

Priests and State in the Roman World
Edited by James H. Richardson and Federico Santangelo

POTSDAMER
ALTERTUMSWISSENSCHAFTLICHE
BEITRÄGE (PAwB)

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Band 33

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Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart 2011

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen
Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese
Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie;
detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über
<<http://dnb.d-nb.de>> abrufbar.

ISBN 978-3-515-09817-5

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Gedruckt auf säurefreiem, alterungsbeständigem Papier.
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Druck: AZ Druck und Datentechnik GmbH, Kempten
Printed in Germany

BEYOND ‘*POLIS* RELIGION’ AND *SACERDOTES PUBLICI* IN SOUTHERN GAUL

Ralph Haeussler

1. INTRODUCTION: BEYOND ‘*POLIS* RELIGION’ – FROM COLLECTIVITY TO INDIVIDUALISATION

The aim of this paper is to go beyond the traditional model of ‘*polis* religion’ which dominates many studies of religions in the Roman provinces. This traditional model focuses on the political role of civic cults as a means of creating social cohesion. It looks for similarities, but by doing so religious diversity and contradictory evidence are frequently overlooked, thus marginalising other religious aspects that were part of everyday life, such as Greco-Oriental cults, household cults, private cults, magical activities, divination, oracles, myth, afterlife beliefs and the wide-range of funerary practices as well as other religious activities. In the Roman Empire, people’s ‘religious’ experience was shaped by many and sometimes seemingly incompatible cult practices, with the result that the ‘civic’ and ‘imperial’ cults might have had the least impact on individuals. Instead we have to develop a more dynamic image of religion which aims for a better understanding of the discrepant religious experiences in the Roman empire, taking into account the varied and often contradictory religious choices of individuals and social groups.

Southern Gaul is an interesting area of study for this subject since we can trace religious changes from the Iron Age to the Principate. There were diverse religious developments that forged the character of the countless local cults and cult institutions with their local peculiarities. Not only was there no ‘blue print’ for how to ‘Romanise’ local indigenous religions, but the Roman period also catalysed existing processes of religious individualisation and diversification that had already started in the late Iron Age – processes that raise questions about the religious authority of the municipalities in Southern Gaul. From the epigraphic evidence, the actions of *sacerdotes publici* do not appear to have had a significant impact on religious life in Gallia Narbonensis. Instead we have to consider other protagonists that shaped the character of local cults. Moreover, the countless rural cults, for example, – whose cult places were often primitive, makeshift affairs – should not be discarded as mere *sacra priuata*, but should be treated as an essential part of communal life in the Roman provinces; according to Festus’ definition, such a cult would not qualify as a private one in any case, for a private cult was limited to individual men, families or *gentes*: *publica sacra, quae publico sumptu*

*pro populo fiunt, quaeque pro montibus, pagis, curiis, sacellis; at priuata, quae pro singulis hominibus, familiis, gentibus fiunt.*¹

In the Roman empire, religion and religious change should not be reduced to a simple question of politics and loyalty to Rome. Instead, we need to consider aspects of religious experience and individual choices. In order to understand religious developments in Gaul we need a bottom-up approach: the extent to which the *decuriones* could really have been at the forefront of shaping local cults is questionable. This is why we need to focus on the role of the individual in shaping local cults, religious understandings and representations. Given the fact that an individual's religious experience was shaped by many factors, the official cults of one's community appear to have played a rather marginal role; indeed, we also have to wonder to what extent they really mattered in the society of the Principate, with its high degree of migration and an intense exchange of religious ideas, where new and alien religions – such as the cults of Serapis-Isis, Mithras, Magna Mater, Jupiter Dolichenus, Christianity and many more – had the potential to attract many devotees. Do these conditions in the Roman empire reduce the concept of *polis* religion to an absurdity?

In recent years the impact of municipalisation on public cults and the model of *polis* religion have been popular for studies of 'Gallo-Roman' religions in the Roman West and in particular for Gaul.² Following this model, one assumes that, in a manner comparable with the Classical Greek *polis*, a *ciuitas* (or *colonia* or *municipium*) in the Roman West had the sole responsibility and authority to install a religious system and to arbitrate the relationship between mortals and the divine.³ For J. Scheid, ancient religion is not religion in a *polis*, but the religion of the *polis*: 'la religion est liée à l'idéal de la cité'.⁴ Common rituals and festivals helped to create the sentiment of a common identity for a local community, for which reason religion is considered a political institution and the central ideology of a *ciuitas* with each deity and cult playing its part in the formation of the self-identity of the *ciuitas*.

As evidence to support the *polis* religion model, one generally cites the *lex coloniae Genetiuae* of the Caesarian colony of Urso. It shows the overall religious authority of *duumviri* and *decuriones* in all religious affairs, such as the care over *fana*, *templa* and *delubra* (paragraph CXXVIII), the introduction of Roman-style priesthoods (*pontifices*, *augures*)⁵ and the imposition of Roman cults and deities

1 Fest. 284L for whom rituals concerning groups within the *populus* – *montes*, *pagi* and *sacella* – are public. Cf. Wissowa 1912, 380-566.

2 For the idea of *polis* religion or civic cults, cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1990; Gordon 1990; Woolf 1997; Derks 1998; Scheid, 1998, 22; Van Andringa 2002; Kindt 2009; and the papers in Dondin-Payre-Raepsaet-Charlier 2006 (along with the review in *Bonner Jahrbücher* 208, 2008, 381-384).

3 For definition and critique of *polis* religion, cf. Sourvinou-Inwood 1990 and Woolf 1997.

4 Scheid 1998, 22; Scheid 1999, 385-387; Rüpke 1999. For a re-assessment of Scheid's methodology, cf. now Ando 2009.

5 Paragraphs LXVI-LXVII.

in the context of a provincial *colonia*.⁶ However, many of the stipulations may be particular for Urso and its colonial status, like the Capitoline Triad (paragraph LXX-LXXI) which is otherwise very rare in, or even absent from, most *ciuitates*. Similarly, the cult of the goddess Venus (paragraph LXXI) as ancestral goddess of the Julii is specific for a Caesarian foundation. An important stipulation refers to the choice of civic cults and public festivals after the foundation of the *colonia* (paragraph LXIV), which creates the impression that the colonists completely redefined the local pantheon in a single day. But the times when colonies were founded as 'bastions of the empire'⁷ by Italo-Roman settlers after the Roman conquest had created a *tabula rasa* were long over: even in a veteran colony like Nîmes (see below), the indigenous population made up most of the citizen-body so that choices regarding cults surely reflected existing local deities; and we cannot assume that there will always have been a consensus among the elites about which gods should receive public funding, since many existing cults may have been associated with particular lineages or *gentes*. Moreover, constant reorganising of the 'civic cults' was, at least in theory, possible since the *lex coloniae Genetiuae* clearly states that the *ordo* decided at the beginning of every year on the colony's public cults and festivals (paragraph LXIV).⁸

We have to ask whether Roman-style municipal structures were really that important for the development of local cults in the provinces. Of course, religious expressions in Gaul changed significantly during the Roman period since religion had to adapt to the changing societal structures and cultural expectations in order to remain meaningful to contemporaries, and urbanisation played an important part in this process. But the impact of municipal structures should not be overemphasised. On the one hand, Southern Gaul was already dominated by large urban-like settlements with monumental urban cult places.⁹ On the other, municipalisation does not appear to have had any similar effect on indigenous communities and their religions in Republican Italy. For example, in Cisalpine Gaul in the first century BC religious dedications, like those from Briona and Vercelli, were still embedded in a traditional mindset, despite the fact that these places had already acquired the status of Latin colonies.¹⁰ Cultural and religious change generally only took place – on either side of the Alps – during the early Principate. It is therefore more likely that this is primarily a cultural phenomenon, and not a political move.

The fact that it is so difficult to identify the *polis* gods in many *ciuitates* suggests that municipalisation had only a minor impact on religion. Even in the case of Cologne – *Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium* – Scheid concluded that it is impossible to identify the *panthéon officiel* of this important colony.¹¹ How

6 For the *lex coloniae Genetiua*, cf. Gabba and Crawford 1996. Cf. paragraph LXXXI in which Jupiter and the ancestral gods (*dii penates*) are mentioned.

7 Cic. *Leg. agr.* 2.73.

8 Scheid 1992, 130 n. 2.

9 Haeussler 2010.

10 For Vercelli: *ILV* 59; *RIG* 2.1 E-2; for Briona: *ibid.* E-1.

11 Cf. Scheid 2006a, 304-305 for the 'panthéon public' of Cologne.

should we identify *polis* deities in Gallia Narbonensis? Attempts to identify a *polis* god by simply counting the number of votive inscriptions to this or that divinity are futile, as this will only reveal deities that are popular with the general public, such as the Proxsumes and other mother goddesses, or healing deities to whom one was obliged to fulfil one's vow. Another criterion would be the involvement of a magistrate or a public *sacerdos*, but this kind of official involvement of the *ciuitas* and its magistrates is rarely attested.

Another problem is that our conventional model of ancient religion as political and highly ritualised largely denies people their 'religiosity'.¹² But is this valid for all ancient religions? We should not create artificial parallels between Greek, Roman and 'Celtic' religions. From a Roman perspective, religion in Gaul was clearly considered to be fundamentally different from Roman perceptions. Why else should Caesar write that 'the nation of all the Gauls is extremely devoted to superstitious rites'.¹³ The rituals he describes¹⁴ indicate *superstitio* as excessive fear of the gods and unreasonable religious beliefs. Similarly, our archaeological evidence suggests that boundaries between religion and everyday life did not exist in late Iron Age Gaul, so that religion intruded into every act of daily life.¹⁵ It is unlikely that this *superstitio* was abandoned with the Roman conquest. Indeed, the exceptionally high number of cult places that become visible or were founded in the Roman period, pay respect to people's continued 'religiosity' in Gallia Narbonensis.

In the *polis* religion model, complex situations are often reduced to a common denominator. This makes analyses superficial as one often focuses on similarities, while largely ignoring the local variations in a cult. For example, the frequent attestations of Latin theonyms (Mars, Mercury, Jupiter and so on) in *ciuitates* across Gaul should not be taken as indicating that the modalities of cults resemble each other across the Roman West or that they were modelled on Rome, as this is mainly due to a bias in our sources.¹⁶ One recent study on the Senones, for example, plays down the differences between Mars and Mercury for the sake of the argument: the fact that Mars is primarily attested in the city and Mercury in the countryside is considered insignificant since both are said to go back to the same 'dieu celtique souverain et guerrier', so that one could postulate 'les mêmes fonctions que les divinités poliades' and that the local population could gather 'autour de valeurs communes'.¹⁷ This is however not the case.¹⁸ Certainly in Roman Gaul,

12 Cf. e.g. Scheid 1998, 20-28.

13 Caes. *B Gall.* 6.16. He also writes that the religion of the Gauls is like those of all other nations (*B Gall.* 6.16-18), possibly to facilitate the integration of the Gauls into the Roman empire.

14 Some of Caesar's descriptions may have been just *topoi* inspired by Poseidonius and were probably already obsolete in his time; cf. Brunaux 2000, 157-165.

