

Gallo-Roman Relations under the Early Empire

By

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## Abstract

This paper examines the changing attitudes of Gallo-Romans from the time of Caesar's conquest in the 50s BCE to the start of Vespasian's reign in 70-71 CE and how Roman prejudice shaped those attitudes. I first examine the conflicted opinions of the Gauls in Caesar's time and how they eventually banded together against him but were defeated. Next, the activities of each Julio-Claudian emperor are examined to see how they impacted Gaul and what the Gallo-Roman response was. Throughout this period there is clear evidence of increased Romanisation amongst the Gauls and the prominence of the region is obvious in imperial policy. This changes with Nero's reign where Vindex's rebellion against the emperor highlights the prejudices still effecting Roman attitudes. This only becomes worse in the rebellion of Civilis the next year. After these revolts, the Gallo-Romans appear to retreat from imperial offices and stick to local affairs, likely as a direct response to Rome's rejection of them.

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## Introduction

What were the Gallo-Roman attitudes towards the Romans and how did Roman prejudice shape the history of Roman Gaul? Those are the key question that this paper seeks to answer. Over the course of this paper, we will examine the interactions between Romans and Gauls during what may be roughly called the early empire: from Julius Caesar to the events immediately following Nero's death. Each Roman leader will have his own chapter and the events that are crucial for understanding Gallo-Roman attitudes will be examined for each of them. Under Julius Caesar these were the careers of Divitiacus and Dumnorix and the rebellions of Ambiorix and Vercingetorix; Augustus dealt with the administration and Romanization of the newly conquered Gallic provinces; Tiberius faced the unauthorized campaigns of Germanicus following the Rhine mutinies and the rebellion of Florus and Sacrovir; Caligula spent a year in Gaul, leading campaigns and selling imperial goods; Claudius launched his invasion of Britain from Gaul, acted as a grand patron of the province, and brought Gallo-Romans into the senate; Nero found Gaul tarred during the Great Fire and faced Vindex's revolt; the year of the four emperors saw chaos and the rebellion of Civilis. We then examine the aftermath of Nero's reign and the strife that followed and finish with an examination of the druids. Roman prejudice will be documented throughout as well as the Gallo-Roman response, where available. Gradual shifts are more apparent than immediate changes, as shall become clear as we get further into Gallo-Roman history.

A note must be made on the sources for this paper. For most Roman and Greek authors, Gaul was not a priority so information must be gleaned wherever possible. Multiple sources, providing they exist, are used for any single event in order to provide an accurate picture of what occurred but in several cases other sources are unavailable or add nothing. For example, I use Caesar's account almost exclusively to document his activities in Gaul because he has the most detailed account and subsequent authors used him as their source. I have attempted to view these events with as much objectivity as possible, generally accepting the facts as portrayed but always questioning the motivations ascribed.

Again, as an example, Caesar was, of course, trying to legitimize his invasion of Gaul and had a vested interest in making himself look good. In some ways, the actual motivations do not necessarily matter, or at least they are not as important as the perceived motivations. The focus is, after all, on the attitudes of both the Gauls and the Romans toward each other. When a Roman (or Romanized Greek) author supplies a motivation that does not appear correct, that can say a great deal about what their outlook was towards the Gallo-Romans. The issues with the sources will be discussed as they occur throughout the paper and the flaws with the authors' accounts will be pointed out in the narrative.

The relationship between the Gauls and Romans was always a rocky one. The first recorded interaction between these two peoples is a semi-mythologized Gallic attack on Rome that culminates in the sack of the city, the last time an invading force would manage that feat for over eight hundred years. Aside from this traumatic (for the Romans) event, the next few centuries saw Rome at war with various Gallic peoples more than peace or alliance with them. From the Gallic Wars in Italy to the Galatian War in Asia Minor, conflict was the most common way for the two cultures to cross paths. Not helping matters was the close, if also conflicted, relationship between Rome and Greece, which had its own troubled history with the Galatians from the looting of Delphi to the propaganda of victory against Galatians invoked by many Hellenistic monarchs. With this in mind, it is easy to see why the Romans would remain prejudiced towards the Gauls, even after they ceased to be a credible threat to the city or even Italy. Much has been said about this Roman outlook, summed up in the phrase *terror Gallicus* (or *metus Gallicus*), a fear and hatred of the Gauls which steered or sometimes outright poisoned Roman relations with their northern neighbours.

Before we examine the events under Caesar and his heirs, I want to discuss a bit of the earlier attitudes of the Romans towards the Gauls before the conquest of Gaul. Both the Roman and Greek authors write about the Gauls after experiencing Gallic attacks. For the Romans, this was the sack of 390

BCE by Brennus and his Gauls. Livy, though writing well after the event and Caesar's conquest of Gaul, captures the terror and destruction of this attack.<sup>1</sup> There are clear mythological elements to the account but what matters is that it had stuck with the Romans until at least Livy's time and still concerned them.<sup>2</sup> The Greeks had a similarly traumatic experience with the attack of another Brennus and his Gauls on Greece in 279 BCE. Pausanias records the attack and describes a very similar reaction to the Gauls as what Livy writes later.<sup>3</sup> The Greeks were defeated at Thermopylae and Delphi itself came under threat before the Gauls were defeated. The stories share a lot of elements: the terror caused by these invading barbarians, the destruction they left in their wake, the eventual victory bringing the community together, even the name of the Gallic leader. It is entirely possible that while a real attack on Rome by the Gauls took place, the tradition was strongly influenced by the Greek tradition stemming from the attack on Delphi.

There is also the tradition of victory propaganda against the Galatians that was used by various Hellenistic monarchs.<sup>4</sup> A splinter group of Galatians from the same army that had attacked Delphi had made their way into Asia minor as mercenaries. The Galatians soon struck out on their own and carved out a territory for themselves in the central plateaus of Asia Minor. From these bases they continued to act as bandits and mercenaries throughout the Hellenistic Age, sometimes allied with Hellenistic kings, other times at war with them but never taken over until Augustus' time.<sup>5</sup> Victory over the Galatians became a way of legitimizing the rule of a Hellenistic monarch styled after the victory of the Aitolians at

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<sup>1</sup> Livy 5.38-55. Kremer (1994) 62-68 and Ruggini (1987) 191-2 note this *metus Gallicus* and how it carries through Livy's narrative. Rosenberger (2003) attempts to downplay the significance of this defeat but even he admits that there was a later *metus Gallicus* even if it didn't immediately follow the actual defeat.

<sup>2</sup> As shall be seen later, it was still well remembered under the empire after Livy.

<sup>3</sup> Paus. 10.19.5-10.23.14.

<sup>4</sup> While Galatians tends to refer to those Gallic peoples who moved into central Asia Minor and Gauls for those living in Europe and this is how I am using these terms, they are not always used in this way by ancient or modern authors. Gauls, Galatians, and even Celts can all refer to the same peoples who share a language and cultural traits.

<sup>5</sup> Coskun (2013) 74.



Delphi and especially the "elephant victory" of King Antiochus I of the Seleucid Empire.<sup>6</sup> These victories, as well as those that followed, were celebrated on coins, in panegyric poems, through sculptures, and cult rituals for the kings who had 'saved' Greek civilization from the 'barbaric' Galatians. The Attalids of Pergamum produced the most prominent of these monuments after Attalos I's victories over the Galatians from 240 BCE onwards. The famed "Dying Galatian" and "Galatian Killing His Wife and Himself" are monuments erected by Attalos and, crucially, made into Roman copies.<sup>7</sup> These monuments and other reminders of victory over the Galatians (or *Keltenseig* to use Strobel's term) made the Galatians into *the* barbarians of the Hellenistic Age and thus created a stereotype of the savage Gaul.<sup>8</sup> Such prejudices were picked up by the Romans during their Gallic Wars of the third and second centuries BCE and carried forward throughout the history of Gallo-Roman relations.<sup>9</sup>

More contemporaneous to Caesar, the surviving sources on Gaul are largely Greek.<sup>10</sup> The earliest account is from Polybius, writing in the second century BCE, and covering the rise of Roman power in the Mediterranean. Polybius writes a narrative on the wars Rome fought and includes details on the Gauls when they are involved, notably in the Gallic Wars of the third and second centuries and during Hannibal's invasion where a number of Gallic tribes joined the Carthaginians. Most of Polybius' comments are quite negative and reflect the stereotypes of the savage Gauls. He writes about the Roman wars with the Gauls and mentions the untrustworthiness and greed of the Gauls, stealing booty from their allies and slaying prisoners even after they had been ransomed.<sup>11</sup> He even explicitly ties Rome's wars with Gauls with the attack on Delphi, saying that all Gauls alike were afflicted with a sort of

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<sup>6</sup> Coskun (2013) 75-77. The actual existence of the latter "elephant victory" is called into question by Coskun (2012) but the propaganda behind it still stands.

<sup>7</sup> Coskun (2013) 77.

<sup>8</sup> Strobel (1994), Coskun (2013) 78.

<sup>9</sup> Coskun (2013) 78.

<sup>10</sup> While the Latin annalists, such as Fabius Pictor, certainly would have written about the Gallic Wars and likely served as sources for later authors, such as Livy, they only survive in fragments, none of which provide any useful information on Rome's attitudes towards the Gauls.

<sup>11</sup> Polyb. 2.7.5-6, 2.19.

epidemic of war.<sup>12</sup> Gallic fickleness is also a running theme throughout his account, making all those who allied with the Gauls (Romans, Carthaginians, etc) wary of trusting them with any important tasks.<sup>13</sup> In his account of Hannibal's invasion of Italy, Gallic hatred of Rome is stressed by Polybius as well, stemming from their defeat during the Gallic Wars.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the Gauls feared expulsion or extermination by the Romans in much the same way the Romans feared it at Gallic hands.<sup>15</sup> Their size and ferocity in battle made them tough opponents for Rome and highlighted the threat they posed.<sup>16</sup> Polybius' account paints a frightening picture of the Gauls, particularly since he was writing not long after the wars had ended.<sup>17</sup> Gruen describes Polybius' comments as a mix of contempt, fear, and respect, a good summation of Mediterranean attitudes towards Gauls in general at the time.<sup>18</sup>

The next Greek author we know of to discuss the Gauls is Posidonius but unfortunately his account has not survived. We know that he wrote about them from Diodorus and Strabo who both cite Posidonius as their source for the Gauls. As such, even though they were writing after Caesar's conquest, their accounts reflect the earlier tradition on the Gauls.<sup>19</sup> Diodorus' overall description is not favourable: Gauls are fearsome in appearance, harsh and deceptive in conversation, boastful and threatening, disparaging of others, and overblown in their language.<sup>20</sup> Diodorus writes on the Gallic fondness for wine and gold, both of which cause the Gauls to behave in an uncivilized fashion.<sup>21</sup> Like

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<sup>12</sup> Polyb. 2.20.7.

<sup>13</sup> Polyb. 2.19.4, 2.32.7-8, 3.70.4, 3.78.2.

<sup>14</sup> Polyb. 3.34.2, 3.78.5.

<sup>15</sup> Polyb. 2.21.9. Not without cause, as most of the wars with the Gauls in Italy were invasions by Rome rather than the other way around.

<sup>16</sup> Polyb 2.15.7, 2.29.5.

<sup>17</sup> Gruen (2011) 142.

<sup>18</sup> Gruen (2011) 142.

<sup>19</sup> Gruen (2011) 143.

<sup>20</sup> Diod. 5.31.1. Gruen (2011) 143-4 attempts to spin Diodorus' account into a more favourable outlook but even at the best of times, Diodorus is merely objective, recounting the information without passing judgement. This opening description of the Gauls certainly does not fit into an account free of polemic.

<sup>21</sup> Diod. 5.26.3, 5.27.4, Gruen (2011) 143.

Polybius, he describes the size of the Gauls, tall and muscular, intimidating to Greeks and Romans.<sup>22</sup> He also describes their practice of collecting the heads of slain enemies and displaying them tied to the Gaul's horse or even in their homes, a practice he calls bestial.<sup>23</sup> The practice of human sacrifice is also detailed which Diodorus condemns as impious and savage.<sup>24</sup> Diodorus also explicitly links the sack of Rome and the plunder of Delphi, mentioning them side by side in his list of Gallic attacks on the Mediterranean world.<sup>25</sup> He finishes his description of the Gauls with the claim that male Gauls lust after each other rather than their own wives and see no harm to their dignity in prostituting themselves to each other.<sup>26</sup> Overall, Diodorus gives a very negative view of the Gauls providing an idea of what Romans contemporary to Caesar would have thought of the Gallic peoples.<sup>27</sup>

Strabo is the other near contemporary of Caesar who uses Posidonius as his source and reflects both the attitudes before the conquest and shortly thereafter.<sup>28</sup> He describes the Gauls as a very bellicose people, very easy to provoke, but otherwise not ill mannered.<sup>29</sup> Like the other Greek authors, he comments on their great size and ferocity, describing all of them as fighters by nature.<sup>30</sup> He also comments on the collecting of heads and human sacrifice, the former he refers to as barbarous and alien.<sup>31</sup> Overall, Strabo's account on the Gauls is nowhere near as harsh as Diodorus or Polybius.<sup>32</sup> This may reflect the fact that the Gauls were fully conquered at the time of his writing so even though he

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<sup>22</sup> Diod. 5.28.1-3.

<sup>23</sup> Diod. 5.29.4-5.

<sup>24</sup> Diod. 5.31.3-4, 5.32.6.

<sup>25</sup> Diod. 5.32.5.

<sup>26</sup> Diod. 5.32.7. Gruen (2011) notes that this is an almost gratuitous appendix to Diodorus' account and a striking final image to leave with a reader.

<sup>27</sup> Even Gruen (2011) 145 admits that there is a good deal of fodder for those who want to read condemnation in the account.

<sup>28</sup> Gruen (2011) 145.

<sup>29</sup> Strabo *Geogr.* 4.4.2.

<sup>30</sup> Strabo *Geogr.* 4.4.2.

<sup>31</sup> Strabo *Geogr.* 4.4.5.

<sup>32</sup> Gruen (2011) 145 claims that it is free from judgement but Strabo's comment on the collecting of heads shows at least some judgement being passed.

used Posidonius' account, many of the more "barbarous" practices, such as human sacrifice, had already been discontinued.

Turning to the Latin authors, we only have two before Caesar's commentaries on his invasion: Cato the Elder and Cicero. Cato's only remark comes from a fragment of his *Origines* which makes the sweeping statement that all Gauls pursue two things most assiduously: the art of war and speaking with wit.<sup>33</sup> This is all that we have from the famous statesman on the Gauls but it is notable that their warlike tendencies are once again highlighted.<sup>34</sup>

Cicero, on the other hand, gives us a more thorough look at Roman attitudes towards the Gauls shortly before Caesar's invasion. Most of these views are recorded in one of Cicero's speeches, successfully defending M. Fonteius, who was accused of extortion and oppression of the Gauls while he was governor of Gallia Transalpina.<sup>35</sup> The text is filled with Roman prejudice against the Gauls. While Cicero is no doubt exaggerating for rhetorical effect, the fact that his attacks on the Gauls giving evidence against Fonteius worked says a lot about Roman attitudes at the time. Cicero questions whether the Gauls know what it means to give evidence under oath, whether they treat it with the same respect and dignity as the Romans do.<sup>36</sup> The boldness of the Gallic speakers prove that they are not worried about their reputations and that they are willing to lie under oath as opposed to the Romans who are nervous under questioning.<sup>37</sup> Cicero condemns the practice of human sacrifice, questioning whether any Gaul can be trusted to keep an oath when they profane the gods by murdering men in their name.<sup>38</sup> He launches into a diatribe comparing the Gauls accusing Fonteius and the Roman citizens who supported him (naturally enough since it was the Gauls who were robbed, not the Romans) asking if the

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<sup>33</sup> Cato *Orig.* F2.3, Gruen (2011) 146.

<sup>34</sup> Gruen (2011) 146.

<sup>35</sup> Cic. *Font.*, Gruen (2011) 146. For more on the historical context, see Coskun (2006).

<sup>36</sup> Cic. *Font.* 27-30, Gruen (2011) 147.

<sup>37</sup> Cic. *Font.* 28.

<sup>38</sup> Cic. *Font.* 31.

judges will prefer "strangers to people whom you know, unjust men to just ones, foreigners to countrymen, covetous men to moderate ones, mercenary men to disinterested ones, impious men to conscientious ones, men who are the greatest enemies to our dominions and to our name, to good and loyal allies and citizens?"<sup>39</sup> Cicero's rhetoric about the trustworthiness of the Gauls as witnesses is especially flagrant because a few years later he employs members of the same tribe, the Allobroges, as trustworthy witnesses against Cataline.<sup>40</sup> He even implies that the witnesses threatened the judges with another Gallic war should they side with Fonteius.<sup>41</sup> From there he expands on his comparison of this trial with a Gallic war, noting the eagerness of the Romans to come to Fonteius' aid and the danger posed by showing weakness to the Gauls, a people who are the most hostile, savage, implacable, and cruel of all of Rome's enemies.<sup>42</sup> He also reminds the judges of the attack on Delphi and the sack of Rome by the Gauls, once again tying those two events together and showing that these events were still well remembered centuries afterwards.<sup>43</sup> Once again, note that this defence worked. Cicero does not bother to deny Fonteius' crimes, only that the Gauls cannot be shown weakness or the Roman hold on Gallia Transalpina was in danger.

Having examined the Roman perspective leading up to Caesar's invasion, we have a better understanding of what the Gauls could expect when the Romans moved deeper into their territory. As you can see, Roman prejudice against the Gauls was alive and well before Caesar's invasion and would affect Gallo-Roman relations during his conquest and afterwards.

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<sup>39</sup> Cic. *Font.* 32, Vasaly (1993) 194, DeWitt (1942) 399-400.

<sup>40</sup> Cic. *Cat.* 4.5. cf. Sallust *Cat.* 50.1, Gruen (2011) 147.

<sup>41</sup> Cic. *Font.* 33, Vasaly (1993) 193, Gruen (2011) 147.

<sup>42</sup> Cic. *Font.* 41, 43. The entire comparison runs from 33-49.

<sup>43</sup> Cic. *Font.* 31, Vasaly (1993) 193-4, Gruen (2011) 146-7.

## Julius Caesar

The wealth of information provided by Julius Caesar's own account of his conquest of Gaul presents both an opportunity and a problem. The opportunity is that for the only time in Gallo-Roman history, we have a nearly complete account of a very important decade that can shed a good deal of light on the attitudes of both sides. The problem is that if these events were to be examined as closely as later ones, this section would dominate the account, lending it an undue weight compared to the rest of the period under scrutiny. As well, since no other significant account of the Gallic Wars exist (Dio's rendition adds little to Caesar's own, and likely uses the former as his source) we are very dependent on one viewpoint that had good reasons to stretch the truth.<sup>44</sup> The commentaries were explicitly written to gain support for Caesar's actions among both the senate and the people of Rome and it is easy to be drawn into his view of events without considering the other side's views.<sup>45</sup> That said, Caesar is a very detailed writer and the actual facts of the war are generally accepted aside from some of the numbers involved but that is common amongst ancient writers.<sup>46</sup> The main issue is Caesar's perceived placidity. When reading his account it would be easy to think that the Romans were drawn into Gaul against their wishes, merely seeking to stabilize and police the region to keep it safe for them and their allies. Caesar would never have gone as far as he did if this were the case. As long as Caesar's agenda is kept in mind, the rest of his account can be accepted as accurate.<sup>47</sup> This chapter will offer a limited look at the conquest focusing first on a pair of Aeduan brothers, Divitiacus (also seen as Diviciacus) and Dumnorix, who espoused opposing views towards the Romans, followed by the later resistance movements of Ambiorix and especially Vercingetorix.<sup>48</sup> Unlike the following chapters, this one will include a good deal

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<sup>44</sup> Chadwick (1997) 104.

<sup>45</sup> Osgood (2009) 339-41.

<sup>46</sup> Dyson (1968) makes a good argument for treating Caesar with caution but considering his information as mostly reliable.

<sup>47</sup> See Drinkwater (1983) 16-17.

<sup>48</sup> These resistance movements could be considered "rebellions" in that Caesar had essentially conquered Gaul by this point, with the tribes largely subjugated by or allied to the Romans.

of the narrative as it helps establish what events were compelling the actions of the Gauls and we have a rich enough source to reconstruct the circumstances. This will allow the examination of changing views of the Gauls without placing an undue amount of importance on the time period.

The seeds for the invasion of Gaul by Caesar were laid over a decade before during a struggle between two rival Gallic tribes, the Aedui and the Sequani. The Aedui were the strongest Roman allies within Gaul before Caesar's invasion. They had been styled both *fratres* and *consanguinei* by the senate as a sign of their close affiliation.<sup>49</sup> As such, it is not surprising that after the king of the Germanic Suebi, Ariovistus, was invited into Gaul by the Sequani in 71 BCE and subsequently defeated the Aedui, the latter would turn to Rome for help.<sup>50</sup> According to Caesar, Divitiacus, a noble from the Aedui, was able to escape his territory after his tribe was defeated by Ariovistus without swearing a loyalty oath or giving hostages to the Germanic king.<sup>51</sup> Due to this, he alone was able to make it to Rome and stand before the senate to plead his case.<sup>52</sup> During this mission, he evidently stayed with Cicero's brother and became friends to both of them.<sup>53</sup> Despite his eloquent words and personal ties to leading Roman politicians, Divitiacus failed in his mission. Ariovistus, rather than attacked or humbled by the Romans, was named *rex atque amicus* by the senate in 59 BCE, when Caesar held the consulship.<sup>54</sup> As such, Ariovistus would remain in place for some time, until another request for aid would bring Caesar into Gaul.

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<sup>49</sup> Caesar *Gal.* 1.33. The section does not say what these were awarded for but given their proximity to Gallia Narbonensis, it is likely that they sided with the Romans against other Gallic tribes who had attacked them, such as the Sequani, their neighbours and rivals.

<sup>50</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.31. The failure of Rome to aid their allies could only have been a blow to their credibility in the region, see Drinkwater (1983) 13, Freeman (2008) 124.

<sup>51</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.31.

<sup>52</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.31 This event is also recorded in a 4<sup>th</sup> century panegyric by an unknown author who says Divitiacus "informed [the Senate] of the situation, and when invited to sit with it, claimed less for himself than was conceded and gave his whole speech leaning on his shield." (Pan. Lat. 5.3.2, Nixon and Rodgers (1994) 269) See Chadwick (1997) 103-4 and Galletier (1952) vol 2 91f.

<sup>53</sup> Cic. *Div.* 1.41. Curiously, Cicero does not mention his political purpose in the visit but does state that Divitiacus was a druid, who knew of natural philosophy and predicting the future. At no point does Caesar say that Divitiacus was a druid. For more on this see chapter 9.

<sup>54</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.35. This would later prove to be a bit embarrassing for Caesar as Ariovistus would soon become one of Caesar's chief opponents in Gaul.

This request would come after Orgetorix, a leading aristocrat among the Helvetii, made a pact with Casticus of the Sequani and Dumnorix of the Aedui to seize control of their respective tribes with the help of the others and through their alliance, dominate and unite all of Gaul.<sup>55</sup> Dumnorix was the brother of Divitiacus but the two would be at odds through the next few years as each dealt with the Romans in different ways.<sup>56</sup> Although Orgetorix would soon commit suicide when his scheme was revealed to the Helvetii, his tribe still resolved to go through with part of his plan to leave their current territory for larger, richer lands.<sup>57</sup> This migration did not go well, since even after they obtained permission to pass through Sequani and Aeduan territory (brokered by Dumnorix), they ravaged the land, prompting the other tribes to go to Caesar for help.<sup>58</sup> Thus Caesar was able to present his reason for invading Gaul as a preventative measure to stop the unification of all the Gallic tribes into an empire hostile to Rome.<sup>59</sup>

Caesar moved in against the Helvetii but his progress was hampered by a lack of supplies, particularly the grain which the Aedui had promised him. Compounding this issue was a defeat suffered by the allied cavalry, chiefly Aeduan, against a small band of the Helvetii. This had emboldened the latter while dismaying Caesar's forces.<sup>60</sup> When this need had become quite dire, he called the leaders of the Aedui before him, Liscus and Divitiacus, and reprimanded them for the lack of aid their tribe was providing when they had asked him to undertake the war in the first place.<sup>61</sup> Shamed by this speech, Liscus revealed to Caesar that Dumnorix was sabotaging the Roman war effort. He was the one who had

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<sup>55</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.2-3. These three groups represented the most powerful Gallic tribes of the time and Orgetorix likely offered Helvetii military support to the other two, see Goldsworthy (2006) 206. The comparison between these three Gauls and the first triumvirate is clear, both made a pact to control their respective states that was outside of normal procedures, Freeman (2008) 117.

