‘Living Like a King? The Entourage of Odet de Foix, Vicomte de Lautrec, Governor of Milan’,

Philippa Woodcock,

University of Warwick,

Department of History,
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Philippa Woodcock

Abstract: In the early sixteenth century, the de Foix family were both kin and intimate councillors to the Valois kings, Louis XII and François I. With a powerbase in Guyenne, the de Foix tried to use their connections at court to profit from the French conquest of Milan, between 1499 and 1522. This paper will explore the career of one prominent family member, Odet de Foix, vicomte de Lautrec (1483-1528). Lautrec was a Marshal of France, who served in Italy as a soldier and governor. He was key to the royal entourage, amongst François I’s intimates at the Field of the Cloth of Gold. His sister, Françoise, was also the king’s mistress.

The paper will examine Lautrec’s entourage from two aspects. Firstly, it presents how Lautrec established his entourage from his experience in Navarre and Italy and as a member of the royal retinue. It establishes the importance of familial and regional ties, but also demonstrates the important role played by men of talent. Secondly, it explores Lautrec’s relationship to his entourage once he became governor of Milan. Were ties of blood, career or positions of Italian prestige the most important aspects for a governor when he chose his intimates? Were compromises made with Italian traditions and elites to sustain his rule? Did he learn from the experience and failures of previous governors? This article contributes to a gap in scholarship for the later period of French Milan from 1515 to 1522. It also adds to our knowledge of the behaviour and ambitions of Early Modern governors.

Keywords: Milan; Governors; de Foix; Lautrec; Entourage; de Marthery

In the weeks after the French victory at Marignano in September 1515, the entourage of King François I and his intimates was scrutinised by observers in Milan: whom the king dined with, whom he rode out with and whom he admitted to his private chambers were of great interest to those trying to understand the young ruler, liberated for the first time from what the Milanese Gian Giacomo Trivulzio called the “petticoat government” of his mother, Louise of Savoy.¹ Venice learned that amongst the stuffed rooms of the Corte Vecchia and Castello Sforzesco there were “five principal persons of this court namely monsieur the Lord Chancellor, [..] monsieur de Lautrec, monsieur de la Trémoiille, monsieur de Boissy the grand maître and monsieur de la Palisse.”² Equally, who was admitted behind closed doors indicated membership of the inner

Thus:

There were, at the gathering of our most illustrious orators, monsieur the Grand Chancellor, monsieur the Grand Master [Boissy], monsieur de Lautrec, monsieur de La Palisse, monsieur Robertet and the lord Theodore Trivulzio, and there was a most solemn and opulent gathering, which cost more than 80 ducats. They then went into a room with the orators. What they said, I don’t know because they left and would not let anyone enter.

Study of François I’s entourage would point to his own policies in Milan, and in theory those of the man he would appoint as his locumtenent or governor to rule on his behalf “au delà des alpes”, in this, France’s first colony. The strictly military powers of the governor’s office had been defined by the Edict of Vigevano in 1499: like domestic governors, they were to oversee the territory’s defence, but could also represent the duke-king, interfere in legal affairs, issue letters patent in their own name, choose castellans and participate in the Milanese Senate. Largely replacing the Sforza Consiglio Segreto and Consiglio di Giustizia, it was formed of 17 members representing the Franco-Milanese elite, comprising eleven jurists, two prelates and four military commanders who served under the chancellor. The governor could not nominate the Senate’s officers or appoint to religious benefices within the duchy. The locumtenent was an office similar in power to the governor, yet without any official civil competency. Despite these theoretical limits, the locumtenents and governors were men with “charges, powers, prestige, charisma,” and as a result, during the second period of the occupation their influence “tended to grow and extend themselves over a good part of the civil administration.”

Thus, when François I departed, the governor of Milan and his own entourage held the potential for great power and the privilege to abuse it.

This article will study the role played by the entourage of one of those admitted behind closed doors and its impact on the domestic and Milanese career of Odet de Foix, vicomte de Lautrec, governor of Milan from 1516 to 1522 (Figure 1). Perhaps François I’s greatest intimate in 1515, he had served as a quasi-mentor for the king before his accession and, after Marignano, was often found in the king’s company as one of the principal persons at the Corte Vecchia. The composition of his court, and the effects of his entourage once he became governor of Milan in 1516 have been partly identified by Stefano Meschini, using archival sources in Milan and Mantua. This article aims to broaden our idea of the relationship between a governor and his entourage by additionally outlining Lautrec’s earlier retinues, both those he played a part in and those he managed for his own purpose. It will seek to link his earlier experiences of entourage to his rule in Milan, and explore whether there was a perceptible difference between the entourage of a French provincial governor, and that of a royal locumtenent or even a duke of Milan.

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5 Stefano Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione Francese nel Ducato di Milano La politica e gli uomini di Francesco I (1515-1521) (Pavia: Guardamagna, 2014), 229: compiti, potere, prestigio, carisma; tendessero a crescere e ad estendersi a buon parte di amministrazione civile.
Where possible, this article will illustrate his use of entourage through imagery, showing that for Lautrec and his contemporaries there was little distinction between the appearance of a royal and noble entourage. Indeed, Milan was the ideal setting for him to experiment with magnificence, echoing R. R. Harding’s 1978 conclusion that “it is fair to say that the public conception of governors was elastic enough to permit some to approach the role of surrogate kings. This tendency was greatest in outlying provinces where monarchs were rarely seen and where traditions of autonomy were strongest.”

1. A governor of Milan could indeed live like a king.

The article will establish how family networks functioned to train an aristocrat in the use of entourage. It will also ask what kind of personal train was needed for a man like Lautrec with estates across France, and try to assess if its composition and background was typical. Secondly, it will explore Lautrec’s Italian experience of entourage, in royal and vice regal trains. This is particularly interesting as in 1511 Gaston de Foix was appointed locumtenent of Milan: he was also Lautrec’s cousin. Thus, during 1511-1512, Lautrec operated in an intersection of royal, governor and family entourage. Finally, once appointed Milan’s governor in 1516, the article will show that domestic retinues, although key to Lautrec’s ruling Milan, needed to be supplemented by Milanese networks. Behind such discussion we must also establish what sort of wage and reward was being offered to those in his entourage.

If the Venetians believed he was probably the most powerful governor of Milan with “the power to appoint and every other thing of the duke of Milan saving the [choice of] castellans and the Senate of Milan,” he is also the least celebrated, an omission that this article aims to rectify. Largely dismissed in French historiography, and last the subject of a monograph in 1930, de Foix’s reputation has suffered on several accounts. Firstly, he has been taken to be responsible for the rout of French forces at Bicocca in 1522, ending in the loss of French Milan and the Sforza’s restoration. This resulted from his failure to deal with the bannis, Milanese disaffected by the now punitive French financial regime. In addition, his eminient position and appointments were allegedly owed solely to his sister Françoise being François I’s mistress. De Chanterac’s attempt to resurrect Lautrec’s reputation through a demonstration of his sound military understanding and excellent connections, was nonetheless ignored for the Dictionnaire de Biographie Française. This is compounded by Meschini’s listing of various contemporary opinions that Lautrec was “un valente capitano ma altero e superbo”. He suggests that François I seems to have been critically blind to his faults, swayed perhaps by Lautrec’s role in his education. Lautrec did indeed support the king at key points of his reign, and a bond of intimacy must have existed. For example, the two men went together to meet Princess Mary Tudor in 1514 and François I helped to organise Lautrec’s wedding. Later, Lautrec was with the king at the Field of

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8 Sanudo, *I diarii*, vol. 23, c. 347: il Re ha mandato un amplo mandato a monsignor di Lutrech […] possi remetter oficii e ogni altra cosa de la duca di Milan; excepto li castelani et quelli del senato di Milan.
9 For the idea that Lautrec owed his position to Françoise see Roman d’Amat, s.v. “Foix-Lautrec (de) Odet” in *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, vol. 14, 1979, c. 216-218. See also Chanterac, *Odet de Foix*, 81-82 for discussion of Odet and Françoise’s relationship.
of the Cloth of Gold in 1520 and supervised the exchange of François’s young sons at the Bidasoa in 1526.\footnote{For Mary Tudor’s arrival see Sanudo I diarii, vol. 19, c. 202; for Lautrec at the Field of the Cloth of Gold see Letters and Papers, vol. 3, part I, 24-25; for the Bidasoa exchange see Chanterac, Odet de Foix; 85, n. 6.}

