

**A QUESTION OF IDENTITY: WHO WERE THE  
GALATIANS ?**

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**Submitted to the University of Wales in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts in Celtic Studies**

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DECLARATIONS



**Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation**

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3. This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation attempts to answer the research question: who were the Galatians? It focuses on their identity over the period when they are known to history, from about 279 BCE to the sixth or eighth century CE.

**Chapter 1** presents the research question and the four subsidiary questions, which mirror the order and structure of the following four chapters. This is followed by a brief historiography of the Galatians, and justification for the dissertation. The concept of identity is then discussed, and a model that recognises identity as containing both sameness and difference or otherness is adopted for the study. The varying uses of the word ‘Celt’ are discussed. The Celtic invasions of Greece are then described as a prelude to their entry to Asia Minor as mercenaries.

**Chapter 2** concerns the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor, their settlements, socio-political organisation, religion, and relations with the Romans. Contemporary sources are plentiful, supplemented by modern archaeological investigations, so a distinct Galatian identity is discernible.

**Chapter 3** discusses *St Paul’s Letter to the Galatians* in 48/49 CE, and the North and South Galatian theories. Evidence of Galatian identity, on the basis of the *Letter* and the unresolved state of the theories, is weak.

**Chapter 4** analyses the main features of the remnants of the Galatian language and concludes that because they are mostly variants of Gaulish, they are a weak marker of Galatian identity. A theory that some Galatian words may survive in modern Turkish is examined and dismissed.

**Chapter 5** summarises the argument of the dissertation and concludes that evidence of Galatian identity is strong as far as our knowledge of their settlements and socio-political organisation are concerned. Evidence for their identity is, however, weak in the case of the Pauline Galatians and the remnants of the Galatian language.

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## CHAPTER 1: CELTS AND GALATIANS

The past is, by definition, a datum which nothing in the future will change. But the knowledge of the past is something progressive which is constantly transforming and perfecting itself.<sup>1</sup>

### *1.1 Introduction*

Modern Istanbul: the suburb of Galata, the Galata Tower, the Galata bridge, and Galatasaray ('Galata Palace'), a leading Istanbul football team. Are these 'Galata' references anything to do with the Galatians, a Celtic people, who are said to have passed through Byzantium/Constantinople/Istanbul as they entered the territory of Asia Minor (modern Turkey) in the third century BCE, and whose name seems to have disappeared from history in the sixth or eighth century CE? This is a question that I will attempt to answer at the end of the dissertation. But first, this study will deal with more substantial matters in an attempt to discern the identity of the Galatians over time.<sup>2</sup> This chapter covers the following topics. Following this introductory note (*1.1*), the research questions for the study are set out, followed by an outline structure of the dissertation (*1.2*); a summary overview of the historiography on the Galatians and a justification for the present study is then presented (*1.3*), followed by a discussion on the nature of identity, and the difficulties of applying the concept to pre-modern peoples (*1.4*); the following section (*1.5*) discusses some generalities about Celtic peoples and their

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<sup>1</sup> Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1954), p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> On a personal note, I first came across the Galatians in the 1960s when reading for a BA in Turkish at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University. I noticed that the foundation of Ankara, the capital of modern Turkey, 'Ancyra' in ancient times, was attributed to the Galatians, and I idly wondered if they were the same people to whom St Paul addressed his *Letter to the Galatians*, in the New Testament in about 48/49 CE, the subject of Chapter 3 of this study. I also wondered if the historical suburb of Istanbul, Galata, mentioned above, had any connection with them. These idle speculations remained thus until some 40 years later, when I returned to SOAS to read for a MA in Turkish and first learned of the Celtic origins of the Galatians. I determined to try and find out more about the identity of these people, their history, language, culture, and, if possible, their ultimate fate, at a suitable opportunity. That opportunity is now, and hence this dissertation.

migrations, while the final section (1.6) discusses their attack on Greece, in order to set the context for chapter 2 and the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor.<sup>3</sup>

### *1.2 Research questions and structure of dissertation*

The overall research question for this study is: who were the Galatians? In other words, this is an attempt to discern the identity of the Galatians over a period of several centuries. This question can be broken down into a series of subsidiary questions which may be characterised, in Rumsfeldian epistemology, as ‘known knowns’ and ‘known unknowns’.<sup>4</sup> There is much about the Galatians that we have ample evidence about and which qualifies as known knowns; and there is much we know we do not know about them which qualifies as known unknowns. In historical studies, known knowns can be divided into two kinds of historical knowledge. First, there is knowledge that is well documented and seemingly indisputable, such as the date of the battle of Hastings (1066), or the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks (1453). Such facts are unlikely to be overturned by subsequent discoveries of artefacts, documents or by new historical paradigms, though there are occasional disputes about such matters.<sup>5</sup> The other kind of known historical knowledge has some similarities to certain kinds of scientific knowledge: knowledge that a majority of scientists believe to be true at a particular point in time but which may be overturned or modified by new discoveries or

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<sup>3</sup> Asia Minor was also known as Anatolia, both in ancient and modern times (*Anadolu*, in modern Turkish).

<sup>4</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of State for Defense, ‘Known unknowns’, Dept of Defense news briefing, Feb 12, 2002, at <http://www.slate.com/id/2081042/> [Accessed 29 March 2011]. ‘[T]here are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know’. Rumsfeld went on to say: ‘But there are also unknown unknowns, The ones we don't know we don't know’. There are always unknown unknowns in any field of research but they are too unspecific and tenuous to be useful in this study.

<sup>5</sup> The date and place of the Battle of Hastings have been agreed on for almost a thousand years, with the latter marked by Battle Abbey near Hastings. Recently (August 2013), two competing claims have arisen: that the fighting occurred a mile to the north on Caldbec Hill, while another claims it was two miles away, to the south, at a place called Crowhurst. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/9797985/One-in-the-eye-for-history-experts-still-fighting-over-the-site-of-the-Battle-of-Hastings.html> [accessed 24 August 2013]. One suspects that regard for tourist possibilities rather than historical truth is at work.

more persuasive paradigms. An example of the latter in Celtic Studies is the recent decipherment of Tartessian, a corpus of Celtic inscriptions discovered in the Iberian Peninsula, which is stimulating a re-evaluation of the origins of the Celts and classification of the Celtic languages.<sup>6</sup>

The overall research question therefore, is to attempt to discern the identity of the Galatians through their various vicissitudes of fortune from about 279 BCE to the sixth or eighth century CE, when they disappeared from presently-known history. The research question breaks down into the following 4 subsidiary questions:

1. What do we know of the Galatians in Asia Minor and what do their forms of government, social organisation, religion, and relations with the Romans, tell us about their identity? (chapter 2);
2. Who are the Galatians to whom St Paul addressed his New Testament *Letter to the Galatians* in 48/9 CE? (chapter 3);
3. What do we know about the Galatian language, and what does it tell us about the identity of the Galatians? (chapter 4);
4. What became of the Galatians and when did they disappear from history? (chapter 5).

Question 1 is a known known, but still subject to further elaboration and refinement as a result of further discoveries, mainly archaeological ones, while questions 2, 3, and 4 are known unknowns or, at least, known uncertainties. These latter questions are not in watertight compartments. They have the potential to graduate to known knowns in the light of further discoveries and interpretations.

The structure of the dissertation is based on the order of the research questions. After a brief description of the break up of Alexander the Great's empire in Asia Minor, chapter

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<sup>6</sup> Barry Cunliffe & John T. Koch, *Celtic from the West* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), p. 185.

2 presents and analyses the circumstances behind the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor, the settlements they built there and their socio-political organisation, their religious practices, and finally, their relations with the Romans, and the formation of the Roman province of Galatia in 25 BCE. Chapter 3 focuses on an important literary source on the Galatians, namely, St Paul's *Letter* in the *New Testament* addressed to the Galatians in about 48/9 CE, and discusses the vexed question of Galatian identity at the time via the North and South Galatian theories: whether the Galatians were the descendants of the historical Celtic peoples or thoroughly Hellenized Galatians who had lost all traces of their Celticity and merely lived, with other peoples, in the Roman province of Galatia ; chapter 4 discusses the remnants of the Galatian language, a corpus of 117 words, mediated entirely through Greek and, in particular, Freeman's monograph on the subject.<sup>7</sup> There are controversial minority views that remnants of Galatian may be found in modern Turkish, and that Galatian is not a Celtic but a Germanic language. These possibilities are considered. The final chapter (chapter 5) considers the evidence for the continuing existence of the Galatians in the first millennium of our era, summarises the evidence for their identity, based on their history, language, and culture, and suggests where further research is needed.

### *1.3 Historiography on the Galatians and justification for present study*

This section deals summarily with the historiography of the Galatians and presents a justification for the present study. Most general books on the Celts include a few passing references to the Galatians, but give no detail on their migration to, and settlement in, Asia Minor.<sup>8</sup> There are, however, more substantial treatments. Rankin's

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<sup>7</sup> Philip Freeman, *The Galatian Language: A Comprehensive Survey of the Language of the Ancient Celts in Greco-Roman Asia Minor* (New York: Mellen Press, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> For example, Barry Cunliffe, *The Celts: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2003); Frank Delaney, *The Celts* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986).

‘The Galatians’ is a short chapter in his *Celts and the Classical World*.<sup>9</sup> Darbyshire, Mitchell, and Vardar have provided a detailed overview of the Galatian settlement in Asia Minor.<sup>10</sup> Ellis is a prolific writer on Celtic matters. He writes for the general reader and his scholarship is usually sound. ‘Galatia’ from his *Celtic Empire* is a popular overview of the Galatian story.<sup>11</sup> His monograph *Celt and Greek: Celts in the Hellenic World* covers the same ground in more detail; he is particularly good on Galatian and Roman relations, but his treatment of the Galatian language and the Pauline Galatians is superficial.<sup>12</sup> Mitchell has written a scholarly, detailed, archaeological study of Celtic material remains in Asia Minor in two volumes.<sup>13</sup> Until the last 20 years, most that was known about the Galatians was derived from historical, mainly Greek and Roman, writers, who mostly presented a stereotypical view of the Galatians. This view may be summarised as follows.<sup>14</sup> The Galatians were bands of Celtic-speaking peoples who arrived on the borders of the Classical world, Macedonia, Greece and Asia Minor, around 281 BCE. They were warlike barbarians set upon raiding and plunder who attacked cities and sacred places in Greece before crossing into Asia Minor where they carried on in a similar manner until the various Hellenistic rulers forced them to settle in the region around Ankara. They were marginalized but not defeated and remained a

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<sup>9</sup> H.R. Rankin, ‘The Galatians’, in H.R. Rankin, *Celts and the Classical World* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 188-207.

<sup>10</sup> Gareth Darbyshire, Stephen Mitchell, and Levent Vardar, ‘The Galatian settlement in Asia Minor,’ *Anatolian Studies*, Vol. 50 (2000), 75-97.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Berresford Ellis, ‘Galatia’, in Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Celtic Empire: The First Millennium of Celtic History c.1000 BC to 51 AD* (London: Constable, 1990), pp. 92-109.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Berresford Ellis, *Celt and Greek: Celts in the Hellenic World* (London: Constable, 1997).

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Mitchell, *Anatolia : Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor. Vol. 1, The Celts in Anatolia and the impact of Roman rule* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); *vol.II, The Rise of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> The following literary perception of the Galatians is summarised from Gareth Darbyshire et al., ‘The Galatian settlement in Asia Minor,’ *Anatolian Studies*, Vol. 50 (2000), 75-97.

constant threat to the more sophisticated communities of western Asia Minor until they were defeated by the Romans in 189 BCE. The enemies of the Galatians saw them as an incarnation of barbarism and a threat to the Hellenistic culture, in the same way as the Persians had been styled ‘barbarians’ in Classical Greece.<sup>15</sup> The Hellenistic kings of Asia Minor saw themselves as defenders of civilisation against the new threat. During the later Hellenistic period the rough edges of Celtic tribalism were smoothed by exposure to Hellenisation and the manipulations of Roman foreign politics and diplomacy. Eventually their territories were absorbed into the Roman Empire by the Emperor Augustus. Within this framework, they developed as a subject people of the empire, who preserved important aspects of their former cultural identity, thanks to the survival of the Celtic language until late antiquity.

This traditional reconstruction of the Galatians is largely based on the classical historiography of the Galatians, which represents them as marginal, nomadic or at best unsettled; politically primitive and barely capable of state organisation; warlike and economically unsophisticated, and relying on raiding and plundering, rather than organized systems of agriculture and land use to maintain their society’s livelihood. This standard view was fully developed in Stähelin’s monograph of 1907,<sup>16</sup> repeated by Rankin more recently,<sup>17</sup> and its main features were accepted as late as 1993 by Mitchell,<sup>18</sup> but corrected in his later writing on the subject.<sup>19</sup> The first scholar to challenge this stereotype and to provide a reappraisal of the Galatians was

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<sup>15</sup> *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, ed. By John Boardman et al., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 48.

<sup>16</sup> F. Stähelin, *Geschichte der kleinasiatischen Galater*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907).

<sup>17</sup> H.R. Rankin, ‘The Galatians’, pp. 188-207.

<sup>18</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol. 1, pp. 11-58.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Mitchell, ‘The Galatians: Representation and Reality’, in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. by Andrew Erskine (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), pp. 280-93.

Strobel in 1996.<sup>20</sup> His reappraisal concentrates on three main features. Firstly, he analyses the ways in which Hellenistic and Roman writers misrepresented the Celts in general, and the Galatians in particular. Secondly, in order to escape from the classical view of the Galatians, his analysis of Galatian society and culture is based on comparisons and methodologies developed in the study of Celtic groups in Europe. And lastly, he has reappraised the geographical aspects of Galatian settlement in Asia Minor, leading to two conclusions, namely that more emphasis needs to be given to the extent of the Galatian settlement, north and north-west of Ankara, in the direction of Bithynia; and that the environment of the region stretching from the Sangarius at Gordium through Ankara to the Halys was more heavily forested in antiquity, and more comparable to the original areas of Celtic settlement in central Europe than it appears today, and very suitable for the permanent establishment of Celtic peoples.

The justification for this study is that it attempts to fill a gap in Celtic/Galatian studies. There is not, as far as I can discover, a modern, monograph-length study in English on the Galatians that deals with their history, language, and culture, while focusing on their identity. The study covers notions of Celticity, Hellenicity, Romanisation and intercultural processes, and is in the nature of an *essai de synthèse*. The sources I draw on are books and articles, in both printed and electronic form in English, Turkish and German about the Galatians and their history, language and culture.

#### 1.4 What is 'identity'?

As this study is an attempt to map the identity of the Galatians through time, it is worth defining what is meant by identity and, in particular, how it might be applied to ancient

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<sup>20</sup> Karl Strobel, *Die Galater: Geschichte und Eigenart der keltischen Staatenbildung auf dem Boden des hellenistischen Kleinasien*. Band 1, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und historischen Geographie des hellenistischen und römischen Kleinasien (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1996).

peoples. Many studies on identity take its meaning as self-evident and do not bother to define it in any detail. The concept of ‘identity’ is ultimately derived from the Latin *idem*, the ‘same’ or sameness. But sameness is only one aspect of identity. Woodward suggests that identity is signified by both sameness, and difference.<sup>21</sup> Or as Stuart Hall expresses it: ‘identities are the products of exclusion, because they are constructed through difference and in relation to the ‘Other’’.<sup>22</sup> In my opinion, these two linked elements are the twin pillars on which any discussion of identity should be based and represent some conceptual clarity in the confusing fog of writings on identity. Identity is forged out of the melding of sameness and difference. Differences may be stereotypical and consist of an exaggerated selection of defining characteristics or may involve contradiction and conflict. Sameness may be manifested in the need to identify with a group or ‘tribe’ by adopting outward symbols of conformity. Visual imagery plays a significant role in creating such a sense of identity. On a personal level, clothes, hairstyles and accessories can be used to define an individual, for example, as a member of a Goth or Punk subculture. Identity is a multi-layered concept consisting of various meanings and intentionalities, and is difficult to find any scholarly agreement on a definition. Popular treatments of the subject tend to be one-sided and defined to fit the writer’s wider purpose. For example, the motivational writer and speaker Anthony Robbins defines identity as: ‘the beliefs we use to define our own individuality, what makes us unique – good, bad or indifferent – from other individuals.’<sup>23</sup> Robbins emphasizes difference but passes lightly over sameness. He goes on to say that

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<sup>21</sup> Kath Woodward, *Questioning Identity: Gender, Class, Ethnicity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 151.