<sup>56</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.3.

<sup>57</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.4-5.

<sup>58</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.9-11. Dumnorix was attempting to move the Helvetii into Roman territory in Gallia Narbonensis in an attempt to weaken the Romans in the region and increase his own prestige by forging the deal between the Helvetii and Sequani, Freeman (2008) 123. Cf. *Caes. Gal.* 1.19; Goldsworthy (2006) 211.

<sup>59</sup> Gardner (1983) 183.

<sup>60</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.15.

<sup>61</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.16.



brokered the deal giving the Helvetii passage in the first place and was even now spying on Caesar for them.<sup>62</sup> Through his connections, Dumnorix was deterring the Aedui from providing the Romans with grain, saying that it would be better for them to be under a Gallic overlord than a Roman one. He also had a band of cavalry loyal to him personally, which had precipitated the defeat by the small band of Helvetii.<sup>63</sup> He was in command of all the Aeduan cavalry so when they had turned and fled it dismayed the others and caused them to withdraw as well. Dumnorix was said to hate both Caesar and the Romans because they had disrupted his attempt to gain control of all Gaul and because their continued presence would weaken the power he had already amassed.<sup>64</sup> Liscus had kept quiet about this treachery for so long because he feared what would happen to him if he revealed the truth, showing just how far-reaching Dumnorix's power could be.<sup>65</sup>

This clear anti-Roman bias was obviously not shared by Liscus nor even by a majority of the Aedui, since the tribe itself was officially on the side of the Romans and from Caesar himself, we hear that it was not shared by Divitiacus, whom he writes of as having a very high regard for the Roman people and Caesar himself.<sup>66</sup> Due to this, despite Caesar's inclination to punish Dumnorix severely, he first went to Divitiacus to ask him to allow Dumnorix to be brought for judgement before either Caesar himself or the Aedui. Divitiacus embraced Caesar and wept, saying the he had helped bring his brother to power and that the latter's popularity exceeded his own, not only amongst the Aedui but throughout Gaul.<sup>67</sup> Any censure of Dumnorix would alienate Divitiacus from the Gallic people since it was known

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<sup>62</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.17-19.

<sup>63</sup> As Freeman (2008) 126 notes, this had worked perfectly to embolden the Helvetii.

<sup>64</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.17-18. It is notable that this does not necessarily make Dumnorix anti-Roman on principle but only because Caesar's presence hurt his own ambition. Of course, this is Caesar's own account and making one of his detractors appear so nakedly power hungry could only help his cause, see Goldsworthy (2006) 208-9.

<sup>65</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.17. As Sage (2011) 36 notes, Dumnorix must have been joined by other prominent nobles for Liscus to show such fear and for his schemes to work.

<sup>66</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.19. One must keep in mind that Caesar is writing this so he could be overstating the closeness of the relationship. That said, from what occurs afterwards, Caesar and Divitiacus seem to have respect for one another as they trust and support each other.

<sup>67</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.20.

that he enjoyed the friendship of Caesar and would have consented to the punishment.<sup>68</sup> With his brother pleading on his behalf, Dumnorix was pardoned by Caesar, although he did set spies on the wayward brother to ensure his future good behaviour.<sup>69</sup> Whether Dumnorix had any intention of remaining loyal or not (his later actions would suggest not), he was soon no longer an issue because a few days after this confrontation Caesar defeated the Helvetii in a hard-won victory that showed the power of Roman arms against traditional Gallic forces. Though it took all day, the Romans wore down a far larger Gallic force, inflicting massive casualties and causing the whole tribe to surrender. Dumnorix's vision of using the Helvetii to further his own ambitions was dashed to pieces. One of the most powerful Gallic tribes had been humbled by the Romans.

At this point, Dumnorix fades into the background for a while as the pro-Roman factions rose to prominence in the wake of the victory over the Helvetii. Divitiacus, as the leading figure of this faction, took centre stage, attempting to fulfill the mission he had failed in earlier: bringing Roman aid against Ariovistus.<sup>70</sup> Caesar writes that Divitiacus and other Gallic chiefs of state came to him to ask for aid in secret and that Divitiacus spoke for them, detailing the ravages of Ariovistus, not only on the Aedui but even more so on their erstwhile allies, the Sequani, in whose territory the Germans had settled.<sup>71</sup> Divitiacus cleverly played off Roman fears by claiming that all the Gauls would have to follow in the footsteps of the Helvetii and emigrate away from the Germans and into Roman territory for protection.

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<sup>68</sup> As Dumnorix was demonstrating, support for the Romans was not universal and siding with the Romans against his own brother could have seriously damaged Divitiacus' reputation in Gaul, see Goldsworthy (2006) 217.

<sup>69</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.20. Caesar would become famous for his forgiveness of enemies during the civil war and this is an early example of it, Freeman (2008) 127. Though clearly Caesar was not completely naive since he posted spies on Dumnorix, Goldsworthy (2006) 217. Sage (2011) 36 notes that Caesar may have simply not wanted to alienate such an important Aeduan nobleman as Dumnorix. Perhaps Caesar was hoping to win over Dumnorix later. Alternatively, this may have been entirely as stated in Caesar's account and it was for Divitiacus' sake that Caesar was sparing Dumnorix and nothing more.

<sup>70</sup> Sage (2011) 40, Divitiacus' obviously close relationship with Caesar would have made him an ideal candidate to speak on behalf of the other Gauls and further increased his prestige amongst both the Gauls and Romans.

<sup>71</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.31.

Worse yet, with the Gauls removed, the Romans would have to face the Germans on their own.<sup>72</sup>

Divitiacus even spoke for the Sequani, ostensibly his tribe's rivals, when they remained silent rather than urge Caesar to aid them. The Aeduan claimed that the Sequani could not talk of resistance or aid without fear of Ariovistus, since even escape was denied to them with the Germans holding all of their towns.<sup>73</sup> This request for aid shows what was a major factor for pro-Roman Gauls: the threat of the Germans. Dumnorix's resistance showed that some Gauls feared that the Romans would take over themselves, but for these Gallic supporters of Caesar that threat did not matter as much as getting out from under the heel of the Germans. Ariovistus had shown them just how dangerous the Germans could be and they preferred the risk of inviting the Romans to intercede over allowing the Germans to continue residing in Gaul. These arguments swayed Caesar into agreeing to help the Gauls against Ariovistus. He also thought it reflected badly on Rome that the Aedui, whom the senate had called both *fratres* and *consanguineos*, were held in thrall by Germans. Moreover, Ariovistus and his Germans represented a potential threat to not only Gaul but even Italy, as the Cimbri and Teutones had before.<sup>74</sup>

Thus began Caesar's war against Ariovistus, although at first it involved far more diplomatic exchanges than actual fighting.<sup>75</sup> Further Germanic incursions against the Aedui and the Treveri forced Caesar to hasten his confrontation with Ariovistus.<sup>76</sup> While in Vesontio, reports of the size and ferocity of the Germans reached Caesar's troops and threw them into a panic. They refused to march through woods and bogs towards such a fearsome enemy.<sup>77</sup> Caesar managed to assuage their fears by

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<sup>72</sup> Burns (2003) 111. This is an appeal to another great *terror* of the Romans, the *terror Germanicus*. The Gauls had acted as a buffer between the Germans and Romans since 121 BCE in much the same role that Armenia would serve between the Romans and Parthians.

<sup>73</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.32.

<sup>74</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.33. Whether this is true or not, Caesar thought it useful to include the threat of further Germanic incursions to justify his campaigns. He must have considered the Romans fearful enough to support his efforts to prevent Ariovistus from threatening Gallia Transalpina or even Italy itself.

<sup>75</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.34-6, 42-47.

<sup>76</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.37.

<sup>77</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.39. cf. Gardner (1983) 184 who argues that Caesar is purposefully stressing the "German menace" in order to convince the Roman people to support his continued campaigns.

downplaying the German threat, saying that the Gauls whom they had just defeated were able to secure victories against the Germans and that their ultimate victory was the result of cunning not valour.<sup>78</sup>

While his stirring speech put confidence back into the legions, Caesar did not underestimate the Germans. He had Divitiacus, in whom he had the greatest faith among all the others, scout out a route to Ariovistus which passed through open territory, rather than the forests and swamps that would favour the Germans.<sup>79</sup> The amount of trust that Caesar had placed in Divitiacus' hands was large. Since he was the one who had found the route, it would have been easy for him to betray it to Ariovistus, leading Caesar into an ambush instead of a safe passage. Yet the Aeduan remained loyal and Caesar's march prompted Ariovistus to attempt a parlay. The talks quickly broke down with Ariovistus demanding Caesar leave Gaul and Caesar, ironically enough, arguing on behalf of Gallic independence.<sup>80</sup> In the battle that followed, Caesar defeated Ariovistus, driving him from Gaul and across the Rhine, from where he would not return.<sup>81</sup> Divitiacus had finally succeeded in his mission to rid his lands of the threat posed by Ariovistus and his Suebi. The Aeduan had used his personal friendship and considerable rhetorical skills to convince Caesar to aid him and had proved invaluable in the course of the campaign. He would prove himself once more to Caesar the following year, when the Belgae rose against the Romans.

Caesar learned that the Belgae tribes of northeastern Gaul were allying against him for many of the same reasons that were given to Dumnorix's treachery. They opposed the Roman presence in Gaul, not wanting to be subject to Rome with the leading men fearing even more so that Roman dominance would undermine their traditional power.<sup>82</sup> This information is given to Caesar by ambassadors from the Remi, a Belgae tribe who wished to stand with the Romans rather than against them, once again

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<sup>78</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.40, Goldsworthy (2006) 226.

<sup>79</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.41, Goldsworthy (2006) 227, Chadwick (1997) 103.

<sup>80</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.46-47.

<sup>81</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.49f.

<sup>82</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 2.4. As Goldsworthy (2006) 237 points out, this was not an unreasonable fear as that is exactly what happened.

showing the divided nature of Gallic society at this point. Understanding the threat posed to his forces, Caesar raised two new legions and summoned his most trusted ally, Divitiacus. He asked the Aeduan to have his tribe invade the territory of the Bellovaci, the most powerful member of the Belgae alliance and a neighbour of the Aedui.<sup>83</sup> Again, the trust shown in Divitiacus should be highlighted. Had he switched sides or even not launched his attack, Caesar's battles would have been far more difficult. Divitiacus once again came through for Caesar and at a key moment in the fighting between the Romans and Belgae, the Bellovaci learned that their territory was being ravaged by the Aedui. Needing to look after their own people, the Bellovaci withdrew, robbing the Belgae of their strongest contingent and essentially destroying the larger alliance.<sup>84</sup> Caesar began to lead his army against the tribes, one by one, most of which surrendered.

When he reached the Bellovaci, a stream of elderly men met him, pleading for clemency. Divitiacus also pleaded with Caesar to show mercy to the Bellovaci, who were often Aeduan allies, saying that they were deceived by leading men of their tribe who claimed that the Aedui were reduced to slavery under the Romans and if the Bellovaci wanted to avoid that fate, they would resist Rome with martial strength.<sup>85</sup> This sounds eerily like Dumnorix's words in Belgae mouths and it would hardly be surprising if he had a hand in the Belgae uprising, although Caesar does not mention any involvement on his part. Another benefit of pardoning this group was the honour and prestige it would bestow on the Aedui and Divitiacus, the staunchest allies of the Romans thus far.<sup>86</sup> The size and power of the Aedui, who were supporting Caesar, could be used as an advertisement of the benefits to friendship with Rome. Caesar was convinced by this, citing his respect for the Aedui and Divitiacus, and after the Bellovaci handed over 600 hostages and their weapons, he took them under his protection and

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<sup>83</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 2.5, Goldsworthy (2006) 238.

<sup>84</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 2.10, Chadwick (1997) 107.

<sup>85</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 2.14.

<sup>86</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 243, Sage (2011) 52.

pardoned them.<sup>87</sup> Once again, Divitiacus' considerable rhetorical skills were on display, convincing Caesar to show a great deal of clemency towards the Bellovaci.

While the war with the Belgae would continue,<sup>88</sup> Divitiacus would no longer play a role. In fact, he essentially disappears from the rest of Caesar's account, aside from a couple of offhand mentions that did not necessitate his continued presence. Since he had been so prominent, both in Caesar's account and amongst the Gauls in general, his disappearance likely means that the Aeduan statesman died some time shortly after securing the Bellovaci pardon. It is difficult to base a claim from a lack of evidence but considering how central he had been previously and that the Aedui would continue to play a key role in the Gallic wars, it is unlikely that Divitiacus simply faded into the background. Perhaps his rivalry with Dumnorix had finally caught up with him and his brother had assassinated him or he simply became ill and died.<sup>89</sup> Whatever the case, one brother was gone but the other would come back once again to hamper Caesar's efforts in Gaul.

The year after the Belgae were defeated saw Caesar mounting a similar campaign against the tribes of northwestern Gaul, along the Atlantic coast. They too had formed an anti-Roman coalition to resist "slavery under the Romans"<sup>90</sup> and which Caesar crushed almost as quickly as he did the Belgae alliance, though their naval capabilities stymied Caesar at first.<sup>91</sup> The following year, Caesar launched punitive raids into Germania, to dissuade the tribes from making any attacks across the Rhine. To accomplish this he built bridges across the Rhine across which he launched devastating attacks.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 2.15.

<sup>88</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 2.16f. The Nervii, in particular, held out against the Romans until the bitter end.

<sup>89</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 287 notes Divitiacus' absence after 57 BCE and likewise suspects his death.

<sup>90</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 3.8.

<sup>91</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 3.

<sup>92</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 4.1-19.

Once the incursion into Germania was over, and with some of the campaigning season still remaining, Caesar launched a raid on Britain as well.<sup>93</sup> This first raid was only a partial success at best so Caesar resolved to go back the next year with a more substantial force. Since he was taking so many troops from the continent, Caesar did not feel safe leaving troublesome Gallic aristocrats behind him, fearing that there might be an uprising when he was away. Considering that most of the northern tribes had tried to push the Romans out a few short years ago and that he had even now just prevented a potential uprising among the Treveri, it is not surprising that Caesar felt this way.<sup>94</sup> Chief amongst these agitators was Dumnorix.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, he had made the false claim to the Aedui that Caesar had appointed him as leader of their tribe, which the Aedui had not dared to contradict for fear of upsetting Caesar if it proved true.<sup>96</sup> While it is not mentioned at this juncture, it is possible that Caesar suspected Dumnorix of conspiring with the other resistance movements as well. The reasons for opposing the Romans all sounds very similar to those ascribed to Dumnorix and Caesar had previously mentioned his ties to nobility from tribes across Gaul.

When Dumnorix was told that he was to accompany Caesar to Britain, he asked to remain in Gaul instead, first due to a fear of the sea and second because of religious responsibilities.<sup>97</sup> When this did not work, he attempted to stir up the other Gallic chieftains who were to accompany Caesar to Gaul, beseeching them to remain in Gaul as well. He claimed that Caesar was taking such an assemblage of Gallic nobility for no idle reason but to kill them all away from Gaul, where he was more likely to get away with it.<sup>98</sup> Evidently Dumnorix was not as skilled an orator as his brother because when the time

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<sup>93</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 4.20f.

<sup>94</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.2-4.

<sup>95</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.6.

<sup>96</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.6.

<sup>97</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.6. The latter may indicate that Dumnorix, like his brother, Divitiacus, was a druid as well but there is no further indication of this. See Chadwick (1997) 111.

<sup>98</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.6. Caesar's account indicates that a revolt was a real concern for him at this point, with Dumnorix at its head and he would not set out for Britain until Dumnorix was brought under control despite how anxious Caesar was to depart. See Chadwick (1997) 110, Goldsworthy (2006) 287, Sage (2011) 81-2.

came to board the ships, the other Gauls remained at the embarkation site rather than attempting to slip away with him and the Aeduan cavalry.<sup>99</sup> When he learned of this, Caesar sent a force of cavalry to bring Dumnorix and the Aeduan cavalry back but to kill him if he resisted. The men Caesar sent demanded he come with them but Dumnorix resisted, defending himself and imploring his compatriots to aid him, all the while exclaiming that he was free and subject of a free state.<sup>100</sup> In a rather pitiful end, Dumnorix was cut down without any of the Aedui raising a hand to defend him, the cavalry all returned to Caesar.<sup>101</sup> The killing of Dumnorix demonstrated to the Gauls that Caesar would only be pushed so far and even the most powerful Gallic noblemen were not safe from him.<sup>102</sup>

Thus ended the careers of the Aeduan brothers who, in many ways, shared responsibility for Caesar's invasion of Gaul. Together they reflected the conflicted Gallic attitudes towards the Romans, at least among the upper classes.<sup>103</sup> Some, particularly among the southern tribes that bordered on Roman territory, embraced the Romans as friends and allies and were personified by Divitiacus, who never wavered in his support of Rome.<sup>104</sup> They no doubt realised that their tribes' independence would be subordinate to Rome's but it was better to profit from being loyal than to, in their view, pointlessly resist.<sup>105</sup> Others dreaded the coming of Rome as a threat to their current hold on power and their freedom. These men, like Dumnorix, resisted Rome's intrusions either through subterfuge or open armed opposition.<sup>106</sup> Divitiacus showed the importance of rhetoric amongst the Gauls, his speeches won

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<sup>99</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.7.

<sup>100</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.7. This was a sentiment that would be taken up by Vercingetorix a few years later, Freeman (2008) 192.

<sup>101</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.7. As Chadwick (1997) 111 notes, Dumnorix comes across as a brave and patriotic man even in an account that paints him as a villain.

<sup>102</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 287, 298; Urban (1999) 22.

<sup>103</sup> Urban (1999) 20-1.

<sup>104</sup> Chadwick (1997) 105.

<sup>105</sup> Freeman (2008) 146.

<sup>106</sup> Goudineau (1990) 324-325 notes that Dumnorix represents the nobles who view Caesar as an impediment to their aspirations.



over Caesar on several occasions and raised his tribe's prominence.<sup>107</sup> Without him and Gauls like him, Caesar would not have been successful in subduing the rest of the country or at least not as quickly. Dumnorix, meanwhile, was rather unsuccessful in his attempts to curb Roman power despite his best efforts. His treachery in the Helvetian campaign has been examined but there is another possible example of his resistance. The language used by the northern Gallic tribes in their resistance to Caesar seems very similar to Dumnorix's own rhetoric. His dying words sum it up well, freedom for the Gauls, freedom from Roman subjugation. This was not only part of his own message to the Aedui but it comes up with the Belgae and the tribes of Brittany.<sup>108</sup> The Belgae even reference the Aedui specifically as being enslaved by the Romans. While this is common language of resistance, it is difficult not to see the hand of Dumnorix in the other uprisings, especially since Caesar himself notes that the Aeduan was popular throughout Gaul.<sup>109</sup> Having gone through their stories, there is one very important caveat to highlight: the entire account is through Caesar's eyes. As noted at the beginning of the chapter, Caesar had reasons for lying or at least stretching the truth if it made him look better in the eyes of the Romans. The wholeheartedness of Divitiacus' support could be one of these stretches. Perhaps Caesar simply wanted to highlight the helpfulness of some of the Gauls. Alternatively, it could have been an act on Divitiacus' part. Perhaps he and his brother were working together to control both the pro- and anti-Roman factions within Gaul. Dumnorix could have simply been a useful scapegoat to cover-up Caesar's mistakes in the early part of the Helvetian campaign. A grand conspiracy to invade Roman territory and unite all of Gaul would justify Caesar's involvement in the region far more than a simple migration of a tribe. All of these are possibilities that need to be kept in mind. However, it is also important to note that the biggest take away from this period, that Gallic views on the Romans were decidedly split, is not

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<sup>107</sup> Chadwick (1997) 108 stresses this role and, as shown, Divitiacus' speeches mark important points in the narrative such as the request for Roman aid against Ariovistus.

<sup>108</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 1.17-18, 2.14, and 3.8.

<sup>109</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 5.6. Caesar may not have suspected Dumnorix himself or was purposefully excluding his involvement for some other reason, possibly to prevent resentment among the Aedui.

invalidated even if Caesar's detail prove false. Clearly opinions in Gaul were mixed, but rebellion was brewing and would soon threaten Caesar's hold over Gaul. Had Dumnorix still been alive, it might have been his role to lead the Gauls against Caesar but with his death the floor was left open to Ambiorix and Vercingetorix.

The first Gauls to truly revolt against Caesar and Rome were the Eburones, a relatively minor Belgic tribe whom Caesar had freed from the subjugation of a neighbouring tribe.<sup>110</sup> The Eburones were lead by Ambiorix and Cativolcus, although the former clearly outshone the latter in the events that followed. Until the winter of 54 BCE, after the second British campaign, they were counted amongst the loyal tribes of Gaul. However, the harvest of that year proved very poor, leading Caesar to scatter his men in smaller camps spread through the territories of several Gallic tribes, the Eburones receiving one full legion and five cohorts led by Q. Titurius Sabinus and L. Aurunculeius Cotta.<sup>111</sup> Naturally, this caused widespread resentment since the harvest was poor for all of them, none could readily afford to feed Caesar's troops on top of their own people.<sup>112</sup> On the fifteenth day since the Romans arrived at their winter quarters, Ambiorix launched an attack against the soldiers outside the camp and then besieged it as well, spurred on by a leader of the Treveri, Indutiomarus.<sup>113</sup>

When a pair of Roman knights were sent to parlay with Ambiorix, he expressed his indebtedness to Caesar for freeing his tribe from tribute to their neighbours and returning the hostages, among them his own son, who had been kept by them.<sup>114</sup> Ambiorix did not personally want to attack the Romans but his people did and he was bound to their wishes. Additionally, it was not his people alone who wanted

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<sup>110</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.24f. The other Gauls who fought against Caesar prior to this could hardly be said to be rebelling, as they had not yet been subjugated by Rome.

<sup>111</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.24.

<sup>112</sup> Sage (2011) 86.

<sup>113</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.26. The latter was killed in a failed attack on the fourth legion which ended the Treveran involvement in the rebellion.

<sup>114</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.27.

to attack the winter camps but all of Gaul had united to overthrow the Romans.<sup>115</sup> He was aware that his own forces were not enough to withstand Caesar but he had been assured of a common resolution among the Gauls and German aid from across the Rhine would be arriving shortly.<sup>116</sup> For the sake of the kindness Caesar showed his people, he would allow the Romans to withdraw to the relative safety of the camps of Quintus Cicero or Labienus before the German reinforcements arrived.<sup>117</sup> This turned out to be a ruse, however, for when the Romans decided to retreat, they were ambushed by Ambiorix and severely battered.<sup>118</sup> When Sabinus attempted to surrender and spare his men, Ambiorix had him cut down and spared no Romans who dropped their weapons.<sup>119</sup> A few managed to fight their way back to the camp but committed suicide when they realised capture was imminent. Only a handful escaped and brought news of the revolt to Labienus.<sup>120</sup> This was the first large scale defeat Caesar suffered in Gaul and it had been accomplished by a tribe with little prestige.<sup>121</sup>

Ambiorix had played the Romans perfectly. While some, notably Cotta, thought he was lying when he offered safe passage, the majority were convinced that he had spoken as a friend of the Romans when he made the offer.<sup>122</sup> He was clearly another gifted Gallic orator, as he went on to convince the Aduatuci, to whom the Eburones had recently been subjugated, and the Nervii, the tribe that had held out longest against the Romans during the Belgae resistance, to join in the revolt.<sup>123</sup> Ambiorix lead this coalition against Cicero's legion which was stationed in the Nervii territory. The Nervii leaders attempted the same bluff on Cicero that Ambiorix had used against Sabinus and Cotta, that they

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<sup>115</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.27.

