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Prosopographica

II

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RESISTANCE AND RECONCILIATION: MAJORIAN AND THE GALLIC ARISTOCRACY AFTER THE FALL OF AVITUS

One of the most obscure periods in the history of Gaul is that from the deposition of Eparchius Avitus in October of 456 until the arrival of Majorian in Gaul at the end of 458. Nevertheless, a close analysis of what evidence there is can shed valuable light both upon the internal operation of the Gallic aristocracy during this period and upon its relations with the government in Italy.¹

¹ The most important secondary works on this period include the following: Paul ALLARD, *Sidoine Apollinaire sous les règnes d'Avitus et de Majorien*, in: *Revue des questions historiques* 83 (1908) pp. 426–452, reprinted in Paul ALLARD, *St. Sidoine Apollinaire*, Paris 1910; W. B. ANDERSON, *Sidonius. Poems and Letters*, Cambridge, Mass. 1936–1965 (Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols.); Marie-Bernadette BRUGUIÈRE, *Littérature et droit dans la Gaule du V^e siècle*, Paris 1974; J. B. BURY, *History of the Later Roman Empire*, London 1923; G. CHIANÉA, *Les idées politiques de Sidoine Apollinaire*, in: *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 47 (1969) pp. 353–389; P. COURCELLE, *Histoire littéraire des grandes invasions germaniques*, Paris 1964; Alfred COVILLE, *Recherches sur l'histoire de Lyon (450–800)*, Paris 1928; Alexander DEMANDT, *Magister militum*, in: *Real-Encyclopädie suppl.* 12 (1970) cols. 553–790; Samuel DILL, *Roman Society in Gaul in the Merovingian Age*, London 1926; Samuel DILL, *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*, 1899; Wilhelm ENSSLIN, *Zum Heermeisteramt des spätrömischen Reiches*, in: *Klio* 24 (1931) pp. 467–502; Élie GRIFFE, *La Gaule chrétienne II*, Paris 1966; A. H. M. JONES, *The Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1964; André LOYEN, *Sidoine Apollinaire. Poèmes I, Lettres II–III*, Paris 1960–1970 (Budé edition); André LOYEN, *L'esprit précieux en Gaule aux derniers jours de l'empire*, Paris 1943; André LOYEN, *Recherches historiques sur les panégyriques de Sidoine Apollinaire*, Paris 1942; A. H. M. JONES, J. R. MARTINDALE, J. MORRIS (eds.), *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, Cambridge 1971; Ludwig SCHMIDT, *Die Ostgermanen*, Munich 1933; Otto SEECK, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt VI*, Stuttgart 1920; Ernst STEIN, *Geschichte des spätrömischen Reiches I*, Vienna 1928; Courtenay E. STEVENS, *Sidonius Apollinaris and his Age*, Oxford 1933; Karl F. STROHEKER, *Der senatorische Adel im spätantiken Gallien*, Reutlingen 1948; Johannes SUNDWALL, *Weströmische Studien*, Berlin 1915; G. TAMASSIA, *Egidio e Siagio*, in:

1. The *Coniuratio Marcellana* and the Nobility of Narbonne

It appears that in Gaul, after the deposition and subsequent death of the Gallic imperial candidate Avitus, there occurred another attempt to seize the throne.² In one of his few references to this dark time, Apollinaris Sidonius, Avitus' son-in-law, discusses the disreputable character of the opportunist Paeonius:

»And when the Marcellan conspiracy for seizing the diadem was being cooked up, he had offered himself to the youth of the nobles as a standard-bearer, up to that time a »new man« in his old age, until at length, through the exploitation of a timely audacity, he was able to give illumination to the obscurity of his birth through the chink of a yawning interregnum. For with the throne being empty and the republic thrown into turmoil, he alone was found who, having dared to be provided with the fasces for the administration of Gaul before he was provided with the codicils, for many months would ascend the tribunal of illustrious officials as a *spectabilis* prefect, scarcely having received his title with the year expired near the very end of his service, in the manner of *numerarii*, or rather of advocates, whose honors begin when their services end.«³

Rivista storica italiana 3 (1886) pp. 193–234; L. VASSILI, La figura di Nepeziano e l'opposizione ricimeriana al governo imperiale di Maggioriano, in: *Athenaeum* 14 (1936) pp. 56–66; L. VASSILI, Il *comes* Agrippino collaboratore di Ricimero, in: *Athenaeum* 14 (1936) pp. 175–180. For the most recent work on the Gallic aristocracy as a whole during the fifth century and later, see Martin HEINZELMANN, *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien*, Munich 1976. Along with Dr. Heinzelmann I also would like to thank Drs. Frank M. Clover, Paul L. MacKendrick and Karl F. Werner for reading the manuscript of this article and suggesting improvements in its content and format.

² The first section of this article was presented in slightly altered form under the title »Alternate Interpretations of the *Coniuratio Marcellana* of Sidonius« at the Second Conference on Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies at Ladycliff College, Highland Falls, New York, on April 1, 1978. The fate of Avitus after his defeat at Piacenza is shrouded in obscurity. John of Antioch (C. MÜLLER ed., *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum* IV, fr. 202) says he was strangled after taking refuge in a church and being besieged there by Majorian; John's final surviving comment, »And this was the end of the life of Avitus and of his kingdom«, is paralleled by Hydatius' only remark on Avitus' death (*Chronicon* 183), *Avitus ... caret imperio ... caret et vita*. Evagrius (*Historia ecclesiastica* 2.7) says he died of starvation, and Gregory of Tours (*Historia Francorum* 2.11) states that after having been made bishop of Piacenza, he died while attempting to return to Clermont. According to the *Chronica Gallica* anno 511 (*Chronica minora* I, p. 664), however, *Avitus occisus est a Maioriano comite domesticorum Placentiae*. For discussion, see STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) p. 38 n. 4.

³ Sid. Ep. 1.11.6: *cumque de capessendo diademate coniuratio Marcellana coqueretur, nobilium inventuti signiferum sese in factione praebuerat, homo adhuc novus in senectute, donec aliquando propter experimenta felicitatis audaciae natalium eius obscuritati dedit hiantis interregni rima fulgorem. nam vacante aula turbataque republica solus inventus est, qui ad Gallias administrandas fascibus prius quam codicillis ausus accingi mensibus multis tribunal illustrium potestatum spectabilis praefectus escenderet, anno peracto militiae extremae terminum circa vix honoratus, numeriorum more seu potius advocatorum, quorum cum finiuntur actiones, tunc incipiunt dignitates*. — This passage seems to imply that Paeonius earlier had been an *advocatus*, and Sidonius' reference

Sidonius gives no other details, and this is the only extant reference to such a conspiracy.

In the past, a great deal of scholarly controversy has centered on the adjective *Marcellana*, the reading of the best manuscripts. The universal tendency has been to reject *Marcellana* as a »non-existent form« and to seek an emendation, and since one of the less reliable manuscripts has the reading *Marcelliana*, the most common form for adjectives created from names, *Marcelliana* has been accepted as correct as far back as Sirmond's edition of 1652.⁴ But, the principle of *lectio difficilior* aside, the reading *Marcellana* yet may be correct: in every instance where Sidonius forms an adjective from a name with the stem ending in the letters -ll-, he uses the termination -anus rather than -ianus, for example *Lucullanus* (Carm. 2.511), *Sullano* (Epist. 3.13.7) and, in the same letter which contains the *Marcellana*, *Camillano* (Epist. 1.11.15).⁵

Attempts to interpret Sidonius' statement also are as old as Sirmond, who thought that it was a conspiracy *Marcelliani patricii, Aetii quondam familiaris*, even though the manuscript readings clearly referred to a Marcellus, not a Marcellinus.⁶ This Marcellinus was *comes rei militaris* of Dalmatia and had declared himself independent of Valentinian III after the murder of Flavius Aetius in 454.⁷ The interpretation of Sirmond found many adherents, and in 1887 Mommsen proposed to strengthen the case for Marcellinus of Dalmatia by reading for *Marcellana* either *Marcellini* or *Marcelliniana*, neither of which has any manuscript support.⁸

Besides Mommsen, most other modern commentators also have felt

to Paeonius' *tribuniciiis flatibus* (Ep. 1.11.6) could indicate that he next held the office of *tribunus et notarius*. For a similar career by another new man, note Sidonius' friend Gaudentius (Ep. 1.3-4), who after serving as a *tribunus et notarius* became *vicarius septem provinciarum*: one might almost suspect that Paeonius and Gaudentius are the same person.

⁴ STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 41 n. 4. For a description of the manuscripts of Sidonius, see LEO, MGH Auct. ant. VIII, p. XXXVII ff. and ANDERSON, Sidonius I (see note 1) pp. LXVII-LXIX. Anderson characterizes manuscripts LMT, which read *Marcellana*, as »a superior class«, while manuscript C, the only to read *Marcelliana*, is »much interpolated«. The stemma of LEO (MGH, Auct. ant. VIII, p. XLI) demonstrates that C is the most derivative. STEVENS (p. 41) inexplicably asserts that the form *Marcelliana* »appears in the best of his manuscripts«.

⁵ Note that the termination -anus is not a priori incorrect, it is merely less common than -ianus. See R. KUHNER, Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache I, Hannover 1912, p. 997 ff.

⁶ The commentary of Sirmond is reprinted in MIGNE, PL 58.

⁷ On Marcellinus of Dalmatia, see Procop. Vand. 1.6.7 and the *Suda* s. v. *Marcellinos*.

⁸ MGH, Auct. ant. VIII, index s. v. Marcellinus, *coniuratio Marcellini vel Marcelliniana* (*alterum utrum enim requiritur pro tradito vocabulo marcellana . . .*) ANDERSON, Sidonius I (see note 1) p. 400 makes a further suggestion of *Marcellina*.

that the conspiracy was a plot to make Marcellinus of Dalmatia emperor.⁹ C. E. Stevens, however, in his 1933 biography of Sidonius, did express some doubt as to the identification of Marcellinus as the object of the conspiracy. Although in his text he decides that a choice of him is »not improbable in itself«, in an appendix he states that the *coniuratio* was aimed at »a Marcellus or Marcellinus (whoever he was)«. ¹⁰

Stevens' hesitancy is well-founded. Aside from the problem of the manuscript readings, there are other objections to a choice of Marcellinus of Dalmatia: 1) Although by 461 he was a force to be reckoned with in the central Mediterranean area, there is no evidence that in 456 he would have been able to seize the western throne even if he had wanted to. 2) There is no indication that he desired the throne for himself. He aided Majorian by bringing troops to defend Sicily against the Vandals, and from that base he made no attempt on the throne after the death of Majorian in 461. Moreover, in 467 he accompanied Anthemius to Rome to aid him in becoming emperor in the west.¹¹ 3) There is no indication that Marcellinus had any sympathy with Gallic interests, and in all the many Gallic revolts of the fourth and fifth centuries, such as those of Magnentius, Magnus Maximus, Constantine III, Jovinus and Avitus, the main concern of the Gallic aristocracy had been to have an emperor resident in Gaul who had Gallic interests as his primary aim.¹²

⁹ The emendation *Marcelliniana* appears in the index of Mohr's Teubner of 1895, in Anderson's Loeb of 1936, and in Loyen's Budé of 1970 (who italicizes the inserted letters *-in-*). The acceptance of Marcellinus of Dalmatia by historians has been virtually universal: see CHIANÉA, *Les idées* (see note 1) p. 375, DILL, *Last Century* (see note 1) pp. 337–338, Wilhelm ENSSLIN, *Real-Encyclopädie s. v. Marcellinus* no. 25, SCHMIDT, *Ostgermanen* (see note 1) p. 309, SEECK, *Untergang* (see note 1) p. 346, STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) p. 552, STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) pp. 55–56, and SUNDWALL, *Studien* (see note 1) no. 294. See also R. CESSI, *Marcellino e l'opposizione imperiale romana*, *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto de Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 75/2 (1915–1916) pp. 1481–83. Some historians, such as Bury and Jones, do not mention the incident at all.

¹⁰ STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) pp. 42, 184–185. Doubts also expressed by O. DALTON, *The letters of Sidonius II*, Oxford 1915, p. 221, and see also A. LOYEN, in: *Journal of Roman Studies* 24 (1934) p. 83.