<sup>22</sup> Stuart Hall, ‘Who Needs Identity’, in *Identity: A Reader*, ed. by P. du Gay et al. (London: Sage Publications, 1966), pp. 5-30 (p. 20).

<sup>23</sup> Anthony Robbins, *Awaken The Giant Within* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2001), p. 413.

individual capability is constant but how much of it is used depends on the identity adopted. He thus draws attention to the fact that identity is also moveable and is being constantly renegotiated. In a similar vein, Galeano considers identity to be a process, as ‘work in progress’:

what it all comes down to is that we are the sum of our efforts to change who we are. Identity is no museum piece sitting stock still in a display case, but rather the endlessly astonishing synthesis of the contradictions of everyday life.<sup>24</sup>

He points to the malleability of identity, and suggests that it is in a constant process of being shaped and defined.

Galeano is speaking about personal identity, but his observation is no less applicable on a larger canvas, to nations, and the formation of national identities. National identity may be marked by common citizenship, shared historical experiences, a common language, religion or culture, and by such visual symbols as coins, banknotes and flags. With regard to flags one is used to such manifestations of Welsh, Scottish and Irish identity and solidarity on major sporting occasions, while the mass displays of flags and other insignia with the Cross of St George during England’s participation in the 2006 World Cup tournament (and since) is arguably a striking and relatively recent example of resurgent English pride and nationalism. Attempts to define the wider concept of ‘Britishness’, however, show how difficult it is to pin down the concept of national identity, or supra-national identity in this case. Andrew Motion, the former Poet Laureate, was part of a roundtable discussion organized by the Fabian Society in June 2006 to consider definitions of Britishness.<sup>25</sup> Unsurprisingly, no consensus was reached and Motion’s somewhat lame, though predictable, conclusion was that,

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<sup>24</sup> Eduardo Galeano, *The Book of Embraces* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> Fabian Society, *Who do we want to be? The future of Britishness*. At <http://fabians.org.uk/publications/extracts/britishness-voices> [accessed 30 July 2013].

‘Britishness is a permanently evolving thing and not the product of a diktat’.<sup>26</sup> His view is largely supported by academic studies. The Library of the House of Lords produced a briefing note for a Lords’ debate in 2008 that summarised many such studies on Britishness and it is clear that no consensus on the matter was possible.<sup>27</sup> The implication of this is that attempts to define Britishness are probably futile, as it appears to be impossible to isolate an agreed set of British characteristics acceptable to all the constituent nations. Perhaps the problem lies in the fact that Britain, and therefore Britishness, is the result of a political and economic union of three nations and part of a fourth, and there is therefore no such thing as a British nation, or at least one that has any credible organic unity. Moreover, for centuries ‘British’ and ‘English’ tended to be synonymous, reflecting the political and economic dominance of the English in the quartet of constituent nations.

If identity in the modern world is hard to define, then it is much more difficult to define in ancient peoples, such as the Galatians. Identity is not just about ethnic affiliation, but about self-identification in different historical, political, and economic circumstances. Stuart Hall promotes this view and considers that identities build on the narratives of the past, something particularly relevant for Celtic identity, and demands of the present, and that their formation is a continuing process, subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power.<sup>28</sup> And whilst the plasticity of national or cultural identities make it difficult to define them in the present, it is possible to recognize them retrospectively. Again, this observation is, as we shall see, particularly relevant to notions of Celtic and Galatian identity. Is there such a thing as a Celtic identity, or is it a

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<sup>26</sup> Andrew Motion, ‘Tennyson had it so easy’, *Sunday Times*, June 18, 2006, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> House of Lords, Library Note, ‘Debate on Britishness’. [www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/LLN-2008-015.pdf](http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/LLN-2008-015.pdf) [accessed 30 July 2013].

<sup>28</sup> Hall, p. 17.

modern construct imposed retrospectively? Some scholars argue that the ancient Celts are really a modern construct and others that it is the modern Celts who have been invented.<sup>29</sup> We know that there were peoples in Iron Age Europe who called themselves Celts and historians and archaeologists have identified similarities of language, beliefs, and material culture and have superimposed a measure of order and unity on what was a diversity of peoples. Such Celtic consciousness as there may have been in Iron Age Europe seems to have disappeared after the Roman conquest, so there is some truth in the assertion that modern Celtic identity is a construct, or at least, a reconstruct.<sup>30</sup> We shall bear in mind these ideas when discussing Galatian identity, while at the same time attempting to apply our preferred model of identity, based on the twin pillars of sameness and difference.

### *1.5 The Celts and Celtic migrations*

Before turning to the entry of the Galatians into Asia Minor, it would be useful to put the event into context by identifying the various Celtic peoples and their migrations eastwards. The peoples known as the ‘Celts’ have been known by various names in their history. The Greeks of Massalia (Marseille) called them *Keltoi*, while the Latin term *Celtiberii* was given to the Celts and Iberians of Spain. The name ‘Gauls’ was bestowed by the Romans on the Celtic hordes who descended on Rome in 390 BCE and those who migrated to Greece and Asia Minor in 279/78 BCE were known as ‘Galatians’ (*Galatai*) by the Greeks.<sup>31</sup> The Latin designations of the Celts: *Celtae*, *Galli*, and *Galati* may all be etymologically related, *Galli* and *Galati* probably are,<sup>32</sup> but the language of

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<sup>29</sup> John Haywood, *The Historical Atlas of the Celtic World* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>32</sup> According to Darbyshire (p. 77), the root *-gal* is identified as Old Irish with various meanings and associations, including war-fever, bravery; smoke, cloud; steam; and the notion of ‘being able’.

these Celts, Gauls and Galatians certainly is, and it forms a separate branch of the Indo-European language family.<sup>33</sup> The remnants of the language of the Galatians are dealt with in greater detail in chapter 4 below.

The Celts had a reputation as mercenaries and this was commented on by Xenophon (died 354 BCE), Plato (died c.348 BCE), and Aristotle (died 322 BCE). Celtic mercenaries appeared in Greece in 369/368 when they were sent by Dionysius I of Syracuse to help his Spartan allies in the Peloponnese.<sup>34</sup> Aristotle's pupil, Alexander the Great, met a deputation of Illyrian Celts in 335 and later he received at Babylon the greetings of a group of Celts whose travels had probably given them opportunities for considering looting possibilities in Greece and Asia Minor.<sup>35</sup> But Alexander's own Macedonian kingdom, while still strong, served as a buffer zone against the migrating masses, moving eastwards for more than a century towards the Aegean.<sup>36</sup> None of the Greek writers of the fourth century BCE seemed to consider the Celts represented a threat to them, but the situation changed following the death of Alexander and the confusion that ensued.

### *1.6 The attack on Greece*

The Celtic invasion of Greece anticipates their more widespread activities in Asia Minor. The Celts attacked Macedonia and Thrace in 298 BCE, and again in 281 BCE, when they killed the eldest son of Ptolemy, founder of Egypt's Greek dynasty. In 280 BCE a great horde of Celts moved south and pillaged Macedonia and attacked Greece, led by "Brennus" (possibly a title), lured, according to Pausanias, writing in the second

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<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>34</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p. 13.

<sup>35</sup> John Davies, *The Celts* (London: Cassell & Co., 2000), pp.52-3; Mitchell, vol I, p. 13.

<sup>36</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p. 13.

century CE, by the wealth of the great sanctuaries, Delphi in particular.<sup>37</sup> At first they had some success but the Greeks eventually drove them out. Pausanias provides the fullest surviving account, written in the late second century CE, of the invasion of Greece and its impact:

My description of the council chamber at Athens contains some observations on the Galatian expedition into Greece. I wanted to provide a clearer record of them in my account of Delphi, because these were the greatest of all the deeds which the Greeks accomplished against the barbarians.<sup>38</sup>

Pausanias saw the Galatian war as an example of how the Greeks were capable of acting collectively in defence of their freedom and he set it alongside their victory over the Persians at the battle of Thermopylae in 480/479 BCE. Some contemporary inscriptions as well as later writers stressed the savagery of the Galatian ‘barbarians’. Pausanias again narrates:

They butchered every human male of the entire race, the old men and the children at the breast; and the Gauls drank the blood and ate the flesh of the slaughtered babies...Any woman and mature virgins with a spark of pride committed suicide as soon as the city fell; those who lived were subjected with wanton violence to every form of outrage by men as remote from mercy as they were remote from love...Others were to die by famishing hunger and sleeplessness, outraged in an endless succession by pitiless and barbarous men; they mated with the dying; they mated with the already dead.<sup>39</sup>

This description of Galatian atrocities is the most extreme example of their demonization but it is historically unconvincing. The evidence from contemporary Asia Minor inscriptions is that the Galatians, rather than kill their victims, preferred to obtain ransom payments, or hold hostages in order to secure the obedience of Greek communities that opposed them.<sup>40</sup>

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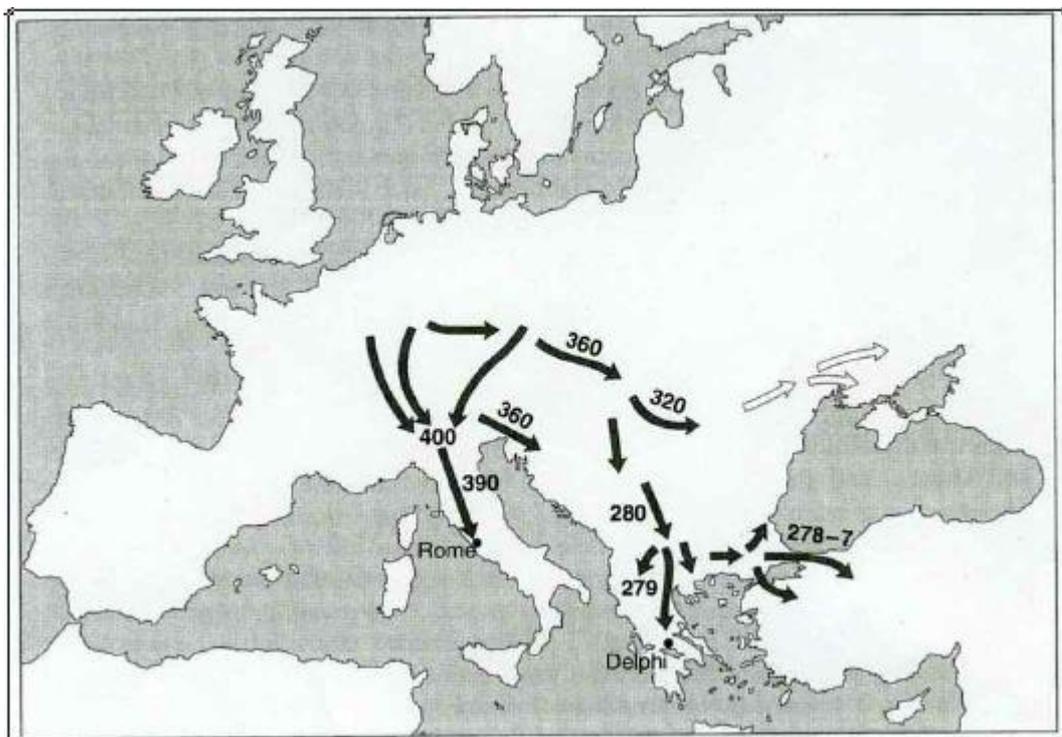
<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>38</sup> Pausanias, cited by Mitchell, ‘The Galatians’, p. 280.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 282-3.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p.283.

Amongst the survivors from the invaders of Greece were the three tribes of the Tectogsages, the Trocmi and the Tolistobogii, who appeared to be in search of land rather than booty. In 278 BCE, they entered the service of Nicomedes, King of Bithynia from 278 to 250, across the Bosphorus in Asia Minor, and this led to the establishment of a Celtic state in Asia.<sup>41</sup> The story of these Galatian tribes in Asia Minor is the subject of the following chapter. The map below shows the various movements and migrations, with BCE dates, of Celtic peoples during the period described above.<sup>42</sup>



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<sup>41</sup> Davies, *The Celts*, p.54.

<sup>42</sup> Based on Darbyshire, p. 76.

## CHAPTER 2: GALATIAN STATE AND SOCIETY

What we know of the Galatian state gives us our first example of the organisation of a Celtic state.<sup>43</sup>

### *2.1 Introduction*

In the previous chapter the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor in the service of King Nicomedes of Bythnia was noted. This chapter takes the story forward. The narrative direction of the chapter is largely chronological, from the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor in about 279/278 BCE, to the formation of the Roman province of Galatia in 25 BCE when the Galatians came under direct Roman rule. There is one significant omission in this chronology: it passes over the event of *St Paul's Letter to the Galatians* in the *New Testament* of about 48/49 CE, as this will be treated in detail in the following chapter. The focus of the chapter, as is the focus of the dissertation as a whole, is on manifestations of Galatian identity or identities in the narrative. This chapter is organised as follows: to set the scene and context for the Galatian entry into Asia Minor, a brief description of the break up of Alexander the Great's empire in Asia Minor is presented (2.2), followed by an account of Galatian settlements in Asia Minor (2.3); the socio-political organisation of the Galatians is then selectively discussed, and their religious practices (2.4); the following section deals with the relations between the Galatians and the Romans, and the formation of the Roman province of Galatia in 25 BCE (2.5); and finally, a summary and conclusion to the chapter is presented and a discussion on what we learn about Galatian identity from the foregoing narrative (2.6).

### *2.2 The break up of Alexander the Great's empire*

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<sup>43</sup> Henri Hubert, *The Greatness and Decline of the Celts* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench & Trubner, 1934), cited in Peter Berresford Ellis, *The Celtic Empire The First Millennium of Celtic History c.1000 BC to 51 AD* (London: Constable, 1990), p. 92.

Alexander III of Macedon (356-323 BCE), commonly known as Alexander the Great, established an empire that stretched from the Ionian Sea to the Himalayas, including Asia Minor, and was undefeated in battle. In the years following his death, a series of civil wars broke up his empire and many states emerged that were ruled by his generals and heirs. Galatia became established through the disunity of the petty kingdoms of Asia Minor that were once part of this empire.<sup>44</sup> Only kingdoms that became significant in Galatian history are mentioned in the following brief *tour d'horizon*. Bithynia (see map below) was an independent kingdom stretching from the Bosphorus along the coast of the Black Sea.<sup>45</sup>



Nicomedes of Bithynia reigned from 270 to 250 BCE and played an important part in the settlement of the Celts in Galatia. In the north-east of Asia Minor there was another semi-independent kingdom, that of Pontus, established in 363 BCE. The kingdom survived Alexander's conquests and the quarrels of his generals, and the

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<sup>44</sup> Ellis, *The Celtic Empire*, pp. 92-3.

<sup>45</sup> The map is from [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Galatia\\_Map.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Galatia_Map.png) [Accessed 20 June 2013].

Pontic kings remained independent until surrendering to Rome in 47 BCE. To the south-east was another semi-independent kingdom, Cappadocia, that retained its independence until 15 CE. In the west central part of Asia Minor was the kingdom of Phrygia through which Alexander passed in 333 BCE and, according to legend, severed the Gordian knot. Into this maelstrom of rivalries and wars between the kingdoms in the wake of the dissolution of Alexander's empire came the Celts.