Yet perhaps we ought to somewhat reconsider Lautrec’s reputation, due to the difficult circumstances that framed his Milanese career. Even contemporaries noted that any French commander operating at this time was fatally compromised by the financial problems stemming from Louise of Savoy’s misappropriation of the treasury’s resources. The Venetian ambassador Giustiniani wryly remarked that the young king “is so very liberal he would rain the very blood from his veins, but his mother hoards money and claims the management of everything.”\footnote{For Louise of Savoy’s greed see Letters and Papers, vol. 2, 81.} Despite this challenge, Lautrec was evidently valued by the Venetians. The Venetian secretary in Milan, Gian Giacomo Caroldo observed that he had become an “expert in war” who by intercepting the letters of the “perfidious Spanish […] showed extreme diligence”.\footnote{Gian Giacomo Caroldo, “Relazione del Ducato di Milano del Secretario Gianiacopo Caroldo 1520”, ed. Arnoldo Segarizzi, Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato, 2 vols. (Bari: Giuseppe Laterza e Figli, 1913), vol. 2, 6: Intercepte le lettere e cognosciuta la perfidia ispana, fu per monsignor di Lautrech fatta extreme diligenzia.} Moreover, his military reputation after the fall of Milan in 1522 remained impressive: at the English court it was feared that “The Duke of Albany, the ‘White Rose’ and Lautrec have been sent with troops to cross over to England” to lead an invasion to depose Henry VIII.\footnote{Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, and in other libraries of northern Italy, ed. Rawdon Brown, 38 vols. (London: Longman Green, 1864-1947), vol. 3, 23 May 1523, Zuan Badoer to the Signoria. Also Sanudo, I diarii, vol. 34, c. 194.}

Lautrec is a useful case-study in the use of entourage, particularly when contrasting his French career to his years in Milan. A contemporary critic, Giovan Andrea Saluzzo di Castellar, said that he had arrived in Milan a “poor gentleman” but now that he was a governor “he lived like a demi-king”.\footnote{G.A. Saluzzo di Castellar, Memoria dal 1482 al 1528 561 cited in Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 78: il qual io l’ho congiusciato per lo più superbo et altero homo che mai chredo sia stato al mondo, et io Johane Andrea l’ho congiusciuto povero gentilomo et poi l’ho veduto uno mezo re.} Although this suggestion of relatively humble beginnings is quite simply belied by his family’s wealth, his activities and those of his entourage may have seemed all the more imposing in Milan as his was also one of the longer appointments as governor. Thus, asking how his entourage sustained his life as governor and as a regional aristocrat is important. This is especially true when we compare it to the earlier mismanagement by governors such as Gian Giacomo Trivulzio. Appointed Milan’s governor in November 1499 by Louis XII, he was replaced in April 1500, due in part to his to partiality to the Guelphs and “defiance towards the French and Lombard members of the government, bad choice of his councillors from amongst his family and his creatures.”\footnote{Léon G. Pélissier, Recherches Dans Les Archives Italianes: Louis XII et Ludovic Sforza (8 Avril 1498-23 Juillet 1500) (Paris: Thorin et Fils, 1896), 316-17: défiance envers les hommes du gouvernement Français et Lombards, mauvais choix de ses conseillers pris parmi sa famille et ses créatures.} The confiscated properties, offices and privileges of Sforza supporters were divided and “all his family supped on favours and riches.”\footnote{Pélissier, Recherches, 315.} Yet at the same time Louis XII similarly rewarded his other French and Italian supporters.\footnote{For example AN JJ 233 n. 34: Don à Bernardino da Corte d’une maison à Milan […] qui tenoit ou estoit tenu au nom de Johan Sforza.} Thus, in the aftermath of regime change there was nothing unusual about a king or a governor using his trusted servants to support him and to establish his rule and, in turn, rewarding them in a very partial way. The skill with which they did this within difficult circumstances made entou-
rage a crucial part of their rule.

This discussion of the actions of locumtenents and governors after 1515 is also timely. Although there is ample literature on Louis XII’s ‘reign’ as duke of Milan, particularly in the reference laden work of Pélissier, Arcangeli and Meschini, the previously neglected second period is now enjoying renewed attention, by French and Italian historians.\textsuperscript{20} Nicolas Leroux’s \textit{1515 L’Invention de la Renaissance} investigates François I’s victory at Marignano as the catalyst for real economic, social and cultural change in Europe.\textsuperscript{21} It also compliments Didier Le Fur’s reissued account of Marignano in providing a close analysis of the diplomacy, preparations for, and tactics at the battle.\textsuperscript{22} Meschini, previously the author of the minutely detailed account of Milan during Louis XII’s ‘reign’ of 1499-1512/13, has provided an equally full archival record of daily events in the duchy from 1515 to 1522.\textsuperscript{23} Finally, the \textit{Estat du Duché de Millan} or duchy balance sheets, conserved for 1510, 1516 and 1518 in AN J 910 have been analysed in detail by Matteo di Tullio and Luca Fois, allowing the reader to easily cross-reference the personnel active in Milan.\textsuperscript{24} Thus, some considerable progress has been made to address the gap in literature for the second period of French domination.

The same attention and neglect is true of discussion of the governors themselves. Letizia Arcangeli has shown how Trivulzio’s governorship in 1499 was merely a part of his plan to create an independent feudal state, which the French might need to solicit for Milan’s survival. This policy continued to characterise his later years in French Milan.\textsuperscript{25} From Meschini’s archival work a picture emerges of the very bureaucratic and military reign of Charles d’Amboise, seigneur de Chaumont, governor from 1500 to 1511. This is supported by Christine Shaw’s identification of Chaumont’s governance as militarily able, where Milan was a hub for Italian diplomacy.\textsuperscript{26} Following this were the princely ambitions and anti-papal, bloody military adventures of Gaston de Foix from 1511 to 1512. Yet, until now, historiography falls quiet on the period after 1515 which ended in defeat and retreat, whilst Milanese history is overshadowed by the Spanish thrall.

2. \textit{Entourage Training for Aristocrats}

Family connections were undoubtedly key to Lautrec’s training in and use of entourage. From his birth in 1483 he was part of the kinship network of the powerful Albret and Aydie families: his cousins included Anne of Brittany, Anne de Foix-Candale, queen of Hungary, Catherine d’Albret, heir to Navarre, and Gaston and Germaine de Foix, nephew and niece to Louis XII. All except Gaston would become a monarch or a France and safeguarded the borders against Spain, whilst furthering their own interests.

\textsuperscript{20} In addition to the earlier works by Pélissier, the most extensive recent texts on Louis XII’s reign are: Milano e Luigi XII, ed. Letizia Arcangeli (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2002); Stefano Meschini, \textit{Luigi XII, Duca di Milano, Gli uomini e le istituzioni del primo dominio francese (1499-1512)} (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2004); Stefano Meschini, \textit{La Francia nel duca di Milano La politica di Luigi XII (1499-1512)}, 2 vols. (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2006).
\textsuperscript{22} Didier Le Fur, \textit{Marignan, 1515} (Paris: Tempus, 2015).
\textsuperscript{23} Meschini, \textit{Seconda Dominazione Francese}.
\textsuperscript{26} Christine Shaw, “The role of Milan in the Italian State System under Louis XII”, in Milano e Luigi XII, ed. Arcangeli, 25-38.
consort. Together, the Foix-Albret were the effective rulers of the south-west of France and safeguarded the borders against Spain, whilst furthering their own interests. Elena Woodacre’s recent work focusing on their connections to the French and Spanish crowns will no doubt bring Lautrec and his cousins further to the fore.\textsuperscript{27} What is clear is that there was little of the “poor gentleman” about Lautrec’s background.