¹¹ Priscus fragment 29; see CESSI, *Marcellino* (see note 9) p. 1482, JONES, *Later Roman Empire* (see note 1) pp. 241–2, SCHMIDT, *Ostgermanen* (see note 1) pp. 310–12, STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) pp. 561, 575, and STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) p. 44 n. 2.

¹² On Gallic self-interest, see BURY, *Later Roman Empire* (see note 1) p. 330, STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) p. 56, SUNDWALL, *Studien* (see note 1) p. 8, and John MATTHEWS, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A. D. 364–425*, Oxford 1975, pp. 329–351. The contention of S. OOST, D. N. Libius Severus P. F. Aug., in: *Classical Philology* 65 (1970) p. 233 n. 30, that Nepotianus, the brother-in-law of Marcellinus of Dalmatia and the second *magister militum praesentalis* of Majorian, was »a promoted Gaul« cannot be supported: his military service was in Spain and his family ties were to Dalmatia, see DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) cols. 683–684, ENSSLIN, *Heermeisteramt* (see note 1) pp. 490–491, and J. P. C. KENT, *Julius Nepos and the Fall of the Western Empire*, in: *Corolla Erich Swoboda*, Cologne 1966, p. 147. Not a single Gallic Nepotianus or Nepos is known for the fifth century.

Marcellinus of Dalmatia offered neither. Communications between Dalmatia and Gaul, with a hostile Italy in between, and with the Vandals in control of the sea, would have been impossible.¹³

In sum, it is probable that the conspiracy involved a Marcellus, not a Marcellinus, and that this Marcellus was a Gallic aristocrat.¹⁴ As shown by the Table of Marcelli and Marcellini, there was no lack of Marcelli in Gaul during the late empire. In the fourth century, several of them were there on official business, including a *praeses*, two *magistri officiorum*, and two *magistri militum*. Others were high-ranking clerics. The best-documented family of Gallic Marcelli came from Narbonne. In the mid fourth century a *grammaticus* of this name settled there and became wealthy; his own origin is unknown, although his father's name also was Marcellus. A descendent of his may be the Marcellus of Narbonne who served as *magister officiorum* in 394/395 and who wrote the extant *De medicamentis*.¹⁵

During the 440s another Marcellus appears at Narbonne serving as *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*, the highest office which an aristocrat normally could hope to attain, and it may, in fact, be this Marcellus who was involved in the conspiracy.¹⁶ His close ties to both secular and ecclesiastical aristocrats in Narbonne are seen in his leading role in the building of a church by Rusticus, the bishop of the city.¹⁷ The advocate Marcellinus of Narbonne, a member of the city's aristocratic circle during the 460s, may have been a relative, perhaps even his brother.

A choice of Narbonne as a center for anti-Italian sentiment is made attractive for other reasons besides the presence of a suitable Marcellus. Several of the high appointees of Eparchius Avitus came from the Narbonese aristocracy, and they understandably would have been upset by his fall. Avitus' *magister officiorum* Magnus, for example, was from

¹³ See STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) pp. 552–553; although he favors Marcellinus of Dalmatia, he notes how easy it would have been to prevent him from establishing contact with his would-be partisans in Gaul.

¹⁴ There is no a priori reason to assume that the plot was to make Marcellus emperor; he may simply have been a motivating force in the conspiracy: note the reference of Gregory of Tours (*Historia Francorum* 2.9) to a *coniuratio Arbogastis*.

¹⁵ On the Narbonese origin of this Marcellus, and on other Marcelli of Narbonne, see John MATTHEWS, *The Gallic Supporters of Theodosius*, in: *Latomus* 30 (1971) pp. 1083–1087.

¹⁶ Eparchius Avitus himself had been *praefectus praetorio Galliarum* in 439: STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) no. 58, SUNDWALL, *Studien* (see note 1) no. 60. Another influential Marcellus of this period was a senator at Avignon; he became bishop of Die c. 463, see G. KIRNER, *De vite inedite di S. Marcello vescovo di Die*, in: *Studi storici* 11 (1900) pp. 289–327. He would have been rather young in 456.

¹⁷ See Henri-Irénée MARROU, *Le dossier épigraphique de évêque Rusticus de Narbonne*, in: *Rivista di archeologia christiana* 3–4 (1970) pp. 331–349.

Narbonne, and Magnus' nephew Camillus probably held some high office under Avitus.¹⁸ Avitus' *cura palatii* was the Narbonese aristocrat Consentius, a grandson of Jovinus, the Gallic usurper of 411–413.¹⁹ In his otherwise detailed description of Consentius' career, Sidonius is tantalizingly silent on Consentius' activities after his appointment by Avitus: »of the time when, summoned to the court of my father-in-law, you controlled the care of the palace, I will speak in later writings.«²⁰

These later writings, however, do not survive; indeed, Sidonius probably thought it impolitic to publish them.²¹

Rusticus, the bishop of Narbonne at the time and one of the most independently-minded prelates of Gaul, also seems to have been involved with Avitus. A consultation of Rusticus' deacon Hermes with Leo, bishop of Rome, probably took place in conjunction with Avitus' stay in Rome in 455–456.²² Rusticus himself had gone so far as to adopt the practice of dating not by consular years but by the years of his own episcopate, and inscriptions of February/March 456 and of 456/457 are dated by this method.²³ Such an unprecedented display of independence illustrates well the extent to which Narbonese aristocrats were prepared to go their own way.

The closely-knit Narbonese aristocracy, distressed by the deposition of Avitus by Ricimer and Majorian, well could have been the focal point of Gallic anti-imperial sentiment in late 456, and if so, these actions may have had their eventual repercussions. One must wonder whether the hostility of the Narbonese aristocracy to Ricimer influenced the patrician's decision to turn the city over to the Visigoths in 462; and it may

¹⁸ On the Narbonese aristocratic circle, see MARROU, Dossier, pp. 332–341, LOYEN, L'esprit (see note 1) pp. 78–87, MATTHEWS, Aristocracies (see note 12) pp. 340–342, and Sid. Carm. 23.346–504. On Camillus, see Sid. Ep. 1.11.10–11, as well as section no. 7, »Majorian, Magnus and the Goths«, below, which see also for Magnus.

¹⁹ Sid. Carm. 23.170–174; see STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 96 and SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 105.

²⁰ Sid. Carm. 23.430–432: *intra aulam soceri mei expetitus curam cum moderatus es palati, chartis posterioribus loquemur.*

²¹ In his works as a whole, Sidonius consistently avoids political controversy. For example, aside from Carmina 6–8, he never mentions his father-in-law the deposed emperor Avitus, by name; rather, in the two instances where he does refer to him (Carm. 23.430, Ep. 1.3.1), he uses the circumlocution *socer*. See Ralph MATHISEN, Sidonius on the Reign of Avitus: A Study in Political Prudence, in: Transactions of the American Philological Association 109 (1979) pp. 165–171.

²² Leo, Ep. »Epistolas fraternitatis« (MIGNE, PL 54, col. 1119). The extended digression on the Vandal sack of Rome would indicate that it had occurred recently.

²³ See MARROU, Dossier (see note 17); Rusticus came from a long line of bishops, and might have been related to the *Rustici* of Lyons, see STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) nos. 331, 333. On the *Rustici*, see HEINZELMANN, Bischofsherrschaft (see note 1) pp. 101–113 and Ralph MATHISEN, The Ecclesiastical Aristocracy of Fifth-Century Gaul: A Regional Analysis of Family Structure, diss. Madison, Wis. 1979, pp. 240–245.

be significant that in Sidonius' detailed description of the Narbonese aristocracy of 463/466, Marcellus does not appear.²⁴

2. Paeonius and the Gallic Administration at Arles

When Avitus, abandoned by his erstwhile allies the Goths, returned to Italy from Arles in late 456 for his final test of strength with Majorian and Ricimer, he would have taken with him as much support as possible, including officials of the Gallic administration.²⁵ One of these probably was his *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*, who may have been killed or captured at Piacenza, since by the end of 456 the office was vacant, and Paeonius, the *signifer* of the *coniuratio Marcellana*, soon was able to usurp it.²⁶

Paeonius' action, however, may not have been as irregular as Sidonius suggests. Since he was at the time a *vir spectabilis*, he may, in fact, have been Avitus' *vicarius septem provinciarum*, or deputy praetorian prefect, the second highest-ranking civil officer in Gaul, with a jurisdiction identical to that of the *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*.²⁷ If this were the case, he would have been the logical choice not only to lead the conspiracy but also to step into the office of prefect. Furthermore, Majorian's confirmation of Paeonius as *vir illustris* at the end of his term of office, Sidonius' vilification aside, would suggest that there was some justification for his assumption of the position.

Although Sidonius' chronology is rather vague, Paeonius' term of service can be dated with some accuracy. The words *donec aliquando*

²⁴ Hydatius, Chron. 217 (see note 74 below), Sid. Carm. 23.436–504; see VASSILI (see note 1) Nepoziano p. 64 and Agrippino passim.

²⁵ Hydatius, Chron. 183, *Avitus ... caret imperio Gothorum promisso destitutus auxilio*, and Chronica minora I, p. 304, *Imperator Avitus Placentiam cum sociorum robore ingressus ... commisso proelio Avitus cum magna suorum caede terga vertit ...*

²⁶ Avitus' *praefectus praetorio Galliarum* is unknown. Both STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 400 and SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 488, suggest that it was Avitus' relative Priscus Valerianus, whom in early 456 Sidonius addressed as *virum praefectorium* (Carm. 8 insc.). But this is unlikely, for Sidonius consistently uses this form of titlature only for officials who no longer are in office (note Carm. 14 ep. 2, Ep. 1.7.4,9; 1.9.1; 1.11.7; 2.9.3; 2.9.3; 2.13.5). Another possibility, which hitherto has received scant attention, is the unnamed father of Sidonius' friend Auxanius, who was prefect sometime before 468 (Sid. Ep. 1.7.7): Auxanius, like Avitus, was an Arvernian, and Avitus' penchant for appointing his own countrymen to high offices is well-known (see note 95 below). For Paeonius, see STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 273 and SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 338. SEECK, Untergang VI (see note 1) p. 344 suggests that Paeonius held office with the consent of Theodoric.

²⁷ On the rank and jurisdiction of the *vicarius VII provinciarum*, see Not. dig. occ. 21. For the *vicarius* as a deputy praetorian prefect, see Avit. Ep. 35, Cass. Var. 3.16, C. Th. 9.34.3, Rut. Namat. 1.501, and Paul: Pet. Vit. Mart. 5.798. Paeonius himself was a *curialis*, and may have been a native of Auxerre, see MATHISEN, Aristocracy (see note 23) pp. 442–445.

would imply that, after the fall of Avitus in October 456, Paeonius was involved in the *coniuratio* for some time, perhaps for several months, before becoming *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*.²⁸ Moreover, since Sidonius states clearly that the usurpation took place during the interregnum, it thus occurred before April 457.²⁹ Finally, Sidonius notes that Paeonius served as prefect *mensibus multis* and that he was replaced *anno peracto*.³⁰ Paeonius, then, probably held the office of *praefectus praetorio Galliarum* from January/March 457 until January/March 458.

Concurrently with these events at Narbonne and Arles of 456/457, equally serious developments were taking place in the north, and these must be discussed before the full thrust of Majorian's policy in Gaul can be analyzed.

3. The Burgundians and the Detachment of Lyons

With the removal of effective imperial control from Gaul after the deposition of Avitus, the Burgundians took immediate steps towards aggrandizement, as reported by the chronicler Marius Aviticensis under the year 456:

»in this year the Burgundians occupied part of Gaul and divided the lands with the Gallic senators.«³¹

²⁸ Sid. Ep. 1.11.6. It is very unlikely that the *coniuratio* began before the fall of Avitus, as suggested by SEECK, *Untergang VI* (see note 1) p. 346. Not only was Avitus himself in Gaul for the few months preceding the end of his reign (Hydatius, *Chron.* 177), but only a careless translation of Sid. Ep. 1.11.6 would conclude that the *hiantis interregni rima* was initiated after the *coqueretur*. It is unclear how the *coniuratio* was connected to Paeonius' seizure of the prefecture: Sidonius seems to imply that when Paeonius was presented with the opportunity to become prefect he abandoned the conspiracy.

