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## COMPETITION, MEANING, AND MONUMENTALIZATION IN GALLIA COMATA

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**Abstract:** Perhaps the most striking, and archaeologically speaking the most evident, change that occurred in Gallia Comata from the 1st century BCE to the end of the 2nd century CE was the incorporation of massive, monumental, Roman-style architecture. Many of these monuments still stand to this day, providing an obvious, visual argument for the impact that Roman culture had on Gallic society. Overall, the incorporation of Roman architecture and monuments, paid for and dedicated by members of the local elite, seems to indicate a clear cultural shift in Gallic society and the adoption of Roman conceptions of urbanism and the role of the urban aristocracy in providing munera for the populace.

This paper will examine the remains of monumental structures in the Gallic *civitas*-capitals, examining the initial stages of monumentalization. While early structures advertised the connection between the community as a whole with the Imperial power structure, the construction of amphitheatres in particular emerged rapidly throughout the Three Gauls and, as this paper will argue, was tied to the glorification and memorialization of the dedicator and his family. The edification of urban space thus became a new ground for the Gallic aristocracy to play out its internal rivalries, rather than a public expression of acceptance or obedience under Rome, and through the use of amphitheatres, urban edification allowed the Gallic aristocracy to retain their ties to the concept of competitive status and martial prowess.

**Keywords:** Romanization, Imperialism, Gaul, Gallo-Roman, Amphitheatres, Pre-Roman Gaul, Roman Monuments, Roman Provinces.

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Perhaps the most striking change that occurred in Gallia Comata from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE was the incorporation of massive, monumental, Roman-style architecture. Many of these monuments still stand to this day, providing an obvious, visual argument for the impact that Roman culture had on Celtic Gaul. Structures such as amphitheatres and baths had no Gallic antecedents, either in architecture or in usage. Overall, the incorporation of Roman architecture and monuments, paid for and dedicated by members of the local elite, would seem to indicate a clear cultural shift in Gallic society and the adoption of Roman conceptions of urbanism and the role of the urban aristocracy in providing *munera* for the populace.

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## 1. The Gallic Aristocracy

The Gallic elite were tapped by the Roman imperial government to control the Gallic peoples.<sup>1</sup> The position of this elite, referred to by Caesar as the *equites* or ‘knights’, were described by Caesar as the warrior aristocracy, marked by their proficiency in warfare and their ability to attract and retain clients, two activities which were intricately linked.<sup>2</sup> Gallic patron-client relationships formed the foundation of Gallic political organization. Both within and between tribes, social and political alliances and networks were created through the intermarriage of great families.<sup>3</sup> Yet these ties were tenuous and informal at best, and what is more contained no clear internal ranking or hierarchy of members, creating an atmosphere of competition and rivalry within the aristocracy. The allegiance of the commoners, as clients, could not be possessed absolutely in a single moment or by a single transaction; instead, the patron must put forth continuous effort in order to gain the client’s loyalty and support in exchange for protection. Shifting fortunes thus brought about rapidly changing political conditions; the overall system engendered competition rather than cooperation, and any change in resources, stability, or external pressures caused the political system to collapse and reconfigure itself.

At first glance then, there was little reason for the Gallic aristocracy to engage in monumental building programs, particularly the construction of Roman style monuments.<sup>4</sup> The Gallic elite were tapped by the Romans to rule a Gallic population, one for whom expressions of Roman culture or traditional Roman public works would have been meaningless. On the one hand, Earle has argued, the manipulation of the landscape itself in the creation of settlements, boundaries, and irrigation served a symbolic as well as practical purpose, emphasizing the dominant role of the chieftain and creating the hierarchy over which he held dominance.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, Crumley’s analysis of the Gallic elite as a heterarchical group must likewise be taken into account, requiring a reassessment of traditional chieftain and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lamoine 2009, Irvin 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Caesar, *BG*, 6.15, cf. Polybius, *Hist.*, 2.17

<sup>3</sup> Crumley 1974: 19. Cf. Wells 1980, Cunliffe 1988, King 1990, Crumley 1995, Arnold and Gibson 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Harmand 1990: 395–397, which outlines the difficulty in reconciling the placement of monuments (particularly amphitheaters) with traditional models of Romanization. However, Harmand attempts to reinterpret the data to allow Gallic monuments to fit the existing paradigm. Also, Dumasy 2011, who argues against a Mediterranean origin for Gallic monuments.

