Thesis

The Gallic War: A Reassessment of Caesar’s Interpretation of Gallic Leadership and Military Response to Rome

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Doctor of Philosophy (Classics) Thesis Submitted
June 2013
Statement of Originality

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to the final version of my thesis being made available worldwide when deposited in the University’s Digital Repository, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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Table of contents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synopsis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Social and political development of Gallic and Māori Society</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Caesar and the Helvetii: The Military Potential of a Celtic State</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Caesar and the Aedui: An Analysis of a Gallic Ally</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Caesar and the Armorican and Aquitani Gauls</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Britons and Indirect Warfare</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Eastern Gaul and the Revolt of 54-53</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Revolt of Vercingetorix 52</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Conclusion</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Synopsis

Julius Caesar invaded Gaul in 58BC and spent the best part of a decade bringing the various communities of Gaul under Roman Control. Caesar has left a detailed and insightful account of the people he fought and the social and political systems that govern them. In particular, Caesar wrote a concise ethnographic account in Book Six of how he believed Gallic society functioned. This study has been looked at in detail and stands as an important starting point for any study of Celtic people but it is limited. The statements made in the balance of Caesar’s *Gallic War* suggest that the Celtic people of late Iron Age Europe enjoyed a variety of social and political development that impacted on the way they fought. By adding archaeological evidence to Caesar’s commentaries we begin to see more of these dynamic people whose social order was characterised by diversity and while this picture is becoming larger, there are still gaps in the information on these Gallic communities who fought Caesar. This comes from the fact that Gallic people and their warfare is generally placed within Roman context.

In this thesis, I have applied a comparative model by measuring Gallic society against the Māori of nineteenth century Aotearoa/New Zealand. This approach has allowed for a new method to re-assess Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society, as it became clear that both the Iron Age Celts and the Māori operated as autonomous political units at the clan or hapū level. This level of development often determined Gallic reaction to Roman invasion. It is expected that this thesis will present an alternative model to challenge the current thinking around Gallic society and further increase our understanding of their political systems, leadership and motivations for fighting that was set out by Caesar.
Acknowledgements

An endeavour of this size cannot be achieved without support. I would first like to thanks my supervisors who both offered invaluable support and advice from two different disciplines and perspectives. In particular I thank Dr Jane Bellemore who provided clear boundaries and direction, and encouraged me to explore the comparative elements of this thesis. Dr Terry Leahy also encouraged my unorthodox approach and pointed me in the right direction to frame the social characteristics of the people under study. I wish to thank the examiners of this thesis who spent the time to read and make valuable comments and suggestions towards the final version of this thesis.

Many thanks to Glenn Anderson, Patrick Bronte, Dr John Moremon, Dr Lachy Paterson, Dr Geoff Watson, Dr Rachel Bell, who all provided encouragement in many ways and at different times of this project. I have also had encouragement from previous lecturers and mentor. Thanks to Associate Professor Chris Dixon, Basil Poff, Associate Professor Jeff Sluka and Professor Joel Hayward.

My family have been an enormous motivating factor while undertaking this long study, always asking about the progress and pushing me on. In particular, I want to acknowledge my step-father, Alan, for looking over my work and my mother for her encouragement. I offer special acknowledgement to my wife Zenaida and our children, Sherine, Joshua and Sha-Hade for their patience while completing this thesis.
Introduction

Thesis Aim

This thesis is a comparative study to test the validity of Julius Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic and British society and their response to Roman attempts to pacify them. This is not an exhaustive study but will look at selective case studies within Caesar’s *Gallic War*. I will be using an approach that draws on comparative anthropology in which the societies of Late Iron Age Gaul and south-eastern Britain will be measured against nineteenth century Māori. I assert that the Late Iron Age Celts and nineteenth century Māori responded to military imperialism in a similar manner determined by shared political and social characteristics. Caesar’s *Gallic War*, while extensive, is not exhaustive, and it is through comparison of Late Iron Age Celts and nineteenth century Māori that I intend to offer another interpretative model to expand Caesar’s scope of understanding seen in his work.

Caesar: Strengths and Limitations of the Gallic Wars

Caesar wrote an extensive account of his campaign in Gaul, where his war spread from the Alps, up along the Rhine into Belgium, across the Channel into south-eastern Britain and down to the Pyrenees Mountains that separated Gaul from Spain. These campaigns were reported in chronological order. Caesar paints a broad portrait of the Gallic and British people in an attempt to create order out of diverse and dynamic communities, and he even presents an ethnographic study of the Gauls as a people in a generic static picture (*Gallic War* 6.11-20). This study in Book Six is at odds with the balance of his commentaries and this creates a tension within Caesar’s interpretation, but this is not the only issue in accepting Caesar as an authority on Gallic and British society. Understanding Late Iron Age Gallic and British culture is problematic in that most assessments rely on accounts recorded by Roman and Greek writers who, by default, assessed Gallic and British culture from the perception of a ‘superior’ classical view, and brought into their writings all the cultural philosophies and biases peculiar to their world. For this reason classical writers

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on Gallic and British responses to Roman military imperialism measure any of their failures and shortcomings against Roman military success, and in Roman terms. Such a Roman perception would not allow for an objective assessment of conflict involving Romans and non-Romans because this would have required a balanced or accurate understanding of these non-Roman communities. It is my contention that the traditions of classical writing have provided a limited interpretation of the Late European Iron Age.

Since the interpretation of Gallic and British warfare has been placed within the Roman sphere, which itself has determined Gallic and British identity and histories, those ‘histories and accounts written from within one tradition would give an entirely different impression from histories written within the other’. This issue of impression and cultural context is at the heart of the problem in understanding prehistoric people and their interaction with Rome. For example, it has been observed that the peoples of Late Iron Age Europe faced the Romans in war only with experience from fighting each other in conflicts that were generally seasonal and of low intensity, and so they fought quite differently to the Romans. To write off Late Iron Age warfare as a seasonal affair (likened to cricket) or ritualistic, is to trivialise or tame an aspect of Late Iron Age society that was far from low-intensive. The warriors of Iron Age Europe had a long tradition of fighting for and against Mediterranean powers, and so their understanding of Roman warfare would not have been as slight as has been stated in some cases. While there was clearly symbolism and ritual attached to Gallic and British warfare, it will be shown that Gallic (and, on a limited scale, British) warfare, which had foundations stretching back thousands of years, was serious and was also constantly changing. To trivialise Gallic and British warfare is naive. Caesar’s account shows that Gallic and British responses to Roman invasion were very serious, and it should be viewed as much more than ritualistic display.

In addition Caesar, our main source on the Gallic Wars, was in conflict with the Gauls and Britons and generally viewed them from a military viewpoint that

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4 Chapman. p. 181. Chapman argues that it may have been more important to ‘be seen to be brave’ and that once this was achieved there was little value in continuing to fight.
was antagonistic in nature. Those who opposed Caesar were simply the enemy, requiring to be crushed. Gallic and British supporters of Caesar gained personal prestige and wealth for their people. The latter were viewed as more ‘civilised’, often having enjoyed long periods of contact and friendship with Rome, some even having made direct contact with the Roman senate prior to Caesar’s invasion (Gallic War 1.31). This image of the Gauls was a contrast between the peaceful, civilised and the warlike barbarian. In writing about his conquest of Gaul and invasions of Britain, Caesar provides a broad picture of Gallic society and customs, but one contrived so that his Roman audience would understand Gallic social characteristics in a way intelligible to them, and he inevitably imposed an ideological perspective on his material that reflected Roman understanding.

Caesar’s detailed account of the communities of Late Iron Age Gaul and Britain provides, however, a very good starting point from which to understand their political structure and modes of warfare. On the other hand, we need to appreciate the context in which Caesar’s accounts were understood to counter the problems that Late Iron Age Gallic and British warfare has always been measured against a context that is Rome-centric. Added to the problems of Caesar’s literary needs are his training and experience as a soldier. Caesar belonged to a military tradition that had made Rome a powerful city-state and regional power through the conquest of other peoples. His commentaries, based on his campaign diaries in Gaul and Britain, provide a first-hand account of the people he was fighting and great detail on their fighting habits and social characteristics, but his work does have its limitations.

What were Caesar’s credentials as a source on Late Iron Age Gallic and British societies? Austin’s and Rankov’s survey on Roman military and political intelligence discusses some of the major historians from antiquity: Caesar, Tacitus, Dio Cassius, and Ammianus Marcellinus. They believe that practical experience was a prime qualification for a historian. As a soldier, Caesar falls

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5 Strabo. Geography: Volume I. Book 2. 1. 16-17. Proximity to Rome encouraged understanding. The ultimate example of this attitude being the far off island of Ierne, described as ‘a wretched place to live in on account of the cold’ and ‘scarcely habitable’.


well within this category, yet while Austin and Rankov provide the qualification, they also offer a word of caution, that historians need ‘to be aware of the pressures on them of literary convention: historiography in antiquity was an art not a science.’\(^8\) Austin and Rankov argue that Caesar had the qualification of experience to be a valued source in researching the period, and Thomas Burns adds that Caesar, as a participant, qualifies as one of the ‘supposed eyewitnesses’ whose ‘testimonies certainly lend a personal touch and add human interest’, and he implies that Caesar is confirmed as a ‘truthful reporter’,\(^9\) but as noted Caesar presented only the Roman perspective.

While in Gaul, Caesar had a constant eye on what was happening politically in Rome, and how those in Rome viewed his actions. Romans were thus informed from his reports, *The Gallic War* (perhaps in instalments). In particular, he would have shaped his reports to the senate and the people to accommodate criteria for a triumph. Caesar wrote his commentaries through a tidy progression of annual campaigns from 58-52BC\(^{10}\), presenting a series of seemingly unrelated campaigns in his campaign diaries and senatorial reports. There was little time to fully explore the nuanced responses by Gauls and Britons or to engage in a detailed account of their political and social structures. Public and private knowledge of matters in Gaul would have put a limit to any large-scale dishonesty. From the perspective of military history, Caesar offers valuable information since he was a participant in Roman campaigns in Gaul and Britain, and the length of his command in Gaul gave him unparalleled access to Gallic and British communities, and despite Caesar spending only two seasons in Britain, he offers a wealth of information on the south-eastern Britons who fought him in 55 and 54.\(^{11}\)

Caesar’s terms for Gallic and British social and political characteristics are used in this study for reference, but scholars have questioned Caesar’s Gallic ethnography, highlighting the fact that Caesar used Latin terms and concepts to describe complex Gallic conditions.\(^{12}\) If we consider the depiction of Caesar’s

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8 Austin & Rankov. p 2.  
10 All remaining dates are BC unless stated.  
11 Caesar may have already gained intelligence on the Britons when they fought against him in Gaul (*Gallic War* 4.20).  
campaigns as a whole in a more critical light, it is clear that his accounts of Gallic and British warfare, Celtic war aims, tactics and criteria for success have been made ‘in absolutely Roman terms,’ and so Caesar provides one interpretative guide to assess the Gauls and Britons. This is not to say, however, that Caesar has no insight into Late Iron Age societies, because in fighting these people, Caesar provides details on how they fought and how he could defeat them, thus indirectly revealing the strategies and tactics used by his opponents. In summary, while limited, Caesar’s commentaries have added much information on the people of Late Iron Age Europe and stand as the major starting point in researching warfare in Late Iron Age Gaul and Britain.

**The need for a Gallic and British context**

Rawlings, when discussing conflict between Gauls and Romans, makes the point that ‘failures and shortcomings of the enemy [Gallic], have to be balanced against the military success [Roman], measured in Roman terms and perceptions’. Rawlings offers, as a case in point, Caesar’s account of his war against the Belgae in 57 (Gallic War 2.8-12). He suggests that the Belgae retreated after satisfying their war aims: to attack the Remi (a Belgic tribe who were supporting Caesar); to confront the Romans before Caesar had entered their territory; and then to withdraw homewards after Caesar’s failure to fight them. Caesar, however, followed up the Belgic withdrawal by attacking the various factions of the large Belgic confederation piecemeal, ultimately claiming victory. As Rawlings shows, the motivations for Belgic confederation, their actions, the final result and Caesar’s explanations may not be an accurate assessment of the outcome when placed in a Belgic context.

Further to this, Rawlings states that Caesar’s commentaries provide a picture of Gallic society and customs ‘in a way which would be intelligible to his audience and, as a Roman, inevitably and subconsciously imposed a Roman ideological perspective on his material.’ Thus Caesar was showing his audience a ‘typical’ Roman victory against a ‘typical’ Gallic enemy. For Caesar

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14 Rawlings. p. 171.
16 Caesar moves against the Suessiones, then the Bellovaci, the Ambiani, the Nervii (and their allies the Atrebates and Viromandui) before finishing off the Aduatuci (*BG* 2.11-33)
and his Roman audience this would have been fine, but we need to ask what the Gauls and Britons would have made of Caesar’s accounts. They may have recognised the military engagements but not understood the interpretations of their motives and actions found in his commentaries. Caesar’s accounts of the Gallic and British warfare, their war aims, tactics and criteria for success would have been made ‘in absolutely Roman terms.’¹⁸

Rawlings’ assessment of the Belgae in 57 is a step towards explaining the actions of the Belgic army, their possible war aims and the reasons for its withdrawal from the theatre. His assessment goes some way towards understanding Belgic warfare and their reasons for certain actions, as well as overcoming assumptions, such as the belief that the Gauls fought like the Romans and that their military thinking was the same as the Romans. Rawlings understands the importance of recognising that in commenting on Gallic (and British) warfare, Caesar only gives us ‘half the picture.’¹⁹ The Gallic armies that fought Caesar and those British mercenaries who had crossed over to the continent prior to 55 would have understood the elements of Roman battle. The styles of warfare seen by Rome and the people of Late Iron Age Europe were similar in many ways, different only in intent and style. State controlled war changed the scale not the structure of warfare.

Archaeology

Archaeology has become a valuable and complementary source in measuring Late Iron Age societies from the material evidence against the picture offered by the classical sources. One of the major issues concerning the use of archaeological evidence, however, is that any findings will be interpretive in nature, more often than not influenced by current or popular themes, ideas and theories or reflects rising national self-consciousness and can change as attitudes or understanding changes.²⁰ Errors in interpretation can be enormous.²¹ Despite these problems increased archaeological work has led to a wider understanding

¹⁹ Rawlings. p. 175.
²¹ Ross and Robins. p. 20.
of the people who left rich remains of lives lived thousands of years ago.\textsuperscript{22} Four hundred years of prehistoric study has made possible a reflection upon the literary evidence. This is because the material culture revealed by archaeology always plays an important role in understanding the structure of social relations and social change.\textsuperscript{23}

![Image of map of Gaul](image)

Figure: 1. The people of Gaul (From B. Cunliffe, 1988).

The diversity of Late Iron Age Gallic and British communities (See figure 1) meant that their styles of political, economic and social structures were varied, but there are generic characteristics that can be determined from the archaeological record. Some of these generic characteristics (such as weaponry) are uncontroversial. Others areas (such as leadership and the role of the druids) have left such scant material remains that it is only through interpretation of the remains, with a reliance on the written accounts, that even a vague understanding can be reached. But this still increases our understanding.

\textsuperscript{22} Cunliffe. 1974. p. xvii.

The archaeological evidence will be used alongside Caesar’s accounts of Gallic society and warfare to add to his interpretation. In this way we can clarify the picture of Gallic society and confirm Caesar’s accuracy or highlight his inadequate assessment of the Gauls. From this picture we can apply a comparison to Māori society.

**Comparative Anthropology**

A comparative approach adds a further dimension in this case since anthropological information on Māori society offers a wealth of information on societies in a similar state of political and military development of the Late Iron Age Celts. Let us consider examples where a comparative approach appears legitimate.

In AD1976 Fox compared British Iron Age hillforts with Māori pa of Aotearoa/New Zealand from an archaeological perspective. Since then, others have referred to Polynesian society (in passing) when looking at Iron Age societies. Webster has conducted several comparative studies where new world practices are considered to identify new questions about ancient practices. Following her example, this thesis will examine the characteristics of the Late Iron Age communities of Europe against the characteristics of the Māori of Aotearoa/New Zealand. New questions enable a fresh look at old subjects and help to break free from age old approaches.

Anthropological and historical approaches to research of Māori society has been conducted by academics, Māori and European, who have worked to expand the general knowledge of the political development of Māori society after contact with Europe, or have questioned the dominant interpretation of Māori warfare. A summary of Māori Custom Law by Durie for the Waitangi Tribunal set out a clear and concise account of Māori society and political structures, establishing a reference point in which to define aspects of Māori

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communities at the time of contact with Europe and beyond. The ‘history’ of nineteenth century warfare in Aotearoa/New Zealand has undergone change as scholars have challenged the accepted paradigms of colonisation and Māori response.

Belich, when describing the situation of Māori response to European military imperialism, notes that the European view dominated the historical record of a series of conflicts that took place in Aotearoa/New Zealand from the AD1840s to the Late 1870s. These accounts were ‘endorsed, repeated, and amplified until they became the dominant interpretation, the general rule which absorbed, replaced, or dominated the exceptions.’ Belich has questioned this interpretation and its dominance. Caesar’s Gallic War enjoys a comparable hold over the interpretation of the Late Iron Age Celts, their political and social systems, and the way they fought.

Ballara, in her work Taua, discusses inter-Māori warfare, recognising the importance of looking to the Māori to explain the wars that raged across Aotearoa/New Zealand in the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, putting these into a Māori context and questioning the accepted interpretations of conflict and contact.

Ballara’s attitude and approach to Māori warfare, by attempting to find the indigenous voice of those who survived the process of military imperialism, is at the root of this aspect of my study. And while Gallic and British voices can no longer be heard, there is a need to modify the dominant Roman “history” of Gaul and Britain. What links Late Iron Age and Māori people of these vastly different communities was the experience and realities of military imperialism and colonisation.

Accounts and interpretation of early New Zealand and Māori history suffered from the fact that most early European accounts of contact with Māori were written by Europeans whose observations and experiences reflected their

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30 Ballara stands out as a scholar who has written on the political development of the Iwi as the major corporate political body in modern Māori society. A. Ballara. Iwi: The Dynamics of Māori Tribal Organisation from C1769 to C1945. Wellington, Victoria University Press. 1998.
own attitudes, values, and spiritual and moral philosophies. In early accounts of inter-tribal warfare, certain practices, such as head-taking and cannibalism, were viewed as barbaric from the European perspective. Later accounts of conflict were again written for the readers and political officials in England, and for the colony, since they concerned the Crown and Māori. These portrayed the colonial and imperial troops in a positive light and demonstrated Māori failure measured against Imperial success, or in reverse, Māori success due to Imperial failings of command, equipment, and numerical inferiority. This constituted a distorted picture of reality because Victorians ‘could not allow for the possibility of indigenous people out-fighting and out-thinking British regular forces.’

Māori victories were either put down to temporary lapses in leadership or discipline by the Crown, superior Māori numbers, or they were simply omitted.

We need to challenge, for similar reasons, the same euro-centric dominance that exists for the series of wars that were fought between people of Late Iron Age Europe and Rome. Roman and Greek writers set the tone of interpretation, and analysis relied on those texts as models of Gallic and British society and of Gallic and British warfare. The written records were seen as the final authority, even to the extent of denying the value of archaeological evidence.

Belich sought to ‘explore the possibility that preconceptions systematically affect interpretation, in a particular intellectual context—that of the Victorian British—and a particular racial conflict—the New Zealand Wars.’ Belich lists inherited and perpetuated assumption as problematic in accepting the secondary sources writing about British victory over the Maori and it is the one-sided evidence that he questions. Concisely put, Māori commentaries and points of view have ‘often been forgotten when popular traditions and historians have cast their narrative nets.’ This was not necessarily a concerted effort on the part of Western or European commentators, and the problems of accessing Māori

33 D’Arcy. pp 117-118.
knowledge has come partly from the reluctance of Māori to share their knowledge with others.\textsuperscript{39} Ballara makes an important point, stressing the need to draw on indigenous histories to give an indigenous voice. While the Late Iron Age Celtic voice has been lost to us, it is possible to suppose, or at least try to compare their attitudes and responses to Caesar by referencing recent access to Māori accounts and examples of their reactions to military imperialism. The lack of cultural connectivity between Celtic and Māori societies is clear, but the experience of conquest by an imperial power and shared social structures allows for us to compare reactions to invasion.

**Chapter summary**

The first chapter (1) will consist of eight sections. The first section (1.1) will discuss what we know of the social and political structures of Gallic societies and how this shaped the organisational complexity of Late Iron Age Gauls and Britons. A brief account of Caesar’s ethnography will be provided to identify his simple assessment of Gallic society. This section also compares Gallic society with Māori society of nineteenth century Aotearoa/New Zealand, from which we can measure each Gallic society against the characteristics of the complex chiefdom or archaic state, as outlined by Malcolm Hamilton and Maria Hirszowicz.\textsuperscript{40} I will consider whether leadership amounted to a claimed monopoly of the legitimate use or threat of force. The chiefdoms and archaic states both relied on military power to sustain their survival, and I will discuss the phenomenon of the confederation and the use of mercenaries. These themes will establish the model for comparison between Māori and Late Iron Age Gallic and British societies, their social and political development and how this influenced their capabilities for war.

The second section of chapter one (1.2) is the substantive component to the thesis. It will start with be an overview of Gallic and Māori society. Section three (1.3) will discuss fission and its effect on those communities and the transition from chiefdom to state. Section four (1.4) will be an account of centralised authority within Late Iron Age communities, and will discuss the

\textsuperscript{39} Salmond 1993. p. 11. Māori historian Dr Monty Soutar makes the point that his iwi Ngati Porou are discussing the wars of the early eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on marae, largely in a Māori language format. Q and A session New Zealand Military History conference Tutu Te Puehu (2011).

\textsuperscript{40} M. Hamilton. & M. Hirszowicz. *Class and Inequality: Comparative Perspectives.* Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf. 1991.
Māori concepts of *mana* (authority) and *tapu* (sacred mandate), within the context of leadership and chieftainship. The fifth section (1.5) will review the characteristics of a ruling group with distinct status positions so that we may consider who the people of influence and leadership were among the Gauls and Māori. From this we can identify the nuances of Gallic and British leadership. Continuing the survey of Gallic and Māori society, section six (1.6) will look at the common folk within the political and social environment.

The next section seven (1.7), will address the making of alliances and the mechanisms to do so in Gallic and Māori society. Section eight of chapter one (1.8) will discuss the concept of territorial sovereignty. The importance of the Gallic *oppida*, British hillforts and Māori pa will be assessed within the context of how of Gallic, British and Māori communities could gain wealth and power from their land. The concepts of *mana whenua* (land) and *mana tangata* (people) provided a widely accepted set of protocols for land use, and this will be discussed in the context of understanding land use in Iron Age Europe.

The remaining chapters of the thesis will follow the chronology established in Caesar’s *Gallic War* in order, as each campaigning year generally deals with people in different regions of Gaul. The purpose of this thesis is not to fill all the gaps or to explain inconsistencies in Caesar’s assessment of Gallic society but to stand as a starting point, encouraging further study with an alternative model. These chapters will be case studies and in no way exhaustive in their assessments. The information from Caesar, as well as archaeology, anthropology and evidence from Māori society will be used to determine the regional variations in political systems and how this may have shaped regional response. Each of these chapters will be broken into six divisions. The first will identify where each grouping was located. The next will assess the socio-political organisation of each regional group drawing on the archaeological evidence. The third division will summarise Caesar’s interaction with each group from his *Gallic War*. The fourth will measure each Gallic group comparing it with Māori society to add to our understanding of the political and social structure set out by Caesar. The fifth division examines Caesar’s evidence to discuss Gallic warfare making account of the comparative material to critique his assessment. The last will look at Caesar’s evidence and Gallic response again drawing on the comparative model to review Caesar’s interpretation and depiction of Gallic society.
Caesar’s depictions of his campaigns of 58 are used as the basis of two chapters (2 and 3) since Caesar introduces in this year two major Gallic groupings, the Helvetii and the Aedui. Chapter Two will assess Caesar’s first campaign in Gaul against the Helvetii in 58. Caesar’s commentaries show the Helvetii at a time of crisis, struggling to hold on to a political system of archaic statehood in the face of a major threat from its previous autocratic style of leadership. This chapter will compare the Helvetii to Māori in the context of emigration and centralised authority. I will also take the opportunity to discuss the concepts of civil and military leadership among the Helvetii.

Chapter Three will assess the Aedui for their political structure, leadership and military response to Caesar. Are the Aedui portrayed differently to other nations by Caesar? The leadership within the Aedui will be discussed, and the impact instability of leadership had on this people’s ability to support the Romans. I will also examine what difficulties arose in the Aedui supporting Caesar against other Belgic people. I will ask what a comparison with Māori society and the concept of kupapa Māori, or those who fought alongside the Crown, can add to determine Aeduan motivations.

Chapter Four assesses the political and social organisation of the Belgae, a large group of people who made up the confederation which fought against Caesar in 57. The assessment will be taken both from Caesar’s view and that of the archaeological record. The Belgae were located within a large northern European transition zone spanning the Rhine to the east and the Channel to the west and this chapter will consider the geographical location of Belgica and whether the concepts of core/periphery influence their response to Belgica and the Belgae. Contact between Belgica and the Britons suggest that the Belgae had a western focus, and we need to assess how this influenced their political development and military response. The nature of the Belgic confederation will be measured against Māori society, and kin-based war-parties will be discussed. The Remi offer a case where, despite claims of kin-ties to most of the Belgic communities, they sided with Caesar, remaining loyal to him throughout his conquest of Gaul. This chapter will ask why did the Remi do this and what influences determined this move?

Chapter Five considers the campaigns of 56 in western and southern Gaul. Since Caesar delegated command in different theatres to his lieutenants, the chapter is broken into two sections; the first (5.1) considering the Armorican
Gauls. How did the coastal terrain and strength in maritime capabilities shape their response to invasion? In the Armorican communities, was there a western/eastern division within the context of social and political development, and in attitudes towards Caesar? The importance of trade among Māori society, and war as a way to protect vital trade networks when threatened by Crown policy will be assessed to reflect on Armorican interaction with the Romans in 57 and 56.

The second part of chapter five examines the Aquitani, the third ethnic group that Caesar identified as making up the population of Gaul (*Gallic War* 1.1). The Aquitani were well placed to influence the trade routes between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, while also sitting close to the land route between Italy and Iberia. They also sat astride the passes through the Pyrenees. Why did some Aquitani stand aloof from open war, while others drew on people beyond Gaul to fight the Romans? Kinship will be considered and the influence social and political development had on their reactions. The style of leadership and tactics will be assessed focusing on the links between Northern Iberia and Aquitania.

In 55 and 54, Caesar crossed the English Channel to fight against the Britons (Chapter Six). South-eastern Britain was part of the northern European transition zone where movement of people, goods and ideas was in constant flow. The social structure of the south-eastern Britons shared the same characteristics of the complex chiefdoms of Gaul, yet their political and military organisation differed and was more successful against the Romans. When the Britons served under the supreme leadership of Cassivellaunus, Caesar struggled to combat the indirect tactics of the Britons and the chariot that dominated the battlefield. What was it that enabled Cassivellaunus to succeed in Britain? The concept of the delegation of leadership was seen in Belgica and Armorica, but we need to assess how effective this was in Britain. This chapter will ask how Cassivellaunus was able to control his political environment.

Chapter Seven will make an assessment of military activities in the winter of 54/53. The people of north-eastern Gaul presented Caesar with a serious challenge. The wider social and political dynamics of the north-eastern Gauls will be measured and I will ask whether the success of the British campaigns changed tactics and strategies in Gaul. This chapter will also discuss why the rebelling Gauls were unable to benefit from early success against the Romans. I
will ask what effects the Roman strategy of *vastatio* had on the military capability of north eastern Gaul. A comparison will be made to the tactics of Crown and colonial forces in Taranaki during the mid-to-late 1860s. Gallic strategies in 54-3 will be compared to those used in earlier years.

Chapter Eight undertakes an analysis of the revolt of the Gauls in the year 52. Issues of supreme leadership will be discussed and the need for a clear strategy to fight Caesar. I will reflect on the leadership style and strategic approach of Cassivellaunus, while measuring the revolt of 54/3. The support from the wider Gallic community and the events during campaign of 52 allows us to ask whether the druids had an impact on the events of 52. For this I will compare what Caesar wrote with the information we have on the Māori *tohunga* who occupied a similar social and political status as the druids in Māori society.
Chapter One:
The Social and political development of Gallic and Māori Society

This chapter is a comparative introduction to the Late Iron Age Celts and Māori people to highlight their shared political and social characteristics and how their development determined military response. We can better appreciate military responses if we understand how people developed politically

1.1. Caesar and Book Six

Julius Caesar has provided a very simple model of Gallic leadership in Book six, and while work has been done on Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic leadership,¹ further analysis is required to gain a deeper understanding of his interpretation of Gallic political systems, since Gallic leadership was dynamic and defied straightforward analysis. To simplify matters, Caesar also related Gallic and German components to Roman concepts.

In Book Six, Caesar stated that Gallic society was factional, divided down every state, canton, district and household (6.11). Caesar also identified men of importance listing the druids (druides²) and knights (equites) who held their positions because of ‘definite account and dignity’ (Gallic War 6.13). In assessing the pre-eminence of the druids and knights, Caesar was attempting to provide a picture to the people in Rome of the holders of power in Gaul (6.13).

The druids will be discussed in detail in chapter eight, but we need to briefly consider them here to establish Caesar’s view on those people who lead Gallic society. Caesar uses three chapters in Book Six to describe the Gallic druids (Gallic War 6.13-15), and he states that druids did not exist in the lands of the Germans (6.21).³ They were concerned with divine worship and sacrifice, and they decided issues of debate, judged rewards and penalties, and druids also had the power and authority to ban anyone from sacrifice (6.13). There was an arch-druid whose position was contested by rivals drawn from among leading druids (Gallic War 6.13). During voting fighting could break out (6.13). Druids meet

³ The term druidum is derived from the Latin Druidae, druidarum and druids.
once a year in the lands of the Carnutes (believed the centre of Gaul and a sacred/consecrated spot) and those with disputes gathered to put forward their cases and would obey the findings and judgments of druids (6.13). Druids trained many young men (Gallic War. 6.13), learning druidic lore for as long as twenty years (6.14). Druids taught through oral transmission but were known to use Greek letters (6.14).

Druidism allegedly came to Gaul from Britain and those keen to study druidism deeper went there to do so (6.13). Caesar provides us with a clear and concise account. The druids were a class of leadership that seems to have impressed Caesar.

In military terms, Caesar believed that it was from the upper reaches of society that the war leaders were drawn. These leading men are referred to throughout Caesar’s commentaries, and warfare was a means from which their reputations for leadership would have come. Caesar listed great prestige as a prerequisite for leadership (Gallic War 6.11). The Gallic leaders of factions held judgment over their lesser followers, and this institution existed from ancient times as a means to protect those under their command and did so, Caesar claims, as a means to prevent oppression of the weak by the strong (6.11). Leadership was also a position of service and protection for the communities aligned to men of influence and power (6.11).

For Caesar, the major class of men comprised equites, ‘knights’ (Gallic War 6.15). Caesar reports that whenever there was a war (which happened annually before 58), equites would engage in fighting (6.15). Caesar stated that when called to war, the importance of some leaders was judged by the number of liegemen (ambacti) they could attract. The ability to draw such numbers to them depended on their birth and resources, and these at least constituted two sources of influence and power available to Gallic leadership (Gallic War

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4 Perhaps the druid council was a place for inter-Gallic issues to be discussed with local disputes being dealt with “in house”.
5 Caesar’s picture of druidic power and position may have been an attempt to compare this Gallic group with the priests embedded in Roman society.
6 Diodorus wrote of the Celts that they bring to battle ‘their free men to serve them, choosing them out from among the poor, and these attendants they use in battle as charioteers and as shield bearers.’ Book 5, 29, 2.
7 Equites, meaning cavalry or order of knights in Caesar’s time comprised the Roman senatorial class with a property qualification of over 400,000 sesterces. Dunham, p. 113.
8 See Helvetii fighting the Germani, Aedui/Sequani/Arverni, Cassivellaunus and Trinovantes.
9 In 52 Vercingetorix summoned his dependants of whom Caesar labelled some as a levy of beggars and outcasts (7.4).
Birth and resources were the prerequisite of leadership and those with a large number of liegemen or *ambacti* held great power and influence among their community (6.15). At the bottom of Gallic society were those who made up the common population. Caesar describes the Gallic free or common people in generic terms as being regarded as almost slaves, saying they never venture to do anything on their own initiative and that most of them are crushed by debt or heavy taxes or the oppression of more powerful men (*Gallic War* 6.13). This in part contradicts his observations that the factional nature of Gallic society was seen as a means to prevent oppression (6.11).

Caesar claims that some Gallic *civitates* exploited a form of censorship ‘to greater advantage’, in that they had a law that any information concerning the people must be reported to the magistrate and to none other, allegedly to avoid panic from false rumour (*Gallic War* 6.20). He adds that magistrates controlled what information was released to the public and forbade speaking on stated questions, except in a *concilium* (6.20).

In Book Six Caesar describes a model of society that was deeply factional and clearly hierarchical where the masses were crushed by debt imposed on them by ‘great’ men whom Caesar equated to the knightly *equites* of Rome. In Caesar’s eyes these men ruled with unquestioned autocratic power, although his understanding of Gallic society shows a contradiction, as he noted that Gallic leaders were also responsible to those they allegedly oppressed. However it was clear that wealth and prestige were prerequisites for leadership. Officiating over all the Gauls were the druids, although Caesar does not discuss this group at any other time in his commentaries. The validity of the group Caesar called druids will be discussed in chapter eight, but their absence in the balance of Caesar’s commentaries does not mean that they were not present in Gaul.

While Caesar’s interpretation is informative within the Roman context, it does not provide a definitive understanding of Celtic/Gallic leadership. Book Six also fails to explain Gallic military response to Roman invasion, but it does provide a sound point of reference. Throughout the balance of his commentaries

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10 Caesar does not list female leaders in battle but Boudicca and Cartumandua are known in Britain.

11 The service of the *ambacti* is some-what higher in the relationship ladder than lord and client (*Gallic War* 6.15 fn 1).
Caesar described a multi-layered and complex environment of leadership and authority.

**The Classifications of the Chiefdoms and State**

Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society and political structures is limited in providing a patent portrayal of Gallic political leadership and response. To this end Māori society will be compared with Late Iron Age Celtic society to add to Caesar’s picture of these people and to archaeological knowledge. First, however, we need to establish what the basic social and political structure of Gallic and Māori society looked like and how this influenced and determined the way these people fought.

Were Celtic and Māori societies based on variants of the prototypical, open or stratified chiefdoms, or on the archaic state? The criteria for both the chiefdoms and the archaic state are seen in the forms of centralised authority, territorial sovereignty, positions of status within a ruling group and the claimed monopoly of the legitimate use, or threat of force. The difference between the two forms of political development lies in where power and authority were placed and in how much influence the general population had over decision-making.

Late Iron Age Europeans and Māori share common characteristics that influenced a similarity in the ways they developed socially and politically and how they responded to military imperialism. What will follow is a brief survey of the social mechanisms of Iron Age and Māori society to provide a comparative context in which to assess their response to external threat.

It is my contention that there were levels within the spectrum of ‘chiefdoms’ (prototypical, open and stratified chiefdom) within Gaul by 58, but these forms of political organisation were not linear but cyclical. Groups could and did move between these types of chiefdoms to meet situations as they arose. This cycle between the development of the chiefdom and the complex chiefdom was observed by Caesar in Gallic and British societies. He just happened to encounter Gaul and south-eastern Britain during a period of social and political

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12 The two major social and political societies have been identified by the work of Malcolm Hamilton and Maria Hirszowicz. *Class and Inequality: Comparative Perspectives*. Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf. 1991.

13 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 75. They use the term centralised government.


15 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. pp.70-71.
development, and he disrupted it. Gallic and British chiefdoms sometimes responded to stress by splitting (fission), as seen in the power relationship in the decentralised structure of the confederations (a military component of the chiefdom) of the Belgae and Armoricans, where leadership was fragmented and temporary, to deal with a current circumstance or threat (*Gallic War* 2.4, 3.17).

This picture of dynamism and complexity in late Iron Age Gaul is seen in a region stretching from the northern Rhine incorporating north eastern Belgica and south-eastern Britain. Caesar provided an initial ‘snap-shot’ of his observations based on his interpretation, but this developed as he spent more time among the Gauls increasing the knowledge of the Gauls. A similar initial view of Māori society was seen initially that grew into a clearer picture of dynamism and social and political complexity in Māori communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand at the time of European contact. Just as Caesar established a structured system of Gallic society in Book Six, European observers classified Māori society within the framework of whanau (family), hapū (clan), iwi (tribe) and waka (canoe, tradition), led at each corresponding level by the kaumatua (elder), rangatira (chief) and ariki (paramount chief). This superficial classification has been revised and the hapū (or clan) has been identified as the main corporate group in Māori society. Eddie Durie categorised the upper reaches of Māori leadership into four groups, tohunga (priest), ariki, rangatira and kaumatua (elder) and these could be variously combined into one person. These titles were more descriptive of the person than of any set class, and within Māori communities there was social mobility for most members. The dynamism and ability to change in the face of internal and external pressures is remarkable, and this forms the basis for comparing the Māori of Aotearoa/New Zealand with the Gallic and British people of late Iron Age Europe.

The two systems, the chiefdoms and the archaic state, had similar characteristics: a centralised form of authority, territorial sovereignty, status positions within a ruling group, and the claimed monopoly of the legitimate use,
or threat, of force. Where the two systems differed was in the character of each element. The archaic state could hold funds in its own right, rather than funds being held by a chief; officials were evident as appointments independent of any one individual; and a hint of bureaucracy can be seen in the form of written records. Coinage might be evident, however, in both forms of political authority, but the sanctioned minting of coins is more likely to have come from a centralised authority and not an individual, when such state sponsored coinage was used to fund mercenary armies in times of conflict, all action was directed from quasi-national or ever urbanised centres. The political structures of both the chiefdom and state had distinct characteristics of hierarchy that reflected an ongoing need to temporarily solve the issues and problems of maintaining order. This shows two separate aspects of social and political developments and the location of power.

Māori society was dynamic and showed regional variations within a set of shared eastern Polynesian cultural characteristics. Late Iron Age European society was also fluid and dynamic with the Gauls and Britons showing variations within the continent, while also sharing social characteristics with peoples across the Channel and beyond. Hillforts/oppida and pa highlight a similar organisational complexity that Iron Age Europeans and Māori developed to keep operating together (most of the time) to common goals, and it is now appropriate to classify the people under study within a theoretical framework.

Polynesian society was based on hereditary chiefs classified as ‘prototypical’, ‘open’ and ‘stratified’. The prototypical chiefdoms were characterised by a system of graded ranks inherited by the male line and strong kinship. Open chiefdoms were directed by male descent, but this was weaker...
than in prototypical chiefdoms, and status was achieved rather than determined by birth. Stratified chiefdoms had kinship as the basis for political organisation, giving way to territorial and residential criteria, with marked inequality where society had distinct strata. This was a practice evident in Māori society.

The rise of stratified chiefdoms came from the contradiction between the principles of hereditary or graded ranks and the natural tendency for individuals to improve their position (dissatisfaction and status rivalry). Rivalry for chiefly power was pursued through warfare by warrior leaders who moved to overthrow the chief, and then become chiefs themselves, although the overthrown chiefs maintained their prestige and noble status. The new chief would try to attain the same status by altering his genealogy and, therefore, linking himself and his family to rank. While the open and stratified society saw the chiefs become powerful enough to take land, or more the control of its (through warfare), resources and effective exploitation was central to the power of the chief and their communities. Māori leadership and political organisation was a unique variation of the Polynesian system that had the characteristics of the open chiefdom. This aspect of Māori society will be discussed below in the context of Gaul, but by the time of contact and the incorporation of the global trading systems, the majority of Māori communities across Aotearoa/New Zealand appeared to have been open chiefdoms and shared the four defining characteristic of chiefdoms listed above.

In early 19th Century Aotearoa/New Zealand there were no overall institutions to enforce obedience, and the nature of Māori leadership was a mix of coercion/persuasion or the voluntary acknowledgement of customary rights of others depending on the balance of power between kin-groups. A Māori war-leader was chosen, among other things, for his ability in war and success in

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27 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 70.
28 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 70.
29 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 71.
30 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 71.
32 See concepts of *mana whenua* below.
gathering mana, prestige, and wealth for themselves and their followers.  

There were some areas where political development took the form of archaic statehood. The kingitanga was one example. These were seen in the existence of a centralised government (a more appropriate definition for Māori would be centralised authority), territorial sovereignty, a ruling group with a distinct status position and an accepted monopoly of the legitimate use, or threat, of force. Māori society had the characteristics of open chiefdoms and some communities were developing beyond this with the impetus of European trade and exposure to and incorporation into the global economy.

Many pre-state societies have been defined as a body of people sharing common descent, a common language and customs, and unlike the modern nation, ‘are not united under a sovereign governing authority, nor are the boundaries of the whole thus clearly and politically determined’ but who share the control of their own extensive territory. The pre-state societies therefore, consist of differing groups or clans who exchange marriage partners and hold customary title over land, not necessarily exclusive ownership, and while the clan hold a tighter bond than the broader ‘tribe’, within their and associated clans, they can recognise their place within the wider symbolic unit. Prehistoric Māori had an organisational complexity that can be termed ‘tribal’ which consists of hundreds or thousands of people who usually lived in settled communities.

Caesar opens his Gallic War with the bold statement that this region was divided between three major ethnic blocs (Gallic War 1.1). He also discusses the Gauls in terms of large states or civitates working at the ‘tribal’ political level, but he was not able to discern the nuances of smaller clan politics and identity that are characterised by the chiefdoms of Gaul. Any site viewed in isolation or

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36 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 75.
within a general principle of classification might lose its uniqueness. Diversity in evidence has encouraged archaeologists to reassess universal approaches when naming groups of people who, on the surface, seemed to share material or cultural aspects. Caesar’s three Gauls is a good starting point in looking at the political map of northern Iron Age Europe. The simplistic classification in itself suggests that Caesar could distinguish ethnographic variations and diversity. That these people had connections with groups outside Caesar’s distinct ethnographic, cultural and physical boundaries gives rise to the obvious conclusion that Late Iron Age Europe was more mobile, diverse and complex than Caesar claimed.

For the people of Gaul, Caesar gives us ethnic names such as Belgae, Aquitani and the Galli (or Celtae) (Gallic War 1.1 see figure 2). These names certainly make for clarity when dealing with the large number of peoples in Gaul, but his terminology may overshadow smaller groupings. For example the Helvetii had four cantons including the Tigurini; the Aeduui appear to have had leadership over an allied people, the Ambarri Aedui; while the western coastal Gauls were defined as ‘Armoricans’ but included smaller groups such as the Veneti and Coriosolites.

In Gaul and Britain, do the ‘tribal’ names allocated by the Roman reflect a genuine Gallic or British political landscape? Coinage has provided evidence to support ‘tribal’ titles given to groups of people in certain areas of Gaul and

44 The tribal names we have are essentially based on the administration boundaries created by the Roman colonisation of what became provinces of the Empire. See T. Moore. ‘Detribalizing the later prehistoric past: Concepts of tribes in Iron Age and Roman studies.’ In Journal of Social Archaeology. Volume 11, Number 3. 2011. p. 336.
Britain by the Romans, but the Gallic example tends to point to coinage being issued by individuals or magistrates rather than by a people or a region. This suggests that the Gauls had powerful leaders at the time of Caesar’s invasion.

Figure 2: Gallic Regional Divisions (From B. Cunliffe. 1988)

The Māori example prior to European contact strongly points to autonomous functionality at clan level, and so this system was probably in place in Gaul and Southern Britain at the time of the Roman invasion. The major authority for the direction of people and resources, therefore, in building hillforts, conducting warfare or promoting political development, was no doubt the clan which must

45 Cunliffe. 2010, Creighton. 2000. Also check coinage for Gallic and British peoples in the Celtic Coin Index www.celticcoins.ca and www.finds.org.uk
have operated as a loose entity (and which the Romans later utilised for administrative purposes), the ‘tribes’ represented a clear administrative entity for Caesar, but the ‘clan’ more credibly satisfied the functional reality for the people of Late Iron Age Gaul.

It has been argued that during the Iron Age the power of the chief may have developed locally but was used in the wider community, for example in the construction of hillforts, but the Māori experience suggests that it was at the *hapū* or clan level where practical autonomous authority lay. Evidence of the autonomous status of the *hapū* can be seen in Ballara’s observations that even ‘minor sub-*hapū*, depending on the nature of their relationship with the major chief, could choose whether to respond to their summons to war or labour’, although adding that ‘the consequences of refusal could be deadly.’ Autonomous power was a prerequisite for localised power. The local chief, not the major or paramount chief, exerted control over the wider community, drawing that power from family position or through gift-giving and feasting, a process of social exchange supported by wealth gathered in war or possibly from excess food production and trade.

The power of the *rangatira* in Māori society was found in the supervision of a building, food-production, planting and warfare. This was the domain of the *hapū* until the mid-19th century. Members of a *hapū* would have developed an awareness of their *iwi* status when confronting other non-related *iwi*. Within an *iwi* the *hapū* name would be recognisable, which may not have been the case from the perspective of other *iwi* units, but the wider *iwi* connection possibly would be. Octavius Hadfield, a missionary to Aotearoa/New Zealand, writing on Māori government systems, said that when ‘a man is within the territory of his tribe, he distinguishes himself by the name of the “*Hapū*” to which he belongs; but when among foreign tribes he calls himself by the name of his tribe; his “*Hapu*” being unknown to foreign tribes.’

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49 Ballara. 1998. p. 179. For the Gauls an incentive to gather for war came from a custom Caesar wrote of in which the last man to arrive to a muster was publicly tortured and killed. BG. 5, 56.
The Māori *iwi* did not become a corporate group until the 19th Century after contact with Europeans. A decline in migratory movement meant that the importance placed on *hapū* as the main identity changed. The reduction of warfare saw a reversion to more settled living patterns, and changes in economic conditions also disrupted old traditional communities while creating others. The introduction of Christianity also saw a change in settlement patterns as warfare decreased and communities became more stable and secure. Contact with *Pākeha* and Crown administration also meant that Māori society changed from focusing on the *hapū* to the bigger *iwi* out of necessity and in particular, the Land Court process was a powerful influence ‘contributing to the loss of identity of small *hapū* and to tribal formation in the late 19th century.’

Within Maori social structure, *iwi* was a symbolic and static identity that the individual *whanau* (family) remained connected to, linking its origin through *whakapapa* (genealogy). Of a more fluid but functional nature was the *hapū*. Ballara says that *hapū* formation was a result of ‘the natural increase of extended families or *whanau*’ that grew to a number where they could exercise strong political independence. A name of a *hapū* was usually derived from its founding member. The examples of the Māori prior to European contact strongly point to *hapū* with autonomy. This would mean that circles of kinship would spread throughout an area but with obligations and connections becoming diluted over distance. Also, larger military contingencies would be problematic in organising and hard to maintain without strong centralised authority. States like the Helvetii managed to keep their large group together through strong central leadership, but the chiefdoms were independently aligned through kinship or by agreement. This can be seen in the confederations formed by the Belgae, Armoricans,

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56 Whakapapa is the ‘genealogical descent of all living things from the gods to the present time.’ J. Barlow. *Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture*. Auckland, Oxford University Press. 1994. p. 172-3.
57 Ballara. 1998. p. 164. ‘By the 18th century, through the ongoing process of intermarriage many *hapū* could not regard themselves belonging to any one *iwi*; they had descent lines from several.’ p. 169.
Aquitani and the Britons and reflect the situation found in Aotearoa/New Zealand where the monopoly of force lay under the authority of the *hapū*.

**A claimed monopoly of the legitimate use or threat of force.**

Warfare and the ability to defend one’s community was a basic factor for group survival, but how did political and social development have an impact on warfare in communities of the Late Iron Age? The centralised nature of an archaic state may have controlled and limited military action, while the chiefdom, due to its limited centralisation and fragmented nature, meant that military action was more common as chiefs fought each other. Each group (within a decentralised confederation) would follow its leader, but local agendas would always be of major consideration.

The potential for better organised and widespread trade connections, and the importance for the archaic state to maintain them, meant that any political units would have had other means to avoid conflict or reconcile differences through negotiated peace. The ability to back up militarily any aggressive threat or action would have been vital to a community, chiefdom or state. From the outside, the chiefdoms would look warlike and disorganised, while the archaic state would have had the outward appearance of peace and regional control. Caesar is clear that the states in Gaul were capable of military action, and the centralised control of the Helvetii, Aedui, Remi and Arverni are evident.\(^{58}\) The characteristics of the archaic state included the monopoly of the threat or use of force, and archaic states were quite prepared to execute this power if their interests were threatened.

There were Māori customs (*tikanga*) that controlled the use of force. *Mana*, *tapu* and *utu* (reciprocation) was the means by which the use of force was mandated or restricted. In the use of force, there were expectations of response (*utu*) that were observed and understood by all Māori. Insult to the *mana* of an *ariki*, *rangatira* or *hapū* demanded swift response although *utu* could be carried over time. To make no response when insulted, however, was unacceptable. *Utu* was also the reciprocal response to an act of generosity.\(^{59}\) *Utu* could localise or expand conflict. The localisation would result from a need to prevent conflict.

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\(^{58}\) For example see *Gallic War* Books 1.4, 29, 7. 75 for the Helvetii, 1.18, 2.10, 7.75 for the Aedui, 2.6 for the Remi and multiple examples in Book 7 for the Arverni.

\(^{59}\) Ballara. 2003. p. 82. Cunliffe describes this as a “potlatch” arrangement in Gallic society where slaves were traded for wine. 1988. p. 88.
spreading across networks of inter-related whanau (family) and hapū. Acts of utu beyond the whanau and hapū would potentially draw wide support to act against other iwi groupings or hapū.

Confederations

A major form of military response among the Gauls to Caesar’s invasion was a Confederation, and this action reflected the military capabilities and political structures of the Gallic chiefdoms. These formations were the manifestations of the monopoly of, or the threat of the use of, force. It is clear that the Gauls, Belgae, Aquitani and Britons developed large military confederations to resist Caesar \( (Gallic War 2.1, 3.9, 17, 23, 5.11) \). Caesar’s observations suggest that there were pre-existing political links and arrangements that underwrote these relationships. Kin-links, patronage and exchanging of hostages or oaths must have been natural aspects of Gallic and British politics, and they would have been used in forming political and military confederation, which in turn would have acted as mechanisms to unite. Perhaps the act of hostage-exchange bound these political alliances together in the case of those without kin or client relationships \( (6.2, 7.5) \). 60

The Helvetii were not a confederation of diverse groups, but a federation made up of four cantons whom Caesar viewed as one corporate group \( (Gallic War 1.4) \), and who collectively planned for emigration. The Belgae, Armoricans and Britons formed confederations for more overt military reasons often from diverse autonomous groups. Caesar states that the Belgic confederation split up, each nation looked to its own internal defence once word reached them that the Aedui were raiding their homelands \( (Gallic War 2.10) \). The Trinovantes left the British confederation when it seemed an opportune time to do so \( (5.20) \), possibly detaching others in the process \( (5.21) \). These activities show that confederations were fluid in nature, and it suggests that each member had the right to withdraw if circumstances changed. Considering that oaths would have been exchanged at the formation of any confederation \( (7.2) \), its breaking may not have been a decision taken lightly but still managed in a way that was legitimate.

Mercenaries.

Another manifestation of warfare was the presence of mercenaries in Gaul. There is evidence in Caesar’s commentaries and through the distribution of

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60 Caesar does not discuss or possibly did not recognise the foster relationship among the Gauls.
coinage to support the notion that Gauls actively sought military aid from beyond their local communities. By 58 this was becoming problematic, in that large groups with military power became involved in Gallic politics and this contributed to instability (Gallic War 1.31, 32).

Caesar makes reference to men he calls desperadoes, brigands, exiles and condemned persons (Gallic War 3.17, 5.55, 7.3), but these men gathered around leaders who resisted Caesar, and they were not simply outlawed peasants, since their ability to bear arms suggests that they may have been professional or semi-professional warriors. They might also have represented war-bands who had kin obligations, or men who, finding themselves leaderless after battle, sought out and followed any who raised a standard to fight the Romans.

Of Celtic warriors, Chapman believes that intra-group violence ‘was a structurally consistent feature of their social organisation’, and that it was a system whereby young warriors were encouraged, when time allowed, making ‘forays against the neighbours who would then respond in kind’. This intra-group conflict has been classified as ‘a continual state of war’ (Gallic War 5.11), but this suggests that Iron Age societies were on a permanent war footing. Caesar’s ‘continual state of war’ is a theme consonant with that of other classical writers in describing the Celts as ‘war mad’, but who also observed that the Celts sustained war at a level comparable to the Romans. This is, of course, reflecting on Gallic warfare in a Roman context, but it needs to be seen in its own context, of social and political development and military response.

Caesar’s observation of Gallic society fits within the characteristics of the chiefdom. These characteristics were seen in an environment of dynamism and de-centralised social and political groupings. In Māori society the hapū was the main corporate body where power and leadership resided in a political environment that was de-centralised. This de-centralised feature of the chiefdom seen within Māori society and placed within a Gallic context could broaden the

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63 L. H. Keeley War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage. (Oxford: Oxford University Press Inc, 1996) 72 describes the ability of undisciplined barbarian hosts of Celts and Germans defeating Roman legions as an example of primitive warriors versus civilised soldiers. At first glance this would appear an accepted definition, but I assert that the actions of the Briton against Caesar (which Keeley lists) are quite removed from the level of primitive warfare. Guerrilla warfare would be a more appropriate definition for British warfare in the 1st Century B.C. Chapman, “The Celts,” 181 crudely likens Celtic warfare with the cricket season as opposed to warfare in the modern sense.

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scope for understanding Gallic military organisation which featured the forming of confederations. It can help explain that Gallic confederations were not designed for lengthy campaigning as each group would make decisions based on local considerations, decisions that could possibly be influenced by the wider group: quite different to the decision-making of the archaic states of Gaul. The clans of Iron Age Gaul, when placed within the political and social context of the chiefdoms suggests that the wider tribal landscape set down by Caesar does not reflect a truly accurate picture of Gallic society or explain the ease in which he defeated these people.

1.2. An Overview of the Characteristics of Gallic and Māori society

Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic kin-groupings identifies two broad stages of social development, the chiefdom and the archaic state. The impact of Roman expansion and influence in southern and central Gaul has been interpreted as a situation developing by the move of some Gallic societies towards more ‘urbanised’ centres, the alienation of democratic heterarchial power relations and encouragement in an acceptance of a more autocratic hierarchy.64

Figure: 3. The states of Gaul (From B. Cunliffe, 1988).

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64 Crumley. 1996. p. 28. Crumley defines heterarchy as a system where elements are unranked or ranked in a variety of ways depending on conditions. p. 30.
The Gallic kin-groups identified as ‘archaic states’ encompassed areas controlled by the Helvetii, the Aedui, the Arverni, the Sequani, the Bituriges and possibly the Belgic Remi.65 Other probable archaic states included the Pictones, the Lemovices and the Ligones (See Figure 3).66 As kin-groupings in Gaul developed from chiefdoms to archaic states, (not to be confused with or measured against the Mediterranean city-state),67 Gallic peoples also developed the characteristics of the archaic state. The large blocs comprising the Belgae, Armoricans, Aquitani and Britons, however, displayed the characteristics of the chiefdom. Whereas chiefdoms allowed for their growing communities to split, the states were political entities that had no room to divide.

1.3. Fission

One way that Gallic society reacted to internal and external pressures was through fission, the splitting of the corporate group. This was an alternative political and social development to forming a state in Late Iron Age Gaul, which Collis describes by the term ‘chiefdoms’, as they were ‘organised in a social hierarchy or pyramid structure based on lineage. Social status is inherited, and power based upon authority’.68 These led to the ‘complex chiefdom’ and from here, to ‘archaic state’.69 An ‘archaic state’ developed when the ‘chiefdom’ experienced population pressure but could not ease this pressure for geographical or political reasons. Otherwise the ‘chiefdom’ would simply separate and develop into two entities by ‘fission’.70 If the ‘chiefdom’ had no way of splitting, then it would develop into more centralised ‘archaic state’. In Gaul, for example, there was ‘fission’, as we see in the case of the Remi and Suessiones who had, in the distant past, been one entity sharing law, custom and government but, by Caesar’s time, constituted different political groupings (Gallic War 2.3). The environment and the geography may have been conducive to this group splitting at the chiefdom stage, but it appears that the Remi had moved even further, towards a form of archaic statehood. In the case of the

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65 Cunliffe. 1988. pp. 95-96. Also see fig. 38.
67 J. Collis., says that the Tribal states of the Celts were certainly very different from the city states of the Mediterranean. The European Iron Age. London, B.T. Batsford Ltd. 1994 p. 527.
70 Fission is a characteristic of pre-state societies and highlights the ease in which these societies fragmented under the right set of circumstances. Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 76.
chiefdom, power remained in individual hands, and fission would maintain this system. In the archaic state, power resided within the mandate of an elected body.

The Celtic Agrarian model

For the chiefdoms of Late Iron Age Gaul, power and wealth came from the land. Nash has identified an agrarian model of land exploitation for power and wealth attainment within Iron Age Gallic and British communities, encompassing two models of organisation, the ‘pure’ and the ‘warrior’ agrarian classifications, which outlines how Gallic and British communities responded to internal and external pressure, and the effects this had on political development.

The ‘pure’ classification is characterised by the gathering of surplus stock from free peasants and dependent labour, such as agricultural produce, raw materials and finished goods, to be used for trade. The ‘warrior’ classification relied on a compatriot community to supply wealth in return for service in contractual or military relationships. Trade and service appeared to influence the political systems that arose. Communities either followed a kin-based structure or party-dominated system to utilise compatriot resource/surplus exploitation. Caesar would have understood both systems placed within a Roman context, and families are portrayed in his commentaries as a powerful factor in Gallic and British politics.

There has been a debate over whether the elite formation in the communities of European Iron Age came out of the control of domestically generated agrarian wealth or from the control of manufactured luxury items. It is possible those both were sources of power and, as outlined above, the gathering of wealth came through the exploitation of the common population.