### 2.3 Galatian settlements in Asia Minor

After the defeat of the Celts in Greece, Nicomedes of Bithynia saw an opportunity to use them to his own advantage, against his brother Zapoetes and against the claims on his kingdom of Antiochus I of Syria. About 20,000 Celts were recruited, with 10,000 of them under arms, consisting of three tribes: the Tolistoboi, the Tectosages, and the Trocmi. We saw in the previous chapter that the Galatians were considered by the classical historian Pausanias to be barbarians who committed atrocities on their enemies.<sup>46</sup> An entirely different picture of the Galatians is painted by another classical historian, Memnon of Herakleia, who describes how the newcomers were brought across to Asia Minor as follows:

[Nicomedes] arranged to bring them across on friendly terms. The terms were: the barbarians would always maintain a friendly attitude toward Nicomedes and his descendants, and without the approval of Nicomedes they would ally with none of those who sent embassies to them, but they would be friends with his friends and enemies to those who were not his friends; and also they would ally with the Byzantines, if by chance there were need, and with the Tians and the Herakleotes and the Chalkedonians and the citizens of Kieros and with some other rulers of peoples. On these terms Nicomedes brought the Galatian hordes into Asia. There were seventeen prominent leaders, and of these the most eminent and chief were Leonnorios and Luturios. At first the crossing of the Galatians to Asia was believed to have led to harm for the inhabitants, but the result proved to have been to their advantage. For, while the [Seleucid] kings were eager to deprive the cities of democracy, the Galatians especially secured it by opposing those attacking it.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Pausanias, cited by Mitchell, 'The Galatians', p. 280.

<sup>47</sup> Memnon of Herakleia, cited by Mitchell, 'The Galatians', p. 288.

It is clear from this account that the Galatians were disciplined warrior bands with effective leadership. With the help of these forces Nicomedes was able to reach a settlement with his brother and end his attempt to usurp his throne.<sup>48</sup> The Celts, however, were aware of the warring factions in Asia Minor and realised they could use the situation to their advantage. They left the employ of Nicomedes and began to extort tribute from Greek city states on the Aegean coastline. Within a few years the Celts had formed settlements in the area south east of Bythina that was to be named after them: Galatia, which they continued to hold for the remainder of their history.<sup>49</sup>

The nature of the Galatian takeover of the region is still obscure but it is reasonable to suppose that the major tribes were settled in their territory by the end of the 260s BCE.<sup>50</sup> They superimposed themselves over parts of the territories of Phrygia and Cappadocia (see map above) and quickly formed their own linguistic identity and tradition.<sup>51</sup> The number of settlers involved is not clear but the historical evidence suggests a figure of about 20,000, including non-combatants.<sup>52 53</sup> Their aims were various. Land on which to settle may have been the ultimate aim but money and plunder was probably a more

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<sup>48</sup> The results of inviting these outsiders in as mercenaries were to prove long lasting. One is reminded, in a later era, of Dermot MacMurrough (1110-1171 CE), King of Leinster in Ireland, who in 1169 asked Henry II of England to send troops to help him recover his throne. In this way began centuries of English involvement in Ireland.

<sup>49</sup> Darbyshire, et al., 'The Galatian settlement in Asia Minor,' p.78.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>51</sup> Karl Strobel, *The Galatians in the Roman Empire: historical tradition and ethnic identity in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor*, in *Ethnic Constructs in Antiquity, the role of power and tradition*, ed. By T. Derks, and N. Roymans (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009), pp. 117-144 (p. 117). The whole volume is available at: [www.oapen.org/download?type=document&docid=340082](http://www.oapen.org/download?type=document&docid=340082) [accessed 30 June 2013].

<sup>52</sup> Darbyshire, p. 78.

<sup>53</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p.15.

immediate need and could be got in various ways, such as hiring themselves out as mercenaries, by demanding protection money from rulers whose territory they were in a position to attack, and plundering the countryside.<sup>54</sup> The three principal tribes who settled in Asia Minor were named by themselves and by Graeco-Roman commentators as the Galatai Tolistobogii, the Galatai Tectosages and the Galatai Trocmi.<sup>55</sup> Strobel compares these tribes with the Germanic warrior bands of the period of the *Volkerwanderungen* in late antiquity, assembled from smaller kinship-based groupings.<sup>56</sup> He suggests a hypothesis concerning the earlier, migratory groups as follows:

The wide-ranging migratory movements of the fourth century BCE were carried forward by a mobile, noble warrior class with their followers, by clans and their component parts or tribal sections, which joined up with the mobile warrior groups and members of the leading kin-groups of a relatively large tribal aristocracy to form wandering bands. The traditional core, which gave the bands their identity, was formed by these princely and noble kin-groups. These core groups, which provided represented a line of kin descent and a sense of identity were the convergence factors in the processes of tribe, and thereby, of ethnos formation and of their internal shaping, which are presupposed during every phase of mobility and land acquisition.<sup>57</sup>

The Tectosages are interesting in that they are the one tribal group that is also known by the same name in the Celtic West. Their name is attested in three parts of the ancient world: in Galatia, in the Hercynian forest,<sup>58</sup> and in southern Gaul, particularly in the region around Tolosa (Toulouse).<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>55</sup> Darbyshire, p. 77.

<sup>56</sup> Strobel, pp. 131-5.

<sup>57</sup> Strobel, pp. 154-5.

<sup>58</sup> In the region north of the upper Danube, where they are mentioned by Julius Caesar.

<sup>59</sup> Darbyshire, p. 77.

Galatia was in the northern zone of the central plateau of Asia Minor, a region that rose to 2-4000 feet above sea level, with few trees, bare hills but with small and fertile plains in the rainy season. It was frequently subjected to droughts and subsequent famine. The area had once been the centre of the Phrygian kingdom (see map above), noted for King Midas and Gordium of the famed Gordian knot.<sup>60</sup> When the Galatians settled in the area they lived alongside a substantial pre-existing native population and seem to have kept themselves aloof, preserving their culture and identity for generations.<sup>61</sup> They did not, in general, occupy the cities, preferring to build their hill-forts and farming settlements. Deiotarus I, King of Galatia [d. 40 BCE] was known to have ruled from a *dun*, though Pessinus, once the main Phrygian religious centre, was said to have been the chief Galatian town. The remnants of the Phrygian civilization were eventually absorbed into Galatian culture.

#### 2.4 Socio-political organisation of the Galatians

The proximity of Galatia to the literate Greek world has resulted in the survival of considerable detail on Galatian political structure. Strabo, cited by Mitchell, provides a brief account of the Galatian constitutional structure:

The three tribes used the same language and differed from one another in no other respect; they were divided each into four sections, and called them tetrarchies, each having its own tetrarch, one judge and one military commander, subordinate to the tetrarch, and two junior commanders. The council of the twelve tetrarchs consisted of three hundred men, and they assembled in the so-called *Drynemetos*. The council decided murder cases, the tetrarchs and the judges all others. This, therefore, was the constitution in the old days, but during my time power has passed to three, then to two, and then to a single ruler, Deiotarus, and then to Amyntas who succeeded him.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Ellis, p. 94.

<sup>61</sup> Simon James, 'The Galatians in Asia', in Simon James, *Exploring the World of the Celts* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993), p. 40.

<sup>62</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p. 27.

When the Gauls first entered Asia Minor they had 17 different chieftains and authority was often divided among many individuals. It is not clear when this disciplined, tetrarchic structure evolved, probably during the second century BCE, as the tribes came under the civilizing influence of Pergamum and other kingdoms in Asia Minor.<sup>63</sup> The Greek title of tetrarch given to the leading figures certainly implies a degree of Hellenisation of the Galatian elite at this period, but the basis of the system is essentially Celtic.<sup>64</sup> The development of Galatian tribal organisation into an embryonic state organisation is matched by similar developments among Celtic tribes in the West.<sup>65</sup> The four-part division of the tribes has a parallel in the west in the four cantons of the Helvetii in the western Alps, or the four kings of the Cantii in south-east Britain.<sup>66</sup> The gathering of the tribal elders at a central meeting place to decide on murder cases and other significant matters was a feature of Celtic societies. The word *Drynemetos* is usually regarded as Celtic and to mean ‘a sacred grove of oak trees’, and marks the use of religious authority to confirm the political and judicial activities of the tribes. *Drynemetos* is discussed further in chapter 4 on Galatian language. A development can be seen whereby Galatian tribal organisation evolved from raiding warrior bands to an embryonic state constitution, which drew a scattered population into a politically united organisation, matching similar developments among Celtic tribes in the west.<sup>67</sup> There between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BCE, increasing contact with the Roman world and the Greek city states of southern Gaul and Spain, Massilia in particular, there was a transformation from loosely structured tribes under a

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<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>64</sup> Darbyshire, p. 82

<sup>65</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p. 27.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, p. 27

warrior aristocracy to a more formal, centralized oligarchic form of government. One consequence of this development in both east and west was the emergence of dominant dynastic families, to replace chieftains, whose authority rested on personal dominance.<sup>68</sup>

For much of the Hellenistic period there was no indication of family continuity among Galatian leaders. The first indication of a dynastic turn was at the end of the second century BCE when Sinorix, a dominant figure, passed his authority down to Deiotarus (the ‘Great’), the dominant Galatian ruler in the first century BCE.<sup>69</sup> During this period dynastic succession prevailed and Deiotarus was succeeded by his son, also called Deiotarus, who in turn was succeeded by his son, Castor. Galatian practice was thus brought in line with that of other aristocracies in Asia Minor and the Levant. According to Strabo, power passed at a certain point from 12 tetrarchs to 3 rulers, stating that this was in his own time, that is after his birth between 70 and 64 BCE.<sup>70</sup> But this date is suspect and it is more likely that it took place after the massacre of the Galatian leadership by Mithridates of Pontus in 86 CE. The old system was not reinstated as the nobility needed time to recover and the surviving chieftains wished to retain the power they had unexpectedly acquired.<sup>71</sup> An additional factor is that Rome was now heavily involved in Asia Minor and had an interest in strong leadership among the Galatians. The old title of tetrarch continued to be used to signify not one of the 12 rulers, but the chief of each of the 3 Galatian tribes, or any of the important members of one of the ruling families. The principle was now formalised that a Galatian chieftain

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<sup>68</sup> *ibid.* p. 27.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*, p. 29.

was now tetrarch of his own tribe. The title of king was bestowed on him by Rome if he headed a kingdom in Asia Minor outside Galatia.<sup>72</sup>

We know more about Galatian religious practices and beliefs than social structure. When the Celts attacked Greece they were castigated for their impiety by Pausanias, but this is possibly an unbalanced view.<sup>73</sup> We know that Celtic forms of divination assumed forms familiar to the Graeco-Roman world namely, drawing of lots, augury, interpretation of dreams and natural phenomena, and the inspection of the entrails of victims, two of which were found in Asia Minor. The best-known is that of King Deiotarus and the use of augury, which Cicero records in detail.<sup>74</sup> The examination of entrails is also found among the eastern Celts. For example, before the battle with Antigonus Gonatas at Lysimacheia in 277 BCE, the Gauls studied the entrails of slaughtered victims, presumably animals. Human sacrifice was also known. In Galatia in about 166 BCE the Galatian chieftain responsible for a victory over Eumenes II collected his prisoners from the battle together, and had the most handsome garlanded and sacrificed. The religious implications of this are demonstrated by the fact that the rest were simply put to the sword, without any ritual.<sup>75</sup> Galatians were assimilated into local religious structures, which themselves became Hellenized. For example, the leaders of the sanctuary of the Great Mother at Pessinous in Western Galatia, known by the Phrygian cult names as Attis and Battakes, including Galatians, and an imperial inscription suggests that the hierarchy consisted of a college of 10 priests, five each of local and of Galatian origin.<sup>76</sup> In Gaul religious practices and

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<sup>72</sup> *ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>73</sup> *ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>74</sup> *ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, p. 48.

divination were controlled by the Druids, a privileged class that passed on its learning and power to aristocratic young men, through a lengthy course of oral instruction.<sup>77</sup> No Druids are known in Galatia but it is possible that a similar priestly caste controlled and passed on the religious knowledge of the country.

There is evidence that the Galatians adopted the native cults of Asia Minor. For example, according to Coşkun, the Galatians took over elements of Phrygian culture, in that they worshipped indigenous gods such as Cybele or Mēn.<sup>78</sup> The Galatians did not, however, abandon their Celtic religious practices; there was nothing to prevent the two coexisting, and it may be assumed that the meetings of the three tribes at the sacred oak grove, *Drynemetos*, described by Strabo (above), contained religious, as well as political and judicial elements.<sup>79</sup> The distinction between religion and politics, especially in a Celtic cultural environment, must have been a marginal one. As long as the Galatians assembled at the *Drynemetos*, then the religious elements must have survived also. It would seem that the Galatians rapidly assimilated the beliefs and cults of their new homeland, but kept the parts of the old religion that were inextricably linked to their particular social and communal way of life.<sup>80</sup>

### 2.5 Galatian and Roman relations

The Romans first entered the affairs of Asia Minor during the reign of Antiochus III (241-187 BCE), who ruled over Syria and western Asia Minor, and culminated in the

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<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>78</sup> Altay Coşkun, *Intercultural Onomastics and Some Patterns of Socio-Political Inclusion in the Graeco-Roman World: The Example of Galatia in Asia Minor*. NIO Publications, Gallo-Roman Series 2006.1., p. 3, at [www.nio-online.net/galat/cos.pdf](http://www.nio-online.net/galat/cos.pdf) [accessed 23 June 2013]

<sup>79</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p. 49.

<sup>80</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

battle of Magnesia in 190 BCE, and the defeat of Antiochus.<sup>81</sup> Gnaeus Manlius Volso now assumed command of the Roman armies, and made plans for an extensive military expedition to pacify Asia Minor, and the Galatians in particular. The first contact between the Romans and the Galatians occurred in 189 BCE when the Romans launched a punitive expedition against the Galatians. Volso gave his troops a talk before their first encounter with the Galatians to make sure his men knew the kind of enemy they were to encounter:

They sing as they advance into battle; they yell and leap in the air, clashing their weapons against their shields. The Greeks and Phrygians are scared of this display, but the Romans are used to such wildness. We have learned that if you can bear up to their first onslaught – that initial charge of blind passion – then their limbs will grow weary with the effort and when their passion subsides they are overcome by sun, dust and thirst. And anyway, these Celts are of mixed blood, part Greek. Not the Celts our forefathers fought.<sup>82</sup>

The Tolistoboi and the Trocmi were defeated at the battle of Olympus, near the city of Pessinus by Volso, who then proceeded to Ancyra where he defeated the Tectosages. This defeat did not have a lasting effect and the Galatians formed an alliance with Bithynia and Pontus against their Roman overlords and remained a formidable force. A Galatian leader of some stature now emerged namely, Ortogion of the Tolistoboi, who, according to Polybius, realised that the loose confederation of Galatian tribes had to unite under a single leader; that the Commonwealth of Galatia needed to become a centralised state to secure their independence from the surrounding kingdoms and the authority of Rome.<sup>83</sup> This plan came to nothing and the Galatians refused to depart from the traditional tribal form of government. The kingdom of Pontus under Pharnaces I (c.190-160 BCE) took advantage of Galatian divisions to establish

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<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>82</sup> Livy, cited by Ellis, 'Celtic Empire', p. 101.

<sup>83</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 101-2.

supremacy over them and also overran Cappadocia (see map above). From 164 to 160 BCE the Galatians were engaged in border disputes with neighbouring Cappadocia. In 86 BCE the leaders of the Galatians were murdered in an act of treachery by Mithridates V of Pontus, after accepting hospitality at his court.

One Galatian leader escaped from the mass murder namely, Deiotarus of the Tolistoboi, who soon emerged as the leader to unite the Galatian tribes and septa, something that Ortagion had failed to do a hundred years before. Under Deiotarus Galatia finally broke free of Pontus. Mithridates had weakened his kingdom by waging war on Rome. Deiotarus now moved his kingdom into alliance with Rome who found it advantageous to build up a strong Galatian state to bolster Roman influence in Asia Minor and to keep the Hellenistic states in check.

In 66 BCE Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great) was sent as Consul to take command of the area. He made a formal alliance with Galatia and befriended Deiotarus and, under Roman overlordship, he allowed the native organisation of independent tribal cantons under the rule of native chieftains. The Galatian chieftains were granted, in compensation for the depredations of Mithridates, concessions of land in Pontus and Armenia. After securing Galatia, Pompey then began to conquer the surrounding kingdoms and by 63 BCE Asia Minor was firmly under Roman control.

