantium to Lyon.6

To compare Mathisen and Shanzer’s examples to those that I cited above immediately reveals the problem inherent in a history of anecdotes. Late antique social experience was so complex, so diverse, that many different and even contradictory arguments can draw on at least some relevant anecdotes. The late Roman world may appear quite different from project to project, even to the same scholar (a decade before the release of the edited volume cited above, Mathisen

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himself had argued for a growing social divide between Gallic and Italian aristocrats). But another factor complicates any synthetic vision of late antiquity. Haunting our kaleidoscopic visions of the period is a deep, sometimes unnerving, and often unspoken question: do complex civilizations really collapse into ruin?

**Debating the End of Civilization**

What would it be like to experience the end of the world? As melodramatic as that question may be, it has a recurring appeal in the popular imagination. If nuclear devastation now seems a bit passé to post-Cold War authors, the Apocalypse still beckons, fueled now by epidemics, ecological crises, or even undead hordes. Although the favored circumstances of ruin may adapt with the times, stories about the cataclysmic end of civilization are not new. In 1915, Edgar Rice Burroughs imagined Europe covered in wilderness and reduced to savagery by the Great War. A century earlier, in 1826, Mary Shelley described humanity’s chaotic demise in the wake of a devastating plague. Religious beliefs have sponsored apocalyptic expectations for millennia, often with greater optimism about the final outcome. But even among secular writings, all but the most nihilistic of end-time visions may focus not only on catastrophe, but also on its aftermath. The “post-apocalyptic” imagination includes eradication, but also transformation;

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civilization (variously defined) may end, but some part of humanity lives on. The genre thus invites speculation into both the challenges and the opportunities of a new age.11

Soberingly, what popular imagination calls the “end of civilization” is not merely a speculative concern. If we strip away the ideological baggage of the term “civilization,” we may still discuss the collapse of complex societies. Processes that at least some scholars have identified as collapse have been frequent enough in prehistory and history to support a burgeoning anthropological sub-field.12 As a part of that broad conversation, the present study explores the degradation of Roman communications and social networks in the fifth and sixth centuries C.E.—a period traditionally associated with the “Fall of the Roman Empire.” That label has often had to carry heavy baggage, but even subtle descriptions of the period may reflect ideological influences. Academic discussions of the transformation of the late Roman world reflect not only careful, thoughtful engagement with ancient evidence, but also broader patterns in the ways human beings ponder The End of Civilization. To identify some of those patterns, it may help to begin by briefly carving out a comparative “neutral zone,” rife with intellectual parallels but safe from the historiographical battles specific to late Roman and early medieval studies. We turn first, therefore, to the eastern Mediterranean, over three millennia ago.

11 On this attitude within popular post-apocalyptic imagination, see Paul Williams, “Beyond Mad Max III: Race, Empire, and Heroism on Post-Apocalyptic Terrain,” Science Fiction Studies 32 (2005): 301-315, at 301: “...this post-apocalyptic landscape is an expression of two converse impulses: the terrifying contemplation of the empty space of the world after nuclear war, and the exhilaration that this blank canvas is the stage for feats of adventure and heroism.”

Late Bronze Age society in the eastern Mediterranean revolved around palatial centers, which ordered economic, political and social connections between polities. In the course of the twelfth century B.C.E., however, the majority of these palatial centers were destroyed, and regional economic and diplomatic networks appear to have disintegrated. A new social system slowly began to evolve across the Near East and the Aegean Sea. Scholars have hotly debated the best explanation for these disruptions, moving from grand invasion theories to seismic activity, military innovation, social tensions, climate change, cultural hybridization, etc.\textsuperscript{13}

Not all interpreters have seen this “collapse” as an unqualified evil. A participant at a 1990 conference on these events described one scholar’s attitudes:

James Muhly ... emerged as the most provocative revisionist spokesman. Noting the new wealth of archaeological finds from Greece, Cyprus, Israel, and Turkey, he contended that the twelfth century B.C. should be seen as a period of “continuity and prosperity” after the welcome collapse of Big Government. Dismissing external invasions as the cause of the destructions, Muhly asserted that the palaces represented “a heavy-handed blight holding down entrepreneurial initiative.”\textsuperscript{14}

Over the past decade, scholarly opinions have remained divided. In 2008, two archaeologists described the evidence for newcomers and twelfth-century social change on Cyprus in eirenic terms: “neither colonists nor conquerors, these newcomers to Cyprus—alongside indigenous


Cypriots—established new social identities as a result of cultural encounters and mixings here defined as aspects of hybridization.”

That pleasant-sounding process contrasts sharply with the title of Eric Cline’s *1177 B.C.: The Year Civilization Collapsed*. However, although Cline opens his book by invoking “warriors” who “entered the world scene and moved rapidly, leaving death and destruction in their wake,” he eschews a monocausal invasion hypothesis. Instead, he posits a “perfect storm” of overlapping military, political, and ecological troubles that combined to sweep away the world of Bronze Age polities; invasions, in this vision, were as much a consequence as cause of the Collapse. That fits with the view expressed in a recent synthetic essay that “it is a waste of effort to try and isolate a single cause or prime mover for the Collapse.” But complexity should not obscure the reality of that destructive transformation: “conditions may have been truly chaotic for a short while,” and later, “when some degree of order was restored in the Aegean, the old systems could not be resurrected, for the conditions in which they had flourished were gone forever.”

Even that recognition does not require subjective evaluation of the Collapse as a step backward in history. As Cyprian Broodbank has argued (in a memorable phrase that echoes Muhly’s provocative statement quoted above), we should eschew “the rhetoric of catastrophe, and instead [think] of burning palaces as problem-solving and enabling moments for certain

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kinds of people.” Specifically, the palace-burners here were participants in an emerging system of decentralized trading and raiding networks, activities that ultimately clashed with the tight controls and fossilized practices of the old palatial system. When tensions between the two systems became irreconcilable, the inflexible and backward-looking palace lords lost. This vision thus prioritizes human rather than environmental causes, but refuses to take the palace-centric written records for the Collapse at face value.

The present study is not about the end of the Bronze Age; it is about the end of Roman imperial society in Western Europe. But our brief excursion into the historiography of the earlier social collapse is instructive. By swapping out a few words, especially names and dates, one could interchange the journal abstracts of surprisingly many articles written for the two fields of study. In both fields, some scholars have insisted on rather extreme interpretations, whether involving apocalyptic doom or rose-tinted continuity. In both fields, too, only a more nuanced approach seems adequate to explain the complex picture adduced from the extant evidence.

Just as the earliest explanations for the Bronze Age Collapse invoked teeming hordes of invaders, traditional explanations for the end of Roman rule pointed to groups of barbarian outsiders who conquered a weakened or even enervated Mediterranean society. There were, of course, scholarly arguments. Motivated in part by nationalist sentiments, some saw Germanic barbarians not as despoilers of a decadent world but as responsible heirs of the imperial

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21 The classic study is of course Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, 6 vols. (1776-1788).
inheritance. Others held to a more disruptive view of the “invasions,” but disagreed over the particular flaws that had fueled the Roman state’s downward spiral.

Then, in 1971, Peter Brown changed everything. His small book The World of Late Antiquity presented a colorful vision of the late Roman world, dominated not so much by wars and invaders as by philosophers, mystics, heretics, and artists. Brown revealed late antiquity as a time of spiritual and intellectual vigor, not decline, and invited a new generation of scholarship that privileged cultural, social, and intellectual histories. Looking back, it is important to recall that Brown’s book was a valuable corrective rather than an outright rejection of earlier approaches to the period. As Brown cautioned in 1971:

A history of the Late Antique world that is all emperors and barbarians, soldiers, landlords and tax-collectors would give as colourless and as unreal a picture of the quality of the age, as would an account devoted only to the sheltered souls, to the monks, the mystics, and the awesome theologians of that time.

Brown’s intellectual heirs did not entirely forget late antiquity’s men of violence, but they often adopted a radically reductionist view of military and political change’s long-term significance. A 1999 survey co-edited by Brown described the world in 761 C.E. as still in profound continuity with ancient traditions, despite any putative Fall of the Roman Empire. “Only at the western tip of Eurasia, in what we call western Europe, did it seem as if the long summer’s


afternoon of empire had begun to fade.” Nonetheless, “the clergy shared a common Catholicism, first formed in the Christian Roman empire of Constantine and Theodosius I,” and “the ruling classes of the postimperial kingdoms of the west had, in fact, inherited a basically Roman sense of social order and a Roman penchant for extended empire. Power still wore a Roman face.” Political history, formerly a handmaiden to theories of Decline and Fall, now served as another witness to the vitality of late antique civilization.

The last decades of the twentieth century also saw a proliferation of archaeological work on late antiquity. Fieldwork uncovered a world of robust social and economic activities across the late Roman countryside, and profound transformations in urban lifestyles. Brown and his intellectual allies celebrated the discovery of a landscape “filled up with the traces of villages and unpretentious bathhouses, with the jolly mosaics of the petty gentry and with hundreds of little churches and synagogues dedicated by pious notables.” A 1999 Guide to late antiquity, co-edited by Brown, emphasized a deliberate shift toward the inclusion of archaeology, although other post-World of Late Antiquity emphases were of course included; the editors noted that “too many bishops and too many heretics would have meant too few villages, too few recently discovered mosaics, altogether too little emphasis on the continuity of the humdrum, profane life of the majority of the ‘worldly’ persons of whom we now have evidence.”


Brown’s approach is not to deny evidence for political and military turmoil in the late Roman world, but to problematize that evidence and re-interpret it within a general narrative of social, cultural, and economic continuity and prosperity. We have already seen those words used, let us recall, to re-envision the end of Late Bronze Age palatial society. But just as evidence from the Bronze Age has stubbornly resisted repudiation of a troubled collapse, so archaeology itself increasingly belies the grand narrative of a painless late antiquity free from decline.

The clearest evidence for decline concerns the fate of the ancient economy. The prosperous villages cited above were not imaginary. But synthetic studies have demonstrated beyond a doubt that the Mediterranean world’s overall socio-economic trajectory between 300 and 700 was downward.\footnote{See recent syntheses: Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages* pp. 693-824, especially pp. 708-20; Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce A.D. 300-900* (Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 25-119, especially pp. 115-19.}


Current studies, however, understand the Arab invasions as a consequence, not merely a cause, of social and economic troubles.\footnote{Two alternative viewpoints expressed in the 1980’s illustrate this shift in opinion. Arguing from archaeological evidence, Richard Hodges and David Whitehouse (*Mohammed, Charlemagne, and the Origins of Europe*) placed the moment of crisis in the sixth century, with its crippling wars, massive expenditures and plague; thereafter trade slowly withered away. Meanwhile Dietrich Claude argued, chiefly from written evidence, that the Mediterranean economy’s nadir came in the decades around A.D. 700 (Dietrich Claude, *Der Handel im westlichen Mittelmeer während des Frühmittelalters* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985]). He cautioned, however, that the}
textual indices, the ancient economy in the western areas of the former Roman Empire, and probably in the surviving Byzantine provinces, now appears to have run down to a whisper by the early eighth century. The process does not seem to reflect any single cause, but rather numerous contingent factors, including barbarian wars, plague, changing social structures, shrinking demand and buying power, and ecological change. The decline also followed different patterns in different regions. In the east, a system troubled by the pressures of the sixth century was then hit hard by the Long War with Persia and finally the Arab invasions; but, again, these final catastrophes (from the Empire’s point of view) must be understood as culminations of long processes in political, social and economic affairs.

Economic decay had set in much earlier in the west, though the beginnings of decline there may appear deceptive. In some places, crisis seems clear; the economy of much of Roman Britain seems to have collapsed, quickly and dramatically, in the early fifth century. Further south, the fate of the imperial economy was often more complex. The Vandal occupation of Roman Africa early in the fifth century denied the imperial government its traditional ability to draw on African surplus production through the tax system. Not only was African grain a strategic asset of great importance, but African exports in several industries appear to have dominated markets across much of the late Roman Mediterranean, especially in the west.

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33 Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 306-9.

34 Archaeological studies of ceramic assemblages around the Mediterranean (chiefly in the west; see below) indicate a booming African export hegemony in the period of the late Empire. These finds show that African wares were common beyond sites associated with the *annona*, the grain shipments for government distribution. On ceramic evidence for late antique trade see *inter alia* Michel Bonifay, “Africa: Patterns of Consumption in Coastal Regions versus Inland Regions. The Ceramic Evidence (300-700 A.D.)” in Luke Lavan, ed., *Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2013) pp. 529-66; Paul Reynolds, *Hispania and...*
Although the imperial government required some merchant shippers to transport African grain across the sea, the government also subsidized these transports, and likely authorized duty-free shipping of other goods carried along on those same voyages. Those benefits offered African export industries a competitive advantage over competitors in different Roman regions. The Empire’s loss of Africa to the Vandals, then, represented not only a blow to the infrastructures of the state, but also a threat to some of the dominant actors in Mediterranean commercial shipping.

Nonetheless, African industry continued after the Vandal conquest. A modern excavation at Carthage recovered, at just one site, 3.8 tons of pottery (!) from contexts dated to the fifth through seventh centuries. Meanwhile eastern ceramics were becoming more prominent

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36 Wickham, Framing the Early Middle Ages, pp. 708-13.
in the west, though overseas ports also continued to receive African wares. Total African exports do seem to have decreased somewhat in the century prior to the Byzantine reconquest of Africa in 533, though in part the new pattern simply shifted in distribution; Italy received fewer African products, but some western areas, such as the coast of Spain, began to receive more. The reconquest of Africa re-oriented (literally) the region with the sixth-century imperial economy. Though Africa continued to export goods, now primarily to the eastern Mediterranean, export production dwindled over time and had ended by 700, if not earlier. In the west, as (to a perhaps lesser extent) in the east, the ancient economy’s slow death was underway long before Arab armies pierced the Empire’s frontiers.

On a more positive note, the data from Vandal Africa show clearly that barbarian conquest in late antiquity did not automatically and permanently sever a region’s former communications, nor knock it out of the Mediterranean economy. These data also show us that late antique overseas trade, despite the imperial state’s fiscal influences, apparently remained sufficiently market-driven to persist for some time after the state’s disruption. Still, this impressive continuity does not negate the impression of overall decline during the Vandal era. Chris Wickham has argued that this slow absolute decline, despite many decades of continuing relative prosperity, stemmed from Africa’s unplugging from state demand. If his interpretation is correct, Vandal industry lacked the institutional supports that had made Roman African trade

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37 Fulford, *Excavations at Carthage* p. 255. See also pp. 255-62 summarizing the continuity of African pottery production and the relative proportions of African/eastern ceramics by date.

38 Reynolds, *Trade in the Western Mediterranean*.

39 The Roman economy, or at least many aspects of that economy, increasingly appears to have operated according to market forces, albeit under some (unintended) influence from the state. I will treat these important issues in more depth in Chapter Five, where I discuss evidence for economic movements; however, for an introduction to the primitivist-maximalist economic debate, see Angeliki E. Laiou, “Economic and Noneconomic Exchange” in *idem*, ed., *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, 3 vols. *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* 39 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002) vol. 2, pp. 681-96, especially pp. 681-9.
so powerful to begin with; meanwhile the loss of African revenue weakened the Empire itself, causing further stress to Africa’s potential markets. As inter-regional demand (weakened by social-political turmoil and a general, relative impoverishment of the western Mediterranean’s purchasing elites) ultimately fell short of that needed to sustain Africa’s previous export levels, the system became unsustainable, though it took time for the stress to show.\textsuperscript{40} However, if Wickham’s explanation of African patterns highlights the slow decline of state-sponsored activities, his broader materialist thesis about late antique transformation points to diminished aristocratic market demand all over the Roman world. In framing that thesis, he has tended to downplay disruption caused by warfare and political conflict, sometimes even against his own evidence.\textsuperscript{41}

Other scholars writing in this new century have more readily stressed military and political disruption. As the titles of some studies reveal, ruin and collapse are making a comeback in late antique scholarship. Bryan Ward-Perkins’ controversial \textit{The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization} not only highlights the pan-Mediterranean decline in material wealth discussed above, but also connects that decline to the ruinous effects of decades of warfare.\textsuperscript{42} Peter Heather’s \textit{The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians} portrays the Empire as strong, but the barbarians who came together in Rome’s shadow as stronger.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{40} Wickham, \textit{Framing the Early Middle Ages} pp. 711-13, 722-28.


\textsuperscript{43} Peter Heather, \textit{The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
This renewed interest in consequential military defeat may reflect in part the West’s increasingly uncertain position in global affairs since 2001. The same unease may account for parallel developments in scholarship on the Late Bronze Age collapse (the publisher’s marketing for Eric Cline’s *1177 B.C.: The Year Civilization Collapsed* hints at the book’s potential applicability for coming twenty-first-century affairs). However, Cline’s dramatic title obscures the lengthy, complex, multi-causal changes that he actually describes, processes in which violent conflict played *a*, but not *the*, starring role. Notably, Cline’s recognition of such complexity does not prevent his formulation of a core explanatory narrative.

In addition to reflecting the current cultural mood, openness to complex history hopefully reflects a real maturing in scholarly discourse on social collapse. In studying late antiquity, too, we should acknowledge the significance of violent regime change and economic decline, without forgetting the rich lessons learned by cultural and social historians since 1971. It is possible to write a narrative embracing both cultural continuity and violent political-military collapse, both institutional vibrancy and economic decline. That has been my aim in writing this book on the fate of Roman social and communication networks in one corner of the Empire.

*Communications: Crossing the World, Shaping the World*

An accurate picture of late antique communication networks, then, must accept both connection and disruption, both the withering of old ties and the persistence of others, or even the development of unprecedented new connections. Most of all, we need a longitudinal view that demonstrates which patterns really predominated, and when, and which connections or

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44 Cline, *1177 B.C.* (see above, p. 8, fn. 16).
disruptions had the greatest effect on human social experience. Finally, we need to ground ourselves in a precise geographic and/or social context; separate sub-regions or even local communities had different experiences, accounting in part for the profusion of contradictory evidence from late antique history.

Yet a robust communications history is not doomed to parochialism. Although this study examines only a few neighboring communities in the heart of eastern Gaul, that study-area is a strategic choice for understanding communications history. As I will discuss in greater detail below, those communities were located at the intersection between major watersheds, and movements of many kinds had flowed across this small sub-region for centuries. Illumination of movements across this area, then, also illuminates the communications of a much wider area.

Although tightly focused, such a history also should draw on lessons learned from other studies of historical communication. Communication has lately been among the hot topics of late antique scholarship. Recent decades have seen publications on many kinds of movement, such as exile, the spread of saints’ cults, pilgrimage, the distribution of books, news dissemination, the spread of saints’ cults, and intelligence gathering across the imperial frontiers. A recent book by Mark Handley uses epigraphic evidence to argue for robust trans-Mediterranean movements, with little indication of disruption linked to the period’s crises.

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46 Mark Handley, Dying on Foreign Shores: Travel and Mobility in the Late-Antique West. JRA Supplementary Series 86 (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2011). Handley’s assemblage of relevant epigraphic
Communication was the subject of the fourth biennial *Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity* conference, in 2001, and of a resulting proceedings volume. That volume’s contributions were diverse, but epistolography and pilgrimage stood out as major themes. Notably, the volume contained no entries on trade or economic links.

The movement of words and ideas through various media is central to many visions of medieval communication. The massive *Bibliography of Works on Medieval Communication* includes over 6,700 titles, but focuses almost entirely on reading and writing, language and speech-acts, and texts; it also treats non-verbal communication of messages through ritual, imagery, etc. Other forms of interconnection, such as trade, appear only as a context for the use of writing. For many scholars, medieval communication thus sits between historians’ traditional emphasis on texts and communication theorists’ concerns about message transmission.

For other researchers, medieval trade has been a central object of study. Indeed, part of communication history’s versatility is its ability to embrace all manner of movements, whether of persons, goods, germs, or ideas. For this study, I have defined communication as broadly as possible, as any act of human movement between communities. Here, communication may involve a bishop setting out for a church council, a rampaging army, a princess taking her dowry to a nearby kingdom, a spreading plague, boatmen shipping a load of cooking-pots downriver for evidence is a great boon to scholars, but I am not as sure as he is that the drop-offs he observes in attested movement only reflect the decline of the epigraphic habit.

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sale, or a cultured aristocrat sending his Latin poems for review by a distant correspondent. That broad definition will be familiar to readers of Michael McCormick’s seminal work on late antique and early medieval communications.\(^{50}\) However, my aims contrast with those of McCormick’s *Origins of the European Economy.* As his title suggests, McCormick used communications history to unveil dramatic but hidden economic histories. Although his methodological influence will be clear throughout my study, and although I make extensive use of evidence for economic activities, my ultimate goal has not been insight into economic history, but into the fate of communication itself.

Katherine Grandjean has recently adopted a similarly broad definition of communications for a work on early colonial America.\(^{51}\) Grandjean’s new book contributes to rich concentrations of communications history in the early modern, Atlantic, and American fields.\(^{52}\) Other works explore the role of communication in the maintenance of Europe’s overseas empires elsewhere

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Another flourishing sub-field concerns the changing history of communications in the wake of modern industrialization, as various telecommunication technologies have utterly transformed the pace and reach of global communication. Not only historians but also scholars of communication theory have explored the social consequences of communications changes. Other social sciences, particularly anthropology and archaeology, have produced innumerable studies on human movement, exchanges, and relationships.

Rather than attempting a comprehensive survey of such disparate fields, I want to draw attention to several useful principles that have emerged in these works and are relevant to the present study. First, scholars across multiple fields have emphasized the important link between communication and power. Writing on colonial New England, Grandjean has stated:

> Travel and communications, in fact, provide uncannily strong barometers of power. Who could travel where, who controlled the routes winding through the woods, who dictated what news might be sent—These things tell as much about power and geographic authority as any deed or document.

The communication-and-power dynamic is equally important for understanding the end of Roman imperial control. As later chapters will illustrate, central-eastern Gaul’s communications

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54 See the special issue of *Historical Social Research* 35 (2010), dedicated to “Global Communication: Telecommunication and Global Flows of Information in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century.”


history during the late fifth and early sixth centuries is closely linked to political developments across the region. My findings will tend to reveal communication changes as consequences of political change, rather than the opposite. But social relations below the level of grand politics also involved power dynamics. Communication as power aptly suits the aristocratic competition for social influence in late antique Gaul, even under barbarian kings.

To understand power and group dynamics, anthropologists and archaeologists have found network concepts particularly useful. Ancient historians, too, have begun to employ network approaches, sometimes including the technical quantitative methodology of Social Network Analysis (SNA); Giovanni Ruffini’s 2008 work on social networks in Byzantine Egypt broke new ground, and a bumper crop of network studies have grown up in the past decade. Early in the life of my own project, I considered and then rejected a similar approach, which would have leaned heavily on computational and quantitative analyses. Although late antique Gaul’s sources are rich and diverse, they are far less extensive and coherent than the documentary sources preserved on Egyptian papyri. My sources are poorly suited to a full-fledged SNA methodology, but I have paid attention to the underlying concepts, asking how they might illuminate the social lives studied in this dissertation. My engagement with network theory will be most apparent in the synthesis that closes this work.


Another valuable lesson from these fields is the recognition that communications can alter perceived geographies of space. Interaction with other people and places changes our vision of spatial connections—that is, of the shape of the world—which in turn alters subsequent interactions. The importance of such reshaping has emerged, for example, in modern study of the telecommunications revolution. By fundamentally altering the speeds at which distant people may communicate, that epochal change has totally altered the shape of human interconnections and the possible perceptions of space.

Related insights still apply to ancient societies. In the preindustrial world, differential maximum speeds of maritime, riverine, and land travel across varied terrain made absolute geographic distance between communities an unreliable measure of the effort and time required to connect them. Along some routes, of course, cultural and political friction complicated travel even further, adding additional perceived “distance.” It is appropriate, then, to speak of Gallo-Romans potentially experiencing multiple “worlds” of spatial perception. Indeed, it should be clear by the end of this book that the world’s outlines did change for some observers; the spatial horizons (so to speak) moved over time as experiences of communication altered. As we shall see, Gaul’s mobile horizons show that violent kings did more than just maintain old Roman traditions: they reshaped the world.

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Scope and Methods

This dissertation identifies and explains the changing communication horizons of several adjacent communities in central-eastern Gaul. Today, their former territory lies in southeastern Bourgogne (Burgundy) and southern Champagne, in France; to be more exact, the area roughly corresponds to the French départements of Saône-et-Loire, Côte-d’Or, and all but the northern third of Haute-Marne. In late antiquity, however, and indeed throughout classical antiquity, these were the lands of two ancient tribal groupings, the Aedui and Lingones. Below the provincial level, Roman administration in Gaul maintained such old Iron Age territorial groupings as a basic unit for organizing the landscape. These units were the civitates (singular civitas), essentially an urban administrative center with surrounding secondary communities and rural lands, somewhat like the large counties of western American states. For the Aeduans and Lingons (as I shall call them), the respective civitas centers were the cities of Augustodunum (now Autun, in Saône-et-Loire) and Andemantunum (now Langres, in Haute-Marne).  

The late antique Christianization of Gallo-Roman society led to changes in the civitas structure. Christian ecclesiastical organization generally followed the urban-centric secular organization of territory, so that bishops and civitates came to be closely associated. The eventual proliferation of bishoprics in more and more communities, the increasing prominence of

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episcopal leadership in Gallo-Roman society, and the general decline in importance of traditional urban councils all led to a multiplication of *civitates*. By 540, therefore, the once-unified Aeduan *civitas* consisted of three separate *civitates*, administered from *Augustodunum*/*Autun*, *Cabillonum*/*Chalon-sur-Saône*, and *Matisco*/*Mâcon*. For convenience, throughout this study I have used “Aeduan” as a catchall to describe these three communities *en bloc*, but in cases where usage matters I have aimed for more precise language. To the northeast, Lingon territory remained united under the nominal administration of Langres, but—as we shall see—in reality social capital and power moved about the *civitas* over time. *Divio*/*Dijon* came to play an increasingly dominant role as the unofficial Lingon social center.

Movement, communication and competition occurred even within these territorial units. The “cities”—urban spaces—at the heart of *civitates* were not so much separate entities cut off from surrounding lands, but instead were integrated parts of a continuum of activity across the entire territory. In this study, I have asked how connections within these territories and to the world beyond changed in the course of the “long” fifth century, from about 395 to 550. I have also asked how Aeduan and Lingon communication changes related to power. Political control of these communities changed many times, often violently, as Roman, Burgundian, Alaman, and Frankish warlords strove to rule the region.

Gaul’s surviving written sources are among the richest from late antiquity. The region also boasts an extensive and accessible corpus of published archaeological data. That diversity of available evidence—rare for many other parts of the former Roman world—opens the door for

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fruitful interdisciplinary scholarship. Within Gaul, the Aeduan and Lingon communities’ geographic position, and their underlying topography and hydrography, make them a strategic choice for a communications-focused study. Much of the scholarship on late antique communication addresses movement across the Mediterranean itself, or in the hinterlands of great coastal centers such as Arles and Marseille. My study area’s deep inland location offers a window onto different patterns of communication. That is not to say that these communities have little to teach us about long-distance travel in the Roman world. Together, Aeduan and Lingon lands bridged three of Gaul’s major watersheds, facilitating movements from the Mediterranean south into Gaul’s northwestern and northern extremities. For centuries, even long before the coming of the Romans to Gaul, these territories were at the heart of one of Europe’s great north-south transport routes. Understanding how well movements along that route weathered late antiquity’s political turmoil is no small gain for communication history.

To illustrate that geographic context: the Rhône River descends through the western Alps and Jura Mountains to the plains, passes through the great city of Lugdunum/Lyon, and then flows south between the Alps and the Massif Central to the Mediterranean. While flowing through Lyon, it meets its greatest tributary, the Saône, which flows down from the old lands of the Aeduans and Lingons, and facilitates connections between the Rhône’s watershed and northern Europe. The Aeduan cities of Mâcon and Chalon-sur-Saône sit alongside the Saône. North of Chalon, the channels of the upper Saône and of its tributary the Doubs both descend from the northeast; their upper basins allow rapid overland access to the Rhine and Moselle.

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66 Crumley and Green, “Environmental Setting” (in Crumley and Marquardt, *Regional Dynamics*).

rivers, which lead ultimately to the North Sea. Of course, the route could be reversed; Constantine’s troops, as we have seen, took to south-moving boats at Chalon after marching from the Rhine.

The Saône basin also grants access to other routes. The Ouche, a minor tributary of the Saône, allows light boat access to Dijon, ca. 40 mi/64 km north of Chalon. The same distance north of Dijon lies Langres. Unlike Mâcon, Chalon, and Dijon, which spread out along river-plains, Langres clings to the top of a narrow ridge, a southern extension of the upland Plateau de Langres that spreads north into French Champagne. Although not sited on a navigable stream, Langres is highly defensible, and strategically located. North of the city, drainage patterns turn away to the upper reaches of the Marne and thence the Seine basin, which drains to the English Channel.

Finally, there is Autun, 29-mi/46 km northwest of Chalon, on a plain at the foot of the iron-rich Morvan hills. Although overland travel is necessary to reach Autun from the Saône, the Arroux river, which passes Autun, can carry light traffic to the Loire basin, which drains to the Atlantic. A Roman highway also linked Autun to Lyon, and in the other direction, to northwestern communities: Auxerre, Sens, Paris. Together, the Aeduan and Lingon cities guarded links between the Mediterranean, the Alps, western Gaul and the Atlantic, and the north, including the imperial court city of Trier, the Rhine frontier, and the routes to Britain.

To understand how such links changed over time, I have turned to prosopography. That text-based methodology underlies the results presented in Chapters One through Four. Like Social Network Analysis, prosopography reveals hidden group dynamics through study of the aggregate experiences within a defined population, and is particularly effective in cases when we
lack detailed biographical information for many of a group’s individual members. To identify the members of my study population, I have relied chiefly on Martin Heinzelmann’s 1982 Gallic prosopography, currently the most robust catalog of late antique individuals for this region. Heinzelmann’s inventory includes a deeper social range of individuals than the better-known Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire (PLRE) and also incorporates the ecclesiastics, whom PLRE excludes and who dominate Gaul’s textual evidence for the later fifth and sixth century. With Heinzelmann as my foundation, I have also consulted other prosopographical aids, including PLRE, lists by Ralph Mathisen and Karl Stroheker, and the classic Fastes épiscopaux of Louis Duchesne, to which Heinzelmann typically deferred when reporting bishops.

In building my own inventory of Aeduan and Lingon communicators, I looked for all persons described as Aeduan or Lingon, persons who visited those territories, or persons who communicated in any way with an Aeduan or Lingon individual. I then turned to the texts identified as relevant for each such individual, in order to catalog instances of communication involving them among Aeduans, Lingons, and members of other communities. Between the sources identified by Heinzelmann or other prosopographers, and other texts needed to

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illuminate my topic, I have drawn on very diverse genres: histories and chronicles, letters and laws, epitaphs and panegyrics, geographies and documentary evidence, and especially hagiographic writings, the often controverted *Vitae* or Lives of late antique saints. By way of Mark Handley’s recent book on epigraphically attested travelers in late antiquity, I have also considered relevant Gallic inscriptions. I have also examined archaeological evidence, which features in Chapters Five and Six.\(^7\)

I have tried to study all persons known to have been alive or active by 395, the last year that a single emperor governed the entire Roman world, and before the troubles of the fifth century began. In practice, I have incorporated some communications from before that date as well, to help set the stage or to flesh out the background experiences of persons who also operated after 395. Heinzelmann nominally ended his prosopographical list at 527, but in fact I have been able to use his guide and other sources to push deep into the middle and even later sixth century, though coverage probably becomes less comprehensive after mid-century. Partly because of clustering within surviving primary sources, and partly to satisfy questions raised by my research, I have devoted the most pages in coming chapters to communications from ca. 460-540. Although that period opened under imperial rule and closed under the Merovingian Franks, the intervening years saw the dramatic rise and fall of another polity: the kingdom of the Burgundians.

\(^7\) Handley, *Dying on Foreign Shores*. 
Illuminating the Burgundian Kingdom

Technically, we are speaking of the Second Burgundian Kingdom; Huns had destroyed the first, near Worms, earlier in the fifth century. In 443, however, Roman authorities settled a group of barbarian Burgundians as federate warriors in the Jura Mountains of Sapaudia/Savoie, between Geneva and Lyon. From there, they expanded their reach outward, and by the mid-460s they held all of Lugdunensis Prima (a Roman province incorporating Aeduan and Lingon lands, as well as the metropolis of Lyon to the south). Unlike some barbarians in fifth-century Gaul, the Burgundians appear to have expanded through collaboration (or at least relatively non-violent interaction) with elite Gallo-Roman landowners. Despite some setbacks, the kingdom persisted for decades, weathering Frankish invasions in 500 and 523/4. In 532, however, Franks captured Autun; in 534, they dismantled the rest of the Burgundian realm.72

Losers in Gaul’s game of thrones and overshadowed by the triumphant Merovingians, the Burgundians have become, in the words of one French scholar, “a forgotten kingdom at the heart of Europe.” Among Anglophone scholars, only a few have written at length about that

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kingdom.\textsuperscript{73} Of all Gaul’s fifth- and sixth-century barbarian realms, the Burgundian kingdom has stood out to researchers as the most Roman-like, the least disruptive to traditional social habits. Ian Wood has even characterized the kingdom as “essentially a late Roman province, run by late Roman officials.”\textsuperscript{74}

Aeduan and Lingon lands formed most of the Burgundian kingdom’s northwestern quarter, and butted up against Frankish-held territory. My study of those communities’ social networks and communications offers a close look into social affairs under Burgundian rule, and will illuminate some of the problems associated with Burgundian history. As I have already noted, communications history should draw on multiple kinds of evidence, reflecting multiple kinds of movement. Therefore, in Chapters Five and Six I turn to numismatic evidence, and provide an unprecedented study of the distribution of Burgundian coins found in France. I also note relevant patterns of ceramic distribution across my study-area. My goal in marshaling these classes of material evidence has been to synthesize their implications with that of the textual sources examined in Chapters One through Four.

It would be a grave mistake to treat such different sources of evidence as simply equivalent in meaning. Just as written texts may reflect a plethora of perspectives and agendas, so the distributions of various types of material artifact may reflect entirely different social,


\textsuperscript{74} Wood, “The Burgundians and Byzantium,” p. 15.
economic, political or cultural processes. Moreover, late antique written texts have infamously little to say directly about the sophisticated social questions framed by many archaeologists. Texts, coins and pots may not illuminate social changes on the same time-scale, or even reflect the movements of the same kinds of people. Although gold coins are *prima facie* more likely to have belonged to privileged persons, there is no reason to suspect that common ceramic wares must reflect only the economic connections of the abbots, bishops and magnates who feature in most of our written sources.

In collating prosopographical, numismatic, and ceramic evidence, I have kept these important caveats in mind. I do not consider any class of evidence simply ancillary to the others, brought on board to “prove” the validity of my earlier interpretations. Rather, each must stand on its own, but also be interpreted in light of the others. This approach has proven very fruitful. Although different types of evidence point to different strata within late antique society, their mutually overlapping testimony compensates for the limited scope of each form of data. By turning from an exclusively text-based, elite perspective, we are able to contextualize that legitimately interesting view within a broader and equally interesting socio-economic context. By situating materially adduced economic patterns against the more precise chronology of political history—in other words, by seeking to synthesize *la longue durée* and *l’histoire événementielle*—we understand better how short-term pressures complicated structural effects within the timescale of individual lives. In combining approaches, I have tried to move the literature on Burgundian-era society beyond conjoined descriptions of history and archaeology,

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where many works have stopped, and toward a true synthesis that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Although these varied sources have their differences, they have all corroborated a roughly equivalent picture of Aeduan and Lingon communication horizons in the late fifth and early sixth century. Under the Burgundian kings, Aeduan and Lingon horizons contracted; they remained relatively more open to the south, but less so toward the Frankish north, where old ties had once flourished. That picture finds wonderful confirmation in an unanticipated way: the same picture shows up, too, in the apparently unconscious cognitive geography of a sixth-century Lingon author, who wrote a fraudulent and wildly anachronistic passion account of a putative saint, Benignus. This author described the city of Sens as located in extremis finibus Galliarum—“in the uttermost limits of the Gallic provinces.” Not only does that description inaccurately reflect the actual administrative geography of this region in antiquity, but Sens was the first metropolitan city within Frankish lands that one would encounter when moving northwest from Lingon territory early in the sixth century. However, this counter-intuitive expression of distance and separation perfectly fits the patterns of communications across the Aeduans’ and Lingons’ northwestern frontiers while under Burgundian rule—patterns deduced in this study from textual, numismatic and ceramic evidence. If the Burgundian kingdom was, in Wood’s words, “essentially a late Roman province,” the great network of networks—the Roman Empire as Constantine had known it—was gone nonetheless. To look northwest from Lingon territory was to peer across the “uttermost limits,” the last horizons of Roman Gaul.

76 See Chapter Four, pp. 127-9.
Chapter One:

Aeduan Communications at the End of Antiquity
Even if by late antiquity their urban lifeways reflected centuries of Roman rule, the *civitates* (i.e., cities, with their surrounding districts) of Autun (*Augustodunum*) and Chalon-sur-Saône (*Cabillonum*) were communities of the ancient Aeduan people.\(^1\) Long before Julius Caesar’s time, however, Rome’s senate already had granted to the Aeduans the nominal title of “brothers and kinsmen” of the Roman people.\(^2\) Centuries after the Roman conquest, Aeduan rhetoric emphasized the harmony between these twin heritages.\(^3\) “For which race in all the world,” a panegyricist asked Constantine at his court in Trier, ca. 311, “should ask to be placed before the Aeduans in love of the Roman name?”\(^4\) Despite the hyperbole typical of a panegyric address, a recent Aeduan generation had indeed shown its loyalty, at great cost. In 270, within living memory for some, a rebel army had sacked Autun in retribution for the city’s support of the central imperial regime. Tetrarchic and Constantinian patronage then allowed the damaged city to rise again, prompting speeches which mixed requests for further help with expressions of supreme gratitude.\(^5\) Indeed, claimed the same orator, if Autun “had been able to displace itself

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\(^{1}\) For an overview of these cities’ history and sources see Ch. Pietri with J.-Ch. Picard, “Autun,” pp. 37-46; Brigitte Beaujard, “Chalon-sur-Saône,” pp. 65-74, both in Brigitte Beaujard et al., *Topographie chrétienne des cités de la Gaule des origines au milieu du VIIIe siècle*, vol. 4, *Province ecclesiastique de Lyon (Lugdunensis Prima)* (Paris: de Boccard, 1986). See also J.-Ch. Picard, “Mâcon,” pp. 75-80, in ibid. That latter community did not gain episcopal autonomy until the 530s, and before then was probably under Autun’s jurisdiction (though that is not certain; possibly, Mâcon had belonged to Chalon).


\(^{3}\) Of course, such rhetoric rested somewhat uneasily with the Aeduan’s actual, more complex history, which included episodes of defiance against Rome during the republican and early imperial period. See C. E. V. Nixon and Barbara Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: The Panegyrici Latini* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), p. 267, fn. 10.

\(^{4}\) *Panegyrici Latini* 5.2.4, p. 586: “Quaenam igitur gens tota orbe terrarum in amore Romani nominis Aeduis se postulet anteponi?” Unless otherwise noted, all dates in this chapter are C.E.

\(^{5}\) See discussions of *Panegyric* 5 (pp. 254-87, text at pp. 585-93), 6 (pp. 211-53, text at pp. 572-84), 8 (pp. 104-44, text at pp. 543-53) and 9 (pp. 145-77, text at pp. 554-63) in Nixon and Rodgers, *Panegyrici Latini* (page numbers are as cited; Nixon and Rodgers did not organize their commentary by sequential *Panegyric* numbers). During the Tetrarchic period, Autun’s famous school of rhetoric was one of the institutions aided by official support (see discussion of *Panegyric* 9, pp. 145-77).
from its foundations and to come hither” to Trier, then all its citizens would have come to praise and thank the emperor. Even if that feat remained purely hypothetical, Autun’s civic leaders entered the fourth century eager to look beyond their local horizons and to maintain ties with the centers of imperial power.

Servants and enemies of the imperial regime would cross Aeduan territory many times during the fourth century. Official workshops in Autun’s territory produced armor, shields and woven products for the Gallic armies, and it was at Autun that Magnentius, a senior officer, launched his ill-fated usurpation of the imperial title in 350. During the 350’s and 360’s, Alamannic raiders menaced the region on multiple occasions, drawing several Roman armies to Autun and Chalon. Chalon also hosted imperial agents in peacetime; the Prefect of the Saône flotilla kept his headquarters at that strategic riverine port. Agents of a different power, too, linked Aeduans to the broader world. Reticius, a bishop of Autun, attended ecclesiastical councils at Arles and Rome in 313 and 314, and some of his writings were still circulating across the Roman world at the turn of the fifth century. Later in the century, Martin of Tours ...

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6 Panegyrici Latini 5.1.1, p. 585: “Si Flavia Aeduorum tandem aeterno nomine nuncupata, sacratissime imperator, commouere se funditus atque huc uenire potuisset…”


9 Notitia Dignitatum Occ. 42.21, p. 216.

10 Duchesne 2.176-7 (1910): Louis Duchesne, Fastes épiscopaux de l’ancienne Gaule, 3 vols. (Paris, 1907, 1910, 1915). All references to Duchesne’s vols. 1 and 2 concern the revised second editions, unless otherwise noted. Jerome of Stridon later praised Reticius’ reputation (De uiris illustribus 82: Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 14.1, ed. E. Richardson (Leipzig, 1896), p. 43) and expressed a desire to read his writings (Ep. 5.2.2: CSEL 54, ed. I. Hilberg [Vienna and Leipzig, 1910], p. 22). After obtaining and reading one of Reticius’ commentaries, however, Jerome was not pleased, and roundly criticized the Aeduan bishop for a number of philological errors (Ep. 37.1-3: ibid., pp. 286-8). According to the late-sixth-century vita of bishop...
By the late fourth century, then, both cities were well connected to external communities, and served as useful nodes in the web of imperial infrastructure in Gaul. Moreover, both communities already had weathered successfully some disruptions to the region’s communications networks. The geographic context for the two cities was not equivalent—both sat beside rivers, yet Chalon-sur-Saône was far more intimately tied to its strategic waterway. On the other hand, these neighboring communities shared a common tribal background, and membership in the same political and ecclesiastical provincial unit (*Lugdunensis Prima*). Did their external connections therefore fare similarly across the “long” fifth century (here, ca. 395-550 CE), when the Roman political order strained and broke down, and barbarian rulers of small kingdoms replaced distant but mighty emperors?

In fact, Autun and Chalon did not share a common communications history across that period. As the next two chapters will show, by the time of the barbarian kings the textually attested communications of these two cities differed significantly in scope and directional orientation. As Roman power waned in the fifth century, Autun’s external ties remained surprisingly robust. Localized barbarian rule, however, ruptured old connections, and Autun’s horizons closed in. Elites from nearby Chalon, however, continued to forge more distant

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**See the Introduction, pp. [pending final page count].**
connections under the new masters. Despite the proximity and historic ties between these two cities, barbarian political power thus influenced their respective social horizons in different ways.

The textual evidence for communications, then, offers a rich witness to the complexity of Aeduan experiences during late antiquity—a complexity which simple binary motifs (“Decline and Fall!” “Continuity!”) inadequately describe.

**Before 450: Autun Looks Northwest**

Beyond the examples already cited, surviving texts offer no further light on Chalon’s social ties during the late fourth century, but we do know of several elite families of Autun with external connections. At some point between 364-388, the Christian neophyte Palladia, wife of the distinguished Aeduan “illustris vir” Eraclius, attended mass at Auxerre. Although Eraclius was Aeduan, the couple possessed ancestral property near Auxerre, part of Palladia’s inheritance. When Palladia approached the altar—dripping with expensive jewelry—the presiding deacon,

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13 Martin Heinzelmann, “Eraclius (Eraclitus) [Heraclius] 2,” p. 622 in Martin Heinzelmann, “Gallische Protopographie 260-527,” *Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte* 10 (1982-1983): 531-718; idem, “Palladia 1,” p. 660; *Vita Amatoris* 8-12, pp. 55-6. The *Vita Amatoris* dates to the late sixth century, when Aunacharius of Auxerre (Duchesne 2.446 [1910]; bishop ca. 570-605) commissioned the priest Stephanus to compose a prose life of Amator (for Aunacharius and Stephanus’ correspondence, see MGH *Epist.* 3, ed. G. Gundlach [Berlin, 1892], p. 447-8). For the date of Palladia’s visit (between Amator’s marriage ca. 364 and episcopal consecration in 388) see still the commentary of AASS Maii vol. 1, 3rd ed. (1866) pp. 52-3 (BHL 356). Eraclius was “from the Aeduan city, begotten from the most outstanding stock.” (Vita Amatoris 8, p. 55: *ex civitate Aeduensi, excellentissimo germine progenitus*). Ibid., 9, p. 55, refers to him in passing as “illustris vir,” which could suggest very great nobility if the passage conveys a genuine, specific fourth-century title. By the later sixth century, however, although still conveying distinction, the term *illustris/illustris* had weakened in force before terms such as *gloriosus*, and was used to describe a broader class of persons than the most prominent Roman nobles. See *TLL* vol. 7.1, p. 396, lines 81-2; Paul Koch, *Die byzantinischen Beamendistel von 400 bis 700* (Jena, 1903), pp. 34-45, especially pp. 42-5; Alexander P. Kazhdan, “Illustris,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 2, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 986-7.

14 The *vita* refers to Palladia as the possessor of the property: “Moreover, after the consummation of her holy baptism, it pleased her to go to the city of Auxerre, near which she held inherited property.” (Vita Amatoris 8, p. 55: *Libuit autem eam, post consummationem sacri baptismatis, in Autissiodorensium civitatem pergere, in cujus vicinitate patrimonium possidebat*).
named Amator, rebuked her for her ostentation. Amator’s own “very noble parents” had similar backgrounds: his father Proclidius was a native of Auxerre, but had married an Aeduan woman, Usiciola. Amator himself was married to a woman from Langres. According to Amator’s hagiographer, his family’s landholdings were extensive: “There came to be such great wealth of fields from his parents’ property, that—because of their distance and the breadth of the regions in which they were located—they did not know how many they were!” Hyperbole aside, these anecdotes claim that some elite Aeduan families in the later fourth century maintained economic and social ties on a regional scale, particularly toward Auxerre and the northwest. While bishop Aunacharius of Auxerre commissioned Amator’s hagiography two centuries after these events reportedly took place, the anecdotes plausibly reflect authentic links from the saint’s lifetime, rather than retrojection of sixth-century conditions into the fifth-century narrative. As I will discuss in more detail below, Amator’s hagiographer clearly possessed a historical consciousness, and the social ties he described fit much better in Amator’s own lifetime than for much, at least, of the sixth century.

Autun and Chalon’s external ties in the first half of the fifth century are very obscure. Our only detailed textual witness to local conditions during that period is Amator’s vita. Around 418, Amator, now bishop of Auxerre, allegedly traveled to Autun after being driven from his see by Germanus, a military officer (against Germanus’ wishes, Amator had destroyed a local tree

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16 Heinzelmann, “Martha,” p. 647; Vita Amatoris 3, p. 54.

17 Vita Amatoris 1, p. 53: “Tanta igitur locupletatio agrorum ejus bonis parentum accesserat, ut prae latitudine eorum et regionum diversitate in quibus siti fuerant, quantitatem ignoraret.”
with pagan associations). According to his *vita*, Amator sought out the Gallic Prefect Iulius, who was then staying at Autun. There, Amator obtained Iulius’ permission not only to relieve Germanus of his office, but also to compel him to enter the clergy. Indeed, despite Germanus’ initial hostility, he would later succeed Amator as bishop of Auxerre, and become a major figure among Gaul’s late antique saints.

Not all scholars have accepted the testimony of Amator’s late *vita*. Iulius, supposedly the Gallic Prefect, is otherwise unknown—unless this was part of the full name of a certain Agricola, known to be Praetorian Prefect of the Gals at the time. Moreover, Germanus of Auxerre’s own *vita* does not include the story of Amator’s visit to a Prefect, and Stephanus’ narrative of these events certainly suggests some literary shaping. On the other hand, Germanus of Auxerre’s own *vita* is rather vague on the circumstances of his consecration, but

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18 *Vita Amatoris* 24-30, pp. 58-60.
19 *Vita Amatoris* 25, p. 59: “...Aeduam profectus est, ubi Julius reipublicae rector ac gubernator Galliae praesidebat,” and idem, 28, p. 59: “...Julio, tunc Praefecto...”
23 Stephanus’ prose emphasizes parallel, opposite groups reconciled through Amator’s ministry. For example, Germanus drove Amator out from Auxerre with a crowd of rustics (“*turbam agrestem,*” *Vita Amatoris* 24, p. 58), but *en route* to Autun Germanus was aided, to his surprise, by a group of sympathetic peasants (“*ruricolae,*” ibid., 25, p. 59); when Amator reached Autun, the bishop, clerics and another Roman official with his own crowd of soldiers welcomed him (“*turmis,*” ibid., 28, p. 59); when Amator returned to Auxerre he in turn captured Germanus using a crowd of clerics and nobles (“*turbā clericorum atque nobilium,*” ibid., 30, p. 60).
does note that Germanus came to his episcopal duties unwillingly and after secular service; that text also depicts Germanus as well connected to the Aeduans after his consecration.\(^{24}\) As Germanus’ vita dates to the second half of the fifth century, those pieces of the associated traditions are much older than the *Vita Amatoris*.

Furthermore, a small detail within Amator’s *vita* indicates a genuine historical consciousness, and suggests that the hagiographer Stephanus had access to at least some accurate information on the situation at Autun during Amator’s lifetime. After arriving at Autun, Amator went to pay his respects at the shrine of the local martyr, Symphorian.\(^{25}\) At the time of the *vita*’s composition, a basilica and a prominent monastic community had long graced the site, yet Stephanus correctly noted the absence of the basilica at the time of Amator’s visit.\(^{26}\) Euphronius, a priest of Autun, constructed Symphorian’s basilica before becoming bishop, no later than 452.\(^{27}\) Writing in the later 500’s at Auxerre, not Autun, Stephanus nevertheless correctly reconstructed this Aeduan site’s history ca. 418-450.

