



Clovis and Remigius of Reims in the making of the Merovingian Kingdoms

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ABSTRACT

This article approaches the study of the collaboration between Remigius of Reims and Clovis and its impact on the formation of the Merovingian kingdoms. This will be achieved through the introduction of an alternative reading of the letter sent by the former to the young king on the occasion of his accession to power. To attain this goal, special attention will be paid to the personal interests of both figures as the main and most immediate reason for their relationship. Specifically, both Clovis and Remigius had to move in a scenario dominated by their own political and social competition, which forced each man to look to his own political survival. It is in this sense in which we will interpret many of his political movements and perceptions reflected in the letter in question. Likewise, the short and long-term political implications of their alliance on the building and forging of the future Regnum Francorum will also be addressed. This will be of special importance in the supply of a territorial basis for the new kingdom, supported largely by the diocesan structure provided by Remigius. In the end, this situation would change and the relationship between the two figures would undergo an erosion as a consequence of Remigius' mistrust of Clovis' increasing power.

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Rumor ad nos magnum pervenit administrationem vos Secundae Belgic<a>e suscepisse: non est novum, ut coeperis esse sicut parentes tui semper fuerunt¹

A strong report has come to us that you have taken over the administration of the Second Belgic Province: There is nothing new in that you now begin to be what your parents always were²

This is the opening of the famous letter sent by Remigius of Reims to a young Clovis on occasion of his accession to power. The brevity of this sentence has caused rivers of ink to flow on the issue of the nature and scope of the authority of who was to become one of the most powerful figures in the post-Roman West. In barely three decades – approximately between the years 481 and 511³–, Clovis managed to gain control over practically all of Gaul, forging a new political reality that would survive longer over time than any other monarchy in its surroundings. The text is one of the rare pieces of evidence that allow us to reconstruct the starting point of his venture. This is why Remigius' letter is considered a crucial testimony for recreating the early years of the *Regnum Francorum*. The document

has attracted the attention of those historians who are keen on defending the continuity of late-Roman structures and dynamics in the world that developed in the years that followed the fall of the Western Roman Empire,⁴ against those who support the prevalence of Germanic elements.⁵ The campaigners for continuity have found irrefutable evidence of the Roman nature of the Merovingian kingdoms in the references mentioned by Remigius, a position that, in our view, would have been the result of an excessively literal interpretation.

Leaving these dichotomies aside, we believe it is preferable to underline the uniqueness of the post-imperial world and, in this case, of the Merovingian political landscape.⁶ Against this background, we may contextualize the post-Roman dynamics in a scenario of coexistence between elements of continuity and rupture.⁷ Hence, societies of the time should be understood by considering the confluence of elements of different origin, whether framed in a specific tradition – Roman, Germanic, Christian and so on – or newly founded. Leaning towards one or another at different times would depend, among other factors, on the particular needs and interests of the monarchs at each moment.⁸ In this regard, rather than perceiving the dawning of the *Regnum Francorum* as a consequence of the transmission of Roman social structures, we suggest that its formation was actually a collateral consequence of all the political activity undertaken by Clovis in pursuit of an eminently personal goal: his own political survival as leader of the Franks.⁹ This purpose, we believe, would lead Clovis to establish a close relationship with the Bishop of Reims. According to these assumptions, Remigius' letter to Clovis can be read in a different light, which, in line with the specific context of its writing, will offer a different view of the earliest years of the *Regnum Francorum*. In this vein, the starting hypothesis we propose is that Remigius' testimony does not picture reality, as has been attributed to it, but that it only reflects the criterion of its sender.

Taking this as a valid assumption, one of the first tasks required is the identification of the causes that led the metropolitan bishop of Reims to establish relations with Clovis. For this, it is essential to pay attention to the political situation that both characters operated in during the late fifth century, which would ultimately shape the personal interests and needs of our protagonists. Political rivalry with other authorities and the struggle for political survival become an intriguing explanation for the relations between Remigius and the Merovingian king. To face this situation, each of the actors would engage in different political strategies, the logic behind them providing the lead for a better understanding of the content of the text under discussion. Indeed, the letter itself allows us to learn the possible results of the collaboration between Remigius and Clovis. Here we could highlight the immediate benefits achieved by both of them, particularly in the context of political competition, but also the long-term implications of the alliance. The latter are actually the most important for understanding not only the power dynamics and the relationship between monarchy and Church that would prevail thereafter, but also the territorial bases that would prepare the foundations of future Merovingian power.

Merovingian monarchy in the light of Remigius' testimony: a reflection of reality?

We will now proceed to a more thorough analysis of the controversy surrounding the mentioned letter from Remigius to Clovis, which is the first preserved evidence of contact between both figures. It is commonly dated around 481/482, immediately after Clovis' rise

to power. This is precisely what seems to be hinted at in the opening lines of this paper, which convey the impression of a recent succession, and by the paternalistic tone of the letter, addressed to a young Clovis.¹⁰ However, although our purpose is not entering into the chronological debate, there are others who, not finding any hint of condolence for Childeric's death, believe the letter to have been written at a later date, after an alleged riot that Clovis managed to quell.¹¹ Another tendency prefers to date the testimony as subsequent to Clovis' victory over Syagrius.¹² Others are more inclined to set the writing of the letter within a longer time-frame, between 481 and 486.¹³ Finally, the latest trend is to date the text as belonging to the last years of Clovis' rule, as suggested by G. Barrett and G. Woudhuysen in a recent article.¹⁴ Although their arguments are very suggestive, accepting a late dating for the letter does not agree with the context and the relationship we will propose for both figures during the last years of Clovis' life. Moreover, some of their arguments are not necessarily in contradiction with our position. They propose a new dating through a new transcription of the letter, but their proposed text can also be accepted for an early dating, especially their replacement of *Belgica Secunda* for *secundum bellice*, as a reference to Clovis' military campaigns. Clovis could launch these warlike actions since he took the power, so it cannot necessarily be an allusion to the last campaigns. Another piece of evidence they offer to support their argument is the supposed reference to Clovis' Christianity.¹⁵ However, this could be read in the Christian cultural framework in which Remigius flourished.¹⁶ Hence, although all the previous arguments call for attention, we will take the traditional dating for the letter, the most accepted and employed.¹⁷

The passage with which we opened this study refers to Clovis' takeover of the administration of the *provincia* of *Belgica Secunda*, as his *parentes* had done before. Likewise, Remigius, the bishop of Reims, encourages the young *rex* to surround himself with good advisers and take advice from the bishops of the *provincia*, also recommending him to keep the latter informed. Finally, the prelate urges the young *rex* to demonstrate certain moral values by looking after the people under his rule.¹⁸

As anticipated, this testimony has been taken by certain historians as undeniable proof of the absolute continuity of late Roman social structures throughout the process of taking control over Gaul by the Merovingians, precisely through Remigius' legitimation of Clovis' power over *Belgica Secunda*. Thus, the existing correlation between the power held by the Merovingian family and their position on the Roman military and administrative scale, would not have involved a break with the preceding political system, only being a legitimate seizure of power over an extensive territory. According to these assumptions, Clovis would embody imperial legality and the continuity of late Roman dynamics and models.¹⁹ These readings have come from certain sectors of historiography that vindicate complete and uninterrupted continuity of the Merovingian world with the imperial period and ways, against propositions that advocate for discontinuance.