<sup>116</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.27.

<sup>117</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.27.

<sup>118</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.32-36. Caesar is highlighting the treachery of the Gauls with this story, with Ambiorix using similar tactics of offering safe passage multiple times, all of which are nothing but ambushes, see Riggsby (2006) 102.

<sup>119</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.37.

<sup>120</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.37.

<sup>121</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 300.

<sup>122</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.31.

<sup>123</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.38. Goldsworthy (2006) 300-1 and Sage (2011) 89 note that Ambiorix's victory had challenged the illusion of Roman invincibility and helped convince the other tribes to join.

could safely withdraw for the sake of friendship.<sup>124</sup> Either Cicero was not as easily misled or the Nervii leaders were not as convincing as Ambiorix, because the ruse failed and Cicero remained in his camp until he finally managed to sneak out a message to Caesar.<sup>125</sup> When he heard of the attack, Caesar gathered two nearby legions, marched to Cicero's camp and managed to drive off the Gauls.

Despite this victory, Ambiorix's success against the troops stationed in his territory had inspired fresh waves of anti-Roman sentiment and hope that armed resistance could succeed.<sup>126</sup> Caesar himself writes that the only tribes he trusted to remain loyal were the Aedui, who had a long history of fidelity (Dumnorix notwithstanding), and the Remi, who had recently offered so much assistance during the fighting.<sup>127</sup> Fortunately for him, no further tribes joined and Caesar and his lieutenants were able to put down in turn all those who had supported Ambiorix's revolt; the Nervii, Senones, Carnutes, Menapii, and Treveri were all brought to heel, forced to give hostages for their good behaviour, many of whom were held by the Aedui for the Romans.<sup>128</sup> With his allies defeated, Ambiorix turned his entire people into a guerrilla army, scattering them among the many secret hiding places in the countryside.<sup>129</sup> Caesar invited all the Eburones' neighbours to join him in plundering the territory in order to spare his troops. Aside from an unfortunate attack on Roman forces by a large band of German cavalry, this had the desired effect. Those Eburones not killed in the fighting died of starvation with the grain either being eaten by the marauding troops or left to spoil in the fields since it was not safe to try to harvest.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.41.

<sup>125</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.45.

<sup>126</sup> Ambiorix was clearly the key to this revolt as he seemed to be inspiring the new waves of resistance, see Goldsworthy (2006) 306.

<sup>127</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.54.

<sup>128</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.3-9.

<sup>129</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.34.

<sup>130</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.34-43. Sage (2011) 103 notes that even while Caesar was attempting to wipe out the tribe, Ambiorix remained a priority, showing how one charismatic Gaul could be a focal point for a rebellion.

Although Ambiorix escaped, his people did not and the Eburones were wiped from the map in a deliberate act by Caesar.<sup>131</sup>

While Ambiorix's revolt had been put down in relatively short order, he had managed to damage severely Caesar's position within Gaul. Only the Eburones themselves proved to be much trouble and even then, only due to their guerrilla tactics. However, the precedent set by that first attack would be a problem for Caesar. Not only had an entire legion and five cohorts been wiped out but their destruction had raised the hope of Gallic partisans throughout the newly conquered territory.<sup>132</sup> The Eburones did not have widespread support for their resistance to Rome prior to their attack. It was only after their victory that others began to flock to Ambiorix's banner and pose a serious challenge to Roman power in Gaul. Caesar's response showed how the Romans would deal with such treachery. While most of the other tribes received relatively light punishments, mostly being forced to give hostages, the Eburones were annihilated as a message to any other would-be rebels. Evidently this was not enough as Caesar's strongest opponent was about to rise and unite nearly all of Gaul behind him: Vercingetorix.<sup>133</sup>

In 52 BCE, Caesar was in Cisalpine Gaul, raising new troops and worrying about the situation in Rome following the death of P. Clodius Pulcher.<sup>134</sup> The Carnutes, who had taken part in Ambiorix's rebellion, heard the rumors of trouble in Rome and decided that Caesar would be too busy to return to Gaul, began another rebellion.<sup>135</sup> They began by attacking a trading centre rather than a more military target, slaughtering the Roman citizens and plundering their property.<sup>136</sup> The story of their success spread throughout Gaul, most importantly among the Averni and to Vercingetorix. He was an Avernian noble whose father had nearly become "king" of all the Gauls and who was excited at the prospect of

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<sup>131</sup> Freeman (2008) 209 notes that the Eburones disappear from history after this point, meaning the entire tribe was either killed or enslaved with perhaps a few, such as Ambiorix, surviving for a short time as refugees.

<sup>132</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.53-54.

<sup>133</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 312 argues that the brutal actions of the Romans actually spread further rebellious feelings.

<sup>134</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.1.

<sup>135</sup> Sage (2011) 106, Freeman (2008) 213.

<sup>136</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.2-3; Urban (1999) 23.

opposing Rome. The other leaders of his tribe believed taking up arms against the Romans to be foolish and kicked him out of Gergovia where he had been gathering supporters. Vercingetorix, however, was not done. He gathered an army from the lower classes and expelled those who had previously expelled him.<sup>137</sup> Clearly the lower classes were not as welcoming of the Romans as the nobility. Vercingetorix then quickly sent out letters to the surrounding tribes, asking them to join him and received a warm response from many, pledging to join the rebellion and asking him to lead it.<sup>138</sup> Crucially, this meant that the entire resistance had a central leadership, something no other Gallic alliance against Caesar had had before.<sup>139</sup> Having gathered his army, Vercingetorix targeted the client tribes of the Aedui, forcing Caesar to come to their aid.<sup>140</sup>

These initial conflicts between the Roman forces and the Gauls did not go well for Vercingetorix as Gallic infantry proved once again unable to withstand the legions in open battle but Caesar was still unable to crush the revolt quickly.<sup>141</sup> Vercingetorix decided that scorched earth tactics were the only way to defeat the Romans, denying them all opportunities to forage.<sup>142</sup> Remarkably, the Gauls agreed to the tactics, despite the fact that it was not Avern territory being destroyed, and set fire to twenty towns, only asking for Avaricum to be spared since it was one of the fairest cities in all Gaul.<sup>143</sup> The battle for this city proved to be a disaster for both sides. When Caesar finally took the city after a siege, his men, stirred up by the massacre of Roman civilians at the start of the revolt, decided to pay the

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<sup>137</sup> *Caes. Gal. 7.4.* Goudineau (2001) 200 notes that it is the younger and lower class Avern who readily side with Vercingetorix while the older nobility seem willing to go along with Caesar.

<sup>138</sup> *Caes. Gal. 7.4.*

<sup>139</sup> Sage (2011) 108, Riggsby (2006) 97, Freeman (2008) 214. Crucially, this meant that Vercingetorix had no model to fall back on and had to improvise as he went on. This sometimes worked and sometimes led to problems.

<sup>140</sup> *Caes. Gal. 7.5f.* As Goldsworthy (2006) 322 notes, the failure of the Aedui to protect their client tribes made Caesar look weak.

<sup>141</sup> Sage (2011) 112.

<sup>142</sup> Like Ambiorix's duplicity, this showed a growing sophistication in the tactics being employed by the Gallic rebels, see Goldsworthy (2006) 324, Freeman (2008) 217-8, Riggsby (2006) 100. By using this strategy, the Gauls were changing their entire lifestyle temporarily, essentially becoming nomads, to gain a tactical advantage. This is a remarkable sacrifice on their part.

<sup>143</sup> *Caes. Gal. 7.14-5.* Vercingetorix is again displaying the talent of Gallic rhetoricians by convincing his followers to go along with these very difficult tactics, Goldsworthy (2006) 324, Urban (1999) 24, Dyson (1971) 247.

Gauls back in kind.<sup>144</sup> Forty thousand men, women, and children were slain by the legionnaires during the night.<sup>145</sup> This was a severe loss for Vercingetorix but he played it to his advantage, using Roman brutality to bring over more tribes to his cause and his prior insistence that the town be abandoned to showcase his wisdom.<sup>146</sup> While Caesar certainly must have realised what a public relations nightmare this sack would be, he likely did not envision just how bad it would become.

Following the sack, Caesar moved into Avern territory and towards Gergovia, no doubt hoping to cut out the heart of the rebellion.<sup>147</sup> Vercingetorix, meanwhile, was showing what an adept politician he was by turning to a group of Aeduan nobles whom he bribed to bring the tribe over to his side, against the Romans.<sup>148</sup> This they managed to do by lying about a Roman massacre of their noblemen, panicking the people and driving them into the arms of the Avern willingly.<sup>149</sup> This was essentially the *terror Gallicus* in reverse, with the Aedui terrified that the Romans were coming to slaughter them, a fear that was no doubt buoyed by the massacre of the Eburones and the town of Avaricum. Matters quickly got out of hand and the Aedui massacred the Roman citizens in their territory and plundered their property.<sup>150</sup> Even those who did not take part in the attacks feared that they would be tarred with the same brush and thus the Aedui, Rome's staunchest allies since before Caesar's invasion, finally turned on the Romans completely, aside from some forces who were with Caesar himself and these would soon withdraw and join the rebels as well.<sup>151</sup> Their defection illustrates how superficial support for the Romans could be. Given the right opportunity, even Rome's strongest supporters were evidently

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<sup>144</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 327 notes that Caesar would have written if he had ordered the townspeople slaughtered to deter others from rebelling since the Romans did sometimes use this tactic. The fact that Caesar did not tell us this means that the legions were acting on their own out of frustration and anger.

<sup>145</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.28.

<sup>146</sup> Sage (2011) 119. Freeman (2008) 219.

<sup>147</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.34.

<sup>148</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.37f.

<sup>149</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.38. Even among the Aedui, there were those who were willing to betray Rome for more power. The bribe was simply Vercingetorix's help and support in taking over the leadership of the tribe.

<sup>150</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.42.

<sup>151</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.43. Sage (2011) 126 notes that the defection of the Aedui was not only the loss of Rome's most powerful ally in Gaul but also their largest source of supplies, making Caesar's position all the more tenuous.

willing to betray them. Caesar's defeat at Gergovia did not help matters and when he retreated it was a signal to the Gauls that they could have their freedom.<sup>152</sup>

The Aedui and Vercingetorix set up a council to determine who should have overall command and how the rest of the war should be waged, with the Aedui attempting to take over.<sup>153</sup> Caesar writes that this council was attended by representatives from all the Gallic tribes save three; the Remi and the Lingones remained loyal to Rome throughout the conflict and the Treveri were too occupied with Germanic incursions over the Rhine to help either side of the conflict.<sup>154</sup> This was unprecedented, all the previous resistance movements were piecemeal and territorially linked whereas this was an alliance of practically all of Gaul.<sup>155</sup> No rebellion that followed had such widespread support with the possible exception of the so-called "Gallic empire" of the late third century CE. The Gauls had come together to drive the Romans out and Vercingetorix was unanimously elected as the man to lead them.<sup>156</sup>

Unfortunately for them, the revolt did not end up amounting to much. Once Caesar regrouped his forces, he was able to drive Vercingetorix into Alesia and besieged him within the town.<sup>157</sup> Vercingetorix had purposefully not assembled all the fighting men he could for want of any way to supply such a force but now that he was trapped, he sent out his cavalry to bring a relief army consisting of all the tribesmen of military age.<sup>158</sup> This, of course, led to the famous double fortifications around Alesia, both to keep Vercingetorix in and the relief army out. While the other Gauls declined to gather

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<sup>152</sup> As Goldsworthy (2006) 331 notes, Caesar was in a terrible position. He could either stay and be defeated due to lack of supplies or retreat and show the Gauls that the Romans could be defeated. Either way it would inspire further rebellion. Goudineau (1998) 182-3 notes these problems facing Caesar as well and points out that this was all according to Vercingetorix's strategy.

<sup>153</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.63.

<sup>154</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.63.

<sup>155</sup> As Burns (2003) 134 notes, this meant that Caesar could not just defeat Vercingetorix, but had to crush him to stop further development of this pan-Gallic resistance. If it was allowed to become institutionalised, conquering the Gauls would become much more difficult.

<sup>156</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.63.

<sup>157</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.68f.

<sup>158</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 7.71.



every fighting man at their disposal, largely for logistical reasons,<sup>159</sup> they did manage to assemble a force of 240,000 infantry and 8,000 cavalry, according to Caesar.<sup>160</sup> What they lacked, however, was another commander of Vercingetorix's caliber. The relieving army was defeated, though not destroyed completely, and forced to retreat.<sup>161</sup> Seeing this and realising that further resistance was pointless, Vercingetorix surrendered.<sup>162</sup> The Aedui soon followed suit and so on until all of Gaul was once again in Roman hands, where it would remain until the empire in the west fell some five centuries later.<sup>163</sup> Aside from Vercingetorix himself, most of the surviving rebel leaders escaped punishment, with Caesar focussing on keeping Gaul in check now that it had been fully conquered.<sup>164</sup>

Vercingetorix had accomplished what no other Gaul had been able to do: he created a pan-Gallic alliance to oppose Rome, united under his leadership. There were no existing institutions for Vercingetorix to rely upon, only the sheer force of his personality held the coalition together.<sup>165</sup> Gallic disunity had proven to be a huge boon to Caesar's invasion but Vercingetorix was largely able to overcome it after Gergovia.<sup>166</sup> Yet this was still not enough to stop Rome. The Gauls learned that armed opposition to Rome was not feasible and central Gaul would remain peacefully under Roman control for decades to come. From this point, civil wars and affairs in the rest of the empire largely preoccupied Caesar and he did little to establish formally the Roman hold on Gaul. He established numerous colonies

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<sup>159</sup> Riggsby (2006) 100 notes the failure in leadership this decision shows. The Gauls failed to follow Vercingetorix's orders and debated the command before settling on the smaller numbers of levies. This incident shows how crucial Vercingetorix was to the unity of the Gauls. Since he was not there to give the command himself, the tribes followed their own judgement.

<sup>160</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 7.75-76. Numbers that were no doubt exaggerated but give the impression of an overwhelming force compared to Caesar's legions. Considering the number of tribes involved this was likely the largest Gallic army ever assembled at any time in history. Goldsworthy (2006) 338 notes that the numbers Caesar gives are in keeping with the others used throughout the commentaries so they could be accurate or mean that Caesar was consistently exaggerating.

<sup>161</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 7.88.

<sup>162</sup> *Caes. Gal.* 7.89.

<sup>163</sup> Goldsworthy (2006) 342.

<sup>164</sup> Sage (2011) 139.

<sup>165</sup> Sage (2011) 139.

<sup>166</sup> Sage (2011) 48, Osgood (2009) 334.

in southern Gaul, most in the territory that the Romans had held for some time before his conquests. There is one, however, outside of this region which would come to be very important in later Roman Gaul, that of Lugdunum, modern-day Lyon. Under Caesar it was simply another Roman colony, well placed to hold back a Germanic incursion, but under his heirs it would become the unofficial capital of Gaul. This transformation would be helped most by the first emperor, Augustus.

This period in Gallo-Roman history shows a great deal transition. When Caesar first arrived in Gaul, the region was dominated by a few larger tribes that largely fought amongst themselves. At the end of the war nearly all of Gaul stood united against Caesar and the Romans, an event that was unprecedented in recent Gallic memory. Even the larger tribes that had fought each other for dominance in Gaul put aside their differences to fight the Romans. Before Caesar's arrival, Germanic peoples had a strong foothold on the western bank of the Rhine and were the dominant force, subjugating even some of the larger Gallic tribes. By the time the wars ended the Germans had all but left Gaul and those remaining were employed as mercenaries by Caesar. Entire towns and even tribes were wiped off the map. The population dropped significantly during the war with countless Gauls either killed or taken as slaves. In short, Caesar turned all of Gaul upside down with his wars. This is important to keep in mind when examining what followed in Gallo-Roman history. After a decade of constant warfare and a grand final stand against Rome, Gaul was exhausted. Many of their leading men had been killed, crops had been destroyed, and towns laid waste. Many of those with the strongest anti-Roman sentiments were gone, either killed, captured, or fled to Germania. The way of life for the Gauls had been significantly altered and there was a need for something to bridge the gap between the Gallic past and the Roman future. This transition was handled by one of Rome's most adept politicians, Augustus.

## Augustus

Roman Gaul was transformed under the reign of Augustus from a newly conquered territory kept in check by the might of the Roman legions to provinces that, while not fully Romanised by any stretch, were well on their way to that goal. Unlike the other emperors that will be examined, there are few standout events during Augustus' reign which changed Roman Gaul, but rather a series of policies and military campaigns which showed just how much had changed since the conquest. Since most of these changes can be tied to the military issues of the times, they will be examined through that lens.

Caesar's conquest of Gaul was at once both a turning point and yet also left a remarkably small impact on some areas of Roman Gaul. The tribes remained in more or less the same configurations they had held shortly before the Roman conquest with the Averni and the Aedui still leading other tribes, despite their involvement with Vercingetorix's revolt.<sup>167</sup> Caesar founded several colonies in southern Gaul, such as Narbo, Arelate, and Baeterrae but all but three of them were in the territory which Rome had held before his conquests.<sup>168</sup> Even the three exceptions, Noviodunum, Lugdunum, and Raurica were all situated on the periphery and placed more to guard against Germanic incursions than to keep the Gauls in line.<sup>169</sup> In fact, there seemed little need to police Gaul following Caesar's defeat of Vercingetorix. During the height of his stage of the civil wars, we hear of no Gallic uprisings, even when nearly all the Roman forces were tied up in the east, battling each other. This was most likely the result of a manpower shortage, with so many lost to the war with Caesar, combined with the more "hot-headed" Gauls being given ample opportunity for battle with the different factions of the civil war. These young nobles that went to war with the Romans are the first that can really be called Gallo-Romans rather than Gauls since they returned from the fighting wealthy, partially Romanised, and most

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<sup>167</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 19.

<sup>168</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 18. This influx of Roman citizens led southern Gaul, already differentiated as *Gallia Togata*, to be a completely different entity to the rest of Gaul.

<sup>169</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 19.

importantly, as Roman citizens themselves, taking the name of their patrons "Gaius Julius".<sup>170</sup> These 'Julii' Gauls would wield considerable influence over Roman Gaul for the remainder of the Julio-Claudian period, taking part in or even sparking all of the important Gallic events that followed.<sup>171</sup> Before they could put this influence into practice, however, Roman politics changed with the death of Julius Caesar and the rise of his nephew and heir, Octavian.

During the civil wars, the governors of Gaul, including Marc Antony, were not concerned with any policy regarding the territory and instead focused on holding the region's resources for their side. As such, until 40 BCE, there is little, if any change in the state of Gallic affairs because the governors were more concerned with the affairs of the wider empire than their province.<sup>172</sup> The change came about as a result of Octavian taking over the west in general and the following year both travelling to Gaul personally and appointing his most trusted lieutenant, Agrippa, as governor.<sup>173</sup> This marks the beginning of the close connection that Augustus and, to one extent or another, the other Julio-Claudians had with Gaul. Many members of the imperial household spent a good deal of time within Gaul, as shall be seen. Meanwhile, Agrippa had to contend with Aquitanian tribes of the southwest and the north eastern tribes bordering the Rhine who were receiving German aid.<sup>174</sup> He even crossed the Rhine to fight the Germans directly, something that only Caesar had previously done.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Both Julius Caesar and Octavian had the name Gaius Julius.

<sup>171</sup> Most Gallo-Romans that we know by name from historical narratives of the period have the Julian name, as the following chapters will make clear.

<sup>172</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 120-121.

<sup>173</sup> App. *Civ* 5.75; Dio 48.20.

<sup>174</sup> App. *Civ*. 5.92. Dio 48.49. Drinkwater (1983) 121.

<sup>175</sup> Dio 48.49. An action for which he was rewarded a triumph which he refused because Octavian's own campaigns had fared poorly.

It is likely that as part of his governorship, Agrippa began his Gallic roadways at this time as well.<sup>176</sup> Strabo tells us that starting from Lugdunum, one road went west into Aquitania, one went to the coast on the north west, one went to the Rhine on the north east, and one went south to the Mediterranean coast. The military troubles in both Aquitania and the north east during his governorship would certainly provide a good military rationale for those roads. By placing Lugdunum at the centre, owing to its proximity to central Gaul, Agrippa magnified its status to a degree beyond that of other colonies, something that would be reinforced by later emperors and princes.

Following Agrippa's governorship we have little detail on Gaul for some time although it seems that both the regions that gave him trouble, also rebelled under succeeding governors. The Morini and the Treveri rebelled with Germanic support sought and given in both cases in 30 and 29 BCE respectively.<sup>177</sup> Furthermore, the Aquitanians revolted in 28 BCE a year after Octavian launched a campaign against the Iberian tribes of Spain.<sup>178</sup> It was becoming clear that the Gauls on the periphery were not content to remain loyal Roman vassals, especially when support from their neighbours was available. The Germans were proving to be a very real problem for Roman control in Gaul. That said, the central regions seem to have been quiet throughout this period. Perhaps they were better represented amongst the young nobles who took part in the civil wars and became Roman citizens, thus tying their fortunes all the closer to Rome's. While the region was clearly receiving more military attention, it would soon see even greater administrative attention when Octavian himself, now Augustus, visited the province in 27 BCE.

Octavian travelled to Roman Gaul shortly after he became Augustus. It was, in fact, the first province he visited since taking the title, showing how important this region was to him. This is where

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<sup>176</sup> Strabo *Geogr.* 4.6.11. The exact dating of the construction of the roadways is disputed but Drinkwater (1983) 125-6 makes a good argument for the start (but not necessarily completion) of the roads during Agrippa's first governorship from 39-37 BCE rather than his second in 19-17 BCE.

<sup>177</sup> Dio 51.20.5, Drinkwater (1983) 121, Urban (1999) 33.

<sup>178</sup> Dio 53.22.5, Drinkwater (1983) 121, Urban (1999) 33.

the first large-scale political reorganizations can be seen, most obviously, with the splitting of the provinces. Prior to this trip, all of Transalpine Gaul was ruled as a single province, a decidedly unwieldy arrangement with so much territory in question. As such, he first split the southern, heavily Romanised section away to form *Gallia Narbonensis*.<sup>179</sup> This divide highlighted the differences between the two regions and why Narbonensis is largely excluded from this paper. For a further contrast, in 22 BCE the province was returned to senatorial control, indicating that occupying legions were not needed.<sup>180</sup> The rest of the territory was divided into three provinces: *Gallia Lugdunensis*, *Gallia Aquitania*, and *Gallia Belgica*.<sup>181</sup> For the first time the 'Three Gauls' truly exist. A census was also conducted at this time, possibly to assess the proper taxes from the new provinces. The Gauls had never before experienced a census so it is likely that Augustus chose to be on hand for it to reduce trouble.<sup>182</sup> Furthermore, Augustus brought in more elements of the Mediterranean with the establishment of administrative centres for at least the larger tribes such as Augustodunum Aeduorum for the Aedui and Augusta Treverorum for the Treveri.<sup>183</sup> These sites would become strongholds of Romanization within the Three Gauls with Augustodunum, for example, becoming a centre for Roman learning in the west. These efforts began the steady process of Romanization which began to take hold of Roman Gaul. The process would be sped along more in later years but it would take the spurring of the Germans for it to take hold.

The hostility of the Germans went on for some time with the Roman response being limited to raids and punitive actions rather than conquest. The change came after the *clades Lolliana* of 16 BCE where an invading army of Germans destroyed the army lead by Lollius and even captured the standard

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<sup>179</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 20, Urban (1999) 34.