15 Cf. e.g. Hill 1995 for the ambiguity of ritual (sacred) and rubbish (profane) in the archaeological context.

16 Cf. Haeussler 2008b for the interpretation of the epigraphic sources.

17 Debatty 2006, 175.

the local Mars and Mercury had developed their own particularities. For example the divine couple Mercury and Rosmerta/Maia seems fundamentally different in character from the more bellicose couple Mars and Victoria, though both couples may well have served as patron deities in their community – as providers of wealth and as strong protectors from calamity respectively. As for the choice of epithets, most clearly in Gallia Narbonensis, Mercury occasionally took a Latin epithet, while a wide range of Celtic epithets was associated with Mars. The traditional focus on civic cults means that evidence of a contradictory or more diverse nature is often deliberately overlooked. It is revealing for this attitude that the phenomenon of *interpretatio Romana* – of expressing indigenous deities by Roman theonyms – is considered by some to be 'un processus bien établi';¹⁹ as a result, its diversity and complexity are ignored, as are, in particular, the individuality of the decision-making processes and the varieties of conflicting *interpretationes* that were possible, as well as the uncertainties of our interpretations. For any deity we are able to provide a variety of explanations. Apollo Granus, for example, could be a syncretism of two deities, with Apollo as the Roman *interpretatio* of a Celtic god Granus or Apollo as the indigenous choice for a healing deity with similar qualities to Granus; then again, there may never have been a god 'Granus', and this word could be nothing but a mere epithet.²⁰ In general, we seem to be witnessing the creation of completely new divine concepts in the Principate – local gods that are neither Roman nor Celtic. In other words, the continuing evolution of local and/or indigenous mythologies is generally ignored by traditional research, as is the multitude of social actors – including members of the lower social strata of society – that shaped the character of local religion by their actions. Altogether, the application of the *polis* religion model for Gaul often creates the image of local religion as an artificial product, created at a precise moment in time when a community was 're-organised' by Rome.²¹

Under the assumption that local religion follows Roman institutional rules and that it is therefore the role of public cults 'à assurer la cohésion du système politique',²² extra-urban sanctuaries are often considered to be political tools consciously employed by the local *ordo* as 'centres of identification' to create social cohesion and territorial unity. In a recent study, the case of Corinth was evoked as model of how extra-urban sanctuaries were used to express the identity and territorial sovereignty of the *polis* with the aim of integrating the various social groups into the community.²³ Some scholars assume that the embellishment of a rural cult

18 Cf. Haeussler 2008c for confusion between Mars/Mercury and Esus/Toutatis (Luc. 1.444-447).

19 Debatty 2006, 173.

20 De Bernardo Stempel 2007; also for Delamarre (2003, 183, *s.u.* grannos 'barbe?') it is an epithet: '(celui qui a une) barbichette'.

21 Cf. e.g. Scheid 2006b, 444.

22 Goffaux 2006, 53.

23 Gillot 2006, 21-22, 24-25; the usefulness of this model for the study of extra-urban sanctuaries in Gaul is argued for by Dondin-Payre-Raepsaet-Charlier 2006, vii; Gillot 2006, 8; Scheid 2006b, 440.

place was done for the sole purpose of creating territorial cohesion in a *ciuitas*. In accordance with this view, the sanctuary of Bois l'Abbé in the *ciuitas* of Amiens is not considered to be the cult of a *pagus*,²⁴ but to have been controlled by the entire *ciuitas*: 'la cité, un tout qui fusionne ses composants'.²⁵ But we should also take into account other cultural and even 'religious' considerations that can lead to the construction of extra-urban sanctuaries and to their monumentalisation. This is especially so in the case of spring sanctuaries. Apart from the reputation of an individual healing deity or sacred spring, there is also a general upsurge in healing sanctuaries in the Roman West: cultural values, health concerns and healing qualities attributed to water and thermal springs in the Principate may reflect the *Romanitas* of local *euergetes*.

We also need to take into account the fact that Iron Age cults seem much more aimed at controlling an entire community compared with cults from the time of the Principate. The size of the large Iron Age sanctuaries,²⁶ as well as the scale of votive offerings, go far beyond the evidence from the Roman period. In Southern Gaul, permanent cult places inside the '*oppida*' provided a focus for collective veneration over several centuries,²⁷ creating a shared identity that consolidated social hierarchies; some sites probably had a supra-regional political function, such as Entremont and Glanum which may have been sanctuaries for the alleged Salluvian 'confederation'. This level of religious centralisation seems very different from Roman times with its multitude of deities, cults, cult places and religious practices. The idea of a 'civic' cult may not have been strange to the local elites of a newly created Roman-style municipality, but the social and cultural reality of the Principate – individualisation and global interaction – must have undermined a city's religious authority.

L'image d'ensemble [de la vie religieuse dans les Gaules et les Germanies] est celle d'une forte ressemblance des modalités d'aménagement du paysage religieux avec celui de l'Italie romaine, et d'une pratique cultuelle qui se distingue uniquement par les noms des dédicants et ceux de certaines divinités.²⁸

The often postulated similarities across the Roman West are due to our evidence. The adoption of Latin epigraphy along with the adoption of Greco-Roman anthropomorphic representations of deities cause our evidence to appear, at least superficially, similar across the Roman West. Instead of searching for similarities, we need to look for diversity, taking into account archaeological, sculptural and epi-

24 Dondin-Payre 2006 does not consider other social groups and social actors who could be involved in the embellishment of this site. But cf. now Vipard 2009 for an inscription which clearly indicates the role of the *pagus* at Bois l'Abbé.

25 Dondin-Payre 2006, 154; Scheid 2006b, 443.

26 E.g. sanctuaries in Northern Gaul, like Corent, Vertault or Acy-Romance.

27 On *herôa* cf. the overview in Haeussler 2010.

28 Scheid, 2006b, 448. However, these can only be superficial resemblances; a comparison with multicultural Roman Italy – N. Terrenato's (1998) 'cultural bricolage' – appears meaningless.

graphic sources. The aim of this paper therefore is to show the importance of local decisions and particularities, some of which go back to pre-Roman mentalities and conceptions, and to show the way in which they shaped local cults and cult institutions in Roman times. Instead of providing a top-down approach to the development of local religion, it will be necessary to identify the actions and motivations of the social agents involved in the decision-making process, as *cultores*, dedicants, *euergetai*, priests and *decuriones*. A large number of Roman-style *pontifices*, *flamines* and *seuiri* is attested epigraphically, but the question arises whether they really mattered. Were public priests really engaged in local religious matters or were priesthoods merely a political tool, a status symbol, a 'social club' of local honoraries?²⁹ We need to consider all the worshippers involved, since an *ordo* or a member of the local elite could not simply introduce a new cult if it did not appear meaningful to local worshippers; by introducing new cults or rituals, local elites may have also been responding to the changing mentalities of a population which may have doubted existing ideologies. As a result, the strategies of local *decuriones* did not necessarily follow the same guiding principles across the province.

There were periods when individuals were faced with a wide choice of cults and divinities, for example in the second to third century AD. And in certain periods, isolated decisions of an individual may, in the long run, have profoundly changed the character of local cults, *panthea* and religions. For example, the first use of an anthropomorphic sculpture for a local deity, the first Latin votive inscription or the first Latin theonym may have been isolated acts, but they may have ultimately changed the character of a local cult. A sculptural representation may have influenced the ways in which the local population perceived their deity, especially if it acquired more and more characteristics of his/her Greco-Roman counterpart, while at the same time still preserving particularly local traits. Further evolution over the following generations would have resulted in a cult that was neither Roman nor indigenous: whether a deity has a Roman or a Celtic name, it will have been typical for the local community of its time.

In what follows, a series of case studies – of Glanum, Nîmes, Aix-en-Provence and Apt – will serve to demonstrate the enormous differences in the development of local *panthea* and religious practices between the late Iron Age and the Principate.³⁰ As we shall see, a particular religious 'system' developed in each *ciuitas* – deriving from a local, regional and global 'repertoire' –, but it will be difficult to identify clearly 'polis deities' and 'civic cults' in the local 'pantheon'. Instead the evidence suggests that there was a diverse range of cults brought about by the growing individualisation of religion in the Principate. Iconography, archaeology and theonyms can demonstrate the diversity of the cults as well as the continuing evolution of religious practises, cults, myths and mentalities in the pre-Roman period and throughout the Principate. Even in the case of

29 Cf. Rüpke, in this volume.

30 The three urban centres of the *coloniae* of Narbonne, Arles and Vienne stand out for the Roman character of religious testimonies.

many *coloniae*, cults were rarely just copied from Rome, but there was a common language that made cults, their functions and rituals legible across the Roman West and this was mainly due to the mentalities of the individual social actor and his/her *Romanitas* (however imperfect).

2. PRIESTS OF THE IMPERIAL CULT

The public cult *par excellence* was the imperial cult. But what relationship did this cult have with religious life in Gallia Narbonensis? In this respect it is interesting to note that – according to our epigraphic record – priests of the imperial cult were hardly ever involved in religious activities. Scheid describes the imperial cult as a very particular part of public cult whose importance should not be exaggerated.³¹ In Gallia Narbonensis, the imperial cult must have played a prominent political role as there are numerous sculptures, statues and podium temples for the emperor and his family, as well as 136 inscriptions mentioning *flamines* and *flaminicae*, and 207 inscriptions for *seuiri/Augustales* (fig. 1).³² However, just 4.4% of these *flamines* and 9.5% of *seuiri* were involved in religious dedications. There are a few dedications to the emperor and his *lares*, but they were mostly set up by other people, like Aix's *pagus Iu(u)uenalis*³³ or Nîmes' *cultores Urae fontis*.³⁴ The few religious dedications made by *flamines* and *seuiri* include, for example, a dedication to Jupiter from Narbonne³⁵ and to Mars Augustus from Lattes³⁶ and Uchaud.³⁷

The largest concentration of imperial priests can be found in the Augustan veteran colony *Nemausus*/Nîmes with 23 *flamines* and 71 *seuiri*, twice the number compared with the provincial capital Narbonne. This is not surprising since the so-called 'Augusteum' may have provided a religious, social and political focal point. But 85% of the inscriptions mentioning *flamines* are epitaphs and 15% are honorary decrees, and at least 67 out of 71 attestations for *seuiri* are epitaphs (94%). Likewise in the *colonia Aquae Sextiae* we are primarily dealing with epi-

31 Scheid 2006a, 304. For Fishwick 2002 the imperial cult is a political phenomenon.

32 Including all inscriptions attesting the words *flamen*, *flaminica*, *seuiri* or *Augustalis*. There is also the *lex de flamonio prouinciae Narbonensis* (CIL 12.6038 = ILS 696): cf. Fishwick 2002.

33 ILN-3, 22.

34 CIL 12.3076 = ILS 4847.

35 Narbonne: CIL 12.4318 (add. p. 845) = AE 1992, 1224: [I(oui?) O(ptimo?)] M(aximo?) / [--Co]rnelius / [Ina]chus / [Vlui]r Aug(ustalis) / [statu]as arg(enteas) II.

36 Lattes: AE 1965, 164 = 1966, 247 = 2003, 1142: Deo Marti Aug(usto) / et Gen(io) col(legi) Vluir(orum) / Aug(ustalium) T(itus) Eppil(ius) Astrapton / fabr(i) et utric(larii) Lattar(enses) / [ob?] mer(ita?) eor(um).

37 Uchaud (Gard): CIL 12.4081: Marti Aug(usto) / C(aius) Iulius I[t]a[I]us / IIIIIluir Aug(ustalis) / [h]onoratus / ornamentis decu[rional(ibus)] / [---].

taphs.³⁸ Many attestations originate from rural sites, both in Nîmes and Aix, where these inscriptions serve to display people's status and identity in the context of the elites' rural residences (see below).

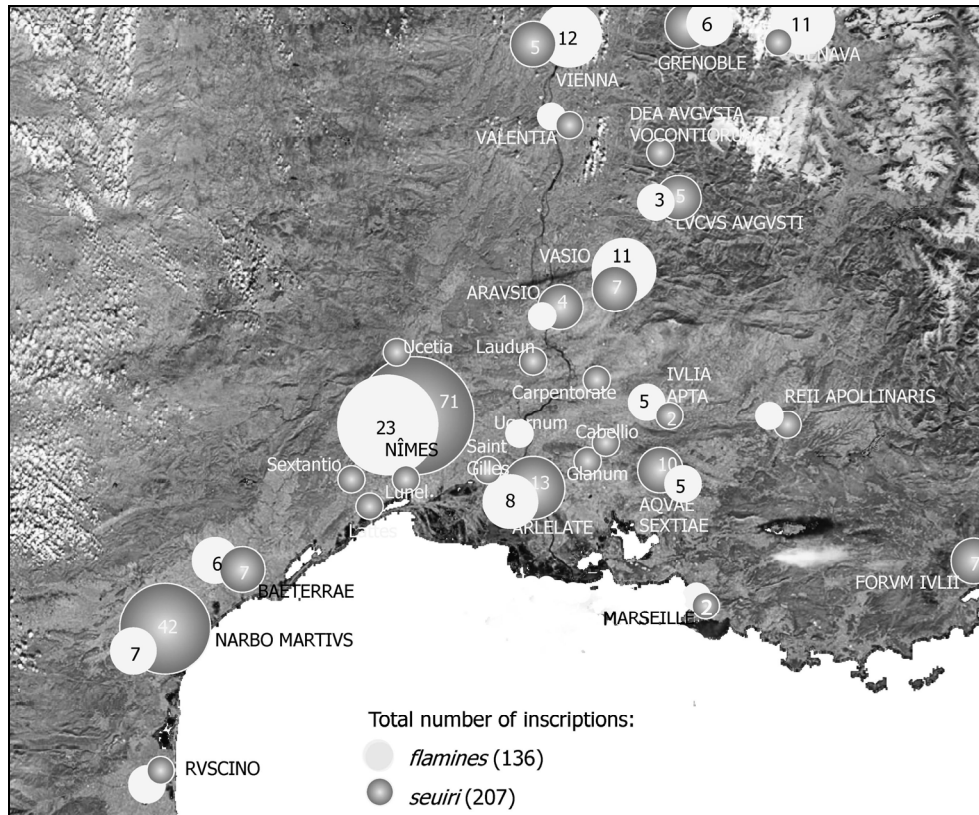


Fig. 1. Distribution map of *flamines/flaminicae* (lighter circles) and *seuiri/Augustales* (darker circles) in Gallia Narbonensis.