In our view, attributing to Clovis ample power, and over a vast territory, would be no more than a historiographic construct built upon an excessively literal interpretation of the terminology used in the text. As stated at the beginning, this letter may be interpreted in many different ways, one of them being that it is far from a reflection of the real context in which it was sent. Clear evidence of this can be observed in the very picture the letter conveys of the Merovingian monarchy during the early years of Clovis' rule, which differs widely from the one suggested by other sources.

Thanks to the testimony of Gregory of Tours we know that Clovis succeeded his father Childeric as *rex* of the Franks.²⁰ The latter would have ruled over at least a certain sector of the Frankish population after 455, approximately.²¹ However, at the time, the groups under this ethnic category were far from being a political unit, each of them operating independently and even made up of individuals of different origin. In fact, each group was led by a *rex* – understanding the term as a military chief – who would occasionally join forces under the aegis of one of them, mainly to achieve military purposes.²² Against this background, Childeric was one of many military chiefs that headed the different groups gathered by the sources under the ethnic category of ‘Franks’.²³

On the scope and reach of Childeric’s power, Remigius’ letter to Clovis suggests indeed that the Merovingian family enjoyed a certain degree of influence over *Belgica Secunda*.²⁴ The reference to that *provincia* and its control by Clovis’ relatives has led to the attribution to Childeric of extensive territorial control delegated by imperial authority.²⁵ Nevertheless, other similar powers are known to have developed within the territory of *Belgica Secunda* in the same chronological context as Clovis and Childeric’s rules.²⁶ Accordingly, Childeric’s *regnum*, as mentioned in the sources, would only reflect a personal type of command over a specific social body and within an eminently local setting, rather than a clearly delimited territorial rule over *Belgica Secunda*.²⁷ Obviously, this connotation of the term did not hinder control over certain centres of power, whether *civitates* or *castra*, among others, since, rather than a direct reference to spatial influence, its meaning refers to rule of an eminently social nature. In this connection, it should be noted that throughout the fifth century, Gaul was under an intense process of localizing of power structures as a consequence, on the one hand, of the Empire’s gradual loss of influence over the territory and, on the other, of the detachment of regional elites’ interests from those of the central State.²⁸ Even so, we do not deny that, beyond this limited control, Childeric would have occasionally enjoyed wide-ranging military leadership, which he would use to draw other warlike groups of *Belgica Secunda* and its adjoining territories together.²⁹

Childeric died around 481 and was buried in a famous barrow found in 1652 in the Belgian city of Tournai, where the Frankish leader was buried with lavish goods.³⁰ However, the influence the Frankish *rex* managed to muster during his rule faded considerably when he died, his successor Clovis only inheriting part of it. In the light of the political rivalry that prevailed in this context, Childeric’s son was probably forced to face certain difficulties in order to gain power. As expressed by I. Wood, direct father-to-son succession need not be a conflict-free process.³¹ In this regard, we must include the possibility of Clovis having to challenge opponents who believed they had the same right as he did to hold the position of *rex*. After all, Clovis had to function in a context of continuous competition for power to which he was no stranger. Thus, we believe that Childeric’s barrow in Tournai, with all its display of wealth, would serve at the same time the purpose of strengthening the social memory of the deceased, and as a mechanism for legitimizing Clovis himself and his family’s right to retain his father’s status at a time when his influence was vulnerable. In this regard, Clovis was faced with the need for such a lavish display of opulence as a way of publicly showing off his family’s power and prestige, which he intended to capitalize on to the detriment of others.³²

Accordingly, in the light of the above, we should not overestimate Clovis’ power in the early years of his rule. The power of Childeric’s son at the time he became *rex* was probably extremely limited, his position not being above that of any other local kingly figure among

the many that populated northern Gaul.³³ Indeed, the reference to Clovis' rule as framed within a provincial constituency was probably no more than geographical terminology resulting from Remigius using the old frameworks of reference of the imperial administration, out of use at the time but still fresh in the collective memory. Likewise, Remigius might have been referring to the geographical area where he exercised his episcopal ministry, even though it was not much different from that within the administrative borders of the old *provincia*.³⁴

That at the time Childeric could have enjoyed a certain degree of influence over the whole of *Belgica Secunda*, especially towards the end of his rule, cannot be ruled out. However, as suggested above, the death of Clovis' father might have been the reason why, in the process of securing support of his person, the Merovingian family lost a certain degree of power, losing all of its influence in certain areas of the *provincia*, such as Soissons.³⁵ This city was at the time under the rule of Egidius' son, Syagrius, who Gregory of Tours refers to by the title *Romanorum rex*.³⁶ Syagrius could have taken advantage of the context of uncertainty and the restructuring of power balance brought about by Childeric's death to consolidate his position as *rex* around the city of Soissons.³⁷ There is also the possibility that Syagrius could have managed to secure the support of leaders of other *civitates*, albeit enjoying a merely military type of superiority restricted to very specific campaigns, while his immediate scope of power would be confined to Soissons and its *territorium*.