<sup>180</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 21.

<sup>181</sup> The latter would later be divided again as the Upper and Lower *Germaniae* provinces were formed to regulate control of the Rhine legions under the Flavians, Woolf (1998) 39.

<sup>182</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 21.

<sup>183</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 22, Woolf (1998) 126, Goodman (2007) 85.

of the Fifth Legion.<sup>184</sup> This loss spurred Augustus to act, journeying to Gaul himself for an extended visit from 16 to 13 BCE and putting first Tiberius and then Drusus in charge of the provinces and the response against the Germans.<sup>185</sup> Aside from the change in Rome's German policy, these events are also notable for the lack of response from the Gauls. This would have been an ideal time to assert their independence once again with Rome's military strength in the region temporarily weakened. Yet there is no evidence for a Gallic rebellion at this time.<sup>186</sup> There may have been an uprising a short time later but it was not the weakness of the legions which spurred it but a new census.

In the periochae of Livy, there is a mention of a Gallic revolt caused by a census shortly before the Germanic campaign of Drusus began.<sup>187</sup> This would make a certain amount of sense, since the Germanic campaign needed provisions to supply them and Gaul was the obvious place to get the materials from. This would also have likely been a larger taxation than the previous census due to the added expense and this time Augustus himself was not on hand to quell any unrest. Unfortunately, no other sources mention this revolt and Livy's actual account is lost so it is not possible to say how widespread the revolt was nor which tribes were involved.<sup>188</sup> While the exact impact of the revolt is difficult to determine, it is interesting to note that the altar at Lugdunum was founded shortly thereafter.

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<sup>184</sup> Dio 54.20. Drinkwater (1983) 122.

<sup>185</sup> Dio 54.22. Drinkwater (1983) 122, Seager (2005) 19 stress the military reasons for the visit, including the Alpine tribes as well as the Germans. Woolf (1998) 39 stresses the piecemeal nature of Augustus' involvements from here forward, intervening as crises arose.

<sup>186</sup> Urban (1999) 34 notes the loyalty of Gaul following this disaster.

<sup>187</sup> Livy *Per.* 139, Levick (1999) 28 and Ó hÓgáin (2002) 177.

<sup>188</sup> It is perhaps tempting to consider the lack of other sources commenting on the revolt to mean it was minor and limited to one region or a few tribes but there are many cases where a revolt is given prominence in one work and no mention in others that cover the same period. e.g., Florus and Sacrovir in the following chapter are only mentioned by Tacitus.

In 12 BCE, Drusus instituted the worship of Rome and Augustus at the Altar built just outside of Lugdunum.<sup>189</sup> This altar is described by Strabo as bearing the names of the sixty tribes of Gaul as well as images of the tribes surrounding it.<sup>190</sup> He also says that the altar was dedicated by all the Gauls in common which would fit with the representation they were given. The first *sacerdos* of the Altar was an Aeduan, fitting considering their longstanding relationship with the Romans.<sup>191</sup> His name was C. Julius Vercondaridubnus, someone who had been rewarded with Roman citizenship by Julius Caesar or Augustus, a further sign of the Julii Gauls rising above the others and of the Gallo-Roman future of the provinces.<sup>192</sup> In order to choose the new *sacerdos*, each year the tribes of Gaul sent representatives to Lugdunum to vote.<sup>193</sup> These leading men became the *Concilium Galliarum* and gained an influence above and beyond that of simply choosing a new priest. With so many leading men gathered together, political matters would undoubtedly creep in as will be seen under later emperors.<sup>194</sup> For now, though, the founding of the Altar and the formation of this council propelled Lugdunum to prominence above all other Gallic settlements and would make it the unofficial capital of the Three Gauls. As well, it seemed to have served the purpose for Drusus and Augustus, the Three Gauls were united in a way that not even Vercingetorix was able to do and the nature of the altar made it clear that these were Gallo-Romans, not just Gauls living under the empire.<sup>195</sup> Of course, this did not stop the old prejudices and a particularly egregious example can be found in the procurator, Licinus.

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<sup>189</sup> Livy *Per.* 139; Dio 54.32. The timing would indicate a need to unite the Gauls due to the Germanic campaigns, Levick (1999) 28. As Goodman (2007) notes, this propelled Lugdunum into not only a colony and political centre but a religious centre as well.

<sup>190</sup> Strabo *Geo.* 4.3.2. See Drinkwater (1975) for the reasoning of placing the altar in Lugdunum.

<sup>191</sup> Fishwick (1978) 1206.

<sup>192</sup> Millar (1981) 148, Woolf (1998) 39. Alternatively, his father may have been the one rewarded with citizenship but the point still stands.

<sup>193</sup> Hatt (1970) 243-4, a co-opting of the Gallic councils which Caesar wrote about in order to bind the Gallic tradition with Roman practices.

<sup>194</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 111-113.

<sup>195</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 24-25, Jones (1970) 151.



Licinus was originally a Gaul who was captured by Caesar and made a slave although he later freed him.<sup>196</sup> Augustus, evidently trusting this man, made him procurator of Gaul where he caused a great deal of trouble. Licinus plundered the provinces to line his own pockets, purportedly going so far as to add months to the year in order to collect extra monthly tribute.<sup>197</sup> Eventually the Gallo-Romans managed to get Augustus' attention on the matter, demanding that Licinus be punished for his crimes.<sup>198</sup> Astonishingly, he managed to avoid any penalty by bringing Augustus to his house and displaying the many items of silver, gold, and other precious materials that he had taken from the Gallo-Romans, saying that he did so to deny the natives the money they would need to revolt.<sup>199</sup> According to Dio, this was enough to save Licinus from punishment.<sup>200</sup> Notable here is that the Gallo-Romans appealed to the emperor rather than attacking Licinus or some other symbol of Roman authority. They were not resenting the taxes so much as the crooked tax collector, which is an important distinction. While Dio does not say that it was the Gallic Council which approached Augustus, it would make sense for that body to be involved, showing how quickly it was assuming wider responsibilities. It once again reinforces the loyalty of the Gallo-Romans at this juncture. This would prove especially important during the Germanic campaigns that followed as the Romans could not risk revolt at their rear when fighting such a dangerous enemy, one that would prove to be a match for the legions.

At first, the war against the Germans went very well and soon Rome was bordering on the Elbe rather than the Rhine.<sup>201</sup> There were severe supply issues, however, and areas that had been subdued in the summer tended to rebel in winter as soon as the legions withdrew to their camps.<sup>202</sup> Tiberius and Drusus had made great strides in securing the region for Rome and it was beginning to look like Gaul

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<sup>196</sup> Dio 54.21.3.

<sup>197</sup> Dio 54.21.4-5.

<sup>198</sup> Dio 54.21.6.

<sup>199</sup> Dio 54.21.7-8.

<sup>200</sup> Dio 54.21.8. Urban (1999) 35 doubts the voracity of this part of the story but it shows that to a Roman audience, pleading *terror Gallicus* to excuse crimes against Gauls was plausible.

<sup>201</sup> Dio 55.1.1.

<sup>202</sup> Seager (2005) 21.

would not be a border province at all once the conquest was completed. Of course this was not to last and in 9 CE, P. Quinctilius Varus was ambushed in the Teutoburg forest and three legions were lost in Germany, forcing Rome to retreat to the Rhine.<sup>203</sup> It is once again notable that the Gauls remained loyal following this disaster.<sup>204</sup> Had they joined the Germans in attacking the Romans from the rear, the Rhine too may have fallen and it is impossible to say how far back the Romans would be pushed. Yet they remained steadfast, despite the depredations of Augustus' procurator (see above). The Gauls were by this point Gallo-Romans and not simply resigned to life under the Romans but embracing it otherwise they would have taken advantage of the opportunity provided. The new status quo would not become obvious for some time but this defeat would lead to the Three Gauls forever being a frontier region and tied closely to the army for both good and ill. Had Rome held onto the land between the Rhine and the Elbe it would be easy to envision the Three Gauls becoming another Spain, quiet and not needing a strong legionary presence. The continued presence of the legions and the constant threat of Germanic raids and invasions shaped Gallo-Romans politics until the end of the western empire.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Dio 56.18-24.

<sup>204</sup> Urban (1999) 34.

<sup>205</sup> See Chappell (1993) for the effects of frontier cultures.

## Tiberius

When Tiberius came to power in 14 CE, he had enormous shoes to fill. Augustus had revolutionized Rome in nearly every way one could think of and Tiberius was hardly the most longed for heir. His ascension was greeted with little fanfare and his reluctant leadership soon grew tiresome for most of the empire. Roman Gaul had been transformed through Augustus' settlements but the Gauls were given little breathing room at the beginning of Tiberius' reign.

Along both the Rhine and Danube fronts, the armies mutinied when they realised that retirement and better pay would not be forthcoming from the new emperor.<sup>206</sup> Tiberius did not set out from Rome himself to deal with these mutinies but rather left them to Germanicus and Drusus on the Rhine and Danube fronts, respectively. Germanicus had control over both armies as the governor of Roman Gaul, where he was currently assessing the tribute.<sup>207</sup> When news arrived of the mutiny, he rushed to the Lower Rhine legions, where the unrest was strongest. Among his numerous rhetorical arguments against their mutiny, he pointed out that all of Gaul remained loyal, which was indeed quite notable as the Gauls were only two generations removed from independence and were currently undergoing a census, usually a time of some trouble within a province.<sup>208</sup> Yet even with the Upper Rhine armies in open mutiny, the Gauls remained steadfast, despite the opportunity the mutiny presented.<sup>209</sup> Germanicus discovered that the Lower Rhine legions had set the capital of the Ubii as a target for plunder and that the rest of the Gallic provinces were to follow shortly after.<sup>210</sup> Aside from the utter disaster that turning upon the hard won allies, which the Gauls had become, would be, this would also

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<sup>206</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.16-30 for the Pannonian legions and 1.31-54 for the Rhine legions. Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 25, Dio 57.5-6. Tacitus' account is the most detailed and provides the most Gallic content but in a few cases it is useful to compare the other accounts where discrepancies lie.

<sup>207</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.31.

<sup>208</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.33-34. Taxes always seemed to bring out the worst in the Roman subjects, yet we hear nothing from the Gauls at this time despite the heavy burdens of the Germanic Wars already felt and those still to come.

<sup>209</sup> Urban (1999) 38 notes that the *fides Galliarum* is brought up in Tacitus' account when Germanicus exhorts the troops to remain loyal like the Gauls; Tac. *Ann.* 1.47.

<sup>210</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.36.

have left the Rhine wide open to Germanic invasion. Germanicus attempted to bring the renegade legions back into line but was forced to make large concessions to them.

Even these concessions did not end the unrest and Germanicus decided to send his pregnant wife, Agrippina, and their infant son, Caligula, to the Treveri for protection.<sup>211</sup> That he trusted the Treveran Gauls more than his own legions says much about both the level of unrest and the loyalty of the Gallic community; it is hard not to imagine the ransom available for the Treveri with the wife and children of the heir to the Roman empire in their grasp. Yet there was no indication that the Gauls were not trusted with them. This proved to be the key to restoring order to the legions. Their shame and jealousy of the Gauls, that the latter would be trusted over the emperor's legions with the safety of the imperial family, finally brought them back in line.<sup>212</sup> This says a lot about the legionnaires' attitudes towards the Gauls: the latter were clearly looked down upon by the former and special favour could easily sow jealousy. Germanicus had finally quelled the uprising but he did not trust the loyalty of the legions enough to leave them be. Instead, he directed them where they could take out their aggression constructively: Germania.<sup>213</sup>

The expedition launched by Germanicus, despite lacking any sort of official sanction or support from Tiberius, was a huge success. Gaul supplied vast levies to support the Germanic expeditions and with Gallic support added to the legions' strength, Germanicus was able to secure a wide swath of

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<sup>211</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.40. cf. Dio 57.5.6. The latter does not mention what this place of refuge was, only that it was safe. In Dio's version the troops seize Agrippina and Caligula and are not induced to renounce the mutiny out of jealousy of the Treveri but because they saw that the hostages were not getting their demands met. If this is the true case then it is interesting that Tacitus would inject a jealousy towards the Gauls into his narrative.

<sup>212</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.41-44. The jealousy they had towards the Treveri was the chief reason Tacitus gives for the change of heart the troops display. He even has them worry directly about the Treveri being given so valuable a hostage as Caligula. This seems genuine and is accepted by Seager (2005) 56-7; Levick (1999) 74 but again would not necessarily fit with Dio's version. Even if Tacitus is inventing this motivation, however, he must have thought it plausible enough for his readers to believe meaning there was a perceived rivalry between the legions and the local tribes supplying auxiliaries.

<sup>213</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.50-71; Dio 57.5-6. Levick (1976) 74 writes that the campaign was meant to wipe away the stain of mutiny and reprisal. See also Drinkwater (1983) 26.

territory on the eastern bank of the Rhine, inflict significant casualties on the Germans, and even recover two of the eagles lost by Varus. Even when there were setbacks, the successes thus far prompted Gaul, Spain, and Italy to compete in providing Germanicus with weapons, horses, or gold.<sup>214</sup> The German campaign was a spectacular achievement but not one that Tiberius could allow to continue. Even apart from the danger in allowing another member of the imperial house to upstage the prestige of the emperor, both in Italy and among the staunchest political allies of the Julio-Claudians, the Gauls, the expenses were beginning to wear on the provinces. Gaul was the chief supplier of the army and they were steadily being drained of their resources without much booty to show for it.<sup>215</sup>

Tiberius therefore recalled Germanicus in 16 CE and awarded him a triumph before sending him out to the east, where he would die a short time later. The Rhine forces were withdrawn to the left bank of the river aside from one bridgehead opposite Moguntiacum. For the first time in decades, Gaul was free from both war with the Germans and the presence of imperial princes. While the princes showcased the importance of Gaul to the Julio-Claudians, their presence could only be a drain to resources and a distraction from domestic affairs. With the *Pax Romana* in place, the Gauls could begin to enjoy the fruits of Roman infrastructure and defence.<sup>216</sup> At least, some of them were able to do so.

As discussed before, there was a strong consolidation of land and power in the hands of a few leading aristocrats, most of whom had Roman citizenship and thus are known as the Julii Gauls.<sup>217</sup> To this group, we are now able to add the *negotiatores*, the traders, and especially the *nautae*, the river

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<sup>214</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 1.70.

<sup>215</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 2.5. See also Drinkwater (1983) 26-7, who notes that the census of 14 CE would likely have taken the expense of the war into account and driven up the costs for the Gauls even more. Levick (1976) 133-4 points out this ongoing cost as a possible economic factor in the later revolt.

<sup>216</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 27, 189, 198. Building projects that required rebuilding under Claudius must have been built originally by Tiberius at least. There is also evidence of a trade boom with Tiberius honoured in inscriptions by traders, butchers, and boatmen (*CIL* xiii 4481, 941, and 3026a respectively) in three separate Gallo-Roman communities.

<sup>217</sup> See previous chapter.

merchants, who amassed their fortunes from the trade within Gaul and especially with the army.<sup>218</sup> These men were often the clients of powerful Gallic nobles and thus made the latter even more wealthy through their cut of the trade.<sup>219</sup> This wealth would only grow under the Julio-Claudians and would become a significant boon to aristocratic Gallo-Roman ambitions under future emperors.<sup>220</sup> For many in the upper echelons, integration with the Roman empire had proven to be very profitable indeed. Not all the Gauls would benefit from this new arrangement, though, and the problems among the lower classes would cause even worse troubles for the Romans and Gallo-Roman relations.

In the year 21 CE, the first significant Gallic rebellion since the conquest began, led by Julius Florus of the Treveri and Julius Sacrovir of the Aedui, both men who owed their Roman citizenship to the military services of their forebears and were continuing the family tradition by serving as auxiliary officers.<sup>221</sup> Both their positions and tribes are worth noting as they were clearly from the aristocracy which had been granted citizenship by Augustus or Julius and were members of two of the richest tribes in Gaul, with the strongest ties to the Romans. The Aedui had produced the first priest of the imperial cult in Lugdunum and held the city of Augustodunum, a centre of Roman learning in Gaul, founded, as the name suggests, by Augustus himself.<sup>222</sup> The Aedui had even been awarded the title of "Brother of the Roman People" since before the conquest, as mentioned above.<sup>223</sup> Likewise, the Treveri had become integral to the Rhine frontier, supplying the legions with both auxiliary troops and supplies. As we saw,

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<sup>218</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 127, 187-8.

<sup>219</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 197.

<sup>220</sup> See Chapters 5 and 6 below for Gallic wealth in use by emperors.

<sup>221</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.40-47. There are no other accounts of this rebellion. Neither Suetonius nor Cassius Dio include it in their writings on Tiberius' reign. Thus I am relying heavily on Tacitus for the facts of the rebellion, though, as always the motivations he mentions must be taken with a grain of salt. The actual facts of the rebellion are likely accurate, aside from the numbers involved which may be inflated, but Tacitus' bias against Tiberius is on display throughout.

<sup>222</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.43. The city played host to youth from great Gallic families who went there to receive an education.

<sup>223</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 1.33. The fact that they were called *fratres consanguineosque saepe* implies that they had been held in such high esteem for some time before Caesar arrived in Gaul. See chapter 1 for more on this relationship.

Germanicus trusted them so much that he attempted to send them his pregnant wife and child for protection when the legions mutinied.

News of Germanicus' death had made the Rhine legions restive, presenting the Gallic rebels with the best opportunity since the death of Augustus to make a break with the Roman empire.<sup>224</sup> Tacitus uses this war as another opportunity to point out the failings of Tiberius, blaming the extent of the rebellion on his indecisiveness. Yet the truth is different, even in Tacitus' own account. According to him, the rebellion began for economic reasons: continuous tribute, grinding rates of interest, and cruel and prideful governors.<sup>225</sup> As noted, the recent Germanic expeditions had drained the resources of Roman Gaul; this would explain the complaints of tribute and debt.<sup>226</sup> We are lacking in any details on the "cruel and prideful governors" but this charge may reflect the fact that Gaul had been without an imperial patron close at hand since Germanicus was recalled in 16 CE.<sup>227</sup> With Tiberius all but abandoning Germania to the Germans, who were in no position to threaten the Romans across the Rhine at this point, Roman Gaul lost the importance it had held since the earliest days of Augustus' rule.<sup>228</sup> The governors who took over may simply not have been as willing to indulge Gallic desires without a pressing need to supply a German offensive or prevent an uprising behind their lines.

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<sup>224</sup> Seager (2005) 141. While nowhere near as serious as the mutinies at the start of Tiberius' reign, the unrest after the death of Germanicus did help to undermine cohesion among the Rhine legions.

<sup>225</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.40. Christopherson (1968) 359-60, argues that the whole revolt was more a protest or labour strike than rebellion with Florus and Sacrovir not expecting to break away from Rome but merely enact economic changes, particularly to the taxes. This certainly makes more sense; concessions were conceivable whereas a complete break would have been incredibly difficult. See also, Sherwin-White (1973) 252. Jullian (1913) vol iv 154, accepts Tacitus' reasons for the revolt at face value.

<sup>226</sup> Seager (2005) 141. Drinkwater (1983) 28 expands on this. In addition to the tribute they had already paid, the debt from the Germanic Wars may have been expected to be paid by the Gauls. This is reasonable enough, since the Gauls benefitted the most from the expeditions by protecting their land from Germanic incursions but it would have exacerbated any money problems that already existed. Grenier (1936) 373, posits that the Aedui had their tax immunity withdrawn at this time, causing them to revolt but this does not explain the motives of the other three tribes.

<sup>227</sup> Levick (1976) 134 makes the Gauls seem a bit petulant in their desire for a member of the imperial family to be close at hand but it was their first time without one since the principate began. The effect on Gallic morale is impossible to measure.

<sup>228</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 28. Without an imperial patron on hand, there was nowhere for the Gauls to turn with their grievances. Increasing taxes and lessening influence and representation has been the cause for many revolts.

According to Tacitus, this led to the seeds of rebellion being planted throughout Gaul, stirred up by speeches from Florus and Sacrovir.<sup>229</sup>

The first outbreak started with the Andecavi and the Turoni but both were swiftly put down by the governor of Lugdunensis, Acilius Aviola.<sup>230</sup> The Andecavi were easily quelled by the cohort stationed in Lugdunum but the latter required the aid of both legionnaires from lower Germany and Gallic auxiliaries, led in part by Sacrovir himself. According to Tacitus, the latter joined merely to screen their defection for the moment and unmask it at a more favourable time. Sacrovir even went into battle without a helmet, ostensibly to display his courage, but in reality so that he would not be targeted by the Turoni.

Even though Tiberius was told of Sacrovir's possible involvement, he failed to act upon the information. Tacitus' charges seem problematic for a couple of reasons. First, the Gauls could hardly have asked for a better opportunity to destroy the legions in a piecemeal fashion. The legions had proven that they were more than a match for Gallic forces in an open battle but with surprise and treachery on their side, as well as the reduced number of legionnaires present, the odds would have been tilted in the other direction. Secondly, Tacitus writes that "Tiberius, consulted on the point, rejected the information, and fostered the war by his indecision." This fits Tacitus' bias against Tiberius quite well and whenever this happens, it is best to examine the historian's claims quite closely. It is more likely that Sacrovir was not yet fomenting rebellion but his later revolt cast his actions in this battle in a new light. Perhaps the testimony of the prisoners convinced Sacrovir after the fact of the need to throw off Roman dominance or the performance of the legions compared to the Gallic forces made him think it was possible. His connection with this part of the uprising is dubious at best and the same can be said for the next stage.

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<sup>229</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.41. Their involvement at this stage is quite questionable, as seen below. The seeds had already been planted by the tax policy of Tiberius as well as his general absence.

<sup>230</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.41. The rest of this episode plays out in the same section.



Julius Florus was the next to raise a rebellion among the Treveri but it did not begin very auspiciously.<sup>231</sup> He attempted to bring an auxiliary of cavalry that was stationed near Trier over to his side but nearly all of them remained loyal to Rome. Instead, he managed to gather a number of dependents and debtors that were armed but hardly an army.<sup>232</sup> These he marched into the Ardennes forest. His forces were trapped between legions from both the upper and lower Rhine and dispersed by Treveri loyal to Rome, led by Julius Indus, another Julii Gaul.<sup>233</sup> Florus escaped but soon committed suicide when he realised the legions had cut off all avenues of escape. Once again the uprising was very local and unsuccessful. Also, Sacrovir was nowhere to be found. While the army that Florus had assembled was of little use in the open, they did not attempt to join up with Sacrovir in central Gaul, heading instead to the east. The reason for this was probably a lack of support from the Treveri. Florus had to retreat quickly before loyal Treveri attacked him, as they eventually did under the leadership of Julius Indus.

There is another possibility, that the revolts were unrelated except in timing. There is no evidence linking the three separate uprisings, except Tacitus' account which lumps them together. There may have simply been a domino effect between them: as one group revolted, another was inspired to rise up as well. Finally, it is important to note that the rebellion was started by one Treveran and put down by another.<sup>234</sup> As Tacitus states, Florus was unable to convince the auxiliaries to join him, meaning that the well off aristocratic youth had no desire to rebel; he was only able to gather lower class debtors who were of little use in a real fight. It is likely that Julius Indus and his men represented the opinions of

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<sup>231</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.42. His uprising is likewise contained within this section so the following all comes from Tacitus.

<sup>232</sup> Heinen (2002) 58 notes that this powerbase of debtors and clients helps the economic arguments for the revolt. If there were so many disenfranchised Treveri willing to take up arms against the Romans because of economic reasons, it speaks of a monetary crisis in the region.

<sup>233</sup> This echoes a later revolt where both sides, both pro- and anti-Roman, were led by Gauls bearing the Julii name. See chapter 8.