<sup>5</sup> Earle 2002: 330.

central-place archaeological models and their application to pre-Roman Gaul. There was not a singular hierarchy multiple differing bases of authority, linked together through kin relationships, economic ties, and social bonds of patronage and clientage.<sup>6</sup> This is not to argue that Earle's models are inapplicable, but rather that they apply to a more diverse group of potential leaders than previous theories based on centralization and central place might allow. Gallic society presents not a single, centralized ruler, but multiple potential rulers who in particular circumstances may exercise greater authority than their peers. The integration of monumental architecture into Gallic models of heterarchical leadership thus indicates an expansion and variation on already existing models of competitive authority within Gallic society, one that cannot be seeking to emulate or reproduce *Romanitas* in its adherents. To be an effective element of Gallic elite expression, monumentalization must have had meaning and been understood in terms cogent to Gallic society.

## 2. Site Selection

For this study I have selected 7 sites from throughout the Three Gauls.

For Lugdunensis, Vienna and Augustodunum.<sup>7</sup> Vienna served as the capital of the Allobroges, who were subjugated by the Romans in the campaigns of 124-120 BCE. After Caesar's wars in Gaul, Vienna rapidly grew in prestige and importance to rival the nearby capital of the Three Gauls at Lugdunum, modern Lyon.<sup>8</sup> Augustodunum meanwhile served as the capital among the Aedui in the Imperial era. The former capital of the Aedui, Bibracte, was located on a mountaintop and was abandoned under the Principate, the capital moved to Augustodunum in the plains below.<sup>9</sup> Both sites thus had longstanding connections to the Romans, with Vienna a traditional capital and Augustodunum a new creation under Augustus' policies.

In Gallia Belgica, Durocortorum and Augusta Trevirorum both served as *civitas*-capitals for the Remi and Treveri, respectively, as well as having served as provincial capitals. The Remi had been Caesar's strongest allies in Belgica, and as a result had grown in power and prestige over the region, as well as having become the victim of uprisings aimed against Roman control of the region.<sup>10</sup> The Treveri rebelled against Roman rule several times during the Triumviral period before Augusta Trevirorum became an important part of Rome's military policy on the Rhine frontier.<sup>11</sup> Thus, both capitals and peoples served as key elements of Rome's control in the region, with Durocortorum a traditional capital, and Trevirorum a new creation under Augustus' policies.

In Gallia Aquitania, the cities of Mediolanum, Vesunna, and Lugdunum Convenarum each served as *civitas*-capitals. Mediolanum among the Santones was created by Agrippa

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<sup>6</sup> Crumley 1974; 1995.

<sup>7</sup> On Vienna's inclusion in Lugdunensis, cf. Drinkwater 1975, Lintott 1981, and Pelletier 1982, as well as Tacitus, *Histories*, 1.65-66, on the rivalry between Vienna and Lugdunum.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Pelletier 1982, still the standard for the history of Vienna.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Pinette and Rebourg 1986, and Rebourg and Goudineau 2002 for an overview of the history of the site.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Wightman 1970, Martin 1983, Wightman 1985, Vanderhoeven 1996, and Haselgrove 1996 for a review of Durocorturum and Augusta Trevirorum.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. in particular Drinkwater 1978 on the revolt of the 'Gallic Julii'.

and served as the early provincial capital and the *civitas*-capital for the Santones.<sup>12</sup> Vesunna among the Petrocorii and Lugdunum among the Convenae were both cities that grew up as a result of trade routes, with few Gallic antecedents.<sup>13</sup> The Convenae themselves were an agglomeration of tribes along the Pyrenees, gathered together by the Romans under a single *civitas* and made a part of Aquitania.

### 3. Augustan Glory and Dynastic Succession

At all of the selected sites, the earliest monuments connected the settlement specifically to the figure of Augustus, advertising the loyalty of the local elite and their desire for inclusion in the new Augustan order. As a review of these earliest monuments shows, there was no consistent style or type of structure between sites. While the imagery invoked often parallels with the Augustan program in Rome, the lack of consistency among monuments argues for the local expression and origin of these structures, and therefore a desire by the local elite to communicate with Rome rather than the local populace, or Rome imposing standard models on local elite.