In short, Clovis would not have inherited the rule over the entirety of *Belgica Secunda* when he came to power. Such control would have been to his own personal credit, especially through his subsequent military victory over Syagrius.³⁸ Thus, we believe that when Clovis came into power he only inherited from his father the condition of *rex* and control over a limited expanse of territory of the former *Belgica Secunda*.³⁹ Otherwise, it would not be possible to understand why he managed to gain jurisdiction over Reims, a city that was too close to Soissons and, therefore, to Syagrius.⁴⁰

Another of the problems posed by the Bishop of Reims' testimony, and one we can even link to the above, is the legitimacy given to Clovis' accession through inheritance by Remigius himself. If attention is paid to the already mentioned information provided by Gregory of Tours, where he states that Clovis succeeded his father Childeric as *rex* of the Franks, it is not hard to believe that Remigius was referring to the latter and his family, the Merovingian dynasty, when referring to Clovis' kin.⁴¹ Nevertheless, beyond the allusion to a specific individual, the truth is that Remigius was claiming legitimacy for Clovis' power based on his belonging to a specific family against other more unreliable and, most likely, far more violent power transfer mechanisms. In view of the Merovingian monarchy's history, characterized by a strict system of hereditary transmission,⁴² the reader might not attach importance to the Bishop of Reims' claim. However, at the time, the Merovingian family was far from settled or entitled to remain *sine die* in control, largely because they had not managed to institutionalize a closed mechanism for the accession to power.⁴³ With only a few exceptions, such as the issue at stake, the number of sources that stress a family conception of power is scarce.⁴⁴ Therefore, Remigius' praise of Clovis and his access to the administration of *Belgica Secunda* through inheritance need not be the rule. Bearing this in mind, and at this stage, rather than as an accurate description of reality, we prefer to understand the content of the letter as a personal prioritization by the Bishop of Reims of the dynastic mechanism of transmission of a specific position. This does not mean that such succession pattern was more legitimate than others, but it was indeed the one whose vindication would

be more to the interest of Remigius himself. The same could be applied to his granting to Clovis of full control over *Belgica Secunda* when, as mentioned, this was not yet the case. Such assumptions lead us to wonder about the specific reasons that led Remigius to express himself thus when, as we have confirmed, this letter is not a descriptive testimony of reality.

Clovis and Remigius against a common threat: Syagrius of Soissons

If we choose an early date for the letter, it is possible that Remigius' resorting to this legitimization mechanism based on the hereditary transmission of power was a way of showing his preference of Clovis to achieve his personal goals. Remigius' family had enjoyed influence in the area, specifically around the city of Laon, since the early fifth century.⁴⁵ For his part, the Bishop of Reims himself invested members of his own family with episcopal functions in other sees – as we shall later elaborate on –, and it has even been assumed that Romanus, his successor in the see of Reims, was also a relative of his.⁴⁶ Thus, it would not be surprising if Remigius' purpose had been to systematize the dynastic method, if not as the only one accepted for transmitting titles, as having priority over other mechanisms.⁴⁷ Therefore, such a general and ambiguous allusion to Clovis' *parentes* might actually be the expression of a veiled claim for power transfer within a specific family.

Likewise, we should not take for granted that Remigius' power was strongly consolidated, since his position was likely to have been in a permanent state of fragility. Although written at a later date, the aggressive tone in the letters sent by Remigius to, on the one hand, bishops Heraclius of Paris, Leo of Sens and Teodosius of Auxerre and, on the other, to Bishop Falco de Tongeren, clearly reveals the rivalry between certain ecclesiastical factions of the area of Reims and its surrounding regions and Remigius himself.⁴⁸ In fact, factionalism and competition between different ecclesiastical groups were surely very common phenomena in numerous fifth-century Gallic cities.⁴⁹ Broadly speaking, the position of bishop, even when acknowledged and supported by secular authorities, was under constant threat from other wielders of power, whether lay or ecclesiastical, with whom the bishop might have to contend, in order to retain his influence.⁵⁰

In the last third of the fifth century, it is likely that Remigius had to face a different adversary: the powerful Syagrius who, as mentioned, ruled the neighbouring city of Soissons. Hence, we estimate that the reasons that drove Reims to build relationships with Clovis and, therefore, to vindicate his authority over the entirety of *Belgica Secunda*, would lie in the competition between the bishop and Syagrius himself, two neighbouring powers bent on extending their power over the same territories and peoples. It should also be noted that, according to the letters devoted to him by Sidonius Apollinaris, Principius, bishop of Soissons at the time, was also Remigius' brother.⁵¹ We do not know whether his own brother, as some claim, promoted him,⁵² but it would not be unreasonable to consider such an assumption given Remigius' authority as metropolitan bishop over the ecclesiastical *provincia*. The truth is that the presence of Principius in Soissons, on the one hand, and the proximity of Remigius, on the other, could be reason enough for a situation of tension and confrontation between the brothers' episcopal authority and Syagrius' secular power. Remigius did not want Egidius' son to become a threat to his and his family's interests in the area by capitalizing on social support and absorbing the heritage they both aspired to control. Remigius' interest in the region is also reflected in the setting up of an episcopal see in Laon, very close to Reims and Soissons, where he would also engage members of his

own family.⁵³ It is even likely that the metropolitan bishop could have been anticipating an impending military attack by Syagrius against the see of Reims. These potential threats would explain why there is no mention of Syagrius in the letter, even though he was supposed to be the most relevant authority in the vicinity of the city of Soissons. Ignoring this figure while asserting Clovis' authority over the entire territory of *Belgica Secunda* can be interpreted as a sign of the above-mentioned opposition of Remigius to Egidius' son. Nevertheless, we must admit that such assumptions are mere speculations, given the absence of sources to substantiate or refute the existence of competition between Remigius and Syagrius.

Regarding the reasons that led Remigius to contact Clovis, conclusions can be drawn from the context of the weakness in which the *rex* found himself when he assumed the leadership of the Franks. From the very moment of his coming into power, Childeric's son was faced by the daily need to assert his power or, in other words, fight for political survival against several warring leaders, all capable of challenging his authority and undermining his social support. Syagrius himself was one of these dangerous leaders. Although not all experts agree,⁵⁴ Clovis and Syagrius would have been two military leaders with comparable power and a similar space of action, as was *Belgica Secunda* itself. Consequently, we would once again stand before contending powers that, in this specific case, would be competing to capitalize on the control and loyalty of the different military groups that were scattered throughout the region. In fact, their own parents had fought for the same cause. At the time, Egidius himself had managed at one point to be chosen *rex* of the Franks replacing Childeric, who was sent into exile.⁵⁵ Against this background, Clovis was probably afraid that Syagrius could follow his father's example and seize his power. Hence, they were both 'warlords' competing for the same area of social and territorial influence, so that it is not unreasonable to think that Clovis at some time would attempt to neutralize his opponent.⁵⁶ It is in this connection that we should frame the ultimate military action that the Frank took against Egidius' son, by which the Merovingian gained control over Soissons and its *territorium*.