²⁹ For date, see: *Fasti vindobonenses priores s. a. 457* (*Chronica minora I*, p. 305); see BURY, *Later Roman Empire* (see note 1) p. 330 and N. BAYNES, in: *Journal of Roman Studies* 12 (1922) pp. 222–224. Some scholars suggest that Majorian's official assumption of power was not until December, for example STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) pp. 554–555, and JONES, *Later Roman Empire* (see note 1) p. 241. For the suggestion that he was Caesar in April and Augustus in December, see, most recently, H. MEYER, *Der Regierungsantritt Kaiser Majorians*, in: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 62 (1969) pp. 5–12. Sidonius seems to have viewed the earlier date as Majorian's date of accession; see *Carm.* 5.386–388 for Majorian's skirmish with the Vandals in Campania *postquam ordine vobis ordo omnis regnum dederat, plebs, curia, miles, et collega simul*. Since Majorian seems to have been in Ravenna from January of 458, this conflict probably took place in 457 (see *Nov. Maj.* 1–7).

³⁰ Sid. Ep. 1.11.6.

³¹ *Mar. Avit. Chron.* s. a. 456 (*Chronica minora II*, p. 225): *eo anno Burgundiones partem Galliae occupaverunt terrasque cum Gallis senatoribus diviserunt*. – This division of land with the Burgundians began in 443, see *Chronica minora I*, p. 660, *Sapaudia Burgundionum reliquiis datur cum indigenis dividenda*. See also M. PERROUD, *La Savoie burgonde (443–534)*, in: *Mémoires et documents publiées par la Société Savoisienne d'Histoire et d'Archéologie* 66 (1929) 263–276 and Ferdinand LOT, *Du régime de l'hospitalité*, in: *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 7 (1928) pp. 975–1011.

This event is very closely dated, since Marius' previous entry states, »in the consulship of Johannes and Varana, the emperor Avitus was deposed by Majorian and Ricimer at Piacenza and was made bishop in the city.«³²

The redistribution of land, then, took place in October/December of 456.

This division may have been based upon an agreement which the Burgundians reached with Avitus, as implied by their sending of troops to aid in the Visigothic campaign in Spain in 456.³³ After Avitus' deposition, with his forces defeated and dispersed in Italy, Gallic landowners would have been hard-pressed to refuse Burgundian dictates at the end of the year.

The demands of the Burgundians would have grown in mid 457, when the Burgundian troops in Spain finally were released by Theodoric.³⁴ In a sinister fashion, a chronicler expressed the intentions of the returning army:

»after the death of Recarius, Gundioc, king of the Burgundians, with permission given him by Theodoric and the Goths, entered Gaul for the purpose of settling down with his tribe and all his forces.«³⁵

If hints from Sidonius are interpreted correctly, it is possible that at this time Lyons received a Burgundian garrison. Note especially Sidonius' comment to Majorian in his panegyric of December 458:

»but Petrus, most placid prince, when surety had been received, drove from our walls the sword thrust into our unfortunate innards.«³⁶

³² Chronica minora II, p. 225.

³³ Jord. Get. 231; the Burgundian troops were under their kings Gundioc and Chilperic. A garbled source for early 455 (Chronica minora I, p. 304) states *at Gippidos Burgundiones intra Galliam diffusi repelluntur*. By way of an emendation, SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen (see note 1) p. 138 suggests *a Gippedis*; and STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) pp. 26–27 n. 8 offers *Gippidae et Burgundiones*. There is no evidence, however, that the Burgundians were repelled in 455; if anything, just the opposite. It may be better simply to read *repellunt*, in which case the Burgundians well may have been acting at the behest of Avitus. The close cooperation between the Romans and Burgundians later in the year also would suggest the appropriateness of such a reading.

³⁴ When Theodoric returned to Gaul on March 28, 457, he left in Spain the part of his forces *quem habebat multitudine variae nationis* (Hydatius, Chron. 186): later after causing further devastation in Gallaecia, *reliqui revertuntur ad Gallias*.

³⁵ Chronica minora I, p. 305: *post eius caedem Gundiocus rex Burgundionum cum gente et omni praesidio annuente sibi Theudorico ac Gothis intra Galliam ad habitandum ingressus societate et amicitia Gothorum functus*. — A garbled account of the Burgundian settlements in 456/457 may survive in Fredegarius, Chron. 2.46: *per legatis invitati a Romanis vel Gallis, qui Lugdunensium provinciam . . . manebant, ut tributa rei publicae potuissent rennuere, ibi cum uxoris et liberis visi sunt consedisse*. For discussion, see SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen (see note 1) pp. 140–141 and STEIN, Geschichte (see note 1) p. 552.

³⁶ Sid. Carm. 5.571–573, . . . *attamen hic nuper, placidissime princeps, obside percepto nostrae de moenibus urbis visceribus miseris insertum depulit ensem*. — COVILLE, Recherches (see note 1) page 127 suggests that Sid. Carm. 12, which refers to Sidonius' responsibility for billeting Burgundians, may refer to the occupation of 457/458. Some,

Under the circumstances, a Burgundian occupation of the city in 457 should not be unexpected, especially if the Gauls felt threatened, for example, by the Alans.³⁷

Whether the city actually fell into Burgundian hands or not, there appears to have been open opposition to Majorian's rule there as late as June 458, when an inscription failed to recognize his consulship.³⁸ It is certainly probable that Majorian's part in the deposition of the local aristocrat Avitus created a good deal of hard feeling towards him in Lyons: one Gallic interpretation went so far as to ignore both the role of Ricimer and Avitus' consecration as bishop and to lay the blame for Avitus' death squarely at the feet of Majorian, viz.

»and Avitus was killed by the *comes domesticorum* Majorian at Piacenza.«³⁹

Sidonius himself, who could have told so much, is silent on the reasons for Lyons' revolt, and it is only through his allusions to its suppression that it is known at all.

At his accession, then, Majorian was faced with a very difficult situation in Gaul. Narbonne was the center of a conspiracy to seize the

noted in STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 66 n. 1, would date this poem to 470 or later, but since it is addressed *Ad v. c. Catullinum*, and since Catullinus was a *vir illustris* by the mid 460s (Sid. Ep. 1.11.3), this is impossible. The pseudo-Eusebian sermon *Homilia de litaniis* (MIGNE PL, supplementum 3, pp. 605–608) probably refers to the occupation of Riez in 477 by the Goths, as suggested by GRIFFE, Gaule II (see note 1) pp. 86–89, 334, rather than to that of Lyons by the Burgundians, as suggested by COURCELLE, Histoire (see note 1) pp. 139–141, SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen (see note 1) p. 141 n. 5, and STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 43 n. 1.

³⁷ In 440, the lands of Valence had been divided with the Alans, see Chronica minora I, p. 660: *deserta Valentinae urbis rura Alanis, quibus Sambida praeerat, partienda traduntur*, and in 442, such a division at Orléans had to be carried out by force (ibid.), *Alani, quibus terrae Galliae ulterioris cum incolis dividendae a patricio Aetio traditae fuerant, resistentes armis subigunt et expulsis dominis terrae possessionem vi adipiscuntur*. – That the Gallo-Roman allies of Majorian felt threatened by the Alans is substantiated by Jordanes (Get. 236), who mentions that in 461 Majorian was deposed *dum contra Alanos, qui Gallias infestabant, movisset procinctum*. See Bernard BACHRACH, A History of the Alans in the West, Minneapolis 1973, pp. 33–41, 59–71; on the unpeaceful Alan settlement, see E. A. THOMPSON, The Settlement of the Barbarians in Southern Gaul, in: Journal of Roman Studies 46 (1956) pp. 68–70. The Gauls also may have felt threatened by the *Alemanni*, who invaded Italy from *Rhaetia* in early 457 (Sid. Carm. 5.373–385), see LOYEN, Recherches (see note 1) p. 75.

³⁸ Corpus inscriptionum latinarum 13, no. 2363, for the dating of which see A. ALLMER and P. DISSARD, Musée de Lyon: Inscriptions antiques IV, Lyons 1888–1894, pp. 27–29, and STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) pp. 44–45. A previously unnoticed argument for this dating is found in: Corpus inscriptionum latinarum 13, no. 2359, dated to 454, which uses the same introductory formula as no. 2363: both come from Lyons, and this formula does not appear anywhere else at any time.

³⁹ Chronica minora I, p. 664: *et Avitus occisus est a Maioriano comite domesticorum Placentiae*. – For other accounts of Avitus' death, see note 2 above. On the biases of the various sources, see T. NAGY, Reoccupation of Pannonia from the Huns in 427, in: Acta antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 15 (1967) p. 176.

throne, Arles was in the hands of an extra-legal praetorian prefect, and Lyons was in open rebellion.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the Visigoths and Burgundians were both pursuing their private ends as actively as possible, and could scarcely be expected to submit to Majorian after having abandoned their ally Avitus. The manner in which Majorian dealt with these problems demonstrates both a shrewd sense of political expediency and a close understanding of the internal operation of the Gallic aristocracy.

4. Aegidius and the Pacification of Lyons

In order to deal with military necessities in Gaul, one of Majorian's first moves was to appoint a new *magister militum per Gallias*, one upon whom he could depend. His choice fell upon Aegidius, whose first appearance in history occurs in Gregory of Tours' discussion of these events:

»Avitus is ordained bishop at the city of Piacenza. . . Majorian succeeded him. In Gaul, moreover, the Roman Aegidius was made master of soldiers.«⁴¹

This gives Majorian's accession, April 1, 457, as the *terminus post quem* for Aegidius' appointment. Aegidius would have been *magister militum*

⁴⁰ The assumption that the *coniuratio Marcellana* and the revolt of Lyons were part of the same movement has pervaded virtually all scholarship on the topic, and several scholars go so far as to suggest that the Visigoths and even the Vandals were part of a single monstrous movement; see, for example, ALLARD, Sidoine (see note 1) pp. 439-440, CHIANÉA, Idées (see note 1) pp. 375-376, DILL, Last Century (see note 1) pp. 337-338, LOYEN, Poèmes (see note 1) p. XIII, SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen (see note 1) pp. 140-141, 483, STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) pp. 41-44, and VASSILI, Nepoziano (see note 1) pp. 56-57. For more prudent attempts to separate the different parties and their interests, see STEIN, Geschichte (see note 1) p. 552 and STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) p. 56. Aside from the fact that it would be simplistic to assume uniformity of political action at a time when Gaul was so fragmented, there also are the considerations that one movement took place in the south, probably at Narbonne, and the other at Lyons; and that one was a plot of the *nobilium iuventus* and the other, involving a division of the land, necessarily would have affected the elder landed magnates. A dissociation of the two movements renders irrelevant the detailed and often convoluted discussions of whether or not Sidonius was involved in the *coniuratio Marcellana*; see, for example, STEVENS, pp. 180-185 and COVILLE, Recherches (see note 1) pp. 56-58. With the removal of this problem, it becomes unnecessary to claim, as LOYEN, Poèmes p. XIV n. 1, that »Rien ne prouve que Sidoine ait participé au mouvement de résistance gallo-romaine à Majorien«. As an aristocrat and landowner of Lyons and the son-in-law of Avitus, Sidonius hardly could have avoided being implicated (see STEVENS, Sidonius p. 185), as demonstrated by his later need to seek pardon (see notes 57-58 below).