Moreover, the social ties that the *vita* describes between elites of Auxerre and Autun seem to fit best right where Stephanus placed them, in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. As Chapter Two will show, attested social ties between Autun and Auxerre almost completely

\(^{24}\) *Vita Germani episcopi Autissiodorensis auctore Constantio*, MGH SRM 7, ed. W. Levison (Hannover and Leipzig, 1920). For Germanus’ transition from a secular to a sacred career, see ibid., 2, p. 252: “*Suscepit sacerdotium invitus, coactus, addictus; sed repente mutatur ex omnibus. Deseritur mundi militia, caelestis adsumitur; saeculi pompa calcatur…*” Germanus’ far-ranging travels included stops in Aeduan territory; for his ties to a priest, Senator, at Aeduan Alesia, see ibid., 22, p. 267, and 29, pp. 272-3 (the latter visit to Alesia preceded a stop at Autun: ibid., 30, p. 273).

\(^{25}\) *Vita Amatoris* 28, p. 59.

\(^{26}\) *Vita Amatoris* 28, p. 59: “*Eo namque tempore nondum latis aedificiis amiebatur, sed parvissimae cellulae angustis obseratum erat spatium.*”

vanish from our sources for the late fifth and early sixth centuries. During the mid- and late-sixth century, some prominent Aeduans did enjoy a number of contacts with central and northwestern Gaul, but it is not clear that such predominantly ecclesiastical and political relationships “trickled down” to incorporate the kind of regular social and economic ties described in Amator’s *vita*. It seems likely therefore that Amator’s *vita* either retrojects conditions that were themselves quite new at the turn of the seventh century, or reflects the distant past somewhat accurately. Because Stephanus knew and correctly noted the history of Autun’s topography in the fifth century, it is reasonable to assume that he also could know other genuine traditions reflecting that period’s local history. I therefore tentatively accept Stephanus’ testimony about these links between Autun and Auxerre.

The *vita*’s depiction of conditions on the roads of early fifth-century Gaul also fits well with the instability of the period. While crossing the wooded hills of the Morvan, Amator reached a spot where the road was overgrown with thorns and brush. Sympathetic peasants recognized him as a holy man and cleared the way for him, suggesting that local transport infrastructure needed maintenance. Amator’s route is not certain, but he may have used secondary roads for this stage of the journey (fearing pursuit by Germanus’ henchmen?); if so, this witness to dilapidated roads might not apply to the main way from Auxerre to Autun.

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28 Heinzelmann’s “Gallische Prosopographie 260-527,” which I have used to frame Chapters One through Four, covers the late sixth century only sporadically, and that period falls beyond the scope of this study; but see my Chapter Two, p. 83, and Chapter Four, pp. 134-9.


30 Amator met these pious peasants near a village called *Gubilium*. Matter and Morant suggest that this could be the modern hamlet Goix (within Moux-en-Morvan, INSEE commune #58185), located between Saulieu (INSEE commune #21584) and Autun (M. Matter and M.-J. Morant, “Autun antique,” in *Les villes antiques de la France III: Lyonnaise 1*, ed. E. Frézouls [Paris 1997], pp. 135-6). However, Goix seems less probable than Gouloux (INSEE commune #58129), not far west of Saulieu: see J.-F. Baudiau, *Le Morvand, ou essai géographique, topographique et historique sur cette contrée*, vol. 2 (Nevers: 1854), p. 90.
Amator was not the only traveler on these paths, however. He soon came across a nobleman from Alesia who had just been robbed. When Amator’s prayers led them to the “night-wandering robber,” the bishop recovered the stolen money and insisted that the thief and his victim be reconciled. According to Amator’s *Vita*, travel between Autun and Auxerre ca. 418 could be hazardous.

If the written evidence for Autun’s early fifth-century communications is slight, that for Chalon is wholly lacking; we have no detailed record of travel to or from that city during this period. There is evidence, however, for connections with Mâcon. Lupus, later a famous bishop of Troyes, was a native of Toul in northern Gaul. After spending time at the Mediterranean monastery of Lérins, Lupus “returned” to Mâcon in order to sell off some property for the poor. While there, he was seized and conscripted for service as bishop of Troyes, 142 mi/228 km to the north. Lupus also returned to Mâcon in mid-century on at least one occasion. This northerner’s connections there (not to mention the alleged presence of citizens of Troyes) hint at far-reaching north-south social relations. The first half of the fifth century, then, is marked by little sure written evidence for Aeduan relations with the outside

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31 *Vita Amatoris* 27, p. 59.

32 I have passed over the martyrdom of Gervasius of Mans, a churchman murdered by brigands in a forest near Chalon while returning from Italy. The date of his death is unclear; the editors of *Acta Sanctorum* (BHL 3512, AASS *Jul.* vol. 2, 3rd ed. [1867], p. 312) suggested either the fourth or seventh century (!). The Namur *Hagiographies* database suggests that the composition of Gervasius’ passion account dates to between “301-1000” ([http://www.unamur.be/philo_lettres/histoire/h2224_g.htm#Gervasius01](http://www.unamur.be/philo_lettres/histoire/h2224_g.htm#Gervasius01)—accessed May 5, 2015). The lawlessness that caused Gervasius’ death would certainly fit well in the early fifth century, but brigandage was not a rare problem across the entire period.


34 *Vita Lupi* 6, p. 298-9.
world, and what exists offers a mixed picture of long-distance communication mixed with obstacles to movement.

**Ca. 450-480: Broad Horizons, Gathering Storms**

After Amator’s journey to Autun, we hear nothing further of Aeduan communications before the middle of the fifth century. Around 451, however, according to the Spanish chronicler Hydatius, bishop Euphronius of Autun sent a letter describing recent celestial omens to a military official, Agrippinus. The Iberian Hydatius’ knowledge of and interest in Autun’s bishop indicates fairly long-range, inter-regional dissemination of information. Moreover, as we shall see, Euphronius’ portentous letter was only the first of many textually attested Aeduan communications in the decades after 450. Indeed, despite the gloominess of Euphronius’ heavenly signs and the rapid disintegration of Roman power in the west, the sources for the final decades of imperial rule in

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35 Hydatius, *Chronicle 143* (Chron. 151 in Mommsen’s numbering); *Hydatii Limici chronica subdita*, in The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana: Two Contemporary Accounts of the Final Years of the Roman Empire, ed. R. W. Burgess (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 100. Agrippinus, ultimately *magister utriusque militum per Gallias* (i.e., Master of both Cavalry and Infantry Forces throughout the Gallic Provinces), pursued a long rivalry with the general Aegidius, eventually handing Narbonne over to the Goths for aid against his enemy—or so claims Hydatius, *Chronicle* 212, p. 110 (Chron. 217 by Mommsen’s reckoning). On Agrippinus’ career, see Heinzelmann, “Agrippinus 1,” p. 548, and Ralph W. Mathisen, “Resistance and Reconciliation: Majorian and the Gallic Aristocracy after the Fall of Avitus,” *Francia* 7 (1979-80): 597-627, at 614-8. Writers from central-eastern Gaul were more sympathetic to Agrippinus than was Hydatius, reflecting Agrippinus’ close ties to Lyon; see Ralph W. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversy in Fifth-Century Gaul* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), pp. 218-19. Mathisen has suggested that Agrippinus also served for a time as Count of Autun, and that his encounter with Anianus, bishop of Orléans, may have taken place not at Orléans but at Autun (Mathisen, “Resistance and Reconciliation” p. 614). According to Anianus’ *vita*, imperial rulers had dispatched Agrippinus “to all the cities of the Gauls” to impose public order (*Vita Aniani episcopi Aurelianensis* 3, MGH SRM 3, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover: 1896), pp. 104-17, at p. 109: “ad principibus fuerat deposited, at per omnes civitates Galliarum pro salute et districione publica habere deberet excursos”). Anianus appealed to Agrippinus to free some inmates of “prison-quarries and workhouses” (*lautumnii aut ergastulis: Vita Aniani* 3, p. 109). Mathisen suggests that these may have included the military-supply workshops around Autun (Mathisen, p. 614). However, nothing in the passage explicitly links this episode to Autun, nothing prevents it from having occurred at Orléans, and Agrippinus—not the bishop, Anianus—was the one described as travelling across all of Gaul. While Agrippinus may have served at Autun at some point, the letter that Hydatius reports he received from bishop Euphronius is in fact Agrippinus’ only certain Aeduan connection.
Gaul surprisingly suggest an expansion in Autun’s ties to distant communities, and real vitality in elite social networks.

Euphronius, who sat as Autun’s bishop from before 452 until at least the early 470’s, actively cultivated such distant links, and became a senior and respected figure among Gallic bishops. His communications with the churches of northwestern Gaul are particularly notable. Probably during the 450s, Euphronius co-wrote a letter, with Lupus of Troyes, to their fellow-bishop Thalassius of Angers. The three bishops resided in separate ecclesiastical provinces (Euphronius in *Lugdunensis I*, Lupus in *Lugdunensis IV*, and Thalassius in *Lugdunensis III*, near the Breton peninsula), so their inter-provincial correspondence went beyond routine ecclesiastical administration. Perhaps going around his own metropolitan superior (Eustochius of Tours), Thalassius had requested Euphronius and Lupus’ guidance on certain festal procedures and on the appropriate episcopal attitude toward remarried clergymen. Whatever Thalassius’ motivations for corresponding with Euphronius and Lupus, the letter illustrates the bishop of Autun’s senior reputation and connectedness across northwestern Gaul. Such ties are also evident from Euphronius’ donation of a marble cover to adorn the tomb of St. Martin at

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36 Duchesne, 2.178 (1910).


38 Duchesne suggests that the letter-exchange took place very early in Thalassius’ career, not long after his ordination in October of 453 (Duchesne 2.247, 357 [1910]). As noted in Chapter Three, p. 90, n. 14, this exchange may have coincided with a journey Lupus took through Lingon and Aeduan lands, probably not long after the Hunnic invasion of Gaul. Interestingly, none of the three bishops involved in this correspondence—Thalassius, Lupus or Euphronius—were metropolitans. While the opinions of Lupus and Euphronius were worthy of attention, perhaps Thalassius also hoped to avoid interference by his own metropolitan, Eustochius of Tours—or, on the other hand, might the junior bishop simply have felt embarrassed to admit uncertainty to his ecclesiastical superior? The issue of consecutive marriage for the clergy certainly touched on matters of interest to Eustochius, since he had overseen (during the same gathering in which he consecrated Thalassius in 463) the discussion resulting in the eleventh canon of the Council of Angers: “Let no deacons or priests be ordained, excepting husbands of one wife, men who likewise have been united with virgins” [i.e. rather than with widows] (*Nonnisi unius uxoris uiri idemque virginitibus copulati diaconi uel presbyteri ordinentur*). “*Concilium andegavense*,” *Conciliae galliae* (CCSL 148) 1.138.
Tours, marking himself both as Martin’s spiritual client, and as a patron of the saint’s distant shrine. Earlier, before becoming bishop, presbyter Euphronius had patronized another saint’s cult at home, too, building a basilica just outside Autun at the shrine of the martyr Symphorian—where Amator of Auxerre allegedly had paid his respects during his 418 visit to the city. Symphorian’s cult would continue to link Autun to other Gallic communities in years to come.

Around 470, Euphronius joined with his metropolitan, Patiens of Lyon, to consecrate a new bishop for Chalon at a “pontifical council” described in a letter by Sidonius Apollinaris. The previous bishop of Chalon, a shadowy figure named Paulus, had absconded under unclear circumstances, and church discipline at Chalon was faltering. Despite local support for three influential but spiritually unfit candidates, Patiens and Euphronius selected a deacon, Iohannes, whom they appointed as bishop in a surprise consecration. Iohannes and his predecessor Paulus are the earliest firmly attested bishops of Chalon, and with this gathering the city’s external connections begin to appear more clearly in our sources.

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39 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 2.15, p. 64. Presumably, Autun’s waterborne connections via the Arroux and Loire proved useful in transporting the heavy load to Tours.

40 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 2.15, p. 64; for Amator’s visit, see Vita Amatoris 28, p. 59.

41 See below, Chapter Two, pp. 78-9, for the role of Symphorian’s cult in the sixth-century movements of Germanus of Paris.


43 Sid. Ep. 4.25.1, vol. 2, p. 169: “…the discipline of the church began to falter after the junior bishop Paulus had left, and died.” (…ecclesiae disciplina nutabat, postquam junior episcopus Paulus discesserat decesseratque…).

44 No firm evidence exists for any bishop of Chalon earlier than Paulus. However, a Domitianus or Donatianus of Chalon allegedly took part in the pseudo-council of Cologne (purportedly 346). See Gauthier, L’Évangélisation des pays de la Moselle, pp. 447-53, for a detailed discussion. The record of that gathering is evidently a medieval forgery (the record’s theological language and structure bear little resemblance to those of genuine fourth-century councils, and the recorded aim of the council—to denounce bishop Eufratas of Cologne as a hyper-Arian blasphemer—contradicts the available contemporary evidence for that bishop’s theology and relations with other orthodox prelates). While the pseudo-council itself can be dismissed, the list of subscribers seems to have been copied from an authentic list, in Greek, of Gallic bishops who attended the council of Sardica ca. 343. That list included bishops’ names (including a Domatianos) but not the sees over which they ruled, preventing certain confirmation of a bishop of Chalon at that date. However, when the records of ps.-Cologne are tested against other
Probably because of the contested election and the scarcity of bishops within *Lugdunensis Prima*, Patiens and Euphronius also involved a number of bishops from other communities in this election. According to Sidonius, Patiens and Euphronius announced their choice “with their opinion first having been made known privately to their fellow-bishops.” These men probably came from other ecclesiastical provinces. It is very unlikely that Mâcon gained a bishop before the 530’s. The bishop of Langres does not appear to have been present; it would have been odd for Sidonius to lavish extravagant praise on two attending provincial bishops while failing even to mention the third. Perhaps the Alamanni, who seem to have pressured and perhaps occupied Langres late in the fifth century, prevented that city’s bishop from attending. At that time, the bishop of Langres evidently was the only other *episcopus* in *Lugdunensis Prima* beside Euphronius and Patiens; even had he been present, then, the *coepiscopi* of Sidonius’ letter would have had to include bishops from surrounding provinces.

Sources, “chaque fois que le contrôle est possible … les évêques nommés ont bien existé et occupé le siège épiscopal indiqué vers 346.” (ibid., p. 449). It seems possible then that Chalon did possess a bishop in the 340’s (M. Kasprzyk holds this view: “Les cités des Eduens et de Chalon durant l’antiquité tardive” 2 vols. [Ph.D. diss., Université de Bourgogne, 2005]: 1.337-8). If so, it is noteworthy that the *episcopi* of Chalon left no trace whatsoever of their subsequent activities in any source until the 470’s, making the rise in Chalon’s attested communications after that date (see below, passim) all the more remarkable.


46 According to Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism*, p. 250, the council instead was held “under the direction of Patiens and Euphronius, and attended by the other bishops from the province.”

47 Mâcon’s early episcopal records appear to be fictive, including (for example) two famous bishops of Lyon. No record of any worth exists for a bishop of the city before Placidus of Mâcon, who attended the Frankish council of Orléans in 538. The Merovingian division of Burgundian territory in the 530’s had split *Lugdunensis Prima* between separate kingdoms, complicating Mâcon’s access to episcopal oversight at either Autun or Chalon, and creating a logical context for the establishment of a new bishopric reporting directly to Lyon. See Duchesne 2.154, 197 (1910); Jean-Charles Picard, “Mâcon,” in Brigitte Beaujard et al, *Topographie chrétienne des cités de la Gaule des origines au milieu du VIIIe siècle, vol. IV, Province ecclésiastique de Lyon (Lugdunensis Prima)* (Paris: de Boccard, 1986), pp. 75-80, at p. 79.

48 By the 480’s, the bishop of Langres resided at Dijon, possibly in response to Alamannic attacks on Langres or even occupation of that city. See Chapter Three, pp. 99-101.
in person at the council or via courier. While he never stated in his letter that he had been present at Chalon, Sidonius clearly was familiar with the proceedings.\(^{49}\)

Strictly speaking, the involvement of bishops from other ecclesiastical provinces may not have been necessary for Iohannes’ ordination. While no single procedural ruling on episcopal elections held absolute sway in the fifth-century west, the approval and presence of the relevant provincial metropolitan was usually a key ingredient for a legitimate consecration. The presence of at least three bishops, however, generally was ideal, and it remained important to honor the congregation’s wishes.\(^{50}\) Sidonius’ own consecration of Simplicius of Bourges ca. 470 showed how extraprovincial support might substitute where such guidelines could only be honored in the breach. At Bourges, Sidonius had to appoint his own metropolitan, the local congregants were hopelessly divided, and Sidonius’ fellow-bishops from *Aquitania Prima* were under Gothic control and unable to join him. He responded by corresponding with extra-provincial bishops, including Euphronius of Autun, whose endorsements might legitimize his irregular but necessary leadership in the election at Bourges.\(^{51}\) At the time of Iohannes’ election, Patiens and

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\(^{49}\) Sidonius was able to describe Patiens’ *adventus* at the council (my term; Sidonius does not use the word in this context) and the three candidates offered by the local congregation. He either was well informed, or an eyewitness. Loyen dated the letter to late 469 or early 470, before Sidonius’ ordination as bishop, but if my claim that the gathering included extraprovincial bishops is correct, then Sidonius himself, as a new bishop, might here have acted “dans l’entourage de Patiens” (Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire*, vol. 2, p. 254). On the other hand, Sidonius did describe Patiens as “caput ... ciuitati nostrae” (Sid. Ep. 4.25.5, vol. 1, p. 171), which might be unlikely from a bishop with his own city—unless in writing to his friend Domnulus Sidonius wished to emphasize their shared heritage at Lyon. Domnulus, too, was not present in Lyon at the time—Sidonius mentioned that he had gone to the Jura monasteries, albeit not permanently (ibid.).

\(^{50}\) See Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250-600: Hierarchy and Popular Will in Late Antiquity* (Oxford University Press, 2007), especially pp. 18-29 (surveying the development across the Empire of late antique canon law on elections) and pp. 156-61 (on episcopal elections in late antique Gaul).

Euphronius had far more experience and prestige than their junior colleague Sidonius had been able to draw upon at Bourges. Nonetheless, their rejection of the locally nominated candidates, and the limited number of bishops available from \textit{Lugdunensis Prima}, may have made it prudent to secure extraprovincial support for Iohannes’ consecration at Chalon. This might reflect simple pastoral concern—Sidonius emphasized the weakened state of Chalon’s flock and the election’s quashing of unhealthy ambitions and factionalism—and the bishops’ intent may have been to overawe those going astray with a show of ecclesiastical unity.\textsuperscript{52} Since the Burgundian king Gundioc had attempted to overturn an episcopal consecration at Die in \textit{Viennensis} in 463, however, Patiens and Euphronius’ display of regional episcopal solidarity also could have been a defense against the possibility that one of the rejected candidates might invite further royal interference.\textsuperscript{53}

Both Euphronius and Iohannes, Chalon’s new bishop, soon participated in an even broader display of ecclesiastical consensus. Around 470, bishop Faustus of Riez spearheaded a campaign against the Augustinian view of predestination, a doctrine unpopular with many contemporary Gallic churchmen.\textsuperscript{54} Faustus’ views clashed with those of a priest, Lucidus, of an unknown church in southern Gaul, to whom he wrote an initial admonitory letter bolstered by ten


\textsuperscript{53} Gundioc complained to Pope Hilarus when Mamertus, bishop of Vienne, consecrated Marcellus of Die in 463; according to the most recent papal guidance, the metropolitan bishop of Arles should have governed Die. Gundioc’s motives likely were political (I hope to publish an explanation for Gundioc’s intervention in the near future). Pope Hilarus warmly described Gundioc’s interference in a letter to Leontius of Arles: see \textit{S. Hilari Papae epistolae et decreta} 9.1, in \textit{Epistolae Romanorum pontificum genuinae} 1, ed. Andreas Thiel (Braunsberg: 1868) pp. 146-7.

\textsuperscript{54} See Mathisen, \textit{ Ecclesiastical Factionalism}, pp. 244-68.
further episcopal signatures—including that of Euphronius of Autun. When this letter failed to shift Lucidus’ predestinarian views, Faustus organized a council, probably at Arles, uniting thirty bishops in opposition to Lucidus and his Augustinian sympathies. While most of the attending bishops were from southern Gallic sees, a minority came from central or northern Gallic provinces. Euphronius not only attended—along with the new bishop Iohannes of Chalon and their metropolitan, Patiens of Lyon—but also headed the list of subscribing bishops at the council. His primacy there reflected his seniority as the longest-serving bishop among the attending prelates. Euphronius’ prominence therefore reflected ecclesiastical etiquette and the importance of smoothing over rivalries between the ambitious metropolitans, but did not indicate that the bishop of Autun actually held the dominant opinion in Gallic episcopal politics.

Euphronius’ involvement in this affair illustrates the feasibility of communication between Autun and the Mediterranean coastal cities, though his involvement probably reflected the efforts of southern bishops to draw in as many like-minded colleagues as possible. It need not signify that Euphronius actively sought to extend his own influence toward the south during the 470’s. Indeed, Mathisen has suggested that Euphronius may have signed the initial letter to Lucidus only when Faustus came north to Lyon hunting support for his position. Although Lucidus did recant when faced with dozens of hostile superiors at Arles, Faustus then called one further gathering, at Lyon, to discuss matters of grace and works in the Christian life. The attendees at

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56 Faustus, Ep. 19, pp. 290-1 (a copy of Lucidus’ letter of retraction) lists the council’s subscribers.

57 Mathisen, Ecclesiastical Factionalism, p. 257.

that synod are unknown, but presumably Euphronius and Iohannes rejoined their metropolitan for this synod held in their own province.  

Even if Euphronius’ involvement in the Lucidus affair may have stemmed chiefly from southern initiative, the moment marks a high-water-point of sorts for his many long-distance connections. With Iohannes’ election and subsequent involvement in the Lucidus affair, however, Chalon’s external connections return to light in our sources after decades of silence. In the last decade of imperial rule in Gaul, Chalon still sat in the shadow of Autun and Lyon, but its ecclesiastical elites apparently made connections with their neighbors in new ways.

Churchmen were not the only elite Gallo-Romans who maintained long-distance ties during these years. As Sidonius Apollinaris’ letters reveal, some elite Aeduan laymen also formed close connections with members of other communities. One of his correspondents, Aper, was the son of an Aeduan father and the daughter of a prominent Arvernian family (in central Gaul, southwest of Aeduan territory). His parents’ marriage offers evidence of continued (or perhaps renewed) regional social ties mid-century. Sidonius also wrote a letter congratulating his friend Attalus, newly appointed as a leader of the community at Autun. Before his

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61 Sid. Ep. 5.18, vol. 2, p. 206: “Haeduae ciuitati te praesidere coepisse libens atque cum gaudio accepi.” Kasperzyk believes that Attalus’ new office was chief of the remaining curial ordo at Autun (M. Kasperzyk, (“Les cités des Eduens,” vol. 1, p. 74, vol. 2, p. 430). Many scholars, however, have seen Attalus instead as count of the city, particularly since many also equate him with Gregorius, ancestor of Gregory of Tours and count of Autun before his episcopate at Langres (see Heinzelmann, “Gregorius Attalus,” p. 563). Gregory of Tours (in Liber Vitae Patrum, MGH SRM 1.2, ed. Bruno Krusch [Hannover: 1885], pp. 211-94) explicitly stated that his ancestor Gregorius died a nonagenarian in his thirty-third year as bishop (7.6, p. 240: Obiit autem trigesimo tertio episcopatus sui anno aetate nonagenaria), and before that had served as count for forty years (7.1, p. 237: Agustidunensis civitatis comitatum ambivit; in comitatu autem positus, regionem illam per 40 [sic] annos, iustitia comitante, correxit). If those figures are correct, Gregorius assumed comital duties in his late teens, ca. 467 (he died in 539 or 540: see Duchesne, 2.186 [1910]), in which case we may plausibly identify him with the Attalus of Sidonius’ letter. Loyen rejected this identification, however, considering it improbable that Attalus could have been a seventeen-year-old, given
ordination, Sidonius had written twice in the late 460’s to Syagrius, a prominent landowner from a consular family, who held property near Autun. In one letter, Sidonius chided his friend for abandoning the cultured urban life and for spending too much time overseeing his farms in the countryside. Perhaps Syagrius took Sidonius’ advice to heart, for in his next letter Sidonius noted (with some pique) that his friend had become a central intellectual and legal figure among the barbarian Burgundians, serving among them as “a new Solon” in their councils. Apparently Syagrius had left his Aeduan estates for the cities of the Rhône/Saône (or perhaps even Geneva). Such a reorientation toward the centers of Burgundian power may have been a startling novelty to Sidonius, but it was a sign of things to come.

Sidonius’ reference to their long acquaintance (“Igitur amplectens in familiari uetusto nouum ius potestatis indeptae materiam beneficiis tuis iam diu quaero,” Ep. 5.18, vol. 2, p. 206). Since the name “Attalus” is known within Gregorius’ family tree, Loyen suggested that this Attalus was simply one of Gregorius’ relations, from the preceding generation (Loyen, fn. 60, in Sid. Ep. 5.18, vol. 2, p. 206). It does not strain belief, however, to imagine a Burgundian king wooing (or rewarding) the support of a key senatorial family by appointing their seventeen-year-old son to comital office (particularly since each Gallo-Roman civic count may have governed alongside a Burgundian colleague: Justin Favrod, Histoire politique du royaume Burgonde, 443-534, Bibliotheque historique vaudoise 113 [Lausanne: Bibliotheque historique vaudoise, 1997], pp. 172-9), nor to imagine that Sidonius’ expression of long familiarity with Attalus reflected old ties with the young man’s family formed before the count had grown to full manhood (in such a situation, would we really expect Sidonius to write to this valuable and suddenly powerful contact with less overt respect?). While Loyen’s proposal is not implausible, the case against identifying Attalus with Gregorius is far from secure, making it premature to call Gregory of Tour’s numeration “exageré,” as does Luce Pietri (La Ville du Tous du lve au Viie siècle: naissance d’une cité chrétienne, Collection de l’École Française de Rome 69 [Rome: 1983] p. 205 fn. 140). Either way, one or more members of Gregorius’ family cultivated extensive ties across Lugdunensis Prima during the later decades of the fifth century.

Chapter Two:

Aeduan Communications at the Dawn of the Middle Ages
The initial Burgundian expansion into *Lugdunensis Prima* probably occurred in 457, though the advances made by the emperor Majorian the following year seem temporarily to have reversed some of their gains. By the mid-460’s, however, the Burgundians apparently had cemented their control of the region, including Aeduan and Lingon territory.\(^1\) A notable shift in Aeduan communications around 476, however, justifies treating the post-imperial Burgundian years as a separate period. Between the end of imperial rule in Gaul and the fall of the Burgundian kingdom in the early 530’s, Autun’s communications horizons became very narrow, particularly toward the northwest, unless royal patronage or displeasure propelled connections farther afield. Chalon’s communications instead become more prominent during this period, particularly toward southern Gaul, but they shared the same limits in the northwest.

*Autun’s Small World*

Germanus, a future abbot of St. Symphorian’s and then bishop of Paris (under the Frankish kings), was born in the final years of the fifth century in Autun’s territory.\(^2\) As a youth, Germanus traveled extensively across that *civitas*. He went to Avallon, where he had relatives, for schooling—until one of those relations tried to poison him for his inheritance.\(^3\) Following that attack he quite understandably relocated to the *vicus* of Lausia (probably Laizy, ca. 9 km

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southwest of Autun), where another relative, Scupilio, oversaw his spiritual education.⁴ From there he went on to enter the clerical ranks at Autun.⁵ While Germanus’ *vita* thus illustrates active links between the communities within the Aeduan *civitas*, it notably omits any mention of links beyond that area before Germanus became abbot of St. Symphorian’s, following the Frankish capture of Autun in 532.

Before that year, some Aeduans did communicate beyond their *civitas*, but generally only with contacts in the province of *Lugdunensis Prima* or in adjacent provinces in the north and center of the Burgundian kingdom. Gregorius, count of Autun, married into a family tied to Langres and Dijon (in the adjacent *civitas* of the Lingons), and later became bishop of Langres.⁶ Social rather than political forces presumably lay behind his marriage, but Gregorius was at the top of Aeduan society in a hierarchy shaped by royal patronage. Despite his elite position, the social connection maintained through his marriage stretched not across the entire kingdom, but only within his own province, *Lugdunensis Prima*. Tellingly, his own and his family’s connections became strikingly more far-reaching after the Frankish conquest.⁷

Other attested social ties before 532 further reveal the Aeduans’ close communication horizons. Lautenus, an Aeduan, founded one of the prominent monastic communities in the Jura

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⁴ *Vita Germani Parisiaci* 3, pp. 373-4. For Laizy (INSEE commune #71251) see Krusch’s fn. 3, p. 373, in *Vita Germani Parisiaci*.

⁵ *Vita Germani Parisiaci* 3, pp. 373-4.


⁷ Gregorius’ attested ties were far more extensive after he became bishop of Langres than during his tenure as count of Autun; see Chapter Four, pp. 114-31. To cite only a few of his connections as bishop: Vienne: Avitus *Ep. 64* (*Alciini Eccltii Aviti Vienensis episcopi epistularum ad diversos*, MGH AA 6.2, ed. Rudolf Peiper [Berlin: 1883], p. 88); Lérins: *Vita Johannis Reomaensis 4*, pp. 508-9 (*Vita Johannis abbatis Reomaensis auctore Iona*, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM 3 [Hannover: 1896]); Rheims and Trier: Gregory of Tours, *Hist. 3.15*: MGH SRM 1.1, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), pp. 112-6. Of course, the ecclesiastical focus of most of our surviving primary sources may have skewed the surviving attestations of this family’s activities away from secular, lay subjects.
mountains just east of *Lugdunensis Prima*. Another abbot in Burgundian territory, Leonianus, had been born a Pannonian, but barbarian raiders carried him off to Gaul. After his arrival there he took up the monastic life, first at Autun and then at Vienne. He also corresponded with Eugendus, who—like Lautenus, mentioned above—was a Jura abbot. Despite his distant origins, Leonianus’ Gallic connections after his stay at Autun were typical. All of the connections described above remained within the north or center of the Burgundian kingdom, or even within *Lugdunensis Prima* itself.

An exception to this pattern is bishop Pragmatius of Autun’s attendance in 517 at the church council of Épaone, between Vienne and Valence. Pragmatius’ journey to Épaone stands out for two reasons. It is the only movement in our sources for the years 476-532 that describes a connection between Autun and anywhere south of Vienne. That is significant; throughout this study, Vienne will emerge again as the southern boundary of a small world of communications across the northern Burgundian kingdom. Pragmatius’ journey to Épaone differs from other examples in a second, important way: he traveled because a very senior authority summoned him. Pragmatius’ own metropolitan, Viventiolus of Lyon, wrote to his suffragan bishops to summon them. The kingdom’s senior metropolitan, Avitus, dominated the gathering and apparently had arranged that it be held in his diocese, *Viennensis*. Pragmatius’ movement south reflected a high-level external “pull,” rather than local “push” factors at Autun.

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8 *Vita sancti Lauteni* 15, BHL 4800, AASS Nov. vol. 1, 3rd ed. (1887), pp. 284-6


11 For the letters of Avitus and Viventiolus summoning suffragans to the council see *Concilium Epaonense* (CCSL 148A) pp. 22-4. See Justin Favrod, *Histoire politique*, pp. 420-3, on the council’s location and on Avitus’ role there.
In fact, the influence of very high-level political agents, or even kings, seems to have been necessary to propel movement from Autun beyond the small world outlined above. That seems to be the implication of the *vita* of Eptadius, sixth-century founder of a small monastic community in the Morvan hills northwest of Autun. According to this text, Eptadius was born an Aeduan, and spent his childhood in the Morvan, probably in the settlement of Lormes. At the age of twelve, he left to seek schooling, and soon was established at Autun, where some years later bishop Flavianus of Autun offered to make him a priest. Eptadius refused, however, feeling himself unworthy of such dignity. Up to this point, Eptadius’ very limited communications are in keeping with the local links discussed above.

However, according to Eptadius’ *vita*, a royal intervention changed the saint’s horizons. At some point in Clovis’ reign, possibly in 501, the kings Clovis and Gundobad met to discuss a treaty, possibly mediated by bishop Flavianus. In the course of these negotiations, Clovis

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13 For *Vita Eptadii* 1, p. 186, Krusch reconstructed: “Igitur sanctus Eptadius Augustidunense Aedue Galliarum oppido civis fuit, sed intra terminum vel castrum Nevernensem sive Lobremense nutritus vel eruditus est…” “Lobremense” likely refers to modern Lormes (ibid., fn. 5; INSEE commune #58145). However, as Krusch noted, the only surviving manuscripts read: “1) vel castri Maternensis sive Elobremensis ; 2) (vel om.) castri Maternensis sive Elobremensis” (Krusch, *Vita Eptadii* p. 186, apparatus). Duchesne fiercely criticized Krusch’s radical correction of *Maternensis* to *Nevernensem*, insisting that the manuscripts simply refer to Marné, a hamlet near Lormes, rather than to the city of Nevers (Duchesne, “No. 24, 25 Août, article 113—Krusch,” *Bulletin critique* vol. 3, 2nd series [1897]: 451-5, at 452). Krusch later retracted the reconstruction *Nevernensem* (“Zur Eptadius- und Eparchius-Legende,” *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere Deutsche Geschichtskunde* 25 [1900]: 129-74, at 153). Both Lormes and Eptadius’ cell at Cervon are roughly equidistant to Nevers and Autun. Lormes is only ca. 59 km/35 mi from Autun. Eptadius spent most of his life a few dozen miles from Autun, on the rural periphery of the Aeduan civitas.

14 *Vita Eptadii* 2, p. 187 (schooling), 7, p. 188 (Eptadius comes to the attention of bishop Flavianus).

supposedly requested that Gundobad send him Eptadius to serve as bishop of Auxerre, whose citizens then acclaimed their king’s choice. Eptadius, however, too humble to consider such an honor, fled in horror to a cell deep in the Morvan, at Cervon, where a monastery later would stand as his legacy. 16 After some time, the *vita* claims, Clovis sent word that he would never dream of compelling Eptadius, but he begged the holy man to oversee the redemption of the many captives taken during his wars. This Eptadius agreed to do, and in subsequent years he spent Clovis’ gold freeing thousands of prisoners in Gaul and Italy. In this role, Eptadius allegedly even corresponded with the Burgundian king Sigismund, demanding that he assist with one such mass repatriation. 17

Not all of Eptadius’ contacts ranged so far afield. Sigifunsus, a count and “barbarian in the sect of the heretics”—likely a Burgundian official serving before 516, the year of catholicism’s official triumph in that kingdom—came to Eptadius’ cell to spy on him and to mock the rigors of his nightly prayers. 18 Divine terror seized Sigifunsus, who repented of impiety and Arianism alike and became Eptadius’ close friend. Although Eptadius spent much time at his cell in the Morvan, he regularly returned to Autun (roughly 60 km to the southeast, across the Morvan hills) for the annual feast of St. Symphorian—marking, again, the emerging importance of that cult in the liturgical and even social life of Autun’s ecclesiastics. 19

neutral frontier site within the Morvan (Maurice Chaume, *Les origines du Duché de Bourgogne, Partie II.3: Géographie historique* [Dijon, 1931; repr., Darmstadt 1977], pp. 1209-10).

16 *Vita Eptadii* 8, p. 189. Cervon = INSEE commune #58047.

17 *Vita Eptadii* 9, pp. 189-90 (Clovis’ second offer); ibid., 10-13, pp. 190-91 (redemption of captives; correspondence with King Sigismund at 12, p. 190).

18 *Vita Eptadii* 19, pp. 192-3: “in ereticorum sectam barbarus comitiva exercens nomine Sigifunsus…”

19 *Vita Eptadii* 21, p. 193.
If trustworthy, Eptadius’ *vita* is an important witness of early sixth-century history, but the text unfortunately includes some puzzling inconsistencies. These primarily involve Eptadius’ ecclesiastical role. As noted above, the holy man supposedly refused to become bishop of Auxerre following Clovis’ initial invitation. Auxerre’s own episcopal records concur, insofar as they make no mention of Eptadius among the ranks of the city’s bishops. On the other hand, the *vita* describes Eptadius as *episcopus* on multiple occasions—but only following his decision to oversee the redemption of Clovis’ prisoners. The description of that reconciliation with Clovis, however florid and awkward, reads suspiciously like a circumlocutory acceptance of the episcopate after the customary show of humility. After being reminded of the good deeds he might work for captives of all races, along with widows, orphans and pilgrims,

…the blessed man Eptadius, for the high and marvelous honor of the apostolate, bow[ed] himself to this degree of humility and the blessing of repentance, so that what that man [i.e., Clovis] formerly had wished, he [i.e. Eptadius] afterward fulfilled with all joy until the end, devoted, holding fast within himself those heavenly injunctions of the divine authority, saying: “Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”

While bishops were not the only persons who rescued such unfortunates, the redemption of captives was a special concern of Gallo-Roman bishops. Moreover, “*apostolatus,*” used here to

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21 *Vita Eptadii* 12, p. 190 (vir beatus Eptadius episcopus), 17, p. 192 (dilectum Dei Eptadium episcopum; sanctus Eptadius episcopus), 18, p. 192 (famulus Dei Eptadius episcopus), 19, p. 192 (sanctus Eptadius episcopus), 20, p. 193 (beatissimus vir Eptadius episcopus).

22 *Vita Eptadii* 9, p. 190: “Et pro summo et admirabile honore apostolatus ad hunc se humilitatem et benedictionem poenitentie gradum vir beatus Eptadius inclinans, ut, quod antea ille optaverat, postea tota gratulatione usque in finem devotus implevit illud, siderea secum retinens divini culminis praecepca, dicens: Qui se exaltat, humiliabitur, et qui se humiliat, exaltabitur.”

describe the role Eptadius finally accepted, typically carried episcopal connotations in post-
classical Latin. 24 Joined with the subsequent references to Eptadius *episcopus*, this passage
implies that Clovis had convinced Eptadius of the pious benefits of serving as his bishop, rather
than commissioning him for some non-episcopal duty. The person(s) responsible for the *vita’s*
text as it now stands wanted us to think that Eptadius was a bishop. 25

If so, why does Eptadius’ *vita* describe his ongoing residence, after Clovis’ commission,
in a cell only “fifty miles” from Autun—which must refer to his home in the Morvan, not to
Auxerre? 26 Krusch argued that this *vita* was yet another anachronistic Carolingian fraud and that
the forger’s intent was to support the struggles of the monastery of Cervon against the bishop of
Autun. 27 On the other hand, Eptadius’ *vita* also displays aspects consistent with a sixth-century
composition, such as a clear ethnic distinction between Gallo-Romans and various barbarian
groups inhabiting Gaul alongside them—particularly noticeable in passages concerning kings
and their affairs. 28 As Justin Favrod has noted, too, the *vita’s* positive depiction of Flavianus of

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24 C. Ducange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis* 1 (Graz, Austria: 1954), p. 320; *TLL* vol. 2, p. 253, lines 59-
65.

25 With Justin Favrod, *Histoire politique* pp. 17-8, I am not convinced by Duchesne’s suggestion (*Bulletin Critique*
[1897]: 455) that the *vita’s* original author may have employed “episcopus” in recognition of Eptadius’ election,
even though he never actually became a consecrated bishop. Rather, as Favrod suggests (see below, p. 61) this may
be an example of late intrusions within a genuine sixth-century text.

26 *Vita Eptadii* 21, p. 193: “Cum ergo ad eius cellulam usque ad urbem Augustidunensem quinquaginta milia
distaret…” By modern measurement, Cervon (the site of Eptadius’ monastery) is 62 km/37 mi from Autun. The
exact length of a Roman mile seems to have varied, but generally can be valued at ca. 1.5 km (Pierre Herrmann,
inexact, therefore (50 mi X 1.5 km = 75 km), the *vita’s* figure very roughly corresponds to the actual distance
between Cervon and Autun, and clearly does not refer to a cell near Auxerre (125 km/75 mi to Autun by modern
measure, or ca. 83 Roman miles).

Gesellschaft für ältere Deutsche Geschichtskunde* 25 (1900): 129-74; but see too idem, “Appendix. Tomus III,” in

28 *Vita Eptadii* 9, p. 189: Clovis mentioned that his captives included Romans, Burgundians and members of all
peoples (*captivorum tam Romanorum quam Burgundionum vel universorum gentium*); ibid., 12, p. 190: “Romans”
assaulted a Gothic castle by order of the Burgundian king Sigismund (*…ius regis Burgundionum a Romanis*
Autun hardly seems to evoke conflict with his Carolingian-era successors.\textsuperscript{29} Indeed, recent scholarship has tended to support a sixth-century date for the \textit{vita}'s composition.\textsuperscript{30} Favrod has moderately argued for an early date for the core narrative while allowing for the possibility of small Carolingian interpolations, perhaps by a copyist who misunderstood the relationship between Clovis and Eptadius.\textsuperscript{31} This view, which rejects Krusch's outright condemnation of the text while recognizing the real ambiguities in the narrative, supports very cautious use of the \textit{vita} as a source for sixth-century history.

We may sum up, then, the possible implications of Eptadius' \textit{vita} for the communications of Burgundian-era Autun. The city's apolitical social ties were quite localized; in the absence of royal patronage, Aeduans typically failed to interact with northwestern communities beyond the limits of Burgundian territory. Eptadius' recorded movements never took him more than a few dozen miles from the Aeduan capital. He had no clear relationship with Auxerre, aside from Clovis' alleged initiative. Compared with the social connections attested before 476, those reported in Eptadius' \textit{vita} were shrinking. Even if a later hand did introduce aggrandizing and anachronistic falsehoods into the narrative, identifying and stripping away such intrusions would only make that relative decline in Aeduan communications during this period seem more acute.


\textsuperscript{29} Favrod, \textit{Histoire politique}, p. 18, fn. 44.


\textsuperscript{31} Favrod, \textit{Histoire politique}, p. 18.
Eptadius’ vita supports the claim that Autun’s horizons became very narrow under Burgundian rule, and that only powerful political interventions tended to open up those horizons.

The Mystery of the Three Bishops: Episcopal Exile and the Burgundian Kingdom

Recognizing that dynamic may cast fresh light on one of the many problems of Burgundian history. Gregory of Tours noted that three of his sixth-century predecessors as bishop of Tours had come from Burgundian territory, where at least two of them had been exiled from their sees. Eventually, these men—Proculus, Theodorus, and Dinifius—gained episcopal appointment at Frankish Tours through the patronage of the Burgundian-born Queen Clotilda; the first two held a very unusual joint appointment. There is no scholarly consensus on the reasons behind their specific expulsions and departure for Frankish territory, and no scholar has identified the Burgundian sees from which they left.

32 Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 10.31.10-11. Note, however, that ibid., Hist. 3.2 and 3.17 offer a contradictory narrative, in which Dinifius held office not after, but three tenures before Theodorus and Proculus. Nonetheless, one should follow the more detailed and orderly account of book 10.31, which Gregory wrote later and apparently in a focused effort to sort out in one place the accounts of his predecessors; the earlier account, conversely, only mentions the bishops in passing. For discussion and dating of these three episcopates (Theodorus and Proculus: ann. 519-21; Dinifius: ann. 521-22), see Luce Pietri, “La succession des premiers évêques Tourangeaux: essai sur la chronologie de Grégoire de Tours,” Mélanges de l’École Française de Rome (Moyen Âge-temps modernes) 94.2 (1982): 551-619, especially 565-7, 571, 618.

More broadly, some scholars in recent decades have explained sixth-century Gallo-Roman episcopal exile as a result of rivalries within bishops’ cities.\textsuperscript{34} Such explanations emphasize the ability of local factions to drive out unpopular bishops, often by slandering them with accusations of treason against barbarian overlords. In these interpretations, kings and their agents appear remarkably passive; they are easily tricked into doing dirty work for bishops’ disgruntled rivals. The actual causes of episcopal exile, however, remain firmly within the realm of social tensions at the community level. Episcopal exile, in this vision, is not primarily about high-level politics.\textsuperscript{35}

I agree that local rivalries were relevant to the problem of episcopal exile. However, a dominant interpretive model pushes the pendulum too far away from taking royal interests seriously. In fact, royal interests are particularly germane in the mysterious case of Proculus, Theodorus, and Dinius, the exiles at Tours. There is a very plausible explanation for their departure into Frankish territory, one that offers insight into an under-appreciated crisis in Burgundian political history.

The exiles’ short tenures at Tours date to 519-522.\textsuperscript{36} During or around those years, one known Gallic bishop offers a possible match: episcopal records from Autun point to a bishop named Proculus, who governed the church of Autun some time between 517 and 533.\textsuperscript{37} A deacon of Autun named Proculus had visited Sidonius Apollinarius during the 470s; if that


\textsuperscript{35} I intend to discuss Gallo-Roman episcopal exile in greater detail in a forthcoming work.


\textsuperscript{37} Duchesne 2.178 conservatively passed over the dimly attested Proculus, moving from attestations for a Pragmatius (517) to Agrippinus (533), but see AASS November 4: \textit{Nov.} 2.1, col. 290-91.
Aeduan deacon is identical to the later Aeduan bishop of the same name, then the bishop of Autun was quite old ca. 520. In fact, Gregory of Tours notes that the exile Proculus at Tours was an old man. While we cannot be certain that Proculus of Autun became Proculus of Tours, the Aeduan bishop is the most likely candidate—in fact, the only plausible candidate of whom I know.

However, if Proculus of Tours was originally Aeduan, his movement into Frankish territory contradicts the typical communication patterns outlined above—unless some kind of high-level political influence propelled him abroad. As it happens, there is a striking chronological convergence, unnoticed by previous scholars, between the exiles’ tenures at Tours and a major conflict between the Burgundian king Sigismund and his Catholic bishops. Moreover, several sources link that conflict to episcopal exile.

The controversy in question erupted after the excommunication of one of Sigismund’s favored court officials. The official had married his deceased wife’s sister; after 517, newly formulated canonical standards defined such marriages as incestuous. The couple refused to


39 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 10.31.10, p. 532.

40 Proculus was a common name in late antique Gaul; Heinzelmann’s prosographic list identifies ten men with that name, comparing favorably to eight men named Iohannes, fourteen Paulini, eleven Pauli, and only five Petri. Notably, too, Heinzelmann’s list is not comprehensive; he omits the Proculus of Autun under consideration here (see his pp. 674-5). On the other hand, even if the name was common, I am not aware of any attested bishop named Proculus in Burgundian territory, other than the prelate of Autun discussed above. The Proculus of Vienne whom Duchesne cites (1.210 [1907]) lived in the eighth century.


42 On the changing definitions of incest and the council of Épaone’s place in that history, see Paul Mikat, Die Inzestgesetzgebung der merowingisch-fränkischen Konzilien (511-626/7) (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1994), 96-120; Ian Wood, “Incest, Law and the Bible in Sixth-Century Gaul,” Early Medieval Europe 7.3 (1998): 291-304, notes too that the Burgundian canons melded biblical Hebrew and Roman legal traditions; the application of these new blended standards across the sixth century sometimes reflected the political context of Merovingian princes’ relations with their bishops.
separate, the bishops refused to back down, and Sigismund applied pressure in favor of his agent. At some point between 518 and 523, a group of bishops met at Lyon to discuss the matter.  

Their response to Sigismund’s demands was bold; they reiterated the excommunication. They expected their decision to come at a price, however, for they further decreed:

…that should anyone of us have to endure any sort of tribulation, bitterness or agitation of the ruler, perhaps inevitable, all would suffer together with him in one mind; and should one incur any sort of needs or expenses in maintaining this cause, fraternal comfort would lift up the anxieties of the afflicted one. [And we have also decreed] that should the most outstanding king further separate himself from the church or the communion of the priests, the holy bishops—giving him room to return to the lap of the holy mother—would remove themselves without any delay into monasteries, accordingly as each should have opportunity … not one whatsoever would depart from the monastery in which he had chosen to live, before peace had been promised and returned to all the brothers in general.

Despite this bold stand against royal interference, the bishops expected trouble. In addition to exchanging mutual pledges of financial, spiritual, and political support, they guarded against subversion of their cause by royal influence within the Church. No one, the bishops insisted, should dare to administer the sacraments or to hold ordinations in a bishop’s absence, or to usurp the see of a bishop who still lived.  

There is a clear sense of resolve in these prohibitions, but

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43 See Concilium Lugdunense, (CCSL 148a), pp. 38-41. Avitus of Vienne appears to have died in February, 518; his successor Iulianus appeared at the Council of Lyon. Saeculatius of Die also subscribed to Lyon’s canons, but his see fell to the Ostrogoths in 523. Thus the council presumably took place between those dates (see discussion in Les canons des conciles Mérovingiens [VIe-VIIe siècles], vol. 1, ed. Jean Gaudemet and Brigitte Basdevant [Paris: du Cerf, 1989], p. 127). There also may have been an earlier convocation on the matter, for which no record survives, since at Lyon the bishops described themselves as “congregati iterato in unum in causa stephani incesti criminem polluti…” (Concilium Lugdunense 1, p. 39).

44 Concilium Lugdunense, 2-3 (CCSL 148a), p. 39: “id quoque adecimus, ut si quicumque nostrum tributionem quamcumque vel amaritudinem aut commotionem fortasse potestatis necesse habuerit tolerare, omnis uno cum eodem animo conpatiantur et, quidquid aerumnarum vel dispendiorum optentu causae huius unus suscipierit, consolatio fraternae anxietates releuit tribulantibus. quod si se rex praecellentissimus ab ecclesiae vel sacerdotum comunione ultra suspenderit, locum ei dantes ad sanctae matris gremium ueniendi, sancti antistetes se in monasteriis absque ulla dilatatione, prout cuique fuerit oportunum, recipiant, donec pacem dominus integram et caritatis plenitudinem conservandam sanctorum flexus praecibus restituere pro sua potentia vel pietate dignetur, ita ut non unus quicunque prius de monasterio, in quo elegerit habitare, discedat, quam cunctis generaliter fratribus fuerit pax promissa vel reddita.”

also vulnerability. The subscriptions to the canons reveal a problem: a few years earlier, twenty-five men had endorsed the canons at Épaone.\(^46\) Now, at Lyon, only eleven bishops signed, in defiance of the royal will.\(^47\) Clearly, these bishops were under significant pressure; half the kingdom’s prelates apparently were unwilling or even unable to join with their colleagues in standing against the king.