Thus, we can observe how Remigius and Clovis' interests converged in the figure of Syagrius. Accordingly, the relationship between Remigius and Clovis should be understood as a circumstantial alliance against a common enemy that threatened the interests of both of them in the region. Remigius' attitude would reflect the pragmatism displayed by part of the Gallo-Roman secular and ecclesiastical elites against the presence of the barbarians, who they would have perceived as a means to achieve their own goals.⁵⁷ By acting thus, Remigius would gain from Clovis precisely what he lacked as an ecclesiastical leader: a weapon, an army to crush Syagrius. A victory of the Merovingian over Syagrius would mean for the bishop not only the elimination of his greatest rival, but also the territorial extension of his and his family's influence. However, this help would not be unconditional, since Clovis would seek some sort of compensation. Pursuant to the line defended by B. Dumézil, secular protection of the bishops was not assured, but had to be earned.⁵⁸ In this case, Remigius offered Clovis acknowledgement of his civil authority over the regions of *Belgica Secunda* as above that of potential opponents, including Syagrius himself. Likewise, Remigius' support would allow Clovis to expand his bases of social power, until then limited to his own military forces. Thus, this new relationship brought benefits to both parties. This leads to the understanding of this alliance, rather than as a voluntary subordination of Remigius to Clovis, as a relationship expressed in terms of reciprocity,⁵⁹ both of them

gaining immediate political advantages from their alliance, in this case to the detriment of Syagrius. Against this approach, it could be argued that a predictable defeat of Egidius' son would lead to a conflict of interest between Remigius and Clovis. Nevertheless, subsequent relations between these two figures reflect that, at least initially, they would have reached an agreement concerning the distribution of their influence across the region.

Long-term benefits of the alliance: towards territorialisation of the *Regnum Francorum*

In the short term, the alliance between both figures would have had the desired effect: Syagrius was defeated and Soissons fell to Clovis.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Remigius strengthened his positions in the region after the disappearance of his main competitor. However, the greatest benefits of this relationship would come in the long term. Once again, Remigius' letter provides the clues. We are specifically referring to Remigius' appeal for Clovis to follow the advice of the bishops of the *provincia*, a call we believe was not just intended as a mere exhortatory message to the young *rex*.⁶¹ Instead, we think that the letter is an open invitation to an agreement between both leaders,⁶² as well as a declaration of intent and of the programme of governance Remigius would like Clovis to implement from then on. According to this, the head of the see of Reims would be offering his collaboration and that of his supporting clergy to the Frankish *rex* in the control of the region.⁶³

The Frank would obviously appreciate the numerous benefits that could be obtained from closeness with one of the major *de facto* powers of the post-Roman context as was the episcopal polity.⁶⁴ Still, we should not think that Remigius' case could be extrapolated to the whole body of bishops of northern Gaul, meaning that the support of the prelate of Reims would not automatically involve the support and collaboration of the entire episcopal community of *Belgica Secunda*. At this point, neither secular nor ecclesiastical aristocracies were united bodies. Instead, '*chaque évêque se trouva à la fois plus indépendant, mais aussi plus isolé qu'il ne l'avait jamais été.*'⁶⁵ Therefore, we cannot speak of coordinated activity between the Church and monarchy. We are before nothing more than an offering of collaboration with a military leader made by a specific individual, even if such support almost certainly involved that of all the authorities that were loyal to the metropolitan bishop. However, the bishops that most resented Remigius' power probably did not support Clovis at the time, regarding the alliance between the metropolitan bishop and the Merovingian as a clear threat to the existing balance of power. In fact, Gregory of Tours reports the sacking of churches located in *Belgica Secunda* by Clovis' troops, which leads us to confirm the theory that the Frankish *rex* did not have the support of the body of bishops of the former *provincia*, at least until his victory over Syagrius.⁶⁶

The benefits of this collaboration between the episcopal polity of *Belgica Secunda* and Clovis were not reduced to mere political support. Actually, through his letter, Remigius would be offering the Frankish *rex* the entire diocesan structure of the episcopal polity in the region. Dioceses were the territorial basis of the episcopal jurisdiction from which the bishop exercised his ministry over the inhabitants of the region. This is precisely the power platform that the head of the see of Reims would be placing at the service of the Merovingian, at least at the theoretical level. In the long term, Remigius' action would involve the handing over to Clovis and the Franks of the territorial bases on which the *Regnum Francorum* would be built.

The implications of Remigius of Reims' concession can be defined with greater accuracy through the understanding of the degree of diocesan influence in these contexts. With regard to this issue, according to French historiography, the scope of action of dioceses would be far more personal than territorial, even considering deterritorialisation of its concept.⁶⁷ Thus, the extent of episcopal influence would depend on factors associated with personal relations among the Christian community rather than by territorial specifications. While we do not deny this, we believe that to catalogue it as deterritorialisation and dismiss the relevance of territory in all this process is too fanciful. Indeed, in line with the approach taken in the area of Human Geography a few years ago, we actually consider that the establishment of territorial control is a fact derived from the imposition of power over a specific social group, rather than the other way around. Yet, we also believe that all manner of human action unfolds within a more or less delimited geographical framework or, in other words, within a territory, which would be the essential setting for the development of all power and all social relationships.⁶⁸ Accordingly, the exercise of power becomes linked to a territory from the very moment when societal power relationships become established in a geographical space, be it at a greater or lesser scale. Therefore, returning to the issue of dioceses, their very existence would be intrinsically tied to the imposition of a power relationship of a spatial nature and,⁶⁹ consequently, the building of a territory.

While it is true that territoriality limits are not very clear in the case of dioceses,⁷⁰ there is evidence that the bishops themselves were aware of the reach of their influence within their respective territories.⁷¹ This is why we prefer to follow the approach of I. Martín Viso to Iberian reality, stating that the territoriality of diocesan realities is diffuse.⁷² Such an unformed definition of territory would be very much the result of how it was articulated around central locations spread across it, whether episcopal sees themselves, or local churches scattered along the countryside. Thus, the building of territories was related to their centre, rather than to specific boundaries. The establishment of such nuclei would be mainly aimed at controlling the relevant place and its inhabitants, not only at the socio-political level, but also in ideological and economic terms.⁷³ Thus, the area of the dioceses could not be simply imposed as another territorial constituency, but it required a previous and slow process of implementation of episcopal influence through the construction of ecclesiastical centres in rural areas. This would be a means for the bishop to secure control over worship and the Christian community in those territories. After all, the Church was the main venue for the most important events of the community's social and religious life.⁷⁴ Consequently, through the building of such focal points, the bishop would achieve high levels of penetration of his influence in the surrounding local areas and, therefore, power beyond the mere urban setting.⁷⁵ Yet, the sources' complete silence as far as the scope of the bishops' extra-urban jurisdiction is concerned, makes it impossible to determine the approximate boundaries of diocesan space. There are only isolated pieces of information mentioning the occasional distribution of rural churches founded by bishops across the territory, which would to a certain degree reflect the implementation of episcopal power in a specific area, but not its extent as regards the entire group that made up the diocese.⁷⁶ In the case of Remigius, his controversial will includes four rural churches under his control, namely, Mouzon,⁷⁷ Voncq, Mézières and Porcien,⁷⁸ although we do not rule out the possibility of there being more. This would confirm the Bishop of Reims' strong influence in regions that were very far from the metropolitan see.