Given the large number of religious dedications from Gallia Narbonensis, it is surprising that *flamines* and *seuiri* did not get more involved in religious affairs, or act as trendsetters for local cults. Instead we seem to be dealing with a primarily political tool that served to negotiate power relationships, especially those between the centre and the periphery.³⁹ Many of the Narbonensis' municipal *flamines* had been chosen from among the powerful elites of neighbouring towns, so that a community could tap into these people's personal patronage networks and position itself in the empire. For example, Lucius Volusius Severianus from Apt was *flamen* in Aix and *pontifex sacerdos urbis Romae aeternae* in Avignon,⁴⁰

38 Evidence from *Aquae Sextiae's* territory: *seuir* at Cucuron (ILN-3, 206); *seuiri* at Arc de Meyran (Aix) (ILN-3, 35-36); *flamen* at Puryicard (Aix) (ILN-3, 29); *flamen* at Vernègues (ILN-3, 261); *pontifex* at Rognes (ILN-3, 245).

39 Cf. Price 1985, 205 and discussion by Schörner 2006.

40 ILN-4, 27.

while Lucius Vercius Priscus was *seuir* in Narbonne and in Aix,⁴¹ and Aebutius Agathonis was *seuir* in Arles and in Apt.⁴² Due to their social standing, *flamines* were frequently patrons of local communities, like Marcus Julius who was tribune of the eighth legion Augusta, *flamen Augusti* and [*patro*]no *coloniae*.⁴³ We are dealing with a local elite that had economic and political interests across several *ciuitates*. External relationships beyond one's community had become increasingly important in the Roman empire;⁴⁴ the relationship with Rome was cast as a personal bond between *flamen* and the emperor. With people having aspirations across the province and beyond, the role of a single *ciuitas* was increasingly diminishing during the Principate and local *decuriones* might therefore have cared less for collective or civic cults. Since the number of socially important priest-hoods for the imperial cult was rather limited, many local elites might have looked for alternatives to express their socio-religious authority and to consolidate and mobilise their own power base, especially in a rural context.

3. DIVERSE EVOLUTION OF LOCAL RELIGIONS

There was no blueprint for how to reorganise indigenous cults at the 'moment' when a Roman-style municipality was created. There is consequently enormous regional diversity which results from the different strategies that were employed by the local elites. Cults in the city of Nîmes, for example, appear to have been dominated by a central urban sanctuary and those in Nîmes' territory were predominantly associated with major agglomerations (*uici*, '*oppida Latina*'), which may indicate the city's control over the cults in the effort to create cohesion across the *colonia*. This was even more the case in *Vienna/Vienne*, where cult choices appear more limited: Mars/Maia and Mercury dominate across Vienne's large territory. This was also the only *ciuitas* with a particular local type of priesthood, the *flamen Martis*, who can be found in numerous *uici* – Geneva, Grenoble, Passy, Saint-Alban Laysse and *Vicus Augusti*⁴⁵ – thus suggesting a more centralised religious organisation.

We encounter a very different situation in the two *coloniae Apta Iulia* (Apt) and *Aquae Sextiae* (Aix-en-Provence), where it is difficult to identify the civic cults clearly or any major urban religious centre, and where there is a myriad of cults and cult places in suburban and rural contexts across both *coloniae*. How can we explain these diverging developments considering that all three were *coloniae* and had acquired Latin rights by the Augustan period? Should we not expect the Roman influence to be more prominent in *Aquae Sextiae* and *Iulia Apta*, consid-

41 *CIL* 12.4424 = *ILS* 6970.

42 *CIL* 12.1005.

43 *ILN*-3, 24 = *ILN*-3, 216 = *AE* 2001, 105 = *CAG* 13/4, p. 375-376; fig. 452; origin of the mausoleum: Aix-en-Provence or Puy-Sainte-Réparate.

44 Haeussler 2008b.

45 *ILN*-5, 374, 547, 549, 621, 638, 845, 849. Otherwise there is one *flamen Martis* from Lyon (*AE* 1966, 252) and one from Pompeii (*CIL* 4.879).

ering that they were related to the early conquest? Apt was possibly founded as a road station during the construction of the *uia Domitia* in 118 BC, and Aix-en-Provence by Sextius Calvinus in c. 122 BC.⁴⁶

We should not create an artificial dichotomy between pre-Roman and Gallo-Roman cults. Religious change is a continuing process that may not even be visible to contemporaries. It is a rupture that needs to be explained, for example as a crisis in the legitimacy of existing social hierarchies and ideologies that caused, for instance, the abandonment of the long-established pre-Roman hero-ancestor cult associated with '*accroupis*' and '*têtes coupées*' during the first century BC. Religious changes have to be understood in a long-term perspective as there were already numerous significant developments in the late Iron Age, such as the architectural monumentalisation of cult places (for example, porticoes, Glanum, the '*fanum*' of Nages, and so on), their association with urban sites ('*oppida*'), the use of anthropomorphic representations (sculptures, like *accroupis* and Glanum's four-figured capitals), religious representations on local coinage, as well as changes in rituals and cult practices, like the change from collective to increasingly individual vows in the late Iron Age.⁴⁷ Some of these processes were further catalysed in the Roman period, but change appears to have been chronologically independent from municipalisation. The Augustan period may have acted as something of a cultural trendsetter for several generations and may have inspired the construction of podium temples at sites like Glanum and Vernègues (see below). Is it possible that the particular Roman veneer of the Augustan period wore off, while subsequent generations were concerned with other aspects, like local identity in a global world? In any case, the religions of Narbonensis continued to evolve and adapt to other religious, societal and cultural developments. Many of the cults that become visible in the second and third centuries AD may have only been created in this period.

The following four case-studies are meant to show the diversity of local religions, the activities of individual social actors and the outcome of the strategies employed by local elites, and especially the diverse role played by the '*ordo*' in making religious decisions.

3.1. Glanum

The agglomeration of Glanon/Glanum⁴⁸ (Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, Bouches-du-Rhône) is an important site for our understanding of religion in Southern Gaul as it allows us to study the chronology of change from the second century BC down to the third century AD. It provides an insight into late Iron Age cults including

46 Either as *conciliabulum* or *colonia*: cf. Strabo 4.1.5 and Cassiodorus, *Chronica* p. 131 (Mommsen), *contra* Livy *Per.* 61: colony.

47 See the size and deposition of votive deposits, and Gallo-Greek dedications set up by individual persons.

48 Cf. Roth Congès 1997, 2000, 2004; Haeussler 2007, 2007b.

changes from the second to the first century BC, such as the increasing diversification of cult activities, the monumentalisation of the sanctuary, the use of epigraphy and anthropomorphic representations, and so on.⁴⁹ At first sight, Glanum also appears to provide a typical illustration of transformation: around 25 BC, a Roman-style forum and two podium temples were constructed in the city centre; this construction work was possibly related to the acquisition of Latin rights.⁵⁰ Many of the changes to local cults were probably adaptations that reflect the *Zeitgeist* of the Principate. The survival of Glanum may have partly depended on rendering cults meaningful for contemporaries by promoting the sacred spring's healing qualities. It was this reputation which probably led Marcus Agrippa to visit Glanum in 39 or 19 BC and to found a temple to the Roman goddess Valetudo next to the sacred spring.⁵¹ Perhaps as an act of private veneration, Agrippa's *interpretatio* of the local deity marks the bringing of this healing sanctuary into the service of the empire (*pro ualetudine Caesaris*). This may explain Glanum's emphasis on the healing aspect to the detriment of other pre-Roman religious functions. Marcus Agrippa seems to have reinvigorated and reshaped the character of Glanum, whose architectural transformation subsequently seems to have gathered pace.

Glanum has to find its place in the Empire. Its proximity to the prosperous Caesarian colony Arles in particular must have threatened its existence as a settlement and a sanctuary, after it had lost its alleged political role for the Salluvii following its destruction in 90 BC.⁵² Subsequently, the *herôon* with its hero-ancestor and *têtes coupées* cult probably ceased to be frequented, since the ideologies behind it had lost their ability to motivate people.⁵³ On the other hand, local elites had been increasingly participating in Roman affairs, most prominently since Caesar's governorship. Certain local families saw themselves as part of the wider world, like Glanum's Julii, whose mausoleum (30s BC)⁵⁴ is decorated with bas-reliefs celebrating the heroic deeds they achieved under Caesar in the Civil War.⁵⁵

This may explain the need to re-position the cult. But grand plans can fail: with not a single ex-voto, Agrippa's Valetudo does not appear to have been a popular healing goddess,⁵⁶ the toponymic theonym Glanis is only attested once

49 The construction of a 'Tuscan' temple at Glanum in the second century BC is one of many aspects that indicate the importance of Italic influence in Southern Gaul, rather than Marseille; also cf. Mullen 2008. On Glanum's Iron Age *herôon*, cf. Roth Congès 2004; Haeussler 2010.

50 Roth Congès 2000, 13 on Glanum as an *oppidum Latinum* or possible Latin colony.

51 *AE* 1955, 111b; 1956, 162: [*Val*]etudini *M(arcus) Agrippa*.

52 Roth Congès 2000.

53 For the hero cult and the abandonment of the cult during the first century BC (destruction and burial of the statues, etc.), cf. Roth Congès 2004.

54 Roth-Congès 2000, 23; 2009.

55 Roth-Congès 2000, 24-25; e.g. the battle of Zela against Pharnace (47 BC) shown on eastern panel.

56 Besides Agrippa's dedication there is only one inscription (*Valetudini*; *AE* 1958, 307b) and no ex-voto.

and the Glanic mother goddesses twice,⁵⁷ while the deities worshipped in the twin temple cannot be identified except for a general association with the imperial cult, as is common with all important cult places across the Roman empire.⁵⁸ Instead ex-votos to Hercules and Silvanus, worshipped as healing deities, dominate the record with eight inscriptions each.⁵⁹ For Hercules a little square shrine – a common feature in many local sanctuaries (see below, Lioux) – was constructed next to the entrance of the sacred spring. In the Roman period, Hercules may have helped to elevate Glanum's sanctuary to the position of an ancient and powerful cult in the rapidly changing sacred landscape of Southern Gaul. On the other hand, Hercules might have already been integrated into local religious life by the time these inscriptions were set up: a statuette of Herakles from the second century BC may indicate that he was already worshipped in Iron Age Glanum,⁶⁰ perhaps in an attempt to integrate Glanum into the Greco-Roman world by creating a mythological ancestry: Glanum is situated next to the Heraklean Way and one of Hercules' deeds was said to have taken place in the Stony Plain, the Crau, to the south of Glanum.⁶¹ The other popular healing deity is Silvanus – not the Roman rustic deity, but a chthonic deity going back to an indigenous conception of the god; the hammer is his attribute which explains his Celtic name Sucellos, 'the good striker' (fig. 2).⁶²



Fig. 2. A typical representation of Sucellos with mallet, *olla* and dog (Nîmes, photo: author, courtesy of Musée archéologique, Nîmes).