The purely agrarian societies created a surplus that, through mainly kin-based networks and elite oversight, established a flow of wealth and power by

74 Dynastic rule and family politics will be discussed below.
importing and exporting.\textsuperscript{76} Raw materials would be traded for processed goods and luxury items that could be redistributed or traded onwards.\textsuperscript{77} Certain areas within this system were central to the movement of their own surplus and raw products, such as slaves, hides, metals and grains, into central Gaul and further onto the city states of the Mediterranean. In return, luxury items, such as wine and ‘workshop’ table ware, would flow back along these trade routes.\textsuperscript{78} Wealth and power would be developed locally but through the manipulation of the surplus gained by the labour of the common folk and the redistribution of luxury goods traded for that surplus. Coinage may have developed from a need to standardise wealth exchange within some of the core communities. The agrarian model suggests both the control of surplus and of luxury items would have stimulated the rise of elite formations within Gallic society.

Warrior agrarian societies were limited by their environment and used their communities differently. Their agricultural base was at a subsistence level, and surplus crops were not sufficient for gaining wealth or power.\textsuperscript{79} The elite members of these communities instead interacted with weaker or stronger neighbours either through raiding the former to attain moveable wealth in the form of cattle or slaves, or by serving the latter as mercenaries. Wealth in the form of loot was then distributed among the compatriot communities, and power was gained and maintained through success in war.

These two systems had an impact on the forms of political and social development seen in Gaul at the time of Caesar’s invasion. Environment and the nature of exchange with internal parties determined the agrarian system found in Gaul, and the proximity to the Mediterranean placed demands on Gallic societies in the way they responded to these external partners and, in turn, the path of internal development.\textsuperscript{80}

As discussed above, in Māori society the \textit{rangatira} (chief) was reliant on the workforce and military strength of the \textit{hapū} for authority and wealth. European trade goods and their control and distribution placed \textit{rangatira} in a stronger

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} Nash. 1984. p. 98.
\item \textsuperscript{77} Cunliffe. 2010. p. 478, 482-3.
\item \textsuperscript{78} Cunliffe. 1988. p. 139.
\item \textsuperscript{79} Nash. 1984. p. 97.
\item \textsuperscript{80} P. Brun. ‘From chiefdom to state organisation in Celtic Europe’. In Arnold, B. & Gibson, D.B. \textit{Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State: The Evolution of Complex Social Systems in Prehistoric Europe}. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 1996. p. 16. This was also seen prior to the 5\textsuperscript{th} century with external stimulation resulting in internal development. p. 24. Nash. 1984. pp. 96-97.
\end{itemize}
position than in pre-contact time. The increase in resource exploitation and the returns in trade items placed the rangatira within a European exchange network as entrepreneur and intermediary.  

This relationship may have given the rangatira a power over the hapū rarely seen in Māori society pre-contact. Gallic chiefs, such as Dumnorix and Orgetorix certainly grew in power within their communities through position with economic or diplomatic authority. Dumnorix’s power came from the control of customs and taxes (*Gallic War* 1.18), while Orgetorix clearly had authority to act as an ambassador when planning the migration of the Helvetii (1.3). Let us now have a closer look at the political authority in Gallic and Māori society.

### 1.4. Political Authority and the Social Status of Chiefs

The individual chief had a power based on his lineage, position or from having wealth through tribute, but not necessarily from the control of trade or industrial production. The chief, using power gained from kin-based status, would establish a network of supporters who would pay tribute in return for protection or some forms of assistance. In this situation the chief could accumulate wealth by controlling the rights to use or exploit land, and in turn use this wealth to hire a coercive force (*Gallic War* 1.4, 18). A chief would in turn pay tribute and support to a paramount chief. Collis’ taxonomy also corresponds to the pure and warrior agrarian models put forward by Nash.

*Mana* and *tapu* were the roots of political authority and social status in Māori society. *Mana* represented a lawful permission delegated to a human agent by the *atua* (god/gods) to ‘act on their behalf and in accordance with their will’. *Mana* could be temporarily transferred to the fighting chiefs for a period of time to meet certain war aims. This was often done through the passing of weapons or other objects that embodied transferred *mana*. *Mana* was a spiritual power, as opposed to purely psychic power, or the natural force seen in *ihi*.

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84 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p. 73.
(awesomeness).\(^{88}\) Ihi had more to do with vigour in battle or the ‘vital force or personal magnetism which, radiating from a person, elicits in the beholder a response of awe and respect.’\(^{89}\) For Māori, the psychic ihi is an intrinsic quality in the human being that could be developed more by some than others.\(^{90}\)

For the Māori, authority and power were expressed by mana, and for the rangatira to possess mana, they should have the authority to act and the power to affect it.\(^{91}\) Personal prestige was seen in the qualities of mana and is central to two activities, the direction of the people (mana tangata) and the claiming and ruling of territory (mana whenua).\(^{92}\)

Mana was to be maintained within particular boundaries and abuse of this spiritual gift could result in the loss of mana or, if left unchecked and allowed to run rampant, could cause harm to the agents of that delegated lawful permission and to others.\(^{93}\) Transgression of mana could lead to muru (raiding, plunder) and the dispossession of items.\(^{94}\) The loss of mana in war occurred when rangatira lost their standing if captured and made prisoners of war, a great shame to Māori rangatira.\(^{95}\)

Linked to mana was tapu, a condition of untouchability or restriction inherited from ancestors and gods at birth or installed in persons with mana by those trained and with the mana to do so.\(^{96}\) To defy tapu was to defy the gods or the authority of one’s mana,\(^{97}\) and the loss of mana demanded restoration where possible or a chief would lose his authority to impose tapu and maintain social independence of their hapū as a social unit.\(^{98}\)

Māori hapū were led by rangatira who gained their mana and leadership authority from the willing consent of the hapū members.\(^{99}\) There was a binary

\(^{88}\) Marsden. p. 118. Durie. p. 32.
\(^{89}\) Marsden. p. 118.
\(^{90}\) Marsden. p. 118.
\(^{92}\) Mahuika. p. 45.
\(^{93}\) Marsden. p. 119.
\(^{95}\) With the lessening of warfare in the 1830s, the adoption of Christianity and the outlawing of slavery, many enslaved rangatira came home to take up positions they once enjoyed prior to enslavement. It appears that conversion to, and the teaching of, this new religion helped these rangatira regain their mana. Ballara. 2003. pp. 426-7. Durie. p. 28
\(^{96}\) Paterson. p. 91. Ballara. 1998. p. 75. Mahuika. p. 45. Tapu was also placed on places or objects.
\(^{97}\) Ballara. 2003. p. 79.
\(^{99}\) Durie. pp. 32&72.
relationship where the hapū relied on the rangatira to execute hapū decisions and actions, but this authority and the mandate to be the executor came from the consensus of the hapū. If, however, the hapū withdrew support, the rangatira lost his mana and the mandate to lead.

The mana possessed by rangatira was inherited by way of his father and ancestors. Mana could be enhanced through success in war, but fighting was not undertaken solely in the pursuit of mana, but success in war, the conquest of lands and people and the carrying of sacred objects were all the signs of one’s mana. Manarangatira rested or lay on or over one’s territory and greater competition for land may have helped develop such concepts of mana and personal status.

The concept of social power in late Iron Age and Māori societies was vested in a person not a place, as is seen by Gallic and British coinage having the names of leaders, not places, nor even people. Māori named places and newly formed hapū after Rangatira, and while places were important, mana was attached to the person. The hillforts of Britain and Gaul may have satisfied symbolic as well as practical functions, but it is unclear what kind of status a leader could draw from physically dominating site such as a hillfort. For the states of Gaul, large settlements became important administration centres for trade or religious activities. ‘Place’ became important, but for the chiefs of Late Iron Age Gaul and Britain, who probably had several residences, the ‘person’ was the repository of power.

1.5. Celtic and Māori Leadership and Chiefdoms

Caesar uses Roman terms to describe the different leaders and people with status positions within Gallic and British society. He clearly linked the equestrian class, equites, with fighting, but Caesar used more specific terms in

106 While Caesar has been criticised for using Latin terms to describe Celtic political and social structures and titles, his lack of Gallic (he used translators see 1.19) his comparisons of Roman and Gallic society would have been lost on his Roman, Latin speaking audience. He was not, to be fair, writing for a Celtic audience.
describing civil and military leaders, mainly *dux* and *princeps*. *Dux* was a generic term for leader and applicable to Gallic military society and martial leadership, while *princeps* was applied to civilian leadership.\textsuperscript{107} Both of these terms, *principes* and *duces*, are used to describe Nervian leaders (*Gallic War* 5.41). Caesar refers to other Gallic chiefs many times as *principes*.\textsuperscript{108} In addition he uses a cognate of *princeps* to describe the exercise of power by the Treveran Indutiomarus and Cingetorix, calling this *principatus* (5.3, 6.8). When the Aeduan Litaviccus was leading a unit of 10,000 Aedui warriors, Caesar’s commentaries clearly identify this combination of both civil and military leadership, but was the situation as clear-cut as Caesar depicts?

**Knights/Equites**

The knights, as mentioned above, gathered dependants around them, and the size of their retinues was the only criterion (in Caesar’s eyes) of influence and power (*Gallic War* 4.15). Vercingetorix, as Orgetorix did to defend himself (1.4), brought armed retainers when he sought to gain the kingship of the Arverni in 52 (7.4). There is an assumption that Caesar was referring to the upper reaches of Gallic nobility when comparing Gallic to Roman *equites*, but it has been observed that Caesar’s term *equites* presents a problem of definition within Gallic society.\textsuperscript{109} What is less problematic is that Caesar clearly equates forms of power with birth and resources (6.15), and he also sees patron/client relationship as an important aspect of power in Gallic society.

**Celtic Leadership**

The arrangement of European Bronze Age chiefdoms was reinforced by a rise of the warrior retinues or war-bands that gathered around the community leaders who went on trade missions or political gatherings and this need for protection and defence was specific to the community and the region it influenced (10-20 km).\textsuperscript{110}


\textsuperscript{108} The leaders of Bellovaci and Britons (2.14; 4. 27, 28, 30); the Nervian leaders (5.41), and the Senonian Acco (6.4), the leaders of the Helvii (7.65), the Aedui chiefs (7.38), the Atrebate (8.7), and the Remi (8.12); cf. 7.89.


By the last century BC Celtic society was becoming more stratified, stimulated by the infiltration of Mediterranean goods and ideas. Those with power and wealth gained authority as they gathered followers in a service/protection relationship. Chiefdoms and kingdoms were scattered across northern Europe but the picture suggests that Gallic society was diverse and dynamic with some communities moving towards statehood and others maintaining a power from within the chieftain framework. What is clear is that at the top of this hierarchy, whether chiefdom or state, was a small elite that came from the nobility of each community.

In coming to Gaul, Caesar marched into an area that had a 2,000 year old tradition of warrior aristocracies and societies that had been experiencing over one hundred years of political change. Māori also had a long tradition of leadership within their diverse and dynamic societies.

**The ariki/rangatira**

As with the differing roles for the *iwi* (tribe) and *hapū*, so the roles of *ariki* (paramount chief) possibly reflected a symbolic and practical difference in leadership. The Māori *ariki* (literally meaning ‘the few’ or ‘the fine thread’) claimed their status through a birthright passed down through a system that recognised the first-born male or female blood representative of the senior family in a *hapū* or collection of *hapū*. The *rangatira* (literally meaning ‘leader’ or ‘those who hold the group together’) led the *hapū* regularly or for a particular purpose, such as war or emigration, and represented the most ‘significant functionaries in community affairs as the community organisers and representatives.’ The *ariki* class were shielded from political affairs and debates, but on the rare occasion they acted as a war leader, they were viewed as very powerful. Leadership in war was temporary and often executed by the

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117 Durie lists *rangatira* as the cement that bonded various elements of the *hapū* and not necessarily elders. 1994. p. 31.
younger brother of the ariki and the hapū rangatiratanga (leadership/chieftainship) was the real political and military power.\textsuperscript{119}

Like the different roles between the ‘symbolic’ iwi and ‘functional’ hapū as the basic, autonomous corporate unit, the roles of ariki and rangatira possibly reflect a symbolic and practical difference of title and position in the directing of organisational energy. Durie states that the positions of rangatira and ariki were not mutually exclusive but could be combined into one person.\textsuperscript{120} A person who was recognised as an ariki maintained that position and title regardless, unlike the tenure of a rangatira.\textsuperscript{121}

The hapū was usually led by a principal rangatira but had a number of subsidiaries, all of whom were graded by their influence and personal mana and not by their class.\textsuperscript{122} The senior descent lines of the rangatira were important in family hierarchy and leadership skills in war, and in this ability to hold unity through the attributes of tapu, ihi (awesomeness), wehi (the power to instil fear) and wana (personal authority).\textsuperscript{123} These were all seen as elements of political mana, but the mana of rangatira could increase or diminish depending on popular recognition within the hapū.\textsuperscript{124}

Rangatira had to have good oratorical ability which they used as a persuasive means to ensure their leadership.\textsuperscript{125} Anyone could gain the rank of rangatira within a society that allowed for hierarchical or social mobility through marriage, acts of courage, or by a contribution to the community.\textsuperscript{126} The ascribing of the power exercised by a leader was mana rangatira which could exist through retrospective justification, whereby leadership skills were recognised and then attributed to their descent lines, and so present acts of leadership were superimposed over past whakapapa.\textsuperscript{127} Manarangatira was acquired and, therefore, depended on ascription and acquisition, and whakapapa could be manipulated to make a claimant appear closer to the senior line of ancestry.\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{120} Durie. 1994. pp. 32-33.
\textsuperscript{121} Durie. 1994. p. 32.
\textsuperscript{125} Durie. 1994. p. 32.
\textsuperscript{127} Durie. 1994. p. 33.
\textsuperscript{128} Durie. 1994. pp. 33-34.
Māori taua were always led by rangatira, (but sometimes by fighting tohunga), and generally they were drawn from the hapū kin-group (not the iwi). If opposing taua shared kin-ties, withdrawal from an engagement would be acceptable so as not to upset the mana of either kin-group or its leader. This would also avert the potential for utu. Leadership was generally the prerogative of males (first born females would defer to male relative), and chieftainship and leadership in most cases went together. Leadership in Māori society could be and was usurped from ariki who lacked ability, through migration, equal allocation of territorial area, or by marriage. The rangatira were the practical, functioning leaders who assumed real authority in their communities. Leadership, however, could be forfeited, but chieftainship could not. Hereditary rank led to hereditary title, but while rank was inherited this may not have been the case with the ‘position’ of leader/rangatira. There were no hard and fast rules about leadership, and the role of the rangatira shows this. It is important to remember that the ariki and rangatira were more a reflection of the person and his power rather than an established class as such.

Civil/Military leadership.

Caesar identified magistrates, kings and chiefs as rulers of the people of Gaul and Britain as people of influence. His classifications suggest different levels of political leadership, reflecting the various stages of social formation. Grave goods have also left an archaeological record of status and social hierarchy in Gaul and Britain with finer items no doubt denoting the higher echelons of Gallic and British society.

The leaders who held both civic and military authority are numerous in Caesar’s commentaries, but Caesar provides a clear example in Sedulius the commander-and-chief, dux et princeps, of the Lemovices (Gallic War 7.88). Dux et princeps encompasses civil and military designations, which suggests that the two positions combined were available to a few powerful individuals. As noted, Caesar’s terminology made a distinction between military power and civic leadership, but Caesar was a Roman politician for whom military and civic

129 Mahuika p. 42.
130 Mahuika p. 44.
131 Mahuika p. 45.
132 Hamilton and Hirszowicz. pp. 64 and 66
service was an expected and acceptable component to any career. Caesar’s civil/military distinction reveals that his audience would have recognised this in their own leaders, but perhaps Caesar was simply making this identification explicit for his Roman audience. Caesar also identified the role of a commander-in-chief among the Gauls. He has the *dux* holding local power over the fighting capacities of the war band and a supreme leader (*rex*) overseeing the wider tactical and strategic aspects of confederation warfare.

**Magistrates/Vergobret**

The Helvetic political system, according to Caesar, was controlled by magistrates (*Gallic War* 1.4), as was that of the Aedui whose chief magistrate, annually appointed, was called the *vergobret* (1.16). In discussing the *vergobret*, Caesar states that one was chosen annually through a system of elections (1.16, 7.32). Annual tenure of magistracies may have been used by the Helvetii too, although Caesar notes that the Helvetii had more than one magistrate. The Belgian Remi too, it would appear from Caesar’s work, were governed by a magistrate or magistrates, a system of leadership shared with their kin the Suessiones (2.3). It is unclear, however, whether the Sequani or Arverni enjoyed this same type of leadership, but both of these societies seem to have rejected kingship in the past, the Sequani before 58 (1.3), and the Arverni, prior to 52. According to Caesar, both were led politically by a *princeps* (7.4), whom we might guess to have been a magistrate of some sort. Thus the major Gallic powers, the Helvetii in the east, the central Aedui, and also the northern Remi and Suessiones, those with close links to Rome, were ruled by magistrates, one or more in number. Caesar certainly believed that most of Gallic political life centred on leading men, a council and/or assemblies, some or all of these elected or appointed, but he also remarks on other political systems in operation, most strikingly, on kingship.

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135 Caesar (*Gallic War* 2.3) writes: ‘unum imperium unumque magistratum cum ipsis habeant, detterere potuerint quin cum ipsis consentirent.’
Kingship

The forms *rex* (king) and its cognate *regnum* (kingship or kingdom) are used throughout Caesar’s commentaries. The function of kingship was clearly acceptable to Caesar for those Gallic (and British) leaders who supported Rome, and he used this traditional form of leadership to reward or promote compliant nobles. Caesar appointed as kings, Commius of the Atrebates (*Gallic War* 4.21), Tasgetius of the Carnutes (5.25), Cavarinus of the Senones (5.54), and possibly Mandubracius of the Trinovantes (5.20), as he became more and more involved in Gallic and British politics. Caesar’s support of these individuals was no guarantee of political survival, however, as Tasgetius was executed on the orders of his own council (5.25) and Cavarinus was forced out by his own people (5.54).

Linked in no small way to kinship was dynastic rule and this was important for the Gauls and Britons. Mandubracius is a striking instance where a chief claimed the leadership of a people, the Trinovantes, because his father had been king (*Gallic War* 5.20). Cavarinus of the Senones was acceptable as a king of his people, as he held the authority from his brother and ancestors (5.54), and the Treveran king Indutiomarus, who was killed resisting Rome, was replaced by a war-chief drawn from his kindred (6.2). This suggests that dynastic rule was part of Gallic and British leadership, and indeed, Britain saw the rise of great dynasties between 54BC and AD43. For archaic Gallic states, however, dynastic leaders may have provided an emergency response in which societies fell back on the families of renown and experience. As magistrates were annual, this would have caused difficulties in continuity of leadership if the community confronted a crisis during the election period (possibly in autumn or winter). The elections of magistrates could slow down military action, especially if fighting broke out in winter. Such a situation occurred in the winter of 53-2 when the Aedui experienced a leadership crisis, a challenge by one of their nobles to the law of sanction against brothers holding the position of magistrate. At this time a certain Cotus claimed the position his brother Valetiacus had held in 53 (7.32). The appropriate time for hosting councils to elect magistrates would be another factor, determined by the ability to feed the council members and their retinues during such important gatherings. A long campaign would affect a people’s

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136 Caesar writes that Mandubracius wanted to be made ruler and sovereign lord of his people on account that his father had been king.
ability to host large gatherings, unless the degree of centralisation meant ample surplus storage was maintained.

**Nobles and Councils and Decision-Making**

All Gallic society had councils or assemblies regardless of their level of political development. Caesar identified the link between the Gallic nobility and the regular councils that were held to make important decisions. He noted that Gallic councils took place at regular intervals (*Gallic War* 1.2, 3),¹³⁷ at which nobles were often present and made speeches.¹³⁸ Councils may have been gatherings of all men in which nobles took a leading role, or they may have been smaller bodies, perhaps councils constitutionally established to make the political decisions for their people through assemblies, and like the senate at Rome, comprising serving and ex-magistrates only.¹³⁹ In addition, there were mixed councils comprising the leading men of various nations (1.3).¹⁴⁰ A magistrate usually led the councils, and the councils in turn led the assemblies in making decisions. Magistrates delivered orders (1.4), perhaps those issued by their council. Caesar implies that Gallic deputations were drawn from the local assemblies (1.7).

Caesar usually uses the term *concilium* to designate a meeting of high-ranking officials; for example, when he called leading men to him (esp. *Gallic War* 1.31, 1.18, 1.19, 1.30), or when leading Gauls met (1.19, 2.10). Caesar also speaks of *concilium commune*, clearly an assembly of the voting men (2.4). Another type of *concilium* (of all the soldiers?) directs the military leaders to follow a particular course of action (3.18). This suggests that magistrates were in control of assemblies in which affairs of state were discussed and decisions were made. A case in point is the start of the uprising in 52. News of the killing at Cenabum of Roman citizens spread across Gaul remarkably quickly and this prearranged event signalled the start of the general uprising in Gaul (7.3). The assemblies (possibly led by magistrates) would have authorised this swift spreading of news, and the events in Cenabum, at least, would have been looked

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¹³⁷ For tribal councils throughout Gaul see *Gallic War*. 1. 30, 31, 2. 4 (Belgae), 2. 5 (Remi), 2. 28 (Nervii numbers lost at the battle of the Sambre), 3. 18 (Venelli), 5. 3, 24, 6. 3, 44 (annual Gallic council), 5. 6, 7. 55, 77 (Aedui), 5. 54 (Senones) 7. 29, 63 (Gallic council called by Vercingetorix) 7. 75 (Council of all Gaul opposing Caesar in 52BC).
¹³⁸ It would be expected that Orgetorix used the council format to persuade migration (but probably not his “conspiracy”) 1. 16.
¹³⁹ This is suggested by the Helvetian magistrates having to force (ordinary) men from the fields when they wanted to raise an army against Orgetorix (1. 4).
¹⁴⁰ For other tribal councils see *Gallic War*. 5. 3, 24. 6. 3, 44. 7. 29, 63, 75.
for, once all the peoples of Gaul had sworn to resist Caesar in a general uprising (7.2).

In Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic systems of government, it is hard to determine whether nobles were elected officials and ex-officials who presided over an assembly of citizens, or they were a hereditary group that established the assemblies’ determined policy and elected magistrates. It is unclear what role the ordinary citizens played, if any, in the decision-making process, perhaps attending as a sign of support for their leaders. Orgetorix was followed by 10,000 men of the Helvetii (Gallic War 1.4) whom he used to try to supplant the power-structure of assemblies, elected magistrates and the judiciary, in clear contravention of the Helvetian constitution.

Caesar makes it certain, however, that councils and assemblies were instrumental in matters of war, and that the nobility, made up of the equites and principes, determined the course of action and chose from their class the military duces to lead the armies and executed local strategy. These assemblies appear to have had limited power, but this may have been dependent on the level of centralisation of the group.

1.6. The Gallic and British Masses

Caesar lists instances where ordinary Gallic people acted against those in charge. This contradicts his description of the masses living in a state of near slavery crushed by debt and oppressed. The Aulerci, Eburones and Lexovii executed their ‘senates’ because they would not vote for war with Caesar, and they held their leaders hostage within a council, so that they might authorise an immediate attack on a Roman garrison (Gallic War 3.17, 18). In Britain, Caesar claimed that his ambassador Commius had been held captive because of the multitude (4.27). The Carnutes executed their king Tasgetius, a Caesarian appointment, with the ‘open approval of many persons in the state’ (5.25), and Ambiorix also claimed that his action of hostility against the Romans was due to the people who had as much sovereignty over him as he over them (5.27).141

The degree of centralisation may also have been a factor in the level of democracy. The more centralised a grouping was, such as seen in the Helvetii and Aedui, the more that functions of political control were placed into the hands of a ruling minority (council). Celtic warrior society had a large group of

141 This may have been a ploy to validate his plot after destroying Cotta.
rich, land-holding peasants and non-land holding people who served the nobility as infantrymen in times of war, and as a source of agricultural production, the bedrock of Celtic economy, the rest of the time. These people may have had a political voice in the assemblies. It could be, however, that the more disparate a group was, under the control of chiefs, such as the Belgae and Armorican groupings, the broader in political decision-making it became.

The wider family was the pool from which leaders were drawn in Māori society, but families retained a say in actions that affected the whole community. Māori leadership was not a legally vested authority. As described earlier, the rangatira relied on the support of the hapū for their leadership or when making important decisions, just as the hapū relied on the mana of the rangatira. For the Māori, a hapū was never ordered to engage in war and would follow their temporarily appointed war-chief through voluntary assent and not out of obedience to any authority. Each hapū had the option to fight or withdraw from larger inter-hapū confederation at any time during a campaign, but the declining of a military summons was deemed a refusal and could result in attack. In this there was coercive influence at play, but withdrawal from a summons would not be regarded as ‘illegitimate’ in the sense of there being a legitimate order of persuasion or expectation. Decision-making was a process where consensus was required.

The major division within Māori society (beyond male and female) was between the rangatira and those who were not. The relationship between the hapū and rangatira, as stated above, was reciprocal. The members of the hapū would rely on the rangatira to make any decision, as long as it was aligned with the consensus (not just a majority) of the hapū. War with the Crown broke out in Taranaki in AD1860 because the Governor chose to accept the decision to sell a block of land by a rangatira who had not gained the consensus of the hapū

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concerned. This shows that a decision by a rangatira had to be based on the people of the hapū and had to consider the impact and benefits of any decision to the hapū. The ideals that kept a group together in the absence of centralised law or blatant coercion was acknowledgement of the customary rights of others, persuasion and consent, and was seen in inter-hapū relationships. This would have been the rules that governed relationships between the whanau groups that made up the hapū.

Does the Māori experience help us to gain a deeper understanding of Gallic society and the general population? Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society is confusing and problematic. This perhaps reflects its dynamism and regional diversity. We do not know if the information Caesar was given was specific to the people he had in his retinue, such as the Aeduan Diviciacus, and, therefore, irrelevant to the wider Gallic community, but Caesar clearly provided a generic picture. Family ties were certainly important to Māori and Gallic societies and the relationship between authority and the peoples mandate to lead is clear among the Gauls. The chiefdoms of the Māori and the Gauls point to a closer link between the chiefs and the people they led. The following case studies will explore people power among the Gauls including the binary relationship between the people and their leaders.

1.7. How were alliances made in a stateless society? The Celts and the Māori

Kin Ties

Caesar was interested in Gallic social relationships, and he stressed the importance of kin-ties within Gallic and British society. He reveals how kin-relationships were valuable to Gallic people in treaty arrangements, but he notes also the importance of family politics among the elite leaders, particularly the Aedui (Gallic War 1.18-19). In essence, Caesar shows that some of the Gallic peoples were divided internally and that dynastic and kin-based politics played a


150 Polybius also describes the clannish nature of the Gauls, those of Northern Italy: the Cenomani, the Insubres, the Senones, the Anares, the Laevi, the Lebecii and the Boii (Histories 2.17), and he recorded their continued contact and kin-ties with Celtic people over the Alps in Transalpine Gaul (2.19).
role in how the Gauls responded to Caesar. This no doubt contributed to his view that Gaul was divided at almost every level (6.11).

Māori society was familial, one that placed emphasis on the family with kin-based links to a wider network of relations who traced their origin to a common ancestor. The basic unit was the whanau (family) that made up the hapū (clan), which itself was part of a wider iwi (tribe). The term whanau and hapū are interchangeable, recognising regional variations, but the smallest unit in Māori society, the whanau numbered around 30 members with the hapū being up to 100-1000 strong. The hapū could be expected to provide 140-400 warriors to a war party. As a rule, the hapū was the smallest unit from which war parties were mustered, but the men of the hapū fought in small family-based units drawn from the core of the village population. Large and wide ranging expeditions however, would involve volunteers from many hapū in the composition of the taua (war party).

The hapū would grow and divide as they got too big, they shared common descent and were named after a famous ancestor or event with an ability to change its name as their situation changed. The common population made up the free members of Māori society, but there was clearly a non-free group that were present in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

1.8. Territorial Sovereignty

To understand the military activities of the Late Iron Age Gauls and Britons it is important to consider the size of their community. A comparative analysis in central Europe shows a continuation of communities from the Late Bronze Age with marked and defined areas. Archaeological evidence dictates Iron Age

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152 Hapū is a ‘subdivision of a tribe; a number of Hapū make up an iwi’. Barlow. pp. 20-1.
153 Iwi is the ‘largest political unit in Māori society.’ Barlow. pp. 32-3.
154 Durie p. 15 (hapū numbers), 16 (whanau number).
158 Durie pp. 15, 17.
Gallic and British society was based on family lines with the smallest socio-economic unit being ‘the single family occupying a small farm’ with some settlement plans suggesting ‘groups of extended family size and even clan groups living in loosely nucleated hamlets.’ This fits into the smallest socio-economic unit of Māori society, the whanau or family that in turn made up the hapū. Caesar does not list individual land ownership in Book Six, although he describes a marriage arrangement where funds from the union were pooled (Gallic War 6.19). Evidence of taxation and debt (1.18, 6.13) suggests that there was a link between the people and income from the land. Each clan group had its own ‘locus or meeting place–frequently a hilltop or plateau defined by earthworks’, which developed into the oppidum or hillfort, some of which reached proto-urban proportions.162

Bronze Age communities were around 20-40 km in circumference, some with fortified settlements, but there was an added zone of 100-200 km that included networks of alliances between different po-lities. Relationships formed between these communities through inter-marriage, trade and gift-exchange, leading to the formation of larger political groupings or chiefdoms. Some of these polities developed into dynastically ruled chiefdoms that would, however, also compete for the control of trade routes and resources. But the chiefdom expanded where local dialects of material culture and international hegemony in terms of the social and religious institutions developed.166

Caesar stated that British oppida were built as defences against enemies, and in 54 Julius Caesar conducted assaults against two such British fortifications.

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160 The reference in Book Six and the marriage arrangement may have been information on the upper reaches of society as Caesar believed that the balance of Gallic society were (Gallic War 6.13).
164 Kristiansen. p. 184.
The first oppidum was situated close to the east coast in Kent but hidden in the woods,\(^\text{167}\) enjoying ‘extremely good natural and manmade defences’ (Gallic War 5.9, 21)\(^\text{168}\), whereas Caesar described the second fort as an oppidum protected by a forests and marshes. He explained that the Britons would fortify any densely wooded place with rampart and trench and use it as a refuge from the attack of invaders (5.21).\(^\text{169}\) Caesar also describes the use of both natural and manmade defences to which the remaining scars on the landscape are testament.\(^\text{170}\)

The strategic placement of oppida is clear, but how was ownership of the land determined? There is still some debate over land rights in Gaul or Britain as there is no evidence of individual or household land ownership in first century BC.\(^\text{171}\) But the systems of land rights and title for Māori society may provide a model to advance our understanding of how people viewed land during the late Iron Age.

With the Māori, acts of warfare and pa building were hapū-based activities, and in responding to an external threat, hapū would join together to ‘build a new pā or refurbish an old one to meet the threat, or put together a war force to ambush an invader.’\(^\text{172}\) The pa was also the local meeting place for social gatherings and in times of threat or stress, serving as ‘permanent foci of group identity, places, and solidarity, re-creating spatial relationships and boundaries in a constantly visible and often highly elevated form.’\(^\text{173}\)

Land was linked to power and wealth, but would have also held significance with matters of identity and belonging. This is not unique to Gallic and Māori societies, but the presence of large and dominating fortifications associated with certain groups suggests territorial sovereignty and any perceived threat to that

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\(^{169}\) Collis. 1984. p. 18. The Scots Gaelic for fort is *dun* and the word for enclosure is *dunadh.* Most of the Gallic and British fortified settlement had the word *dunum.*


\(^{171}\) Sharples. p. 175.

\(^{172}\) Ballara. 1998 states that the name of that force would take the larger *iwi* name or the closest common name of their genealogies. If the fight was inter-*iwi* the senior *hapu* name was taken for the group. p. 128.

sovereignty would have demanded action. Regardless of Caesar’s intentions in Gaul in 58, moving into the lands of the Belgae, Armoricans, Aquitani, Britons and other Gauls would have been a threat to the sovereignty of those people. Hostile opposition would be an obvious response and Māori certainly resisted any threat to their sovereignty, land being the source of social and political power.

**Māori and the land: Mana whenua and mana tangata**

*Mana* satisfied two activities, the direction of the *hapū* and *rangatiratanga* over them (*mana tangata*) and the claiming and ruling of territory (*mana whenua* and *mana ariki*).\(^{174}\) *Mana whenua* accounted for the power over land through inter-marriage with the local people (*tangata whenua*) and *mana ariki* concerned the power over people through conquest.\(^{175}\)

*Mana whenua* was and is the authority/control over land (through the *rangatira* at *hapū* level). *Mana tangata* was the authority/control over people or having influence or power over them. *Arikitanga* was also relevant to territorial possession, advantage and control.\(^{176}\) Through *mana* and the authority of *arikitanga* or *rangatiratanga*, the hereditary chiefs could control produce from an ecological niche creating a surplus. This could develop into a redistribution system and/or overseas trading, creating political relations with other communities.\(^{177}\) This situation could lead to a village (*hapū*) and a chief (*rangatira*) becoming the centre of the district economy, essentially creating and enforcing the territorial criteria for leadership and control.\(^{178}\) All *hapū* members were involved in the exploitation of resources and the *rangatira* would supervise and coordinate the labour force.\(^{179}\) It was also the role of the *rangatira* to distribute the benefits of the compatriot labour for the benefit of the whole community.\(^{180}\) Europeans who witnessed the transactions between *rangatira* and European sailors and traders, and the distribution of trade goods believed that the *rangatira* had autocratic authority, but this was not the case.\(^{181}\) There were some resources that were reserved for *rangatira* such as stranded whales or cast

\(^{174}\) Mahuika. p. 45.
\(^{175}\) Paterson. p. 138.
\(^{176}\) C. Barlow p. 6.
\(^{177}\) Hamilton and Hirszowicz. pp. 66 and 68.
\(^{178}\) Hamilton and Hirszowicz. p.66.
\(^{179}\) O’Malley. p. 130.
\(^{180}\) O’Malley. p. 131.
\(^{181}\) O’Malley. pp. 130-1.
up canoes, but accumulation and distribution of wealth from surplus, and later from trade, was the main way of asserting chiefly mana, the hallmark of a true rangatira.  

Land was important to Māori but there was a greater and primary interest in land use and not ownership of individual parcels, be it for hunting, foraging, farming or fighting. On any parcel of land there would be numerous overlapping rights of land use, arranged between the hapū and distributed amongst individuals (with mana) and groups. Māori tenure was individual tenure but conditioned by community responsibility, especially when it concerned disposal, and was rarely given away. This land tenure was conditional to common good and linked to kinship obligations and the principle of reciprocity where land use agreements were protected by the mana of the rangatira and strength of the hapū.

The levels of land rights have been classified to reflect the origins of ownership. Ahi ka was the generic right to occupation with further rights of take raupata (conquest) and take tuku (giving). Ahi ka roa, was the term for ownership rights of the people and absence over short periods would not mean a loss of the right of occupation, but an absence over a period of up to three generations would make it hard for a hapū to claim this right.

In summary, possession of land by rangatira was managed for the good of the hapū and would create the accumulation and the distribution of wealth among the hapū. The numerous family-based homesteads and settlements in Gaul reflect this similarity in land use among Gauls and Māori in the importance in the relationship between land, wealth and power. The hapū would provide the force for the security and survival of the right of occupation under the mana of a rangatira. The late Iron Age warbands of the chiefdoms would have also been drawn from the smaller political units evident in the creation of confederations among the chiefdoms of Gaul. The pā was a manifestation of the mana of the

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182 Durie Custom Law. p. 69.
183 O’Malley. pp. 133 and 146.
185 Durie. p. 68.
188 Durie. pp. 67&75.
189 D. Sinclair. p. 68.
190 D. Sinclair. p. 68.
hapū and the rangatira. As the population increased the Māori communities of Aotearoa/New Zealand centralised locally where the defence of land and cultivations were based around the pā, but had added importance when rangatira needed to control trade contacts and access points with Europeans. This type of local centralisation enhanced the power of the rangatira. The demonstration of raw power or mana can be seen in the development of fortified villages or pā. The development of local power in Gaul can be seen in the relationship between fortified settlements and stratified society with many variations across northern Europe.191.

**Summary**

Caesar recognised major ethnic divisions in Gaul but also smaller divisions of society, down to household units. Caesar found the peoples of Gaul allied at a higher level to either the Aedui or Arvernian/Sequanian bloc. By 57 Caesar had established a new order, preserving the Aedui as one faction, but he replaced the Sequani by the Belgic Remi, thus maintaining a two-fold division in northern/central Gaul. Kin-ties were an obvious and important feature of Gallic politics, as Caesar proves. Caesar gained information about his enemies through kin-ties (*Gallic War* 2.4, 5.57), yet Gallic people appealed to their kin, to gain favours, or to get better terms after being defeated by the Roman general (2.12, 13). Caesar rated the power and status of Gallic chieftains by the number of retainers. Kin-ties and clientage were also supported by other forms of political relationships. Friendship was listed by Caesar and denoted possible legal obligations.

The relationships of hostage exchange provide an insight into Gallic political relationships and Caesar’s instinctive understanding and manipulation of this arrangement. For Caesar, hostage taking denoted a position of dominance over his defeated enemies. For the Gauls, hostage exchange signified power over others, but it also established formal alliances and agreements to consolidate inter-group relationships. Confederations were an expression of all the political relationships that the Gauls shared and probably provided the faculties and social mechanisms to establish larger military formations. Caesar noted various arrangements among Gallic people. Agreements would have been made by the

leading members of those Gallic people, and Caesar dedicated a lot of time to those Gallic leaders and their ruling bodies.

Caesar’s assessment of Gallic leadership and political systems in Book Six defies simple analysis, yet the balance of his commentaries shows a picture of how dynamic and diverse the Gallic peoples were and that this was reflected in their political systems. His terminology presents different kinds of leadership in Gallic society in the use of *princeps* and *dux*. The first was used to denote civil leadership and the second, military leadership. Caesar also noted a combination of both civil and military leadership among certain people. There is a strong suggestion that the more centralised a state or people were, the more the military and civil components were separated. The least centralised polities tended to have limited separation between civic and military leadership. Caesar described the central Gallic states as having a political system run by magistrates who controlled the decision-making processes. It is possible that this system buckled under external and internal pressures, opening the door for a return to an older system of the single leadership of a king (not unlike the position of dictator in Republican Rome).

There was an ambiguity to Caesar’s attitude towards kings, and while they are numerous, his dealings with them show that he condemned those who opposed him, while he established as kings those who supported him. Roman endorsement of Gallic kings was by no means a guarantee of success, as several of Caesar’s appointed kings were deposed by their people. Caesar fully supported Gallic aspirations of kingship, when it suited his aims, but, he would also oppose those who were hostile to him. Dynastic kingship also existed in Gaul, where the leadership of the people who held by certain families.

It seems that whether people were ruled by magistrates or kings, most decision making was done through councils or assemblies. While there was an elective process for the magistrates and even possibly for kings, there was no obvious procedure for the construction of the Gallic councils and assemblies. A closer look at the relationships within Gallic society and the roles played by the nobility and the common folk show definite variations within Gallic society and the different groupings that defy Caesar’s simplistic interpretation and assessment.

Māori society had the characteristics of the open chiefdom where *hapū/iwi* tension existed in the *ariki/rangatira* positions. The *hapū* was the functional
corporate grouping in Māori society, while the *iwi* had a more symbolic status for Māori until 1840. This tension appears to be reflected in the symbolic ‘title’ of the *ariki* and the functional ‘position’ of the *rangatira*. *Rangatira* were dependent on the *hapū* while the *mana* of that *rangatira* was the real representation of the *hapū*. Before 1840, Māori society was not centralised on a wide pan-*iwi* scale, as sometimes after this. Power and authority was at a more localised level with kin networks spreading out from points of *hapū* origin and the *mana* of the *rangatira*. This *mana* gave individual leaders the authority to supervise group activities and distribute the product of group activities. The construction and positioning of *pā* was a manifestation of this local centralisation and group labour. Land was important to Māori but there was an understanding that issues were dealt with communally and would always require consensus decision-making. This continued ideal of consensus ownership would conflict with European ideas of individual land entitlements after 1840 when conflicts arose out of European land-hunger and a move by Māori to hold on to land.

The main division in Māori society was between *rangatira* and those who were not. As shown, the *rangatira* was dependent on *hapū* support, which placed restrictions on autocratic behaviour in most instances. Slavery was an aspect of Māori society, and slave raiding gained impetus from the move by some Māori to increase surplus production by trade in European goods.

The characteristics of the complex chiefdom are clearly evident in Māori society and the political structure follows the Polynesian classification of the ‘open chiefdom’. These characteristics allow us to compare Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society, and the archaeological evidence to gain further insight into the Late Iron Age people of Gaul.
Chapter Two

Caesar and the Helvetii: The Military Potential of a Celtic State

2.1 The Helvetii

The Helvetii were a people who occupied modern Switzerland and formed part of the three divisions that Caesar identified as Gauls (Gallic War 1.1). They were allegedly one of the fiercest of the Gallic tribes who gained their reputation from constant warring with the Germans, either in defence of their lands or in aggressive operations against these eastern people (1.1). Caesar reported that, because of their being hemmed in by the Jura Mountains to the west, by the Rhone to the south (and by the Roman province) and the Rhine to the north and east, they decided to move westwards. In 58, Caesar tells us, the Helvetii had decided to move into Gaul and conquer it (1.2). Caesar’s opposition to the Helvetii settling in western Gaul was ostensibly for military stability in the region.

The Helvetii were made up of four cantons (Caesar names two cantons, the Tigurini (Gallic War 1.12) and the Verbigene (1.27)) and this suggests that these people still had regional and possibly kin-based identities beyond the state. They had a centralized form of government ruled by magistrates who had the ability to mobilise a group for internal applications of force. This ‘police force’ was used against Orgetorix, a nobilissimus who made a bid for regnum (kingship) of the Helvetii (1.2). Caesar refers to the Helvetian cantons throughout their migration, revealing that the confederation or state may have split into smaller groupings. The Helvetii provide an example of a strongly centralised archaic state successfully resisting multiple pressures.

2.2 The Archaeology of the Helvetii

The complex chiefdom and archaic state have been defined above, and the Helvetii were an example of how their limited room for expansion and fission meant that they developed from complex chiefdoms into an archaic state. An important point to consider is what role Rome played in providing impetus for this political development. The Helvetii were seen as the eastern bloc of a

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northern trade frontier that, by 60, they shared with the Aedui. While in close proximity to Rome and enclosed geographically they were subject to other factors, such as the tension with the people who lived west and east of the Rhine, and the growing power of the Aedui, Arverni and Sequani in central-eastern Gaul.

Archaeological evidence shows ‘type-fossils of Celtic culture’ stretching east as far as the Lippe River but ‘assemblages of Germanic artefacts’ found westwards towards the Rhine. While the Helvetii were distinctly Celts, they were ‘markedly different from the Celts of central Gaul’. The Helvetii had contact with the eastern Boii who had attacked Noricum in a period prior to Caesar’s invasion, and the latter, along with the Tulingi, made up an allied faction within the emigration of the Helvetii in 58 (Gallic War 1.5, 25). Mont Vully, located south of lac de Neuchâtel, provides archaeological evidence of the twelve Helvetian strongholds Caesar noted (Gallic War 1.5). Mont Vully is a 3ha fortification founded in the Bronze Age and shows continuity of Helvetian occupation in this area. Its size also suggests a capacity for large centralised populations.

2.3. Caesar and Helvetian Political and Social Organisation

Caesar refers to an earlier failed migration of the Helvetii, in which a Roman army had been destroyed in 107. Whether the Helvetians or a section of this people (the Tigurini led by Divico; Gallic War 1.12 and 13) failed as a reconnaissance in force, either to establish a foot-hold in western Gaul or to complete a full emigration, is unclear. The failure of one or more groups of the Helvetii to emigrate and so to relieve population pressures may have stimulated or forced the Helvetii to develop a system of government that would set boundaries to power and leadership. These people were border folk who needed a strong central government to organise its warrior resources’ from within the common population against a hostile eastern frontier.

On preparing their move into Gaul, the Helvetii had not only set aside two years for logistical planning and preparation, leaders had begun negotiations

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with the people through whose land they hoped to move (Gallic War 1.3). The major planner was Orgetorix, and his actions (some known to his people and some not) involved complex dealings with other Gallic states, mainly the Aedui and the Sequani (1.3). This inter-group politics and intrigue noted by Caesar should not be trivialised as minor workings of barbarian peoples, as these negotiations were conducted within a network of political alliances that were established by kin-based connections and other political arrangements. What is clear in Caesar’s account of the Helvetii is that these people had a history of conflict with Rome and their plan to move into central Gaul and, more importantly, close to the Roman province might bring them into conflict with Rome again, and cause conflict with other Gallic people as well.\footnote{While Rome had no direct political influence in Gallic society north of the Alps it would have been important to Roman regional interests to be aware of activities to the north. Diviciacus’ approach to the Roman senate and the presence of traders north of the Alps and in the Province strongly supports the idea that Caesar would have viewed the movement of the Helvetii with concern.}

The events in 58 are insightful in that they provide Caesar’s first example of Gallic social order and leadership. This account of the Helvetii (and the Aedui) introduces Gallic magistrates, councils, and local governments in actions, and it reveals aspects of the factional nature of the Gauls.

**Factions**

Caesar believed that all of the Gauls were factional in character (Gallic War 6.11). In the case of the Helvetii, this factional characteristic was based on kin-ties of the leading families within and beyond the Helvetian group. Although Caesar has listed four major cantons among the Helvetii and, at the time of emigration, allied people, it is unclear whether these cantons were in competition for power and control of the wider confederation, in the sense of Caesar’s interpretation of what he had seen in other Gallic people, such as the Aedui.

According to Caesar, Orgetorix was of noble birth and was also the wealthiest of the Helvetii (Gallic War 1.2). Here Caesar equates nobility and power with wealth, and this seems to have provided Orgetorix with some authority to plan the emigration of the people as he was required, so Caesar states, to move among the communities to oversee the planning and preparation (1.3). While Caesar gives no information on how Orgetorix gained his wealth and position, he clearly held enough power (and wealth) to draw to him 10,000
men and their followers when and if he needed them (which he did later on) (1.4). Orgetorix may have been the leader of one canton, but his mission was to work for all the Helvetii.

Extrapolating from the Māori example that a people would only adopt a certain action if the whole group reached consensus, the story of Orgetorix suggests that all the Helvetii (regardless of its being divided into cantons (pagi)) agreed to emigrate, indicating that the Helvetii were not hampered by the factionalism Caesar believed endemic to all Gauls.

**Clients**

Caesar saw the client-patron relationship in Gauls as a means for groups or individuals to connect politically. Clients or *clientelae* in the Roman sense were individuals dependent on a superior, and clientship constituted one of the principal separating, yet integrating factors in Roman society of the Middle Republic.\(^8\) There was an expectation that clients would support their patrons in matters of politics and, in earlier times, in war, and in turn the patron would provide political protection or favour, financial assistance and even the provision of food for his clients.\(^9\)

Caesar uses the term *clientes*, ‘dependants’ or sometimes ‘vassals’, and he observes that the leading men in Gaul also have these types of relationships, some private individuals holding even more power than the magistrates, since they could draw retainers and dependants to them through wealth and prestige, and he offers examples that were easily identified by him and worthy of note for his audience in Rome.\(^10\) Caesar also lists the neighbours and/or allies of the Helvetii, the Ruaraci, Tulingi and the Boii (*Gallic War* 1.5), who might be considered dependants in a public sense.

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\(^10\) Through his generosity Dumnorix had more power than the magistrates (*Gallic War* 1.17). Orgetorix held immense power because of his wealth (1.2). McGeough. p. 113. Polybius. (2.17) identified in the Northern Italian Gauls the importance they placed on comradeship. Polybius (2.19, 21) calls the Transalpine Gauls compatriots of the Italian Gauls. Where Polybius placed comradeship within the client/retainer relationship is unclear but kin links are often mentioned and quite possible inter-kin comradeship and fostering would have been more likely than comradeship beyond the kin grouping.
Orgetorix took his clients, debtors and retainers with him when he went to trial circa 59 (Gallic War 1.4), and in these 10,000 followers, we may suppose that there was a combination of relationships in play, since this leading nobleman needed to go beyond his kin-base to gather a larger group to defend his personal interests. Given that this group was prepared to move against Helvetian magisterial power and a force of the common people, some of them must have considered that their obligations to Orgetorix’s interests or the benefits that they might gain outweighed the constitutional basis of the state. The clients Caesar notes may also have had legal and financial obligations of a nature that speak of another political relationship among the Gauls.

**Hostages**

Divico, an old, noble princeps and war leader, dux, of the Tigurini (Gallic War 1.13), refused to give hostages to Caesar, although the Tigurini had suffered a defeat at Roman hands, as it was not the usual practice of the Helvetii to do so, since they commonly received hostages (1.14). At this stage of the campaign, despite the opening of hostilities, Divico did not feel the need to submit to Caesar. Although he was compliant in some respects to Caesar, he baulked at surrendering hostages. This suggests that the Helvetii usually held a position of dominance over those with whom they made political arrangements.

**Civil/Military leadership among the Helvetii**

Orgetorix’s role of negotiator with other Gauls on behalf of the Helvetii certainly shows an acceptance of his civil authority, but his move to make permanent his temporary position went too far for accepted Helvetian custom, and thus his ‘conspiracy’ was exposed and he was threatened with public trial and probable punishment (Gallic War 1.4).

That the Helvetii brought charges against Orgetorix and were prepared to go to war over his autocratic designs shows that they had a developed form of rule that included selected or elected councils and magistrates. In Caesar’s eyes Orgetorix was a powerful leader in Helvetian politics, but he had overstepped his mandate to the point that the magistrates had begun a general mobilisation to confront him, despite his being a leading member of the nobility (Gallic War 1.4). 11 The Helvetii had accepted Orgetorix’ planning for their emigration to Gaul and the fact that he was solely in charge in preparing it, but that he would

11 Indeed Caesar gives a lot of space in the opening of Book One to the politics of Orgetorix and events that happened before his time in Gaul.
try to gain kingship was clearly unacceptable. In the end Orgetorix died, civil war was avoided, and the Helvetii carried on with the planning and preparation for their move west (1.5). Despite Orgetorix’s power and influence his military prowess is never discussed and it would appear that his leadership was mainly of a civic and political nature.

Caesar portrays the Helvetic migration as a military threat to the Roman Province (Gallic War 1.6, 7, 10), but there were several times in early 58 when conflict could possibly have been avoided. As the Helvetii moved towards the Province initially, Caesar blocked their path, and so they sent ‘the noblest men of the state’ to negotiate with him (1.7). The men who were to conduct the diplomacy on behalf of the people were led by Nammeius and Verucloetius. Little is said about their positions or eligibility to lead the delegation, but they engaged in discussion with Caesar before open conflict began. Nevertheless, these men were civil leaders, and so there was a definite distinction at this time between the civil and military leaders among the Helvetii. This was a reflection of their development, and it reveals that there existed a diplomatic or civic level of authority which sought a peaceful solution with hostile neighbours that, if successful, would allow them to carry on westwards. As the Helvetii comprised not just their warriors but also the whole community, perhaps these men were the elected or selected magistrates of the year, or they were ex-magistrates chosen for their political and diplomatic expertise.

When approached by Nammeius and Verucloetius seeking a diplomatic and peaceful resolution, Caesar deceived these men because, as he states, he was not prepared to trust the Helvetii who had promised to move through the Province in peace and without mischief (Gallic War 1.7). He sent the delegation off with a request to return after a period of time that, Caesar told them, would allow him to consider their request, but in reality Caesar required vital time to consolidate his position and gather troops to resist the Helvetii (1.7-8).

The events that Caesar reports following the initial Helvetic request, their later disappointment at Caesar’s decision, and then finding their path blocked by Roman fortifications and troops, would have been viewed by the Helvetians as a failure in diplomacy. The responsibility for this failing would have fallen on those who led the delegation and could well have meant the loss of prestige among their people for Nammeius and Verucloetius. These two Gallic nobles are not mentioned by Caesar again after their initial deputation in 58. There are
several possible reasons for this. They may have withdrawn from the field of diplomacy, or they may have died at the confrontation at the Arar River (Saône), when Caesar destroyed the Tigurini. They may even have also lost their authority through the diplomatic failure and the defeat of the Tigurini.

By contrast a later delegate Divico, who addressed Caesar after his attack on the Tigurini at the Arar River, is described as an old warrior who had had dealings with the Romans in the past (Gallic War 1.13). Does the entry of Divico as sole leader of the second delegation represent a change in leadership and Helvetian attitudes to Caesar who had attempted to halt their progress into Gaul? Divico was noted as the commander of the Helvetii who had defeated a Roman army in 107. In his commentaries, Caesar uses Divico as a timely reminder to the Roman people that the Helvetii, or a faction of them, had shown hostility towards a Roman army previously and that they should, therefore, not be trusted. The motivation for this needs no explaining given that Caesar was now at war with these people and may have already decided to destroy them. To this end, it is not what Divico says that is important here, but that Caesar has introduced a single negotiator, as opposed to the partnership seen in Nammeius and Verucloetius.

Since the Tigurini had defeated Lucius Cassius in 107, and given that military success was often a legitimate prerequisite to leadership, Nammeius, Verucloetius and Divico may have been members of the Tigurini pagus or canton. The position of the Tigurini as rear-guard on the Helvetian line of advance away from the threat of the Roman army also points to a position of responsibility. Among the Belgae, the Bellovaci claimed leadership of the confederation because of their reputation in war (2.4), and so it is possible that the Tigurini, although travelling with their whole community, claimed a position of leadership within the Helvetian confederation.

After the failed diplomacy of Nammeius and Verucloetius, the appointment of Divico as the sole representative of the second diplomatic embassy to Caesar, may also be seen as a move by the Helvetii not only to put their trust in an aggressive (although old) military leader with a proven track record against the Romans, but to allow him sole leadership of the delegation at a moment of when war was looming. After all Caesar had, by defending the Rhone and attacking the Tigurini at the Arar, raised the military stakes considerably. Divico’s role as leader may well mark a more aggressive stance in Helvetian diplomacy than that
seen with Nammeius and Verucloetius. The Helvetii had also raised the stakes. For their part, they had made raids against the Allobroges, the Aedui and their allies (1.11). Divico appears compliant to Caesar’s wishes in offering to settle his people where the Roman general chose, but he does this with a warning not to forget past losses at the hands of the Helvetii and himself in 107 (1.13). Caesar in turn offered terms to Divico who declined them as a possible affront to his and his people’s reputation, since these terms included addressing wrongs done to the Allobroges, the Aedui and their allies (1.14). The Helvetii and Aedui had their own diplomatic dealings, and Divico’s reluctance to give satisfaction to the Aedui suggests a deeper problem in inter-Gallic politics that Caesar omitted. Divico’s compliance in offering to go where Caesar chose is confusing, but this may reflect his trouble in finding a home for his people who had now been attacked and were in hostile country. The Helvetii also then had a hostile Roman army to contend with. Divico was prepared to negotiate for the safety of his confederation with Caesar who represented an external, superior power, but he could not afford to lose face, either personally or for the Helvetii as a whole, by having to make reparations to Gauls Divico may have viewed as of equal or lesser standing.

From the example given by Caesar of the Helvetii, we see that Gallic leadership was a fluid and dynamic aspect of their organisational complexity, and that Caesar, often unwittingly, reveals this in his observations on Gallic society and his interaction with it. The Helvetii sent a deputation of their noblest men, led by Nammeius and Verucloetius, but Caesar did not attach a specific title to these men, calling them only *nobilissimi* (*Gallic War* 1.7), unlike the titles he gives to Divico, *princeps* and *dux*, who led a second delegation of the Helvetii, but who also had great military renown (1.13). Since Divico was both *princeps* and *dux*, this suggests that those holding military leadership also came from the chiefly class (magistrates and ex-magistrates). The position of *dux* was bestowed on the man (or woman; e.g. Boudicca in Tac. *Agric.* 16.1), who had a recognised ability in warfare. The Helvetii had a strong centralised authority, and its magistrates enjoyed the support of a seemingly strong council and people. The appearance of Divico as a legate suggests that the Helvetii placed power in the hands of a proven military leader if they felt circumstances

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12 The Helvetii will be discussed in detail below, suffice to say that Divico had a definite military distinction that Nammeius and Verucloetius did not.
required it. Just as the emigration had been given to Orgetorix to plan, Divico was appointed by the magistrates and council to undertake war-time negotiations.

The dynamic between civil and military leadership suggests that centralised archaic Gallic states had separated these two functions, and the meetings and voting of Gallic leaders implies a vigorous process in operation. Certain chieftains, however, from the Gallic ‘states’ were eager to over-ride these new systems, ones that controlled and limited the powers of any factional leaders within the state.

Magistrates and Kingship

Caesar wrote of magistrates (*magistratus*) who controlled the Helvetian political system, since he perceived this as a valid and flourishing form of Gallic government (*Gallic War* 1.4). There was, however, a tension among the Helvetii, as there were those who opposed the magisterial system, leading to the potential for nobles to aim for kingship. The case of Orgetorix who had aspirations for Helvetian and Gallic *regnum*, however, demonstrates the power the Helvetian magistrates could exert over the wider group (1.2, 3). Orgetorix included other Gallic nobles in his quest for kingship. The Aeduan Dumnorix also had desires to hold *regnum* over his people (1.9, 18), and yet another Gallic noble, Casticus, sought the kingship of the Sequani (1.3), and both were drawn into the dealings of Orgetorix. Their attempts at kingship were covert in nature and in Caesar’s eyes, against the *mores* of this part of Gaul. As such, Orgetorix paid for his outrageous behaviour (1.4). Although Orgetorix used his numerous clients (10,000 men) to affect his escape from custody before the trial, further action was not required as Orgetorix died, perhaps by his own hand.\(^{13}\)

What role did the personal authority of Orgetorix and that of the larger group have in this series of events? Accepting that Gallic leadership, like the power of the Māori *rangatira*, relied on the support of their people, perhaps the Helvetian magistrates demanded that Orgetorix’s canton should deal with one of its own. In particular, when a large force of Helvetii gathered to bring Orgetorix to trial, the canton may have withdrawn its support for him.

