

# HILARIUS, GERMANUS, AND LUPUS: THE ARISTOCRATIC BACKGROUND OF THE CHELIDONIUS AFFAIR

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ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN EXAMPLES of the attempts of the bishops of Rome to forward their pretensions to ecclesiastical hegemony came in 445, when Leo, the bishop of Rome, obtained from the emperor Valentinian III a rescript detailing the primacy of the see of Rome.<sup>1</sup> The pretext for the issuance of this rescript lay in a quarrel which Leo was having with Hilarius, the bishop of Arles, who had been attempting to reestablish the influence of his own see in Gaul.<sup>2</sup> The ramifications of the dispute with regard to the internal structure of the Gallic church, the relations between the Roman church and the Roman state, and the establishment of the primacy of the church of Rome were so far-reaching that the original causes of the feud have been either glossed over, or, more commonly, totally ignored. The dispute has been viewed either in a primarily ecclesiastical context, or, more recently, as a reflection of the dissension between the Gallic and Italian aristocracies.<sup>3</sup> Hitherto, no attempt has been made to search out the purely Gallic origins of a conflict which only later was to have such startling repercussions.

Leo leveled against Hilarius two specific accusations. One of them concerned a bishop Proiectus, whose see is unknown, whom Hilarius had replaced on grounds of illness. Nothing further is known of this incident except that Leo ordered Proiectus' restoration.<sup>4</sup> By far the better-documented of the charges is that regarding the deposition of Chelidonius,

<sup>1</sup>*Nov.Val.*17, issued at Rome July 8, 445.

<sup>2</sup>For the ecclesiastical relations between the bishops of Arles and Rome, see G. Langgärtner, *Die Gallienpolitik der Päpste* (Bonn 1964). For the vicariate of Arles in a secular context, see J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* 1 (London 1923) 362-365; A. H. M. Jones, *History of the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1964) 889-890.

<sup>3</sup>For the sequence of events, see E. Griffe, *La Gaule chrétienne* 2 (Paris 1966) 200-212. For the ecclesiastical interpretation, see Langgärtner (above, n.2) 61 ff.; also D. Franes, *Paus Leo de Grote en S. Hilarius van Arles* ('s-Hertogenbosch 1948). For the Gallo-Italian aristocratic aspect of the conflict, see M. Heinzelmänn, *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien* (Munich 1976) 78-82. For the later effects of the conflict on popular attitudes, see H. Fuhrmann, "Die Fabel von Papst Leo und Bischof Hilarius," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 43 (1961) 125-162.

<sup>4</sup>*Leo Epist.* "Divinae cultum" 4 (Migne, *PL* 54.628 ff.). For Proiecti in Arles during this period, see *CIL* 12.958, 965; for a presbyter Proiectus at Narbonne in 456, see E. Espérandieu, *Inscriptions latines de Gaule (narbonnaise)* (Paris 1929) 604. The bishop Proiectus may have been related to the *vir clarissimus* Proiectus to whom Sidonius Apollinaris wrote during the 460s and whose grandfather was a bishop (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 2.4.1).

the bishop of the metropolitan see of Besançon in the central Gallic province of Maxima Sequanorum. Directly opposed accounts of the affair come from the *vita* of St. Hilarius of Arles and from the letter which Leo addressed to the bishops of Viennensis, Hilarius' province, dictating his terms.<sup>5</sup> The relevant passages are short and warrant quotation and translation:

### 1) *Vita Hilarii* 21

*quis . . . explicabit, quantum eius praesentia profectum contulerit civitatibus Gallicanis sanctum Germanum saepius expetendo, cum quo sacerdotum ministrorumque vitam, nec non profectus excessusque tractabat? Ubi eius adventus innotuit, flammata ad utrosque nobilium et mediocrium studia convolarunt, astruentes Celidonium internuptam suo adhibuisse consortio—quod apostolicae sedis auctoritas et canonum prohibent statuta—simul ingerentes saeculi administratione perfunctum capitali aliquos condemnasse sententia. Tanta rei novitate permoti testes imperant praeparari. Conveniunt ex aliis locis probatissimi sacerdotes; res omni ratione prudentiaque discutitur; accusatio testimoniis confirmatur; adhibetur vera simplexque definitio, ut quem scripturarum regulae removebant, voluntate propria se removere deberet. Ille Urbem credidit expetendam, ibique se iniusto rigore astruit condemnatum.*