The oldest monument at Lugdunum Convenarum, dated to the last decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, is a trophy commemorating what can best be described as generic Augustan victories and Augustan greatness; the remains of the monument include images of the prow of a naval vessel flanked by a dolphin and crocodile, atop of which is a Tritoness bearing a globe, above her an eagle, wings outspread, carries a thunderbolt, and atop the eagle is the figure of winged victory bearing a palm branch and wreath. Statues on either side of the central trophy have been interpreted as Gallia or Hispania, and the trophy has been dated to sometime between 31 BCE (the battle of Actium) and 12 BCE (the suppression of rebellion in Spain and the return of legionary standards).<sup>14</sup> The trophy seems to incorporate *all* aspects of great Augustan victories into a single monument, with imagery evoking the campaigns and victories over Antony and Cleopatra at Actium, the conquest of Egypt, the campaigns in Gaul and Spain, and the honors voted to Augustus by the Senate in the aftermath of Actium, all in a generic tableau. The original placement of the trophy cannot be determined, but the nature of the monument and its early construction indicate a position of central importance to the new city.

Fragmentary sculptures speak to the existence of at least three triumphal monuments within the city of Vienna. Remains of several statues of Roman soldiers have been found in the district north of the Gère river and near the Rhône along the *cardo maximus*. The arch seems to have been built contemporaneously with the walls, thus dating it to the early 1<sup>st</sup> century CE.<sup>15</sup> The remains of a triumphal arch, including friezes of military arms and griffons, have been found among the material of the Thermes de la Rue Victor-Hugo, while similar remains of military arms were found near the temple of Augustus and Livia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; Will, in his work in the Musée Lapidaire de Vienne, has noted that while the friezes are fragmentary and the original location of the monument cannot be ascertained, none of the arms appear to be

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. Maurin and Thauré 1994 and Esmonde-Cleary 2007.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. May 1986, Girardy-Caillat 1998, Esmonde-Cleary 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Esmonde-Cleary 2007: 32.

<sup>15</sup> Pelletier 1982: 120–121.

Gallic, making the monument one dedicated not to the Roman conquest of Gaul (as at similar arches in Orange, Carpentras, and Glanum) but to victories the citizens of Vienna participated in.<sup>16</sup> This likewise seems to be the case with the third monument, which involved plastered Corinthian columns and a sculpture of a warrior in a Phrygian cap and carrying a long spear.

Pelletier makes the point that these monuments have no antecedents among the Gauls; they are purely of Roman origin, and their erection by the Gallic population of Vienna is an indication of the Romanization of the populace.<sup>17</sup> The friezes and the monument of the Phrygian warrior commemorate the local population's involvement in Roman victories, and utilize Roman artistic types, styles, and language to commemorate these victories and communicate the greatness of the city to locals and outsiders alike.

Alongside these monuments, there exist a series of early temples dedicated to aspects of the *Domus Augusta*, local permutations of the Imperial cult. In Vesunna, the central forum and sanctuary to the goddess Vesunna Augusta date to the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE.<sup>18</sup> In Convenarum, the Forum Temple dates to the reign of Tiberius, and while no inscriptions indicate the deity of the temple inscriptions within Convenarum mention the existence of a '*sacerdos Romae et Augustorum*', without mention of the Altar or the Confluence, allowing for the possibility that the local cult was one of Roma and the defied Augustus or Augusti.<sup>19</sup> Augustodunum shows no clear central temple to Augustus from this early period, though the city itself, with its new name and construction, can be argued to have therefore been something of a monument to Augustus.

Meanwhile Vienna, Durocortorum, and Augusta Trevirorum all reveal a series of temples dedicated to members of the first generation of the Imperial family. The temple at Vienna was begun sometime around 27–25 BCE and was initially modeled after the Hellenistic decorative styles seen at the nearby site of Glanum. The temple was eventually re-designed after the famous Maison Carée in nearby Nemausus, however James Anderson, Jr., has shown the reconstruction of the Maison Carée to its present form likely did not occur until the later Antonine dynasty. The inscription for both temples in Vienna and Nemausus remain disputed, with dedications to Lucius, Gaius, Agrippa, or Augustus and Livia all variously presented as possibilities based on various reconstructions.<sup>20</sup> An inscription in Durocortorum records a monument dedicated to Gaius and Lucius Caesar in 1 CE by the '*Civitas Remorum*'.<sup>21</sup> A similar monumental inscription is found in Augusta Trevirorum dedicated to Gaius alone, likely dedicated after the death of Lucius in 2 CE but before Gaius' own death in 4 CE.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Will 1952: 42.

<sup>17</sup> Pelletier 1982: 224.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. CIL 13, 955, 956

<sup>19</sup> Cf. AE 1938 171, AE 1997 1098, AE 1997 1099, ILTG 64, ILTG 76-84. Note Esmonde-Cleary 2007: 41, disagrees with seeing the presence of the imperial cult in Lugdunum Convenarum, arguing it more likely that the temple was dedicated to the presiding deity of the Convenae. As the Roman sources highlight, however, the Convenae were not a tribal entity; they were an artificial creation by the Romans, Lugdunum Convenarum an artificial *civitas*-capital created by Augustus. It seems fitting that such a group would turn to the worship of those 'divine' entities directly responsible for their creation as a unified people, namely, Roma and Augustus.