⁴¹ Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. 2.11: *Avitus . . . apud Placentiam urbem episcopus ordinatur . . . cui Maiorianus successit. In Galliis autem Aegidius ex Romanis magister militum datus est.*

per Gallias, since by late 458 the two *magistri militum praesentales* were Ricimer and Nepotianus.⁴²

Although Aegidius' background is unspecified, he had considerable influence in the north, as shown by Gregory's next chapter:

»finally the Franks . . . unanimously proclaimed as their king Aegidius, who we said above was sent by the republic as master of soldiers.«⁴³

If, as is probable, Majorian and Aegidius had served together in northern Gaul under Flavius Aetius, Majorian's selection of Aegidius, an old and, to be hoped, trustworthy comrade as his *magister militum per Gallias* seems eminently reasonable.⁴⁴

Besides Aegidius' influence with the Franks, which would have balanced the Visigothic support for the regime of Avitus, Majorian may have found him an attractive choice for another reason: his family connections. The name of Aegidius' son, Syagrius, would suggest that he was related to the Syagrii of Lyons, one of the oldest, most aristocratic families of Gaul.⁴⁵ Aegidius, in fact, has been proposed as a grandson of Flavius

⁴² On Majorian's accession, see note 29 above. Gregory of Tours' statement (Hist. Franc. 2.12, see also Lib. hist. Franc. 7 and Fredegar. Chron. 3.11) that Aegidius was expelled as *rex Francorum* in his eighth year of rule, in conjunction with the indications from Hydatius (Chron. 231) that he died before the end of 465, shows that Aegidius could not have been appointed *magister militum* after 458. Therefore, Aegidius was promoted sometime between April 457 and the end of 458. For discussion, see DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) cols. 688–689, STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 89, and TAMASSIA, Egidio (see note 1) p. 214. STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) pp. 559–560, followed by STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 1, equivocates between 456/457 (too early) and 459 (too late). Ricimer: *Chronica minora* I, p. 305. Nepotianus: Sid. Carm. 5.553–557, Hydatius, Chron. 197; see also DEMANDT, cols. 683–684, ENSSLIN, *Heermeisteramt* (see note 1) p. 491, STEIN p. 559, and LOYEN, *Recherches* (see note 1) p. 82.

⁴³ Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. 2.12: *Denique Franci . . . Aegidium sibi, quem superius magistrum militum a re publica missum diximus, unanimiter regem adsciscunt.* – The attempts of STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 45 n. 4 to impugn the accounts of Aegidius in the north before 458 have no basis. Gregory of Tours, the Liber historiae Francorum and Fredegarus (see note 42) are very specific on his presence there, and his great influence there in the early 460s (Hydatius, Chron. 218, *Chronica minora*, I p. 664, II, p. 225, Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. 2.18 and Glor. conf. 22, Lib. hist. Franc. 8) certainly did not spring up full-blown. For discussion, see DILL, Gaul (see note 1) pp. 10–13, STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) p. 559, and TAMASSIA, Egidio (see note 1) pp. 213–219. For a reference to Aegidius as *rex Romanorum*, perhaps a recollection of his position of *rex Francorum*, see the *Vita Lupi Baiocassensis* 1, published in: *Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartres* 24 (1863) pp. 309–323, *tempore quo Aegidius, rex Romanorum, regnabat in Galliis.*

⁴⁴ For Majorian's service in Gaul, see Sid. Carm. 5.198–293, especially near Arras, just northwest of Aegidius' capital at Soissons (Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. 2.27, Lib. hist. Franc. 9). Was Sidonius indulging in word play when in Carm. 5.193, just before the section on Majorian in Gaul, he used the word *Aegides*? On Majorian and Aegidius, see DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) col. 688, and LOYEN, *Recherches* (see note 1) pp. 65–66, 82.

⁴⁵ On the Syagrii of Lyons, see COVILLE, *Recherches* (see note 1) pp. 5–29 and MATHISEN, *Aristocracy* (see note 23) pp. 233–239. Syagrius, son of Aegidius: Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. 2.27, Lib. hist. Franc. 9, STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 370.

Afranius Syagrius, consul in 382, who was buried in Lyon.⁴⁶ Another Syagrius, a great-grandson of Afranius, had an estate at Taionnacus near Lyons and was a jurist in the Burgundian kingdom.⁴⁷ And in the late fifth century, a rich Syagria of Lyons was referred to by Magnus Felix Ennodius as *thesaurus ecclesiae*.⁴⁸

If Aegidius did in fact have family ties to the aristocracy of Lyons, which included Sidonius and some of Avitus' most avid supporters, then he himself may have expressly supported Avitus.⁴⁹ Sidonius' otherwise surprising claim that Avitus was supported by the »nobility which the water of the Rhine washes« would be explained if it included a reference to Aegidius.⁵⁰ And if Aegidius had supported Avitus, his defection to Majorian would have been that much more valuable for the pressure he could bring to bear on his aristocratic cousins to accept the new emperor.⁵¹

Sometime after June 458, perhaps in July/September, Aegidius arrived at Lyons, and after meeting some resistance he took the city.⁵² In his

⁴⁶ For Afranius, see JONES, Prosopography (see note 1) Syagrius no. 2 and John MARTINDALE, Note on the Consuls of 381 and 382, in: *Historia* 16 (1967) pp. 254–256; for an opposing opinion, see Alexander DEMANDT, Die Konsuln der Jahre 381 und 382 namens Syagrius, in: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 64 (1971) pp. 38–45. On the relation of Aegidius to the family, see DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) p. 688, Otto SEECK, *Real-Encyclopädie* I, p. 476, STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) no. 1, SUNDWALL, *Studien* (see note 1) no. 3, and TAMASSIA, *Egidio* (see note 1) pp. 195–198. For Afranius in Lyons, see Sid. Ep. 5.17.4.

⁴⁷ Sid. Ep. 5.5, 8.8, see STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) no. 369.

⁴⁸ Ennod. *Vita Epiphani* 173 (MGH Auct. ant. VII, p. 106), see also *Vita Eugendi* 12 (MGH Script. rer. Merov. III, p. 159), *Vita abbatum Acaunensium* 2 (ibid. p. 176), and *Vita Domitiani* 10 (*Acta Sanctorum*, July I, p. 46 ff.).

⁴⁹ Another possible aristocrat of Lyons who supported Avitus was Priscus Valerianus, a relative of Eucherius, bishop of Lyons c. 430–449, see MIGNE PL 50, pp. 711–726, GRIFFE, *Gaule II* (see note 1) p. 286, and STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) no. 400. In early 456, Sidonius sent Valerianus a copy of his panegyric to Avitus (Sid. Carm. 8). On the ties of Majorian's *quaestor* Domnulus to Lyons, see note 64 below.

⁵⁰ Sid. Carm. 7.525–527, *nobilitas . . . quam . . . ambit . . . Rheni liquor*.

⁵¹ For the possibility that Aegidius initially was hostile to Majorian, see TAMASSIA, *Egidio* (see note 1) p. 202. Because of his isolation in the north, however, he probably escaped implication in the revolutionary movements at Lyons and Narbonne/Arles, see STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) p. 56, and STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) p. 559.

⁵² The suggestion of STEIN, *Geschichte*, p. 599, that it was Aegidius who reduced Lyons has been defended ably by LOYEN (see note 1) *Poèmes* p. XIV, and *Recherches*, pp. 82–84, see also DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) col. 689, SCHMIDT, *Ostgermanen* (see note 1), p. 141, STROHEKER, *Adel*, p. 56 and no. 1, and VASSILI, *Nepoziano* (see note 1) p. 57. For the older, untenable view that it was Petrus who took the city, see, inter alios, STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) p. 45 n. 4. SEECK, *Untergang VI* (see note 1) p. 344, misreads Sid. Carm. 5.553–557 when he suggests that Majorian sent a *magister militum* over the Alps ahead of him to pacify Gaul: this *magister*, Nepotianus (note 42 above) clearly accompanied Majorian in the winter of 458. This summer campaign of Aegidius against Lyons moves the terminus ante quem for his appointment as *magister* to approximately April/May of 458.

panegyric to Majorian, Sidonius artfully described the condition of the city at the end of 458:

»It has been emptied of cattle, grain, peasants and citizens. While standing, her fortune escaped notice; now captured, woe, how great it was! After joy, lordship, it is delightful to recall evil. Even if we fell to fire and destruction, nonetheless your coming restores all things with you: because we were the cause of your triumph, our very ruin is pleasing.«⁵³

Once Aegidius and his forces had captured Lyons and either defeated or overawed the Burgundians, Majorian was able to send his *magister epistularum* Petrus, a civil officer, as Sidonius is at pains to make clear, to impose his settlement:

»Why speak here of him who controls the sacred bureau, who, while he guides the reins of a civil office, sustains the cares of one armed, through whose mediation a savage race is bent to your terms.«⁵⁴

The terms inflicted upon the Burgundians would have been a reacknowledgement of their federate status. Upon the Gallo-Romans Majorian initially seems to have imposed some form of tax penalty, to which Sidonius refers in his plea to have it removed:

»Imagine us to be Eurystheus and the tax the hydra; remove from it three heads for me, so I may live . . . for now my loquacious muse is silenced by the tribute; in place of Vergil and Terence she reaps the small change for the imperial treasury.«⁵⁵

⁵³ Sid. Carm. 5.580–586: . . . *bove, fruge, colono, civibus exhausta est. stantis fortuna latebat; dum capitur. vae quanta fuit. post gaudia, princeps, delectat meminisse mali. populatibus, igni, etsi concidimus, veniens tamen omnia tecum restituis: fuimus vestri quia causa triumpho, ipsa ruina placet.*

⁵⁴ Sid. Carm. 5.564–567, *quid loquar hic illum qui scrinia sacra gubernat, qui, cum civilis dispenset partis habenas, sustinet armati curas, interprete sub quo flectitur ad vestras gens effera condiciones?*

⁵⁵ Sid. Carm. 13.19–20, 35–37: *Eurysthea nos esse puta monstrumque tributum; hinc capita, ut vivam, tu mihi tolle tria . . . nam nunc musa loquax tacet tributo, quae Vergilio Terentioque sextantes legit unicasque fisci.* — The suggestion by COVILLE, *Recherches* (see note 1) page 130 and LOYEN (see note 1) *Poèmes* p. XIV, and *Recherches*, p. 83 that the occupation of Lyons referred to by Sidonius in Carm. 5.572–573 (note 36 above) was by the troops of Aegidius has little foundation: not only is the reference admirably suited to the Burgundians, who clearly had been expanding at the expense of the Gallic magnates, but it also would have been very impolitic for Sidonius to refer in such derogatory terms to the forces of Majorian; see STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) p. 43 n. 1. For the settlement with the Burgundians, see Priscus fr. 27 and Sid. Carm. 5.364; also DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) col. 689, LOYEN, *Poèmes* p. XIV, and *Recherches*, p. 83, SCHMIDT, *Ostgermanen* (see note 1) p. 141, STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) p. 560, and STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) p. 45. Another allusion to the capitulation of the Burgundians may appear in Sid. Carm. 5.476, *Bellenotus, Rugus, Burgundio, Vesus, Alites*. On the date of Sid. Carm. 13, see STEVENS, pp. 181–185, and for the tripling or quadrupling of the tax assessment, see ANDERSON, *Sidonius I* (see note 1) pp. 214–215 n. 1, LOYEN, *Poèmes* p. XV, SCHMIDT, *Ostgermanen*, p. 141, and STEVENS, *Sidonius*, p. 45. It is possible to suggest a different interpretation of the *tria capita* of Sid. Carm. 13.20: Nov. Maj. 2 (March 10, 458) deals with the remission of delinquent

5. Majorian and the Conciliation of Lyons

Majorian himself had left Ravenna after November 6, 458, and he arrived in Lyons before the end of the year, when Sidonius delivered to him a panegyric requesting leniency for the city:

»and because you have come as the only hope for our greatly exhausted condition, minister to our ruins, we beg you, and while you pass by as victor, behold your Lyons: shattered, she prays for rest after her great labors. Return the spirit to her whom you give peace.«⁵⁶

As for Sidonius himself, he seems already to have received pardon for his role in the revolt of Lyons before he delivered the panegyric, as implied in subsequent lines:

»because you turn your gaze and because you now view the wretched with a serene countenance, one may rejoice: I recall that this was your look when you wished to grant pardon; your gentle grace gives the sign.«⁵⁷

In the preface to the panegyric, Sidonius likewise alludes to his personal pardon:

»thus, when recently I was succumbing to adverse fortunes in war, you, the victor, ordered me to be of stout spirit.«⁵⁸

It is probably in this context, at Lyons during the winter of 458/459, that the dinner party mentioned by Sidonius in Epist. 9.13.4 is to be

taxes, but also states that taxes which remain due must be paid *trina per annum vice* (»in three installments per year«). It may be that rather than referring to an arbitrary three or four-fold increase in the capitation tax, Sidonius in reality is merely requesting a remission of an existing tax, in line with the remission which Majorian already had granted. Indeed, Sidonius may be requesting remission of the installments of the Gallic ship-tax which Majorian had instituted in early 458, see Sid. Carm. 5.446–448, *Gallicia continuis quamquam sit lassa tributis, hoc censu placuisse cupit nec pondera sentit quae prodesse probat.* – This latter tax was undoubtedly another part of the overall settlement of Gaul which Majorian began in early 458; there is no need to assume that it implies an early capture of Lyons, as suggested by LOYEN, *Recherches*, pp. 78, 81.