A young de Foix learned to play a part in his more senior male kinsmen’s military entourages. This might not initially relate to a specific appointment, but led to the acquisition of political and military experience which could then be ploughed back into careers at court. Powerful appointments were in this way kept within the family. For example, Lautrec would have experience of provincial government via his father Jean, vicomte de Lautrec, who was governor of the Dauphiné until 1501. This model of professional family entourage characterised Lautrec’s entire career and he had a particularly noticeable working relationship with his younger brother Thomas, seigneur de Lescun, until the latter’s death at the battle of Pavia in 1525. Whether this was a useful relationship or not is questioned in Chanterac’s damning description of Lescun found “often close to his older brother for whom he was the evil genius, this heroic and stupid soldier, of proverbial bravery [...] greedy for money and pleasure, and devoid of all political sense.”\textsuperscript{28} Like the Hapsburgs, family power was also consolidated through marriage. Lautrec’s cousin Germaine was twice envisaged as Lautrec’s potential bride – in 1503 and again in 1518. Had this marriage gone ahead he would have been a potential heir to her brother’s titles and could have pursued her eventual claims to Navarre. Thus like his cousins, he could indeed expect to have a very courtly lifestyle.\textsuperscript{29} As it was, Lautrec’s 1520 marriage to “the little and lame” Charlotte d’Albret d’Orval consolidated his holdings in the south, brought him property in Rethel and the Loire valley, and reinforced links to her powerful Albret kinsmen: her father Jean d’Orval was Lieutenant-General of the Roussillon, governor of the Champagne and ambassador to Ferdinand of Aragon.\textsuperscript{30}

In Lautrec’s lifetime a very skilled business staff of retained professionals and household servants was needed to administer such disparate and vast estates. His key aides had to be prepared to be mobile and in some cases understand and respect the privileges and particularities of different regions, jurisdictions and linguistic boundaries. His entourage also had to reflect his different roles: landed aristocrat, courtier, soldier, diplomat and family member. How then did Lautrec find and form such a band?

The guiding principles seem to be family and clients, and this is largely true whether Lautrec was in France or Italy. Firstly, his brothers took the key roles and they were remunerated by royal appointments and salaries. When Lautrec became grand seneschal (1504) and then governor of Guyenne (1515), his brothers Lescun, and André, seigneur de Lesparre, could survey his estates, and also deputise for him in Bordeaux.\textsuperscript{31}


\textsuperscript{28} Chanterac, \textit{Odet de Foix}, 15: souvent auprès de son frère ainé dont il fut le mauvais génie, ce sonnard bêruque et stupide, d’une bravoure proverbiale [...] avide d’argent et de plaisirs et dénué de tout sens politique.

\textsuperscript{29} Archives Départementales des Pyrénées Orientales, E454. Chanterac, \textit{Odet de Foix}, 39 mistakenly refers to the earlier contract as belonging to 1518.

\textsuperscript{30} Sanudo I \textit{diarii}, vol. 28, c. 504, 1 May 1520: petite et boiteuse, Chanterac, \textit{Odet de Foix}, 40 argues that Lautrec had a pre-contract of marriage with Charlotte d’Orval whilst pursuing Germaine de Foix and Philiberte of Savoy.

\textsuperscript{31} Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BN) MS Fr. 27659, fol. 354 for Lautrec’s appointment as seneschal, Meschini, \textit{Luigi XII}, 112 n. 194 gives a conflicting date of 1510 for this appointment. BN MS Fr. 5805, fol. 90 for Lautrec’s wage in this post. Archives Départementales de la Gironde (ADG) G 1117 has the few autograph edicts and judgements from Lautrec’s brief periods in residence in Bordeaux, dating from 1511 and 1513.
Lautrec and Lescun accompanied the king on his new conquest of Italy, Lesparre was appointed deputy in Guyenne in 1515.\textsuperscript{32} Lescun, originally destined for the Church, instead turned to soldiery in 1515, and was appointed Maréchal de France in 1518, receiving the baton from Lautrec.\textsuperscript{33} He also twice deputised for Lautrec in Milan when his brother returned to France: for example, from September to October 1520, and from May to July 1521.\textsuperscript{34} Lesparre, the youngest brother, although also serving at the siege of Genoa in 1507, spent more time on the family’s southern estates, fighting against Aragonese invasion. He also deputised for Lautrec in his government of Guyenne from 1515 to 1528. He was in charge of the Franco-Navarrese offensive on Pamplona in 1521 and was an executor of Lautrec’s will.\textsuperscript{35} Thus royal military appointment could be combined with working in the family interest. As a younger sibling Françoise can have had very little early contact with her eldest brother. She was raised at Anne of Brittany’s court and was married to Jean de Laval in 1509, only becoming François I’s favourite around 1518. Thus, her period of influence postdates his appointment. By 1522, when Lautrec lost Milan, Françoise had already lost favour.

Beyond his siblings, Lautrec had several key Guyennese clients. Chief amongst these was Ménau (or Menault) de Marthery. De Marthery became bishop of Tarbes in 1515 after serving in the cathedral chapter at Orléans.\textsuperscript{36} The previous non-resident incumbent was Lautrec’s younger brother Lescun: the gift of the See to de Marthery signals a close client-lord relationship between himself and Lautrec.\textsuperscript{37} He held this post for nine years, until he exchanged it with another Béarnais ecclesiast, Gabriel de Gramont, for the bishopric of Couserans in Lautrec’s county of Comminges.\textsuperscript{38} From 1522 to 1528 he returned to France where he acted as the senior administrator of Lautrec’s estates, handling legal matters pertaining to the patrimony, whilst his patron served at court and in Italy. After Lautrec’s death in 1528, de Marthery served as a royal councillor and resided at the Foix estate at Coulommiers, to the east of Paris, until his own death in 1548.\textsuperscript{39} He was probably a patron in his own right as at least one poem was dedicated to him.\textsuperscript{40}

The close connection between Lautrec and de Marthery is evident from their surviving correspondence in France, as well as documents concerning their relationship in Milan, as identified by Meschini. It was de Marthery who was entrusted with the supervision of construction at Coutras and his taste and judgement of the quality of the build were admired by Lautrec. In an undated letter he wrote to de Marthery that “I have had great pleasure at that which you have written to me [of Coutras] that the main hall [...] tower of my building are covered and the said tower is roofed [with lead] and all is in order. [...] and of the diligence that you have attended to matters of money.”\textsuperscript{42} According to

\textsuperscript{32}Le Fur, Marignan, 86-87.  
\textsuperscript{33}Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 129.  
\textsuperscript{34}Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 129.  
\textsuperscript{35}Chantereac, Odet de Foix, 15, 83-84; Le Fur, Marignan, 86; BN MS Fr. 4791 for Lautrec’s testament.  
\textsuperscript{36}BN MS Fr. 4437, fol. 42 for the exchange and contest of the see with Roger de Montant.  
\textsuperscript{37}L. Deville, “Thomas de Foix Lescun, évêque de Tarbes et son successeur Manaud. Épitaphe de ce dernier”, Revue d’Aquitaine (1863), 1-19 for de Marthery’s role as Lautrec’s client.  
\textsuperscript{38}For the exchange see BN MS Fr. 4437, fol. 66 Diptyche ou Catalogue en forme d’histoire des Evêques de Tarbes. I have used Couserans in the text as the correct French spelling of the diocese. However, Lautrec and his children addressed de Marthery as Coserans, using the Gascon form.  
\textsuperscript{39}De Marthery was buried in the parish church at Coulommiers.  
\textsuperscript{40}BN MS Fr. 4437, fol. 66.  
\textsuperscript{41}Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 78.  
\textsuperscript{42}BN MS Fr. 3212, fol. 100, Lautrec to de Marthery, Parma, 15 November 1527: Et ay eu plaisiere de ce que mavez escript que la grant salle et la tour de mon bastement sont couverte et lad[it]te tour plomber et du tout en ordre, [...] et de la dilligen [ce] quon fait de l’argent. This was written from Parma and is addressed to de Marthery as bishop of Couserans, suggesting that it dates to Lautrec’s Italian campaign of 1527-1528.
Brantôme, at Lautrec’s death, de Marthery made it his particular charge to complete the château as a mark of respect for his patron:

Mannaud [sic.], who had neither been able to recover his master and benefactor’s bones or erect a magnificent tomb for him, had, at his own cost and expense built and completed this beautiful house at Coutras, which had not risen beyond the foundations at his master’s death: by continuing the design, he had achieved it in its present state of beauty, of which one can say that it has the most beautiful corps de logis and façade that one can see in France [...]. As such, with this good work [...] this honest and knowledgeable bishop had achieved a second monument celebrating his master to posterity, who remained unmarked in France, other than by the memory of his great feats.43

De Marthery was appointed the guardian of Lautrec’s children, guiding their later progression at court. Such close intimacy with the affairs of the family suggests that whilst Lautrec was the patriarch of the clan, striving to extend its power and influence, de Marthery was equally responsible for the maintenance of this position, the family’s wealth and future in France. Lesparre and de Marthery were also the key executors in Lautrec’s will: this shows the intimate position held by de Marthery, and how a well-constructed retinue and famiglia supported its patron in life, as well as death (although Chanterac insinuates that the now deafened Lesparre could only be deployed in family interests in such a task).44