<sup>20</sup> Anderson 2001: 68–79.

<sup>21</sup> CIL 13, 3254.

<sup>22</sup> CIL 13, 3671, 3655, 3707.

#### 4. From Local to Regional Monumentalization

In Mediolanum Santonum, the earliest Roman remains were, unfortunately, utilized in the construction of the city walls during the Crisis of the Third Century. Still, some of these remains have been dated to the last decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, creating a city of marble and stone monuments whose people lived in wood-and-wattle homes. Perhaps the most famous monument of Mediolanum is the Arch of Germanicus. Originally located on the bridge spanning the Charente River, the Arch was moved in 1843 to Bassompierre on the east bank of the Charente when the bridge was destroyed.

The inscription on the Arch is dedicated,

‘To Germanicus Caesar, son of Tiberius Augustus, grandson of the deified Augustus, great-grandson of the deified Julius, augur, *flamine Augustalis*, consul 2nd time, *imperator* 8<sup>th</sup> time, *tribunicia potesta* 21<sup>st</sup> time/ To Drusus Caesar, son of Tiberius Augustus, grandson of the deified Augustus, great-grandson of the deified Julius, consul, pontifex, augur’.<sup>23</sup>

Mirroring the dedication to Germanicus and Drusus, the dedicator, Gaius Julius Rufus, lists himself as,

‘son of Gaius Julius Catuaneunus (or Otuaneunus), grandson of Gaius Julius Agedomopatis, great-grandson of Epotsorovidius, *sacerdos* of Roma and Augustus at the Altar which is at the Confluence (Condate in Lugdunum), *praefectus fabrum*, made this with his own money’.<sup>24</sup>

Drusus Caesar’s first consulship was in 15 CE, Germanicus’ second in 18 CE concurrent with his campaigns in Asia Minor, dating the construction of the Arch to between 15 CE and October of 19 CE.

The Arch originally spanned the bridge across the Charente which connected the main road from Lugdunum to the *decumanus maximus* of the city. The Arch thus acted as the symbolic ‘gate’ to the city, marking the boundary line where the traveler was no longer simply ‘on the road’, but had entered Mediolanum itself. In this same capacity, the Arch advertised the loyalty of the town to its imperial benefactors, specifically Germanicus and Drusus Caesar, who in 15–18 CE were the appointed successors to Tiberius; the Arch displayed not only the loyalty of Rufus and the Santones to Rome, but to the next generation of Roman leadership as well. Gaius Julius Rufus likewise dedicated the amphitheater in Lugdunum during his priesthood to Tiberius, noting the gift was from himself, his son and his grandson ‘from the *civitas* of the Santones’.<sup>25</sup> The Arch likewise served to advertise the importance of Rufus, not only to his home-*civitas* of Mediolanum but within the Three Gauls as a whole through the advertisement of his position at Condate.

There is an explicit inter-generational relationship advertised at both the Arch of Germanicus in Mediolanum and at the amphitheater at Condate. At Mediolanum, Rufus proclaims not only his ancestors, but the Emperors that they served, lining the generations

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<sup>23</sup> CIL 13, 1036.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> ILTG 217.

up in such a way as to advertise his continued obedience to the (presumable at that point) next generation of Emperors. At Condate, Rufus displays his loyalty to Tiberius through the donation of an amphitheater out of his own pocket, dedicating the amphitheater in his own name as well as the names of his son and grandson. Both dedications serve to advertise the greatness of Rufus and display his personal relationship with Rome as well as the prize that that relationship has brought. On the other hand, both dedications simultaneously serve to press that relationship into the next generation, Rufus displaying his relationship with the presumptive Emperors as well as Tiberius, as well as creating a relationship with Tiberius for his son and grandson to utilize in their future careers.

Both monuments advertise a personal relationship with a source of power in the provinces and a desire to extend that personal relationship into the future. If Drusus or Germanicus had managed to ascend to the Imperial office, Rufus would have his monument among his own people as a display of his already existing relationship with either of these men; the location of the Arch at the entrance to the city would serve as an immediate advertisement to all who entered that this man, C. Julius Rufus, had already (presumably) received favor from the Imperial court and thus might be able to use those contacts to the benefit of his clients among the Santones. The amphitheater at Condate would have served as a continual reminder of Rufus' *beneficium* to the imperial court, one that his son and grandson could utilize to their own advantage in future dealings with the Emperor.