Despite Orgetorix’s obvious influence over the members of his extended family (*familia*), clients (*clients*), debtors (*obacrati*) who had gathered to help

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\(^{13}\) Since Caesar has these details of the affair, there may have been an investigation carried out by the Helvetian magistrates, perhaps to find who else was implicated in the conspiracy.
him escape, and no doubt over other members of the nobility who had conspired in other ways to help him, the power of the Helvetian magistrates rested on a wider power-base, farmers, in theory comprising all their warriors, about 65,000 men. Although Orgetorix had been appointed to undertake high-level negotiations with other states over the planned Helvetian emigration (*Gallic War* 1.3), the magistrates were prepared to act against him because he had exceeded his legally designated authority, and they risked civil war to enforce Orgetorix’s trial for treason (1.4). From this, we can see that Helvetian magistrates could force their men folk to support its legal system and governing practices, and that kingship was anathema to Helvetian society.

Another dimension to the fall of Orgetorix, or the loss of his support, could lie in the withdrawal of the sacred mandate of the magistrates, placing a restriction on him and those who supported him. While Caesar notes a strong power-base in his 10,000 followers, Orgetorix’s supporters would not have gone against a sacred sanction imposed on him (6.16).

In essence, Caesar’s uses his account of Orgetorix in 58 to highlight the native consequences in aspiring to kingship, and he relates on later occasions that he himself opposed similar hopes, those attributed to Dumnorix and Vercingetorix. The leadership of the magistrates is obvious in Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society, and the actions of Orgetorix, Casticus and Dumnorix show that the political institution of the magistrates could be challenged in times of stress, but the Helvetii held strong.

### 2.4. The Helvetii and Māori Society: Kinship, Leadership and Noble Councils

**Kinship**

The Māori example allows us to offer another way to interpret Caesar’s assessment of Gallic society. For Māori family and kinship were very important and kin-links were strengthened through marriage adding a political aspect to familial connection. Marriage was an important dimension to Gallic political arrangements as well, as it bonded people by kin links. In his actions we can see that Orgetorix created kin-ties beyond the local families of the Helvetii and strengthened his power-base at the same time.

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14 Described as *multitudinem hominum ex agris*. Caesar reports later that the Helvetian numbered 263,000, and approximately 90,000 of these were of military age (*Gallic War*. 1.29) Also see Goldsworthy. 2007. pp. 250-1.
The leadership of a kin-group was important in gaining political recognition, but the control of clan or kin-based war bands would give such leaders military power that spread beyond immediate kin groupings. This has parallels in Māori society, as seen within the rangatira/hapu relationship, where reputation in war and the success of the war bands were a reflection of one’s mana. The case of Orgetorix is an example where the status of his followers is uncertain, and it is hard to determine whether all of his 10,000 followers represented his kin-grouping. How the battle-lines were drawn up when the Helvetian magistrates threatened force against him is also unclear, as Caesar fails to record any other protagonists when Orgetorix made a bid for autocratic power. Orgetorix and his retainers, clients and debtors seem to represent one clan within the wider grouping that constituted the Helvetii (Gallic War 1.4).

Caesar provides the information that the Helvetii state (civitas) was partitioned into four cantons or pagi (Gallic War 1.12), and it is certain that within these communities there would have been those responsible for group activities on a smaller scale. If we accept Caesar’s four divisions of the Helvetii, and there is no reason not to, Orgetorix was probably drawing on a small group within his canton to support his autocratic designs.

Faced with their leader going against the major decision of the wider Helvetian group, and the potential size of the opposition, Orgetorix’s canton and clan may have withdrawn their support, leaving him without authority (or mana). This loss would be too much for his sense of pride and honour, and so suicide may have been his only option, or his clan may have pre-empted any response by the magistrate by killing Orgetorix to maintain the clan’s prestige.

The case of Orgetorix comes close to the factionalism seen among the Aedui, but there was a wider ‘conspiracy’ taking place on the eve of the Helvetian migration of 58. Caesar stated that the Helvetian Orgetorix sought to marry his daughter to the Aeduan Dumnorix, to strengthen ties between their two nations (Gallic War 1.3), and that the Helvetians requested Dumnorix to speak on their behalf to the Sequani when they wanted to move through Sequanan territory (1.9). In addition to his ties to Orgetorix however, Dumnorix himself organised political marriages for his female relatives as a means to confirm links with the peoples (quite probably the Sequani) of central and eastern Gaul (1.18).

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15 This may have occurred for private reasons, as Dumnorix was allegedly part of Orgetorx’s conspiracy (1.3).
Kinship ties between the Aeduan Dumnorix, the Helvetii and the Sequani continued even after the fall of Dumnorix’ father-in-law, Orgetorix, and for reasons unspecified Dumnorix remained very popular with the Sequani (Gallic War 1.9). The original agreement had been of a military nature in that Orgetorix promised to provide warriors for Dumnorix’ attempt to gain dominance over the Aedui (1.3). For Orgetorix it was important to gain outside support for the migration through the lands of other people, and for his alleged moves to gain control of the Helvetii. Orgetorix, Dumnorix and Casticus were looking at autocratic rule over their people, a move that for Orgetorix, as we have noted, was against the customs of his community (1.3).16

For a kin-based people an aspect of the Helvetian emigration that should be considered is the spiritual or sacred dimension that leaving their homeland meant for the Helvetii. In an emigration that reflects that attempted by the Helvetii, Te Rauparaha and Ngati Toa successfully moved south from Waikato, leaving their traditional and ancestral lands to relocate in the Cook Strait region of Aotearoa/New Zealand. This move was pre-empted by negotiations to move through the lands of other people and invitation of kin and non-kin people to join the migration (heke).

For Te Rauparaha to undertake such a migration shows great mana. Just the matter of leaving the burial sites of the ancestors was a move not taken lightly by Māori.17 The link to the land or mana whenua meant maintaining a contact with those ancestors buried and tied to the land and to break this link (to break the continued conversation) with ones ancestors was a serious matter and involved ritual and tikanga.18

Given the many late Iron Age burial sites across Gaul, it would be easy to imagine the importance placed on the resting places of the ancestors and the process and discussions that would have been conducted when considering leaving the bones of their ancestors behind, and this should be taken into account.

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16 Casticus is not mentioned again after Book One and Caesar does not elaborate on how his move to kingship was treated by his people. Dumnorix did not seem to lose any standing among his people over his autocratic designs as he continues to be active in Aedui politics until he is killed by Caesar in 54.
in any analysis of Caesar’s campaigns and the actions of the different Gallic groups.

**Leadership**

Caesar uses the Helvetii to discuss statehood, and he essentially sets this group up as a model of Gallic society. Caesar’s commentary marks a clear break in 58 between the past actions of Orgetorix and the emigration. Orgetorix would have had over-arching supervision of the emigration and the mandate that would have come from his position within the Helvetian socio-political structure as a man of prestige, nobility and power. Like Māori society and the power attached to *mana*, this mandate would have been limited, lasting only for the duration of the emigration and the period of settlement, as demonstrated in the case of Hongi Hika of the Northern Nga Puhi, who was granted temporary *mana* over his brother’s *tauā* that moved south to raid southern folk in the early nineteenth century AD.

That the people of Iron Age Europe would appoint temporary leaders for particular activities or in times of stress is well documented by Caesar’s accounts of his wars with these people. In Māori society, delegated authority provides parallels that expand our understanding of temporary Gallic leadership. Hongi Hika, of the Ngāpuhi *iwi*, rose to the position of *rangatira* of his *hāpu* Te Uri o hua, but he also served as military commander for his half-brother who was head of the *hapū*. We can see this occurring in Aeduan society, when Dumnorix fought for Caesar at the direction of the magistrates, and also among the Helvetii (Gallic War 1.18) when Divico and the nobles Nammeius and Verucloetius represented the larger Helvetian group on a diplomatic missions to Caesar (1.7, 13). Among the Rangitane, there were also fighting and non-fighting chiefs. There was a clear distinction between *rangatira* who led war parties and those who did not. These temporarily appointed leaders would hold great prestige and even supernatural powers within *hapū*. The war chief would lead the war-band for the duration of the campaign, relinquishing his authority...

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19 *Gallic War*. Galba (2.4), Viridovix (3.17), Cassivellaunus (5.11), Vercingetorix (7.4), Commius, Viridormarus, Eporedorix and Vercassivellaunus (7.76).
20 Cloher, D. U. *Hongi Hika: Warrior Chief*. Auckland, Penguin Books Ltd. pp. 22&23. The *iwi* became the political level for decision making after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. Prior to this the *hapū* was the political functioning unit for Māori society.
once the fighting was over. This was a characteristic shared by the Gauls of the Late Iron Age.

**Noble Councils**

Caesar often refers to councils from the different groups he was dealing with, and he notes that some of the leading men had more power than the magistrates, being those who could draw retainers and dependants to them through wealth and prestige. Caesar observed that Orgetorix and other Gallic leaders were, *nobles* (*Gallic War* 1.2, 3), and although this suggests simply the aristocratic lineage of these men, we should also consider the possibility that these ‘nobles’ were recognised as ex-magistrates of the highest rank, as was the case with Roman *nobles*, and so perhaps they were selected officials. It would be expected that Orgetorix and others used their influence within the council to persuade the Helvetii to emigrate, but he clearly did not discuss with the council his plans for ‘conspiracy’ (1. 16).

From Caesar (*Gallic War* 1.2, 3) we learn that Orgetorix convinced his state (*civitas*), by means of his authority (*auctoritas*), to leave its homeland. This suggests that there was an assembly of the Helvetii, which listened to speakers and took collective action based on such advice. Also, either Orgetorix held a position in the government, since he addressed the assembly, or as a leading citizen (noble) he was authorised to address an assembly on matters of national importance. Whatever the status of Orgetorix when he first addressed the assembly, he was chosen (*deligitur*) to undertake ambassadorial duties for the Helvetii (1.3).

We must consider the place the council played in putting forward the will of the people. The council comprised nobles, who may well have spoken for the people they represented, from each of the clans and cantons. Each canton itself would have had an obvious and transparent form of political leadership. Were

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23 Best. 2001. p. 151. Ballara. 1998 states that mana could be temporarily transferred to toa or fighting chiefs for a period of time to meet certain war aims. This was often done through the passing of weapon or other object that embodied the transferred mana. p. 205.

24 Caesar. *Gallic War* Book 1. 18, 2. 5. For references to tribal councils see 1. 30, 31, 2. 4 (Belgae), 5 (Remi), 28 (Nervii numbers lost at the battle of the Sambre), 3. 18(Venelli), 5. 3, 24, 6. 3, 44 (Annual Gallic council), 5. 6, 7. 55, 77 (Aedui), 5. 54 (Senones) 7.29, 63 (Gallic council called by Vercingetorix) 7.75 (Council of all Gaul opposing Caesar in 52).

25 These nobles may well correspond to the *principes* found accompanying the Aeduan Vergobrets (*Gallic War* 1.16).

these councillors the body who discussed matters of state? If so, then they would have advised the magistrates who in turn passed the laws of the people. The appointment and the rulings of the council and magistrates would have been sacred, adding religious authority to the council and the magistrates who would have been acting for the benefit of the people. In this light, the call to arms to defend their political system and stop Orgetorix would have been seen as defending the will of the people and the sacredness of the council.

The Masses and the mobilisation of the Helvetii

The common folk of the Helvetii were called out to resist Orgetorix (Gallic War 1.2), but Caesar does not clarify whether this obligation to provide military service gave the masses a political voice within the assemblies. Given that the masses were often blamed or credited with influencing the councils in making important decisions elsewhere, the expectation to mobilise may have given them a say at crisis-meetings and influence over the council. As discussed above, the council being made up of the nobility drew its power from the masses and thus was obliged to listen to the people. This circular arrangement of power coming from the support of the masses, and the masses in turn providing support to those they served, is implicit in Māori society. Caesar also makes a similar observation (Gallic War 6.11), although he stops at giving the mass of Gallic society a political ‘voice’ calling the populace not much more than slaves in his ethnographic account of the Gauls (6.13).

It is unclear how the Helvetii enforced a general call to arms, other than bringing together a multitude of men from the fields (ex agris) (Gallic War 1.4). As the Helvetii were preparing to emigrate, a large force would have been at hand. The numbers involved are impressive, but the Helvetii had developed the mechanisms of state to manage a large body of people. This level of political development, with its strong central authority, must have influenced their ability to undertake such a risky emigration over a long distance. There must have been unity of command among the Helvetii, both for the logistical planning of the emigration and then for the movement into Gaul. Caesar (1.3) provides definite timeframes for the Helvetians’ planning and departure (at the start of the third year), and he records the stores each man needed to provide, three months

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27 Orgetorix formed his conspiracy in the consulship of Marcus Messella and Marcus Piso.
provisions (1.5). This organisational complexity and unity of leadership is reflected in their response to the Romans’.

2.5. Response

In 58 Caesar, using the emigration by the Helvetii into Gaul as a reason for intervention became directly involved in Gallic politics. This move would establish a platform for the eventual conquest of the Gallic lands north-west of the Alps. The Helvetii decided to move their entire people westward, leaving their homelands (in Switzerland) to settle in Gaul. Caesar claimed that the Helvetii and allies had a population of 368,000 of which 92,000 were warriors (Gallic War 1. 29). This was a considerable force threatening the fragile political environment of Gaul and the Roman province west of the Alps, a situation that Rome and Caesar would not allow to occur.

Caesar’s campaign against the Helvetii stands out in the Gallic War, as it is an instance where Gauls intentionally fought a pitched battle with the Roman legions after diplomacy had broken down. This direct tactic, as we shall see, was one that Gallic leaders rarely used, and this instance and later episodes show a broad fluidity and flexibility in the way that Gauls prosecuted warfare.

After much manoeuvring by the Helvetii and Caesar, and the pre-emptive attack by Caesar on the Tigurini at the Arar (border between the Sequani and Aedui), their two forces met close to the oppidum of Bibracte. Caesar had bought six legions (tenth, eleventh, and twelfth, seventh, eighth and ninth), perhaps 35,000 men with cavalry and auxiliaries, to face the large force of the Helvetii and their families. With a need to establish the state of his grain supply and settle the Aedui who were having problems of leadership, Caesar moved his force towards Bibracte. The Helvetii saw the Romans’ deviation towards the nearby oppidum as a sign of weakness, and followed Caesar’s force, harassing it as it moved off toward Bibracte (1.23).

What was the motivation of the Helvetii when they undertook this move? Why did they not simply move on, putting space between themselves and Caesar’s force? From Caesar’s account, we might assume that they saw an opportunity to attack Caesar at a disadvantage, but they may have also needed to feed their people, and so the grain supply at Bibracte may have been theirs for

28 This was broken into 263,000 Helvetii, 36,000 Tulingi, 14,000 Latobrigi, 23,000 Rauraci and 32,000 Boii.
29 Caesar would have had auxiliaries supporting his legions.
the taking, once Caesar had been defeated. Whatever the reason, the Helvetii attacked and fought Caesar in a decisive action in a set-piece battle. This was not, however, a standard Roman victory against a standard Gallic enemy. The Helvetii did not crumble after the initial charge.

Caesar opens the account of the battle by explaining the Helvetians’ tactics: they lined up ‘in very close order, they drove our cavalry back, formed a phalanx, and moved up towards our front line’ (*Gallic War* 1.24). The phalanx formation of the Gauls shows an orderly manoeuvre and group cohesion, and it would have proven hard for Caesar’s cavalry to resist, since the Helvetii must have rushed onto the cavalry before moving against the Roman infantry. Although fighting uphill the Helvetii nevertheless closed in on the Roman formations to fight a pitched infantry battle. The range of the Roman *pilum* is estimated at a killing range of around thirty metres,\(^{30}\) which would have provided an effective opportunity for the legionaries to hurl their javelins downwards into the ranks of the Helvetian warriors, and Caesar mentions the advantage that the Roman javelin, or *pilum*, had against the shield-wall formation of the Gallic Helvetii, ‘It was a great handicap for the Gauls as they fought that several of their shields could be pierced and pinned together by a single javelin’, and without being able to remove the javelin, they ‘preferred to let go of their shields and fight unprotected’ (*Gallic War* 1.25).

As the front ranks of the opposing armies closed up, the Helvetii would have been required to fight toe to toe with the Romans. Caesar, in discussing this engagement, states that the Helvetian warriors preferred to drop their pinned shield rather than have their left arm encumbered (*Gallic War* 1.25). From this point, the well-disciplined Roman soldier using swords would out-perform the the Helvetian warriors. In spite of Caesar’s comments on Gallic warriors dropping their pinned shields, he in fact describes an orderly withdrawal by the Helvetii, during which they first disengaged, and then successfully redeployed on a small hill a mile from the initial infantry engagement (1.25). Caesar also

states that the Romans faced an attack on two fronts, as the Helvetian allies, the Boii and the Tulingi, so far not engaged in the fight, appeared and charged the Roman rear as it continued its attack on the Helvetii who had redeployed to the high ground (1.25).

The arrival of the Boii and Tulingi was timely and fortuitous, despite its ultimate failure, but their ‘reservists’ part in the battle suggests flexibility and unity within the Helvetian command structure. Having engaged the Romans who held the high ground, the Helvetii withdrew in order. Most casualties are inflicted in battle when one side withdraws from the battle line, but this does not appear to have been the case in this battle. There is strong evidence to suggest that the Helvetii planned this action, to draw the Romans into a trap where they would be forced to fight on two fronts.

The ambush was a tactic used by the Gauls throughout Caesar’s accounts of Gallic and British warfare, and it was this manoeuvre that the Helvetii applied against Caesar outside of Bibracte. The Romans were successful in fighting on two fronts, however, and they managed to defeat a numerically superior force through discipline and tactics. The numbers that Caesar attributed to the enemy were suspiciously large (92,000 warriors), but this victory ensured that the notion that Roman skill and training would usually defeat superior Celtic armies began to take its place in the classical military paradigm.

Caesar’s description of the enemy tactics show evidence that the Helvetii were confident in attacking the Romans head-on, although it is highly probable that they sought a decisive battle out of a necessity pressed on them by the fact that the army had families and stock with them. The size of the Gallic force was reflective of a people in the process of emigration, and this must have given the Helvetii a sense of urgency. They sought a decisive action because, strategically, they did not have the luxury of time.

What this battle and the campaign in general shows is that the Helvetii had a strong central authority that could engage in diplomatic negotiations or direct a large military force of over 90,000 men in battle. This suggests a united command, although, the supreme commander of the battle near Bibracte is not even named, but Caesar does remark on the capture of Orgerorix’s daughter (Gallic war 1.26), revealing that members of his ‘clan’ remained prominent in Caesar’s mind. There was also a strategic vision that directed the tactical response to the Romans who had initiated aggression. For the people of late Iron
Age Gaul, this singular type of leadership and strategy was not seen again in Gaul until 52, although the British war chief Cassivelleunus used a similar approach against the Romans in 54.

From the opening phases of the Helvetian campaign, there seems to have been no use of indirect actions by the Gauls. The Helvetii were not defending their own territory and could, therefore, not afford to drag out their war. The mass emigration meant that the Helvetian leadership had a responsibility to their women, and children and the elderly. This necessitated a quick decisive action, one that the Helvetii felt that they could win. Sadly for them, despite being one of the largest and strongest of the Gallic people, they were soundly defeated and sent back to their homeland. In seeking a decisive action, the Helvetii played into the hands of Caesar who always sought to end any campaign as quickly as possible in one pitched battle, and at this time in particular, because the Romans were short of grain. The rest of Gaul must have watched with interest as Caesar and his (comparatively) small army decisively beat the Helvetii.

6.6. Summary

The centralised nature of the political system and magisterial leadership enabled the Helvetii to withstand localised uprisings and to push their way into Gaul, revealing in both instances a system with an ability to manage a large number of people. The exposé on Orgetorix, and the role played by Divico, Nammeius, and Verucloetius show strong and flexible leadership, and a strong central authority, despite issues of factionalism. The Helvetii were a vigorous archaic state that failed only in that they faced an efficient and confident Roman general who had the backing of a professionally trained army. While a Gallic people on the move appeared chaotic to Roman eyes, lacking the efficiency of Roman forces on the march, they were organised enough to fight, once they believed that they held the military initiative. The Helvetii displayed all the characteristics necessary to secure unity of command and to fight well planned-battles. Their last engagement against Caesar in 58 was a set-piece battle, from which we can see the Gallic predisposition for applying an ambush in force. Their tight formations and the withdrawal onto higher ground while still engaged in fighting would have require internal discipline and strong leadership over the entire army (including reserves), and because of this the Helvetii were

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31 This was a long hard fought and costly victory for Caesar who rested his men for three days to tend to the wounded and bury the Roman dead (Gallic War 1.26).
able to force the Romans to fight on two fronts, once the Boii and Tulingi became engaged.

In comparing the Helvetii with Māori, we have been able to establish the importance of kinship and of political and military alliances beyond Caesar's scope of understanding. Orgetorix used marriage-alliances to draw other Gallic nobles into his plan for the kingship of all Gaul. He went beyond his immediate kin-base, and he created a new kin-base in Dumnorix. While Orgetorix gained support from new kin and allies beyond Helvetia, it was in his immediate kin group that true basis power resided. When he went against the Helvetian magistrates, who would have had sacred authority, Orgetorix was possibly deserted by his immediate kin who, while supportive of his initial plans, perhaps withdrew support when it was realised that they would have to fight the wider Helvetian community. A leader who lost divine or sacred support in Māori society would lose the backing of his people and Orgetorix’ death may suggest that he found himself in this situation.

The Helvetii fought Caesar, with the support of allies as a united force, never wavering from their aim to settle in south-western Gaul. They were a strong and confident example of a Celtic state that had the infrastructure to move a large group, and to enforce the destruction of their homeland. For the Helvetii, the tension between the magisterial system and strong noble such as Orgetorix was removed, and the state faced Caesar as a united group. Their defeat lay in their military, and did not arise from flaws in their political system.
Chapter Three

Caesar and the Aedui: An Analysis of a Gallic Ally

3.1. The Aedui

The Aedui lived in central Gaul occupying territory west of the Auvergne Mountains, with the Saône to their East and the Loire to their West. The Massif Central was to their South. The control of the Saône, Seine and Loire Rivers was important with regards to the major trade route between Gaul and the Mediterranean world. The major settlements of the Aedui were the *oppida* of Bibrate (Le Mont-Beuvray) (*Gallic war* 1.23), Decectia (7.33), Noviodunum (7.55), and Cabillonum (7.42). Their neighbours were the Arverni to the south who were traditionally hostile (1.31). To the East lived the Sequani who seemed to shift in their relationship with the Aedui, opposing the group before 58, but then supporting the Aeduan noble Dumnorix during the Helvetian emigration (1.9).

Through the friendship of Rome, the Aedui had once held primacy over the Gallic people (*Gallic war* 1.31). This position of supremacy led the Aedui into conflict with their neighbours, the Arverni, Sequani and also with an eastern people led by Ariovistus who had crossed the Rhine River to work as mercenaries for the Sequani (1.31). Since the Aedui enjoyed the friendship of the Romans (1.31), they supported Caesar’s war against the Helvetii but it would not be long before internal factions, under the brothers Diviciacus and Dumnorix, created a diversion that Caesar had to deal with during the fighting. In this chapter we will examine Aeduan support for Caesar, as the dynamics of Aeduan politics threatened their alliance to the Romans.

The state of flux between both sides of the Rhine created an environment of shifting politics and movement of people. This situation had an impact on the eastern and central Gauls and particularly on the Aedui and their political manoeuvring at the time of Caesar’s invasion.

3.2. The Archaeology of the Aedui

The archaeological evidence supports Caesar’s account of the Aedui as an archaic state, but also gives us further information on the Iron Age Gallic states. The Aedui were known to the Mediterranean city-states as traders and this is

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seen in the archaeological record from the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. Major oppida show evidence of trade, either from metal working, such as in artefacts made of iron, gold, silver and bronze, found at sites like Bibracte (Mount Beuvray) or from the remains of large-scale, open-cut mining. At Cabillonum (Saône of Chalon) too, large quantities of amphorae have been unearthed. Cabillonum was a major entrepôt for the Aedui, and it was located close to Bibracte.

The archaeological material from the lands of the Aedui shows evidence of skilled craftsmen and design, for example in coinage and fine enamelling, and a diverse agricultural economy, with pastures, orchards and gardens located around large oppida like Bibracte. The Aedui were central to the extensive and rich trade route from the Atlantic, and they formed part of the northern trading frontier, along with the Helvetii to the east, from around 60. Bibracte and other Aeduan oppida could hold large populations measured in the thousands. This mixture of a primary economy and industrial production meant that the Aedui developed into one of the most powerful and rich Gallic states. The Aedui could afford a political system with a bureaucracy that supported the authority of magistrates.

The Aedui fit Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society stated in Book Six and fit within the characteristics of the archaic state. Caesar would have known of the Aedui before he invaded Gaul in 58 as this group had been valuable allies as Roman troops moved up the Rhone valley as early as 125. They would have

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6 Galliou. p. 28.

7 Duval. p. 89.


been invaluable to Caesar too, as the Aedui appeared to have the surplus production and resources to support a Roman army in the field.

3.3. Caesar and the Aedui

Although Caesar provides a generic image of the Gallic state in his ethnography (*Gallic War* 6.11-20), the Aedui possibly provided Caesar with the model for this society. This is not surprising when we consider that the Romans had been in contact with this central Gallic state from 125, and Caesar possibly attained specific information about Gallic society from Diviciacus, a leading noble and ex-vergobret, who was his constant companion in the opening years of his campaigns in Gaul.

Although the Aedui appeared stable, the intrusion of the Helvetii and the arrival of the German Ariovistus in eastern Gaul near the time of Caesar’s governorship would have added confusion to an already dynamic environment, since the wider political situation within Gaul was one of instability. Ariovistus had become involved in Gallic politics as a mercenary leader, but he and some groups within his force (‘Germans’) decided to take control of parts of Gaul, and so to settle on the western side of the Rhine (*Gallic War* 1.31). The Aedui opposed Ariovistus, however, and they tried to put a stop to ‘German’ settlement in Gaul, but after a series of clashes with Ariovistus, they were soundly defeated at the battle of Magetobriga (possibly in 60 or 59), where most of their nobility was allegedly wiped out (1.31, 6. 12). Given that the brothers Dumnorix and Diviciacus, belonging to one of the leading Aeduan families, participated in these events, obviously not all the nobility was destroyed at Magetobriga.

The loss of many Aeduan leaders at Magetobriga, however, had implications for the Aedui, and it created a weakness within this once powerful Gallic people. This led to a leadership crisis as the surviving nobles sought to control the people and to re-establish Aeduan dominance in Gaul. Dumnorix, the younger brother of Diviciacus, challenged the magisterial authority of the Aeduan political system.

It is unclear whether the presence of Ariovistus in Gaul, the removal of Sequanan authority in Gaul, and the Aeduan leadership crisis after Magetobriga,

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10 Caesar states that 15,000 Germans initially came across the Rhine but that that number had risen to around 120,000 at the time of the Helvetii migration.
11 Caesar uses Latin terms for the Gallic elite *omnem nobilitatem, omnem senatum* and *omnem equitatum.* (*Gallic War* 1.31).
motivated the planned emigration of the Helvetii into central-southern Gaul, but there are other signs of stress within these communities. Several Gallic leaders applied pressure to their political systems in an effort to get their people to return to older forms of leadership, as can be seen within factions of the Helvetii (although rejected), the Aedui and the Sequani. While the Helvetii aggressively resisted this reversion and their magistrates retained power, among the Aeduan Gauls kin-based factionalism challenged the status quo, and it even proved troublesome for Caesar.

As in the case of all Gallic people, hostage-exchange was a characteristic of Aeduan society, and we see this as a means of developing political relationships. Dumnorix and Diviciacus, both leading nobles, made political arrangements that involved the exchange of hostages. Dumnorix had brokered a deal between the Helvetii and the Sequani using hostage-exchange to seal the contract (Gallic War 1.9, 19). Diviciacus aligned himself to Caesar, no doubt because of his relationship with the Roman senate, and re-enforced his ties with Rome through his personal support for Caesar in campaigns against the Helvetii, Ariovistus and the Belgae (1.19, 31). Diviciacus, however, had been forced to leave his homeland and join the Romans because he had refused to surrender his children as hostages to Ariovistus (1.31).

The difference between Diviciacus’ relationship to the senate and that to Caesar was that, while one arose from the other, the former was potentially an arrangement that bound the Aedui as a people or civitas, while the later appears to have been a personal alliance as well. This suggests that the Aedui and the leading power brokers within this Gallic group were at a stage of development where the archaic statehood still relied upon the initiatives and personalities of strong individual chiefs. It could also show that strong individuals like Dumnorix were looking to restore an older form of control, the complex chiefdom, that Caesar named regnum (Gallic War 4.21. 5.20, 25, 54).

3.4. The Aedui and Māori: Factional Politics and Reaction to Invasion

The level of politics and the development in social order and hierarchy are influenced by the area a people occupy and control. A people can enjoy stability within an enclosed habitat and, with the control of resources, this energises the

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effective production of a different ranges of goods and a surplus for trade.\textsuperscript{13} The Aedui gained their dominant position within Gaul through control of the Rhone Valley and the trade networks through that area. The Aedui comprised an archaic state that developed out of the need to centralise a large group of people with a power to keep them united. As noted, the Helvetii also had developed into an archaic state, and the Aedui had moved along similar lines politically, and like the Helvetii, the Aedui gave power under the control of a leading magistrate, whom Caesar called a \textit{vergobret} ‘dispenser of judgment’ (\textit{Gallic War} 1.16).

The Aedui were linked politically to the Helvetii and were involved in the latter’s migration in 58. The Aeduan noble Dumnorix had been implicated in the plot of Orgetorix, and he had covertly supported the Helvetii as they attempted to immigrate into Gaul. His brother Diviciacus, on the other hand, provided advice and military aid to Caesar during the early campaign of 58, which were designed to prevent the Helvetii from reaching their chosen destination.

\textbf{Factional Politics and the Aedui}

The Aedui show signs of deeply divided factions. At the time of his arrival in Gaul, Caesar found two major tribal factions competing for the control of Gaul itself (\textit{Gallic War} 6.11), one led by the Aedui, Rome’s friends, and the other, by the Arverni, recently allied to the Sequani (1.31, 6.12). The Aedui and the Arverni had held long-standing authority in Gaul,\textsuperscript{14} while the Sequani had become a political force just before Caesar’s arrival. The Arverni and Sequani had used German mercenaries to tip the balance of power in their favour, and so to gain primacy (1.31, 6.1), but Caesar soon re-established the dominance of the Aedui and established the Belgic Remi as the second major faction in Gaul, in place of the Sequani and Arverni (6.12, 7.63).\textsuperscript{15} Caesar was essentially establishing these two factions directly under his own control. Under Caesar’s new imposition, these factions gave non-aligned Gallic people, previously clients of the Sequani and Arverni, the opportunity either to follow the Aedui or to join the new group led by the Remi (6.12). Both these people supported

\begin{footnotes}
\item[14] On Allies of the Arverni, see \textit{Gallic War} 7.4.
\item[15] Despite the two new prominent groups, the Arverni must have remained influential in central Gaul, as they easily took leadership of the disaffected Gauls in 52 (\textit{Gallic War} 7.4).
\end{footnotes}
Caesar for the most part (5.54), to the benefit of all parties. It would seem that the majority of Gauls were, however, unhappy with the new arrangement, as the revolts in 54/3 and 52 reveal. In addition, these realignments suggest the continuation of Gallic in-fighting even after the Romans gained dominance in the region.

The promotion of the Remi suggests that Caesar identified the importance of the northern Belgic and western Armorican blocs politically in the current balance of power, and so he had manufactured a shift in power from an Aeduan and Arvernian axis to an Aeduan and Remian one. The Aedui and Remi relied on Caesar for their positions of dominance in Gaul, as the loss of power by the Aedui during the Gallic revolt engineered by the Arverni in 52 demonstrates. This new structure fits well within the image Caesar believed characterised all of Gaul (6.11).

Caesar portrayed Gallic society as being factional in nature, and he no doubt based his assessment on his personal knowledge of the Aedui, but how did factionalism affect where the loyalties of the Aedui lay? The on-going loyalty of the Aedui to Caesar was problematic to them, and they finally wavered in that loyalty in 52, but Caesar neglects to inform his audience of the leadership crisis among these friends of Rome that led to their defection. The simple reason for this is that Caesar had begun his commentary listing the Aedui as allies and friends of Rome, since this was a well known fact at Rome, but soon a leadership crisis among the Aedui became obvious. Caesar continued to play down this issue because, apart from the Remi who grew in importance to Caesar and gained considerable power within the wider Gallic political world as a result, the Aedui held strategic significance to any move by Rome to stabilise Gaul and to create an effective province. Caesar needed this group as a steadfast ally, for whom he had destroyed the Helvetii (Gallic War 1.11) and Ariovistus (1.43, 45) in 58.

Not only were the Aedui involved in an external power struggle involving the Helvetii, the Romans and the Germans under Ariovistus, but they were engaged in an internal leadership struggle. The Helvetii and the Aedui were archaic states that had serious challenges to their magisterial bodies. Where they differed was in the way they dealt with those subversive elements. The state

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16 The Aedui joined the Gallic revolt in 52BC, but only after a lengthy period of prevarication caused presumably by their previous loyalty to the Romans.
authorities of the Helvetii were easily able to shut down its internal dissent, while the Aeduan state continually struggled to keep its nobles in check, although nobles such as Dumnorix continued to challenge the senate and the leadership of the Vergobret.

A parallel to Gallic factionalism is seen in the dynamics of the Northern War fought in the Aotearoa/New Zealand during the early 1840s, which show a similarity to the problems experienced by the Aedui. The large Nga Puhi confederation was one of the first of the Māori people to encourage and embrace European trade and technology.17 Contact between Māori and Europeans had been ad hoc and generally controlled by local rangatira until the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. Once the Crown gained a legal mandate over the European settlers in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the power of the rangatira came under threat. War broke out between factions of Nga Puhi and the Crown as a result of the perception that crown authority was interfering with the authority or mana of the local rangatira. The moving of the nation’s capital from Kororareka (Russell) to Auckland and the imposition of shipping duties and taxes created Māori tensions. While all Nga Puhi were in opposition to this move, both sides wanted to maintain trade and some elements even supported the Crown.

Hone Heke and Kawiti brought their warriors to fight the Crown. Hone’s motivation was to protect his people’s contact with Europeans and the benefits of trade. Kawiti joined Hone possibly from the need of an old warrior to try his skills against the new military power in the region. Kawiti had gained a reputation as a fighting chief during the wars of the early nineteenth century. The other major Nga Puhi rangatira who joined the fighting in the Northern war was Tamiti Waka Nene of the Hokianga. Nene wanted the same thing as Heke but he had given his word to the Crown to bring Heke into line.18 The Northern war ended in a stalemate with limited local success for Heke and Kawiti, a demonstration of Crown loyalty from Nene and a paper victory for the Crown which showed that they had men and supplies to fight if necessary.19 Conflict

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18 Belich. 1998 p. 36.
with the Crown was a new phenomenon for Māori but it exposed the factional nature of Māori society mirrored in Gallic society. Factions of the Nga Puhi resented and opposed Crown interference just as Dumnorix did with Caesar. While Hone Heke and Kawiti were overt in their opposition, Dumnorix was much more subtle.

The factional tension between the magistrates and Aeduan nobility was presented by Caesar in the persons of the brothers Diviciacus, one of the annually elected chief magistrates of the Aedui, and Dumnorix who seemed to desire a more autocratic position within the Aedui (Gallic War 1.3). Caesar’s account of the ongoing problems with the leadership of the Aedui revolving around Dumnorix and Diviciacus is but one example of Gallic bi-partisan politics and intrigue.\(^{20}\) The power-vacuum created by the battle of Magetobriga and the leadership struggle that followed gave Caesar a literary device, to introduce tension into the initial stages of his writing, and to have Dumnorix play the role of minor antagonist to Caesar until his death in 54 (5.7). By that stage too Diviciacus was conspicuous through his absence, and without him, the Aedui appear leaderless and wavering in their support for the Romans, until leadership squabbles in 52 led to a complete rupture with Caesar. Dumnorix and Diviciacus are the epitome of what Caesar saw as Gallic factional behaviour, but these two Aeduan nobles present a picture of kin-based politics.

**Kin Ties and Political Resistance within the Aedui**

Caesar goes to great lengths to discuss the political intrigue of the Helvetian Orgetorix, just prior to the end of the Helvetians leaving their homeland.\(^{21}\) He formed a strong alliance with Dumnorix by marrying his daughter to him, and Dumnorix was drawn into the politics of the Helvetii, but he also worked to augment his own position with the military help of Orgetorix (Gallic War. 1.4). Dumnorix married his mother to the leader of the Bituriges (a powerful Gallic state) and his sisters and female relatives to men within all the leading states in Gaul, including no doubt the Sequani, creating kin-ties between these groups (1.18). Similar alliances to secure peace as practised by Dumnorix can be found

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\(^{21}\) Caesar discusses the defeat of Lucius Cassius in 107 at the hands of the Helvetii (Gallic War 1. 7) and specifically the Tigurini (Gallic War 1. 12) to justify the destruction of this canton by the legions under his generalship.
in Māori society, for whom, peacemaking through marriage was a standard political arrangement, and peace between warring parties could be made by the exchange of high-ranking women. The importance of these relationships among prehistoric people was the kinship implications that would create stronger relationships beyond non-family alliances. Dumnorix’s marriage-ties would have been entered into to establish peace between the Aedui and Sequani after a period of war. The Aedui were not at war with the Helvetii, and so any marriage arrangements here were motivated by securing kin-links. Marriage arrangements among Māori were also set up to secure or reward allies, and this certainly seems to reflect the practices of Dumnorix and Orgetorix.

Looking outside of his marriage alliance, we should consider the economic implications of Dumnorix’s mother marrying into the Bituriges. As alleged by Liscus, Dumnorix gained his wealth through holding the right to gather customs taxes, portoria and vectigalia (Gallic War 1.18). The Bituriges were a major supplier of raw materials, iron (7.22) and grain (7.13), and this marriage alliance between Dumnorix’s mother and the Bituriges may have been a simple act of securing trade agreements which would have been a major source of revenue for both parties.

The act of Dumnorix marrying his mother to the leader of the Bituriges also suggests two things. Dumnorix and Diviciacus shared a father, but perhaps were born of different mothers, but even if they had the same parents, Dumnorix did not recognise Diviciacus’ seniority within the family. It is unclear what happened to Diviciacus after 57, as Caesar does not mention him directly after his participation against the Belgae when, at his behest, he led the Aedui to invade the lands of the Bellovaci (Gallic War 2.5, 10). The disappearance, for whatever reason, of Diviciacus from the Aeduan leadership may have left Dumnorix uncontrolled to pursue his anti-Roman intrigue, and his absence would have allowed Dumnorix to rise to the top of his clan. This would explain Dumnorix’s leading presence among the Gauls in 54, and Caesar having to eliminate him, this time without intercession by Diviciacus, as happened in 58. Since Dumnorix had risen to be head of his family kin group, Caesar may have

needed to dispose of him, whose behaviour had become increasingly hostile to Caesar, and whose attitude was causing disaffection elsewhere.

Māori society showed similar dynamism in family politics. The Māori great-war chief of the Nga Puhi, Hongi Hika, was a fighting rangatira for his older and senior brother. Hongi was the third son but rose in power through wars against traditional enemies. The successive deaths of his older brothers meant that his rise in mana was two-fold. His reputation as a fighting rangatira grew and his position as the surviving son meant that he became the head of his hapū. Hongi’s ability in war was equalled by his success as a politician, and he created a thriving modern economy for his people through trade. Large-scale raiding, leading to the capture of slaves to work the land, enabled Hongi to trade more effectively in muskets and iron, which in turn proved an advantage in further raiding against those who did not have access to European trade and goods. In the same way Dumnorix was seemingly a fighting chief and otherwise had standing among the Aedui, first through the support from his brother as vergobret, and then as a proven leader in war, as demonstrated in his leadership of the Aeduan cavalry in 58 (Gallic War 1.18). Gallic and Māori society both judged military success as a prerequisite for leadership.

In advancing the Helvetic plans for emigration, and because of Orgetorix’ offer of support in setting him up as leader of the Aedui, Dumnorix entered a larger political world (Gallic War 1.3). This was a sensitive matter for Caesar, in that he was using his friendship with the Aedui as a reason to fight the Helvetii, yet Dumnorix was providing the Helvetii with an ally, even after Orgetorix had died. Caesar does not record kin-ties between Dumnorix and the Sequani, but Dumnorix did negotiate with them later, which suggest he had some authority to do so.24 That the Helvetii maintained the relationships set up by the ‘rebel’ Orgetorix suggests that the group Orgetorix belonged to, perhaps now led by his son, was still a major force within the Helvetii.

Despite Orgetorix’s death, Dumnorix had obligations to his wife’s family. These kin-ties may help explain events that unfolded once the Helvetii had been first of all held back from crossing the Rhone near Geneva, and then attacked

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24 This points to forward planning on the part of the Helvetii in that they would use the mana/prestige of a man like Dumnorix with his kin ties to open up alternative routes through Gaul other than the direct one through the Roman Province.
later by Caesar on the Arar. Forced into moving northward and through the lands of the Sequani, the Helvetii would have been well placed to aid Dumnorix, who had his own plans and aspirations within the Aedui, since this northern route would take the Helvetii through the lands of the Aedui, where Dumnorix may have planned to use them to remove his personal enemies.

Dumnorix is an example of a Gallic leader with kin-based relationships that encompassed central Gaul, but Caesar also recognised other kin relationships. For example, he reports that the Ambarri were kinsmen (necessarii and consanguinei) of the Aedui (Gallic War 1.11), who may represent the last stages of fission among the Aedui, and they perhaps shared a common system of government, as did the Remi and Suessiones. Given their close relationship, the Ambarri were clearly important to the Aedui who petitioned Caesar to come into Gaul to protect them from the Helvetii (1.11, 14).

**Aedui Leadership: Chief versus Magistrate**

Diviciacus held the position of chief magistrate (vergobret) within the Aedui, a position elected annually (1.16). He played a diplomatic role, dealing with other Gallic groupings, the Roman senate and Caesar. Diviciacus was often at Caesar’s side, and although involved in action against the Belgae in 57 (1.20, 2.10), he may have been present to keep Dumnorix in check (1.20).

Caesar’s observation on Aeduan leadership provides insight into the vergobret who exercised civil leadership over the people, as we see with Diviciacus and Liscus at the time of the Helvetian emergency in 58 (Gallic War 1.16), when Liscus was the acting vergobret. Even though Diviciacus was no longer holding office and Liscus was, both were active as diplomats during 58.

After the Romans had utterly routed the Helvetii in battle and sent them back to their homeland (Gallic War 1.31), the Gauls then asked Caesar to eject Ariovistus and his ‘German’ warriors from Gaul. Perhaps some of the Gauls were hoping that the Romans and the Germans would weaken one another militarily, and that they might then be able to eject both groups from the region. Since the main discussion concerning Germans was initiated by Diviciacus, it is noteworthy that, despite Aeduan domination by Ariovistus, Diviciacus was free in talking to Caesar because he had not submitted hostages to the German leader (1.31), and instead had fled to Rome. As such he had perhaps not personally

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25 The Helvetii may have chosen not to fully attempt to cross the Rhone but move north instead.
made a formal act of submission to Ariovistus, and so was not bound by a code of silence in this point, as were other Gauls. If Diviciacus had been absent from the battle at Magetobriga, this would have arisen from the position he held as chief *vergobret* who was not permitted to leave Aeduan lands during his period of tenure (7.33).

Let us investigate what reliance the Aeduan state had on fighting leaders. Dumnorix was a warrior or fighting chief who played an active military role for his people, as attested by Caesar in 58, when he led the Aeduan cavalry (1.18). Dumnorix’s wealth and power are explained as coming from revenues and taxes from customs that he won through a tendering process (*Gallic War* 1.18). Dumnorix even appears on coinage with the legend *DVBNOCOV*, and this coinage linked to Dumnorix mimics Caesar’s (or vice versa). Its presence supports Caesar’s observation that this man gained wealth through the control of trade routes, possibly through taxing Italian traders who were moving goods along the Rhone Valley and further afield. With the support of Diviciacus and his clan, few would bid against Dumnorix (1.18).

Although a fighting chief, Dumnorix was also capable of diplomacy because of his noble standing among the Aedui and other Gallic people. He actively engaged Orgetorix in discussions on the future of Gaul, the Aedui and his own position. The emigration of the Helvetii exerted pressure throughout eastern and central Gaul, and Dumnorix was well positioned to make the most of any available Helvetian forces. Temporary war leaders of large confederations were a common feature of late Iron Age societies, put in place in response to military aggression, but the groups who made up the armies were also independent within any larger force mobilised in times of stress. Dumnorix’s autocratic designs, however well regarded he was in military terms, led him into conflict with his brother Diviciacus and the ruling of the magistrate.

Caesar was inconsistent in his attitudes to kingship. In the case of the Aedui, Caesar saw the value in supporting Diviciacus not Dumnorix who had

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27 Caesar mentions Roman citizens established in Gaul but it is unclear if they came with him or were already operating north of the Alps. See *Gallic War* 7.3, 42. Cunliffe. 1988. p. 97. Collis. 1984. p. 156. Roman traders controlled Gallic rivers but would have surely paid for this in taxes and duties.
aspirations of kingship (*Gallic War* 1.3, 5.6), and had proven himself unreliable in 58 (1.18). If there was tension between the brothers, this would show the Aedui developing a means to meet the circumstances of the day, but there also appears evidence for Aeduan instability.

Dumnorix’s centrality to the events of 59-58 and the groups involved highlights the instability in eastern Gaul and the tensions between Diviciacus and his brother. We need to briefly look at the bigger political picture to see the wider problems for the Gauls in 58. The chronology of events in 58, as presented by Caesar, creates problems of continuity. Caesar states, through Diviciacus, that the situation of the Sequani was desperate after the destruction of the Helvetii (*Gallic War* 1.32). We need to first determine what Ariovistus was doing as the Helvetii moved into the lands of the Sequani. If he and his warriors controlled all the major Sequani settlements, why were they not involved in actions before Caesar moved to evict them from Gaul? Did the entry of a large force of the Helvetii give the Sequani a timely opportunity to remove these German invaders?

The Helvetii would have wanted to get to their new home as quickly as possible, but a direct route would have taken them through the Roman Province. Caesar blocked their path, and so they took a secondary route through the lands of the Sequani and Aedui. This move may have come with conditions. The Helvetii had a reputation for fighting Germans and would have satisfied Gallic (Sequanan) needs to remove Ariovistus. This could explain why Caesar does not mention the movement of Ariovistus, until after he destroyed the Helvetii, since only then was he made aware of the utter dejection of the Sequani. However, Diviciacus would have been aware of this situation, but he may have kept silent out of concern for the hostages that Ariovistus had in his care. Given the tension between the Aedui and Sequani before 58, Dumnorix may also have been brokering a peace deal with them, as Caesar states that Dumnorix had ‘great weight with the Sequani, for he was both popular and open-handed’ (*Gallic War* 1.9).

The Helvetii moved through the lands of the Sequani and into territory bordering the Aedui, where they attacked various peoples (*Gallic War* 1.11), by these actions perhaps fulfilling their obligations to provide aid to Dumnorix
(1.3), but a promise of booty would have been an added incentive to raid.\textsuperscript{28} An arrangement to settle members of the Helvetian grouping in the lands of the Aedui may have also offered a further incentive to invasion. Dumnorix’s quest for power might see him allowing attacks on fellow Aedui. What we perhaps see in 58 is the Helvetii plundering the Aedui and their allies as a mechanism to allow Dumnorix to gain \textit{regnum}.

Once Caesar had also moved into the lands of the Aedui, the situation for the Helvetii and Dumnorix became critical. Caesar was at this stage following the Helvetii with aggressive intentions. Caesar discusses preventing Helvetian looting, but Dumnorix’s supporters were hampering Caesar’s campaign by stopping grain collection (\textit{Gallic War} 1.15). Dumnorix’s enemies had not been removed (his brother and the leading magistrate were still present), and Caesar needed to confirm the loyalty of the Aedui and to secure his grain supply. Things began to centre on the \textit{oppidum} of Bibracte. Not only was it the Aeduan capital but it was a major grain storage site making it valuable to Caesar, to the Aedui and, at this stage, also to the Helvetii.\textsuperscript{29} But Bibracte had deeper political importance as the administrative centre for the Aedui people. While grain was important to Caesar, his march towards Bibracte can be seen as a secondary action to support Diviciacus and the magisterial faction within the Aedui. The Helvetii turned to follow and to try to destroy Caesar at this point but, while Caesar portrays this move by the Helvetii as typical Gallic over-confidence after minor military victories, the kin-based connections between this people and Dumnorix must be considered also as a major strategic factor in Helvetian military action.

Since Caesar reports that Dumnorix had entered into agreement with a section of the Helvetii and that they had agreed to supply him with military aid and support (\textit{Gallic War} 1.3), the attack on the Aedui by the Helvetii makes sense if placed within this Gallic political framework. The Helvetii’s refusal to hand back Aedui hostages and slaves (1.11, 14) would keep the balance of power among the Aeduan in Dumnorix’s favour, while underlining political arrangements between the Helvetii and Dumnorix. It is possible that the attack

\textsuperscript{28} Slaves in particular would mean the freeing up of land and perhaps further conditions of the deal between Dumnorix and the Helvetii.

\textsuperscript{29} Caesar states that Bibracte was “by far the largest and best-provided of the Aeduan towns”. (\textit{Gallic War} 1.23)
on the Aedui by the Helvetii was, in fact, intended to remove Dumnorix’s political rival. Thus, these activities were not random acts of destruction by a marauding group raiding those in their path, but the behaviour of a group with set limits and kin-obligations. Caesar’s account has ignored Gallic societal politics in this instance.

For Dumnorix, Helvetian success was linked to his success, just as Diviciacus’ was linked to Caesar’s. Once the Helvetii were defeated, the magisterial system and the power behind Diviciacus were restored among the Aedui. Dumnorix was still active within Aeduan society, but he was rendered less important, as Caesar makes little reference to him until 54.

The political system of the Aedui invested power in the hands of the councils and magistrates, and this was no doubt associated with the decline of kin-based power within this archaic state. The structure of the Aeduan system did not, however, discourage Dumnorix from strengthening kin-ties beyond the Aeduan nobility. Dumnorix used his marriage alliances in various ways, be it to gain allies, make peace or to strengthen trade-links. His kin-links would play a part during the Helvetian migration when he persuaded the Sequani to allow the Helvetii to travel through their lands (Gallic War 1.9, 19).

**Clients**

There is evidence of client relationships within the Aedui. Dumorix, for example, had a group of paid retainers permanently with him. In his case and that of his self-funded cavalry, it remains unclear whether this was a group of mercenaries or kinsmen and clients (Gallic War 1.18). Caesar also noted that Litaviccus was accompanied by his dependants into Gergovia in 52, as was their custom, since it was considered wicked for these men to desert their patron (7.40). In the not so distant past liegemen and dependants had allegedly been burnt, along with slaves (servi), on the funeral pyres of their dead masters (6.19). During a leadership struggle among the Aedui in 52, Caesar noted that each claimant gathered their own following (clientes) (7.32). This suggests that the Aeduan nobility employed mercenaries as personal retainers. What is clear about these dependants is that this arrangement included both groups and individuals, and there were mutual obligations. The cases of Litaviccus suggest that there were possibly mutual legal responsibilities as well, although Caesar never states this directly, but this relationship between friendship and generosity implies some form of reciprocation.
The function of *utu* in Māori society may provide understanding of reciprocation in Gallic society. *Utu* was a central concept for inter-group relationship for Māori society where any action, positive or negative required reciprocation. It created obligations and expected outcomes between individuals and groups.

Given that Dumnorix had the wealth to support a band of permanently armed cavalry at home and abroad, he may well have employed both kin and non-kin as his warriors. Dumnorix had visible power among the Aedui derived from funds gathered from taxation, but taxation was now also the main method of support to the state, and so perhaps kin-based ties became less important. We do not know if this shift in gathering taxes worked at breaking down the older client relationships, but it was a platform that Dumnorix had used in his bid for power. Coinage would have played a part in exchange for services, rather than obligations to return services, as money became common.

The introduction of money into Māori society was a major threat to the *hapū*-based unit that was deeply reliant on kin-ties to survive. The European idea of individual labour, not European trade goods was one of the major elements to undermine the authority and *mana* of Māori *rangatira* in the late nineteenth century. 30 Changes to traditional mechanisms for forming relationships, particularly within kin-based societies, affected Gallic and Māori society as new forms of social organisation were sought to address a changing political environment. The Aedui present a case in point of a people in transition from a complex chiefdom to an archaic state, as the old family kin-ship ties were giving way to client relationship, based on financial rewards over family obligation to the leading noble of the smaller clans.

Retainer-type relationships are evident in Caesar’s interpretation of Gallic society, but client relationships were not between individuals, but groups. In 58 Caesar allowed the Boii, former allies to the Helvetii, to settle, at the request of the Aedui, within their lands (*Gallic War* 1.28, 7.9).31 In that relocation, the Boii would have been a military buffer against the Arverni to the south, who were the traditional enemy of the Aedui and this measure would have secured for the

31 The actions of settling the Boii in Aeduan lands would certainly have strengthened Dumnorix’s position given his strong links to the Helvetii. This may be pushing the point, but Caesar did allow the Boii (Helvetian allies) to settle in Aedui lands at the end of 58 at Aeduan requests (1.28).
Aedui, unchallenged control of the river valleys that linked the southern Rhone and its tributaries to the Loire and Saône River systems, and it would have also kept the Sequani at bay to the east.\(^{32}\) Since the Aedui provided land for the Boii, a client relationship would have described this arrangement since kin-ties were absent and there were obvious benefits of a military nature for the Aedui. By allowing this, Caesar was giving the Aedui further legitimacy in the new political order of Gaul. This inter-group relationship may have reflected the smaller scale arrangements Dumnorix had with his dependants.

Gallic and Roman Friendship: The Aeduan Experience

Caesar uses the term *amicitia* when describing alliances of friendship between groups of Gauls, but he also uses the same term to describe friendship to Rome. *Amicitia* was observed between Rome and an individual or a group. Catamantaloedes of the Sequani and Diviciacus the Aeduan were friends to the Roman people (*Gallic War* 1.3), as was the Aedui state as a whole which also claimed paramount status because of this relationship (1.31). Friendship and comradeship seems to have had a military component to it in Gallic society and Caesar observed this obligation as he dealt with Gallic leaders. *Amicitia*, too, may have been an accepted term to describe alliances of formal and military character, and it could go some way to explaining the 4,000 Gallic cavalry who supported Caesar in his British expedition of 54. While the treatment of Dumnorix shows that Gallic leaders had no real choice in accepting or declining service to Caesar (5.7), military support may have been a condition of Roman ‘friendship’, although the relationship may have been further guaranteed by an added element of the provision of hostages.

Friendship also existed between Gauls and Belgae. The Belgian Bellovaci enjoyed friendship and protection from the Aedui (*Gallic War* 2.14), but the Aedui invaded Belgic lands at the request of Caesar (2.10). From these actions of the Aedui led by Diviciacus, it would seem that Caesar’s friendship took precedence over the ties of friendship that existed previously with the Bellovaci. Once conquered by Caesar, however the Belgic people called on Diviciacus to speak to Caesar on their behalf, which shows evidence of the continuing importance of the older alliance between these two people. That the Aedui and

\(^{32}\) An Aeduan push south would cut the trade links between the Arverni and Sequani and this may have been what sparked conflict between the Aedui and the Sequani while maintaining the tension between the Aedui and Arverni.
Bellovaci chose opposite ways to respond to Caesar in 57 did not appear to affect the long-standing arrangement of friendship between these two groups, once the fighting season had ended in victory to Caesar.

In 52, the Bituriges who lived west of the Aedui, called on them to protect and to support them against an aggressive force that was moving against them on the orders of the Arvernian war-leader Vercingetorix (*Gallic War* 7.5). This request was made within the traditional functioning of an allegiance between the two people. While the Aedui initially mobilised a force that moved to their borders on the Loire River to support the Bituriges, the Aedui ultimately chose not to engage, returning from their border on suspicion of some treachery (7.5), a move that Caesar in turn questioned (7.5). The relationship between the Aedui and Bituriges is simply called allegiance (*fides*), and there is no mention of kin-links or clientage. Dumnorix, who had created kin-ties with the Bituriges in 58, was dead by 54, and so this reference to an allegiance could mean that the Bituriges no longer acknowledged kin-ties or obligation. As shown by the initial reaction of the Aedui, there was an unquestionable military component to this relationship, and it took place within the accepted obligations of friendship between states, but when the Aedui failed to offer substantive support, the Bituriges committed themselves instead to the Arverni (7.5).

**The Aedui after the campaigns of 58–7**

Diviciacus is not directly mentioned by Caesar again after 57, but Dumnorix turns up again in 54 on the eve of Caesar’s second campaign in Britain where he formed part of a large Gallic cavalry force, auxiliaries for the Romans (*Gallic War* 5.5, 6). Dumnorix may have seen his service to Caesar as a necessity or a local expedient, yet service in Britain, across the Channel, may have been viewed as outside the conditions of service. Dumnorix would have realised that service in Britain was placing himself and his men into Caesar’s control, virtually as hostages, and that the Aedui could not have retired from the expedition, once it had embarked (5.5). If hostages, this would have represented a completely different relationship between the Aedui and Caesar, as would have been clear to Dumnorix and other Gauls after Caesar’s campaigns and hostage-taking in 58, 57 and 56. The Gallic cavalry who served Caesar in his campaigns, however, may have initially viewed their service no differently from mercenary service abroad, but the actions of Dumnorix in 54 and the great revolt of 52 reveal a change in the relationship between Caesar and Gauls at this time.
Prior to 54, but even until 52 the Aedui and Remi had willingly supplied Caesar with steady stream of auxiliary forces. An obvious question that needs to be answered is why Gallic leaders placed their war-bands in the service of Rome?

3.5. Gallic Auxiliaries and Māori kūpapa: Reasons for fighting for the ‘Enemy’.

We can gain insight into Gallic motives for individual nations siding with Caesar by looking at similar attitudes among Māori communities during the wars of the nineteenth century. Many Māori fought for the Crown, but this was an acceptable form of military response in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These warriors were called kūpapa. When fighting broke out between Māori and the Crown, different kūpapa groups responded in a variety of ways. Motives varied, and the warriors did not always share Crown aims. A more realistic interpretation of this phenomenon is that kūpapa aims intersected with British aims. Some fought within their own rohe only to protect their economic interests, while others travelled into another’s rohe to fight. If kin were killed, some Māori changed from observers to aggressive combatants. Large iwi groupings such as the Te Arawa confederation and Ngati Porou supported the Crown against their traditional enemies and Pai Marire missionaries. In other areas, such as Nga Puhi and among Whanganui Māori, hapū fought each other with some showing the outwards appearance of fighting for the Crown, while their kin resisted imperial troops. The Northern war (AD1845-6) and Titokowaru’s war (AD1868-9) in southern Taranaki are examples where imperial and colonial expectations were not met, despite clear military support by Māori leaders and their warriors.