As a military aristocrat Lautrec also had key lieutenants whose names appear in his personal papers in France: their reappearance in official records in Milan suggests some element of personal influence over royal appointments, contrary to Sanudo’s beliefs.45 These include Jehan, seigneur de Sainte-Colombe and a seigneur de Loupe. Interestingly, these were probably members of the d’Angennes family and retinue from distant Normandy-Maine, rather than Gascons.46 Sainte-Colombe was active in Navarre, particularly in 1521, serving under Lesparre. There are also numerous members of the de Béarn family in Lautrec’s circle, who may have been linked to him by ties of kinship, as well as shared experience in Italy. These included Roger, known as the baron de Béarn, Bertrand de Béarn, and Menault, bastard de Béarn.47 Roger de Béarn probably found his way into Lautrec’s entourage through his former service to Gaston de Foix: whilst Gaston had been comte d’Etampes, Roger de Béarn had been bailli e capitaine of this town. He would later

43 Brantôme, Œuvres Complètes de Pierre de Bourdelle, abbé seculier de Brantôme et d’André, Vicomte de Bourdelles, ed. J.A.C. Buchon, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Desrez, 1838), vol. 1, 228: Mannaud, qui ne pouvant recouvrer les os de son maître et son bienfaiteur et ne lui ériger un tombeau superb, fit, à ses propres couts et despens bastir et achever cette belle maison de Coutras, qui n’ait qu’aux fondemens eslevez lorsque son maistre mourut; et en continuant le dessain, la fit ainsi parachever belle comme elle l’est, qu’on peut dire le plus beau corps de logis et la plus belle vis qui soit en France, ainsi que j’ay veu et ou dire aux grands sei-gneurs et dames qui l’ont veue et aux grands architectes, ne voulant point qu’on soit arresté à mon dire. Ce bel oeuvre ainsi – paracheva cette bonneuse et reconnoisant envoie pour servir d’un second monument à la postérité de son maître, ne luy restant marque en France que celle-là, for la mémoire de ses hauts faits.

44 BN MS Fr. 4791, fols. 44-47; Chanterac, Odet de Foix, 15.

45 Sanudo, I diarii, vol. 23, c. 347.

46 The Seigneurie de La Loupe was held by Charles d’Angennes, d.1514, then Denis d’Angennes d.1552. The title of seigneur of Sainte-Colombe came to Denis d’Angennes through a maternal great-grandfather, Olivier de Beauvoisin (d.1493), a bailli d’Alençon and maître d’hôtel du duc d’Alençon. The family had a historic association with Guyenne through Jean 1er d’Angennes, dit Sapin, (m. 1418), seigneur de Rambouillet and de La Loupe, chambellan du roi et du duc de Guyenne, gouverneur du Dauphiné Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 239 mentions a Rai-mond de Loupe as Lautrec’s squire.

47 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 169, 241. A personal communication from the genealogist Peter Bakos suggests that de Béarn was a name frequently given to illegitimate de Foix children.
gain a fierce Italian reputation having resisted the siege of Trezzo until January 1513.\(^{48}\)

Hence we see key lieutenants in service within the de Foix family’s spheres of operation in France and they would all reappear in Italy.

Beyond these most important figures, certain members of Lautrec’s French household and retained business staff can also be identified from his correspondence and will. These included several retained lawyers (Maître Bernard and Maître Thurelles), a maître d’hôtel (Estienne d’Aubreaul), a treasurer (Gracieu de Gassisaule), an argentier (Goncareun de Gassisaule) and several valets de chambre.\(^{49}\) These professionals were presumably paid from his own estate revenues and received personal gifts at his death; this reflects standard aristocratic practice, and good lordship, thanking, through tokens, many years of service and loyalty. Lautrec also sought royal favour and appointments for another secretary Jehan Vian, showing that this was an effective and established way in which Lautrec compensated his followers.\(^{50}\) Here, talent and training were also important to membership, as well as utility to other family members, for specialists were shared around the family: for example, Maître Bernard was sent by Lautrec to his mother to transact business.\(^{51}\)

Assessing Lautrec’s income and, more precisely how he paid his household, is problematic as extant records of his lands are dispersed, and their receipts detail hommages from tenants, rather than precise monetary receipts. For example, hommages due for the estates he gained in Fronsac from Jean d’Orval survive in the Archives Départementales de la Gironde, but they are very scant in comparison to the detailed developments to these properties by later owners.\(^{52}\) The most complete portrait of his wealth is the 1534 Registres des « foy, hommäiges et sevemens de fidelite que ont faiz et prestez », belonging to his son Henri.\(^{53}\) Again, rather than rents this just tells us who the chief vassals were on each of over 35 châtellanies and provostes, and what tribute they performed each year. Moreover, unlike Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, who has left us images of his estates and even a portrait of himself enjoying their fruits in the Tapestries of the Months, there is no image of Lautrec upon his lands, or even great physical remains of his presence: all that remains of his château at Coutras is an ornamental well head in a municipal car park.\(^{54}\)

How then can we compare and contextualise Lautrec’s entourage? Without a household roll no extant document gives us exact numbers for his entourage, but if we include his household staff, his family and their servants, his military staff and their own travelling equipages, our impression of Lautrec’s French following quickly swells. Sharon Kettering has shown that provincial governors were accompanied by anything between 30 and 800 noble gentleman, not including their household officers such as notaires and argentiers.\(^{55}\)

Her estimate that the “governors of major provinces, for example, could easily have 100 salaried individuals on their staff”, and travel in an entourage of around 500, fits what we know of Lautrec and his contemporaries.\(^{56}\) For example, when in 1511, François de Longueville, comte de Dunois, left Milan in a fit of pique and little notice, it was with a

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\(^{48}\) Meschini, Luigi XII, 112-113, nn. 195-199.

\(^{49}\) BN MS Fr. 3081, fol.16; BN MS Fr. 4791, fol. 47; BN MS Fr. 4791, fols. 46-48.

\(^{50}\) BN MS Fr. 2992, fol.21.

\(^{51}\) BN MS Fr. 3081, fol.16.

\(^{52}\) ADG C 4146 Hommages pour Fronsac.

\(^{53}\) BN MS Fr. 4800.

\(^{54}\) Jean-Edouard Fellonneau, Histoire de la ville de Coutras et ses environs (Maurin-Lattes: Editions Esmerelda, 1982); Brantôme, Œuvres Complètes, vol. 1, 228.


mere 200 men.\textsuperscript{57} Lautrec’s own will allowed for 400 men, plus cavalry to assist his executors indicating huge ready resources and loyal followers.\textsuperscript{58}

There are also certain comparisons to be made with royal entourages, as great nobles employed similar officers to run their estates as monarchs. Testifying for Louis XII in his divorce case against Jeanne de France in 1498 were the “immediate entourage of the prince who had followed him since his accession. This included, amongst others, his doctor, his treasurer, his secretary and his almoner.”\textsuperscript{59} We can also draw parallels between Lautrec’s dependence on the career administrator-ecclesiast, de Marthery, and Louis XII’s relationship with Georges d’Amboise, cardinal-archbishop of Rouen, who was appointed as lieutenant general of Milan in 1500. Equally, royal trains had remained relatively modest until the late fifteenth century, and could easily have been outnumbered by the retinues of the greatest princely houses. For example, Louis XI had a court of under 300 members, but as Knecht demonstrates, the Italian Wars caused royal households to boom.\textsuperscript{60} By 1523 the \textit{Maison du Roi} had grown to an estimated 540 officials, and then to 622 in 1534. The court itself could be as big as 10,000 including “numerous hangers-on, including merchants and artisans [...] and \textit{filles de joie suivant la cour},” although of course these were not in the king’s personal entourage.\textsuperscript{61}

This is not to belittle Lautrec’s entourage and household. If by the end of his career it was certainly dwarfed by his monarch’s ballooning court, it was perceived as of the highest status and had a similar structure. Lautrec died of plague at the siege of Naples in 1528 and his estates were inherited by his five year-old son, Henri. The surviving estate book of 1534 shows the young man enthroned, surrounded by a throng, which includes mature, bearded courtiers and ecclesiasts (Figure 2). Whilst this clearly adapts earlier images of kings in their courts and was produced in the same year as Clouet’s famous image of François I amidst his retinue, it shows us that a de Foix and his courtiers were easily compared to and imagined as a royal retinue (Figure 3). Some attempt at personalisation has also been made, suggesting that the artist had knowledge of Henri’s own personnel. This includes a prelate who may be Menaud de Marthery, Henri’s tutor and guardian, placed in the mirror position to the cardinal in Clouet’s court. Henri also has a somewhat scruffier, more mountain appropriate dog, than the elegant greyhound which sits at François I’s feet in the Clouet illumination.\textsuperscript{62} Hence, if the son mimicked his father, we are far from the world of the rural \textit{hobereau}.