Who will expand upon how much advantage his presence brought to the Gallic cities by repeatedly seeking out Saint Germanus, with whom he directed the life of bishops and clergy, as well as their advancements and departures? When his arrival became known, the enflamed desires of nobles and commoners flocked to them both [sc. Hilarius and Germanus], asserting that Chelidonius had married a widow, which the authority of the apostolic see and the statutes of the canons prohibit, and saying at the same time that while he was serving in the secular administration he had sentenced several to capital punishment. Aroused by the novelty of such a charge, they order witnesses to be summoned. The most upright bishops gather from other places, the affair is investigated with all intelligence and prudence, the accusation is confirmed by testimony, a true and simple rule is brought forth, that he whom the rules of scripture remove ought to remove himself of his own will. But he [sc. Chelidonius] believed that he should go to Rome, and there he asserted that he had been condemned by an unjust strictness.

### 2) *Epistula Leonis* "Divinae cultum" 1.

*Absolutus est Celidonium episcopus, quoniam se iniuste sacerdotio fuisse deiectum, manifesta testium responsione, ipso etiam praesente, monstraverat; ita ut, quod Hilarius nobiscum residens posset opponere, non haberet. Remotum est ergo iudicium, quod prolatum in hac sententia legebatur, quod tamquam viduae maritus sacerdotium tenere non posset.*

The bishop Chelidonius has been absolved because he had demonstrated that he was expelled from his see unjustly, with the clear testimony of witnesses and with himself [sc. Chelidonius] present, so that Hilarius, sitting among us, did not have anything to offer in opposition. Therefore, the judgement rendered in that sentence is removed, that as the husband of a widow he could not hold the episcopate.

<sup>5</sup>S. Cavallin, *Vitae SS. Honorati et Hilarii* (Lund 1952). Cavallin (39) dates the *Vita Hilarii* to between 475 and 496.

Some additional light is thrown on the proceedings by a passage from the *vita* of St. Romanus, abbot of the monastery at Condat in the Jura mountains:<sup>6</sup>

3) *Vita Romani abbatis* 18–19.

*Audita namque memoratorum fama, sanctus Hilarius Arelatensis episcopus, missis in causa clericis, beatissimum Romanum haud longe sibi a Vesontionensi urbe fecit occurrere, cuius incitamentum vitamque dignissima praedicatione sustollens, inposito honore presbyterii, ad monasterium honorifice repedare permisit. Siquidem antedictus Hilarius venerabilem Caeldonium supradictae metropolis patriarcham, patricio praefectorioque fultus favore, indebitam sibi per Gallias vindicans monarchiam, a sede episcopali memoratum Caeldonium nulla existente ratione deiecerat . . . Exstat denique exinde antedicti ac venerabilis papae ad Galliae episcopos . . . epistula . . .*

For when the fame of the aforementioned became known, Saint Hilarius, bishop of Arles, when clerics had been sent for the proceedings, had the blessed Romanus meet him not far from the city of Besançon, and praising his motivation and life in a most worthy proclamation and having imposed on him the office of presbyter, he permitted him to return honorably to his monastery. In fact, the aforementioned Hilarius, supported by the patrician and the prefect, seizing for himself an unjustified monarchy throughout Gaul, for no clear reason deposed the venerable Chelidonius, patriarch of the aforementioned metropolis, from his episcopal see . . . There is extant, moreover, a letter of the aforementioned and venerable father [sc. Leo] to the bishops of Gaul . . .

While this account, due to the author's use of Leo's letter, is critical of Hilarius in its description of the Chelidonius affair, it does give additional information not only as to where the incident took place, but also as to who some of Hilarius' supporters were.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, aside from the Chelidonius story, the depiction of Hilarius is favorable; clearly there are two traditions in conflict here, the favorable local tradition and the hostile Roman one.