Eventually, someone accepted a compromise. In an addendum to the council’s records, nine of the original eleven signatories agreed at a later date that, “following the opinion of the most glorious king and lord,” the excommunicated couple should be allowed to remain in church services at least through the reading from the Gospels.\(^48\) It is not clear whether Sigismund or his bishops had given the most ground.\(^49\) Although the incest controversy thus came to an end, it seems to have poisoned the king’s relations with his bishops.

In fact, two hagiographic accounts suggest that the crisis led to exile or exile-like conditions for some bishops. A Life of bishop Apollinaris of Valence claims that Sigismund was “agitated by the fury of a dreadful madness” because of the incest controversy; as a result, Apollinaris and his brother Avitus of Vienne had to travel together to a settlement near Lyon “as if condemned to exile,” \textit{tamquam exilio deputati}.\(^50\) The \textit{Vita Apollinaris}’ text is ambiguous; were

\(^{46}\) Gaudemet and Basdevant note the contrast: \textit{Les canons des conciles}, pp. 134-5, fn. 1. Episcopal sees represented at Épaone but not at Lyon include, in the northwest, Nevers and Autun; all others were in the kingdom’s southern and south-eastern edges.


\(^{48}\) \textit{domni quoque gloriosissimi regis sententia secuti...} \textit{Concilium Lugdunense Add.} (CCSL 148a), p. 41.

\(^{49}\) See Mikat, \textit{Die Inzestgesetzgebung}, pp. 11-13 on possible interpretations.

\(^{50}\) \textit{Vita Apollinaris} 3: \textit{Vita sancti Apollinaris episcopi Valentinis}, MGH SRM 3, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover: 1896; repr., 1977), pp. 194-203, at p. 198. Reading sixth-century Gallic sources on exile, we should not be fooled by a modifier such as \textit{tamquam}; a hagiographer writing of bishop Caesarius’ of Arles deportation to Visigothic Bordeaux described his political deportation, too, as \textit{quasi in exilio}, “as if into exile,” in a situation unquestionably involving involuntary relocation (\textit{Vita Caesarii} 1.21: \textit{Sancti Caesarii episcopi arelatensis opera omnia}, vol. 2, \textit{opera}}
the bishops removed, or did they elect to remove themselves in protest, as the bishops at Lyon would later threaten to do? Avitus was already dead by the time of that council, but perhaps he, too, had experienced the early phase of this struggle, watching the bridges he had built with the royal house burn. 51 Whatever the nature of Apollinaris and Avitus’ alleged departure from their cities, the king could control their movements; when Sigismund ordered them back to their sees, they returned. Sickness and a miraculous healing, however, allegedly brought the king to repentance. 52 The details of the vita’s account do not square perfectly with the more reliable documentary evidence from the council at Lyon. However, the narrative reflects some memory or rumor of episcopal removal during the incest controversy.

Another source claims that Catulinus, bishop of Embrun, was “expelled by heretics” and had to take refuge with Avitus of Vienne. 53 We do know that Catulinus was among the bishops present at Épaone in 517, before the incest controversy, and he was no longer bishop of Embrun by 524. 54 The only witness to his exile, however, is quite late, and draws only on late medieval Spanish sources. 55 It is easy to see its details as very confused; since Sigismund was a convert to and patron of Nicene Catholicism, he would hardly have tolerated Arian persecution of one of his

varia, ed. Germain Morin [Maredsous: 1942], p. 304). However, the exilic language of the Vita Apollinaris may repay further, pending philological scrutiny.

51 Avitus died February 5, 518; his successor Iulianus of Vienne attended the council at Lyon. See Duchesne 1.206 (1907), especially fn. 3.

52 Vita Apollinaris 3-6, pp. 198-99.


54 Concilium Epaonense (CCSL 148a), subscription at p. 36; Duchesne 1.291 (1907).

55 AASS Jun. vol. 5, June 21st, p. 83. The body of Palladius, who accompanied Catulinus on his supposed exile, was translated to Spain, not before the eleventh century. His translation accounts for the Spanish origin of source material on Catulinus; as AASS notes (p. 83), the dissemination of the Spanish material brought notice of Palladius’ sanctity to France, where it had been unknown for centuries!
own bishops, as our source suggests. However, I suggest that this anecdote makes perfect sense when aligned with other evidence for episcopal exile during Sigismund’s reign, linked not to sectarian rivalry but to the highly political incest case. As with the *Vita Apollinaris*, I do not suggest that we should closely follow the details of this troubled source. However, like that text, this one surely evokes a somewhat garbled memory of real events connected with the ecclesiastical crisis during Sigismund’s reign.

Overall, evidence for banishment or removal of bishops in the Burgundian kingdom is rare. To my knowledge, there are only five attested cases of episcopal expulsion in the Burgundian realm, three of which involve this same crisis. Of the two others, the earliest—the flight of Aprunculus of Langres ca. 480—almost certainly reflects political tensions along the kingdom’s northern frontier, as we will see in Chapter Three.\(^{56}\) Second, a bishop of Lyon, Stephanus, possibly was removed briefly from office before being reinstated. Stephanus sat at Lyon for some years between April 501 and 517, and the source for his (possible) removal most likely dates somewhere between 501-513.\(^{57}\) An expulsion during that period could well reflect trouble stemming from the Burgundian civil war and first Frankish invasion of the kingdom (which resolved in 501), one of the more politically volatile moments in Burgundian history, though this is of course only conjectural. The final three cases of Burgundian episcopal exile are those already discussed here: Catulinus’ alleged exile from Embrun, Avitus and Apollinaris’

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\(^{56}\) See Chapter Three, pp. 106-8.

alleged removal under Sigismund, and the three Burgundian exiles at Tours, one of whom may have been Proculus of Autun. Autun, we should note, was one of the sees not represented at the council of Lyon, at which half the kingdom’s bishops complained of royal mistreatment and threatened to leave their sees. In short, every clearly attested case of episcopal removal in Burgundian history most plausibly points to kingdom-level political crisis, not just local intra-civic tension, and the vague, possible removal of Stephanus of Lyon might also be connected (though much less firmly) to political troubles; his status as metropolitan in the kingdom’s court city makes a political complication more probable than simple trouble with the locals. More importantly, three-fifths of the evidence for exile dates to the time of the incest controversy under Sigismund. Whether Sigismund drove them out or they took the initiative to flee, I suggest that Proculus, Theodorus, and Dinifius most likely left Burgundian territory because of that crisis.

After the incest controversy’s formal resolution, these men did not return to Burgundian territory, but died in Tours. Scholars already recognize the incest controversy as a factor in eroding Burgundian support for Sigismund. Ultimately, his own men handed the king over to Frankish invaders in 524, after he had murdered his son, who allegedly fell prey to a false accusation of conspiracy against his father. If Sigismund’s oppression of his bishops earlier in the 520s was even more severe than we have realized, resulting in permanent expulsion or emigration of some bishops, the king may have had reason to fear that any such coup against him would receive widespread support.

My interpretation of these events does not require the identification of Proculus of Tours with Proculus of Autun, although the fit is compelling. There is one important problem with this

identification: Proculus of Autun’s remains allegedly lay until the eighteenth century in the
abbey of St. Symphorian, just outside the city of Autun. Unless we conjure up an unattested
translation of the saint’s corpse back to his first diocese, his interment at Autun poses obvious
complications for the idea that he died in exile at Tours. On the other hand, we should note that
the belief that Proculus’ remains were present at St. Symphorian’s is not attested before the
eighteenth century—that tradition is very late.

Moreover, the relics honored at Autun may not have belonged to our sixth-century
bishop. Proculus’ commemoration there is not attested until the thirteenth century. Moreover,
the vague records of the city’s early bishops include a second and otherwise unknown Proculus.
There are several possible explanations; one, of course, is that this is only a confused duplication
of a single bishop. Possibly, however, there may have been an early martyr at Autun named
Proculus, followed by a late antique bishop of the same name, leading to eventual confusion
surrounding a “martyr-bishop” Proculus. If the bishop became a confessor in exile, such
confusion in later tradition with another martyr would be all the more likely. If so, the martyr’s
relics honored at early modern Autun would no longer trouble the hypothesis of Proculus’ flight
to Tours. Nonetheless, the link proposed here between the bishops of Tours and Autun during
Sigismund’s reign is plausible, but uncertain.

59 Harold de Fontenay, “Épigraphie Autunoise. Moyen âge et temps modernes (suite),” Mémoires de la Société
Filippo Caraffa (Rome: Istituto Giovanni XXIII della Pontificia Università Lateranense, 1968), cols. 1176-77.
62 Gallia Christiana, ed. Denis de Saint-Marthe, vol. 4 (1728) col. 342; AASS Nov. 2.1, 290; Dinet, S. Symphorien,
522.
If Proculus of Tours was indeed an Aeduan, the likely connection with the incest controversy explains his atypical movement across the Frankish border. Between the end of imperial rule in Gaul and the destruction of the Burgundian kingdom, Autun’s attested communications failed to penetrate beyond the kingdom’s northern heartland, unless they involved some form of royal influence. During this period, elite Aeduans ceased marrying their sons and daughters into extra-provincial families, and Aeduan clerics ceased their autonomous correspondence with churchmen from northwestern and southern Gaul—or, at least, contemporaries stopped recording such activities. As Chapters Five and Six will illustrate, the region’s archaeological record adds evidence that this more restricted spectrum of ties reflects real conditions, and not only selective recording in written sources. Judging by both the historical and material record, Autun’s horizons had begun to shrink.

**Looking South: Chalon under the Burgundians**

Chalon’s connections, on the other hand, were becoming more extensive. Despite the paucity of *Cabillonum’s* attested links in previous generations, its elites now clearly made use of many links. Some of these connections remained within Burgundian territory: the bishop of Chalon attended the council at Épaone in 517 and another at Lyon, sometime between 518 and 523.63

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63 Silvester of Chalon at Épaone: *Concilium Epaonense* (CCSL 148a), p. 35. At Lyon, Silvester was among the initial subscribers who upheld the excommunication of the official Stephanus, and among the smaller group that subsequently approved a compromise position (*Concilium Lugudunense a. 518-523*, in De Clercq, *Concilia Galliae II* [CCSL 148a], pp. 38-41, at pp. 40-41).
Other ties involved foreign contacts. According to the late and questionable testimony of the so-called “Fredegar” chronicler, king Clovis and his Burgundian bride Clotilda married at Chalon.\(^{64}\)

Multiple ties linked Chalon to the distant south of Gaul, ruled not by the Burgundians but by the Visigoths (and Ostrogoths, after 507). Several members of one family became influential at Arles after Caesarius, a young man from the territory of Chalon, moved south ca. 490 to join the island monastic community of Lérins.\(^{65}\) After Caesarius ruined his health through excessive asceticism, his abbot made him desist and relocate to Arles.\(^{66}\) The bishop of that city, Aeoni, recognized Caesarius and proclaimed himself to be Caesarius’ “fellow citizen” and kinsman.\(^{67}\) Aeoni promptly brought Caesarius under his wing, employing him within his own church and ultimately arranging for Caesarius’ appointment as his episcopal successor.\(^{68}\) After becoming bishop, Caesarius’ northern origins enabled multiple accusations (likely undeserved) that he hoped to betray Gothic-occupied Arles to the Burgundians.\(^{69}\) But Caesarius overcame his accusers, and established a position firm enough to endow other immigrants from his family with

\(^{64}\)”Cabylonno nupcii preparantur.” Ps.-Fredegar, *Chron.* 18, p. 100: *Chronicarum quae dicuntur Fredegarii scholastici*, MGH SRM 2, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover: 1888). In a classic article, Walter Goffart rehabilitated the theory of single authorship for “Fredegar,” but argued that a single composition ca. 658 also significantly diminishes the text’s authority on late antique events, from which the author was quite distant (Walter Goffart, “The Fredegar Problem Reconsidered,” *Speculum* 38 [1963]: 206-41).


\(^{66}\)Vita Caesarii 1.6-7, pp. 298-99.

\(^{67}\)Vita Caesarii 1.10, p. 300: “episcopus dixit: ‘Meus es, fili, concives pariter et propinquus, nam et parentes tuos reminiscor optime et per consanguinitatem parentali recordatione complctor.’”

\(^{68}\)Vita Caesarii 1.11-13, pp. 300-01.

\(^{69}\)Vita Caesarii 1.21, p. 304, 1.29, p. 307. According to the first accusation, Caesarius wanted to betray Arles “quia de Gallis haberet originem” (1.21, p. 304)—i.e., because he came from the old Diocese of the Gauls, which began north of Viennensis. The implicit argument was that anyone, including a Gallo-Roman, with a patria (fatherland) in central Gaul held interests at odds with those of the Gothic rulers of the south. The point illustrates well the general contraction of social horizons across Gaul by this period.
positions of influence in the Arlesian ecclesiastical community. His sister Caesaria moved to Arles, where she oversaw a convent founded under Caesarius’ auspices; her successor there was a second Caesaria, probably Caesarius’ niece. Tetradius, Caesarius’ nephew, served as a priest at Arles, and took dictation for his uncle’s monastic rule. This northern family from Chalon’s territory enjoyed decades of influence over Arles’ ecclesiastical life.

However, these southward movements do not necessarily indicate frequent direct communication between Chalon and Arles. We know little about Aeônius’ background, but Caesarius himself moved south in haste and against his family’s wishes. Moreover, Aeônius’ patronage as depicted in the vita was unexpected; an introduction to the bishop by friends led to a surprised recognition of kinship. In other words, when Aeônius and Caesarius met, the elder

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72 Heinzelmann, “Tetradius 6,” p. 701. Vita Caesarii 1.29, p. 307 also mentions a further, anonymous relative of Caesarius’ from among his clergy (“quidam e clericis, concivis et consanguineus ipsius”) who escaped Arles and went over to the Franks and Burgundians besieging the city in 507-8.
73 Vita Caesarii 1.4-5, p. 298; on his way south, he evaded a search party sent by his mother.
74 Vita Caesarii 1.10, p. 300: “Præsentatum ergo sibi sanctum Caesarium venerabilis Eonius episcopus diligentius percunctatur, qui cives esset quibusve parentibus fuerit procreatus…” Klingshirn has suggested that Caesarius instead may have moved south precisely because his relative was bishop there, in order to improve his own chances at advancement (Making of a Christian Community, pp. 22-3), and has argued (ibid., p. 72) that “it is difficult to believe, as the authors of the vita suggest, that neither man was aware of his relationship to the other before their first meeting in Arles. Caesarius’ biographers are likely to have endorsed this fiction in order to enhance the drama of his arrival in the city, to suppress the suggestion that he went to Arles to exploit his kinship with the bishop, and in general to de-emphasize the importance of his remaining ties with relatives he was supposed to have left behind in the ‘world.’” Klingshirn’s conjecture is plausible, though I find it no more likely than the vita’s version—in which a young ascetic of about twenty years (Vita Caesarii 1.4, p. 298), full of the passion of youth and zealous to the point of physical self-destruction, might scorn his family’s wishes and connections when he moved south (note that when Caesarius first sought out holy orders at Chalon at the age of eighteen, he allegedly did so “ignorante familia vel parentes”—Vita Caesarii 1.4, p. 298). Of course, the vita does not actually say that Caesarius was ignorant of his relation to Aeônius when he reached Arles; indeed, since Caesarius’ own relatives eventually were able to learn of his election, we might suppose that Caesarius had learned about Aeônius, but chose not to make use of the connection upon his arrival. Aeônius, on the other hand, clearly (or so the vita indicates) did not expect Caesarius, suggesting that he was no longer in close communication with his associates near Chalon (or that they had chosen not to tell him about their monastic runaway). Lacking a clearer reason to reject the testimony of our source, I am content to accept the vita’s version of events.
man was not well-apprised of the junior’s movements and was not necessarily in contact with Caesarius’ parents, however well he may have known them before his own move south. The later movements of Caesarius’ sister and nephew to Arles likely came in response to Caesarius’ success and saintly displays there; presumably they came to Arles specifically to serve with their accomplished kinsman. This concentration of Caesarius’ relations at Arles shows that some of Chalon’s elites were able to move south when they desired to do so, but does not necessarily indicate a regular, two-way relationship. If anything, the fact that some of these relatives relocated permanently to Arles might suggest that frequent short-term visits were not very feasible.

Some ties with the far south relied on intermediaries. One such was the influential Avitus of Vienne, the foremost bishop in the early-sixth-century Burgundian kingdom. One of his correspondents was Ceretius, a *vir ilustrius* to whom Avitus jokingly sent a poor-quality fish from the Isère south of Vienne, with an invitation to visit Vienne and not spend as much time near Chalon.75 Wood and Shanzer have plausibly equated this Ceretius with persons mentioned in other letters by Avitus: one, a refugee in the Jura mountains, likely fleeing the violence of the Burgundian civil war of 500; the other, the father of a very ill son, requiring introduction to a skilled physician at the Ostrogothic court in Italy.76 If the recipient of Avitus’ fish was indeed identical with these other men, then Ceretius was well connected in the Burgundian heartland of southern *Lugdunensis Prima* and northern *Vienensis*. On the other hand, while travel to Italy remained possible, he relied on Avitus’ connections there for access to the Gothic court. Of

75 Avitus, *Ep.* 83, p. 94.

course, there was nothing unusual about needing such an introduction, and on its own this
episode would be unremarkable.

There are other signs, however, that Avitus played a broader liminal role between
otherwise poorly connected contacts in the north and south. To judge by Caesarius of Arles’
surviving letters, Avitus of Vienne was his northernmost direct correspondent. Avitus wrote him
a single letter, in which he introduced a traveling bishop from northern Gaul.\textsuperscript{77} It is also relevant
here to recall that only one known traveler from Autun journeyed south of Vienne during this
period: the bishop Pragmatius, who attended the council at Épaone in 517. While residents of
both Autun and Chalon kept up some ties to Vienne, the lands south of that city seem to have
been foreign to most of them. Indeed, one hagiographic anecdote from the Burgundian north
expresses precisely such a view of Gaul’s southern coast. According to the \textit{vita} of Eugendus,
abbot of the Jura monks from 485-514, that saint once sent some brothers to the Mediterranean
coast to buy salt (Alamannic raids had disrupted access to local supplies). When these had not
returned after two months’ time, Eugendus’ remaining monks began to grumble that he had
given the travelers “not so much exile, as much as a foreign death” (\textit{mortem peregrinam}).\textsuperscript{78}
Although the brothers returned home shortly thereafter, the monks’ melodramatic complaint is
instructive. One recalls the accusations that Caesarius of Arles contemplated treason against the

\footnote{\textsuperscript{77} Despite the limited geographical range of Caesarius’ extant correspondence, news of his prominence at Arles
obviously also made its way to his relatives at Chalon, but whether that news traveled north directly or indirectly is

\footnote{\textsuperscript{78} “…\textit{non tam destinatis fratribus exsilium quam mortem peregrinam propria persuasuione dedisset.”} \textit{Vita Eugendi} 158, p. 408 (3.17 of \textit{Vita patrum}).}
Goths because he was a northerner; in some cases, it seems, residents of both southern and central Gaul saw each other as aliens.  

Nonetheless, private individuals from Chalon did make trips to southern Gaul. In doing so, they apparently crossed Burgundian-Gothic borders without great difficulty. These movements contrast with Autun’s very limited ties across the Frankish border, and notably lacked the reliance on royal initiative so important along that northwestern axis. The Burgundians may have discouraged some cross-border ties into Frankish territory (one thinks of the flight of bishop Aprunculus of Langres into exile ca. 480, after the Burgundians suspected him of sympathizing with the expansionist Clovis).  

Yet the relatively open nature of the southern border indicates that if there were any such restrictions, they were not universally applied on all frontiers. After all, when Caesarius moved south to Provence, seeking monastic retreat, only his family (and the devil, according to his hagiographers) tried to stop him. Active political hindrance alone thus seems unsatisfactory for explaining all Burgundian-era communication horizons. An explanatory model for the factors that influenced these movements must wait until after we have reviewed a broader range of evidence, later in this study, and can draw on the independent light of other, completely autonomous sources.

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79 *Vita Caesarii* 1.21, p. 304; see above, p. 72, fn. 69.

80 Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 2.23, p. 69.

81 *Vita Caesarii* 1.5, p. 298.
Under Frankish Rule

In 532 a Frankish army wrested Autun from Burgundian control. Two years later, a coalition of Merovingian princes destroyed the Burgundian kingdom outright and divided its territory amongst themselves. Under the new regime, Chalon became an increasingly important political center. King Theudebert visited Chalon ca. 547; Chramn, a rebellious Merovingian prince, tried to capture the city in 555; and King Guntramn of Frankish “Burgundy” frequently resided there in the 570s. Frankish rule also expanded Chalon’s elite connections in northern Gaul. Agricola, bishop of Chalon, attended or sent a delegate to Frankish church councils at Orleans in 538, 541, and 549, and at Paris in 552 (along with one council closer to home, at Lyon in 570). The south remained open to Chalon’s elites, too. Aregius, born ca. 530 at Chalon, became bishop of Gap in southeastern Gaul.

82. The fundamental discussion of sixth-century Frankish territorial divisions is Eugen Ewig, “Die fränkischen Teilungen und Teilreiche (511-613),” in ibid., Spätantikes und Fränkisches Gallien: Gesammelte Schriften (1952-1973), ed. Hartmut Atsma (Münich: 1976), pp. 114-71. For the division of Burgundian territory in the 530’s, see ibid., pp. 130-1. Autun and Chalon, along with other northern Burgundian cities, passed initially to Theudebert; Mâcon and Lyon came under Childebert’s rule, so that a frontier between kingdoms now passed through the middle of the ecclesiastical province of Lugdunensis Prima.

83. Theudebert’s visit to Chalon: Vita Germani Parisiaci 8, p. 378; Chramn’s rebellion: Gregory of Tours, Hist. 4.16, pp. 147-50 (see discussion below, pp. 80-2); Guntramn’s frequent residence at Chalon, despite Orléans’ original status as his nominal court center: Ewig, “Die fränkischen Teilungen und Teilreiche (511-613),” p. 162.

84. Beyond the examples cited here, the churchman Aper of Toul supposedly stopped at Chalon on a preaching tour at an unknown date in the first half of the sixth century (Heinzelmann, “Aper 3,” p. 555; Vita Apri 6, p. 67: BHL 616, AASS Sept. vol. 5, 3rd ed. [1866] pp. 66-9). Aper’s vita is not attested before the tenth century and may be largely invented; according to one estimate, the vita is untrustworthy and “priva di valore storico” (Bibliotheca sanctorum 2 [Rome: Pontifical Lateran University, 1962], col. 320). If the story contains any truth, it might reflect a journey shortly after the Frankish conquest. While Aper’s purpose allegedly was to combat “heresy and paganism,” which could suggest that the visit took place before the official triumph of catholicism in Burgundian territory in 516, the visit might more plausibly be dated to the years after Chalon and Toul were united within Austrasian territory.

85. Duchesne 2.193 (1910).

In the mid-sixth century, Chalon’s elites also remained connected to Autun. Agricola, bishop of Chalon, corresponded with Germanus, abbot of St. Symphorian’s at Autun, asking him to pray for a sick servant.\textsuperscript{87} Germanus also traveled in person to Chalon in the 540’s, appealing there to king Theudebert on behalf of ecclesiastical estates near Autun.\textsuperscript{88} Abbot Germanus and his fellow churchman, the bishop of Autun Agrippinus, dominate the records of Autun’s connections in the decades following the Merovingian conquest. Agrippinus attended church councils at Orleans in 533 and 538.\textsuperscript{89} Germanus stayed closer to home during his tenure as abbot, though in addition to his correspondence with Chalon, he also visited Alesia.\textsuperscript{90} Thus, while in charge of St. Symphorian’s, he remained active across much of the territories of Autun and Chalon—though apparently without leaving that region.

Ca. 556, however, Germanus took an unprecedented trip to Paris, and while there, became bishop of that prominent city.\textsuperscript{91} As ruler over this important see, Germanus communicated with and even visited communities across most of northwestern Gaul, ranging from Nantes and Poitiers to Tours and Bourges.\textsuperscript{92} Despite his newfound prestige and expanded horizons, Germanus repeatedly returned to Autun, making at least four trips to his old home in

\textsuperscript{87} \textit{Vita Germani Parisiaci} 6, p. 376-7.

\textsuperscript{88} \textit{Vita Germani Parisiaci} 8, p. 378.

\textsuperscript{89} Duchesne 2.178-9 (1910).

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Vita Germani Parisiaci} 11, p. 380.

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Vita Germani Parisiaci} 12, pp. 380-1; see Krusch’s fn. 2, pp. 381-2, on the date of this movement, and also my comments at p. 81, fn. 102, below.

\textsuperscript{92} \textit{Vita Germani Parisiaci} 47, p. 401 (Nantes); 45, p. 400 (Poitiers); 27, pp. 388-9, 57, pp. 406-7 (Tours); 40, pp. 396-7, 62, pp. 409-10 (Bourges). \textit{Gregory of Tours, Liber in gloria confessorum} 79, MGH SRM 1.2, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover: 1885), pp. 347-8, also describes Germanus’ visit to Bourges. Raymond van Dam has noted that Germanus’ connections to the martyr-cult of Symphorian at Autun likely influenced his decision to visit Bourges, where another church dedicated to that saint stood (Raymond van Dam, trans., \textit{Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Confessors} [Liverpool University Press: Liverpool, 1988] p. 85, fn. 89).
approximately twenty years of episcopal service. En route, he visited and allegedly worked miraculous wonders at Tonnerre, Avallon, and in the Morvan hills. These journeys not only let him visit his former cloister at St. Symphorian’s, but also allowed him to monitor affairs at Rotogiacus, an estate near Nevers owned by the church of Paris. On one visit to Autun ca. 561, Germanus healed a distinguished citizen (cives ... inluster) named Florentinus, a future bishop of Mâcon, and assisted in the consecration of bishop Syagrius of Autun. Syagrius, too, would be an active presence across the region, attending councils (Lyon 570, Paris 573, Mâcon 581 and 585), hearing an ecclesiastical trial at Lyon, and possibly even implicating himself in the far-reaching Gundovald conspiracy, ca. 584.

If Autun’s connections to the northwest had been limited before the Frankish period, Agrippinus and especially Germanus now cultivated numerous connections along that axis. Yet the community of Autun as a whole probably was not resuming its old, pre-Burgundian levels of interaction with the northwest. Although the political changes following the Frankish conquest did reorient some elite Aeduan social ties, the forces that shaped such external links do not appear to have changed greatly. Certainly, the councils that Agrippinus and Syagrius attended at Orleans and Paris brought together far more bishops than any Burgundian council had ever

94 Vita Germani Parisiaci 30, p. 390 (Avallon); 32, pp. 391-2 (Cervon, in the Morvan); 35, p. 394 (Tonnerre).
95 Vita Germani Parisiaci 36 p. 394; 52, p. 404; 61, p. 409.
96 Vita Germani Parisiaci 63, p. 410-11. For Florentinus see Duchesne 2.197-8 (1910).
97 Duchesne 2.179 (1910). For the ecclesiastical trial (in which a deacon, Peter, was acquitted of charges of murder by magic) see Gregory of Tours, Hist., 5.5, pp. 201-2; for Syagrius’ alleged involvement in the Gundovald affair, see Ps.-Fredegar, Chron. 3.89, p. 117.
convened; but these Frankish councils usually gathered in response to royal summons, and often
drew together bishops linked to specific kingdoms.  

Germanus’ movements between Autun and Paris also likely involved royal influence. Venantius Fortunatus, Germanus’ hagiographer, recorded the saint’s early movements in rich
detail, without mentioning any ties beyond the territories of Autun and Chalon prior to
Germanus’ consecration at Paris. Nor did Fortunatus give any reason for Germanus’
unprecedented trip to Paris ca. 556, beyond an anecdote about a visionary premonition four years
earlier, showing him that he would govern that see.  

What prompted Germanus’ sudden and
unexplained journey to the north?

Suspiciously, Germanus’ episcopal consecration coincided with a political crisis linked
both to Burgundy and to Paris. In 555, the Merovingian king Theudebald died, and his lands
passed to his kinsman Clothar. Prince Chramn, one of Clothar’s sons, rebelled against his
father—with the aid of king Childebert of Paris. During his rebellion, Chramn advanced from
his holdings in Aquitaine into Burgundy, capturing Chalon and moving as far as Dijon. Local
ecclesiastics debated the best response to his actions; at Dijon, the bishop gave Chramn

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98 For a general discussion of these councils, see Odette Pontal, Histoire des conciles mérovingiens (Paris: Éditions
of Frankish Church Councils, AD 511-768 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010). The three kings Theuderic, Childebert
and Clothar summoned the council held at Orleans in 533. The council held at the same city, in 538, drew bishops
subject to Theuderic and Childebert, but bishops subject to their brother Clothar did not attend. Notably, the
convoking authority for another council held at Orleans in 541 is unclear; bishops from across Gaul, including
southern Provence, attended that gathering. Childebert summoned the bishops who came to Orleans in 549 and to
Paris in 551. With only one possible exception, then, these councils’ subscription lists at least partly reflect the
patronage and territories of various Merovingian rulers.

99 Vita Germani Parisiaci 12, pp. 380-1: “Itaque positus sopore, inspicit, a quodam sene claves sibi portae
Parisiacae porrigi. Interrogans, quid hoc fieret, accipit in responsum, ut salvas eas faceret. Quod post civitatis eius
episcopo decidente, dum praecellentissimo regi Childeberto occurreret, in eius electione effectum illa vox meruit,
ordinatusque pontifex…”
communion, yet refused him entry to the city itself.\textsuperscript{100} After this campaign, Chramn took refuge with king Childebert in Paris.\textsuperscript{101}

It is a remarkable coincidence that Germanus left Aeduan soil for the first time, went all the way to Paris, and was appointed bishop of that prominent city by Chramn’s patron, at approximately the same time that Chramn also traveled from Burgundy to Childebert’s court.\textsuperscript{102} Perhaps Germanus—abbot of an important monastic center in a region through which Chramn’s army passed—had responded to Chramn more warmly than had the bishop of Langres/Dijon. Further reason for suspicion comes from the aftermath of Chramn’s rebellion. Three years later, after Childebert’s death, Chramn’s aggrieved father Clothar entered Paris. Venantius Fortunatus’ \textit{vita} relates that when bishop Germanus presented himself at the palace for an

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{100} See Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 4.16, pp. 147-50.
  \item \textsuperscript{101} Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 4.17, p. 150.
  \item \textsuperscript{102} Germanus’ consecration at Paris certainly occurred between 552-558, and probably took place in 556. See Duchesne, 2.470-1 (1910). Bishop Saffaracus of Paris was deposed in 552; another bishop, Libanus, took his place. Germanus’ election occurred after Libanus’ undated death, but while king Childebert still lived (d. 558). Fortunatus described a prophetic vision that allegedly had announced Germanus’ future episcopal office four years before his consecration. Krusch (\textit{Vita Germani Parisiaci}, pp. 338 and 381-2, fn. 2) plausibly identified this episode as a veiled reference to the departure of Saffaracus in 552; if correct, that would date Germanus’ election to 556. Since Theudebald held Autun before his death in 555, the years 555-6 also offer the earliest likely context for Germanus to have formed ties with king Childebert of Paris. Those were precisely the years in which Childebert and Chramn cooperated against Clothar, who annexed Theudebald’s lands in 555. The chronicler Marius of Avenches dated the conspiracy against Clothar to 555 and 556 (555: P.C. Basili annos XIII, indictione III \ldots Eo anno Cramnus filius Chlothacarii regis sollicitanti Childeberto patruo suo ad ipsum latebram dedit. 556: P.C. Basili annos XV, indictione III \ldots Ipsis diebus [i.e. synchronous with a war in Thuringia] Cramnus, collecto exercitu regionem patris sui devastavit. Justin Favrod, \textit{La Chronique de Marius d’Avenches (455-481)}. Texte, traduction et commentaire [Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, 1991] p. 76). While Gregory of Tours did not date these events, his narrative provides a more detailed sequence of events (Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 4.16-17, pp. 147-50): Chramn formed a conspiracy with Childebert, and then seized cities in Aquitaine; Chramn next marched on his father’s holdings in Burgundy, seizing Chalon and visiting Dijon; Chramn traveled to Paris and plotted there with Childebert; subsequently, Childebert himself took the field, and advanced on Clothar’s lands as far as Rheims. Neither Gregory nor Marius indicated that any further significant military clashes occurred between Childebert and Clothar before Childebert’s death in 558, when Clothar in turn seized his lands. While Marius noted that Chramn had ravaged his father’s territory in 556, this could refer either to the Aquitaine-Burgundy campaign or to participation in Childebert’s push toward Rheims, so that Marius’ dating does not clarify whether Chramn’s trip from Burgundy to Paris took place in 555 or 556 (perhaps he wintered in Paris, between campaigning seasons). To sum up: Germanus most likely went to Paris in 555 or 556, and probably became bishop of that city in 556. Chramn also traveled from Burgundy to Paris at some point in 555-6. The coincidence is very suspicious.
\end{itemize}
audience with his new sovereign, Clothar refused to receive him, leaving the bishop standing unannounced until he finally went home.¹⁰³ Among status-conscious late antique elites, such a snub would carry real sting, explaining the attention Fortunatus devoted to describing the miraculous divine vengeance that supposedly chastened the angry king.¹⁰⁴ Just as he remained silent on the circumstances surrounding Germanus’ move to Paris, Fortunatus carefully avoided explaining the reason for this show of royal pique in 558. The insult would make sense, however, as a response to moral or material aid that Germanus may have provided in 555-6 to Chramn.¹⁰⁵

Germanus’ move from Autun to Paris, then, probably represented not a general reassertion of Aeduan engagement with the northwest, but the consequence of one individual’s political relationship with several Frankish rulers. Unquestionably, Germanus’ subsequent career linked his friends at Autun indirectly to broader worlds to the northwest. Yet there is no

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¹⁰³ *Vita Germani Parisiaci* 23, p. 386: “*igitur cum glorioso Chlodchario regi occurrisset ex solito, nec tamen de sancto viro, stante ante palatio, ei fuerit nuntiatum, mora facta ante vestibulum, non repraesentatus inde domo revertitur. Sequens nox in oratorio vigiliis ducitur; rex dolore atque febris infestatione torquitur.*”

¹⁰⁴ *Vita Germani Parisiaci* 23, p. 386. On episcopal prestige in general, see Claudia Rapp, “The Elite Status of Bishops in Late Antiquity in Ecclesiastical, Spiritual and Social Contexts,” *Arethusa* 33 (2000): 379-99. In the east, as Rapp argues, “…every citizen had the right to approach the emperor directly with a petition, prominent citizens represented their cities on embassies to the imperial court, and provincial and imperial officials often sought the emperor’s ear, but it was the bishops who assumed this privilege as a matter of fact and on a regular basis. As representatives of the Church and spokesmen of Christ, the bishops enjoyed parrhesia, literally the ability to “say everything,” to speak openly with the emperor. … [This] was in my view the most important and enduring factor in enhancing the elite status of a new bishop” (pp. 396-7). While conditions at late Roman Constantinople and Merovingian Paris were not neatly equivalent, the eastern view may suggest the ideal episcopal relationship to power for any prominent late antique bishop. If so, then Clothar’s refusal even to acknowledge Germanus’ presence at his palace directly undercut the dignity of Germanus’ office, and was a notable sign of royal displeasure.

¹⁰⁵ Krusch did connect the timing of Germanus’ consecration at Paris to Childebert and Chramn’s campaigns: MGH SRM 7 (Hannover and Leipzig: 1920), p. 338, in his introduction to the *Vita Germani episcopi Parisiaci*, and at pp. 381-2, fn. 2. However, Krusch did not suggest that Germanus played a partisan role in these affairs. Presumably, Clothar’s cold treatment of Germanus in 558 reflected much more than dislike for a man appointed by his rival, and involved suspicion or knowledge that Germanus had acted unfavorably toward his royal interests in the contest of 555-6. Clothar’s response was part of a broader pattern of rewards and punishments after Chramn’s rebellion. See Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 4.18, pp. 150-1: Clothar favored a dux Austrapius, who had opposed Chramn; ibid., 4.20, p. 152-3: the priest Willichar, who had married his daughter to Chramn in the midst of the conspiracy (ibid., 4.17, p. 150), had to take refuge from Clothar in the church of St. Martin at Tours.
real evidence that the Aeduan community as a whole reoriented itself in that direction after leaving Burgundian control in 532, even if both Germanus and Agrippinus enjoyed increased connections along that axis. Other Aeduan ties from the mid-sixth-century tended to point east and to remain within *Lugdunensis Prima*; for example, Pappolus, archdeacon of Autun, became bishop of Langres around 572. Fewer and fewer Aeduans cultivated distant, extra-provincial ties across the sixth century, and those who did tended to be among the most elite. Bishop Syagrius of Autun received the right to wear the papal *pallium* in the 590s, because he had aided Augustine’s historic mission to southern England; but Syagrius’ involvement seems to reflect the interests of a powerful yet narrow segment of Frankish society, as Ian Wood has argued:

Syagrius has been described as [Queen] Brunhild’s “closest supporter.” His support for Augustine should be set alongside that of the queen, and should not be seen as an indication of the involvement of the episcopate as a whole … Syagrius was, after all, the only Frankish bishop to be rewarded for his part in the mission. … It was the court, and most especially Brunhild and her supporters, rather than the Merovingian church as a whole, that had become involved.

While Syagrius thus fostered a nascent link re-connecting distant corners of the old Western Empire, his involvement was not emblematic of Gallic elite experience in general, or of the regular ties of his own Aeduan flock. Bishops like Syagrius were now in a class under direct royal influence, and thus the movements of this small minority primarily reflect the currents of Frankish political history at the royal level.

106 Duchesne, 2.187 (1910).

**Conclusions**

In the late fourth century, Autun’s elites maintained stable social ties across the surrounding region; links to Auxerre, northwest of Autun, stand out among the attested communications. For the early fifth century, a troubled period in Gaul’s history, very little textual evidence attests to communication between Autun and other communities. While some ties undoubtedly persisted during this period (links to Auxerre, again, appear), the available evidence not only is meager, but also hints at difficult travel conditions.

From about 450, however, robust patterns of communication came roaring back (or at least again become visible in our sources), despite the complete degradation of imperial power in Gaul over the subsequent decades. Autun’s elites in this era looked to contacts as far away as Angers in the northwest, or to Gaul’s Mediterranean coast in the south. It is only in this period, too, that fifth-century contacts with Chalon emerge in our written sources. Overshadowed at first by Autun’s many connections, Chalon gradually extended its social horizons, particularly southward down the Saône-Rhône corridor. Chalon’s communications would continue to expand even after the imperial government retreated fully from Gaul, leaving *Lugdunensis Prima* to the rule of Burgundian kings.

Seen from Autun, however, the world began to shrink. The city’s attested communications after the end of imperial control were limited in scope. While local connections remained strong, gone were the days of autonomous elite ties with extra-provincial cities in the northwest or far south. Only when royal patrons drove communication did Autun’s attested ties reach beyond the north or center of the Burgundian kingdom. This change in the communications history of Autun and Chalon is striking. In the century before 476, Autun’s
attested ties had linked to the neighboring city of Chalon far less often than to more distant communities outside *Lugdunensis Prima*. Now, under the barbarians, it was Autun that sat in Chalon’s shadow. If the Frankish conquests of the 530’s drew elites of both cities into new relationships centered on northern Gaul, these cities’ relative levels of communications activity remained largely unchanged, apart from the occasional movements of individual Aeduans tied to royal power.

The textually attested communications patterns of these two communities changed, then—over time, over space, and across the social hierarchy. As the differing experiences of these neighboring cities show, no monochrome interpretive framework can be adequate here, whether stressing “decline and fall” or “continuity.” To flesh out this complex history still further will require engagement with other sources. Certainly, the predominantly ecclesiastical Aeduan textual sources have revealed a great deal, not only about the basic patterns of late antique Aeduan communications, but also about the political aspects of that communications history—particularly remarkable, since such sources were written to tell hagiographic, rather than political narratives. As subsequent chapters turn to the social ties of the Aeduan’s Lingon neighbors, and also to the material evidence for connections across our region, the micro-regional diversity of late antique experience will come more and more into focus—along with previously-unrecognized aspects of the region’s political history.
Chapter Three:

Lingon Communications at the End of Antiquity
In the year 298 CE, Germanic Alaman invaders were ravaging central-eastern Gaul. The junior emperor Constantius Chlorus marched against the barbarians, but almost fell into their hands. Cut off from his main force, Constantius came to Langres—a city perched atop a narrow plateau, its citizens huddling fearfully behind their walls. The city’s gates were already shut; the Alamanni were at hand; the Langrois saved their emperor only by hauling him over the walls with a rope. Six hours after this ignominious escape, however, Constantius’ main army arrived. Not far from Langres, Roman forces annihilated the barbarian host.

Chief city of the Lingon civitas, Langres—originally called Andemantunum—was not unfamiliar with the violence of Rome’s imperial conflicts. Like many Gallic communities, the city had become involved in the civil wars following the death of Nero. Several cohorts of Lingon troops garrisoned Britain under the High Empire. The Alaman raiders who again assaulted Gaul during the mid-fourth century seem to have bypassed Langres itself, though perhaps they threatened the Lingon countryside during their raids into Aeduan territory.

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3 See e.g. Tacitus, Histories, 1.8 (pp. 5-6), 1.54 (p. 31), 1.64 (p. 36): P. Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt, vol. 2.1, Historiarum libri, ed. Erich Koestermann (Leipzig: Teubner, 1961).


(and probably spurious) memory also records a Vandal sack of the city in 407. Better attested around that time is the presence near Langres of a Sarmatian unit, on guard against threats to the imperial order.

In seasons of peace, however, the Lingons still bought and sold, married and planted, and wrote to their neighbors. We possess little textual evidence for Lingon social affairs in the fourth and early fifth centuries, but enough exists to offer a picture of some vitality. With other Gallic colleagues, a Lingon bishop may have traveled to a church council in far-off Sardica ca. 343. An aristocratic Lingon family of the late fourth century owned property near Auxerre, and they married their daughter Martha to a native son (and later bishop) of that city. As the groom’s mother was an Aeduan, the marriage tied Martha’s Lingon family into a kin-network linking

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6 According to the seventh-century *Life of Desiderius of Langres*, Vandals martyred the bishop during their rampage across eastern Gaul, but their king, “Croscus,” ultimately died a brutal death at Arles: *Acta martyrii a Warnahario exculta*, BHL 2145, AASS Maii vol. 5, May 23rd, 3rd ed. (Paris & Rome: Palmé, 1866), pp. 246-8, at p. 247. This king appears as the villain of several late antique historical and hagiographical works, which place him at the head of either Alaman or Vandal forces ravaging different parts of Gaul at quite varied dates. According to Gregory of Tours, e.g., an Alaman king named Chrocus invaded Gaul, martyred many saints, was captured, and died at Arles—but during the third century (*Hist.* 1.32, pp. 24-5; 1.34, p. 26: *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis decem libri historiarum*, MGH SRM 1.1, ed. Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison [Hannover: 1951]; see fn. 4 in ibid., p. 24, for further examples and for other literature on the “Crocus-figure”). Since Desiderius is among those who may have attended the Council of Sardica in 346 (see below, fn. 9), he probably was not bishop of Langres in 407, and the report of his death at Vandal hands in that year is apparently spurious.


9 “Desiderio Lingonie” is among the alleged signatories of the pseudo-council of Cologne (*Concilium coloniae Agrippinae*, in *Concilia Galliae a. 314-a. 506*, ed. C. Munier (Turnhout: Brepols, 1963), pp. 26-9, at p. 27). That record is almost certainly a medieval forgery, but the bishops named in the document actually may have been Gallic attendees of the council of Sardica (Sofia in modern Bulgaria); for discussion and bibliography see Chapter Two, p. 46, n. 44.
three adjacent *civitates*.

Circumstantial evidence from the fifth century suggests that some of Gaul’s most influential ecclesiastics—Honoratus of Arles and his successor Hilarius (and thus the latter’s brother-in-law, Lupus of Troyes)—may also have had ties to Lingon families. Certainly, Hilarius was active in central-eastern Gaul, more broadly; he helped lead an ecclesiastical gathering at Besançon, which deposed that city’s bishop, Chelidonius, in the 440s. Whatever the nature of Hilarius’ relationship to the Lingons, the gathering of churchmen from across the region at Besançon must have required at least some of them to travel along Lingon highways.

Despite such connections, the strength of Lingon communications fluctuated during late antiquity. To an even greater degree than among the nearby Aeduans, Langres’ external ties seem to have been quite sensitive to political changes. Contrary to traditional narratives of decline, however, the story of textually attested Lingon communications during the fifth and sixth centuries builds toward a peak during the Merovingian era. But if this tale of shifting horizons ends in relative stability and prosperity, that should not obscure the hard years which the Lingons first had to endure. Indeed, only shortly after Hilarius lent his prestige to the trial of Chelidonius of Besançon, the boundaries of Langres’ world appear to have closed in. During the ensuing decades, Langres remained figuratively as Constantius Chlorus had found it in 298: a city with closed gates, waiting for warlords from afar to determine its fate.


Lupus, the famous bishop of Troyes, made one attested journey to Lingon territory. Concerned by the insecurity of his diocese after Attila’s retreat from Gaul, Lupus moved south and established a hilltop refuge, where he hoped to resettle his congregation. For this refuge, he chose a site called Latisco, now Mont-Lassois, located not by Troyes but rather in Langres’ episcopal territory. After two years, he left Latisco, disappointed by the meager trickle of

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14 This exodus’ placement in Lupus’ vita implies a date between 451-477; a date early in the 450s is most likely. Lupus stayed at his refuge for two years (“ubi bienni tempore spatio commanens,” Vita Lupi 6, p. 298) and died in 478/9 (Duchesne 2.453-4 [1910]: Louis Duchesne, Fastes épiscopaux de l’ancienne Gaule, 2nd ed., 3 vols. [Paris, 1907-1915]), but the emigration comes one chapter after an encounter with Attila the Hun, who invaded Gaul in 451 (Vita Lupi chs. 5, 6, pp. 297-8). While nothing guarantees that the vita correctly places events in chronological order, at face reading a date in the early or mid-450s seems highly plausible. Such dating could link this movement to Lupus’ known interaction with Euphronius, bishop of Autun, with whom he co-wrote a letter to Thalassius of Angers (“Epistola sancti Lupi et sancti Eufronii episcoporum,” Concilia galliae I, a. 314-a. 506, ed. C. Munier. CCSL 148 [Turnhout: Brepols, 1963], pp. 140-41). Duchesne suggested that this correspondence occurred very early in Thalassius’ career, not long after his ordination in October of 453 (Duchesne 2.247, 357 [1910]). After spending two years at Latisco, Lupus went south to Mâcon, crossing Aeduan territory (he passed near Alesia en route to Mâcon: Vita Lupi 6, p. 298-9); perhaps he met with Euphronius (and wrote to Thalassius) during that journey, or on the way home from Mâcon. See also Chapter One, p. 45.

refugees who had followed him there. Perhaps Lupus’ flock did not share his pessimistic view of their security. If Lupus’ flight to Latisco puzzled many of his contemporaries, questions still remain surrounding this episode. If the Huns already had left Gaul, what threat prompted Lupus to seek shelter in the countryside? Why did he abandon his own see and move into Lingon territory? While planning this exodus, did Lupus consult with the bishop of Langres?

Whatever the circumstances of Lupus’ flight to Latisco, the episode introduced a half-century of Lingon history marked by hints of violence and instability. Evidence for Lingon affairs from about 450 to 506 is rare. During these years, most attested Lingon communications involved local ties, or the machinations of barbarians pursuing their own designs. While the paucity of relevant sources (and thus attested communications) may signal the period’s instability, the bleak picture of late-fifth-century Lingon history does not rely on silence. Rather, independent sources offer enough detail for an impressionistic picture of disruption, insecurity and restricted communications.

That picture contrasts sharply with contemporary patterns elsewhere in Lugdunensis Prima. In the late 450s and 460s, the Burgundians effected control over much, if not all, of that

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16 Vita Lupi 6, p. 298-9: “Ubi bienni tempore spatio commanens, offensus venientum raritate suorum, Matiscone se consuit transferendum.” (“…Where he remain[ed] for the space of two years, [and then,] displeased by how few of his own people were coming [with him], he decided to move himself to Mâcon.”

17 Crété-Protin, Église et vie chrétienne, pp. 170, suggests that Lupus’ territory lacked sites of equal defensive value. If Lupus moved in response to instability following the Hunnic invasion, his flight southward might also reflect a desire to put distance between his flock and the northeastern frontiers of Gaul.

18 Lupus’ Vita makes no mention of the bishop of Langres; did Lupus move to Latisco without his fellow-bishop’s permission? Some scholars have argued from this silence that insecurity at Langres, too, must have caused a breakdown in episcopal communications and a weakening of ecclesiastical frontiers between Troyes and Langres: Justin Favrod, Histoire politique du royaume Burgonde, 443-534, Bibliothèque historique vaudoise 113 (Lausanne: Bibliothèque historique vaudoise, 1997), p. 320; Crété-Protin, Église et vie chrétienne, pp. 169-70. We should beware putting too much weight on this argument from silence, for while the Lingon bishop is absent from Lupus’ vita, so are at least two of Lupus’ known correspondents, Euphronius of Autun and Thalassius of Angers. Therefore, absence from Lupus’ vita clearly does not rule out a supporting role for the bishop of Langres.
province.\footnote{Favrod, \textit{Histoire politique}, pp. 232-45.} South of Lingon territory, among the Aeduans, this barbarian expansion did not cut off elites from robust, long-distance social networks before the 470s.\footnote{See pp. 44-54 above.} Aeduan horizons shrank back within the Burgundian kingdom’s northern core only ca. 476, the last year in which an imperial regime directly ruled any part of Gaul; that date does seem to mark a turning point in the history of Gaul, whatever the impact of Odoacer’s coup that year on Italy and the other provinces. Near Langres, however, the transition from imperial rule was not so tidy. On their northern marches, the Burgundians encountered dangerous rivals: the pagan Alamanni, who once again threatened eastern Gaul from their center of power on the upper Rhine.\footnote{For archaeological and historical overviews of the Alamanni of this period, see Dorothee Ade, Bernhard Rüth, and Andreas Zekorn, eds., \textit{Alamannen zwischen Schwarzwald, Neckar und Donau} (Stuttgart: Theiss, 2008); John F. Drinkwater, \textit{The Alamanni and Rome 213-496: (Caracalla to Clovis)} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Françoise Passard et al., eds., \textit{Burgondes, Alamans, Francs. Romain dans l’est de la France, le sud-ouest de l’Allemagne, et la Suisse, vi-vii siècle après J.-C.} Annales Littéraires de l’Université de Franche-Comté 756 (Paris: Presses Universitaires Franc-Comtoises, 2003), especially pp. 205-54; Ian Wood, ed., \textit{Franks and Alamanni: An Ethnographic Perspective} (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 1998); Dieter Geuenich, ed., \textit{Die Franken und die Alemannen bis zur “Schlacht bei Zülpich” (496/97)} (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998); Archäologischen Landesmuseum Baden-Württemberg, \textit{Die Alamannen} (Stuttgart: Theiss, 1997), especially pp. 73-201.} After 481, the expansionism of Clovis the Frank further heightened tensions in the region. From about 450-506, the region’s political instability seems to have constrained Lingon communications—holding back the extensive social links so common among the Aeduans, only one civitas away.