Thus, the domestic retinue was formed and influenced by family and professional connections. It was recompensed by gifting and preferment, all of which had been well established for great feudal lords: now they could also offer access to royal office. What extended Lautrec’s experience of entourage, and perhaps widened his own political ambitions, was his experience of being part of the royal entourage. This was most important for the style in which he later governed Milan, and was arguably the support for his political importance after 1516, rather than the bedroom politics of his sister.

\textsuperscript{57} Meschini, \textit{Louis XII}, 111.
\textsuperscript{58} BN MS Fr. 4791, fol.47.
\textsuperscript{59} Didier Le Fur, \textit{Louis XII, Un autre César} (Paris: Perrin, 2001), 46: \textit{entourage immédiat du prince qu’ils avaient suivi de son ascension. Il s’agissait, entre autres, de son médecin, de son trésorier, de son secrétaire et son aumônier.}
\textsuperscript{61} Harding, \textit{Anatomy}, 21-22, 27; Knecht, \textit{Renaissance Warrior}, 118.
3. The Experience of Ducal Entourage: Family Connections in Milan

The family’s link to Louis XII as well as their military renown provided various examples of life in a royal or ducal entourage, guiding Lautrec’s later style of rule in Italy. Lautrec followed his father to Italy in 1499: the elder Lautrec was in Louis XII’s train in his triumphal entry into Milan, led by the governor Gian Giacomo Trivulzio. Lautrec was certainly at the siege of Genoa in 1507, for the chronicler Jean d’Auton records that, although wounded, Lautrec never stopped fighting, and that he was rewarded with a place in the king’s victory processions, swiftly followed by an annual pension of 1000 livres tournois. Here, entourage functioned to display proximity to the crown. The more de Foix gathered around the king, the greater the power they held. Lesparre was also present in the parade, but Lescun may have still been at university.

The fusion of family, royal and vice-regal entourage as a model for Lautrec followed soon after. Gaston de Foix, the king’s 22 year-old nephew, great-grandson of Valentina Visconti and Lautrec’s cousin was appointed locumtenent of Milan in June 1511 and “took his cousin with him.” It set a powerful example for Lautrec. Here was an office holder with a real claim to rule Milan, who had the opportunity to use his entourage to reinforce any ducal pretensions he might harbour. Although we have few archival resources for his very short tenancy, it is arguable that Gaston de Foix’s court was modelled on Sforza precedent. Prior to French control, Milan had already looked to monarchical courts for models of etiquette, but had found the poorly staffed French court of Louis XI strangely informal. Instead, as Gregory Lubkin’s exploration of Galeazzo Maria’s court has shown “only the duke of Burgundy’s court displayed the lush extravagance” deemed seemly as a model of etiquette and numerical composition. Following similar texts such as the Burgundian Ordonnances de l’Hotel (1469), a copy was made in 1470 of all the Sforza court’s numerous household offices, “to send to Naples, to his Majesty the king, so that at one time he could see all the order of the court”. Galeazzo Maria ensured support from his father’s adherents by confirming many household posts. Thus, employment at the ducal court was an established way of drawing the city into financial dependency on its overlord. Indeed, it also gave the duke an entourage comparable to that of the richest provincial governor and approaching that of a king. Lubkin’s transcription of a list from 1476 of “Persons to be lodged when travelling with the Milanese Ducal Court” names approximately 500 officers, from around thirty gentlemen such as the duke’s own brother Lodovico and Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, down to the duke’s more quotidian household including two barbers and three sous-chefs. The constantly peripatetic nature of the court also meant that the entire duchy was witness to this entourage.

At the Sforza court “[luxurious ostentation was converted into an identity essence.” Invitations to court events gave temporary entrance into the ducal entourage, but also displayed Milan’s friends to diplomatic observers: for example, over 200 dignitaries were invited to spend Christmas 1472 in Milan. Whether out of economy or ennui, Galeazzo Maria also predated Louis XIV’s intimate “by invitation only” Marly weekends.

64 D’Auton, Chroniques, vol. 4, 196-197, 201, 234.
65 Chantereac, Odet de Foix, 17; Meschini, Luigi XII, 110; Meschini, La Francia, vol. 2, 843-845: emmena avec lui son cousin.
67 Lubkin, A Renaissance Court, 95.
by alternating membership of his entourage, issuing lists of his current favourites, and using the fear of exclusion to control noble rivals, even rejecting his brothers upon occasion. Those who were admitted to the most private spaces around the duke, and who were least visible to the crowd and diplomats were perhaps the most powerful. Thus, for Milan, both grand and select entourages conveyed ducal power.

French poets celebrating Gaston de Foix’s life and early death at the battle of Ravenna presented him as a veritable prince of Milan. His poet kinsman Pierre de Foix wailed: “With this cut we lost/ The most perfect amongst us/ The most gentlemanly person of the world.” In response Belleville declared that: “We would be able to see him crowned, sceptre in hand.”\(^\text{70}\) This impression is consolidated by images of Gaston’s power. In fact there are clear visual parallels between the governor and the duke, whether Sforza or Valois. For example, we recognise the honour conferred upon Louis XII by the baldachin over his head in images of his triumphal entry to Genoa. Earlier, Sforza dukes such as Galeazzo Maria had also employed this instrument of “profound sacral associations, a potent symbol that blended princely, civic, and divine power.”\(^\text{71}\) The remains of Gaston’s tomb includes panels which show the same baldachin covering Gaston as he enters Brescia in 1512, followed by his own gentlemanly, and notably bearded entourage (Figure 4). Of course, this is a visual trope, just as much as those of a king surrounded by his court, but it is interesting to note the apparatus of ducal/royal status appear in depictions of both men. It seems no exact protocol existed relating to baldachins, as this privilege was also extended to non-royal governors: in 1500 Engilbert de Cleves had entered Dijon under a canopy, as did Guillaume Gouffier in Grenoble in 1520. However, the 1515 entry of the duc de Bourbon into Lyon did not employ a baldachin, but he nonetheless had “an entry worthy of a monarch, saving that he was not honoured by a dais.”\(^\text{72}\) While there are no visual records of Lautrec being honoured with a baldachin, Lautrec did tell Andrea Gritti in 1517 that he entered towns in this way as “he was accustomed to do so.”\(^\text{73}\) Thus, it was not self-evident to subjects that the authority of the de Foix cousins was distinct from the duke-king’s.

More concrete examples can be used to reinforce the impression of Milan now having a ducal ruler in contrast to his immediate predecessor Chaumont. The elaborate ritual of Gaston’s installation as locumtenent recalled ducal coronations, with Gaston receiving the baton of command from Dunois, hearing a sermon preached in the Duomo and then touring the city. In addition, the Milanese elite sought his presence: he was godparent to a Milanese child in 1511, along with Beatrice d’Avalos, Trivulzio’s second wife.\(^\text{74}\) Like a Sforza duke, Meschini has shown how Gaston appointed his household servants to civil, as well as military offices, contravening the Edict of Vigevano (1499): “In respect to Chaumont, probably, he exercised such powers of intervention in the civil administration more despotsically.”\(^\text{75}\) Yet family networks continued to operate very closely, probably more so than at Galeazzo Maria’s court from which his own brother Lodovico was some-

\(^{69}\) Lubkin, \textit{A Renaissance Court}, 271-273.
\(^{70}\) BN MS Fr. 1710, fol. 9: \textit{Cest a le coup que nous avons perdu/ Le plus parfait que jüst entre cent nulle/ La personne du monde plus gentille ; Le pourrions veoir couronne en main sceptre.}
\(^{71}\) Lubkin, \textit{A Renaissance Court}, 67; also Harding, \textit{Anatomy}, 12 for contemporary discussion of this right among the nobility.
\(^{72}\) Le Roux, 1515, 128: une entrée digne d’un monarque, à ceci près qu’il ne fut pas honoré d’un dais.
\(^{73}\) Sanudo, I diarii, vol. 22, c. 471, Gritti, Villafranca, 14 January 1517: \textit{Lautrec vol entrar colle gente d’arme armato in Verona per honor suo, dicendo cussì si sua di far.} Lautrec also entered Bayonne after its fall in 1523, see Chanterac, \textit{Odet de Foix,} 83.
\(^{74}\) Giorgio Nicodemi, \textit{Agostino Burti, ditto il Bambhaia} (Milan: Emilio Bestetti, 1945), 44, fn. 24.
\(^{75}\) Meschini, \textit{Luigi XII}, 113, 115: \textit{Rispetto allo Chaumont, probabilmente, egli esercito tali poteri di intervento nell’amministrazione civile più dispoticamente.}
Family members present included Lescun, Lesparre, Roger and Frederic de Foix and a Jorio de Lutrech, as well as members of the Béarn and Gramont families. Lautrec was pre-eminent amongst these: when Gaston returned to the French court in 1511, “he was replaced, as usual by a ‘locumtenens in absentia’, which gave an opportunity to his cousin Odet de Foix seigneur de Lautrec.” The family network was again in operation, but within a new Milanese context.