Deiotarus demonstrated that he was a shrewd politician. In the wars against Mithridates he had emerged as a single, unifying leader of the Galatians. Pompey, however, curbed his power by restoring the tripartite leadership system. But by marrying his daughters to the leaders of the Trocmi and the Tectosages, Deiotarus once again became the undisputed leader of the Galatians. He introduced Roman methods of military training, organisation and tactics into his army. In addition, he formed successful friendships with influential Romans such as Lucius Cornelius Sulla, Gaius

Julius Caesar, and the Marcus Tullius Cicero. It is said, however, that Deiotarus always consulted the auguries, in traditional Celtic fashion, before taking an important decision.<sup>84</sup> He was confirmed as King of Galatia by the Roman senate in 59 BCE. But he made a major mistake in picking the losing side in the Roman civil war (49-45 BCE). He took the side of Pompey against Julius Caesar. Pompey was defeated by Caesar at the battle of Pharsalus in central Greece in 48 BCE, with Deiotarus personally leading 600 horsemen in support of Pompey.<sup>85</sup> Deiotarus was tried before a Roman court. He had the good fortune to be defended by his friend Marcus Tullius Cicero, who had been governor of Cilicia, south of Galatia, from 51 to 50 BCE, and had become friendly with the Galatian king during his governorship. Cicero himself had taken Pompey's side against Caesar but had become reconciled with Caesar before the trial. Deiotarus was acquitted and is said to have lived to an advanced age.

Deiotarus was succeeded by his surviving son, Deiotarus II, who also managed to pick the losing side in the next phase of the Roman civil war, the fight between Marcus Antonius (Mark Anthony) and Octavian, the soon-to-be first emperor of Rome, Augustus. Mark Anthony gave Deiotarus II territory in Armenia for his help against Octavian. On Deiotarus' death, which seems to have coincided with the victory of Octavian, a chieftain called Amyntas made himself King of Galatia.<sup>86</sup> Amyntas (from Greek *Amyntor*, 'defender') was the first Galatian leader of any significance who did not have a Celtic name, but there is no reason to doubt his Celtic origins. On the death of Amyntas, who was the last Galatian ruler, his possessions were taken over by the Romans and the Roman province of Galatia was formed in 25 BCE. The conversion of

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<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>85</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, p. 34.

<sup>86</sup> Ellis, 'Celtic Empire', p. 106.

Amyntas' kingdom into a province of Rome provided a template for the taking over of a large part of the rest of Asia Minor over the following century. The province was enlarged as existing dynasts died out and their territories became available for annexation. By the year 3 BCE a cult of the new Roman emperor Augustus was widespread in Galatia, with the first centre of worship, the 'Temple of Rome and Augustus' at Ancyra.<sup>87</sup> Various parts of the Celtic world involved themselves in the cult of Augustus. In Nero's reign (54-68 CE) Galatia was joined with Cappadocia (see map) to form a large eastern command.

Little is henceforth known about Galatia until the arrival of Paul of Tarsus on his first missionary journey, sometime between 40 and 50 CE. He was ill at the time and stayed in Pessinus, the chief city of the Tolistoboi.<sup>88</sup> St Paul's *Letter to the Galatians* is treated in detail in the following chapter.

## 2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we have reviewed various aspects of the Galatian settlement in Asia Minor: the circumstance behind their arrival in Asia Minor, their settlements, socio-political organisation, their religious practices, their contact with the Romans, and the formation of the Roman province of Galatia in 25 BCE. It remains to summarise these events and their implications for Galatian identity.

The appearance of the Galatians in Asia Minor can be seen with hindsight as the final stages of the migrations and expansion of Celtic peoples from their supposed homelands in Central Europe during the fourth and third centuries BCE.<sup>89</sup> There are no single causes for these movements such as overpopulation, pressure from other

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<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>88</sup> Peter Walker, *In the Steps of Saint Paul* (Oxford: Lion Hudson, 2011), p. 78.

<sup>89</sup> Darbyshire, p. 77.

migrating peoples, famines, drastic ecological changes, or particular economic and political pressures.<sup>90</sup> The Galatians who established themselves in the third century BCE in north-central Asia Minor were a new and influential geo-political entity. The permanent nature of their settlement cannot be attributed to the sort of barbarians that the Galatians were portrayed as by classical authors (see chapter 1, section 1.3). On the contrary, the fact that they survived and were incorporated into the Roman empire would seem to indicate the existence of ‘highly-developed social structures, bound together by shared value systems’.<sup>91</sup> The Galatians successfully adapted to their new environment and while changing it, were in turn changed by it. They seem to have retained some elements of their former cultural identity, for it is clear that the communities they established remained, in a number of respects, distinctive within Asia Minor through the Hellenistic period: most obviously in their use of a Celtic language, in aspects of their socio-political organisation, in elements of their material culture, and in certain ritual forms. It will be recalled that in chapter 1 (1.4) the malleability of identity was discussed. With their settlement, new Galatian identities appeared and developed in the region, ranging from the level of kin-group through tetrarchy and tribe, to a larger inter-tribal shared identity as manifested in the *Drynemetos* council gathering and in co-ordinated actions against others outside the region. These cultural manifestations may well have varied in their details across the region as the Galatians were not one people, but an assemblage of several groups with their own cultural traditions and identities. And within Asia Minor the different tribes may well have followed their own paths and had different relations and connections outside the region.

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<sup>90</sup> *ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>91</sup> Darbyshire, p.95.

One significant element for modifying the cultural identity of the Galatians was the process of Hellenisation. This had started in the region before the arrival of the Galatians but it becomes more apparent in the first century BCE at the level of the ruling elite. It is shown in the military architecture of forts, in the funerary inscription of Deiotarus the Younger, and in the minting of silver coins by the last Galatian rulers, Deiotarus, Brogitarus, and Amyntas. Otherwise, there is little to show that Hellenisation had penetrated into other areas of Galatian life, despite the fact that the Galatians came to be called ‘Gallograeci’ by outsiders.<sup>92</sup> In addition, the only evidence of the increasing influence of Rome in the area, is at elite level and in related military matters, for example, in the Roman-style organisation of Deiotarus’ troops, and in Deiotarus’ allegiance to Rome as shown in the funerary inscription set up for his dead son.

One significant event that has been omitted from this largely chronological narrative of the chapter, namely, St Paul’s *Letter to the Galatians* of about 49/50 CE. Because of its potential significance for Galatian identity, it is treated in a separate chapter, to which we will now turn.

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<sup>92</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol I, pp. 85-6.

## CHAPTER 3: GALATIANS AND ST PAUL

For now we see through a glass, darkly.<sup>93</sup>

### 3.1 Introduction

Christianity was introduced to Asia Minor within a generation of the death of Christ, and the Galatians are important in the early history of Christianity. They were probably the first non-Jewish people to accept the new religion and they are best known outside specialist circles on account of *St Paul's Letter to the Galatians* in the New Testament, written in about 48/49 CE; it is the ninth book of the New Testament and is possibly the earliest surviving document of the Christian church.<sup>94</sup> The *Letter* is about the identity of the people of God and how they should live in the world, both as individuals and as a community of believers.<sup>95</sup> Theological commentaries on it are many but there have been far fewer attempts to place the *Letter* in its precise historical context. The aim of this chapter is not to add to the accumulation of exegesis, but, specifically, to see what light, if any, St Paul's *Letter* throws on the identity of the Galatians as a people in the middle years of the first century CE.

There are some known knowns about Paul's *Letter*: its authorship is not in doubt and is accepted by all scholars, except for a few radical critics, and is regarded as the standard example of Paul's style and theology;<sup>96</sup> it was addressed to the Galatians: 'You

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<sup>93</sup> *Holy Bible, King James Version*, (Michigan: Zondervan, 2002), 1 Corinthians 13:12.

<sup>94</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol ii, p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Simon Jones, *Discovering Galatians* (Nottingham: IVP, 2007), p.16.

<sup>96</sup> G.W.Hansen, 'Galatians, Letters to The', in, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel C. Reid (Leicester: IVP, 1994), pp. 323-34 (p. 326).

foolish Galatians!’ (NRSV, 3:1)<sup>97</sup> who were grouped into what was called ‘the churches of Galatia’ (1:2). Here the known unknowns begin, as scholars are divided concerning the geographical location of these churches, the ethnic identity of the churches in that area, and the social and cultural situation of those churches.<sup>98</sup> In an attempt to try and answer these questions, this chapter discusses the form and presentation of St Paul’s letter (3.2), the North and South Galatian theories (3.3), and, finally, the significance of Paul’s letter for an understanding of the identity of the Galatians in the middle years of the first century CE (3.4).

### *3.2 Form and presentation of St Paul’s letter*

The theology of Paul’s *Letter* is not of major significance to the main thrust of this study, but it is worth considering the way in which it is presented, its literary form, in order to try and discern the identity of the people to whom it is addressed. Paul was from Tarsus, a city in the neighbouring kingdom of Cilicia (see map below), and his *Letter* is addressed to a number of early Christian communities in the Roman province of Galatia, which was established in 25 BCE. Paul is mainly concerned with the controversy surrounding the Gentile Christians and the Mosaic Law in early Christianity. It is written to counteract the influence of Judaizers who had come among the Galatians and were attempting to persuade them that in order to be perfect Christians, it was necessary to be circumcised and obey the Law of Moses. The tone is emotional and passionate because the Galatian crisis threatened the very foundation of

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<sup>97</sup> The *New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)* (London: HarperCollins, 2007) of the Bible is quoted in the text from here on.

<sup>98</sup> Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: a commentary on Paul’s letter to the churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 2.

the Torah-free gospel which he preached.<sup>99</sup> Paul's main message is that all anyone needed to do to be a Christian was to trust in Jesus Christ.<sup>100</sup>

There are some scholarly differences concerning the form of the *Letter*. Hansen declares that Paul used a common form of letter called a 'rebuke-request' form.<sup>101</sup> Unlike his practice in all his other letters, Paul does not follow his salutation (1:1-5) with any kind of thanksgiving. Instead, he expresses astonishment and a rebuke: 'I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel – not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ' (1:6-7). The expression 'I am astonished' was often used in letters of the time as a rebuke for not meeting the expectations of the writer.<sup>102</sup> Paul admonishes his readers for their disloyalty to the gospel (1:6-10) and reinforces his rebuke with an account of his own loyalty to the truth of the gospel (1:11-2:21). Then he admonishes them for their foolishness concerning the gospel (3:1-5), and again reinforces that rebuke by explaining the meaning of the gospel in the light of his exposition of the Scriptures (3:6-4:11). Letters of rebuke are usually followed by requests to put things right, and Paul begins his request at 4:12, an appeal to imitate him in his stand for the freedom of the gospel. This appeal is reinforced by an autobiographical narrative of his relationship with the Galatian believers (4:12-20) and an allegorical treatment of the Abraham story (4:21-31).<sup>103</sup> The request to stand firm for freedom is then spelled out in a series of

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<sup>99</sup> Frank J. Matera, *Galatians* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2007), p. 1.

<sup>100</sup> Jones, *Discovering Galatians*, p. 15.

<sup>101</sup> Hansen, p. 329.

<sup>102</sup> I can testify from personal experience that a milder variant of the expression is alive and well in the modern British Civil Service. 'I am surprised' is used to administer a mild rebuke or to take issue with a point of view, in a manner that avoids direct confrontation.

<sup>103</sup> This is the story of Hagar and Sarah, told in chapter 21 of Genesis.

ethical instructions (5:1-6:10). He underlines the main themes of the *Letter* in his own hand-written subscript (6:11-18).

Betz, on the other hand, classifies Paul's *Letter* as an example of Greco-Roman forensic rhetoric, as he is using the means of persuasion used in the law courts to address the judge or jury in order to defend or accuse someone concerning past actions.<sup>104</sup> St Paul defends himself against accusations (1:10), while at the same time accusing his opponents of perverting the gospel (1:7). Betz uses the categories of classical forensic rhetoric to classify Paul's *Letter* as follows:

- I. Epistolary Prescript (1:1-5)
- II. *Exordium* ('introduction', 1:6-11)
- III. *Narratio* ('narration', 1:12-2:14)
- IV. *Propositio* ('proposition', 2:15-21)
- V. *Probatio* ('confirmation', 3:1-4:31)
- VI. *Exhortatio* ('exhortation', 5:1-6:10)
- VII. Epistolary postscript –*Peroratio* ('conclusion', 6:11-18).

Other views argue that the *Letter* is best viewed as deliberative rhetoric, as it aims to exhort or dissuade the audience regarding future actions by showing that those actions are expedient or harmful.<sup>105</sup> Paul attempts to dissuade the Galatian believers from following the false teachers by pointing out the harmful effects, namely severance from Christ and grace (5:4), exclusion from the kingdom of God (5:21), and a reaping of corruption (6:8). He underlines the expediency of the course of action he is exhorting them to follow by offering the promise of the harvest of eternal life (6:8) and granting them the blessing on all those who walk according to 'this rule' (6:16).

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<sup>104</sup> Betz, pp. 16-23.

<sup>105</sup> Hansen, p. 329; Matera, p. 11.

The *Letter* is probably most convincingly seen as a blend of forensic and deliberative rhetoric. The rebuke section (1:6-4:11) has the characteristics of rhetoric, but at 4:12 there is a rhetorical change to deliberative rhetoric. Paul is no longer concerned with accusing or defending but trying to persuade the Galatian believers to adopt a certain course of action. He begins his appeal to this new course of action by stating, 'Become as I am' (4:12). This exhortation is then bolstered by the command from the Abraham story to 'drive out the slave and her child' (4:30), and clarified by instructions to stand in freedom (5:1-12) and defined in specific terms in the ethical exhortation to walk in the Spirit (5:13-6:10).

How effective were Paul's arguments? We have no specific information about the results of Paul's argument among the Galatians, but we may infer from the fact that early Christianity found the *Letter* worth preserving, and that the matter never seems to have arisen again, that Paul's argument was deemed to be effective and achieved the result he wanted. Henceforth Christianity stood on its own and did not need to observe the customs of the Jewish law, such as circumcision and other Mosaic rituals. Such splits could not be tolerated because: 'there is no longer Jew or Greek... for all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (3:28). Gentile Christianity eventually became a strong movement in Asia Minor and Pliny the Younger remarked on the large number of Christians in the areas of Pontus and Bithynia in about 110 CE; and there is evidence that Celtic Galatians later organised missions to their fellow Celts in Gaul and that the early Galatian church had links with the Gaulish church.<sup>106</sup>

What does the form of the *Letter* tell us about the kind of people it was addressed to? It is clear from its form and content that it was addressed to a literate, sophisticated people, who understood the conventions of classical rhetoric. The question

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<sup>106</sup> Ellis, *Celt and Greek*, p. 252.

remains as to their ethnic identity. Were they solely Hellenized descendants of the original Celts, or were other peoples among the addressees of the *Letter*? This matter will be explored further when we examine the North and South Galatian theories and try to discover what is meant by ‘Galatia’ in 48/49 CE.