⁵⁶ Sid. Carm. 5.574–578: *et quia lassatis nimium spes unica rebus venisti, nostris, petimus, succurre ruinis Lugdunumque tuam, dum praeteris, aspice victor: otia post nimios poscit te fracta labores. cui pacem das, redde animum . . .* – Nov. Maj. 7; Majorian arrived at Lyons before the end of 458, see Sid. Carm. 5.2, *imperium iam consul habet.* For Majorian's winter crossing of the Alps, see Sid. Carm. 5.510–552; his departure at such an inopportune season demonstrates well his pressing desire to settle the affairs of Gaul.

⁵⁷ Sid. Carm. 5.596–599: *. . . quod lumina flectis quodque serenato miseros iam respicis ore, exsultare libet: memini, cum parcere velles, hic tibi vultus erat; mitis dat signa venustas.*

⁵⁸ Sid. Carm. 4.11–12, *sic mihi diverso nuper sub Marte cadenti iussisti invicto, victor, ut essem animo.* – On Sidonius' pardon, see STEVENS, *Sidonius* (see note 1) pp. 46, 180–185; on his need to seek it, see note 40 above. At this time Sidonius may have received his title of *comes* (Sid. Ep. 1.11.13) from Majorian, see LOYEN, *L'esprit* (see note 1) p. 39. Sidonius probably was *comes civitatis Arvernensis*, see STEVENS, *Sidonius*, pp. 52–53.

placed.⁵⁹ The incident occurred *temporibus Augusti Maioriani*, and Sidonius wrote of it *post annos circiter viginti*, providing a good approximate date.⁶⁰ The text offers further indications of the banquet's time and place: »while we were gathered at dinner at the request of some comrade, I expounded suddenly on a suddenly produced book of the *magister epistularum* Petrus, while my intimates Domnulus, Severianus and Lampridius composed likewise . . . the emperor had united them in one city, brought in from cities everywhere.«⁶⁰

The importance of Petrus in the passage alone should suggest Lyons in the winter of 458/459 as the site of the banquet, since it was there that Sidonius not only was constrained to accept him as a political patron, but also professed to see in him a literary patron, as in the first preface to the panegyric on Majorian: »But for me, Petrus will be the Maecenas of our time.«⁶¹

The involvement of Petrus with this group of men made such an impression on Sidonius that in another passage he groups Severianus, Domnulus and Petrus, and in a third, Petrus, Lampridius and Severianus.⁶² Petrus' presence as an object of esteem in Gaul at another place and time is conjectural; at Lugdunum in late 458, with Sidonius present, it is known, and another date or location for the gathering should not be suggested without very strong reasons.

The very fact that Majorian gathered together Gallic aristocrats under what appears to have been friendly circumstances indicates his desire to find common grounds with them. The significance of the presence of Lampridius and Severianus is not fully clear: both were rhetors and poets. Lampridius taught and had property near Bordeaux and Majorian may have seen in him a link with the Gallo-Roman aristocracy in the Visigothic kingdom; Severianus may have been related to Sidonius.⁶³

⁵⁹ The banquet is usually placed at Arles, see ANDERSON, Sidonius II (see note 1) pp. 568 n. 3, 570 n. 2, LOYEN, Lettres III (see note 1) p. 207 n. 51, and L'esprit, pp. 102–103, and STEVENS, Sidonius, p. 51. There is no known reason, however, for the assembly of this group of individuals at Arles in 458/459. One of the few to suggest Lyons as the site of the gathering is W. BRANDES, Der Dichter Rusticius Helpidius und seine Namensverwandten, in: Wiener Studien 12 (1890) p. 300.

⁶⁰ Sid. Ep. 9.13.4; *cum rogatu cuiusdam sodalis ad cenam conveniremus, in Petri librum magistri epistularum subito prolatum subitus effudi, meis quoque contubernaliibus . . . Domnulo, Severiano atque Lampridio paria pangentibus . . . quos undique urbium ascitos imperator in unam civitatem . . . contraxerat.*

⁶¹ Sid. Carm. 3.5, *at mihi Petrus erit Maecenas temporis huius*. For the adulation paid to Petrus at this time, see also Sid. Ep. 9.13.5 *carm. 6, Petrus est tibi legendus*, and *ibid.* 87, 93, *Petrus haec et illa transit . . . et ab omnibus probatus.*

⁶² Sid. Ep. 9.15.1 *carm. 37–40, Carm. 9.308–315*. The recurrent references to this group can hardly be fortuitous.

⁶³ On Lampridius, who lived in Bordeaux, see also Sid. Ep. 8.9, 8.11.3–13. Severianus is never mentioned outside the context of this group; note that Sidonius had a daughter named Severiana (Ep. 2.12.2).

Domnulus is more interesting: he had ties to the area of Lyons and by the mid 460s he was a *quaestorius vir*, that is, he had been *quaestor sacri palatii*.⁶⁴ If, as is probable, he is identified correctly as Rusticius Helpidius *v. c. et inlustris exquaestor*, the author of the *Historiarum testamenti veteris et novi* and the *Carmen de Christi Iesu beneficiis*, then he also may be the Rusticius who was bishop of Lyons at the end of the fifth century and who died in 501/502.⁶⁵ His identification also with Flavius Rusticius Helpidius Domnulus *v. c. et spectab. comes consist.*, a subscriptor at Ravenna of manuscripts of Pomponius Mela, Valerius Maximus, and the *De musica* of Augustine, could have important implications for an analysis of Majorian's conciliation of Gaul.⁶⁶

A reconstruction of Domnulus' career could then suggest that, probably as a result of his connections at Lyons, he held a *spectabilis* office in Avitus' consistory. He then may have been captured either at Ravenna or at Piacenza in late 456.⁶⁷ During a year or two of enforced idleness at Ravenna, he would have had ample time both to indulge his literary inclinations and to become acquainted with Majorian, who was there for most of 458.⁶⁸

When Majorian, in early 458, embarked on his campaign to regain control of Gaul and to win over the Gallic aristocracy, Domnulus would have proved a useful ally. In fact, it probably was under Majorian that Domnulus served as *quaestor sacri palatii*; if he did, it would explain Sidonius' otherwise awkward parenthesis in the midst of his *laudatio* of Petrus, viz. »although he [sc. Majorian] also glories in his eloquent quaestor«: just as Sidonius could not omit a reference to the Gaul Magnus,

⁶⁴ Sid. Ep. 4.25.5, Carm. 14 ep. 2; see STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 105, and SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 132.

⁶⁵ See S. CAVALLIN, Le poète Domnulus. Etude prosopographique, in: Sacris erudiri 7 (1955) pp. 49–66, in opposition to the view expressed by F. CORSARO, Elpidio Rustico, Catania 1956, pp. 10–21, and BRANDES, Dichter (see note 59) pp. 297–310, that the poet lived in the first half of the sixth century.

⁶⁶ See O. JAHN, Über die Subscriptionen in den Handschriften römischer Classiker, in: Berichte über die Verhandlungen der königlich-sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig. Philologisch-historische Klasse 3 (1851) pp. 345–347, for discussion. The attempt of CAVALLIN, Le poète, p. 65, to identify the subscriptor with Helpidius, the emissary of Theodosius II to the council of Ephesus, offers no explanation for his presence at Ravenna.

⁶⁷ The forces of Majorian and Ricimer were able to capture Ravenna only after a battle in which Avitus' patrician Remistus was killed, see Chronica minora I, p. 304, and Theophanes Chron. 5948.

⁶⁸ During 458, the following *Novellae* of Majorian were issued at Ravenna: 1 (Jan. 11), 2 (Mar. 10), 3 (May 8), 4 (July 11), 5 (Sep. 4), 6 (Oct. 26) and 7 (Nov. 6); see STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 45, n. 2. Domnulus also may have been related to the *vir inlustris* Rusticius of Milan (Ennod. Vita Epiphani 38, omitted by CAVALLIN, Le poète); if this were the case, Domnulus would have been another of Majorian's Gallic appointees to have Italian ties.

Majorian's *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*, in the panegyric, he likewise could not avoid a passing word on Domnulus.⁶⁹

6. Aegidius, Agrippinus and Majorian's Policy of Conciliation

The confusion of the years 456–458 seems to have led to the development of a feud between Aegidius and another Gallo-Roman official in the north, Agrippinus of Autun. Agrippinus first appears c.450 in the *vita* of Anianus, bishop of Orléans:

»The *vir inlustris* Agrippinus, who at that time performed the duties of master of soldiers, was assigned by the emperors the responsibility of making journeys throughout all the cities of Gaul for the sake of the public safety and order.«⁷⁰

Anianus appealed to him for the release of those »who were held imprisoned in stone quarries and workhouses«.⁷¹ This incident may have taken place at Autun, where several such imperial factories were located.⁷²

In the spring of 452, Agrippinus appears again:

»In the days after Easter certain phenomena were seen in the sky in regions of Gaul; a letter about them of Euphronius, bishop of Autun, to count Agrippinus clearly depicts these occurrences.«⁷³

The only other dated reference to Agrippinus is from 462:

»Agrippinus, a Gallic count and citizen, very hostile to count Aegidius, in order that the aid of the Goths would be earned, surrendered Narbonne to Theudoric.«⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Domnulus' position as Majorian's *quaestor sacri palatii* is generally accepted by scholars, for example ANDERSON, Sidonius I (see note 1) p. 111, n. 4, LOYEN, Recherches (see note 1) p. 84, STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 105, and SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 132. LOYEN, Recherches, pp. 80–83, notes that Petrus was performing duties normally reserved for the *quaestor sacri palatii*, who supervised the *magister epistularum*, see JONES, Later Roman Empire (see note 1) pp. 367–368, 504. For the duties of the *magister epistularum*, see Not. dig. occ. 16.2, *legationes civitatum et consultationes et preces tractat*. It may be that the loyalty of Domnulus, who had ties to Lyons, was considered too suspect to allow him to deal personally with the delicate initial settlement at Lyons, and therefore his subordinate was sent in his place.

⁷⁰ *Vita Aniani* 3 (MGH Script. rer. Merov. III, p. 109): *vir inlustris Agrippinus, qui tunc tempore magistri militum fungebatur officium, ab principibus fuerat deputatus, ut per omnes civitates Galliarum pro salute et districtione publica habere deberet excursos*. – The invasion of Gaul by Attila occurred *non post multo tempore* (*Vita Aniani* 4).

⁷¹ *Vita Aniani* (see note 70) 3: *qui lautumniis aut ergastulis tenebantur inclusi*.

⁷² Not. dig. occ. 8.1.b.c.3 (*loricaria, balistaria, and clibanaria*) and 8.1.b.c.4 (*scutaria*). Similar factories also were located at Rheims, see Not. dig. occ. 8.1.b.c.6, 10.1.c.10, 10.1.e.11, and 10.1.h.2.

⁷³ Hydatius, Chron. 151: *in diebus sequentis paschae visa quaedam in coelo regionibus Galliarum, epistola de his Eufronii Augustodunensis episcopi ad Agrippinum comitem facta evidenter ostendit*. – On the dating of this passage, see C. COURTOIS, Remarques sur la chronique d'Hydace, in: Byzantion 21 (1951) p. 40.

⁷⁴ Hydatius, Chron. 217, *Agrippinus Gallus et comes et civis, Aegidio comiti viro insigni inimicus, ut Gothorum mereretur auxilia, Narbonam tradidit Theudorico*.