<sup>234</sup> Urban (1999) 41-42 notes that this gives the whole affair more the look of an internal power struggle than of a war against Rome. The Roman presence is barely felt, with the legions only serving to box Florus in while Indus does the work.

the majority of the tribe, those who were benefitting from Roman rule and had no desire to break way at this time.

Finally, we turn once again to Sacrovir, who by now was leading his own uprising.<sup>235</sup> Sacrovir, at least, met with some success, unlike his compatriot. He had the advantage of the greater wealth of his tribe and the relative remoteness of the legions. Aeduan territory was in central Gaul which had few legionnaires, unlike the Treveri who were close neighbours of the lower Rhine legions. Sacrovir seized the city of Augustodunum.<sup>236</sup> By taking control of this city he would have a ready supply of either willing young nobles to join his army or else hostages to ensure that the other Gallic tribes would not stand against him since many great Gallic families had sons receiving an education in the city.<sup>237</sup> He managed to gather forty thousand followers, one fifth armed like legionnaires, the rest with hunting weapons. Additionally, he freed a number of gladiatorial slaves who fought in heavy iron armour and were nearly impervious to harm. To these a steady stream of supporters arrived from the surrounding territory. While no other tribes officially joined Sacrovir, private individuals did make their way to him, no doubt buoyed by the lack of response from the Roman legions. The upper and lower Rhine commanders disputed who should have command and thus neither made a move to stop the rebellion at first. By the time the lower commander, Varro, withdrew in favour of the upper, Silius, word of the rebellion had spread to Rome.<sup>238</sup>

According to Tacitus, the eternal city was thrown into a panic far exceeding the actual scope of the rebellion.<sup>239</sup> Rumors swirled that not only the Aedui and the Treveri were rebelling but all the tribes

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<sup>235</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.44-46.

<sup>236</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.43. Jullian (1913) vol iv 158, follows Tacitus, that the city of students from many great Gallic families provided Sacrovir with many hostages.

<sup>237</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.43.

<sup>238</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.43.

<sup>239</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.44. Urban (1999) 43, notes that this reaction was highly overblown compared to the extent of the rebellion. It was simply used a political tool to attack Tiberius in his view. This would again fit Tacitus' view of

of Gaul and that they were joined by the Germans across the Rhine and even that the Spanish were considering throwing in with the rebels. Tiberius' inaction in the face of these rumors was viewed harshly even though it would soon be clear that the situation did not require his direct involvement. Taking Tacitus at face value, the sheer panic shows just how close to the surface the *terror Gallicus* was for the Roman people.<sup>240</sup> As soon as they received word of a rebellion, it was blown way out of proportion, with fears of another Gallic sack of Rome looming large in the minds of the populace. It is unfortunately unclear who in the city was making these accusations. Tacitus mentions only the best people worrying about the state while those who wanted change in leadership used the rumours as an excuse to attack Tiberius, who was acting very unconcerned.<sup>241</sup> There is no clear indication what groups of people are being referred to here. The best people may be a reference to the nobility but that may be stretching Tacitus' words more than necessary, he could very well just be referring to those who cared most about the safety of the state as the best men. It later becomes clear why such rumours were swirling, however, as it is not until the revolt ends that Tiberius informed the senate.<sup>242</sup> If the senators were only receiving official word after the fact, then the common people would have been even less well informed and every snippet of information from those travelling abroad would be passed on and exaggerated in a large scale version of a game of telephone. Clearly the Roman people did not yet trust the loyalty of the Gauls, despite over half a century of Gallic aid against the Germans. Of course, it would soon be clear that the Romans had nothing to fear from this revolt, regardless of their prejudices.

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Tiberius and it may mean that the panic was his invention. However, it is once again notable that the *terror Gallicus* is a plausible enough response for Tacitus to use.

<sup>240</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 29. This revolt, in fact, revived the *terror* which had been replaced by a condescending attitude towards the Gauls, who were incapable of standing against Roman legions. This can clearly be seen in the attitudes of the legions, who could be shamed when the Gauls were given their jobs (as with Germanicus' wife above) or inspired when facing down 'mere' Gauls (as below). For the reviving of the *terror* see also Urban (1999) 43.

<sup>241</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.44. As Urban (1999) 42-3 notes, there was little reason for him to fear the rebellion so his actions make sense.

<sup>242</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.47. Woolf (1993) 187 notes that Tiberius may have been deliberately trying to downplay the seriousness of the situation.

When Silius finally set out against Sacrovir, he first devastated the villages of the Sequani, who were situated between their two forces.<sup>243</sup> It is worth noting that Tacitus makes no mention of Sequani disloyalty up to this point so Silius may have been attacking Gauls for the sake of attacking Gauls.<sup>244</sup> Sacrovir set out to meet him and awaited the inevitable Roman attack. He attempted to rouse his men by reminding them of ancient Gallic victories and reverses they had inflicted on the Romans while also scaring them with the threat of what would happen if they lost. Sacrovir's words had little effect, the untrained men he had assembled began to lose their nerve when confronted by Silius' legions.<sup>245</sup> Silius, on the other hand, managed to induce a great shout from his men by pointing out how pitiful the Gauls were. They had defeated the Germans after all, what fear did they have of the Gauls? The Turoni were driven off by a single cohort, the Treveri by a single cavalry division, and his own army had put down the Sequani.<sup>246</sup> The legions made short work of the Gallic forces, with only the armoured gladiators being able to stand up to the Roman legions, and Sacrovir fled, only to commit suicide when he realised capture was imminent, just like Florus.<sup>247</sup> The weakness of his forces in battle shows how few of the auxiliaries joined his revolt. Had they done so, they could have stiffened the resistance and if not win, then at least make a better fight of it.<sup>248</sup> While the Aeduan position had helped Sacrovir build up his rebellion in relative safety, it also left him apart from any auxiliary forces that he could convince to join him. Tacitus' description of the army as undrilled townsmen makes it clear that Sacrovir's forces were

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<sup>243</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.45. Seager (2005) 142 claims that the Sequani joined in the rebellion but the only evidence is the attack itself.

<sup>244</sup> This may reflect his later indictment for extortions in Gaul. See below.

<sup>245</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.46.

<sup>246</sup> The condescension is palpable in Tacitus' text. This reflects the attitude the legions held towards the Gauls. Rather than seeing them as allies against the Germans and fellow members of the Roman empire, they were a pathetic people who could not be trusted. Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.5., the legions were along the Rhine to quell the Gauls as much as defend from the Germans.

<sup>247</sup> Aside from the lack of training, a paucity of real weapons would have made defeat likely for the rebels, see Brunt (1975) 265.

<sup>248</sup> Urban (1999) 44.

little better than Florus', except in sheer numbers. Clearly the mass uprising of all the Gallic tribes that he had hoped for and the Romans had feared, failed to materialize.<sup>249</sup>

The inconsequentiality of the revolt is best expressed by Tiberius' letter to the senate. He announced both the outbreak and completion of the "war" in this single missive.<sup>250</sup> While criticisms may have been laid at his feet for his lack of action when the rebellion broke out, Tiberius was vindicated by the swiftness of the victory. He said that his presence during the revolt would send the wrong message but now that it was over, he would go himself and settle matters. Unfortunately, we do not know what settlements were made in the wake of the rebellion, although we do know that Tiberius never actually journeyed to Gaul himself to make them.<sup>251</sup> Neither Tacitus nor any other source mentions what they were. We do know that immediately following the fighting, Silius extorted money from the Gauls but the wealth they would display later under Caligula and Claudius meant that however bad the depredations were, they were not crippling.<sup>252</sup> The Treveri were unlikely to have suffered for their part in the rebellion as it was largely put down by Treveri auxiliaries commanded by their own Julius Indus.<sup>253</sup> Most of the tribes, in fact, had remained loyal (sixty out of sixty-four) and even among the tribes who did participate, revolutionary feelings were clearly not universal.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> As Jullian (1913) vol iv 157 notes, they were confined to a lot of words and a good death with little else to show for it.

<sup>250</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 3.47. We are not given a timeframe for how long this revolt was but based on Tiberius' response it could only have been a matter of weeks at most. Walbank (1972) 163 notes the insignificance of the revolt as well.

<sup>251</sup> Seager (2005) 142. Tiberius would hardly be in Rome much after these years, let alone heading to Gaul himself.

<sup>252</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 4.18-20. Silius was put on trial for both conspiring with Sacrovir and extorting the Gauls after the fighting. While Tacitus claims these were trumped up charges, he admits that the extortion at least was not a complete invention. See the following chapters for demonstrations of Gallic wealth. The Aedui in particular could not have been too badly hurt as they were the first granted senatorial rights less than a generation later. Note also that the Gauls did ask for restitution (Tac. *Ann.* 4.20.1) so they may not have had the pull necessary to do so but the Gallic assembly may have put forward the evidence. See Christopherson (1968) 357.

<sup>253</sup> Wightman (1985) 64 notes that Indus may have had a longstanding rivalry with Florus, certainly they were of the same social class and this revolt may have simply given Indus the chance to do away with a potential impediment to his own rise in power. All of the leaders, as Julii Gauls, would have been of similar if not the same social rank and may have had other connections as well but it is not possible to flesh this out more.

<sup>254</sup> Sherwin-White (1939) 251-252.

Life in the Three Gauls, it would seem, continued on as before. The real change was in Roman attitudes. As mentioned above, this revolt seems to have revived the *terror Gallicus*, which had lain dormant for some years. Germany had held the popular attention, especially after the defeat of Varus. The Gauls were allies at best, weakened subjects at worst. Now the populace recalled the panic of a Gallic attack and this fear would continue to taint relations in years to come.

## Caligula

Out of all the Julio-Claudian emperors, one would not expect Caligula to have had that much of an influence on Roman Gaul. After all, he was in office for only four short years and had to fight the senate for most of that time, a situation that limited his impact on the empire in general, let alone a specific region. Yet he spent more time in Gaul as emperor than any other member of his dynasty except Augustus himself, a historical fact that is often lost in the morass of attempted coups and honours for horses. It was because of one of these assassination attempts that Caligula travelled to Gaul in the first place in 39 CE, roughly two years into his reign.

Caligula had already survived an attempted assassination by a group of senators not long before but the next attempt hit far closer to home. Two of Caligula's sisters, Livia and Agrippina, were involved in the plot, as were their husbands. Their involvement alone was dangerous enough but the real threat came from the commander of the Upper Rhine legions, Gaetulicus.<sup>255</sup> He had held this position for two decades and thus had a firm grip on his troops who were the closest military forces to Rome itself. When Caligula learned of the plot, he quickly had the conspirators he knew of in Rome arrested and then rushed into Gaul with a hastily assembled army. This bold move managed to catch Gaetulicus completely off guard and he was unable to organize any sort of resistance. Caligula had him arrested and executed, replacing him with Galba, who would also play an important role in Gaul in the future.<sup>256</sup> This march into Gaul would be notable but largely superfluous to any understanding of Gallic attitudes had Caligula not remained there for some time. Instead of returning to Rome, Caligula took an interest in the military affairs of the region.

The exact chain of events after Caligula stopped the conspiracy is difficult to piece together from the sources, as those writing about Caligula spent a great deal of time trying to make him seem insane

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<sup>255</sup> Dio 59.22-23; Suet *Cal.* 24.

<sup>256</sup> See below, Chapter 8.

even when he was acting rationally.<sup>257</sup> For example, Caligula's march to Germania was said by Suetonius to have been a means of recruiting more men for his Germanic bodyguard; but Suetonius also claims that the emperor assembled an army from across the empire to do so.<sup>258</sup> Clearly Caligula needed these troops for something else, as a force of this size to hire guards makes no sense. Dio makes a similarly odd claim that Germania was only a pretext and that Caligula's true goal was to plunder wealthy Gaul. This seems plausible enough at face value but Dio also writes that the army gathered to do this numbered 200,000 to 250,000.<sup>259</sup> Not only would this have been extreme overkill but the expense of such an army would drain more than it could loot.

So what was really happening in Gaul at this time? Ironically enough, Suetonius gives us the clues. In his biography of Galba, he mentions that in the fall of the year when he became governor, he repelled barbarians who had advanced into Gaul on raids.<sup>260</sup> As well, his *Life of Vespasian* mentions that the future emperor proposed in the senate special games to be held to mark Caligula's victory over the tribes of Germania.<sup>261</sup> Even Suetonius' attempts to mock Caligula points to military activity, as when he claims that Caligula performed a cavalry raid on some of his own German bodyguards, returning to camp with branches cut from trees on the far bank of the Rhine.<sup>262</sup> It is another event that is easy to dismiss as farce, but it was likely to have been a training exercise, practicing fording the river or even cutting back the trees on the far side to prevent ambushes.<sup>263</sup> Dio also gives a hint as he claims that the emperor had himself acclaimed *imperator* several times.<sup>264</sup> Clearly there was trouble along the Rhine with the Germanic tribes and they were deemed serious enough to warrant the gathering of a large army to deal

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<sup>257</sup> Winterling (2011) 108-111 points out the difficulties with this particular chain of events.

<sup>258</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 43.

<sup>259</sup> Dio 59.22.

<sup>260</sup> Suet. *Galba* 6.2-3.

<sup>261</sup> Suet. *Ves.* 2.3.

<sup>262</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 45.1.

<sup>263</sup> Winterling (2011) 114. The fact that the emperor himself took part in this exercise is significant. He was clearly trying to mingle with his troops and prove his ability to lead.

<sup>264</sup> Dio 59.22. Campbell (1984) 124 agrees that these were real acclamations based on Germanic encounters.



with them.<sup>265</sup> Caligula deemed the situation so important that rather than return to Rome for the winter when the campaigning season was over, he only withdrew from the front and set himself up in Lugdunum.<sup>266</sup>

While he was there he began raising funds to pay for his army. Here we can at last get a voice from the Gallo-Romans as they were the ones who financed the troops. Dio claims that this was done in part by Caligula going over the tax rolls and giving instructions to execute the richest inhabitants.<sup>267</sup> There is no indication that this was carried out, even in the rest of Dio's account but the emperor found another way to raise funds that was even more effective. As part of the punishment for their involvement in the conspiracy against him, Caligula auctioned off all the household effects of his sisters, including slaves and even freedmen, presenting them to the wealthy men of Roman Gaul.<sup>268</sup> This proved to be so successful that Caligula gave the order for other valuable imperial items that had accrued under the previous two emperors to be packed up and shipped to Gaul so that they too could be auctioned off.<sup>269</sup> The sheer size of the shipments was such that private vehicles had to be seized to transport them all. So many were taken for these shipments that the grain supply was affected and Rome experienced a shortage.<sup>270</sup> Dio claims that those who attended these auctions (apparently led by Caligula himself) were compelled to buy items but this again seems unlikely. If that had been the case it would have been easy enough to simply not to attend, especially since the leading men of Roman Gaul did not normally live in Lugdunum but rather amongst their own tribes.

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<sup>265</sup> Balsdon (1934) 79-81 covers these excursions into Gaul.

<sup>266</sup> The city had played host to an emperor before and would do so again with Vitellius, see Chapter 8.

<sup>267</sup> Dio 59.21-22. One instance has Caligula ordering the death of the wealthiest citizens when he found he had lost too much money in a dice game.

<sup>268</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 39.

<sup>269</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 38-39; Dio 59.21-22.

<sup>270</sup> A likely hyperbolic and polemic claim against Caligula but it does give an impression of the sheer size of the auctions taking place.

Instead, the wealthy Gallo-Romans likely leapt at the chance to own actual pieces of the imperial court as status symbols of both their wealth and prestige. They were quickly moving towards their request for admittance to the senate and this proved they had both the money and political clout to do so. Suetonius provides an anecdote that illustrates this quite well.<sup>271</sup> One wealthy Gallo-Roman wished to attend one of the many feasts held by Caligula in Lugdunum so he bribed a servant to smuggle him in. This, of course, would not have been all that noteworthy except that the man offered 200,000 sesterces to the servant for this privilege. When Caligula learned of this he had the man buy some small item at the next day's auction and said he could attend the banquet at his personal invitation. This anecdote could explain Dio's story about the Gauls being forced to buy items at the auction. He may have simply extended it from one individual to their entirety. The upper classes were clearly doing quite well under Roman rule and wanted to get closer to the centre of power. The emperor did, in fact show them some favour as in addition to the festivities, including oration competitions in both Latin and Greek, and auctions, Caligula also granted the citizens of Vienna Roman citizenship.<sup>272</sup>

Yet all this accumulated wealth seems to have come to naught. Rather than continue the attacks on Germania, which the Gallo-Romans would have no doubt appreciated as it protected their territory from raids, the emperor turned his attention to Britain instead.<sup>273</sup> Once again, the sources are little help in determining why this shift took place, only that it did. This new direction may have been spurred by the dispute over the succession of the British king Cynobellinus, just the kind of internal dispute that Romans were so adept at exploiting.<sup>274</sup> The circumstances could have lead to a quick victory and a highly prestigious one as Julius Caesar had shown (or at least attempted) before and Claudius would

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<sup>271</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 39.

<sup>272</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 20 and Dio 59.22. Jullian (1913) vol iv 163-4, is particularly dismissive of these festivities, lambasting them as mere follies.

<sup>273</sup> Whether this was intended to be a real invasion or simply a show of strength to intimidate the British has been debated back and forth several times. See Davies (1966) for the view that it was only a show of strength and the rebuttal by Philips (1970) asserting that it was a planned invasion that simply failed due to a mutiny by the troops. Cf. Balsdon (1934) 88-95, who also argues that a mutiny took place.

<sup>274</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 44.

demonstrate just three years later.<sup>275</sup> Britain probably looked like a far better option than Germania which had been mismanaged ever since Varro's disaster in 9 CE.<sup>276</sup> Furthermore, the situation in Rome was becoming more tense and Caligula felt the need to return there soon and with victory behind him. He lacked the military experience that Augustus, Tiberius, and his own father had been able to boast of; an easy victory in Britain could give him all the prestige he needed. Unfortunately for the emperor, this too was denied to him. The invasion never took place<sup>277</sup> and Caligula was forced to give away much of the wealth he had accumulated from the auctions to the soldiers.<sup>278</sup> He returned to Rome and was soon after assassinated.

This episode in Gallic history shows just how successful the leading Gallo-Romans were at the time. Almost unheard of wealth was in the hands of the prominent men, allowing them essentially to finance an entire army for Caligula while accruing tokens of legitimacy from him. The value of these imperial items cannot be overstated, they showed the Roman world that the Gallo-Romans were willing and able to play on the imperial scale. Caligula's successor would not forget the value of Gallo-Roman support and would use it to succeed where Caligula had failed and pull the Gauls all the way to the senate.

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<sup>275</sup> Barrett (1989) 127-129. The unstable situation in Britain made it very easy for Romans to exploit the weaknesses and divisions presented to them once they finally made it across the channel.

<sup>276</sup> Barrett (1989) 129. The disaster would have shown just how easily victory could turn to defeat and Caligula was far more interested in an easy victory to guarantee some prestige.

<sup>277</sup> Balsdon (1934) 88-95 suggests that a mutiny took place but it has been called into dispute several times, recently by Malloch (2001). Notably, there is no mention of a mutiny by any of the sources who will put in any tidbit of information that makes Caligula look bad.

<sup>278</sup> Suet. *Cal.* 46; Dio 59.25. Both authors propose that Caligula was declaring war on Ocean and that he had his troops gather seashells on the shore as a sign of his victory. Again, the truth is likely far less crazy. Whether this was intended to be a real invasion or simply a show of strength to intimidate the British has been debated back and forth several times. See Davies (1966) for the view that it was only a show of strength and the rebuttal by Philips (1970) asserting that it was a planned invasion that simply failed due to a mutiny by the troops. Cf Balsdon (1934) 88-95, who also argues that a mutiny took place due to a fear of crossing the ocean which would explain why Caligula himself went out in a ship. Barrett (1989) 135f suggests that it may have simply been posturing on Caligula's part.

## Claudius

The emperor Claudius found himself in a rather precarious position at the beginning of his reign. Relying on Praetorian support, he had no personal accomplishments to shore up his power base, with the senate and the common people of Rome both regarding him as little more than a joke. Fortunately for him, Caligula had left him a campaign that was ripe for the taking, with many of the preparations already completed. Claudius would conquer Britain and thus legitimize his rule in the eyes of the Romans and the provincials.

Unlike Caligula, who prepared and campaigned with his forces the entire time, Claudius would remain in Rome during both the preliminary build-up and even the initial landing on the island. This decision was not without merit since Caligula had chastened the Germans for their raids just a few years before and they were showing no signs of causing trouble again just yet.<sup>279</sup> Likewise, the Gallo-Romans seemed not just complacent in their new role as provincials but their exuberance for the imperial goods auctioned off showed a willingness and desire to become even more Roman, at least among the elites. Additionally, Caligula had already raised new legions which could be left along the relatively quiet Rhine frontier while Claudius pulled veteran troops from the Rhine and Spain for the British expedition.<sup>280</sup> Thus, Claudius could be confident that the expedition would be well staffed and would not have to worry about enemies at their rear. Once the initial landings had taken place and a foothold was well secured along the Thames, Claudius set out from Rome with a substantial entourage accompanying him.<sup>281</sup> This group included Praetorian guards, Senators and their own entourages, members of the

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<sup>279</sup> See previous chapter for the Germanic excursions under Caligula.

<sup>280</sup> Osgood (2011) 88-89. These troops were shuffled around the empire, one legion from Spain, two from the Rhine (one Upper and one Lower), and the fourth legion taken from as far as Pannonia. Caligula's green legions filled the holes left along the Rhine.

<sup>281</sup> Dio 60.19-23. The initial assault was led by Plautius. Once the soldiers were convinced to actually cross to Britain, the Romans made quick work of the Britons. Dio suggests that heavy resistance had caused Plautius to send for Claudius but it is more likely that it was agreed beforehand to let Claudius lead the largest battle. See Osgood (2011) 90.

imperial staff, and his promising young son-in-law. To these were joined other army contingents as Claudius passed through Gaul, including elephants.<sup>282</sup> Such a spectacle could only have impressed the Gallo-Romans and was likely made all the more spectacular when Claudius returned through Gaul little more than a fortnight later having won a major victory and leaving little more than mopping up operations for his commanders.<sup>283</sup> The expedition must have impressed the Gallo-Romans a good deal for when Claudius celebrated a triumph for his victory in Britain, the silver crown sent from Gallia Comata weighed an astounding nine thousand pounds.<sup>284</sup> Clearly Claudius was right not to worry about the Gauls rebelling while Britain was being subdued as they showed pride in the empire's accomplishment as if they were true Romans. Soon, in fact, they would make a request that would put them further along that path.

As we have seen, citizenship was flourishing among the Gallo-Romans.<sup>285</sup> Some families could trace their line back for several generations of Gauls who had Roman citizenship and these men were usually immensely rich landholders.<sup>286</sup> There was a second group of wealthy Gallo-Romans, however, merchants who had benefitted greatly from the *Pax Romana* in Gaul and the increasingly well-developed infrastructure. The road network that had been initially constructed by Agrippa was essentially finished by Claudius, helping internal trade even more.<sup>287</sup> It is likely that the new Claudii Gauls, having obtained their citizenship through Claudius, emerged from the merchant classes so that

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<sup>282</sup> Dio 60.21. How and why he would bring elephants to Britain is not discussed. They most likely served a propagandistic purpose, showing the power Claudius had and a means of frightening the Britons, who were unlikely to have seen the animals before.

<sup>283</sup> Dio 60.21 and 60.23.1. The latter passage claims that Claudius spent only sixteen days in Britain out of six months away from the capitol. The rest would have been travel time to and from the island with a no doubt leisurely pace set.

<sup>284</sup> Plin. *Nat.* 33.54. This also serves as another example of the wealth the Gauls had available to them, even after the auctions just a few years prior. Laubscher (1976) argues that these are visible on the victory arch celebrating the conquest.

<sup>285</sup> See previous chapters, particularly 3.

<sup>286</sup> See Drinkwater (1978) for these Julii Gauls and their prominence.