For at least some of these years, the Alaman-Burgundian conflict seems to have split Lingon territory in two. That is the testimony of an anonymous early medieval \textit{Cosmography} written at Ravenna several centuries after our period.\footnote{\textit{Ravennatis anonymi cosmographia}, in \textit{Itineraria Romana} vol. 2, ed. Joseph Schnetz (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1940; repr. with index, 1990), pp. 1-110.} As we shall see, the \textit{Cosmography} is a troubled source, and requires cautious use. Still, while no other source directly links the
Alamans to late-fifth-century Langres, multiple witnesses describe Alaman attacks on the Lingons’ neighbors to the east, north and northwest. Other sources for the period further suggest that insecurity plagued Lingon society; that impression generally fades from our sources in the first decade of the sixth century—the moment of Clovis’ decisive victory over the Alamans. Taken together, these factors support the claim that Alaman pressure, and perhaps even occupation, shaped Lingon social experiences during the late fifth and early sixth centuries.

While that claim is not new, many scholars have underappreciated its importance for the history of the Lingons or, more broadly, of late-antique eastern Gaul.

The *Cosmography* therefore deserves careful attention. It largely describes the political geography of late antiquity or the very early medieval world, but scattered details date the text’s final redaction to no earlier than the ninth century. Large sections of the work clearly derive from a route-itinerary similar (but not identical) to the famous Peutinger table, supplemented by

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23 See pp. 93-103 on the sources referenced in this paragraph.

24 Some have dismissed the hypothesis of late-fifth-century Alaman-Burgundian conflict near Langres. Odet Perrin doubted the idea, but without considering in detail evidence beyond the *Ravenna Cosmography* (Odet Perrin, *Les Burgondes* [Neuchâtel, Switzerland: La Baconnière, 1968], pp. 457-9, especially 459). Earlier, Paul Martin had rejected a late-fifth-century Alaman occupation of Langres (Paul Edmond Martin, “La fin de la domination romaine en Suisse et l’occupation germanique,” *Bulletin de la Société d’histoire et d’archéologie de Genève* 6 (1935): pp. 3-30, at p. 11, building on ibid., *Études critiques sur la Suisse à l’époque mérovingienne*: 534-715 (Geneva, 1910), at p. 27 and 49). Martin’s analysis, however, depended on a misinterpretation of Gregory of Tours Hist. 2.23, p. 69. Martin interpreted the residence of the bishop of Langres at Burgundian-held Dijon as proof that the Burgundians also occupied Langres in the 480s. To the contrary: Gregory’s anecdote in no way links the Burgundians to Langres itself, and instead fits the view (for which I argue below) that rival powers held or influenced Langres and Dijon. Other scholars have long accepted the Burgundian-Alaman wars in our region; see, e.g., Émilienne Demougeot, *La formation de l’Europe et les invasions barbares*, vol. 2.2 (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1979), p. 732. More recently, Justin Favrod has argued at length for this position. My views on the matter match his closely (Favrod, *Histoire politique*, pp. 310-22, especially pp. 319-20). Going further than Favrod, however, I argue below (see e.g. pp. 106-8, 114-21) that paying closer attention to the implications of this Alaman threat will enrich our understanding of Lingon history and of aspects of the work and family history of Gregory of Tours.

other sources. Although the *Cosmography* is infamous for its garbled and clumsy descriptions, for some regions it unquestionably preserves geographic information not available through the more celebrated Peutinger map.

Rather than mentioning any route-map, however, the anonymous cosmographer cited the authority of numerous ancient geographers or philosophers—many of whom turn out to be figures from classical mythology, or historical persons with no recorded role as geographers. The author-redactor may have fabricated witnesses to make his work seem more impressive, even if the spurious references still indicate some engagement with older sources. Louis Dillemann showed that some of these false citations plausibly reflect inept misreadings of older texts, whereby persons mentioned in a geographic or historical document were mistaken for ancient authors. When describing Alaman territory, for example, Anonymus claimed to have read the work of two “Gothic philosophers,” Atanarid (or Anarid) and Eldebaldus. As Dillemann noted, these names are probably corruptions of the names of Athalaric and Hildebald,

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27 Talbert, *Rome’s World*, p. 164: “The [Peutinger] map, for example, marks no more than a handful of isolated settlements on Sardinia and Corsica, whereas the cosmographer (5.26-7) lists a total of thirty-three ... He also covered regions beyond the scope of the Peutinger map, such as Arabia and Ethiopia.”

28 Dillemann, *La Cosmographie*, pp. 47-58; as Dillemann illustrates (pp. 54-5), cited “authorities” include (e.g.) several Roman consuls, two Amazon queens, an Egyptian pharaoh, and a legendary companion of Hercules.


30 Dillemann, *La Cosmographie*, pp. 54-5.

31 *Ravennatis cosmographia*, 4.26, p. 61 lines 7-11: “…Alamanorum patriam plurimi descriptserunt phylosophi, ex quibus ego legi praenominatos Atanari<d>um et Eldebaldum Gothorum phylosophos.” (“…Many philosophers have described the country of the Alamans, from among whom I have read the aforementioned Atanarid and Eldebald, philosophers of the Goths”).
both sixth-century kings of Ostrogothic Italy. While the compiler may have mistaken these men for scholarly authorities, they suggest exposure to sixth-century information. At any rate, Dillemann concluded, the Cosmography’s fraudulent citations were superficial; they had been “plastered onto the text without altering it.” Does the underlying text tell us anything useful about Alaman geography?

In fact, the Cosmography’s descriptions of the Burgundian and Alaman border-territories best match the known political geography of the late fifth and early sixth centuries. The text itself offers no dates for the polities it claims to describe. The roster of Burgundian cities, however, appears to describe the so-called second Burgundian kingdom, probably ca. 470. The Alaman description instead seems cobbled together through multiple redactions, anachronistically incorporating the political geographies of different times. While one city’s

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33 Dillemann, La Cosmographie, p. 58.

34 Dillemann, La Cosmographie, p. 212: “Ils sont été plaqués sur le texte sans l’altérer.”

35 The text describes “Burgundia” (26-27, p. 62 line 40—p. 64 line 32) and the “patria Suavorum que et Alamorum patria” (26, p. 61 lines 4-52). The Alaman description is consistent with late antique nomenclature. Gregory of Tours (Hist. 2.2, p. 39) referred to early-fifth-century “Suebi, id est Alamanni,” and Jordanes mentioned Suavi who fought in confederation with Alami ca. 470, noting that these Suavi lived north of the Burgundians and east of the Franks (Getica 280-81, p. 130: Iordanis de origine actibusque Getarum, MGH AA 5.1, ed. Theodor Mommsen [Berlin: Weidmann, 1882], pp. 53-138). Gallic references to “Burgundia” begin in the sixth century, but post-date the fall in 534 of the Gibichung regnum Burgundionum, so the text could reflect retrojection of the later name (so Favrod, Histoire politique, p. 276). In fact, however, the term would not be out of character for an early-sixth-century document produced at Ravenna, for in 507 Cassiodorus (Variae 1.46) called Gundobad’s kingdom Burgundia (Magni Aurelii Cassiodori variarum libri xii, ed. A. J. Frdh. CCSL 96 [Turnhout: Brepols, 1973], p. 52). While these names do not prove the antiquity of the Cosmography’s sources, they are consistent with fifth- or sixth-century usage.

36 Favrod, Histoire politique, pp. 273-80. As Favrod notes (p. 276 n. 335, p. 278 n. 342) a few scholars have favored other dates, but his proposed date in the 470s is coherent; most alternative dates stay within the late-fifth/early-sixth-century life-span of the second Burgundian kingdom (ibid.). Any date within that time period (at least before Clovis’ 506 victory over the Alamans) fits the arguments I outline below. Miller, on the other hand, claimed long ago that the passage describes Merovingian Burgundy no earlier than the late sixth century, but he did not adequately support the claim (Konrad Miller, Mappaemundi: die ältesten Weltkarten, vol. 6: Rekonstruierte Karten [Stuttgart, 1898], p. 12).
designation (*Theodoricopolis*) probably post-dates 506 (or, at earliest, the 490s), the name given to Zurich (*Ziurichi*) dates no earlier than the seventh or even eighth century. The westernmost Alaman section, of greater interest for our purposes, seems to reflect the securely attested Alaman offensives into eastern Gaul during the late fifth and early sixth centuries.

For the environs of Langres, the Burgundian and Alaman lists partly overlap. The Burgundian roster includes an apparent reference to Dijon, and also names Besançon and several other communities in the Doubs watershed east of Lingon territory—but omits Langres. Langres does appear, however, in the list of cities under Alaman control, along with Besançon and some towns near that city. These portions of the *Cosmography* appear to have incorporated two descriptions of the region’s political geography, dated no more than a few decades apart; we thus gain a moving picture of the region’s fluid borders, which a more

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37 *Ziurichi* for Zurich: *Ravennatis cosmographia* 4.26, p. 61 line 43; for the date, see Lieb, “Bodman,” p. 157. *Theodoricopolis* (i.e. *Theodoricopolis*): *Ravennatis cosmographia* 4.26, p. 61 line 45. The latter town is probably Chur/Coire, in eastern Switzerland; presumably, Alaman settlement there followed Theoric’s grant of asylum to Alamans defeated by Clovis in or before 506 (Favrod, *Histoire politique*, p. 312).


39 Dijon: *Ravennatis cosmographia* 4.26, p. 63 line 20, “Dibialimon.” Besançon and neighboring towns: ibid., 4.27, p. 64 lines 18-21: “Item iuxta fluvium Duba Burgundie sunt civitates, id est Busuntius, Mandroda, Portin.” Dibialimon seems to be a garbled reference to Dijon. See Schnetz’s fn. 20 at *Ravennatis cosmographia* p. 63 (he suggested that the name resulted from later misreading of a scribal correction inserted in the text, which would reflect the frequent alteration of intervocalic b and v/u in late Latin: *Dibio divion* later became *Dibialimon*). Pinder and Parthey, responsible for the critical edition prior to Schnetz’s, suggested instead *Dibio*, *Dibiodunum* (M. Pinder and G. Parthey, eds., *Ravennatis anonymis Cosmographia et Gvidonis Geographica* [Berlin, 1860] p. 237, app. crit. n. 19). Gregory of Tours *Hist.* 2.23, p. 69, confirms that the Burgundians held Dijon late in the fifth century (discussed in detail below, pp. 14-15, 18-21), and it seems the best fit for the *Cosmography*’s odd Dibialimon.

40 The *Cosmography*’s roster of Alaman communities includes numerous sites well east of Lingon territory, but Langres in *Lugdunensis Prima*, and several nearby Gallic towns in *Maxima Sequanorum*, head the list (*Ravennatis cosmographia* 4.26, p. 61, lines 4-52, quotes below from lines 6-21): “…patria Suavorum que et Alamannorum patria ... in qua patria plurimas fuisse civitates legitim, ex quibus aliquantus designare volumus, id est: Ligonas, Bizantia, Nantes, Mandroda.” “The country of the Suevi and of the Alamanni … in which country we have read that there were many cities, from which we want to point out some, namely: Langres, Besançon, Port-sur-Saône [?], Mandeure.” The latter three communities lay in the Saône and Doubs watersheds east of Langres (*Nantes’* identity is uncertain. It might be Port-sur-Saône, INSEE commune #70421; thus Raymond Schmittlein, “La frontière entre les Burgondes et les Alamans dans la Haute Alsace,” *Bulletin philologique et historique du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques* [1967.1 (published 1969)]: pp. 205-31, at p. 212).
coherent and well-collated source might have erased from historical memory. The Burgundian list reflects a moment when that kingdom held a broad swath of central-eastern Gaul, but controlled only the southern half of the Lingon diocese. The overlap with the Alaman list suggests that after ca. 467, when the Burgundians first held Besançon and its environs, Alaman fighters captured those communities. That these cities were once again under Burgundian control by the 510s indicates the back-and-forth nature of the conflict. West of the Doubs basin, Dijon evidently remained in Burgundian hands—but Langres reportedly fell outside their control. The Cosmography, then, appears to reflect a division of Lingon territory by Alamans and Burgundians late in the fifth century, amid a broader regional conflict.

Other sources confirm that Alamans threatened much of eastern Gaul throughout the period. According to the Life of Lupus of Troyes, whose episcopal seat lay some 70 mi/113 km to Langres’ northwest, that bishop had his own run-in with the Alamanni before 479. After these barbarians invaded his diocese, Lupus interceded with an Alaman king and won freedom

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42 While limited and inconclusive, the contemporary evidence for the environs of Besançon is consistent with this picture. See Favrod, Histoire politique, pp. 313-17.

43 Claudius, bishop of Besançon, attended the Burgundian council of Épaone in 517, as did the Lingon bishop Gregorius (Concilium Épaonense a. 517, in De Clercq, Concilia Galliae II, CCSL 148a, pp. 20-37; subscriptions at p. 36). See Chapter Four for the more stable period of Lingon communications after about 506.

44 Vita Lupi 10, pp. 300-1. The vita (probably composed early in the sixth century; see fn. 13, above) places the Alaman incursion several chapters after Atilla’s retreat from Gaul in 451, and Lupus died in 478/9 (Duchesne 2.453-4 [1910]). If the order of the narration is more or less chronological (which can not be guaranteed), then this Alamannic raid dates between 451-479, and probably at least several years into that period. Favrod (Histoire politique, p. 320) suggests that Alaman incursions could explain Lupus’ sojourn at Latisco (Vita Lupi 5-6, pp. 297-8) and that Lupus’ apparent infringement on Lingon episcopal territory reflects local disarray in the wake of Alaman attacks. While that idea squares nicely with my arguments, Lupus’ vita does not make any connection between Latisco and the Alamans, whether explicitly or through contiguous placement in the text; the episode’s placement within the vita instead suggests a post-Hunnic context.
for some captives. If the Alamanni were near Troyes, then they likely had passed close to Langres, since the northern half of Lingon territory lay almost directly between Troyes and the Alaman heartlands on the upper Rhine. The anecdote shows that Gallic cities even further west than Langres already were accessible to Alaman forces by 479, at the latest.

Within Burgundian territory, Alaman attack remained a pressing issue at the turn of the century. Their raids presented a serious threat to monastic communities in the Jura, and the Alamans may have attacked Geneva, one of the Burgundians’ main political centers, in 500. Around 502, the Burgundian king Gundobad legislated concerning the redemption of prisoners enslaved by the Alamans. Further north, Alamans warred against several Frankish kings before Clovis broke their power by 506. Alaman attacks thus are attested east, northeast and northwest of Langres during the later fifth or very early sixth centuries—the period when the

45 Lupus’ vita names this king Gebavultus (Vita Lupi 10, pp. 300-1). It is tempting to equate him with the Alamannic king Gibuldo, who features in the vita of Severinus of Noricum and behaved similarly in that province (raiding, hauling off captives, and yet deferring to a prominent Christian figure); see Vita Severini 19, pp. 17-18: Eugippii vita sancti Severini, ed. Harman Sauppe, MGH AA 1.2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1877; repr., 1961). While Krusch’s claim that the Vita Lupi borrowed this figure from Severinus’ vita no longer appears persuasive (Ewig, Bemerkungen pp. 20-22), this disputed identification is impossible to confirm. Whether or not both rulers were the same man, the Alamanni—while disruptive—may have fostered some connections between eastern Gaul and trans-Alpine areas lost to Roman control. That could explain the arrival in Gaul of Leonianus, seized by unnamed raiders in Pannonia, who ended his days as an abbot at Burgundian-controlled Autun and Vienne (Vita sancti Eugendi abbatis 127-128 [i.e., Vita patrum 3.5-6]; François Martine, Vie des pères du Jura, Sources Chrétiennes 142 [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968], pp. 64-6, 376-8; see also my Chapter Two, p. 56).

46 Favrod, Histoire politique, p. 320.


49 On the sources and chronology, see Favrod, Histoire politique, pp. 330-32.
Cosmography appears to show Burgundian and Alaman masters vying for control over Lingon territory.

Moreover, without naming the Alamans directly, other evidence points to insecurity within Lingon territory. At some point during the fifth century, Langres’ bishops stopped living there, and began to reside instead at Dijon. Although we do not know when the Lingon bishops first moved to Dijon, the earliest securely attested case dates to the 480s. Subsequent bishops largely maintained this pattern until the Carolingian period—though their title as recorded at church councils remained simply “bishop of the Lingon civitas.” This pattern is unusual. In almost all cases when a late antique Gallic bishop relocated his cathedral seat, that bishop’s

50 Aprunculus of Langres is reliably documented as living at Dijon during the 480s: Gregory of Tours, Hist., 2.23, p. 69; Duchesne 2.186 (1910); on the date, and for more concerning Aprunculus, see below, pp. 14, 17-21. The evidence for earlier episcopal residence at Dijon appears to lack historical value. Bishop Urbanus of Langres allegedly lived late in the fourth century: Ralph W. Mathisen, “Some Hagiographical Addenda to P.L.R.E.” Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte 36.4 (1987): pp. 448-61, at p. 460; Urbanus’ Vita associates him, too, with Dijon, saying that while living he gave orders for his burial there (Vita Vrbani auctore monacho Benigniano anonymo 1.3, BHL 8407, AASS Ian. vol. 2, Jan. 23rd, 1st ed. (Antwerp: 1643] pp. 492-4, at p. 492). That detail, however, is almost certainly worthless. Urbanus’ Vita post-dates our period by many centuries (in the judgment of the Namur HAGIOGRAPHIES editors, the work dates to the tenth-eleventh centuries: see “Urbanus ep. Lingonensis,” accessed December 23, 2013, http://www.unamur.be/philo_lettres/histoire/h2224_uv.htm#Urbanus04). The vita’s anonymous author admitted to general ignorance about the saint’s life, thanks to a lack of surviving testimony (because, in his words [Vita Vrbani 1.2, p. 492], “up to the time of Charlemagne, on account of the persecutions of the heathens and also because of the civil wars of kings, there was hardly anybody to be found among the Gauls who was properly educated in the grammatical arts.”—“eo quod usque ad tempora Caroli Magni, propter persecutiones gentium, & intestina etiam bella Regum, uix possent in Gallis inueniri qui in Grammatica essent sufficienter instructi”). Duchesne (2.186 [1910], fn. 1) considered the work worthy only of a dismissive footnote: “La vie de ce saint … ne nous apprend rien sur son histoire.” I agree with Justin Favrod (Histoire politique, p. 319-30, fn. 137) that this detail from Urbanus’ Vita has no bearing on the date of relocation to Dijon.

titular designation changed in recognition of the move. Not so at Dijon. We will return below to the retention of the old title in later years. During the fifth century, however, something prompted Lingon bishops to quit their official seat, while retaining nominal attachment to Langres. We should note that Langres itself occupies a very defensible site, but even if that city could have withstood some direct assaults, hostilities in the surrounding countryside may have caused additional problems, making Dijon’s proximity to the Burgundian heartlands more advantageous.

In fact, if the Alamans dominated or menaced Langres, while the Burgundians held Dijon, the situation may have been particularly problematic for the local bishop. Elsewhere in central-eastern Gaul, even in relatively less volatile areas, the movement of royal frontiers within an existing see could fragment ecclesiastical structures. The creation of bishoprics at Nevers and Mâcon apparently reflected new political boundaries separating those suffragan communities from their former episcopal overseers. Whether these new foundations stemmed from local dissatisfaction with decreased episcopal access, or from kings’ consolidation of ecclesiastical networks within their territory, political divisions within a see could reduce a bishop’s earlier influence within his diocesan territories, and lead to ecclesiastical reorganization. The two examples named above involved frontiers between Christian kingdoms. In Langres’ case, however, the invaders were pagans, who did not leave fond memories in the region. Given our

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52 According to Favrod, *Histoire politique*, p. 319 fn. 134, the only exception apart from Lingon practice is a single reference to an old seat by the bishop of Viviers in 549.

53 Despite Langres’ tactically superior topography, Dijon’s strategic position within the region was less isolated; see Chapter Four, pp. 121-2.

54 Duchesne 2.154 (1910). Nevers’ episcopate is first securely attested in 517, when a nearby frontier ran between Frankish and Burgundian territory (Duchesne 2.483 [1910]), disrupting the city’s old ties with Auxerre. Mâcon’s bishopric appears to date to the 530’s, when a border between two Merovingian prince’s realms complicated earlier ties to the Aeduans (Duchesne 2.197 [1910]).
Gallo-Roman sources’ highly unfavorable portrayal of the violent Alamans, an episcopal decision to retreat from Alaman-held or Alaman-threatened Langres offers a compelling explanation for the move to Dijon.\textsuperscript{55}

The earliest secure example of a Lingon bishop living at Dijon dates to the 480s, and occurred against a backdrop of political insecurity and violence. According to Gregory of Tours, Aprunculus of Langres lived at Burgundian-held Dijon, but had to flee for his life after the Burgundians suspected him of colluding with the Franks.\textsuperscript{56} Relocation to Dijon, then, did not free Lingon bishops from entanglement in regional political concerns. In fact, as I will argue below, tensions surrounding the Burgundian failure to repel the Alamans from around Langres provide the most plausible context for the conspiracy against Aprunculus.

Perhaps because of local insecurity, Lingon bishops are not attested as participants in some of the pressing ecclesiastical affairs of the age. No Lingon bishop seems to have taken part

\textsuperscript{55} The Burgundians themselves, rather than only the Lingon bishops, may have influenced the decision to relocate. After all, they were willing to interfere forcefully in Lingon episcopal affairs (out of concern for frontier security); see below, pp. 105-8, on the exile of Aprunculus of Langres. Judging by our sources, however, Gallo-Roman elites in the region loathed and feared the Alamans. No Lingon observer’s perspective on the Alamanni survives, but contemporaries living farther east in the Burgundian kingdom expressed only hostility toward them. The \textit{vita} of Eugendus, a Jura abbot, relates that these barbarians fell upon travelers in the manner of wild beasts (“\textit{ritu superventuque solerent inruere bestiali}”—“they were accustomed to fall upon [their victims] in an animalistic manner and savage assault”), and describes the intense fear their raids provoked, claiming that sending monks as far away as Gaul’s southern coast was deemed more prudent than continuing to collect salt from local sources exposed to Alaman activity (\textit{Vita sancti Eugendi abbatis} 157 [i.e., \textit{Vita patrum} 3.17], pp. 406-8). That source’s hostile view of the Alamanni involved more specific loathing than a generalized dislike of barbarians; while the Jura hagiographer(s) expressed some measured prejudice against the Burgundian overlords (see \textit{Vita sancti Lupicini} 92-5 [i.e. \textit{Vita patrum} 2.10] in ibid., pp. 336-40), their attitude toward the Alamanni is far more harsh. The author of the \textit{Vita} of Lupus of Troyes, however, did present the Alaman king Gibavultus in somewhat ambiguous terms, as a violent raider but also pious respecter of Lupus’ spiritual authority (\textit{Vita Lupi} 10, pp. 300-1; that king ironically was “\textit{devotus rei publicae legibus},” because he obeyed Lupus’ command to release his abductees). As Lupus’ \textit{Vita} also presents Attila the Hun with the same ambiguity, we should see the hagiographer’s aim as burnishing Lupus’ credentials rather than those of the barbarian princes with whom the bishop negotiated (“\textit{ille feralis Attila},” that savage man, Attila, “\textit{pro se orando supplicavit},” begged the saint to pray for him: \textit{Vita Lupi} 5, p. 298; on scholarly treatments of this passage, see Crété-Protin, \textit{Église et vie chrétienne}, pp. 138-40). The \textit{Vita Lupi}’s softer tone might also reflect Troyes’ greater distance from, and thus perhaps more sporadic exposure to, the Alamans—or the (probably) early-sixth-century author’s greater chronological distance from these violent events.

\textsuperscript{56} Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.}, 2.23, p. 69; see below, pp. 105-8.
in the “Lucidus Affair,” ca. 470, in which the Gallic bishop Faustus orchestrated a massive show of opposition to the predestinarian views of the priest Lucidus. While most of Faustus’ supporters came from southern Gaul, the bishops of Lyon, Autun, Chalon, Besançon, and possibly even Paris joined with their colleagues and signed the rulings of a pro-Faustian council held at Arles. While not all of Faustus’ supporters can be identified, none of them seems to match the attested Lingon prelates who sat around 470. If Langres’ bishop did not attend these gatherings, his absence cut against the grain of the episcopal networks and allegiances within Lugdunensis Prima.

Of course, one could speculate that one of the signatories was a Lingon, whose name later dropped out of Langres’ episcopal records. On the other hand, the silence here parallels that from the conciliar election, also ca. 470, of Iohannes of Chalon. Describing that gathering, Sidonius Apollinaris lavished praise on every bishop from Lugdunensis Prima (Patiens of Lyon, Euphronius of Autun, and the bishop-elect, Iohannes)—except for the bishop of Langres, who

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58 Faustus, Ep. 19, pp. 290-1 (a copy of Lucidus’ letter of retraction) lists the council’s subscribers.

59 Contrast the subscription list with Duchesne 2.186 (1910). One of the signatories, Paulus, does match the name of a Lingon bishop, albeit the third bishop after Aprunculus, who sat in the 480s (Duchesne 2.186-7 [1910])—so he is not a match, unless the Lingon records are grossly disordered. Moreover, Mathisen has argued that the Paulus who signed at Arles likely was bishop of Trois-Châteaux in Viennensis (Mathisen, Ecclesiastical Factionalism, p. 250).

60 Patiens of Lyon, metropolitan of Lugdunensis Prima, was a key supporter of Faustus, and organized a subsequent council at Lyon to follow up on related doctrinal discussions (no record of the attendees survives): Faustus, De gratia, prologue, p. 4: “…in quo quidem opusculo post Arelatensis concilii subscriptionem nouis erroribus deprehensis adici aliqua synodus Lugdunensis exegit.” Fausti Reiensis praeter sermones Pseudo-Eusebianos opera, CSEL 21, ed. Augustus Engelbrecht (Prague: 1891).
went unmentioned.\textsuperscript{61} In each case the argument from silence proves little, but given two independent silences about a prelate whose presence in both cases would be expected and the evidence for Lingon troubles late in the fifth century, one wonders whether instability at home prevented the bishops of Langres from full engagement with their colleagues to the south—or even disrupted the ordination and service of Lingon bishops.

Despite these troubles, however, life in the diocese continued. At some point in the latter half of the fifth century, a nobleman named Iohannes founded a rural monastery at \textit{Reomaus} (Réome).\textsuperscript{62} His community seems only to have attracted local notice during these years, though it would gain wider renown in the sixth century.\textsuperscript{63} Armentaria, a Lingon woman “of senatorial stock” (\textit{de genere senatorio}), married Gregorius Attalus, count of Autun, probably during the late 470s or ca. 480.\textsuperscript{64} Armentaria was likely the daughter (or other relation) of the Armentarius who later sat as bishop of Langres in the 480s.\textsuperscript{65} As a union between two noble families of the adjacent \textit{civitates} of Autun and Langres, this marriage shows that the instability of Lingon affairs did not prevent all Lingon elites from forming ties beyond their civic territory. It is easy to see


\textsuperscript{62} Near the modern village of Moutiers-Saint-Jean (INSEE commune #21446). Lying in the western extremities of the diocese, this site likely lay within Burgundian rather than Alaman territory. Iohannes was born at a rural estate near Tonnerre (INSEE commune # 89418), also located in the western fringes of Lingon territory. For his birth and Lingon identity, see Jonas of Bobbio, \textit{Vita Iohannis abbatis Reomaensis} 1, MGH SRM 3, ed. B. Krusch (Hannover, 1896: repr., 1977), pp. 502-17, at p. 507.

\textsuperscript{63} See Chapter Five, pp. 116-8, 137-8.

\textsuperscript{64} Gregory of Tours, \textit{Vit. Patrum} 7.1, p. 237: Gregory of Tours, \textit{Liber Vitae Patrum}, MGH SRM 1.2, ed. B. Krusch (Hannover, 1885), pp. 211-94. This Armentaria should not be confused with her granddaughter of the same name, who was Gregory of Tours’ mother. On that latter Armentaria and her travels, see Chapter Five, pp.131-2. Gregorius Attalus and Armentaria likely had married by ca. 480, as one of their grandsons, Eufronius, was born in 503 (Martin Heinzelmann, \textit{Gregory of Tours: History and Society in the Sixth Century}, trans. Christopher Carroll [Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001], pp. 16-17).

the appeal of partnership with an influential family at more-stable Autun. Notably, the marriage also indicates that alliance with some Lingon families offered positive incentives for Aeduans, too, not just socio-economic liabilities.\textsuperscript{66} At the same time, the scope of this link remained within \textit{Lugdunensis Prima}, and therefore relatively local.

\textbf{Aprunculus of Langres: Contextualizing an Exile}

We know of one Lingon in this period, however, who engaged with contacts beyond the province. Aprunculus, bishop of Langres, received a letter (probably very late in the 470s) from bishop Sidonius Apollinaris of Clermont.\textsuperscript{67} One of Sidonius’ servants, whom he names Injuriosus, had left Clermont and entered Aprunculus’ service at Dijon—without first gaining Sidonius’ written permission.\textsuperscript{68} To make matters worse, Aprunculus had been lax in communicating with him. A certain Caelestius, apparently an agent of Aprunculus’, carried Sidonius’ correspondence north to Aprunculus while returning from a long journey, one which had taken him to Béziers in \textit{Narbonensis} (\textit{Biterrensis}, near the Mediterranean coast).\textsuperscript{69} Sidonius now granted his permission for Injuriosus to remain with Aprunculus, but cautioned that should the man flee onward a second time, both bishops should hunt him as a fugitive.

\begin{footnotes}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[66] Armentaria’s husband, Gregorius Attalus, would later relocate to Lingon territory, serving as bishop of Langres for much of the early sixth century. His affairs there belong to a later and relatively more stable period. See Chapter Five, pp. 114-31.
\item[69] Loyen, \textit{Sidoine Apollinaire}, p. 206, fn. 33, suggests that Caelestius might be a second name of the runaway servant, and that the same person may have made these journeys, i.e. Aprunculus may have sent the abscondee to Sidonius, seeking forgiveness. While Loyen’s discussion of Sidonius’ possible play on names is not relevant to our purposes here, the implied communications remain the same either way. Movement was feasible between Narbonensis, the Auvergne, and Dijon.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotes}
The fact that Injuriosus and also Caelestius had been able to make such journeys speaks to the still-open nature of communications across much of Gaul during the 470s, even if only a handful of Lingons are attested as participants in such links. What business Aprunculus had as far southwest as Béziers remains unknown (though, as we shall see, Aprunculus later had even more intimate contact with southwestern Gaul). If his agent made such trips during the late 470s—Sidonius never suggests that the journey was remarkable or unusual—then the instability north of Dijon certainly did not prevent some southward ties.

On the other hand, Aprunculus stands out as the only Lingon whose attested connections during the second half of the fifth century explicitly ranged beyond *Lugdunensis Prima*. Within a few years of receiving Sidonius’ letter, Aprunculus would forge an even more direct connection with Clermont—but that episode highlights the pressures which shaped contemporary Lingon communications, for (as mentioned earlier) Aprunculus became an exile. Gregory of Tours tells the story:

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70 Did Aprunculus (and perhaps other bishops of Langres) have family connections as far away as southwestern Gaul? An “assez mauvaise liste épiscopale” of the thirteenth-century, held at Auch in *Novempopulana* (close to the Pyrenees), mentions both an Aprunculus and an Armentarius among that city’s fourth- and fifth-century bishops (Duchesne 2.92 [1910]); both are names of fifth-century bishops of Langres. Auch, however, lies hundreds of kilometers beyond Aprunculus of Langres’ attested contacts at Clermont and Béziers. An Armentarius/Ermentarius may have sat at Puy-en-Velay, southeast of Clermont, in 451 (ibid., 2.57 [1910]). There is no evidence for a familial connection, however, and these parallels may be entirely coincidental (Duchesne’s index of bishops across Gaul lists in total 5 separate Armentarii, 1 Ermentarius, 3 Aprunculi, and 1 Abrunculus [the latter merely a variant spelling for our Aprunculus of Langres]; ibid., 3.231, 234, 240 [1915]).

71 We know of at least eleven Lingons who lived between 450-506, though for most of the eleven we know very little beyond their names. Aprunculus is the first fifth-century bishop of Langres whose dates of service can be fixed with even remote confidence, but there are five further bishops who sat before Gregorius’ episcopate began in 506/7 (we know nothing about these bishops, apart from the possible relationship between bishop Armentarius and the Armentaria who married Gregorius Attalus); see Duchesne 2.186 (1910), and see above, pp. 16-17. Some of the recorded bishops preceding Aprunculus presumably sat during the 450s-470s, but their dates are unattested. Beyond these bishops, and Armentaria, we may add the abbot Iohannes Reomaensis (see p. 103 above), his parents Hilarius and Quieta (see “Hilarius 4,” p. 625, and “Quieta,” p. 677, in Martin Heinzelmann, “Gallische Prosopographie 260-527,” *Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte* 10 [1982-1983]: 531-718), and a widowed *femina illustra* named Bert[…], whose funerary monument attests to her burial at Langres in 461 or 482 (“Bert[…]” [= CIL 13.5657], p. 571 in Heinzelmann, “Gallische Prosopographie.”
Now, meanwhile, when the terror of the Franks began to resound in these regions and when everyone was wishing with ardent love that they should reign [over them], the holy Aprunculus, bishop of the Lingon civitas, began to be held suspect among the Burgundians. And since their hatred increased day by day, it was ordered that he should be put to the sword in secret. But since a report [of this plan] was conveyed to him, after being let down by night from the wall of the town of Dijon he arrived [at Clermont] in the Auvergne…

For some scholars, Gregory’s account is implausible, particularly since the Frankish king Clovis was pagan at the time. Certainly, the unexplained generalization that early in the 480s “everyone was wishing with ardent love” for (pagan) Frankish mastery sounds a lot like retrojection of Gregory’s own sympathies toward Clovis and the eventually-catholic Franks. On the other hand, it now seems clear that long before his conversion Clovis was not a stalwart champion of paganism, but an interested examiner of Arian and catholic tenets, capable of savvy interaction with the bishops living in his realm. The pagan Clovis, like the Arian Burgundians,

72 I have chosen to translate Gregory’s per murum dimissus (see fn. 73 below) as “being let down … from the wall” because his phrasing echoes, no doubt deliberately, the biblical accounts of the apostle Paul’s escape from Antioch in a basket lowered from that city’s walls: Paul says of himself in 2 Corinthians 11.33 “dimissus sum per murum,” while Acts 9.25 relates that Paul’s disciples “nocte per murum dimiserunt.” Gregory’s text thus casts Aprunculus as a righteous, suffering confessor oppressed by ungodly persecutors. If Gregory’s phrasing reflects more than his own rhetorical flourish, it implies that the Burgundians (in this case, at least) effectively controlled movement through the city gates of Dijon, and likely other cities under their control.

73 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 2.23, p. 69: “Interea cum iam terror Francorum resonaret in his partibus et omnes eos amore desiderabili cupirent regnare, sanctus Abrunculus Lingonicae civitatis episcopus apud Burgundiones coepit haberi susceput. Cumque odium de die in diem cresceret, iussum est, ut clam gladio feriretur. Quo ad eum perlato nuntio, nocte a castro Divionensi per murum dimissus Arvernus advenit…” This incident took place at an uncertain date in the 480s. Sidonius died after 480, Aprunculus in 490 (Frank-Michael Kaufmann, Studien zu Sidonius Apollinaris [Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995], pp. 63-4. Gregory’s reference to Clovis’ conquests implies a date after the king’s accession in 481.

74 Favrod, Histoire politique, p. 337 (“Il est téméraire de se fier à ce témoignage pour reconstituer de premières tensions entre Francs et Burgondes.”); Ian N. Wood, “Gregory of Tours and Clovis.” Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire 63 (1985): pp. 249-72, at p. 257 (“Aprunculus of Langres later fled from Dijon to Clermont, perhaps because of Burgundian hatred, but that hatred can scarcely be associated with fear of the Franks, since at the time of Aprunculus’ flight they were still ruled by a pagan king—and the bishop in any case fled west to the Gothic kingdom and not north.”).

75 See e.g. the bold letter from bishop Remigius of Reims to Clovis, long before the latter’s conversion, which praises upright character and cooperation with bishops as key to a stable rule: Epistolae Austrasicae 2, MGH Epistolae 3, ed. W. Gundlach (Berlin: Weidmann, 1957), p. 113. See also Joseph-Claude Poulin, “Geneviève, Clovis et Remi: entre politique et religion,” pp. 331-48, and Georg Scheibelreiter, “Clovis, le païen, Clotilde, la
thus may have enjoyed a reputation for friendly cooperation with catholic Gallo-Romans. Clovis’ religion, therefore, neither explains nor disproves Aprunculus’ alleged “Frankish connection.” At any rate, Gregory never stated that Aprunculus was guilty (though, of course, he may have been); opportunistic treason accusations were a common feature of the period’s politics. We must examine the claims Gregory did make in light of what we know about conditions at Dijon early in the 480s. Might some aspect of Clovis’ rule have appealed to Dijon’s residents? More importantly, would Dijon’s Burgundian masters have found such a treason accusation plausible and worthy of prompt, violent action?

Indeed. As we saw earlier, Alaman pressure seems to have cast a long shadow over Lingon society throughout the late fifth century. Critics of Gregory of Tours’ story have underappreciated the importance of the nearby Alamans, whom Gregory does not mention here. Read against the backdrop of the Burgundian-Alaman wars, however, Gregory’s claims make sense. He made no explicit mention of religion, but emphasized the martial prowess of the advancing Franks (“the terror of the Franks began to resound in these regions”).

76 See Chapter Two, p. 63.

77 Gregory had close family ties to Dijon and to Clermont, Aprunculus’ destination in exile. This account thus involves communities Gregory knew well. Why, then, are the Alamans invisible here? Gregory tended to ignore those barbarians unless they entered directly into the events of his story. More to the point, if Gregory intended to equate Clovis’ expansionism with the advance of catholic belief in Gaul (see Wood, “Gregory of Tours and Clovis,” especially pp. 264-72), and to cast Clovis’ opponents as justly-damned heretics (see Gregory’s polemic against Burgundian Arianism [Gregory of Tours, Hist. 3.Prologue, pp. 96-7]), then emphasizing mundane political factors other than the appeal of Frankish power might have undercut Gregory’s rhetorical purpose. Alaman absence from Gregory’s account of Aprunculus’ flight, therefore, does not mean that Alaman pressure did not shape the story’s underlying context.

78 Given that Gregory may have “spun” this account slightly to connect the episode with an overarching vision of sacred conflict between Clovis and various Arian rulers (see above, fns. 72 and 77), it is telling that Gregory in fact had so little to say to link Aprunculus’ story directly to religious conflict. The tale of Aprunculus’ exile could have suited that purpose very well, had a clear connection been plausible.
beleaguered Lingons, their own territory divided between feuding barbarian powers, perhaps without imminent hope of resolution, the rise of a vigorous conqueror to the north may have suggested certain hopeful possibilities. As we saw earlier, division of Lingon territory may have been particularly inconvenient for the local bishop; the situation likely caused problems for other elites as well, of whom many presumably held property on both sides of the new frontier. Could Clovis reunite their ancestral *civitas*? Insecure Burgundian masters may have feared—with good reason—that some Lingons preferred Clovis’ reported strength over their apparent weakness against the Alamans. We have no way of proving whether Aprunculus thought Clovis might be a providential answer to the problems of his diocese. The historical circumstances, however, make the Burgundians’ fears, and their harsh response to the allegations of treason, fully comprehensible.

Whether or not Aprunculus ever acted on such ideas, Burgundian suspicions cost him his Lingon home, and nearly cost him his life. When he fled, why did he go south to Clermont? We have seen already that Aprunculus had corresponded with Sidonius Apollinaris; indeed, Sidonius is Aprunculus’ only known correspondent prior to his exile. Although Sidonius’ letter about the negligent Injuriosus might not suggest a very warm relationship, Gregory of Tours implied a closer connection. On his deathbed, Sidonius supposedly predicted and endorsed Aprunculus’ succession to his episcopate at Clermont.\(^79\) If there is any truth to that claim, it would suggest a relationship broader than the exchange of correspondence after the flight of Injuriosus. Gregory of Tours’ fleeting narrative mentions no difficulties in Aprunculus’ election at Clermont (or at least ignores them), despite very recent dissensions among Sidonius’ own clerics.\(^80\)

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\(^79\) Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 2.23, p. 68.

\(^80\) Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 2.23, p. 68; two priests had risen up against Sidonius’ leadership shortly before his death.
to this picture, not only Sidonius but the Arverni themselves were willing to accept Aprunculus, who had just arrived “out of the blue” from Dijon. Aprunculus’ connection (through his agent Caelestius) to Béziers may suggest that the bishop had family or property connections in southwestern Gaul. Perhaps Aprunculus had relatives among the fifth-century refugees who had fled from the growing Visigothic power. After his flight and election at Clermont, Aprunculus was an active correspondent, but all within the relatively enclosed world of Gothic Aquitania.

Back north, division and disruption continued to characterize Lingon history. After 476, when the Burgundian king Chilperic died, his nephews Gundobad and Godigisel had divided his kingdom, ruling from Lyon and Geneva respectively. The precise boundaries of their sub-kingdoms are not clear, but Godigisel’s northern territory probably incorporated the Lingons. While these internal frontiers do not seem to have blocked passage, this division cannot have improved the Lingons’ relative isolation from the outside world. Presumably, the alignment of Burgundian cities toward different local courts diminished some distant contacts as much as it

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81 See above, fn. 70.

82 On such refugees from southwestern Gaul, see Ralph Whitney Mathisen, Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul: Strategies for Survival in an Age of Transition (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), pp. 60-64.

83 He received several letters from Ruricius of Limoges (Epp. 2.54-57), relating to ecclesiastical discipline that Aprunculus had imposed on Ruricius’ sons: Ruricii epistularum, MGH AA 8, ed. Bruno Krusch (Berlin: Weidmann, 1887; repr. 1961), pp. 299-350, at pp. 346-8.

84 Favrod, Histoire politique, pp. 159-61. While recognizing that Godigisel’s late-fifth-century sub-kingdom may not have matched Sigismund’s princely realm early in the sixth century, Favrod suggests that in Sigismund’s time the “secondary kingdom” included the Valais, Avenches, Geneva, Besançon, Langres/Dijon, Autun and Nevers. This is a plausible reconstruction. However, Favrod’s roster of the territory’s western cities depends almost entirely on an obscure detail from the vita of the Aeduan abbot Eptadius, who wrote a letter to Sigismund demanding that he release some prisoners of war. While I have defended the historical usefulness of that vita (see Chapter 2, pp. 60-1), Eptadius’ political relationships are too ambiguous, and the meaning of that anecdote too uncertain, to make this detail a sound basis for reconstructing the Burgundians’ internal frontiers. However, it is probably correct to assume that Lingon territory belonged to Godigisel. During the Frankish invasion of 500, Godigisel summoned Gundobad to defend him; the two brothers and Clovis met in battle near Dijon (see fn. 85, below). Presumably Gundobad entered his brother’s territory in coming to his aid.
may have stimulated other, closer ties. Still, the sub-kingdoms could cooperate against external threats—even though rivalry between the ruling brothers would prove the system’s undoing. In 500, Clovis invaded Burgundian territory. Summoned to the aid of his brother Godigisel, Gundobad marched north with an army, and the three rulers met near Dijon. Unfortunately for Gundobad, the “invasion” was in fact a ruse. Godigisel had conspired with Clovis, and the two turned on Gundobad and put him to flight. Driven south, Gundobad recovered his forces, avenged himself on his brother, and won sole rule over the kingdom. Dijon and Langres now belonged to a unified Burgundian realm.

Clovis and Godigisel’s treachery rounded out a half-century of disruption and violence affecting Lingon territory. Between Lupus’ flight to Latisco (perhaps in the early 450s) and the first decade of the sixth century, external Lingon communications not shaped by violence appear in our sources only twice: with the marriage of Armentaria to Gregorius Attalus of Autun, and with Aprunculus’ letter from Sidonius. Both links, notably, pointed southwest, away from the Alaman frontier. That both connections took place during the 470s is unsurprising, given the prolific ties forged during that decade by the nearby Aeduans. More commonly, however, Lingon sources for the years 450-506 reflect obstacles to friendly, long-distance social relations: Alaman fighters active in the region, political tensions, suspicions, exile, invasion. Under these circumstances, the generally close Lingon horizons are not surprising; nor is the Lingon bishops’ residence away from their nominal seat, or their seeming absence from ecclesiastical gatherings beyond their territory. Still, some Lingons evidently made the most of their situation, forging

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85 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 2.32-3, pp. 78-81; Marius of Avenches, Chronicle, an. 500: Justin Favrod, La Chronique de Marius d’Avenches (435-481). Texte, traduction et commentaire (Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, 1991), p. 68. The battle probably occurred by the modern commune of St-Apollinaire, northeast of Dijon (INSEE# 21540); Favrod, Histoire politique, pp. 341-3.
ties when and where they could. But the political instability afflicting their lands posed challenges to communication far beyond what their neighbors to the south had to endure.

Only significant change in the region’s political affairs would remove those challenges. Fortunately for the Lingons, change was coming. The next chapter explores the revitalization of attested Lingon communications after about 506—a rebirth notably contemporaneous with Clovis the Frank’s resounding defeat of the Alamans. We may take it as a final confirmation of the fifth-century patterns outlined above that the signs of Lingon instability and anemic communication fade from our sources just as Alaman violence ceased to afflict eastern Gaul. As Lingon elites entered the sixth century, a new day was at hand.
Chapter Four:

Lingon Communications at the Dawn of the Middle Ages
A modern visitor to Dijon’s Musée archéologique passes from the city’s streets, through a shaded garden court, and into the cool stone chambers of a former medieval abbey. If visitors now come to learn about the city’s distant past, that building (and the earlier structures beneath it) first arose for a very different purpose: to honor a local saint, Benignus, whose cult originated early in the sixth century.\(^1\) As we will see, the story of the cult’s formation is one of competition, ambition, and co-option of the saintly cults of surrounding communities.\(^2\) Such aggressive engagement with Dijon’s neighbors contrasts with the patterns described in the previous chapter. Late in the fifth century, as we have seen, Lingon social networks had contracted, apparently hindered by insecurity and the fragmentation of the civitas. Before 500, Lingon horizons had no room for a cult like that of Benignus.

All that changed in the first decade of the sixth century. At least three factors account for that shift. As we have just seen, in 501 Gundobad gained sole control over the entire Burgundian kingdom. While his united realm continued to face many dangers, it also experienced its golden age. Further adding to the region’s political stability, Clovis soundly defeated the Alamans in or by 506, and then allied with the Burgundians in his war of 507 against the Visigoths.\(^3\) While Franks and Burgundians would clash again in the 520s and 530s, the removal of the Alaman threat near Lingon territory appears to have made conditions there less volatile, and the

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2 See below, pp. 123-30.

Burgundians probably now cemented their control over Langres itself. Finally, also in 506 or 507, Gregorius Attalus—formerly the Burgundian-appointed Count of Autun—became bishop of Langres. Gregory of Tours was his descendant, and that historian wove into his writings numerous anecdotes illustrating their family’s affairs. As a result, at the beginning of the sixth century we enter a better-illuminated age of Lingon history. The important changes visible through Gregory’s descriptions find support in multiple independent sources. Rather than being distorted by Gregory’s testimony, therefore, the dynamics addressed in this chapter seem more likely to have shaped the family’s experiences.

506-534: Gregorius Attalus, Great Man in a Small World

As an Aeduan, Gregorius Attalus apparently derived his connection to Langres-Dijon through his wife, Armentaria. He took the cloth only after her death, but since she likely had been related to a former bishop of Langres, Armentarius, her connections may have played some role in Gregorius’ rise to prominence in the diocese. Once established as bishop, he spent most of his

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4 This is only an inference—access to Langres itself by Lingon bishops is not explicitly attested until 539/40 (see below, p. 3 fn. 9), a few years after the Frankish conquest of the region (534). However, there is no reason to assume that the Burgundians did not hold Langres itself after 507; by that year, at the latest, Gundobad possessed forces strong enough to campaign abroad (he allied with Clovis against the Visigoths), while the Alamanni after that year were in no position to retain Langres against any determined Burgundian offensive. In fact, all the former indications of disruption and division within the diocese vanish from our sources from this point on, and attested Lingon connections regain vitality.

5 See the prosopography of Gregory of Tours’ relatives and the broader discussion of his connections in Martin Heinzelmann, *Gregory of Tours: History and Society in the Sixth Century*, trans. Christopher Carroll (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 7-35.

6 To what extent does Gregory’s focus on his own family skew our picture of Lingon communication patterns? I will return to that question later in this chapter, after exploring the relevant evidence from before and after the Frankish conquest of 534 (see below, pp. 139-42).

time at Dijon, despite the apparent removal of the Alaman threat to Langres.\textsuperscript{8} He did visit Langres to hold mass at his nominal cathedral seat, yet Dijon seems to have emerged by this time as the center of gravity for the Lingon social world.\textsuperscript{9} We will return shortly to the implications of that prominence.

From Dijon, Gregorius kept in touch with fellow ecclesiastics across much of the Burgundian kingdom. He attended the council of Épaone in 517, and was later among the eleven bishops who opposed King Sigismund at the council of Lyon, ca. 520.\textsuperscript{10} In happier times, he had corresponded with Avitus of Vienne; the tone of their single attested letter implies an ongoing relationship.\textsuperscript{11} The \textit{vita} of Lautenus, an abbot of the Jura monks, records an encounter with Gregorius, who was traveling between Geneva and his own see.\textsuperscript{12}

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\textit{Dominum convertitur, et electus a populo, Lingonicae urbi episcopus ordinatur} (“Having a wife named Armentaria, of senatorial stock … he was converted to the Lord after the death of his wife, moreover, and having been elected by the people, was ordained bishop of the Lingon city”). For the likely role of Armentaria’s family connections, see Martin Heinzelmann, \textit{Bischofherrschaft in Gallien. Beihefte der Francia} 5 (Munich: Artemis, 1976), pp. 213-14.