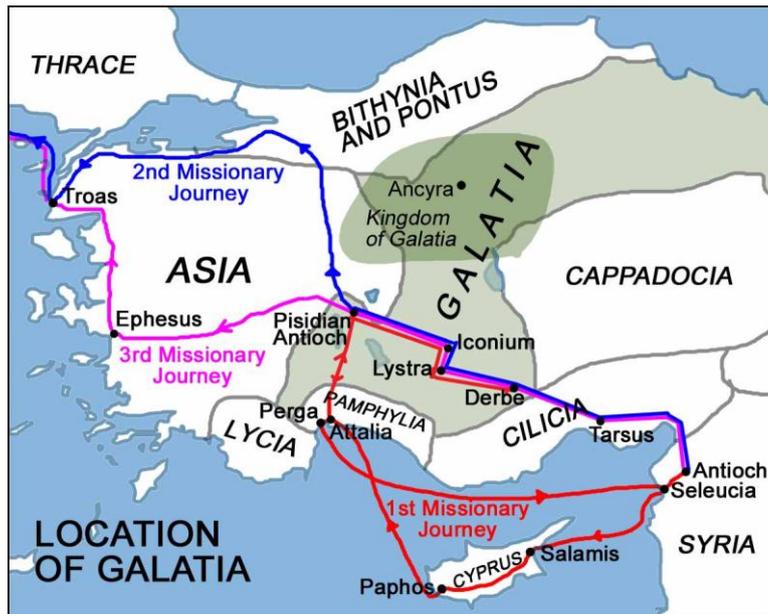
### 3.3 *The North and South Galatian theories*

We have seen in Chapter 2 that following the death of the Galatian King Amyntas, the Roman province of Galatia was established by the Emperor Augustus in 25 BCE. The province contained the old territory of Galatia and also extended further south to include portions of Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Phrygia. As a result, the province of Galatia was larger than the old territory of Galatia and included people who were not ethnically Galatians (Celts). They were all called Galatians because they lived in the Roman province of Galatia, and among these ‘new Galatians’ were the inhabitants of Antioch in Pisidia, Lystra, Iconium, and Derbe, all cities in which St Paul established Christian communities on his first missionary journey, according to the *Acts of the Apostles* (13-14)<sup>107</sup> (see map below).<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Matera, p. 19.

<sup>108</sup> Google map at <http://www.jesuswalk.com/galatians/maps/galatians-map-1200x959x300.jpg> [accessed 23 June 2013].



Paul addressed his letter to ‘the churches of Galatia’ (1:2). The territorial name of Galatia is also found elsewhere in the *New Testament* (2 Tim 4:10<sup>109</sup>; 1 Pet 1:1) and the designation ‘the region of ... Galatia’ is used in the *Acts of the Apostles* (16:6; 18:23). None of these references are clear about where these Galatian churches were located, when they were founded, or what type of people constituted them. In geographical terms, ‘Galatia’ can therefore refer to two adjacent territories in Asia Minor: to the region in the central parts, namely North Galatia, or to the Roman province, namely South Galatia. There are two schools of thought on these matters. Some scholars believe that the letter was written to the Christians of Celtic (Gaulish) descent living around Ancyra, Pessinus, and Tavium, three cities in Northern Asia Minor. Other scholars assert that the ‘churches of Galatia’ were planted by Paul, as recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles* (13:13; 14:6; 14:8) in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe in South Asia Minor, and consisted of Gentiles from diverse ethnic origins – Phrygians, Pisidians, and Lyconians, as well as Galatians.<sup>110</sup> A minority of scholars have argued

<sup>109</sup> Some ancient authorities read ‘Gaul’ for ‘Galatia’.

<sup>110</sup> Hansen, p. 323.

that the ‘Galatia’ is an ethnic reference to a Celtic people living in northern Asia Minor, but most agree that it is a geographical reference to the Roman province in central Asia Minor, which had been settled by immigrant Celts in the 270s BC and retained Gaulish features of culture and language in Paul’s day. Which Galatians are we talking about: northern or southern? The problem is that the Roman province of Galatia contained areas not part of the original Celtic homeland. Today many scholars think these Christian churches were located on lands south of the Anatolian Plateau that were only added to Galatia when Roman administrators re-drew the boundaries of the province. The resolution of this matter, as Matera points out, is more important for Pauline chronology and history, than it is for exegesis.<sup>111</sup> Is there a solution to the North and South Galatian theories? The next section will consider this possibility when discussing the identity of the Galatians.

### 3.4 *The identity of St Paul’s Galatians*

A prominent nineteenth-century commentator on the identity of the Galatians in the *Letter* is Joseph B. Lightfoot (1828-89), Bishop of Durham. Bishop Lightfoot was a prominent proponent of the North Galatian theory, and seemed very certain of their identity; his view is worth quoting at length:

When St Paul carried the Gospel into Galatia, he was thrown for the first time among an alien people differing widely in character and habits from the surrounding nations. A race whose home was in the far West, they had been torn from their parent rock by some great social convulsion, and after drifting over wide tracts of country, had settled down at length on a strange soil in the very heart of Asia Minor.<sup>112</sup>

He goes on to say:

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<sup>111</sup> Matera, p. 20.

<sup>112</sup> J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1896), p.1.

There is a certain distinctness of feature in the portrait which the Apostle has left of his Galatian converts... we may expect to have light thrown upon the broad features of national character which thus confront us, by the circumstances of the descent and previous history of the race...<sup>113</sup>

He is convinced that they display the characteristics of their Celtic ancestors:

...it will not be thought idle to look for traces of the Celtic character in the Galatians of St Paul's Epistle, for in general the character of a nation even outlives its language. No doubt it had undergone many changes. They were no longer the fierce hardy race with which Rome and Greece successively had grappled in a struggle of life and death. After centuries of intercourse with Greeks and Phrygians, with the latter especially who were reputed amongst the most effeminate and worthless of Asiatics, the ancient valour of the Gauls must have been largely diluted. Like the Celts of Western Europe, they had gradually deteriorated under the enervating influence of a premature or forced civilisation. Nevertheless beneath the surface the Celtic character remains still the same, whether manifested in the rude and fiery barbarians who were crushed by the arms of Caesar, or the impetuous and fickle converts who call down the indignant rebuke of the Apostle of the Gentiles.<sup>114</sup>

In short, his viewpoint is that, although these warrior Celtic Galatians had become enfeebled by their contact with Phrygian and Hellenic civilizations, they still retained some of their ancestral barbarian fierceness, as manifested in their defiance of St Paul. Lightfoot follows the majority of patristic, medieval, and Reformation commentators in identifying Paul's Galatians with the descendants of the original Celtic inhabitants. His eponymous monograph on *St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* includes an introductory chapter entitled 'The Galatian People' in which he outlines the history of the Galatians from their arrival in Anatolia. It was first published in 1865, is still in print today, and continues to be cited in modern works on St Paul's *Letter* for its theological insights.<sup>115</sup> His historical and anthropological insights, however, are no longer as valued. His identification of the recipients of St Paul's epistle with the original

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<sup>113</sup> Lightfoot, p. 1

<sup>114</sup> Lightfoot, p. 13

<sup>115</sup> For example, by John Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edn (Nottingham: IVP, 1993).

Celtic people is no longer a certainty, if it ever was. His views are in conformity with popular, romantic, nineteenth-century stereotypes of the Celts, particularly as expressed in Matthew Arnold's *On the Study of Celtic Literature*.<sup>116</sup>

There is, however, nothing in Paul's letter that points to the Celtic origin of the 'Galatians'. Their Greek name, *hoi Galatai*, is derived from *hoi Galli* (Latin *Galli*), that is, from the Celtic tribes who in 279/78 BCE under Brennus pushed into the Balkans, Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly. Three of those tribes, the Trocmi, the Tectosages, and the Tolistobogii, crossed the Hellespont and settled in the area around Ancyra (modern Ankara) in 278/77 BCE. The subsequent history of the Galatians was turbulent, with local rulers using them as mercenaries in their battles for territory. The Galatians took advantage of these opportunities to gain land for themselves. This period ended when the Romans entered the area in 189 BCE and defeated the Galatians in two battles. From then on the Galatians sided with the Romans and helped them conquer areas of Asia Minor. Their loyalty was rewarded after the defeat of Mithridates VI when Pompey made the territory a client kingdom under Galatian rule. When the king Amyntas died in 25 BCE, Augustus created the Roman *Provincia Gallia*, that included the old country called Galatia as well as parts of Pisidia, Isauria, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Paphlagonia, and Pontus Galaticus (see map above).

Culturally, the Galatians soon became Hellenized and then Romanized.<sup>117</sup>

Writing in the first century CE from a Roman point of view, Livy described their Hellenisation: 'those forefathers of ours had to do with true Gauls, born in their own land', and, echoing Bishop Lightfoot nineteen centuries later, 'these are now

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<sup>116</sup> Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature* (London: Smith, Elder, 1867).

<sup>117</sup> A.H.M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 120.

degenerates of mixed race, and really Gallogrecians, as they are named'.<sup>118</sup> And although the Galatians became known as the *Gallograeci*, that is Greek-speaking Galatians, they are still depicted by the ancient Greek and Latin historians as barbaric warriors, invading and ransacking neighbouring countries. Livy describes the terror they invoked:

[so] that the most distant and nearest alike obeyed their orders... tall bodies, long reddish hair, huge shields, very long swords; in addition, songs as they go into battle and yells and leavings and the dreadful din of arms as they clash shields according to some ancestral customs – all of these are deliberately used to terrify their foes'.<sup>119</sup>

Part of Livy's purpose in portraying the Galatians in such a way may have been a propaganda one, to demonstrate the might of Rome in defeating such formidable foes, but although there must have been some truth in this description, modern archaeological discoveries have revealed a more nuanced picture of the character of the Galatians.

We do not know for certain whether the Galatians whom Paul addressed were descendants of the old Celts, or whether they represented the ethnic mixture that was found in most Hellenistic-Roman towns. In any case it is safe to surmise that these people must have belonged to the Hellenized town populations and not to the rural people. This leads to some sociological conclusions. As we have seen (2.2 above) Paul composed an apologia that was well-structured, both rhetorically and theologically, and we may assume that the churches he founded were not among the poor and uneducated but among the Hellenized and Romanized urban dwellers. His message was about 'freedom in Christ', which must have had resonance among people interested in political, social, cultural, and religious emancipation. Their Christian experience, what

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<sup>118</sup> Livy, *Hist* 28.17.9, cited by Hansen, p. 324.

<sup>119</sup> Livy, *Hist* 38.18.3-9, cited by Hansen, p. 324.

little of it Paul refers to, reflects this. He mentions several changes that have occurred in the Galatians' way of life. For example, they ceased to worship pagan gods and spirits (4: 8-10); they now prayed to a monotheistic deity (3: 20), and their abolition of the old religion led to the elimination of all religious, social and cultural distinctions and discriminations based on it and approved by it.<sup>120</sup> 'There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (3: 28). Paul does not provide any clear information about the religious affiliations of the pre-Christian Galatians. So it is impossible to say if they had been adherents of the old Celtic religion, perhaps in syncretistic transformations, or if they had belonged to various Hellenistic cults. As members of the Christian community, the Galatians now experienced the fulfillment of some old dreams of mankind, dreams of freedom which were very much alive at this time. They were liberated from pagan superstition and the fear of Gods and demons. For them, the new religion was 'enlightenment' (4: 8-10). Being members of the Christian community meant being cosmopolitans, not provincials from an ungovernable and dangerous territory on the fringes of the Roman Empire. The world was now the Roman Empire and they must have approved when Paul, himself a Roman citizen, attributed to them the attitudes of adults and 'mature' sons, as compared with 'minors' who need constant supervision (4: 1-3).

It seems to be impossible to arrive at a consensus about the identity of the Galatians, for two principal reasons. First of all, there is a limited amount of information in the *Letter* which is relevant to this question, and this information is open to different interpretations. This information is as follows. In 1:2 Paul addresses his *Letter* to the 'churches of Galatia', and addresses his readers as 'you foolish Galatians' (3:1).

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<sup>120</sup> Betz, p. 3.

Proponents of the North Galatian theory claim that Paul would never have called the inhabitants of the southern part of the Roman province ‘Galatians’. Proponents of the South Galatian theory, however, claim that Paul usually used Roman provincial terminology, for example Macedonia and Achaia. In addition, they argue that ‘Galatians’ would have been the only inclusive term by which to address the inhabitants of a province that included such diverse peoples as those of Pisidian Antioch, and the Lycaonian cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.<sup>121</sup> In 4:13-15 Paul recalls the circumstances surrounding his arrival in Galatia. Owing to illness he had to stay in Galatia. He was well received and preached the Gospel. The reference does not, however, disclose the location of the Galatian churches. Advocates of the North Galatian theory, however, point out that in Luke’s description of Paul’s first missionary journey through South Galatia, there is no mention of any illness as described here, and this is taken as an argument against the South Galatian theory.<sup>122</sup> In 4:20 Paul is perplexed at the change in the behaviour of the Galatians: ‘I wish I were present with you now and could change my tone, for I am perplexed about you’. But he does not explain why he cannot at this time come to Galatia. Some scholars suggest that it was because he was preoccupied with the Corinthian crisis (Corinthians 1: 1-11) and, if this is so, he is probably writing from Ephesus, and this could be considered an argument supporting the North Galatian theory.<sup>123</sup>

The second main reason why the identity of the Galatians cannot be clearly discerned in New Testament sources is that there are discrepancies between the information in the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Letter*. The *Acts* have much information

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<sup>121</sup> Matera, p. 21.

<sup>122</sup> Matera, p. 21.

<sup>123</sup> *ibid.*, p. 21.

about Paul's missionary activities, but there is no agreement about how this information should be reconciled with what Paul says in his *Letter*.<sup>124</sup> Matera constructs an ingenious argument that attempts to reconcile the two, but it is unlikely to persuade adherents of either the North or the South Galatian theories.<sup>125</sup>

In this chapter we have attempted to discern the identity of the Galatians as presented in St Paul's *Letter*. The evidence is indirect. For example, from the presentation of his argument we may draw the inference that his intended audience was a sophisticated one, one able to appreciate an argument presented in the form of a blend of Graeco-Roman forensic and deliberative rhetoric. The debate about North and South Galatian theories presents further obscurity about Galatian identity. We do not know if Paul's Galatians were descendants of the old Celts, or the ethnic mixture that was found in most Hellenistic-Roman towns. Was the Galatian ethnos still preserved anthropologically at the time of Paul's *Letter* or had they been totally assimilated? The name 'Galatians' may simply refer to those who inhabited the Roman province of Galatia and may have included the assimilated original Galatians, as well as numerous other peoples. Galatian identity in Paul's *Letter* must therefore remain an unknown known and we can only glimpse it, as Paul himself said in another context, 'through a glass, darkly'.<sup>126</sup>

As a coda to this chapter, we will look briefly at another commentator on St Paul's *Letter*, one much better known than Bishop Lightfoot, namely, St Jerome (d.420 CE). We are not so much interested in his exegesis on the *Letter*, as in his famous remark on the Galatian language on his visit to Ancyra in 373 CE. He compared it with the language spoken by the Treveri who lived around ancient Trèves (modern Trier). It has been assumed that the Treveri were Celts and the Galatians therefore spoke a Celtic

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<sup>124</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 21-2.

<sup>125</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 22-4.

<sup>126</sup> *Holy Bible, King James Version*, 1 Corinthians 13:12.

language, and this is therefore taken as evidence that Galatian was still being spoken in the fourth century CE and that the Galatians kept their Galatian identity until then.

Although our examination of Paul's *Letter* left Galatian identity uncertain, is it possible that it will become clearer when we examine the remains of the Galatian language? We will turn to this and other linguistic matters in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4: GALATIAN LANGUAGE

Galatian... is a unique example of a language which migrated into the heart of the Greco-Roman world during classical times and there survived for centuries.<sup>127</sup>

### 4.1 Introduction

There are expressions in many languages to the effect that a nation without its own language cannot be a nation at all. For example, ‘Cenedl heb iaith, cenedl heb galon’ (‘a country without a language is a country without a heart’), and ‘tír gan teanga, tír gan anam’ (‘a country without a language is a country without a soul’),<sup>128</sup> are proverbial affirmations of the importance of the Welsh and Irish languages respectively in defining Welsh and Irish identities. The thought is that if a ‘nation’ expresses itself using some other nation’s language, then it really has no separate identity at all.<sup>129</sup> Less dramatically, it may be claimed that language is a significant marker of national identity. Evidence on the survival and use of a Celtic language has been used to define the Celtic identity of the Galatians. Strobel, for example, states:

The Celticness of the three Galatian tribes of Asia Minor is manifested primarily as a linguistic category, which both sets them in contrast and binds them to their environment [‘sameness’ and ‘difference’ in our identity model]. Within the framework of their ethnogenesis and acculturation, as also of their broader social and cultural development, it is of fundamental importance.<sup>130</sup>

This chapter discusses the remains of the Galatian language in order to see what light it might throw on Galatian identity. Following this introduction (4.1), the place of Galatian in the Celtic language scheme is presented, along with a brief history of

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<sup>127</sup> Freeman, *The Galatian Language*, p. iii.