<sup>287</sup> Chevallier (1972) 185 credits Claudius with the completion of the Agrippan roadways, possibly to help the movement of troops for the British campaign.

their wealth could better be exploited by the emperor.<sup>288</sup> The chief towns of the Treveri and the Ubii were both given full colonial status, a great benefit to these communities with close ties to the legions.<sup>289</sup> Claudius clearly never forgot the territory he was born in and Lugdunum, his birth city, was granted the title of Claudia, while Agrippina's birthplace of Cologne became Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium.<sup>290</sup> Claudius was proving to be the best patron yet for the Gallo-Romans with the honours he was giving to them.<sup>291</sup> Yet the largest increase in the fortunes of the Gallo-Romans was yet to come: Claudius brought them into the Senate.

In the year 48 CE, while Claudius was censor, he was petitioned by the Gallo-Romans of Gallia Comata for the privilege to join the senate.<sup>292</sup> There were, understandably, some objections raised regarding this idea but it seems that Claudius was willing to argue in favour of the Gauls. We have two accounts of this speech, one by Tacitus and, remarkably, one apparently recording a significant part of Claudius' actual words.<sup>293</sup> The latter was found inscribed on a bronze plate in the city of Lyon, or Lugdunum as it would have been when the inscription was recorded. It would be best to look at Claudius' recorded words first, which may reflect his genuine arguments more than Tacitus' invented speech. Claudius begins with a collection of examples from Roman history showing that innovative proposals such as his are not to be feared, from the time of Romulus right up to Augustus and Tiberius. Next, he discusses the Gallic elite that were already part of the Roman magistracies, largely from Gallia Narbonensis. His final argument rests on the loyalty of the Gauls since the conquest by Julius Caesar. For

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<sup>288</sup> Drinkwater (1978) 833f. Others have argued that the Julii were replaced by the Claudii at around this time [e.g. Jullian (1913) vol iv 174; Grenier (1937) 526] but Drinkwater shows that this was not necessarily the case. For the rise in Claudii in general see Laet (1966) 955.

<sup>289</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 12.27.

<sup>290</sup> Suet. *Claud.* 2. Griffin (1982) 415.

<sup>291</sup> Jullian (1913) vol iv 171f.

<sup>292</sup> I here follow Cunningham (1914) 132-135; (1915) 57-60; and Last (1934) 58-60 who do not believe that provincials such as the Gauls lacked a right to stand for the senate but had not yet been granted the privilege by the emperor although arguments for a lacking right are occasionally made.

<sup>293</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.23-25 and *CIL* xiii 1668, respectively. Since both accounts survive relatively intact, these speeches have been examined from a variety of positions by many scholars. Fabia (1929) provided a full edition of the tablets.

many scholars, the speech is filled with problems.<sup>294</sup> Even though we only have two short sections, it manages to ramble and depart onto pointless tangents regarding Etruscan history that do not back up his argument. His examples of leading men from Gallia Narbonensis include an equestrian (hardly the most relevant) and two disgraced senators. His speech is even interrupted by outbursts from senators which betray the prejudice they held against non-Italian senators, let alone those from Gallia Comata. His concluding remarks, at least, seem more sound. He points out the loyalty of the Gauls, as they did not turn on his father, Drusus, when he was called away to war in Germania even though they were undergoing a census at the time, something the Gauls would be unused to. This is indeed a fair point but it neglects to mention the rebellion that had taken place in 21 CE by Florus and Sacrovir, something the senators are unlikely to have forgotten.<sup>295</sup> Of course, there are other views which defend Claudius from accusations of being an incompetent speaker. His foray into Etruscan history reflects the innovation inherent to the Roman system, appropriate, perhaps since his own position as emperor was still quite novel. By discussing Priscus, who was barred from office in Tarquinii because he was the child of a Corinthian immigrant and an impoverished Tuscan noblewoman, Claudius is making arguments against objections based on birth, nationality, wealth, and previous office, all of which were highly relevant.<sup>296</sup> Even those sections which some have taken to be interruptions from Senators could simply be rhetorical flourishes on Claudius' part.<sup>297</sup>

Tacitus attempted to shore up the emperor's arguments a good deal in his account.<sup>298</sup> He begins by putting easily countered arguments in the mouths of nameless advisors of Claudius. His advisors

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<sup>294</sup> Osgood (2011) 165-7 covers a lot of these problems.

<sup>295</sup> See above, Chapter 3.

<sup>296</sup> Wellesley (1954) 20. It is unclear whether the lines asking if it is not preferable to have Italian senators over provincials and especially the lines urging Claudius to get to the point of his speech are interjections from senators or rhetorical flourishes. The second line, in particular could be seen as a bit of humour on Claudius' part.

<sup>297</sup> Wellesley (1954) 21-22.

<sup>298</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.23-25. Not all agree that the following arguments make for a stronger speech, see Wellesley (1954) 25-26 and Vittinghoff (1954) 369. Compare Syme (1953) 31, who clearly viewed Tacitus' speech as superior saying it granted the argument "proportion, coherence and power."

make it clear that they would prefer Italian senators at least and even these they grant only grudgingly to the non-Latins.<sup>299</sup> They will not stand for the grandsons and great-grandsons of the men who had besieged Julius Caesar at Alesia becoming senators, saying it would vulgarize the positions and honours. They even raise the spectre of the sack of Rome in 390 BCE, showing that event was always in the back of the Roman mind when dealing with Gauls and that the *terror Gallicus* was always looming behind any Gallo-Romans relations, whether as a true fear or a rhetorical tool against the Gallo-Romans.<sup>300</sup> The advisors also contrast the "poor" senators from Latium to the opulent Gallo-Romans who were asking for admittance.<sup>301</sup> Tacitus' Claudius manages neatly to counter these arguments by drawing upon Roman history much like Claudius' speech found on the tablet, although the examples used are different.<sup>302</sup> He points out that many leading patrician families had their origins in other cities, including the Julii from Alba and his own Claudii from the Sabines.<sup>303</sup> Others, he states, have come to Rome from Spain or Gallia Narbonensis and yet they have not betrayed Rome to their homelands.<sup>304</sup> He also dismisses the arguments from past battles with the Gauls since the Romans had given hostages to the Tuscans, passed under the yoke of the Samnites, and fought against other Italians who now enjoyed senatorial ranks.<sup>305</sup> Finally, their wealth should not be considered a detriment but a bonus; by making the Gallo-Romans senators, they will spend their money in Rome and for the empire rather than

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<sup>299</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.23. Vittinghoff (1954) 354 argues that this either reflects a real sentiment held by some senators at the time or, perhaps more likely, that Tacitus is reducing the opponent's case to absurdity. Complaining about Italian senators so long after their inclusion does seem a bit extreme.

<sup>300</sup> Perhaps even more so because this allusion is absent from Claudius' speech, meaning that objections based on this bit of shared history may have seemed more relevant to Tacitus' readers than Claudius' original audience. See Vittinghoff (1954) 369.

<sup>301</sup> Syme (1953) 31 calls these arguments "trivial and emotional."

<sup>302</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.24. It is worth noting that any points Tacitus appears to add to Claudius' speech may have been found in the missing section of the tablet.

<sup>303</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.24. Also note here, as Schillinger-Häfele (1965) 450, that Tacitus is closely tying the acquisition of Roman citizenship to magisterial and senatorial recruitment. The Claudii ancestor becomes *simul* a citizen and the head of a patrician house, at that time a de facto senator.

<sup>304</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.24. Sherwin-White (1967) 60 notes that this is an acceptance of foreign peoples who have become Romanised rather than a blanket statement of tolerance.

<sup>305</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.24.



hoarding it in Gaul.<sup>306</sup> Claudius' speech is followed by a resolution of the senators and the Gallo-Romans were granted senatorial rights in the capital.<sup>307</sup>

The Aedui were the first granted the right to become Roman senators, a privilege that reflected their close relationship with the Romans since before the conquest.<sup>308</sup> In granting this privilege, the senate was ignoring the fact that the Aedui were heavily involved in Sacrovir's revolt, though not officially.<sup>309</sup> Evidently this fact was either easily forgotten or easily overlooked. It was not long, however, before other Gallic communities could boast their own senatorial families.<sup>310</sup> This led to the Gallo-Romans commemorating the passage of this resolution by inscribing the bronze tablets found in Lugdunum. The fact that the tablets were found here, rather than the chief city of the Aedui, Augustodunum, implies that it was a Gallic Council, during one of their annual meetings in the city, which made this request to the emperor, perhaps going through the well connected families of the Aedui to do so.<sup>311</sup> The fact that the Gauls themselves made this request shows just how Romanized the upper echelons of their society had become. Far from waiting and watching for the ideal time to make a break with the empire, they instead wished to strengthen their ties even more. This a mere generation after Florus and Sacrovir's revolt and, as Tacitus points out, only a few more from the Gauls being independent peoples desperately attempting to hold on to their freedom against the conquest of Julius

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<sup>306</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.24.

<sup>307</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.25. Liechtenhan (1946) 202, claims that this was passed without debate, following from Fabia's edition. This view is opposed by Wellesley (1954) 24-25, who believes that a debate must have taken place since instead of all Gallia Comata being granted senatorial privileges, the Aedui alone were singled out to be first. A debate in the senate may have brought about this result, to at least slow the influx of Gallo-Roman senators and limit them at first to the friendly Aedui.

<sup>308</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.25.

<sup>309</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>310</sup> E.g., the father of Gaius Julius Vindex, an Aquitanian. See the following chapter for more about him.

<sup>311</sup> Audin (1979) 10-12, 122-5. This being said, Lugdunum was an important city to Claudius personally, being his birthplace, so he may have wished the speech inscribed there himself regardless of whether the Gallic council was involved in the request or not.

Caesar.<sup>312</sup> This remarkable shift in such a short period of time highlights the adaptability of the Gallo-Romans.

One other interesting aspect is the senatorial vote on this resolution. As censor and emperor, Claudius had the power simply to grant the request himself but he chose to make the symbolic gesture of having the senate vote on the matter.<sup>313</sup> This was perhaps a bit risky as Claudius was never on the best terms with a senate that looked down on him and the interruptions in the recorded speech indicate quite clearly that not everyone was on board with the idea. Tacitus' account makes this all the more clear, with the prejudices and outright expressions of *terror Gallicus* being rallied against the idea of Gauls being allowed into the senate. Yet the measure was passed, despite the poor rhetorical skills of Claudius. The importance of wealth may have tipped the balance as it factored into both the arguments for and against. A treasury which had been drained by Caligula's excesses may have held more importance than the dignity of the senatorial seats.<sup>314</sup>

Claudius' influence was still felt in Roman Gaul after the adlection of the Gallic senators. More Claudii Gauls joined the ranks of citizens, the roads were improved, and the border with Germania well looked after. When the emperor was assassinated in 54 CE, the Gallo-Romans lost their greatest advocate. Under Augustus and Tiberius, the Gallo-Romans demonstrated their military abilities and willingness to support Rome; under Caligula they had shown their wealth and ability to bankroll the empire; now under Claudius they achieved the ability to prove their magisterial capabilities to the still biased Roman world. This was the height of Gallo-Roman power and wealth and one could scarcely

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<sup>312</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 11.24. Perhaps an anachronistic view in that most Gallic tribes were subject to other, larger tribes of either Gauls or Germans at the time of Caesar's invasion but they were at least free from Roman oversight which is likely what Tacitus meant.

<sup>313</sup> Griffin (1982) 405.

<sup>314</sup> Wellesley (1954) 31. Tacitus' view on wealth as a factor for Gallo-Roman admittance to the senate may have been a reflection more on his own time than the situation under Claudius.

believe that they would fall so far a mere fifteen years from then. Nero, unfortunately for them, was a disaster for the Gauls.

## Nero

The evidence for the emperorship of Nero is challenging. The ancient sources all contain a strong bias against Nero and the stories of his reign are sometimes too fanciful to believe. We are not really concerned with the tales of Nero's debauchery or his involvement in sports, theatre, and music; and unlike previous Julio-Claudians, who had strong connections with Gaul and the west in general, Nero would focus his attention on Greece and the east. Yet his rule still had profound repercussions for Roman Gaul and would help spark the biggest shift in Gallo-Roman relations for centuries to come. The catalyst for these changes began far from Gaul, in the city of Rome itself, and outside anyone's control: the Great Fire of Rome.

In July of 64 CE the Great Fire of Rome began and continued to burn unabated for nine days.<sup>315</sup> The damage was unprecedented and required massive rebuilding efforts to restore the city. To Nero's credit, he put in a great deal of effort to aid those who had been made homeless by the fire. Temporary dwellings were built and the Campus Martius, Agrippa's buildings, and even his own gardens were opened for those seeking shelter. Additionally, Nero lowered the price of grain and brought in other necessary goods from Ostia to make sure everyone was provided for.<sup>316</sup> Then he began to build. Nero's rebuilding of Rome drastically reshaped the city, with wider avenues and colonnades in front of private dwellings that were designed to lessen the risks of future fires and were paid for by public funds. Cash incentives were granted to private builders to finish their work quickly and up to the set standards. The temples which were damaged or destroyed received major refitting and/or rebuilding.<sup>317</sup> All of this gives Nero the appearance of a benevolent and intelligent leader who saw to the immediate needs of his capital after the worst crisis it had faced in centuries.

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<sup>315</sup> Accounts of the fire can be found in Tac. *Ann.* 15.38-54, Dio 62.16-18, and Suet. *Nero* 38.

<sup>316</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.39.

<sup>317</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.43. The other ancient authors focused on the disaster of the fire itself rather than the rebuilding efforts afterwards.

Of course there was also his grandiose palace built in a space cleared by the fire and so expensive that it managed to "fritter away the resources of a Caesar".<sup>318</sup> As for the rest of his building projects, while they were very beneficial to the city and provided for the displaced poor (aside from the palace), they were very expensive. Here we find the first link to Gaul, as Nero squeezed the provinces (along with the temples and the rich) for all the money he needed. Suetonius claims that "from the contributions which he not only received, but even demanded, he nearly bankrupted the provinces and exhausted the resources of individuals," which, naturally, included the famously wealthy Gauls, whom Caligula had used to finance his failed British expedition and who had the money and clout needed to lobby for inclusion in the Senate under Claudius.<sup>319</sup> Tacitus goes so far as to claim that the provinces were ruined by the heavy burden placed on them due to the rebuilding costs. Roman Gaul was feeling the squeeze alongside the other provinces. There is also an inscription which may be of note regarding the rebuilding, which was recorded in Gaius' *Institutes*.<sup>320</sup> It records an offer extended to Latini citizens giving them the right to build within the city of Rome. While it cannot be dated aside from the reign of Nero, it would make a great deal of sense for this to have followed the fire as it follows with the other incentives Nero offered. Also of note is the fact that a great many of these colonies would have been situated in Roman Gaul (Lugdunum, etc.) and that many native Gauls who had obtained Roman citizenship, could have been residing within one of them. Thus there may have been an influx of Gallo-Romans after the fire, buying up plots of land that used to belong to native Romans, although this is supposition based upon the inscription which does not single out any region in particular, only colonies. This could only have strained tensions between the two groups more.

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<sup>318</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.42.

<sup>319</sup> Suet. *Nero* 38.3. Dio 62.18.5 echoes this same method of acquisition. See above for the wealth of the Gauls under previous emperors. It is probable that Suetonius is being hyperbolic about the burden placed on the provinces in order to paint Nero in a worse light. That said the expense of the rebuilding would have been large and is mentioned in other sources as well.

<sup>320</sup> Gai. *Inst.* 1.33. Coskun (2009) 59-60 interprets the Latini as Latini coloniarii.

As discussed earlier, the Roman perspective on the Gauls was often negatively coloured by the sack of Rome in 390 BCE.<sup>321</sup> The disaster of the fire echoed the destruction of the sack and references to it, both implicit and explicit, are rife throughout the ancient accounts. Tacitus tells us that when the Sibylline books were consulted after the fire, sacrifices and rites were to be offered to four gods to appease them and ask them to spare the city: Vulcan, Ceres, Prosperpina, and Juno. For three of these gods the significance is quite clear as Vulcan is the god of fire, and Ceres and Prosperpina both had temples near the origin of the fire. Juno's importance is harder to determine, especially since the Capitoline had escaped the fire, unless one views the fire through the lens of the sack of 390 BCE. Juno Moneta is the incarnation that was being beseeched, the same Juno whose geese had warned Capitolinus of the Gauls' sneak attack and was strongly tied to the sack and reconstruction of Rome after the Gauls were defeated.<sup>322</sup> Tacitus writes that some found significance in the date of the fire since July 19 was not only the day the fire started but also the traditional date for the sack and that an equal number of days, months, and years had passed between the sack and the fire.<sup>323</sup> Tacitus makes another deliberate reference to the sack when he talks of the rebuilding efforts, contrasting the supposed indiscriminate and piecemeal work done after the sack to the deliberate and well planned streets after the fire.<sup>324</sup>

There are also more oblique references such as Tacitus' echoes of Livy's account of the sack when Tacitus describes the *clades*, disaster, of the fire and the rebuilding as a *nova urbs*, a new city.<sup>325</sup> Tacitus is not alone in making this connection as Cassius Dio claims that the people mourned their

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<sup>321</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>322</sup> Champlin (2003) 194.

<sup>323</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.41. From the traditional date of 390 BCE it had been 454 years or 418 years + 418 months + 418 days: Koestermann (1968) 245-246. Like many numerological observations from ancient sources, this is a dubious claim at best but it does highlight the connections that were being drawn between the sack and the fire.

<sup>324</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.43.

<sup>325</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 15.38, 15.43; Livy 5.42, 5.53.

shared tragedy by recalling that once before most of the city had been laid waste by the Gauls.<sup>326</sup> He also wrote that the disaster was unparalleled either before or since except for the Gallic invasion.<sup>327</sup> Even Suetonius, who blames the fire entirely on Nero, makes reference to the spoils of the Gallic wars being lost in the fire.<sup>328</sup> Clearly for the ancient authors these two events were connected and it was impossible to think of one without recalling the other. While the Christians bore most of the contemporary blame for the fire and Nero took on most of it after his death, the recollection and newfound prominence of the sack of Rome could not have helped Gallo-Roman relations. Italy, if not necessarily Rome itself, was still the largest recruitment area for legionnaires who served along the Rhine.<sup>329</sup> Even if they were not present for the fire and the rhetoric that followed, they surely would have heard the news and quite probably, the conflation with the Gallic sack. These men would soon prove that they were ready to turn on the Gallo-Romans if given the chance and such a stark reminder could only exacerbate their prejudices. As well, since Claudius' reign, there were Gauls serving in the Senate, so they would have had firsthand exposure to the correlation of their people and destruction at Rome. While we cannot know the mood of Roman Gaul at the time, in a few short years it would become clear just how far they felt themselves pushed by the repercussions of the fire.

Gallo-Roman tensions seem to have finally come to a head when Gaius Julius Vindex began a rebellion in March 68 CE. He was said to be a descendent of Aquitanian kings. His father had been a senator, probably brought into the senate by the emperor Claudius in 48 CE. He followed in his father's footsteps and was not only a senator but also the governor of Gallia Lugdunensis in 68 CE.<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> Dio 62.17.3.

<sup>327</sup> Dio 62.18.2.

<sup>328</sup> Suetonius *Nero* 38.2. It is not completely clear whether this was the spoils from the early wars with Gaul or Caesar's conquest but they are mentioned alongside the Punic spoils and other items from antiquity which would imply the former.

<sup>329</sup> Parker (1958) 176. Most of the Rhine army was composed of Italians or Narbonensians.

<sup>330</sup> Epitome of Cassius Dio 63.22.1. The location of Vindex's governorship is somewhat of an open question. Although most scholars work under the assumption that he was governor of Lugdunensis, no ancient source

Interestingly, it was in this capacity, that of a Roman senator and governor rather than a Gallic aristocrat, that Vindex's rebellion started.<sup>331</sup> Vindex began by sending out letters to other governors, asking them to join him in overthrowing Nero.<sup>332</sup> Nearly all of those he sent such a letter to forwarded them to Nero, tipping off the emperor that trouble was brewing in Gaul. Only Servius Sulpicius Galba, the governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, refrained from turning over his letter. Despite this lackluster show of support from his fellow governors, Vindex went ahead with the revolt, perhaps judging that others would join him once the rebellion was underway since Nero was so unpopular. This turned out to be at least partially true as when Vindex sent another letter to Galba inviting him to become the new emperor, Galba accepted.<sup>333</sup> Despite this alliance, however, Galba was not quick to move outside his own province and thus was not able to help Vindex when the latter ran into opposition.

Vindex's problems began almost immediately. It became clear that he did not have widespread support and, more importantly, lacked military backing. Lugdunensis had no strong legionary presence and the forces on the Rhine did not support the revolt. Instead, he was able to garner some local support from the tribes of southern Gaul, the Aedui of Lugdunensis, the Arverni of Aquitania, the Sequani of Belgica, and the city of Vienna in Narbonensis.<sup>334</sup> While this gave the revolt a pan-Gallic appearance, in reality most of the tribes remained indifferent to Vindex's call to "succour [themselves], and succour the Romans."<sup>335</sup> Even the urban cohort stationed in Lugdunum, the most important settlement in Lugdunensis and arguably of all Gaul, refused to join in Vindex's revolt and shut him and his supporters out of the city. Even more significantly, the soldiers along the Rhine remained aloof, neither declaring for Vindex and Galba nor making any move to stop them, at least at first.

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clarifies which province he governed. That said, Belgica is highly unlikely due to the location of the rebellion which leaves only Aquitania and Lugdunensis. The later is more central with the rebellion so it is a sound logical step.

<sup>331</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 40f; Matthews (1975) 350; Brunt (1959) 531f, Urban (1999) 65.

<sup>332</sup> Plut. *Galba* 4.2.

<sup>333</sup> Suet. *Galba* 4.3.

<sup>334</sup> Bradley (1978) 244.

<sup>335</sup> Dio 63.22.6.



This changed, however, when Vindex made his biggest mistake: raising a militia force of local Gauls. He called upon those tribes who had pledged their support to furnish him with troops. It is an open question whether Vindex believed he was acting as a Gallic warlord, summoning troops through his ties to the Gallic aristocracy, or as a Roman magistrate, calling upon the local militia in a time of crisis. It seems likely that Vindex was of the latter opinion, based upon his actions thus far during the rebellion. After all, he had expressed no desire to split Gaul from the empire but rather to restore dignity to the emperorship.<sup>336</sup> At no point did Vindex indicate he wanted to be emperor himself or even to restore the republic. Instead it seems that his only goal was to install a better princeps than Nero. This also precludes any desire on his part for a 'free Gaul', separate from the Roman empire and at no point did he express any interest in breaking away.<sup>337</sup>

Despite this, Vindex's raising of what were likely thousands<sup>338</sup> of Gallic troops did not sit well with the legions of the Upper German military zone. They, at least, seemed to view Vindex as little more than a Gallic warlord, despite his high station within the Roman bureaucracy and his expressions of loyalty to the state if not to Nero himself. Later events would show that these men had no loyalty to Nero<sup>339</sup> and thus would have had every reason to side with Vindex, especially now that Galba had joined, giving the whole affair a sense of legitimacy. I believe there was one factor which drove them and their commander, Lucius Verginius Rufus<sup>340</sup>, to make war upon Vindex; the *terror Gallicus*, the fear of the Gauls which had been a defining feature of Gallo-Roman relations since the sack of Rome by

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<sup>336</sup> There may have been talk of Gallic liberty amongst the lower ranks, possibly stirred by Nero's mismanagement of the provinces, but it certainly was not Vindex's viewpoint and any speculation on the motives of the rank and file must remain exactly that from lack of evidence. See Brunt (1959) 549, 553-5, Drinkwater (1983) 42-3, Corbier (1988).

<sup>337</sup> See also Brunt (1959) 548, Drinkwater (1983) 40-1.

<sup>338</sup> Morgan (2006) 23 has the numbers at a possible 100,000.