\textsuperscript{9} Gregory’s travel to Langres to hold services there is explicitly attested only at the end of his life, several years after the Frankish conquest of the region (he caught fever and died after walking to Langres to celebrate Epiphany: Gregory of Tours, \textit{Vit. Patrum} 7.3, p. 238). His death occurred in 539/540: Duchesne, 2.186 (1910): Louis Duchesne, \textit{Fastes épiscopaux de l’ancienne Gaule}, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Paris, 1907, 1910, 1915). However, if the Burgundians controlled the entirety of the diocese of Langres after the 506/7 defeat of the Alamans, as seems likely, then presumably Gregorius Attalus also performed liturgical services at Langres prior to the Frankish conquest of 534.


\textsuperscript{11} Avitus \textit{Ep.} 64: \textit{Alcimi Ecdicii Aviti Vienensis episcopi epistularum ad diversos}, ed. Rudolf Peiper, MGH AA 6.2 (Berlin, 1883), pp. 35-103, at p. 88. Avitus wrote to acknowledge that Gregorius had been ill and thus could not join him for a feast (presumably at Vienne?), but sent thanks for Gregorius’ greetings and a gift. The letter’s tone clearly implies that the bishops’ correspondence extended beyond this solitary example.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Vita sancti Lauteni} 15, BHL 4800, AASS Nov. vol. 1, Nov. 1\textsuperscript{st}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (Paris: Palmé, 1887), pp. 284-6, at p. 286: “\textit{Et cum appropinquasset ad Grosonem, obviam factus est ei sanctus Gregorius papa, properans partibus Genavensium}.”—“And when he had come near to Grozon, he encountered the holy bishop Gregorius, who was hastening to [or from] the environs of Geneva.” Note that in the apparatus to ibid., ch. 15, p. 286, a variant
Those links all connected Dijon with other communities in the Burgundians’ northern core, but a few attested Lingon ties stretched far to the south. Bishop Gregorius allegedly received a document containing the passion account of the local saint Benignus from travelers with connections to Italy. Gregorius also had some contact with Gaul’s southern coast, prompted on one occasion by the temporary emigration of the Lingon Iohannes (whom we encountered in the previous chapter founding a monastery at Reomaus). At some point early in the sixth century, Iohannes fled from his duties as abbot, and moved south to the monastic community of Lérins. Subsequently, another traveler to Lérins—apparently a northerner there

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14 Jonas of Bobbio, *Vita Iohannis abbatis Reomaensis*, 4-5, pp. 508-9 (MGH SRM 3, ed. B. Krusch [Hannover, 1896: repr., 1977], pp. 502-17). Jonas wrote the *vita* in 659, during a brief stay at Iohannes’ monastery (see Krusch’s introductory comments; ibid., pp. 502-3.). Certainly, it is a late source—but Jonas wrote only half a
only for a short visit—recognized Iohannes, and then reported his location to the bishop of Langres. Once informed, Gregorius Attalus wrote two letters to Lérins: one to its abbot, and one to the runaway Iohannes, warning him sternly to return to the monks he had abandoned at Reomaus. The chastened Iohannes complied. His brief Mediterranean sojourn, however, had widened his horizons, and he brought north seeds of the monastic culture of southern Gaul. Resuming his duties, he implemented at Reomaus the so-called Rule of Macarius, produced at Lérins ca. 490, and applied the teachings of John Cassian (d. ca. 435), a pioneer of Massiliote monasticism.\textsuperscript{15}

Iohannes’ flight south and eventual discovery at Lérins show that Lingons could communicate with Gaul’s Mediterranean coast. On the other hand, the prestigious center of Lérins was the only “magnet” that our sources describe as drawing native Lingons so far south beyond their territory. Of course, the ecclesiastic focus of our sources may have obscured other connections. Even religiously motivated travel south, however, appears to have been sporadic. Since news of Iohannes’ arrival at the coast was not immediately reported back home, Lingon communication with Lérins was apparently irregular, even if it was active enough to ensure the runaway abbot’s eventual detection. Still, the southward flights of Iohannes and earlier, ca. 490,

of Caesarius (from Chalon) show that movement from Burgundian into Gothic territory remained feasible for private persons.\textsuperscript{16}

There is very little textual evidence, however, for contemporary Lingon communications with the north. Gregory of Tours describes an old friend of Gregorius Attalus’ named Paulellus, who served as a priest at Reims in \textit{Belgica Secunda} some time between 534-539.\textsuperscript{17} The only attested contact between the two men occurred after the Frankish conquest of 534, but Gregory’s description (“he had an old friendship”) suggests that their relationship pre-dated that conquest.\textsuperscript{18} On the other hand, we do not know whether Paulellus was a native of Reims; his friendship with Gregorius could have developed in Lingon or even Aeduan territory, earlier in Gregorius’ career. Written sources describe no other Lingon social connections north of Burgundian territory between 506 and the Frankish conquest of 534 (leaving aside the movement of troops during the short-lived invasion by the Franks in 524).\textsuperscript{19}

The patterns outlined above suggest that after 506 the Lingons’ social horizons were roughly equivalent to those of their Aeduan neighbors. Under Burgundian rule, elite Aeduans and Lingons traversed the northern areas of the kingdom, while maintaining more sporadic contacts with Gaul’s southern coast. Across the frontier with the Franks, however, there seems

\textsuperscript{16} For Caesarius, see Chapter Two, pp. 9-11.

\textsuperscript{17} Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 3.15, p. 116: “Presbiter enim amicitiam cum beato Gregorio antiquam habebat.”

\textsuperscript{18} Gregory of Tours uses similar vocabulary elsewhere to describe an old grudge (\textit{antiquam inimicitiam}; see \textit{Hist.} 8.45, p. 411) held against a Frankish general for a defeat some twelve to twenty-six years earlier, or to describe Gregory’s own \textit{antiquam dilectionem} toward two saints (\textit{Liber de virtutibus sancti Iuliani} 2 = MGH SRM 1.2, ed. Bruno Krusch [Hannover, 1885], p. 114). In that context, Gregory’s relative Nicetius was still bishop of Lyon (552-72), so Gregory (b. 538; see Heinzelmann, \textit{Gregory of Tours}, p. 29) must have been between fourteen and thirty-four years old. Of course, this provides only an outer limit for the age of Gregory’s “old affection” for the saints. Based on these limited examples from Gregory of Tours’ language, we cannot rule out—in fact, it may be most prudent to assume—that the “old friendship” between bishop Gregorius of Langres and the priest Paulellus pre-dated the Frankish conquest of 534.

\textsuperscript{19} Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 3.6, pp. 101-3.
to have been little movement. While these patterns reflect limits—a small world of regular contacts—they also imply that Lingon territory now was relatively more secure than in previous decades.

Lingon stability, however, raises an important question. In the previous chapter, I argued that Langres’ bishops relocated to Dijon because of Alaman insecurity late in the fifth century. If so, then why did the bishops of Langres continue to reside at Dijon after the Alaman threat had passed? Does their continued preference for Dijon suggest that something other than security concerns—perhaps economic interests—had offered a more primary motivation for their relocation? One thinks of Gregory of Tours’ famous description of the prosperity of Dijon (albeit from his late-sixth-century perspective).

Echoing ideas offered earlier by Jean-Charles Picard, Ian Wood has suggested that Gregorius Attalus and his relatives “appear to have had land in the vicinity” of Dijon, and that “this may account for the family’s preference for the castrum of Dijon to the diocesan centre of Langres.”

Had Lingon bishops moved to Dijon simply to

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20 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 3.19, pp. 120-21.

21 Jean-Charles Picard, “Langres et Dijon au haut Moyen-Âge: christianisation et réseau urbain en Bourgogne,” in La Bourgogne: études archéologiques. Actes du 109e congrès national du sociétés savants (Dijon, 1984). Vol. 1, Section d’archéologie et d’histoire de l’art, no editor given (Paris: Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1984), pp. 85-99, especially pp. 87-93; Ian Wood, “Topographies of Holy Power in Sixth-Century Gaul,” in Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages, eds. Maybe de Jong & Frans Theuws (Leiden, Boston & Köln: Brill, 2001), pp. 137-54, at p. 143 (see also p. 144). Wood cites Gregory of Tours’ description (Vitae Patrum 7.2-3, pp. 237-8) of Gregorius Attalus’ activities at Dijon. S. T. Loseby further echoes Wood’s interpretation in “Gregory’s Cities: Urban Functions in Sixth-century Gaul,” in Franks and Alamanni in the Merovingian Period: An Ethnic Perspective, ed. Ian Wood (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), pp. 239-69, at p. 243. Although its testimony is very late, an eleventh-century chronicle written at Dijon purports to list some of Gregorius’ estates (Chronica venerandorum abbatum ... Benigni Divionensis Monasterii, pp. 15-16, = Chronique de l'abbaye de Saint-Benigne de Dijon suivie de la chronique de Saint-Pierre de Bèze, ed. E. Bougaud and J. Garnier. Analacta Divionensia [Dijon: Darantière, 1875]). It describes thirteen properties that bishop Gregorius allegedly gave to a local monastery; some of these lands were church estates, while others came from his own possessions (the chronicler does not specify which properties Gregorius himself had owned). Eleven of the thirteen properties are now identifiable; ten of these eleven were located between six and sixteen miles from Dijon. The one notable exception is the estate of Lernerlus (Lignerolles, INSEE commune #21350), forty miles northwest of Dijon and only twenty miles west of Langres. Although, again, we do not know how many of these estates (allegedly) had belonged to Gregorius vs. his church—and we do not know where Gregorius’ other properties lay—this very late witness also suggests that Gregorius’ family may have owned much land close to Dijon.
benefit a prominent land-owning family nearby? Not initially, I think; the evidence already discussed for insecurity and Alaman pressure offers compelling indications that the threat of violence caused the initial episcopal retreat to Dijon. Moreover, bishop Aprunculus’ departure from Dijon late in the fifth century strongly suggests that episcopal residence there pre-dated the tenures of Gregorius’ (known) relatives.22

Yet it is important here to distinguish between the causes and the consequences of episcopal relocation. Gregorius Attalus’ family was among the most prominent of sixth-century Gallo-Roman aristocratic clans.23 We simply do not know where in the Lingon civitas they owned property, but one presumes that such wealthy landowners could have acquired estates near Langres, had they wished to do so. It is even possible that their preference for Dijon did not benefit all their estates, but some of their estates in particular—perhaps even to the detriment of properties elsewhere. In fact, our study of Lingon social dynamics after 506 suggests several factors that made Dijon the better choice, even for a family with potentially widespread landholdings.

For one thing, Alaman raiding (or even just the threat of such attacks) cannot have been conducive to prosperity around Langres. The fear of attack may have discouraged investment on lands there, and where the Alamans did physically damage vineyards, estates, and infrastructure across the Lingon north, many of those assets will have required rebuilding. Such things—particularly vineyards—do not spring up overnight; they require an investment not only of

22 See Chapter Three, p. 101. There is no clear evidence that Aprunculus was related to Gregorius and Armentarius’ kin-network (though see Chapter Three, p. 105, fn.s. 70 and 71).

23 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 4.15, p. 147. As a member of that family, Gregory of Tours was not without bias in reporting its great nobility. Yet, as Heinzelmann notes (Gregory of Tours, pp. 7-11), the dignity of Gregory’s family did not dominate his own self-representation. “No one could deny that the author of the Histories had a measure of pride in his family … but it is also clear that he did not wish to use the Histories to give literary expression to this pride” (pp. 8-9); for more on this issue, see below, p. 140 fn. 82.
wealth but also of time.⁴ Undamaged estates in the Lingon south—near Dijon—thus likely enjoyed a productive advantage for some years even after the stabilization of the frontier brought peace to the north. That advantage suggests a spin on Picard and Wood’s interpretations: the location of *profitable* estates may have encouraged Lingons like Gregorius Attalus to remain at Dijon after 506.

Dijon’s prominence also makes sense against the broader context of communications in the Burgundian kingdom. As we have seen, both Aeduans and Lingons during this period participated in social networks focused on the northern periphery and the center of that kingdom. Beyond their local movements, they communicated with Lyon, with the Jura and the Burgundian mountains, and with Vienne. Very few Lingon ties pushed beyond this small world; when they did, these generally pointed south. In that context, Dijon was a more efficient base of operations than Langres. Under Burgundian masters, Lingons looked south—and Dijon was south of Langres. However, the region’s hydrography and physical topography, and not just the two cities’ relative latitudes, also made Dijon better connected than Langres. Dijon’s nearby waterway, the Ouche (navigable for light craft near Dijon), drained toward the Saône.⁵ While not a major artery, Dijon’s waterborne connection thus aligned the city toward the heart of the kingdom, the center of the Saône-Rhône basin. Langres, by contrast, looked away. While that hilltop city’s territory bridged southern and northern watersheds, overland transport was

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necessary to reach the nearest navigable streams—which flowed north toward the Franks. Had Gregorius transferred the primary episcopal residence back to Langres, he would have moved away from the patrons and neighbors with whom he regularly kept in contact, and toward a remote frontier that hardly any of his compatriots seem to have crossed.

After 506, then, Gregorius may have been free to choose his place of residence, but the available choices were not equally useful to the frontier bishop. The location of Gregorius’ family property was by no means the only factor involved. Wood is probably right to implicate socio-economic factors in Gregorius’ decision. I would suggest, however, that Gregorius’ patronage of Dijon was at least partly a response to political and economic forces beyond his control, rather than just a self-seeking promotion of nearby family estates on a playing-field that was otherwise free of constraints. Dijon’s sixth-century overshadowing of Langres did not arise in a vacuum, disconnected from the social dynamics of the surrounding regnum Burgundionum. It is worth noting here that Langres’ increasing isolation during this period has other parallels within the region. If contemporary Lingon and Aeduan social horizons were roughly analogous, they also display parallel divisions. In each area, the outer and more peripheral city seems to have wilted. Under Burgundian rule, Autun’s ties shrunk, while Chalon’s grew; the same pattern holds for Langres’ decline relative to Dijon. Of course, there were important differences: Autun and Chalon each had their own bishops, and Chalon lay directly on a major waterway. Yet, when we turn to coins and the circulation patterns they reveal in this region (Chapter Six), we will find further evidence that many of the kingdom’s peripheral settlements were relatively disconnected from a more vibrant zone of interactions across the central Saône-Rhône basin.

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26 Les villes antique de la France 2, pp. 371, 384.
The long-term effects of Alaman pressure around Langres will have exacerbated broader processes, which already were causing an inward turn across much of the Burgundian periphery. Dijon’s prosperity, which Gregory of Tours praised so highly later in the sixth century, therefore may not have reflected continuity with Roman-era conditions, but likely stemmed from post-imperial factors. These included trouble in the Lingon north before 506, the pull of Burgundian patrons to the south, and even simple inertia once landowners grew accustomed to habits, assets and relationships cultivated around Dijon.

Even if Dijon did become more prosperous early in the sixth century, the elite Lingons who looked south to their neighbors encountered a small world, with close horizons. A remarkable text from the period confirms that impression. According to Gregory of Tours, his ancestor Gregorius Attalus formalized the veneration of the martyr Benignus after investigating the visits of rustic pilgrims to that saint’s sarcophagus, just outside Dijon. Gregorius was initially skeptical, but Benignus rebuked him in a vision, exhorting Gregorius to support the martyr’s cult. In response, Gregorius renewed Benignus’ vaulted tomb; later, after obtaining a record of his life from men going to Italy, he built a basilica to honor him. So much for Gregory of Tours’ version of events.

For Gregory of Tour’s description see Hist. 3.19, pp. 120-21. Unfortunately, archaeological excavations beneath Dijon have been too limited to confirm when the city first matched this prosperous description. See Carte archéologique de la Gaule 21.2, La Côte d’Or, ed. Michel Provost et al. (Paris: Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2009), pp. 290-304.

Without suggesting exact parallels, it may be useful to consider some analogous modern situations. The Republic of China long treated mainland Nanjing (controlled by the People’s Republic of China) as its official capital, but Taipei, on the island of Taiwan, is nevertheless that polity’s functional seat of government. Despite the ROC’s symbolic commitment to old territory, Taipei clearly has moved on, now flourishing as an important node in new economic networks. Violence and conflict also led to the movement of the German Federal Republic’s capital from Berlin to Bonn. The choice to return most government offices to Berlin in the 1990s, however, provoked significant opposition, reflecting not only ideological but also fiscal and economic concerns. As these examples illustrate, a few decades of activity at a “temporary capital” may fundamentally complicate that city’s relationship with the traditional seat of power.

Gregory of Tours, Gloria martyrum 50, pp. 72-3.
As it happens, a text of Benignus’ *passio* (i.e. the account of his martyrdom) has survived.\(^{30}\) It purports to describe his death during a persecution under Aurelian, a third-century emperor. While Gregory of Tours claimed that travelers with links south of the Alps had procured the document, modern scholars agree that the author was in fact a resident of Dijon, most likely writing during Gregorius’ lifetime—perhaps even the bishop himself, or at least someone close to him.\(^{31}\) As we shall see, the text is remarkable not only for the audacity of its claims, but also for its striking corroboration of the Lingon communication horizons described above.

The *passio* makes Benignus’ ministry and death the culmination of an apostolic mission responsible for the main cults of northern *Lugdunensis Prima*. Supposedly, bishop Irenaeus of Lyon (following his own martyrdom) appeared in a vision to his old mentor, Polycarp of Smyrna (of Ephesus, according to this *passio*). Because recent persecutions had robbed Gaul of its

\(^{30}\) *Passio sanctorum Herenei episcopi, Andochi presbiteri, Benigni presbiteri, Tyrsi diaconi, Felicis negotiatoris*: Joseph van der Straeten, “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien en Bourgogne: étude littéraire,” *Analecta Bollandiana* 79 (1961): 115-44 (literary-historical introduction), and “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien en Bourgogne: le texte de Farfa,” in ibid., pp. 447-68 (sic); for the text itself see pp. 455-68. Benignus features throughout the text, but for his particular passion account (BHL 1153) see pp. 465-8. Van der Straeten’s text preserves the unity and arrangement of Farfa codex 29 (Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS lat. 341, fols. 192r-200v), whereas earlier editions presented fragments of this ensemble text, with separate BHL entries: part 1 of BHL 424; part 2 of BHL 424; BHL 1153; BHL 4457b-e; BHL 4458 (Van der Straeten, “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien,” pp. 118-21).

\(^{31}\) Benignus’ *passio* shares a complex intertextual history with other Gallic hagiographies. See Van der Straeten, “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien,” pp. 115-44, especially pp. 126-31. Gregory of Tours not only knew about Benignus’ *passio*, but incorporated language from that work and from the surrounding Farfa text in his own writings; the *passio* thus certainly pre-dates the late sixth century (see discussion at Van der Straeten, “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien,” p. 128). But Gregory linked the introduction of the *passio* at Dijon to his own ancestor Gregorius Attalus’ episcopal tenure, implying a composition between 506-540. Indeed, the Farfa text clearly influenced other texts during the sixth century, most notably a *vita* of St. Albanus written at Auxerre, which may itself have been known to Gildas by 547 (see Wilhelm Meyer, “Die Legenden des h. Albanus des Protomartyr Angliæ, in Texten vor Beda,” *Abhandlungen der königliche Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-Hist. Klasse*, N.F. 8 [1905]: 1-81, especially pp. 21-24, 62-81; Wilhelm Levison, “St. Alban and St. Albans,” *Antiquity* 15 (1941): 337-359, especially pp. 344-50). All indications therefore point to a composition within Gregorius Attalus’ lifetime for the Benignus *passio*. Moreover, as I will show below (see e.g. fn. 46 below), other evidence suggests a composition before the Frankish conquest. It is unlikely that such a text was written and promoted “under the eyes” of bishop Gregorius without his direct involvement or endorsement of the claims made therein (Van der Straeten, “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien,” p. 129).
Christian preachers, Irenaeus urged Polycarp to send several men to spread the gospel there.\footnote{Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 459, paragraph 1. Van der Straeten’s edition includes for convenience the paragraph numeration of earlier editions of pieces of his composite text. The passio thus includes three series of sequential paragraph numeration: paragraphs 1-17 from pp. 455-59, 1-11 from pp. 459-64, and finally 1-14 on pp. 465-68. In citing this text I will list page numbers first, followed by paragraph numbers.} Polycarp sent three clerics, Benignus, Andochius, and Tyrsus, who boarded a ship for Marseille. Once in Gaul, they proceeded directly to Lyon; from there, an angel directed them to Autun.\footnote{Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 460, paragraph 3.} After reaching Aeduan soil, they partnered with Faustus, a governing prefect and Christian nobleman, in promoting the local church. Benignus baptized Faustus’ son, Symphorian, Faustus’ sister Leonilla, who lived at Langres, and Leonilla’s nephews, the brothers Iosipphus, Eleosipphus and Meleosipphus.\footnote{Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, pp. 460-61, paragraphs 3-5.} After this happy beginning, the emperor Aurelian arrived on the scene, full of wrath, and martyred the three missionaries. Benignus’ death and burial near Dijon appropriately came last in the series of martyrdoms.\footnote{Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 461, paragraph 5—p. 468, paragraph 14. For Benignus’ death see pp. 467, paragraph 13—p. 468, paragraph 14.}

Like many such accounts, the passio is an anachronistic jumble: the appearance together of Polycarp (69-ca. 160), Irenaeus (130-202), and Aurelian (214/15-275) is chronologically impossible. Other features of the text indicate more than unconscious error. The four young men baptized by Benignus—the Aeduan Symphorian and his Lingon cousins—were in fact local saints, already venerated at Autun and at Langres well before the sudden “discovery” of Benignus’ passio during Gregorius’ episcopate. In making Benignus responsible for their baptisms, the author asserted the preeminence of the upstart Benignus at Dijon over the older
martyr-saints of Autun and Langres.\textsuperscript{36} Moreover, by making Polycarp (traditionally, a disciple of the Apostle John) responsible for Benignus’ mission, the author assigned apostolic authority and dignity to the martyr’s foundations. Notably, this apostolic commission neatly sidestepped Lyon’s metropolitan authority.\textsuperscript{37} Lyon might have Irenaeus himself, also a disciple of Polycarp, and for that, the city deserved respect. But the cities of the north possessed equal dignity, and Dijon held chief place among them. The passio’s audacity is breathtaking. As the most likely patron of the text, Gregorius Attalus (or someone in his circle) asserted that his new saintly foundation was not only legitimate and respectable, but the most important of the cults in northern \textit{Lugdunensis Prima}, and perhaps a rival in prestige to the metropolitan city itself.

In rewriting the past, what did the author reveal about his present? Despite the document’s claim to record centuries-old events, Benignus’ passio allows a precious glimpse into the mental horizons of an early-sixth-century Lingon author. As we have already seen, other sources indicate that before 534 Aeduans and Lingons maintained active ties very close to home, had only limited interactions with the cities south of Lyon and Vienne, and typically had nothing to do with the territories lying northwest across the Frankish frontier, although royal impetus might propel movement across that border.

The world portrayed in Benignus’ passio fits those outlines like a glove. The author mentions Ephesus and Rome, both cities of the Bible.\textsuperscript{38} In the author’s mind, a single sentence of the text suffices to narrate a journey across the Mediterranean and arrival at Marseille. The traveling saints reach Lyon in the passio’s following sentence; the picture of southern Gaul is


\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Passio sanctorum atque Benigni}, p. 455, paragraph 2 (Ephesus); p. 457, paragraph 7 (Rome).
Even Lyon receives courteous but short treatment. While we have noted already the implicit challenge to Lyon’s spiritual authority, nothing in the passio treats that city with disrespect; Lyon is called nobilissimam and felicissimam urben. Yet Lyon vanishes almost as soon as the missionaries have arrived in Gaul. No further connections, whether spiritual, social or political, tie Lyon back into the story after an angel directs the travelers to continue north to Autun. Lyon, it seems, is an important place to mention, but it has little bearing on the networks shaping everyday life. A web of social and spiritual relationships, in contrast, crisscrosses the civitates of the north. The nobleman Faustus lives at Autun, owns property at Saulieu, 23 mi/37 km north of that city, and has family at Langres, who themselves guide Benignus to Dijon. Indeed, that latter element is suspiciously evocative of Gregorius Attalus’ own career; he had passed, probably via his noble Lingon wife’s connections, from secular power at Autun to spiritual authority at Dijon.

The passio’s treatment of the northwest completes the picture. The persecutor Aurelian enters Aeduan territory from that direction. He had just come from Sens, which our author surprisingly locates “in extremis finibus Galliarum,” in the outer limits of the Gallic provinces. Hardly! Sens was chief city of Lugdunensis Quarta (the province immediately northwest of

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39 Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 460, paragraph 3.
40 Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 456, paragraph 4.
41 Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 460, paragraph 3.
42 Faustus at Autun: Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 460, paragraph 3; property at Saulieu: ibid., p. 462, paragraph 6 (see Van der Straeten’s fn. 1); relatives at Langres: ibid., p. 461, paragraph 4.
43 Passio sanctorum atque Benigni, p. 461, paragraph 5: “Eodem tempore erat Aurelianus iniquissimus imperator in extremis finibus Galliarum et ad civitatem veniens Senonas…” (“At that time, the most wicked emperor Aurelian was in the furthest ends of the Gallic provinces, and coming to the city of Sens…”).
Locating Sens within Gaul’s “extremis finibus” strained the limits of typical Latin usage, both before and after this period. In late antiquity, uses of *finibus Galliarum* with any specificity typically evoked Gaul’s Atlantic coast or territories quite near it; in later centuries, the phrase’s valence shifted to include Gaul’s/France’s eastern borders as well as the coast, but an emphasis on Gaul’s edges remained clear when discussing specific geographic locations.45 Our Lingon author’s location of Sens in the *extremis finibus Galliarum* is therefore as unique as it is striking,


45 The author of Benignus’ *passio* used the same expression earlier in the text to describe the movement of another persecutor from somewhere in Gaul (unspecified, in this case) to Lyon: “erat tunc temporis iniquissimus Cesar in extremis finibus Galliarum”—there was at that time a very wicked Caesar in the outer limits of the Gauls” (*Passio sanctorum atque Benigni*, p. 457, paragraph 7). Note that both uses of *extremis finibus Galliarum* in the *passio* concern violent oppressors arriving in *Lugdunensis Prima* from elsewhere in Gaul. The phrase hardly fits Sens’ location; it lies 100 mi/160 km northwest of Dijon, but Sens is a further 150 mi/241 km distant from the nearest part of the English Channel. The city lies in the very heart of northern Gaul. In late antiquity, use of *finibus Galliarum* with any specificity typically evoked Gaul’s Atlantic coast or the territories quite near it. Jerome described a journey *de oceani litore atque ultimis finibus Galliarum*, probably referring to Bordeaux, but at least to Aquitania, where his correspondent lived (Hieronymus, *Ep*. 121 preface, p. 3: *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi epistulae*, CSEL 56.1, ed. Isidore Hilberg, 2nd ed. revised by Margit Kamptner [Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996]); on this letter and on the embarkation-point of “*filius meus Apodemius*,” whose journey Jerome described, see Andrew Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 188-90. See especially ibid., p. 188 fn. 91: analogous language “suggests that Jerome was using stock terminology for plotting Bordeaux’s coordinates.” In later centuries the phrase’s valence shifted to include Gaul’s eastern borders as well as the coast, but an emphasis on the outer limits of Gaul remained clear when specific geographic locations were under discussion; the language in our *passio*, then was not the harbinger of an emergent trend. For example, a ninth-century *vita* states that while St. Gall was at Luxeuil (southeast of the Voges mountains, and on the eastern edge of Gaul), his fame spread into “*finibus Galliae vel Germaniae*” (Wetti, *Vita Galli confessoris* 1.3, MGH SRM 4, ed. Bruno Krusch [Hannover and Leipzig: 1902], pp. 256-80, at p. 258). The tenth-century Folcuin of Lobbes used *in finibus Galliarum* when discussing the Channel and Thérouanne in Pas-de-Calais (*Vita Folcuiini episcopi Morinensis*, MGH SS 15, ed. O. Holder-Egger [Hannover: 1887], pp. 424-30, at p. 427); the eleventh-century Hugh of Flavigny described the ancient Vandal invasion of Gaul as erupting *ab extremis finibus Galliae*, and he wrote elsewhere of *finibus Galliae Belgicae* (Hugo abbas Flaviniacensis, *Chronicon* 1,p. 305; 2, p. 397: MGH SS 8, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz [Hannover: 1848], pp. 288-502). In other medieval Latin texts, the Atlantic coast remained the *locus of the fines Galliarum*; a description of the ravages of the Northmen, for example, noted that Brittany had formerly been considered “*cornu et finem Galliarum*” (*Vita et miracula S. Vitalis confessoris* 17, BHL 8698, AASS *Oct.*, vol. 7, Oct. 16th [Brussels: Greuse, 1845], p. 1098). As these examples (both late and early) show, locating Sens in or near the *finibus Galliarum* would be unusual in general usage; that an author at sixth-century Dijon not only did so, but also added the qualifier *extremis finibus*, attests remarkably to the psychological barrier which lay between the Lingons and their northwestern neighbors.
and attests remarkably to the psychological distance between the Lingons and their northwestern neighbors, confirming our picture of limited ties across the frontier. Indeed, apart from the emperor’s movement from Sens into Aeduan territory, the author portrays no other ties linking Aeduan or Lingon citizens to the northwest. The *passio* presents the northwest as a distant land, brought near only by the unwelcome movement of a violent ruler. In all directions, then, the text fits our general portrait of Lingon horizons under Burgundian rule.

For this reason, I suggest 532 as a *terminus ante quem* for the *passio*’s composition. In 532, when Merovingian forces captured Autun, that city no longer belonged to the same kingdom as Dijon. Following the full Frankish conquest of 534, a single kingdom (Theudebert’s; see below, fn. 59) once again encompassed Langres, Dijon and Autun (though not Lyon). As the rest of this chapter will make clear, Gregorius and his family very rapidly widened their social horizons to other regions of Gaul in the wake of the Merovingian victory. However, Benignus’ *passio* seems concerned to promote Gregorius’ interests in the small, stable world he dominated before the Frankish conquest: northern *Lugdunensis Prima*. The text speaks to the social and ecclesiastical relationships between Dijon, Autun, Langres, and the secondary settlements that revolved around those cities—without paying much attention to the world beyond that limited network. Neither the years between 532-4 (when that small world was fractured) or after 534 (when its horizons were thrown wide) neatly fit the text. A composition before 532, however, would fit the limited evidence available for the formation of Benignus’ cult, and describe well the known patterns of Lingon communications established through other sources.46

46 Gregory of Tours describes three steps in the cult’s formation (*Gloria martyrum* 50, p. 74): Gregorius’ vision of Benignus and subsequent renovation of his crypt; then, some years later, Gregorius’ reception of the martyr’s *passio*; finally, the construction of the basilica (ordered without delay after receiving the *passio*). Gregory of Tours
Like other sources studied above, Benignus’ *passio* thus seems to illuminate a transitional period in the history of Lingon social connections. While the insecurity of the late fifth century had robbed Lingon long-range communications of their vitality, local horizons were generally stable after 506, notwithstanding the short-lived Frankish invasion of 524. Like an incubator, Burgundian rule sheltered the re-unified Lingon territory and fostered the growth of links to nearby communities. Still, limits remained; the incubator had walls. Attested Lingon ties rarely extended beyond *Lugdunensis Prima, Maxima Sequanorum*, and the northernmost reaches of *Viennensis*. Then, in 534, Frankish armies destroyed the Burgundian kingdom. Lingon elites were ready to meet the world beyond.

thus understood the *passio* to be a little older than the earliest basilica of Saint Benignus, but the foundation-date for that structure is unknown. Carbon dating of mortar from the lowest walls excavated on the site returned a calibrated range of 532 CE +/- 51 (1 sigma); C. Malone, S. Valastro, Jr., and A. G. Varela, “Carbon-14 Chronology of Mortar from Excavations in the Medieval Church of Saint-Bénigne, Dijon, France,” *Journal of Field Archaeology* 7.3 (1980): 329-43, at pp. 330-32. While this confirms the antiquity of the site (but not necessarily the institution), it offers a broad range rather than a single date. Some modern sources give 535 as the approximate year of the basilica’s foundation (e.g., see Malone, “Carbon-14 Chronology” p. 332, fn. 6, citing L. Chomton, *Histoire de l’église Saint-Bénigne de Dijon* [Dijon, 1900], p. 59; Van der Straeten, “Les actes des martyrs d’Aurélien,” p. 129 fn. 5). That date turns out to be untrustworthy. A chain of footnotes leads back to Jacques Vignier’s seventeenth-century claim that the eleventh-century chronicle of the abbey of Saint-Benignus offered a foundation-date of 485, written *CCCCLXXV* (Vignier’s history was first printed centuries later: Jacques Vignier, *Décade historique du diocèse de Langres*, vol. 1 [Langres: Société historique et archéologique de Langres, 1891], p. 415). Vignier asserted that this date was a mistake—that a monk had misread a Latin *L* (50) as a *C* (100)—so he corrected the reading to *CCCCCXXV*, 535. In fact, it was Vignier who had misread. Contrary to his assertion, the abbey chronicle *does not* provide a date for the basilica’s foundation; it dates to “485” the moment when Gregorius first found and moved Benignus’ remains, prior to the creation of the *passio* and the basilica (*Chronique de l’abbaye de Saint-Benigne*, pp. 9-10). Moreover, as the chronicle’s editor noted, its chronography is offset by 28 years, so that 485 refers in fact to 513 CE (ibid., p. 9, fn. 1); problems remain with the chronicle’s internal relative dating, and Bougad, the editor, further emended this date to 511 to harmonize it with the chronicle’s claim that the event occurred during Clovis’ reign). The abbey chronicle also states that Gregorius endowed a monastic community there, and that Pope Hormisdas (who died in 523) confirmed Gregorius’ donations (ibid., p. 10, 15). While one hesitates to believe that claim (see the critique of Jean-Charles Picard, “Dijon,” pp. 62-3), it remains noteworthy that an eleventh-century writer at the site of Benignus’ basilica implied that the structure (and thus too the *passio*) existed between 513-523—well before the Frankish conquest. Note finally, concerning the colorful Jacques Vignier and his Lingon history, that he was not the infamous Jérôme Vignier, forger of Merovingian documents (for the exposé of Jérôme’s frauds see Julien Havet, “Questions Mérovingiennes II. Les découvertes de Jérôme Vignier,” *Bibliothèque de l’école des chartes* 46 [1885]: 205-71, and ibid., vol. 47 [1886]: 335-41, 471-2). Yet our Jacques was in fact Jérôme’s cousin; and a modern author, in describing Jacques Vignier’s work, notes that “one cannot charge him with reticence or even logic in the pursuit of historical truth … his writing abounds in casual error and in hasty unexamined connections.” (Meredith P. Lillich, *The Queen of Sicily and Gothic Stained Glass in Mussy and Tonnerre*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 88.3 [Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1998], p. 113; see also ibid., pp. 2-3).
The end of the Burgundian kingdom in 534 fundamentally altered Lingon communication patterns. Gregorius Attalus continued to govern the see of Langres for several years after the Frankish conquest, until his death in 539 or 540.\(^{47}\) During his final half-decade, Gregorius’ horizons widened dramatically. Only a year after the conquest, he traveled 140 mi/226 km in person to the council of Clermont (535); three years later, in 538, he sent a priest as his delegate to a council at Orléans (likely due to his advanced age; the latter city was 150 mi/242 km from Dijon).\(^{48}\) We have already seen, too, that during these years Gregorius had an “old friend” living at Reims, the priest Paulellus.\(^{49}\)

The movements of Gregorius Attalus’ relatives illustrate even more clearly the expansion of the Lingons’ external ties after the Frankish conquest. In or very close to 534, Gregorius’ granddaughter Armentaria (named after her grandmother) married Florentius, an Arvernian nobleman, and moved south to live with her new husband at Clermont.\(^{50}\) There, she promoted the cult of Saint Benignus, already formalized among the Lingons by Gregorius Attalus.\(^{51}\) Her promotion of Benignus highlights the role of networks of personal and familial relationships in the spread of many late antique Gallic saints’ cults.\(^{52}\) After Florentius’ death ca. 548, the widow

\(^{47}\) Duchesne 2.186 (1910).
\(^{48}\) Duchesne 2.186 (1910).
\(^{50}\) Heinzelmann, *Gregory of Tours*, p. 14.
\(^{51}\) Gregory of Tours, *Gloria martyrum* 50, p. 74.
\(^{52}\) On the importance of aristocratic familial networks in shaping such saintly cults, see Ian Wood, “Topographies of Holy Power,” especially pp. 143-5 on the Benignus cult; see too Raymond Van Dam, *Saints and their Miracles in*
moved back to Burgundy, most likely to Chalon-sur-Saône. A few years later, her young son Gregory (the future historian and bishop of Tours) journeyed from the Auvergne to Tours and to Lyon, where he stayed with his uncle, the metropolitan bishop Nicetius; in his subsequent travels he seems to have developed personal ties to members of the Austrasian royal family. Decades later, Armentaria would visit her son at Tours, after his election as bishop of that city. Other members of their family resided (for example) at Besançon, Geneva, and again at Lyon and Tours. Back in Lingon territory, Gregorius Attalus’ son Tetricus succeeded his father as bishop in 539/40; like his father, he maintained his primary residence at Dijon, not Langres. Tetricus attended church councils at Orléans (549) and Paris (552), and sent a delegate to Lyon (570).

Late Antique Gaul (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 50-68, on Gregory of Tours and his personal connections to various saints’ cults.

53 Gregorius of Tours, Vitr. Martini 3.60, p. 197 (Libri de virtutibus sancti martini episcopi, MGH SRM 1.2, ed. Bruno Krusch [Hannover: 1885], pp. 134-210). It is not clear whether Gregory referred here to Chalon or to Cavaillon (in Provence). Krusch followed the majority of the manuscripts in placing Gregory’s mother at Cavaillon (in territorium Cavellonensis); the text also mentions an interaction with Veranus, bishop of Cavaillon. But Gregory’s family has no other known connection with Cavaillon. Moreover, variant readings include Cavillonensis and Cabillonensis; it is easy to see how late Latin’s frequent interchange between intervocalic $b$ and $v$ could cause scribal confusion between the names of Chalon/Cabillonum and Cavaillon. Even a visit from Veranus may have occurred at Chalon, Guntram’s principal court center, for Veranus worked closely with Guntram. Chalon is the most plausible reading, although we cannot be certain. See Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, p. 14; Brigitte Beaujard, “Chalon-sur-Saône,” in Beaujard et al., Topographie chrétienne des cités de la Gaule des origines au milieu du VIIIe siècle, vol. 4, Province ecclésiastique de Lyon (Lugdunensis Prima) [Paris: de Boccard, 1986], pp. 65-74, at p. 73; Luce Pietri, La ville du Tours du Ixe au IIe siècle: naissance d’une cité chrétienne, Collection de l’École Française de Rome 69 (Rome: 1983), p. 253, fn. 40; Van Dam, Saints and their Miracles, p. 283, fn. 93, 94.

54 On the sources for Gregory’s life prior to his ordination as bishop of Tours, see Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, pp. 29-35; Van Dam, Saints and their Miracles, pp. 50-64.

55 Gregorius of Tours, Vitr. Martini 3.10, p. 185.

56 Gregory’s sister and brother-in-law, Justinus, lived at Besançon, and their (probable) daughter was, ca. 590, prioress in Poitiers (see the prosopographical comments of Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, p. 11); Eufronius, bishop of Tours (556-73) was cousin to Armentaria, Gregory of Tours’ mother (ibid., pp. 16-7); Nicetius, Gregory’s great-uncle, became bishop of Lyon (ibid., p. 21), and Nicetius’ father, Florentinus, had nearly become bishop of Geneva (ibid., p. 22).

57 Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, p. 17; Duchesne 2.186-7 (1910).
This family’s wide-reaching connections across much of Gaul are a far cry from the geographically limited Lingon ties attested during the Burgundian period. Noteworthy, too, is the immediacy of Armentaria’s marriage and of the change in her family’s communication horizons after the arrival of the Franks. Remarkably, Gregory of Tours did not recognize (or did not care to address) the seeming suddenness of this shift. From his late-sixth-century perspective, he may have taken it for granted that his parents could have formed such long-distance ties. Yet both the timing of this marriage and Armentaria’s subsequent mobility across central Gaul strongly suggest that the political changes of 534 rapidly transformed Lingon communications. That is not to say that the new Frankish masters were somehow responsible for the marriage. Even without directly meddling in Lingon social affairs, the Franks simply may have removed barriers long in place under the Burgundians.

The eagerness of Armentaria’s family to cultivate ties with Clermont as soon as such links became possible is striking. Like Armentaria, her Arvernian husband Florentius had family ties to some of Gaul’s noblest aristocrats; the two were well matched, and the family’s prominence in later years indicates the usefulness of the alliance to both sides.58 The fact that both Dijon and Clermont belonged to the Austrasian ruler Theudebert after 534 also must have facilitated this bond.59 Even so, Armentaria’s marriage represents the first documented Lingon connection to Clermont in half a century, since the flight of bishop Aprunculus. Yet this new tie was in place almost as soon as the Franks had conquered the Lingons. Consummation of that alliance, however, apparently was possible only as or after the Burgundians fell. The marriage

58 Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, pp. 11-28.
thus appears to reflect a very rapid move on the part of aristocratic families seeking to exploit decisive political change. Such eagerness to expand the family’s influence as far and as quickly as possible seems in keeping with the ambition—if not the more constrained geographical horizons—latent in the passio Benigni “discovered” for Gregorius earlier in the century.

Sometimes, Merovingian politics were less beneficial to Lingon interests. Attalus, a young relative of bishop Gregorius Attalus, had to travel north in the 530s as a hostage vouching for a peace-treaty between two Merovingian kings. When the two rulers resumed their feuding, Attalus became a slave to a Frankish warrior living near Trier. After the warrior demanded an exorbitant ransom payment, one of Gregorius Attalus’ domestics made his way north and helped Attalus escape. Together, they evaded pursuit and returned successfully to bishop Gregorius Attalus via the route Trier-Reims-Dijon. A different journey ended less happily: sometime between 534-48, a son of the bishop of Verdun (near Metz) led an armed band south to a villa near Dijon. There, they murdered a Frank whose slanders had turned the late king Theuderic against the bishop and his family.

While Merovingian rulers did cause great difficulty for some aristocrats, kings also fostered connections across their territories. Several mid-sixth-century church councils met at the behest of rulers, sometimes to address very specific concerns on behalf of the convoking

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60 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 3.15, pp. 112-16.

61 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 3.15, p. 113: the warrior refused to return Attalus for less than ten pounds of gold. Since bishop Gregorius was among the most prominent of Gallo-Roman elites, his family’s inability (or unwillingness) to pay this much gold may offer insight on the relative value of some gold hoards from sixth-century Gaul. On hoards in Burgundian territory, see Chapter Five, pp. 158-72.

62 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 3.35, pp. 130-31. The villa was Floriacum ... in Divionensi territorio (Fleury-sur-Ouche, ca. 15 km west of Dijon; see ibid., p. 130, fn. 4). For the date: the event occurred between the deaths of kings Theuderic and his son Theudebert (ibid., 3.35-36, p. 131).
monarchs. Yet the foibles and feuds of Merovingian rulers made for some uneasy relations with Gallo-Roman leaders. In 555, the rebellious prince Chramn came to Dijon. Bishop Tetricus met him outside the walls and granted him communion, yet refused him entry to the city. According to Gregory of Tours, even later in the century Gaul’s rulers would remember Tetricus as an outspoken, prophetic critic.

Tetricus’ physical decline and then death in 572 led to a melodramatic series of ill-fated episcopal successions. Even so, these episodes exemplify the busy communications of Lingon ecclesiastics late in the sixth century. Before Tetricus’ demise, the Lingons had recognized his deterioration and had arranged in advance for the election of one Munderic. Since Tetricus still lived, however, the bishop-elect Munderic received the administration of the Lingon town of Tonnerre (62 mi/100 km northwest of Dijon), where he was to serve as an archipresbiter until the death of Tetricus. Before Munderic could become bishop of all the Lingons, however, he ran into political trouble. During a recent war, Munderic (some alleged) had given material aid to King Sigibert while that monarch opposed Guntramn, king of Frankish Burgundy (which included Langres and Dijon). Guntramn’s men hauled Munderic south to a tower near the Rhône, where he spent two years in captivity. Although he then gained parole under the custody of Nicetius, bishop of Lyon, Munderic soon realized that he would not regain his privileged

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63 Examples of royally convened councils attended by Lingon bishops or delegates include those at Clermont (535), Orléans (549), Paris (552), and Lyon (570). See Gregory I. Halfond, *The Archaeology of Frankish Church Councils, AD 511-768* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 91-4, 226-29; on Frankish kings and conciliar legislation more broadly, see ibid., pp. 142-58.


67 Gregory of Tours, *Hist.* 5.5, pp. 201.
position at Dijon. So, like a latter-day Aprunculus of Langres, he fled by night (from Lyon) and made his way to southwestern Gaul, where King Sigibert appointed him a bishop.⁶⁸

With Munderic now unavailable for their episcopate, the Lingons nominated Silvester, a member of the family of Gregorius Attalus and Tetricus.⁶⁹ Silvester, however, was an epileptic, and died from a seizure before he could be consecrated at Lyon. Several associates of the church of Dijon next accused Petrus, a deacon, of having murdered Silvester by witchcraft. Petrus was the brother of Gregory of Tours, and although a native of Clermont, was a member of Tetricus’ family; he apparently had given up his own claim to the episcopate in order to support his uncle Silvester.⁷⁰ With great oaths, Petrus cleared his name before an assembly at Lyon, in the presence of Nicetius of Lyon, Syagrius of Autun, many other ecclesiastics and a number of secular potentates.⁷¹ His chief accuser, Silvester’s son, was unsatisfied; he slew Petrus and fled as an outlaw to the kingdom of Chilperic. The Lingons buried Petrus at Dijon, near the tomb of his relatives Gregorius Attalus and Tetricus. Rumors of his death spread as far west as Nantes, in the lower Loire basin.⁷²

After Silvester’s premature death, Dijon received a new (and unpopular, according to Gregory of Tours) bishop named Pappolus, formerly the archdeacon at Autun. Gregory of Tours

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⁶⁸ Gregory of Tours, Hist. 5.5, pp. 201; see ibid., fn. 4, on the possible locations of his see in southwestern Gaul.

⁶⁹ Gregory of Tours, Hist. 5.5, pp. 201; Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, p. 15.

⁷⁰ Gregory of Tours, Hist. 5.5, pp. 201-02; Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, pp. 11, 15.

⁷¹ The prominence in these episodes of bishop Nicetius of Lyon illustrates the ongoing ecclesiastical relationship between that city and the northern civitates of Lugdunensis Prima. The Frankish division of the Burgundian kingdom in 534 had separated Lyon and Mâcon from Autun, Chalon and Dijon/Langres (Ewig, “Die fränkischen Teilungen,” pp. 130-1), but by the time of Peter’s trial at Lyon, King Guntram “of Burgundy” held the entirety of Lugdunensis Prima.

⁷² Felix, bishop of Nantes, wrote a nasty letter to Gregory, in which he mentioned a rumor that Gregory’s brother Peter had died after killing his own bishop: Gregory of Tours, Hist. 5.5, p. 200. However, on this letter and the likelihood that the two bishops later reconciled, see William C. McDermott, “Felix of Nantes: A Merovingian Bishop,” Traditio 31 (1975): 1-24.
claimed that Pappolus acted badly, and that after his death the Lingons buried him not at Dijon but at Langres. Most likely, this represents not a renaissance for the latter city, but rather an unwillingness to bury Pappolus alongside the revered Gregorius Attalus and his kin. The next bishop, while a Lingon, was also an outsider to that family. Mummolus, called “the Good,” had been abbot of Iohannes’ monastery at Reomaus. Although he was a local, Mummolus’ selection immediately after that of an Aeduan is interesting: the Lingons were no longer nominating members of Gregorius Attalus’ extended family. Perhaps no viable candidates from that clan remained—after all, both Silvester and Petrus, presumably the most promising candidates, had just died. On the other hand Munderic, elected before Silvester (and then exiled), apparently was not part of that clan. With Munderic, Pappolus, and Mummolus, the Lingons seem to have explored alternatives to the family that had dominated the local church for most of the century.

Whatever the shape of such local power struggles, some sixth-century travelers connected the Lingons to very distant regions. But long-range connections could be dangerous. Abbot Iohannes of Reomaus reportedly healed a man who may have caught malaria while campaigning in Italy. The dreaded “Justinianic” plague reached Gaul in 543, and struck again on several

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75 *Vita Iohannis Reomaensis* 15, p. 513. The afflicted man had quartan fever (he was sick with *quartano inquomodo* [i.e. *inquomodo*]), a malarial infection which recurs on each fourth day (on malarial fever, especially in antiquity, see Robert Sallares, *Malaria and Rome: A History of Malaria in Ancient Italy* [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002], p. 9-12; Sallares notes that the quartan fever, although the safest form of true malaria, is one of the more reliable indications of a true malarial infection, rather than infection by some other pathogen). It seems quite likely that that the man with malaria had come from Italy. Iohannes’ *vita* describes the man immediately after narrating the return of Theudebert’s armies from Italy; we know from other sources that Theudebert’s soldiers suffered greatly from what seems to have been malaria during the Italian invasion (539): see e.g. Gregory of Tours, *Hist. 3.32*, p. 128 (*diversis febris*); Marius of Avenches, *Chronicle*, an. 539, p. 74 links the Italian illnesses to “the unhealthiness of the place,” *loqui infirmitate*; Justin Favrod, *La Chronique de Marius d’Avenches* (455-481). *Texte,*
occasions later in the century. During the 543 outbreak, Iohannes also healed a man with plague, who had just returned to his own Lingon property from Paris. We do not know where that victim picked up the disease, but as the 543 epidemic is known to have reached at least as far north as Reims, he might have been infected at Paris, or at any point along the journey home. The outbreak that year also ravaged Clermont, Bourges, Lyon, Chalon—and Dijon. While horrifyingly destructive, the disease’s advance into central and northern Gaul demonstrates that communication routes between those cities and the Mediterranean were open, since the plague spread via the transport networks that linked distant communities.