Hitherto, scholars have seen Hilarius' desires to expand his metropolitan authority over all Gaul as his sole motivation for his involvement in the incident.<sup>8</sup> The evidence for this conclusion, however, is only an indirect inference from the unspecific and highly rhetorical charges aimed at him in the letter of Leo and the rescript of Valentinian. But these charges, in fact, are probably concerned with Hilarius' undeniable efforts

<sup>6</sup>F. Martine, *Vie des pères du Jura* (Paris 1968). Romanus is described (*Vita Romani* 4) as *non adeo exiguae familiae, quantum testatur parentalis dirivata posteritas, intra Galliam Sequanorum oriundus*. Like all the others connected with the incident, he seems to have been a local aristocrat. The *vita* is dated by Martine (56–57) to ca 520.

<sup>7</sup>The patrician would have been Fl. Aetius, the *patricius et magister utriusque militiae*: see J. Sundwall, *Weströmische Studien* (Berlin 1915) 40–42. The identity of the praetorian prefect of Gaul at the time is unknown; he may have been Marcellus of Narbonne (Sundwall 101).

<sup>8</sup>See, for example, Langgärtner (above, n.2) 63.

to solidify his authority in the Three Provinces of Viennensis and Narbonensis Prima and Secunda in the south.<sup>9</sup> There is no direct evidence that Hilarius wished to intrude his authority beyond this area.<sup>10</sup>

The only indication in all the sources as to the reason for Hilarius' presence in Lugdunensis at the time of the controversy has been left uninterpreted by all commentators. The *vita* of Hilarius states that it was while he was visiting Germanus, bishop of Auxerre, and not before, that the matter was brought to his attention. The ties of Hilarius and Germanus are confirmed by a passage from the *vita* of St. Germanus, which gives an account of Germanus' journey to Arles ca 435/437 in an attempt to obtain tax relief from the praetorian prefect:<sup>11</sup>

#### 4) *Vita Germani* 23–24.

*Inlustrabatur eo tempore civitas Hilario sacerdote multimoda virtute pretioso; erat enim fide igneus torrens caelestis eloquii et praeceptionis divinae operarius indefessus. Qui venerabilem sanctum affectu ut patrem, reverentia ut apostolum sublimabat. Auxiliaris etiam regebat tum per Gallias apicem praefecturae. Qui praesentiam sacerdotis duplicata gratulatione suscepit . . . .*

At that time the city was blessed with the bishop Hilarius, a man made precious by his manifold virtues; he was indeed a torrent of celestial eloquence, burning with faith, and a tireless worker of the divine precept. He exalted the venerable saint [sc. Germanus] with affection as a father, with reverence as an apostle. Indeed, at that time Auxiliaris was ruling the praetorian prefecture throughout the Gauls, who received the bishop with a double joy . . . .

The high opinion of Hilarius expressed here probably reflects as much Germanus' ties to him as the high regard in which Hilarius was held in the aristocratic circle of Constantius of Lyon, the author of the *vita* ca 480.<sup>12</sup> Such a close connection between the two bishops would tend to support the contention of the *vita* of Hilarius that Hilarius' presence at Chelidonius' hearing was purely adventitious. While there is no evidence that he instigated the proceedings against Chelidonius, it is also clear that he

<sup>9</sup>For Hilarius' use of church councils to extend his authority in southern Gaul, see Langgärtner (above, n.2) 63–66. For the initial establishment of the authority of the bishop of Arles over the Tres Provinciae in 417, see Zosimus, bishop of Rome, *Epist.* "Placuit apostolicae" (Migne, *PL* 20.642).

<sup>10</sup>The presence of Eucherius, bishop of Lyon, at the council of Orange in 441 probably reflects not Eucherius' submission to Hilarius in ecclesiastical matters, as suggested by Langgärtner (above, n.2) 64–65, but the aristocratic bonds of the two; see discussion and n.21 below.

<sup>11</sup>R. Borius, *Vie de saint Germain d' Auxerre* (Paris 1965). The *vita* was written ca 480 (44–46).