<sup>339</sup> They would later try to make their own commander emperor several times, although he declined. Dio 63.25.1; Plut. *Galba* 6.3.

<sup>340</sup> Eck (1985) 28-9 has more information on this commander.

Brennus.<sup>341</sup> The legions who every day faced down Germans from across the Rhine could not countenance a Gallic uprising at their backs and that is exactly how they viewed Vindex's rebellion as would soon be made clear.

Only a few short weeks after Vindex's original uprising, the two forces met at Vesontio, modern-day Besançon, which had closed its gates on Rufus.<sup>342</sup> The latter's legions besieged the city and Vindex marched to relieve it. However, there were several exchanged messages and meetings between Vindex and Rufus as the former drew closer to the city.<sup>343</sup> The fact that these negotiations were taking place implies that Rufus at least did not view Vindex as merely a Gallic rebel. It is likely that Vindex had been in contact with Rufus before the rebellion in the same fashion that he had been with the other governors, so Rufus would have had a good idea of his intentions. Exactly what sort of accord they were coming to is impossible to know, although one source even states that Rufus had made a pact to join Vindex's rebellion.<sup>344</sup> Whatever agreement the two men came to, the Roman legions cut short any accord between them.<sup>345</sup> When Vindex's troops approached Vesontio, the Roman forces attacked on their own initiative (*αὐτοκέλευστοι*) and began a battle which the Gallic forces had no hope of winning.<sup>346</sup>

According to Plutarch, some 20,000 of Vindex's men perished, no doubt an inflated number but it does

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<sup>341</sup> Urban (2004) provides a good overview on the origins of the *terror (metus) Gallicus* stretching back to the taking of the city by Gallic forces.

<sup>342</sup> Dio 63.24.1.

<sup>343</sup> Dio 63.24.2;

<sup>344</sup> Dio 63.24.3. Brunt (1959) 538 correctly points out that even Dio says this is a rumour but the existence of negotiations is not given the same warning. Thus it is quite likely that the meetings were taking place; which means that a compact was possible and even likely since Rufus' negotiations would otherwise have been treason. See also Drinkwater (1983) 42.

<sup>345</sup> Morgan (2006) 23 lists the legions involved as IV Macedonica and XXII Primigenia from Upper Germany and detachments of V Alaudae, XV Primigenia, XVI, and I Germanica, although auxiliaries were no doubt involved in the battle as well. Tacitus (*Hist* 4.17) even has Civilis claim later that it was only Batavian and Gallic support which allowed the legions to triumph. According to Mann (1983) 25f and Parker (1971) 173f, these legionnaires would have been recruited largely from Italy or Narbonensis whose population was (mostly) fully Romanized.

<sup>346</sup> Dio 63.24.3. Plutarch (*Galba* 6.3) says that both of the armies forced their leaders into battle but that may amount to the same thing if the Romans attacked and the Gauls retaliated or even just defended themselves.

suggest a large loss of life. Vindex took his own life when he saw the disaster that had befallen his men and the rebellion in Gaul came to an inglorious end.

This is a clear case of the Romans falling prey to the *terror Gallicus*.<sup>347</sup> Rufus had already worked out some sort of arrangement with Vindex, there was no reason for his troops to attack.<sup>348</sup> All the sources make it clear that Rufus had no say in the matter, though, and thus it was the fear of these Gallic rebels which must have seized the legions. It could not have been for riches, Vindex would not have had a massive war-chest, nor could it have been loyalty to Nero which drove them, for they immediately tried to proclaim Rufus emperor. It was simply fear and prejudice which gripped them and led to the destruction of Vindex's forces.<sup>349</sup> This can perhaps be summed up best by the fact that the Rhine legions were now calling the Gauls enemies rather than allies.<sup>350</sup>

Nero's reign saw a change in the trajectory of Gallo-Romans. The other Julio-Claudians all had a strong connection with Gaul, in one way or another, and this usually resulted in benefits for at least the wealthy Gallo-Romans, whether that be citizenship, senate positions, or other means of climbing up in Roman society. Nero, however, focused his attention on the east and the only time Gaul came to prominence was to either tar it with an association with the Great Fire or to delegitimize the grievances of a Roman senator simply because he was a Gaul. Admittedly, Nero's involvement in these events is tangential but Roman Gaul never earned his attention in the way the east did. Yet despite the downward trend, most Gallo-Romans remained loyal to the empire, even Vindex. The ways in which this loyalty was repaid in the following two years would change Gaul for the next two centuries.

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<sup>347</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 42-3 espouses many of the same views on this matter.

<sup>348</sup> Hainsworth (1962) 95 notes that Rufus was disconcerted immediately after the battle as well, meaning he had not wanted that outcome.

<sup>349</sup> Flaig (1992) 244-5; Drinkwater (1983) 42.

<sup>350</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 1.51.



## Year of Four Emperors

The years following Vindex's defeat were rather tumultuous for Gaul, even compared to the other areas of the empire at the time.<sup>351</sup> Roman Gaul suffered through the largess of some emperors, the pillaging of others, and a rebellion on their doorstep which came to involve some Gallic tribes. One would probably have expected a wider scope to the involvement in the latter and yet most of Gaul stayed loyal, or as loyal as possible when emperors were shifting every few months. The ways in which the Romans repaid this loyalty would thrust the Gauls onto the path they followed for two centuries. First, though, they had to make it through the Year of the Four Emperors.

Despite the defeat and the loss of so many men, things began to look up for the tribes which had supported Vindex soon afterwards. Nero lost control not long later and Galba was offered the emperorship by the Senate. The new emperor did not forget that he owed his new position to Vindex's initiative and those tribes which had supported him were rewarded with grants of Roman citizenship, remissions of taxes, and land grants.<sup>352</sup> Of course, these grants had to come from somewhere and the northern tribes such as the Treveri and Lingones, which had not supported Vindex, bore the brunt of the cost.<sup>353</sup> Matters only became worse when A. Vitellius, commander of the lower German army, was declared emperor by his troops in opposition first to Galba and then to Otho when the latter overthrew the former. Those tribes which were on the marching paths of Vitellius' lieutenants were forced to provide supplies to the legions. Four thousand Gallo-Romans were slaughtered at Divodurum, the urban centre of the Mediomatrici, today's Metz, and settlements further along the path of march pleaded with the legions to spare them, not having rebelled at any point.<sup>354</sup> The Helvetii in particular suffered harshly

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<sup>351</sup> Judea may be the only reasonable comparison and even there the locals had to worry much less about the rapidly swapping claimants to the throne, being too distant from Rome and too caught up in their own rebellion.

<sup>352</sup> Plut. *Galba* 22-23; Tac. *Hist.* 1.8, 1.51. Chastagnol (1995) 185-7 has more on the effects of these grants.

<sup>353</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 43; Brogan (1953) 47.

<sup>354</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 1.63.

as they had refused to recognize Vitellius.<sup>355</sup> A poorly organized resistance by their tribe was swiftly put down with thousands dead or enslaved. The new emperor himself set a leisurely pace on his march to Italy and, in fact, had a prolonged stay in Lugdunum, where his expensive tastes were said to have done almost as much damage as his army's march.<sup>356</sup>

The Three Gauls had been in a state of upheaval for nearly a year by this point and the strain was definitely showing. One particular incident shows just how frustrated the Gallic people were by this time. A Boian commoner named Mariccus declared himself a god and a liberator of the Gallic provinces and managed to attract a following of around 8000 people which plundered territory of the Aedui. Eventually, Aeduan militia and a few cohorts sent by Vitellius were able to stop the revolt. Mariccus himself was captured and later executed by Vitellius.<sup>357</sup> Previous uprisings had always been led by members of the Gallic aristocracy but the Three Gauls were apparently so shaken by recent events that even a man such as Mariccus was able to gain a strong following.<sup>358</sup> This revolt highlights the disruptions that were taking place in Roman Gaul at the time and the tenuous nature of any appearance of peace.

It was in this context that the final and by far most widespread rebellion of this period took place, that of Julius Civilis. He was from a similar pedigree as Vindex although his attitude differed greatly. Civilis was a prince of the Batavians, a Germanic tribe which had been settled in Gallo-Roman territory and provided auxiliary forces rather than tribute for the privilege.<sup>359</sup> Tacitus claims that agents of Vespasian encouraged Civilis and his formidable Batavians to rebel in order to tie down some of

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<sup>355</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 1.67-70. Brogan (1953) 47; Drinkwater (1983) 44; Wightman (1985) 67.

<sup>356</sup> Suet. *Vitellius* 10.3; Tac. *Hist.* 2.59-64. This may be at least partially propagandistic and drawing from the rhetoric of the victorious Flavians. The empire had just gone through the excesses of Nero so tarring Vitellius with the same brush would have been very effective. That said, it seems more likely for this to be an exaggeration rather than a wholesale invention.

<sup>357</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.61

<sup>358</sup> Brogan (1953) 48; Drinkwater (1983) 45.

<sup>359</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.12.

Vitellius' troops along the Rhine.<sup>360</sup> However, it soon became clear that Civilis had his own motivations and goals for the rebellion.<sup>361</sup> In addition to the Batavians and some German allies from across the Rhine, Civilis hoped to bring the Gallic provinces into his revolt.<sup>362</sup> As such, Gallic auxiliary units which were captured or surrendered were treated very well and encouraged to join Civilis or if they chose not to were sent home with spoils from the Romans.<sup>363</sup> Tacitus also claims that Civilis downplayed Vindex's disastrous defeat the previous year, saying that the Roman victory was due to German and Gallic support of the legions. Thus, according to Tacitus, Civilis was preparing an independent kingdom consisting of both Gallic and Germanic territories and was doing all he could to bring the Gauls onboard willingly.<sup>364</sup> Despite these overtures, the Gallic communities remained very loyal to Rome at first. Gallic reinforcements continued to stream in to support the beleaguered and depleted legions stationed along the Rhine despite their inability to stop Civilis' revolt.<sup>365</sup> This inability to halt Civilis strained and then finally broke the morale of the Rhine legions. With the Roman forces so dispirited, some Gallic tribes began to abandon the empire and instead joined forces with Civilis.

The leaders of the Gallic side of this revolt were Julius Classicus and Julius Tutor from the Treveri and Julius Sabinus from the Lingones, the same tribes which had suffered most under Galba's policies and had rallied to Vitellius' cause.<sup>366</sup> Like Vindex and Civilis, these men bore names that pointed to an aristocratic background with ancestors who received Roman citizenship under Julius Caesar, Augustus or Tiberius at the latest. Both of the Treverans were commanders in the Roman military, probably in charge

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<sup>360</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.13. Timpe (2005) claims that Tacitus is showcasing the blurring of lines between barbarian and Roman ideals with barbarian forces used in a Roman civil war.

<sup>361</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.13; Civilis had already been falsely charged with rebellion and barely escaped execution. He may have thought that an actual rebellion could both protect and enrich him at Roman expense; see Drinkwater (1983) 45. For a slightly different view see Cosme (2011) showing how Civilis may have been manipulated by Roman powers before the beginning of the revolt.

<sup>362</sup> Dyson (1971) 264-5.

<sup>363</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.17.

<sup>364</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.18.

<sup>365</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.25. Drinkwater (1983) 45-6 points out the noteworthiness of this loyalty shown by the Gallo-Romans.

<sup>366</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.55. Timpe (2005) sees the revolt of locally recruited auxiliary units as the biggest danger.

of units drawn from their own tribe. This turned out to be a serious problem for the Romans as the defection of these men and the forces under their influence led to the complete surrender of the legions along the Rhine who had been relying on local reinforcements to make up for their losses.<sup>367</sup> Any doubt there may have been that these men were simply leading an anti-Vitellius movement among the Gauls was immediately shattered when they compelled the troops who were spared to swear allegiance to an *Imperium Galliarum*, a Gallic Empire.<sup>368</sup> Unfortunately for the rebels, this stunning initial success would not last long. Julius Sabinus and his Lingonian militia were defeated by the Sequani, who had remained loyal to Rome. Sabinus himself went into hiding for nine years before he was located and executed.<sup>369</sup> Sabinus' defeat was a significant setback for the revolt but the bigger blow was yet to fall.

The Gallic tribes came together in a grand conference at Reims to discuss what the policy of the Gallo-Romans should be regarding the rebellion. Tacitus says that Julius Valentinus led the delegation from the Treveri and was a fierce advocate for the war, calling to mind the usual arguments against empire and hurling insults upon the Romans.<sup>370</sup> Julius Apex, a Remian, meanwhile was the advocate for the Romans, pointing out the loyalty they were owed and the danger now that the legions were nearly upon them. The position against the rebellion was further strengthened by infighting amongst the Gallic tribes over who would have prominence if they were successful in breaking away from Rome.<sup>371</sup> Thus,

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<sup>367</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 2.57.

<sup>368</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.57-59. Classicus even came out wearing the imperial purple to showcase his new position. Wightman (1985) 68 notes, somewhat ironically, the very Roman nature of this new *Imperium Galliarum*, something that can be seen again with the next iteration of it under Postumus in 260 CE. Of course, there had been no notion of united Gaul before Caesar's invasion so the Gauls owed even this notion to Rome.

<sup>369</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.67. This extremely odd tale went on to become a sort of moralising folk tale of the Romans, showing the loyalty of Sabinus' wife and the harshness of the punishment which followed.

<sup>370</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.68.

<sup>371</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.69. Wightman (1985) 68, Drinkwater (1983) 47, Brogan (1953) 49-51.



the joint decision was declared in the name of the Gallic provinces not to join the rebellion and to tell the Treveri and Lingones, who had determinedly not joined in the resolution, to stop their revolt.<sup>372</sup>

Although Tacitus highlights the petty infighting as the main reason the Gallo-Romans were won over to the Roman side, it is important to note that they did not join the Treveri and Lingones in revolt. Despite everything the Gallo-Romans had been subjected to over the previous year at the hands of the Romans, they chose to continue their loyalty to the empire. They even organized men to be sent to Cerealis, the general Vespasian sent to quell the rebellion. He turned them down, saying that the legions were sufficient to defend the empire.<sup>373</sup> Which, to his credit, they were as he quickly defeated the bulk of the Gallic forces at Trier driving Classicus, Tutor, and Civilis out of Gaul itself.<sup>374</sup> The rebellion was thereafter a very localized affair in Batavian territory before the ultimate surrender of Civilis. What happened to him and the other rebel leaders is unknown though it is probably safe to presume they were executed.

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<sup>372</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.69. Christopherson (1968) points out that this was not the normal meeting of the Gallic council but rather an adhoc assembly by the Remi which, nevertheless, seemed to carry weight.

<sup>373</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.71.

<sup>374</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.75-78. The account of Tacitus goes on to discuss the last attempts at resistance but as they do not involve Roman Gaul these matters will not be discussed here.

## Aftermath

While the rebellions were at an end in Gaul, it was not the end for how the Gallic provinces were affected by them. The lasting effects would shape the Three Gauls for the next two hundred years. There does not seem to be any evidence that there was widespread destruction or retribution in general for those tribes which had joined the rebellion. Even Trier was spared from sacking by Cerealis after his victory there.<sup>375</sup> It was the political ramifications of the rebellions which seem to have shaped Roman Gaul more than any superficial destruction or loss of property. The Gallo-Romans had learned that the Romans did not really consider them to be equals in the empire. Vindex was thought of as a Gaul who had led a Gallic rebellion against Rome rather than a senator who had tried to overthrow an unfit emperor. Their territory was subject to the whim of emperors like Galba who could take land when they needed to appease allies. Even when they refused to join the rebellion of Civilis and offered their support and troops, they were refused and told that the legions, i.e., the Romans, could defend the empire themselves. Tacitus himself said that this action showed the Gauls how despised they were (*nam recepta iuventute facilius tributa toleravere, prouiores ad officia quod spernebantur*).<sup>376</sup>

The Gallo-Romans had made great strides in Romanization since the conquest under Julius Caesar. Roman citizenship was very common among the aristocratic class<sup>377</sup> and since Claudius' reforms there were even Gallo-Roman senators from the Three Gauls such as Vindex and his father. Yet they were never really fully accepted. As discussed in a previous chapter, Vindex's revolt could not be seen as a senatorial protest against a bad princeps, only as a Gallic dynast attempting to wrest control of Gaul from the Romans. Supporting Gallo-Roman forces were rejected by a commander who did not trust

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<sup>375</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.72 and confirmed by Heinen (2002) 78, noting a lack of any destruction in that timeframe.

<sup>376</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.71.

<sup>377</sup> The sheer number of Julii involved in the events described above attests to the widespread nature of Roman citizenship amongst the leaders of the Gallo-Romans. See Drinkwater (1978) for more on the rise and fall of this group. Raepsaet-Charlier (2001) likewise points out the proliferation of Roman names amongst the leading members of Civilis' rebellion although many of these would have been from German tribes.

them to remain loyal. The *terror Gallicus*, the Roman fear of the Gauls, was an ever-present detriment to Gallo-Roman relations and at this point the Gauls seem to have become fed up. After these years it is very difficult to find any senators or equestrians originating in the Three Gauls. Likewise, leading Gallo-Romans no longer controlled the locally raised auxiliaries, increasingly these came under the command of Italian officers and, moreover, these tribal auxiliaries were now often sent away from their province of origin.<sup>378</sup> Gallic aristocratic families continued to exist afterwards, they were not wiped out by the rebellions, although it is likely that there was a diminished male population among those tribes which supported the rebels (e.g., the Treveri, Lingones, etc.).<sup>379</sup> It seems that the Gallo-Romans were actively rejecting a larger role in imperial politics from this point until the third century crisis, some two centuries later. They instead focused on local politics, leading their *civitates* and not straying beyond their tribal territories. It is not until the rise of another *Imperium Galliarum* in 260 CE that we see Gallo-Romans becoming major players in imperial politics and that seems to be because imperial politics became local politics.<sup>380</sup> A similar rise of Gallo-Romans to prominence can be seen during the tetrarchy and throughout the 4th century when Trier was repeatedly used as an imperial residence.<sup>381</sup> In my view, this can all be traced to the events of 68-70 with the generations immediately following staying out of imperial politics due to what occurred and later generations simply following in the footsteps in their ancestors and staying out of imperial politics from tradition. That said, there may be other explanations as to why Gallo-Romans senators and equestrians are so difficult to find in the later 2nd and 3rd centuries and the rebellions of Vindex and Civilis may have only impacted the generation or two that came immediately afterwards.

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<sup>378</sup> Demougin (1999) 361-3 discusses the problems of these locally recruited and deployed auxiliaries in Civilis' rebellion. See also Drinkwater (1979) 98; Wightman (1985) 74; Brogan (1953) 51.

<sup>379</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 5.19 actually claims that the Treveri senatorial class fled, *en masse*, with 113 of them fleeing across the Rhine into Germany.

<sup>380</sup> At least one and perhaps two of the three rulers of the Gallic Empire, Victorinus and Tetricus, were native Gauls and the lower magistracies were no doubt full of Gauls; see Drinkwater (1987) 126-7.

<sup>381</sup> Cf., e.g., Stroheker (1948); Coşkun (2002) 206-210.

Roman biases and prejudices managed to offend the Gallo-Romans enough that they caused a wholesale rejection of a role in imperial politics by the Gallo-Romans despite the social and financial benefits to becoming a senator or equestrian. In fact we know of only a handful of senators from Gaul (excluding the highly Romanized Narbonensis) during the first three centuries after the crisis of 68-70 CE who made up less than 5% of the Senate in the 2nd century.<sup>382</sup> While Narbonensis produced dozens of senators, there are only 11 known with certainty to be from the Three Gauls in the first two centuries, 3 in the first (including both Vindex and his father) and 8 in the second.<sup>383</sup> While there is obviously an increase in the number of senators, the numbers are so small that it still paints the picture of how few Gallo-Romans made their way to the heights of imperial office, especially when one takes into account the increase in epigraphic materials in Gaul during the second century. With the wealth of epigraphic material available, the paltry number of senators from the Three Gauls is noteworthy, especially compared to those from Narbonensis. Also important to note is the lack of continuity amongst the senators; Settapani has done a great deal of work cataloguing the senatorial families but the Julii Gallo-Romans cannot be found, despite their wealth and prominence within Gaul; there are no inscriptions featuring Julian Gaul senators or equestrians and they are absent from any lists of senators or consuls that are available.<sup>384</sup> Likewise, even the work of Talbert, which covers so much of the workings of the Senate, has little to add on the lack of Gallic senators and Chastagnol's account on the origins of senate members similarly has little to say on the non-Narbonensian Gallic senators.<sup>385</sup>

The example of Vindex shows that Gallo-Romans were willing and able to become senators under the Julio-Claudians, that is, they possessed the wealth and power necessary for the posts, yet only this small group took advantage of the opportunity. There is no evidence for Gallo-Romans being

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<sup>382</sup> Barbieri (1952) 453, 457-9, 473. See also Drinkwater (1983) 202; Matthews (1975) 350; Urban (1999) 83.

<sup>383</sup> Burnand (1982) 391-2.

<sup>384</sup> Settapani (2000).

<sup>385</sup> Talbert (1984) and Chastagnol (1992).

excluded by official or unofficial policy so one would have to conclude that they chose not to join, perhaps due to the prejudices of the Romans. Gallo-Romans taking equestrian posts are likewise rare to find. Following Civilis' rebellion, auxiliary units and officers were not allowed to serve locally to hinder further rebellions and this seems to have convinced the Gallo-Romans to abandon military careers as well.<sup>386</sup> Our one outstanding example, an anonymous Treveran (*CIL* xiii 4030 ) who served as an officer in either Britain or Lower Germany, reinforces the view of Gauls eschewing imperial politics. The inscription shows him holding the posts of *flamen Augusti*, *flamen Leni Martis quinquennalis*, *praefectus cohort. Hispanorum equitatae*, *tribunus militum leg. VIII Hispanae*, *praefectus equitum alae Augustae Vocontiorum*. Instead of moving on to a procuratorship, this individual became a leading figure amongst his own tribe.<sup>387</sup> The only imperial post that we have more evidence for is the religious posts tied to the altar outside Lugdunum and that can be seen as a high post within Roman Gaul rather than an imperial position.<sup>388</sup>

Drinkwater makes the case that a historian must be careful not to read too much into the events of 68-70 CE.<sup>389</sup> After all, the vast majority of the Gallo-Romans remained loyal to Rome in a time of great upheaval, and there is no evidence for direct retribution or a break in the acquisition of Roman material goods. While most scholars do not draw any connection between the decline in Gallo-Roman imperial service and the events of these years aside from the relocation of auxiliary forces away from their recruitment area, there does seem to be a connection between the events of 69-71 and the future of Roman Gaul. A closer analysis of the crisis at the end of Nero's reign, in combination with a look at the long-term effects would rather speak to the opposite: that this was the straw that broke the camel's

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<sup>386</sup> Drinkwater (1979) 98.

<sup>387</sup> Drinkwater (1979) 98.

<sup>388</sup> Drinkwater (1979) 94-98, Woolf (1998) 24-5. For example, there is an inscription (*CIL* xiii 3162) of a high priest of the altar of Rome and Augustus named Titus Sennius Solemnis who served in the early 3rd century, indicating some continuity in that post as well as the continued existence of the Gallic council, who voted him the right to a statue and inscription.

<sup>389</sup> Drinkwater (1983) 47.

back for Gallo-Roman relations. There is such a sharp divide between the growth of Gallic influence before 68 and such a marked decline afterwards that the influence of the troubles of these years cannot be overstated. The Romans had demonstrated exactly what they thought of the Gauls and they, in turn, decided they had had enough of being second class citizens in imperial politics.

## The Druids

It has likely come to attention that the druids have been conspicuously absent from the preceding chapters. This is because their evolution is easier to display when all the accounts are examined together.<sup>390</sup> So having gone through the history of Roman Gaul from its conquest by Julius Caesar to the beginning of Vespasian's reign once, we will do so again, now with a particular focus on the druids and their intersections with and reactions to the Roman world.