## 5. Amphitheatres and Regional Competition

Perhaps most important, the Arch at Mediolanum and the Amphitheater at Condate both advertised the benefaction of their dedicator, Julius Rufus, rather than just the loyalty and connection between their site and the *Domus Augusta*. Nor do these monuments mark the only contributions of the descendants of Epotsorovidius. The Amphitheater of Mediolanum is located southwest of the city-center, on the outer edge of the urban settlement. The floor of the Amphitheater was sunk into the valley floor, the only *in situ* remains being the lower levels of the Amphitheater. The earth removed from the site was used to create the walls of the Amphitheater, which were then given added structure and stability by a stone façade. A dedicatory inscription dates the opening of the Amphitheater to 47 CE, during Claudius' 4<sup>th</sup> consulship and censorship, by Gaius Julius Victor, son of Gaius, tribe Voltinia.<sup>26</sup> This Julius Victor's grandfather is recorded as Gaius Julius Congonetodubnus, priest of Roma and Augustus at Condate and military Tribune of cohort I Belgarum, son of Gaius Julius Agedompatis, son of Epotsorovidius, and therefore cousin to Gaius Julius Rufus.<sup>27</sup>

The Amphitheater of Vesunna, built north of the city-center on the edge of the urban settlement, dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, its construction spanning at least two generations. The Amphitheater was given by one Aulus Pompeius, son of Dumnomotulus, military Tribune and *praefectus fabrum*, who claims to have paid for the amphitheater 'and all of its accoutrements' out of his own pocket; the inscription notes that the actual dedication of the

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<sup>26</sup> CIL 13, 1037.

<sup>27</sup> CIL 13, 1036, 1043.

Amphitheater was by Aulus Pompeius, son of Aulus Pompeius Tertullus, who ‘attended to its completion and dedicated the same’.<sup>28</sup> The foundation of the Amphitheater likely dates to the reign of Tiberius, while the date of its completion depends in part on A. Pompeius Tertullus’ relation to A. Pompeius son of Dumnomotulus.<sup>29</sup> The site of the Amphitheater had been lowered by roughly 4m, the earth used to create the walls of the Amphitheater which were then covered with a façade of stone, nearly identical to the techniques used in the construction of the Amphitheater at Mediolanum.<sup>30</sup> While the date of completion for the Vesunna Amphitheater cannot be determined with absolute certainty, the identical techniques and similarity in date to the Amphitheater of Mediolanum at least suggest a contemporaneous construction, with the Amphitheater in Vesunna perhaps completed later due to the death of its original benefactor. The Pompeii are celebrated in other monuments in Vesunna. A series of dedications to the god Telonus and goddess Stanna record that the installation of the basilica and the improvements around the Temple can be attributed to Aulus Pompeius Antiquus, who acted with the permission of Gaius Julius Silvanus, *curator civium Romanorum* for Vesunna.<sup>31</sup> Julius Silvanus is recorded as a Roman citizen in the tribe Quirina, the same tribe as the Flavian dynasty.<sup>32</sup> The baths of Godofre in Vesunna likewise date to no earlier than the Flavian era, as evidenced by the dedication of the builder, Marcus Pompeius Libo.<sup>33</sup>

Further northeast of the North Baths in Lugdunum Convenarum lay a depression, excavations of which has uncovered evidence of masonry emplacements, marble decorations, and pottery, indicating the presence of an amphitheater in Lugdunum Convenarum.<sup>34</sup> The technique of sinking the floor of an amphitheater into the ground and using the excavated soil to shore up the walls has already been noted at Mediolanum and Vesunna.<sup>35</sup> The site shows yet another example of this same Gallic building technique, and likely dates to roughly the same time period as the amphitheaters in nearby Mediolanum and Vesunna, the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century CE.

At Vienna, carved out of the side of Mt. Pipet and dated to between the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE to no later than the early 40’s CE, the Theater of Vienna was the second largest in all of Gaul after the theater of Augustodunum (Autun). The Vienna theater not only utilizes similar construction techniques as the Aquitanian amphitheaters, but also displays a heightened awareness and integration of class and display into its seating and internal

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<sup>28</sup> CIL 13, 962. The inscription provides ‘DUMNOM[6]’, with ‘DUMNOM[OTULI] F(ilius)’ (Aulus Pompeius son of Domnotus) or ‘DUMNOM[OTULUS]’ (Aulus Pompeius Domnomotulus) being equally possible. The inclusion of the name of the father fits the general pattern of inscriptions from throughout Gaul, as well as the pattern of the second half of the inscription, but cannot be said with absolute certainty to be a reconstruction of the original inscription.