<sup>12</sup>Constantius was a close friend of Sidonius Apollinaris, a native of Lyon himself, who dedicated his first eight books of letters to him (Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 1.1, 3.2, 7.18, 8.16, 9.16.1).

did involve himself in the situation when it was thrust upon him, and his reasons for doing so have yet to be clarified.

Further light can be thrown on the background of Chelidonius' deposition by a consideration of the charges against him. The accusation that is stressed by modern accounts is that he had married a widow contrary to canon law. Such a charge, however, seems to have been a catch-all often used in such cases, and Chelidonius was able to discount it at Rome by simple denials.<sup>13</sup> A more revealing charge, whose significance has been ignored in modern accounts just as it was ignored by Leo when he overturned the rulings of the Gallic council, is that Chelidonius, when serving as a secular magistrate, had passed the death sentence. To do so he would have had to have been at least a provincial governor, the lowest-ranking office which permitted the passing of such a sentence.<sup>14</sup> If he was serving in his native region, as so many Gallic aristocrats of the time did, he may have been *praeses Maximae Sequanorum*.<sup>15</sup> After rising to high secular office, he then had become a bishop, probably of his native city, a practice especially common in this region.<sup>16</sup> Germanus himself had followed a similar career: after serving first as an *advocatus* at the court of the praetorian prefect of Gaul at Arles and then as *dux* (?*tractus Armorici*), ca 418 he too had become bishop of his native town, Auxerre.<sup>17</sup>

This phenomenon of Gallic aristocrats' obtaining episcopal office was due especially to the particular political and social situation in Gaul. In the course of the fifth century, as the imperial administration disintegrated in the face of barbarian settlements, internal upheaval, financial impoverishment, and senatorial pursuit of local interests, secular offices, the traditional means of public service and personal fulfilment among the aristocracy, became more and more difficult to obtain. Soon, only the highest offices, usually available only to a very narrow circle of the noblest families of Gaul, remained.<sup>18</sup> As a result, many aristocrats sought refuge in the church.

<sup>13</sup>A fourth-century example from the same area concerns the senator Simplicius of Autun, who was accused of not abstaining from sexual relations with his wife (Greg. Tur. *Glor. Conf.* 76). The council of Tours held in 461 stated *Ut clericus, cui nubendi datur licentia, internuptam non accipiat uxorem* (Corp. Chr. Lat. 148.145).

<sup>14</sup>See Jones (above, n.2) 517–522 for the role of provincial governors as *iudices* and 983–984 for the attitude of the church to them.

<sup>15</sup>See *Notitia dignitatum occidentalium* 21.1.b.3.

<sup>16</sup>Another to do so was Gregorius Attalus, a correspondent of Sidonius Apollinaris (*Epist.* 5.18) who served as count of Autun ca 466–507 and then as bishop of his native town of Langres ca 507–538/540; see K. Stroheker, *Der senatorische Adel im spätantiken Gallien* (Reutlingen 1948) 178–179.

<sup>17</sup>*Vita Germani* 1–2 (above, n.11). The *vita* states only that he obtained the *ducatus culmen*; his position as *dux tractus Armorici* (*Notitia dignitatum occ.* 36) is inferred from his patronage of the Armoricans while he was bishop (*Vita Germani* 28, 40).

<sup>18</sup>See J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court A.D. 364–425* (Oxford 1975) 347.

The northern provinces of Gaul were the first to be affected by this process, and one of the results was an exodus of nobles to the south.<sup>19</sup> Many of them entered monasteries, especially that at Lérins, which had been founded ca 400/410 by Honoratus, who had consular ancestors and who preceded his countryman and relative Hilarius as bishop of Arles.<sup>20</sup> Other monk-aristocrats also became bishops, e.g. Eucherius, who obtained the important see of Lyon and who maintained the ties with Hilarius which had been formed at Lérins.<sup>21</sup>

A very real problem, however, in the implementation of this practice was that there were more aristocrats than episcopal sees, and the competition for the most important sees was particularly fierce. The result was that it was not uncommon for members of the same aristocratic circles to support their own in episcopal elections, not necessarily by peaceful means. Hilarius himself was reputed to have been encouraged to become bishop of Arles by the *illustris Cassius, qui tunc praeerat militibus*, i.e., he was master of soldiers in Gaul.<sup>22</sup>