These sources on Agrippinus have been quoted in detail because of the confusion they introduce regarding his ranks and offices. Only in the earliest, before 451, is he a *vir inlustris* and *magister militum*; in the later two he is only a *comes*. The second would imply that he was *comes Augustodunensis*, an office specifically attested c.470 and later.⁷⁵ Moreover, the purely administrative duties specified in the first passage also would be more appropriate to a *comes civitatis* than to a *magister militum*. What probably has happened here is that the author of the *Vita Aniani* has introduced, if not a blunder, at least an anachronism: Agrippinus may have been a *vir inlustris* and *magister militum* at some later time, but in 450 he was still *comes Augustodunensis*.⁷⁶

Some light can be shed on the problem by a lengthy, but undated, account of Aegidius' and Agrippinus' rivalry embedded in the *vita* of Lupicinus, abbot of the monastery at St. Claude, just northeast of Lyons, in the Jura mountains:

»the *vir inlustris*, at one time, Agrippinus, endowed with a wonderful wisdom and, according to the dignity of secular service, established by the emperor as count of Gaul, was accused to the emperor by Aegidius, master of soldiers, with clever and malicious art, viz. that he, jealous of Roman rule, undoubtedly favored the barbarians and was attempting with clandestine plotting to detach provinces from Roman rule.«⁷⁷

This incident generally has been connected with Agrippinus' surrender of Narbonne to the Visigoths in 462, but two considerations make this unlikely. First of all, in 462 Aegidius was in revolt against the government of Ricimer in Italy, and thus was hardly in a position to make such

⁷⁵ Another *comes Augustodunensis*, Gregorius Attalus, entered office c. 470, see Sid. Ep. 5.18, also LOYEN, *Lettres* II (see note 1) p. 256 and STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) no. 182. For other Agrippini of Autun, see Sid. Ep. 6.2.2 and *Vita Germani Parisiensis* 9 (MGH, *Auct. ant.* IV, p. 12).

⁷⁶ The office of *comes* carried the rank only of *spectabilis* (see, for example, Not. dig. occ. 28). Once the reference in the *Vita Aniani* is seen as anachronistic, as suggested by VASSILI, *Agrippino* (see note 1) p. 180, there no longer is any reason to make Agrippinus *magister militum* as early as 452, as done by DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) cols. 669–670, 687, ENSSLIN, *Heermeisteramt* (see note 1) p. 486, and STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1) no. 11: to do so in no way weakens the fact of the anachronism. SUNDWALL, *Studien* (see note 1) no. 8 is overly conservative to deny that Agrippinus was ever *magister militum*.

⁷⁷ *Vita Lupicini* 11, see François MARTINE, *Vie des pères du Jura*, Paris 1968 (*Sources chrétiennes*, 142) p. 342. Similar charges were levelled against the prefect Arvandus in 468, see Sid. Ep. 1.7.5, *haec ad regem Gothorum charta videbatur emitti . . . cum Burgundionibus iure gentium Gallias dividi debere confirmans*, and against the vicar Seronatus in the early 470s, see Sid. Ep. 7.7.2, *Seronatum barbaris provincias proprinatem*: both of them were convicted.

an accusation.⁷⁸ Second, and even more significant, the role of Lupicinus as Agrippinus' defender would make no sense if the charge concerned Narbonne and the Visigoths. But if the accusation referred to Agrippinus' implication in the Burgundian expansion of 456–458, then the involvement of all three is explained: Lupicinus, who had ties to the Burgundians himself, and Agrippinus both came from the area just north of Lyons, and Aegidius was the representative of Majorian and Ricimer at a time when the authority of the new regime in Gaul was not yet secure. The outcome of the incident in the life of Lupicinus likewise accords with the circumstances of this period.

According to the *vita*, Agrippinus, accompanied by Lupicinus, was taken under guard to Italy, where he initially was sentenced to death by the emperor and imprisoned to await execution. But in the interim, he escaped and went into hiding at St. Peter's basilica, where unrecognized he entered into a discussion with *quosdam de palatio viros*, the text of which follows:⁷⁹

»How much better«, he said, »the emperor would have done if, by the kindness of his piety, he had made for himself a debtor of a man of this sort, even if

⁷⁸ SCHMIDT, *Ostgermanen* (see note 1) p. 140, n. 3, VASSILI (see note 1) *Agrippino*, pp. 176–180, and Nepoziano, p. 64, and TAMASSIA, *Egidio* (see note 1) pp. 210–213, all place Agrippinus' trial in 461. By 462 (see note 74), Aegidius had been removed as *magister militum*. On the enmity between Aegidius and Ricimer, see Priscus fr. 30 and Hydatius, *Chron.* 224.

⁷⁹ *Vita Lupicini* (see note 77) 14: »Quanto«, inquit, »melius fecerat imperator, si huiusmodi virum, etiamsi esset in accusatione convictus, magis sibi fecisset pietatis beneficio debitorem, quam indiscussum et inconvictum ad id fortassis, quod falso obiectum fuerat, iniuria instigante, citaret«. – Hoc . . . Augustus ac patricius omnisque senatus, cur ita, ut dicis, factum non fuit, congemiscunt. – Et modo . . . si repertus esset, evaderet? – Sicubi . . . indagari inveniri que posset, non solum indemnus, verum etiam sublimatus honoribus et muneratus valde, rediret ad propria, dummodo hoc metu res publica solveretur ad praesens. – The *Vita Lupicini* 12 is almost certainly in error when it calls Rome the site of the trial since such a location has no historically probable context: see DEMANDT, *Magister militum* (see note 1) cols. 689–690 for the resultant difficulties. But, at this period, confusion between Rome and Ravenna is not uncommon in Gallic sources, note *Chronica minora* I, p. 664, which has Majorian ruling at Rome rather than Ravenna, and *Greg. Tur. Glor. conf.* 40, where Germanus of Auxerre dies at Rome rather than Ravenna (*Vita Germani* 35 ff.). The confusion undoubtedly was caused by the facile assumption that any business concerning emperors must have occurred at Rome. Furthermore, in the case of saints' lives, one also must consider the topos of the pilgrimage to Rome, see G. BARDY, *Pèlerinages à Rome vers la fin du IV^e siècle*, in: *Analecta Bollandiana* 67 (1949) pp. 224–235. If the author of the *Vita Lupicini* was affected by either of these factors, his inclusion of Rome could be explained as either misguided supposition or a pious fiction. Since Majorian was in Ravenna for most of 458 (see note 68), the trial well may have taken place there. The importance of »the patrician« throughout the account of the trial also would suggest that the trial took place before Majorian left Italy, since Ricimer did not accompany Majorian to Gaul, see BURY, *Later Roman Empire* (see note 1) p. 332, and STEIN, *Geschichte* (see note 1) p. 561.

he were convicted of the accusation, rather than citing him untried and unconvicted for that which, perhaps, had been accused falsely, on account of enmity.«

To which the officials of the palace responded,

»The emperor and the patrician and the entire senate grieve that it was not done as you say.«

Agrippinus then asked,

»And now, should he be found, would he go free?«,

and the officials answered,

»If he could be tracked down and found anywhere, he would return home not only unconvicted, but also exalted by honors and greatly rewarded, as long as the republic, for the present, is freed from this fear.«

On the basis of this exchange, there can be little doubt that Agrippinus was guilty as charged of collusion with the Burgundians, convicted by his own words. As a result of his actions, however, he was not punished, rather he was allowed to return home *sublimatus honoribus*.⁸⁰ It is not difficult to find parallel examples in Majorian's settlement of Gaul. Paeonius, who had appropriated his office with little or no authority to do so, was allowed to retain the title of *inlustris*; and Sidonius was pardoned, and perhaps at this time granted the office of *comes* and hence the rank of *spectabilis*.

Such a context for the rivalry between Aegidius and Agrippinus also can offer a possible resolution for the problem of Agrippinus' ranks and offices. It may be that Agrippinus was appointed *magister militum per Gallias* by Avitus in the last month of his reign, after the death of his patrician Remistus: Avitus had named as his new patrician his lieutenant Messianus, who well may have been initially Avitus' *magister militum per Gallias*.⁸¹ Majorian, in early 458, then replaced Agrippinus with Aegidius, and Agrippinus, like Sidonius, had to make his peace with the new emperor. He too was pardoned, and allowed to retain not only the title of *inlustris*, but also his previous office of *comes Augustodunensis* which he still held in 462. Under these circumstances, the apparent anomaly of the author of the *Vita Lupicini* calling him a *vir inlustris . . . comes Galliae* is explained: that is exactly what he was.

⁸⁰ *Vita Lupicini* 14.

⁸¹ For Agrippinus as a supporter of Avitus, see TAMASSIA, Egidio (see note 1) p. 211 and VASSILI, Agrippino (see note 1) p. 177. STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 11 is one of the few to imply that Agrippinus' trial took place c. 458. In the spring of 455, Avitus entrusted the preliminary negotiations with the Visigoths to Messianus (Sid. Carm. 7.426-427). As patrician: see note 67 above. Messianus himself may have come from near Lyons, as the name recurs at the end of the fifth century in a *vir illustrissimus* Messianus who lived in Burgundia, see Avit. Ep. 56 and STROHEKER, Adel, no. 248. If the Messianus who became patrician had been master of soldiers in Gaul, then he too, of course, would have needed a replacement.

It would appear, moreover, that Domnulus, the friend of Sidonius who may have been Majorian's *quaestor sacri palatii* at the end of 458, may himself have played a key role in Majorian's reconciliation with Agrippinus and his partisans. Sidonius mentions that Domnulus had close connections to the *Iurensia . . . monasteria*, the very place where Lupicinus, the patron of Agrippinus and the intimate of the Burgundian king Chilperic who recently had returned from Spain, was an abbot.⁸² It is not too much to suppose that Majorian would have exploited the ties in Lugdunensis of his new *quaestor* in his efforts to win over Agrippinus and the Burgundians. And if Agrippinus, Lupicinus, Domnulus and Sidonius are all thus interconnected, it is possible that Agrippinus, Lupicinus, Sidonius, and other aristocrats from the area of Lyons may have anticipated Majorian's arrival at the city together.⁸³

It appears that in the north, once it was clear that Majorian did not intend to take reprisals and, in fact, that he was making special efforts to be conciliatory, organized resistance to his rule vanished. If the Burgundians, who must have provided much of the impetus for the opposition, could be subdued, then the Gallo-Romans also were prepared to submit.

7. Majorian, Magnus and the Goths

Majorian's settlement of the affairs of southern Gaul paralleled that in the north, viz. to be lenient towards the officials of the old administration, but to replace them with his own appointees. In early 458 he relieved

⁸² Sid. Ep. 4.25.5. Lupicinus appears in the key role of intermediary between the Gallo-Romans and Chilperic in the *Vita Lupicini* 10, immediately before the story of Agrippinus. In this incident, which took place c. 467, Chilperic, now a *patricius*, berated Lupicinus for his activities in 457: ›*Nonne, ait, tu es ille dudum noster inpostor, qui ante hos decem circiter annos, cum civilitatem Romani apicis arrogans derogares, regioni huic et patribus iam iamque inminere interitum testabaris?*‹ (›Are you not that recent trickster‹, he said, ›who around ten years ago, while you were insolently diminishing the government of Roman authority, asserted that even then ruin threatened our country and families?‹).

Such an accusation offers the strongest possible evidence that Lupicinus, too, was involved in the opposition to Majorian, and the fact that the incident involving Agrippinus follows immediately in the *vita* only serves to confirm this suspicion. For the dating of this event, see MARTINE, Pères (see note 77) p. 337, n. 3.

⁸³ The *Vita Lupicini* 11 states that Agrippinus, once accused, *ad comitatum sub quadam custodia cogitur properare*, but that then *reclamare fortiter coepit, non se omnino iturum*, and his journey was not undertaken until Aegidius' arrival. It well could be that Agrippinus' journey was delayed at Lyons, a natural stopping point on the way south from Autun, and that it was not continued until after Aegidius had taken the city, in which case it would have been natural that Sidonius, Lupicinus, and others implicated in anti-imperial activities would have been brought to Majorian at the same time.