In light of the above, Remigius would ultimately be paving the way for Clovis to acquire a degree of influence over the territory and the rural communities that was until then unbelievable for the Merovingian king. Moreover, the Bishop of Reims and the other prelates could provide to the new Merovingian monarchy additional ideological support which could be projected over these communities.⁷⁹ Hence, bishops would become the preferential mode of communication between the royal central power and the rural areas.⁸⁰ Obviously, the Frankish leader would highly appreciate all the benefits entailed in the political adherence of the episcopal polity and its territorial structures of social control. In fact, during the subsequent process of expansion across the entirety of Gaul, Clovis would devote a large part of his political efforts to gaining the support and collaboration of the bishops. Throughout its course, the Merovingian would even encourage the promotion of certain individuals to the episcopate, which, understanding the degree of penetration of episcopal power within the territory, real or potential, would entail that he would eventually gain *de facto* power over a specific region.⁸¹ Thus, from then on the Church became a leading territorial implementation mechanism for the monarchy, meaning that the spreading of royal influence itself would go hand in hand with the extension of ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction over a specific region. Hence, against this background, we can assert that, from the rule of Clovis onwards, the power of the Merovingians would have territorial implications, regardless of whether the boundaries of this territoriality were clearly defined or not because, in the end, its making would be always closely connected to personal bonds.

However, such concessions would be accompanied by the logical expectation of gaining something in return. In this case, by opening the entire ecclesiastical structure to Clovis and secular power, Remigius probably expected to secure continuity of his episcopacy's independence of action. Likewise, considering that Clovis paid due attention to the Bishop of Reims' recommendations, the latter would have managed to place episcopal influence above secular power. We assume that the monarchy's support would have brought a continuous inflow of material goods in the form of presents and donations.⁸² Here we can add Clovis' political and material help in the Bishop of Reims' initiative to restore and establish episcopal sees in northern Gaul.⁸³

Subsequent relations between Clovis and Remigius

With regard to subsequent dynamics, it is known that practically throughout the entire duration of Clovis' rule the relationship between both figures would have remained under the previous terms of collaboration, the ultimate expression of this maxim being Clovis' baptism by Remigius between the late fifth and early sixth centuries.⁸⁴ This would also become reflected in the royal policy of creating and restoring bishoprics in northern Gaul with the promotion to the episcopal rank of individuals chosen by Clovis. This is proof of the Merovingian's concern about extending his network of influence over that territory, although opinions vary in this regard.⁸⁵ After all, for the reasons set forth above, the creation or restoration of dioceses, as well as the appointment of bishops that were close to Clovis, would be one of the most precious territorial implementation mechanisms for the Merovingian monarchy.

At this point, we assume that there would be occasions when Clovis acted with the acquiescence of Bishop Remigius of Reims, such as the cases of Vedastus and the see of Arras,⁸⁶ but we also know that other appointments were made without the consent of the authority

of the see of Reims or other bishops of the north.⁸⁷ This issue brought about the first signs of tension between the two men, especially towards the end of Clovis' rule. Remigius himself reports it in another of the preserved letters written by him, in this case addressed to Bishop Falco of Tongeren, whom the author reproaches precisely for the allegedly illegal mechanism by which he was raised to an episcopal position,⁸⁸ which leads us to assume that he was appointed by the king.

It is specifically the Bishop of Reims' disapproval of Falco that leads us to believe that the relationship between the Frankish king and Remigius was not always as smooth as hinted at in the letter which opens this study. This would explain his absence at the First Council of Orléans in 511 presided over by Cyprian of Bordeaux.⁸⁹ The bishop's attitude towards Clovis changes clearly from one letter to the next. It seems that Remigius disliked the turn in Clovis' ecclesiastical policy during the late years of his rule, when he attempted to bring the entire body of the Gallic Church under his control. Indeed, Remigius opened the doors of the ecclesiastical structures of *Belgica Secunda* to Clovis, but at no time did he intend for this concession to involve Clovis overlapping his functions and rising above his metropolitan authority, appointing bishops of his choice. In fact, Remigius could have actually been the one who coveted the privilege to choose the bishops of his ecclesiastical province or, even, of the neighbouring ones. It should be recalled that Remigius' letter to Clovis expresses a relationship between two homologous agents of power and, accordingly, it is written in terms of reciprocity and mutual collaboration, but it by no means involves the bishop's submission to the Merovingian's authority. Clovis' eventual shift towards imposing himself upon ecclesiastical affairs would have been the result of the growing and indisputable power of the Merovingian within the entire Gallic territory in the first decade of the sixth century. Certainly, this royal interest in the episcopacy was no doubt also due to his perhaps reluctant admission of the power and importance of the bishops. Yet, towards the end of Clovis' life, the tensions must have been clear to the point where, when the *Regnum Francorum* became divided after his death in 511, the ecclesiastical province of Reims was severed and shared among the Merovingian's successors.⁹⁰ This would lead to a fragmentation of Remigius' area of influence and to the consequent weakening of his power. On the other hand, the choice of Falco for the see of Tongeren and the subsequent conflict between both bishops for control of the church of Mouzon gives reason to think that such royal movement was aimed at inflaming rivalry within the episcopal body. Evidence would ultimately suggest a deliberate policy used by the monarch to weaken the power of the metropolitan Bishop of Reims while strengthening his own.

Conclusions

This study is proof that it is still possible to find alternative interpretations of such an important testimony for the reconstruction of the formation process of the Merovingian kingdom of Clovis. Beyond the framing of the different events and historical processes of the post-Roman world within the limited categories of Romanism/Germanism or continuity/break, the truth is that the main actors involved in the transformations that took place in this period had worries that had nothing to do with such dichotomies. Where Remigius and Clovis are concerned, both displayed high degrees of pragmatism and response capability in the face of the relevant threats that emerged in the course of their exercise of power, and the letter in question, as shown, provides the clues to the procedures they followed for such purposes.

Thus, both figures would have been able to appreciate the benefits of mutual collaboration against common challenges, such as the threat posed by Syagrius of Soissons. Nevertheless, beyond the goals they pursued, the importance of the relationship between Remigius and Clovis lies in its pioneering nature vis-à-vis earlier dynamics. Far from limiting themselves to the occasional collaboration, these individuals formed a long-term alliance that would be crucial, not only for the perpetuation in power of both figures, but also for the definition of the territorial foundations on which the budding *Regnum Francorum* would rest.