<sup>29</sup> Girardy-Caillat 1998: 43.

<sup>30</sup> Girardy-Caillat 1998: 43.

<sup>31</sup> CIL 13, 950–954.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> CIL 13, 939.

<sup>34</sup> May 1986: 121–122; Esmonde-Cleary 2007: 74.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Duval 1989, who begins with the statement, ‘L’amphithéâtre est un monument essentiellement romain...’ (1087), while also noting Gaul was the origin for many of the features, techniques, and technical developments in amphitheater construction decades before they were seen in Rome (1089–1092).



geography.<sup>36</sup> Differences in material marked out the hierarchical seating arrangement within the Theater. The wealthiest area, supposedly for the local, provincial, and Roman elite, was accessed through its own separate entrance, with alternate access points to other parts of the arena. The seats themselves were made of red and white marble, the benches accented with griffon feet at the legs. A 1,5 meter high wall separated this elite area from the rest of the arena, constructed of limestone and accessed by 10 *vomitoria*, at the top of which was a large platform for a temple dedicated to Apollo.<sup>37</sup>

The Amphitheater of Augustodunum was situated some 50m north of the Roman Theater, and likely dates to the same period. In a slightly oblong shape at 150 x 134 meters along its axes, the Amphitheater was among the largest in Gaul, comparable in size to the Amphitheater of Poitiers, and in style similar to the Amphitheaters of the Roman colonies of Arelate and Nemausus, dating it to the latter half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. In terms of seating and internal layout, unfortunately not enough of the Amphitheater remains to provide detailed analysis.

In February of 2009, the Institut national de recherches archéologiques préventives (INRAP) discovered the remains of Durocortorum's Roman Amphitheater beneath the Place St. Thomas above an early 1<sup>st</sup> century CE structure.<sup>38</sup> As seen at Augustodunum, the Amphitheater was a later addition to the site, located on the edge of settlement and atop pre-existing structures. Taken together, this indicates a mid to late 1<sup>st</sup> century construction for the Amphitheater, prior to the demolition of the inner walls and the expansion of the settlement in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE.

The Amphitheater of Augusta Trevirorum was sunk into the western side of the Petrisberg, the excavated earth used to create the standing structure opposite the excavated hillside. Limestone was then used to give structure and stability to the earthen walls, as well as for the seats, some of which were marked to designate specific sections for specific groups or individuals. Similarities with the Barbarathermen bathing complex in building techniques and materials suggest a similar 100-150 CE date range for construction.<sup>39</sup> Maintenance of the Amphitheater was apparently in the hands of a private *collegium*; an inscription in the Amphitheater is dedicated to the 'To the honor of *domus divinae* and the Genius of the *arenarii* stationed at Colonia Augusta Trevirorum' by Axsillius Avitus, nicknamed 'Sacruna'.<sup>40</sup>

## 6. Analysis

There is a gap of nearly a generation between Rufus' Amphitheater at Condate and Victor's Amphitheater in Mediolanum which, if it did not directly inspire, was at the least a part of a sudden surge in amphitheater construction throughout Aquitania and then north into Vienna and Augustodunum, and finally Durocortorum and Augusta Trevirorum. While

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<sup>36</sup> Matter 1992: 29–31 on the distinction made between theaters based on shape and circumference. It is on the basis of Matter's argument that the Theater of Vienna should be included alongside the other examples here.

<sup>37</sup> Pelletier 1982: 415; Will 1952: 72, 128.

<sup>38</sup> Tyrrell 2009/2017 (<https://www.inrap.fr/en/all-treasures-reims-12156>).

<sup>39</sup> Wightman 1970: 81.

<sup>40</sup> CIL 13, 3641.

*evergetism* and the edification of urban space became a new ground for the Gallic aristocracy to play out their rivalries and competition, such impetus came from within Gallic society over time rather than from any type of Roman policy of cultural conversion, or from a sudden shift in cultural identity. Rufus' and Victor's act of dedicating their monuments to themselves and their descendants sparked a sudden flurry of building activity; among our sites, the earliest amphitheaters appear almost simultaneously at Mediolanum, Vesunna, and Lugdunum Convenarum; the location of the amphitheater in Durocortorum implies a late 1<sup>st</sup> century date, but until further excavation is done on the site the precise date-range for the structure remains unknown. Each of these amphitheaters was constructed in a similar style as the amphitheater at Pompeii, dated to ca. 70 BCE, and pre-dates the better known amphitheaters of Arles (Arles) and Nemausus (Nîmes) by at least 20 years. The only amphitheater in the Three Gauls that can be precisely dated to the period before the Amphitheater of Mediolanum is the amphitheater at Condate, dedicated by C. Julius Rufus before 19 CE.