35 The iwi and hapū that constitute Te Arawa include Ngati Whakaue, Ngati Rangiteaorere, Ngati Pikiao, Ngati Makino, Ngati Rangitihii, Ngati Rangiwhewehi, Tapuika, Waitaha, Ngati Ngararanui, Ngati Rongomai, Ngati Tahu, Ngati Whaoa, Ngati Tarawhai, Ngati Te Roro o Te Rangi, Ngati Kea Ngati Tuara, Ngati Tura-Ngati Te Ngakau, Ngati Uenukukōpako, Tūhourangi, Ngati Wahiao Ngati Manawa, and Ngati Tuwharetoa.
Māori motivations may shed light on the decisions some Gallic people made to side with Caesar. The Aedui provides a case similar to Te Arawa, when the whole Aeduan group supported Caesar and his actions in Gaul.38 Once the first leadership crisis among these people had been averted, the Aedui (and the Remi) offered auxiliary support to the Romans, but, as the actions of Dumnorix show, allegiance was not always total. Dumnorix proved unreliable in the campaign against the Helvetii in 58, for reasons that are obvious given his own agenda, but he was openly rebellious in 54 on the eve of Caesar’s second raid on Britain, and he ultimately lost his life as a result of his dissent. Such actions are often interpreted as duplicitous by Roman military standards and expectations. This interpretation fails, however, in that it does not allow for local politics or aspirations to be considered. If we place Dumnorix in the context of Gallic attitudes, he was consistent to his own agenda. His actions in 58 were clear to Caesar and Dumnorix had been exposed, and he appeared to bide his time, although watched by Caesar (*Gallic War* 1.20). The situation became untenable in 54, however, since Dumnorix proved openly hostile to Caesar. Caesar claimed that Dumnorix was telling fellow Aeduan leaders that he had Roman support for the *regnum* of the state (5.6) and that he also made excuses not to go to Britain for health and religious reasons (5.6). Caesar believed that Dumnorix was involved in a wider conspiracy (5.4), and given the events later in 54 and in 53, his sources for this claim may have been accurate. Caesar certainly believed that he held authority over Dumnorix and his warriors in this matter, and he had him killed when he and the Aedui under his command would not return to camp (5.7).

**The Aedui in 52**

During the first few years of Caesar’s campaigns in Gaul, Diviciacus and the magistrates keep the Aedui strong in their support of the Romans, but by 54 the two major Aeduan leaders were gone, and Caesar was then forced to try to settle the Aedui as he sought to face Vercingetorix and his Arvernian forces, combined with other Gallic rebels. After 54, it is unclear who was leading the Aedui, but Caesar names prominent figures, Valetiacus in 53 and Convictolitavis in 52 (Gallic War 7.32). At the time, Caesar sheds light on another leadership crisis among the Aedui. Caesar has already acknowledged that his faith in the Aedui

38 See *Gallic War* 1.18. 2. 10. 5.5. Throughout the opening stages of the campaign in 52.
was in some doubt when he questioned their failure to support the Bituriges early in 52 (7.5). As Caesar reports, he rushed through the Aeduan territory to reach two legions in the lands of the Lingones, to ‘forestall even the possibility of any design of the Aedui on his own safety’ (7.9). It is true that Caesar was writing with hindsight, but the issue remains that the Aedui were in 52 again wavering in their support for Caesar.

Caesar desperately needed the Aedui in 52, and his actions show that he was not prepared to ignore disputes among them. His swift movements arose partly from a need to unite his legions scattered across Gaul in winter quarters, but also to prevent the reduction or defection of the peoples allied to the Aedui (Gallic War 7.10). Caesar first articulates his suspicions of the Aedui, then his grave concerns. His involvement in the appointment of the vergobret in 52 is evidence that he needed the Aedui settled and able to support his forces wholeheartedly in the upcoming campaign.

The contest between Cotus and Convictolitavis gives proof of the dynamism of Gallic political development, but it also shows the potential for the Aedui to erupt easily into factional conflict. We know from Caesar that the Aedui followed certain procedures and traditions in the appointment of their supreme political magistrates (Gallic War 1.16). The vergobret was annually elected, and from 58 there should have been six elections, but we are given only the names Liscus (58), Valetiacus (53) and Convictolitavis (52), and we know that Diviciacus had held the role before 58. The claimant in 52 Cotus came from an old and noble family, and he was challenging the restriction on members of the same family holding the position of vergobret or on entering the Aeduan senate (7.32, 33). Convictolitavis was elected vergobret, although a young man, but he had the support of the priest, perhaps the druids and of half of the senate (7. 32, 33). The challenger Cotus was excluded by law, since his brother Valetiacus had been vergobret in 53, but Cotus tried to gain this position through the magisterial system. Caesar wanted to intervene, but he was mindful of Aeduan traditions, and so he entered Aeduan territory to put his support behind the lawful vergobret, as neither claimant was permitted to leave Aeduan territory during their tenure (7.33). Cotus was, however, extending the boundaries of accepted
political procedures, but we must wonder how much Dumnorix’s actions set a precedent for the overturning the accepted rules.\textsuperscript{39}

Despite the fact that Caesar had endorsed Convictolitavis as \textit{vergobret}, the Aedui soon openly opposed Caesar, and Convictolitavis encouraged his people to join Vercingetorix. The Aeduan slaughter of Roman traders and citizens (7.42, 55), as had happened at Cenabum, may have had a spiritual and symbolic dimension. Such acts may have constituted a ‘point of no return’ in their disloyalty to Caesar. Some Aedui would have seen what they would lose as leaders, if Caesar should be triumphant. These factors, placed within a Gallic and Aeduan context make perfect sense of their actions. Aeduan war aims and political plans would always supersede Caesar’s and, like the aims of \textit{kūpapa} Māori, only every now and then intersected with Roman aims.

The authority that the Aedui held in Gaul prior to 58 was reported by Caesar (\textit{Gallic War} 6.12), and their position had been reinstated through Caesar’s support. Despite six years of aiding Caesar, the Aedui rejected this relationship, and they instead demanded a place within the Gallic leadership of the large force that was mobilising to support Vercingetorix in Alesia. This shows that while Caesar had inserted himself into areas of Gallic leadership and political and social activities, the Gauls viewed local and inter-Gallic relationships as important and possibly taking precedent over those relationships with Caesar. As noted among Māori society, \textit{hapū} agendas would follow imperial lines until those aims no longer suited Māori aims. For the Aedui in 52, this was one of those situations. But what is important to note is that the Aedui had not lost any authority among the wider Gallic community for their alliance with Caesar, since they were allocated key leadership positions within the confederation of 52 (7.76).

Caesar, however, supported the Aedui once again after the defeat of Vercingetorix. Despite their rebellion Caesar needed these people to be stable, and given that there were still in excess of 180,000 Gallic warriors in the field, he had limited options but to reinstate the Aedui as a paramount group (\textit{Gallic War} 7.88).\textsuperscript{40} The defeat of the Gallic garrison at Alesia, and the rout of their

\textsuperscript{39} The period between 58-52 enabled the Aedui to re-establish a strong leadership and the actions of Cotus and Convictolitavis possibly represent younger factions within the nobility who had witnessed policy towards the Gauls over the past six years.

\textsuperscript{40} The 60,000 led by the Arvernian Vercassivellaunus that attack the northern defences were destroyed and the remained of the relief force disengaged and withdrew from Alesia.
relieving army would not have completely eliminated the serious threats to Caesar’s position at the time. The force that tried to relieve Alesia was only a portion of the fighting strength of all the Gallic people, and in this environment, Caesar needed allies. With the restoration of the Aedui, Caesar would have won local Gallic support in the way of supplies and auxiliaries, and in particular, cavalry, to augment his German mercenaries (7.65).

3.6. Summary

Despite the factional nature of the Aedui throughout the period of Caesar’s campaigns, this group reflects the political and social characteristics outlined by Caesar in Book Six. The relationship between Dumnorix and the Helvetii, on the one hand, and Diviciacus, on the other shows two quite different responses to military aggression among the Aeduan leadership. The destruction of the Aeduan nobles at Magetobriga must have created a power-vacuum in central and eastern Gaul. Dumnorix and Diviciacus squabbled over the leadership of their people, with the younger brother siding with Helvetian Gauls and Diviciacus maintaining support from Rome and Caesar. A civil war erupted when Dumnorix attempted to install himself as sole ruler of the Aedui, while his brother supported the chief magistrate. Dumnorix began a challenge to the magisterial system that was no doubt severely weakened by his efforts. This instability within the Aeduan leadership was of concern throughout Caesar’s campaigning, but it reached a second crisis-point in 52. The Aedui comprised a cohesive archaic state in name only, as individuals tried to dominate Aeduan decision-making and leadership.

The Aedui were not a model Gallic State, and given the opportunity, they might have reverted into smaller complex chiefdoms controlled by strong leaders, like those polities seen among the Belgae and Armoricans. Caesar was the major factor in keeping the Aedui together. Their factional nature was similar to the Māori Nga Puhi who, being made up of smaller kin-grouping under strong individual leadership both fought against and supported the Crown, with factions seeking to maintain the status quo. It was also a family fight.

This chapter has focused on the Aedui and the importance of kin-ties and obligations within the sphere of political relations and the implications of this when maintaining support for or negotiating opposition to Caesar. Dumnorix certainly used kinship connections and alliances to improve his position among his people which, as we saw in the comparison with Māori society, proved a
standard mechanism to gain authority and power. Diviciacus looked to Caesar and Rome, as Waka Nene did with the Crown during the Northern War, as a way to maintain the status quo. Dumnorix relied on kinship, but Diviciacus looked to the greater interest of the group, supporting the power of the magistrates. In this behaviour we see two different Gallic responses to Caesar’s arrival that considers factors beyond his scope of interpretation. Caesar also shows that the archaic states of the Helvetii and Aedui were different in their responses to nobles who sought to subvert the power of the magistrates. The Helvetii censured Orgetorix, but Dumnorix was allowed to maintain his power within the Aedui. The Helvetii also had a very strong central authority invested in their magistrates and senate while the Aedui showed the weakness of its central authority, in that the state was suffering from long-term internal, factional disputes. The Helvetii and Aedui were both archaic states, but the Aedui did not have the same stability that the Helvetii displayed.

While the Helvetii were able to enforce their magisterial system of centralised authority, the Aedui struggled to maintain their system in the face of multiple external and internal pressures from 60 onwards. Despite their defeat at the hands of Caesar, the Helvetian state was robust, while the Aeduan was not. In comparing these two people we see different stages within their similar political development. The Helvetii could support their political structure with an active armed ‘state’ force in constant use against its external enemies, while the Aedui may have lost their military potency through years of trade-wars and their disastrous defeat at Magetobriga. Despite their magisterial system of centralised authority, the Aedui lacked the ability to sustain this system without Caesar’s interference, but by 52 Caesar had failed to keep the Aedui committed to their allegiances to Rome.

The Aedui, despite trouble with Dumnorix and the defection in 52 were Roman allies. By looking at the Māori kūpapa, we can see motivation for fighting alongside colonial powers involved local politics and agendas. This could be from the need to defend territory or as an opportunity to be part of the new political order. Caesar’s commentaries reveal that the Aedui struggled to suppress factional leaders who fought one another to fill a power vacuum initially created with the battle at Magetobriga. This leadership crisis weakened the Aedui internally, despite their rise as a Gallic power under Caesar’s influence.
Caesar may have portrayed the Aedui as his solid allies in Gaul, but by 52 their support had faltered and they rejected the Romans and joined the pan-Gallic force under Vercingetorix. This action by the Aedui brought the remaining, wavering Gallic people over to Vercingetorix, and their long-standing status dictated that they play a major role within the confederation.
Chapter Four
Caesar and the Belgae: An Analysis of the Gallic Chiefdoms

4.1. Belgic Gaul
The previous two chapters have examined the Helvetii and Aedui as examples of Gallic archaic statehood and analysed how these centralised political structures responded to both internal and external pressure. Using Caesar’s narratives and archaeological evidence, this chapter will assess the Belgae to determine their level of social and political development and how this affected their prosecution of war. I will apply a comparative assessment with Māori society to gain insight into Belgic society and warfare.

Caesar placed the Belgae into a neat geographical area north of the Seine (Gallic War 1.1) (see figure 4). The archaeological evidence shows that the Belgic communities lived in a region north of the Risle and Seine Rivers with the western border along the North Sea, which reached across the Rhine to make up a distinct North Eastern Gallic zone.\(^1\) Caesar noted clear regional variation among the Belgae, and a degree of ethnic commonality between the Belgae and groups across the Rhine. He also equated their distance from Rome and their proximity to the barbarous Germans as a factor in the level (or lack of) sophistication in the social and political characteristics (Gallic War 1.1).

Caesar established the Rhine as a convenient boundary between Gaul and the people east of the River whom he called “Germans” (Gallic War 1.1) but the archaeological evidence does not support a clear cultural division set by the Rhine and Caesar. The use of the terms ‘German’ and ‘Germanic’ are problematic, in that the archaeological (burial practices) or linguistic evidence suggests that there was no distinction between people living on either side of the Rhine and that this river did not form a cultural barrier.\(^2\) Connections between the people on either side of the Rhine are shown in the spread of ‘Celtic’ motifs

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on metal items and shared burial practices, and these were no doubt reinforced by kin-ties, clientage and military arrangements, connections that may have become more important with the arrival of Caesar.\textsuperscript{3} The people of North Eastern Gaul, during the Late Iron Age, show regional diversity at both local and regional levels.

Figure 4. The Belgae. (B. Cunliffe. 1988).

4.2. The Archaeology of Belgica

The archaeological evidence tells us that the Belgae inhabited the region of the Lower Rhine during the Late Iron Age, but that those living west of the river were markedly different from the people of central Gaul, and they constituted a Northern Peripheral zone.\textsuperscript{4} Indeed, this region is seen as a transition zone. The settlement patterns comprised individual homesteads and small hamlets, and in the first century BC, hillforts increased in size from 10 ha to, in some cases, over 50 ha.\textsuperscript{5} At the time of Caesar’s invasion, these northern people lived in villages or hamlets of between 20-100 people, with large fortified settlements containing

\textsuperscript{5} Roymons and Aarts. p. 7. Wightman. p. 17.
between 500-1,000 people. Aerial surveys of the Somme region point to small farmsteads, and in the region of Hundrück there is evidence for units made up of one to two families. In Belgic Gaul, the size of each civitas appeared to be noticeably smaller than those of the southern peoples, suggesting that the Belgic confederation may have been made up of leading sub-units of a ‘wider cultural or ethnic grouping’.

Nash argues that the Belgae were characterised as a ‘warrior-agrarian’ society, but one that became known to the city-states of the central and eastern Mediterranean from 390. This type of society became the model that dominated classical assessment of Gallic/Celtic culture. The ‘warrior-agrarian’ society was initially characterised by a subsistence economy. The maintenance of elite groups occurred in various forms and peasant labour was important for providing social wealth, which was accumulated through contractual and military relationships. Unlike the purely agrarian economy, however, in a warrior-agrarian society wealth was gained through gifts, grants, plunder or payment arising from military service, and not solely from the production of any surplus. Indeed warrior-agrarian societies did not rely on redistribution or marketing activities of surplus for wealth creation, although there is evidence of limited redistribution in the form of slaves and iron (from the Rhineland), and there would have also been arrangements for obtaining livestock or seed-grains at an agreed rate of return. The Belgic economy also had contact with external communities, but this relied on the exporting of warriors. The fortunes of a chief would wax and wane through success or failure in battle, or through harvests, which if poor could weaken a power-base, leading to conflict or

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7 Wightman. pp. 15-16
14 Nash. 1984 p. 103.

108
emigration. Service abroad by Belgc warriors would have alleviated such pressures on a population.

The population of Belgica has been put at 1-1.5 million with a fighting population of 306,000, and the warrior-culture of the Belgae is exemplified by the material remains which are of a martial nature. The Belgae undertook offensive warfare against their neighbours to gain wealth through plunder, slaves, foreign lands or tribute from subject people. Belgc communities would also have provided mercenaries to strong neighbours in their wars of aggression. Both forms of military activity would ensure a high level of martial mobilisation among the common population, but this readiness and engagement in warfare would have placed limits on agrarian production and, therefore, on the potential for the creation of surplus or social development, as seen in the purely agrarian model of Celtic society. Belgc expansion could have created an unstable local political environment as chieftains competed for power, but this instability would also benefit those chiefs who could offer protection or service for payments. Successful warlords would draw retainers to them, paid for by goods and coin, to the point that some communities might even be based around the war-band, rather than kin-based households. The decentralised nature of open chiefdoms would have encouraged this development creating societies out of a patch-work of chiefdoms centred on warlords.

Linguistically, the northern fringe of Gaul developed differently to the rest of Gaul, although the contrast between southern and northern Belgica was

18 Wightman p. 32. These figures are close to those provided by Caesar (Gallic War 2. 4), of approximately 1,765,000 with a collective fighting force 444,000. The Bellovaci provided 60,000 warriors from a pool of 100,000, three-fifths of their fighting force. The other Belge military populations have been worked out through dividing the warriors’ deployed figure, provided by Caesar, into thirds and multiplying the divided total by five. This military population is then multiplied by four to get the total population figure for the confederation.
20 Nash pp. 99-100.
21 Nash p. 100.
perhaps not strong.\textsuperscript{26} Language is important when we consider common identity across various communities. There is evidence of group identity, hierarchy and leaders to be seen in coinage, which reveal social linkages and social cohesion.\textsuperscript{27} Any linguistic differences apparent in Belgica did not appear to impede trade arrangements or military alliances in this region. Coin production does, however, highlight changes in social structures within the Belgae, as older groupings representing earlier phases of Iron Age societies were being replaced by newer ones with different structures that enabled the production and distribution of coins.\textsuperscript{28} The Eburones, for example, issued their own coins, while others, such as the coastal Belgae who were more fragmented, had limited trade links and coinage.\textsuperscript{29}

\textbf{The Morini and Menapii}

The coastal Belgic Morini and Menapii are the focus of Caesar’s campaign to close the year 56. Of all the peoples of Gaul, these two had not provided Caesar, he alleges, with any indications of submission and they remained under arms (\textit{Gallic War} 3.28). Caesar wrote that these people employed tactics quite different from the rest of the Gauls (3.28). Instead of fighting in open battle they attacked the Roman soldiers when they were out foraging, and when confronted, they scattered before withdrawing back into the forest, when they ambushed any Romans who followed (3.28). Māori in southern Taranaki used this method to attack small and isolated colonial troops and surveyors in the AD1860s, and Caesar’s approach to these tactics, like that of colonial military planners, was to cut down the forests, and to capture the enemies’ cattle and baggage (3.28). The tactics of the Morini and Menapii were similar to the approach of the Nervii, in that ambush was the chosen fighting style. The ambush was a tactic often used by the people of Gaul, with variations seen mainly in the scale of ambush conducted. Decentralised political structures, where the focus was local, lent itself to indirect warfare against military threats.

The fragmented nature of Belgica is most clearly seen in the archaeological evidence of ‘border’ regions. Through epigraphic evidence we find smaller groups omitted by Caesar who was interested in listing only larger \textit{civitates}.  

\textsuperscript{26} Roymons and Aarts. p. 7. 
\textsuperscript{27} Roymons and Aarts. p. 20. 
\textsuperscript{28} Roymons and Aarts. pp. 7, 8 and 20. 
Inscriptions provide evidence of ‘border’ peoples, such as the Catsoslugi, living among the Caletes who possibly had links to Britain,\(^{30}\) and the Ambiani. The Caletes themselves were a group located between the Belgae and Armorican Gauls.\(^{31}\) There were others whom Caesar did not mention; for example, the Silvanectes who inhabited the lands between the Suessiones and Parisii and were clients or tributaries to the Bellovaci; the Tricasses, who lived among the Senones and Lingones; and the Catuvellauni who, while archaeologically linked to the Remi, were flanked by this people and by the Leuci.\(^{32}\) Archaeological evidence demonstrates that these groups had lower levels of political organisation than their neighbours, which were determined by a decentralised region, but that they were within a large Belgic bloc. In the Helvetii we saw a large corporate group fighting as a united people, but in contrast the Belgae were composed of smaller polities characterised by open and stratified chiefdoms.

Wightman has classified smaller polities as being characterised by chieftains and small hillforts. While the *pagus* (canton) was based on larger hillforts, both the small and big were the essential building blocks of Caesar’s *civitates*, or states, centred on larger *oppida* (*Gallic War* 1.12).\(^{33}\) Although Caesar does describe the reduction of Belgic *oppida* in 57, these types of larger fortifications in Belgica appear to have been largely post-invasion in date, and coin evidence suggests that the hillforts Caesar captured in and around 57 were in fact subdivisions of cantons.\(^{34}\) The *pagus* is symptomatic of the chiefdom, where kin and non-kin folk formed a nucleus for smaller groups to gather around. These smaller groups would then attach themselves to larger and stronger political leaders and groups, as the Silvanectes possibly did to the Bellovaci, and the Catuvellauni to the Remi. This would explain the large number of different groups who provided warriors for the Belgic confederation.

Unlike in central Gaul, where the archaic state dominated, Belgic Gaul was the domain of the chiefdoms, with centralisation existing at a smaller, regional level. The archaic state was not absent from Belgica, however, as we see that people like the Remi, after having split from the Suessiones, developed towards

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Wightman. 1985. p. 27.
statehood. The Remi are an example of a civitas that developed after the process of fission but then unified their disparate cultural groupings into a centralised entity, possibly as a result of strict geographical limits to their territory. The Remi displayed a confident leadership by their elite who negotiated with Caesar, despite the larger Belgic groups choosing to resist the Romans.

What was Caesar comparing the Belgic communities to when he made his assessment of these people as being furthest from civilization (Gallic War 1.1)?

The archaic states of the Helvetii and Aedui, and the Remi would have offered a familiar political structure to Caesar, and in contrast to these he described the Belgic chiefdoms as kingdoms, although they exhibited diversity and dynamic forms. It is true that the actions of the Belgic confederation suited the dominant interpretation of Iron Age societies which failed to maintain cohesion in the face of Roman invasion and efficiency, but Caesar’s interpretation fails to recognise the different social structure of the chiefdoms and the localised focus of these communities. On closer analysis, however, Caesar’s commentaries do attest to much regional diversity within Belgica and to indicate decentralised forms of political organisation ruled by powerful chiefs (2.1).

4.3. Caesar and Belgic Leadership and Society

In 57 Caesar took action in 57 against the people of Belgica. Several episodes from his narrative of these events describe the reaction of the Belgic confederation following the news of the Caesar’s success against the Helvetii and Germans. Caesar states that the Belgae were initially stirred up by Gauls who did not want the Romans interfering in the Gallic way of life, since the Romans might inhibit ambitions of kingship (Gallic War 2.1). Caesar indicated, however, that his intention was to prevent this by imposing Roman domination on the region, so that those wanting to make themselves king would not be able to do so ‘under our empire’(2.1).

Caesar described the Belgae he faced in 57 as a confederation of different civitates, and he lists the number of warriors each group provided. These political units were named Bellovaci, Suessiones, Nervii, Atrebates, Ambiani, Morini, Menapii, Caleti, Veliocasses, and Viromandui (Gallic War 2.4). Caesar

also claimed that the Belgae were of Germanic origin but had pushed aside and
replaced the original Gallic inhabitants of northern Gaul (2.4). Caesar’s account
of the campaign describes the early success of the Belgae followed by the
disintegration of the Belgic confederation as each group returned home to face
the Romans on an individual basis. The regional focus on defence by groups
within the Belgae is a probable reason for the ‘failure’ of the confederation.
Caesar initially implies that Belgica was not a centralised political group but an
ethnic bloc (1.1).  

Caesar also noted distinct positions of leadership among the Belgae: kings
(*rex*), chief (*princeps*) and a military leader (*dux*). These variations among the
Belgae paint a picture of diversity reflective of the archaeological evidence,
which also shows the social and political diversity of the large ethnic group.

**Belgic Kingship and Magistrates**

Among the Belgae, Caesar used the term ‘king’ for the Suessionian leader
Galba and for his predecessor Diviciacus (*Gallic War* 2. 4). The Eburones had
dual kings, Ambiorix and Catuvolcus (5.24), which may be confirmation of an
earlier fusion of two regional groups loosely based in the south-east Netherlands
and central Belgium. While Caesar uses the term ‘king’, in many Belgic
contexts, this does not appear to have been an accurate title, given that the
Belgic communities presented all the characteristics of chiefdoms. While some
Gallic leaders enjoyed Caesar’s protection and support, Caesar was probably
only supporting a position already endorsed by the local people and councils.

Commius of the Atrebates, made ‘king’ by Caesar (4.21), provides another
example of Belgic kingship. His appointment by Caesar and his rise in power
among the Gauls brings into comparison the Atrebates and the Remi. The main
difference between the two groups was that Commius was a king of the
Atrebates and held the leadership of his people as chief, while the Remi had a
magisterial system. This highlights the different political development between
the state and the chiefdom with Belgic people.

The Remi (and possibly the Suessiones) had the only Belgic *civitas* that had
developed a form of archaic statehood and a magisterial system of political

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37 Diviciacus of the Suessiones is not to be confused with the Aeduan of the same name.
38 Roymons and Aarts. p. 12, as defined by Sheers 31 type coinage. Figure 7. p. 13. Wightman.
leadership. When Caesar advanced into Belgica, two Remian men approached him, Iccius and Andecumborius, who were considered the leading men of their community, first in rank and favour (Gallic War 2.3, 6). The Remi, therefore, show characteristics of the archaic state, in which power resided in a central authority, elected by the leading men of the state. The Remi are an example of a state that was under the control of a hierarchy that, as with the Helvetii, stayed true to their chosen course of action. Unlike the Aedui, who wavered in their support for Caesar, the Remi remained unshaken in their loyalty. It is easy to see how a strong central authority, unhindered by kin-based factions, could remain steadfast. The Helvetii had been able to present a united front in 58, so too the Remi even though the Belgic confederation attacked them at Bibrax. Another aspect of Remi leadership was the civil/military divide, but this may have not been a characteristic of the Remian magisterial system. When compared to other states within Gallic society, the Remi had not reached a high level of political development and their magistrate(s) were still fighting leaders.

The Belgae illustrate a decentralised (or local) leadership system that met to unite against an external threat, but disbanded when they thought the threat effectively dealt with. There were existing mechanisms to create alliances among the Belgae and Caesar noted hostage-exchange as a major one. He would use this practice himself to impose dominance over the Belgae.

Like other Gallic communities the Belgae acknowledged hostage-exchange as an acceptable mechanism to establish a political arrangement. Caesar describes one instance when the members of the Belgic confederation exchanged hostages with each other, to ratify their agreement to join in fighting him (Gallic War 2.1). Caesar too received hostages from the Remi, but as a sign of submission (2.5) and, after he had defeated the Belgae, the Suessiones surrendered hostages (2.13), and he demanded 600 from the Bellovaci (2.15). When the Belgae were ordered to provide hostages to Caesar, they did so through the mediation of the Remi and Aedui, who approached Caesar on behalf of the defeated Gauls. In this way the Remi and Aedui must have expanded their influence by entering into arrangements with the Belgic communities that Caesar had defeated. These arrangements between the Belgae and Caesar were not acts

39 The highest form of Māori leadership was arikitanga but those who held the rank of ariki rarely engaged in politics or fighting and those that did held immense mana. E. T. Durie. Custom Law. Waitangi Tribunal-04-January 1994. Unpublished. p. 31.
of hostage-exchange, as had been the case among the Belgae at the start of 57 (2.1), but they were simply acts of a defeated people giving hostages to the victor, or in the case of the Remi, the actions of a subordinate acknowledging a superior. There would have been no ambiguity among the Belgae about what arrangements they had been forced into through military defeat.

The political leadership in Belgica at the time of Caesar’s invasion was made up of many local chiefs. The military importance of this fact is seen in the ability of these chiefs to hand over the authority of their men to other leaders. The number of chiefdoms in Belgica suggests that the Belgae must have had a hierarchy when facing an external threat, but that each group retained its authority to deal with local defence.

4.4. The Belgae and the Māori: A comparison of Factions, Kinship and Client Relationships

Factions

The decentralised nature of the Belgae reveals an environment across the northern transition zone, where a web of chiefdoms, focused on local politics predominated. Within this web, factionalism was a source of division that Caesar identified as a standard feature of Gallic society (Gallic War 6.11). The existence of a transition zone in northern Belgica without geographical constraints would mean that populations could expand and fission could take place, thus allowing the maintenance of chiefdoms. In Southern Belgica, with the Remi in particular, however, we have an example where geographical limitation forced the transition of one of the Belgic kin-groups from a complex chiefdom into an archaic state. As a growing power in Belgica that had aligned with Caesar very early in his campaigns, the Remi are exceptional. Ultimately their gamble to side with Caesar paid off but it did lead to open hostility between them and other Belgic people (2.6).

Caesar stated that the Remi and Suessiones shared laws and a magisterial government (Gallic War 2.3), but there was no natural geographical boundary between them and these two people split into smaller centralised groups. The archaeological evidence for the lands of Remi has been interpreted as combining disparate regions with varying cultural traditions.40 By the time of Caesar’s arrival, however, the Remi appear to have moved to a system characterised by a

Caesar’s observation is supported by the archaeological records that have found clear evidence that the Suessiones had contacts with Britain (2.4). Statehood, as seen in the Remi was not yet a necessary political development for the Suessiones, as they had been able to expand into Britain. The political divergence seen in the Remi and the Suessiones is reflected in the sides they supported in 57. It could also show us that the Remi had moved beyond the leadership of powerful kings or chiefs, and the Suessiones had not enjoyed the rule of a dynastic king (2.4). This would make one question Caesar’s statement that these two groups shared the same laws and political systems. There is a contradiction in his statement. The Suessiones were aligned to a north-western axis and the Remi to the south. Yet these two communities divided along political and military lines.

It was a common occurrence in Māori society for communities to choose different paths, despite shared origin, as shown by the relationship that existed between hapū of the central plateau of the North Island of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Within the Te Arawa tradition Tuwharetoa had moved away from traditional settlements in the Bay of Plenty and around Rotorua and moved south to settle around Lake Taupo. While Tuwharetoa constituted a large independent corporate group, it still shared the same waka as the Te Arawa confederation. Te Arawa’s response to the Crown in the nineteenth century echoes that of the Remi and its relationship to Caesar. Te Arawa were staunch supporters of the Crown, denying passage through its rohe (territory) to Kingitanga supporters in the early 1860 and supplying warriors for the major conflicts of the late 1860. Like the Suessiones after their initial resistance to Caesar, Tuwharetoa remained relatively aloof in the conflicts against the Crown although they provided supplies and warriors to the Kingitanga and allowed the war chief Te Kooti to operated within their rohe. The Remi and Te Arawa were steadfast in their support for Caesar and the Crown respectively, motivated by their own local

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agendas and receptive to a changing political order. Despite kin-links the Remi and Suessiones found themselves within different factions of the campaign in 57 and in 52 (Gallic War 7.75). Tuwharetoa and the wider Te Arawa confederation were also on different sides during the 1860s.

Another Belgic example of this type of division is seen among the Aduataci in 57. These people, whom Caesar claimed as being descended from the Cimbri and Teutoni (Gallic War 2.29), had been marching to fight alongside their Nervian allies on the Sambre but, on hearing of Caesar’s victory, they abandoned all their towns and forts, and withdrew with all their property behind the protection of one of their major oppida with all their property (2.29). They offered to surrender to Caesar after a period of siege, but in the night a faction tried to break out. Caesar treated the Aduataci as one unit, but one faction and its leader may not have agreed with the position by the larger group to surrender in the first place (2.33). Caesar, with the support of the Remi and Aedui, showed leniency to some Belgae, like the Suessiones, for example (2.13), but not to the Aduataci who appeared to show duplicity.

This perception of ‘duplicity’ is replicated in the hapū context, when one examines the decision-making processes within Māori society. Māori communities did not make decisions based on majority rule. The hapū would consider any matter that would impact on all members of the hapū with all having their say. The hapū would then make a decision once a consensus was reached. Inter-hapū decisions were dealt with in the same manner, but withdrawal from any action was a naturally accepted position, even if the major rangatira disapproved. The Māori example allows us to deduce that Gallic society and decision-making operated in a similar manner. This situation can be compared to the Gallic experience when we consider the actions of this Aduataci faction. While this single clan’s decision had a disastrous effects on the whole group, this action should be seen as a clan choice. The initial decision by the Aduataci had been to support the Nervii with fighting men, but the situation had changed once the Nervii had been defeated on the Sambre and the whole Aduataci became a target of Caesar’s invasion of Belgica. Stating that this situation among the Aduataci was a case of Gallic duplicity fails to recognise

internal Gallic structures and the freedom that individual clans had under the political systems that seen in the complex chiefdoms of the Belgae confederacy.

**Kin Ties.**

Caesar gained valuable intelligence about the Belgic confederation from the Belgic Remi who claimed kin-ties to the Suessiones and relationships and intermarriage to most of the clans (*civitates*) comprising the Belgic confederation (*Gallic War* 2.3-4). This suggests that the Remi had kin-links radiating throughout the Belgic communities. This would be the same for all the Belgic people who also shared the social characteristics of Māori communities. They developed kin-ties by entering into marriage alliances to make peace and gather or reward allies. In Māori society, the development of kin-ties to other *hapū* was a way for smaller groups to survive.

The Remi, as stated, provided Caesar with a steadfast alliance throughout his wars in Gaul. Why these people would choose an alliance with Rome at such an early stage in Caesar’s invasion when there was no sure sign of success is unclear. The Remi may have sensed a political change after Caesar’s victories in 58.

For the Māori communities that formed around the volcanic cone of Pouerua in the central region in Northland and the coast, the abundance of coastal food sources and the development of an agricultural inland system allowed for fission that meant that there was no need for the centralisation found in other Polynesian societies. The more stratified *hapū*-based systems experienced post-contact by Europeans appears, in the far-North at least, to have been stimulated by certain Māori who used the control of European trade-goods and contact (missionaries and sailors) to increase the exploitation of resources. This required a more centralised form of society that reflected those seen by European explorers in the wider Polynesian world and mirrored in other communities around the same time in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These chiefdoms were triangular in nature and demanded a degree of obedience to maximise the labour-force needed to maintain the upwards spiral of resource exploitation, trade in European goods (muskets and other items), or large military raid to gain

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48 Sutton. p. 684.
slaves to work to exploit the resources. This was more in line with the development of stratified chiefdoms and archaic states during the Late Iron Age in Gaul. Given the geographical location of the Remi between central Gaul and Belgica their political development followed a trajectory towards the archaic states of central Gaul, this in turn coincidentally determining their support for the Romans (and their traders).49

Among the Belgae the Remi and Suessiones may have been clan entities of a larger group sharing wider kin-ties who each exercised the right to engage in the conflict with Rome as prudent for the clan. During the campaign of 57 when Caesar attacked the Suessiones’ stronghold of Noviodunum, the Remi interceded on their behalf, brokering favourable terms for them with the Romans (*Gallic War* 2.12).50 The relationship between the Remi and the Suessiones differs from that seen when the Aedui spoke on behalf of the Bellovaci. Although both the Remi and the Aedui interceded with Caesar (3.13), the Remi, Suessiones and Bellovaci were all Belgic Gauls, but the Aedui were not.

The tensions and factions that developed between the Gallic communities can be explained when one examines issues of kin-ties and influence of the *rangatira* among the Nga Puhi. Having different political and military aims is reflected within Māori factions of the northern Nga Puhi when the war *rangatira* Kawiti found his kin from another *iwi*, Ngati Whatua the target of *utu* from another Nga Puhi *rangatira*, the great warrior chief Hongi Hika.51 The tension developed between two *rangatira* from different *hapū* (Kawiti had served Hongi earlier in the musket wars), but with Kawiti having kin-ties beyond the major Nga Puhi group.52 Kawiti’s kin were placed under his protection from other Nga Puhi aggression. Kawiti’s *mana* was not as strong as Hongi’s, but these *hapū* of Ngati Whatua were not attacked. Despite sharing membership to the large Nga Puhi grouping, Kawiti and Hongi held very different views about Kawiti’s Ngati Whatua kin, which could have led to open conflict.

49 There is a high concentration of Dressel 1 amphorae in the lands of the Remi post-Caesar possibly suggesting trade concessions after the Gallic war. Cunliffe. 1988. p. 141.
50 By 51BC the Caesar states that the Suessiones were tributaries of the Remi (*Gallic War* 8.6) which suggests a shift in power balance between these two clans that shared a common origin long before Caesar invaded Gaul.
52 Te Ura Martin. p. 220-1.
Factions of Nga Puhi also chose to fight on different sides in the Northern war, a fact lamented by Kawiti who sang a *takuate* (lament), saying that Nga Puhi were made up of people from different *waka* (canoe), different *rangatira* and, therefore, had different choices.\(^{53}\) Kawiti’s sentiment was reflective of the powerful and diverse confederation of the Nga Puhi *hapū*. Each *hapū* had the mandate to make whatever choice it felt would best benefit the wider group. This meant that not all *hapū* were in line with each other’s policies. This situation emphasises the dynamics of *hapū* choice and the implications, where *hapū* could face each other in a conflict or provide outside observers with a view that suggests duplicity. This mirrors similar dynamics within Gallic strategic decision-making, where clan autonomy took precedence and while outsiders could interpret this as fickleness or duplicitous it fails to recognise the nuances of kin-based factional politics.

**Clients**

Kinship connections or political arrangements may have also been strengthened by other political arrangements. The Belgae brought western Rhine German clients, such as the Condrusi, the Eburones, the Caeroesi and the Paemani, to battle Caesar in 57 and also subjects or mercenaries from across the Rhine (*Gallic War* 1.1, 28, 2.3, 4). Given the level of contact between the Belgae and Germans living either side of the Rhine, the Belgae probably did not differentiate between the ethnic character of Belgic Gauls and Germans in this part of northern Europe. Britain was also important to the Belgae for the establishment of client relationships.\(^{54}\) Belgic leaders of the Bellovaci (2.14) and an earlier king Diviciacus of the Suessiones (2.4) had contacts in Britain. The presence of the coinage of the Ambiani in Britain indicates a form of relationship that may have been formalised through political marriage or clientage on either side of the Channel.\(^{55}\) Commius will be discussed in detail below, but this Atrebate king also had influence in Britain (4.2). The Nervii, Eburones and Aduataci gathered their allies and dependants (*socii et clientes*) to attack Cicero in 54 (5.39). Caesar states that the Nervii held sovereignty over the

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\(^{53}\) Te Ura Martin. p. 221.

\(^{54}\) In looking across the Channel some Belgic nobles enjoyed power among the British communities of the Late Iron Age.

Ceutrones, the Grudii, the Levaci, the Pleumoxii and the Geidumni who supplied men to the Nervii (5.39).

In 57 the Bellovaci submitted to the Aedui but not to the Remi with whom they shared kinship (*Gallic War* 2.14). This action appears odd within a kinship context, but, it would appear that the Bellovaci had enjoyed the friendship and protection of the Aedui prior to 57. Caesar in fact describes their actions that year as being a revolt against the Aeduan state (2.14). The Bellovaci had possibly supplied the Aedui with mercenaries in a core and peripheral relationship but, after the Aedui had interceded for them in 57, this relationship would have been redefined as one of clientage. This reluctance in submitting to the Remi could be likened to the positions certain groups held within Māori communities and inter-**hapū** hierarchy. Seniority and size within **hapū**-based politics was important, and through comparison, the position that the Bellovaci held in leading the war against Caesar certainly suggests their authority among the Belgae. The realities of intra-Belgic hierarchy could have meant that the Bellovaci felt that their standing among the wider Belgic group, while diminished by their loss to Caesar, was still too great to allow their submission to the Remi who quite possibly comprised a minor or junior Belgic **civitas**. The Bellovaci may have viewed the Aedui outside the kin-group and therefore acceptable as patrons not much different from what they had enjoyed prior to the war of 57.

The diverse political landscape of the Belgic chiefdoms and the transition zone of northern Gaul allowed for movement east and west. Factions within the Belgae are seen from Caesar’s observations but the archaeological evidence shows further divisions that represent smaller clans located between the larger polities Caesar’s noted. As seen in Māori society this could lead to opposing stands in the case of military response. Kinship was an important characteristic for wider cohesion but showed divergence away from the chiefdom among the southern Belgae state of the Remi. Kinship and clientage played an important role in Belgic alliance-making but was also used by the Belgae and Aedui once Caesar had defeated the confederation in 57. Levels of seniority were important to Māori and this hierarchy can be seen among the Belgae. This seniority would have provided a natural and accepted chain of command when confederations were formed to respond to external threats.

**Military Leadership**
Warfare was an important social and political component of Gallic society and it was in this arena that leaders rose. The Belgae formed a confederation that drew on a wide group of people from a broad geographical region, which Caesar identified as one quarter of Gaul (Gallic War 1.1). While the Helvetii could also field a very large military force, they were considered one nation, their leadership was centralised and able to maintain a united front in the face of internal and external pressures. What can be seen with the Belgae is that their leadership at the start of the campaign of 57 was strong, although only in the sense that it was capable of exacting a large number of warriors from each group within the Belgic bloc, but it appears weak from Caesar’s perspective, in that it did not last. There was however a definite line of command within the Belgic confederation of 57. Caesar states that the Bellovaci led the confederation on account of their numbers, courage and authority (2.4). Bellovician leadership may have come from earlier Belgic alliances against the movement of people from across the Rhine (1.1).

Caesar was not the first example of external threat, as seen in the movement of people back and forth across the Rhine and the wanderings of the Teutones and Cimbri (Gallic War 2.29). It is clear that by the time of the Teutones and Cimbri in the late second century BC, the Belgae had a social mechanism for the forming of confederations and this suggests two things: that the Belgae had some sense of shared identity and that there was a system to allow for the election of a single authority.

The people of Belgica would come together in times of stress and when the wider group was threatened. This could suggest a strong feeling of Belgic unity. Belgic coinage from the last half of the 1st century BC has been seen as evidence that some Belgic communities had a shared sense of unity, reinforced by religious gatherings in which coins were tokens that produced or reproduced central ideas, values and collective identity. Coins also represented signs of leadership, social networks and social cohesion. All these concepts were

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57 Roymans and Aarts. p. 20.
58 Roymans and Aarts. p. 20.
necessary to withstand external threats like that seen with the Teutones/Cimbri and the Caesar’s campaigns in Gaul.

In 57 Caesar describes, through intelligence offered by the Belgic Remi, a confederation that not only united to meet him but one that had clear requirements of each group (Gallic War 2.4). The actions of the Belgae show a strong degree of centralised planning, but this may have lasted as long as the perceived threat existed, or when all agreed that their war-aims had been met.\(^{59}\)

The major and minor groupings Caesar noted in Belgic Gaul may have been representative of group formations in response to his hostile arrival, and the archaeology confirms this.\(^{60}\) Caesar sped up a process of change in this area where the effects of Romanization had initially shown limited signs of impact. But centralised leadership over larger groupings of people was a relatively recent phenomenon in Belgica influenced by inter-action with the Roman world, which had been intensifying from the second century BC.\(^{61}\) By 57, Belgica still had a fragmented political landscape, being at odds with the more the centralised southern or central Gaul,\(^{62}\) and this would influence their response to Caesar.

Rawlings has raised questions about Caesar’s interpretation of events in 57 and Belgc war aims.\(^{63}\) Caesar portrays the actions of the confederation after the fighting in the lands of the Remi as disintegration, as each group withdrew to see to its local defence. For Caesar, it is at this point that the leadership of the confederacy “fails”, but this may not be an accurate assessment of Belgic leadership. Those leaders who had joined the confederacy were perhaps acting well within accepted practice- to re-gather their mana and the leadership of their warriors-then to leave the confederation to look after local affairs.

The supreme commander of the Belgic confederation was King Galba of the Suessiones, chosen because of his sense of justice and sagacity (Gallic War 2.4). This respect for the reputation of the commander is in line with Māori taua that were made up of various related and non-related hapū but led by rangatira of

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\(^{63}\) Rawlings. pp. 174-77.
great *mana* usually from the leading *hapū*. Like temporary *tauau* in Māori society, leadership of the Belgic confederation would have lasted as long as the need remained, but once the perceived threat had diminished (Caesar’s apparent unwillingness to fight 2.8), or a new threat presented itself (such as Aedui raiding lands of the Bellovaci 2.5) the unity of command no longer held authority. It was a limited command.

In Māori society temporary leadership was a common move with *rangatira* leading *tauau* under the authority of senior family member. This has been explained above and the Belgae also appeared to look for temporary leaders who had good reputations. In 1868-9 Titokowaru gathered various *hapū* of southern Taranaki in his war against colonial forces who sought to enforce surveying and settlement on confiscated lands. As more people joined the conflict between Māori and the colonial forces (and their Māori allies), Titokowaru sent out his warriors to execute his strategy to defeat the Crown. Kimble Bent, an American Pākehā/Māori deserter, left a detailed account of how Titokowaru chose his *tauau* (usually around 60 *toa* or warriors), the *Te kau ma rua* (the “twelve”), to move out and who led the force. Titokowaru would summon all to the *whare kura* (house of learning), sitting on a raised *tapu* platform, watching as the *toa* performed a *haka* (war dance). After the *haka*, all would sit in silence as Titokowaru in a trance-like state would, through the invocation of the god Uenuku and using his *taiaha* Te Porohanga, divine who should go. This account shows that Titokowaru’s method of delegation was deeply spiritual and steeped in ritual. It is not unreasonable to suggest a similar attitude towards sacred leadership among the people of Late Iron Age Gaul, with sacred oaths made over war-standards (*Gallic War* 7.2), which would have been a uniting factor, even if only for a short period of time.

There are two points that need to be stressed here: the acceptance of leadership and the sacredness of this act. In passing over power, there needed to be recognition of authority. The generic characteristic of kinship, hostage-

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64 Durie. pp. 32 & 35.
65 Durie. p. 35.
66 J. Cowen. *The Adventures of Kimble Bent*. Wellington. 1911. (Reprinted, Papakura, Southern Reprints). The “Twelve” represented the taua as a whole but specific of the first twelve members. The “twelve” had symbolic importance as it represented the 12 Apostles of Christ, the twelve sons of Jacob and the twelve months of the year. pp. 110-111.
67 Cowen. 1911. pp. 111-112.
68 Cowen. 1911. p. 112.
exchange and client relationships appear to have been universal across late Iron Age Gaul. This allowed the room to gather large forces in times of need.\(^{69}\) The study of burials in modern Belgium has shown that there was a distinction between rich and poor gravesite from the Early Iron Age (seventh and sixth centuries BC) and, while there is variation within this area, it does suggest an elite group among the masses.\(^{70}\) It would be from these elite groups that the leaders would have been chosen. For the Belgae these leaders were chieftains of varying levels of power, wealth and control. The relinquishing of one authority would be hard unless it was sanctioned by the profane.

**Nobles and Councils**

The leaders of the Belgae communities would have held councils in the winter of 58-7, where they met to agree on what action should be taken against Caesar. From here the Belgc leaders exchanged hostages as a sign that all (except the Remi) agreed to the course of action (*Gallic War* 2.1). Once the decision was made to fight, the second concern would be to appoint a leader of the confederation. Despite the Bellovaci demanding the right to lead the confederation, all consented to Galba, the Suessionian, as supreme commander (2.4). The next step would be to ascertain the quota of warriors each group would commit to the campaign (2.4). The Remi sent a deputation of their leading men to Caesar in 57 (2.3) and provided the Romans with detailed intelligence on the commitment of each Belgic grouping; so it is fair to deduce that the Remi would have been present at the initial Belgic council. The Remian decision not to support the general Belgic confederation may have been within accepted Belgic law and practice, but they were attacked by their fellow-Belgae in the first action of the army (2.6).

What is apparent among Māori society is that decision-making was consensus-based and *hapū* action was not determined by majority rule.\(^{71}\) The fact that Caesar enjoyed Remian support throughout his campaigns in Gaul indicates that the whole (or at least the majority) of the voting body of that

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\(^{71}\) The consensus would need to be unanimous for a decision to be made. It was not simply a majority or large part of the community. Even powerful *rangatira* were required to persuade all to agree to any action. Durie. p. 34.
civitas (their senate Gallic War 2.5) had agreed to align with Rome. The Māori experience shows that each hapū had the right to make a decision that considered all the risks and benefits of the whole group. They had to equally consider the consequences of the decisions made, and perhaps the Remi suffered the consequences of their decision to support Caesar. Ultimately the Remi benefitted from their allegiance to Caesar, as also happened in the case of Te Arawa who sided with the crown. This confederation based around Lake Rotorua sided with the Crown becoming involved in the wars of the late 1860. The Arawa “flying column” became a specialised bush-fighting unit with some Te Arawa contingents becoming anglicised in uniform and weaponry. In supporting the Crown, Te Arawa was able to fight their traditional enemies. It is unclear if the Remi did the same, but they certainly ended up being one of the strongest Gallic states under Caesar’s protection supported in its decision-making by a strong council and the common population.

The Belgic confederation also held a council (of war) to decide the actions of the confederacy after the show-down with Caesar and the fight around the Ainse River (Gallic War 2.10). Each group at the war council would have certainly had a say on what should be done. Some may have pushed for the dispersal and local defence, while others possibly argued to confront Caesar. It is at this point that the temporary, centralised authority appeared to lose its cohesion, which Caesar described when they withdrew in a disorganised affair, but this may have been the decision of the members of the confederation after debate.

When we look at the debates within Māori councils before and during the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi one can visualise the intensity of debate that would have taken place within Gallic war councils. During the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, the combined gathering of mainly Nga Puhi rangatira debated the benefits of signing the Treaty. The various rangatira spoke at a major hui putting forward their reasons for supporting or opposing the Treaty. Men of great mana spoke in turn, their views considered by all. It is easy to imagine the leaders of the Belgic communities doing the same, as they

discussed the next move. At Waitangi Tamati Waka Nene, the great Nga Puhi rangatira of the Ngati Hao hapū swayed the gathering in favour of signing the Treaty, and in a similar manner so did the leaders of the larger and more powerful Belgae who convinced the other leaders to follow a certain action. The Māori example shows decisions were made by consensus, but local agendas would have been important in debate.

**Civil and Military Leadership among the Belgae**

The Belgae did not distinguish civil and military leadership and Caesar reverted to the title ‘*rex*’ with the absence of a recognisable magistrate, possible out of the need to separate the term chief from king. The presence of men willing to move into the position of kingship with military authority suggests that this was still an acceptable and realistic function for some archaic states. Although the Remi did not appear to face the same problem, many of the people of the Belgae may have resorted to this position in response to any threat, the autocratic leader being a role natural to the complex chiefdoms of Belgic Gaul.

Within the Gallic states the civil/military division is clear. The Aeduan brothers Dumnorix and Diviciacus suggest a fighting chief and a diplomatic leader, while the first of the two Helvetian delegations to Caesar in 58 initially had a civic nature (*Gallic War* 1.7), but after open conflict developed, the delegation is characterised by the leadership of a successful veteran military commander Divico (1.13). Perhaps this move was acknowledging an older system, where the military leadership also assumed diplomatic duties, but the Helvetii and Aedui show clear signs that they had separated the civil and military roles. By comparison the Remi do not appear to have a fully separate civil and military leadership. The Remian leader Iccius held both military and civil leadership. He was part of the deputation that approached Caesar at the start of the Belgic campaign (2.3), and he sent Caesar reports requesting aid when Bibrax was attacked, a request he made as commander of the town’s defences (2.6).

For the majority of the Belgae (if not all), there was no distinction between civil and military leadership and the leading nobility or senate also comprised warriors. The Nervian senate of 600 men was allegedly nearly wiped out in 57, with only three surviving the campaign that also reduced their fighting force.

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76 Iccius may have come from Bibrax.
from 60,000 to 500 (Gallic War 2.28).\textsuperscript{77} The leaders of the Nervii, including their commander-in-chief, dux, Boduognatus (2.23) perhaps chose to die fighting rather than suffer the ignobility of capture. So too for Māori rangatira it was immensely shameful to be captured in battle, since the loss of mana was often irreconcilable.\textsuperscript{78} This prompted intensification of fighting and we may see this happening on the Sambre in 57. The Nervian leadership was severely weakened.

Military leadership among the Belgae was based on a shared sense of identity seen linguistically and in coinage. This shared identity enabled a swift mobilisation of warriors to face threats from external forces, but these confederations were short-lived. The diverse nature of the Belgic chiefdoms also had spiritual significance and was supported by councils that agreed on important issues. A comparison with Māori suggests that the Belgae were consensus-based in their decision-making and that local politics would dominate any action. The Belgae show a leadership that did not separate civil and military leadership. Other than the Remi who appear to have moved to a state orientated political system, which itself was heading towards separating civic and military duties, the majority of Belgic leaders were fighting chiefs.

4.5. Response of the Belgae

In 57 the confederation of the Belgae mobilised a considerable force to face the advancing Romans. First the Belgae attacked the Remi and ravaged the surrounding countryside (Gallic War 2.6, 7). The Belgae withdrew from the Remian oppidum of Bibrax and moved towards Caesar, fighting his cavalry as they advanced, but decided not to engage Caesar in a direct battle, as he had deployed his troops on favourable ground (2.8). Caesar was also reluctant to initiate battle for the same reason but added that he was weary of testing his unseasoned troops against an enemy that had a reputation for valour in battle (2.8).\textsuperscript{79}

Caesar and the Belgae now confronted each other across a piece of marshy ground, both armies in a strong position as the cavalry on each side continued to fight with Caesar’s horsemen gaining the best of the contest (Gallic War 2.9). The Belgae then sought to push a section of their force across the Aisne and

\textsuperscript{77} It is not stated whether the Nervii senate was killed in action or executed.
\textsuperscript{78} Durie. pp. 39-40
\textsuperscript{79} Caesar was writing retrospectively, and this would make his victory more impressive to those back in Rome. Belgica was, after all well beyond the knowledge of the Roman public before Caesar’s invasion.
either attack one of Caesar’s fortifications, or continue to lay waste to the lands of the Remi and cut Caesar off from his supply lines, both possibly moves to draw Caesar out of his position (2.9). Caesar attacked this force with cavalry, light troops, archers and slingers killing many in the process (2.10).

After the battle at the Aisne River, where Caesar claimed a minor victory, the Belgic army held a council and decided to disperse. All the groups returned to their own territory where local knowledge would, they believed, provide tactical advantages (Gallic War 2.10). They would also be defending their homes that were under threat from invading Aeduan warriors (2.10). Caesar attacked the confederation as it separated, finding the only resistance coming from the rear-guard who, Caesar states ‘stood at bay, bravely sustaining the attack of our troops’ (2.11). This action suggests a clear tactical manoeuvre, not disorder. Those withdrawing had placed confidence in a rear guard placed between them and the Romans, but the leaders seem to have underestimated Caesar’s resolve to attack, given that he had held off attacking, supposing him to be unwilling to engage the full Belgic army until his action on the Aisne.

As discussed, the Belgic confederation and its supreme command were temporary, established for a specific external threat, and it broke up as each section looked to local defence. This raises the question of whether the Belgae viewed the Romans as a real threat after the fighting at the Aisne. In harnessing the inter-tribal conflict, Caesar’s tactic of asking the Aedui to attack the Belgae was a shrewd and obvious move that would be beneficial to his campaign against the northern people, but its strategic importance is hardly mentioned except to say that the Aedui threatened the Bellovaci (2.5, 10).

Similar to the strategies employed by Caesar, it was a standard policy by the Crown and colonial government to use friendly kūpapa Māori to fight those who resisted European military imperialism. And while Caesar and Rome continually drew Gallic cavalry into the auxiliary formations that supported the Roman legions, the Māori examples show that local agendas were primary in hapū motivation to fight alongside the Crown. For Gauls like the Aedui, their presence in the Roman army would have satisfied local imperatives: to survive

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80 Waka Nene of Nga Puhi served the crown in the Northern war, and Whangnui Māori fought each other as the lower river hapū protected the European settlement of Whanganui. Te Arawa and Ngati Porou of the East Coast people fought for the Crown in the wars of the late 1860s. See Belich. 1998.
or, in the case of the Aedui, to increase local political power and not just blind support for Caesar. For the Belgae the Romans may have been a secondary consideration in the nuances of inter-Gallic warfare. On the other hand, this presupposes that the Belgae did not consider that Caesar and the Romans were there to stay and thus he was able to defeat them piecemeal.

Did the political development of the Belgae affect Belgic response to Caesar? The chiefdoms of Belgica were a characteristic of a political landscape where power was invested in small kin-based polities, but the Belgae were not politically motivated to keep the confederation together beyond the confrontation on the Aisne River. The Belgae had raised war-bands from different communities, they had attacked and looted an easily identifiable enemy (the Remi), and faced down Caesar. This would have satisfied war aims appropriate to Gallic attitudes to the Roman invasion at the time. It would have also been a hard task to keep the force together once news of the raids of the Aedui reached the confederation. Caesar, however, sees the “collapse” of the Belgic confederation through a negative lens, but within the Belgic context, it was probably an appropriate and logical time to disband the confederation. For Caesar the Bellovaci was possibly the main target with the confederation stirring him to attack Belgica in the first place.

Caesar moved further into Belgica picking off the tribes one by one. He defeated the Suessiones (Gallic War 2.12-13), Bellovaci (2.13-15) and the Aduataci (2.29-33), who sought security against Caesar from behind their defences. This approach proved unsuccessful, since it allowed Caesar, through superior siege techniques, to reduced the walls of their towns (or threaten to by swift deployment of siege equipment), and to gain the surrender of those inside, many more than he could have captured by other means.

The Nervii had been very close to stopping the Romans in 57, because they were strong in infantry and had developed tactics to counter cavalry forces (Gallic War 2.17). The value of this approach was possibly seen as a defensive screen against Aeduan cavalry or when they shielded the Nervian positions across the Sambre. With their allies, the Nervii had camped in a large wood across the Sambre (2.16). Caesar states that the Nervii had developed a plan of attack aimed at taking advantage of the Romans’ line of attack and the gradual arrival of all the Roman legions and baggage to the camp site (2.17). As the first legions started to build the camp, the Nervii and allies attacked, crossing the
Sambre and pushing the Roman forces back (2.19). They threatened to over-run the Romans. Caesar describes in detail the battle that unfolded, with a focus on his leadership and the abilities of his subordinate commanders to rally the troops and take control of the battle (2.19-27).