57 Haeussler 2007a.

58 There is one dedication to the Capitoline Triad of unknown origin: *CIL* 12.996; Rolland 1944, 173-174, no. 13.

59 Roth Congès 1997; Haeussler 2007b.

60 The term *Hercules Gallicus* is attested on a dedication from Allife, Italy (*CIL* 9.2322); it is possible that the characteristics and myth of the Greco-Roman Hercules merged with indigenous heroes and semi-gods; cf. Euskirchen 2001; Bauchhenß 2007.

61 Diod. Sic. 4.19-20; Strabo 4.1.8.

62 *CIL* 12.1000-1002; 1004; *ILGN* 146-147; *AE* 1924, 59; 1958, 307a; on Silvanus and Sucellos cf. Haeussler 2008c.

Deities like Silvanus and Hercules were obviously more popular with worshippers and pilgrims than Valetudo and Glanis. Another significant feature is the diversification of cults in the city with the creation of distinct cult places. One of them is the temple for Bona Dea in the former market hall. The Celtic theonym *Roklosia*⁶³ has been interpreted as ‘hearing deities’, thus comparable with the *Auribus* worshipped by a *ministra* of the Bona Dea cult on an inscription from the first-second century AD,⁶⁴ though it is not certain whether *Roklosia* is a pre-Roman goddess or whether the function of a hearing goddess was part of pre-Roman cult.⁶⁵ There are also the *dendrophori Glanici*:⁶⁶ the cult of Cybele therefore seems closely related to that of Bona Dea, herself perhaps reincarnating the local mother goddess.

Overall, the enormous transformation and diversification of cults seem as characteristic for Roman Glanum as the continued presence of indigenous concepts (like Sucellos) and numerous Celtic theonyms.⁶⁷ Religious changes, like the abandonment of the hero-ancestor cult, had started long before Glanum acquired Latin rights. Change therefore primarily reflects societal and cultural motivations.

3.2. Nîmes – the *colonia Augusta Nemausensium*

In the late Iron Age, cults in Glanum and Nîmes appear rather similar: both had a sacred spring, a *herôon* with *accroupis* and *têtes coupées*, a portico, and were located inside an *oppidum* and near a rampart. Both underwent a profound transformation, but religious choices in Nîmes were rather different.⁶⁸ Nîmes may be considered as prime example for the *polis* religion model due to its central urban sanctuary and a patron deity like Nemausus. Within the city, virtually all known dedications come from the Spring Sanctuary ‘La Fontaine’, only very few from the forum with its Maison Carré or from any other cult place; there may have been a (suburban?) cult place for Mars, Mercury, Vulcanus and Ventis, perhaps outside the *porte d’Auguste*, while altars to the Proxsumes can be found all across the town; inscriptions from the amphitheatre are clearly reused stones of diverse origins. The Spring Sanctuary provides a monumental setting in Roman fashion with porticoes, a library (the so-called Diana temple) and theatre. It has been described as an ‘Augusteum’, a term inspired by the Greek Sebasteion,⁶⁹ but this term is misleading: although the sanctuary undeniably had a political role and provided a stage to display honorary statues of local dignitaries, the cult of the emperor was merely incorporated in an already existing cult place in order to enhance the presence of the emperor and to legitimise local elites. In essence we are still dealing

63 *RIG* G-65.

64 *AE* 1958, 36.

65 Cf. Roth Congès 1997; Blétry 1998; *contra* Campanile 1983.

66 *AE* 1946, 156.

67 E.g. *Epona* (*AE* 1946, 151), *Abianos* (Rolland 1944, 182, no. 39), *Meldios* (*AE* 1946, 160), *Coaitoo(?)* (*AE* 1969/70, 342), *Di(uo) Bude[no]* (Rolland 1944, no. 40).

68 Haeussler 2007b.

69 Gros 1984; *CAG* 30/1, no. 125-136.

with a pre-Roman sacred place – focused on the spring and the Tour Magne – that evolved gradually over many generations. The distribution pattern of inscriptions and sculptures found within 'La Fontaine' reveals its religious complexity (fig. 3). Besides honorary dedications to *flamines*, dedications in honour to the emperor do exist, but even they are related to the spring (see below). The deity that dominates 'La Fontaine' is undeniably Nemausus. Five dedications to Nemausus come from the sacred spring itself, the others from the sanctuary precinct. This is followed by dedications to a variety of mother goddesses in the widest sense: *matres*, Proxumes, nymphs,⁷⁰ and other female deities, like Venus. But there are also, for example, dedications to indigenous and Greco-Oriental deities.

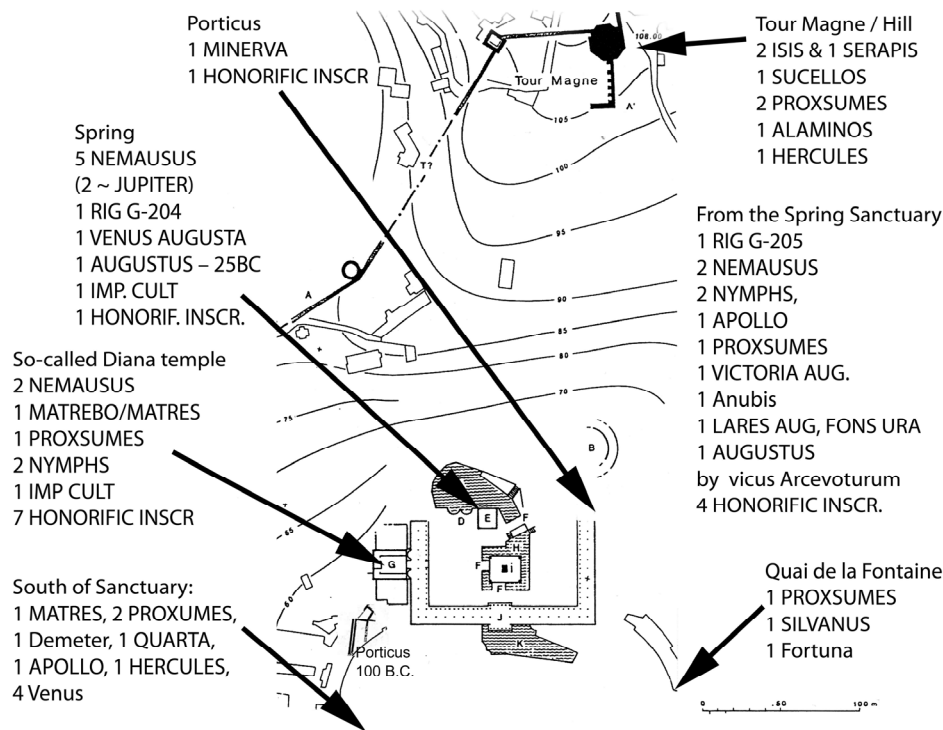


Fig. 3. *Nemausus*/Nîmes, the Tour Magne (top) and the sacred spring at 'La Fontaine' (bottom). Distribution of inscriptions and sculptures. Base map and data based on *CAG* 30/1 (cf. fig. 146 CNRS IRAA Varène et Bigot).

Who is this god Nemausus? This kind of toponymic deity is very common in Gallia Narbonensis. There is Vasio in *Vasio*/Vaison-la-Romaine, Glanis in *Glanum* and so on. But it is not certain that this really was the name of a pre-Roman deity after whom the sacred spring and/or the 'oppidum' was called. One indicator for his 'Celtic' character would be his attributes, a Celtic shield and a carnyx, de-

70 Representations of nymphs as triad of *matres* cf. sanctuary of Les Fumades, *u. infra*.

picted on an altar from *c.* AD 200.⁷¹ But are these really the insignia of a local pre-Roman deity, a remembrance of long-gone rituals, or did people create a mythical past to display Nîmes' local identity and ancestry? It is possible that Nemausus was a creation of the Augustan period as a deity which served to create an identity for the newly founded *colonia* with its attributed *oppida Latina*. The political role of Nemausus is supported by the generally elevated status of the dedicants (table 1). Considering that only one inscription was found outside Nîmes at Manduel (Gard),⁷² Nemausus' primary function must have concerned the sacred spring itself where virtually all dedications have been found: he could therefore reflect a chthonic deity directly linked to the spring and by consequence a protector of the city and the *colonia*, and he may therefore have taken on the role of a pre-Roman patron deity.

Table 1. Dedications to Nemausus

Deities	Dedicant	Social status / Votive object	Reference
<i>I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Heliopolitan(o) et Nemauso</i>	<i>C(aius) Iulius Tib(eri) fil(ius) Fab(ia) Tiberinus</i>	<i>p(rimi) p(ilaris), domo Beryto</i>	<i>CIL 12.3072 = ILGN 406 = ILS 4288</i>
<i>Ioui et Nemaus(o)</i>	<i>T(itus) Flavius Herm(es)</i>	<i>exactor oper(is) basilicae marmorari(i) et lapidari(i)</i>	<i>CIL 12.3070 (p. 834) = ILS 4844</i>
<i>Deo Nemauso</i>	<i>Valeria Procilla</i>		<i>CIL 12.3098</i>
<i>Nemauso</i>	<i>C(aius) Andolatus</i>		<i>CIL 12.3093 = ILS 4842</i>
<i>Nemauso</i>	<i>Q(uintus) Crassius Secundinus</i>	<i>q(uaestor) col(legii)</i>	<i>CIL 12.3094 = IAN 24 = 142</i>
<i>[Deo Nema]uso sacrum</i>	<i>[---]nicci f(iilius?)</i>		<i>CIL 12.3101 (p. 834)</i>
<i>Deo Nem[auso]</i>	<i>[Se]x(tus) Vtullius Perseus</i>	<i>horologium et cerulas II argenteas</i>	<i>CIL 12.3100 = ILS 4845</i>
<i>[L]aribus Aug(ustis) sacrum et Mineruae Nemauso Vrniae Auicanto</i>	<i>T(itus) Cassius T(iti) I(ibertus)</i>	<i>exs(!) uot(o)</i>	<i>CIL 12.3077 (p. 834) = ILGN 406</i>
<i>Nem(auso) Aug(usto)</i>	<i>Censor Iugarius</i>		<i>CIL 12.3102 (p. 834) = ILS 4843</i>
<i>Nemauso</i>	<i>Q(uintus) Iuliu[s -3-] Bucca A[-3-]</i>		<i>CIL 12.3095 (p. 834)</i>
<i>Nemaus[o]</i>	<i>Sex(tus) Iul(ius) Seueru[s]</i>		<i>CIL 12.3096</i>
<i>Nem(auso)</i>	<i>Virrius A[-3-]</i>		<i>CIL 12.3099 (p. 834)</i>

71 *ILGN 406 = ILS 4288.*

72 *CIL 12.3097.*

Deities	Dedicant	Social status / Votive object	Reference
[D]eo Siluano et Libero patri et Nemauso	[---]rchus Synodi [		CIL 12.3132
Deo Nemauso	Marius Paternus	pro patr[e]	CIL 12.3097 – found in Manduel (Gard)

The following first-century inscription set up by a freedman may provide an interesting insight into people’s perception of ‘La Fontaine’ (fig. 4):

[L]aribus Aug(ustis) / sacrum et /
Mineruae /
Nemauso /
Vrniae /
Avicanto /
T(itus) Cassius T(iti) l(ibertus) /
felicio(!) exs(!) / uot(o).⁷³



Fig. 4. Dedication to the *Lares Augusti*, Minerva, Nemausus, Urnia and Avicantus (photo: author, courtesy of Musée archéologique, Nîmes).

Rather than just viewing this text as a long list of deities, a particular arrangement could be suggested. It is relatively common to start with a dedication to the *Lares Augusti*. This seems to be followed by two divine couples (in ‘Celtic tradition’), with the female deity mentioned first: Minerva and Nemausus, Urnia and Avicantus. The former couple may be the protectors of the city,⁷⁴ the latter may be more directly related to water: the name Urnia derives from the modern hydronym of the river Eure near Uzès whose water was captured for Nîmes’ aqueduct from

⁷³ CIL 12.3077 (p. 834) = ILGN 406 = ILS 4846.

