

its claims of superiority and regarded the cardinals it had appointed as its agents. These provided their anti-Roman services for the most part in Roman guise. An initial attempt to reorient the cardinalate along a broad, national basis failed, because the candidates for the most part ignored or rejected the offices offered them, in coordination with or under the pressure of their princely courts. Even before the question of obedience was decided officially, therefore, the great ecclesio-political developments of 1440 had already undermined their positions in the Basel cardinalate; prelates from Aragón-Naples and Brittany assumed the red hat only for the duration of their sovereigns' short-lived participation in the council. Thus the synod and its pope had recourse only to candidates from their own ranks, that is to say those loyal to Savoy, or those motivated by sincere conviction – whose numbers, however, included scholars of the calibre of a Segovia or a Ragusa. If those cardinals who remained to see the dissolution of schism and council in 1449 found their livelihood elsewhere, this can be put down to the accommodating attitude of Eugenius's successor, Nicholas V; and also to the efforts of Louis Aleman. But their survival also owes something to Amadeus VIII-Felix V. The princes of Europe under French leadership saw him as one of their own, and they proved unable and unwilling to let him and his followers fail completely. In the end, even the council, or what remained of it, did not stand over the pope, but under his *de facto* protection.