The plan of the Nervii was clear: to attack Caesar before he could establish his marching camp or even concentrate his forces in one place. This was an ambush in force, similar to Caesar’s actions against the Helvetii on the Saône River in 58, where he attacked a section of the enemy on the march (Gallic War 1.12). The plan was effective, utilising local intelligence, which, however, was outdated by the time of the attack, but it relied on the swift concentration of force against a divided enemy, with specific areas of attack for the allied groups. Such planning and aims were not those of a reckless rabble, but they were sophisticated and well-thought out. In near defeat, Caesar was obviously impressed by his enemy, but when he stresses their quality and valour, he would be attempting to make his victory highly creditable, a result only of his own valour, skill and leadership.\(^{81}\)

The Nervian decision to ambush Caesar on the Sambre reflects a realisation that fighting the Romans in direct and open battle was not a realistic way to defeat them. The indirect approach manifested in a large-scale ambush was characteristic of the chiefdoms of Belgica.

At the Sambre small polities chose to put all their efforts into an ambush in force, and these forces, led by the Nervii, had also drawn Caesar deeper into Belgica, stretching out his line of attack. The Nervian ambush shows tight cohesion that one would expect from a smaller political unit with power placed at a local chiefdoms, but the fact that this leadership was destroyed at the Sambre suggests that this group had decided to fight a decisive battle. The initial success of the Nervii on crossing the river, attacking a disorganised Roman force and the near-capture of the half-built Roman camp would have encouraged the Nervii to push home their advantage. This ambush in force was different to that attempted by the Helvetii outside Bibracte where the ambush was sprung half way through a conventional battle, and it would seem that ambush was the tactic of choice for the Gauls, and for the Nervii in particular. The leadership of

\(^{81}\) Belich discussed the early histories of Māori response where European commentators explain British defeat (if even acknowledged) by overstating Māori numbers, poor leadership or the poor quality of British and colonial troops. See 1998. pp. 16-17.
the clans of the Belgic chiefdoms must have determined this indirect tactical approach on this occasion. Caesar does not hide the fact that he was nearly overwhelmed by the Nervii, but their gamble ultimately failed, and the defeat of the Nervii left undefended eastern Belgica from the Romans who continued the reduction of the remaining Belgic people.

The Belgae formed a confederation to fight the Romans and then separated, while under attack by Caesar. This reflects an organised resistance within a political landscape of fragmented chiefdoms. The campaigns of 57 show the ability of a large group of people to mobilise and fight on a large scale. The importance of planning and logistics for this type of action cannot be ignored and, as Rawlings has stated, these people may have met their own war aims in mobilising to face a perceived threat, attacking an enemy (the Remi), ‘facing off’ against Caesar, then departing to look to local defence against a local enemy. The point of ‘failure’ may be seen in the absence of the over-arching aim to defeat Caesar, despite his stating this as his motivation for invading Belgica (Gallic War 2.1). The actions of the Remi and the Aedui during this phase are of particular interest here, in that they strongly suggest that inter-group politics, while largely ignored by Caesar, had an impact on events in 57.

6.6. Summary

Belgic Gaul was a region with limited potential for social development because of the constraints placed on the communities’ inability to provide surplus resources as a means to accumulate wealth. The Belgic communities were warrior agrarian societies that used their military structures, based on warlords and the common population, to supply mercenaries to stronger neighbours or to attack weaker communities. The limits to social development created a fragmented bloc that, while defined as culturally different to Gallic groups to the south and west, could and did unite to face temporary threats. Responses to major external threats came in the form of loose confederations.

Caesar’s commentaries ultimately paint a picture of success for Roman arms over the Belgae and, to a degree they disregard the inter-group political dimension to this campaign. Caesar would have presented the people of Belgica as a tidy bloc (one of his three ethnic divisions) that he defeated wholesale in 57. Caesar does not consider that the Remi provided a traditionally accepted target,
rather than the Romans, for the Belgic confederation to attack and this suggests that the inter-Galic politics could fall beyond his scope of understanding. Also, the Aedui, invading Belgic territory at Caesar’s request, may have posed more of a recognisable threat than the Romans. The dimensions of intra-Belgic warfare (as opposed to war with Caesar) may have occupied the energies of the tactical thinkers of the Belgae. After all the Romans were a relatively new threat to them, whereas the Remi and Aedui were not. Rawlings’ assessment of the Belgae in 57 explains their possible war aims and the actions of the withdrawal of the Belgae after Caesar’s refusal to fight them. His assessment goes some way towards providing an alternative outlook to understanding Belgic warfare and their reasons for certain actions, as well as showing that the Belgae fought differently from the Romans and that their military thinking was the not the same.

By comparing the Belgae to Māori society an alternative assessment can be made of how smaller polities made decisions, appointed war leaders and responded to military imperialism. Kinship was important to the chiefdoms of both the Belgae and Māori, but local imperatives would be dominant, despite the implication for the wider kin grouping, as the Remi show. Seniority among kin-groups was also a feature among Māori society and helps explain the decision by the Bellovaci to turn to the Aedui for assistance, when a logical move would be for the Bellovaci to approach their kin. Caesar provides an assessment of the structure of the leadership of the Belgic confederation, but Māori examples add to Caesar’s criterion, that war leaders were chosen for their practical skills in warfare, by noting their rank as well. Both the Belgae and the Māori shared a proclivity for indirect warfare, and this was a characteristic of non-state chiefdoms when fighting state directed military imperialism.
Chapter Five
Caesar and the Armorican and Aquitani Gauls

The campaigns of 56

At the end of 57 a Roman legion under Publius Crassus moved into the territory of the people along the Atlantic seaboard apparently bringing them into submission before moving into winter quarters along the Loire in the lands of the Carnutes, Turones and the Andes (Gallic War 2.34). It was obvious that this submission was not complete as in 56 Caesar also fought a campaign along the Atlantic coast, attacking the Armorican Veneti, and equipping a navy under Decimus Brutus to counter the naval power of this group (3.7-16). The possible reason for Venetians in particular to go to war appears to have been confusion around what agreement they had entered into with the Romans the year before. Given the trade focus of the Armoricans and the establishment of trade relations with the Britons and eastern Gallic people, it is likely that the alleged submission to Crassus in 57 was seen as a trade arrangement and not submission. The demand for hostages may have caught the Armoricans off guard as they rescinded this deal in 56. The Armorican were forced to fight to defend this.

5.1. The Armorican Gauls

The Armoricans occupied western Gaul and lived between the Risle and the Garonne Rivers (See figure 5). To the north and east were Belgic Gauls, and to the south the Aquitani. There is evidence from coinage and pottery styles for a degree of homogeneity among the Armoricans. 1 This has been seen as a representation of an ‘Atlantic’ Gallic bloc with sub-divisions contrasting continental Gaul and south-eastern and western Britain. 2 The political systems among the Armoricans are not clearly defined by Caesar, but he noted different groups of which the Veneti (Gallic War 3.9) and the Coriosolites (3.11) were preeminent. The Pictones (3.11) have been identified as a grouping that was reaching archaic statehood, 3 but the rest appear to have been chiefdoms. Other kin-groupings are named as the Osismi, the Redones, and the Namnetes who

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occupied the Brittany peninsula (7.75). The Venelli (3.11), Lexovii (3.9) and a group called the Baiocasses controlled the Normandy coast with the Aulerci (Cenomani, Dialintes and Eburovices 3.9, 7.75) forming a central Armorican confederation. In this region we also find the Andes, the Turones, the Santones (3.11) and the Esuavii. The Armorican Gauls were certainly a disparate grouping, and their coinage shows this.4

![Figure 5. The lands of the Armorican Gauls. (B. Cunliffe. 1988).](image)

5.2. Archaeology of the Armoricans

Iron Age Armorica was more densely populated around the coast and tidal estuaries than in the interior of the peninsula that was made up of forests and upland moorlands.5 Aerial photography has shown that the populated areas were dotted with small oval-shaped and rectangular enclosures attached to cultivation plots that, once established, remained occupied for some time. This shows a

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4 See Celtic Coin Index at [www.finds.org.uk/CCI/](http://www.finds.org.uk/CCI/) for Coriosolitae (silver), Osismi (gold and silver), Veneti (gold and silver), Redones (silver), Aulerci (Cenomani), Baiocasses, and Namnetes (gold and silver) coinage (many being found in Britain). Retrieved 28.3.2012.

period of population expansion and settled communities. The Armoricans controlled the trade between the continent and south-western Britain, with the material evidence pointing to the Coriosolites dominating the movement of Mediterranean goods through Alet to Hengistbury Head, which were in turn traded for raw and manufactured goods. This situation has been revealed by the depth of archaeological work done on both sides of the Channel, and links have been shown to have existed between the Armoricans of Gaul and the Durotriges and Dumnoni of south-western Britain. The evidence is seen in the wide range of imports into Britain of Gallo-Belgic and Armorican coins, pottery, amphorae, bronze and silver tableware and other luxury items. Exports from Britain included iron, shale and salt, ingots of gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, and slaves.

To establish such import and export capabilities, the communities that came to dominate cross-Channel trade would have needed the internal impetus and capacity to engage in trade across the Channel and into Gaul. Drawing on Nash’s definitions of the purely agrarian society, it would seem that the Armoricans’ wealth came from agriculture, raw materials and finished goods, where free peasant and slave labour became the principal basis of wealth. The creation of a primary surplus was turned into more valuable wealth through systems of trade and exchange controlled by the local elite who oversaw the expansion of craft production. This developed from a local activity to large external operations. The various Armorican communities (comprising a family or extended family size) were well situated to develop in this way, given their centrality to trade routes between the Mediterranean, Western Gaul and Britain. Kin-ties would have been an important network to help coordinate and control

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6 Cunliffe. 2001. pp. 66-67. The houses were of various construction but usually timber-framed and sub rectangular with roofs of thatch that swept down to the ground, some had low walls of drystone. p. 67.
this process of decentralised organisation and the articulation of internal economic relationships.\textsuperscript{13} By comparison Māori, having kin-ties or links to those hapū that had established trading centres, meant that they would, through traditional trade and communication networks, gain access to European goods.\textsuperscript{14} This saw the development of trade-based polities using those traditional networks to accrue wealth and power as Māori engaged in European exchange. The Armorican would have done the same in controlling Atlantic trade routes from the continent into Britain.

The establishment of trade centres in Britain and the processing of British raw materials by Armorican tradesmen, and the requirement for sailors for constant sea-trading vessels would have allowed for some movement of young men to alleviate any population pressure in that region.\textsuperscript{15} Core and periphery communities seen in the archaeological record have been identified and for some northern Armoricans, such as the Osismi and Coriosolites, dominated trade as core groups.\textsuperscript{16} These communities would need to maintain friendly relations with trading partners, so all would benefit, and this means that the core and periphery communities were complementary and interdependent and not necessarily locked in constant conflict.\textsuperscript{17} Core and periphery relations may have been conducted between social elites, but what is certain is that these kinds of relationships, while beneficial to both, would have been more favourable for the core communities than for those of the periphery.\textsuperscript{18} These relationships would have certainly had a military component,\textsuperscript{19} which may explain why there were British auxiliaries in the fleets of the Veneti in 56 (Gallic War 3.9), and the presence of other Britons who supported Gallic armies in all their campaigns against Caesar as he noted in The Gallic War (4.20). This might also explain the presence of Armorican coinage in Britain, and how the Armorican confederations that arose in 56 could also provide 30,000 warriors to the Gallic army of 52 (7.75), a distinctly Armorican bloc supplemented by British warriors.

\textsuperscript{13} Nash. 1984. p. 96.
\textsuperscript{15} Cunliffe. 2010. p. 126.
\textsuperscript{17} Levick. 1998. p. 69. Nash. p. 97
\textsuperscript{19} Nash. 1984. pp. 97-98.
Caesar recorded that the Veneti were destroyed as a political unit after 56 (3.16), but evidence shows that they were still issuing coins after this date.20

The Armorican Gauls displayed the characteristics of the complex chiefdom and any movements of specialist tradesmen, artisans, warriors and their families may have relieved population pressures in these communities. Movement across the Channel would have acted as fission to stall the development of statehood.

5.3. Caesar and the Armoricans Factions: The Western and Eastern Armorican Blocs

Caesar placed three legions between the western and eastern Armoricans in 56, essentially spitting the bloc in half (Gallic War 3.11), an action he justifies from a need to separate the two factions. This division may be symptomatic of Caesar’s strategic move, or it may have reflected that there were two kin or ethnic blocs within the Atlantic Gauls, although these two groups do not appear to have been mutually antagonistic. The tactical approaches from blocs led by the Veneti and Venelli were very different, however, and may have been a reflection of varying political development or core and periphery relationship. The Venellian-led confederation reflected the actions of the Belgic confederation seen in 57, suggesting that the natural Gallic response to attack was to form large temporary confederations to respond to these threats as they arose. The Venellian-led confederation was smaller than that of the Belgae, and so it was possibly based on kin.

Kin-Ties and Friendship

The division in the Armorican response to Caesar in 56 could be seen as evidence for localised and kin-based groups within the larger area. The Veneti are noted as dominating Brittany, while the Venelli, under the command of Virodovix, led the Armoricans based around the Contentin peninsula and the Normandy coast. The fact that the Veneti took the first step in the resistance to Caesar (Gallic War 3.8) should be seen as evidence for their seniority within the western Armorican bloc and the Veneti and Venelli possibly represented the senior branches of the Armorican bloc. Given what we have seen elsewhere in Gaul (such as with the Aedui, Arverni, Sequani and Bellovaci), the Veneti and Venelli may have also been the leading Armorican factions. In light of the discussion of the Bellovaci, it would seem that societies led by chiefs were

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observant of seniority. Like the Gauls, seniority within Māori society was also important and the ariki was the symbolic figurehead of the hapū and was drawn from the eldest son of the senior family of the hapū.21 Leading rangatira would also be the military commanders of large kin-based taua. The junior families would take their lead from the senior leaders of the hapū, who would also delegate war-time leadership to subordinate rangatira from within the group. This might explain Caesar’s identification of the Veneti and Venelli as leading Armorican units within the wider group.

Caesar makes particular note that the Veneti had auxiliaries from Britain (Gallic War 3.9), whose presence among the Venetian fleet suggests kin links at least and definite commercial trade contacts between the Armoricans and British chiefdoms (3.9). We may consider that these Britons were providing part of a local shipping network for trade or fishing fleets. Although Caesar does not suggest that these Britons were clients of the Veneti, evidence of cross-channel trade suggests an arrangement between core communities within their spheres of influence, implying relationships between trading partners, not necessarily between chiefs and vassals.

Hostages

Caesar concluded the commentary of his campaign against the Belgae in 57 with the statement that Publius Crassus had brought the maritime states of the Armoricans ‘into subjection to the power of Rome’ (Gallic War 2.34). The Armoricans show a behaviour in 56 that suggests that some Gallic people did not necessarily see the giving of hostages to Caesar as recognition of submission. The Veneti may have seen the giving of hostages as an establishment of a formal treaty agreement. The Veneti and their neighbours’ detained Roman officials in the belief that they could get their hostages back (3.8).22

In situation 57-56 and the revolt highlights the complexity of Gallic social and political interaction and how this was managed with a new and foreign entity. While this interaction could mean an act of submission, hostage exchange was also used to form military alliances, as seen among the Belgae in 57 (Gallic

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War 2.1). The strengthening of family ties and the fostering of children may be seen as an act sealing a pact of kinship or familial links. The Helvetii refused to give hostages to Caesar before they were defeated in battle from a sense of honour and pride, and the Belgae only presented hostages after they had been defeated. Caesar is not clear whether the Armorican had fought Crassus in 57. On reflection of their “submission” and on account of how some of the Belgae were treated, the Veneti sought to renegotiate the position they now found themselves in, understanding late that Caesar expected their total submission. Perhaps the Veneti and other Armorican did not realise what arrangement they had made with Crassus in 57. This kind of submission would be a real threat to Armorican trade and the means of political control of the region.

Whether the different groups of the Armorican bloc had sincerely submitted to Rome or were duplicitous in their actions is unclear, but in 56 the Veneti moved down a path that drew them and the wider Armorican bloc into conflict with Caesar. This war would have disastrous results for the Veneti in particular (3.16) and the Armorican/south-western British trade axis in general.23

5.4. Caesar’s Armorican societies and Maori comparisons

As discussed, Nash defines the Armorican culture as purely agrarian variants of Gallic culture, characterised by a subsistence economy.24 The Armorican were a series of complex chiefdoms with an evolved bureaucracy stimulated by successful trade links to Britain and central Gaul. If Caesar had not interrupted the social development of Armorica with his devastating attack on the Veneti and, as a consequence, placing this important cross-Channel trade network in the hands of Roman traders after annexation,25 the Veneti and other maritime grouping may have made the transition to archaic statehood.

Armorican arrangements of kinship with British communities would have facilitated trade links and arrangements. This would mean that the economic units would also be kin-based, carrying certain obligation in war and peace. A clan’s ability to rely on family support, advice and authority would make the unit stronger. This is also seen in Māori society where leaders, for example, would often allow people of knowledge, skill or expertise to marry into their hapū, as this made it easy and acceptable to ask for their advice if from

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23 Cunliffe. 2010. pp. 479-80
family/whanau. It was rare for rangatira to seek or accept advice from strangers or from people lacking mana. 26 We have seen that Celts also used marriage to affirm alliances, through adding a kin-based dimension to their agreements (Gallic War 1.3, 18). Perhaps Gallic chiefs preferred to take the advice of allies if they were linked by kin-ties.

The example of the Kingitanga can help us understand the Gallic Armorican’s response to Caesar. In Aotearoa/New Zealand the Kingitanga (a Waikato-based political unit) grew from a need by the Tainui people (who had refused to sign the Treaty of Waitangi in AD1840) and other North Island communities to create a political and economic state to engage the Crown. The Crown felt that there was no room for dual-sovereignty in AD1860 and invaded the Waikato. The Kingitanga defended their lands against a large imperial force of professional British soldiers, colonial militia and kūpapa Māori. The result was the destruction of the Kingitanga economy, the removal of its government deeper into the interior of the North Island and the confiscation of over one million acres by the Crown. 27 The motivation for the Kingitanga to fight is obvious and reflects the situation in Armorican Gaul when confronted by Caesar’s determination to impose his role on the region. The Armorican response in 56 was strong and reflected a similar need to resist an external threat possibly beyond anything the Armoricans had faced before.

Leadership

This large-scale response by the Armorican people to Caesar in 56 would be a test to the political leadership of the Atlantic people of Gaul. The reaction also highlights the leadership styles of the Armoricans. The actions of the Veneti to Caesar were complex and would have required strong command. The combinations of naval and land operations would have necessitated logistical planning and tactics. An aspect of the “pure” agrarian Celtic societies is the limited need for external warfare on a large scale. 28 Armorican dependence on trade for wealth and the means to maintain order within their communities meant that treaties would have been entered into to prevent large-scale warfare and disruption to trade. Any threat to the control of these important trade networks

would demand response and the local leadership would have facilitated such response: Caesar posed such a threat.

How would this system of leadership work in these pure agrarian societies of western Gaul? An examination of Māori society offers an alternative interpretation of Armorican leadership. In Māori society there was a binary system of leadership and service. The rangatira was responsible to and for the hapū and acted for the good of all. As Māori society encountered and traded with Europe, the potential and need for the growth of agrarian output stimulated large raids by musket-armed taua against traditional enemies and people well beyond the usual limits for campaigns. All efforts by the hapū were put to food production (items such as introduced pigs and potatoes), resource processing (flax and timber) and slaves took on a new importance for Māori. For the rangatira, this new impetus of trade opportunities reinforced their position in that they would distribute the profits of all hapū-based production. This would also provide a much wider scope from which to gain wealth and mana. A similar response could, therefore, be expected by the Gauls as economic ties with Rome became more pronounced.

Prior to Caesar’s invasion of Gaul, the communities of Armorica enjoyed limited external warfare, unlike that seen among the eastern Gallic people, as all their efforts were directed towards specific resource production and trading. The relationship between the chief and the common population would have been vital to the success of the “pure” agrarian communities of Armorican Gaul. The need for the Armorican chiefs to rely on the common folk would bind the leader to the people and vice versa. Supreme command would be backed by the whole community, unlike the authority given to the senate and magistrates of the archaic states in Gaul. This may have come from community interest and investment within the navy. Consensus-based decision-making would have prevailed, and the Armorican model suggests that councils were still accountable to the people. Decisions were not made by an autocratic body or magistrate, but by leaders with the full support of the people.

The Armorican Councils

Was there a political difference between the power found within the councils and senates of the chiefdom and of the archaic state? Caesar acknowledged Viridorix as the leader of the Venelli and other people of the eastern Armorican confederation (Gallic War 3.17), but he also lists the existence of senators (3.17)
and councils (3.18). The Armoricans sent deputies and bound themselves by mutual oath when faced with having a Roman garrison stationed in their lands and during the attack on the Veneti but no hostage exchange is mentioned by Caesar (3.8). Notice of a meeting of leading men and senate suggests that the Armoricans had a leadership structure that was aristocratic and contained a senate (3.16, 17). Caesar, however, tells of an intriguing event in which the Aulerici, Eburuvices and Lexovii put their senators to death and joined Viridovix of the Venelli. They were executed for refusing to approve war with Rome Viridovix (3.17). It is also reported that the assembly of fighting men (later called concilium) forced Viridovix and the duces to give permission to attack the Roman camp under the leadership of Sabinus (3.18). This behaviour by the Armoricans people as described by Caesar fails to fully explain the mechanisms of Gallic decision-making that was more consensus-based rather than the majority rule that Caesar implies.

However, when one examines the decision-making in most Māori societies one can understand why the Armoricans acted in this manner. This reflects the position within Māori society too where consensus was the mandate for agreement for the group. The will of the leader was always made after careful consideration of all the issues and benefits or risks to the wider group.29

In a counterintuitive way, the death of the Armorican councillors would make way for a consensus decision. If majority rule was the system in place, then the killing of members on the one hand, and forcing of the leaders in another would not be necessary to reach a decision. Given the localised reaction and the methods used by the Veneti, there was clearly a political system that enabled a very complex naval response to Caesar, and that coordinated land and sea operations with apparent ease, once a decision had been made. This type of operation would have also needed a strong centralised leadership. Viridovix, a fighting chief (dux) was another example of strong leadership. Like all Gallic complex chiefdoms, perhaps leadership of the Veneti and Venelli was temporary but had the support of all the community. This was not an established senate, like that seen among the Helvetii or possibly the Aedui, but a military assembly and senate all the same.

The Armoricans, and in particular the Veneti and Coriosolites encompass ‘pure’ agrarian societies that were complex chiefdoms with councils of varying degrees of authority. Power resided in the hands of the military assemblies and senators but there was still a strong sense of influence housed among the common populations who supported their single leadership in times of war (possibly among the western Armoricans and certainly within the eastern faction). The Armoricans fought hard to protect their communities and the trade networks that were well established.

5.5. Response

The Veneti

In 56 the tactics of the Veneti and their allies were defensive in nature until they were drawn into a decisive naval battle. The Veneti fought by withdrawing into coastal promontory hillforts (Gallic War 3.12). Once the Romans had begun besieging these positions, the inhabitants would retreat into ships and move away (3.12). Having drawn the Roman troops up to their promontory forts, they used the tides to escape by sea, leaving the Romans in command of empty settlements.

The Venetian approach, to draw the Romans into attrition warfare, was also a major strategic method used by Māori in Taranaki during AD1860 where they built a cordon of fortified pa around the new settlement of New Plymouth. The cordon was used to draw the British forces out of New Plymouth in an attempt to take occupied pa that were often in sight of New Plymouth. The Māori defenders would remain in situ until the British forces were in a position to take the pa, but they would then abandon the fortifications to take up positions in another purpose-built pa within the cordon. This approach wore down the British forces and avoided direct conflict with a superior and technically advanced enemy.

We can gain further tactical insight into Armorican reaction and military thinking by looking at Māori strategies during the land wars. Northern Māori also used the indirect tactical approach time and time again to fight the Crown and Colonial forces that held technological (and often numerical) superiority.

30 For details of this part of the Taranaki campaign of 1860 see Belich. 1998. pp. 99-105.
31 See Belich. 1998 and J. Belich. I Shall Not Die: Titokowaru’s War 1868-1869. Wellington, Bridget Williams Books Ltd. 2010. For his assessments of the wars fought in Northern Taranaki (AD1860) and southern Taranaki (AD1868-9).
The tactical approached applied, for example, by Hone Heke and Kawiti in the Northern war was to draw the British forces away from their naval guns and into the hinterland, where the Māori built purpose-made pa to force the Crown to attack well defended defences. The Crown supply train was long and once taken (Māori usually abandoned them once casualties had been inflicted on the soldiers), the pa no longer held strategic importance.

The institution of such strategic withdrawals provides us with an understanding of Armorican tactics when faced with a greater military force such as the Romans. They were determined by geography, but they were also used by the Armoricans to draw the Romans into extending their supply lines while they wasted time, energy and supplies in attacking these coastal fortification.

Caesar suggests that he saw the folly in his reaction to these tactics and the merits of deciding the matter on the sea and waited for his fleet to arrive (Gallic War 3.14). Caesar had ordered the building of a fleet once the Veneti showed their intentions to resist him (3.9). It must have, however, become clear to the Veneti and their allies that they would soon run out of forts, and so a decisive action was forced upon them. Given that the Veneti were a sea power, they were able to gather a fleet of 220 ships and faced a Roman fleet in the Bay of Quiberon (3.14). Caesar, through his subordinate Decimus Brutus, defeated them in a decisive action at sea. The result of this battle had a huge impact on the Armorican military capabilities on the Atlantic seaboard. Caesar followed up this move with two raids to Britain in 55 and 54.

It seems unlikely that a major naval battle was ever a part of the Veneti strategy. Agrarian societies would try to avoid costly warfare. The Veneti response in 56 was risky and costly and considering that the fleet was the source of wealth and power for the western Armoricans, it seems illogical that they would intentionally jeopardise that unless fighting was unavoidable.

The period between the initial treaty with Crassus in 57 and the response in 56 would have been enough time to coordinate the logistical support in ships, warriors and sailors, against the Romans. The time needed to discuss any decisions that would affect the whole community was important for Māori when

33 Belich. 1998. p. 68.
considering war, so, in a similar manner, the period immediately after Crassus’ withdrawal from Armorica and the request for grain by Quintus Velanius and Titus Silius (Gallic War 3.7) would have given the Veneti time to have discussions on what had just occurred and the course of action to be taken and the logistics needed once open war was decided on. It has been stated above that the logistics involved in coordinating a combined land-and-sea operation would have required a unity of command and vision. The cost in ships alone would have been expensive and great risk to both local trade and income by the moves of Caesar in Gaul cannot be minimised. The large Armorican fleet may have been gathered for the same reasons. The show of naval power by the Veneti may have been an attempt to bring Caesar to the negotiating table. Caesar wrote that once the fleets were engaged and several (out of 220) had been boarded, the rest sailed ‘down the wind’ that went suddenly calm (Gallic War 315). It was at this point that Caesar’s galleys attacked the becalmed Gallic fleet, destroying it (3.15). We can take from this that the Veneti never intended to engage Brutus in a full-scale naval battle. Caesar does not write in great detail about this campaign against the Venetian led confederation, but this was an expensive gamble for the Veneti.

The Armoricans may have realised Caesar’s designs to control the coast facing Britain only after their treaty with Crassus in 57. Since the Armoricans were sea-based, possibly Caesar saw a way in which he could gain their fleets using the Veneti and their allies to support an invasion of Britain.35 Given that, after ‘submission’, the Aedui and Remi were required to provide military auxiliaries to Caesar, the Veneti and their allies might also have been expected to provide, men and subsidise a Roman fleet. Their ‘revolt’ and ultimately the destruction of the Venetian fleet put back Caesar’s plans, as events in eastern Gaul demanded his attention.

The Venelli

While Caesar was fighting the Veneti and their allies, Quintus Titurius Sabinus was facing a revolt by another Armorican group led by the Venelli (Gallic War 3.17). As discussed above, the Venelli possibly represented the senior group of the eastern Armorican Gauls. Caesar was quick to place Sabinus, and no less than three legions, between the Armoricans of Normandy (Venelli, 35 Levick. 1998. p. 67 dates this to 56.
Coriosolites and Lexovii) and Brittany (3.11). It is not clear whether the Venelli or any of their allies provided the Veneti led confederation with ships and sailors, but the eastern Armorican force was land-based. Viridovix was the commander in chief of the Venelli-led confederacy (3.17). He quickly raised levies and was joined by the Lexovii, Aulerici and Eburovices (3.17). Allies would have also come from among the Britons. The response of the eastern Armoricans was swift and direct, quickly besieging the Romans until they were lulled into a false sense of confidence from a seemingly inactive Sabinus (3.17-18). The Roman leader refused to fight and presented an appearance of cowardice (3.17). To further encourage the Gauls to believe a position of fear, Sabinus induced a Gallic auxiliary with promise of reward to fain desertion and inform Viridorix that the Romans intended to leave during the night and make for Caesar’s forces (3.18). Sabinus then confronted the Armoricans who had gathered around his fortification in an attack that took the Gauls unawares (3.19).

Of interest in this account is the presence of a large number of ‘desporadoes and brigands’ from across all of Gaul (Gallic War 3.17), but where did these men come from? The presence of Menapii and Morini among the Venetian confederation (3.9) suggests that the Armoricans used these western Belgic people as mercenaries. It has been argued that warrior agrarian societies would provide military service for less war-like neighbours who would pay for that service. Given the death of Orgetorix, the muzzling of Dumnorix in 58, both of whom kept around them a military force (1.5, 18), and the destruction of a large share of the Belgic leadership, there may have been a large number of leaderless war bands looking to attach themselves to new leaders, using traditional ways among the Gallic communities to find “work”. These men no doubt held anti-Roman sentiment, but they may have simply followed the conflicts that promised financial reward in the payment of gold or silver coinage. Professional mercenaries were common among the Gallic peoples north of the Alps and had a history of serving in most eastern Mediterranean city-states from about 300. The movement by some Gallic people away from strong kin-based to non-kin war-bands would create a space for non-kin mercenaries to operate.

36 There is no evidence for this but it may explain Caesar’s desperadoes and such.
Using warriors from outside the immediate kin-groupings was costly. The development of coinage in late Iron Age Gaul was a way to pay for such warrior groups. While it was acceptable to use non-kin warriors when going to war within Māori society, it was relatively unusual, but after the introduction of muskets, the practice increased during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The use of non-kin warriors was to step outside of the conventional code of tikanga, and often denoted escalation in the scale of conflict and the response required; a separation from more ritualistic to total warfare. The enlistment of warriors from beyond the immediate kin groups among Māori communities was time consuming and expensive.

What we see in Armorica in 56 is the use of non-kin mercenaries against an external enemy, but the act of using mercenaries would have been natural in fighting any threat to trade interests. The “pure” agrarian communities would employ military services from their “warrior” agrarian neighbours, core centres bringing in war-bands from the periphery communities in Belgica and Britain. The core and periphery relationships across late Iron Age Gaul and Britain were not necessarily a cycle of conflict. As noted above, the importing of non-kin warriors would have been a practical response to Caesar, utilising old systems and relationships. The Romans certainly brought an expansion of the scale of warfare in Gaul from 58, and “war coinage” is evidence of this. The large campaign in Taranaki (AD1860-1) and in Waikato (AD1863-4) drew warriors from a wide geographical area and of the twenty-six major North Island iwi, 15 sent warriors to fight in the Waikato war. The campaigns of the Veneti and Viridovix may have drawn warbands to that area to tender their services. The presence of British and Belgic warriors in Armorica is further evidence that the Gallic communities were using non-kin war bands to fight Caesar.

In summary, Caesar’s campaigns against the Armoricans in general, and the Veneti in particular, would have been disruptive, if not disastrous to Armorican communities. Coin hoarding suggests this, and the shifting of the trade axis from

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39 Ballara. 2003. pp. 124-5. Non-kin warfare was characterised by slavery and enemy killed, acts of cannibalism and head-taking, however the risk in non-kin warfare was that the cycle of utu (reciprocation), while being prevented within kin-groups, would have extended fighting beyond the kin group.
41 Cunliffe. 2010. p. 128.
the Armorican and southern British area to a more Belgic and south-eastern British direction may also be the result of Roman intrusion. However, the trade routes between Armorican Gaul and southern Britain were old and strong enough to survive, although at a lesser level than just prior to Caesar as seen in the continued minting of coins after 56.\textsuperscript{43} The Roman presence in Gaul and the creation of the Rhine frontier clearly created a divergence in political organisation between the more centralised archaic states of the Trinovante/Catuvellauni bloc of the south east and the complex chiefdoms of the south and south western Durotriges and Dumnonii. This may well reflect the situation seen with the establishment of the archaic states of southern and central Gaul and the Chiefdoms in Armorican and Belgic Gaul.

The Armoricans had strong central authority with the Veneti and Venelli taking leadership of the two Armorican blocs. Unlike the loose centralisation of the Belgic chiefdoms, the Armoricans had a robust central authority, closer to that seen among the Aedui, but not as advanced as that of the Helvetii. In this distinction Caesar may have recognised divisions in group power where the senate of the archaic states were an elected group of representatives with a mandate to make decisions while the senators and councillors of the chiefdoms were still responsible to the masses. The cost of waging war cannot be overlooked, and it required considerable organisation. Caesar’s placement of Sabinus and his three legions effectively separated the Armoricans in two, who fell back on regional west/east alliances. The involvement of British auxiliaries suggests the importance of the Atlantic trade axis and the need to keep it in local hands. The example of the Northern War shows that fighting would be a natural response if trade interests were threatened. For the Armoricans, war with Caesar was a natural response, using pre-existing trade networks and military arrangements to defend local autonomy and commercial interests.

In the Armoricans we see decision-making following consensus. Instead Caesar uses these examples to show the fickleness of the Gallic masses, but these people were following a process opaque to outside observers. Caesar’s interpretation of these people and the conclusions he drew were the same made by European observers when assessing Māori society and cultural practices. These Gallic communities, like Māori, were experiencing social and political

\textsuperscript{43} Levick. 1998. pp. 68 & 69.
change and stress, of which the Roman invasion was but one. The chiefdoms of the Armorican were under threat. Like the Belgic communities who were following their own trajectory of social and political development, the Armorican development was abruptly halted by Caesar’s ruthless and successful invasion.

5.6. The Aquitani

The Aquitani constituted one of the three designated groups that Caesar asserted made up Gaul and they differed from the central and western Gauls and Belgae through differences in language, custom and laws (*Gallic War* 1.1, 3.20). Caesar placed the Aquitani between the Pyrenees and the River Garonne and east to the Gallia Narbonensis. They were a people who had a close proximity to the Roman Province but had strong links to Spain. Strabo said of the Aquitani, they ‘differ from the Galatic race in the build of their bodies as well as in their speech; that is they are more like the Spanish’ (*Geog.* 4.2.1). The proximity of the Aquitani to Spain was to provide an aspect not seen in Caesar’s other campaigns in Gaul, the use by the Aquitani of Roman tactics. Crassus had moved into Aquitania on Caesar’s orders to prevent these people sending support to the Armorican Veneti (3.11). This suggests that some of the communities among the Aquitani (probably those living in the northwest) had links to those people who controlled the Atlantic stretch of the trade routes between Britain and the Mediterranean.

During the campaigns against the Aquitanian people, Caesar stated that they called on military aid from across the Pyrenees in the form of leadership (*duces*) and warriors (*auxilia*) (*Gallic War* 3.23). The passes of the Pyrenees on the west between the Aquitani and Iberians of Spain had been important trade routes from the sixth and fifth centuries, and the Aquitani, with their copper deposits, access to Tolosa and (possibly the control of) the Garonne made them important to the Atlantic trade networks. The Rhine, the Channel and the Pyrenees offer a comparison whereby Caesar and the Romans chose geographical divides as a barrier or border. The Roman boundary of the Pyrenees failed to recognise the traditional cultural divides within these mountains. The Rhine gave Caesar an

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44 Caesar did not personally campaign in Aquitania but may have drawn on his experiences in Spain.
Eastern and Northern border, while the Channel his western limit. The Pyrenees framed Gaul from the south and any links of kinship would be missed or invisible to Caesar.

5.7. The Archaeology of the Aquitani

For the Aquitani, their proximity to the province and the important trade route of the Garonne is evidence in the presence of coinage (monnaies-á-la-croix) that links the Aquitani to southern Gaul and the Rhone through this western trade corridor (See figure 6).47 Archaeological remains in the form of amphorae attest to the trade in wine along the Garonne into Aquitania.48 The location of the settlement of Tolosa in Narbonensis may have been important to the trade in wine, and for metals, such as copper that was being mined in Aquitania at the time of Caesar’s invasion of Gaul.49

The Aquitani had links to the Arverni,50 providing a corridor from Spain into the Province and beyond to the Arverni. This may have been based on relationships between core and peripheral societies. The Aquitani would also present the Province with a buffer zone to the people who lived in the Pyrenees and Spain. Aquitania was a peripheral zone to Tolosa’s core zone and the markets along the Mediterranean. The need to control the land routes between Italy and Spain meant that for the Romans, war with the Aquitani, or at least their submission, would be a strategic consideration. The submission of the Aquitani would have meant stability along the Pyrenees and the protection of the Rhone and the Garonne river valley trade routes through to the Atlantic, ensuring Roman control of Tolosa and the Carcassonne Gap.

5.8. The Aquitani and Crassus

The Aquitani were organised politically and socially into chiefdoms reflected in the number of people Caesar believed made up the Aquitani. Caesar noted the Sontiates as a large confident group who chose to fight Crassus relying on their strength in cavalry to fight the Romans (Gallic War 3.20). Two other hostile groups were the Vocates and Tarusates who set up a command base in a fortified town as Crassus entered their lands and then called on aid from Spain (3.23). From this point the Aquitani fighting mirrored Roman tactics of

49 Cunliffe. 1988. See figure 35. p. 35
entrenchment, and control of supply lines (3.23). A large number of Aquitani remained detached from the fighting but Caesar clearly had intelligence on these people (*Gallic War* 3.27) as he noted their names.

![Figure 6. The lands of the Aquitani. (B. Cunliffe. 1988).](image)

**Factions**

As noted, many of the wider Aquitani communities stood aloof from the conflict, submitting to Crassus once he had defeated the Vocates and the Tarusates. Caesar lists these as Tarbelli, Bigerriones, Ptiianii, Elusates, Gates, Ausci, Garumni, Sibuzates and Cocosates, who surrendered hostages to the Romans (*Gallic War* 3.27). It is not stated whether these communities officially remained out of the fighting, but it is highly probable that detachments of warriors joined both sides of the fighting, as Caesar states that Crassus had previously gathered auxiliaries and cavalry locally, and so the Romans were open to accepting those willing to fight (3.20), while the Vocates and the Tarusates sent deputies in ‘every direction’ (3.23). This sparse information does suggest however that the communities of Aquitani represented a patchwork of polities not held together by strong centralisation or even ethnic unity.

Ethnic links among the Aquitani were stronger southward with the people across the Pyrenees, more so than to communities in central, western or Belgic Gaul. All Celtic societies were agrarian in nature and relied on the land for
wealth and power, and while there has been a strong focus on trade networks within these agrarian models, perhaps some of the major groups of the Aquitani were not prepared to lose their power-base found in the control of the Garonne and Pyrenees trade routes.

**Clients and Friendship**

Caesar noted friendships between Gauls that were military in nature. The description of Adiatunnus, commander in chief of the Sontiates, expands concepts of obligation. Caesar delineates the relationship between *soldurii* and friendship (*amicitia*) (*Gallic War* 3.22). He observed that the *soldurii* were comrades whose friendship meant devotion and commitment. In the case of the Sontiates, these were devotees, 600 in number, who had vowed to share their leader’s fate (3.22). To fight, live or die with their commander-in-chief was clearly an alliance that was martial by definition.

Rome had contact and formal agreements with sections of the Aquitani before Crassus campaigned in the region in 56. Caesar notes that the Aquitanian Piso’s grandfather, who had held kingship (*regnum*) over his people, had also been named friend (*amicus*) by the Roman senate (*Gallic War* 4.12). The long established status of friendship between the senate and this Aquitanian king suggest that a personal arrangement had been made between Rome and individuals from different groups. This arrangement of friendship between Piso’s grandfather and Rome, however, may have been a formal relationship and validated through an association between Piso and Caesar. This Aquitanian was obviously of high rank with Caesar describing him as ‘the scion of a most distinguished line’ (4.12). Piso was killed trying to save his brother while fighting in a cavalry skirmish for Caesar in 55 (4.12). This tells us two things. First, Piso was serving within an auxiliary force of cavalry fighting for Caesar,

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53 The actions of Adiatunnus and his *soldurii* echo the actions of the faction within the Atuatuci who tried to escape Caesar in 57 and the obligations of Litaviccus’ supporters when he moved within the walls of Gergovia. The Atuatuci who attempted the break out may have been a faction who chose not to surrender just as Adiatunnus could be representative of a clan within the Sontiates or Spanish group.
54 There were other Gauls in Caesar’s service. Gaius Valerius Procillus was the son of Gaius Valerius Caburus who was a Gaul from the Province who had received Roman citizenship (*Gallic War* 1.47). This citizenship manifested into a personal relationship of friendship between Procillus and Caesar with the former offering himself as an interpreter and political assistant throughout Caesar’s campaigns against the Gauls and Ariovistus (1.19, 47).
and secondly, given the presence of his brother, this indicates that the Gauls provided a kin-based war-band. This was a continuation of the relationship with Rome set up by Piso’s grandfather and it but followed family lines. This is evidence of family obligations tied to formal agreements. The relationship between Piso and Caesar shows that, given the proximity of Aquitania to the Province, relationships should be expected between Rome and Aquitanians.

Hostages

In Aquitania, the Vocates and the Tarusates send deputies and exchanged hostages as they prepared to meet Caesar’s commander Crassus in 56 (Gallic War 3.23). This was a standard act that Caesar noted among the Gauls when establishing a confederation in response to Rome. Likewise, several groups within the Aquitani offered hostages to Crassus during his campaign of 56 (3.27). Caesar again makes a contrast in Aquitania between Gallic hostage exchange (Gaul to Gaul) and hostage taking (Gauls to Romans) when Gauls submitted to the Romans. The generic relationships involving hostages was plainly recognised by the Gauls of Aquitania and the Romans were consistent in using this to secure the compliance of the Gauls in this region.

Civil/Military leadership among the Aquitani

The situation of Spanish leaders (duces) of the Aquitani has been discussed above, but what is unmistakable is the fact that the Vocates and the Tarusates looked beyond Gaul. Caesar adds another dimension to the delegation of leadership from Spain (Gallic War 3.23), being that these leaders had served with Sertorius in his rebellion against Rome in Spain. They would have had knowledge of Roman tactics as Caesar notes. The other obvious factor in the Spanish leadership is Caesar’s use of the word ducers which is explicitly military in context. In accepting that the Cantabrian military leaders were also leaders within their communities (on both sides of the Pyrenees Mountains) the Aquitani had not divided their positions of authority down civil and military lines like that seen among the Helvetii and Aedui.

Dynastic Kingship

Caesar refers to Aquitanian kingship when commenting on Piso whose, grandfather had held kingship (regnum) (Gallic War 4.12). This indicates that the Aquitani were still at the stage of social and political development where kings and chiefs held authority among their communities, as does the large numbers of groups easily identifiable by Caesar in such a small region. The local
nature of power and authority meant that any confederation that formed to face
the Romans would have experienced the same issues as those seen among the
Belgæ and Armoricans. Each group would have decided on its response and
what the risks or benefits of fighting the Romans would carry. That the Tarbelli,
Bigerriones, Pitianii, Elusates, Gates, Ausci, Garumni, Sibuzates and Cocosates
stood aloof from the fighting represent an official diplomatic position by the
Aquitani.


The Aquitani called on the Cantabri of northern Spain for help, who then
allegedly used Roman tactics they learnt while serving under Quintus Sertorius
(Gallic War 3.23). It is doubtful that the Spanish Cantabri were mercenaries
given the leadership positions they held. An examination of the situation in
Māori society when facing the Crown can provide insights into the reactions of
the Aquitani as they faced Caesar’s forces. Māori taua, that comprised a mixture
of kin and non-kin warriors, confirms that they were independent units under the
larger group, but under the command of a leading rangatira of the major hapū.55
The leadership of the taua would, however, remain with the hapū. The Spanish
command over the Vocates and the Tarusates response suggests (from Caesar’s
interpretation) that outside authority and planning, and not internal leadership,
was acceptable. This may not be the case of external leadership and the
delegation of local authority if the Vocates and the Tarusates shared kin-links
with their neighbours across the Pyrenees. As already stated, it was usually
outside Māori tikanga to accept advice from anyone who was not related by kin,
and more importantly, immediate kin. Many Pākehā/Māori, who would add
value, skill or knowledge, to a rangatira and hapū would be married into that
hapū. Outsiders were viewed still as hunga or non-members although their
offspring would be full members of the hapū.56 Leaders always sought the
advice of their hapū members, especially the kaumatua or kuia (elders). The
comparison with the Māori experience suggests that the Vocates and the
Tarusates were led by Cantabrian chiefs who enjoyed authority over the
Aquitanians.

It is clear that the Aquitanian Gauls were very much controlled by the
leading families of their respective kin-groups, and while some central Gallic

56 Durie. p. 11.
placed sanctions on family members sharing the top political office within a generation (e.g. the Aedui), it would appear that the concept of kin-links remained a strong political force in much of Gaul, whether chiefdom or state. This would go some way to explaining the Cantabrian leadership over the southern Aquitani, if framed within kin-relationships. The Māori example and the strong kinship that was found in many Iron Age communities strongly indicate that the Aquitani shared kin-ties across the Pyrenees, and that the leadership of the Vocates and the Tarusates was facilitated by kin ties.

Strong bonds of kinship could have implications for its members in battle. Returning to the death of the Aquitanian Piso and his brother, the latter had broken free from his assailants but watched as the former was cut down during the attempt to save his brother (Gallic War 4.12). On seeing this Piso’s brother rushed back into the cavalry fight and was in turn killed (4.12). In this we see no sentiment of living to fight another day, but an instinctive act of support for a family member. The emotional response of Piso’s brother to avenge his loss is obvious, but this may have been linked to deep oaths of kin and client obligations. Māori were also bound by obligations to follow kin into battle or to fight to save fallen comrades or leaders. For Māori, it was unacceptable to lose a leader in battle and fighting could intensify, even against great odds, to retrieve a body of a fallen rangatira. When Te Arawa was being attacked by a larger enemy force of Ngati Haua at O-Hine-Mutu in Rotorua, a rangatira Koro-Kai rushed the enemy to inspire his warriors who had lost heart. Mana of the rangatira and the hapū demanded that the warriors follow their leader. So from this example one can assume that similar considerations would dominate or appear in Gallic determinations to continue battle even after the leader had been killed.

There is a dearth of information about Caesar’s views on Aquitanian social and political leadership. He has noted kingship among some of the Aquitani two generations before his invasion of Gaul (Gallic War 1.47), and he described war leaders (duces) from among the Cantabri who led the Aquitanian reaction to

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57 This was also natural behaviour in the legions among men not related (5.44)  
58 E. Best. Notes on the Art of War: As Conducted by the Maori of New Zealand, with Accounts of Various Customs, Rites, Superstitions, & C., Pertaining to War, as Practiced and Believed in By the Ancient Maori. Evans, J. (ed) Auckland, Reed Publishing in Association with the Polynesian Society. 2001. pp. 114-15.  
Crassus’ invasion of Aquitania in 56 (3.23). This was a military situation, not a civic leadership. What is obvious from Caesar’s commentaries is that military response among the Aquitani varied, reflecting the decentralised nature of the Aquitanian chiefdoms. Some people, such as the Sontiates took responsibility for the defence of their region, to defend the whole Aquitanian part of Gaul (3.21). The Vocates and the Tarusates formed a southern confederation drawing leaders and warriors from Spain to fight Crassus (3.23).

During the opening stage of the campaign in Aquitania, the Sontiates appointed Adiatunnus as the commander-in-chief (summa imperii) (Gallic War 3.22). This was not a position comparable to the supreme commanders of the Belgae or Armoricans as Adiatunnus was only leading one of the many Aquitani groups. That Caesar labelled him commander-in-chief does, however, suggest that this group was made up of several chiefdoms. We can find parallels in Māori society. Māori taua would take the name of the leading hapū when joined by hapū from other unrelated, aligned groups. Like Māori taua that could be made up of several kin-linked hapū, the Sontiates constituted a kin-based corporate body who shared wide ancestral connections across northern Aquitania and, as such, could conduct their defence without the need of support from other groups from Aquitania.

Caesar’s ignorance of the nuances of Gallic social relationships may have meant that he (or his subordinate) simply saw the force that faced the initial Roman invasion of Aquitania as being made up of Sontiates. The absence of other groupings in Caesar’s text does not necessarily mean the complete absence of warriors from the Tarbelli, Bigerriones, Ptiainii, Elusates, Gates, Ausci, Garumni, Sibuzates and Cocosates in this army. Given that the Aquitanian communities would have been either “pure” or “warrior” agrarian societies that characterised all Gallic society, the Sontiates would have been a rallying point for warriors looking to fight (either as mercenaries or simply out a desire for potential booty).

The example from Māori society is compelling and sheds light on this situation in Aquitania. If a grouping of hapū with kin-ties linked by iwi went to war with a group from outside, then the taua from that group would take the iwi name, although this did not mean that all hapū from a common iwi would

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support kin against an external threat.\textsuperscript{61} The \textit{hapū} had the right not to participate in \textit{iwi}-wide activities, and there was no \textit{iwi}-wide mechanism ‘for enforcing a common policy in making war or peace’.\textsuperscript{62} These warriors would have been unidentifiable in the ranks of the Sontiates to an outsider and quite possibly represented unofficial support for the Sontiates by individual groups and their chiefs.

5.10. Response

In Aquitania, Crassus had a mandate to prevent warriors from that area joining the Veneti who had risen in Revolt that year (\textit{Gallic War} 3. 11). The Sontiates, who had assembled a large force of infantry and cavalry, appear to have conducted an ambush in force to meet his initial advance. They attacked the Romans on the march and after the withdrawal of their cavalry, ‘brought out into the open the infantry troops they had been keeping hidden in a valley’ and proceeded to attack the Romans who by now were scattered (3.20). This battle, as described by Caesar, highlighted the indirect nature of Gallic warfare and how the Aquitani fought, choosing the place to spring an ambush by coordinating infantry and cavalry. Crassus appears to have maintained discipline and withstood the actions of the Sontiates, eventually wearing them down, marching to and attacking their main political centre and finally bringing them to submission (3. 21-22).

The Helvetii and Nervii both used the ambush as a tactical reaction against Roman forces. We also see the ambush used by the Sontiates, on the understanding that an indirect approach was necessary to avoid defeat. This indirect approach is symptomatic of the style of the chiefdoms that ruled over the communities of Aquitania. This was an approach also favoured by Māori during traditional warfare,\textsuperscript{63} but here it evolved into an extremely effective tactic when fighting Crown and Colonial forces.\textsuperscript{64} Where the Aquitani stands out from the other large ethnic groupings was that large sections remained “officially” aloof from the war with Caesar. This behaviour is also symptomatic of the

\textsuperscript{61}Ballara. 1998. p. 128.
\textsuperscript{64}See Belich. 1998. For the Northland battle at Ohaeawai. pp. 47-54. For the northern Taranaki battle of Puketakauere. pp. 91-95. For the southern Taranaki battles of Te Ngutu O Te Manu and Moturoa. pp. 241- 252.
decentralised political development in that each clan could make a choice of fighting or not. The fifteen *iwi* that supported the *Kingitanga* in Waikato were not in an open state of war with the Crown.\(^{65}\) This testifies to a policy of supporting rebellion in the field but remaining loyal at home. The individual communities among the Māori would have made decisions on a smaller scale and the Aquitani, made up of small political units, would have acted in the same manner.\(^{66}\)

5.11. Summary

The Archaeology certainly attests to a cultural divide between the Aquitani and the rest of Gaul.\(^{67}\) The Aquitani were chiefdoms that were a trading periphery but militarily important to the trade route from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic and across the Pyrenees. They were also positioned close to the main road from Italy to Spain. There were obvious links between the Aquitani and the Northern Spanish communities, and this had clear military implications once the Romans challenged the chiefdoms of the Aquitani with Crassus’ invasion in 56. Strong kin-ties meant that obligations of military support were strong, but also suggest that leadership of the Aquitanian communities were located in Spain and not Gallic Aquitania. To this end, the tactics used in response to Crassus were Roman in character and show a clear knowledge of the current Roman military practices. In Aquitania we see a form of warfare that focused on attrition. The Aquitanian response was conducted tactically independently from the fighting elsewhere in Gaul, Belgica and Armorica, but the initial response by the Sontiates was similar in that it featured ambush and they retreated, then enduring siege warfare. The military action of the Vocates and Tarusates shows a move toward a strategic and tactical antidote to Roman arms. Using an advantage of cavalry and light infantry, the Vocates and Tarusates worked within interior lines of communications and denied the forces of Crassus supply and support. Having sufficiently dealt with the Sontiates, Crassus, following Caesar’s orders, moved into the territory of the Vocates and the Tarusates. The limited support for opposition to Crassus is a characteristic of the choice by the clan or chiefdom choice (as seen in Māori society) and that the

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\(^{65}\) Belich. 1996. p. 128.

\(^{66}\) See how the Teutomatus went to war against Caesar despite his father being a friend of the senate (*Gallic War* 7.31).

\(^{67}\) Cunliffe. 1988. p. 60.
confederations that rose were localised and not widespread across all of Aquitania.

The response of the Aquitani demonstrates the subtle actions of local politics and these nuances would have been lost on the Romans and on Caesar who left the fighting to Crassus. Why did some Aquitani resist Rome while others did not? Caesar noted that not all the people in this area opposed Roman movement into their area (*Gallic War* 3.27), and so there were clearly defined groups of the Aquitani, the Tolosates (within the province), the Sontiates and the Tarusates.68 This strongly suggests an absence of centralisation and a system more in line with smaller autonomous chiefdoms. The smaller autonomous chiefdoms would have made decisions based on local impact and not necessarily influenced by the larger strategic issues. Indeed, the option to fight Caesar or not was a strategic decision for the groups involved. Again the consensus-based decision-making process seen in Māori society and the Belgic and Armorican chiefdoms would have been present among the communities of Aquitania. This would explain the mixed responses by the different chiefdoms among the Aquitani and while not factional in the sense of the Helvetii and Aedui were still varied reflecting local motivations.

The Armoricans show many of Caesar’s standards characteristics social and political development but also provide clear examples of “people” power, where the councils were killed or held hostage until a certain decision was made. To this end, this chapter will look at the dynamics of decision-making among the Armoricans.

The Aquitani are not covered by Caesar in any great detail, but the presence of Spanish among the leadership of the southern Aquitani does raise questions about their social and political structure. This chapter discussed the implications of strong kin-links with the Spanish, drawing on the Māori example, and the impact this had on the leadership and tactics of this campaign.

The Veneti and their allies, the Aquitani and the coastal Morini and Menapii show variations to the tactic seen so far in that the former fought a naval battle (the first recorded fight in the Atlantic) against one of Caesar’s lieutenants, while the second group used Roman tactics against another, while the last relied

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68 Cunliffe. 1997. Figure 45, p. 108.
on terrain to shape their response. The responses of these groups were similar to those that had preceded them in an important feature, all were regional.
Chapter Six
The Britons and Indirect Warfare

6.1. The Britons.

Caesar’s raid to Britain in 55 was the first recorded time that the Roman military set foot on the island. Before this time, Britain was a mysterious island to the people of Mediterranean city-states with vague information coming from traders and travellers.¹ The Britons, however, had caught Caesar’s attention by supplying military support to the Gauls (Gallic War 4.20), and he notes links between Gaul and the Britons in 57 (2.4, 14), where he described Belgic leaders holding authority in parts of Britain. Implicit military support by the Britons is recorded for the Veneti when they called for help in their struggle with Caesar in 56 (3.9). The Britons who fought with the Armoricians for the Veneti were probably drawn from the southern and south-western communities. The Britons who faced Caesar in 55 and 54 were from the south-east, although possibly from further afield.

Caesar campaigned mainly through Kent and along the southern bank of the Thames River. Cassivellaunus lived to the north-west of the Thames River about 130kms from the coast (Gallic War 5.11)², so his area of authority was extensive given the number of independent polities found in south-eastern Britain. The lands of Trinovantes are not identified by Caesar, however a powerful people with the same name dominated the area north-east of the Thames.³

Caesar outlined how the late Iron Age people of south-eastern Britain evolved culturally alongside those on the continent, but with distinct variations. This chapter will consider those south-eastern communities. Given that Caesar remained close to the coast, limited in his military potential from a lack of cavalry in 55, this thesis will mainly focus on the more far ranging campaigns of 54, and the confederation led by Cassivellaunus.

6.2. The Archaeology of the Britons.

Caesar identified some of the Britons as having similar habits and culture to the coastal Gauls (Gallic War 5.14), an observation that are attested to by the

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² Caesar states 80 miles.
archaeological evidence in trade and coin finds. The people of south-eastern Britain were closely aligned to the Belgae, in terms of their agrarian warrior society. While the Belgic Gauls represented core/periphery communities, the Britons of the south-east were also part of this broad periphery zone providing trade goods and various services, and the British political and social systems were characterised by the complex chiefdoms. Power was held by the chiefs who exercised autonomous authority over small clan-based units. Centralised authority was to be found in the individual, not in a senate, like those seen in the archaic states of Gaul. Caesar does not associate senates or councils with Britain, but decision-making mechanisms must have existed with other complex inter-group relationships. Britain was part of the wider northern European context, but developments on the island would have necessarily had an insular context. Inter-group relationships within the periphery zone, and in particular, among the Britons would have been dynamic and rapidly expanding, motivated by continental contacts.

Nash has identified core/periphery relationships between the Armorican and Belgic communities in Gaul and the people of south-eastern Britain, and Cunliffe confidently asserts that in turn there were also core/periphery relationships between the coastal Britons (core) and interior (periphery) communities. The core zone, centred on the Thames River, was going through rapid socio-economic development that was in contrast to an older social system in the periphery. These core/periphery zones have been identified through detailed analysis of coin development and distribution. These zones have their foundations before 54, but they exhibited a socio-political development that were characterised by the archaic states of the bloc comprising the Trinovantes and Catuvellauni, the Atrebates and the Cantiaci, all of which developed after 54.