The two earliest amphitheaters in Gaul were thus built by members of the same family, roughly a generation apart, both of whom had ties to Rome through the Altar at Condate.<sup>41</sup> Again, the nearly contemporary construction of the Amphitheater at Vesunna and at Lugdunum Convenarum would seem to argue in favor of a type of rivalry between these cities, the aristocracy of each city attempting to outdo the other with the addition of monumental architecture. If not direct rivalry, Rufus' amphitheater at Condate still served as a central point of influence, with the elite in his home of Mediolanum and nearby Vesunna and Lugdunum Convenarum seeking to mirror his construction in their own home *civitas*. With the continued monumentalization of the city by the Pompeii of Vesunna, and the spread of techniques, styles, and monument types north and east into the rest of Gaul, Rufus and Victor had clearly hit upon a strategy in building that was recognized as effective and adapted by local elite families throughout Gaul. Some variation of the Greco-Roman concepts of *beneficium/officium* and *evergetism* began to emerge among the Gallic aristocracy, with Gallic power no longer expressed simply in martial terms but the act of monumentalization gaining a new meaning and traction as a means of expressing authority and status, and in particular the construction of Roman amphitheaters.<sup>42</sup>

## 7. Conclusions

Of what use was an amphitheater to a Gallo-Roman audience, and why would a member of the Gallic elite choose to build one? That an amphitheater inherently meant gladiatorial games should not be assumed, though nearly all the sites show signs of gladiatorial games, the presence of gladiators, or references to gladiatorial games in art. There also exists the example of the rural Gallic theater, generally found some distance from a central settlement, often attached to a Roman-style bath and religious site.<sup>43</sup> For these

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<sup>41</sup> CIL 13 1036, 1037, 1043.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Woolf 1998: 125, though Woolf still argues for an active role on the part of the Romans in shaping and defining the Gallic elite. This argument is itself deconstructed in Irvin 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Picard 1970. Also Pelletier 1980, Picard 1946, and Picard 1955 on the Magna Mater 'Theater of the Mysteries'. Also, Dumasy 2011, which argues Gallo-Roman theaters had architectural antecedents in (rural) Gallic sanctuaries, versus Harmand 1990, who argues for at best a mix of Mediterranean architectural styles.

structures there are several assumed uses such as for rural assemblies, public ritual, possibly types of entertainment as well.<sup>44</sup> Rufus' amphitheater at Condate was initially utilized as a mixed place for the assembly of Gallic elite, as well as religious activity connected to the Imperial altar stationed at the confluence. Thus, a similar political and religious function likely preceded the structures' usage as a site for Roman-style blood sport, though by how great a gap we cannot say for certain.

Public displays of combat were by no means unique to Roman society. Futrell notes the presence of combat displays attested during later Celtic festivals, as well as mock combats between different factions and villages in Irish society.<sup>45</sup> Fagan likewise notes evidence for combat sports in Mesopotamia and Egypt in the commemoration of 'royal hunts', Greek combat sports such as boxing, wrestling, and pankration, even fights between animals including dogs and birds.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, the Hittites are recorded as staging a yearly mock battle between their soldiers and the 'Men of Masa', just before the season for warfare began.<sup>47</sup> The utilization of 'foreign' styles in the public display of martial prowess can be attested throughout Gaul prior to the Roman era. The combination of Hellenic architectural styles with Gallic skull trophies can be seen at Glanum, Roquepertuse, and Entremont, while inland sites of human sacrifice and war trophies such as Gournay-sur-Aronde or Ribemont-sur-Ancre continued to be used in the Gallo-Roman period. The building style, or the adoption of gladiatorial events, cannot be argued to be a measure of Roman acceptance or Roman cultural influence on these sites, especially given their construction by local elite and local benefactors.