Lautrec also appears in poetry recording the military feats of French Milan under Gaston, and in particular the battle of Ravenna in 1512. As in Jean d’Auton, these poems record the political elite, and literary proximity shows political importance: indeed they are perhaps more valuable as written by non-partial, occasionally pro-Papal Italian poets. If they noticed Lautrec it was because he was prominent, as were other Guyennese in his entourage. For example, in the _Componimento di Giraldo Podio da lugo sulla Battaglia_, Gaston “nepote de lo Roi” appears in verse fifteen, followed by Lautrec in verse sixteen, Gabriel de Gramont in eighteen and Béarn in nineteen. In the poetry Lautrec is only ever a few steps behind his cousin, and never more so than at Gaston’s death at the battle of Ravenna when he cried out to the bloodthirsty Spanish troops “don’t kill him, he’s our Viceroy, the brother of your queen.” Gravely wounded, Lautrec was sent to Ferrara to recuperate, and the Milanese buried their Visconti-Foix prince in ducal style. Soon afterwards, French Milan fell to Swiss-Sforza control, and the duc de Bourbon was appointed its _locumtenent in absentia._

4. _A Governor in Milan, Political Networks_

After the Franco-Venetian alliance reconquered the duchy in 1515, François I became the new duke of Milan, but he relied upon fragile support. Milan demanded that the new lieutenant general would be “a man of great probity and experience, with an absolute authority over the military chiefs.” Perhaps in response to this, or in recognition of the previous honour done to him, the duc de Bourbon, the most important military aristocrat and wealthiest feudatory in France was re-appointed in December, arriving in Milan with “his court”, including his personal biographer! However, after a problematic incumbency he was recalled to France in April 1516. He was replaced by Lautrec whose appointment as governor, rather than _locumtenent_, fused military and civil power more than ever before. It is arguable that he responded to Milanese tradition by assuming Gaston de Foix’s very regal style of government to continue the idea of a prince of the blood govern-

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76 Lubkin, _A Renaissance Court_, 89.
77 Sanudo, _I diarii_, vol. 15, c. 289; Sanudo, _I diarii_, vol. 21, c.497. A Baron de Gramont served at the siege of Genoa in 1507 and with Lesparre and Sainte-Colombe in the attack on Navarre in 1521.
78 Meschini, _Luigi XII_, 112: _era stato sostituito, come usuale da un “locumtenens in absentia”, che fu per l’occasione il cugino Odet de Foix signore di Lautrec._
80 Archives départementales de l’Ariège, Z° 607, Anonymous, _La vie et les actions glorieuses de Gaston de Foix, Duc de Nemours, Vice-Reg de Milan et General des Armée des Ray Louis XII en Italie_, 132: _ne le tuez pas, c’est nostre Vice-Ray, le frere de votre royne._
82 Chanterac, _Odet de Foix_, 45: _un homme d’une grande probité et expérience, ayant une autorité absolue sur les chefs militaires._
83 Sanudo, _I diarii_, vol. 22, c.248, Andrea Trevisan, Milan, 25 May 1516: _parti il signor ducha di Borbon gran contestabile, con li suoi gentiluomini e la sua corte per Pavia_; Meschini, _La Seconda Dominazione_, 231.
ing the duchy, rather than a mere locum. Although he did not have that all important Visconti claim, he assumed it as Gaston’s ‘heir’ and successor, just as he inherited some members of his entourage. This presumption also characterised his inheritance of Gaston’s claims to Navarre.

Unsurprisingly, his family and clients were prominent in this process of establishing authority: here we have the benefit of Meschini’s identification of his rule supported by a “small court of his fellow countrymen”. In addition, the surviving duchy accounts of royal pensions and salaried offices illustrate that the royal purse was now funding Lautrec’s entourage. Lautrec might not have been making the appointments directly, but ‘on the ground’ in Milan he was able to suggest who merited reward, and thus his influence and that of his friends in the duchy is clear. In both 1516 and 1518 the pensions list is headed by a payment to Lescun of “3000 livres tournois further to that which he receives in France.” In 1518 Lautrec received 12,000 livres tournois in addition to his French salaries. There was also a certain continuity in posts from Gaston de Foix’s governorship, such as Bonneval and la Palisse. In Milan Sainte-Colombe became Lautrec’s “luogotenente di compagnia di 100 lance,” as well as governor of Piacenza, pensioned at 500 livres tournois. The same pensions roll also features familiar names: for example, Roger de Béarn had served in Italy since 1499 and just before his death in 1518 was receiving an annual pension of 2000 livres tournois. Bertrand de Béarn and Menault, bastard de Béarn also received pensions in 1518. These pensions, accorded by the crown for a few years, recognised the most important military and political officers in the duchy, and tended to be awarded to French, rather than Italians. Significantly, di Tullio and Fois show that the sum spent on French pensioners was increasing under Lautrec, suggesting that his administration favoured this means to ensure continued support.

The extreme confidence Lautrec placed in Menaud de Marthery in France was astutely transferred to Milan. A supporter of the Gallican church like his master, he does not seem to have had any life as a senior Churchman, but was an able diplomat and administrator. His manuscript correspondence with Paris shows his close understanding of Milanese politics, and most especially the strictures placed upon Lautrec’s government by pecuniary insufficiency. For example, de Marthery had the management of Milan’s councils, a task which grew more difficult as rewards from Paris dried up, and necessitating greater tax demands by the French on the city. In July 1521 he wrote to Robertet “tomorrow I will assemble the Council of Sixty and some others amongst the principal figures of this town, and I will speak to them with the most honest and best words that I can.” He also relayed diplomatic agreements and acted as an envoy, or even agent provocateur himself. After Lautrec had met officially with Milan’s Swiss confederates in October 1521, de Marthery related to Robertet that “after having thanked them for their good will, I told them that they should know and condemn the fact that the Pope had prayed for them to lose their followers and for the king to lose Milan.”

84 For Lautrec’s appointment see BN MS Fr. 5500 fol. 279.
86 Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 78: piccola corte di suoi connazionali.
87 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 169, 241: autre trois mil livres tournois qu’il a en France.
88 Meschini, Luigi XII, 113, n.198; Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 242.
89 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 243.
90 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 72.
91 BN MS Fr. 2931 fol. 98: je feray demain assembler les soixante de la provision et quelques autres des principaux personages de ceste ville, aux quoy feray avec les plus honestes et meilleurs paroles dont je pourray.
92 BN MS Fr. 2933 fols. 159-160: apres les avoir remerciers de leur bonne vouloir je leur faiz response qu’il pourroient connoistre condenement que le pape a prié tout d’avoir leurs adherens et de faire perdre au Roy la duche de Milan.
to Lucerne “pour roz affaires” and tried to negotiate a loan for the payment of Swiss mercenaries, all “pour la seureté de Millan.”

As well as assisting in diplomatic relations with the Swiss, de Marthery was a key contact for Milan’s most important ally, the Venetian Republic, most frequently represented in this period by Andrea Gritti. His despatches to the Senate as recorded by Marin Sanudo suggest that Lautrec was not the easiest of colleagues, nor always the most diplomatic of men, succumbing to tantrums and hawking up phlegm at irritable moments. From the Venetian perspective de Marthery was a useful intermediary, for Gritti often found “monsignor di Torbe” with Lautrec in his chamber. Following one particularly fine Lautrec tantrum Gritti noted that “Monsignor Terbe, who is a good man and a friend to our signoria, excused Lautrec for his words, saying such is his character.” Perhaps then, at a personal level, Lautrec’s bad reputation is truly merited, but he still enjoyed the loyalty of this most capable man.