<sup>128</sup> D.B. Gregor, *Celtic: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Oleander Press, 1980), p. v.

<sup>129</sup> Such expressions do not, in my opinion, bear too much close analysis. My impression is that the vast majority of Irish people use daily a variety of English, namely Irish English, without feeling that their Irish identity is compromised. And Switzerland, with four official languages, is similarly comfortable in its identity.

<sup>130</sup> Strobel, p.139.

Galatian language scholarship (4.2). A selective review of the extant examples of the Galatian language is made (4.3), followed by literary references to Galatian. (4.4). The next two sections consider some radical possibilities about Galatian: the possibility of the survival of some Galatian words in modern Turkish (4.5), while section (4.6) considers the view that Galatian may not be a Celtic language at all but a Germanic one. The conclusion summarises what may be deduced about Galatian identity from the evidence of language (4.7).

#### 4.2 *The Galatian language: introduction*

Galatian is an Ancient Celtic language and ranks along with Goidelic (Primitive Irish), British (Brittonic), Celtiberian or Hispano-Celtic (in east-central Spain), Lepontic (in the northern Italian Lakes District and nearby Switzerland), and Gaulish.<sup>131</sup> Galatian is lineally descended from the reconstructed proto-language, Proto-Celtic, from which Common Celtic is descended. Common Celtic has three branches, Celtiberian (Q), Gaulish and Brittonic (P) and Gaelic (Q).<sup>132</sup> Galatian is considered by some scholars to be, not a discrete language, but a variety of Gaulish.<sup>133</sup> Another source declares cautiously: ‘In general we may say that Galatian tends to share the developments that are attested in Gaulish’.<sup>134</sup> A more radical opinion is that Galatian is not a Celtic but a Germanic language.<sup>135</sup> Claims for this will be examined later (4.6 below). Scholarly consensus at present is that it is in fact a Celtic language, a P language, that is, it uses *p*

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<sup>131</sup> Barry Cunliffe and John T. Koch, *Celtic from the West* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), p.1. The authors present a case for adding Tartessian – known from inscriptions in southern Iberia – to the list of Ancient Celtic languages.

<sup>132</sup> Donald MacAulay, ed., *The Celtic Languages* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), p. 5.

<sup>133</sup> Joseph F. Eska, ‘Continental Celtic’, in *The World’s Ancient Languages*, ed. by Roger Woodard (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), pp. 857-80 (p. 858).

<sup>134</sup> *The Celtic Languages*, ed. by Martin J. Ball, and James Fife (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 47.

<sup>135</sup> Anthony Durham and Michael Goormachtigh, ‘Was Galatian really Celtic?’, available at [www.proto-english.org/Galatians.pdf](http://www.proto-english.org/Galatians.pdf), dated 10 January 2013 [accessed 10 May 2013].

in place of the Indoeuropean *kw*. The nearest substantial extant variety of Celtic to Galatian would therefore appear to be Welsh, also a P language. This fact is of some significance when we come to consider theories about the possible survival of Galatian words in modern Turkish, using Irish as a comparison language (4.5 below).

The history of scholarship on Galatian is brief. Alfred Holder listed some Galatian words and names in his three-volume *Alt-Celtischer Sprachschatz* at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>136</sup> Stähelin published about 50 Galatian names of Celtic origin in 1907,<sup>137</sup> but it was left to Weisgerber to produce the first comprehensive collection and study of the Galatian corpus with his ‘Galatische Sprachreste’ published in 1931.<sup>138</sup> There have been a few publications since then that deal briefly with what is known about Galatian, notably Schmidt<sup>139</sup> and Strobel<sup>140</sup>, both of whom lean heavily on Weisgerber’s pioneering study. It remains, according to Freeman, author of the most recent corpus of Galatian (to be discussed next), an important secondary source for Galatian studies.<sup>141</sup>

#### 4.3 Remains of the Galatian language

The most recent, and so far only monograph on Galatian, is Freeman’s study, published in 2001. The following discussion therefore inevitably draws heavily on this study. Eska endorses the book as follows: ‘Within these pages, students of Continental Celtic will find a guide to the testimony of Galatian which will serve them commendably; so also

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<sup>136</sup> Alfred Holder, *Alt-Celtischer Sprachschatz* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1896-1907).

<sup>137</sup> Felix Stähelin, *Geschichte der kleinasiatischen Galater* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907), pp. 109-21.

<sup>138</sup> L. Weisgerber, ‘Galatische Sprachreste’, in *Natalicium Johannes Geffcken zum 70. Geburtstag* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1931), pp. 151-75.

<sup>139</sup> K. Schmidt, ‘Galatische Sprachreste’, in *Forschungen in Galatien*, ed. by E. Schwertheim (Bonn: R. Habelt, 1994), pp. 15-28.

<sup>140</sup> K. Strobel, *Die Galater* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1996).

<sup>141</sup> Freeman, p. 3.

for those interested in the sociolinguistic circumstances of ancient Asia Minor'.<sup>142</sup> The book consists of lists of words, mostly names, with extensive, contextual, quotation from Latin and Greek sources. These passages are, unfortunately, not translated, so a knowledge of these languages is necessary in order to understand and check these sources. Freeman draws on three sources for his material:

- a. Classical and early Christian texts;
- b. Previous books about the Galatians, such as Stähelin and Weisgerber mentioned above;
- c. Transcriptions of stone inscriptions, mostly from the catalogue by Mitchell et al.<sup>143</sup>

The title and subtitle, however, of the work, promise more than they deliver: *The Galatian Language: A Comprehensive Survey of the Language of the Ancient Celts in Greco-Roman Asia Minor*. But as Eska in his foreword admits: 'We do not have any Galatian texts or inscriptions; only individual words and the names of persons, tribes, deities, and places are attested'.<sup>144</sup> In short, the only evidence we have of the Galatian language is almost entirely in the form of onomastics, and it is mediated entirely through Greek. The corpus of Galatian, as presented by Freeman, is very small and may be categorised as follows: personal names 78, tribal names 13, place names 12, divine names 4, and 10 others, making a total of 117.<sup>145</sup> There are no examples of verbs, sentences or syntax. There are two contrastive views of the corpus. Freeman claims that

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<sup>142</sup> Freeman, p.ii.

<sup>143</sup> Stephen Mitchell, D. French, and J. Greenhalgh, *Regional Epigraphic Catalogues of Asia Minor II, The Ankara District, The Inscriptions of North Galatia*. British Institute Archaeology at Ankara (Oxford: BAR, 1982)

<sup>144</sup> Freeman, p.ii.

<sup>145</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 23-88.

the items in the corpus are a variety of Celtic or Gaulish, while Durham and Coormachtigh have critically examined the corpus and contend that most of these items are of Germanic origin.<sup>146</sup> The implications for Galatian identity will be considered in the light of these views after a selection of words in the corpus has been examined.

Before considering some of the onomastic words in the corpus, it is worth considering the small number of non-onomastic words. There are only two that Freeman claims to be of undoubted Celtic origin, namely *drouggos* ('nose') and *taskos* ('peg').<sup>147</sup> The words are known to us through the fourth-century bishop Epiphanius of Salamis, in his description of eighty heresies in the early Christian church. He identifies a sect active in Galatia called the *Taskodrougitaie* who had the odd habit of placing a finger on their nose and mouth during the mass. Their name, claims Epiphanius, derives from *taskos* (the equivalent of the Greek *passalos* ('peg')) and *drouggos*. He does not say that the name is Galatian, but their location, the testimony of other Church fathers, and Celtic cognates, would seem to confirm a Galatian etymology. The root of *taskos* appears in the Gaulish names *Tasco*, *Tascius*, and Irish *Tadg*, and according to Freeman, it also means 'badger'.<sup>148</sup> *Drouggos* ('nose'), again according to Freeman, corresponds well with Welsh cognate *trwyn* ('nose'). Freeman's account is unconvincing and partial. He does not, for example, properly explain or try to reconcile the two meanings of *taskos*: 'peg' and 'badger'. A much more convincing explanation is offered by Durham and Goormachtigh who contend that 'badger' is the usual meaning of *taskos*, as manifested in personal names such as *Taximagulus* and *Tasciovanus* in Britain, and

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<sup>146</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, pp. 1-28.

<sup>147</sup> These are Romanized forms of words recorded in Greek.

<sup>148</sup> Freeman, p. 14.

*Tasgetius*, *Tasgillus* in Gaul, and *Tadg* in Irish.<sup>149</sup> They further contend that words like English ‘dachshund’,<sup>150</sup> from German *Dachs* ‘badger’ show that there was also an equivalent Germanic root.<sup>151</sup> Many ancient tribes were named after animals and, citing Lacroix,<sup>152</sup> they suggest that the ‘Tascodruniges’ were an Anatolian clan called the ‘badger throng’, similar to Strabo’s ‘Bebrukes’ (‘beaver people’). They conclude that *tascos* is a ‘wander-word’ and cannot be considered diagnostically Celtic and therefore Galatian.<sup>153</sup> As for *drouggos*, they claim that the word is well attested in late Greek and Latin meaning a ‘troop’, with probable descent from Proto Indo-European *\*trenk-* and leading to English ‘throng’ or Irish *drong* (‘gang’). They can find no evidence, in spite of Welsh *trwyn*, that it meant ‘nose’ or ‘snout’. There is much more that Durham and Goormachtigh say about these two words, but the main point is that they appear to provide a plausible, alternative explanation to that of Freeman. If this difference of explanation is replicated in other words in the Freeman corpus, then the assignment of a definite Celtic identity to the Galatians on the basis of language must be in some doubt.

The bulk of Freeman’s corpus consists of 78 personal names.<sup>154</sup> The list is a conservative one, with a Galatian defined as an ancient Celt resident or originating in Asia Minor. The list therefore excludes Brennus, the leader of the invader, but does include later arrivals such as the *Aegosages* tribe who came to Asia Minor after the

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<sup>149</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p. 9.

<sup>150</sup> A ‘badger-dog’, ‘a short-legged, long-bodied dog used to draw badgers’. *OED on CD-ROM*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: OUP, 2009).

<sup>151</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p. 9.

<sup>152</sup> Jacques Lacroix, *Les noms d’origine Gauloise: La Gaule des dieux* (Paris: Errance, 2007).

<sup>153</sup> Durham & Goormachtigh, p. 9.

<sup>154</sup> Freeman, pp. 23-64.

main Galatian invasion in 278/79 BCE.<sup>155</sup> Freeman lists 21 name elements, both prefixes and suffixes, and three of them will be considered here.<sup>156</sup>

There are several names in the corpus ending in *-rix*, meaning ‘king’, ‘chief’, ‘leader’, for example *Adiatorix*, *Albiorix*, *Bitorix* etc. Cognates, according to Freeman, are Gaulish *-rix*, *-rig*, *-reg*, Old Irish *rí*, Welsh *rhi*, Latin *rex*.<sup>157</sup> We have more context about some names than others. *Adiatorix*, for example, is mentioned in Cicero’s *Epistulae ad Familiares* (*Letters to Friends*), described as a Galatian of Pessinus in the mid first century BCE.<sup>158</sup> Another well-known name is *Sinorix*, father of Deiotarus the Great, King of Galatia, mentioned in several sources, including Plutarch.<sup>159</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh challenge the assumption that a name ending in *-rix* is evidence that the bearer was a Celtic speaker. After a detailed discussion, they conclude that *-rix* was widely used across Europe and has no diagnostic value for designating a name Celtic or Germanic.<sup>160</sup>

Another name element mentioned by Freeman is *maro-* (Lepontic *maro-*, Gaulish *maro-*, Old Irish *mór*, *már*, Welsh *mawr*), meaning ‘great’, and manifested in such Galatian names as *Brogimaros*, *Katomaros*, *Combolomarus*, *Rossomara*, *Tectormarus* etc.<sup>161</sup> Again, this is challenged: it might be Celtic but not diagnostically so. Cognates in early Germanic languages include Old English *maeran*, ‘to proclaim,

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<sup>155</sup> *ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>156</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 19-22.

<sup>157</sup> *ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>158</sup> *ibid.*, pp.24-5.

<sup>159</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 61-2.

<sup>160</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p. 17.

<sup>161</sup> Freeman, p. 21.

celebrate’, and it appears in Germanic names such as Chlodomer (a son of Clovis I, King of the Franks), and Godomar (King of Burgundy, 524-34 CE), to later Adhemar and Hathumar, up to modern Waldemar and Vladimir.<sup>162</sup>

The final name element in Freeman to be considered is *gnatus*– (Gaulish *gnato*–, Old Irish *gnáth*, Welsh *gnawt*), meaning ‘born’, ‘knows’[sic],<sup>163</sup> and manifested in such Galatian names as Bitognatus, Cassignatus, and Eposognatus.<sup>164</sup> Freeman is remiss in not explaining the suffix further, particularly the ‘knows’ [sic] meaning. Durham and Goormachtigh claim that *gnatus* is not distinctively Celtic, because Latin *natus* and *gnatus* are common in inscriptions, with *gnatus* the less common but probably earlier form. In Greek *gnōtos* means ‘kinsman’ but also ‘known’, or ‘well-known’.<sup>165</sup> A possible Germanic connection occurs in the word ‘juggernaut’, with Sanscrit ‘*gnatha*’, ‘lord’, ‘protector’, probably cognate with Gothic ‘*nifan*’, to ‘help’, ‘support’, and whose relatives in other Germanic languages often have an initial ‘G’, such as Old Dutch ‘*ginatha*’, Modern Dutch ‘*genade*’ and German ‘*Gnade*’, which mean ‘mercy’, ‘favour’. In Old English ‘*genedan*’ meant ‘to compel’, but its modern relative ‘need’ has mostly lost the sense of compulsion, and keeps the sense of deficiency.<sup>166</sup>

One name in Freeman’s corpus is of considerable historical interest in the history of Galatia and whose etymology is not challenged by Durham and Goormachtigh, namely *Deiotarus* (‘divine bull’), with 9 pages of sources in Freeman.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p.18.

<sup>163</sup> The form of the word suggests that ‘known’ is the more accurate translation.

<sup>164</sup> Freeman, p. 21.

<sup>165</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p.18.

<sup>166</sup> *ibid.*, p.18.

<sup>167</sup> Freeman, pp. 41-9.

It is a common Galatian name from the end of the second century BCE into the Roman era, notably individuals from the family of Deiotarus the Great, King of Galatia (d. 40 BCE). As we have seen in the last chapter, he became an ally of Rome first under Pompey, then Caesar, and finally Brutus. He used Roman backing to expand his empire over all of Galatia, especially at the expense of his son-in-law Brogitauros. Enemies denounced him to Caesar but he was successfully defended by Cicero as recorded in *Pro rege Deiotaro*. Many other classical authors refer to Deiotarus. His great-grandson became King of Paphlagonia.

There are only 12 place names in the corpus.<sup>168</sup> And even with this small number there are, on Freeman's admission, difficulties in establishing their Celtic origins.<sup>169</sup> They might be of Greek or native Anatolian origin. One name from the list will be discussed. In the early first century CE Strabo tells us that long before his time a great council of the Galatian tetrarchs and judges met at a place called *Drynemeton*. The prefix *dry-* is unlikely to refer to the druid order (Greek *druides*, Latin *druides*, Old Irish *druí*) who are not mentioned at all in connection with Galatia, but may instead refer to the oak tree (Greek *drus*, Old Irish *daur*, Welsh *derw*). The root *-nemeton*, Freeman claims, is common Celtic for 'sacred space' (Gaulish *nemeton*, Old Irish *neimed*). If *dry-* means oak in this context then the *Drynemeton* was a sacred grove, a meeting place for the ancient Celts, noted by classical authors.<sup>170</sup> Once again Durham and Goormachtigh challenge this account and assert that *Drynemeton* is not diagnostically Celtic. But their statement that *dry* is routinely claimed as Celtic is setting up a straw

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<sup>168</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 83-8.