⁷⁴ For Minerva, cf. CIL 12.3092 (p. 834): [---]cus / Mineruae / u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito).

c. AD 40-60;⁷⁵ together with Ura, as in *cultores Urae fontis*,⁷⁶ this was probably the goddess of the divinised spring or river Eure. Avicantus may be related to another local river or spring (perhaps the river Vistre?),⁷⁷ since Avianos/Abianos is a common name for water deities across the Gallia Narbonensis.⁷⁸

The many honorary inscriptions to provincial magistrates and local dignitaries, predominantly set up *decreto decurionum*, demonstrate the sanctuary's supra-regional political role.⁷⁹ People like the equestrian Quintus Soillius Valerianus show that élites were honoured for achievements in a provincial context: *omnib(us) honorib(us) domi et prouinc(iae) flamon(io) functo curator(i) Cabell(enses) Auenniens(es) Foroiuliens(es) Aptenses patrono*.⁸⁰

Altogether, the inscriptions, the monumentalisation, the status of the dedicants and the apparent centralisation of cults seem to indicate that the *ordo* functioned as the overall religious authority in Nîmes. But the evidence for cults also reveals many local particularities – common not just for Nîmes, but on both sides of the Rhône. We generally seem to be dealing with deities whose characteristics take up substance from both local and Roman religious understanding.⁸¹ Jupiter, for example, reflects a deity of indigenous origin. His attribute on numerous altars is the wheel (fig. 5) that was already known from pre-Roman iconography. He is also associated with Terra Mater (see, for example, *ILGN* 517), which probably reflects an indigenous, 'Celtic' conception (cf. Haeussler 2008c). Similarly, Nîmes' Silvanus is the same local hammer-god Sucellos that we already encountered at Glanum (fig. 5).⁸² There is also the three-headed Mercury from Nîmes,⁸³ often interpreted as Lucan's Celtic god Esus.⁸⁴ While a dedication to *Marti et G(enio) Flauiani n(ostr)i*⁸⁵ may indicate Mars' public role, the local Mars generally carries a variety of Celtic epithets,⁸⁶ like *budenicus* from *budina* – 'troupe' (that is, Mars *militaris*?),⁸⁷ *britouius* probably deriving from *brito* 'justice' ('the just Mars'),⁸⁸

75 The alternative interpretation of Urnia as the river Ourne seems unlikely as this is a small stream in the territory of Anduze joining the river Gardon by Massillargues-Attuech (Gard). Also cf. *Ura* – plural *Uroicis* – from Aix-en-Provence *ILN*-3, 240.

76 *CIL* 12.3076 = *ILS* 4847.

77 It is unlikely that Avicantus relates to a toponym, like Vigan; but cf. the dedication *laribus / Augustis / uicus Au[ic(antus?)]* (*ILGN* 407).

78 For Avianos/Abianos, cf. e.g. *AE* 2001, 1319, 1368; *CIL* 12.6034, 5.7865; *ILGN* 666.

79 *CIL* 12.3172-3173, 3176, 3183, 3185, 3187, 3206, 3213, 3274-3275, 3332, 3869.

80 *CIL* 12.3275 (add. p. 837) = *ILS* 6980a (p. 188).

81 Cf. Haeussler 2007.

82 Delamarre 2003, 113-114, s.u. cellos; 283-284, s.u. *su*; cf. *CIL* 13.6224 (*Borbetomagus*/Worms) for the combination of Silvanus and Sucellos: *Deo Sucelo et [S]iluano*.

83 *CAG* 30/1, fig. 379.

84 But Esus may just mean 'god': cf. Meid 2004.

85 *CIL* 12.3081 (add. p. 834).

86 Also cf. the indigenous Mars 'twins' (*Diunno / Dinomogetimaro / Martib(us)*) from the *Colonia Iulia Baeterrae* (Béziers) (*CIL* 12.4218 = *ILGN* 557 = *ILS* 4585).

87 Collias (Gard): *CIL* 12.2973; Delamarre 2003, 93; De Bernardo Stempel 2007; or is this a toponymic theonym?

88 *CIL* 12.3082 (add. p. 834) = *ILS* 4548: *Aug(usto) Marti Brito/uio*; *CIL* 12.3083 = *ILGN* 406: *Ma[r]ti --- / Brito[uio ---]*; De Bernardo Stempel 2007.

Melou[ius] perhaps deriving from *mello* – 'hill' ('Mars of the hill?'),⁸⁹ and Mars Aug(ustus) Lacauus (the 'shining' Mars?).⁹⁰ There are also various mother goddesses, like the *matres*, Proxumes, the nymphs, and Terra Mater. The Gallo-Greek dedication to the *matrebo Namausika* has conventionally been dated to the first century BC,⁹¹ but recent research suggests a second century AD date,⁹² which places it into the context of the Roman sanctuary at approximately the same period when the Nemausus altar with the carnyx and Celtic shield was set up.



Fig. 5. Dedication to Jupiter and Silvanus with their local attributes: wheel and thunderbolt, hammer and *olla* (ILGN 516, Aigues-Mortes) (photo: author, courtesy of Musée archéologique, Nîmes).

The territory of the Volcae Arecomisci between Rhône and Hérault consisted of numerous *oppida Latina* that were attributed to Nîmes;⁹³ Nages seems to be the only victim of this 'synoikism'.⁹⁴ In such a vast territory we would expect to find Nîmes' *polis* deities being used to create social and territorial cohesion, but except for a possible dedication to Nemausus from Manduel and the popularity of Apollo,⁹⁵ even dedications to Mars, Mercury, Minerva or Jupiter are relatively

89 *AE* 1955, 00106 = *AE* 1959, 192 : *Marti Melou[io]*; De Bernardo 2007.

90 *CIL* 12.3084 = *ILGN* 406 = *ILS* 4565: *Marti Aug(usto) / Lacauo* ; cf. the proto-Celtic root **laxsV*; *laccus* 'cisterne'; or is this a toponymic theonym?

91 *RIG* G-203.

92 Mullen 2008.

93 Bats 2007. Strabo 4.1.12.

94 *CAG* 30/3, no. 186.

95 E.g. Apollo also at Tavel (Gard) (*CAG* 30/3 no. 326, p. 696. [fig. 864]), Roquemaure (*CIL* 12.2792), Montfaucon (*ILGN* 381), twice at Gaujac (*AE* 1992, 1217; 2003, 1137), Apollo temple (?) at Pouzilhac (*HGL* XV 1523), Remoulins (*CIL* 12.2988).

scarce.⁹⁶ Some deities are attested by their iconography, like altars to the hammer god (Sucellos)⁹⁷ or representations of mother goddesses, but these are deities that reflect mentalities on both sides of the Rhône and thus are quite independent from *polis* politics. Instead we find many local deities in Nîmes' *chora*, like Ritona,⁹⁸ Icotiae,⁹⁹ Diiona,¹⁰⁰ Segomana,¹⁰¹ the *Aquis B(riginnensibus?)* from Brignon,¹⁰² and many more. At the pre-Roman *oppidum* L'Ermitage-de-Laval (Collias), for example, a variety of deities is attested – all with toponymic/ethnic associations, like *Suleviae Edennicae*¹⁰³ *Mineruae*, 'to the well leading goddesses of Edennica (and to) Minerva',¹⁰⁴ the god Aramon (a toponymic deity; cf. the modern-day village of Aramon),¹⁰⁵ a collective dedication to Jupiter set up by the local inhabitants, *Coriossedens(es) et Budenicenses*,¹⁰⁶ and finally a dedication to the local Mars, *Marti Budenic(o)*.¹⁰⁷

Many of these hilltop sites acquired urban characteristics: Laudun, for example, has an impressive first-century AD forum-basilica complex.¹⁰⁸ Deities attested are Diiona, Mercury, Sucellos (but only iconographically) and Jupiter (with his wheel);¹⁰⁹ there is also a *seuir Augustalis*.¹¹⁰ At the nearby *oppidum* Saint-Vincent at Gaujac,¹¹¹ which was densely occupied from c. 40 BC to the third century AD, we find a small podium temple constructed as early as 40-20 BC and a Tiberian forum or *peribolos*, probably related to a water cult which would explain the two dedications to Apollo, one of them was set up by the local aedile and *quattuoruir aerarium*.¹¹² The only other dedication from Gaujac is to the Parcae.¹¹³ The problem with towns like Gaujac and Laudun is that we might be dealing here with *ciuitates* independent from Nemausus,¹¹⁴ perhaps related to the *eth-*

96 Mars, for example, from Saint-Bonnet-du-Gard (*CIL* 12.2986). For local particularities, cf. e.g. Mars Ugius (or Magius) from Serviers (*AE* 1903, 363). Also cf. a dedication to Jupiter with wheel from Tresque (*CIL* 12.2752).

97 E.g. from Marguerittes (*Esp* 435: divine couple with hammer); Le Pin (*CAG* 30/3, 196, fig. 602); Laudun (*infra*).

98 Montaren: *CIL* 12.2927.

99 Cruviers-Lascours: *CIL* 12.2902.

100 *CIL* 12.2768 (*add.* p. 831) = *ILS* 4703a.

101 From Dions: *CAG* 30/2, 101, no. 5, p. 353: *L. Virius / Viroci / f(ilius) Rustic(us) / Segom(anae) d(e) s(uo) da[t] colum(nam) (siue colum(nas))*.

102 *CIL* 12.2913.

103 Or: [*L*]edennicae.

104 *CIL* 12.2974.

105 *CIL* 12.2971: *Aramoni / porticum / Licinia P(ublilii) f(ilia) / Acceptilla / ex uoto d(e) s(ua) p(ecunia)*.

106 *CIL* 12.2972.

107 *CIL* 12.2973.

108 *CAG* 30/3, 403-427, no. 141, esp. pp. 410-412 on religion.

109 *CIL* 12.2768-2771; *Esp.* 513; *HGL* XV 1563.

110 *CIL* 12.2775.

111 *CAG* 30/2, 127.

112 *AE* 1992, 1217; 2003, 1137.

113 *AE* 1997, 1066.

114 Cf. Roth Congès-Charmasson 1992.

nikon Samnagenses attested on an inscription from Nîmes.¹¹⁵ Similarly a sanctuary, like Les Fumades-les-Bains, created in the late first century BC, is unlikely to be an extra-urban sanctuary at the margin of Nîmes' territory; instead it was probably related to the local agglomeration, Arlende.¹¹⁶

3.3. *Coloniae Aquae Sextiae* and *Iulia Apta*

East of the Rhône, the *coloniae Aquae Sextiae* and *Iulia Apta* allow us to recognise different developments compared with Nîmes, though there are also many similarities, especially regarding people's preference of deities, like the local Jupiter and Silvanus-Sucellos, which are common on both sides of the Rhône.¹¹⁷ In the second and first centuries BC we are dealing with a polynucleated landscape centred on a network of hilltop settlements, most of which had only been created during the second century. By the end of the first century BC, a stronger hierarchy of sites had developed: from small rural habitats, farmsteads, elite residences (*uillae*), and dispersed settlements to *uici*, from villages to the urban centres of Apt and Aix-en-Provence, with most hilltop sites now being abandoned. Despite this process of centralisation, *Aquae Sextiae* and *Apta* did not develop the same religious organisation as Nîmes. The large number of suburban and rural cult places seems to indicate that there was no centralisation of religious authority. The protagonists who controlled these local cults could hardly have been the *sacerdotes publici*, but other members of the local elites who asserted their religious authority in a rural context.

For example, we find only a few attestations of cult activity in Aix-en-Provence. The cult of the healing god Bormano/Borbano must have played an important role in the city's religious calendar, though there are only three inscriptions of mediocre quality.¹¹⁸ Many religious attestations come from suburban sites in the vicinity of Aix-en-Provence, like the dedications to Minerva and the nymphs at Les Milles,¹¹⁹ a possible sanctuary at Bastide Forte Figons,¹²⁰ a possible 'fanum' at La Valette, and so forth.¹²¹ Similarly at Apt, there are few testimonies in the city (for example the toponymic deity Vintur [Mont Ventoux]),¹²² but in a suburban context there is a possible sanctuary to Silvanus Conservator at the

115 *CIL* 12.3058.

116 *CAG* 30/2, no. 008.