Paeonius of his appropriated office of *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*, and his own choice for the office fell upon the aristocrat Magnus of Narbonne, who had been Avitus' *magister officiorum*.⁸⁴

Magnus was a good choice for several reasons. He could restrain any subversive movements, such as the *coniuratio Marcellana*, at Narbonne. He also had ties in the area of Lyons: he himself was related to Avitus, and his son Probus, then or later, was married to Sidonius' cousin Eulalia.⁸⁵ Moreover, he was influential with the Goths. He had served as Avitus' liaison with them in Spain in 456, and Sidonius, in his panegyric to Majorian in late 458, spoke to the new emperor thus of his new *praefectus praetorio Galliarum*:

»If you should ask how great a man controls the office of prefect, where Gaul extends her wide borders . . . the skin-clad enemy, who now gives laws to the Goths, under your judge heeds the hoarse herald.«⁸⁶

But any inclination of the Goths to obey Magnus probably was due less to his personal authority than to consideration of their own self-interest. In October of 456 Theodoric had been too busy defeating the *Suevi* and expanding his power in Spain to come to the aid of Avitus. He remained there until April of 457 when, leaving his allies in Spain under Gothic commanders, he returned suddenly to Gaul, where he seems to have remained the rest of the year.⁸⁷

Theodoric's precipitous return probably was a result of the rapidly developing situation in southern Gaul, including the *coniuratio Marcel-*

⁸⁴ See note 3 above. For Magnus as Paeonius' successor, see STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 273, and VASSILI, Nepoziano (see note 1) p. 59, n. 1. For Magnus' offices as *magister officiorum* and *praefectus* see Sid. Carm. 15.154–157, 5.558–564, and Ep. 1.11.10. Magnus' service as *magister* had to be under Avitus, as STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) p. 44, n. 2, and STROHEKER, Adel p. 63, no. 232, not under Majorian, as LOYEN, L'esprit (see note 1) p. 83, and SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 288: Magnus was *magister* in Spain, and it is hardly likely that after having held the offices of *praefectus praetorio Galliarum* in 458 and 459 and consul in 460 that he would have held the lower-ranking office of *magister officiorum* in 461; furthermore, when Sidonius specifically discusses Magnus' rank in 461 (Ep. 1.11.10), no mention is made of him recently having been *magister officiorum*. The office must have been held under Avitus, when Magnus would have been Avitus' liaison with the Gothic armies in Spain, see note 86 below for Magnus' influence with the Visigoths.

⁸⁵ Both Avitus and Magnus were related to the fourth-century patrician Philagrius (Sid. Carm. 7.156, 24.93, Ep. 2.3.1), see JONES, Prosopography (see note 1) Philagrius, no. 4. Eulalia: Sid. Carm. 24.95, Ep. 4.1.1.

⁸⁶ Sid. Carm. 5.558–563: *si praefecturae quantus moderetur honorum vir quaeras, tendit patulos qua Gallia fines . . . qui dictat modo iura Getis, sub iudice vestro pellitus ravum praeconem suspicit hostis.* — On Magnus' value as Majorian's diplomatic representative with the Visigoths, see VASSILI, Nepoziano (see note 1) p. 59. On the history of Spain in general during this period, see E. A. THOMPSON, The End of Roman Spain, in: Nottingham Medieval Studies 20 (1976) pp. 3–28 and 21 (1977) pp. 3–31.

⁸⁷ Hydatius, Chron. 173–186, Chronica minora I, p. 305.

lana and Paeonius' seizure of the prefecture.⁸⁸ It may be that he took this opportunity to attempt to expand his influence in Narbonensis, and Sidonius' account of the resistance of Narbonne to Theodoric may date to 457 or 458.⁸⁹ In 458, Theodoric seems to have made an attempt on Arles, which was defended towards the end of the year by Aegidius, who eventually put the Goths to flight.⁹⁰ After this setback, the Goths were willing to come to terms with Majorian, and they had done so by the end of the year, when Sidonius, in his panegyric to Majorian, referred to them as being at peace with Rome.⁹¹

Majorian's ease in conciliating the Goths is to be explained less by his military superiority than by his ability to find ends advantageous to them both. The primary concerns of the Goths at this time were not in southern Gaul but in Spain, where Theodoric had sent one Gothic army under Cyrila in July of 458, and where he himself led another in 459.⁹² Both Majorian and Theodoric wished to see Suevic power in Spain neutralized, Majorian to safeguard his Vandal expedition and Theodoric to further his future interests there. Thus, in 460 an army under joint Roman-Gothic command was operating in *Gallaecia*.⁹³

⁸⁸ According to Hydatius, Chron. 186, Theodoric returned *adversis sibi nuntiis territus*. The remainder of Theodoric's army returned later in the year (see notes 34–35 above).

⁸⁹ See SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen (see note 1) p. 484, and, on Narbonne, Sid. Carm. 22 ep. 1, 23.59–75.

⁹⁰ Paul. Pet. Vita Martini 6.111–142, cf. Greg. Tur. Virt. Mart. 1.2. For discussion, see GRIFFE, Gaule II (see note 1) pp. 65–67, SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen (see note 1) p. 484, and STEVENS, Sidonius (see note 1) pp. 50–51.

⁹¹ See note 86 above. The standard interpretation, that Arles was not relieved until early 459 by Majorian himself (see SCHMIDT and STEVENS in note 90 above), is probably incorrect: it is very unlikely that Majorian would have left Arles under attack while he visited Lyons. What probably happened was that he sent his *magister militum praesentalis* Nepotianus (see note 42) to relieve Arles (the *auxilia* and *socialia castra* of Paul. Pet. Vita Martini 6.115, 117) while he continued on to Lyons. The important role played by Nepotianus in the settlement with the Goths certainly would tend to support this interpretation, note Hydatius, Chron. 197: *legati a Nepotiano magistro militiae et a Suerico comite missi veniunt ad Gallaecos, nuntiantes Maiorianum Augustum et Theudoricum regem firmissima inter se pacis iura sanxisse, Gothis in quodam certamine superatis*. – A settlement in late 458, moreover, would eliminate the otherwise awkward necessity of explaining away Sidonius' reference to a Gothic peace at that time, as by SCHMIDT, Ostgermanen, p. 484, STEVENS, Sidonius, p. 51 n. 1, and VASSILI, Nepoziano (see note 1) p. 59. Magnus' success in dealing with the Visigoths is reflected in his appointment by Majorian as consul for 460 (Sid. Carm. 14 ep. 2, Ep. 1.11.10). For Majorian's settlement with the Goths, see also Priscus fr. 27 = Joh. Ant. fr. 203. The suggestion, as by DILL, Last Century (see note 1) p. 338, that Majorian relieved Arles before going to Lyons, is rendered unlikely by considerations of time: he left Ravenna in November and was in Lyons before the end of the year.

⁹² Hydatius, Chron. 192–193. On the Gothic offensive in Spain, see THOMPSON, End (see note 86) part II, pp. 4–6.

⁹³ Hydatius, Chron. 201. On Majorian's cooperation with the Goths, see THOMPSON, End, part II, pp. 18–19 and VASSILI, Nepoziano (see note 1) p. 59.

8. The Italian Considerations of Majorian's Gallic Settlement

A consideration that Majorian would have kept in mind whenever he made appointments to imperial offices, especially those in the central administration, was the need to avoid offending the Italian aristocrats, since every office held by a Gaul was one less that could be held by an Italian.⁹⁴ Avitus had failed to do so, and as a result the Italian senators had been instrumental in his fall.⁹⁵

When Majorian embarked on his settlement of Gaul, moreover, he had little reason to expect loyalty from Gallic aristocrats and every cause to expect their hostility. It has been seen that Majorian's appointment of Aegidius probably was based to some degree on their past acquaintance. It appears that several of his other choices took into consideration the family ties of some Gallic senators in Italy.

The names of Magnus, Majorian's *praefectus praetorio Galliarum* in 458–459 and consul in 460, and his son Magnus Felix would indicate that they were related to Magnus Felix Ennodius, who was born in southern Gaul but became bishop of Pavia c.514 and had many ties to the high Italian aristocracy.⁹⁶ Moreover, Camillus, the son of Magnus' brother, and a relative, perhaps an uncle, of Magnus Felix Ennodius, himself seems to have held an office of illustrious rank under Majorian, and in 461 he had hopes of further advancement.⁹⁷ He was the son of a proconsul, apparently of Africa, who, on the basis of nomenclature, well may have been Felix Ennodius, *proconsul Africae* in 408/423.⁹⁸ Felix Ennodius, in turn, has been suggested as the son of the Ennodius who was *proconsul Africae* in 395, and who thus would have been Magnus' father.⁹⁹ Therefore, another example of an appointment by

⁹⁴ See note 12 above for the potential antipathy between the aristocracies of Gaul and Italy.

⁹⁵ See Greg. Tur. Hist. Franc. 2.11, and Joh. Ant. fr. 202 for the Italian opposition to Avitus.

⁹⁶ Magnus Felix: STROHEKER, Adel (see note 1) no. 145, SUNDWALL, Studien (see note 1) no. 172. Magnus Felix Ennodius: STROHEKER, Adel, no. 112, J. SUNDWALL, Abhandlungen zur Geschichte des ausgehenden Römertums, Helsinki 1919, pp. 1–83.

⁹⁷ For Camillus, see Sid. Carm. 9.8, Ep. 1.11.10–15, Ennod. Ep. 4.25.2, cf. 9.9, 9.29; also STROHEKER, Adel, no. 83, SUNDWALL, Studien, no. 78, and VOGEL, MGH, Auct. ant. VII, p. IV. Note Camillus' response to Majorian in 461 when the emperor referred to his bestowal of *consulatum unum* upon the family: *non unum . . . domine Auguste, sed primum* (Sid. Ep. 1.11.11).

⁹⁸ Sid. Ep. 1.11.10, *ornaverat proconsulatum patris*. The only western proconsulate was in Africa (Not. dig. occ. 17). Felix Ennodius: SUNDWALL, Studien, no. 141.

⁹⁹ SUNDWALL, Studien, no. 140.

Majorian from this family is surely to be seen in his *comes rei privatae*, another Ennodius, perhaps a third son of the *proconsul* of 395.¹⁰⁰

Aside from Magnus, most of these individuals had interests and family ties primarily in Italy and to the south rather than in Gaul. Majorian's intention in making such appointments is clear: to conciliate the Gallic aristocracy, without offending the Italian, by making use of aristocrats who had connections to both.¹⁰¹

9. Summary

When he ascended the western throne in 457, Majorian, who had been instrumental in the deposition and possibly in the death of the Gallic emperor Eparchius Avitus, was faced with serious resistance in Gaul. A conspiracy to seize the throne involving the Gallic aristocrat Marcellus had been underway at Narbonne, the *vir spectabilis* Paeonius had appropriated the prefecture at Arles, and Lyons was in open revolt. Moreover, the Visigoths and Burgundians had discarded their federate status and were actively pursuing their own expansionist interests.

In early 458, after his full assumption of power in Italy, Majorian embarked upon his reconciliation of Gaul, which included some changes in the administration. Paeonius, who probably had been Avitus' *vicarius septem provinciarum*, was replaced with Magnus of Narbonne, who had been Avitus' *magister officiorum* and who had connections to the Italian aristocracy. Paeonius was allowed to hold the rank of *inlustris*. Agrippinus, the *comes Augustodunensis* who seems to have been appointed

¹⁰⁰ Nov. Maj. 5; SUNDWALL, Studien, no. 142. If Felix Ennodius was indeed Camillus' father, he probably was *proconsul Africae* c. 420/424, a not unlikely conclusion in any event, if he were the son of Ennodius, the *proconsul* of 395. Although it is *prima facie* unlikely that a *proconsul* of c. 420 and a *magister officiorum* (that is, Magnus) of 455–456 would be brothers, it appears in fact that Camillus' father was a good deal older than his brother Magnus: both Magnus and his nephew Camillus seem to have reached their illustrious ranks at approximately the same time (see Sid. Ep. 1.11.10), which could imply that they were about the same age, and hence Magnus' elder brother well could have been twenty or thirty years older. The same argument can be applied to Ennodius, the *comes rei privatae* of 458, as a possible third brother.

¹⁰¹ Family members in the high Italian aristocracy include Flavius Rufius Magnus Faustus Avienus, consul in 502, and Flavius Ennodius Messala, consul in 506: both were relatives of Magnus Felix Ennodius, see SUNDWALL, Abhandlungen (see note 96) pp. 97–98, 141. On the potential danger to Majorian of offending the Italian aristocracy, see S. OOST, Libius Severus (see note 12) pp. 232–233. Oost's contention, however, that Majorian did just that is weakened by the arguments presented here: Majorian was probably a good deal more sensitive to the political realities of the time; and the suggestion that Severinus, consul in 461, the *magister epistularum* Petrus, and the *magister militum* Nepotianus were Gauls is both speculative and unlikely: see note 12 above on Nepotianus and LOYEN, L'esprit (see note 1) p. 64, on Petrus.

magister militum per Gallias late in Avitus' reign, was replaced by Aegidius, an old army comrade of Majorian who had great influence among the Franks, whom the new emperor saw as a counterweight to the Visigoths and Burgundians.