<sup>169</sup> *ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>170</sup> *ibid.*, p. 84.

man.<sup>171</sup> No one, including Freeman, makes such a claim. How could they when *drus* goes back to Homeric times, thus preceding by far any possible Celtic or Germanic origins?<sup>172</sup> As for *nemeton*, they claim that it is well attested across Europe, and not just in Celtic areas but also in the Germanic tribe *Nemetes*, and is usually translated as ‘sacred grove’.

What conclusions about Galatian identity may be drawn from the foregoing discussion of Galatian words? In spite of the title of his book, Freeman is suitably cautious about claiming a uniquely Galatian provenance for most the names he lists. Durham and Goormachtigh assert that the whole Freeman corpus is listed in Delamarre’s Gaulish dictionary.<sup>173</sup> And, furthermore, they claim a Germanic provenance for most of the names and, as we shall see, for the Galatian speech as a whole (4.6 below). It would seem that Galatian identity on the basis of language is problematic. Identity will be further discussed in 4.7, but first it is necessary to review references to Galatian in literary sources.

#### 4.4 *Literary references to Galatian*

The literary evidence for Galatian is limited to glosses and some comments on the language in classical writers and names recorded on inscriptions. It is presumed that the Galatians learned Greek at an early stage after their settlement in Asia Minor. One of the earliest references we have to the Galatians is a second century BCE Greek inscription left by Galatian mercenaries in Egypt, in the small chapel of Horus, in the

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<sup>171</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p. 10.

<sup>172</sup> ‘*Drus*’, H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: OUP, 1992), p.212.

<sup>173</sup> Xavier Delamarre, and Pierre-Yves Lambert, *Dictionnaire de la langue gauloise: une approche linguistique du vieux-celtique continental* (Paris: Errance, 2003).

tomb of Seti I, at the great temple of Karnak: ‘Of the Galatians, we, Thoas, Callistratos, Acannon and Apollonios, came, and a fox we caught there’.<sup>174</sup> It would seem that four Celts, serving Ptolemy V, wandered into the tomb out of curiosity and caught a jackal, which they mistook for a European fox, and recorded what they had done, adding their names. Significantly, the names of the soldiers are Greek, not Celtic. And a remark by Cicero defending the first-century BCE Galatian ruler Deiotarus also shows that the upper classes of Galatian society were acquainted with Greek literature:

Thus when he [Deiotarus] heard that Domitius had died in a shipwreck, while you [Caesar] were besieged in a fortress, he quoted a Greek verse about Domitius similar to one we have in Latin: “Let our friends perish, that our enemies die also”.<sup>175</sup>

But it would seem that bilingualism among some Galatians did not decrease the general use and knowledge of Celtic speech. Four hundred years after the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor Lucian records that a soothsayer called Abonuteichos in Paphlagonia, to the northeast of Galatia, had no difficulty in raising Galatian interpreters in the second century CE: ‘He often gave oracles to barbarians, if anyone asked a question in his native language, Syrian or Celtic, as he easily found strangers in the city of the same origin as the questioners’.<sup>176</sup> From this we may deduce that the soothsayer needed interpreters because some Galatians were still monolingual in the Christian era. And in the same century the physician Galen confirms the existence of Galatian when he complained that careless speakers were corrupting Greek by using: ‘three words from Cilicia, four from Syria, five from Galatia, and six from Athens’.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Ellis, *Celt and Greek*, pp.106-7; Freeman pp.9-10.

<sup>175</sup> Freeman, p.10

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>177</sup> *ibid.*, pp.10-11.

Two centuries later St Jerome records that the Galatians spoke, as well as Greek, a language very similar to that used by the Gaulish tribe of the Treviri at (Trèves) near the Rhine: ‘The Galatians, except for the Greek tongue, which the whole east speaks, have their own language very similar to the Treviri’.<sup>178</sup> There has been some debate about this passage, that Jerome was quoting an earlier author, but the context would seem to suggest he was referring to his own time whether he was speaking from personal contact or using second-hand information. It is also claimed that Jerome’s remarks have been misinterpreted and that the Treviri actually spoke a Germanic language.<sup>179</sup> (to be discussed at 4.6).

The final reference to Galatian comes two hundred years later in the sixth century CE when Cyril of Scythopolis attests that Galatian was still being spoken eight hundred years after the Galatians arrived in Asia Minor. Cyril tells of the temporary possession of a monk from Galatia by Satan and rendered speechless, but when he recovered he spoke only in his native Galatian when questioned: ‘If he were pressed, he spoke only in Galatian’.<sup>180</sup> After this, the rest is silence, and further archaeological or literary discoveries are awaited to see if Galatian survived any later. In this regard, the example of Crimean Gothic is instructive. It was presumed to have died out in the fifth century CE, but the discovery of a small corpus of the language dating from the sixteenth century altered this perception.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Ellis, p.131.

<sup>179</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p.2.

<sup>180</sup> Freeman, pp.11-12; Ellis p.131.

<sup>181</sup> MacDonald Stearns, *Crimean Gothic: Analysis and Etymology of the Corpus* (Saratoga, Calif.: Anma Libri, 1978).

The long survival of Galatian in Asia Minor was not unusual and other minority languages such as Phrygian, Mysian, Cappadocian, and Lycaonian were spoken and written languages until well into the Christian era.<sup>182</sup> Most of the linguistic relatives of Galatian in western Europe survived for a long time under Roman rule. According to classical authors, Gaulish survived as a spoken language into the fifth century CE and perhaps for longer.<sup>183</sup> Britain kept its Celtic speech during four hundred years of Roman rule and emerged as Welsh and Breton still, of course, spoken today.

Did all traces of Galatian die out in the sixth century CE? Or has some part of the Galatian linguistic identity survived the centuries and surfaced in modern Turkish? The next section considers the possibility that some Galatian words may have survived into the twenty-first century in modern Turkish.

#### 4.5 *Galatian survivals in modern Turkish*

Dr Taner Yılmaz is an independent Turkish researcher who hosts a website dedicated to all things Galatian: religion, coins, music etc.<sup>184</sup> Of particular interest here is his section on language in which he attempts to project Galatian linguistic identity into modern times and to show that a number of Galatian words have survived into modern Turkish.<sup>185</sup> Freeman's corpus is largely confined to onomastics while Yılmaz focuses on the possible survival of everyday words: tool names, agricultural terms etc. His method is to make a comparison of selected words in the modern Turkish and Irish lexicons. In the absence of a substantial corpus of Continental Celtic, Irish was selected for

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<sup>182</sup> Mitchell, *Anatolia*, vol. 1, pp. 173-4.

<sup>183</sup> Freeman, p. 12.

<sup>184</sup> <http://galloturca.com/galatians.htm> [accessed 10 May 2013].

<sup>185</sup> [http://galloturca.com/galatians\\_files/galatianwords.htm](http://galloturca.com/galatians_files/galatianwords.htm) [accessed 25 May 2013].

comparison purposes on the grounds that it is the best preserved Celtic language to date (he ignores the status of Welsh). His hypothesis is that by means of a careful comparison using conservative criteria, the Turkish and Irish cognates would reveal words of Galatian origin in modern Turkish. The criteria for the selection of Turkish words are as follows: words of currently obscure origin or unknown etymology; words that appear in Turkish after the Turkish invasion of Asia Minor in the eleventh century; words of rural, provincial, agricultural, slang, or archaic classifications. Annex A to this chapter is the result of his selection and comparison of Turkish and Irish words.

There are a number of objections to Dr Yılmaz's theory:

- a. The only possible connection between Galatian and Turkish would have to be via identifiable Galatian survivals in 11-12th century Anatolia, and none have been identified, or perhaps, in post-sixth century Balkans (Bulgars or proto Bulgarians) - and that would be mostly through Galatian survivals in Greek or Armenian or any other languages still spoken in Anatolia when the Turks arrived.<sup>186</sup> Turks arrived in numbers in Anatolia after defeating the Byzantine army at the battle of Manzikert in 1071, though Turks were in Anatolia before this date and some even fought on the Byzantine side at Manzikert. According to Professor Koch, there are no instances of Galatian words going into standard Byzantine Greek (some alleged Greek-Celtic cognates in *Koine* might be early loans). To check this, it would be necessary to know about local forms of Greek current in Anatolia and the Balkans in the Byzantine period, as well as other

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<sup>186</sup> I am grateful to Dr George Dedes, Senior Lecturer in Turkish, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, for this observation. Personal communication, 24 July 2009.

pre-Turkish local languages. The continuous survival of Celtic somewhere in an area that subsequently became Turkish speaking seems unlikely.<sup>187</sup>

- b. Modern Irish is a poor choice for a comparison language; Old or Middle Irish would have been better candidates. But the major theoretical objection to Irish is that it is a Q Celtic language, whereas Galatian is a P language and in the same language branch as Welsh, which would have been a much better comparison language. Another more credible comparison choice would have been Proto-Celtic.<sup>188</sup> Given the objections at a., however, none of these comparison languages is likely to yield credible results.
- c. Apart from these theoretical objections to the survival of Galatian words in modern Turkish, the list at Annex A offends against some historical linguistic principles for establishing distant genetic relationships between languages. The following are examples of this, using some of the principles set out in a standard textbook of historical linguistics:<sup>189</sup> chance is a possible explanation for similarities between compared languages. Conventional wisdom is that 5-6 per cent of the lexicon of any two compared languages may be due to chance.<sup>190</sup> That means at least 2 words from the list should be discounted. Onomatopoeia words imitate sounds associated with meanings of words, and may be similar in different languages because they independently mimic natural sounds, and not because they are related. Numbers 3, 18, 33, 39, and possibly, 19 in the list fall

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<sup>187</sup> I am grateful to Prof John T. Koch, University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, for this observation. Personal communication, 7 June 2011.

<sup>188</sup> A substantial Proto-Celtic and English dictionary is available at <http://www.spns.org.uk/ProtoCelt.pdf> [accessed 30 May 2013].

<sup>189</sup> Lyle Campbell, 'Distant Genetic Relationship', in Lyle Campbell, *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 344-60.

<sup>190</sup> *ibid.*, p. 355.

into this category, so that rules out a further 5 words;<sup>191</sup> the list relies heavily on sound correspondences in the two languages and while these may be significant, they are not always evidence of genetic affinity.<sup>192</sup>

Lexical comparisons by themselves are seldom convincing without support from other criteria and, as we know, there is no surviving grammar or syntax in Galatian. Apart from the methodological and other issues discussed above, there is the question of authority and credibility. Nothing of his theory has been subjected to the scrutiny of peer review, with the website being the sole medium for its presentation to date. Whilst not in itself a fatal argument, such a consideration can only strengthen objections to the theory. It has been included in this study to show that there is some non-academic interest in Galatian, and to demonstrate the pitfalls of such an approach to historical linguistics. It is an interesting approach, but, in my opinion, misguided.

#### *4.6 Was Galatian really Celtic?*

The above is the title of a substantial twenty-eight page, fully-referenced, internet paper, by Durham and Goormachtigh, which has already been cited extensively in 4.4 above. It challenges the notion that Galatian was a Celtic language, and suggests that it was in fact a Germanic language.<sup>193</sup> In addition to challenging the Celticity of individual items in Freeman's corpus, St Jerome's famous remarks come under particular scrutiny in this respect: 'in addition to Greek, which is spoken throughout the entire East, the Galatians have their own language, and it is almost identical with that of the Treveri'.<sup>194</sup> These remarks have been taken to mean that Ancient Celtic had spread from its Atlantic-fringe

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<sup>191</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 353-4.

<sup>192</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 348-9.

<sup>193</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, pp. 1-28.

<sup>194</sup> Galatas excepto sermone Graeco, quo omnis oriens loquitur, propriam linguam eandem paene habere quam Treviros. Freeman, p. 11; Ellis, p. 131.

heartland into Asia Minor, as Freeman's quote at the head of this chapter suggests.<sup>195</sup> Jerome was speaking on the occasion of his visit to Ancyra (modern Ankara) in 373 CE and the Treveri lived around ancient Treves (the modern Trier in Germany). It has been assumed that the Treveri were Celts.<sup>196</sup> On the other hand, Durham and Goormachtigh quote a number of classical authors who state that the Treveri were a Germanic tribe. For example, Strabo: 'along the Rhine dwell the Treveri...this side of the Rhine. Next after the Treveri are the Nervii, who are also a Germanic tribe'. And Tacitus: 'The Treverians and the Nervians are very proud of their Germanic origin, considering that the nobility of this blood distinguishes them from the laziness of the Gauls'.<sup>197</sup> After some further discussion the authors conclude that Galatian speech resembled Gaulish only insofar as they are both Indo-European languages and reconstructed Gaulish is heavily contaminated with Germanic words.<sup>198</sup> They back up their theory that the Galatians were closer to being Germanic rather than Celtic by some fanciful, in my opinion, speculation about 'Galatian' deriving from Greek 'galatai', meaning 'milky-white' and therefore fair-skinned and characteristic of Germanic peoples.<sup>199</sup>

This theory has also, like that of Dr Yılmaz, not been subjected to peer review and scrutiny. The authors make a virtue of this fact, stating that for speedy dissemination they have posted the paper on the Internet so that readers can skip rapidly over parts that do not interest them, and specialists can check their references which are slanted towards material readily available online and in English. In addition, the article

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<sup>195</sup> Freeman, p. iii.

<sup>196</sup> For example, by Mitchell, *Anatolia, vol. 1*, p. 50, and Freeman, p. 11.

<sup>197</sup> Durham and Goormachtigh, p. 2.

<sup>198</sup> *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*, p. 4.

can be continuously updated.<sup>200</sup> In an ideal world this lack of expert scrutiny should not affect the quality of their arguments, but it is a factor to be considered, when set against the views of established Celticists.

#### *4.7 Galatian and Galatian identity*

So what do we learn about Galatian identity from this brief excursus into the remnants of the Galatian language? The conventional view is that Galatian survived much longer as a minority language than might have been expected under pressure from the omnipresent Hellenistic Greek and that it lasted well into the Christian era. Galatian, like Etruscan, Oscan, Punic, Lydian, and many other minority languages of the ancient world, was part of the great tapestry of languages spoken in the Mediterranean basin in classical times. Greek and Latin were the dominant written and spoken languages in Graeco-Roman societies, but many other languages coexisted alongside them, and some even prospered during the classical era. Galatian is possibly unique in that it entered the Graeco-Roman world (as opposed to being already there) during classical times and survived there for several centuries.<sup>201</sup> The wider significance of Galatian is that it has been established that it is a variety of Gaulish. Our knowledge of the latter is fragmentary, so any information from an offshoot variety of the language is useful for information about early Celtic as a whole. The evidence from onomastics is mostly confirmatory, rather than revealing new knowledge.

Unconventional views on Galatian are taken by Yılmaz and Durham and Goormachtigh. Yılmaz attempts to project Galatian identity into the modern era by claiming the survival of some Galatian words in modern Turkish, but his approach is theoretically and methodologically unsound, for the reasons given at 4.4. The Durham

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<sup>200</sup> *ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>201</sup> Freeman, p. iii.

and Coormachtigh theory is presented in a more sophisticated manner and attempts to show that Galatian is not Gaulish or even Celtic but a variety of Germanic. Their views are at variance with those of established Celticists such as Eska, Freeman and Koch. It is not my task to argue for a Celtic or Germanic etymology for the contents of Freeman's Galatian corpus. My concern is Galatian linguistic identity and such differences between authors indicate the shadowy and uncertain nature of this identity. Both of these 'maverick' points of view suffer from lack of academic credibility in that their theories have not been tested by peer review. If I were to peer review the Yılmaz and Durham and Coormachtigh contributions, I would give the following verdict on them. The Yılmaz effort is a theoretically and methodologically unsound curiosity, and I would remove from further serious consideration in the field. As for Durham and Coormachtigh, in spite of some overstatements, it is presented as a logically-argued, fully referenced thesis, and I would afford it further consideration.