Cicero is the first Roman we find writing about the druids but only in a passing mention. Yet the passage is quite positive, saying that the druid he had met was a learned man, well versed in natural philosophy and divination.<sup>391</sup> This was Divitiacus, the Aeduan, who was discussed above in the chapter dealing with Caesar's conquest. He was hosted by Cicero's brother while in Rome.<sup>392</sup> There are a few things to note here. First is that Cicero does not mention the political role that Divitiacus' visit was playing at the time. This is in contrast to Caesar, who only writes about Divitiacus' political role in Gaul and not that he was a druid.<sup>393</sup> This would seem to say that a Gaul's role as druid and as an aristocrat were separate and need not have directly influenced each other - at least in the perception of the Roman nobility. The second matter to note is that Cicero does not mention human sacrifice when discussing what role druids played. He was both aware of, and disgusted by, the practice of human sacrifice amongst the Gauls yet he does not tie it to the druids here.<sup>394</sup> It is unclear what should be made of this distinction, if anything, except perhaps that the druids were not necessarily perceived as being stained by the practice of human sacrifice amongst the Romans, even the highest echelons of the senate.

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<sup>390</sup> Webster (1999) has a valuable table of the sources which mention Druids, of which only some are used in this examination. Some contain only a passing mention and others are well after the time period in question.

<sup>391</sup> Cic. *Div.* 1.41.

<sup>392</sup> *De Divinatione* was styled as a dialogue between Cicero and his brother Quintus who had evidently hosted this druid. This is the same Divitiacus whom Caesar deals with in Gaul (see Chapter 1).

<sup>393</sup> In fact, druids are entirely absent from Caesar's account of the war. See below.

<sup>394</sup> Cic. *Pro Fonteio* 14. A defence speech which highlights Roman prejudice against the Gauls.

Caesar is the Roman writer who provides the most detailed account we have of them from any source. While discussing the nature and structure of Gallic and Germanic societies<sup>395</sup>, Caesar claims that there are two leading classes in Gaul: the Druids and the knights.<sup>396</sup> While the latter were the warlords and tribal chiefs whom Caesar most often dealt with, the former had control of all religious matters in Gaul. They served as the teachers of aristocratic youth whether they intended to become druids themselves or not. They served as mediators and judges for every type of conflict within Gaul and if someone was found to have been in the wrong, the druids had the power to ban him from all sacrifices, which essentially made them outlaws from Gallic society. These sacrifices could include human sacrifices, which the druids were also in charge of.<sup>397</sup> Gallic youths would train for up to 20 years before they could be called druids, the length of the training being explained by the need to memorize all the druidic teachings. Caesar writes that the druids would not commit any of their teachings to writing both to ensure that they did not circulate amongst the masses and because having access to the written works would lessen their abilities to recall the information from memory. They would, however, use Greek letters to record more mundane matters and correspondences.<sup>398</sup> Finally, Caesar states that the druids were headed by an archdruid whose position was sometimes contested by arms (although this somewhat contradicts his later statement that the druids do not go to war).<sup>399</sup> In short, according to Caesar, the druids have a very prominent place in Gallic society and politics.

Yet the rest of Caesar's account of the war does not harmonize with his information on the druids. While Caesar deals with many Gallic aristocrats he does not mention druids in the rest of his

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<sup>395</sup> Webster (1999) 7: The placement of these two together was likely not accidental but an argument for not going beyond the Rhine during his conquests. Caesar takes pains to highlight the differences between Gauls and Germans as well as why it is better to not attempt a conquest of the Germans at this time.

<sup>396</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.13f. The scattered nature of this following report on the druids mirrors Caesar's own, which does not seem to be organized in any fashion.

<sup>397</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.13-16 Again, this must be contrasted with Cicero's silence regarding human sacrifice when discussing Divitiacus.

<sup>398</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.14.

<sup>399</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.13-14.



account of the war.<sup>400</sup> One would think that during the Gallic councils which are called several times during the war, the mediating druids would have a central role, yet they are missing. Even Divitiacus, whom Cicero had identified as a druid, is only mentioned in his role as a leader of the Aedui. Caesar never calls him a druid, yet they must have known one another well, as Divitiacus was a strong supporter of Caesar. In fact, recalling the conflict between the Germans and the Gauls, Caesar mentions Divitiacus in the section directly preceding his description of the druids without connecting the two.<sup>401</sup> There is also a possibility that Divitiacus' brother, Dumnorix, was also a druid since one of the reasons he gave for not being able to accompany Caesar to Britain was religious obligations.<sup>402</sup>

The discrepancy may have occurred because Caesar wrote most of this section using information from earlier authors, most notably, Posidonius.<sup>403</sup> While the latter's writings have not survived, both Strabo and Diodorus Siculus mention him as a source and Caesar's account looks very much like a hastily written condensation of some of his passages. The simplifications in Caesar's account (mostly failing to mention the other two intellectual classes among the Celts) are easily explained by the difficult circumstances under which he was writing and that he was more concerned with justifying his actions to the senate than providing an entirely accurate picture.<sup>404</sup> This would mean that the political influence actually possessed by the druids was far more minimal than Caesar's description implies, which fits the rest of his narrative since the druids are completely absent from it.

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<sup>400</sup> As noted by DeWitt (1938) 322.

<sup>401</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 6.12.

<sup>402</sup> Caes. *Gal.* 5.6. Chadwick (1966) hints at this possibility but there is no further proof other than Dumnorix's resistance to Rome which later authors characterised as a druidic trait. As seen in chapter 2, he had other reasons to resist Rome as well.

<sup>403</sup> Chadwick (1966) 17f, Klotz (1910) 120, Ellis (1994) 56. The similarities between Caesar's account and those that are known to have used Posidonius make this quite likely.

<sup>404</sup> Chadwick (1966) 27; Rankin (1987) 275; Tierney (1960) 203. Webster (1999) offers a contrasting view that Caesar was reflecting the situation in Gaul quite well but that the nature of the conquest left the druids with little power either during the fighting or in the Roman Gaul which followed. This would have changed them significantly, as will indeed be seen below.

After Caesar, the accounts of the druids become far more spotty despite the fact that authors would have much greater access now that Gaul was part of the Roman empire. This probably reflects the decline of the druids in both numbers and influence brought about by the Romans' policies and their general presence.<sup>405</sup> From Suetonius, we learn that Augustus banned Roman citizens from the "religion of the druids," which would have been a death knell for them even if other prohibitions had not been placed.<sup>406</sup> Those who were most likely to become druids were the young nobles but they were also the most likely to attain Roman citizenship, either through military service or through their fathers. Since there were so many benefits to becoming a Roman citizen the incentives were tipped away from the druids. Compounding this was the founding of several Roman schools throughout Gaul as part of Augustus' program of Romanization, the largest of which was set up in 12 BCE at Augustodunum.<sup>407</sup> This centre of Roman teaching would become so important that Florus targeted the city during his rebellion in order to secure Gallic youths from across the provinces.<sup>408</sup> With so many Gallic youths being taught in the Roman manner, it could only have weakened the influence of the druids since they would, naturally have fewer adherents.

The next emperor to pass legislation against the druids was Tiberius, at least, according to Pliny the Elder. He states that Tiberius put down the druids and that their few remaining adherents fled to Britain where local cults were still practised.<sup>409</sup> This would raise the intriguing possibility that Tiberius passed this legislation either before the revolt of Florus and Sacrovir, perhaps giving religious reasons for the revolt as well as financial, or that it was passed afterwards since the druids were viewed as an anti-

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<sup>405</sup> King (1990) 233-4 argues that these policies are explicit attempts to grab religious power in Gaul, something that could only be done by limiting the power of the druids.

<sup>406</sup> Suet. *Claud.* 25.

<sup>407</sup> Chadwick (1966) 70-71.

<sup>408</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 3.43.

<sup>409</sup> Plin. *Nat.* 30.4. Rankin (1987) 290 says explicitly that Tiberius started this suppression following the revolt of Florus and Sacrovir, although Pliny's text does not make that completely clear.

Roman element.<sup>410</sup> The slightly less charitable conclusion is that Pliny was mistaken in saying it was Tiberius who passed this legislation rather than Claudius.<sup>411</sup> It is Suetonius who says that in 54 CE Claudius was the emperor who abolished the religion of the druids in the same passage mentioning Augustus' prohibition on Roman citizens practicing it.<sup>412</sup> Again, the timing would be interesting here as Claudius also was the one who admitted Gallo-Romans from Gallia Comata to the Senate in 47 CE.<sup>413</sup> There is no mention of druidic concerns when admitting such men to the senate despite a large contingent being against the admittance of the Gallo-Romans at all. It is possible that this is again a sign of their diminished importance since their anti-Roman stance did not even warrant a mention.<sup>414</sup> One should also note that these measures clearly all failed to stop the druids completely as Tacitus mentions the druids being involved with Civilis' rebellion<sup>415</sup> and there remains scattered references to druids all the way to the 4th century CE.<sup>416</sup> How the druids managed to hold on shows what a powerful influence Roman prejudices could have on Roman Gaul.

There is a noticeable distinction between the accounts of Romans and those living within the Roman empire in the first century BCE and the first century CE. The earlier accounts all contained sections which read as condemnations, almost entirely centred around the practice of human sacrifice and the druids' involvement in it.<sup>417</sup> Yet aside from this instance, for the most part they remain objective recorders of what functions the druids served. It is in the writers of the first century CE that we see

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<sup>410</sup> Aldhouse-Green (2010) 233 notes that *Sacrovir* can be translated as "holy man" which may show that *Sacrovir* was a druid or at least linked to them. It would have added a religious element to his rebellion but it is important to note that there is no mention of this in Tacitus' account.

<sup>411</sup> Haarhoff (1920) 15. Pliny's confusion may stem from Claudius' first name being Tiberius.

<sup>412</sup> Suet. *Claud.* 25; Chadwick (1966) 73.

<sup>413</sup> See above, Chapter 5.

<sup>414</sup> Rankin (1987) 289 points out that their opposition to Roman rule had to be in the back of the emperor's mind and the legislation may have been a salve for those who opposed the adlection of the Gauls.

<sup>415</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.54. See below for more on this prophesy. It must be said that this could be an invention on Tacitus' part.

<sup>416</sup> Chadwick (1966) 81-82. Ausonius' *Parentalia* 25 being the clearest case, where they are prophets and teachers still.

<sup>417</sup> E.g. Caes. *Gal.* 6.16; Strabo *Geogr.* 4.4; Diodorus 5.31. All of which may stem from a Posidonius' bias (see Chadwick (1997) 24-25) or simply an abhorrence to the practice itself.

special venom towards the druids in general.<sup>418</sup> Tacitus calls their sacrifices *sævus*;<sup>419</sup> to Lucan their ceremonies are barbaric;<sup>420</sup> when Mela says the Gauls still possess some of their former savagry he next writes of the druids;<sup>421</sup> for Suetonius the religion of the druids is barbarous and inhuman;<sup>422</sup> finally, Pliny, whom one would think would be more sympathetic to the druids due to his fascination with both medicine and magic and his attribution of these roles to the druids, declares at the end of his section on druids that one can hardly realise how much they owe to the Romans for sweeping away the monstrous conditions where killing and even eating people was the highest religious observance.<sup>423</sup> These are all incredibly damning attitudes taken towards the druids as a whole rather than focusing on the one rite they do not condone. One can easily see a self reinforcing circle where the druids resist Romanization which led to them being seen as disruptive elements and described in harsh terms which fuelled even more resistance from the druids and so on. Yet this would not have happened so readily had the druids retained their hold on upper Gallo-Roman society, but as we have seen, that hold was greatly reduced by the legislative efforts of the emperors. Indeed, every time they emerge into the main narrative of history, they are actively working against the Roman authorities. Both of these instances are from Tacitus, first the druids on the island of Anglesey taking part in a battle against the Roman forces invading the island<sup>424</sup> and again in 70 CE when druids prophesied that the fire in Rome was a sign that the peoples beyond the Alps would come to rule the world.<sup>425</sup> In both cases the druids were taking part in armed resistance to Rome and are named as the chief instigators of the movements. Clearly they were acting to re-establish their positions in the Gallic world and the only way they thought that could happen was to oust the Romans. Which was probably true. With their traditional roles denied to them,

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<sup>418</sup> Chadwick (1966) 70.

<sup>419</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 14.30.

<sup>420</sup> Lucan *Pharsalia* 1.447f.

<sup>421</sup> Mela *De Chorographia* 3.14.

<sup>422</sup> Suet. *Claud.* 25.

<sup>423</sup> Plin. *Nat.* 30.4.

<sup>424</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 14.30.

<sup>425</sup> Tac. *Hist.* 4.54. cf Webster (1999) 14, who claims that prophesy was a key medium through which dissent was voiced.

the druids changed themselves as can be seen in the other main shift in first century CE descriptions, the emphasis of groves.

When modern people think of druids, the image that usually comes to mind is of robed men performing secret rites in groves and other secret natural places but this was far from the historical truth, at least before Gaul was conquered by Rome.<sup>426</sup> Afterwards, almost every source mentions some connection between the druids and groves. The most direct, and most famous, account relating druids to groves comes from Pliny who claims that druids do not perform any rites away from the foliage of their sacred oak groves. He mentions this in connection to a bizarre ritual to harvest mistletoe from a sacred oak that involves a golden cutting tool, bulls, and the full moon.<sup>427</sup> The emphasis in Pliny's work is definitely on the magical and/or medicinal with the teaching and political roles of the druids nowhere to be found.<sup>428</sup> Lucan writes of the druids living in deep groves and uninhabited woods<sup>429</sup> and Mela notes that they teach in remote, sequestered places such as groves or caves.<sup>430</sup> Lastly, Tacitus mentions groves used for sacred rites on the island of Anglesey, which was attacked by Suetonius Paulinus before 61 CE. Since the Romans are confronted by an army that included druids, it is reasonable to conclude that these groves were sacred to them.<sup>431</sup> Where did this grove affinity come from if the earlier sources do not mention it at all? There are certainly some examples of sacred trees in Celtic religions but they may be no more important than sacred trees in any other Mediterranean cults.<sup>432</sup> Oaks, after all, are sacred in quite a few religions. While it is possible that a sort of folk etymology came into play regarding the

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<sup>426</sup> As Freeman (2006) 157 notes, the druids did not worship trees.

<sup>427</sup> Plin. *Nat.* 26.95. This account is perhaps the most famous story of the druids from antiquity, certainly the most widely known outside of academic circles.

<sup>428</sup> Rankin (1987) 291; Webster (1999) 11. Both hold the opinion that this represents a fundamental shift for the druids, away from their traditional political roles and towards secrecy and mysticism.

<sup>429</sup> Lucan *Pharsalia* 450ff.

<sup>430</sup> Mela *De Chorographia* 3.15.

<sup>431</sup> Tac. *Ann.* 14.30. These were British druids rather than Gallic but it still speaks to the druids as a whole, especially since so many other authors link the practice between Britain and Gaul. See Plin. *Nat.* 30.4 and Caes. *Gal.* 6.13.

<sup>432</sup> Rankin (1987) 281, Ross (1968) 62. Trees were representations of the world itself with many branching paths. The idea of a "world tree" is hardly unique, however, and did not necessarily lead to exclusive worship in groves.

druids and the similarity with the Greek word for trees, the other possibility is that the druids actually did migrate to these groves after the conquest of Gaul.<sup>433</sup> With legislation being enacted against them, the druids were forced into hiding and secrecy in order to survive. All the passages that connect the druids to groves also highlight the secrecy of these places. The only times they emerge are when they are directly threatened or see a chance to drive the Romans out.

Thus we have the full transformation of the druids under the Julio-Claudians from aristocratic men prominent in both religion and politics to backwoods hermits eking out an existence along the fringes of Gallo-Roman society, only occasionally venturing into the spotlight when things look the most dire for Rome and then we cannot fully trust our sources as accurate. Even this resistance seems to have petered out after the first century as there is no mention of druidic inspired uprisings or attempted uprisings during, for example, the third century crisis, a point when Rome was far weaker than any time under the Julio-Claudians. As with Roman Gaul as a whole, the druids adapted rather than dying out and managed to survive, albeit in a diminished capacity, at least until the Christians took over the empire.

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<sup>433</sup> Pliny outright claims that the name derivation is part of it (*Nat.* 26.95) but he is likely just supplying his own explanation. Chadwick (1966) 12 and Ross (1968) 89 both argue for a Celtic derivation translating to "wise person" or "philosopher."

## Conclusion

At the end of our examination, we can now answer the questions posed at the start: what were the Gallo-Roman attitudes towards the Romans and how did Roman prejudice shape the history of Roman Gaul? The short answers are: mixed and negatively. It is interesting to note that Roman attitudes on the Gallo-Romans changed relatively little throughout the period we scrutinized. The prejudice and *terror* seemed to always be there, if not in the open then always lurking behind various decisions and policies. Some, such as Claudius, could rise above this stereotyping view and argue for greater inclusion of the Gallo-Romans in the empire but for many the image of the barbarous Gauls seemed to take centre stage. The contrast was the Gallo-Romans who, once brought under the control of the empire, embraced Romanization whole-heartedly. The problem was that they were not embraced in turn by the Roman establishment. A quick recap of what occurred is useful here.

Under Caesar, opinions on the Romans were quite obviously split in Gallic society. Divitiacus represented the pro-Roman side while his brother, Dumnorix, was a leading anti-Roman Gaul. The fact that opinions over the Romans could be split not only amongst the Gauls as a whole or even within a tribe but between siblings showed that there was no overarching Gallic policy towards the Romans. One cannot say that "the Gauls" as a group held any opinion on the Romans. Instead, each tribe and noble would support or oppose the Romans as they saw fit, looking out for their own self interest. As time went on, with more and more of Gaul falling into Caesar's hands, resistance became a more universal sentiment. Under Vercingetorix, the Gauls achieved a unity unseen for as long as the Romans had been fighting them. The Romans had helped bring the Gauls together and while the revolt ultimately failed, it forged a shared identity that Augustus would use to craft his own form of Gallic unity.

While Caesar had fought to bring Gaul under his control, Augustus worked to make them part of the empire, not just a subject people or the personal holdings of one man. The colonies, the new Gallic

cities, the roads, the citizenship grants, and the altar all brought the Gauls into the Roman fold. Furthermore, these initiatives served to unite Gaul. The roads allowed easier movement and communication, the cities became populations hubs, larger than any others that had previously existed in Gaul, and the altar and the council surrounding it gave a collective voice for the Gallo-Romans, not just as individual tribes but as a whole. Romanization spread throughout the Gallic provinces and ensured the loyalty of the new Gallo-Romans despite Augustus' setbacks with the Germans.

Tiberius freed the Gallo-Romans from the expenses of imperial princes and Germanic campaigns, allowing them to grow and enjoy the peace and prosperity of the empire. Some, particularly the lower classes, were clearly not faring as well which allowed for the revolt of Florus and Sacrovir. Yet the failure of their rebellion shows how widespread Romanization had become within Gaul. Few of the nobility joined and the entire event seems to have been largely forgotten by later emperors. Caligula's visit put the wealth of the Gauls on display and his auction of the imperial household goods granted them a new level of prestige. Claudius furthered this with his numerous grants of citizenship, rewarding cities with colonial status, and eventually even allowing Gauls to join the senate. There was a clear upward trajectory for the Gauls from Caesar through Claudius, even under Tiberius who largely ignored the territory. The Romans still displayed their prejudice in the panic at the revolt or the arguments against inclusion of the Gallo-Romans into the senate but the wealth and relative placidity of Roman Gaul seems to have kept such expressions to a minimum. The *terror Gallicus* was not ruling over Gallo-Roman relations under most of the Julio-Claudians.

The shift occurred under Nero, though the emperor himself bears little blame for what happened. The Great Fire of Rome brought the memory of the sack of Rome back to the forefront for the Romans. When Vindex raised his rebellion against Nero, he was not treated as a Roman senator resisting a tyrannical emperor, as his patron Galba was, but as a Gallic warlord, intent on carving out his



own kingdom in Gaul despite all evidence to the contrary. The destruction of his forces by uncontrollable Roman legions, coupled with the grants of Galba and the excesses of Vitellius would have provided compelling reasons for the Gallo-Romans to rebel during the year of the four emperors, especially since the empire was in chaos. But despite this, Civilis was only able to convince two tribes to join his rebellion, powerful ones to be sure, but a paltry showing overall. The rebels even used overt Roman iconography for their revolt, dressing in imperial purple to signify their leadership. Meanwhile, the rest of Gaul actively rejected the revolt, holding a council to cast a vote formally and tell the Treveri and Lingones to end their rebellion. Still, they were not treated as the loyal provincials they were and Cerealis rejected their offers of aid and dealt with the rebellion himself.

The druids, meanwhile, had been driven from their traditional roles in Gallic society and retreated to the groves and caves that they would become famous for. Romanization had progressed so much that the druidic teachings were no longer accepted. Legislation passed against the druids only sped up the process and by the time of Nero's death, they had all but disappeared from mainstream Gallic society.

Throughout the early empire, the Gallo-Romans made every effort to integrate themselves with the Roman empire. They served in the army, they became Roman citizens, they used their wealth to support the emperors, they bought imperial items to further their prestige, and finally, they became senators. Yet despite this upward climb in the first century of their subjugation under Rome, Gallo-Romans do not constitute a major faction in later imperial politics. There are few Gallic senators and most of those, such as Vindex and his father, are from the short window between Claudius' raising of the Gallo-Romans to the senate and Nero's death. Even lower imperial postings for equestrians show little Gallic involvement. Those few exceptions, such as the priestly positions at the altar outside Lugdunum, are decidedly local imperial positions and have more to do with Gaul than Rome as a whole.

The handful of exceptions show that imperial posts were still open to Gallo-Romans, yet they were not flocking to fill them. Roman prejudice, which had tainted Gallo-Roman relations from the start and was made nakedly clear during the rebellions of 69-71 CE, had discouraged the Gallo-Romans from further involvement in larger imperial politics. Instead, they focused on local affairs, rarely straying far from their homeland and becoming the sort of quiet provincials that merit few mentions in the historical record from 71 to 260 CE. That shift still did not change the nature of Gallo-Roman politics but merely shifted the centres of power.

The state of affairs only changed in 260 CE due to the weakness of the empire and even here, it was more of a breakaway Roman empire than a Gallic nation. When the emperor Valerian was captured in 260 CE by the Persian shah, the weakness of the empire proved too much for the western provinces. They had been routinely stripped of their best soldiers in order to confront the growing Persian threat as well as the Gothic incursions, leaving Gaul exposed to the new German federations. The governor of Lower Germany, Postumus, was declared emperor by his troops and in a twist on the usual story of the third century, did not march on Rome but instead forged his own breakaway empire centred on Gaul, Spain, and Britain. The new empire had all the trappings of Rome: an emperor, a Caesar, a senate and did not revert to the tribal structure of pre-Conquest Gaul. For all intents and purposes it was simply another Roman empire, but centred on Trier rather than Rome, much like the later eastern Roman empire was still Roman but centred on Constantinople. The Gallo-Romans would fill the ranks of these institutions, possibly including the emperorship, that were needed to run the new empire but these could still be considered local positions. It is simply that the empire came to the Gallo-Romans rather than the other way around. Furthermore, once Rome reasserted its authority and power over the breakaway state, Gaul once again became a willing member of the Roman empire. They had not wanted to escape Rome, merely to keep out the invading Germans, which the central government had ignored in light of Gothic and Persian threats. After 275 CE, when the emperor Aurelian brought Gaul back into

the empire, there were no further revolts from that region by natives, only usurping generals and Germanic invaders.

Gaul's relationship with Rome was complicated but as shown, they attempted to embrace the Roman way of life once it became clear they would not be able to keep Rome out. The struggles over exactly what that relationship would be took the entire period of the Julio-Claudian emperors to work out but eventually the Gauls retreated into local affairs while embracing all the trappings of Romanization.

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