Once Hilarius had become bishop, it is not surprising that he used his connections among the civil and military officials at Arles to forward the ambitions of fellow-aristocrats in obtaining episcopal sees. The passage from the *Vita Romani* quoted above demonstrates his ties with the praetorian prefect and the master of soldiers Aetius; and Auxiliaris, the praetorian prefect of Gaul during the 430s who had aided Germanus, also was sympathetic to the cause of Hilarius in the 440s.<sup>23</sup> It is significant that Valentinian's rescript is addressed not to a civil official but to Aetius himself, seeming to indicate that if Aetius were not directly instructed to comply he might be inclined to do otherwise.<sup>24</sup> Pretexts aside, the underlying charge directed against Hilarius by both Leo and Valentinian was that he had used his power to influence episcopal elections:

<sup>19</sup>See F. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* (Munich-Vienna 1965) 47–62.

<sup>20</sup>On Honoratus' consular background see *Sermo de vita Honorati* 4 (above, n.5), and on Hilarius' aristocratic ties and relation to Honoratus, see *Vita Hilarii* 2 (above, n.5) and Gennadius *De viris illustribus* 69 (Migne, *PL* 57.1100).

<sup>21</sup>Note letter of Hilarius to Eucherius (Migne, *PL* 50.1274) and Eucherius' attendance at one of Hilarius' councils (*Corp. Chr. Lat.* 148.87). Hilarius and Eucherius also are connected, for example, in *Chron. Gall. a. 452 s.a. 449* (*MGH AA* 9.662) and in Sid. Apoll. *Carm.* 16.115.

<sup>22</sup>*Vita Hilarii* 9 (above, n.5); this Cassius is otherwise unknown. Patroclus, bishop of Arles ca 412–426, had had similar connections: Prosper *Chron. s.a. 412* (*MGH AA* 9.385 ff.) states that he was the *amicus et familiaris Constantii magistri militum, cuius per ipsum gratia quaerebatur. Quae res inter episcopos regionis illius magnarum discordiarum causa fuit*.

<sup>23</sup>The *Vita Hilarii* 14 and 22 (above, n.5) quotes two letters of Auxiliaris, who received Hilarius' emissaries to Rome.

<sup>24</sup>*Nov. Val.* 17 inscr. Leo and Aetius themselves had met at least once before, in 440, when Leo, then a deacon, was in Gaul smoothing over a quarrel between Aetius and a certain Albinus (Prosper *Chron. s.a. 440*, *MGH AA* 9.385 ff.).

5) *Epistula Leonis* "Divinae cultum" 6.

*Militaris manus, ut didicimus, per provincias sequitur sacerdotem, et armati praesidii praesumptione suffulto ad invadendas per tumultum famulatur ecclesias, quae proprios amiserint sacerdotes. Trahuntur ordinandi ante hoc officium, his quibus praeficiendi sunt, civitatibus ignorati. Ut enim notus qui fuerit et probatus per pacem petitur, ita per vim necesse est, qui ignotus adducitur, imponatur.*

A military force, as we have learned, follows the bishop throughout the provinces, and with the presumption of an armed guard as support, it serves for attacking through tumult churches which have lost their own bishops. Those to be ordained, unknown to the cities which they are to govern, are dragged before this band. Indeed, when one who was known and approved is sought peacefully, it is necessary that one who is brought forward as an unknown be imposed.

6) *Novella Valentiniana* 17.

*Hilarius Arelatensis, sicut venerabilis viri Leonis Romani papae fideli relatione conperimus, contumaci ausu illicita quaedam praesumenda temptavit et ideo transalpinas ecclesias abominabilis tumultus invasit: quod recens maxime testatur exemplum. Hilarius enim . . . indebitis sibi ordinationes episcoporum sola temeritate usurpantis invasit. Nam alios incompetenter removit, indecenter alios inuitis et repugnantibus civibus ordinavit. Qui quoniam non facile ab his, qui non elegerant, recipiebantur, manum sibi contrahebat armatam . . .*

Hilarius of Arles, as we have learned from the reliable report of the venerable Roman father Leo, with contumacious audacity has attempted certain illicit presumptions and thus an abominable tumult has attacked the transalpine churches, as a recent example particularly attests. For Hilarius . . . with the mere temerity of a usurper has appropriated episcopal ordinations not entitled to him. For some he has removed illegally, and others he has ordained unfittingly with the citizens unwilling and protesting. Because they were not accepted easily by those who had not chosen them, he gathered to himself an armed band . . .