Lautrec’s court in Milan was the first French establishment to attract any specific comment or identification as a magnificent household, befitting his dignity and impressing visitors, giving such men as the Swiss ambassadors “dinner and good cheer.” The power of displaying powerful entourages to the countryside was also exercised through Lautrec’s own peripatetic lifestyle and avowed preference for his hunting lodge at Pavia. Back in Milan, and just as any other would-be prince, Caroldo noted that Lautrec “maintains a handsome court of twenty five gentlemen, to whom he gives pensions, as well as men-at-arms of his company [...] he keeps ten liveried boys and has a beautiful stable of corsairs.” He also dined splendidly from silver plate, using these social occasions to draw his friends around him and to reward allies through inclusion in his social circle. He habitually “serves at table three courses to captains, lieutenants and men of war, and he always has between 20-25 at table; in addition there are two further tables for his closest friends and relatives and all have wine and bread – grandees and foreigners.”

The details of this household in Porta Vercellina illustrate that although loyal Guyennese and French were relied upon, Lautrec also recruited Lombard servants and advisors, such as monsignore Montello, his “maestro di casa.” His French retainers also sold the privilege to their own perquisites to Italians, both sides profiting from the governor’s entourage. Further corruption existed between entourage members, for example, Meschini records collusion between Sainte-Colombe and de Marthery over the reward of Milanese revenue.

94 BN MS Fr. 2963 fol. 161.
95 Chanterac, Odet de Foix, 39; Caroldo, “Relazione”, 14.
96 Sanudo, I diarii, vol. 23, c. 467 Gritti, Villafranca, 12 January 1517: monsignor di Terbe suo secretario, qual è bomo da ben e amico di la Signoria nostra in ogni sua operation, scusando Lutrech di le parole etc. dicendo è di tal natura.
97 BN MS NA Fr. 22898, fol.31, Lautrec to François I, Tournus, 14 July 1521: jay donne a disner et fait bonne chere.
98 Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 238.
99 Caroldo, “Relazione”, 13: Monsignor de Lautrech tien bella corta da 25 gentilomini, a li qual dà particular pension, utra che siano omini d’arme de la compagnia sua [...] tien 10 ragazzi vestiti a la sua livrea ed ha una bella stala de corsier.
100 Catalogue des Actes de Francois I, 1515-1547, ed. Paul Marichal, 10 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1887-1908), vol. 5, 718 records that Lautrec was later forced to sell this plate, along with his collar of St. Michel to pay the Swiss; ibid., 769: Mandement au trésorier de l’épargne de payer 16082 livres, 10 sous, 7 deniers tournois a Lautrec qui avait avancé cette somme en or, argent et vaisselle au roi.
101 Caroldo, “Relazione”, 13: che sempre l’ha 12 a la sua tavola. Monsignor de Lautrech fa tavola de tre piati a capitanis locotenenti e gente da guerra, e sempre l’ha 20 e 25 a la sua tavola: fa etiam due altre tavole per la fameglia, ed a tutti da vino e pane, macchine e forzieri.
102 Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 238-239.
103 Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 181.
Despite this corruption, the core of Lautrec’s Milanese retinue was clearly politically functional and effective, at least from the Venetian point of view. If they wanted to access the king via Lautrec, they could, and key members received ‘gifts’ from Venice for their support with Lautrec. The Venetian Senate voted Lautrec a series of costly presents, money, and “ten barrels of Muscat.” Typically, Lautrec and Lescun received bolts of Venetian silks, and other gifts included artworks, a “Christo passo con figure” said to be by Giovanni Bellini, and a Titian, possibly Saint Michael with Saint George and Saint Theodore. The Venetians also thanked de Marthery ‘who has always done us good service’ with a diamond worth 125 ducats. Further expensive gifts were sent to Lautrec including “a Turkish corsair [...] with its livery.” Gifts of falcons sparked a frenzy amongst French nobles with Lautrec acting almost as a dealer for the demand. In addition to the twelve falcons he received from the Venetian Republic, he sent “six to monsignor di San Polo, six to monsignor di Scut [Lescun] his brother, two to monsignor di Telegni, two to the Master of Artillery, and two to another [person]”. As a result, all key figures around Lautrec have suffered from accusations of venality.

Lautrec himself was also aware of the obligations that he owed to his entourage, and drew upon local resources to reward his adherents and practice ‘good lordship’ – that is, offering something in return for client loyalty. We have seen Lautrec writing to Paris for offices for French friends, but his period as governor also saw a growth in the sale of administrative, salaried offices, with Lautrec recommending more and more Italians to duchy offices, who through his patronage then became part of his informal entourage. Meschini cites amongst others the examples in 1518 of Lautrec’s nominations of Giovan Pietro Fumagalli to the vicario di Brianza, Graziano da Lucino to the commissario delle monete and in 1521 Carlo Pagnani to the commissari sul naviglio della Martesana. However, these men were not necessarily originally supporters amongst the more Francophile Guelph elite. Instead, this phenomenon reflects a more general “objective to create, enlarge and consolidate consent in favour of the occupation.” For Di Tullio and Fois there is little to separate the aforementioned pensions from the distribution of salaried office in the creation of good will; neither were they mutually exclusive.

What is more significant is that this represented a growth in administrative costs under Lautrec, which could be ill-afforded. In 1516 approximately 41% of the duchy’s outgoings were spent on administration, rising to 57% in 1518. Annual outgoings also rose in this period from 700,000 (at a time of costly war outgoings) to 1.2 million livres.

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105 Archivio di Stato di Venezia, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secreti, Filze, 2 nf; Sanudo, I diarìi, vol. 24, c. 63; Giorgio Agosti, Bambina e il classicismo Lombardo (Turin, Einaudi, 1990), 141, fn.39 discusses the identity of the Titian.
107 Sanudo, M. I diarìi, vol. 22, c.301, 10 June 1516: È da sapere in questi zorni fo mandato il presente a monsignor di Latrech, come fu preso in Pregadi alias di far, e di più un cavallo Turche, qual il bassà di Bosina mandò a donar a la signoria, con le stella ecc.
109 Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 245.
110 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 69: obiettive di creare, allargare, consolidare il consenso in favore di una dominazione.
tournois at a time of peace, this expansion represented by growing pensions and salaries. In terms of entourage and rule, Lautrec recognised that he had to try to offer an interesting financial settlement to the entire city, to avoid further regime change by default. The very recent lesson of a Milanese tax-strike leading to an “acceptance of forms of self-government”, effectively weakening Swiss power in Milan in 1515 had opened the city to the French, as the Milanese “decided that they did not want to and could not pay.”

Buying Milanese support and affiliation was well whilst Paris sent money to pay salaries and military expenses, but when from 1518 Lautrec was forced to impose taxation upon Milan to pay for the occupation and the Perpetual Peace of Fribourg, frictions were raised.

Where Trivulzio had been concerned to keep reward in his family, appointments under Lautrec were typical (if just in greater volume) of French policy in going beyond France’s longstanding allies amongst the “big four” Milanese families of the Borromeo, Visconti, Palavicino and Trivulzio to include names such as the Birago, Panigarola, Torelli, Anguissola, Malespina and Stanga. As in theory he could not appoint to bishoprics or to the Senate, his favouring of Italians to civil office represents an attempt at compromise. However, Caroldo tells us that it was not perceived in such a manner. One man’s attempt at impartiality was another’s lack of interest. Rather than improving Lautrec’s popularity this made him susceptible to other accusations, for “he makes profession of belonging neither to the Guelph party, nor to the Ghibelline, and as a result he is disliked by both factions.”

We must question Caroldo’s report here, as there is plenty of evidence that Lautrec’s entourage did extend to Milanese friends amongst the Guelph party: to remain financially supported he had to recruit support by packing political organs with friends and creatures. The reduction of the Consiglio Generale in July 1518 from 150 to 60 members (the Consiglio di Sessanta), reflects an attempt to reduce the risk of financial wrangling, but naturally, these members reflected the Francophile elite. He could also use gifting and honorary positions to recruit and reward support. Lautrec was one of the most senior members of the Order of St. Michel in the Duchy, and this gave him the opportunity to “to honour as best he could the principal representatives of the citizen families”. In the absence of Trivulzio in March 1518, Lautrec himself gave the Order’s collar to Bernabò Visconti, the Marquis of Saluzzo and Galeazzo Pallavicini.