Notes

1. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, II, 1, ed. Malaspina, *Il 'Liber epistolarum'*, 62.
2. Trans Hillgarth, *Christianity and Paganism*, 76
3. With regard to establishing the chronology for Clovis' rule, cf. Bachrach, "Procopius and the Chronology," 21–31; Wood, "Gregory of Tours and Clovis," 249–72; Breukelaar, *Historiography and Episcopal Authority in Sixth-Century Gaul*, 144–85; Halsall, "Childeric's Grave, Clovis' Succession," 170–3.
4. As one of the main advocates of this, cf. Werner, *Les origines. Histoire de France*. For further references, see later in this article.
5. For example, Latouche, *Les grandes invasions et la crise*; Tessier, *Le baptême de Clovis*.
6. Lot et al., *Les destinées de l'Empire*, 302. In a similar vein, Dumézil, *Servir l'État barbare*, 135–6.
7. Escalona Monge, "Patrones de fragmentación territorial," 165.
8. Taking a similar view, Goetz, "Gens, Kings, and Kingdoms," 332–4; Le Jan, "La sacralité de la royauté mérovingienne," 1234–38; Moore, *A Sacred Kingdom*, 112, among others. Although the forging of a common identity for the kingdom as a whole was mostly accomplished through the fusion of Gallo-Roman and Germanic peoples along the sixth century, the monarch would play a leading role in community cohesion and, therefore, in the embracing of the identity elements that would prevail throughout the Merovingian period. Cf. Gillett, "Was Ethnicity Politicized in the Earliest Medieval Kingdoms?," 85–121; Pohl, "Nouvelles identités ethniques," 23–34.
9. In this regard, the following assertion by I. Wood is quite revealing: 'In such periods of change we should not expect to find archaic tradition so much as strategies for survival.' "Royal Succession and Legitimation," 61. The building of medieval states in the eastern part of central Europe has been approached from this perspective. Cf. Urbanczyk, "Early State Formation in East Central Europe," 139–51.
10. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, 166; Daly, "Clovis: How Barbaric, How Pagan?," 632; Rouche, *Clovis*, 390–1.
11. MacGeorge, *Late Roman Warlords*, 127.
12. Tessier, *Le baptême de Clovis*, 83; Pietri, "La chrétienté gauloise de la division à l'unité retrouvé," 332; Cândido da Silva, *A Realeza Crista na Alta Idade Média*, 53, who base their support of this timeline on the analysis of the array of titles that Remigius uses to describe Clovis.
13. Cf. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms*, 41.
14. Cf. Barrett and Woudhuysen, "Remigius and the 'Important News,'" 471–500, who present an exhaustive account of the state of the issue.
15. *Ibid.*, 485, specifically 'ut domini iudicium a te // non uacillet'.
16. For different views on the issue, see Daly, "Clovis: How Barbaric, How Pagan?," 632.
17. Our purpose is not to argue about the chronological background; rather, we are suggesting a new reading of the letter based on the traditional dating. In addition, although we recognize that there could be other chronological possibilities, none of them for now have the final word.
18. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, II, ed. Malaspina, *Il 'Liber epistolarum'*, 62, 64. For a new lecture of the letter through an exhaustive study of the manuscript transmission, Barrett and Woudhuysen, "Remigius and the 'Important News,'" 471–500. It is a known fact that this bishop occupied the episcopal cathedra from 459 until his death in 533. On the figure of Remigius of Reims, see Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*.

19. This view is defended by Bloch, "Observations sur la conquête de la Gaule," 161–78; Werner, "La 'conquête franque' de la Gaule," 23–4; James, *The Franks*, 6; Lebecq, *Les origines franques*, 47–50; Daly, "Clovis: How Barbaric, How Pagan?," 627–35; Rouche, *Clovis*, 203–4; Guillot, "Clovis 'Auguste', vecteur des conceptions romano-chrétiennes," 155; Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 97; Cândido da Silva, *A Realeza Crista*, 53–7; Oudart, "Seigneur insigne et par ses mérites," 69–143, among others, although the latter shows certain reluctance when it comes to claiming that Clovis held ample territorial power. A far less popular line rejects the continuist theory when interpreting the letters. MacGeorge, *Late Roman Warlords*, 127.
20. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 27, 11, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 71. For further research on Childeric and Clovis' family roots, see Renard, "Le sang de Mérové," 999–1040.
21. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 12, 1–2, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 61. Cf. Lebecq, "The Two Faces of King Childeric," 327–41. Specifically, Childeric and, eventually, his son Clovis, are said to have ruled over the so-called Salian Franks. Cf. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, 149. On the controversy around the separation of the Franks into different branches, cf. Springer, "Salier und salisches Recht," 485–7. For a journey through the history of the Franks at different times until Clovis' takeover of power, see Zöllner, *Geschichte der Franken*; Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, 148–63; James, *The Franks*, 34–77; Staab, "Les royaumes francs au V^e siècle," 539–66.
22. On a similar note, Périn and Feffer, *Les Francs. Tome 1*, 137; Goetz, "Gens, Kings, and Kingdoms," 321–2.
23. Advocating this idea, Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, 164; Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms*, 39; Kulikowski, "The Western Kingdoms," 39. Gregory of Tours himself states that at a certain point between the late fourth and early fifth centuries, the Franks themselves were led by different *reges*, apparently holding the same rank and scattered across the different *pagi* and *civitates*. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 9, 11–3, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 57.
24. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, II, 1, ed. Malaspina, *Il 'Liber Epistolarum'*, 62. For an alternative approach, see Halsall, "Childeric's Grave, Clovis' Succession," 178.
25. The wealth of literature available on this issue is overwhelming. A selection of it: Wood, "Kings, Kingdom and Consent," 24; Werner, *Les origines*, 336; Lebecq, *Les origines franques*, 46–7; Rouche, *Clovis*, 187; Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 97, among others. E. James even claims that the scope of Childeric's control spread beyond the limits of *Belgica Secunda*. Cf. James, *The Franks*, 64.
26. There is evidence of the *comes* or *magister utriusque militiae per Gallias* Egidius, a Frankish man called Ragnachar, who exerted his power in Cambrai and its surroundings and, also of another Frankish leader, Chararic. However, we cannot rule out the existence of more political players that the sources do not mention. Cf. MacGeorge, *Late Roman Warlords*, 69–164.
27. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 12, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 61–2. Sarti, *Perceiving War and the Military*, 33. The territorial connotations of the term *regnum* would come later, with the construction and consolidation of the post-imperial kingdoms. Cf. Jiménez Garnica, "Sobre *rex* y *regnum*," 57–80; Kulikowski, "The Western Kingdoms," 34.
28. On this issue, see Van Dam, *Leadership & Community in Late Antique Gaul*, 141–56; Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West*, 346–68; Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 392–400, among others.
29. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms*, 39; Halsall, "Childeric's Grave, Clovis' Succession," 182. Such status would derive not so much from his relationship with the Empire, as from his own political abilities and reputation. Sarti, *Perceiving War and the Military*, 31–2.
30. Cf. Brulet, "Le tombe de Childéric et la topographie de Tournai à la fin du V^e siècle," 59–78.
31. Wood, "Kings, Kingdom and Consent," 10.
32. Childeric's barrow is understood as a mechanism to express such competition: Effros, "Grave Goods and the Ritual Expression of Identity," 190; Halsall, "Childeric's Grave, Clovis' Succession," 173–6, 185; Le Jan, "Prendre, accumuler, détruire les richesses," 372–3.
33. Alongside the abovementioned authors, other authors also agree with this idea of Clovis, among them are: Verlinden, "Frankish Colonization: A New Approach," 15; Wood, "Gregory of Tours and Clovis," 262.