These accounts, although clearly one-sided, nevertheless illustrate well the conflict that often arose during episcopal elections, and the decisive part that powerful aristocratic factions could play. A recent study rightly points out that such interventions on the part of Hilarius only could have been accomplished with the connivance of the imperial authorities at Arles.<sup>25</sup>

Such practices were by no means limited to the bishop of Arles, and indeed appear to have been common in many fifth-century Gallic aristocratic circles. In 463, the bishop of Rome Hilarus attempted to interfere in another such dispute after Mamertus, bishop of Vienne, had intervened in an episcopal election at Die in support of Marcellus, a senator of Avignon: *hostili more, ut dicitur, occupans civitatem, episcopum consecrare praesumpsit*.<sup>26</sup> Another example of aristocratic manipulation of an episcopal election occurred ca 470, when Sidonius Apollinaris, who had served as prefect of Rome in 468 before becoming bishop of Clermont,

<sup>25</sup>Heinzelmann (above, n.3) 82–83.

<sup>26</sup>*Hilarius Epist.* "Qualiter contra sedis" (Migne, *PL* 58.27). Marcellus succeeded his brother Petronius, who may have been at one time a deacon of Hilarius: see *Vita Marcelli* 1–2 (*Acta Sanctorum* Apr. 1.824–826) and *Corp. Chr. Lat.* 148.87.

secured the ordination of another former secular official, his friend the *vir spectabilis* Simplicius, as bishop of Bourges.<sup>27</sup>

In the light of these practices, is it possible to interpret the Chelidonius affair not as part of a uniform scheme to bring all ecclesiastical Gaul under a single authority, but rather as a struggle among local aristocrats for the control of an important see? In order to answer this question, the aristocratic affiliations of those involved must be investigated more fully. The involvements of Germanus in the area of eastern Lugdunensis are well known, and those of Chelidonius have been inferred. But what of Hilarius? In the past, commentators have generally specified his native place only as "the north."<sup>28</sup> In fact, however, it can be made much more specific. His aristocratic ties and frequent visits to Germanus alone could suggest family connections in this area. Moreover, both Germanus and Hilarius had connections with Lupus, an aristocrat who was born at Langres, had property at Macon, and ca 426 became bishop of Troyes. Lupus was married to Pimeniola, the sister of Hilarius, and spent several years with his brother-in-law at Lérins before he returned north and was ordained.<sup>29</sup> With Germanus, he went to Britain in 429 to combat Pelagianism.<sup>30</sup>

Later tradition also was aware of the interrelationship of these three. Sidonius Apollinaris, who had ties to Lupus himself, linked Germanus and Lupus as the premier bishops of north-central Gaul.<sup>31</sup> Even later, during the 560s, bishop Nicetius of Trier wrote to Chlodosuintha, queen of the Lombards, *Nam quid dicam adhuc de domino Germano, Hilario vel Lupo episcopis?*<sup>32</sup> The close associations of the three both during their own time and in the minds of later writers are not fortuitous, but rather reflect bonds of similar origin and aristocratic background which were maintained throughout their lives.

The region of Lugdunensis I as the homeland of Hilarius and his relative Honoratus is confirmed by other evidence. In the early fifth century another Honoratus was bishop of Langres.<sup>33</sup> And Gregory of Tours mentions a further possible fifth-century member of the family:

7) *Gloria confessorum* 42.

<sup>27</sup>Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 7.9. Two *virii illustres*, Pannychius and Eucherius, also were in competition for the see, an excellent example of the aristocratic desire for high ecclesiastical office during this period.

<sup>28</sup>For example, Stroheker (above, n.16) 182–183, Prinz (above, n.19) 49 and Heinzelmann (above, n.3) 76. The *vitae* of neither Honoratus nor Hilarius (above, n.5) specify their place of origin.