117 Cf. Haeussler 2008a for detailed study.

118 *ILN*-3, 1: *Borbano* set up by Pompeia Antiopa (beginning of the first century AD), *ILN*-3, 2: *Borman(o)* set up by Dexter; *CAG* 13/4, p. 251, 69*: *Borm[ano]* set up by Q(uintus?) Titu(s). The other dedication found in the city is that of Victoria Cumulatrix(?) (*ILN*-3, 19), of uncertain origin are the dedications to Mercury, Silvanus and the Parcae.

119 *ILN*-3, 14-16; *CAG* 13/4, 543*.

120 *CAG* 13/4, 481*.

121 *CAG* 13/4, 548*.

122 *ILN*-4, 17, inscription found in the rue Paul-Achard.

quartier *Sineti* near the château du Peyroles,¹²³ one to Minerva at Les Tourettes,¹²⁴ and one to Jupiter at Pré du Cire.¹²⁵ The vast majority of cult places in both *coloniae* are situated in rural areas; many of the smaller ones must have played an important role for rural communities, although they yielded hardly any inscriptions or cult architecture (see fig. 6).¹²⁶ Some more prominent cult places, like Le Castellar, Vernègues, Montjustin, Lioux and Villars could be considered to be extra-urban sanctuaries, but each had their very own particularities that reflect on the individual choices of local *cultores* and *euergetai*.

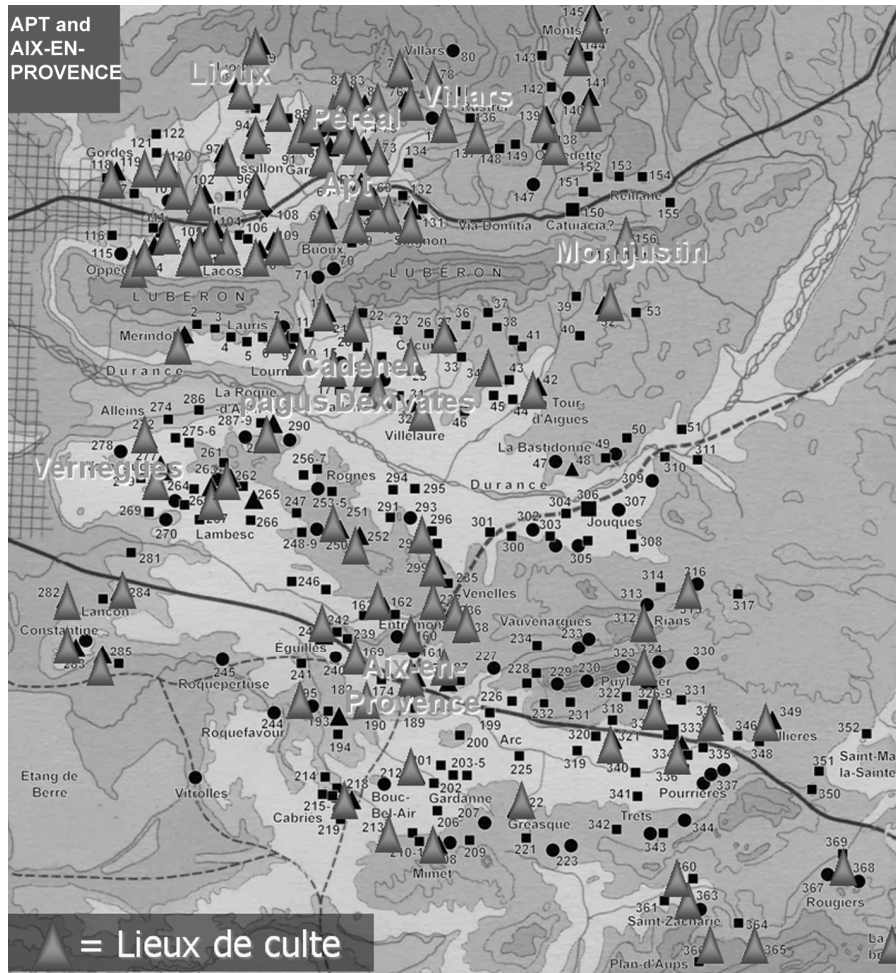


Fig. 6. Distribution of cult places in the *coloniae Aquae Sextiae* and *Iulia Apta*.

123 *ILN*-4, 16; *ILN*-4, 21; *CAG* 84/2 no. 003, 103*.

124 *ILN*-4, 8-9; *CAG* 84/2, no. 003, 72*.

125 *CAG* 84/2, no. 003, 23*; *ILN*-4, 2-4.

126 Cf. Haeussler 2008a.

3.3.1. The Dexivates and the Dexiva sanctuary of Le Castellar

The region between the river Durance and the Luberon Mountains, to the north of Aix-en-Provence, provides an interesting case scenario with a sanctuary to the goddess Dexiva on the abandoned Iron Age *oppidum* Le Castellar¹²⁷ in a region that may be associated with the Dexivates – an *ethnikon* mentioned by Pliny.¹²⁸ This potentially provides a good case scenario for an extra-urban sanctuary controlling a *pagus* in an attempt to create cohesion within the *colonia*. In order to understand the Dexiva sanctuary, we have to take into account the wider socio-cultural and economic changes in the region, such as changes in infrastructure and agricultural exploitation, the diversification of settlements and the emergence of the 'villa' as elite residence and focus of extensive patronage networks. Not far from Le Castellar we find a strong elite presence with various villa sites and countless dynastic tombs of local families, such as the Novellii, Septumii, Cornelii, Virilii, and [Of]filii/[A]filii,¹²⁹ above all the famous mausoleum of Cucuron where a dedication of the *pagani* to their patron Petronia was discovered.¹³⁰

Local cults and their role in a rural community need to be understood in the context of a landscape dominated by elite residences. There are many dedications to 'non-Roman' deities, like the dedication to the water deity Avianus set up by a certain Abasc[a]ntus,¹³¹ or the limestone altar to the *genius* Adcorus.¹³² These dedications are not the product of a secluded rural population. In addition, many of the dedicants' names are common for the region. For example, a dedication to Silvanus was set up by T. Cornelius Maternus,¹³³ whose *gentilicium* is common in the region, while his *cognomen* is also attested at the mausoleum of Cucuron. Similarly, a dedication to the god [L]ucuttectos, whose Celtic name could be translated as 'son of Lugus',¹³⁴ was set up by [---] *Commius* [Sa]turnius, whose *gentilicium* is common north of the Durance.¹³⁵ Altogether, it seems that the great landowners of the region supported, sponsored and financed these rural cults. Similarly at Le Castellar, the *cultores* to Dexiva seem to have belonged to local landowners: there is another *Commius*, namely Aulus Com(mius) Successus, and Caius Helvius Primus, whose elaborate marble inscription dedicating *sedilia* to the goddess reflects his *Romanitas* (fig. 7). Helvii are also attested in the vicinity:

127 For Le Castellar (Cadenet, Vaucluse, height 341.9m), cf. *CAG* 84/2, no. 026, 4*.

128 Plin. *HN* 3.34; for Barruol 1961, 80-81, no. 41; 1969, 203-206 a 'peuplade "salyenne"'.
129 For *Nouellii*, cf. *ILN*-3, 170, 189, 235.

130 Cucuron, Pourrières: Mausolée de Cucuron and marble inscriptions dedicated to *Petronia* by the *pagan*[i --] and marble fragment to -]Ma[t]erni[--] (*ILN*-3, 207; *ILN*-3, 210).

131 *AE* 2001, 1319.

132 Cucuron, Aumane: *genio Adcoro* (*ILN*-3, 202); an indigenous deity?

133 *ILN*-3, 205 from Cucuron, Chabronne, Val de Peigus.

134 *ILN*-3, 203: [L?]ucuttectos/ [.] *Commius*/ [Sa]turninus/ [u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens)] m(erito); cf. Delamarre 2003, 178, s.u. *genos*; *ibid.*, 211, s.u. *lugus*; *ibid.*, 210, s.u. *lucot-* 'souris'.

135 E.g. at Le Castellar: *Commius* (*ILN*-3, 220) and Komo (*RIG* G-114); Montjustin: *Comianus* (*ILN*-3, 183).

another Helvius Primus at Lamanon,¹³⁶ and Helvii in Glanum,¹³⁷ Nîmes¹³⁸ and Aix.¹³⁹ We are most probably dealing with members of the municipal elite,¹⁴⁰ though no direct involvement of the *ordo* and *sacerdotes publici* is attested.



Fig. 7. Dedication of *sedilia* to Dexiva and the *Caudellenses* by Gaius Helvius Primus (after *ILN*-3, 222 CCJ).

If we assume that extra-urban sanctuaries served to generate cohesion in a Roman-style *ciuitas* or *colonia*,¹⁴¹ the question arises whether Dexiva was ‘invented’ as patron deity to create a focus of identity for the Dexivates and/or for a Roman-style *pagus*. The situation is, however, more complex. Le Castellar was also the site of a pre-Roman cult place, thus raising the question of possible cult continuity. In the late Iron Age, steles with niches in which *têtes coupées* were displayed, suggest the kind of hero-ancestor worship we encounter across Southern Gaul.¹⁴² The importance of the late Iron Age site is shown by the exceptional find of four Gallo-Greek inscriptions.¹⁴³ Altogether, the evidence seems to be rather different from the Roman period with its possible Roman-style temple,¹⁴⁴ though the dedication of an axe to Mars and Dexiva is reminiscent of the many votive axes in Iron Age sanctuaries;¹⁴⁵ Mars and Dexiva themselves appear as a divine couple in an indigenous conception. Helvius’ inscription also mentions the Caudellenses, probably toponymic deities named after the locality (modern-day Cadenet), the

136 *AE* 1992, 1176: [--- *He*]/*uius Prim[us] ---*].

137 *CIL* 12.1001 (p. 820): (*Heluius* / *dom(i)no* / *Silvano*).

138 A frequent *gentilicium* in Nîmes.

139 *ILN*-3, 70 : [---]*Hel[ui]a* ?].

140 E.g. the *euergetism* of Gaius Helvius: *ILN*-3, 222: *Dexivae et Caudel/lensibus C(aius) Heluius Pri/mus sedilia u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

141 Cf. the papers in Dondin-Payre-Raepsaet-Charlier 2006 on the role of extra-urban sanctuaries.

142 On this kind of Iron Age hero-ancestor cult, cf. Haeussler 2009; 2010.

143 *RIG* 1 G-112-G-115.

144 As suggested by a number of architectural fragments and a marble pavement. cf. *CAG* 84/2, no. 026, 4*.

145 *ILN*-3, 221. Kiernan 2009, 114-152.

type of local mother goddesses that we encounter across the region (for example, Vogontiae, Vessaniae, Uroicae, Suleuiae, Gerudiatæ and Almahæ).¹⁴⁶

Besides the conjecture that Le Castellar was re-occupied after a period of abandonment and that Dexiva was a completely new invention of the Principate, it is also possible that the role and function of this cult place were gradually being adapted to the *Zeitgeist* and the changing conditions, especially the decentralisation of settlements in this highly populated area in the Roman period, the multitude of settlements, elite residences and cult places. The cult of Dexiva was 'competing' with other cult places in the vicinity: the cults of Lanovalus ('Le Tout Puissant') located just below the *oppidum* Le Castellar,¹⁴⁷ of Jupiter near Cadenet's castle,¹⁴⁸ along with numerous other cult places of diverse deities within a ten kilometre radius.¹⁴⁹ In these changing times, the *oppidum* Le Castellar could have been a 'géosymbole' that provided awe and respect and was thus appropriated by local elites. But are we dealing here with an extra-urban sanctuary aimed at integrating the local population as *pagus* into the structure of the Roman-style municipality? Or did Dexiva provide a focus of identity for an indigenous *ethnos* – the Dexivates – and thus serve to consolidate the authority of local elites within that local group? Was Dexiva a toponymic deity named after the Dexivates, or were the Dexivates named after Dexiva 'La Favorable', a powerful goddess, for De Bernardo Stempel the equivalent to Bona Dea, and perhaps the counterpart to Lanovalus (*u. supra*)?¹⁵⁰

It seems that Le Castellar was more than just a 'lieu de memoire',¹⁵¹ since it was not about the past, but the present. The location of the cult on this hilltop site aimed at legitimising the cult by placing it in a powerful symbolic location and thus creating a link to ancient times, like other cult places on *oppida*.¹⁵²

146 *ILN*-3, 167, 160, 240, 256; *ILN*-4, 111, 87, 94; *CIL* 12.333. Some of them may be deonomastic (ethnic/toponymic) theonyms.