34. Cf. Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 94. A new edition of the fragment concerned has been recently suggested, denying any mention of *Belgica Secunda*. Cf. Barrett and Woudhuysen, "Remigius and the 'Important News,'" 483–4.
35. Wood, "Gregory of Tours and Clovis," 262.
36. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 18, 8–9; II, 27, 13–14, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 65, 71.
37. There has been much discussion on the meaning of Syagrius' title of *rex* and the *regnum* it entailed. For a state of the question, see Fanning, "Emperors and Empires in Fifth-Century Gaul," 288–97.
38. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 27, 13–17, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 71.
39. MacGeorge, *Late Roman Warlords*, 127–8.
40. These two cities are barely 60 kms away from each other.
41. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 27, 11, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 71. This is a generally accepted opinion in historiography. For example: Bloch, "Observations sur la conquête," 163; Rouche, *Clovis*, 389–90; Oudart, "Seigneur insigne et par ses mérites," 115–16.
42. Cf. Wood, "Deconstructing the Merovingian Family," 149–71.
43. Along these lines, see Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West*, 322. Evidence of the indefinite nature of political succession at the time can be found in Le Jan, "La sacralité de la royauté mérovingienne," 1233. To further support this idea, Gregory of Tours claims that there was a time when Childeric was removed from his status as *rex* by his own people, who chose Egidius as their new leader. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 12, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 61–2.
44. Dumézil, "Les ruptures dynastiques dans les royaumes barbares," 43.
45. Cf. Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 52–7.
46. Gauthier, "Le réseau de pouvoirs de l'évêque," 197. Against this, Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 178–85. On Remigius' family policy, Cf. Foviaux, "Les mutations de la géographie administrative de l'Antiquité tardive en Gaule," 201–25.
47. The *successio sancta* phenomenon, meaning the transfer of the episcopal rank within a specific family, was a constant in fifth- and sixth-century Gaul. Cf. Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul*, 91; Beaujard, "L'épiscopat, ambition des familles de clarissimes gaulois aux V^e et VI^e siècles," 381–92.
48. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, III-IV, ed. Malaspina, II 'Liber Epistolarum,' 64, 66, 68, 70, 72.
49. Cf. Mathisen, *Ecclesiastical Factionalism and Religious Controversy*.
50. Kreiner, "About the Bishop: The Episcopal Entourage and the Economy of Government," 337.
51. Sid. Apollinaris, *Epistulae*, VIII, 14; IX, 8, ed. Loyen, *Sidoine Apollinaire*, III, 123–5, 145–6. Concerning the same individual, Hincmarus, *Vita Sancti Remigii*, II, 1; 32, ed. Krusch, *Passionae vitaeque sanctorum*, 259–62, 336–7.
52. Heuclin, *Hommes de Dieu et fonctionnaires du roi en Gaule du Nord*, 39.
53. Specifically, in case we can lend a minimum of credibility to such a late source as the *Vita S. Remigii*, after Principius, Remigius would promote his nephew Lupus to the bishopric of the see of Soissons. In the case of Laon, the first holder of such place would be his niece's husband, Genobaudus, who would be succeeded by his own son. On such episcopal promotions, see Cf. Pietri, "Remarques sur la christianisation du Nord de la Gaule," 58–9; Foviaux, "Les mutations de la géographie administrative de l'Antiquité tardive en Gaule," 201–25; Heinzelmann, "L'aristocratie et les évêchés entre Loire et Rhin jusqu'à la fin du VII^e siècle," 81, 97.
54. Lebecq, *Les origines franques*, 47; Rouche, *Clovis*, 206.
55. It is also true, according to Gregory of Tours' testimony, that, after eight years, Childeric would have recovered his authority. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 12, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 61–2.
56. Along these lines, see Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, 164; Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West*, 304. Revealing in terms of the relevance of the competition between Clovis and Syagrius is the principle of competitive exclusion expressed by anthropology: "The principle of competitive exclusion [...] states simply that two species occupying and exploiting the same portion of the habitat cannot coexist indefinitely. Sooner