It will be recalled from chapter 1 that a model of identity was adopted for this study, one that incorporated the notions of sameness and difference. For Galatian, the sameness element is that Galatian is a variety of Gaulish and therefore part of the wider family of Celtic languages; but where is the difference, the 'otherness', that would mark Galatian as a language in its own right? A corpus of 117 words, most of which are onomastics, is, I suggest, insufficient to mark Galatian as a language in its own right, and therefore it fails as an identity marker of the Galatians. The most that can be said with any degree of certainty is that it is a variant of Gaulish. Calling it a variant of Germanic is a step too far at present. Shared language use and similarities of material culture have been key markers in discussions of ethnic identity in ancient peoples, particularly in questions of Celtic identity. However, as Darbyshire points out:

...the privileging of language as a defining criterion of ethnic and cultural identity needs to be treated with caution, for there is a danger that another imbalance in the evidence available to us, in this case the predominance of linguistic over archaeological information, may cause too much stress being placed on language at the expense of other categories. The linguistic evidence for the Celticness of the Galatians appears dominant in part because other categories of information, and in particular the material culture, have hardly been examined.<sup>202</sup>

How long did Galatian survive? there is a passing reference to Galatia as an entity in the eighth century.<sup>203</sup> Perhaps the language was dead by then, the century in which the earliest records of the precursor of modern Turkish are to be found.<sup>204</sup> In summary, Galatian as an identity marker of the Galatians, must therefore, in my opinion, remain a known unknown.

The following chapter will summarise the arguments presented in the dissertation for Galatian identity and suggest where future research might be directed.

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<sup>202</sup> Darbyshire, p. 96.

<sup>203</sup> Rankin, 'The Galatians', p. 206.

<sup>204</sup> These are the Orkhon funerary inscriptions found on stelae in Mongolia. See Carter Vaughan Findley, *The Turks in World History* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), p. 42.

## Turkish-Irish Cognates via Galatian

| Turkish                       | Irish                                   | Meaning in Turkish   | Meaning in Irish           |
|-------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| 1. abart                      | abair                                   | exaggerate   | boast, state               |
| 2. alçı                       | aolta                                   | lime   | lime                       |
| 3. abu!                       | ababú!                                  | sound of surprise  | sound of surprise          |
| 4. abudan                     | amadan                                  | stupid   | stupid                     |
| 5. arkın                      | arcán,<br>arcawn                        | weak, soft   | weaking, little fellow     |
| 6. ayak                       | éitheach                                | deceit, lie  | lying, falsehood           |
| 7. badi                       | beadai                                  | goose, duck  | duck                       |
| 8. boduk,<br>potuk            | badóg,<br>bodóg                         | young heifer   | buffalo calf               |
| 9. bidik, bıdık               | bídeach,<br>bídeog                      | tiny, small  | tiny, small                |
| 10. dallama                   | dallamlan                               | stupid, fool   | stupid, fool               |
| 11. dolan                     | dolan                                   | deceit, deception  | imposition, burden, toll   |
| 12. düdük                     | dúdóg                                   | short pipe (musical)   | short-stemmed pipe (clay)  |
| 13. farı                      | faire                                   | get tired of, run out of patience                                    | disgust, annoyance         |
| 14. farta furta,<br>fart furt | furtla fartla,<br>futa fata,<br>fut fat | fuss, confused talk  | fuss, confused talk        |
| 15. genz                      | geanc,<br>geince                        | nasal cavity   | nasal cavity               |
| 16. genzek                    | geancach                                | person with nasal voice  | person with nasal voice    |
| 17. gırgır                    | grıg                                    | tease, annoy   | tease, annoy               |
| 18. hoşt                      | hois                                    | shoo away! (for dogs)  | shoo away!                 |
| 19. haydi                     | háidi                                   | let's ....., go on! let's get on! Now then! (urging to do something) | Aha! (admonishing a child) |
| 20. kabak                     | cabach                                  | idiot, ignorant talk   | empty talk, talkative      |

|             |              |  |                                       |
|-------------|--------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 21. kabak   | cábóg        | unripe, stupid,<br>honorless                 | clown, ignorant<br>male, country man  |
| 22. kalar   | clár         | wood pile                                    | board                                 |
| 23. kaltak  | gealtog      | mischievous woman                            | mischievous girl,<br>emaciated woman  |
| 24. kasnak  | casnóg       | wheel (only on a<br>wheel-belt system)       | twist                                 |
| 25. kazak   | cásach       | despotic husband                             | honorable, revered                    |
| 26. kelek   | cealg        | deceit, treachery                            | deceit, treachery                     |
| 27. kepenek | caipíneach   | shepherd's hooded<br>coat                    | hooded jacket                         |
| 28. kıtık   | catach       | hair ball                                    | curly, curly haired                   |
| 29. koruk   | caoróg       | unripe grapes                                | small berry                           |
| 30. koş     | cos, cois    | run  | foot, leg                             |
| 31. maganda | macánta      | unrefined person,<br>clumsy, a boor          | childlike, meek,<br>gentle            |
| 32. mızız   | masmas       | unpleasantly<br>particular, finicky<br>eater | nausea from eating<br>too much        |
| 33. nah!    | nach?        | never!                                       | not?                                  |
| 34. salak   | salach       | stupid                                       | dirty, filthy person,<br>disorganized |
| 35. sümük   | smuga        | snot   | snot                                  |
| 36. şu      | seo, sin     | this, that                                   | this, that                            |
| 37. tavan   | taobhán      | ceiling                                      | ceiling joist                         |
| 38. turşu   | tuirse       | tired, worn out (slang)                      | tired, worn out                       |
| 39. vay     | fai          | cry, call, lament                            | cry, call, lament                     |
| 40. yamalak | gamalach     | sloppy job                                   | loutish, silly                        |
| 41. yıl     | géill, giall | to be afraid, yield,<br>give up              | yield, submit                         |
| 42. yor     | coir         | to tire, to exhaust                          | to tire, to exhaust                   |

## CHAPTER 5: WHO WERE THE GALATIANS ?

The stream of Time, irresistible, ever moving, carries off and bears away all things that come to birth and plunges them into utter darkness, both deeds of no account and deeds which are mighty and worthy of commemoration ... the science of History is a great bulwark against this stream of Time; in a way it checks this irresistible flood, it holds in a tight grasp whatever it can seize floating on the surface and will not allow it to slip away into the depths of Oblivion. Anna Comnena, Preface to *Alexiad*.<sup>205</sup>

### 5.1 Introduction

The name of the Galatians will live on in St Paul's *Letter to the Galatians*, in the canon of the New Testament, for as long as the latter is preserved and read, and will be saved from Anna Comnena's 'depths of Oblivion'. But the essential question is: who were these Galatians? This dissertation has attempted to answer this question and to discern their identity by examining their history, organisation, society, religion, and language, using an identity model based on the twin pillars of sameness and difference. Although the concept of identity was treated in 1.4, a few further amplifying remarks are in order in these closing pages. Understood as an ontological category, the concept of identity must refer to a universal human condition arising from the development of self-consciousness; that is, the ability to distinguish between 'self' and 'other', and possibly the ability to distinguish between the sexes and to situate oneself – albeit problematically – in relationship to them. However, understood in the way I have used the concept in this study – that is, as arising from social and cultural roles and activities – it refers to a historically and socially specific condition, which undoubtedly does not apply universally across all history and all humanity. Social and cultural identities tend to be formed in societies where diversity and distinction between the roles and activities of groups and individuals are the norm. This is because any social persona only comes to be what it is, that is, only takes on an identity, insofar as it is distinct from what it is

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<sup>205</sup> Quotation is at <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/458866-the-stream-of-time-irresistible-ever-moving-carries-off-and> [accessed 5 September 2013].

not. Where there are no distinctions, or few distinctions, so there will be no identities, or few identities. Identity is therefore what a person or nation is: what larger entity they are part of and what marks them out and distinguishes them from that entity? In advertising terms: what is their USP? <sup>206</sup>

The remainder of this chapter takes the Galatian story beyond their Pauline period (5.2), summarises what we have gleaned about the identity of the Galatians from this study, and suggests where further research is needed (5.3). A brief coda discusses the provenance of ‘Galata’ references, mentioned at the start of the dissertation, in modern Istanbul (5.4).

(5.2) *The Galatians in post-Pauline years*

The last substantial references to the Galatians occur in about 48/49 CE with St Paul’s *Letter to the Galatians* and, as we have seen in 4.4, there are passing references to the Galatian language at intermittent periods thereafter. The most significant of these are St Jerome’s remarks, discussed in the previous chapter. On the political front, Galatia was joined to Cappadocia as a single province by the Emperor Vespasian (r.69-79 CE) in 74 CE.<sup>207</sup> At this period Cappadocia was beginning to become of greater strategic importance to the Roman empire on account of its eastern position. The empire’s eastern borders were at the time a point of weakness and would continue to be so.<sup>208</sup> Trajan (r. 98-117 CE) detached the provinces again in 106 CE, and Galatia became isolated and the process of Romanisation slowed. Hadrian (r. 117-138 CE) paid more attention to it, but from this point there was an increasing tendency to detach

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<sup>206</sup> USP = Unique Selling Proposition.

<sup>207</sup> H.R. Rankin, ‘The Galatians’, p. 206.

<sup>208</sup> *ibid.*, p. 206.

pieces of its territory and its diversity is shown by the use of the plural *provinciae* with reference to it. There still appears to have been a province of Galatia in the eighth century CE.<sup>209</sup> Finally, it would seem that the Celtic nature of Galatia had all but faded away and been absorbed by the time the Seljuk Turks swept into Asia Minor after their defeat of the Byzantines at the battle of Manzikert in 1071.

What became of the Galatians? We have seen how ethnic identity can be considered as a social construct, not as primordial or fixed, not stable but open to change. Thus the Galatians became the GalloGraeci as they became more Hellenized, and then more Romanized, as the Romans involved themselves in Asia Minor and Galatia, and finally created the Roman province of Galatia. There is a long list of peoples who, after an initial impact, faded away. Is it possible that the Galatians could be compared to the Normans in England and Sicily: they came, they saw, they conquered, and they were finally absorbed.<sup>210</sup>

### 5.3 Summary and further research

We have attempted to discover the identity of the Galatians across the centuries through various episodes and eras in their history. The overall research question for the dissertation was: ‘who were the Galatians’, and this was subdivided into 4 further questions, corresponding to chapters 2-5:

- a. In **chapter 2** the question was: ‘what do we know about the Galatians in Asia Minor and what do their forms of government, social organisation, religion, and relations with the Romans tell us about their identity?’ We know a great deal. There are extensive references to the arrival and settlement of the Galatians in Asia Minor in the classical writers; the biases

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<sup>209</sup> *ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>210</sup> R.H.C. Davis, *The Normans and their Myth* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976).

of some of these accounts have been modified by modern archaeological discoveries. The Galatians were differentiated from the mass of Celts who migrated eastwards and attacked Greece by the fact that their fighting prowess was discerned by Nicomedes of Bithynia, who invited them to enter Asia Minor as mercenaries to assist him in his dynastic conflicts. The Galatians were further differentiated by extensive references by classical writers to the major tribal names: the Tectosages, Trocmii, and Tolistobogii. Identity is often discerned in action and the relations between the Galatians and the Romans provide evidence of this. Although the Galatians were subject over the years to Hellenisation and Romanisation, it would appear that they retained elements of their Celtic identity.

- b. In **chapter 3** the question was: ‘who were the Galatians to whom St Paul addressed his *Letter to the Galatians*’? The matter was addressed by an analysis of the literary form of the *Letter*, with the Galatians identified as a sophisticated, literate, and probably elite audience. The North and South Galatian theories were discussed. Were the Galatians, to whom the letter is addressed, the descendants of the original invaders or is it addressed to all the inhabitants, including Galatians, of the enlarged Roman province of Galatia, created in 25 BCE? The issue is still the subject of scholarly dispute and the matter of Galatian identity in this context remains opaque.
- c. In **chapter 4** the question was: ‘what do we know about the Galatian language, and what does it tell us about the identity of the Galatians’? A selective examination was made of the remnants of the Galatian language, a small corpus of 117 words, mostly onomastics. Language is usually considered to be a strong marker of identity, but in the case of Galatian this

is not so; on our identity model of sameness and difference, it meets the criterion of sameness, in that it is a variety of Gaulish, but it lacks sufficient difference or otherness to mark it as a distinct language, and cannot therefore be counted as a strong marker of Galatian identity. A couple of maverick treatments of Galatian were considered: one attempted to project Galatian identity into the modern era, and show that some Galatian words had survived in modern Turkish, and the other suggested that Galatian was in fact a Germanic language. The former was examined and dismissed as a misguided curiosity, while the arguments of the latter were considered to be interesting and worthy of further investigation.

- c. In **chapter 5** the question was: ‘what became of the Galatians and when did they disappear from history’? The last significant references are to the Pauline Galatians of c.48/49 BCE, and, apart from St Jerome’s comparison of Galatian with the language spoken by the Treveri in 373 CE, the rest is mostly silence. Galatian identity seems to have completely disappeared by the time the Turks poured into Asia Minor in the eleventh century CE.

The following are, in my opinion, some areas where further research on the Galatians is desirable:

- a. There are many uncertainties as to the precise areas that specific Celtic tribes settled or ruled in Asia Minor and how they eventually came together;
- b. How did the invaders treat the indigenous in the towns and the countryside? We need to know more about intercultural relations resulting from the impact of Hellenisation and Romanisation;
- c. After the Pauline period of about 48/49 CE, there is relatively little known about the Galatians. Further work is needed on names in 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE. This

may help to flesh out the rather scanty evidence of Galatian life in this period, and how the different ethnic elements either interbred or kept their distinctiveness in certain areas;

- d. On the Galatian language, Freeman's corpus of onomastics, published in 2001, would benefit from being re-examined in the light of Lacroix's three works on Gaulish names published since 2001.<sup>211</sup>

#### 5.4 Coda: 'Galata' in modern Turkey

At the outset of this study (1.1) the question was posed as to whether 'Galata' names in modern Istanbul – the name of an historic suburb, a bridge, a tower, and a football team – had any connection with the Galatians, who are supposed to have crossed from Europe into Asia at some point in Constantinople/Istanbul. The answer is 'perhaps', because there are other candidates for the origins of this name. 'Galata' was a colony of the Republic of Genoa from 1273 until 1453 – the latter year being the year that Constantinople was captured by the Turks from the Byzantines – and, according to the Italians, the name comes from 'Calata' meaning 'downward slope', as the area slopes downwards to the sea from a hill top.<sup>212</sup> The seventeenth-century Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi has another explanation:

The area of Galata was a meadow of pleasant air and a rich pasture, where shepherds tended their sheep and cows, always milking them and bringing the milk to the king. Since delicious milk came from this fertile pasture, it was named Galata- GALATA being the Greek word for milk.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Jacques Lacroix, *Les noms d'origine Gauloise, Les noms d'activité économique* (Paris: Editions Errance, 2005); Jacques Lacroix, *Les noms d'origine Gauloise: La Gaule des dieux* (Paris: Errance, 2007); Jacques Lacroix, and Venceslas Kruta, *Les noms d'origine Gauloise, La Gaule des combats* (Paris: Editions Errance, 2012).

<sup>212</sup> 'Calata', in Nicola Zingarelli, *Vocabulario della Lingua Italiana* (Roma: Zanichelli, 2002), p. 238.

<sup>213</sup> Çelebi, Evliya, *An Ottoman Traveller: Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi*, ed. by Robert Dankoff and Kim Sooyong (London: Eland, 2010), p. 17.

Or perhaps on the principle of Occam's razor, the obvious explanation is the most likely one. Galata is derived from *Galat*, the Greek for Celt, and hence the Galatians. For the present then, the definitive origins of modern manifestations of 'Galata' must remain, like much else about the Galatians, a known unknown. As Marc Bloch says, we cannot change the past but we can change the way we look at the past, as our knowledge of the past grows and we develop different perspectives.<sup>214</sup> Through time we project perspectives with which to recover and correct the past. We may be then able to turn known unknowns into known knowns.

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<sup>214</sup> Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, p. 58.

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