In happier times, such distant contacts recovered. As we noted earlier, Gregory of Tours described late-sixth-century Dijon as a large and prosperous urban center, and wondered why it was not named the official

traduction et commentaire (Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, 1991). The return from the Italian expedition, therefore, seems to provide the context for the appearance in the vita of the man with malarial symptoms.


77 Vita Iohannis Reomaensis 17, pp. 514-15: the man was suffering “ulcerae pessima,” from a very bad sore, due to a sickness which had spread “passim per Galiae finibus,” everywhere throughout the boundaries of Gaul. Unlike the uses of finibus Galliarum discussed above, p. 15 fn. 45, this clearly implies (at least rhetorically) universal extent rather than a specific locale. That description, along with Iohannes’ advanced age and likely death-date ca. 544, indicate that this episode involved the 543 outbreak of plague rather than one of the cycles of plague or pox later in the century (see Krusch’s comments, Vita Iohannis Reomaensis, p. 502, and p. 514, fn. 2).


79 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 4.31, pp. 164-6.

seat of the Lingon *civitas*. Gregory also favorably compared Dijon’s local wines to the prestigious white vintages the Lingons might import from Ashkelon, in far-off Palestine.\(^8\) Gregory’s point was to praise Dijon’s viticulture, but his remark confirms the ongoing viability of the eastern Mediterranean wine trade, and its penetration into central Gaul at least as far north as Lingon territory.

**Conclusions**

After 534, elite Lingons’ communications expanded dramatically across Gaul. The immediacy of that expansion indicates that the Frankish conquest was responsible for that communications revival. That is not to say that such ties generally depended for their motive force upon royal patrons—as does seem to have been the case with many of the contemporary long-distance ties of Autun. While some Lingon movements certainly stemmed from royal action, others appear to have been relatively autonomous, and still others were somewhere in the middle; Armentaria’s marriage, for example, probably reflected opportunism by elite families taking advantage of political change. The events of 534 offered such elites many advantages; in breaking the Burgundian frontier, Frankish kings reintroduced Lingons to the broader world of Gaul.

Armentaria’s was a prestigious family, however, close to the pinnacle of Gallo-Roman aristocratic capabilities in the new Merovingian society. Some of the apparent vibrancy of Lingon communications attested by historical evidence after 534 could stem from Gregory of

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Tours’ recurring attention to the affairs of his prominent relatives. Yet source bias alone cannot explain away the patterns in our written evidence. For one thing, Gregory’s focus on his relatives was by no means absolute. Moreover, Gregory’s own scattered descriptions reveal a contrast between his family’s experiences under Burgundian and Frankish rule, a contrast that the historian-bishop himself did not emphasize and may not even have recognized. As we have seen, the Passio Benigni, almost certainly written for (if not by) a member of Gregory’s family, powerfully supports that contrast. It shows that the patterns implicit in Gregory’s descriptions of early-sixth-century affairs accurately reflect his Lingon ancestors’ mental horizons at that time. That does not rule out the possibility that the family’s interests as a whole have skewed our picture, but it does argue for the general reliability of the patterns Gregory perhaps unconsciously revealed.

Other evidence, not produced by Gregory’s family, corroborates the sense of expanding horizons after 534. As we have seen, the vita of Iohannes of Reomaus illustrates the same pattern of a small world broken open by the Frankish conquest. One should note too the general fit between Lingon patterns after 506 and the ties attested among their contemporary Aeduan neighbors; the limited Lingon evidence is consistent with the broader regional picture for communications under Burgundian rule, a picture less dependent on information supplied by Gregory’s family. Finally, as Chapters Five and Six will show, entirely independent material

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82 Heinzelmann, Gregory of Tours, pp. 7-11, stresses that scholars often overestimate Gregory’s attention to his own relatives. Gregory often omitted to mention his relatedness to persons in his narratives, including very prominent individuals such as Sacerdos of Lyon, who “came from a patrician family and was the principal Reichsbischof of Childebert I” (ibid., p. 9); moreover, “Gregory’s self-consciousness as an author was formed principally from the exceptional value he placed on his quality as a bishop … he viewed his origins from a great Gallo-Roman senatorial family as little more than the personal requirements for achieving his position in the world and for the exercise of episcopal office. After all, it was a background he shared with the majority of his colleagues” (ibid., p. 11). Gregory, then, did not think that shared ancestry was the most important feature of all his relatives, and he did not think that his relatives were the only important actors in his narratives.
evidence—coins, and in less detail, ceramics—will provide further corroboration of the general patterns we have detected in our written sources. Numismatic evidence from *Lugdunensis Prima* during this period includes some foreign coins from the south (indicating at least indirect connection with southern territories), but there is little to no evidence of northern, Frankish coins until after the Frankish conquest—broadly corroborating the same patterns revealed by textual evidence for contemporary communications. While Gregorius Attalus and his family dominate our view of Lingon communications, we have multiple good reasons to see that picture as essentially reliable.

Given all these factors, we might turn the importance of Gregory’s family on its head. Two of the milestones in their history notably coincide with key political events in the region: Gregorius Attalus began his stable, well-attested career as bishop of Langres at roughly the same time as Clovis’ defeat of the Alamans, and Gregory’s mother and father united Dijon and Clermont no more, it seems, than a year after the Frankish conquest of Burgundy. While the family’s records have unquestionably colored our picture of Burgundian history, it seems too that the region’s political history was decisive in shaping the family’s fortunes. Gregorius Attalus’ episcopal horizons and Armentaria’s nuptial voyage depended on the affairs of distant kings. Rather than a screen obscuring the broader experience of Lingon elites, we can take Gregory’s well-documented family connections as samples of alert Lingon responses to contemporary political changes. These samples reveal both the autonomous efforts of Lingon elites to forge strong connections, and the pervasive effects of regnal politics, which redrew the boundaries of the possible—or at least the prudent—again and again.

Over time, the possibilities expanded. Ironically, Lingon ties across Gaul ca. 560 appear to have been stronger and more extensive than they had been a century earlier, despite the
collapse of imperial power and the “coming of the barbarians.” After about 450, Lingon communications had become anemic and unstable, stifled by frontier tensions between warring barbarian polities. But the relative military stabilization of the local frontier in the first decade of the sixth century had allowed Lingon elites to form new ties, albeit almost entirely within the Burgundian kingdom’s northern core. Finally, the conquest of 534 had opened Lingon horizons, and had allowed new connections across much of Gaul. In each phase, the strength and direction of this civitas’ external ties depended on grand political events beyond local control. Yet the relationship between political change and shifting communications here was not always straightforward. In each period, some Lingons crossed “international” boundaries, while others forged ties constrained by the borders of whatever polity then dominated Langres and Dijon. While the number and reach of attested distant movements increased during the Merovingian era, it is not yet clear whether the Franks added some stimulus that had been missing under the Burgundians, or merely removed obstacles that those predecessors had imposed. What is clear is that the Lingons’ experience of the Roman Empire’s end involved neither apocalyptic ruin nor painless continuity. Theirs was a more complex story; it began with considerable disruption and the contraction of horizons, but it turned in the 530s to new birth and fresh expansion. The new horizons may have been narrower than in the old imperial days, but they did not look dark.
Chapter Five:

Buried Treasures and Hidden Networks
On Easter Sunday of 1845, in a pasture in Burgundy, a young girl scraped the soil with her foot—and revealed the bright gleam of a gold coin. A month later, she returned to the field with a companion and a pickaxe. They began to dig, but soon stopped and fled in horror; they had disturbed (or so they thought) a priest’s grave. In fact, the ground below them held no grave, but a golden platter, a chalice, and a treasure of many gold coins.1

The discovery occurred at the village of Gourdon, described evocatively by one nineteenth-century Frenchman as “at the western extremity of the arrondissement of Chalon-sur-Saône, and isolated from the great routes of communication … the Siberia of the pagus Cabillonensis.”2 However remote their former resting place, the coins soon spread across France, thanks to various legal and illegal transactions (after two Gourdon locals commandeered the treasure, a series of civil and criminal proceedings led to the public auction in 1846 of 104 coins).3 Because of this rapid dissemination, only a partial reconstruction of the hoard’s contents is now possible. The available evidence, however, suggests that the Gourdon treasure contained money struck in the kingdom of the Burgundians, and that the coins had last seen daylight during the mid-520s.4

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1 Henri-Antoine Petit, “Le trésor de Gourdon: problèmes juridiques, numismatiques, et historiques,” Revue de La Physiophile [sic], sciences naturelles, histoire, archéologie en Bourgogne du sud, new ser., 118 (June, 1993): 9-20; see 9-10 on the initial discovery. Petit’s essay is essential reading for any scholar interested in the Gourdon treasure, but the article is little known in Anglophone circles. I am very grateful to Jacques Meissonnier for bringing this study to my attention. See discussion on pp. 158-69 below.


4 Scholars more commonly follow the great numismatist Jean Lafaurie in dating the Gourdon hoard’s deposition to the mid-530s; see Jean Lafaurie, “Séance de 19 Mars/Le trésor de Gourdon,” Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France (1958): 61-76. Instead, I follow the dating argued for by Henri-Antoine Petit, “Le trésor de Gourdon.” On the reasons for that date, see below, pp. 164-8.
Such gold pieces belong to the so-called pseudo-imperial coinage of late antiquity.⁵ Amid the military and political turmoil of the fifth century, the supply of official coins struck by imperial mints dwindled across the western Roman world. Once the early barbarian kingdoms had restored a modicum of order, however, many of them began to strike their own coins. However, these coins still bore the names of emperors ruling in far-off Constantinople (thus the label “pseudo-imperial”), and they retained the denominational structure in use by official imperial mints. Far from “counterfeits,” in the pejorative modern sense, such coins were creative responses to the shortage of official money; pseudo-imperial minting generally reflected an eagerness to sustain the monetary systems of the late Roman world. In addition to pseudo-imperial gold, some western regimes also minted other coins of lesser value, using silver and bronze. The primary denomination, however, was the gold solidus (plural solidi); a smaller gold coin, the tremissis (plural tremisses) was worth a third of a solidus. Although the geographic origin of many pseudo-imperial pieces remains unclear, stylistic patterns and even royal monograms help to identify the regimes responsible for numerous coins. When a coin’s attribution is unknown, the location of its discovery (its findspot) does not always clarify its place of origin, for many pseudo-imperial coins traveled widely and across borders. For example, one gold tremissis struck for the Burgundian king Godomar late in the 520s found its way to the Pas-de-Calais in northern France; a contemporary coin found in the same département had come from the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy.⁶

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⁵ For an introduction to pseudo-imperial coinages and for more on the material discussed in this paragraph, see Philip Grierson and Mark Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, with a Catalogue of the Coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, vol. 1, The Early Middle Ages (5th-10th Centuries) (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 12-116; for the coinages relevant to this study, see especially pp. 33-8 (Ostrogoths), 44-9 (Visigoths), 74-7 (Burgundians), 81-117 (Merovingian Franks).

Such long-distance coin movements are of great value for the historian of communications. Because we know the approximate date and the place (or at least region) of origin for many coins, they offer a proxy record of human travel across Gaul; some person or persons physically transported these coins. Where we have enough data to investigate the aggregate movements of many coins, the analytical possibilities become very powerful. In recent years, new publications have broken fertile ground on the study of coin distributions in late antique Gaul and early medieval France. These studies rely in great part on a monumental national inventory for early medieval coins found in France, a 2003 work by Jean Lafaurie and Jacqueline Pilet-Lemière (hereafter in this chapter: LPL). For example, Michael McCormick has used the LPL inventory to describe the monetary history of the Moselle département from the fifth through the eighth centuries, and to refine the standard periodizations of monetary and economic history in northern Gaul. Michael Metcalf has produced a rich study of coin distributions across the entirety of France, albeit only for the years 561-674 -- the age of the so-called national or moneyers’ coinage (which replaced Gaul’s pseudo-imperial money). Among other techniques, Metcalf uses fall-off analysis of the distances between coins’ mints and findspots to reveal patterns in the economic activities of the central Merovingian period.

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Ostrogothic coin: 62.889.1). Note that I will cite this work as LPL. LPL’s numerical citations describe the French département and then the commune in which a coin-find occurred, and finally the ranking of coin-finds within a commune. 62.603.1 thus lists the first coin that LPL records for commune #603—Nesles—in département 62, Pas-de-Calais.

7 LPL; see fn. 6 above.


Scholars have not yet used LPL effectively to assess the broad distribution, across all of France, of the pseudo-imperial coins struck from the late fifth through the mid-sixth century. There is, however, a two-fold consensus model for such coins’ movements across Gaul. First, the consensus recognizes regional differentiation -- particularly a split between northern and southern Gaul. Separate coin-types dominated production in each region; gold coins from Frankish Neustria and Austrasia typically used the so-called “Victory, Globe, and Cross” (VGC) reverse type, while coins from Aquitania or the Rhône basin (even after the Frankish conquests of those regions) commonly bore instead a “Victory, Palm, and Wreath” (VPW) type. Circulation patterns also reveal the broad north-south regional split. Coins found in the south include more Mediterranean issues, such as Ostrogothic or genuine imperial coins, but such coins are more rare in the north.

Despite such regional differentiation, numismatists also have emphasized a second aspect of pseudo-imperial circulation: long-distance movement. We have already noted that such coins could travel quite far; for some scholars, this “internationalism” is a key feature of pseudo-imperial movements. For example, when Xavier Barral i Altet mapped Visigothic coin findspots in 1976, revealing a sweep of findspots linking Spain and the North Sea, he highlighted their “uniformité de circulation.” More recently, Sebastian Heath and David Yoo have used Gallic hoard evidence to suggest that pseudo-imperial tremisses “circulated fairly freely, without much


regard to political boundaries.” A recent study of the Burgundian kingdom nods briefly to LPL’s map of pseudo-imperial findspots, and notes that Burgundian coins “diffused along the Rhône-Saône axis out to the limits of Gaul.”

Burgundian coins are particularly important, if we wish to understand more clearly how long-range coin movements penetrated and linked Gaul’s separate monetary regions. Although their kingdom fell to the Merovingians in 534, the Burgundian Gibichung dynasty was an influential force in the power politics of the early sixth-century West. No less importantly, the kingdom’s location makes the study of Burgundian circulation patterns a useful step toward the full history, still waiting to be written, of pseudo-imperial coin distributions. As we have seen, Burgundian-controlled territory straddled the Rhône-Saône basins of central-eastern Gaul, a strategic crossroads for many centuries before and after late antiquity. The forces that shaped coin movements into, within, and from this region therefore have major implications for Gaul’s broader monetary history—if the region’s ancient role as a funnel for north-south movements continued under the Burgundian kings. Scholars sometimes assume that the kingdom preserved that traditional pattern, without testing that assumption.

We need to test it, for scattered studies hint that the Burgundian evidence fits poorly with a vision of robust “international” exchanges. For example, although Grierson and Blackburn noted evidence for market activity in Burgundian territory, they also argued that the simplistic

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15 See the Introduction, pp. 26-7.
mono-denominational structure of Burgundian copper coinage implied a somewhat restrained level of “commerce” in the early sixth-century Rhône valley.\textsuperscript{16} But copper coins were most suitable for small-scale interactions, the stuff of daily life. What about the circulation of gold? When Heath and Yoon emphasized the free movement across borders of sixth-century \textit{tremisses}, they conceded that the Gourdon treasure -- the hoard that the peasant girl discovered near Chalon in 1845, in formerly Burgundian territory -- “suggests a circulation pattern with a greater emphasis on political boundaries” than other contemporary assemblages. Nonetheless, they insisted that “too little is known about the Gourdon hoard for one to be certain that it contradicted this pattern” of unrestricted movements.\textsuperscript{17} To emphasize what we might call the “internationalism” of gold flows, then, it was necessary to downplay the evidence from Gourdon. As these examples show, the little that we know about coin movements inside the Burgundian kingdom is in tension with the most optimistic visions of pseudo-imperial circulation. That is not to say that the consensus model for pseudo-imperial circulation in Gaul is necessarily wrong, but rather that the Burgundian evidence may not fit that picture.

Beyond the kingdom, however, some Burgundian coins did travel south to the shores of the Mediterranean and north to the Channel, as Katalin Escher recently has reminded us.\textsuperscript{18} Some Burgundian coins, then, did travel “internationally.” But without further elaboration, that statement elides significant gaps and concentrations on the distribution map for Burgundian coin finds (which I will discuss in detail in Chapter Six). Such gaps could simply reflect lacunae in the surviving coin-evidence, of course, but they might instead reflect real forces that shaped,

\textsuperscript{16} Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European Coinage}, vol. 1, p. 75.

\textsuperscript{17} Heath and Yoon, “A Sixth-Century Tremissis from Psalmodi,” p. 69.

restrained, or redirected flows of sixth-century coinage. We must take that latter possibility seriously, and ask probing questions about the patterns within the coin data. We should not, then, equate the long range of pseudo-imperial movements with “uniformity of circulation.”

Scholars certainly should appreciate the scope of long-range coin movements, but we also need to identify and explain variations within coins’ broad “international” distribution.

This chapter and the next therefore seek to illuminate the known coin movements associated with the Burgundian kingdom. This heretofore-unprecedented study covers both the circulation of coins within Burgundian territory and also the movements of Burgundian coins exported beyond that realm’s frontiers. This entails at least 135 coins from four (or possibly five) hoards, thirty-seven single finds (some of which included more than one coin—whether lost at different times on the same site, or buried in a small “mini-hoard”), and five questionable coins possibly linked to the Burgundians. The corpus of Burgundian coins found in France is thus small, but not negligible, especially given that the Burgundian kings issued known coins for little more than about four decades.

The broad outlines of the kingdom’s monetary history seem clear (at least for the kingdom’s last three kings, Gundobad, Sigismund, and Godomar). Yet artifact distribution maps are easily misinterpreted; aggregate findspots can suggest, but will not prove, artifacts’

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19 Barral i Altet used those words to characterize the flow of sixth-century Visigothic coins across Spain and France, even though his own distribution map clearly showed areas of scarcity and concentration—particularly in Burgundy. Barral i Altet, *La circulation des monnaies Suèves et Visigotiques*, pp. 146-7.

20 The exact contents of some of the hoards went unrecorded, and so the 135 coins listed is a minimum number. I describe the hoards in detail later in this chapter, and the 37 Burgundian single finds (NB: not coins but finds, which in some cases involve more than a single coin from the same site) and dubia in Chapter Six.

direction and means of travel. It will prove rewarding, therefore, to read LPL’s numismatic evidence alongside the Burgundian-era communication patterns already discovered through textual sources and described in previous chapters. Although the two types of sources are wholly independent, they present patterns that are surprisingly close, and which therefore corroborate and enrich one another. This study thus aims not only to describe the Burgundian coin data in unprecedented detail, but also to situate that data within a coherent interdisciplinary vision of social and economic networks under the Burgundian regime.

In doing so, we will need to think carefully about why coins traveled. Related to that question is the important debate on the importance of market factors in ancient and early medieval economies. In the mid-twentieth century, the dominant view reflected primitivist models of ancient economies, as seen in works by Moses Finley, A. H. M. Jones, and the anthropologist Karl Polanyi. Primitivists argued that ancient economies likely did not function similarly to those of modern societies. Instead, they argued, market forces in classical antiquity generally were important only at a local level for trade in local products; no vast system of interconnected markets unified the Empire’s economy. Instead, long-distance resource shipments typically reflected non-market forces, whether driven by the state or by mostly self-sufficient private actors, such as great aristocrats or the Church. In a slightly different position,
C. R Whittaker argued for late Roman “tied trade” by agents beholden to the interests of the state or private landowners. Though he suggested that tied trade skewed the market, he rejected the starkly primitivist ideas that large private estates and their agents were self-sufficient, or that elites had little interest in profits.24 Still, as late as 1984 an archaeologist could write that, until the barbarian conquests, “given the ‘tied’ status of traders during the late Empire and the control of the State ... there seems to have been little scope for major profit by traders or consumers of exchanged commodities after the third century AD.”25

In recent years, however, a new consensus has supported a more substantivist vision of the Roman economy. Economist Peter Temin has argued influentially that the evidence from the Roman imperial period only makes sense in light of the operation of market forces.26 Major synthetic works now give much credence to an entrepreneurial spirit and desire for profit among Roman merchants.27 The new understanding has not abandoned primitivists’ concerns wholesale, however. Rather, much leading scholarship now argues that the late Roman economy followed market forces, even if it did so in ways conditioned by the state’s non-market influence. In fact, Keith Hopkins has suggested that Roman taxation in coin indirectly stimulated the market economy by requiring producers to exchange some of their surplus for currency suitable

for tax-paying; Chris Wickham has argued that government perks for African merchants transporting *annona* grain shipments to Italy gave them a comparative advantage—with ripple effects across other north African industries, strengthening African wares’ share of the Mediterranean market.²⁸

But how did market forces fare after the imperial system collapsed? Did pseudo-imperial coins change hands for the same reasons that money had moved in the fourth and fifth centuries? Money mattered in the sixth-century West, but it could have many uses, a point Grierson emphasized long ago in his famous challenge to the idea of exclusively commercial coin movements in early medieval Europe.²⁹ The Burgundians’ law code (the *Liber constitutionum*) prescribed diverse fines in gold for various crimes, paid in some cases both to victims and to the royal fisc.³⁰ The availability of gold for such payments might reflect social and political bonds, but not necessarily a broader market economy. Neither does reference to gold coinage in the law code necessarily indicate that actual coins changed hands; coins, perhaps, could serve as a


³⁰ *Liber constitutionum sive lex Gundobada: Leges Burgundionum, MGH Legum sectio 1, Legum nationum Germanicarum* 2.1, ed. L. R. De Salis (Hannover: 1892: repr., 1973), pp. 29-122. For example, Liber Const. 5, p. 45, prescribes a payment of one *solidus* per blow given to a free man; but the offending party had also to pay a six-*solidi* fine to the crown.
nominal standard of value, so that an animal (for example) or other asset valued at so many *solidi* might serve as adequate compensation.\(^{31}\)

Still, there is good evidence for market-driven activities in the Burgundian kingdom, even if they (naturally) did not account for all coin movements. There is likely no other explanation for the Burgundian bronze coins found in great quantity at Lyon. Such coins almost certainly fueled low-value, “everyday” market transactions in the capital, although evidence for such monetized market activity is rare outside Lyon.\(^{32}\) Many gold coins struck by Burgundian kings have also been found across Burgundian territory. Foreign coins struck during the Burgundian kings’ tenures have also appeared in former Burgundian territories, although their archaeological contexts do not allow firm dating of their deposition. Still, as I discuss in Chapter Six, we have good reason to think that moderate numbers of foreign coins from Italy or the Empire did circulate in the Burgundian kingdom, along with many more gold coins struck locally.\(^{33}\)

In fact, one Burgundian law not only describes such circulation, but confirms that gold coins did fuel market transactions— and that the kings recognized and facilitated that role. Although the edict is anonymous, Godomar, the final Burgundian ruler, probably was the issuer.\(^{34}\) The king commanded:

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\(^{31}\) I owe this point to Michael McCormick.

\(^{32}\) I discuss these finds in detail in Chapter Six, pp. 178-9.

\(^{33}\) See Chapter Six, pp. 176-8.

\(^{34}\) The law code of the Burgundians, as it now stands, appears to combine several stages of legislation and editing. Gundobad most likely made a codification and modification of existing law ca. 502, but the surviving text includes further modifications and additions by Sigismund and Godomar. See Justin Favrod, *Histoire politique du royaume Burgonde, 443-534*, Bibliothèque historique vaudoise 113 (Lausanne: Bibliothèque historique vaudoise, 1997), pp. 24-7.
...that it be observed\textsuperscript{35} concerning mints\textsuperscript{36} of \textit{solidi} that all gold should be accepted, whoever may offer\textsuperscript{37} it, save for four coins only, that is: \textit{“Valentiani;”} the former coinage of Geneva; also the Gothic coins that were debased in the time of king Alaric; and \textit{“Adaricianos.”} We also order that if anybody should not accept proffered gold, except for these four coins, he shall lose that thing that he was wanting to sell, without getting the price for it.\textsuperscript{38}

According to this law, the stated purpose for the circulation of gold coinage (in one context, at least) was economic and indeed commercial, rather than purely social. Coins enabled Burgundians to buy and sell commodities. The law also portrayed the pool of gold money in circulation as at least potentially international, singling out some foreign and domestic coins and commanding that all others should not be restricted, whatever their geographic and political origin. Scholars naturally have sought to identify the four unacceptable kinds of coinage, but

\textsuperscript{35} Following De Salis’ suggested reading, I have taken \textit{custodire} here as passive, i.e. \textit{custodiri} (\textit{Leg. Burg., const. extra.} 21.7, p. 120, line 31 [apparatus]), that reading fits with the construction (or at least required sense) of other passages across the \textit{Liber Constitutionum}: see 7.1, p. 48 (\textit{id volumus custodiri, ut...}); 24.3, p. 62 (\textit{praecipimus custodire—but the sense here demands custodiri}); 27.2, p. 64 (\textit{custodiri ut}).

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Moneta} may refer to a mint that strikes coins, but also to the coin itself; in late antique contexts the form \textit{monetis} typically refers to the issuing mint rather than the coins—particularly in legal texts (TLL, vol. 8, p. 1413, lin. 56—p. 1415, lin. 72; note especially the citations of \textit{Cod. Theod.} 9.21.3, 9.21.7, 9. 21.8). But sufficient ambiguity of usage exists to permit the form \textit{moneta}, used later in this Burgundian passage, to refer either to mints or to coins. Unfortunately, the choice of translation bears on the implications of the evidence here. Coins, rather than mints, seem the better fit for \textit{Gotici, qui ... adaerati sunt} (“the Gothic ones, which were devalued/debased...;” see below, fn. 38) since coins may be debased and mints do the debasing. I have therefore translated \textit{monetis} as “mints” and \textit{moneta} as “coins,” but the precise meaning remains ambiguous. The point, either way, is to single out four identifiable categories of gold coinage which are not to be recognized as legal tender, and to issue a blanket statement endorsing all other categories of gold coinage.

\textsuperscript{37} I have followed the ms. A4 variant readings of \textit{pesaverit} and \textit{pesatum}, instead of \textit{pensaverit} and \textit{pensantem} (see next fn.); in both cases, the variant makes much better sense of the text. \textit{Peso} is an obscure Christian Latin word used as an equivalent to \textit{paro}, “prepare, offer, provide” (see TLL vol. 10.1, p. 1915, ll. 63-65, which cites a single use of \textit{pesat} in a \textit{Vetus Latina} text of Psalm 146.8, in place of the Vulgate’s \textit{parat terrae pluvium}, “He provides rain to the earth”). Further philological investigation of this reading may prove rewarding.

those four were the exceptions among circulating gold coins, not the rule.\textsuperscript{39} Whatever the identity of those exceptions, the text makes clear that gold coins did facilitate high-value sales in the Burgundian kingdom, and that the Burgundian regime recognized and placed its authority behind market-driven monetary exchange.

The evidence for at least sporadic monetized markets in some parts of sixth-century (and even fifth-century) Gaul is growing more and more compelling.\textsuperscript{40} To be clear, nothing in this study takes aim at that general picture. But the Burgundian kingdom will appear here as a somewhat paradoxical anomaly, inviting us to think more deeply about late antique Gaul’s perceived norms. Aware of regional loyalties and Gibichung rhetoric, scholars typically view the Burgundian kingdom as the most pro-imperial of Gaul’s successor states; Ian Wood has even described the kingdom as “essentially a late Roman province, run by late Roman officials.”\textsuperscript{41}

Yet texts and (as we will see) coins reveal a wide gap between the Burgundians’ aspirations and the lived reality of most of their subjects. Ironically, it was the “less Roman” Merovingians, not the Burgundians, who subsequently renewed the mid-level regional horizons of the Rhône-Saône communities. Market forces unquestionably drove some movements across Burgundian territory, but our evidence suggests that the political relationship between kingdoms could trump

\textsuperscript{39} See, e.g., Lafaurie, “Les monnaies frappées à Lyon au VIe siècle,” pp. 195-6. I discuss this law and the possible identities of the four prohibited coins further in Chapter Six, pp. 199-200.


those forces. Even as scholars reveal the active markets of sixth-century Gaul, we must account for the local variations within “international” market patterns. Despite the Rhône-Saône’s ancient role as a funnel for communications, many economic movements in the decades before 534 may have flowed around -- not through -- Burgundian territory.

This study aims to illuminate the history of communication -- whether or not economic motives drove movements. From the perspective of economic history, however, my approach calls for justification. Hoards and grave finds required the deliberate deposition of specific coins; in a savings hoard, for example, the depositor may have selected the highest-quality coins available. As that possibility illustrates, hoards may not represent a truly random sample of all coins in circulation across the surrounding territory. For this reason, some numismatists eschew inclusion of such coin finds in distribution studies.\(^{42}\) Instead, they focus on the distribution of stray finds—coins found singly and apparently lost by accident.

On the other hand, there are real advantages to studying both hoards and single finds together. Some emergency hoards, buried on short notice, may have contained most or even all of the coins in their owner’s possession. In such cases, these hoards may indeed offer a nearly random sample of coins in circulation at the moment of deposition. Hoards offer further advantages.\(^{43}\) We often can date a hoard’s deposition with some precision, thanks to the ensemble of dated coins making up the find. Similarly, coins found in graves may accompany datable artifacts, which help to identify the coin’s deposition date. Stray coin finds offer much less chronological certainty. A coin minted in 520 may have fallen to the ground in that same

\(^{42}\) Metcalf, “Monetary Circulation in Merovingian Gaul,” 340.

\(^{43}\) For a discussion of the advantages discussed in this paragraph, and for a further example of mutual attentiveness to hoards and single coin finds, see McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, p. 439.
year; on the other hand, it may have done so two generations later. Deposition closer to the date of minting may seem logical, but can in no case be taken for granted. In fact, the problem is exacerbated for high-value coins, which owners presumably tried to recover with greater determination when lost. Compared to other coins, then, freshly minted gold pieces may have been less likely to disappear into the ground when new. Finally, coins in hoards and in graves, if found at some distance from their places of minting, still reflect human movement. Since communication itself is central to this study, I include hoards and grave goods here, though the relevant caveats remain important. Doing so carefully allows us to harness the advantages of each class of evidence. Encouragingly, the patterns suggested by data from hoards fit remarkably well with the heretofore-unstudied distribution of Burgundian single coin finds across France.

The Evidence from Hoards

The Gourdon treasure—found some twenty-two miles (thirty-five km) southwest of Chalon, and introduced at the beginning of this chapter—is the sole early-sixth-century hoard known from Burgundian territory. Only a partial reconstruction of that hoard is now possible, because two men stole the treasure shortly after its 1845 discovery. Legal action subsequently recovered 104 coins, but part of the treasure may have escaped detection by the authorities. That possibility, and the dispersal in the following year of the 104 surviving coins via public auction and other means, make all modern efforts to reconstruct the Gourdon treasure imperfect.

44 See above, fn. 3.
Fortunately, we possess the eyewitness record of the archivist Claude Rossignol, who studied and inventoried 104 Gourdon coins in 1845 (the inventory was published the following year).\textsuperscript{45} Rossignol listed one \textit{solidus} each of the emperors Leo and Zeno, seventy-seven coins of Anastasius (fourteen \textit{solidi} and sixty-three \textit{tremisses}), and twenty-five coins of Justin I (twenty \textit{solidi} and five \textit{tremisses}).\textsuperscript{46} The last two emperors’ reigns are contemporaneous with the era of Burgundian coinage (Anastasius: 491-518; Justin: 518-527).\textsuperscript{47} According to Rossignol, the earlier coins were well worn, but the coins of Justin were in quite fresh condition. Rossignol also noted that all the specimens of Justin were cut by the same coin-die, an observation suggesting that the latest coins buried in the Gourdon hoard were a coherent group of recent issues.\textsuperscript{48} Justin’s coins, the only ones Rossignol described in detail, bore a reverse legend \textit{VICTORIA AVCCCIS}—an unusual legend, to which we shall return.\textsuperscript{49}

But what about the seventy-seven coins in the name of Anastasius, which formed the bulk of the coins that Rossignol studied? Rossignol claimed that the Gourdon coins honoring Anastasius showed the marks of more than thirty different coin-dies.\textsuperscript{50} Today, we are unable to

\textsuperscript{45} Rossignol, “Le trésor de Gourdon.”

\textsuperscript{46} Rossignol, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 289, 294-5.

\textsuperscript{47} While Burgundian coins of Leo and Zeno are not known, the earliest phase of Burgundian minting is shadowy and unclear (Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European Coinage}, vol. 1, p. 75). The two \textit{solidi} of these emperors found at Gourdon conceivably could be early Burgundian issues, though it is more likely that the two (which are notable outliers beside the 102 coins of Anastasius and Justin) were residual authentic imperial issues.

\textsuperscript{48} Rossignol, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 307. Rossignol examined twenty \textit{solidi} and five \textit{tremisses} of Justin; obviously, the \textit{solidi} and \textit{tremisses} were not cut by the same coin-die, since a \textit{tremissis} was only a third the size of a \textit{solidus}. Rossignol did not specify which denomination he had in mind when he wrote “Justin, dont les médailles ... sont toutes frappées au même coin,” but his earlier, extended description of Justin’s coins involved mostly the \textit{solidi}. He may have had only these in mind when discussing die-counts, but he also may have meant that \textit{solidi} and \textit{tremisses} reflected a single die each.

\textsuperscript{49} Rossignol, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 294-5.

\textsuperscript{50} Rossignol, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 307. He did not specify obverse vs. reverse die counts.
check his count, but we should note (and I will demonstrate below) that when we can verify Rossignol’s observations, they prove very reliable. The count of thirty coin-dies implies an astonishing diversity among the hoard’s Anastasian coins; the contrast with the homogenous coins of Justin is remarkable. Lamentably, Rossignol provided no further description of the coins of Anastasius. Without additional information to guide us, we would have to conclude that those coins might have come from any of the mints around the Mediterranean world, official or otherwise; indeed, the prolific issues of Constantinople might be prime suspects. However, Rossignol’s study was not the final word on the Gourdon hoard.

In 1958, Jean Lafaurie published a detailed reconstruction of the treasure. ⁵¹ He added three new sources to Rossignol’s inventory. The first was an envelope marked “trésor de Gourdon” and found in the Bibliothèque de Dijon, which held four gold coins; nineteenth-century documentation at Dijon confirmed the coin’s provenance from Gourdon. ⁵² The coins were a tremissis and a solidus of Anastasius, bearing respectively the monograms of Gundobad and Sigismund, and a tremissis and solidus of Justin I. ⁵³ These four coins are the only individual specimens definitively linked to Gourdon that now remain accessible to numismatists. That control-sample is woefully small, but the presence of Burgundian royal monographs on both coins of Anastasius points to a local origin for at least part of the hoard. The hoard’s concealer had contact with the networks of Burgundian monetary circulation; indeed, during the reigns of Anastasius and Justin I, Gourdon fell within Burgundian territory.

⁵¹ Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon.”

⁵² Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 65-7. As Lafaurie notes (ibid., pp. 65-6, fn. 1), mid-nineteenth-century documentation supports this provenance. Records at Dijon indicate that the owner of the field in which the Gourdon hoard was found gifted four coins to the city, which then deposited the coins within the Bibliothèque de Dijon.

⁵³ For images and descriptions of the four coins held at Dijon see Petit, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 15-18.
The two gold coins of Justin I stored in the envelope at Dijon also shed light on the hoard’s contents. They are in near-mint condition, exactly matching Rossignol’s 1845 description.\(^{54}\) The \textit{solidus} of Justin bears the reverse legend VICTORIA AVCCIS, just as Rossignol noted.\(^{55}\) The triple CCC (i.e., GGG) within the legend does not illuminate the coin’s origin, as that form (which replicates earlier homages to colleges of joint emperors, stylized as the \textit{Augustoroom}) remained as an immobilized feature even on genuine Constantinopolitan coins throughout Justin’s reign, and indeed across most of the sixth century.\(^{56}\) Only the terminal IS appears peculiar. The second coin of Justin, the \textit{tremissis}, does narrow the field of possible origins: its reverse legend reads SVICTORIA AVCCCI. Unlike \textit{solidi}, the reverse legend on genuine \textit{tremisses} of Justin I spelled out the full title VICTORIA AVGUSTORVM.\(^{57}\) This coin, then, is pseudo-imperial. The separation and reordering of the mysterious letters on the \textit{tremissis}—S I instead of IS—expand the range of possible meanings for the abbreviation, and suggest (for example) that the \textit{solidus}’ IS may be an upside down or reversed SI.

In 1958, Lafaurie expressed knowledge of some seventeen \textit{solidi} in Justin’s name with the IS terminus, housed in various coin cabinets across Europe. Tellingly, Lafaurie reported that \textit{all} these coins shared the same pair of coin-dies.\(^{58}\) Rossignol, let us recall, had observed in 1845 that the Gourdon coins of Justin also shared a single die. Every known Justin “IS” \textit{solidus}, then, seemingly derives from the same coin issue attested at Gourdon. The only comparable coin


\(^{57}\) Grierson, \textit{Byzantine Coins}, p. 49.

\(^{58}\) Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 67.
known to Lafaurie was in fact the *tremissis* reading SVICTORIA AVCCCI, with only three exemplars—one from Gourdon and two in French collections. Coins may travel far before resting in a numismatist’s cabinet; two of the seventeen IS *solidi* listed by Lafaurie were in St. Petersburg. Keeping that caveat in mind, we should note that the collections with IS *solidi* predominate in or near France (three in Paris, two in Lyon, one in Brussels, three in Stuttgart, two in England, two in St. Petersburg; Lafaurie did not provide the geographic location of the other four, but associated them with named collections of Francophone collectors). In fact, even the coins held in Russia had been purchased in England and Germany. The earliest known sale of any of these seventeen collected *solidi* post-dated the discovery at Gourdon, making it possible that the coins in museums were actually among those buried at Gourdon and later sold. Whether or not that is the case, all these coins were housed at some point in or near the former territory of ancient Gaul, and all seventeen *solidi* are die-linked to the Gourdon hoard. Moreover, as Lafaurie stressed, the pasture near Gourdon offers the only known archaeological context for the discovery of coins of Justin with IS/SI letters; no other documented hoard in France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, or Scandinavia included similar pieces.

Let us pause to marshal the evidence raised thus far. The extant *tremissis* from Gourdon is pseudo-imperial. The unusual S I legend on that coin almost certainly identifies the equally unusual IS on the *solidus* found with it as part of the same monetary system, whatever their

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59 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 68.
60 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 67.
61 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 68.
origin. Even after filtering through the market, the distribution of such coins clusters in or near France, and such coins have not been documented in archaeological contexts in other countries—or, for that matter, anywhere outside formerly Burgundian territory. Moreover, the Gourdon coins belonged to someone with access to circulating Burgundian coinage, since the hoard’s two attested Anastasian samples bear Burgundian monograms. Finally, during the reigns of Anastasius and Justin I, Burgundian kings ruled the lands around Gourdon. Given these factors, a Gallic or even Burgundian context is most likely for the letters on these coins.

Jean Lafaurie argued that IS/SI letters on a pseudo-imperial coin must represent either the location of a mint or the name of a minting authority. He noted a nineteenth-century coin merchant’s proposed reading of IS(ARNODORO), modern Izernore, a small settlement half-way between Mâcon and Geneva (and in Burgundian territory). But Izernore is not otherwise attested as a Burgundian mint, and its Merovingian coins were not notable until the seventh century. Indeed, as the next chapter will discuss, the early sixth-century Burgundian kings seem not to have minted outside one or a few royal centers. Instead, as Lafaurie showed, the second hypothesis—that SI/IS might be a ruler’s personal name—seems more fruitful. Among western monarchs contemporary with Justin I, only one bore a name beginning SI or IS: Sigismund, the penultimate Burgundian king.

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62 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 68.
64 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 70.
Lafaurie’s proposed identification elegantly fits the available evidence, and now reflects the cautious consensus opinion among medieval numismatists.\textsuperscript{66} Notably, our SI/IS coins are the only gold pieces in Justin I’s name attributed to Sigismund.\textsuperscript{67} Sigismund certainly struck gold coins honoring Anastasius, Justin’s predecessor; we have already seen, for example, that the Gourdon hoard contained at least one such coin, with Sigismund’s monogram. But Sigismund’s reign also overlapped with that of Justin I, from 518-524. The Burgundian king did mint coins during those years, as a silver coin of Justin bearing Sigismund’s monogram attests.\textsuperscript{68} But if we should reject the attribution of the IS/SI coins to Sigismund, we would be left without any known gold coins struck by him during those years. Not only is the SI-Sigismund link plausible, it is the only plausible link between Justin’s reign and Sigismund’s gold.

Sigismund’s reign also offers a historically plausible context for the burial and loss of so much Burgundian wealth. The uniformity and fresh appearance of the coins of Justin imply a deposition not long after the date of minting. Since it appears most likely that Sigismund struck those coins, and since the coins of Justin are the hoard’s most recent issues, deposition must have occurred not much later than Sigismund’s death at Frankish hands during 523 or 524.\textsuperscript{69} In fact, as Rossignol recognized in the 1840s, the short-lived but devastating Frankish invasions of the Burgundian kingdom during those two years provides a very compelling possible context for the hoard’s burial.\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{66} See the attribution’s cautious acceptance in Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European Coinage}, vol. 1, p. 76.

\textsuperscript{67} Lafaurie, “Les monnaies frappées a Lyon,” pp. 200-201; Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European Coinage}, vol. 1, p. 76.

\textsuperscript{68} Lafaurie, “Les monnaies frappées a Lyon,” pp. 200-201; Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European Coinage}, vol. 1, p. 76.

\textsuperscript{69} On the date of Sigismund’s death see Favrod, \textit{Histoire politique}, pp. 436-7.

Jean Lafaurie, however, favored a deposition in the mid-530s.\textsuperscript{71} That judgment challenged the reliability of Rossignol’s account, and reflected information from two other sources -- both of which are problematic. An acquisition note for forty-four gold coins held in the national Cabinet des Médailles stated that “nearly all these pieces come from the treasure of Gourdon.”\textsuperscript{72} “Nearly all” (presque toutes) is an important but vague qualifier. They were:

- 12 *tremisses* of Anastasius with Gundobad’s monogram
- 11 *tremisses* of Anastasius with no monogram
- 6 *tremisses* of Anastasius with Sigismund’s monogram
- 4 *tremisses* of Justin with no monogram
- 11 coins of Justinian (not specified, but presumably also *tremisses*)

Of this collection’s twenty-nine coins of Anastasius, eighteen bore Burgundian monograms. Moreover, not all Burgundian coins bore royal monograms, so that even the unmarked coins could have been Burgundian.\textsuperscript{73} Keeping in mind that only “nearly all” of these coins came from Gourdon, these twenty-nine pieces provide a good-sized possible sample of the hoard’s seventy-seven recorded Anastasian coins. Like the handful of coins in the envelope at Dijon, this larger sample suggests that despite their diversity the majority of Anastasian coins from Gourdon originated within the Burgundian kingdom.

The later coins on this list are more problematic. Rossignol’s 1846 inventory had included no coins of Justinian. The acquisition note’s “nearly all” naturally implies that some of the coins listed above were not from Gourdon; the note and Rossignol’s inventory are not

\textsuperscript{71} Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 74-5.

\textsuperscript{72} Lafaurie “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 72, fn. 2, citing a hand-written acquisition note of 1851 from the French Cabinet des Médailles, in the hand of Pierre Le Gentilhomme, stating that “presque toutes ces pièces proviennent du trésor de Gourdon.”

\textsuperscript{73} For example, Lafaurie’s inventory of the Alise-Sainte-Reine hoard (discussed later in this chapter) includes five coins “sans monogramme royal attribuables aux Burgondes;” all five coins bear the name of Anastasius or a moderately-corrupt form of his name. Jean Lafaurie, “Trésor de monnaies du VI\textsuperscript{e} siècle découvert à Alise-Sainte-Reine en 1804,” *Revue numismatique*, 6th series, 25 (1983): 101-138, at p. 130.
inherently contradictory. Yet Lafaurie stated that Rossignol’s brief encounter with the coins easily could have led to a misreading of some pieces.74 Lafaurie also drew on a group of twenty-three coins advertised in an 1856 letter from a coin merchant, J. Rousseau, to a prominent collector. Rousseau had described:

3 solidi of Anastasius with monogram of Gundobad
1 solidus of Anastasius (for Gundobad? Marked by a sideways “G”)
1 tremissis of Anastasius with monogram of Gundobad
1 solidus of Anastasius with monogram of Sigismund
16 solidi of Justin I with “IS” for Sigismund
1 tremissis of Justinian, bearing the mint-mark “LVG(dunum).”

The final coin also bore the mark “SΩ.” Lafaurie believed this tremissis to be a Frankish coin struck at Lyon very soon after the fall of the Burgundian kingdom, and suggested that “SΩ” might refer to the Merovingian ruler Clotharius.75 But when had these coins been found? Rousseau’s 1856 letter made no reference to Gourdon, and postdated that hoard’s discovery by a decade. Indeed, Rousseau described these twenty-three coins as a group discovered only a month earlier. Lafaurie argued that this was a sham; in his opinion, these coins had to be a part of the Gourdon treasure, hidden from the authorities in 1845 and finally sold under false premises a decade later. Lafaurie’s confidence that these coins could “only pertain to the same discovery” stemmed from the close similarities between Rousseau’s pieces and the other coins linked to Gourdon.76 Lafaurie concluded, therefore, that the Gourdon hoard contained coins struck in Burgundy not only by Burgundian kings but also by the Franks, immediately after the conquest of 534. He therefore suggested that Rossignol possibly had mistaken Justinianic coins for earlier issues, including coins of Anastasius.

74 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 72.
76 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 74.
Lafaurie characterized Rossignol’s 1845 inventory as “hasty.” “Cependant,” Lafaurie wrote, “l’examen, qui parait hâtif, auquel Rossignol s’est livré, n’exclut pas la mauvaise lecture de certaines pièces dites au nom d’Anastase...” 77 The label of “hasty” is very questionable. If I understand Lafaurie’s point, he meant that Rossignol’s written description of Anastasius’ coins was less detailed than his study of the coins of Justin I; therefore, the archivist might have mistaken coins of Justinian for coins of Anastasius. As we have seen, in fact, Rossignol studied the die-links between the coins of both Anastasius and Justin, a step surely requiring careful inspection of all coins involved. Moreover, there is some circularity to Lafaurie’s broader argument; he claimed that the similarity between Rossignol and Rousseau’s coin-lists proved the two collections’ common parentage, but then used the difference between the lists to impugn Rossignol’s accuracy. As we noted earlier, Rossignol took the time to identify and count over thirty die-types on the coins of Anastasius. How likely is it, then, that in doing so he “hastily” failed to recognize issues that Rousseau would identify as Justinianic? To be sure, it is notoriously easy to confuse blundered legends of Justin I and Justinian I. 78 Confusing a coin of Justinian for an Anastasian piece would be another matter, particularly if the legible reverse legends of the Anastasian coins in the Bibliothèque de Dijon are at all representative of the hoard’s other contents. 79 Henri-Antoine Petit did “not believe that Rossignol, départemental archivist, archaeologist, numismatist and certainly an excellent Latinist was capable of committing that kind of blunder.” 80 Although Rossignol’s written description of the Anastasian coins was very brief, his die-count suggests that his inspection of those coins was similar in

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77 Lafaurie, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” p. 72.
78 Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, vol. 1, p. 114.
79 See the images in Petit, “Le trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 15, 17.
detail to his inspection of the coins of Justin. His attentiveness while examining those latter coins is evident from his published description:

The latter coins, those of Justin, have sharp lines and angular letters. The circumference is freshly cut; tremisses and solidi of gold are in mint condition; one might say that they had passed from the minter’s workshop into the hands of those who buried them. ... The coins of Justin of ordinary module [i.e. solidi], are a little smaller and less thick than a twenty-Francs piece. The figure is facing, and covered by a crested helmet or diadem. Justin is represented down to his chest; he holds in his right hand a spear, leaning on his shoulder, which appears behind the head. The other hand is hidden under a shield depicting a horse mounted by a rider. The legend is: DNIVSTINVSPAVC. On the reverse, one sees a standing angel, holding in its right hand a cross as big as itself, and forming the monogram of Christ, for the Greek “Rho” appears on the upper part of the cross, but turned backward. The sign is a star; the legend VICTORIA AVCCCIS. On the base, one reads: CONOB.81

Rossignol’s inspection does not appear hasty. Not only is his description very detailed, but those details accurately describe the sole surviving solidus of Justin definitively linked to the Gourdon hoard.82 Frankly, nothing but special pleading requires that the Justinianic coins in the Cabinet des Médailles, or the coin of Clothar sold by Rousseau, belonged to Gourdon. The most likely date for the treasure’s deposition, then, remains the mid-520s.

Whether Lafaurie was correct or not, however, the implications for Burgundian circulation patterns do not change significantly once all the evidence is assembled. Every coin confidently linked to Gourdon and known in detail is Burgundian. Among coins less confidently linked to Gourdon, Burgundian issues remain prevalent. Burgundian monograms appeared on eighteen of the coins from the Cabinet des Médailles (fifteen of the pre-Justinianic coins bore no monograms, along with eleven coins of Justinian); twenty-two of Rousseau’s twenty-three coins

81 Rossignol, “Trésor de Gourdon,” pp. 294-5. Rossignol also offered multiple pages of description for the vase and platter that had accompanied the Gourdon coins (pp. 290-4).

were Burgundian. Coins from unknown mints with no monograms, then, only cloud the issue as the certainty of provenance from Gourdon diminishes; moreover, as noted earlier, not all Burgundian coins bore royal monograms, so that even unmarked coins possibly linked to Gourdon may have been Burgundian. The available data imply at the very least that the person(s) who buried the treasure selected or had access to *predominantly* local money, or perhaps only local money.

As Lafaurie noted, the twenty-three coins described by Rousseau a decade after the discovery at Gourdon do share that pattern. Twenty-two exhibit likely monograms of Burgundian kings; the twenty-third, a Frankish coin, bears a Lyon mint-mark. The similarity between the localized patterns of the two coin-collections helped fuel Lafaurie’s suspicion that Rousseau’s coins also came from Gourdon. Even if Lafaurie were correct, these coins would suggest that immediately after the Frankish conquest, local issues still dominated the pool of available money near Chalon. But that impression becomes even more important if Lafaurie was *not* correct. If Rousseau was truthful -- if his coins were not from Gourdon, but from a separate find in formerly Burgundian territory -- then we may have a precious second hoard-list from the early sixth century, one that supports the implications of the Gourdon treasure. The fact that single-finds support that impression, as we will see in the next chapter, makes that possibility all the more compelling.