<sup>29</sup>*Vita Lupi* 1–2 (MGH *Script. rer. Merov.* 7.295 ff.).

<sup>30</sup>*Vita Germani* 12–13 (above, n.11) and *Vita Lupi* 4 (above, n.29).

<sup>31</sup>Sid. Apoll. *Epist.* 8.15.1 describes St. Anianus of Orléans as *Lupo parem Germanoque non imparem*; in *Carm.* 16.110–115 Sidonius also connects them.

<sup>32</sup>MGH *Epistulae* 3.121.

<sup>33</sup>L. Duchesne, *Fastes épiscopaux de l'ancienne Gaule* 2<sup>e</sup> (Paris 1915) 186.



*Apud castrum Divionense Hilarius quidam ex senatoribus habitavit, habens coniugem, ex qua et filios dicitur suscepisse . . . qui qualis quantusque fuerit iuxta saeculi dignitatem, sepulcrum eius hodie patefacit . . .*

At Dijon lived Hilarius, a certain one of the senators, having a wife, from whom he is said to have received children . . . His tomb makes clear today how great his secular dignity was . . .

This is probably the same man whose son Iohannes was described in the *vita* of the abbot Iohannes:<sup>34</sup>

#### 8) *Vita Iohannis* 4.

*ortus sub territorio Lingonicae urbis, nobilitatem generis nobilitate adornavit mentis . . . Qui etiam generosissimis parentibus est procreatus. Pater eius Hilarius nomine, mater vero Quieta vocitata est.*

Born in the territory of the city of Langres, he adorned the nobility of his family with the nobility of his spirit . . . He was born, indeed, of most noble parents; his father Hilarius by name and his mother was called Quieta.

The *patria* of Hilarius of Arles, then, appears to have been the area of Langres, a location which, significantly, is equidistant from Auxerre and Troyes to the west and Besançon to the east. It is not surprising that Hilarius would have a purely personal interest in any developments in the region which contained his own circle.

Given the aristocratic affiliations of all the participants to the area of Lugdunensis I, the Chelidonius affair is probably interpreted best as an example of in-fighting among the local aristocracy for control of the metropolitan see of Besançon. Hilarius was taking part in ecclesiastical proceedings involving his friends and probably his relatives, and his presence, as far as can be adduced, was coincidental. Possible family interests of both Germanus and Hilarius in the outcome of this conflict are indicated by the presence in the ecclesiastical *fasti* of Besançon of a Hilarius in the fourth century and a Germanus in the fifth.<sup>35</sup> After Chelidonius' deposition, Hilarius, perhaps because his visit in the area was at an end, does not seem to have involved himself in the choice of a successor. None is mentioned in the *Vita Hilarii*, the *Vita Romani*, or, most significantly, in the letter of Leo, which does specify in the case of Proiectus that *eius sacerdotium in alium praeter suam notitiam esse translatum*.<sup>36</sup> Hilarius, in this regard, seems to have left the northerners to solve this problem for themselves.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup>MGH *Script. rer. Merov.* 3.502 ff. Iohannes was born ca 447.

<sup>35</sup>Duchesne (above, n.33) 3<sup>2</sup> 200–201.

<sup>36</sup>Leo *Epist.* "Divinae cultum" 4 (above, n.5).

<sup>37</sup>One set of *fasti* for Besançon has, after S. Chelidonius, *Inportunus pseudoepiscopus receptus sed turpiter eiectus* (Duchesne [above, n.33] 3<sup>2</sup> 198), the only evidence that a successor was chosen.

The aristocratic background of this conflict over the see of Besançon reflects on a small scale what was occurring on a larger scale between Arles and Rome, where ecclesiastical and aristocratic factions also were in conflict. The details of this situation, however, have been investigated previously and need not be repeated here.<sup>38</sup> But what should be stressed is that the later significance of the Chelidonius controversy should not be allowed to obscure the light that it throws, in its early stages, upon the inner workings and dissension of the Gallic aristocracy in the fifth century.

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<sup>38</sup>Heinzelmann (above, n.3) 82–84.