After Aegidius had put down the opposition of Lyons and the Burgundians, probably in mid to late summer, several Gallic aristocrats initially hostile to Majorian were pardoned, including Agrippinus, who was confirmed in his title of *inlustris* and permitted to retain the office of *comes*, and Sidonius, who also may have been granted the office of *comes* at this time. The abbot Lupicinus of St. Claude also may have been implicated in the anti-imperial activities and likewise pardoned.

Other aristocrats, with connections to both Gaul and Italy, by this time had been appointed to high office, including Camillus, Magnus' nephew, to an illustrious office, and Ennodius, probably another relative of Magnus, to the post of *comes rei privatae*. Flavius Rusticius Helpidius Domnulus, who had been a member of Avitus' consistory and who had ties to Lyons and the Jura monasteries, was made Majorian's *quaestor sacri palatii*, and, with Aegidius, was able to aid in the reconciliation of his aristocratic cousins of *Lugdunensis Prima* to the new regime.

Majorian exhibited a remarkable astuteness in his initial settlement of Gaul. His close understanding of the ties among Gallic aristocrats enabled him, through leniency and shrewd appointments, to reconcile to his rule, in a very short time, the senators whose imperial candidate he himself had been responsible for dethroning little over a year before.¹⁰² For Majorian, such a reconciliation was necessary if he was to offset the preeminent power of his patrician Ricimer in Italy. Moreover, any ambitions he had for a reconquest of Africa via Spain would have been futile without support from Gaul.

For the Gauls, it soon became clear that without outside help they would not be able to resist the increasing ambitions of the Germans, and a reconciliation, if favorable terms could be obtained, became equally favorable to them. In his panegyric, Sidonius succinctly expressed to Majorian the hopes of the Gallic nobles:

»From the time when Theodosius restored a joint authority to his patron's exiled brother, whose neck a hand to be turned upon itself shattered, has my Gaul, until now, been ignored by the lords of things, and ignored she has served. (...) ... her nobility has lain in contempt for so many years: the republic

¹⁰² It is an oversimplification to suggest, as LOYEN, *Poèmes* (see note 1) p. XV, that Majorian's policy of conciliation in Gaul was due to Sidonius's pleas. For a hint of Majorian's own attitude to the situation, see Nov. Maj. 1, where he claims to have liberated the state *a domestica clade* (sc. the rule of Avitus), although he also offers the reassuring, albeit conventional, assurance, *nemo delationes metuat* (cf. C. Th. gest. *extinctores delatorum, extinctores calumniarum*).

has rendered envy as a reward to the brave. Our leader is correcting all this, and augmenting his forces from the tribes, he comes through wars to your war.»¹⁰³

The hopes of both Majorian and the Gallic aristocrats momentarily were realized. The Gallic nobles, confirmed in the ranks acquired before Majorian's arrival and granted additional state offices as well, were to support Majorian both in Gaul and in Spain.¹⁰⁴ The Burgundians were restrained and the Visigoths were induced to cooperate in Majorian's campaigns in Spain. Whatever the reasons for Majorian's eventual failure, it cannot be attributed to a lack of forethought, intelligence, and planning.

*Annexe I: Table of Marcelli and Marcellini
in Gaul during the late Empire*

Name	Date ¹	Position	Reference ²
1. Antonius Marcellinus	313–340	<i>Praeses Lugdunensis I</i> 313 <i>?PPO Galliarum</i> 340	P 5
2. Marcellianus	314	Bishop of Auxerre	D 2.444, RE 6
3. Marcellus	EIV	Father of Marcellus of Narbonne	P 14
4. Marcellus	MIV	<i>Grammaticus</i> , Narbonne	P 14, RE 20
5. Marcellinus	350	<i>Magister militum</i> of Magnentius	P 9, RE 14
6. Marcellinus	350–351	<i>Comes rei privatae</i> of Constans, <i>magister officiorum</i> of Magnentius	P 12, RE 13
7. Marcellus	356–357	<i>Magister equitum et peditum</i>	P 13, RE 14
8. Marcellus	IV	Bishop of Bourges	D 2.26, RE 41
9. Marcellinus	?360	Bishop of Rouen	D 2.206, RE 33

¹⁰³ Sid. Carm. 5.354–365, *ex quo Theodosius communia iura fugato reddidit auctoris fratri, cui guttura fregit post in se vertenda manus, mea Gallia rerum ignoratur adhuc dominis ignaraque servit . . . contempta tot annos nobilitas iacuit: pretium respublica forti rettulit invidiam. princeps haec omnia noster corrigit atque tuum vires ex gentibus addens ad bellum per bella venit.*

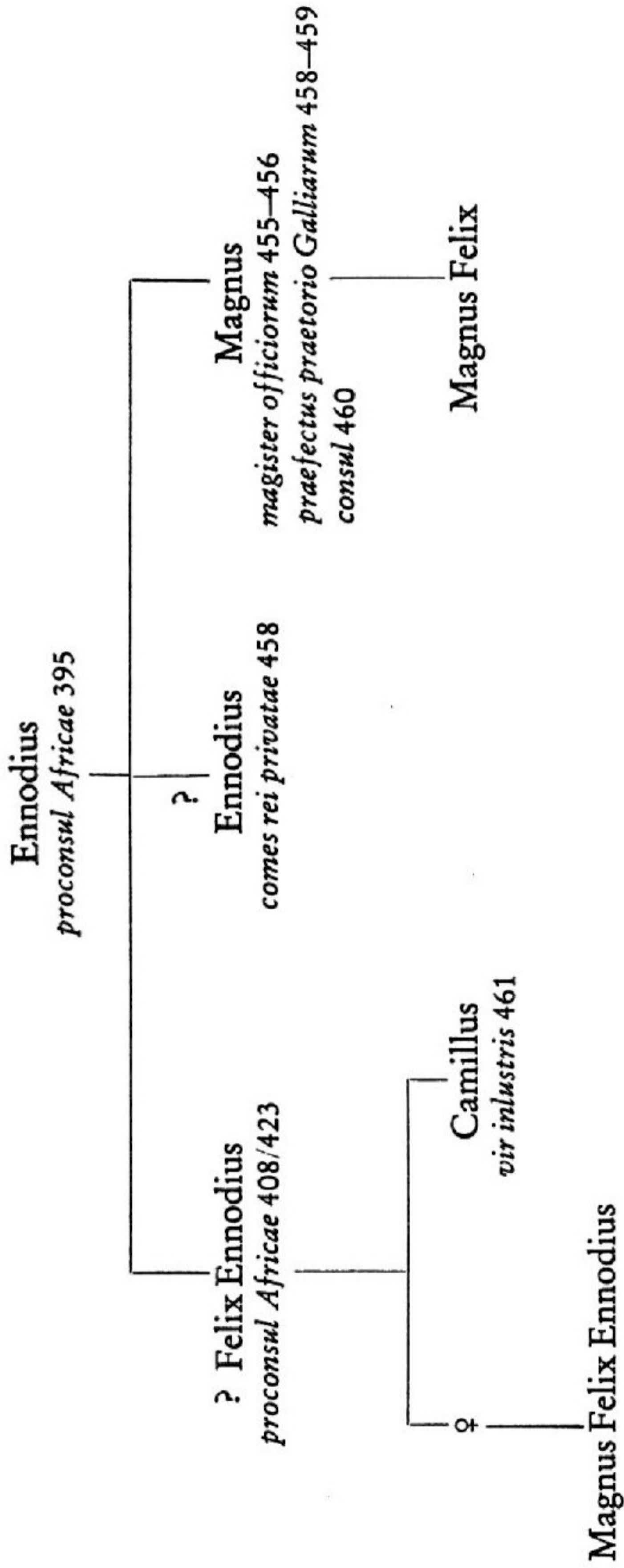
¹⁰⁴ For the Gallic friendliness towards Majorian, see Sid. Ep 1.11.10–16. Gauls who accompanied Majorian to Spain include Aegidius (Priscus fr. 30), Trygetius of Bazas (Sid. Ep. 8.12.2), and perhaps Sidonius himself (Sid. Ep. 8.5 and 9.12, to Spaniards).

¹ E = early, M = middle, IV, V, VI ≡ fourth, fifth, sixth century.

² D = DUCHESNE, *Fastes épiscopaux*, Paris 1915; P = JONES, *Prosopography* (see note 1); RE = *Real-Encyclopädie*; S = STROHEKER, *Adel* (see note 1).

10. Marcellinus	c. 356/380	Bishop of Embrun	D 1.290, RE 35
11. Marcellianus	371–376	Son of Maximinus <i>PPO Galliarum</i>	P 2, RE 2
12. Marcellinus	383–388	<i>Comes</i> , brother of Magnus Maximus	P 12, RE 18
13. Marcellus	394–395	<i>Magister officiorum</i> , from Narbonne	P 3, RE 58
14. Marcellus	c.400	Presbyter, southwest Gaul	RE 40
15. Marcellina	c.400	Daughter of <i>PPO Galliarum</i> c. 340	P 1, RE 2
16. Marcellus	–c.400	Bishop of Paris	D 2.470, RE 42
17. Marcellus	MV	Presbyter, dedicatee of Salv. De virg. bono	
18. Marcellus	441–443	<i>PPO Galliarum</i> , from Narbonne	RE 24
19. Marcellinus	MV	Advocatus, Narbonne	RE 31
20. Marcell(in)us	MV	Bishop of Tarantaise	D 1.244n
21. Marcellus	463–510	Senator at Die, bishop of Avi- gnon	D 1.234, RE 51
22. Marcellus	MV	Friend of no. 21 (<i>Vita Marcelli</i> , see note 16)	
23. Marcellus	506	Bishop of Senez	D 1.293
24. Marcellus	506	Bishop of Aire	D 2.100, RE 52
25. Petrus Marcellinus Felix Liberius	510–534	<i>PPO Galliarum</i>	RE 29
26. Marcellus	MVI	<i>Vir inlustris</i>	S 237
27. Marcellinus	538	Presbyter Nantes (<i>Corp. Chr. lat.</i> 148A, 128)	
28. Marcellus	MVI	Bishop of Auch	D 2.92
29. Marcella	MVI	Sister of Hesychius, bishop of Vienne (MGH, Auct. ant. VI, 188)	
30. Marcellus	581	Senator at Uzès, bishop of Marseille	D 1.293, S 238

Annexe II: Suggested Family Ties of Magnus of Narbonne



Annexe III: Suggested Chronology

- 456 Spring Visigoths depart for Spain under Theodoric, accompanied by Burgundian kings Chilperic and Gundioc.
- September 17 Avitus' patrician Remistus killed at Classis.
Agrippinus becomes *magister militum per Gallias*.
- October 18/19 Avitus deposed at Piacenza, consecrated bishop.
- October/
December Burgundians obtain additional division of land in *Lugdunensis*.
Coniuratio Marcellana under way at Narbonne.
Successes of Theodoric in Spain.
- 457 January/March Paeonius assumes praetorian prefecture of Gaul.
- March 28 Theodoric returns to Gaul with Visigothic army.
- April 1 Majorian emperor in Italy.
- Summer ?Visigothic attacks in Narbonensis.
Burgundians return from Spain. ?Occupation of Lyons.
- 458 January 11 Majorian's address to senate.
- January/March Magnus of Narbonne replaces Paeonius as praetorian prefect of Gaul.
Aegidius replaces Agrippinus as *magister militum per Gallias*.
Majorian's tax reforms; ship tax levied on Gaul.
- January/
September Rusticius Helpidius Domnulus as *quaestor sacri palatii*.
Ennodius as *comes rei privatae*.
?Camillus in office.
- March/April Theodoric attacks Narbonensis.
Aegidius rex Francorum.
- June 28 Lyons still does not recognize Majorian.
- July Visigothic army to Spain under Cyrila.
- July/September Aegidius pacifies Lyons and Burgundians, then besieged in Arles by Visigoths.
- September/
November *Magister epistularum* Petrus imposes terms on Lyons and Burgundians.
Sidonius and Agrippinus pardoned by Majorian.
- November Majorian leaves Ravenna for Gaul.
Nepotianus relieves Aegidius, Goths come to terms.
- November/
December Majorian at Lyons; Sidonius delivers panegyric.
Domnulus, Lampridius, Severianus at Lyons.