The hoard evidence is limited and problematic, but it does suggest that coins in circulation across Burgundian territory were mostly local. That impression contrasts sharply with the evidence of other pseudo-imperial hoards across Gaul, outside the Burgundian realm. A treasure buried ca. 520 at Roujan in Narbonensis contained thirteen Merovingian and twelve
Gothic coins, two Burgundian gold pieces, and one imperial solidus.83 Another hoard, lost in the 520s at Chinon, southwest of Tours, contained eighty-one gold solidi. These included one probably authentic imperial issue, and a handful of Ostrogothic and Burgundian coins (ten coins bore monograms of Gundobad or Sigismund). The rest seem to have been Merovingian, but their places of origin were diverse, including Laon, far away to the northeast in Gallia Belgica.84 The Roujan and Chinon hoards prove that pseudo-imperial gold coins could circulate “internationally,” and over fairly long distances. They also show, to quote Grierson and Blackburn, that “by the 520’s…there was an abundant Frankish coinage of pseudo-imperial solidi.”85 Importantly for this study, both hoards also prove that some Burgundian coins had traveled outside the kingdom before its fall in 534.

Only after 534, however, does the hoard evidence from Burgundy align with the patterns from hoards elsewhere in France. A treasure found in 1804 at Alise-Sainte-Reine (ancient Alesia, in Aeduan territory, and thus in the former Burgundian kingdom) probably dates ca. 550.86 It contained 350 solidi and tremisses. Lafaurie reconstructed a catalog of 108 of these coins, along with a further five possibly associated with the hoard.87 According to him, the Alise-Sainte-Reine hoard included at least the following coins:

83 LPL 34.237.1, p. 152.


85 Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, vol. 1, p. 113.

86 Lafaurie’s suggested date (ca. 550) for the hoard’s deposition reflects the presence of coins of Theudebert I (534-548), as well as two early tremisses of the “boucle perdue” type, which began circulating in Gaul early in the second half of the sixth century. The Alise-Sainte-Reine treasure definitely contains coins struck some time after the fall of the Burgundian kingdom. See Lafaurie, “Trésor de monnaies du VIe siècle découvert à Alise-Sainte-Reine en 1804,” pp. 127, 135-7.

87 For a reconstruction of the hoard’s contents see Lafaurie, “Trésor de monnaies du VIe siècle découvert à Alise-Sainte-Reine en 1804,” pp. 129-37.
6 imperial (rulers from Theodosius II to Anastasius)  
1 fifth-century imitation  
4 Ostrogothic  
20 Visigothic  
19 Burgundian  
60 Frankish (various: many of Theuderic I, Theudebert I, etc.)  
3 coins with named mint-sites (but not certainly part of this hoard)

Although coins minted in Burgundy or Austrasia dominate this list, the overall mix is eclectic and international. That pattern is common to Gaul’s mid-sixth-century coin assemblages. An elite Frankish woman’s burial at Cologne contained a dozen coins, probably interred during the 530s and thus very close to the fall of the Burgundian kingdom farther south; they are mostly genuine imperial issues from across the Mediterranean, but they also include a few Ostrogothic coins from Ravenna. A treasure buried ca. 580 at Monneren in the Moselle held mostly northern Frankish tremisses, but also a pair of solidi struck near the Danube (including one possibly issued by the Lombards before their entry into Italy). The Velsen treasure, buried ca. 560 in Holland, was even more cosmopolitan; in addition to a solidus of possible Pannonian origin, it contained Frankish, Visigothic, Ostrogothic, and imperial coinage. Two Provençal hoards buried ca. 570-80, one in the Var and the other near Viviers, likewise reflect a mixture of Frankish, Gothic and imperial money.

88 Jean Lafaurie and Cécile Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines en Gaule mérovingienne et visigothique du VIe au VIIIe siècle,” Revue numismatique, 6th series, 29 (1987): 38-98, at pp. 83-4. The burial’s most recent coin was an argenteus of Athalaric of Italy (526-534). Factoring in time for transport to the north, that suggests a deposition date from the end of the 520s through the following decade.


90 Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” p. 89.

91 Var: Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” pp. 75-6; Viviers: ibid., pp. 77-80. Both treasures contained at least one coin struck for Justin II (567-578); ibid., pp. 75, 79.
To sum up: although most sixth-century hoards from Gaul have an “international” character, the limited Burgundian hoard evidence instead suggests a very localized distribution network. Burgundian coins do occur in a pair of hoards found beyond Gibichung territory (at Chinon and Roujan), proving that some gold did move out of the kingdom before its fall in 534. On the other hand, no sixth-century foreign coin is definitively linked to the hoard evidence from within the kingdom. Instead, foreign coins in that territory only appear in hoards buried well after the Frankish conquest. If relatively free movement characterizes pseudo-imperial circulation across Gaul, then the evidence from Burgundy is an outlier, reflecting limited connections with the outside world for the first decades of the sixth century.

On its own, the limited Burgundian hoard evidence would offer little ground for confident interpretation, but the data discussed in this chapter forms only one part of an emerging synthesis. The region’s contemporary written sources also reflect very limited connectivity under the Burgundians. As the next chapter will show, the detailed evidence from single coin finds suggests a similar picture. Together, these independent sources are revealing a kingdom that stood apart, in many ways, from its nearby neighbors. In this kingdom, briefly but clearly, we see a new socio-political entity that followed a different path from its better-studied neighbors. The spectrum of social and economic possibilities in sixth-century Gaul was broader than we have realized.
Chapter Six:

Single Finds and Small Worlds
PEACE AND ABUNDANCE (*PAX ET ABVNDANTIA*): the words grace a silver coin issued in the early sixth century by Gundobad, king of the Burgundians.¹ Hemmed in by dangerous neighbors, the Burgundian kings seem to have taken a special interest in Peace; the theme figures prominently in some contemporary rhetoric from the Rhône valley.² But peace, in the Burgundian kingdom, never lasted for long. What about abundance?³

Chapter Five, arguing from coin-hoards, suggested that the money that circulated in Burgundian territory was predominantly local. This chapter breaks fresh ground by examining independent evidence: the distribution of Burgundian single-coin finds, and of contemporary single foreign coins found on formerly Burgundian soil.⁴ I first study coins found within the Burgundian kingdom’s former territory, and then turn to the evidence for the circulation of Burgundian coins abroad, in other kingdoms across what is now France.

Although the more extensive single finds permit greater detail and nuance than does the hoard evidence, the single finds point to a similar conclusion. Within the Burgundian kingdom, evidence for Burgundian-era money and its circulation is almost entirely limited to a

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⁴ This study reflects my own hand-checking of the entire LPL inventory (LPL = Jean Lafaurie and Jacqueline Pilet-Lemière, *Monnaies du haut Moyen Âge découvertes en France [Ve-VIIIe siècle]*. Cahiers Ernest-Babelon 8 [Paris: CNRS, 2003]). However, I also have consulted a draft digitized database of that inventory, provided by Michael McCormick and compiled laboriously by Brendan Maione-Downing with McCormick’s assistance, that they hope to add in due course to the *Digital Atlas of Roman and Medieval Civilization* (darmc.harvard.edu). I have used the DARMC database to check my work and to supply geo-coded locations for LPL coin finds. I am grateful for DARMC’s collaborative spirit; any errors in this study remain my responsibility.
geographically limited core at the heart of the realm. Evidence for the flow of coins in and out of Burgundian territory also appears limited, particularly for imports of foreign coins into Burgundian territory. Although entirely peaceful exchanges undoubtedly facilitated some such movements, another, darker factor also shaped Burgundian coin distributions abroad: the effects of violence, whether threatened or actual.

**Coin Distributions in Burgundian Territory**

The Lafaurie/Pilet-Lemiè re inventory (hereafter, as in Chapter Five, “LPL”) reports twenty-three separate single finds of Burgundian coins in locations within the maximal extent of the Burgundian kingdom. The distribution of those coins is not even; most come from a belt close to the Rhône-Saône, running southward from just below Dijon to Vienne. Finds from the capital city, Lyon, are particularly numerous (two silver coins and well over a score of bronze pieces). Only a few Burgundian coins, however, have turned up in the rather more rugged, and presumably less populated, east of the kingdom. No Burgundian coins are known from Autun, Langres, and the rural areas near those cities. Likewise, the kingdom’s southern reaches are almost entirely devoid of Burgundian coin findspots, with only a single specimen reported between Vienne and the kingdom’s southernmost frontier.

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5 Silver: LPL 69.123.1.1, 69.123.3.3 (p. 270); Bronze: 69.123.2.1-2 (p. 269), 69.123.3.2 (p. 270), 69.123.7.3-4 (p. 271), 69.123.8.1-4 (p. 271). An exact count of the bronze coins is impossible, since some entries pertain to multiple specimens; 69.123.2.1 (p. 269) reports the 1855 discovery of copper coins “en grande quantité.”

6 From French soil, these are an argenteus (silver coin) found at Yvoire in Haute-Savoie (LPL 74.315.1, p. 297) and a gold solidus from Mandeure in the Doubs basin (LPL 25.367.1, p. 127).

7 The Oppedette tremissis struck for Sigismund between 516-524 (LPL 4.142.1, p. 49) was found ca. 15 miles northwest of the Durance River, the Burgundian realm’s southernmost frontier. However, the Ostrogoths occupied territory north of the Durance, up to the Isère, after the battle of Vézéronce in 524; therefore, at the time of the coin’s deposition, this area may not have belonged to the Burgundian kingdom. See Justin Favrod, *Histoire politique du*
Contemporary foreign coins—that found in Burgundian territory, but struck elsewhere during the kingdom’s lifetime—are also rare. For studying this group of coins, we have not only LPL’s inventory but also a similar, smaller inventory of imperial and other imported coins in the region, published in 1987 by Jean Lafaurie and Cécile Morrisson. While LPL covers only France, incorporating the shorter Lafaurie-Morrisson inventory allows us to comment also on coins found on Swiss soil in formerly Burgundian territory.

Apart from coins found in hoards deposited after 534, Ostrogothic coins in Burgundian areas include only two tremisses of Anastasius from the mountains of Savoie, just south of Lake Geneva/Léman, and a third Ostrogothic gold coin found at Dully in western Switzerland (though the deposition of that solidus is more likely to have post-dated the 534 fall of the Burgundians). None of the few Visigothic pieces in our region appear to date before 534; more surprisingly, perhaps, the same holds true for Frankish money. That is not because the early Merovingians


9 Ostrogothic tremisses in Haute-Savoie: LPL 74.37.1 and 74.123.1, p. 296. The Dully coin is a solidus of Athalaric struck at Rome between 527-536, and thus entered Burgundian territory either late in the kingdom’s history, or after its fall (Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” p. 86). Lafaurie also suggested that a copper coin of Justin I from Semur-en-Brionnais in Saône-et-Loire (near the western edge of Burgundian territory) might be an Ostrogothic five-nummi piece, misidentified upon its discovery a century ago, but this remains uncertain (LPL 71.510.2, p. 288). Either way, of course, it would represent an imported coin.

10 Aside from the twenty Visigothic pieces recorded from the Alise-Sainte-Reine hoard, which I exclude here due to their late date of deposition (ca. 550, many years after the end of the Burgundian kingdom; see Chapter Five, pp. 170-1), LPL list only two Visigothic coins in the entirety of Burgundian territory. These are LPL 71.104.1.2 (at Charnay-lès-Chalon, p. 284) and 71.270.2 (at Mâcon, p. 286). The first (actually only a gilded imitation, but using a Visigothic model) was found in the same burial as a Frankish coin minted between 555-575, and thus is a weak witness for local circulation before 534. Both that and the second Visigothic tremissis, moreover, share stylistic features (blundered or illegible legends, Victory with star-shaped, deformed head) associated with later Visigothic coins ascribed to Justinian or Justin II, rather than with coins struck earlier in the sixth century (Grierson and Blackburn, Medieval European Coinage, vol. 1, pp. 48-9). Unlike the Visigothic coins, Frankish issues found in formerly-Burgundian lands are far too numerous to list here, but none of them clearly pre-dates the Frankish conquest of Burgundy.
lacked a pseudo-imperial coinage; by about 520, as the hoard evidence discussed in Chapter Five shows, Frankish gold coins were circulating over long distances in Gaul.

Only a very few genuine and contemporary imperial issues, too, appear in Burgundian territory. Aside from those within the Alise-Sainte-Reine and Viviers hoards (disregarded here, again, because of their late deposition after the fall of the Burgundian kingdom), seven gold coins honoring Zeno have turned up on Burgundian soil (or right on the periphery of the kingdom). Most of these are probably genuine imperial issues, but the Burgundians’ earliest (and little-known) pseudo-imperial coinage may have included pieces struck in Zeno’s name. Whether the seven coins of Zeno are genuine or Burgundian imitations, five of them come from the kingdom’s mountainous east (the other two were found in the kingdom’s extreme northwestern and western peripheries). The distribution of Zeno’s coins, therefore, mainly shares the same eastern orientation as the three Ostrogothic coins mentioned above, found in Savoie and Switzerland near the trans-Alpine routes that connected Gaul to northern Italy.

Genuine official issues by successive emperors are even fewer across the Burgundian kingdom. Two copper coins of Anastasius come from Anglefort (on the Rhône between Lyon and Geneva); an Anastasian solidus from Constantinople derives from Dully in western Switzerland (where one Ostrogothic piece also was found). With these coins, the kingdom’s

\[11 \text{ LPL 21.711.1}, \text{p. 117 (Vix, Côte-d’Or; undescribed gold coin); 25.323.1}, \text{p. 127 (Laissey, Doubs; undescribed gold coin); 38.185.2}, \text{p. 161 (Grenoble, Isère; undescribed gold coin); 58.95.1}, \text{p. 234 (Decize, Nièvre; tremissis); 74.10.2-3}, \text{p. 295 (Annecy, Haute-Savoie; one undescribed gold coin and one tremissis); 74.268.1}, \text{p. 297 (Seynod, Haute-Savoie; tremissis).} \]

\[12 \text{ Anglefort: LPL 1. 10.1, p. 33; Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” p. 65. Dully: Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” p. 86. To this short list one might tentatively add the Saint-Bonnet-de-Joux solidus (LPL 71.394.1}, \text{p. 287), found in the Charollais in the west of Saône-et-Loire. The piece was discovered in the 1930s, but Lafaurie evidently learned of it through a conversation dated 1992 (see ibid.), after the publication of Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines.” The coin is a solidus of Anastasius I; the obverse legend is DN ANASTASIVS PP AVG, the reverse VICTORIA AVGVSTI. Lafaurie does not suggest an attribution for this coin, but it may be foreign, since obverse legends on Gundobad’s coins of Anastasius often read PR AVG for PP AVG (see e.g. LPL 71.270.1, p. 286; Grierson and Blackburn, }\]
mountainous east emerges yet again as the area of concentration for foreign coinage. Known imperial coins in Burgundian territory, then, decline over time, and are concentrated near the transalpine routes into Italy, not near the lower Rhône basin transit route.

To sum up: Few foreign coins struck before 534 are known to have circulated in Burgundian territory, and the extant specimens all belong to Ostrogothic or imperial mints, not to the Visigoths or Franks. Many more local, Burgundian-struck coins irrigated the kingdom’s economy. Only in the central core of the kingdom, however, does the density of coinage appear to have been robust; the Burgundians’ southern, northwestern and northeastern peripheries have revealed little contemporary coinage of any kind. However, findspots of coins confidently attributed to foreign mints cluster in the upper Rhône basin or, more broadly, across the mountainous region east of Lyon—Sapaudia. So much for the coin data themselves; what do they reveal about Burgundian social and economic networks?

The minting of coins in three metals—gold, silver and bronze/copper—indicates that monetized market transactions continued to play an important role in the Burgundian economy. In 1855, workers at Lyon uncovered a “great quantity” of bronze Burgundian coins of Gundobad and Godomar; eyewitnesses did not record the number of coins found, but one observer described the sight as “a veritable volcano” of small copper coins.13 Other Burgundian coin finds documented from Lyon include two silver and more than twenty-one bronze pieces.14

However, the Burgundians’ copper coinage lacked multi-denominational differentiation. Whereas the Ostrogoths minted different copper coins worth varying numbers of *nummi*,

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14 See above, fn. 4.
Burgundian bronzes were mono-denominational, suggesting that monetized low-value exchanges were not frequent enough to require a more finely articulated small-change currency.\(^{15}\) Moreover, no evidence exists for robust use of Burgundian bronze coinage beyond Lyon. The many silver and bronze coins found at the kingdom’s metropolis contrast sharply with patterns elsewhere in the kingdom. Only a single Burgundian silver piece derives from elsewhere within Burgundian territory (from a grave-burial at Yvoire, in Haute-Savoie\(^ {16}\)), and LPL recorded no Burgundian bronzes within the kingdom, other than those found at Lyon.\(^ {17}\) As we saw earlier, the few contemporary foreign coins in the kingdom include only two coins made of bronze, found between Lyon and Geneva.\(^ {18}\) Low-value monetized exchanges, then, probably were much more frequent at Lyon than elsewhere in the realm.

\(^ {15}\) Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, vol. 1, p. 75.

\(^ {16}\) LPL 74.315.1, p. 297.

\(^ {17}\) Two Burgundian copper coins at Marseille (LPL 13.55.6.1-2, pp. 80-81), and an *argenteus* in Frankish territory, at Caulaincourt in the Aisne (LPL 2.144.1.2, p. 38), attest to movement of Burgundian small change beyond the kingdom.

\(^ {18}\) See above, fn. 12.
If we turn to the distribution of Burgundian coins in all three metals [Fig. 1], we gain better insight into patterns of monetization across the kingdom as a whole. That distribution suggests two broad zones of monetary activity within the kingdom. The first was a monetized core area running from Vienne in the south to just below Dijon in the north, with a concentration of coins at Lyon. Surrounding that core in all directions was a less wealthy (or at least less heavily monetized) periphery.

Although that periphery now is less densely settled than what I have called the core circulation area, a look across LPL shows that the contrast between the two zones is not merely

Figure 1. Burgundian Single Coin Finds. Dots = Burgundian coin find-spots; Crosses = possible Burgundian coins. The bold line shows the approximate borders of the Burgundian kingdom at its greatest extent.
the result of sampling bias or the greater frequency of coin-detection in heavily populated areas. Not only have more Burgundian coins turned up within the core, but Burgundian coins also make up a much higher percentage of the total of early medieval coins found within the core. That is most evident at Lyon, where ten of the eighteen finds recorded in LPL (56%) are Burgundian; if we include all coins in the Rhône département around Lyon, then Burgundian money still takes up 50% (ten out of twenty) of LPL’s entries. That is a striking statistic. LPL covers four centuries of coin issues, but half of the relevant finds from the Rhône département date from a period of only a few decades. Elsewhere in the core area, the proportion of Burgundian coins is not always so dramatic, but remains respectable. North of Lyon, at Bourg-en-Bresse, LPL lists only two coins, but one is Burgundian. At Mâcon, one coin among nine is Burgundian; at Vienne, south of Lyon, the count is one coin among five entries. At Chalon the proportion is much lower, because of the very high number of national or moneyers’ coins found there; but among the forty-two coins found at Chalon there are two Burgundian tremisses, roughly in keeping with the absolute numbers elsewhere across the core.

The periphery, in contrast, is empty of recorded Burgundian single coin finds—but not because that area is generally bare of coins. In the south, the Drôme département below Vienne holds thirteen LPL entries, ranging in date from the early fifth through the mid-seventh centuries. None of them are Burgundian. In the north, LPL records twenty separate entries for

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19 LPL, “Rhône (69),” pp. 269-272. Note that I refer here to “finds,” not just individual coins; one Lyon entry (LPL 69.123.2.1, p. 269) records Burgundian bronze pieces found “en grande quantité.”

20 LPL 1.53.1-2, p. 33.

21 Mâcon: LPL 71.270.1-9, pp. 286-7; Vienne: LPL 38.544.1-5, pp. 162-3. Note that Vienne’s find-entry 38.544.5 concerns an unquantified group of late Roman and Merovingian coins.

22 LPL 71.76.2-3, p. 278.

23 LPL 26, pp. 129-30.
the 1900 km² arrondissement of Autun—the same number of coins as in the entire 2715 km² Rhône département. But none of the coins found in the vicinity of Autun are pseudo-imperial, let alone Burgundian. Older sources than LPL also betray the paucity of pseudo-imperial coinage in that area. Railway cuttings at Autun in 1866 revealed approximately 1,620 ancient coins (found separately, not as a single hoard) that ranged in date from the pre-Roman Iron Age to the reign of Arcadius. Late Roman coins from the Valentinianic and Theodosian eras made up a full 10% of the total recorded. The strikingly rich finds, however, did not include a single pseudo-imperial coin. Indeed, turning back to LPL we may note that coin-finds at Autun resume only with the “national” coinages of the later sixth century. As these samples illustrate, the contrast between the Burgundians’ monetized core and periphery does not appear to be an illusion caused by more active coin-recovery in one part of eastern France. Much of the periphery is not especially poor in coin finds, but it is poor in Burgundian money, and in money contemporary with that kingdom.

The contrast between the core and periphery also accords with patterns of personal connections and movements documented independently by preserved written records. As the prosopographical analysis of previous chapters revealed, at northern cities around the edge of Burgundian territory, in communities like Autun and Langres, social horizons contracted under Burgundian rule. The Life of the originally Aeduan Germanus of Paris, for example, pays close attention to that saint’s early movements and social connections in the first decades of the sixth

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26 The chronology of the coins cited above in fn. 24 includes a century-long gap between a solidus of Julius Nepos (474-475), LPL 71.98.1, p. 284, and the moneyers’ coins, beginning (in Lafaurie’s sequence) with a tremissis struck at Autun by a certain Teudulfus (LPL 71.14.3, p. 276).
century; *none* of those movements extended beyond the Aeduan *civitas* until after the Frankish conquest.\(^{27}\) In contrast, the recorded ties of cities such as Chalon or Dijon, closer to the centers of Burgundian court power, grew—at least across the Burgundian core, and toward the Gothic south. However, southward social ties within the kingdom tended not to reach into the Burgundian-ruled communities south of Vienne.\(^{28}\) Since Vienne also marks the approximate boundary of what I have called the Burgundians’ monetized core, there is a striking similarity between zones of frequent and infrequent communication attested by two independent classes of evidence.\(^{29}\) As a political, social, and economic center of gravity, the core area may have attracted occasional ties from the northern periphery, but the kingdom’s opposite peripheries seem to have had little to offer to each other; there was little incentive to forge ties between, say, Autun and Valence. I shall have more to say about communications on the Burgundian periphery, but now that we have understood the evidence of stray coin finds inside the kingdom, we must first address the flow of coins, Burgundian or otherwise, across the kingdom’s borders.

\(^{27}\) See Chapter Two, pp. 54-5, 78.

\(^{28}\) See Chapter Two, pp. 71-6, and Chapter Four, pp. 116-8.

\(^{29}\) I explore likely reasons for these patterns at pp. 216-22, in the synthesis that closes this study.
Figure 2. Proposed zones of circulation of Burgundian coins.

Coins Beyond the Burgundian Kingdom: Distance-Traveled Analysis

Findspots indicate that Burgundian coins spread widely across France. But they are by no means ubiquitous. Most have been found in eastern France, but even across that half of the country their distribution is not uniform. Although Burgundian coins cluster in the heart of the kingdom, as we have already seen, most samples found outside that realm occur not close to its borders but far away, near the modern limits of France. I identify four main zones of Burgundian coin finds in France [Fig. 2]: first, the inner core of the kingdom itself, which we have just discussed; second, a band across the Mediterranean littoral of lower Provence; third, across the Frankish
north, close to the English Channel; and finally a broad zone in the west of France, with only a few scattered find-spots. That fourth zone, the west, is the only area in which some Burgundian coins occur close to the kingdom’s borders, and as we shall see, the circumstances of that exception may turn out to prove the general rule. Elsewhere, however, a broad empty zone circles Burgundian territory, just as the peripheral settlements around the kingdom’s borders are largely bare of attested contemporary coinage.

We can begin to make sense of those concentrations and gaps through fall-off or distance-traveled analysis. In 1975, archaeologist Colin Renfrew modeled ten different “modes” of trade, as he called them, including each mode’s implications for the spatial distribution of recovered artifacts. That now-classic approach allows one to use the spatial distribution of a group of exchanged objects to hypothesize which modes of exchange governed the objects’ diffusion. Some scholars have criticized Renfrew’s model, for example for inadequately reflecting the influences of multiple overlapping exchange mechanisms. Here, I use Renfrew’s fall-off models not as a totalizing scheme to describe all exchanges, but rather as a heuristic tool, useful for highlighting plausible main explanations for the coin data when read in light of contemporary and parallel textual evidence. When their findspots and mints are known, coins make good objects for such analysis; D. M. Metcalf’s recent article on Merovingian coinage of the “national” era uses distance-traveled analysis to illustrate powerfully the dynamics of

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30 Colin Renfrew, “Trade as Action at a Distance: Questions of Integration and Communication,” in Ancient Civilization and Trade, ed. Jeremy A. Sabloff and C. C. Lamberg-Karlovsky (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 3-59, at pp. 41-51. Note that Renfrew’s “mode of trade” or exchange is not equivalent or related to the Marxist conception of “modes of production.”

31 See Alexander A. Bauer and Anna S. Agbe-Davies, “Trade and Interaction in Archaeology,” in Social Archaeologies of Trade and Exchange: Exploring Relationships among People, Places and Things, eds. Alexander A. Bauer and Anna S. Agbe-Davies (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), pp. 29-47, at p. 35. Kantner has noted that “the classic tools of regional analysis, such as fall-off analysis ... are used less often today ... [but] still have a place in regional archaeology” (John Kantner, “The Archaeology of Regions: From Discrete Analytical Toolkit to Ubiquitous Spatial Perspective,” Journal of Archaeological Research 16 [March, 2008]: 37-81, at p. 47.
monetary exchange across Frankish territory between 561-674. Metcalf shows that most such exchanges involved “down-the-line” trade. That phenomenon involves numerous short-range exchanges that gradually diffuse commodities over long distances, but in progressively smaller quantities as distance from the place of origin increases. When artifacts spread via down-the-line trade, a graph plotting the distance between the source and places of deposition shows (after a relatively flat area adjacent to the source) a steadily declining curve as distance increases [Fig. 3].

The distance-traveled chart for Burgundian coins found in France displays a very different pattern [Fig. 4]. It plots the distance of Burgundian find-spots (omitting hoards from

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Figure 4. Distance-traveled plots for single finds of Burgundian coinage.

Lyon.34 With each step to the right, the chart tracks the number of Burgundian coins found within successive forty-mi/sixty-km bands of territory radiating outward from that city. One can match the chart to the coins mapped in Fig. 1; the initial “heights” of the first two bands

34 Almost all surviving Burgundian coins probably derive from the mint of Lyon. A minority of sixth-century issues by Gundobad, Sigismund and Godomar may come from Geneva or Chalon, but those attributions are very tentative and uncertain (Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, vol. 1, pp. 76-7; Jean Lafaurie, “Les monnaies frappées a Lyon au VIe siècle,” in *Mélanges de travaux offerts à maître Jean Tricou*. Travaux édités sous les auspices de la ville de Lyon 3. Ed. Amable Audin (Lyon: Audin, 1972), pp. 193-205, at pp. 200-02). These uncertain attributions, however, are not problematic for the distance-traveled study presented here. Rare tremisses of Justinian struck for Godomar, which bear a “G” in the reverse field, may derive from Geneva, Chalon, or Lyon. Our list, however, contains only a single example, from Gigny-sur-Saône (LPL 71.219.1, p. 285); because this site was well within Burgundian territory, the coin does not complicate our discussion of distances traveled by coins exported from the kingdom. Similarly, minters at Chalon possibly produced the homogenous series of coins ascribed to Justin found at Gourdon (Grierson and Blackburn, *Medieval European Coinage*, vol. 1, p. 76), but as that assemblage is both a hoard and within Burgundian territory, it too offers no complications here. Lyon, then, is a reliable estimated point of origin for all of the exported Burgundian coins in our study. For the sake of argument, were some of these coins actually from other Burgundian mints it would not change significantly the arguments advanced here; the point of the distance-traveled study is not to identify a quantitatively-precise gradient, but to assess heuristically the broad gap in coin distributions between the Burgundian core and distant reaches of modern France. All the coins in questions came from somewhere near the Rhône-Saône confluence or the upper Rhône, and the observations later in this chapter remain relevant for any coin exported from that region.
represent what I have called the monetized core of the Burgundian kingdom. The low-frequency bands on the chart reflect the wide areas largely devoid of Burgundian money, followed by notable spikes in frequency at greater distances. In one sense, this simply offers another way to see what the map of findspots already shows us: a core distribution area, then broad empty zones, and finally distant areas of concentrated coins.

The chart, however, also unambiguously fits one of Renfrew’s modes: exchange influenced by central-place dynamics (the fit is most clear when assessing only gold coins; the very numerous bronze coins found and probably issued at Lyon, used for local, small-value transactions, otherwise mask the relative contrast between find-zones). In this mode, artifact counts (measured in some directions) produce not a steadily declining fall-off curve, but rather a

![Figure 5. Distance-traveled plot for exchange subject to central-place dynamics.](image)

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35 Renfrew, “Trade as Action at a Distance,” p. 48.
curve with one or more “peaks” [Fig. 5]. In such cases, exchanged goods do not gradually diffuse through many contacts, as in down-the-line trade. Rather, shipments of goods travel for some distance from their place of production until they reach a central point or region; only there does a group of goods disseminate, in exchange for other goods brought to that distant meeting point. That dynamic can involve many kinds of exchange, whether involving unrestricted market forces or redistribution by authorities within a controlled economy. Linking our chart to central-place dynamics thus answers only some questions about coin circulation. Alone, it does not explain the circumstances or reasons for coin movements; but it does suggest how far coins traveled when they first left the Burgundian kingdom. These data offer very little support for casual exchange with close neighbors across the kingdom’s borders; the evidence points instead to direct, long-range movements as the typical vehicle for Burgundian coin exports.

Happily, we can expand that insight, because the independent witnesses of coins and of movements recorded in texts again prove mutually illuminating. Written evidence sheds some light on the contexts in which coins crossed Burgundian frontiers. In what follows, I situate the monetary patterns for three zones—the south, the north, and the west—against the prosopographical patterns revealed earlier in this study. I suggest that coin movements in all three directions largely involved the same mode of exchange: direct long-range movement to a distant region, followed by short-range diffusion within that region (links to the Auvergne may offer a key exception). However, although the overall mode of exchange stayed the same, I will argue that the socio-political context of coin movements differed substantially between the north and the south. Market forces, influenced by Provence’s urban and riverine geography, seem

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36 The Y-axis of a distance-traveled or fall-off plot may represent either absolute numbers, or artifacts’ proportional frequency among total artifacts. As Renfrew noted, in most cases absolute numbers will more easily capture the “peak” associated with central-place dynamics (Renfrew, “Trade as Action at a Distance,” p. 48); I use absolute numbers here. However, I have noted issues of proportionality earlier, when discussing the contrast between the Burgundians’ monetary core and periphery.
most likely to have shaped Burgundian coin exports to the south. To the north, however, while market forces remained active, violence and/or unequal exchange probably dominated the interactions that moved coins from Burgundian into Frankish territory.

**Provence and the South**

The spatial distribution of Burgundian coins in southern Gaul is imbalanced, for no findspots occur along the Rhône basin between Vienne and the latitude of Avignon. Burgundian coins therefore have not been found for some distance on either side of the moving frontier between Burgundian and Gothic Provence. As we will see shortly, independent evidence suggests that this gap along the middle Rhône reflects more than sampling bias. The distance-traveled chart for Burgundian coins has already suggested a fit with long-range traffic toward central redistribution points; if we think of the major centers of Gaul’s Mediterranean littoral as a regional “central place,” then our textual evidence will fit neatly with the patterns implied by the map of findspots.

To whatever extent coins did move across the southern frontier, they may have flowed in the southerners’ favor. The eight Burgundian coins found in lower Provence or Languedoc compare favorably to the six contemporary Ostrogothic and imperial coins discovered on Burgundian soil (leaving aside the early and unattributed coins of Zeno found in Burgundy). Moreover, since the contemporary foreign coins in the Burgundian kingdom cluster near the transalpine routes east of Lyon, most southern coins probably crossed from Italy over the mountains, rather than up the Rhône. These data are too few to prove much, but the southern pattern suggests an imbalance along the Rhône between exports of Burgundian coins and imports.
of foreign money from Provence. If that impression mirrors reality, then Burgundian economic relations with the south likely involved more consumption of southern goods purchased with Burgundian coins, rather than the sale of surplus or processed Burgundian goods in southern markets.

The texts studied in previous chapters support that impression. We should keep in mind that this study’s prosopographical investigations focus on the Aeduan and Lingon communities (and occasionally on their northern neighbors, such as the Jura monasteries), rather than on all communities within the Burgundian kingdom. Aeduan and Lingon connections to southern Gaul are informative, but they offer only a partial sample of the Burgundian kingdom’s external ties; the present observations call for further studies on the archaeology and prosopography of the rest of the kingdom. However, our initial sample of ties to the south entirely confirms the impressions sketched from numismatic data alone.

None of the movements studied in previous chapters involved transfers of wealth from southern Provence toward the north, but numerous anecdotes report the movement of wealth or resources down-river. When Alamannic raiders threatened local salt production, monks from the Jura Mountains traveled to the Mediterranean coast to buy salt there; that transfer presumably involved coin traded for unambiguously non-monetary goods.37 Even travelers not seeking commodities may have drawn wealth southward with them. Bishop Avitus of Vienne wrote a letter to Caesarius of Arles, introducing a northerner seeking competent treatment for an eye problem.38 Such engagement with the “service sector” drew wealth downriver, without a


reciprocal transfer of wealth back north.\textsuperscript{39} The nobleman Ceretius, probably from Chalon, took a similar letter from Avitus when he traveled to Italy to find a skilled physician; if Ceretius also used the Rhône route, then the same applies to his money.\textsuperscript{40} Travelers to the Lérins monastery, such as Iohannes of Reomaus, Caesarius (later of Arles), and other northerners (such as the letter-carrier for bishop Gregorius of Langres), may have paid for incidental expenses on their journey with coins that had circulated back home.\textsuperscript{41} We do not know what Caesarius’ uncle Aeonius, sister Caesaria, and other relations brought with them when they moved from Burgundy to Arles, but the end result involved the permanent transfer of some personal effects to the south.\textsuperscript{42} Not even military expeditions into Provence seem to have transferred great wealth to the north. Gundobad’s attack on Arles in 508 resulted only in defeat by an Ostrogothic relief column. Far from plundering the wealthy community, Gundobad ultimately shipped south a fleet of grain -- free of charge -- to mend fences with the Arlesians, and perhaps to feed his own defeated warriors imprisoned within the city.\textsuperscript{43} According to anecdotal textual evidence, then,
economic movements across the Burgundian-Gothic frontier usually fed wealth downriver, toward the coast.

To illuminate further the patterns of exchange along the Rhône from Lyon to Arles, we can turn to another kind of evidence, of which the survival and recording is completely independent from the written and numismatic evidence already surveyed. That is the so-called *bistre* ceramic ware, produced near Chalon-sur-Saône from the early fifth century through the end of the eighth century. 44 Beige-orange to red-brown, *bistre* pottery dominates very early medieval common-ware assemblages in the Lyonnais, but also disseminated widely across the Doubs basin, and into the Jura Mountains in the east. *Bistre* wares are well attested as far south as Vienne, “which seems to mark the southern limit of a massive diffusion.” 45 South of Vienne, the ware is largely absent. Although a single fragment is known from Valence, the excavations for the TGV Mediterranean high-speed rail route south of that city, for example (which had the

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44 Scholars once associated these wares primarily with the workshops at Sevrey (INSEE commune #71520), immediately south of Chalon-sur-Saône; thanks to chemical analysis we know now that a number of workshops across the Chalonnais (and perhaps an even wider territory) produced *bistre* wares. Even so, the wares share technical and morphological homogeneity. For an introduction to *bistre* wares and their distribution, see: Michel Bonifay, Claude Reynaud, et al. “Échanges et consommation,” *Gallia* 64 (2007): 93-161, at pp. 107-9 and Fig. 80, p. 147. While available as an autonomous article, that study is part of a larger collaborative work: Marc Heijmans and Jean Guyon, eds., “Antiquité tardive, haut Moyen Âge et premiers temps chrétiens en Gaule méridionale,” *Gallia* 64 (2007): 1-189. For a more detailed discussion of *bistre* wares, see Clément Mani, “La ‘céramique bistre’ dite de Sevrey (Saône-et-Loire): caractérisation et étude de diffusion d’une production du haut Moyen Âge,” *Revue archéologique de l’Est* 53 (2004): 189-219.

singular advantage of investigating an archaeologically arbitrary transect across the French countryside), did not turn up any bistre pottery.\textsuperscript{46}

Vienne’s position as a southern boundary for the ware’s primary diffusion is highly significant, because Burgundian coins and the prosopographically attested communications of Aeduans and Lingons show the \textit{same} phenomenon. For example, the bishop of Autun’s attendance at the church council of Épaone, between Vienne and Valence, marks the southernmost attested movement from Autun during the period of Burgundian rule -- and the bishop of Vienne organized that council.\textsuperscript{47} For natives of Chalon (such as Caesarius of Arles) or for Lingons, the area between Vienne and Arles was likewise a “dead zone,” passed through \textit{en route} to the coast, but otherwise ignored.\textsuperscript{48} Vienne also marks the southernmost point of what I have called the “monetized core” of the Burgundian kingdom; there are no find-spots of Burgundian coins along the Rhône below Vienne until one reaches lower Provence. That the bistre wares corroborate the pattern offers further evidence that we are discussing a real sixth-century phenomenon, not an accident caused by irregularities in the collection or recognition of a single kind of evidence.

Moreover, bistre wares also have unexpectedly turned up in small numbers in excavations close to the Mediterranean, south of the empty region without attested bistre finds.\textsuperscript{49} In other words, just as Burgundian coins and social ties seem to have “leapfrogged” over Upper


\textsuperscript{47} See Chapter Two, p. 75.

\textsuperscript{48} See Chapter Two, pp. 74-6, and Chapter Four, pp. 116-8.

\textsuperscript{49} Bonifay and Reynaud, “Échanges et consommation,” p. 108-9. In lower Provence, bistre wares have appeared at Marseille and Arles, and also in the Camargue, in the Lunellois, and at Maguelone.
Provence toward the coast, so do *bistre* wares. To judge by the samples found in lower Provence, however, these ceramics did not reach the coast until the sixth and especially seventh centuries, so the extension of *bistre* distribution that far south at least primarily post-dates the era of Burgundian rule to the north. What are we to make of this similar distribution, but on a different timeframe from those of coins and social ties?

Texts, coins and pots all indicate that active socio-economic ties bound together the Burgundian heartland, but ties from there to communities just south of Vienne were too weak to motivate much direct interaction. Rather, most southbound trips involved a desire to visit the major littoral centers of Arles, Marseille, Lérins, or even Italy and the Mediterranean world beyond. Political divisions existed along the middle Rhône, but did not overrule these dynamics. As I argued in Chapters Two and Four, Burgundian subjects could cross the Gothic border at the Durance and later the Isère River with relatively little interference, and without the benefits of royal patronage. But pulled south by the main centers near the coast, travelers had little incentive to socialize with or sell to residents along the route between Vienne and Arles. Those communities lacked enough social or economic “gravity” to attract much direct communication (I will elaborate on the concept of communication “gravity” in much greater detail in the synthesis that closes this study).

Once goods and coins reached the coastal cities of southern Gaul, they will have begun at that point to circulate around lower Provence via the normal means, which included market exchange. This accounts for the diffusion of Burgundian coinage among numerous sites in southernmost Gaul. Just as our distance-traveled chart suggests, then, the main centers of lower Provence acted as central-place influences on Burgundian coin distribution, pulling some coins

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50 See Chapter Two and Four, pp. 72-6 and 116-8.
out of their typical circulation within the Burgundian core and then passing them on within a relatively narrow southern zone.

Yet coins and social ties from Burgundian territory reached and crossed lower Provence before bistre ceramics did. That fact tells us that communication horizons affected separate kinds of movement in different ways. The data suggest that it was feasible earlier for individuals, perhaps equipped with modest amounts of money, to travel south to the coast to visit a monastery, than it was to transport shipments of pottery for sale far away in southern markets. Early in the sixth century, when Vienne marked the edge of one small world of socio-economic connections, a commercial venture to sell bistre at the coast was apparently not a sound idea; transport costs and risks outweighed profits.

But southward communications slowly expanded across the sixth century. Although no Burgundian coin find-spots are known for the middle Rhône, later pseudo-imperial coins struck after 534 do appear in that area. After the Frankish conquest, a native of Chalon certainly developed close links with the middle south, because he became bishop of Gap. And, as we have seen, bistre wares seem to have penetrated to the coast (never in quantities equal to those distributed near Lyon) only later in the sixth century and beyond. In the mid-sixth century, following the Frankish conquest, Burgundy’s weak social ties to the south seem to have expanded slowly, probably reflecting the progressive rejuvenation and development of socio-

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51 Examples of coins struck between 534 and the end of the pseudo-imperial era, found between Vienne and the Durance, include the Viviers hoard, buried ca. 565 (Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” pp. 77-80); also LPL 26.176.1, p. 130 (an argenteus of Justin II, 565-578, which LPL label [in error, given the date?] as Ostrogothic); LPL 4.45., p. 48, LPL 4.111.1, p. 49 (both are tremisses “à la boucle perdue” struck for the Frankish kings of Burgundy, mid-6th c.); LPL 4.138.1, p. 49 (a copper coin of Childebert I, struck 534-558); LPL 84.7.1, p. 326 (an argenteus struck for the Ostrogothic king Theodahad between 534-536); LPL 84.54.2, p. 327 (an 1857 discovery of “some gold solidi of Childebert and Sigebert;” Childebert I reigned 511-558, Sigebert I 561-575).

economic ties across the Merovingian world. But despite this growth, the movement downriver of bulk goods lagged behind the more flexible and mobile social movements attested in written sources.

Individual movements blazed trails that later cargo shipments might follow, but growth was not so rapid as to allow an immediate change in the overall pattern of Rhône communications. Vienne’s liminal position as a permeable boundary for southern ties persisted (as the bistre distributions indicate), despite the fluctuating locations of frontiers between kingdoms at various latitudes further south along the Rhône. The limits on southern communications seem primarily to have reflected socio-economic dynamics, rather than conflict between barbarian polities.

*The Frankish North*

Small scale but persistent communications, then, linked the Burgundian kingdom to the Mediterranean coast and to places beyond. Such ties were not so persistent across the Burgundians’ opposite frontier. On first inspection, however, the distribution map for Burgundian coins in the north of France does imply that the same mode of exchange held there, too. The northern distribution broadly mirrors that of Provence; Burgundian coins are absent near the frontier, but re-occur in significant numbers deep inside Frankish territory. But in the north, the imbalance between imported and exported coins seems to have been far more extreme. Within Burgundian territory, LPL lists not one Frankish coin struck before the conquest of 534. That point bears restating: although some Merovingian coins were circulating over long
distances by the 520s, there is no direct numismatic evidence for the movement of Frankish coins across the Burgundian frontier.

The prosopographical studies in previous chapters concluded that communications across the Burgundians’ northwestern frontier were very rare, and that border-crossings generally involved royal or high-level political interests. But thanks to the Roujan and Chinon hoards (deposited by the 520s), we know that some Burgundian coins crossed into Frankish territory well before the conquest of Burgundy. If the data accurately represent the circulation of money before 534, why were coin flows between the Franks and Burgundians so severely lopsided?

Discussing these issues, multiple scholars have suggested to me that this imbalance may reflect Burgundian collection and re-minting of foreign coins. Such re-coining probably occurred, for example, in Provence later in the sixth century. If it also happened under the Burgundians, this could have obliterated the evidence for coin imports, explaining why contemporary Frankish coins have not been found inside the Burgundian kingdom. Yet I do not think that possibility makes best sense of the available data. There is absolutely no direct evidence that the Burgundians did confiscate and restrike most foreign issues, or in fact that the procedure was common anywhere in Gaul so early in the sixth century. But we can go beyond arguing from silence. A small number of Ostrogothic and imperial coins have been found intact in Burgundian territory; clearly contemporary Visigothic and Frankish coins have not. Perhaps it is merely coincidental that the only foreign coins found that escaped the hypothetical minter’s crucible were southeastern, but our prosopographical analyses suggest that the pattern is not

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53 See above, Chapter Five, pp. 169-70.

54 I thank Michael McCormick and Jonathan Conant for pressing me to develop my thoughts on this issue.

55 Lafaurie and Morrisson, “La pénétration des monnaies byzantines,” pp. 54-5.
random; ties with the south (however limited) seem to have been more active than ties to the north or west.

We also must consider the decree in the *Liber constitutionum* that all but four kinds of gold coinage should circulate without interference in Burgundian markets.\(^{56}\) That edict is hard to reconcile with the putative re-coining of imported money under discussion here. If the regime’s putative confiscation and re-minting was truly effective enough to create major gaps in the numismatic data, why would the same regime vainly command that no one should hinder the circulation of the very coins that it was supposedly confiscating for re-minting? The law, then, fits poorly with this hypothesis—but does offer potential insight into other concerns of the Burgundian regime.

The identity of the four prohibited mints or coin-issues has always been somewhat unclear, but all four prohibitions seem to have affected only early coins issued decades before the law in question, which Godomar probably promulgated ca. 524.\(^{57}\) Two or three may refer to fifth-century Visigothic issues, a point worth noting given the scarcity of Visigothic coinage in Burgundy; the fourth concerns early Burgundian coins from Geneva, perhaps struck by Gundobad’s brother and enemy, Godegisel.\(^{58}\) Although political tensions might lie behind the

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\(^{56}\) *Leges Burgundionum, constitutiones extravagantes* 21.7, pp. 120-121 (*Liber constitutionum sive lex Gundobada. Leges Burgundionum*, MGH *Legum sectio* 1, *Legum nationum Germanicarum* 2.1, ed. L. R. De Salis [Hannover: 1892: repr., 1973], pp. 29-122. The edict commanded “...that it be observed concerning mints of *solidi* that all gold should be accepted, whoever may offer it, save for four coins only, that is: ‘*Valentiani*;’ the former coinage of Geneva; also the Gothic coins that were debased in the time of king Alaric; and ‘*Adaricianos*.’ We also order that if anybody should not accept proffered gold, except for these four coins, he shall lose that thing that he was wanting to sell, without getting the price for it.” See Chapter Five, p. 155, on the details of my translation. *De monetis solidorum* [iubemus] custodire, ut omne aurum, quocumque pensaverit [ms. A4 = pesaverit], accipiat ur praeter quattuor tantum monetas, hoc est: *Valentiani*, *Genavensis prioris et Gotici, qui a tempore Alarici regis adaerati sunt, et Adaricianos. Quod si quicumque praeter istas quattuor monetas aurum pensantem [ms. A4 = pesatum] non acceperit, id, quod vendere volebat, non accepto pretio perdat.

\(^{57}\) On the promulgation of the Burgundian legal appendix, see Favrod, *Histoire politique*, pp. 451-6.

prohibitions, there is compelling evidence that debased gold levels characterized the prohibited
Geneva coins as well as those of the Visigoth Alaric II, and the fear of value lost to adulterated
coinage when coins were paid to the royal fisc may at least partially explain the royal prohibition
of all four banned categories.\textsuperscript{59} Whatever the motive behind this law, nothing in it appears to
restrict the Frankish coins that were circulating across Gaul by the 520s.\textsuperscript{60}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{59} Avitus of Vienne criticized a Gothic king for ordering his mints to debase their gold coins; the \textit{rex Getarum} in
question must be Alaric II, who died at Vouillé in 507, since Avitus (bishop by 494 and until 518: Duchesne 1.206
[1907]) describes the monarch as having acted most recently (\textit{nuperrime}) and before a disaster. Avitus’ comment
therefore matches the Burgundian law code’s reference to adulterated Gothic money in the time of Alaric. See
and Selected Prose}, pp. 251, 254. For debasement of early Burgundian coins minted at Geneva, see W. A. Oddy,
metallurgical analysis identified a discrete group of early Burgundian coins in the name of Anastasius, distinguished
by inclusion of PRF in the obverse legend, which suffer from gold debasement of approximately ten percent. These
contrast with the nearly pure coins associated with Gundobad, who “continued to strike in an alloy containing
96-98\% gold” after seizing sole control over the kingdom (p. 134). This contrast, coupled with the law’s explicit
reference to gold adulteration for the Gothic coins of Alaric II, implies that concerns over gold purity may lie behind
the legal prohibitions. Why? Whether or not the Burgundians attempted to uniformly melt down all foreign
coinage, royal minters still could have recoined gold that was paid directly to the fisc (there is evidence of that
practice later in Merovingian history; see Grierson and Blackburn, \textit{Medieval European coinage}, vol. 1., pp. 100,
128-9). Debased coinage threatened royal profits at a moment when the kingdom needed all its resources; if
Godomar’s agents had accepted and then recoined the debased PRF coins at the value determined solely by their
weight, for example, the fisc would have taken a nearly 10\% loss on each such exchange. Jean Lafaurie applauded
Oddy’s findings, though he cautioned that the PRF coins might be early issues by Gundobad, not his defeated
brother; Jean Lafaurie, “À propos des premières monnaies Burgondes : note sur l’article de W. A. Oddy,” \textit{Revue

\textsuperscript{60} Before adopting the reading \textit{et ad Eurici annos}, (see above, fn. 58) Lafaurie proposed for the fourth prohibited
coinage a—rather doubtful, it must be said—deformation of \textit{Αρβορυκοι} (\textit{Arborukoi}), a Greek form for the
suggested that the coins in question had been struck by fifth-century Roman warlords of northern Gaul in the years
after Valentinian III’s reign. Could one argue that such a putative prohibition on Armorican money might have
extended to contemporary Frankish coinage? As already noted, Lafaurie ultimately abandoned this fairly dubious
reconstruction. Moreover, when Burgundian laws discuss the Franks (in close proximity to the coinage edict), the
text explicitly calls them Franks (\textit{Leges Burgundionum, constitutions extravagantes} 21.4, p. 120: \textit{captivus a
Francis}; 21.9, p. 121: \textit{de Francis}). The putative prohibition of Armorican coins, which Lafaurie rightly jettisoned,
does not offer a compelling explanation for the absence of contemporary Frankish coin finds on Burgundian soil.
\end{footnotesize}
In fact, the hypothesis of re-coined Frankish money is ultimately unnecessary, because an alternate model can better harmonize the various textual witnesses and numismatic data. Burgundian subjects conducted very little exchange with neighbors immediately across the Frankish frontier. Instead, I will argue, coin transfers into Frankish hands generally involved direct long-range movements deep into the north, followed by shorter-range diffusion after arrival. For the most part, these transfers of wealth were either non-reciprocal—wealth flowed one-way from Burgundian coffers—or they involved the exchange of coinage for non-monetary commodities. Unlike conditions in the south, political tensions along the northern frontier profoundly shaped economic links. In fact, I would suggest that most economic transfers across the northern border involved some form of exploitation, unequal exchange, or violence.