147 *ILN*-3, 226: *Lanoualo / u. s. l. m. / Sex(tus) Celtiliu(s) / Sencio pro / Sex(to) Veratio / [---]*; *ILN*-3, 227: *Lanoualo / Q(uitus) Corn(elius) / Smertullus / u. s. l. m. / pro Placido / fratri*.

148 *ILN*-3, 224 = *CAG* 84/2, no. 026, 6* from Cadenet castle, at height of 280 m; *ILN*-3, 225 from Cadenet, Croix Blanche.

149 E.g. to *Adcorus*, *Auianius*, *Bona Dea*, *Mars Diu[annonus]*, *Silvano*, *Parcis* and *Proxsumes* at Lourmarin, Vaugines and Cucuron (*ILN*-3, 202, 204-205, 218, 230-232; *AE* 2001, 1319).

150 Delamarre 2003, 143, *s.u. dexsiuo*- 'à droite, au sud, favorable'; for equivalent to Bona Dea, *u. supra* the case of Bona Dea and Roklosiai in Glanum; De Bernardo Stempel 2007; *DNP* 2, 717-718, *s.u. Bona Dea*. Cf. Haeussler 2008a.

151 Boularot-Golosetti forthcoming.

152 There are many similar examples; also cf. the many cult places in British hillforts. In Chanctonbury, for example, a Romano-British temple was built inside the '*oppidum*' and the Iron Age rampart became the *temenos* boundary; similarly in Maiden Castle and Gosbecks (see Haeussler 2009 with further bibliography).

3.3.2. The Sanctuary of Jupiter *tonans* at Vernègues

At *Aquae Sextiae*'s western frontier, the monumental architecture¹⁵³ of Vernègues provides another possible example of an extra-urban sanctuary.¹⁵⁴ The cult activities start around the middle of the first century BC; figure capitals similar to those from Glanum, may suggest a first cult building *c.* 50-25 BC, but already a few years later – around 30-20 BC – a Roman-style temple was constructed on an impressive semi-circular platform (55.6 metres in diameter); a spring was captured whose water was led through canals to three large basins below the temple, probably indicating an important thermal complex.

Given the scale of the site, the epigraphic evidence appears extremely thin. A dedication to the *nym[phae?]* seems appropriate for a possible water cult, while another dedication mentions Jupiter *tonans*. Approximately at the same time when Vernègues was re-built, Augustus also dedicated a temple to Jupiter *tonans* in Rome in 22 BC.¹⁵⁵ Perhaps we are dealing here once more with an *interpretatio Romana*, comparable with Marcus Agrippa's involvement at Glanum and Nîmes – a possible interpretation of the indigenous thundering sky-god '*taranis*' whose attribute can also be found on an anepigraphic marble altar from Vernègues that depicts the attributes of the wheel (Jupiter *tonans/taranis*), hammer (Silvanus) and tree (Caillirius or Silvanus?).¹⁵⁶

Vernègues represents a financial investment that goes far beyond what we would expect for a rural cult. The inscription of a [*flamen*] *Romae et Augusti*¹⁵⁷ and sculptures that may represent *dea Roma* and Augustus' grandsons may indicate a cult of the emperor and thus probably a civic cult. However, Vernègues was constructed prior to Augustus' reign. It could therefore have been just a healing sanctuary that expanded due to the cultural values and health concerns of the Principate. It is also possible that this was no extra-urban sanctuary, but a cult for the associated settlement of ten to fifteen hectares; however, the settlement was only created after the construction of the temple. Perhaps this site in the plain succeeded one of the surrounding *oppida*, for example the *oppidum* Vieux-Vernègues.¹⁵⁸ In this case, the religious concept may be of indigenous origin. It may even be possible that this was the site of *Anatilia*, an *oppidum Latinum* mentioned by Pliny in the *regio Anatiliorum*¹⁵⁹ and that the temple is part of the forum of their capital, similar to the way in which Nîmes' sacred spring became an important sanctuary.

153 Following the argument of Dondin-Payre 2006.

154 For the temple and settlement of Vernègues, Château Bas, cf. *CAG* 13/4, pp. 709-717, no. 115, 6*; inscriptions: *ILN*-3, 259-266; for anepigraphic altar: *CAG* *ibid.* p. 716.

155 Aug. *RG* 19.

156 Anepigraphic altar in white marble: *Esp.* 1691.

157 *ILN*-3, 261: ---] *Augusto Caesari* / [---] *Romae et August[i-]*.

158 Also cf. *oppidum* Saint-Saens in Vernègues (seventh century BC – first century AD): *CAG* 13/4, no. 115, 22*.

159 Plin. *HN* 3.34-36.

3.3.3. Montjustin

Montjustin, situated on a 570 metre high mountain ridge at the north-east fringes of *Aquae Sextiae*'s territory, could also qualify as extra-urban or frontier sanctuary, though the evidence is very different from Vernègues. The high-quality inscription COLA – probably meaning *col(onia) A(---)* – could indicate a possible civic cult, but already the inscription *Regil[l]us cum templo a solo consecrauit* – instead of *dedicauit* – may indicate that it was not.¹⁶⁰ Most of the evidence suggests a rather indigenous context, like the second century dedication to Jupiter *Corniger* 'the horned Jupiter' set up by Sex(tius) Coinn(...).¹⁶¹ Also, most of the names attested at Montjustin seem to be of Celtic origin, such as Coinn(ag(i)us?), Dagovir, Fermus son of Magullos, Vinucius, and Comia(nus?).¹⁶² The large number of burials on this remote mountainous location is surprising and may be motivated by a particular sacredness of the site that may go back to local/indigenous mentalities.

3.3.4. Lioux

The sanctuary of Lioux (Vaucluse) is situated at the north-west fringes of the *colonia Iulia Apta* and is the only major cult place in Apt's territory excavated so far.¹⁶³ It could be one of those extra-urban sanctuaries. The evidence suggests many non-Roman features, for instance the four 'shrines' (*aediculae*, *cellae*) in a *temenos* surrounded by a wall,¹⁶⁴ the sacrifices that took place inside one of the shrines, the presence of horse and human bones,¹⁶⁵ the miniature vases, and the otherwise unknown deity ([.]ronea).¹⁶⁶ All this may indicate a cult of pre-Roman origin, but the evidence suggests that, despite a short frequentation in the Augustan period, this sanctuary was only frequented from the Flavian period onwards. Besides *H()* *L()* *F()* *L()*,¹⁶⁷ the only dedicant attested is a peregrine bearing the Celtic name *Ammo Sol[---]* (perhaps Solimarius or Solico).¹⁶⁸ Regarding the role of this sanctuary, the construction of permanent buildings and the performance of

160 Leveau 1988.

161 For a horned Jupiter, Jupiter Ammon seems unlikely. Leveau 1988, 185-186 associates him with Cernunnos.

162 Holder I.1073, 1215; Delamarre 2003, 134, *s.u.* *dagos* 'bon'; Delamarre 2003, 214, *s.u.* *magus* 'enfant, servant, valet'; for Comianus, cf. Delamarre 2003, 227, *s.u.* *minio-*, *meno-* 'doux' (par ex. *Cominius*).

163 For Lioux cf. Borgard and Rimbert 1994.

164 Typical form of shrine, cf. Hercules' '*fanum*' at Glanum, the '*fanum*' of Nages, or the *aediculae* of the sanctuary Chastellarde-Lardières (Alpes-de-Haute-Provence): some of them could have been *fauissae*.

165 Human bones may indicate a (disturbed? secondary?) burial; burials are at the base of many Romano-Celtic sanctuaries in Britain and Gaul, cf. Haeussler 2009, 2010.

166 Could [.]ronea be the Italic goddess Feronea?

167 *ILN*-4, 135: *M.V.S.L.M./H.L.F.L.*

168 *ILN*-4, 136.

animal sacrifices suggest an important form of social organisation that coordinated and financed this cult place. The evidence does not suggest a sanctuary for a *pagus* (like the nearby *pagus Vordenses*), but perhaps we can interpret it as a focal point for the rural population.

3.3.5. Courre Frac, Villars: Mercury and the Vogontiae

A few kilometres north of the *ciuitas* capital Apt, at Courre Frac (Villars, Vaucluse), there seems to have been a sanctuary for Mercury and the Vogontiae that was primarily frequented by Roman citizens and *socii* (*propolae* ‘vendors’ and *uectigalis* ‘tax farmers’).¹⁶⁹ In this context, Mercury appears most likely as the god of commerce. The Vogontiae are probably mother goddesses;¹⁷⁰ the name is otherwise unattested and could be interpreted as a derivative of the Celtic name *Vogitios*, ‘carrier’;¹⁷¹ alternatively, they could also be toponymic *matres* – the mother goddesses of the Vocontii (who live north of Villar) or of the Vulgientes (to the east of Apt).¹⁷² The latter interpretation would support the hypothesis that Courre Frac was a public cult site of the *colonia Iulia Apta* – perhaps a focal point of identity for the local *pagus* or ethnic group; it probably was a public cult place where financial transactions took place that would attract the interest of the *socii*. The choice of this remote location remains obscure: was it a particular sacred place, perhaps appropriating a pre-Roman feature?

3.4. Rural shrines

So far, we have looked at the larger cult places and have tried to understand their role for the running of the two *coloniae* in question. When consideration is given to the enormous diversity in location, cult architecture, deities, *cultores* and a sanctuary’s function and catchment area, no two cult places seem to resemble each other. Altogether we are probably not dealing with extra-urban sanctuaries whose role was to create cohesion across the territory. The presence of deities of indigenous origin that were integrated into the fabric of a Roman-style colony does not pose a problem as such. But the distribution of deities is revealing as it hardly overlaps with *ciuitas* boundaries – thus contradicting the idea that the local *ordo* controlled these deities despite their official role and/or popularity. The indigenous Jupiter with wheel, for example, is popular across the lower Rhône Val-

169 On Courre Frac cf. *Vogient[is e]t Mercur[io]* (ILN-4, 87), and – from Apt, colline des Puys – *Vogientis et V[---] Mercurio* (ILN-4, 18); other inscriptions from Courre Frac: ILN-4, 82-83, 94 (*Vo[gon(tiae?)*], 90, 91. Cf. ILN-4, 88 (from Villars): one of the *soci propoli*, [*L(ucius?) Valerius Niua[lis?]*] may have resided in Uzès and been married to *Comagia*, *Comagi fil(iae)* (CIL 12.2939). Cf. Haeussler 2008a, 189-190, Gasco 1998.

170 *V. supra* for Caudellenses, Almahaes, Gerudiatae, and many more.

171 Cf. De Bernardo Stempel 2007; for *Vogitios*, cf. Delamarre 2003, 326-327, *s.u. uogi(tion)*.

172 Plin. *HN* 3.36.

ley. And besides Nîmes and Glanum, the hammer god Silvanus-Sucellos is common north of the Durance and in the *pagus Vordenses* (fig. 8), but hardly anywhere else in the territory of *Iulia Apta* and *Aquae Sextiae*, that is to say his distribution does not correlate with Roman *ciuitas* boundaries. A deity's popularity and distribution may go back to individual choices, whereby a sanctuary, like Glanum, could well be a centre from which a cult could have been spreading.



Fig. 8. Altar to the hammer god Silvanus/Sucellos from Goult (after *ILN*-4, 142 CCJ).

Across the territories of *Iulia Apta* and *Aquae Sextiae* we can also identify a myriad of rural cults of a diverse range of deities, some of which are only attested once or twice. The question arises regarding the function of these cults and the *cultores* who supported and financed them. At many rural cult places, epigraphy and cult architecture are rare, if not absent. The low number of dedications – hardly more than one to three dedications per site or per deity – appears surprising in such a highly 'Romanised' and literate province like Gallia Narbonensis, as we have seen even in the case of a monumental sanctuary like Vernègues where the lack of ex-votos in the context of a possible healing cult seems unexpected. Even where we have a Romano-Celtic temple, as at Colombières, there are no inscriptions at all, but only ex-votos, such as terracotta figurines.¹⁷³ We therefore should expect that many cult places in Narbonensis will not yield any inscriptions: they may have been seen as an exceptional addition to a rural cult. We need not recount Caesar's observation that Druids forbade the use of writing for religious affairs.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, there is a large body of anepigraphic altars, often just providing a god's attribute, like Sucellos' hammer or mallet. It also appears that the names of dedicants were not always considered important and could therefore be

173 For Colombières-sur-Orb (Hérault), cf. Guiraud 1992.

174 Caes. *B Gall.* 6.14.

left out or reduced to people's initials (for example none of the three altars to Acorus indicates the name of the dedicant).¹⁷⁵ This need not indicate an illiterate community, but may reflect the importance of collective vows.