The process of fission and the need to relieve population pressure, or/and the income that could be gathered by service abroad, would have been attractive to

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the growing polities of southern Britain. The risk of leaving the home communities vulnerable and weakened would have been a major consideration in letting warriors fight abroad. Service in Belgica or raiding into peripheral zones in Late Iron Age Europe is seen across a zone that comprised the northern region of the Rhine to the Channel and including south-east Britain. Viewing this situation from an Atlantic perspective (as opposed to a Mediterranean direction) makes the “fission” corridor logical and appropriate.

The similarity in culture of Belgic Gaul and south-eastern Britain is seen in the material evidence. Shared ceramic technology, burial rites, economy and socio-political structures varied little between the Belgic region of Northern Gaul and much of Kent to the Fens and from the east coast to the Ouse Valley. Although Iron Age communities of Britain shared many social innovations with the continent, their origins have their foundations in the middle Bronze Age and subsequent centuries. Supplementary data, in the form of coinage, shows that distinct political groupings made up the Kentish region and the lands north of the Thames. Like Gaul, south-east Britain defies the picture of a people with simple social structures and indeed, shows considerable fluidity and diversity.

Settlement patterns in Britain show rural communities in the form of isolated farmsteads or hill forts with associated field systems that were densely distributed throughout southern Britain. These farmsteads were sometimes, but not always, enclosed. Their buildings consisted of earthen floored, thatched round-house buildings and large storage pits and four-posted granaries. The archaeological evidence for late Iron Age Britain suggests a prosperous agricultural economy supporting a densely populated landscape made up of large families that look like agricultural hamlets. The density of population may have been one of the factors that led to conflict in south-eastern Britain at the time of Caesar’s movement into Gaul.

10 Cunliffe. 2010. p. 149.
12 Cunliffe. 2010. p. 149.
Cassivellaunus put a large force of chariots into the field against Caesar (Gallic War 5.19), and this would have required a considerable infrastructure of food production, livestock services and track-ways. Late Iron Age communities of Britain accommodated ‘specialists’, such as wheelwrights and blacksmiths, within their social framework, and specialised craftsmen existed at the time of the Roman invasion. A considerable surplus of wealth would have been required to sustain such members in the community, and it is probable that those involved in the equine industry formed part of this specialist class, including not just the drivers and chariot warriors, but trainers, grooms, carpenters and those responsible for the well being and medical care of the horses. Reynolds believes that it would have required an infrastructure that could cope with all the issues of ‘grazing, winter foddering, housing and necessarily breaking and training.’ The warrior agrarian societies in southern Britain were capable of maintaining craftsmen as seen by a chariot-making infrastructure.

The deployment of chariots will be discussed below, but a robust network of roads and tracks would have been necessary to deploy large numbers of chariots effectively. A network of small local roads linking the major tracks must have existed to make it possible for the British forces to harass the advancing Roman army. Settlement patterns in Iron Age Britain identify areas that were used for the breeding and running of stock. Pryor has shown through aerial photography, ground surveys and excavations, that there were ‘numerous droves, roads and track ways’ and he also believes the population of Bronze and Iron Age Britain would have required a formal road system for droving and transport. Roadways were an important aspect in fighting the Romans, allowing the deployment of warriors and movement of chariots around the campaign theatre.

6. 3. Caesar and the Britons

Caesar’s campaigns against the Veneti and other Armorican people brought Caesar and his forces to the Atlantic Ocean and close proximity to the British Islands. In 55, after crossing the Rhine (a Roman first), Caesar looked to the West and contemplated another first for Roman arms, crossing the Channel into Britain. With not much of the campaigning season left, Caesar led a reconnaissance in force to Britain, reasoning that the tribes of Britain had supported his Gallic enemies in ‘all our campaigns in Gaul’ (Gallic War 4.20). Caesar’s only mention of the Britons is in their support of the Veneti in 56 (3.9). This may have been a statement offering a legitimate reason for invading Britain in the first place. The potential for mercenaries working either side of the Channel is an aspect of cross-Channel communication and interaction that could have threatened the stability of that region. There he faced opposition from several peoples of south-eastern Britain and found that without cavalry his small force (two legions 4.22) was vulnerable to British attacks. Without cavalry (who had failed to arrive) Caesar and his troops were forced to remain on the coast within the safety of their fortified camp. His opponents in 55 had been able to hamper Roman foraging activities and attack isolated Roman units that ventured out of their fortifications, with chariot and cavalry forces (4.32).

Hostages.

The communities of late Iron Age Britain engaged in hostage exchange like the people in Gaul. Diplomatic contacts were made through giving hostages, and hostages would have been offered to victors by the defeated between Gallic and British communities. It is worth noting that the Britons appear to have held off giving hostages to Caesar early in 55, despite the promise to do so, watching as the fortunes of the Roman army fluctuated (Gallic War 4.21, 27, 31). Some of the Britons plainly recognised that to provide Caesar with hostages would have been an acknowledgement of a victory over them, particularly if hostage-exchange was not reciprocated.

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23 Caesar does write of a victory over the Britons, gaining hostages but his commentary is far from satisfactory (Gallic War 4.35).
25 The behaviour of the Veneti in 56 and their detaining of Caesar’s officials may explain why the Britons were so reluctant to give hostages, as it would have been recognition of Caesar’s dominance over them (Gallic War 3.8). They may have learnt of Caesar’s attitude to hostage-exchange after service with the Belgae and Armoricans.
In Britain, Caesar reports that only two states (civitates) sent hostages after he had returned to the continent in 55 (Gallic War 4.38). It would appear that Caesar may have demanded hostages from the Britons, but he did not have the means to personally receive them, and the two states that did send hostages probably did so as recognition of an alliance not of Roman dominance. It is hard to accept Caesar’s positive reports of his first raid to Britain as Caesar does not name the two groups who allegedly supplied hostages as he does for the Gauls.\textsuperscript{26} The presence of Mandubracius on the continent in 54, however, strongly points to some form of treaty between the Trinovantes and Caesar, and this translated into an open military alliance after the Trinovantes supplied Caesar with 40 hostages on the eve of his push across the Thames (4.20). The possibility for Mandubracius to meet Gallic leaders (like Commius) on the continent is highly probable and the benefits of Roman support would have been obvious. The actions of Mandubracius and the Trinovantes followed the example of the Aedui, the Remi and the Atrebates.

**Factions.**

We have seen that the people of Gaul experienced factional politics that sometime affected their ability to retain military cohesion. The ability of the Britons to organise a coordinated opposition to Caesar could be explained by a number of factions that existed between the different polities. Caesar’s account of the Trinovantes in Britain offers an example where a people had the option of shifting their allegiance. The Trinovantes broke away from the confederation and leadership of Cassivellaunus, choosing to align themselves with Caesar who possibly offered better terms than their traditional enemy cum-leader (Gallic War 5.20). The submission of the Trinovantes had given Cassivellaunus temporary control over their allies, possibly over the Cenimagi, Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bibroci, and the Cassi, but the return of Mandubracius may have been the impetus for a shift in allegiances, a return to older established ties of loyalty to the Trinovantes. The people who followed the move of the Trinovantes may well have been simply exercising their right to align with whomever they

\textsuperscript{26} Caesar is specific when he lists the number of hostages provided by the Gauls to Roman commanders. For a sample see Gallic War, Helvetii to Caesar (1. 27, 28). The Remi surrendered themselves and all their stuff to Caesar (2. 3). The Suessiones to Caesar (2.13). 600 Bellovaci demanded by Caesar (2.15). Ambiani to Caesar (2.15). Alpine Gauls gives hostages to Servius Galba (3.1). Sotiates and other Aquitani to Publius Crassus (3. 23, 27) 5. 4. Treveri to Caesar (5.4). Trinovante to Caesar (5.20).
considered appropriate in the shifting sands of southern British politics. While Caesar claims a victory against Cassivellaunus, having attacked and taken his oppida (5.22), resistance to Caesar did not falter after the crossing of the Thames but probably after the defections of the Trinovantes, Cenimagi, Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bibroci, and the Cassi (5.21). In fact, once the Thames had been crossed by Caesar (5.18) Cassivellaunus’ response became more tactical and deliberate in the use solely of the mobile British war-chariot.27

**Kings**

Caesar reports that the area of Kent was controlled by at least four kings and a nobilis dux, again suggesting defined political groupings within south eastern Britain.28 Caesar named Cingetorix, Carvilius, Taximagulas, Segovax and Lugotorix as leaders of the Cantiaci (Gallic War 5.22), possible a kin-based confederacy centred on Kent. Caesar does not note Cassivellaunus’ title but he had been given supreme command of the forces of the Britons (5.11), and his orders to the Kentish kings show that he held authority over that area (5.22), despite the clear schism in the Britons’ confederation led by the Trinovantes. This power in Kent may have been temporary but may also have been consolidated by kin ties. Because of the role Cassivellaunus held as supreme commander he would have come from the same social standing as the Kentish kings and he may have even been a senior member of an extended kin-based power bloc. As seen in the case of the Veneti, the Venelli and the Sontiates, seniority within kin-based societies was an important factor in leadership.

**Dynastic Rule**

In Britain, open and stratified chiefdoms existed, and some appear to have been dynastic, such as Mandubracius whose father ruled over the Trinovantes before him.29 Caesar describes the British Trinovantes having hereditary regnum (Gallic War 5.20), and the political units in Southern Britain show evidence in the development of dynastic leadership and economic core zones after Caesar’s

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27 With only 4000 charioteers (Gallic War 5.19) to face Caesar’s 4 legions (5.8) and 2000 Gallic cavalry (5.5, 8), Cassivellaunus would then be outnumbered well over 10 to 1. These are truly staggering odds.


intervention. This was certainly continued as a family operation that may have had its foundation from the time of Caesar.

**The Masses**

Caesar commented briefly on the common people of south-east Britain. He noted that the British leaders started gathering the followers from the fields in 55 when it looked like they would renew hostilities with him (Gallic War 4.30). The agricultural nature of Late Iron Age British society and the importance of harvesting, offer a practical, if not a vital time limit in which to engage in fighting. Even though the Roman legionaries were professional soldiers, they stopped campaigning during winter. Weaknesses, the failure to win a quick victory, and supposed inadequacies of sound logistics have been listed as reasons for the inability of many Celtic forces to sustain lengthy campaigns. This is clearly not the case in Britain and the countryside and the common populations were active in harvesting when Caesar arrived in 55 and again in 54. The degree in which the elites were involved in agricultural activities may have also affected sustained campaigning.

Slaves may have freed up men of the community to fight, but it is unclear how embedded they were in Iron Age British society. Given the seasonal nature of warfare, slaves may have been of more value in trade. There is no reason to doubt the existence of slaves in Britain at the time of Caesar’s invasion and these members of the community would have been involved in agricultural activities or other menial chores. What would have been a new development for the eastern British communities was the trade in slaves and human labour that grew as periphery regions of Britain fed the core regions on both sides of the Channel, feeding markets that stretched as far as the Mediterranean.

**6.4. Caesar’s Briton and Māori Comparisons: Factional Politics and Reaction to Invasion**

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30 Cunliffe. 2010. pp. 144-145. In the Catuvellauni/Trinovantes bloc, and its expanding control over much of southeast Britain, there were dominant families that held sway over several groupings. Cunobelin controlled the expansion of the Catuvellauni with his brother Epaticus and his three sons, Caratacus, Togodunus and Adminius. By around 40AD they were ruling over the Trinovantes to the east, the northern Atrebates to the southwest, and the Cantiaci to the southeast, while holding some control over the northern Dobunni to the west. For political developments in south east Britain between Caesar and Claudius see Cunliffe. 2010. pp. 146-148. K. Branigan. The Catuvellauni. Gloucester, Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd. 1985. pp. 8-9.


The nature of the warrior agrarian society seen in the eastern British communities in the late Iron Age was strongly driven by contact and conflict. Māori society provides parallels that can further our understanding of these British communities. Nash has identified three types of interaction: diplomatic (negotiated agreement, gift or hostage–exchange and official marriages); the exchange of goods and military service; and raiding and war. The strong would encourage a relationship based on negotiated service, in the form of providing military support from the common population, who would serve the warlords and high-kings of the core groups. The weaker were targets for offensive warfare in the form of raiding to secure items for trade, such as raw materials and slaves. The movement of British warriors to serve “abroad” in Gaul would have meant that the chiefdoms of Southern Britain could channel their growing populations across the sea, or north and west, in the pursuit of slaves and other moveable trade items. The presence of British coinage in Belgica (and vice versa) is evidence of contact of British mercenaries serving Belgic overlords. Core/periphery spheres of influence made an impact on social and political development for the communities involved, and raiding was one part of any relationship.

The picture that Caesar paints of the south-eastern Britons and the political environment can be expanded on by looking at Māori society. There are parallels for the people and activities in Māori society, where the introduction of European trade goods and commercial agents encouraged hapū to adjust to a changing world, and it influenced their approach to their own identity and attitudes towards their immediate neighbours and distant people. The great raids of the Nga Puhi war chiefs Hongi Hika and Pomare are clear examples of how trade potential created a cycle of raiding, slave gathering, resource production and trade in European goods, particularly items such as muskets and iron tools that provided a military edge over traditional enemies. As noted, slaves were rarely taken prior to European contact with Māori. Once the demands for the production of food crops and other raw materials overstretched the common

population of the *hapū*, an additional workforce was required. This created a cycle of trading (for muskets, powder, shot and iron blades), extended long-distance raiding (muskets created the security of a technological edge), the capture of large numbers of slaves,\(^3^9\) increased resource exploitation, increased trading potentials, and so on. From those first great raids, there followed a period of rolling instability as other Māori communities obtained muskets, thus unsettling the established balance of power among Māori.

While the Māori sought to capture slaves and thus enhance their economic capabilities, the Celts were encouraged to engage in the slave trade for economic and political reasons. The demand from slave markets to service Mediterranean city-states would have created a system to supply slaves. Britain was experiencing a period of stress at the time of Caesar’s invasion, and like Gaul, the political situation that Caesar recorded was not static and defies a simple interpretation.\(^4^0\) Caesar’s comments on the fighting between Cassivellaunus and Mandubracius hints at conflict (*Gallic War* 5.20), and the numerous examples of coin hoards dated to around this time provide possible interpretation of instability for the area Caesar campaigned through.\(^4^1\) Activities on the continent may have forced immigration into southern Britain as people sought new homes with kin, allies or even strangers away from Roman arms. Britain was in a state of flux and the centralisation of the Catuvelauni and Trinovantes under Cunobelinus shows this dynamism, and later, strong leaders did rise in Britain based around centralised social groupings. Likewise Te Rauparaha of the Ngati Toa formed a strong economic base centred on the Cook Strait and controlled it from Kapiti Island and the adjacent main land of Paremata after being forced out of the Waikato by other Tainui *hapū*.\(^4^2\)

The understanding that south-eastern Britain, and particularly Kent, was made up of smaller groupings is supported by the archaeological record that shows no large polities. Indeed data suggests a heterarchical system (web of

\(^3^9\) As an example, Nga Puhi returned to the Bay of Islands in 1815 with possibly as many as 1,000 prisoners with most being used as slaves. Wright. 2011. p. 84. When campaigning against Te Arawa in the Rotorua region Hongi Hika brought 2,000 slaves back to the Bay of Islands in the 1820s. Ballara. *Taua*. p. 219.
\(^4^1\) Cunliffe. 2010. p. 139 and figure 6.8 for coin and metalwork hoards .
\(^4^2\) Wright. p. 137.
relations or kin-ship circles). British political units are identified in coin evidence, but there are also clearly defined sub-units or ‘septs’, as revealed by cemetery evidence and tracing of pottery motifs. Caesar claims that Kent was ruled by four kings (Gallic War 5.21), indicating four regions (chieftdoms), and the coin evidence has identified three of these distinct socio-economic groups.

Caesar also identified other factions in Late Iron Age Britain. Prior to his raid in 54 the war-chief Cassivellaunus had killed the King of the Trinovantes and forced his son (Mandubracius) into exile in Gaul (Gallic War 5.20). Clearly there was a struggle taking place between Cassivellaunus’ people and the Trinovantes. We are not given the political group that Cassivellaunus led, but what is evident is that this war-chief had a strong power-base among the people of south east Britain and possibly further.

There are clear parallels with Māori rangatira whose mana and fame drew many warriors to them from successful raiding, particularly when going on raids that promised wealth in slaves and booty. Rangatira, such as the Nga Puhi Hongi Hika, Patuone, Kawiti, Waka Nene and Tainui leaders, Te Wherowhero and Rewi Maniapoto were mirrored by Taranaki rangatira such as Wiremu Kingi and Titokowaru who were numerous and noted by European historians.

Caesar would have been made aware of similarly powerful chiefs in Britain, and he does note many examples. He lists different groupings when the Trinovantes defect to him during the fighting beyond the Thames in 54. The Trinovantes are followed by the Cenimagi, Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bibroci, and the Cassi (5.21). This is the only time these people are recorded, and it is unclear what relationship they had to the Trinovantes or Cassivellaunus. The lack of clarity Caesar experienced in identifying the subtleties of group formations are similar to the situation in Aotearoa/New Zealand when Crown administrators dealt with Māori society, from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. Māori hapū names changed as they grew and split, moved away from their traditional lands, aligned to a new rangatira or for many other reasons. This process would explain the “disappearance” of the peoples who followed the Trinovantes.

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as they may have lost or changed their names as the people of southern Britain went through huge social and political changes from 54BC to AD43. What Caesar does say is that he gathered intelligence on Cassivellaunus from these people who clearly had knowledge of the immediate political boundaries at the time, and perhaps even loose kin links with Cassivellaunus and/or the Trinovantes.

**British Kin Ties and the Māori comparison**

When considering the role of kinship, Caesar does not directly state that the Britons had kin ties with the Gauls, but he does claim that some coastal Britons had come to the island from Belgica, and that those in Britain (Kent) differed little from those in Gaul (*Gallic War* 5.12, 14). As seen in Māori society, kinship would have been important to the Britons and their ability to fight Caesar.

For Māori, there was an importance placed on the individual having an identity that placed him within a certain context within a group or to land as ‘living in isolation could not generally be conceived of’. Identity came from, and was proven by *whakapapa* which validated one’s position in the community and connections to others. These connections were seen in three major considerations where a person resided, with whom he occasionally associated; and to whom he could claim connection. Knowledge of the wider kin-links would be under the authority of the *rangatira* or *tohunga*. *Whakapapa* was also used to validate the group and was sustained through association with distinctive land forms, water and sacred place, *urupa* (burial sites) and local resources. A characteristic of Māori society was kin-links between several *hapū* and these were transmitted through formal and informal training. Kinship circles would have implications in war, and the choice of the *hapū* to fight, stay home or to withdraw support any time during a campaign. If facing kin in an opposing force, there would be acceptable *tikanga* in withdrawing. Following a senior *hapū* in a large pan-*hapū* taua would also be limited, but, again, kinship would be a major consideration when deciding what a *hapū* would and could do.

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48 Durie. p. 10.
50 Durie. p. 28.
The tensions revealed in Māori tikanga may provide an insight into the confederations and realignment of loyalties in Celtic society in response to Roman invasion. The Romans were not part of the kinship circles in Britain, and with the Aduataci obviously there would be no concerns on this point, but the actions of Mandubracius, the major candidate for the kingship of the Trinovantes, may have had implications for the people of southern Britain who shared kinship ties to the Trinovantes.

District hapū generally stood united in war, but independent in peace. Māori taua could sue for peace independently and this process of withdrawing support was accepted in Māori society. In Gaul independent peace-making was present by factions within the Aduatuci and elements within the Aquitani took place. When considering circles of kinship in southern Britain, the Trinovantes comprised one kin-grouping, and Cassivellaunus represented another. When Mandubracius committed to Caesar, his kin, distant and immediate may have at this point left Cassivellaunus’ confederation. Such a practice has relevance in any analysis of British and Gallic society in the Late Iron Age.

The defection of the Trinovantes from the “British” alliance is understandable, given their recent struggle against Cassivellaunus and Mandubracius had returned to reassert his claim to the kingship of the Trinovantes. It is not immediately clear why the war bands of the Cenimagi, Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bibroci, and Cassi also withdrew their support for Cassivellaunus, Caesar describes the Britons’ confederation as a ‘still greater force’ gathered from ‘every direction’ led by Cassivellaunus (Gallic War 5.11). The diplomatic role played by Commius prior to Caesar’s invasion of 55 (4. 21, 27. 5.22) and in leading a small cavalry force (4.35) could mean that the British Atrebates were also in the confederation although Caesar never mentions them by name. Since Commius was leader of the Gallic Atrebates, he may have had kin-links to the British Atrebates who are mentioned in the Claudian era. Coin evidence strongly suggests that those people followed Commius into

53 Durie. p. 25.
55 The Cenimagi may have been the Iceni of Norfolk but there is no clear evidence for this. If there is a link than this confederation did draw on people over a large distance.
56 Cunliffe. 1988. p. 123. The existence of the Atrebates at the time of Caesar is unclear and offers problems of distance and logistics in fighting Caesar given their location in relation to the fighting in south eastern Britain.
exile in the early 50’s but the Atrebates may have also been in Britain before Caesar.

If we accept that Cassivellaunus represented the leader of a kin-based bloc incorporating those people living west of the Thames, the Cantiaci and the Atrebates, while his rival, Mandubracius, led a kin bloc of people from east and north of the Thames, there may have been ongoing fighting between these two major blocs of southern Britain. The action of the Trinovantes, the Cenimagi, the Segontiaci, the Aencalsci, the Bibroci, and the Cassi, was interpreted by Caesar as the action typical of barbarian peoples who failed to maintain military cohesion against the strength of Roman military imperialism. Their kinship ties, however, would mean that, if one clan withdrew allegiance from Cassivellaunus, others would most likely follow, in this case the Trinovantes, particularly since Mandubracius was the senior leader of this bloc. Caesar clearly states that he reinstated the Trinovantes to an autonomous situation previously lost to Cassivellaunus (Gallic War 5.20). A further struggle ensued between the Trinovantes and the Catuvellauni who were to continue this south eastern power struggle between 50BC and AD10.57

The Britons were reportedly active as mercenaries in large numbers across the Chanel, and the archaeological evidence shows strong links between the Belgic and Armorican Gauls and Britain.58 Mercenary activities may have worked at breaking down kin-ties, especially if warriors moved away from their traditional lands to serve under powerful warriors in non-kin war bands. Non-kin warrior mercenaries would have a loyalty to the band and its leader. However, if through the process of fission, these war bands were made up of kin-related men, they may have served under a chief in which family links and identity were strong, only diminishing over time depending on the frequency of their return to the main kin groups. Kin-based war bands serving outside their kin-group are evident in the case of Piso the Aquitanian. The small cavalry force led by Commius in 55 was probably his kin-based war-band (Gallic War 4.35). The dynamic of party and kin-based politics can be seen in Gaul. Here the archaic states developed a senate and magisterial political system, where power of the

57 There is no evidence that Cassivellaunus ruled the Catuvellauni or that this group existed as a corporate group in 54.
group lay within the functionaries of the senate and magistrates,59 but among the Helvetii and Aedui tensions rose when powerful men fell back on their kin to gain power.60

**Late Iron Age British and Māori Leadership**

We have seen that there were varying degrees of social and political development in Gaul. Caesar noted kingship as the major system of political leadership in Britain and the number of kings named shows that power was under the control of leaders of autonomous clans, in distinct socio-economic zones.61 He also noted military commanders in Cassivellaunus (*Gallic War* 5.11) and the noble Lugotorix (5.22). Despite this patchwork of polities, the Britons appear nearly to have defeated Caesar. The major factor in the Britons’ ability to inflict defeats on Caesar was the unity of command by Cassivellaunus, despite the Trinovantes’ defection in 54. Cassivellaunus clearly had a mandate for leadership over a broad group of people and their respective leaders.

Evidence from the Middle Iron Age suggests that the communities of southern Britain were egalitarian in nature. The ruling societies of Britain had a long history of self-determination and there are those that question the reality of influence exerted by elites (warriors and chiefs) over the common population.62 These limitations of influence have parallels with the binary nature of Māori leadership where the rangatira was constrained in any decision making process by the need to serve their hapū and the wider group. The demands to serve the wider group would give rise to elite warrior groups within Māori society, which mirrors the rise of similar elite groups in late Iron Age British society. The rise of elite groups can be seen from the eight century BC, but there was by no mean a uniform process across Britain.63 Evidence of the rise of elites and the direction of war-bands by warlords can be seen in the decline of the hillfort as community focal points in Southern Britain. Warfare and raiding became organised on a bigger scale than that previously seen in the middle-to-late Iron Age, coming under the control of kings who enjoyed power over larger stratified

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60 See Caesar’s *Gallic War* for Dumnorix (Aedui) and Orgetorix (Helvetii).
61 Cunliffe. 2010. pp. 139 and Figure 7.2. p. 151.
chiefdoms.64 This can be seen among the Māori communities of Northland who successfully moved into a market-based economy after contact with European traders and in so doing increased the mana of the hapū and the rangatira that led them.

The role of mana or personal authority would have certainly played a part in why the Trinovantes defected from Cassivellaunus’ confederation. Mandubracius of the Trinovantes may have lost his mana after his father’s death. Having arrived in Britain in the company of Caesar, who had already proven his military reputation in Gaul, Mandubracius may have regained standing, with the support of Caesar and his army and 2,000 leading Gallic chiefs (Gallic War 5.20). On the other side of the ledger, Cassivellaunus’ reverses at one of his oppida (5.21), and the failure to destroy Caesar’s base on the coast (5.22), may have undermined his position in the eyes of the Trinovantes’ leadership and others.

The loss of reputation and authority may have been one aspect of Cassivellaunus losing the support of some of the coalition. For Māori, the loss of mana had serious implications. In AD1868, the Ngati Ruanui warrior prophet Titokuwaru was responsible for a very successful campaign in southern Taranaki against European settlers and military, when he had turned away from a path of non-violence, and conducted an aggressive, calculated and successful campaign against the Crown. During the early stages of his war, Titokuwaru attracted many followers and increased his mana, but as he moved closer to the major European settlement of Wanganui, this highly capable warrior and leader was deserted by most of his followers.65 It is clear that he suffered a decrease in mana, but Titokuwaru regained his mana and became an influential leader and prophet at the community of Parihaka in Taranaki, where he led a stand of non-violent protest against land seizures in the AD1870’s.66

Titokowaru also provides an example that highlights the transition of mana rangatira within kin groupings from the hapū to the rangatira. The various hapū would have decided to give their mana rangatira to Titokowaru. Later they would have decided collectively and legitimately to withdraw from his alliance

66 The use 2,000 armed constabulary to forcefully remove the inhabitants of Parihaka has been put down to the fact that this proven war leader was in residence. Belich. 2010. pp. 295, 297.
and regain their *mana rangatira*. *Mana* and leadership were often at variance with one another, as the case with Titokowaru demonstrates.\(^{67}\) This response has parallels when assessing the British reaction to Caesar and the delegation of military leadership especially when one examines the actions of Cassivellaunus who led the Britons.

Strong military leadership or command was vital for British success against Caesar. Using a large force of chariots Cassivellaunus sought to draw Caesar inland and away from his coastal base, ambushing the Romans en route and avoiding direct battle. To achieve this Cassivellaunus held supreme military leadership, he also enjoyed a strong chain of command, as he delegated four kings to execute an attack on Caesar’s fortifications on the coast. In this instance Cassivellaunus executed a strategy that had a clear focus and delegating leadership to others for aspects of his plan stretched the Romans. Caesar realised that despite his crossing the Thames and the defeat of the Kentish kings on the coast, he could not effectively combat Cassivellaunus’ tactical approach being aware that the campaign ‘might easily be spun out’ by the Britons so returned to winter on the continent (*Gallic War* 5.22). The delegating of leadership to a single commander was not unique to the British Celts, but where Cassivellaunus’ leadership stood apart from other examples was that defections from his confederation did not affect his ability to execute his clear strategic vision. Vercingetorix would provide this supreme command in 52 with similar affect in Gaul.

Hone Hika and Kawiti used a similar strategy in the Northern War to draw out the superior technologically armed British forces into the hinterland to attack purpose built pa that were of no strategic value. This type of strategy will be discussed in detail below but Cassivellaunus had a strong mandate from the communities of south eastern Britain, and a clear strategy.

**6.5. British Response to Caesar's Invasion**

When British warriors opposed Caesar’s landing on the southern coast of Britain in 55, there occurred a clash of arms that, by all accounts, was recorded as the “organised” Romans against the “disorganised” barbarians. Despite his eventual landing and creation of a beachhead, Caesar was lucky, due to the capable and well-conducted beach defence. The warfare of 55 and 54 represent a

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clash in different military ideas and traditions and the Britons used to combat the threat posed by the Romans was a continuation of fighting traced back to the Bronze Age and based on a hit-and-run style of warfare that was neither decisive nor fatal in the same way that classical, and particularly Roman, warfare was.

Caesar’s commentaries on his invasions of Britain in 55 and 54 describe successful tactics in response to this particular Roman invasion that stand at a time when the tribal armies of Gaul fell before the Roman military juggernaut. The tribes in southern Britain conducted a style of war characterised by hit-and-run tactics, conducted from the highly mobile war chariot, which enabled the Britons to avoid a decisive battle.

The tactics used against the Romans reflected an older, local way of fighting, as Bronze Age warfare in Britain has been described as small-scale border disputes, characterised by cattle raiding and skirmishing, with no real full-scale pitched battles. The use of the chariot and cavalry was ideally suited for this type of fighting and Iron Age warfare prior to the Roman invasion was a continuation of indirect fighting seen in the Bronze Age. The chariot provided mobility around the theatre of fighting and a missile platform on the battlefield. The warriors who fought the Romans in 54, however, had gained experience and knowledge of Roman tactics the events of 55 and by having supported various Gallic people across the Channel (Gallic War 4.20). Despite this experience, their traditional tactics were sufficient to fight the Romans.

There was a striking contrast between the professional Roman soldier and the part-time British warrior. The efficiency of the Roman army, and the Roman strategy of decisive victory, presented problems to the British leaders who sought to resist invasion using their part-time warriors and traditional tactics. The war bands may have represented a degree of professionalism, but their numbers would have been relatively small. Malcolm Chapman makes the point that the Celts of Iron Age Europe and Britain fought the Romans as they fought other Celtic tribes, generally, as discussed above, at a level of low intensity. Like the Gauls, however, the Britons were capable of increased levels of warfare that went beyond the localised “raiding” of inter-tribal warfare. Caesar discusses

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such inter-tribal warfare in Britain (*Gallic War* 5.9), and in discussing the actions of Cassivellaunus sheds light on the political flux evident prior to his invasions (5.20). As the Roman army was a new phenomenon in Britain, how did the Britons respond?

The British fought the Romans on the beach with an intensity that comes through in Caesar’s account of his invasion of 55 (*Gallic War* 4.24). The cavalry and chariots had the mobility and speed to concentrate against any landing point Caesar chose as he moved along the coast (4.24). Once the embarkation point was identified, the ‘unencumbered’ Britons could attack the boats and legionaries with javelins and cavalry with a freedom of movement not enjoyed by the heavily armed Romans (4.24). Even when the legionaries got ashore the Britons continued to fiercely oppose the invaders, attacking again with horse and javelin, surrounding isolated men and units or hurling javelins at the exposed flanks of formed up groups (4.26). The swarming attacks of the British maximised the speed and mobility characterised by chariot and cavalry and the Roman forces struggling to land would have been relatively easy targets from the beach. Caesar would face the mobile tactic the following year as he moved further inland in 54.

The Britons in 55, and under Cassivellaunus’ direction in 54 hampered the advancing Roman infantry, (as discussed above) sweeping out from wooded areas to attack, with chariots, when favourable opportunities presented themselves before withdrawing from the field. Caesar tells of the tactics used by the Britons who fought in scattered groups. He described the Britons dismounting from their chariots to fight on foot in concentrated numbers, applying their main effort to gain the advantage. Caesar also noted British placement of reserves and the injection of fresh troops to relieve tired units (*Gallic War* 5.16). According to James, Caesar’s accounts assert that the chariot acted as a “battle taxi”.

Caesar discusses the use of missile hurled from chariots in his commentaries (4.24, 26 & 33), and the idea of the “missile platform” certainly suits the indirect tactics of the hit-and-run style of warfare demonstrated by Cassivellaunus against Caesar. The chariot and its freedom of movement around the campaign theatre allowed the Britons an advantage of mobility and manoeuvre over the Romans, while also suiting their indirect

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67 James, 1993. p. 78.
approach to warfare. From this it could imply that the chariot performed both “battle taxi” and “missile platform” roles.

The use of chariots for both transport and war is attested by various finds at archaeological sites across Europe and by their representation on coins and in other iconographic imagery from the Continent and the Mediterranean. But by the First Century BC the chariot was confined to Britain but used to execute an indirect style of warfare against Caesar. The cost in vehicle and horses, with the elaborate fittings, must have been a limiting factor on the numbers deployed by the British nobles who would have supplied them. The Iron Age chariot horse would have required training and thus a horse husbandry and training infrastructure. Movement of these mounted troops would have required an established network of roads and tracks. For the Britons, there were quite possibly many tracks they could use. An experiment with a reconstructed British war chariot showed that it was possible to ‘either sit or stand at walk, trot, canter and gallop over rough, bumpy terrain’, meaning that the tracks need not be of a high or permanent quality.

Archaeological evidence confirms the use of planked roadways in Britain, with an example in the Somerset Levels. Planked or other tracks would have provided for the relatively easy movement of British forces (infantry, cavalry and chariots), in and around the marshlands of the Thames region. They would

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74 Loades. www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/archaeology.

75 Dark & Dark. p. 39. The Corlea track is an important example of Iron Age construction and the organisational skill of its builders. Raftery states that Irish Iron Age legal texts have provided examples of laws governing their building and maintenance. Pagan Celtic Ireland: The Enigma of the Irish Iron Age. London, Thames and Hudson Ltd. 1994. p. 98.
also have provided interior lines that allowed the Britons freedom of movement, possibly as far as the Kentish coast to Cassivellaunus’ base 130kms inland.\footnote{Caesar found very few warriors in and around Cassivellaunus’ hill fort across the Thames River. Perhaps Cassivellaunus had redeployed most of his forces to the coast, by interior lines, to attack Caesar’s fleet? (BG. 21&22)}

The woods and thickets helped to conceal the Britons while the connecting tracks allowed them freedom of movement.\footnote{Raimund. Karl. ...on a road to nowhere...? Chariotry and the Road systems in the Celtic World. \url{http://homepage.tinet.ie/~archaeology/road.htm}. Retrieved March 2003.} Cassivellaunus’ knowledge of the various pathways must have enhanced his ability to move effectively or hide his people, cattle and supplies, while sending warriors to harass the Romans (\textit{Gallic War} 5.19). The actions of Cassivellaunus and his army had two possible functions: the first to deny the Romans the ability to forage and find food; and to frustrate and attack any Roman force isolated from the main group. These activities would have kept the Roman troops on a high state of alert, taxing them both physically and mentally. This threat would also have dictated that the Romans move as a large force for security reasons. A major road or track would have provided the means to do this. Cassivellaunus maintained the tactical initiative through being able to anticipate Caesar’s line of march because he was familiar with the tracks.

In accepting that the Britons had fought in Gaul and had experienced Roman warfare, then perhaps the tactical decision-makers realised the advantage that an indirect approach represented in avoiding the professional efficiency of the legionnaires.\footnote{Pryor. 2003. p. 433 questions the long held belief that the Late Republican Army was an efficient military machine. It was still militarily successful against most tribal armies of Iron Age Europe, although the contest in Britain (and certainly in Spain) was far from one sided.} As well as knowledge gained in Gaul, it is plausible that the British leaders would have felt more secure in the existing form of indirect warfare. Cassivellaunus, whom Caesar claims was the overall military commander of the Britons (\textit{Gallic War} 5.11), may have adopted an indirect style of warfare out of necessity, in an attempt to minimise Roman dominance in close quarter fighting. Iron Age tribal armies in any case rarely won against the professionally trained Roman army.\footnote{Cunliffe. 2010. p. 140.} The indirect style of warfare was an effective way of avoiding a decisive action. For Caesar and the Roman way of war; the decisive battle was important in conquest and not being able to close in and decisively beat an enemy would have been frustrating. To this end, the
chariot complemented hit-and-run warfare, giving local forces an advantage of mobility and manoeuvrability around the campaign theatre.  

**The Britons ambush the seventh legion in 55**

Caesar and his force were primarily confined to the coast of southeast Britain during the campaign of 55. Caesar’s small force remained within the confines of its camp and rarely moved inland. Caesar claims that his force was beset with bad weather and also lacked cavalry (*Gallic War* 4.28, 29), but the absence of cavalry would have been the major reason for staying on the coast as the weather did not appear to affect the Britons. When the Romans did move inland, they encountered stiff resistance. Caesar provides an account of the ambush on the seventh legion, which shows the careful planning and tactics of the Britons (4.32). The Britons chose to attack at a place that had been un-harvested, applying local knowledge and intelligence to their advantage. These fields may have been deliberately left un-harvested as a decoy, offering suitable forage for the Romans with the intention of ambushing an isolated Roman force.

In a similar situation to the Britons, Titokowaru built pa in southern Taranaki that acted as a decoy for colonial troops who, having learnt the futility of direct attack on new gunfighter *pa*, moved to outflank the main defences. The effectiveness of Titokowaru’s defensive tactic was revealed in that, in anticipating (or encouraging) an outflanking manoeuvre he built fire pits on the flanks from which Māori could deliver a withering fire against the colonial troops.  

Both of these examples maximised the use of purpose-built *pa* to draw enemy forces into a killing zone where musket fire could be concentrated from well designed and positioned firing pits. Rarely did Māori communities fight pitched battles with Crown or colonial forces and this reflects the capabilities of the chiefdom where minimum effort would provide maximum impact.

They used chariots and cavalry to attack the legionaries who had put aside their weapons to harvest grain. At the time Caesar believed the Britons had submitted, but his faith in their offering of terms and his experiences in Gaul suggest that Caesar was being naive, he had been deceived. Caesar had to lead

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80 The small ponies used in Britain in the First Century BC were suitable for chariots but inadequate for effective cavalry. The chariots were the shock aspect of mounted warfare, while the cavalry would have been used for screening, reconnaissance and flank protection duties. It would appear that the British cavalry worked in with the chariot forces as Caesar usually mentions them together. See *Gallic War* 4. 23, 24, 32, 33. & 5, 9, 15, 16.

81 Belich. 2010. For Te Ngutu o Te Manu see p 117, and for Moturoa see p. 169.
out a force to relieve the seventh legion that had been thrown into confusion and was unable to form up (Gallic War 4.32). He had failed to adequately judge the strength or resolve of the enemy, obviously under-estimating the British threat. The regimented legionaries struggled to cope on a battlefield that changed as the mobile chariot forces switched the point of concentration to keep the Romans confused and reactive. This demonstrates the limited capacity of the Romans without their cavalry and the superior and flexible tactics employed by the use of chariots by the Britons.

As we can see from this incident, Caesar had to support any formations in trouble, expose yet more men to danger. He realised that he could neither afford to let his infantry move out of his sight or support of the main force nor to do so without a large force of cavalry. It is clear from this action that the Britons did not fear and indeed preferred to, attack isolated Roman forces even as large as the size of a legion (around 5,000 men). Their highly mobile chariots were suited for this kind of action, employing speed and mobility. The British tactics on the coast and during the ambush tested Caesar’s ability to command effectively as he was forced to always be close to the action. Caesar obviously felt he could not delegate command in Britain as he did in Gaul, which meant that the Romans would be limited tactically in what they could achieve in Britain that year.

**The Britons dominate with mobility and manouevring**

In 54, under Cassivellaunus’ direction, the Britons harassed the Roman column on the march as they moved inland after an unopposed landing (Gallic War 5.15). Caesar gives a detailed account of his march inland, in which he describes the British tactics that centred once again on the mobile war-chariot. Caesar wrote of a ‘fierce engagement as the British cavalry and charioteers clashed with our men’ (5.15). He tells us that he sent out the first two cohorts of their respective legions to aid soldiers who were under attack while on guard as the rest of the legion were constructing the camp (5.15), and that the enemy, ‘showing very great daring, broke through between them [the cohorts] and got away safely because our men were unnerved by these unfamiliar tactics. On that

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day, a military tribune, Quintus Laberius Durus, was killed (5.15). This passage reveals that the Britons had identified a weak target (isolated pickets while the others were occupied entrenching) and rushed the Roman positions. When Caesar sent out reinforcements twice to beat off these attacks, the Britons, using the mobility of the chariot, simply moved between the formations, killing a military tribune as they did so, demonstrating their freedom of movement on the battlefield. This military action also shows confidence in that Cassivellaunus was prepared to attack numerically superior numbers.

The tactics used against Caesar were deliberate and displayed strong central leadership, sound tactical ability and a clear understanding of the actions required to combat the invading Romans. They are not the actions of a disorganised tribal army. It also points to regional knowledge of the best possible point of attack, and of the means to deploy the appropriate amount of force. The chariots troubled the Romans at first, and Caesar had to coordinate his infantry and cavalry more effectively to face the British threat. It ultimately failed to stop the Roman force advance westward in 54, yet it was a campaign where Caesar was clearly reacting to attacks from a force that held the initiative for most of the campaign and was dictating the tempo of the fighting. The injection of fresh British troops, that Caesar described (Gallic War 5.16), also points to forethought and a tactical understanding of the importance in dictating the tempo of offensive action and in maintaining the initiative and combat efficiency.

Caesar also observed this tactic of changing strategies after initial conflict in Britain. After fierce resistance to Caesar’s landing in 55, the Britons melted away once the initiative was lost (Gallic War 4.26). The Britons then used diplomacy to gain time to re-evaluate circumstances and, in the case of 55, renew indirect tactics (4.32). In 54, the British war chief Cassivellaunus initially attacked the Romans on the march and then reverted to indirect tactics after

84 The loss of a military tribune was a blow for Caesar and for the general morale of the army. This period of fighting must have been heavy and suggest that during that engagement, the tribune would not have fallen alone.
85 At the Thames, Caesar coordinated his infantry and cavalry together and continued this thereafter.
86 The term tempo is used to describe the rate of speed or activity in an attack with the aim of keeping the enemy off balance in response to attacks.
failing to prevent Caesar forcing the River Thames, even disbanding his infantry in favour of his mounted troops and chariots (5.19), while placing his force at a numerical disadvantage.

In 54, Caesar spent a full campaigning season in Britain and learnt more of the Briton’s style of warfare. Their tactics were of an indirect nature, with the aim to separate Roman formations and attack isolated units through the use of the chariot, all the while avoiding pitched battle. The Romans were unused to the tactics as the chariot was no longer in use for war on the continent. Caesar noted that the Britons ‘regularly use [them] in battle’ (Gallic War 5.24). He gave a very clear account of the chariot and the tactics he faced and if we accept his words it is obvious that the chariot played a prominent part in British warfare (4. 33. 5, 15-19). Caesar stated that Cassivellaunus deployed as many as four thousand charioteers, even demobilising his infantry in favour of the more mobile chariots after he failed to defend the Thames (5.19). Such a use of the chariots in Britain shows preference for indirect hit-and-run tactics.

This style of fighting is reflected in almost all the fighting by Māori against each other and against Imperial and colonial forces. Apart from the Waikato war where the Kingitanga built large trench-like fortifications to confront a full-scale invasion, Māori employed indirect, guerrilla warfare. The non-state communities fell back on a natural system of warfare that proved problematic for the Crown from the 1840s through to the 1870s. The natural remedy to this was to employ Māori troops who obviously were natural guerrilla fighters.

6. 6. Summary

The political and social systems found in Britain were similar in character to the complex chiefdoms of Belgica and Armorica; however in Cassivellaunus, the Britons found an able and energetic leader who united the people of south eastern Britain. His confederation seriously challenged Caesar’s air of invincibility. Comparisons with Māori society and the delegation of mana provide a possible explanation for how Cassivellaunus was able to execute total command of the south-eastern confederation despite not being called a king. Whether through ties of kin-ship or pre-existing core/periphery trade relationships the Britons accepted Cassivellaunus as their supreme commander.

87 The chariot ended its role as a weapon on the continent by approximately the second century BC; with its last recorded use being at the battle of Telamon in 225, see James. 1993. p. 78. For an account of the battle of Telamon see Polybius. The Histories. Book II, 27- 31.
until the Trinovantes left the confederation taking several other groups with them. After Caesar’s crossing of the Thames, Cassivellaunus maintained a tight tactical edge over the Romans. While Caesar writes of a victory once Cassivellaunus’ hillfort had been taken, and the assault by the combined force of four kings on his naval base had failed, Cassivellaunus himself remained in the field. Although Caesar claimed that the Britons offered hostages, and the Romans left Britain at the end of the campaigning season with hostages and prisoners, Caesar did not claim a triumph over Britain.

The defection of the Trinovantes and other named polities to Caesar reinforces the idea that Celtic people operated at clan level and not at a “national” level. Through the leadership of strong chiefs who could choose to fight, these war-bands could withdraw military support from their allies at any time. This is seen with Titokowaru and his allies at Tauranga Ika, and was acceptable within Māori kin and non-kin based war parties. The comparative analogy of the dispersal and re-forming of British clans and Māori hapū gives a probable explanation for the apparent disappearance of political units between the time of Caesar’s campaigns and the invasion of AD43. The leadership of Cassivellaunus and Mandubracius needs to be understood within a kin-based context.

How do we assess the success of the Britons? Of British warfare, Cunliffe writes, that it was ‘daring, fierce and brave but lacked staying power. It was impetuous and instinctive rather than considered. When faced with the grinding solidarity of the Roman military machine, the British resistance melted into the forests to engage in guerrilla warfare’ having evolved for ‘the rapid raids of inter-tribal fighting’. In 54 the British pushed Caesar and his forces to the limits of their capabilities and while impetuous and instinctive from years of inter-group fighting, Cassivellaunus, war aims and tactics to achieve these were considered and supported by sound strategic consideration.

The chariot was ideal for these tactics. It suited the indirect hit-and-run fighting style of the Britons. An old and well-used communication infrastructure would have certainly facilitated these tactics and movement around the campaigning theatre. By Caesar’s account, the chariot was a unique feature of

89 Cunliffe. 2010. p. 140.
British warfare. It was a characteristic of the warrior elite and used as a multi-purpose vehicle, both as a battle-taxi and as a missile platform.

No doubt the 2,000 Gallic cavalry accompanying Caesar in Britain noted the trouble Cassivellaunus and his forces caused Caesar. Given that Commius was travelling between Caesar and Cassivellaunus it is possible that other Gallic leaders were in direct contact with British war leaders.

Cassivellaunus adopted an indirect style of warfare because of several factors. The warriors of Britain had gained knowledge of the proficiency of Roman arms prior to, and during the fighting of 55. In addition, indirect warfare represented a continuation of pre-Roman, low intensity level of fighting that has been traced back to the Bronze Age and, therefore, easily applied to the static Roman approach. The indirect style of warfare, using hit-and-run tactics, lessened the impact and advantage of Roman military efficiency and professionalism in the field. As a result, Caesar clearly struggled when fighting the Britons in 54. But where Cassivellaunus was different to the Gallic response so far was his ability to enforce his supreme leadership and see his strategy applied to the end of the campaign. It is in Britain that an antidote to Roman arms developed.

In a similar way warfare among Māori prior to European contact changed little once Māori started fighting Imperial and colonial soldiers. Warfare certainly adapted to new technology but it remained indirect in essence as it evolved. This situation is comparable to warfare in late Iron Age Europe. The characteristics of warfare seen in Britain on the eve of the Roman invasion were not that of large pitched battles and there are several aspects of British (and Gallic) warfare that contrasts greatly with the Roman military tradition in the first Century BC The first obvious aspect already stated was the level of warfare. On the occasions when raiding intensified into larger battles, the aim rarely appeared to be the mass slaughter of the enemy but rather the ‘aggressive competition’ of groups who used warfare as a self-adjusting system for ‘establishing and reasserting social relationships at both an individual and a tribal level.’

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Chapter Seven
Eastern Gaul and the Revolt of 54-53.

This chapter is a brief case study on the social and political nature of the Eburones and the Treveri people of eastern Belgica, and how it affected their ability to fight Caesar between 54 and 53. The events of 54-3 are important, not for the destruction of one of Caesar’s legions, but as a prelude to the general revolt led by the Arvernan war-chief Vercingetorix. The north-eastern peoples who fought the Romans between 54 and 53 were mainly from Belgic communities, but limited, simultaneous support for these Belgae came from the Gallic Carnutes and Senones. The far western Armoricans (Caesar calls them civitates Armoricae) also made moves to attack the Roman legion that had been placed in their territory over winter (Gallic War 5.53).

The campaigns of late 54 and early 53 centred on eastern Belgica and the communities of that group, but the Treveri, Eburones and the other Belgic peoples involved appear to have represented an “eastern” confederation. Like the Belgians, Armorican and Aquitanians, theirs was a regional and local resistance. The actions of this eastern Belgic group had the potential to engulf the rest of Gaul, but they failed to ignite support beyond enlisting the Eburoni, the Aduataci, the Nervii and their allies and the Treveri.

7.1. The Social and Political structure of Eastern Belgica

As discussed in chapter four, the Belgic communities had different social and political organisations, but the majority enjoyed chieftainships, ruled by local kings. Statehood was found only among the Remi of southern Belgica. Caesar noted that the Treveri lived on both sides of the Rhine (Gallic War 4.10), and that they controlled the area around the Moselle that ran into the Rhine River. The Eburones lived north of the Treveri, also bordering the Rhine, but along the Mosa River. This region was strategically important to both Gauls and Romans and people living on the eastern bank of the river.

1 Caesar states that the Remi and the Suessiones shared a government (Gallic War 2.3) but this is disputed in chapter Four.
2 E.M. Wightman. Gallia Belgica. London, B.T. Batsford Ltd. 1985. p. 31. Caesar noted their absence from the rebellion of 52 as they were busy with affairs along the Rhine, but events over the 54-3 period may better explain their absence from the revolt of 52 (Gallic War 7.63).
7.2. The Archaeology of Eastern Belgica and the Treveri

The whole area of Northern Gaul was part of a fringe or transition zone,\(^3\) incorporating the Eburones, the Atrebates, the Nervii, the Morini and the Menapii. Belgic leaders had links to Britain and clearly eastern Belgic chiefdoms had contacts eastwards.\(^4\) The decentralised nature of eastern Belgica meant that leadership would be locally based in smaller political units as the central Gallic states or the larger stratified chiefdoms of Armorica, and this would mean that any response to Rome might lack unity of command, or be deficient in coordination or planning.

The archaeological evidence verifies that the Treveri who lived along the Rhine shared burial customs, coinage and pottery with those living on the eastern side of the Rhine.\(^5\) The presence of “German” mercenaries aiding the Treveri during Caesar’s campaigns testifies to contact, but perhaps also kin-ties, between the people living either side of the Rhine.\(^6\) The Treveri did not show signs of stable political organisation at the time of Caesar\(^7\) and their hill forts were small to medium in size,\(^8\) indicative of small socio-political units.

In the early first-century BC, hill-fort settlement had declined in the north-eastern Gallic zone\(^9\) and this may account for Caesar’s belief that the Germans were less civilised and settlement patterns had become more widespread, with smaller, armed groups predominant (seen in weapon burials).\(^10\) The movement away from centralised authority would have been a destabilising factor along the Rhine. This was seen with groups of people living east of the Rhine moving west from their traditional homelands to set up new chiefdoms in the settled areas of Gaul. Ariovistus was a clear example of a major group moving west

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\(^3\) Wightman. p. 12.
\(^4\) These are the communities that Caesar campaigned against (with the Atrebates serving Caesar). This was no coincidence and suggests a web of kin-ties where confederations would form relatively quickly.
\(^6\) B Cunliffe. Greeks, Romans and Barbarians. London, Guild Publishing. 1988. p . 117. Indutiomarus invited German people to join him in 54 but they declined (Gallic War 5.55). Caesar stated that there was little difference in ‘habits of barbarity’ between the Treveri and the Germans (8.25). Also see Hirtius’ comments on the Germans supporting the Treveri against Labienus in 51. (8.45)
\(^7\) Wightman. 1985. p. 31.
\(^8\) Wightman. 1985. p. 32.
along with the development of the Batavi, Tungri and Ubii as corporate groups in Northern Belgium.¹¹

The presence of hostile or unsettled peoples across the Rhine who were involved in Gallic and Roman affairs at the end of the first century BC was a destabilising influence but was quite possibly symptomatic of destabilisation across the Rhine and the northern transition zone. But we should be mindful that the border Caesar placed at the Rhine ignored the political situation that worked beyond the eventual Roman frontier.

7.3. Caesar and North-Eastern Gaul

In 58 the Treveri gave intelligence to Caesar on the leadership and numbers of the Suebian forces on the Rhine (Gallic War 1.37), and in 57 they had provided cavalry to the Roman army that campaigned against the Belgae, but Caesar stresses their withdrawal from the major battle on the Sambre River at a crucial point (2.24). This action probably explains why Labienus and the cavalry were sent east in 56 with a brief to keep this region pacified (3.11). By 54, the Treveri had amicitia with the Romans (5.3).¹²

In 54, Indutiomarus was required to provide 200 hostages (including his son and all his relatives) to Caesar after he had interceded in a leadership struggle between Indutiomarus and another noble (Gallic War 5.4). While it is not explicit that he was to serve in Britain, Caesar would not have allowed Indutiomarus to remain in Gaul after declaring Roman support for the younger Cingetorix as the leader of the Treveri. Indutiomarus, once his hostages had been delivered, was neutralised as a threat to Caesar’s eastern frontier. The presence of Indutiomarus’ son among the hostages would have obviously given Caesar power over the deposed Treveran leader, and it would have played into the hands of Cingetorix who was married to Indutiomarus’ daughter (5.56). In the event we see Caesar becoming involved in Gallic politics and collecting hostages as a way to bring a former Belgic leader into line. Caesar was at pains to list Indutiomarus’ son and family members as hostages and was thus aware of this kin-based dynamic. How would the Gallic leaders feel about this foreigners meddling in Gallic custom? Indutiomarus may have discussed the affront to his

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¹¹ N. Royman. & J. Aarts. ‘Coin use in a dynamic frontier region. Late Iron Age coinage in the Lower Rhine area’. In Journal of Archaeology in the Low Countries. Volume 1-1. May 2009. Figure 2. p. 8 and 19.

¹² In the tension between Indutiomarus and Cingetorix, Caesar states the later wanted to ‘not forsake their friendship’ (Gallic War 5.3).
authority (5.4) with other Gallic leaders who also felt resentful against Roman dominance in Gaul.\(^\text{13}\)

**Kings**

By 54 Caesar would have become familiar with the Belgae, and able to discern their systems of social and political leadership. Caesar noted that the Eburones were under the power (*imperium Gallic War* 5.24) of two kings Catuvolcus and Ambiorix (*regnum* 5.26), each later called *rex* (6.31). Where Caesar noted kingship, we should see chiefdoms of varying sizes as a more appropriate definition. The Belgic chiefdoms show variation in scale to those of central and Armorican Gaul and while displaying a local focus in matters of politics and the Roman invasion Caesar’s kingship may be how he defined the more developed levels of chieftainship within Gallic society.

**7.4. Caesar’s Eastern societies and Maori comparison**

**Factions**

The Treveri showed factional conflict when Indutiomarus competed with his son-in-law Cingetorix for the leadership of their people (*Gallic War* 5.3, 4).\(^\text{14}\) The former represented an anti-Roman faction of the Treveri while the later was one of those Gallic chiefs who saw Caesar and the Romans as a means of securing his position (5.3). This *princeps factionis* among the Treveri erupted again later in the year (5.56), but we will discuss this further below. As with other Gallic communities, the factional nature of the eastern Belgae would have been manipulated and exploited by Caesar as he moved to complete his conquest of Gaul. This was not, however, a symptom of the Roman presence in Gaul, but an existing facet of Gallic politics and social development.

There are relevant parallels in Māori society that can expand our understanding of factional politics in eastern Gaul. As we have seen in Māori society, kinship seniority and marriage were acceptable forms by which to achieve leadership. But these forms could be problematic for Māori and Celts alike. In the case of Indutiomarus his leadership was challenged by his son-in-law, perhaps a younger man. This was seen among the Aedui where Dumnorix

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\(^\text{13}\) Caesar does not give names of the 2,000 cavalry that go to Britain in 54 other the Commius and his actions to force Dumnorix (*Gallic War* 5.7) suggests that it would have been risky to leave Indutiomarus behind. Having Indutiomarus’ son as hostage and a triumphant Cingetorix in control of the Treveri may have been enough to keep Indutiomarus temporarily in check.

sought to usurp the power of the magistrates (and of his brother), but in the case of Cingetorix he was usurping power within an existing system of the chieftainship. He may have been a young chief seeking to remove an older one (who happened to be his father-in-law). For Māori the usurpation of *rangatiratanga* (more relevant in the case of the Belgic chiefdoms) or *arikitanga* was accepted if the senior chief lacked the ability to lead, or this was gained through marriage to a high born female of the senior line.\(^{15}\) What we may be seeing in the factional fighting between Indutiomarus and Cingetorix is a push by a younger chief (with the support of Caesar) to prematurely replace his father-in-law as the leader of the Treveri. Caesar was always willing to support Gallic chiefs who saw the Romans as a new force in Gallic politics. Even families were divided by factions.

In the case of the Eburones, Caesar states that they were led by two chiefs: Ambiorix and Catuvolcus (*Gallic War* 5.24). This dual leadership is of interest when considering political structure. Given Caesar’s comment that all Gaul was divided (6.11), this dual leadership may have been a mechanism developed to moderate autocratic power, and it may represent an intermediate stage between the complex chiefdom and the archaic state. However, taking into account that Catuvolcus was the older of the two (6.31), and that Ambiorix features as the prominent leader of the revolt, we may be seeing here functional and symbolic leadership among the Eburones. There are clear parallels between Celtic and Māori society. The practical/symbolic leadership was ever present in Māori society through the positions of the *ariki* and *rangatira* or senior *rangatira*. Among the Eburones, this example of factionalism in the form of dual leadership is not as overt as that seen among the Treveri, but the duality in the Eburones’ leadership system is seldom found and may have its origins east of the Rhine. Catuvolcus provided symbolic support to Ambiorix until he tired of fighting and killed himself (possibly also a symbolic act (6.3)).