- or later one of them will eliminate the other.' Carneiro, "Political Expansion as an Expression of the Principle of Competitive Exclusion," 208.
57. Cf. Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul*, 67; Díaz, "El obispo y las invasiones de los pueblos bárbaros," 140–3.
 58. Dumézil, *Les racines chrétiennes de l'Europe*, 72–3.
 59. This idea is further supported by the request made by Remigius to Clovis asking him to use his own wealth to free the prisoners that had been enslaved. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, II, 3, 18–20, ed. Malaspina, *Il 'Liber Epistolarum'*, 62, 64. Freeing the captives through episcopal intervention was a constant immediately before and after the fall of the Western Empire. For a case study, see Klingshirn, "Charity and Power: Caesarius of Arles and the Ransoming of Captives in Sub-Roman Gaul," 183–203. An alternative approach, Barrett and Woudhuysen, "Remigius and the 'Important News,'" 484.
 60. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 27, 13–17, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 71.
 61. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, II, 2, 9–15, ed. Malaspina, *Il 'Liber Epistolarum'*, 62. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, 166.
 62. Hen, "The Church in Sixth-Century Gaul," 237.
 63. For an analysis of the different virtues listed by Remigius, see Oudart, "Seigneur insigne et par ses mérites," 118–43.
 64. The bibliography available on the relevance of the figure of the bishop in the late antique and early medieval contexts is very extensive. A selection: Heinzelmann, *Bischofsherrschaft in Gallien*; Mor, "Sui poteri civili del vescovi dal IV al secolo VIII," 7–33; Beaujard, "L'évêque dans la cite en Gaule aux V^e-VI^e siècles," 127–45; Gauthier, "Le réseau de pouvoirs de l'évêque," 173–207; Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity*.
 65. Dumézil, *Les racines chrétiennes de l'Europe*, 73.
 66. Greg. Tur., *DLH*, II, 27, 1–2, ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 72.
 67. Cf. Lauwers, "Territorium non facere diocesim," 23–68; Mazel, *L'évêque et le territoire*.
 68. Cf. Gottmann, *The Significance of Territory*; Raffestin, *Pour une géographie du pouvoir*; Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*; Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights*.
 69. Guerreau, "Quelques caractères spécifiques de l'espace féodal européen," 85–101.
 70. From a general perspective, cf. Jones, "Mann and Men in a Medieval State," 65–78.
 71. Mériaux, "De la cité antique au diocèse médiéval," 603.
 72. Martín Viso, "Organización episcopal y poder entre la antigüedad Tardía y el Medioevo," 160.
 73. Le Jan, *La société du haut Moyen Âge*, 48.
 74. In anthropological terms, churches could be also defined as 'active centers for social order.' Geertz, "Centers, Kings, and Charisma," 122–3. On the social role of rural churches, cf. Pietri, "Chiesa e comunità locali nell'Occidente cristiano," 493–500; Delaplace, "Local Churches, Settlement, and Social Power in Late Antique and Early Medieval Gaul," 419–47, where the relationship between rural churches and the elites' influence networks is also addressed.
 75. Cardot, *L'espace et le pouvoir*, 163.
 76. Gregory of Tours' testimony provides a quite exhaustive list of the rural foundations made by the bishops of Tours since the times of Saint Martin. Cf. Stancliffe, "From Town to Country," 43–59. For further studies on this, see Delaplace, dir., *Aux origines de la paroisse rurale*. As for the north, there are data on foundations in the vicinity of *Belgica Secunda*. Cf. Gauthier, *L'Évangélisation des pays de la Moselle*, 153–6, 238. For a general assessment, see Pietri, "Chiesa e comunità locali," 475–521.
 77. As well as in this will, this church also appears under the influence of the Bishop of Reims in the letter Remigius addresses to Falco of Tongeren. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, IV, 2, 12–14, ed. Malaspina, *Il 'Liber Epistolarum'*, 68.
 78. Hincmarus, *Vita Sancti Remigii*, 32, 15–18, ed. Krusch, *Passionaes vitaeque sanctorum*, 339. Cf. Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 130. On the controversy around this text and its two versions, cf. Jones et al., "The Authenticity of the 'Testamentum S. Remigii,'" 356–73. Based on this study, later historiography usually accepts the authenticity of the shorter version of the will.

79. A similar situation has been proposed for the Visigothic kingdom in *Hispania*. Cf. Castellanos and Martín Viso, “The Local Articulation of Central Power in the North of the Iberian Peninsula,” 15.
80. Again, the Visigothic reality presents a useful analogy. Cf. Castellanos, “The Political Nature of Taxation in Visigothic Spain,” 221.
81. For example, this royal appointment would have been made in the cases of Sofronius in Noyon, Libanus in Senlis, Edibius in Amiens, Gildaredus in Rouen, Maurusus in Evreux, Nepos in Avranches and Leontianus in Coutances, who subscribe the minutes of the I Council of Orléans. *Conc. Aurelianense a. 511, Subscriptiones*, ed. De Clercq, *Concilia Galliae*, 13–19. Cf. Heuclin, *Hommes de Dieu et fonctionnaires du roi en Gaule du Nord*, 39–41; Halfond, “Vouillé, Orléans (511),” 157. This idea is deduced because these bishoprics were unoccupied the years prior to Clovis’ conquest of the region located between the Seine and the Loire. The letter sent by Remigius to the bishops of the province of Sens is clearer proving the intervention of Clovis in the appointment of bishops. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, III, ed. Malaspina, *Il ‘Liber Epistolarum,’* 64, 66.
82. A very illustrative example is the episode of the Vase of Soissons, when Clovis quarrels with his own soldiers to satisfy the desires of the bishop, who had requested the return of the famous vase. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 27 ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 71–3. Further evidence of such concessions, although framed in the late part of Clovis’ reign, can be observed in the minutes of the Council of Orléans, held in 511, where there is clear evidence of the Merovingian king personally giving *munera* to the Church. *Conc. Aurelianense a. 511*, c. 5, ed. De Clercq, *Concilia Galliae*, 6. Likewise, at the Council of Paris in 556–73, there is also mention of such type of grants. *Conc. Parisiense a. 556–573*, c. 5, ed. De Clercq, *Concilia Galliae*, 205–6. On discussion concerning this council, cf. Halfond, “Charibert I and the Episcopal Leadership,” 1–28. Despite the fact that this evidence belongs to a later date, there is no reason to think that such deliveries were not offered to the septentrional episcopacy throughout his entire reign.
83. Heuclin, *Hommes de Dieu et fonctionnaires du roi en Gaule du Nord*, 38–9. For an alternative approach, Isaïa, *Remi de Reims*, 138–61.
84. Greg. Tur. *DLH*, II, 31 ed. Krusch and Levison, *Gregorii episcopi Turonensis*, 76–8. On the issue of dating it, Spencer, “Dating the Baptism of Clovis,” 97–116; Shanzer, “Dating the Baptism of Clovis,” 29–57.
85. Mériaux, *Gallia irradiata. Saints et sanctuaires*, 54, who defends the view of a certain disregard of Clovis and his sons for the region.
86. Jonas Bobbiensis, *Vita Vedastis episcopi Atrebatensis duplex*, 5, ed. Krusch, *Passiones vitaeque sanctorum*, 409. Cf. Pietri, “Remarques sur la Christianisation,” 61–3; Heuclin, *Hommes de Dieu et fonctionnaires du roi en Gaule du Nord*, 39.
87. Heuclin, “Le concile d’Orléans, un premier concordat ?,” 444–5.
88. *Epistulae Austrasicae*, IV, 2, 12–13, ed. Malaspina, *Il ‘Liber Epistolarum,’* 68, 70.
89. For other approaches to the reasons that led to Cyprian’s election, see Heuclin, “Le concile d’Orléans, un premier concordat?,” 440; Halfond, “Vouillé, Orléans (511),” 160.
90. Heuclin, *Hommes de Dieu et fonctionnaires du roi en Gaule du Nord*, 69.

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