In addition, there may not always have been a need for permanent cult buildings. Instead we have to look for structured deposits containing the remains of offerings and sacrifices, such as bones, pollen, vases for libations, coinage, miniature objects, pottery, bronze or terracotta statuettes, silver plates and other such evidence. In Ollières (Var), for example, excavations carried out in 1978 have uncovered a cult place which consisted of a single dedication to Hercules, an an-epigraphic altar, small votive vases, a limestone statuette (of a mother-goddess?) and coins of the first century BC and the fourth to fifth centuries AD.¹⁷⁶ The lack of monumental architecture may be explained if we assume that many of these cult place were only frequented during seasonal votive festivities; some may have been only constructed for such an occasion. Still in Roman times, certain periods of the year seem to have been periods of increased ritual activity in many sanctuaries, supporting the concept of seasonal cult places.¹⁷⁷ The most important feature might have been a *temenos* or *nemeton* with a ditch or palisade and an altar (or ritual pit or shaft), similar to the ditched enclosures we find across Iron Age Europe, to separate the world of the living from the world of the gods; in Cisalpine Gaul, sanctuaries were still marked by steles in the Principate: the phrase *inter quattuor terminos* (CIL 5.7493) from the *Fons Dianae Victoriae* at Pino Torinese (Turin) reminds us of the four *lapide[s]* that defined the *finēs* of a *campus* dedicated *deīs et hominibus* in first century BC Vercelli.¹⁷⁸ In such a context, a single altar may already be viewed as exceptional as it suggests that the same site was frequented year after year. Such a rural cult would of course only require a modest financial investment.

Such a rural cult place can be essential in creating a sense of identity and community for the rural population that lives in surrounding farms, villages and dispersed settlements. Cults and festivals can also create an important link between the local landowners and their *clientes*, as we know from many anthropological studies which show that such meetings may serve to demonstrate the sacred powers of a 'chief'; these events serve to perpetuate social relations and are also the main venue for communicating and transforming old and new rituals. The rural cult places in the Provence are located in a landscape dominated by residences and burial grounds of the elite who probably were the major protagonists in these cults. As we have seen above, the names attested on inscriptions suggest the involvement of local landowners, their clients and freedmen (also cf. table 2). For example, there are only three dedications to the goddess Iboita. These were set up by *liberti*, but this does not make Iboita a cult exclusive to freedmen; they

175 E.g. Q.I.M. for the ex-voto to Jupiter *conseruator* from Villars (ILN-4, 80).

176 ILN-3, 158 : *Fausta / Herculi / u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito)*. Excavations by François Carrazé: cf. *Gallia* 37 (1979), 559; CAG 83/2, 539-541, no. 089.

177 E.g., increased sacrificial activity in these periods: cf. King 2005; Haeussler 2008c.

178 For the bilingual inscription from Vercelli, ILV no. 59; cf. Haeussler 2008a, 236.

were merely the ones who set up inscriptions; Iboita could have been a local water deity whose cult place may have been located at a spring (at the quartier Font d'Arles near Lambesc, below the Iron Age *oppidum* Coulet de Viret); the rural population depended on water in this arid climate and venerated the spring, but they did not set up votive inscriptions.¹⁷⁹

Table 2. Dedicants in *Aquae Sextiae* and *Iulia Apta*

Number of dedications	112
Personal names attested	89
of which: Roman citizens	60
- women	7
- freedmen	6
- single names / <i>peregrini</i>	29
- women	8
- Celtic filiation	6
- Celtic onomastic	11
inscriptions without name of dedicant	14

It is conceivable that the religious authority of local elites in the Provence goes back to their role in late Iron Age society. As we have seen, this period was dominated by dynastic cults of heroised ancestors,¹⁸⁰ which were abandoned during the 100 years that followed the Roman conquest. As a result local elites may have looked for other means to assert their power. One strategy may have been the impressive mausolea that were constructed in Southern Gaul between 50 BC and AD 50, like the mausoleum of the Julii in Glanum;¹⁸¹ the mausoleum from Argenton (c. 40-30 BC) is situated in a remote location, but is visible across the valley from a long distance, and thus it claims authority over land and people.¹⁸² Perhaps an individual buried in such a mausoleum would have once acquired heroic status,¹⁸³ but the society of Gallia Narbonensis was evolving at a rapid pace. Some families may have managed to acquire a priesthood in the Roman-style civic cults or in the imperial cult, but the small number of such priesthoods probably denied most local elite families any religious influence. This may explain the evolution of countless rural cult places in an area that largely overlapped with the distribution of pre-

179 *ILN*-3, 252-254; *CAG* 13/4, no. 055, 37*-38*.

180 Haeussler 2009; 2010.

181 Roth-Congès 2000, 24-25 with reliefs celebrating the heroic deeds achieved under Caesar in the Civil War.

182 Roth-Congès 2006, 286-287.

183 Cf. heroisation of individuals around the Roman conquest of Britain: overview in Haeussler 2009; 2010.

Roman ‘*herôa*’. From the Augustan period onwards, these rural cult places become increasingly visible in the archaeological record as a new medium that local elites employed to consolidate their religious authority.¹⁸⁴ Some of these cults may have been more directly linked to elite domains, but many were in conspicuous geographical locations (hilltops, springs and so on), while a number of cult places appropriated pre-Roman ruins, like *tumuli* and *oppida*,¹⁸⁵ to give a certain legitimacy to a new cult place of the Roman period. Besides toponymic patron deities (like Nemausus, Glanis, Vasio and Vintur), most deities in the Lower Rhône Valley have unique names not attested elsewhere, like Dexiva, Iboita, Obio or Bergonia; this attempt to create a specific religious identity for each rural community may be explained if we assume that the concept of a localised (hero) cult which had been the focal point of the pre-Roman community continued to be compelling to the local population in the early Principate.¹⁸⁶ While there may always have been a need for cult places as focal points of the rural population, the large number of such cults in the Provence may reflect not only the particular situation, which may have originated in the late Iron Age, but also a particular strategy of the local elites who expressed their social status through their religious authority, to the detriment of any *polis* identity. These rural cults do not appear to have been private cults for a family or lineage, but cult centres for a rural population.

4. RÉSUMÉ: RELIGIOUS INDIVIDUALISATION AND DIVERSIFICATION

The aim of this paper has been to question the *polis* religion model as it provides a false and artificial image of the religious conditions in the Roman West. People’s religious experience and identity went far beyond the official civic cults, and also encompassed the enormously wide range of religious choices available in the Principate; indeed it is difficult to identify *polis* deities in most of our sample *coloniae*. Local religions were not re-created with the re-foundation of an indigenous populace as a Roman-style *colonia* or *ciuitas*; instead we are dealing with long-term developments that took into consideration diverging local decisions, changing societal circumstances, the lack of consensus among the elite and many other such things.

The major protagonists were the local elites. But they were increasingly acquiring economic, social and political aspirations outside their own community,¹⁸⁷ acting as magistrates, priests or patrons in different municipalities or aspiring for rank and status at imperial level. In a traditional model, citizenship is directly

184 Cf. Haeussler 2008b.

185 A Gallo-Roman cult place on a former hilltop site does not necessarily imply continued worship since pre-Roman times; there may be a period of abandonment (cf. Haeussler 2007b). For examples of appropriation, cf. Haeussler 2008b.

186 Haeussler 2008b.

187 On the *Domitii Aquenses*, cf. Burnand 1975.

linked with the religion of a *polis* (as in Classical Athens), but in the Roman empire, the local population was artificially split up into *peregrini* and Roman citizens, while slaves and freedmen could become more powerful than the peregrine aristocrats. What role could the *ciuitas* possibly have played for these people? After a possible initial push for *Romanitas* in the Augustan period, the importance of the local municipality and its civic cults was rapidly diminishing for the local aristocracy. Even priesthoods of the imperial cult – mainly attested by epitaphs and honorary inscriptions – primarily served a socio-political purpose and hardly had any visible impact on local religion.

The aim has to be to look for alternatives to the *polis* religion model that take into account discrepant religious experiences, the local variability of religious traditions and the dynamics of religious developments. We need a bottom-up approach that focuses on the social actor and his motivations and experiences. We also should not discount the concept of 'religiosity' which continued to motivate people to make diverging religious choices or to adapt new foreign cults. There is a myriad of cult places in Southern Gaul that reflect an enormous variability and diversification of cults, with the result that it is difficult to identify any deity or extra-urban cult that was used to create social and territorial cohesion in a municipality. Many of the rural cults played an important role for the local community – the decisions that were made about deities, sacrifices and architecture reflect the background of the local *cultores* and of the local elites who tried to assert their religious authority, an authority that may have gone back to pre-Roman mentalities (perhaps relating to the role of the hero-ancestor cult for *oppida* and lineages). Rural cults do not need any ostentatious architecture and can easily be financed by the rural community and their *patroni*. Many of the deities attested epigraphically were either very localised (such as Iboita, Obio, Dexiva and Almahae) or show a distribution that does not overlap with *ciuitas* boundaries and therefore probably had no relationship with the colony's civic cults. It is also significant that public involvement of the *ordo* and its magistrates is rarely attested.

It has been possible in this paper to provide only a few examples to demonstrate the discrepant religious experiences in Southern Gaul. Individual choices – regarding deities, cult practices, architecture and sculpture – show enormous regional variation that does not seem to follow any pattern, except for a certain Romano-centric bias of our sources, in particular on account of the epigraphic evidence, which is largely in Latin. Each of the four municipalities – Glanum, Nîmes, Apt and Aix-en-Provence – has provided evidence for a range of local decisions regarding the choice of deities and cult practices. No two sanctuaries are the same, and any parallels that there are appear to be merely superficial.

A major factor in the religious development is the increasing individualisation of religion. Since the late Iron Age, the role of collective vows had been decreasing, while the repertoire of cults and deities increased enormously during the Roman period, providing a much wider scope for religious choices. Especially in periods of social upheaval with pre-existing ideologies losing their credibility, surges of individualisation can be recognised when an individual act can significantly shape religious traditions. But grand strategies to introduce new cults may

fail (like Agrippa's Valetudo cult in Glanum). In general, we have identified gradual developments, with cults taking up the substance of Greco-Roman, Greco-Oriental and indigenous traditions, creating the enormous plurality of cults that is characteristic of Gallia Narbonensis. The individuality of religion is reflected in linguistic variability (as seen in the use of indigenous language and alphabet or in variant spelling of theonyms), iconographic variability (particularly in local representations, of, for instance, Sucellos, where Roman art was used to develop the representation of an indigenous concept), architectural variations (of, for example, sanctuaries, such as Lioux), and variation of cult practices;¹⁸⁸ and vice versa, other religious activities, such as magic (as seen in things like curse tablets) may be part of public cults. All these cult activities did not take place at the 'margin' of the *polis* religion, but they reflect the multi-layered religious awareness of the majority of people, including the elite.

Testimonies that contradict the *polis* model should not be neglected as they show the complexity behind the *interpretatio Romana / indigena* and show the continued evolution of local cults and local mythology. Local indigenous cults were adapted to the new social and cultural needs of Roman provincial society, while more than 100 Celtic theonyms along with non-Roman iconography and cult practices show that people did not aspire to *Romanitas*. Though Greco-Roman forms of communication and architecture were employed, *Romanitas* played no major role in people's religious expression, although the major protagonists aspired to a Roman lifestyle and had received a Greco-Roman education. Altogether it seems that we should not exaggerate the Roman model when studying local religions in the Roman West. The creation of a Roman-style municipality was only one step in the evolution of local religions, especially in Southern Gaul where indigenous religions had already entered a phase of significant transformation in the third and second centuries BC.

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