Kin Ties

The factional conflict among the Treveri was centred on a kin-based division, when in 54 Cingetorix representing a faction in support of an alliance with Rome, joined Caesar with his kin and provided military intelligence on Indutiomarus’ plans to oppose him (Gallic War 5.3). As stated above, Indutiomarus was competing with his son-in-law Cingetorix for the chieftainship in their people (5.30, 56). This “in-law” relationship echoes the marriage politics seen among the Helvetii, Aedui and Māori, where chiefs strove to strengthen their positions through marriage alliances to leaders. The strengthening of kin-ties would allow for chiefs to maintain their power while creating an alliance that was an understanding of collective security and obligations for partners. Caesar mentions this connection between the two Treveri leaders without expanding on their relationship by marriage, and he may have assumed that this was a political characteristic of the Gallic communities of the time (see 6.11).

Leadership of the anti-Roman faction was removed when Indutiomarus was killed at the end of 54, but this faction of the Treveri looked to his kin for continuing leadership in 53 (6.2). This revolt failed, and the kin of Indutiomarus departed from Gaul, crossing the Rhine where they had links (6.8), leaving Cingetorix as king of the Treveri. If Indutiomarus represented the senior line, and his position of chief suggests this, then Cingetorix may have only had a tenuous claim to the chieftainship of the Treveri. A stronger male claimant within the senior branch of the ruling families may have, with the support of Indutiomarus’ kin, blocked Cingetorix’ ambitions despite his marriage to Indutiomarus’ daughter. Caesar does record that Indutiomarus had a son whom he held hostage in 54 (5.4) but perhaps he was too young to oppose Cingetorix at the time (probably still being held by Caesar).

We can gain insight into this situation by looking at Māori society. The senior line in Māori society was very important for the continuation of one’s whakapapa16 and since Cingetorix had the support of Caesar, perhaps a major section of the Treveri (followers of Indutiomarus) left Gaul rather than follow a chief who had limited prestige and lineage, and not from the senior line, but gaining his position from beyond accepted social and political practices and

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traditions. This was an example of fission, and we can see the natural reorganisation of an “older” branch of the Treveri across the Rhine under Indutiomarus’ kin-group. The establishment of a new hapū under a rangatira of rank was viewed by Māori society as a legitimate way for rangatira to maintain their mana when there was no room to move up the kinship ladder, or if men were forced out of the leadership contest. When Cingetorix had been installed as leader of the Treveri west of the Rhine, Caesar would have felt that this border chiefdom was secure from any threats from across the Rhine. There was no support from these people for Caesar or Vercingetorix in 52, and Caesar clearly trusted Cingetorix’s loyalty. This episode shows that the fall of a kin-based faction affected the power of the wider kin-group.

Clients

Caesar was acutely aware of Gallic relationships, aspects of which he may have confused with the Roman clientage. He was able to discern what he believed were client-relationships among the eastern Belgae. He noted, for example that the Eburones and Condruisi were dependants of the Treveri (4.6). Despite Caesar’s stating that the Nervii had been destroyed by the Romans on the Sambre in 57 (Gallic War 2. 28), they continued to hold sway over the Ceutrones, Grudii, Levaci, Pleumoxii and the Geidumni in 54 (5.39). These people are not recorded as being present when the Nervii fought Caesar in 57, and so they were perhaps committed to the Nervii through trade arrangements. It is unclear, however, if Nervian sovereignty also entailed kinship.

To understand further how Gallic clans and their chiefs reacted to Caesar there are many examples found in Māori society where kin-based taua were formed to respond to aggression. During the fighting between factions of the Tainui hapū in the late eighteenth century, Ngati Toa was attacked by a force made up of Ngati Mahunga and allied kin-based hapū, Ngati Rehu, Ngati Reko and Ngati Mahuta. This was an example of kin-based conflict, where hapū gained support from other groups with which they shared whakapapa. Within the context of fighting an external threat, however, requests for support would

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17 The absence of this kin-group who showed open hostility towards Caesar would explain the reason the Treveri were absent in the Gallic revolt of 52 (Gallic War 7.63).
18 Caesar probably killed Indutiomarus’ son because of his father’s actions and this would have further strengthened Cingetorix’ position once his rival was killed.
also be sent to the wider kin group. When Wiremu Kingi resisted British efforts
to take land in Northern Taranaki (March AD1860-March 1861) a call went out
to related and non-related hapū to support his Atiawa force of around sixty to
eighty warriors made up from the Waitara and Puketapu hapū. Taranaki hapū
and a taua from the southern Taranaki, Ngati Ruanui, joined the fight in mid-
March AD1860, and by March 1861 warriors had joined the fight in Taranaki
from the Kingitanga hapū of Tainui, and from as far afield as Rotorua, Tauranga
and Taupo.

The gradually augmented support for Kingi in Northern Taranaki was a
feature of the decentralised social and political landscape. This would also have
been the case in Gallic societies characterised by the decentralised chiefdoms.
The force raised in 54-3 by the Nervii was probably made up from those people
geographically removed from the fighting in 57, giving the impression that the
Nervii were militarily active after their supposed destruction in 57, through the
support of distant kin and non-kin groups.

Among the central Gallic people who fought in 54-3 we see other examples
of client relationship. Part of the action of 54-3 took place among the Senones
and Carnutes (linked to Indutiomarus Gallic War 5.55), but at the end of the
fighting both these groups looked to the old and new Gallic powers for
protection. The Aedui intervened with Caesar on behalf of the Senones, whom
they had protected from ancient times (6.4), while the Carnutes approached the
Remi in the same manner (6.4).

Friendship

When describing Ambiorix’s relationship to the Menapii, Caesar
acknowledges that this was “formal” friendship (hospitium Gallic War 6.5),
suggesting that political and possibly legal mechanisms were involved.
Indutiomarus of the Treveri, in an attempt to raise an army against Caesar in 54,
had gained such a reputation that other leaders in Gaul sought his favour and
friendship (5.55). The absence in Caesar’s commentaries of any standard Gallic
political arrangement between Indutiomarus and the Canutes and Senones does
not mean that a relationship of clientage or kin-links did not exist. His contact

20 D. Keenan Wars Without End: The Land Wars in Nineteenth Century New Zealand. North
with the Senones and the Carnutes is important in that for the first time we see the potential for pan-Gallic allegiances. An oath of friendship may have bound these groups together in common cause.

Unlike the Celts, for whom an oath of friendship was sufficient to bind individuals and groups together in response to invasion, pan- hapū alliances for Māori in the nineteenth century were based on a new but common desire for land-holding that hastened war in Taranaki. For Māori land-holding became a common cause creating alliances that went beyond the normal kin-based arrangements. Wiremu Kingi was able to get support for Atiawa from Taranaki and Ngati Ruanui, in 1860-1 by forcing the Crown to attack his pa at Te Kohia. Crown aggression opened the door for other land-holding Māori to support him in a legitimate act of utu.23 The desire by Māori to hold on to their land, and to withstand the pressures of the Crown and a growing settler population represented a uniting force for hapū not related. Unrelated hapū rarely concerned themselves, prior to contact with Europeans, with the politics of non-related hapū. The great hui, a seminal event in Māori nationalism, was held at Manawapou in 1854, which gathered hapū from the Taranaki and Whanganui regions including delegations from Ngati Raukawa.24 Land holding became a common cause that had resonance among many Māori. The inclusion of non-related hapū members was rare in Māori society, but the development of pan-iwi movements like the Kingitanga and land “leagues” moved Māori into unique, political territory. The actions of Ambiorix and his alliance to non-Belgic Gauls suggest a move by Gallic leaders to look beyond their own kin (immediate) and ethnicity (distant) to face a threat of blatant imperialism. Ambiorix gained support from outside his kin group and ethnic Belgae. Formal friendship would have been a way to establish such agreement.

After Ambiorix had destroyed the Roman forces commanded by Cotta and Sabinus in late 54, he urged the Nervii to send word to the people over whom they had sovereignty to join in open rebellion against the Romans (Gallic War 5.39). Caesar mentions hospitium between Ambiorix and the Menapii (6.5), and that the Treveri had brokered the same relationship with the Germans (6.5). The Treveri, the Eburones and the Gallic Senones and the Carnutes appear to have

shared a common goal of rebelling against Roman invasion. The forming of these relationships set a precedent in Gaul, whereby central Gallic people were willing to support the actions of Belgic communities, and the Carnutes in particular appeared to become a centralising force in Gaul. On several occasions they offered to open offensive rebellion through blatant acts of violence against Roman puppets (5.25) or Roman citizens (7.3).

Was there a deeper or sacred reason for the Carnutes’ willingness to act on behalf of others? The Carnutes were also the holders of land where Caesar noted the annual druidic council was held (Gallic War 6.14), and it is also important to note that the Carnutes were the first to cross ethnic lines in the cause of pan-Gallic rebellion. It is not hard to imagine Indutiomarus, still indignant in the way his authority and dignity had been challenged, perhaps giving a sympathetic ear to a resurgent group who saw a need to stop Caesar.25 The Roman general was, after-all, threatening the Gallic way of life, and the Romans were the desecrators of sacred sites (Suet. Caes. 54.2). Because of the actions of Caesar and his troops, a network of hostile pan-Gallic sentiment was widening. For Māori, once they realised that settler numbers were beyond anything they had expected or wanted, and that the colonial government would compromise Māori ownership for settler land-hunger, some Māori attitudes towards the Crown hardened. Indutiomarus’ attitude had already hardened when he moved on to encourage the Eburones to attack the Romans in their region (5.26), an act that threatened to spread across northern Gaul from the Rhine to Armorica.

Some within the Treveri were pro-Roman. Indutiomarus’ opponent, Cingetorix, had Caesar’s support, and while, the Roman leader states that Cingetorix’ signal goodwill and a loyalty was fully proved, the context of this is not clear. Cingetorix may have led the Treveri who served Caesar in 58, earning Caesar’s friendship and support, and Roman domination of the Treveri was vital to Caesar’s strategic planning for the full conquest of Gaul (Gallic War 6.8). We have already discussed the situation where Māori fought for the Crown as a way to attack traditional enemies or achieve political advantage under the new power structure of European government. Cingetorix was clearly operating

25 Māori warriors were required to have the ceremony of wakanoa performed on them when they returned home after war. Perhaps the forest of the Carnutes was a place where warriors could gain a similar lifting on returning from over the sea. A solemn act once safely back on Gallic soil. Dumnorix claimed religious reasons for not crossing the Channel with Caesar in 54.
under similar circumstances as had the Remi. Cingetorix pinned his success to Caesar, but Cingetorix was a leader who had the support of a faction (5.3).

**Leadership**

The predominant form of leadership for the eastern Belgic communities placed power within the chieftains seen in the location of power within individual chiefs, war-leaders and kings. In eastern Belgica leaders may have relied on the common people for their power, sharing the binary obligations as seen in Armorican and Māori society. Leadership was, however, contestable, as we see among the Treveri when Indutiomarus struggled for power with Cingetorix. Just as Caesar was prepared to support Cingetorix, Indutiomarus and Ambiorix would have had considerable power among the eastern communities and beyond to gain support in their opposition to Caesar. They were probably drawing on common resentment arising from Roman military success and Caesar’s interference in local politics. This is reflected in Caesar’s language for leadership in this region, which comprised the terminology of kingship. The strong chiefdoms of Belgica were perceived by Caesar as autocratic in nature and therefore the preserves of powerful kings. The eastern Belgae displayed the characteristics of the chiefdoms and as such the division of civil and military leadership was limited.

**Dynastic rule**

As discussed above, Indutiomarus was the leader of a kin-group who fought for the leadership of the Treveri and power devolved to them; the Carnutes were allegedly ruled through dynastic kingship. Caesar noted that Tasgetius, his unpopular nominee, held the leadership of his people because of his lineage that was traced back through a strong dynastic line (*Gallic War* 5.25). Likewise the Senones were ruled by hereditary chiefs or kings with Cavarinus, like Tasgetius, following his brother and ancestors to the leadership of his people (5.54). Caesar claims that family lineage was important to the central Gallic Carnutes, the Senones and the Treveri. We can possibly draw on Māori society to expand our

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27 Ambiorix does describe his obligations to the people in 54 (*Gallic War* 5.27).
28 He uses *principatus* (chiefs) for Indutiomarus (*Gallic War* 5.3) and Cingetorix (5.3), *rex/regni* (king) for Ambiorix (5.26) and Catuvocus (5.26, 6.31). For a table of Caesar leadership terms with *Gallic War* see Barlow. 1998. pp.159-164.
30 Caesar’s support did not save him though (*Gallic War* 5.25).
understanding of Gallic dynastic leadership. Maori society was ruled by dynastic *rangatiratanga*, where one’s position within the *whakapapa* of the wider *hapu* was of primary importance. This finds a parallel in Gallic society where dynastic rule was emphasised by Caesar who often noted the lineage of the leading Gauls. That Caesar was made aware of the dynastic lineage of some of the Gallic political leaders suggests that he may have had that lineage recited to him as part of formal Gallic protocols as was, and still is, standard in Maori society. The ability to recite and prove one’s *whakapapa* was a prerequisite of *rangatiratanga*, and this was most likely the same for the Gauls given Caesar’s knowledge of family lineage across the numerous Gallic societies.

**Civil and Military leadership in Eastern Gaul**

Caesar gave the chieftaincy *principates atque imperium* of the Treveri formally to Cingetorix in 53, once the relatives of Indutiomarus had left Gaul and the rest had been defeated (Gallic War 6.8). There is the possibility that this denoted both civil and military leadership over the Treveri. This shows that the Treveri had not moved to a position where a civil bureaucracy supported the power of a magisterial system of government where civic and military duties were separated.

There is little evidence to argue that, among the Eburones, there was a civil/military division. Catuvolcus and Ambiorix certainly shared the leadership of the Eburones and, as discussed above, this may have formed a functional and symbolic system of authority. This does not show the same development as the archaic states of the Helvetii or Aedui where this civil/military division was arguably defined by Caesar. The *ariki* in Maori society rarely became involved in political affairs or went on campaign, although when they did (such as Te Wherowhero the Maori king) they gained immense *mana*. However, in a similar manner the *rangatira* of Maori society were able to gain *mana* through success in fighting, but they were also expected to be diplomats, an extension of their *rangatiratanga*. This comparison could help explain the difference between Catuvolcus and Ambiorix. It would appear that Catuvolcus had been and was still

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31 Durie. pp. 32, 36-7, 64.
32 Caesar. *Julius Caesar: The Battle for Gaul*. Translators A. Wiseman & P. Wiseman. London, Chatto & Windus. 1980. This translation reads ‘Cingetorix, as I have already said, had remained loyal from the start, and he was now given the supreme civil and military power over his tribe’ (6.8).
33 See chapter two and three for discussions on Diviciacus and Dumnorix, and Divico and Nammeius and Verucoetius.
a fighting chief, but although Catuvolcus and Ambiorix were fighting chiefs, they also conducted civic duties for their people. The Eburones were still at the stage of political development where the warrior-chief held the power in matters of peace and war.

**Councils/Assemblies**

The use of councils or assemblies was important in Celtic societies as the outcomes of the discussions would direct the group in its response to invading powers. We can see this with the Treveri who held councils, and especially when Indutiomarus proclaimed an armed convention, *armatum concilium indicit* (Gallic War 5.56). This convention was the culmination of much diplomatic work, since Indutiomarus had spoken with the Senones, the Carnutes and other Gallic peoples in an attempt to coordinate a north eastern Gallic-uprising (5.56). As noted above, the *hui* at Manawapou discussed common issues of land sale with all present agreeing to oppose any land sales, while the *hui* also set the parameters by which this agreement covered. It also represented a move by Māori to assert their autonomy and to determine how their land should be used. The meeting concluded with the signing of a document by the leading Taranaki, Ngati Ruanui and Ngaruaru *rangatira* and oaths sworn on the bible. The solemnity of the *hui* would not have been out of place in late Iron Age Gaul. A common cause would be the topic of discussion at the councils held in late 54. The *hui* at Manawapou was not overtly martial, as some European commentators have suggested, but there is little doubt that Māori would fight to preserve their *manawhenua*. As with the *hui* at Manawapou, the initial Treveran assemblies organised by Indutiomarus may have been simply to gauge the mood of other Gallic leaders, but the move to a convention of armed men suggests that, like Māori, Celtic communities would fight to preserve their land and independence.

The Treveran assembly got involved in the kin-based tension of 54. Very early on in the campaigning season, the Treveri were facing a factional fight between Indutiomarus and Cingetorix. Indutiomarus’ success was not lasting, however. A later assembly voted in favour of Cingetorix, but this was after Indutiomarus had been killed and his kin had moved east of the Rhine. Parts of this assembly would have consisted of Cingetorix’s kin (6.8).

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34 Sole. p. 221.
35 Sole. p. 220.
36 Sole. p. 221.
The Masses

Caesar’s *Gallic War* Book 5.3 is insightful as it provides an example of his interpretation of the binary relationship between the leaders of the Treveri and the mass of the common population. Early in 54, Cingetorix approached Caesar to reaffirm his loyalty and that of his supporters, while also providing information on the activities of his major political rival Indutiomarus (*Gallic War* 5. 3). For his part, Caesar notes that Indutiomarus was preparing for war and looking to the safety of his people, as the Roman army approached (5.3). The series of events that unfolded are slightly confusing, but as Caesar gets closer to the lands of the Treveri, some of the *principes* (and probably members of the council) begin to approach Caesar to gain his support in “private matters” (5.3).\(^{37}\) This third group, although actuated by their friendship to Cingetorix (5.3), possibly represented a neutral faction or nobles not as involved in this power struggle between two leading nobles of the Treveri.

The option to be neutral when facing a force like Caesar is not at first clear when analysing the *Gallic War*, but the Treveri perhaps offers an example of this. In comparing Gallic and Māori neutrality one can see that the expediency of neutrality depended on the perception of threat. Neutrality for Māori in their dealings with the Crown and the colonial government in the mid-nineteenth century was often expedient, dependent on the locality of potentially hostile European forces or the dynamics of inter-group relationships. With Caesar opening his season on the west coast readying for the invasion of Britain this meant that, for the eastern Gallic leaders among the Treveri, he was not close at hand to interfere or threaten Treveran autonomy. As he approached them, however, the strategic situation changed. Survival and protection of the community was a primary duty of Gallic leadership, and in the character of Indutiomarus we can see that he was serving the people (and of course his own power-base), by moving the vulnerable away from a clear military threat, Caesar (*Gallic War* 5.3).

Indutiomarus makes a clear point to Caesar that, without firm leadership the common people would go astray out of ignorance, but he was also concerned over the loss of favour among the nobility of the Treveri (*Gallic War* 5.3). Cingetorix was a man of the nobility and Indutiomarus was both noble and a

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\(^{37}\) There appears to have been some restriction on this group speaking outside the council on matters of state. (*Gallic War* fn 1. 5.3).
man of the people (not unlike Caesar). Again, Indutiomarus epitomises the *rangatira/hapū* relationship of Māori society of a binary relationship of equal obligation. Cingetorix, however, exposed a split between the old ways of chiefly obligations to the people and a new way offered by the support Caesar could offer.

The actions and consent of the common population among the Eburones is alleged by Ambiorix in the prelude to the destruction of Sabinus and Cotta in the winter of 53. Ambiorix stated that the people had as much sovereignty over him as he had over them (*Gallic War* 5.27), this reflects the binary relationship in Māori society where the *rangatira* followed the decision of the people of the *hapū*. While the context for the destruction of a Roman foraging party was framed by Caesar within an elaborate plan to get the Romans to leave their fortifications and the lands of the Eburones (5.27), it was deemed a legitimate excuse for the Roman commander Sabinus to withdraw despite warnings (5.31). To add weight to his suggestions of withdrawal to the Romans, Ambiorix offered a solution to the pressing problems. He stated that had followed through on his obligations to the wider Gallic plan, but was now appearing to allow Sabinus to leave, further alleviating the strain on resources and food stocks for the local population (5.27). Here we see Ambiorix acting, like Indutiomarus, for his people. The common populations among the Treveri and the Eburones were important factors of support and obligation for leaders such as Ambiorix and Indutiomarus. Gallic leaders were held accountable to the common people in Māori society, and both reflect a comparable response.


This section will be made up of two parts. The first will look at the events that unfolded during the winter of 54, mainly the attacks on the Roman garrisons quartered in eastern Belgica. The second part will assess Caesar’s reaction.

Caesar describes how the eastern Gallic confederation gathered in 54 after Indutiomarus called an armed convention (*Gallic War* 5.56). It may have been at this meeting that the plan to attack the Roman garrisons at the same time was
discussed. The revolt appears to begin with the execution by the Carnutes of Caesar’s puppet Tasgetius (*Gallic War* 5.25). The Eburones attacked the Roman garrisons quartered in their lands (5.26). This started with the destruction of a Roman wood-cutting party automatically placing the garrison on alert (5.26). Ambiorix then discussed the option for Sabinus and his force to leave his encampment and march to the nearest garrison as all Gaul was in revolt (5.27). Ambiorix was deceptive in his advice but succeeded in encouraging the Roman commander, Sabinus, to leave the relatively safe confines of winter encampment (5.31). This decision was a disastrous one for the Roman garrison that was wiped out in a well planned and executed ambush led by Ambiorix (5.32-37). In isolation, this response worked, inflicting on Caesar one of his worst defeats, but it was local in nature and on home ground.

The attack on Caesar’s other winter garrisons spread to the Eburones, Nervii and Aduataci, but the results were not the same and the garrison commander, Cicero under siege, withstood attacks, until he was relieved as the Gauls turned to face Caesar and his column (*Gallic War* 5.40-52). Hoping to gain victory through a swift attack, the siege lost momentum and moved into a phase of attrition (5.40). The Nervii did try to replicate Ambiorix’ approach of drawing the garrison through promises of safe passage but Cicero was not convinced (5.41). The actions of Cicero are in stark contrast to the actions of Sabinus, a comparison that overshadows the events in late 54 as Caesar uses his commentaries to place blame of Sabinus for the loss of his Po Valley legion (5.24) and highlight Cicero’s leadership qualities (5.52).

For the Treveri, their target was the garrison under Labienus, but Caesar implies that Indutiomarus was late in his attempt to attack the Roman garrison and eventually withdrew his forces when news reached him of Caesar’s victory against the Eburones, Nervii and Aduataci (*Gallic War* 5.53). Indutiomarus and the Treveri had missed their chance to defeat Labienus. It would have been hard for Indutiomarus to start campaigning earlier that year given the factional tensions that had split the Treveri, but they withdrew back into their own lands (5.54), and prepared to continue their fight with Caesar (5.55).

The initial plan by the eastern Belgae and the Treveri was strong in theory, but flawed in its execution. Targeting the isolated Roman garrisons once they had made their encampments was probably determined by the fact that the Gallic leaders themselves we returning to their own territories after campaigning in
Britain or garrisoning Caesar’s port of departure (Gallic War 5.5, 8). Attacking each Roman force would have succeeded if coordinated to happen at the same time, but Caesar implies that it did not. The impact Ambiorix’s success had on other Gallic communities cannot be under-estimated and it is plain to see why Caesar stayed in Gaul over winter (5.53). The rest of Gaul was unsettled and Indutiomarus was still operating from his re-established Treveri power-base. He had succeeded in ousting Cingetorix and had called for aid, unsuccessfully, from across the Rhine (5.55), and planned to attack Labienus (5.56). Labienus remained within the walls of his encampment until Indutiomarus and his forces became over confident, approaching the wall without concern of security (5.58). During the night the Roman commander brought inside his camp all the allied cavalry and the next day surprised and killed Indutiomarus (5.58). Caesar’s description of this phase of the fighting in 54 is questionable. Perhaps the Treveri and their allies had become complacent or possible over confident after the success of the Eburones, but they were defeated and eastern Gaul lay open for Caesar to settle this area down.

With Caesar’s placement of his legions separating eastern Belgica from the other Belgae communities and the Armoricans, the implications were that once Caesar organised his response, the revolt fell apart. Caesar’s response brought a large force into eastern Belgica by the end of 54. In the winter of 53 Caesar renewed his offensive with four full legions (Gallic War 6.3), increasing his strike force to five as he moved against the Menapii (6.5). This force was divided into three columns marching in light order, without baggage (6.6). Caesar then marched into Germany then back into eastern Gaul and through the Ardennes. He sent his cavalry ahead under Lucius Minucius Basilus with strict orders not to light fire (6.29). Caesar did not want the Eburones to know he was coming.

Caesar followed up the destruction of Sabinus and Cotta’s command with a campaign of vastatio against the Eburones, attacking soft targets like villages and crops, crippling the people’s ability to fight or fund war. To do this Caesar attacked the people living between the Treveri and the Eburones, again dividing his force into three sections leaving the baggage at Aduatuca to lighten the

labour of the soldiers (*Gallic War* 6.32). Three legions under the command of Labienus attacked the Menapii, three under Trebonius moved on the Aduatuci while Caesar took three more legions in pursuit of Ambiorix (6.33). Ambiorix was forced to command his followers to look to their own defence (6.31). The devastation visited upon the Eburones was widespread and unforgiving. But for Caesar, this was not enough. To protect his scattered soldiers and to make the destruction of the Eburones and the leadership of Ambiorix complete, Caesar invited other Gauls to pillage these lands (6.34, 43).

This destruction of a region is reflected in the late stages of the wars in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the nineteenth century. Caesar faced a similar situation where that the people of eastern Belgica and southern Taranaki lived in small widespread communities or “soft” targets that determined the colonial strategists in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the *vastatio* and the bush-scouring method.

Between 1866-8, the Southern Taranaki region of Aotearoa/New Zealand received attention similar to that visited upon eastern Belgica in operations called “bush-scouring”. This targeted villages and crops, destroying Māori settlements regardless of their support or opposition to the Crown. The “bush-scouring” tactics involved flying columns that were unencumbered by a long supply train, and they attacked “soft” targets of undefended villages or cultivations in the bush. 40 Caesar describes similar tactics in detail (*Gallic War* 6.3, 6, 33-35, 43, 44), and while he had used this tactic before 54 (5.10), he had not given the details of its practice as with the campaigns of 53.

In Taranaki Māori resistance was ‘brave but decentralised, and small forces were repeatedly driven out of unfortified villages and traditional *pa* by vigorous assaults’. 41 In two campaigns, the crown succeeded in ‘intimidating and weakening the local Maoris’ 42 not unlike Caesar in eastern Belgica. Caesar was able to execute this strategy because the communities were decentralised and lacked strong unity of command or a defined strategy. This local disorganisation meant Caesar and his columns could pick off the settlements one by one. These “mopping up” operations ensured that the food and resources needed to resist

Rome was, for the eastern Belgae, fully compromised (*Gallic War* 6.44).\(^{43}\) In essence, the devastation of the Eburones was complete, as it was for some Māori communities of southern Taranaki.\(^{44}\)

The revolt of 54-3 was not well-coordinated, there was no single leader or strong strategic vision, despite Indutiomarus’ intentions, and it unfolded as a series of separate outbreaks occurring at roughly the same time, feeding off each other.\(^{45}\) It failed to move beyond Eastern Gaul, although Vercingetorix was able to unite most of Gaul within a year. The major factor in the earlier revolt remaining localised and restricted to eastern Gaul may have been that the Gallic leaders were required to support Caesar in Britain over the summer and not at home. There may have also been a class dimension to the Gallic reaction in the east. The attacks on Caesar’s garrisons may have been locally driven because of limited food. Caesar’s response suggests this. The presence of Gallic cavalry in Caesar’s army may have prevented a large revolt because these leaders had not fully grasped that Caesar intended to conquer all of Gaul. Their capabilities would have been exhausted after the season in Britain, but they would have seen how to combat the Roman, by witnessing first-hand the tactics of the Britons and Caesar’s struggle to deal with their indirect nature.

Caesar’s strategic garrisoning across Belgica also successfully separated the eastern Gauls from the potential support of other Belgic communities and the Armorican to the south-west. On the completion of his last campaign in Britain in 54, Caesar must have had good intelligence on Belgica (probably from Commius and the Remi\(^{46}\)). The winter placements of his legions show that Belgica was still a concern for Caesar equal to his grain requirement. That Caesar remained in Gaul until his troops had reached their quarters and successfully encamped also suggests that he expected trouble from this region. Perhaps the Treveri and Eburones were premature in initiating a general uprising in Gaul, but the idea must have gained some degree of momentum as the people of Gaul began to realise that Caesar and his Roman army were there to stay. His

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\(^{43}\) The mention of other Gallic raiders at the end of 53 (*Gallic War* 6.34) is questionable given the major revolt that erupted in 52, but Caesar may have been using the support of the Remi, Aedui and the Ligones to paint a false picture of widespread Gallic support for the destruction of the Eburones.


\(^{45}\) A. Goldsworthy. 2007. p. 361.

\(^{46}\) Caesar made the comments that Gallic cavalry reporting to hostile Gauls as only natural (*Gallic War* 6.7). This passing of information would have gone both ways.
strategic placement was certainly a double-edged sword, on the one hand quite possibly caused the revolt but preventing it spreading across Gaul. But the seeds may have already started to grow, and the systematic destruction of eastern Belgic military capabilities would have been a strong warning of what to expect from the Romans.

The revolt of 54-3 must have made an impression on Vercingetorix. In Britain, Vercingetorix may have seen an example of how a single commander could be effective against Caesar and his army. The eastern Belgic revolt was an example of how not to do things. Ultimately the revolt failed, but despite the poor coordination and general execution, the Eburones/Treveri had destroyed a composite force of one-and-a-half legions. The decentralised and local focus of the rebels would also have sounded a warning to those looking to remove Caesar and his Roman army from Gaul. Just as European commanders who could not (or would not) differentiate between hostile, neutral or friendly Māori communities created simmering resentment that could breakout at any time into violent acts of aggression, usually against settler targets, Caesar’s acts of vastatio left many Gauls in no doubt that Caesar could treat any opponents with blatant aggression creating a similar growth of resentment and covert opposition to Rome.

7.6 Summary

Caesar’s success against the communities of eastern Belgica can be attributed to the fact that they were characterised by smaller scattered chiefdoms as seen among the wider Belgae communities. In the Treveri we see kinship factionalism, where loyalties were to local agenda, and this reflects the dynamics of kin-based politics in Māori society. Kinship obligations and politics were an active characteristic of eastern Belgica. Caesar gives good details from Indutiomarus and Cingetorix, but a comparison to Māori hapū seniority allows further analysis of the process of fission and clan realignment in eastern Belgica. The Treveri were important in the rebellion of 54-3, but unity among the people of eastern Belgica and central Gaul would have been lacking, through a combination of factors, and so this revolt failed to spread beyond eastern Belgica. However, this revolt did show signs that Gallic resistance was spreading beyond the standard “ethnic” groups that Caesar identified earlier in (Gallic War 1.1). Common cause may have opened the door to pan-Gallic response to Caesar, but just like the scattered communities of Taranaki who
struggled to unite in the face of colonial aggression, the planning in eastern Belgica was piecemeal. Unity of command, such as that seen by Cassivellaunus in Britain, was lacking and a clear strategy was not obvious in the revolt of 54-3. The placement of Caesar’s legions also cut Belgica in half, and the fact that the leadership and warrior bands of most of the Gallic communities were probably exhausted after a hard fought campaign in Britain, or divided, meant that they did not have the capabilities or inclination to fight in 54-3. The tactic of vastatio, similar in nature and result to the bush-scouring in Taranaki, was effective in shutting down dissent in eastern Gaul and sent a clear message to others as to what they should expect if they challenged Caesar’s authority.
Chapter Eight
The Revolt of Vercingetorix 52BC

The campaigns in Britain in 55 and 54 had brought Caesar glory. In 52 Caesar faced a Gallic leader in Vercingetorix who displayed a style of leadership reflective of Cassivellaunus in Britain. Vercingetorix was a young Arvernian nobleman who would have served as one of Caesar’s 4,000 auxiliary cavalry, 2,000 of whom went to Britain to fight. Vercingetorix developed a strategy to deal with Caesar. Despite the varied levels of political leadership and Gallic tensions, Vercingetorix was able to unite almost all of Gaul to his cause and keep all involved focused on defeating Caesar. The pan-Gallic nature of the revolt in 52 suggests a pan-Gallic body, such as a resurgent druidic order. This chapter will look at Vercingetorix and his military approach that enabled the Gauls to seriously challenge Caesar.

8.1 The Arverni.

The Arverni occupied the Massif Central, with the Bituriges to the north-west, the Aedui to the north-east and the Province to the south. The Cevenne Mountains separated them from Narbonensis. The Arverni were in a position close to the trade routes along the Rhone River, and this was probably why the Aedui located the Boii east of the Allier River in 58 (Gallic War 1.28). The Loire River was to the north of the Arverni, and they may have held some form of influence over the people who controlled the Garonne River trade routes between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.1 In time, this suggests a solid economic area that would enable this central Gallic state to amass wealth, but equally risked conflict with other trade focused-neighbours. The confined geographical homeland of this central Gallic kin-grouping, their proximity to, and history with Rome and the Mediterranean, would have limited the process of fission, and centralisation would have led to statehood.2 Of importance to this

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development was that the necessity that the ruling body enforced centralisation and maintain the autonomy of the state.3

8.2. The Archaeology of the Arverni

The Arverni had a long history of trade seen in the archaeological record from the fourth and third centuries BC, and evidence of metal working such as iron, gold, silver and bronze as found at sites, such as Aulnet and Gergovia.4 Trade with its accumulation of wealth would account for the issuing of coins, and these provide the names of leaders from within the Arverian group. The Arvernian leader Vercingetorix is represented in the coinage, with his image and name displayed in the form of VERCINGETORIXS.5 The central archaic states had moved away from more overt warfare among geographically close communities and the using of military force to maintain social hierarchy,6 but centralisation allowed for the employment of force when necessary and coinage was a means to pay for it.7

Warfare was a part of the communities of southern Gaul, as is seen in both art and ritual and although there was warfare against the people east of the Rhine and random military excursions against the Romans that required military action, and the presence of weaponry in burials suggest that rank and social order was maintained through military display.8 The coins of Vercingetorix strongly suggest that Gallic leaders needed to provide payment for services, since the traditional means of mobilisation were no longer in use. The propaganda value, seen in Roman coinage and replicated on Gallic coins, had its benefits with regards to military status and reputation and cannot be ignored.9

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3 M. Hamilton. & M. Hirszowicz. Class and Inequality: Comparative Perspectives. Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf. 1991. p. 75. The relevant characteristic of the archaic state here is ‘a claimed monopoly of the legitimate use, or threat of use, of force’.
7 Dumnorix had a force of cavalry that he maintained and the evidence of “war” coinage attests to the need by groupings in central Gaul to have moveable income to fund larger military forces (Gallic War 1.18).
9 Vercingetorix portrayed his image on coinage as the image of Apollo while the reverse shows a horse jumping over an amphora (possible the two sources of income) DLT 3745 and as a long haired Celt with a complex necklace different from a torc see K. Gilliver. Essential Histories: Caesar’s Gallic Wars 58-50BC. Oxford, Osprey Publishing. 2008 (This Impression). pp. 52-3.
For the Gallic peoples living close to the Mediterranean, access to Roman goods became the main influence in acquiring power and control. During the earlier Hallstatt period in transalpine Europe, political and military leadership would be funded by ‘Mediterranean wealth, prestige objects, diplomatic contacts and protection.’

The later La Tène period saw warrior societies in which ‘leadership was based on military prestige or status and the ability to guarantee reward and plunder.’ This fits the “classic” warrior society, or the warrior agrarian society noted and defined by Nash that fascinated the Greeks and Romans alike. The rise of the oppidum is seen as the physical expression of ‘a deeper transformation of society, involving increased political centralisation and stratification’ based on trade wealth.

The gradually increasing involvement of Rome in southern Gaul brought the rest of Gaul into contact with Mediterranean trade. Archaeological remains reveal an abundance of evidence of the trade that occurred between Late Iron Age communities of Europe and of the Mediterranean. The natural resources were sought by the Mediterranean markets, such as amber, gold, furs and slaves, along with specialist products such as cloaks and pottery, glass, bronze and iron objects, animals (war/hunting dogs), herbs and a wide range of food-

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stuffs. The Mediterranean traders in turn supplied goods and numerous wine amphorae are clear examples of such trade. There was also a trade in wine drinking paraphernalia evident in a market for these finished products, and these drinking cups, decanters and wine jugs may have provided a rich alternative for wealthy Gauls, in a drinking culture previously framed on mead-drinking ceremonies, and possibly, rituals.

Trading centres developed in Gaul and from these trade and social activities were controlled. The larger councils and assemblies of political importance no doubt met at these centres, and notice of important decisions made would be relayed to the small kin-based holdings of the nobility and chieftains. Control of resources and trade is also a determinate in social development. The fluctuation of fortunes for polities in Iron Age Europe, measured in the wealth of grave goods, has been explained by archaeologists as reflecting levels of trade, and in particular links to the Mediterranean communities.

Centres of trade had several facets. There was the potential for exploitation of natural resources and the movement of raw material to external markets, and the importing of processed goods from external markets. This would have been seen among the Arverni who probably enjoyed contacts with peripheral societies. Increased land exploitation and trade would have created the potential for conflict or large trade alliances such as those seen between the Armorican Gauls and southern Britons in the first century BC. Given Arvernian links to the Garonne trade routes indirect links to the Atlantic are probable.

8.3. Caesar and the Social Characteristics of the Arverni

The Arverni are one of the few Gallic people named in conflict with Rome as early as the 120BC, but they are conspicuous by their absence until they erupt into history in 52. The power of the Arverni in Gaul may have diminished after their defeat in 121, as the Aedui and Sequani took their place as the regional powers in central Gaul. The Arverni were traditional enemies of the Aedui and the fact that Caesar was supporting Diviciacus and the magisterial faction of this group from 58 may have encouraged the leaders of the Arverni to

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remain detached from the events in Gaul between 58-52. They do not seem to have been involved in any of the campaigns from 58 onwards, and Caesar appears to have left them alone, only mentioning them in passing when he provides his readers an introduction to Ariovistus and his presence in Gaul (Gallic War 1. 31). This section will look at what Caesar observed when discussing the factional nature of the Arverni, kinship, client and friendship, hostage-exchange and leadership, and show how credible this material is, or how this may be interpreted.

**Factions and Kin Ties**

Vercingetorix’s father Celtillus, after having attained the chieftainship (principatus) of all Gaul, had sought the kingship (regnum), but he had been killed by the Arvernians (Gallic War 7.4). Like Orgetorix of the Helvetii and Dumnorix of the Aedui, Vercingetorix was part of a group of Gallic elite who worked at returning the political leadership of their people to a single leader, dispensing with a senate and magisterial system. The treatment of Orgetorix and Dumnorix by their people was different in that the former was censured and died, while the later was allowed to live with his honour intact. Vercingetorix gained the control of the Arverni but this was achieved not without opposition. His uncle, Gobannitio and the ‘rest of the chiefs’ tried to prevent Vercingetorix and his supporters taking up arms against Caesar (7.4). The rise of this young Arvernian nobleman indicates once again that in times of stress or crisis Gallic communities would revert to the leadership of an individual chief. Given the resistance by Gobannitio and the other chiefs, however, not all elements in the community agreed to this political move. Caesar stated that, by the expulsion of his uncle and the other chiefs, Vercingetorix became the leader of the Arverni (7.4). This was a contest that was kin-based, and it shows that there was tension for the control of the Arverni among the nobility (7.4).

Caesar does not state whether Vercingetorix gained support from his kin in ousting Gobannitio, but he obviously could draw on a broad base, perhaps including kin such as the dux Vercassivellaunus, who was Vercingetorix’s cousin and would lead a large section of the army in 52 (Gallic War 7.77, 83). Much of Gallic society was set up along kin-based lines and these would have also served as fighting units supporting the leading members of each kin-group. The leadership of these familial and clan units are seen throughout Gaul and
again in 52 when Caesar noted that Vercingetorix arranged the pan-Gallic army by state/civitas (clan) (7.36).

**Clients and Friendship**

In 52 Vercingetorix began his preparations for war by calling on his personal dependents or clients (*Gallic War* 7.4). Why did these people obey a call to arms? Client relationships may have arisen from kin-based connections, but mercenary service may have been replacing these old kin-based loyalties. Vercingetorix is an example of a leader who gained support from the people well beyond his own power-base as the revolt expanded. First he held a levy outside Gergovia where he attracted beggars and outcasts (7.4). Caesar is trying to discredit Vercingetorix in this instance but he proceeds to bring over members of his state/civitas to his cause (7.4). This clearly points to Vercingetorix appealing to mercenary forces and Arverniains alike. Vercingetorix, in accepting leadership, had obligation to all who followed him, as they would have had to him, and this may have been in the form of clientage that Caesar understood from Roman society.

Vercingetorix also gained allies by his guileful speeches and friendly demeanour (*Gallic War* 7.31). Support came to him from almost all the Gallic peoples, including the Aedui, once steadfast Roman allies who brought over their dependants to the Gallic cause (7.75). The Aedui had been confirmed friends and allies of Caesar and the Romans, and Commius had gained a position of leadership among the Belgic Atrebates through ‘faithful and efficient service to Caesar’ (7.76). In 52 the Aedui revolted against Caesar and Commius could not resist his fellow Gauls and not even the memory of friendship could prevent this change in loyalty (7.76). The revolt of 52 made many Gallic leaders look at their loyalties. The princep of Gallic society were bound to lead their people so it is probable that these leaders were following the wishes of their anti-Roman populace. The actions of Commius in 52 and the revolt of the Aedui suggest that friendship may not have been as binding to the Gauls as were arrangements such as clientage or hostage exchange.

**Kingship and Military Leadership**

In his general view of Gallic society, Caesar identified men of importance, the druids (*druides*) and knights (*equites*) who held their positions because of “definite account and dignity” (*Gallic War*. 6.13). In assessing the pre-eminence of the druids and knights, Caesar was attempting to provide a picture to the
people in Rome of the holders of power in Gaul and Britain (6.13), but some of the leading members of Gallic society already had existing friendships with Rome and the senate. Caesar’s account of the revolt of 52 presents us with a picture of the Arverni leadership. Vercingetorix was proclaimed rex over the leadership of his uncle Gobannitio who, like Vercingetorix’s father who desired kingship regnum, held the positions of princeps (7.4). Military leadership among the Arverni can be found with Vercingetorix, and his role of imperium (7.4), Vercassivellaunus, as noted, summa imperi (7.76) and dux (7.83) and Critognatus who held noble authority and character magnae habitus auctoritatis (7.77) within Alesia. This shows that even when Vercingetorix was surrounded at Alesia the state continued in its war and he had leadership support with him.

Elements of the Carnutes’ nobility adduced ancestors who were reges (5.25), and Teutomatus’ father was king rex of the Nitiobriges (7.46). In 52, nearly all the leaders of Gaul, whether chiefdoms or archaic states deferred their authority to Vercingetorix and it is highly probable that he had a strong support base in the form of the druids.

**Caesar and Hostage-exchange**

The Gallic practice of hostage-exchange had an impact on power and leadership between Gallic communities and Caesar’s observations in 52 needs to be discussed. Caesar viewed the exchanging of hostages between Gauls as a step towards open hostility and rebellion against Rome (Gallic War 3.10), and in 52, the Carnutes warned others against hostage-exchange for fear of giving away their intentions of a common Gallic covenant against Caesar (7.2).

Once the revolt was declared, the Gauls reinforced their commitment to the cause through the act of hostage-exchange. Vercingetorix, in ‘virtue of the power’ conferred as imperium made ‘requisitions of hostages’ on all the states who had so far joined the rebellion (7.4). As the revolt spread more people offered hostages: the Nitiobriges and Gabali to the Cadurean Lucterius (7.7). The revolt of the Aedui in 52 set off a new series of hostage-exchange as more Gallic people committed to the rebellion (7.63), and, as commander-in-chief, Vercingetorix requested hostages from those states in revolt (7.64). What is

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22 Caesar lists the Sequanian Catamantaloeides as friend of the Roman people (1.3). Diviciacus of the Aedui states his people’s friendship to Rome (1.31). Friendship to Rome or the senate was no guarantee against hostility. See Ariovistus in Book 1.

23 There is confusion whether Celtillus was, or sought, to be king of all Gaul or just the Arverni (Gallic War. 7.4).
important here is that Vercingetorix was apparently expected to request or demand such hostages without reciprocating. The other Gallic leaders were obviously submitting to Vercingetorix’s over-all command, but it does mirror Caesar’s behaviour, however, the major difference was that the Gauls were joined in a common cause.

The revolt of the Aedui had major implication for the power that Caesar held over the leaders of Gaul. Noviodunum, one of the major oppida of the Aedui, held much of Caesar’s money, corn and the army’s baggage (Gallic War 7.55). More importantly, in the context of power, all of Caesar’s Gallic hostages were also being held at Noviodunum (7.55). The advantage that Caesar once held over the Gauls was now in the hands of the Aedui. This situation was not lost on Vercingetorix who moved to meet the Aedui and he called a convention. Caesar’s hostages were placed under the protection of the magistrate at Bibracte (7.55). This move strongly points to the legality of hostage-exchange, a move initiated by the Aedui leaders and respected by Vercingetorix and the other rebel leaders.

Caesar described the Arverni as factional whose leadership was based on its leading families. Kin-based or dynastic aspirations challenged the political mechanisms of statehood. Caesar noted that Vercingetorix’s initial power-base came from the needy and brigands but was able to draw on the Arverni and then a wider group of people beyond the kin-group. This extended beyond the Arverni as the revolt grew in momentum. Vercingetorix and his uncle Gobannitio were clearly leading members of what Caesar saw as part of the equestrian class among the Arverni, with the former providing Caesar with the image of a Celtic warrior king and a worthy opponent.

The Arverni were part of the groups Caesar distinguished as Gauls (Gallic War 1.1) and came from the regionally distinct central region. The Arverni were an archaic state that shared a similar political system to those of the Helvetii, Aedui and Sequani. Their proximity to, and conflict with, the city states of the Mediterranean was possible impetus for a move towards a political system that placed power in the hands of an elected body, removing the chief as the main holder of group power. The confederations that had formed in 57, 56 and

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54-3 to expel Caesar were clear indications of regional blocs. They must have attended the pan-Gallic councils that Caesar convened, as he did not single them out as avoiding them, as he did with other Gallic groups (*Gallic War* 4.22).

Given that Caesar demanded all Gallic peoples provide him with cavalry for his second British campaign in 54, Vercingetorix might have been in the ranks of the 4,000 that served the Romans, he may have also gained support in 52 rapidly because many of the Gallic chiefs were serving Caesar.

Archaeological evidence shows that gold was in enough supply for Vercingetorix to mint coins. He had the power to over-turn the authority of the leading chiefs through his immediate supporters and those who gathered around Gergovia early in 52 (*Gallic War* 7.4). These two factors, wealth and authority were what Caesar recognised as the prerequisites of Gallic power, but Vercingetorix was able to take this power further than any other Gaul.


Councils and assemblies appear to have been an important part of the development of alliance and war aims in 53-2. The deliberative processes of these councils have been lost through lack of written records, but, by examining *Māori* examples, it may be possible to deduce how Gallic people negotiated alliances and responded to Caesar. Vercingetorix was able to attain supreme command of the Gallic people in 52. To achieve this Vercingetorix used all the mechanisms of Gallic political life.

After defeating the Helvetii in 58 Caesar convened a major Gallic council (*Gallic War* 1.30).26 This was set up annually and in line with what Caesar described as a Gallic “custom” (6.3, 44). Leading Gallic nobles used these conventions to meet Caesar afterwards to deal with private matters (1.31). This is Caesar’s account of events, but it would be reasonable to assume that many Gallic leaders would have also taken this opportunity to meet and discuss regional and local matters among themselves, reaffirming ties of kinship or alliances. But was this a pre-existing Gallic custom or creation of Caesar?

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26 Miranda Aldhouse-Green suggests that these councils may have been Caesar’s initiative. *Caesar’s Druids*. New Haven, Yale University Press. 2010. p. 43. This is not what Caesar states in Book 6.
A comparison with the Crown’s experience in Aotearoa/New Zealand as the British attempted to negotiate with Māori suggests that a pan-Gallic council was in fact the creation of Caesar. During the colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand, the Crown organised meetings or hui with the leading Māori rangatira. The Crown used such hui to address issues of sovereignty, law or land and to assess the mood of Māori when situations erupted into open conflict. A major hui was called in July, 1860 at Kohimarama after the Crown had fought Wiremu Kingi in Taranaki earlier in 1860 and was attended by 200 rangatira with strong Crown leanings.27 This hui was an unusual environment for Māori as it was, in theory, an acceptance of Queen Victoria’s mana over their own.28 One of the major points of discussion was supposed to be the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840, but this was put aside in favour of other issues, including the criticism of war in Taranaki, matters concerning the Kingitanga, Crown indifference to land sales and other matters of a local nature.29 While the Crown had a particular agenda set for this hui, it was not followed. This comparison gives an insight into the situation Caesar may have found himself in as he, too, was imposing an alien process on what would have been a traditional, well established set of protocols, although we cannot confidently prove this.

The Gallic leaders who attended Caesar’s conventions would have shown a friendly face, but there can be little doubt that Gallic matters and Roman behaviour would have been discussed. Officially, the Gauls may have respected Caesar’s authority, as he was holding many of their family members hostage, but perhaps there was a level of indirect opposition, as there was among Māori when faced with a similar delegation of their leadership or authority.

The conventions held by Vercingetorix and the affirmation of his supreme leadership (Gallic War 7. 1, 14, 29, 63 and 75) could mean that this was either an abandoned, yet traditional function of Gallic society or an idea that developed from Caesar’s conventions. Caesar does list Gallic leaders who held kingship or immense power over all or large parts of Gaul in previous times (2.4, 7.4). Like

28 Paterson. p. 143. The translators of the Treaty of Waitangi were at pains not to use the term mana in the document as it was understood by many Europeans involved that no rangatira would sign the Treaty if it meant signing away their, and their peoples mana. Issues of translation and interpretation continue to affect Treaty claims to this day.
the *hui* at Kohimarama, pan-Gallic conventions would have represented a new and unusual environment for the Gauls. The personality and energy of Vercingetorix possibly forced the issue of a supreme military commander, but his leadership was endorsed by the united council made up of all the chiefs of Gaul except those who remained loyal to Caesar. The decision of these councils placed Vercingetorix in a position of authority over the Gallic communities, giving him a huge reservoir of manpower to fight Caesar.

As discussed above, the Carnutes voted against exchanging of hostages in 52, for fear that this would prematurely expose their plans of rebellion, but instead they took oaths of honour over assembled war standards (*Gallic War* 7.2), no doubt a religious act and spiritually important. Early in the winter campaign of 52, Vercingetorix asked those who had sworn on their war standards to support a general uprising to remain loyal to him (7.4), gaining the position of supreme commander during these diplomatic missions by his deputies. The oaths taken under the war standards was a formal and solemn event and it is hard to imagine, after Caesar’s comments in Book 6, an absence of druids or priests.

An oath of honour was taken in 58 when the assembled Gallic chiefs pledged to meet for a convention (with Caesar’s approval) on a set day to discuss certain petitions, the agreement being that the proceedings would not be published without appropriate authority (*Gallic War* 1.30). Both the oath in 58 and an oath made by the pan-Gallic leadership in 52 did not require the exchange of hostages but were possibly binding in the same sense. Caesar’s authority in 58 was clear, having defeated the Helvetii, and the circumstances of the oath in 52 required secrecy but an acknowledgement the importance in committing to each other in solemnity. The people of Iron Age Europe clearly had other arrangements that bound people and individuals together, and oath-taking was another Gallic characteristic that was binding as groups formed alliances (1.3, 5.6, and 7.66).

Māori society offers further insights into the religious and political implications of oath-taking. At the great land-holding *hui* at Manawapou in 1854 oaths were given over a Christian bible that was then buried in the ground and covered with a cairn of stone.  

around the meeting.\textsuperscript{31} While the \textit{hui} at Manawapou was not military in nature, those who arranged this meeting used weapons as a means to validate and add solemnity to the agreements. When rumours surfaced that a \textit{rangatira} had sold this hatchet to a European, tensions increased between those who stood by the decision to hold onto their land and those who began to waiver under Crown pressure to sell their land.

We see a parallel process in action among the Gauls when Caesar discusses the practice of offering weapons up before and after battle (\textit{Gallic War}. 6.17). This suggests a religious dimension to Iron-Age warfare, and given that the druids oversaw all aspects of ritual (6.16), Caesar’s observation of the druids’ aloofness from war is questionable.\textsuperscript{32} The importance of such ritual would have a parallel in Māori tradition in that the “blessing of weapons” was a natural and spiritual component to fighting. \textit{Tohunga} would recite \textit{karakia} over weapons and warriors making them \textit{tapu} before a raid or battle and removing that \textit{tapu} once fighting had ceased.\textsuperscript{33} The \textit{tapu} placed over the Māori warriors (\textit{whaka tapu}) was handing them over to the gods, and their kin would send them off as though they were dead (essentially a \textit{tangi} or funeral). The \textit{whaka noa} was performed to remove the \textit{tapu} from the warriors and embrace them back into the community.

The integration of warfare and spirituality which was important in Māori society can be seen in Iron Age warfare and we can gain insight into the importance of druidic ritual in maintaining group cohesion behind a strong leader. There may also be parallels to Māori society, since some ideas of death and combat are mirrored in Late Iron-Age warfare as two strands of war and spirituality.\textsuperscript{34} The use of blue body paint or woad, suggests a ritualistic component to Iron-Age warfare.\textsuperscript{35} Caesar mentions its application only by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} Sole. p. 222.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Diviciacus of the Aedui was a druid and a constant companion of Caesar’s during the early campaigns in Gaul. How active he was as a fighter in unclear but he certainly led Aedui warriors into the lands of the Bellovaci in 57 (\textit{Gallic War} 2.5,10). Caesar’s statement that druids were aloof from war is a major contradiction in his ethnography in book six.
\item \textsuperscript{33} A. Ballara. \textit{Iwi: The Dynamics of Māori Tribal Organisation from C1769 to C1945.} Wellington, Victoria University Press. 1998. p. 117.
\item \textsuperscript{35} Woad is a blue paint extracted from \textit{Isalis Tinctalia}. A body found in Lindow Moss in the early eighties had signs of body paint, supporting Caesar’s reports of painted Britons (\textit{Gallic War} 5.14). D.Clarke. and A.Roberts. \textit{Twilight of the Celtic Gods: An Exploration of Britain’s Hidden Pagan Traditions.} London, Blandfords. 1996. p. 34. Anne Ross and Don Robins attach
Britons (Gallic War 5.14), not by Gauls, and this may well be how he recognised Britons fighting in support of Gallic armies. Its application, however, suggests that the Celts of late Iron Age Britain (and Gaul) observed a spiritual dimension to warfare.

Iron-Age communities were protected by the local war gods who were personified by the people and thanked for success, as material finds and weapons hoards in aquatic settings suggests, representing offerings by warriors to their war god.\textsuperscript{36} Cults associated with warriors and weapons were a feature of Iron Age religion and society and are traced back to the Bronze Age.\textsuperscript{37}

In situations where the Gauls delegated chiefly authority they would have observed rules and etiquette, possibly with rituals officiated by leaders from within the communities, as Caesar describes (Gallic War 6.16). Archaeological finds of older Iron Age swords at Alesia may represent family heirlooms, but also the object in which chiefly power resided. Caesar records oaths taken over war standards, items that would have held great importance to the local people (7.2). This suggests that power and authority was attributed to sacred items or weapons.

The position Vercingetorix attained in 52 is comparable to Māori arikitanga and rangatiratanga, the supreme mana or power of the Māori.\textsuperscript{38} The ariki and rangatira can be seen in the equation of the hereditary rank/noble status (arikitanga) and hereditary office of leadership and authority (rangatiratanga).\textsuperscript{39} The ariki and rangatira were the two main types of superior positions that sometimes coincided, and denoted supreme power or status, the power of the gods, chiefly lineage and territorial possession, advantage or control.\textsuperscript{40} The ariki was the first-born male (ariki Tamaroa) or female (ariki Tapairu) of the senior

\textsuperscript{36} Green. 1993. pp. 103-4. Sites of mass deposition of items includes the Battersea shield found on the Thames and large collections in Switzerland (Lake Neuchâtel), Wales (Llyn Cerrig Bach), Gourney-sur-Arond (Oise) and Ribemont where weapons were deliberately damaged and place in a hoard. Green. 1993. p. 106. Wells. 2001. p. 88. The site at Tiefernau in Switzerland had over 1000 deposits including iron swords (some bent and broken), scabbards, horse harnesses, chariot fittings and coins. Wells. 2001. p. 91.

\textsuperscript{37} Green. 1993. p. 104.


\textsuperscript{39} Hamilton and Hirszowicz. 1991. p. 64.

\textsuperscript{40} Barlow. p. 6.
This title also indicated nominal leadership. Rangatiratanga (*mana rangatira*) was the functioning of true leadership. It would display evidence of breeding or greatness. The *rangatira* was defined as a chief, male, noble, well born, and master. Whenua *rangatira* was the term for a state of peace. The role of the *rangatira* and the power or authority they held (in the form of *mana*) was always assessed in terms of their relationship to the hapū and the circumstances of the time.

In a similar way Vercingetorix’s authority was granted because of his position as leader of the Arverni, a once powerful people, and made supreme leader of the revolt through a process in which councils or conventions voted in favour of his leading the combined Gallic force, either by consensus or majority rule. Since Māori society followed a decision-making process that was consensus-based, this allows us to understand the nature of Vercingetorix’s leadership. Vercingetorix routinely offered the validation of his leadership back to those who gave it to him. He maintained his command after the loss of Vellaunodunum and Cenabum and the reverse at Noviodunum, while realigning the strategic focus (*Gallic War* 7.15). Early in the campaign around Avaricum, Vercingetorix was accused of treachery for leaving the Gallic army without a leader while he took his cavalry to scout Caesar’s position (7.20). At this accusation, Vercingetorix gave the title of supreme commander back, but the military host reaffirmed its decision and loyalty to him (7.20-1). The last, unsuccessful challenge to Vercingetorix’s command came when the Aedui revolted against Caesar and demanded that they should direct the campaign and lead the Gallic army (7.63). Each time Vercingetorix was chosen by those attending the convention to lead the revolt.

The premature moves of the eastern Gallic bloc over the winter of 54-3 would have impressed on Vercingetorix that he plan his strategy and demand a sole command, as seen in Britain. A major factor in this was the need to have direction over the revolt with a clear idea of what the Gauls wanted to achieve. This required the leadership of one individual who was the leader of a people who were traditional enemies for many Gallic people.