Equally important to his ‘friendships’ were cultural and religious links, which created an informal entourage of friendship and shared interests. French governors of Milan had to work with Milan’s elite, coordinating events at the Duomo, hiring artists from the aristocratically controlled board of works, the Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo. Lautrec’s record in this respect is typical, as he made alliances and contacts with the Fabbrica for the tomb to his cousin Gaston de Foix, and embellishments to his palace. Interestingly, within the Fabbrica there were members of the Francophile Panigarola family who also controlled the abbey church of Santa Marta, where he chose to bury his cousin, Gaston. This church was also the home of the Conciliarist Oratorio della Divina Sapienza, attend-

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112 Caroldo, “Relazione”, 14: Fa profession de non voler tenir parte ne gelfa ne ghibellina, e per questo etiam è mal volute da ambe fazione.

113 Meschini, La Seconda Dominazione, 244: onorare come meglio poteva i principali rappresentati delle famiglie cittadine.

ed by Milan’s Francophile elite and connected to the Briçonnet interest. The Oratorio also received material gifts from Lautrec including “trimmings, chasubles, cushions, robes, table cloths, brocaded garments, velvets, embroidery.”

Valois Milan needed Italian friends, and these were the “grandees and foreigners” at Lautrec’s table. However, in large part, their friendship was bought. If the proportion of duchy monies spent on offices was growing, the amount of revenue alienated on donativi under Lautrec was even more significant. This was a kind of pension, composed of the gift or revenues from certain direct taxes (for example on wine or salt), given to “eminent personages of the state and the dominion of the French crown, but in respect to pensions, also to the allies of the time (the pope, the Swiss, the duke of Ferrara, etc.)” promoting good will for the occupation amongst Italians and foreigners.

If those in receipt of donativi were well-disposed to Milan, Lautrec’s deliberate social connection to them was another means to reinforce French rule, without alienating revenue. Like his cousin Gaston, he wanted to appear as a Prince of Milan, and princes needed princely friends. After his wound at the Battle of Ravenna he had recovered at the Este court thanks to the care of the Duke of Ferrara’s doctors, and seems to have had developed a friendship with Alfonso I d’Este. Alfonso’s support for the reconquest of Milan by François I was expressed in military support and a loan of 20,000 livres tournois, for which he was recompensed in donativi. He also hunted with the marquis de Montferrat, a long standing supporter of Valois Milan, paying his wife Anne d’Alençon a significant pension of 2000 livres tournois in 1518. More importantly, bringing such notables into a looser friendship network reinforced French foreign policy from 1515 to 1521, as the Duchy was officially supported by Ferrara. That in return they chose to associate with him socially makes them just as much a part of his entourage as Lescun, or others who expected a return for their efforts. Indeed, it was not just financial reward but social advancement that could be obtained by becoming Lautrec’s satellite: for example, they might be recommended into the royal entourage by the gift of the collar of St. Michel, as he gifted it to Ludovico da Bozzolo, telling the Venetians that “this lord is a man of standing and amongst the first of Italy, and the King loves him greatly.”

Personal links were longstanding as Lautrec was later able to forward Renée of France’s marriage to Ercole, Alfonso’s son.

This entourage, formal and informal, French and Italian, was costly in terms of resources and remuneration. Of course, this system was abused, whether practising “good lordship” towards relatives, trusted advisors or clients, and was a result of dwindling official payments, salaries and pensions from Paris, forcing Lautrec and his followers to seek other sources of reward. It seems to have most outraged Milan when abused by his most inner circle. Lescun, who had previously threatened Robertet and the king with the potentially dire consequences of Milan’s financial situation in June 1521 for “those of his Duchy of Milan have a very ill-will to pay the aforesaid subvention,” scandalised public opinion when he expropriated wholesale the properties of Girolamo Morone, the onetime Sforza chancellor. Directly enriching de Marthery was always problematic: Lautrec could not

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115 Agosti, Bambaia, 140.
117 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 69-70: personalità eminenti dello stato e del dominio della corona francese, ma, in modo maggiore rispetto alle pensioni, anche agli alleati del momento (Papa, gli svizzeri, il duca di Ferrara, eccetera).
118 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 165, 300, 311.
119 Di Tullio and Fois, Stati di guerra, 116, 222, 244, 300.
121 BN MS Fr. 2992 fol. 8, Lescun to Robertet, Milan, 2 June 1521: cecue de son duché de Millan les qu’ils ont tres mauvaise volonté de payer ladit(subvention). Tountefoiz il me fauldrait point de ny employer en tant ce que me sera possible et adverteray ordinairement les s(eigneur) de que se sera qui sera la fin apres.
give him further high ecclesiastical position, and as a supporter of the conciliar movement, any incursion he made into ecclesiastical revenue was bound to further offend Leo X. When he attempted to transfer to de Marthery the revenues of the abbey of Chiaravalle this intruded upon papal prerogative, and hardened papal opposition to French rule. Leo X sponsored attacks by bannis on French Milan from May 1521, and formally declared war on France in July. By November 1521, everything in Milan apart from the Castello Sforzesco was back in Sforza hands.

5. Conclusions

Lautrec’s entourage aimed to keep him in power, and to maintain his personal magnificence and that of the French state. Indeed, thinking about noble and royal entourage led artists to use the same visual language and models, suggesting how closely the two behaved and appeared. Lautrec’s experience of family and royal entourage from his youth was highly influential on his later retinue, whereby family and trusted military clients remained in his close circles, moving from regional to royal service, and then into Milan. We also see that he perceived and valued the ability of de Marthery, and as with his key estate officers kept him close to him throughout his career. Thus entourage bolstered power as well as aiming to be as practical and effective as possible in Lautrec’s interests.

The Venn diagram that we might draw of the interlocking and overlapping groups, which he participated in, created, and which supported him, show the importance of continuity, clients and family, but also creativity whereby Lautrec reacted to the circumstances of his appointment to bolster his power with Milanese and Italian friends. Indeed, the investigation into a governor’s entourage in Milan shows that what distinguishes Lautrec’s entourage from Trivulzio’s was its relationship to faction, or rather perceptions of this. Yet, when the relationships he built with the community at Santa Marta and with the Este family are considered, the inevitable need for Italian friends is apparent, but also Lautrec’s ability to find those who most closely corresponded to his own interests and activities. Whilst he had only been governor since 1516, we must remember the longevity of his association with Italy, and once again the role of experience comes into the building of a successful entourage.

Underlying all these entourage relationships were a series of reciprocal agreements, in which members expected a return. It has been argued that French Milan fell because of Lautrec’s venality and military incompetency. The latter accusation can be explained by the lack of money coming from Paris leading to a defeat by default. Obviously aware of Milan’s wealth (in this he was no different than his sovereign), Lautrec himself does not seem extraordinarily venal, apart from his interest in the finest falcons and hunters. Although undoubtedly weakened by the need to service the debt he owed to his entourage, he was again just following a royal model. Beyond his permanent household, and business staff, he settled his dues by licensing his followers to take their own rewards and the illegal seizure of goods and houses belonging to Milanese who may have otherwise supported him. Ultimately, if his ambition was to make his Milan as independent as possible from central control, he was also funding his entourage by the distribution of offices to his followers, the salaries for which were paid by (or at least owed by) the royal treasury and the opportunities for enrichment which might present themselves. Ultimately, when we think about noble independence, studying the composition and payment of noble entourages is another way to think about the ways in which centralisation – here by bad royal example – was creeping into the noble entourage by offering greater reward and office in royal service, even if appointments were mediated by Lautrec’s intervention. In this preferment to, and alienation of royal office revenue, Lautrec was truly living like a king.
Figure 1. Jean Clouet, Odet de Foix, vicomte de Lautrec, c.1520, Chantilly, Musée Condé, INV MN 136.

Figure 2. Anon., Henri de Foix in his court, c.1534, manuscript illumination on vellum, Paris, BN MS Fr. 4800 fol. 1. Registres des « foy, hommâges et seremens de fidélité que ont faictz et prestez » à Henri de Foix, seigneur de Lautrec, représenté par son tuteur « l’evesque de Coserans », les seigneurs ses vassaux et autres, ses sujets, en 1533 et 1534, à raison de fiefs mouvant dudit seigneur dans les terres dont les noms suivent.

Figure 3. Jean Clouet, Antoine Macault reading his translation to François I and his court, c.1534, parchment, 29 cm x 20 cm, Chantilly, Musée Condé, INV MN 721, fol. 1v.

Figure 4. Bambaia, Gaston de Foix enters Brescia/Porta Romana, c.1518, plaster cast of the original tomb, h. 96.5 cm, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, cast 1884-656.
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