Non-reciprocal transfer of wealth is easy to find in our written sources for the north. Frankish armies invaded the Burgundian kingdom in 500, 524, and then again between 532-534. Gregory of Tours notes that Frankish soldiers desired to participate in such campaigns in order to gain gold, silver, slaves, and clothing. Gregory also claims that Gundobad paid tribute to Clovis to appease the Frank during the invasion of 500-501. The long-distance transfer of plundered or extorted gold back into Frankish home territories, presumably followed by redistribution in Merovingian hands, exemplifies the kind of transactions implied by the chart of distances traveled by Burgundian coins. Other movements may have reinforced that pattern. Three bishops exiled in Sigismund’s reign found refuge at Tours in the northwest; if they took


62 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 3.11, pp. 107-8 (Gregorii episcopi Turonensis decem libri historiarum, MGH SRM 1.1, ed. Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison [Hannover: 1951]). This description describes rewards promised for an assault on the Auvergne, not against the Burgundians, but the alleged promise does suggest the importance of booty in motivating participation in Frankish military campaigns.

63 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 2.32-33, p. 80.
any wealth with them, it moved with them deep into Frankish lands.\textsuperscript{64} That dynamic seems to have persisted even in the immediate wake of the Frankish conquest. Gregory of Tours relates how Attalus, a member of his own family, endured captivity near Trier after serving as a hostage between rival Merovingian princes. The Frank who held Attalus demanded a ransom of ten pounds of gold for his return. Gregory claims that a loyal servant and a few miracles -- not gold -- brought Attalus home, but he notes that many other elite Gallo-Roman sons experienced the same kind of Frankish captivity during the mid-530s.\textsuperscript{65} If some families did pay out ransom money, Attalus’ experience suggests that such funds may have gone not to communities right across the border, but deep into the north. As these examples indicate, many transfers of wealth across the Frankish-Burgundian border were unidirectional -- in the Franks’ favor.

In fact, surviving texts describe only a single kind of reciprocal commodity exchange across that border: human trafficking. The final section of Burgundian edicts, which an unnamed “most glorious Lord” promulgated at Ambérieux east of Lyon, most likely dates to the last decade of the kingdom’s existence; it probably reflects King Godomar’s somewhat desperate attempts to bolster his weakened realm shortly after the disastrous invasions of 524.\textsuperscript{66} These final laws include half a dozen edicts concerning human movement across borders, most of them involving violence.\textsuperscript{67} Although one edict permits voluntary immigration, we also read of free Burgundian subjects led into captivity, who might someday return home, and of the loss of slaves due to enemy pillaging; of Goths escaping from Frankish captivity; and again of Franks

\textsuperscript{64} Cf. Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 3.17, p. 117, and \textit{Hist.} 10.31.10-11, p. 532. On these exiles, see Chapter Two, pp. 62-71.

\textsuperscript{65} See Gregory of Tours, \textit{Hist.} 3.15, pp. 112-16; see also above, Chapter Four, p. 134.

\textsuperscript{66} Favrod, \textit{Histoire politique}, pp. 451-6.

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Leges Burgundionum, constitutiones extravagantes} 21.2-6, 21.9, pp. 119-121.
who sell slaves to Burgundians -- a dicey issue, since the slaves might have belonged to other 
Burgundians before their capture. That latter decree thus implies the abduction and sale of 
persons within Burgundian territory. One law, however, mentions the sale of Burgundians’ 
slaves abroad; admittedly, such transactions would have directed wealth back into the kingdom. 
Not disregarding the human misery caused by abduction and violence, however, the chief 
economic impression is that the slaving/ransom industry mainly drained money away from the 
Burgundians.

The dismal circumstances suggested by these laws probably reflect conditions during a 
particularly troubled period for the Burgundian kingdom; ransom payments to the Franks likely 
were less common in more peaceful periods. Nonetheless, the anecdotal textual evidence 
suggests that instead of disrupting normal cross-border interactions in the north, violence and 
human trafficking were among the more common forms of contact there. It is noteworthy that 
the royal decree that ordered Burgundians to accept most gold coins as legal tender belongs also 
to the final section of laws.\(^{68}\) Aside from the possible fiscal interest in purging debased coins 
from circulation, perhaps the order to accept foreign coins in this troubled context also reflected 
widespread unfamiliarity with foreign money, and suspicion of the foreigners who carried it. 
When Frankish slavers left for home, they took Burgundian coins back north, and they left non-
monetary commodities—human beings—behind. Grimly, such human trafficking is the lone 
form of commerce with the north that stands out in the written sources for the Burgundians’ 
northwestern frontier communities.

For the decades prior to the Frankish conquest, ceramic evidence -- pottery recovered 
during archaeological excavation -- also tentatively supports the impression that little traffic

\(^{68}\) *Leges Burgundionum, constitutiones extravagantes* 21.7, pp. 120-121.
crosed the border with the Franks. Northern ceramic goods had penetrated well into Aeduan and Lingon territory in earlier periods; in the fourth century, these included both the famous wares of the Argonne forest, and the more modest regional productions from Jaulges/Villiers-Vineux (in the Yonne basin northeast of Auxerre). No longer. Our knowledge of ceramic use along the Aeduan and Lingon periphery is very limited for the fifth and sixth century, but the scanty data suggest localized links facing into the Burgundian-held Saône basin, rather than engagement with ceramic industries across the frontier. For example, a few fifth- and sixth-

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century samples of Chalonnais *bistre* ware have been recovered at Autun; *bistre* wares also penetrated into Lingon territory, for example at Genlis, southeast of Dijon. On the other hand, a little-studied gray ware that circulated in the Loire basin and in the Yonne (right across the Frankish border) apparently failed to penetrate into the Aeduan heartland. The lack of such short-range commodity transfers across the border helps to explain the absence of Burgundian coins close to the kingdom’s frontiers. Instead of short-range ties, it was long-range movements -- often funded by exploitation of one kind or another -- that decisively shaped the distribution of Burgundian coins across the north.

*Aquitania and Western Gaul*

Only a handful of Burgundian coins are known from Aquitania—that is, from central and southwestern Gaul. In addition to the ten Burgundian coins deposited in the 520s as part of the Chinon hoard, these finds amount to only three coins -- one *tremissis* each at Saint-Pierre-d’Amilly near the Atlantic coast, and at the formerly Arvernian communities of Clermont-Ferrand and Brioude (also noted on Fig. 1 are two possible Burgundian coins: one is a Frankish or Burgundian imitation of an Anastasian copper coin, from Parisot in the Tarn of southwestern France; the other is a possibly Burgundian *tremissis* of Justinian found at Andard in the lower

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73 Kasprzyk, “Les cités des Eduens,” 1.41-44.
Loire basin). The density of Burgundian coinage across western France is very low. Because the coins in the lower Loire are so far from Burgundian soil, and given the very infrequent attested Burgundian movements into that region (one thinks of the exiled bishops at Tours), the patterns of Burgundian coin circulation suggested for the Frankish north also may have applied in the far west.

However, the Burgundian *tremisses* found in the Auvergne (at Clermont-Ferrand and Brioude) are anomalies within the overall distribution of Burgundian money across France. To the north and the south of the Burgundian kingdom, Burgundian coins have not been found for some distance on either side of the border. The two Arvernian coins are the sole exception; to put it another way, these *tremisses* are the only Burgundian coins found outside the kingdom that also fall within zones Two and Three on our distance-traveled chart [Fig. 4], that is between 40 and 120 miles from Lyon. But this exception only reinforces the good fit between coin distributions and textually adduced movements, because the Auvergne also stands out in written texts as uncommonly well connected to Burgundian territory. As late as the 470s, Sidonius Apollinaris was still communicating from Clermont with contacts in Autun and Dijon. Although textual witnesses do not describe communication between Aeduans, Lingons and Arvernians during the next few decades, elite Lingons re-established social ties with the Auvergne very quickly following the destruction of the Burgundian kingdom (Gregory of Tours’ Arvernian and Lingon parents appear to have married in or ca. 534). Further south in Burgundian territory, some Burgundian subjects still maintained ties to Clermont even before

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74 LPL 17.382.1, p. 104 (Saint-Pierre-d’Amilly); 63.113.2, p. 253 (Clermont-Ferrand); 43.40.2, p. 174 (Brioude); 81.202.1, p. 321 (Parisot); 49.4.1, p. 195 (Andard).

75 See Chapter One, pp. 46-9; Chapter Three, pp. 104-5.

76 See Chapter Four, pp. 131-4.
534. When bishop Quintianus of Rodez fled north from Visigothic oppressors some time after 507, he took refuge at Clermont. There he received material support not only from the local bishop, but also from the bishop of Lyon, who granted him Arvernian property owned by the church of Lyon. That generosity implies a pre-existing economic relationship, linking an institution in Lyon to property in Clermont, a relationship apparently not completely severed by the tensions that had complicated communications elsewhere. On the other hand, of course, the transfer of property to a resident at Clermont could also suggest that the bishop of Lyon could not easily enjoy that property’s benefits at this point.

To the north, south, and west of Burgundian territory, coin distributions broadly corroborate the communication patterns revealed by written texts. The Auvergne does appear somewhat exceptional. Elsewhere, however, the data suggest that short-range cross-border traffic in and out of the Burgundian kingdom was very rare.

Postscript

The depositional context of a single Ostrogothic tremissis, found at Brèves in the Nièvre, effectively symbolizes the patterns proposed in this study. The coin’s find-spot sits alongside the ancient frontier between Frankish soil and the Burgundians’ northwestern territories. As the crow flies, the most direct path between Brèves and the Ostrogothic mints would point due

77 Gregory of Tours, Hist. 2.36, p. 85. On Gregory’s presentation of this episode see Ian N. Wood, “Gregory of Tours and Clovis,” Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire 63 (1985): 249-72, at 256-7. Despite some misleading statements from Gregory of Tours, Quintianus apparently fled to Frankish territory not before the battle of Vouillé, but rather following Clovis’ offensive and a subsequent re-occupation of Rodez by the Visigoths.

78 LPL 58.39.1.1, p. 233.
southeast, through Burgundian lands. Yet the Brèves tremissis’ context suggests that the coin may have taken a much more circuitous route before its deposition.

Although this coin was struck for Theodoric, king of Ostrogothic Italy, prior to 526, the coin was pierced at a later date for use as jewelry, and was then buried within a sixth-century necropolis.79 The grave-furnishings at Brèves indicate links to the material culture of military communities in northern Gaul -- and even from Thuringia, far to the northeast in what is now Germany. In fact, archaeologists consider the settlement at Brèves to be a military outpost controlling one of the approaches to Burgundy, founded either in immediate anticipation of the invasion of the Burgundian kingdom or during the consolidation of that territory after the conquest of 534.80 This community was only one part of a chain of Frankish border-garrisons now detected across the Burgundian frontier.81 The links to Thuringia suggest that the warriors resident at Brèves included Thuringians enrolled in Merovingian service after Theudebert’s Thuringian victory at the beginning of the 530s.82

The Brèves tremissis is the only Ostrogothic single coin find from the northwestern periphery of the Burgundian kingdom. Yet its deposition either post-dates 534, or dates to no earlier than the preparations for the climactic invasion of Burgundy. The site’s association with goods from Thuringia—a region subject to Ostrogothic transalpine influence—implies that the coin may have passed north across the Alps, then southwest into Gaul. Roundabout as that path

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79 See LPL’s image and description (58.39.1.1, p. 233). Also found within the necropolis were two gilded, counterfeit tremisses and a silver piece of unknown origin dating to the mid-sixth century: LPL 58.39.1.2-4, p. 234.


81 Pépin, “L’archéologie funéraire,” passim (but see map at p. 229).

may be, it crosses territories in which Ostrogothic contacts were more common than in northwestern Burgundy. To put that another way, the warriors who menaced Aeduan territory from the northwest had better access to Italian gold than did the Aeduans or Lingons themselves, who inhabited a kingdom abutting Ostrogothic territory. Rather than a conduit for movement between south and north, the Rhône-Saône basin under Burgundian control seems relatively isolated.

The material culture of the finds at Brèves reflects a community prepared for violence, and yet in communication with distant lands and communities. Before the Burgundian kingdom’s fall, armed foes like the warriors at Brèves lay in wait on the periphery. The *pax* lauded by Burgundian kings failed, ruined by Frankish aggression and predation. Paradoxically, such violence also tore down boundaries, but subsequent growth was not always immediate, nor necessarily even. Merovingian social and economic networks were themselves evolving, and integration into those incipient networks took time; recall the complete absence of recorded coinage around Autun, even following the conquest, until the final decades of the sixth century. Nonetheless, change was coming -- sometimes painful, often slow, but heralding a new order.
Toward an Interdisciplinary Model

of Late Antique Communications History
During the fifth and sixth centuries, Aeduan and Lingon communication horizons were not uniform. They changed from one place to the next: Autun and Chalon-sur-Saône’s horizons always looked slightly different, as did those of Langres and Dijon. The horizons also changed over time, sometimes quite quickly; from Autun, the shape of elite social networks changed between 530 and 535. Even at the intra-provincial level, then, late antique communications history reveals profound diversity, which should complicate any attempt to impose monolithic interpretive schemes of crisis or continuity.

Diversity, however, is not equivalent to chaos. The evidence marshaled here has supported a coherent narrative, in which Aeduan and Lingon communication history makes sense within a synthetic framework. Until the final retreat of imperial power in the 470s, Lingon and especially Aeduan elites enjoyed surprisingly robust and far-reaching ties across much of Gaul. As Gaul became only a patchwork of squabbling kingdoms, however, communication horizons contracted sharply. From about 480 onward, we may say that social connections at the most local level—intra-civitas—were only rarely disrupted by political turmoil -- with Langres’ troubles before ca. 506 offering an important exception. Under barbarian rule, however, ties between some adjacent civitates or provinces became less regular. For Aeduans and Lingons, most social connections remained within the northern half of the Burgundian kingdom, an area incorporating Aeduan and Lingon space, the Jura Mountains, and the capital cities of Lyon and Geneva. Old connections to adjacent cities in the northwest, across the Merovingian frontier, shriveled. The Burgundian collapse during the 530s, however, re-opened communication axes into Frankish territory.

In framing that narrative, I have had to grapple with the problem of negative evidence. Can one demonstrate the absence of communication? Arguments from silence are rarely
convincing. I want to stress, therefore, that my assertions of relative absence in fact reflect multiple, parallel, and overlapping absences noted in wholly independent sources, and in some cases in wholly independent *types* of sources. For example, I have asserted that early sixth-century Aeduans and Lingons almost never penetrated south of Vienne, *unless* they were headed for the coastal centers of Arles and Lérins. I based that conclusion not only on parallel patterns of attestation and silence within multiple written sources, but also on observed parallels in distributions of contemporary coins and ceramics.

The conversation between various sources has been one of the happy fruits of this study’s methodology. I have focused on a fairly restricted area -- only a few cities at the heart of Gaul. Yet that tight focus has made possible a rich synthetic understanding of the patterns of communication across the area. Late antique aristocratic texts are notoriously difficult to align with the findings of archaeology, in part because most texts and most excavated sites answer very different questions. But communication history, it turns out, can ask meaningful questions of many different kinds of evidence. Elite ecclesiastical authors may have cared little about qualitative analysis of network change across their society, but those authors’ unspoken assumptions and casual anecdotes have much to tell us about their own communication horizons—perhaps most remarkably illustrated in the early sixth-century fictive passion account of Benignus of Dijon, which described territories then across the Frankish frontier as “*in extremis finibus Galliarum.*”¹ This project’s tight geographic focus has also allowed detailed engagement with the many peculiarities and critical problems associated with the evidence. In some cases, familiarity with this micro-region’s communications has rehabilitated seemingly implausible textual claims. For example, Gregory of Tours’ explanation for the exile of

¹ See Chapter Four, pp. 127-9.
Aprunculus of Langres, so often doubted by modern scholars, appears perfectly coherent within the Lingon communication context revealed in this study.²

These pages have illuminated our view of more than just the Aeduans and Lingons. To be sure, the prosopographical studies of Chapters One through Four address those communities specifically, and it would be a mistake to apply those chapters’ findings elsewhere in Burgundian territory without careful reflection. Scholars familiar with the letters of Avitus of Vienne, for example, may be surprised by my insistence on limited communication across some of the Burgundian kingdom’s frontiers (I will return, however, to the issue of metropolitan cities and their networks). Moreover, Aeduan and Lingon territories bridged multiple watersheds; their roads and rivers connected much of Gaul. Close investigation of the typical communication patterns of this small region also reveals atypical interactions with places farther afield. Investigating those atypical connections has led, for example, to the probable circumstances in which several Burgundian exiles became bishops at Tours, or to the likelihood that Germanus of Paris’ journey to and ordination as bishop of that city in the 550s followed political impropriety during the rebellion of the Merovingian prince, Chramm.³ Detailed study of communications in the Burgundians’ northern hinterlands, then, has contributed to the history of many places across Gaul.

The conversation between multiple kinds of sources has also enriched an unprecedented distribution-study of Burgundian coins found in France. By putting numismatic and prosopographical data into close conversation, this study has moved some distance toward an interdisciplinary model of socio-economic networks in Burgundian territory. I am certainly not

² See Chapter Three, pp. 105-8.
the first scholar to include both textual and material evidence in a study of late antique Gaul, but much of the literature, particularly in the Francophone academy, has settled for simple description of, rather than synthesis between, different types of evidence. In presenting this study, I hope to have shown that a communication-oriented investigation of a compact geographical area makes such synthesis both possible and rewarding. It remains now to sum up what that synthesis has revealed about late antique economic, political, and social transformations in Gaul.

**Explaining Communications Changes**

At the broadest level, between 395 and 500 the social and communication networks that crossed Gaul (and beyond) eroded massively. To use the language of network analysis, the networks that crossed Gaul in 395 were decentralized, diffuse, and richly supported by weak ties.4 One should keep in mind that “weak” ties, despite their pejorative-seeming name, are highly valued by many network theorists.5 Strong ties to close relations provide stability in life, but many weak ties to more casual acquaintances provide opportunities for advancement, innovation, new resources, and new information. The late Roman system and its infrastructure proliferated weak ties as imperial agents moved across Gaul. Passing merchants, mid-level bureaucrats, imperial couriers, soldiers newly stationed in the region, petitioners or panegyricists on the road to court, bishops spending the night on their way to a distant ecumenical synod, etc.; such travelers’ aggregated...

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4 I do not use “decentralized” here in reference to the strength of the central imperial regime. In network terms, a decentralized network is one that includes many ties between separate nodes rather than domination by a few hegemonic nodes, which control access to other nodes.

5 For example, see the development and application of this point at fn. 44, below.
movements aided the flow of information and the development of new relationships across the imperial network.

In 500, by contrast, discrete and fairly effective networks still linked the members of small worlds within and around local communities, but far fewer individuals connected those small worlds to each other. In the big picture, Gaul’s overall social network in 500 was now more centralized (to use network vocabulary) and thus more vulnerable. The movement of information across the total network now relied much more on key brokers, the very few persons (such as bishops, abbots, and secular magnates) who operated near the top of the social pyramid. The role of network broker offers individuals many opportunities for information and access control.\footnote{Ronald S. Burt, “Structural Holes and Good Ideas,” \textit{American Journal of Sociology} 110 (2004): 349-99; Noah E. Friedkin, \textit{A Structural Theory of Social Influence} (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 72. For an excellent historical example of power through network brokerage, see the discussion of an eighteenth-century Native American Creek leader’s skillful manipulation of rival European and tribal networks: Alejandra Dubcovsky, “One Hundred Sixty-One Knots, Two Plates, and One Emperor: Creek Information Networks in the Era of the Yamassee War,” \textit{Ethnohistory} 59 (2012): 489-513, especially pp. 497-8.} Loosely connected networks that rely upon such brokers, however, are more vulnerable to disruption and are far less efficient, since the few strong ties connecting small worlds lack the redundancy offered by many weak ties. The degradation of late imperial networks was not only a symptom of late antique troubles, but also a contributor to further socio-economic disruption.

Network degradation did not affect all communities equally. I have already noted the diversity of economic experiences among neighboring Aeduan and Lingon cities. That diversity stems partly from the apparent existence within Burgundian territory of core and peripheral areas of differing socio-economic “mass.” Elite residents of Chalon, Lyon, and Vienne seem to have been much better connected to the rest of the kingdom, and to the world beyond it, than residents of cities closer to the kingdom’s borders. Coin distributions reveal the same core/periphery contrast.
On the other hand, even the inner core does not seem to have been tightly integrated into “international” monetary networks. The flow of foreign money across Burgundian borders appears to have been much less robust than the current consensus on pseudo-imperial coin circulation might lead us to suspect. To the extent that Burgundian subjects did connect to foreign economic networks, the resulting coin flows apparently were imbalanced in favor of the Burgundians’ neighbors; coin distributions and written anecdotes both support the claim that more wealth flowed out from Burgundian territory than was imported into the kingdom.

Just as we can differentiate spatially between core and peripheral regions within the kingdom, we also must differentiate between separate axes of movement. The Burgundian kingdom’s external socio-economic ties were not omnidirectionally equivalent. The Burgundians’ monetary import/export imbalance did apply toward both the south and north, though it was more pronounced to the north, and market forces surely affected some movements across both frontiers. But the context in which Burgundian coins moved south toward the Mediterranean littoral also allowed for relatively uncomplicated social movement by Burgundian subjects themselves. That was apparently not the case in the north, where slave-trading and other violent acts may have accounted for most northward transfers of Burgundian wealth into Frankish territory. Across the northwestern frontier with the Franks, attested Aeduan and Lingon social ties withered—even where these had been robust before the end of imperial rule.

To conceptualize this communication imbalance, we can turn to the Newtonian language of social scientists’ gravity models. Gravity, according to a recent literature review, “has long been one of the most successful empirical models in economics, ordering very well the enormous observed variation in economic interaction across space.” Gravity models have also proven

useful in geographers’ discussions of human movement and migration. It would not be helpful to employ here the formal mathematical structures of modern economics, against which the surviving data from late antique Gaul are far too scanty to prove of use. Yet the basic principles of traditional gravity theory remain highly relevant, and are simple to summarize. As a “direct demographic analogy of the basic model of Newtonian gravity,” the theory asserts that when all other considerations are equal, communities with more economic “mass” will experience more interaction with external communities. Meanwhile, interaction will *decrease* with greater distance -- or, more to the point, with greater travel time or difficulty -- between communities. When those principles do not obtain, it is because other considerations are not equal; *friction* stemming from trade costs or risks (e.g., corruption, political borders, tariffs, etc.) has affected the flow of interaction along a communication/trade/migration axis.

Those principles coherently explain the regional and directional diversity observed in this study for Burgundian-era communications—particularly if we define settlement “mass” flexibly, as economic and social gravity theories allow. Lérins was a long way from Dijon, but its appeal as a prestigious locus of spiritual activity gave the monastic island enough mass to overcome distance-friction, and attract traffic from Aeduan and Lingon communities. Lyon’s mass—here, its potential for attracting Aeduan or Lingon communication—also involved more than its population size alone. Lyon was an active and monetized market, a mint and court center, and a metropolitan episcopal seat.

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11 See fn. 12, below.
But most Gallo-Roman communities had far less communications mass than Lyon. At the local level, however, it took less mass to promote communication over short distances. Thus, we have seen fairly robust short-range movements within the Burgundians’ northern civitates. Further afield, there was little motivation for interaction between distant communities with low mass. That explains why Aeduan and Lingon travelers left neither textual nor numismatic evidence of close interaction with the small communities between Vienne and Arles, even though northern travelers heading for the coast (with its high-mass centers) had to pass those same small communities.

Distance and travel time are not the only potential sources of friction or resistance to communication. Political borders and their associated complications can impede trade. To the Burgundians’ south, the shifting Gothic political frontiers on the Durance and Isère Rivers do not seem to have imposed significant communications friction. For the years between 476 and 534, in fact, we have more evidence for Aeduan and Lingon contact with the Mediterranean centers of Arles or Lérins than with nearby Auxerre, just across the Frankish border. So far as we can tell from extant texts, moreover, Aeduans only pierced that northwestern border when royal or high-level political interests propelled them. The stark limitations on northwestern communication reflect significant friction, apparently linked to the politics of that frontier.

This study’s findings, in fact, suggest that the amount of friction caused by military conflicts or political tensions between kingdoms was one of the most important factors in shaping communication habits. The major shifts in communication patterns presented here

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coincide with key changes in political control of Aeduan and Lingon territory. Aeduan social networks, for example, show a marked contraction around 476. Although the importance of that date for Roman history is famously exaggerated, that year witnessed more decisive changes in Gaul, where the Visigoths drove out the last imperial forces loyal to the Italian regime. Thereafter, no part of Gaul was ruled directly by the central government. Evidence for Lingon communications is very weak until after the defeat of the Alamans, ca. 506; the end of Burgundian power in 534 also roughly coincides with an expansion of communication horizons.

In insisting on the importance of political violence, there is no need to deny the fact of accommodation and cooperation between Gallo-Romans and barbarians. Warlords and kings reshaped Gaul’s communication networks, not so much as barbarians but as commanders of violence. Over the fifth century, the proliferation of borders between armed rivals brought the threat of war closer to home for every Gallo-Roman. War’s consequences outlasted any armistice, and included not only violence but also diminished opportunities for social interaction and communication, even in peacetime. Accusations of treason (one thinks of Aprunculus of Langres’ exile) remained possible after hostilities ceased, but the rise of many small polities had less intentionally malign effects, too. In the late fourth century, Aeduans might travel to Trier to seek governmental aid; in the early sixth century, they would go instead to Lyon, while communities across the Frankish border looked elsewhere. Gaul’s aristocrats no longer shared common political centers.

Still, we should not lose sight of the longer narrative of economic change. Gaul’s pottery industries had already contracted before the end of imperial rule; Savoyard *luisante* wares, for example, no longer reached Aeduan and Lingon territory after the mid-fifth century. On the other hand, the positive growth of *bistre* production near Chalon was already underway by the
late fifth century, and continued thereafter for centuries further. Coin distributions point to a progressive, relative de-integration of the Burgundian economy from surrounding territories, but the signs of greater connectivity after the Frankish conquest appear over a period of several decades, not overnight. Of course, this may only be a feature of the time-scale attested by the numismatic evidence found to date, but we may not ignore the evidence as it stands.

Frankish-Burgundian political tensions do not neatly explain all aspects of eastern Gaul’s economic affairs ca. 500. Rather, we should view the different kinds of communications addressed here in a nested sequence, linked causally but changing on different time-scales. For ceramic exchange patterns, I suggest that political change reinforced network contractions that were already underway by 476. The tense northwestern political border contributed to but did not cause the discernable ceramic frontier on the edge of the Aeduan civitas. Elite social connections described in texts stand at the other end of our nested communications, and sometimes responded very quickly and precisely to political changes. But rather than treating politics as a monocausal explanation for Aeduan and Lingon isolation early in the sixth century, I see politics as one component of a “perfect storm” of communications change. Elite social ties, coin movements, and ceramic distributions were each more sensitive to different factors in that process. Nonetheless, they all testify to the same “storm,” a storm that would not have had these particular effects were it not for the tensions along the Burgundians’ northwestern frontier. It is that particular combination of effects, in this particular cultural-geographical area, that created the small world described in this study.

Of course, some large urban centers continued to attract fairly robust communications, even before 534. As an avenue for future research, it would be enlightening to apply this study’s prosopographical methods to the metropolitan cities of Lyon and Vienne. During the
Burgundian era, when Aeduan and Lingon external ties seem to have been so limited, the bishop of Lyon at least nominally still owned property in Frankish-held Clermont; more impressively, Avitus of Vienne corresponded with the imperial court in Constantinople, with Rome, and with the Frankish king Clovis. Indeed, such anecdotes suggest that the metropolitan cities’ communication histories would match what gravity theory implies. I suspect that those histories would include more communication across frontiers than we have seen in this study—even to the north, albeit concentrated in ties to other major centers of “mass,” such as royal courts or key ecclesiastical centers. Such a picture would differ from what I have presented here, but would not -- I speculate -- fundamentally undermine the importance of politics in complicating or driving many cross-border contacts. Indeed, Avitus of Vienne once acknowledged that he would have endangered a friend in Visigothic territory by corresponding while that contact was under suspicion from his barbarian overlords. These cities’ greater mass, and the higher political status and influence of metropolitan bishops, did not entirely erase political realities that affected communication. Moreover, I have not argued that Aeduans never communicated to the northwest, but rather that such ties were anemic unless high political actors motivated travel. As Lyon was a primary court center, senior secular authorities concentrated there. These will have had many more opportunities to interact with distant communities through royal agency, or (perhaps) may have enjoyed more trust from rulers, allowing toleration for increased engagement across sensitive borders.

Sometimes, such high-status persons may have used their influence to benefit less well-connected Burgundian subjects. Vienne, for example, seems to have bounded the Burgundian

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core zone of social and economic interaction; several interactions suggest that Avitus of Vienne may have brokered communications between cities north and south of his see. Network theory suggests that nodes with high centrality—brokers—are more likely to use network connections regularly than are the peripheral nodes that rely on such brokers.\textsuperscript{15} If men like Avitus thus fostered Gallic communications, then he played a key structural role in regional social networks, and may have reaped significant personal influence from that position.

But even in the south of Gaul, the end of Empire broke apart ancient and far-reaching networks. As Jonathan Arnold has demonstrated, observers in Ostrogothic Italy saw the cities of Gaul slipping away, both from \textit{romanitas} and (less abstractly) from easy communication.\textsuperscript{16} Gaul’s violent dissolution had real consequences. Even if the early sixth-century Burgundian kingdom remained, as Ian Wood has asserted, “essentially a late Roman province, run by late Roman officials,” the communication horizons of the Burgundians’ Aeduan and Lingon subjects after 476 emphatically do not reflect business as usual.\textsuperscript{17}

Kings and their agents made forceful and often canny decisions to exploit particular circumstances. But some studies in recent decades have downplayed royal agency, presenting secular rulers as essentially reactive or even passive. That view has stood out to me most in discussions of episcopal exile and treason accusations; in our (appropriate) haste to tease out the complexities of local aristocratic social relationships, we have not always taken seriously the

\textsuperscript{15} Friedkin, \textit{A Structural Theory of Social Influence}, p. 72.


high-stakes politics that motivated rulers to threaten some of their subjects.\textsuperscript{18} The shift in recent generations away from the “great man” vision of history has enriched scholarship, illuminating the vigorous and complex lives of those below the pinnacle of late antique society. Yet we downplay the influence of violent warlords and scheming princes at our intellectual peril; their choices and rivalries determined the most prudent scope for many social interactions across Gaul.

\textit{Network Theories, Chinese Guanxi, and the Experience of Empire’s End}

Despite the importance of feuding warlords, the Gallo-Romans over whom they fought were no less active. Political tensions limited possible or prudent communications, but aristocratic families still worked to promote their interests. The marriage of Gregorius Attalus and his Lingon wife Armentaria reflects social connection between \textit{civitates}, despite the turmoil around Langres late in the fifth century.\textsuperscript{19} When opportunities for change appeared, some families acted rapidly and decisively. The marriage of the younger Armentaria (Gregory of Tours’ mother) into an Arvernian family probably reflects her ambitious family’s bold exploitation of the fractured horizons that opened as the Burgundian kingdom collapsed.\textsuperscript{20} Some Gallo-Romans were motivated and able to shape their present and future affairs.

\textsuperscript{18} See Chapter Two, pp. 62-71; Chapter Three, pp. 105-8.

\textsuperscript{19} Chapter Three, pp. 103-4.

\textsuperscript{20} Chapter Four, pp. 131-4.
Given that, the relative ambivalence of some Gallo-Roman references to what we call the “Fall of the Roman Empire” is rather surprising.\textsuperscript{21} The author of a Jura hagiography, for example, barely pays that transition any attention, noting simply that public affairs were handed over to royal authority.\textsuperscript{22} It seems that he only included it at all as necessary context for an anecdote about a saint, Lupicinus, standing up to a Burgundian noble at the royal court. Various factors may explain such diffidence: the Christianization of social priorities away from the \textit{saeculum}; general apathy toward the imperial commonweal; or studied literary aloofness from unpleasant realities. Alternately, as some have suggested, things really may not have been all that bad. If Ian Wood’s vision of Burgundian society is correct, the retreat of direct Roman rule was something of a non-event, and Burgundian masters simply acted as the emperor’s latest representatives.\textsuperscript{23}

On the other hand, some late antique authors did express grave concern over contemporary events. Orientius of Auch famously claimed that during the Vandal ravages at the beginning of the fifth century, “all Gaul smoked in one funeral pyre.”\textsuperscript{24} Salvian of Marseilles waxed eloquent over Gaul’s many misfortunes, though it is important to recognize that he saw Gallo-Romans’ moral faults as more troubling and as the cause of the violence and suffering in his own time. His description, at any rate, often seems hyperbolic.\textsuperscript{25}


\textsuperscript{23} Wood, “The Burgundians and Byzantium,” p. 15.

\textsuperscript{24} Orientius, \textit{Commonitorium} 2, line 184 (\textit{CSEL} vol. 16, p. 234).

At any rate, the contrast between the attitudes expressed by Orientius and Salvian, on the one hand, and by writers like the Jura hagiographer of St. Lupicinus, have contributed to tensions between rival catastrophist and continuist historiographies. That tension has long been a feature of late antique studies, and recent work such as Ward-Perkins’ *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* has reignited debate.\(^{26}\) The common reference by many scholars to the “transformation” of the Roman world does not inherently solve the problem. Transformation may occur in a range of contexts; cocoons and crucibles both transform, but as metaphors for social change they represent entirely different experiences. Part of the problem here is the occasional tendency for scholars to eschew mixed models, preferring stark, dogmatic paradigms that oppose catastrophe or continuity as somehow irreconcilable. In reality, both catastrophe and continuity shaped life across late antiquity and into the early medieval period. To some extent, that assertion points to the different fates of separate regions or even communities across the Empire—or even across individual provinces, as this study has shown. But forces of crisis and continuity might also operate simultaneously in the *same* historical context.

As I bring this study to a close, I want to elaborate on that claim by harnessing recent developments in communication and network studies, which offer conceptual tools to re-imagine the experience of the end of empire in Roman Gaul. I include “experience” in that statement very deliberately; the *experience* of late antiquity offers a different historical object than the *circumstances* of the Empire’s fall. Of course, even our most confident assertions about “what actually happened” require subjective judgments. To write about ancient human experience doubles that problem, as it requires us to make subjective judgments about long-deceased

humans’ own subjective views. It is helpful therefore to think first about the distance between ancient and modern assumptions about social relationships.

Modern scholarship on network and communication theory often presents its findings in universalizing terms. In recent years, however, scholars have begun to question the unspoken Western and Modern assumptions that underlie such claims. As one scholar has complained,

As a set of views and principles developed on the basis of European experience yet ... presented as universal, Eurocentrism has come to be seen as one of the primary factors leading to a serious imbalance in knowledge production ... One may talk about media and communication studies around the world, yet the discussion is essentially an intellectual monologue within the mainstream West—with itself.27

To address that imbalance, some social scientists now frame research that privileges traditional cultural perspectives from the global South, particularly Africa and Asia. To the extent that dominant understandings of social change rely on culturally determined assumptions of value or epistemology, this broadening of perspectives may prove very enriching to scholars of pre-modern Mediterranean history. In some ways, Europe’s pre-Enlightenment and pre-industrial cultures share many similarities with traditional non-Western societies.

Broadly speaking, the dominant modes of thought in many Western societies are universalist, rather than particularist.28 Westerners tend to idealize the equally binding moral force of rules and laws for all members of society (even if that attitude is not always honored in practice). Particularist societies more openly prioritize relationships over abstract rules, which


are understood to bend to accommodate the needs of relationships in shifting contexts.\textsuperscript{29} Although governments in particularist societies do produce and enforce laws, it is often the strength or weakness of an individual’s social relationships -- not the protection of impartial justice -- that determines social outcomes.

Particularist societies exist in many parts of the globe, including Europe, although the dominant modern universalism of northern European cultures views such cultural expressions with great suspicion. Particularism helps to explain, for example, the social importance of the notorious \textit{mafiosi} of Sicily. In 1966, anthropologist Jeremy Boissevain characterized the social tensions that made patronage so important there:

To an extent, then, every Sicilian feels himself to be isolated in a lawless and hostile world in which violence and bloodshed are still endemic. Not only is he surrounded by enemies and potential enemies, he is also subject to the authority of an impersonal government whose affairs are administered by bureaucrats, each of whom is either trying to derive some personal advantage from his position or is liable to be maneuvered against him by his enemies.\textsuperscript{30}

For readers familiar with Ammianus Marcellinus, these words might equally describe late Roman aristocratic society, in which fierce competition over honor and power routinely coopted the organs of government.\textsuperscript{31} Less sinister is this description of a different culture, from a foundational text for social scientific understanding of particularism:

[This society] can be said to have organized primarily about the relational reference points of kinship, local community, continuity with ancestors, the ordering of hierarchical relationships, and a general orientation to collective morality emphasizing responsibility for the functioning of collectivities, all the


\textsuperscript{31} Christopher Kelly, \textit{Ruling the Later Roman Empire} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004) offers a penetrating but empathetic study of these factors at work at the heart of the late imperial bureaucratic regime.
way from the Emperor’s responsibility for the society as a whole, to the father’s responsibility for his family.32

The passage refers to traditional China, which Talcott Parsons hailed in 1951 as a paradigmatic example of the “particularistic achievement” society. Yet Roman historians will also recognize here the social world of the ancient Mediterranean. Work on the early imperial period has also revealed particularist forces at work. Describing Roman trading communities framed by common geographic origin, who found the state’s legal protections to be unreliable, Terpstra has argued that “the loss of a member’s reputation or trading position within the group formed the instrument of contract enforcement.”33 Terpstra’s characterization of in-group relationship enforcement among Roman traders aligns with many of the particularist social structures described below.

In the long historical view, Christianity’s cosmological and moral claims drew many parts of Europe away from particularism.34 Even after the Roman Empire had identified itself as a Christian polity, however, particularist assumptions remained very strong. Even if many Gauls did radically renounce the world, the flavor of monasticism that dominated Gaul wove contemplatives into tight-knit community relationships. Selection for episcopal office famously reflected family connections; the machinations behind some episcopal appointments, as Gregory of Tours reports them, are about as clear an illustration of particularist actions as one could seek. Earlier, the imperial project had introduced universalizing claims into a highly particularist

society, with mixed results.\textsuperscript{35} Similarly, the Christianization of Gallic society did not provoke the immediate rejection of either particularist or universalist sentiments. We may imagine an ongoing tension between the universalist implications of many Christian beliefs and practices, and the underlying particularist social structure. Chris Kelly has suggested that the same tension gave pause to some officials in the imperial court, where “the contrast with widely accepted, everyday practice must have been starkly and disturbingly clear. At the Last Judgment, there was to be no means of mollifying, tempering, or avoiding bureaucracy. Christ’s court would hand down a decision untroubled by clout, connections, or money.”\textsuperscript{36}

Naturally, there is no need to pretend that Rome (in any period) and China are exact equivalents; particularist social systems are very diverse in form. Nonetheless, they share common structural features, which invite us to learn from studies of modern particularism, for which data abounds. The point of the comparative exercise will be to see through different eyes and to re-imagine, using reasonable modern proxies, how a late antique particularist society might have experienced the network changes described in earlier chapters—in ways that may seem alien to the typically western and modern academic mind.

Numerous studies in the last quarter-century have explored the Chinese understanding of \textit{Guanxi}, “an older form of social network theory that contextualizes individuals within a highly collectivist society.”\textsuperscript{37} Sometimes translated “connections,” \textit{Guanxi} is better understood to refer “to relationship in the most profound sense of the term, with implications that are modeled by the


\textsuperscript{36} Kelly, \textit{Ruling the Later Roman Empire}, p. 244.

father-son and husband-wife relation.\textsuperscript{38} Guanxi regulates social behavior by extending familial norms of relationship across some connections beyond an individual’s literal kin-group. For example (to use a frequently-cited illustration), if a woman from village A marries a man from village B, every member of A and B become connected by Guanxi. As a result, persons from A may call on members of B for aid or preferential treatment, because the familial link between the new bride and groom have assimilated both communities within an assumed kinship relation (albeit one containing a superior/inferior status dynamic).\textsuperscript{39} Compared to western network theory, however, the traditional rules for Guanxi offer not an alternate objective description of network activity, but (as we will discuss shortly) a different set of assumptions about the purpose of social networking.

In Communist China, particularly before the reforms of the 1980s, the grand claims of the massively inefficient state did not erase cultural particularism. In an age of profound scarcity, bureaucratic capriciousness caused severe human suffering, but the particularist rules of Guanxi helped to mitigate risk for some groups. Guanxi opened doors that official State policy, with its command economy, had kept shut. In one stark case, for example, a household facing starvation during a famine had Guanxi with someone from a neighboring but less-devastated community; that person delivered a sack of maize on his bicycle, saving the family from death.\textsuperscript{40}

But Guanxi’s particularism, by its very nature, could not privilege everyone; other families starved. With its focus on special treatment for members of a select group, Guanxi hardly promotes equal fortunes across society as a whole. That inequality has prompted many to

\textsuperscript{39} Bell, “Guanxi: A Nesting of Groups,” p. 134.
\textsuperscript{40} Bell, “Guanxi: A Nesting of Groups,” p. 136.
criticize some manifestations of Guanxi as an unethical form of corruption or nepotism.\textsuperscript{41} Without dismissing that accusation, we also must understand that Guanxi, Sicilian patronage, and similar systems depend on a fundamentally different outlook than the universalist understanding dominant in the modern West. The particularist systems studied here divide the world into insiders and outsiders. They also prescribe different moral codes of conduct toward persons within each category. In Sicily, as within the norms of Guanxi, outsiders are mistrusted; deceiving or exploiting them does not necessarily cause social shame.\textsuperscript{42} But insiders are family. In both cases, promoting that small group’s honor and wellbeing is an individual’s highest social good; as Boissevain noted for Sicily, “a person’s responsibility for his family is thus the value on which his life is centered. Other values and organizational principles are of secondary importance.”\textsuperscript{43} While Sicilian custom very tightly circumscribes familial boundaries, Guanxi allows the “in” group to grow, albeit under controlled circumstances, by extending outward the obligations imposed by familial relationship.

In network terms, as business scholars Scott Hammond and Lowell Glenn have argued, in this aspect Guanxi deliberately promotes strong ties but devalues and even mistrusts weak ties.\textsuperscript{44} That attitude directly counters the normal assumptions of Western network theory, which prize multiple weak ties as optimal for creating access to new social or business opportunities. But Guanxi’s chief aim as a code of conduct is not to create opportunity; it is to protect existing core group relationships from disruption by whatever opportunities or hardships may arise. “The

\textsuperscript{41} Since the turn of the present century, the globally focused Journal of Business Ethics has published articles with titles featuring Guanxi at least fourteen times. See, for example, Ying Fan, “Guanxi’s Consequences: Personal Gains at Social Cost,” Journal of Business Ethics 38 (2002): 371-380.

\textsuperscript{42} Boissevain, “Patronage in Sicily,” pp. 20-21.

\textsuperscript{43} Boissevain, “Patronage in Sicily,” p. 19.

Guanxi social network,” write Hammond and Glenn, “serves first to provide context through strong ties.”

Guanxi locates the individual within a tightly knit and intimate group, and then guides individuals as they seek to protect that particular group from harm or disruption. In times of great social stress, particularist attitudes may erode a society’s overall capability to weather change, but those same attitudes prevent rapid changes from overwhelming the most valued of communities.

I suggest that these attitudes likely parallel some aspects of the aristocratic mentalité of late antique Gaul, an honor/shame society in which resources often were scarce, justice often was not impartial, and relationships with powerful individuals often determined social fates. Moreover, Gallic society faced significant political, economic, and cultural disruption across the fifth and sixth centuries. To the extent that the particularist social structures obtained in late antique Gaul, then the richly attested modern parallels offer comparative insights into the subjective meanings that Gallo-Romans may have assigned to the changes they saw happening around them.

In fact, if the suggested parallel is correct, particularist Gallo-Romans may have perceived violent crises in different ways than we now imagine them. Hammond and Glenn recount a conversation with a Chinese colleague concerning the 1998 American airstrike on the Chinese embassy in Belgrade. Their insights are worth quoting at length:

One astute Chinese scholar told us, “What Americans need to understand is not that the Chinese were worried about the violence of the Embassy bombing. Chinese see a great deal of violence from their own government. What worried the Chinese ... was the American violation of the relationship.” ... Note that the Chinese fear induced by the embassy bombing is a fear of disrupting the

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relationship between two important collectives, while the American fear of terrorism is a fear of the individual being attacked within the collective.\textsuperscript{46}

In this particularist perspective, violence remains undesirable and will be avoided. Yet individual suffering is less innately disturbing than damage to the collective to which one belongs, or to that collective’s reputation and standing with other groups. Indeed, individual suffering and the suffering of persons outside the in-group may be acceptable costs, if they preserve the in-group’s wellbeing.

Such an outlook helps explain aristocratic responses to the imperial retreat from Gaul. The rare cases of aristocratic resistance to the barbarians tend to coincide with threats to those aristocrats’ intimate networks, rather than to the imperial system as an abstract “patriotic” good. Sidonius Apollinaris emotionally condemned the imperial surrender of Clermont-Ferrand to the Visigoths, but that was his own bishopric. Sidonius, like his militant brother-in-law Ecdicius, also represents an inconceivably tiny minority of the Gallic population, the demographic pinnacle that had participated directly in the highest levels of late imperial society in the West. If he was motivated most by the plight of his own neighborhood, how much more were his less cosmopolitan contemporaries?

In Burgundian territory, the promotion of local strong-tie relationships seems to have been equally important. The main signs of trouble between Gallo-Roman aristocrats and Burgundian rulers also coincide with threats to existing group relationships. Aprunculus of Langres’ exile from Dijon, I have shown, likely stemmed from tensions surrounding the Burgundians’ failure to block Alaman aggression in the northern half of Lingon territory. Unlike the defeat of distant emperors, that failure had immediate consequences for social ties across

\textsuperscript{46} Hammond and Glenn, “The Ancient Practice of Chinese Social Networking,” p. 28.
Lingon territory, and it is not entirely surprising that the Burgundians soon became suspicious of the Lingon bishop’s loyalty. The opposition between Sigismund and his catholic bishops, during the incest controversy ca. 520, likely led to feelings of betrayal on both sides; again, it is not surprising to see around that date the only clearly attested departures into exile in or from the Burgundian kingdom since Aprunculus’ flight in the previous century.

When Aeduans and Lingons sought to extend their social networks, they turned first to strong network ties. The ambitious marriage of the younger Armentaria to an Arvernian on the heels of the Frankish conquest of the 530s offers an excellent example. Notably, central Gaul did not become a convenient communication corridor immediately after the Frankish victory. Shortly after the marriage, Gregory of Tours tells us, his father Florentius was taken north from Clermont as a hostage of Theudebert, who traveled back to Austrasia to secure his royal power base. Recalling the journey years later, Florentius told Gregory of the journey’s hardships and perils. Along with dangers from violent men (perhaps his captors or those who might incite them), Florentius first mentioned the danger of bandits and rivers. It is striking that Florentius would first call to mind unsafe travel conditions, even though as a hostage he presumably traveled in the custody of armed Frankish captors. Given such instability in the Gallic countryside during the 530s, Armentaria’s marriage and movement from Burgundian territory to Clermont was probably a bold step in uncertain times. I am tempted to see here an analogue with Guanxi’s reliance on strong ties to expand networks. New political circumstances allowed the marriage, a strong network tie, to take place long before regional communication infrastructure was suitable for more casual weak ties. The family’s rapid extension into a distant social sphere contrasts with the generally slow and more gradual expansion of economic ties.

after 534, as coins, pots, and some texts seem to reflect. Just as Guanxi relies on “safe” strong ties for the extension of trust outward into society, I suggest, elite Gallo-Romans took vigorous action to maintain and grow valued close ties, but had much less concern for the diminished place of weak social ties across Gaul.

From the perspective of the central Roman regime (or of western historians’ attempts to explain the Empire’s fall), the continuity of life within local communities offers little consolation for the massive degradation of the imperial political and economic system. In the particularist view of a Guanxi practitioner or a Sicilian client, however, that macro-perspective inverts appropriate social priorities. Seen this way, to debate whether catastrophic disruption or continuity best characterize late antiquity offers something of a red herring. Terrible violence unquestionably afflicted some communities in fifth and sixth-century Gaul, but many local communities found the means to live on. Our task is not only to weigh disruption against continuity, asking which affected more communities or aspects of life, but also to recognize that the same events, the same processes, might include both catastrophe and continuity. From a universalizing, systemic point of view, the death of the empire in Gaul was a disaster. We may think of the Roman imperial system as a vast network of networks, a world of political, economic, and social interconnections. In Gaul, during the second half of the fifth century, that world ended violently.

From the particularist view, however, the collapse of this “network of networks” may have been a painful but acceptable loss amid the high-stakes struggle to preserve local communities. The imperial regime shatters, but the intimate local group is preserved; this counts as a qualified success. The individual aristocrat has protected, to use Boissevain’s language
again, “the value on which his life is centered.” The end of the world, then, was not necessarily the end of the world.
Bibliography

Abbreviations Used


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CCSL  *Corpus Christianorum*—*Series Latina*. Turnhout: 1953-.

CSEL  *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. Vienna: 1866-.

INRAP  Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives.

MGH  *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*. Hannover, Berlin, etc.

AA  *Auctores antiquissimi*. 1877-1919.

Epist.  *Epistolae*. 1889-.

SS  *Scriptores*. 1826-.

SRM  *Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum*. 1884-1951.

SFECAG  Société française d’étude de la céramique antique en Gaule.

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