Fagan lists what he sees as the contextual factors specific to Roman society that supported the centrality of the games. These include the practice of slavery, the embracement of violence, the obsession with hierarchy and status, the proximity to pain and death, and the connection between agonism and government services.<sup>48</sup> Central to all of these factors is the issue of power and control, whether direct control over persons as property, or control over everyday life and thereby the ability to improve the lot of the community. The amphitheater itself served to contain these elements of society, expressing them clearly and concisely before the collected community, distilling the complexities of society and the struggles for power among the elite into a series of games, shows, spectacles, and entertainments. The arena was the stage wherein control and power were displayed before the public, not through the abstract exercise of legal or institutional authority, but directly through life-or-death struggles, contests, and competitions. The arena served as a similar grand, defined stage on which rivalries and contests might play out before the Gallic community, versus the abstraction and insecurity of the heterarchical society the Gauls had competed within previously.

Rufus' monuments at Mediolanum and Condate, and the inscriptions on each, call the viewers' attention not just to the present wherein the monument exists, but to the future.

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<sup>44</sup> Futrell 1997: 70–71, 75; Roymans 1990, 31, 74. Cf. Hanson 1978 for potential Roman analogues to the rural temple-theater.

<sup>45</sup> Futrell 1997: 104–105.

<sup>46</sup> Fagan 2011: 74–75.

<sup>47</sup> KUB 17.35.

<sup>48</sup> Fagan 2011: 24, 27, 28, 30, 32.

The Arch presents Rufus as an already willing servant of the future Emperors and advertises himself as such to all who enter Mediolanum. It does not record a triumph, and it serves as a literal gateway into the city; Rufus misuses a style of Roman monument in order to project a legacy. He does the same at Condate, though his concern is his descendants and his legacy through them rather than himself personally. In both cases what the structure provides is stability and legacy, a future that Rufus' heirs can point to in order to hopefully secure their own positions, and thereby Rufus' position as well.

That we can still discuss him today shows that he was successful, and that success inspired subsequent generations to likewise invest in the construction of amphitheaters and public constructions, as the places and means by which the nebulous, agonistic world of pre-Roman Gaul might find definition and stability. These contests had little, if anything, to do with Roman culture; like the Hellenic lintels at Glanum or the pillars at Roquepertuse, both dotted with human skulls, Roman architecture served as the structure upon which the Gallic elite displayed their own prowess and right to rule over the Gallic community.

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##### Abbreviations:

- AE – *L'Année Epigraphique*  
CIL – *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*  
ILTG – *Inscriptions latines des trois Gaules*  
KUB – *Keilschriftkunden aus Boghazkdi*

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## **НАДМЕТАЊЕ, ЗНАЧЕЊЕ И МОНУМЕНТАЛИЗАЦИЈА У ГАЛИЈИ КОМАТИ**

### **Резиме**

Римска управа у Галији се ослањала на локалну елиту како би владала у име Рима. Била је то иста локална елита која је финансирала и градила монументалну архитектуру у провинцијама са којом се и идентификовала. Стога, оно што нам на први поглед изгледа као исказивање римске културе, мора заправо бити разумевано унутар контекста локалних елита, стандарда ауторитета и исказивања моћи.

Рани галски споменици имали су римске архитектонске типове и представљали су непрецизно слеђење елемената Августовог културног програма. Публика за ове споменике била је римска и настојала је да проглашава локалну верност извору царске моћи. Почевши од грађевинских активности Гаја Јулија Руфа у време Тиберија, догодила се значајна промена. Руфова изградња лука посвећеног Германику у сопственом родном граду, као и подизање амфитеатра на локалитету Кондат, комеморише управо њега као градитеља. Ови споменици такође експлицитно преносе Руфово наслеђе будућим генерацијама јер и у њихово име и пред будућим царевима оглашавају његов статус и лојалност. У следећем поколењу, Руфов рођак, Гај Јулије Виктор, по сличном обрасцу је подигао амфитеатар у породичном родном граду, док су и оближњи градови и друге регионално моћне породице отпочеле изградњу амфитеатара. До краја I века, подизање амфитеатара, употребом сличних ако не и истих архитектонских техника, проширило се од Аквитаније до Белгике, а сви су били посвећени својим финансијерима и предвиђени за успостављање трајне породичне баштине.

Иако се не може понудити конкретан разлог зашто су галске елите биле фокусиране баш на амфитеатре, може се предложити неколико могућности. Укратко, амфитеатри су служили као средство путем којег је претходно ратничка галска аристократија могла да се надмеће и показује сличне вредности ратничких вештина и јавне користи. Ширење римских споменика, а посебно амфитеатара, на тај начин је служило као начин да галска аристократија публици искаже своју подобност као водећег дела друштва и унутар контекста империјалног система.

**Кључне речи:** романизација, империјализам, Галија, гало-римска култура, амфитеатри, преримска Галија, римски споменици, римске провинције.

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