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42 Durie *Custom Law*. p. 36. Also see O’Malley who describes the relationship between Rangatira and the hapū in Māori society as ‘a highly responsive and participatory form of decision-making.’ p. 195.
The Gallic Druids and Māori Tohunga

The attention Caesar gives to the druids suggests that in his eyes these members of Gallic and British society were important. Caesar describes at length the Gallic and British druides (Gallic War. 6.13-15). According to Caesar, druids were concerned with divine worship, sacrifice, and the public and private interpretation of ritual questions, they decided issues of debate in public and private affairs and judged rewards and penalties. Druids could also ban anyone from sacrifice (6.13). Failure to follow their wishes or judgement would result in banishment, and those banished from sacrifice were considered criminals (6.13).

The druids may have been important enough to have been able to unite all the people (except the Remi and Lingones) to a common endeavour. While some believe that Caesar was discussing an archaic religious order in the druids, it is possible that the trauma of Roman invasion may have seen this group resurgent by 52. Caesar had first-hand exposure to information on this group through his personal friendship with the druid Diviciacus of the Aedui. Caesar’s failure, or choice, to not list the class of druids elsewhere in his commentaries has created uncertainty over this group and their role in Gallic and British society at the time of his invasion. Caesar’s use of the term “priest” and not “druid” further confuses the issue, but comparative studies with Māori and later accounts may provide some clarity to this class and their role in Gallic and British society.

Caesar has discussed the role that the druids played in officiating over all aspects of ritual (Gallic War 6.13), and the material found in burials from Bronze and Iron-Age gravesites have been interpreted as evidence of religious observance and the importance placed on this aspect of life for the people. What is clear, however, is that Caesar felt it important to record this class of

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44 Cicero indirectly records that Diviciacus was a druid and a gust-friend of Caesar’s (Div. 1.90). Caesar may not have noted Diviciacus as druid as it could have been common knowledge. He may have not wanted to associate his “friend” with a group that was showing dissent.
men, and to provide detailed information. The term *tohunga* comes from the root word *tohu* “to point out” and tradition states that *tohunga* arrived on the canoe/waka that all Māori claim descent from. *Tohunga* made up the early crew or captained those early waka. Once established, *tohunga* (and *ariki*) were tasked with the reestablishment of the essential power of the gods to the new land with exact ritual and the placement of sacred or *tapu* objects and it was their role to name key areas, stake claims to land and make peace.

For the Gauls, the druids held a place of authority in their communities similar to the *tohunga*. Druids were held in great honour, and many young men were instructed by them (*Gallic War. 6.13*), who learnt lore and training by heart, with *some* remaining in training for twenty years (6.14). Druids would not commit utterances to writing but used Greek letters for the mundane (6.14), and Caesar believed that this was so druid lore would not become common knowledge, while also helping to cultivate the memory. All this lore was passed down to the young initiates (6.14). Caesar does not identify where druids gained their instruction, but, it is conceivable that trainees were instructed and introduced to the roles of druids in a manner similar to that of the *tohunga* in Māori society. *Tohunga* were trained at *whare wananga*, *whare marae* and *whare kura* (special houses/schools of learning). Their knowledge was guarded and only taught to those thought worthy. There was no rule of inheritance in Māori society, as seen in the prototypical chiefdoms, but there are cases where

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50 Bentley. p. 90.
51 Durie. p. 33.
great tohunga came from a long line of tohunga.\footnote{Te Atua Wera (or Papahurahia) was one such tohunga from the Hokianga (far North Island). Bentley. p. 91.} Tohunga were also receptive and respectful of any special knowledge or skill, especially from newcomers.\footnote{Bentley. p. 90.}

According to Caesar, druids meet once a year in the lands of the Carnutes,\footnote{The forest of the Carnutes was believed the centre of Gaul and a sacred/consecrated spot (Gallic War 6.13).} and those with disputes gathered to put forward their cases and would obey the findings and judgements of druids (Gallic War 6.12).\footnote{Perhaps the druid council was a place for pan-Gallic issues to be discussed with local disputes being dealt with “in house”.} Caesar even claimed that there was an arch-druid of the highest authority who held power for life and was succeeded after a contest by rivals drawn from among pre-eminent druids (6.12), sometimes decided by armed combat (6.13). Tohunga were also fiercely competitive with other tohunga and fought physically and spiritually to maintain their mana and that of their rangatira, as powerful men never tolerated an upstart\footnote{Bentley. p. 96. J. Cowen. The Adventures of Kimble Bent. Wellington. 1911. p. 105.} and some tohunga were rangatira in their own right. Many had wives since their mana meaning that they were desirable as a partner or husband.\footnote{Bentley. pp. 99, 101. Tohitapu of Nga Puhi was a great tohunga rangatira.} The position of tohunga was not reserved to males alone, and there are even several cases of female tohunga.\footnote{Durie. p. 33. E. Best. Notes on the Art of War: As Conducted by the Maori of New Zealand, with Accounts of Various Customs, Rites, Superstitions, & C., Pertaining to War, as Practiced and Believed in By the Ancient Maori. Evans, J. (ed) Auckland, Reed Publishing in Association with the Polynesian Society. 2001. p. 46.}

Tohunga, like the druids, were teachers and advisors, and the specialists in discipline.\footnote{Durie. p. 31.} They were also priests, sorcerers/wizards, seers, clairvoyants and held the positions of war priest and healer/doctor, while also dealing with issues of dispute and punishment.\footnote{Durie. p. 33. E. Best. Notes on the Art of War: As Conducted by the Maori of New Zealand, with Accounts of Various Customs, Rites, Superstitions, & C., Pertaining to War, as Practiced and Believed in By the Ancient Maori. Evans, J. (ed) Auckland, Reed Publishing in Association with the Polynesian Society. 2001. p. 46.} It was the tohunga’s role to maintain traditions and connect the spiritual world to the physical.\footnote{Durie. p. 31. Ballara. 1998. p.112. Ballara. 2003. p. 117. Bentley. pp. 83, 84, 89, 91, 92. P. Moon. This Horrid Practice: The Myth and Reality of Traditional Maori Cannibalism. North Shore, Penguin Books (NZ). 2008. p. 166. Best. 2001. p. 43. Cowen. 1911. Kimble Bent (a Pākehā/Māori) learnt Māori medicine from tohunga. p. 328.} This was achieved through the transmission of waiata (song), karakia (prayer), whakapapa (genealogy) and waka (traditions),\footnote{Ballara. 2003. p. 76. Moon. p. 166.} and as such they held great influence and mana over the people of their hapū.\footnote{Ballara. 1998. pp. 112, 201. Bentley. p. 92.} As priest, tohunga recited karakia over all manner of
activities in daily life, providing that important link between the secular, sacred and profane, the people and their gods and ancestors. This connection to the spirit world also meant that the tohunga were well placed to read signs from the gods or ancestors. These tohunga were known as tohunga matakite, who divined omens given by the stars, from dreams or through other signs. Tohunga, through their communion with the spirits, were also capable of telling the future, raising the dead and had control over certain spiritual forces, a feature that was similarly seen to be important in the relationship between the people and the druids in Celtic society (Gallic War 6.16).

The training of the tohunga involved gaining the ability to commune with the spirit world, where the gods and ancestors lived. This provided spiritual power and was the basis for the authority the tohunga held within their communities. Having spiritual power and authority meant that the knowledge the tohunga had was tapu. This knowledge also gave the tohunga the mandate to impose tapu and practice curse giving and removing, place blessings over crops, hunting and fishing trips or campaigns, weapons and equipment. In a similar manner to the druids (Gallic War 6.16), it was believed that Tohunga also had power over the environment and the spirits that could affect fishing, planting or campaigning.

Numerous young men joined the druids of their own accord, while others were sent by their families, since druids did not pay war-tax and were exempt from military service and all liabilities, as druids, ‘usually hold aloof from war’, (Gallic War 6.14). Given the statement from Caesar that the druids could break-out into armed fights over the position of the arch-druid, it is conceivable that the druids were not that aloof from war, but where circumstances dictated, would become active participants in battle as, when one examines the role of the tohunga in Māori warfare, there is ample evidence of their active involvement in inter-hapū conflict. The solemnity of oaths in remote places over war standards too suggests a link between the spiritual world of the late Iron-Age Gauls and war. The war tohunga was a fundamental part of any taua going on campaign.

64 Ballara. 1998. p. 112.
68 Bentley. p. 90.
Not only would they fight ritual war or taua tapu, tohunga were required to divine the outcome of battle, and to apply the necessary tapu (whakatapu) to the warriors as they left their communities to fight and remove it when they returned (whakanoa).

The war tohunga’s duties went beyond the opening and closing stages of conflict, sending away and receiving the warriors back into their communities. War tohunga recited karakia throughout the campaign, providing spiritual protection to the taua, they would perform karakia over the arms and men to maintain morale, and they oversaw the spiritual protection of the wounded and dying. During the actual battle war tohunga were active in both spiritual and physical actions. They were constant in the recitation of karakia and actively fought in the front ranks to maintain morale, with the fitter and younger tohunga taking their place in battle, while the older ones stayed in the rear to maintain the spiritual protection of the taua at the peak of battle.

Warfare definitely had a religious element in the societies of Iron Age Gaul and Britain, and Caesar recorded at least one druid present on the battlefield, the Aeduan Diviciacus who was ever-present among Caesar’s retinue during his early campaigns. The druids, like the tohunga, would have had a two-fold impact on the battlefield. They would have raised and maintained the morale of their own warriors while possibly undermining that of the enemy, and druids may also have actively fought in battle. Given that elections for the arch-druid could sometimes end in fights, the idea of druids fighting in the ranks of their warriors is not unrealistic.

Caesar states that the Gauls were “greatly devoted to ritual observances” (Gallic War 6.16). Those affected by severe maladies or who were going to war would sacrifice, or vow to sacrifice, humans to the “immortal Gods” (6.16). The immortal Gods accepted nothing less than a life-for-a-life, and Caesar described a practice where a wicker-man was built for the purpose of sacrifice to the gods (6.16). Criminals, so Caesar claims were satisfactory offerings to the immortal

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72 Bentley. pp. 109, 118, 122
73 Bentley. p. 129.
gods, but the innocent would also be used (6.16). Tohunga also established what behaviour was acceptable within their communities and cannibalism was an aspect of Māori society which the tohunga sanctioned and for which they passed on instructions for the method of death and consumption of a corpses.

In Caesar’s interpretation druids clearly held a similar position as Māori tohunga among their communities and with this comparative material validate some of what Caesar noted but expand the picture still further.

Although at the local level, each kin-grouping would have worshipped local deities that represented all aspects of their life, including warlike activities, Caesar acknowledged further the druidic tradition that all Gauls traced their ancestry back to a common ancestor (6.18). This would have connected the druids to all the people and provided the potential for pan-Gallic politics, based on religious commonality. That Caesar knew this, when most druidic traditions were kept sacred, suggest that his informant (possibly Diviciacus) was forewarning Caesar about the potential of a pan-Gallic threat and the potency of the druids to organise it.

Some scholars believe that Caesar’s material was taken from the older writings of Posidonius. Caesar’s failure and that of his subordinate Hiritius, to nominate any druid suggests that Caesar was indeed drawing on a tradition from an earlier age. Taking this further, it could be asserted that Caesar’s account of the druids was outdated, and that their influence had declined in social importance at the time of Caesar’s conquest. There is little debate over the impact and immense stress Caesar’s invasion and conquest of Gaul had on those Gallic communities, and it is this stress that may have seen a resurgent druidic power as a rallying point under Vercingetorix for Gaul to unite against Rome.

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74 Perhaps the non-criminal victims had little fear given their belief in reincarnation (symbolic, chosen ones, honorific).
75 Moon. pp. 165-6.
78 Hutton . p. 4. Caesar may have presented the druid as reflecting Roman society and their priestly class. Of which Caesar was a member. Dunham . p. 114. Hutton. p. 5. An interesting dichotomy exists around the image that classical sources around the first century BC provide of the druids. They are portrayed as a wise priestly intelligencia on the one hand and practitioners of barbaric ritual on the other see Hutton. p. 10.
The Carnutes, who controlled the great forest where the druids are said to have met, were instrumental in the revolts of 54/3 and 52. While this may not have been a “national” movement, when we consider the diverse nature of Gallic societies and the equally diverse religious outlook, it has been asserted that druids could represent evidence for mutual belief and that matters of ritual were possibly mechanisms for a degree of unification.81

Scholars have questioned Caesar’s exaggeration or embellishment for the importance of this group and their centralised power.82 The case of druids in Britain is unclear, but Caesar claimed, that the druidic custom came from Britain and those wanting to study it more deeply would journey to Britain to do so (Gallic War. 6.13).83 Given that he spent little time in Britain, most of which was taken up by campaigning, Caesar may have gained his druidic information from Gallic informants or from Posidonius. He certainly does not mention druids throughout his British campaigns although later classical texts do discuss the druids in the British societies.84

It is a possibility that the druids were above local politics and that they could temporarily organise or gather together groups of people who would normally have had a natural antagonism towards each other. The druids may well have functioned as a focus for revitalisation in response to Roman military imperialism.85 Given that the Gauls and Briton were in constant conflict with each other, how would a group like the druids operate in an environment where any alliance was only temporarily binding at best? The absence of a pan-Gallic “police” force is also at odds with the idea of a pan-druidic judicial system that Caesar discusses (Gallic War 6.12). Religious sanction however, like the application of tapu in Māori society, would have provided power behind the passing of judgement. Like the Celts, Māori experienced many challenges to their world after contact with Europe. There is little doubt that the introduction of Christianity to Aotearoa/New Zealand had mixed effects on Māori society.

83 H. D. Rankin does not disagree with Caesar’s statement but also warns that there is no way of telling where druidism came from. Celts and the Classical World. London, Croom Helm Ltd. 1987. p. 276.
84 For a recent survey of classical accounts on the druids in general see Hutton. pp.1-23, and Berresford Ellis 1994. pp. 50-69. Rankin writes that little information on druids in Britain is written prior to 60AD. p. 191. Classical information on the druids in Britain increases around 60AD and perhaps their presence suggests that they were pushed out of, or underground, in Roman controlled Gaul and into Britain.
85 Rankin. p. 291.
Some embraced this new religion, while others resisted it, with the *tohunga* leading opposition. There were, however those who walked in two worlds. The result in some cases was a syncretic form of religion that incorporated Christianity (usually Old Testament) and traditional Māori spirituality.\(^{86}\) In the mid-to-late 1860s some syncretic religions manifested into revitalisation movements with several, like *Pai marire* taking on a raw militarism that shocked Europeans.

Despite the Treaty of Waitangi (AD1840) containing an article on religious freedom, this was not extended to the *tohunga* who were targeted by acts of parliament (the Tohunga Suppression Act 1907\(^ {87}\) that made traditional beliefs, particularly those concerning Māori medicine, outlawed. The Romans after Caesar took exception to druidism, and the conquest of Gaul started a process of decline for local spiritual worship and the power of the druids, if the latter had not already started to decline in power prior to Caesar.\(^ {88}\) This would mean that any revitalisation in Gaul could grow from a similar set of circumstances to those seen in Aotearoa/New Zealand where Māori society struggled to cope with land loss, war, a replacement of their spiritual beliefs, and diseases that the new god could not prevent. Caesar’s invasion and conquest of Gaul was destructive for the Gallic communities, and the druids, never totally absent, may have once more become important as desperate people looked to the past. The revolt of 52 represents a huge change in Gallic thinking towards the Romans in that almost every Gallic *civitas* mobilised to eject Caesar.

A wide civic religion embedded in the socio-political fabric of late Iron-Age Gallic society overriding all other cults and rituals has been suggested.\(^ {89}\) This model attributes centralised support for Vercingetorix despite appearing very general in Caesar’s assessment. When considering the diversity of the Gauls and Britons of the late Iron Age the druids appear to have reflected the dynamism and diversity.\(^ {90}\)

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\(^{88}\) Claudius abolished druidism during his reign but those emperors before him were hardly warm towards this Celtic religion. Aldhouse-Green. 2010. p. 27.

\(^{89}\) Aldhouse-Green. 2010 . p. 58.

\(^{90}\) Aldhouse-Green. 2010 . p. 31.
The confederations of Cassivellaunus and Vercingetorix were short lived, and if involved, the druids perhaps only enjoyed a limited authority dependent on the threat at hand. That Caesar was able to usurp the judicial power ascribed to the druids could mean that they were in decline as a political force in 58. In a similar manner, as Crown authority and law became effective in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the power of the rangatira and tohunga came under threat. Therefore, the establishment of Caesar’s authority in Gaul possibly allowed the druids to act as a resurgent element in a revolutionary movement under the leadership of Vercingetorix, but later their central power was broken and pushed underground with the Gallic defeat at Alesia in 52.

8.5. Caesar and the war of 52

The death of Acco by flogging at the hands of the Romans was of concern for many of Gallic leaders who held a convention to discuss the state of affairs after the revolt over the winter of 54 and Caesar’s use of vastatio in 53 (Gallic War 7.1). Perhaps Caesar’s boldness in killing his enemies, such as Dumnorix and Acco, made all Gallic leaders re-assess the situation for their own people in particular, and for Gaul in general. There may have been a growing sense of national unity because the Gallic way of life (in a broad sense) was under threat. The need to stop Caesar may have been realised after the premature revolt in 54/3 but when all the Gallic leaders presented a united front, Vercingetorix may have impressed on the Arverni the need to act.

The destruction of the Eburones and other Belgic people during the Caesar’s campaigns of 53 may have been too much for Commius, an Atrebates rex who had thrived under Caesar’s patronage. Similarly, in Southern Taranaki a pro-government Māori, Wiremu Katene Tuwhakaru, “turned his coat” and joined the war tohunga Titokowaru after seeing his people suffer from the bush-scouring activities of Imperial and colonial troops. He did not go alone and took over 50 of his kinfolk with him.

After the rebellion of 52 and his part in it, Commius could not remain in Gaul, and he joined his people already in Britain. Here, the Channel prevented the Romans from following. Roman success in 52 made Commius’ leadership in

93 Belich. 2010. p. 75.
Gaul untenable, but his personal standing remained intact as he moved the base of rule to Britain, effectively creating a new chiefdom outside his traditional area of power.94 The actions of Commius in becoming openly hostile to Rome were mirrored by Katene in Southern Taranaki when he faced issues of allegiance and land confiscation. As with Māori, the Gauls viewed land-ownership of supreme importance in the maintenance of status. Katene’s defection was not an isolated instance and other Māori moved from support for the crown to open hostility when matters of land were concerned. The loss of land may not have been immediate during Caesar’s conquest of Gaul, but the disruption to the local communities would have made their leaders re-assess their service to Caesar.

An examination of the behaviour of the Māori rangatira, Wiremu Kingi Rangitake, gives us an insight into the behaviour of Commius when he was faced with a situation that questioned his relationship with Caesar. Kingi was a rangatira who had migrated to the top of the South Island, after pressure from Waikato war parties made his and his people’s position untenable in Northern Taranaki. When tensions rose in the Wellington region over settler pressure and Māori moves to hold on to their land in the mid 1840s, Kingi supported the crown against other Māori.95 Kingi and his people returned to Northern Taranaki in 1848,96 to take up the occupation of their traditional lands, but in doing so, they started a land-selling/land-holding conflict, as government officials tried to buy land for an increasing the European settler population. When another rangatira, Ruhia Teira (who did not follow tikanga and obtain a hapū consensus), sold a block of land, Wiremu Kingi found he and his people in open and armed conflict with the Crown and Imperial troops.97

These examples show that, for Māori communities, their friendship would last as long as it benefited the wider group and perhaps Commius, faced with a decision over his existing alliance with Caesar supported Vercingetorix from a need to follow the sentiment of his people, the real source of his power and position. We should never assume that, for the Gauls the Romans were the only option for autonomy or as the means to accrue or hold their positions of leadership. The Aeduan revolt is a spectacular example of factional behaviour.

95 Belich. 1998. p. 76.
among the Gauls of the Late Iron Age, and an open change from support for, to opposition to Caesar and Rome. Caesar tried hard to keep the Aedui loyal, but perhaps he was fighting a losing battle once the leaders of this group realised that they would be strong only if they had Caesar’s support.98

There were other political dramas unfolding as the revolt intensified. For the Nitiobriges, the revolt of 52 may have proved problematic. The current king Ollovico sent his son to fight among the other Gallic people, while he stayed at home (Gallic War 7.31). His father had enjoyed the friendship of the Roman senate, which may have evolved into friendship with Caesar, as had been the case with Diviciacus. If this was the situation, Ollovico’s actions of “rebel in the field” and “neutrality at home” would be a natural response to an uncertain political situation.

Confederations

The confederation was the standard response to Caesar. The revolt of 52 was no different, but there were key factors that prevented Vercingetorix from drawing in more people to open rebellion. Caesar devoted much detail to the Gallic revolt of 52 and provides evidence for those who rallied around Vercingetorix. This information tells a story of gradual support that becomes a true pan-Gallic enterprise after the revolt of the Aedui.

Events in Rome encouraged the Gauls to think that the time had come to remove the Romans. A convention was held in which all the chiefs were summoned (Gallic War 7.1). All agreed that the major aim was to keep Caesar from returning to Gaul and joining his troops (7.1). Caesar claimed that liberty was the main sentiment and the Gauls felt it was better to die in war that live to lose that liberty (7.1). The Carnutes volunteered to start the rebellion and a starting date was agreed on.

The Carnutes opened the rebellion with the violent (and probably symbolic) killing of the Roman traders and other official Roman citizens at Cenabum (7.3). This set Vercingetorix on the path of taking leadership of the Arverni (7.4), a move possibly discussed at the convention. Once this was achieved, the Arverni were joined by their allies (and possibly clients) the Cadruci, the Lemovices, whereas, probably in support of the Carnutes, the Senones and the Parisii joined

98 Perhaps the removal of the brothers Diviciacus and Dumnorix began an undercurrent of dissent.
the revolt (7.4). The Arverni and Carnutes were linked geographically to the Turoni and Aulerci who also bordered the maritime or Armorican people (7.4). The Pictones, Andi and Aulerci swiftly joined Vercingetorix (7.4). The first phase of the rebellion encompassed central and western Gaul.

After Vercingetorix had sent the Cadrucian Lucterius to attack the province, the rebellion was joined by the Bituriges (Gallic War 7.5), the Nitiobriges, the Ruteni and the Gabali (7.5-7). The Bituriges were important to the rebellion as they appeared to be the wheat bowl of Gaul (7.13) and had all manner of mineral wealth including iron, another essential for war (7.22). This would have made the Bituriges important to the war effort and Avaricum a natural target for Caesar. The importance of oppida to the Gauls in pre-Roman times has been questioned, but the destruction of the major oppida in 52 as a way to deny Caesar supplies suggests that they were important as centres for meeting. The Nitiobriges, the Ruteni and the Gabali were vital to Vercingetorix’s need to place the Province under threat of invasion and therefore draw Caesar to that point. Even when Caesar had made his near impossible march through the Cevenne Mountains, the Province was still a strategic consideration.

The Bellovaci joined the rebellion after the successful Gallic defence of Gergovia, given the rumour that Caesar was making for the Province and that the Aedui had rebelled (Gallic War 7.59). The actions of the Bellovaci were more opportunistic and local in impact as they saw a chance to defeat Labienus and the four legions that were campaigning against the Senones and the Parisii and separated from other troops. At the revolt of the Aedui, nearly all the peoples of Gaul, excluding the Treveri, the Lingones and Remi (7.63), joined Vercingetorix in open rebellion. The Aquitani were absent except some mercenary horsemen who were fighting for Teutomatus, the chief of Nitiobriges (7.31). Like the Aedui, this move was possible unexpected as Ollovico, father of Teutomatus, had been called amicus by the senate (7.31).

Until 54-3 Gallic confederations had formed within distinct ethnic boundaries. The revolt of 54-3 was the first to expand the ethnic boundaries

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99 The Parisi and Senones were two separate political entities who, a generation before had allegedly formed one state (Gallic War 6.3), most likely observed close kin ties.
102 Caesar campaigned against the Bellovaci in the winter of 51-50 see Gallic War Book 8.
Caesar had outlined (Gallic War 1.1). In this context, the revolt of 52 showed that the local Gallic leaders were prepared to hand the control of their military and civil structure to a single leader. For “archaic states”, this would have meant a step back into the past, and for “complex chiefdoms”, their jealously guarded power was also taken over by a paramount war leader. The leaders of Gaul were prepared to act by setting aside their own power and relinquishing to others the fate of their people. In much the same manner, Māori, when faced with military imperialism and colonisation, began to reconsider their systems of political leadership and issues of personal mana and the mana of their people. A strong Māori political force arose out of a need to gain some control over the gradual imbalance between Crown and Māori political power. From this major political developments was the Kingitanga (King movement), which originated from Māori (predominately from the central North Island) who wanted to maintain land ownership and retain Māori sovereignty or chiefly authority, alongside the Queen of England equal under God. Kingitanga became an issue for the Crown in terms of dual sovereignty, law and military power.

Formed in AD1858 with the proclamation of the Waikato great-war chief Pōtatau Te Wherowhero as King, this movement (Kingitanga) became involved in land disputes in Taranaki as the Crown sought to relieve land pressure by dealing selectively with rangatira who would sell land. This was a breach of Māori tikanga since consensus was a prerequisite for any decisions being reached concerning land. The major factor for the Kingitanga was land-holding, and in an unprecedented move for Māori, mana whenua (authority over land) was placed under the mana of the Māori King. The mana of the people was always tied to the land, and while land was the central issue, the Kingitanga represented a move by some Māori to place their own and their people’s mana under a single Māori King. Vercingetorix’s attempts to burn all the major oppida of central Gaul comes close to the situation of mana whenua seen with the rise of the Kingitanga. While land is an issue implied by the orders of Vercingetorix and his scorched-earth strategy, there are clear similarities between the Kingitanga and the pan-Gallic confederation of 52.

104 Paterson. p. 142.
Kingitanga involvement in Taranaki was based on the issue of Wiremu Kingi Te Rangitake’s right in asserting his mana in vetoing land sale of a particular bloc of land at Waitara, but this interaction was not entered into lightly or impulsively.\textsuperscript{105} In the end, the Crown felt that the Kingitanga was an obstacle to Crown authority, sovereignty and land sales. The Crown invaded Waikato in AD1863 eventually pushing the Kingitanga south after having defeated its forces in a series of mainly set-piece battles. Over one million acres of land was confiscated as a consequence.\textsuperscript{106}

What the Kingitanga represents for Māori is a willingness by autonomous hapū leaders to hand over their power in times of necessity. In Gaul, Vercingetorix achieved the same type of pan-Gallic authority. This authority was not immediate, and with each wave of support came the need for Vercingetorix and the powers behind his position to argue their case. As stated above Vercingetorix was made commander-in-chief of the revolt (Gallic War 7.4), but he had to be reaffirmed twice after his initial installation (7.21, 63). The last challenge arose in the face of a strong move by the Aedui, a people who had a long history of antagonism towards the Arverni (1.31). The other Gallic leaders endorsed Vercingetorix as the supreme commander and, despite obvious disappointment the Aedui accepted his authority over all the leaders and resources of Gaul.\textsuperscript{107}

The Bellovaci, after its move against Labienus, initially refused to answer the general call to arms in 52 because they were looking to their own defences and wanted to conduct war against the Romans locally. In the end they committed 10,000 but only deployed 2,000 warriors for the common cause, but the initial refusal seems to have been accepted without demur (Gallic War 7.75). Perhaps the diplomatic embassy of Commius had encouraged the Bellovaci to send this token force.\textsuperscript{108} The Treveri did not respond to the general call to arms,

\textsuperscript{106} Belich. 1998. p. 197.  
\textsuperscript{107} It is hard to predict whether the Gauls would have had the unity to maintain a single leadership as Rome would have surely returned to Gaul once it had dealt with its own political instability. As evidenced when one looks at the Kingitanga, military defeat and gradual enforcement of Crown authority and law across Aotearoa/New Zealand marginalised the strength of this pan-Māori political movement, so it would have been for the Gauls whose loyalty had been declared to Vercingetorix. The Kingitanga was neutralised as an independent sovereign entity and today it is a valid organisation for the mainly Tainui and Waikato-based iwi focusing on Māori issues through the Government.  
\textsuperscript{108} The Bellovaci may have had limited warriors available after previous campaigns against Caesar and the Aedui.
as they were busy with the threat of German incursions into their lands (7.63). The Remi and Lingones remained loyal to Caesar and did not send any support to Vercingetorix in 52 (7.63). There is no record of how the Remi and Lingones fared during the rebellion of 52 but perhaps the Remi worked as an effective buffer against the Bellovaci, on the other hand, two legions were stationed there after the fall of Alesia to protect the Remi from their northern neighbours (7.90), although Caesar may have intended to campaign in Belgica the following year. The Lingones may have proved useful as a defence against incursions from anti-Roman activity (7.66), but Caesar had garrisoned troops among this group which may have made revolt impossible. Regardless, most of the Gauls responded to Vercingetorix’s call to arms, although we see four groupings that, for different reasons, resisted the pressure to join the general uprising.

**The Gallic masses**

Gaul had a large population and the revolt of 52 revealed the vast military potential of these communities of the Late Iron Age. At the start of 52, Vercingetorix nominated how many warriors were required from each group of the rebellion, and he asked for cavalry (*Gallic War* 7.4). The specific number of warriors requested to fight suggests that Vercingetorix expected the others to provide food and war materials or act as a reserve. The extensive pool of warriors is referred to after the loss of Avaricum, when Vercingetorix recruits more men to make up for those lost in the siege (7.31). Again, Vercingetorix is clear about what was required, in the first instance asking for archers (7.31). Late in 52, from within the walls of Alesia, Vercingetorix called to arms *all* men of fighting age (7.71). This suggests that the general male population would be expected to fight at times of stress, or to work to support the war effort. This fits well within the Celtic agrarian model of a service for protection exchange, whether men fought in the cavalry, infantry or as archers, or worked on the land. The mass of the population was mobilised to fight and follow leaders into open and continued opposition to Caesar. Given the nature of Gallic economy, which was effectively agricultural and for the central states such as the Arverni and Bituriges, based on iron working, the common population may have been expected to support the war effort through labour and not by the bearing of

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109 The general instability and threat to Caesar’s control in Gaul may have encouraged German movements against Eastern Gaul.
Similarities with Māori society show that their agrarian economy increased output to meet the demands from European traders for raw materials. Nga Puhi developed an efficient balance between producing and processing raw materials at home, while committing large *taua* to fight abroad during the early nineteenth century. Perhaps each Gallic group may have struggled on a community basis to sustain a large force (relative to its population), but collectively Vercingetorix could mobilised the martial power of Gaul on a scale not seen before.

Vercingetorix’s call to arms tells us that the Gallic people were expected to provide the men needed to fight. In his specific requests of cavalry and archers, Vercingetorix shows that all classes of Gallic society were required to fight. War is expensive and the masses, not serving as archers, possible fulfilled essential tasks around food and weapons production. We know from the archaeological evidence that Celtic society was both set up for agrarian production and manufacturing. This fight was not a war to simply maintain the local power-bases of the *princeps*, this war threatened all Gauls.

**Gallic Military Response**

Vercingetorix saw from what happened in Britain that sole military leadership was important in defeating the Romans, and this provided his strategic purpose. The revolt was a series of events in which Gallic support for the Arvernan noble grew as his actions gained momentum, but the success of Vercingetorix was gradual, in the way Gallic support was similar to that enjoyed by fighting *rangatira* such as Wiremu Kingi in northern Taranaki and Titokowaru in southern Taranaki. Titokowaru attracted more warriors as he defeated colonial forces in a series of battles.

The revolt of Vercingetorix can be broken up into three phases. The first ends with the fall of Avaricum where Vercingetorix’s scorched-earth policy proved its worth, but where the subordinate leaders questioned but then reaffirmed the Arvernan’s military authority. Phase two brings Caesar and Vercingetorix into direct conflict outside the walls of Gergovia, and it was at this moment that the Aedui revolted against Caesar. Phase three was the major showdown at Alesia, where Caesar capitalised on Vercingetorix’s decisive error.

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The revolt set in motion the killing of Roman traders and citizens at Cenabum, an oppidum of the Carnutes (Gallic War 7.3). This act is similar to the actions of the Carnutes in 54 when they killed Caesar’s appointment Tasgetius (5.29). Killing a Gallic chief was one thing, but the Carnutes took the dangerous step, with little military advantage, of killing Roman citizens. What was the significance of these killings? A similar situation to that of the Carnutes’ actions, appeared in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the war of AD1868-9. When faced with a need to both engender support among Māori and to spark fear among the settlers, the war-priest Titokowaru revived traditional practices within his Pai Marire beliefs that shocked European observers. Ritualised cannibalism and the mutilation of the first soldier killed (Whangai Hau) acted as provocation to the Colonial government and military officials in Aotearoa/New Zealand. 111 These acts had a psychological effect sending a clear message to Europeans living within the vicinity to beware. Intimidation, stealth and ambush underpinned Titokowaru tactics and allowed for his strategy of controlled provocation.112 The famous “I shall not die” letter that Titokowaru sent to the colonists contained a particularly chilling threat: ‘I have begun to eat human flesh, and my throat is constantly open for the flesh of men. I shall not die: I shall not die. When death itself is dead I shall be alive.’113 While Titokowaru’s tapu meant that he refrained from eating human flesh, he had placed himself and his followers beyond accepted European (and Māori Christian) society. The letter’s intent was symbolic, sending a very clear message to stay off the roads of southern Taranaki. Placed in this light, the events at Cenabum can be interpreted as deliberate acts that would place the Carnutes beyond acceptable behaviour to the Romans and Caesar in particular. This act would have also sent a message to the other Gallic people who supported open revolt against the Romans.

During the opening phase of the revolt Vercingetorix devised his aim to defeat Caesar, and remove the Romans from Gaul (Gallic War 7.1). Strategically, Caesar needed to be kept from his forces and these were to be held, and if possible attacked, in their cantonment. This reflected elements of what had worked in 54-3, and the Gauls began their offensive like the attacks on

111 Belich. 2010. p. 89.
Cotta and Sabinus, during winter. The initial Gallic approach relied on the fact that Caesar’s commanders would not march without his orders. At the same time, Vercingetorix also attacked the Province creating a southern front in Gaul and perhaps threatening Italy itself. Once Caesar had crossed the Cevennes Mountains still in winter, Vercingetorix adjusted his strategic approach by denying the Romans (and potential allies) forage and food, shelter or refuge and this was achieved through the utilisation of Gallic cavalry and local knowledge. To apply these approaches Vercingetorix required command of the Gallic forces, the style of command Cassivellaunus had enjoyed in Britain, but which Ambiorix and Indutio marus had lacked in 54-3.

The scorched-earth policy had been effective in Britain, and Vercingetorix applied it with some success in Gaul. But Vercingetorix failed to maintain complete control of all his subordinates. We can see this around decision-making processes that impacted on local communities when Vercingetorix, despite strongly arguing his strategy and tactics to the Bituriges, listened to their pleas to not destroy their oppida in the first instance, and to defend it in the second (Gallic War 7.15). During the fight at Avaricum Vercingetorix had not been idle, as he had used this time to bring more Gallic civitates into revolt. Caesar won a hard-fought victory that stretched his army to the limits at Avaricum. In a similar way, when faced with the question of revising strategies, Māori leaders also reluctantly consented to move away from agreed actions, even if it meant engaging the enemy on an inappropriate battlefield. During the Waikato war, the great Ngati Maniapoto leader Rewi Maniapoto decided, against his better judgement and Kingitanga consensus, to fight the Crown at Orakau (31 March to 2 April 1864).\(^{114}\) Rewi was drawn into the fight out of obligation to his allies (Tuhoe) and kin (Ngati Rau kawa) whom he had asked to join him during the earlier fighting in Waikato.\(^{115}\) Ultimately Rewi Maniapoto was defeated at Orakau, but it shows that despite reservations, Māori leaders were obliged to listen to all parties involved. Like Rewi at Orakau, Avaricum fell and Vercingetorix’s original strategy was vindicated.

The battle at Avaricum coincided with the end of winter, and it was at this point that the Aedui demanded Caesar’s attention, choosing this moment to distract Caesar again with problems about the leadership of his trusted allies.

\(^{114}\) Belich. 1998. p. 166.
Leading up to Avaricum, Vercingetorix realised how vulnerable Caesar was to an indirect style of warfare that might hamper his supply lines but also destroy food sources for the Romans. Vercingetorix’s leadership was reinforced by discipline that was unquestioned, but enforced mobilisation of the Gauls with the threat of punishment (Gallic War 7.4, 63). This would suggest a coercive power brought to bear on the leaders of those groups. While punishment of recalcitrant individuals would be incentive enough to mobilise quickly, perhaps marshals also were sent out to enforce or encourage the call to arms. This again raises an issue over the right to decline a call to arms and its potential consequences. Kin-based war-bands would have been kept together by small-unit cohesion with a locally focused imperative. With no pan-Gallic police force to enforce mobilisations that involved more than one kin-grouping, oaths of loyalty would have been tied to the honour, authority or reputation of a people through their leaders. No doubt these were sacred if sworn over war standards or other religiously important items (7.2).

The mass mobilisation would have placed a huge strain on the Gallic communities but war coinage and references by Caesar to groups of warriors forming the initial numbers in a rebellion suggests the presence of large numbers of mercenaries. The “desperadoes” and “brigands” that supported Viridovix in 56 (Gallic War 3.17) and the “outcasts” and “beggars” (hardly a fighting force) that rallied around Vercingetorix outside Gergovia (7.4) may very well have been more organised and less desperate than Caesar described. Roman forces placed a large and mobile force in Gaul possibly putting a halt to inter-Gallic warfare fighting where non-aligned warriors earned their income (6.15). The mass production of coinage during the Gallic wars meant that the hiring of extra military capabilities in the form of mercenaries was already an accepted process among Gallic and British societies in Late Iron Age. 116 This meant a combination of kin-based and commercial-based military relationships.

The development of personal retinues of warriors, as seen with Dumnorix, follows the warrior society within the agrarian definition. In this development the communities were more households of warrior-retainers and/or specialists with the traditional kin-ties losing their importance within internal organisation and transactions with external parties. The break-down of kin-based models of

116 It is presumed that the Gallo-Belgic C coinage was minted around 60BC and circulated on both sides of the Channel to finance the war against Caesar. Cunliffe. 2010. p. 128.
transaction and compatriot labour may have originated from the introduction of coinage that became a method of payment for service in Gaul as mercenaries returned from service abroad.

The fact that Vercingetorix was able to gain the supreme command of the initial uprising and maintained it as the revolt grew in size and intensity suggests great power, and he was able to channel this into a leadership style that was autocratic. To support this, Vercingetorix had a clear strategy (*Gallic War* 7.4, 14). The first main strategic objective, as discussed, was to separate Caesar from his forces, as had happened in 54-3, when he had separated his forces into winter quarters. The opening attack on the Province arose possibly from a belief that Caesar would be tied down there, leaving his legions in central Gaul to be picked off piecemeal. The strategy, once Caesar had crossed into Gaul, was to avoid direct battle, unless on favourable ground. Next, the Gauls would deny the Romans logistical and communications networks by utilising the Gallic advantage in cavalry. The overarching strategy was to implement a scorched earth policy imposed on Gaul and Roman alike.

Vercingetorix also delegated responsibilities in other theatres and during battles. His leadership sat above a pan-Gallic council which validated his strategy and tactics. Vercingetorix gave a command to Camulogenus to fight against Labeinus in the territory of the Carnutes and Parisii (*Gallic War* 7.16). Lucterius was also trusted to command a force that operated in the south (7.5, 7). At Gergovia, he made sure that his leading chiefs were close at hand where they could response quickly to orders or be given intelligence as it came in (7.36).

When Vercingetorix moved with his army into Alesia and found himself trapped by Caesar (*Gallic War* 7.68). In response to this situation, Vercingetorix dispersed his cavalry and requested that a large force was mobilised (*Gallic War* 7.71). Despite Vercingetorix being trapped with 80,000 picked men in Alesia (71) all the Gallic leaders remained committed to the rebellion. They called a council of chiefs mobilised a massive force (7.75). The leadership of this large Gallic confederation was split down lines attested by Caesar’s assessment of the political make-up of this region. The forces besieged in Alesia were under the command of Vercingetorix of the Arverni (7.76). The massive relief-force was divided, under the command of another Arvernian, Vercassivellaunus, and two Aeduans, Eporedorix and Viridomaus (7.76). Here we see Gallic groupings falling into the old “factions” between the Aedui and Arverni, as they joined...
forces to try to defeat Caesar. The Belgic Gauls were also represented, with Commius taking command of this remaining quarter of the relief army. The Aedui/Arverni divide reflects the larger political divide Caesar noted had existed prior to his arrival in Gaul, and this organisational framework may have been a natural reflection of the larger political connections of kinship and client relations in the formation of confederations.

8.6 Summary

The Arverni had been a power-house in central Gaul. Centralisation, a characteristic of the archaic state, has been linked to the control of the environment and the opening up and exploitation of peripheral area for cultivation and agriculture. The ability to establish a core zone for the flowing in and out of raw materials and luxury goods would provide the economic stimulus to strengthen positions of power internally and increase wealth potentials.

Despite the loss of political dominance after 112, the Arverni managed to present a serious challenge to Caesar in Gaul. A growing sense of pan-Gallic interests is mirrored by the similar rise in Māori nationalism in the nineteenth century which had, as with the Gauls, developed from the need to provide a sense of identity among a group who were becoming increasingly marginalised as colonisation progressed. The role that the Arverni played in Gallic politics meant that Vercingetorix acted as a magnet for disaffected Gallic leaders.

The establishment of Vercingetorix as commander-in-chief was a direct response to Caesar’s invasion, and an indication of growing Gallic nationalism. That it had taken six years to get to this position is indicative of the divergent leadership systems that characterised Gallic political development. Cassivellaunus had shown what could be achieved under a strong single leader, even when a faction of the southern Britons defected. We cannot ignore the impression Caesar made as a successful example of a supreme commander. Vercingetorix was able to appeal to the leadership of the many Gallic clans, gaining their trust and the delegation of their individual authority.

The role Vercingetorix played in leading the revolt of 52 was the only time Caesar faced a truly pan-Gallic attempt to eject him. Vercingetorix relied on the people to validate his position, and druids may also have provided a sacred

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mandate for the Gallic revolt. The brutal killing of Roman citizens by the Carnutes and Aedui have parallels in Māori reaction to colonial rule and would, just as it did in Aotearoa/New Zealand, have sent a clear message to the Roman that this was a fight for survival.

In Vercingetorix’s response to Caesar we can see an evolution in Gallic leadership. The local campaigns by the Helvetii, Belgae and Armoricans were swiftly dealt with by Caesar and it is in Britain that Vercingetorix saw an antidote to Roman strength in arms. Cassivellaunus fought with a clear strategy and supreme command. The revolt in eastern Belgica also revealed to Vercingetorix other approaches, and the response by Caesar, the campaign of vastatio, clearly demonstrated what failure would bring to any Gallic attempts to resist Caesar.
Conclusion

Caesar’s account of Gallic society has not adequately provided a clear image of these Late Iron Age people and their systems of government, their social characteristics or how they reacted to military imperialism. His concise ethnographic account offered in Book Six of his *Gallic War* detracts from a larger pool of evidence of Gallic society found throughout Caesar’s work. Teasing out this information expands the knowledge of the Gauls and the archaeological evidence supports much of what Caesar described. Each area of knowledge allows the picture of Gallic political and social systems to come through with more clarity. Even with this increased understanding, however, there is room for further expansion of the existing knowledge.

To this end, I have approached this situation by comparing Caesar’s interpretation of the Gauls, and the evidence gathered from archaeology with the Māori of nineteenth century Aotearoa/New Zealand. The benefits of applying the comparative model to the Gauls of the Late Iron Age is that it takes these people out of the Roman context and places them within a framework where they can be assessed against a group of people who shared similar social and political characteristics. The application of this model argues that Celtic and Māori society operated at a clan or *hapū* level, reflecting the characteristics of the political development of the chiefdom. Comparisons, whereby a people from an earlier era have been compared to another one from a later period, have been conducted successfully before and in comparing Celts to Māori, I believe I have moved, in some small way, the way we look at Late Iron Age people and their military response when faced with external threat.

This study was by no means exhaustive and a selective approach was adopted as the material from Caesar could be expanded on so much more than it has been in this study. Māori can provide that next step as I have shown in this thesis. In deciding to follow Caesar’s chronology of events as a structure for this study I have limited my study, and as such provided select examples of social and political development from among the Gauls. I believe that this model needs to be applied to each group identified by Caesar in more depth to fully appreciate the information we have available in the ancient sources and the every growing archaeological evidence.
The form of looking at the development of social order and authority often conforms to a linear or evolutionary model seen, in the case of the communities of Iron Age Gaul, as moving from chiefdom to complex chiefdom to archaic state (not to be confused with the advanced city-states of the Mediterranean). The pattern in Gaul appears to be more cyclic or revolutionary depending on the external and internal factors of the time. With the pressure applied to Gaul, and a lesser degree southeast Britain, we see this revolutionary/cyclic process in action.

From this analysis, it is clear that Caesar was identifying different levels of Gallic and, on a limited scale, British political entities. What is also apparent is that Caesar was observing an organisational complexity that was dynamic, which he tried to equate with the society he came from. The unique position as observer that Caesar holds as a commentator on Iron Age warfare allows for a deeper study from his initial interpretation. While his world view was the dominating influence on his understanding of Gallic and British society, Caesar’s accounts portray a people at a time when military imperialism added further stress to a dynamic and ever-changing way of life. Chiefdoms were controlled by individuals in whom power and wealth were invested. The state had moved to the implementation of institutions where bodies governed through their appointed positions or elected status.

The arrival of Caesar created tensions within the Gallic societies of central Gaul that had been moving into a phase where they were consolidating the power of the appointed councils (senates) and Vergobrets (magistrates) who were drawn from an oligarchic group who had moved the power and wealth of their people into the hands of a collective group, not individuals. We see this with the Helvetii, Aedui and Arverni of central Gaul and the Belgic Remi. Within these groupings however there was a move after 58 to possibly return to an older system. There may even have been a function for this, not unlike the role of dictator in Rome. But what is clear, and seen in Caesar’s observations, is that the archaic states of late Iron Age Gaul were not solid. The archaeological record supports this in so much as it shows that a reliance on trade was risky and areas that developed into societies that had the characteristics of the archaic state could return to a system where warlords rose in the form of warrior-based chiefdoms.
Caesar possibly broke this cycle among the archaic states of the Aedui, Arverni and Helvetii. Response to this interference in removing Gallic choice, was seen by the Remi and to a much lesser extent, the Aedui was to rally to Caesar and the new order. Others openly opposed this interference such as Vercingetorix. What should be remembered is that all levels of Gallic and British societies were complex and not explained by simple models such as Caesar’s attempt in Book Six of his commentaries.

Helvetii and the Aedui had a social and political development that had moved down the path of archaic statehood. Both groups were controlled by a magisterial political system that was supported by a council or senate. What is important about the examples provided by these two states is that both were under internal pressure from strong leaders who sought to undermine the magisterial system. In the two states we are able to compare how the leadership of each state dealt with these threats. These two Gallic states provide an opportunity to compare that form of government. The Helvetii, while crushed militarily, never faltered as a political force. Orgetorix was dealt with and the migration he had helped organised moved off on the set date. The Helvetii were able to maintain a more centralised mode of political control supported by an internal monopoly of the use and threat of force. The threat and potential to use force was there for the leaders of the Helvetii but it was never used against Orgetorix.

The Aedui were clearly struggling to maintain centralisation under the past and present Vergobrets Diviciacus and Liscus and this leadership struggle would plague Caesar throughout his campaign until the group revolted in 52 and joined Vercingetorix. The pro-Roman faction of this state needed Caesar’s support and firm hand to keep them true to their allegiance to him and it was usually when he was busy elsewhere that the fragile nature of the Aeduan support was revealed. The factional divide of the Aedui was exposed early in Caesar’s commentaries by the detailed account of Diviciacus and Dumnorix. The Aedui suffered from an internal power struggle as the old way tried to do away with the new. Men such as Orgetorix and Dumnorix give flesh to the idea of the return of the warrior chief and Caesar’s commentary allows for a comparison of how the Helvetian and Aeduan leadership dealt with these great and powerful men.

The Aedui were an allied state and parallels to Māori kūpapa highlight the dynamics of Gallic support for Caesar. The Aedui became powerful under
Caesar and he used Gallic factionalism to install an Aedui/Remian axis of Gallic leadership. This would have suited the agenda of the Aeduan leadership who initially pinned their fortunes to Caesar’s. *Kūpapa* aims were always driven by local political agendas and would only remain aligned to Crown leadership as long as those local aims were met. For the Aedui, who had been dealing with a leadership struggle since before Caesar’s arrival, the revolt of 52 was one such divergence.

After the defeat of the Helvetii, Caesar conducted a series of campaigns against the various chiefdoms of the Belgae, Armoricans, Aquitani and Britons. Chiefdoms varied in structure, they were fragile and would form in once place only to disappear and reform in another as seen with elements of the Treveri and in Britain. The chiefdom could move from one form to another (chiefdom to complex chiefdom) and then on to archaic state but this was more cyclic that linear. Northern Gaul was a large transition zone where politics’ response to external and internal pressures was varied. Reaction to Caesar’s invasion of Belgica was symptomatic of Gallic chiefdoms seen in the initial formation of a large confederation that broke up to fight at a local level.

Kin-ties, client arrangements and hostage-exchange were mechanisms of Gallic and British politics and would have been considered in the formation of military confederations. There was formality around the creation of confederations, but it also appears that any group could break away if matters more pressing arose, such as home land defence or political expedients. Māori society operated on a similar level concerning decision-making where local *hapū* would make decisions that benefited the group. Placed within this *hapū/clan* context, and understanding that clan agendas would always take precedent over the broader Belgic war aims, it is more appropriate to see the disbanding of the confederation in 57 a natural reaction for the Belgic chiefs and their people. This attitude is reinforced by the story Caesar tells of a faction of the Aduataci who try to escape after the wider group had agreed terms with Caesar.

Comparisons with Māori society also offer some clarity around Belgic leadership in 57. The Bellovaci were a powerful group among these northern people and their reluctance to submit to fellow Belgae suggests that they were a senior kin-group among the Belgic confederation. The *mana* of senior *hapū* rarely allowed them to answer to a lesser *hapū* and the Bellovaci example suggests a similar tradition.
Leadership was defined clearly between civic and military positions. The terms *princeps* / civilian and *duces* / military were definite with the former often used to note chiefs within particular groupings. Caesar was consistent with this terminology and denotes military prowess as a prerequisite for leadership, but he also acknowledges that this custom of leadership was carried through from ancient times. Leadership meant responsibility by those leaders for those they led, implying a service/protection relationship. This was embedded in Māori leadership where the group’s *mana* was linked to that of their *rangatira*. There was a binary arrangement that bound *hapū* to *rangatira*. These *rangatira* would lead the warriors in war but would also manage business of the *hapū* during peace-time. This civil/military political division was absent in the Belgic communities, but were seen among the archaic states of the Helvetii and Aedui.

Caesar’s ability to defeat the Belgae came from their decision to disband the confederation of 57 and look to local defence. This action and the result are not necessarily a natural conclusion to conflict between Romans and Celts. The Nervii came close to defeating Caesar in 57 and a legion was wiped out in eastern Belgica in 54 as a group, the Eburones, looked to attack Roman forces garrisoned in their territory. The Belgae were agrarian warrior societies and their local focus in fighting was a major factor in how the Belgae fought in 57.

The chiefdoms of Armorica were factional and characterised by the pure agrarian model of Celtic society. As such, they enjoyed trade connections with the Britons and the communities of central Gaul, and Belgica, through their control of the Atlantic trade routes. Trade was important to these people and they would fight to defend it. The parallels in Māori society show that the motivation to defend trade connections cannot be under-estimated. Under the leadership of the Veneti, the western Armoricans faced Caesar’s Atlantic fleet in an attempt to protect their source of wealth and power.

Regional factions are detected in Armorican society in the form of the two major confederations that formed to face Caesar’s forces in 56. The Veneti and Venelli held leadership of this western/eastern divide. The factions were not as those seen among the Aedui or Treveri and, when compared to Māori society, suggest group seniority within the Armorican Gauls. The destruction of the Veneti-led confederation and the defeat of the Venelli and their allies may have resulted in the major trade shift across the Channel, but the Veneti needed to defend their trade interests and this decision proved fatal.
The Aquitani are an important group in the assessment of Gallic society and military response as this region presented people who did not fight against Caesar or fully support the Romans either. The northern Sontiates fought alone, yet it is highly probable that war-bands from other northern Aquitani communities fought against Crassus in 56. Māori taua were often filled with non-related warriors although this was rare before European contact. The action by the southern Aquitani confederation, which formed several autonomous groupings, to bring Spanish war-leaders and warriors across the Pyrenees shows that these people shared kin-links with those communities in northern Spain. The leadership role these Spanish nobles held in the southern Aquitani confederation reflects military leadership in Māori societies who rarely delegated such authority to lead in war to non-kin.

The Aquitani were located in a peripheral zone that supplied warriors to the states of central Gaul and probably across the Pyrenees and down into northern Spain. This movement of warriors across the Pyrenees may explain the tactical approach seen in southern Aquitania. Crassus was confronted by leaders who understood Roman tactics.

The political landscape in south-eastern Britain was characterised by many local chiefdoms that enjoyed core/peripheral relationships with communities in Armorica and Belgica. South-east Britain was factional and there were circles of kinship that negatively affected any attempts to face Caesar with a united confederation. Fighting between Cassivellaunus and the Trinovantes had occurred before 54, and this factional conflict threatened to weaken the confederation facing Caesar as the Trinovantian noble, Mandubracius joined him on the Thames River. Caesar noted that Mandubracius was joined by several other groups in his defection. This highlights the kin-based relationships among Māori where leaving a taua at any stage of a campaign was acceptable within Māori tikanga. Hapū choice was never questioned and the Trinovante “defection” may have been acceptable within the British political environment in 54. Cassivellaunus was certainly not affected by this move as his fighting tactics switched to fast-moving mobile warfare.

Cassivellaunus was able to execute a clear strategy from a position of supreme command. This meant that those chiefs who ruled as small independent polities in south-eastern Britain had no barriers to delegating their authority to Cassivellaunus. This is reflected in Māori society where the delegation of mana...
was seen when *taua* were formed among *hapū* that shared common descent. The Trinovantes’ defection and the power Cassivellaunus held over the Kentish kings suggests that kinship, like that seen in Māori society, operated in a similar environment of kin-ship circles. Acknowledgement of seniority would have paved the way for Cassivellaunus’ supreme leadership of the British resistance to Caesar, a situation Caesar barely escaped from.

Events in eastern Belgica in 54 highlight several things about the complexity of Gallic society. The factional kin-strife among the Treveri affected this group’s cohesion along the important “Roman” boundary between Gaul and the Germans. Māori kinship sheds light on the dynamics of in-law politics among the Treveri, and the importance placed on seniority within the kin-group. Caesar’s interference in this conflict created an enemy in Indutiomarus who became involved in a wider conflict the ignited eastern Belgica. The Treveri also show us that clans within the wider Treveri unit were capable of relocating to across the Rhine rather than accept the authority of Cingetorix, possibly a junior member of the kin-group and Caesar’s puppet.

The second point of interest was the development of a quasi-pan-Gallic sentiment across northern Gaul. The Romans represented a new political force in Gaul and Caesar’s involvement in local politics may have created a gradual resentment among the Gallic communities. Examples from Taranaki and the rise of the land-holding movement in response to Crown land demands show that Māori were beginning to unite across non-kin lines as a means to voice their concerns against land alienation. This sentiment can be seen in the Late Iron Age with the central Gallic Carnutes and Senones offering to support the eastern Belgae and Treveri in open revolt to Caesar. This rising threatened to spread into Armorica and shows that opposition to the Romans was far from crushed in 54.

The importance of this pan-Gallic sentiment cannot be understated and Caesar’s response in eastern Belgica to the revolt was swift and brutal. Cingetorix was installed as leader of the Treveri and the Eburones were devastated. The treatment of the Eburones and Caesar’s treatment of the Carnutes may have inspired further momentum for the pan-Gallic movement. The revolt of 52 suggests that this was the case and it was during the fighting of that year that Caesar lost all his allies to the revolt except the Remi.

The events of 52 show the full realisation of a pan-Gallic confederation as allies and antagonists joined to remove Caesar as a power from Gaul. This pan-
Gallic confederation was unprecedented. The rise of the *Kingitanga* movement and *hui* like those held at Kohimarama were direct responses to contact with Europe and the growing power of the Crown that was beginning to get involved in Māori issues usually under the *mana* of rangatira. While the *hui* at Kohimarama was attended by pro-government Māori, the *Kingitanga* had the military potential of the major Waikato *hapū*. The *Kingitanga* and pan-Māori *hui* were also unprecedented in pre-contact Māori society. In Vercingetorix we see parallels in that he offered a way to unite under one leader.

The ability to lead a pan-Gallic force may have come from the support of a group that crossed traditional tensions, while giving the revolt a sacred mandate. Caesar stated that the druids were an important group within Gallic society. A comparison with Māori *tohunga* shows that this group were linked to warfare and added a spiritual dimension to conflict. The druids would have satisfied this aspect of Gallic society, providing moral support in war and a pan-Gallic leadership in 52.

The rolling support that Vercingetorix enjoyed represents the momentum of resentment felt by Gallic communities that were suffering under Roman occupation. The support for this revolt went beyond the level seen in 54-3. The Arverni were almost absent in the events in Gaul from 58, but this does not mean they were not involved. Vercingetorix must have watched as Caesar marched through Gaul defeating group after group, but it was in Britain that Cassivellaunus showed how the Romans could be defeated and the two central factors to Gallic success lay in having supreme command of the Gallic army and a clear strategy in the direction of that army. Alesia was a mistake and one that Caesar took full advantage of. But in Vercingetorix we see the last major military effort of the Gaels.

What Vercingetorix overcame was the leadership of a group of people who had a variety of political systems and networks of local authority, often centred on kin-based relationships. Caesars’s brief ethnographic account of the Gaul in Book Six is inadequate as a fair assessment of Gallic society, but the balance of Caesar’s *Gallic War* remains an invaluable starting point to any study of Celtic people. Despite the fact that many have ignored Caesar’s wider assessment to focus on Book Six, the comparative model I have presented in this study may encourage others to apply a similar model and expand our knowledge of Celtic
society and how their levels of political development influenced the way they fought.
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