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VII

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CHRISTIANS AND PAGANS IN THE REIGN OF CONSTANTIUS

In the introduction to his lectures *On the Epochs of Modern History*, Leopold von Ranke enunciated a celebrated principle of historical or historiographical equality:

> Every epoch is directly under God (*unmittelbar zu Gott*), and its value does not depend not on what proceeds from it, but in its existence itself, in its own uniqueness (*in ihrem Eigenen selbst*)... Each epoch must be seen as something valid for itself and appears most worthy of consideration... The historian thus has to direct his principal attention (*Hauptaugenmerk*) in the first place towards how men in a particular period thought and lived, and then he finds that, apart from certain unvarying eternal leading ideas (*Hauptideen*), for example moral ones, each epoch has its own especial direction (*Tendenz*) and its own ideal... All generations of mankind appear equally justified before God, and thus must the historian too regard the matter.[1]

[1] L. von RANKE, *Über die Epochen der neueren Geschichte* (Darmstadt 1954), 7-8. These lectures delivered before the king of Bavaria in 1854 were first published

Few historians would perhaps explicitly dispute Ranke's proposition that all periods deserve equal regard, yet in practice they inevitably concentrate their attention on periods which are interesting or well documented (or both), so that periods which are badly documented in the surviving evidence or which appear to have less intrinsic interest tend to be neglected or taken for granted. Such has been the fate in recent scholarship of what could be called 'The Age of Constantius'. When a book can be published with the title *The Age of Constantine and Julian* and pass straight from "the Constantinian period" to "the pagan revival of Julian the Apostate",[2] that implies that the period between the death of Constantine in 337 and Julian's accession to imperial power did not have a unique character of its own. One of the main aims of the present paper is to argue that the reign of Constantius has a unique character, that it deserves study and analysis in its own right, not merely as an interval between two more important and better known periods.

The reign of Constantius is undeniably ill-documented in the surviving evidence. There is no narrative source of any compass for political events for the period between Constantine's defeat of Licinius in 324 and 353 when the extant portion of Ammianus Marcellinus begins. Moreover, the meagre accounts which do survive (principally, the *Epitome de Caesaribus* and Zosimus) pass over the decade of the 340's with extreme brevity. For ecclesiastical events, it is true, there are no fewer than four fully preserved histo-

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after Ranke's death in his *Weltgeschichte* IX 2 (Leipzig 1888), 1-238: for a critical text of the passage quoted, see L. von RANKE, *Aus Werk und Nachlass*, ed. W. P. FUCHS and T. SCHIEDER, II (München 1971), 59-63. I have used and modified the translation in L. KRIEGER, *Ranke: The Meaning of History* (Chicago and London 1977), 6.

[2] D. BOWDER, *The Age of Constantine and Julian* (London 1978), esp. chaps. 2 and 5.

ries and one fragmentary one. But the four orthodox *Ecclesiastical Histories* (by Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoret) exhibit too frequent confusions when confronted with the primary evidence to be trusted even for their narrative framework, while the tendentious Eunomian Philostorgius survives only in abridgement and fragments. Consequently, the narrative framework of the reign of Constantius has to be patched together largely from primary but non-narrative materials such as coins, papyri, inscriptions, synodical letters and theological polemic—a task only recently commenced on a serious and thorough basis and still far from complete. Perhaps the single greatest obstacle arises from the fact that so much of the non-documentary evidence comes from or through Athanasius or relates to his career, which he was at pains to misrepresent on central issues, particularly his dealings with Roman emperors. Hence the essential preliminary to any serious reconstruction of the history of the reign of Constantius is the reconstruction of the career of the bishop of Alexandria.[3] But perhaps the nature of the period can be defined approximately without a full narrative framework. Much of the reign of Augustus is badly documented and uncertain, yet the nature of the regime, its ideology, the culture of the reign and its social history have all proved accessible to modern enquiry.

A rigorous scrutiny of the historian's craft lays it down that it is not sufficient to read in a period until one can hear its people speak: the professional historian will read, study and think about the surviving records of his chosen period until he knows what its people will say next.[4] Salutary and

[3] Attempted in the monograph *Athanasius of Alexandria. Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (forthcoming).

[4] G. R. ELTON, *The Practice of History* (Sydney 1967), 17. He rejects the laxer standard as "amateurishness of a drastic kind because it is superficially professional."

bracing advice indeed, which can be heeded for a period for which voluminous writers survive (for example, Eusebius of Caesarea for the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine). Unfortunately, apart from coins, inscriptions, papyri, laws and letters, the contemporary material from the period between the death of Constantine and the proclamation of Julian as Caesar on 6 November 355 is exiguous. In Latin literature there is nothing of any consequence except Firmicus Maternus' *On the Error of Profane Religions*, the derivative and often overlooked *Itinerarium Alexandri*,[5] the *Ars Grammatica* by Marius Victorinus and his commentary on Cicero's *De Inventione*, and the calendaric compilation whose author is circularly and with minor inaccuracy known as 'The Chronographer of 354'.[6] The Latin *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* is not an original composition in that language, but a much later translation of a Greek survey of the Roman Empire apparently written by a native of Palestine in the late 340's.[7] In Greek there survive two imperial panegyrics, one by Themistius and one by Libanius,[8] Themistius' philosophical works and a few speeches,

[5] Edited most recently by H.-J. HAUSMANN, *Itinerarium Alexandri (Kritische Edition)* (Diss. Köln 1970). Unfortunately, this unpublished dissertation is not widely available: on the date and historical context of the work, T. D. BARNES, in *JRS* 75 (1985), 135.

[6] H. STERN, *Le calendrier de 354* (Paris 1953), esp. 45; 115; 358. Stern argues convincingly that this combination of pagan almanac and Christian calendars was produced in 353 for presentation to its dedicatee Valentinus on 1 January 354, and that Valentinus was a Christian who needed to know the dates of pagan festivals still celebrated in Rome.

[7] J. ROUGÉ (éd.), *Exposito totius mundi et gentium*, Sources chrétiennes 124 (Paris 1966), 89 ff. Rougé argues that the original was written in 359 (*op. cit.*, 9 ff.), but the clear references to the emperor residing in Antioch (*Expositio* 24; 32) and to Pannonia as a *habitatio imperatorum* (57) suit 348 or 349 far better.

[8] Viz. Them. *Or.* I, delivered in 347 at Ancyra, and Lib. *Or.* LIX, delivered at Nicomedia in 348-9.

including his eulogy of his dead father,[9] some vapid orations by Himerius and a number of *Letters* from Libanius.[10] Latin theological writing offers little more, since it was the 'blasphemy of Sirmium' in 357 and its repercussions which stimulated a sudden efflorescence of theological writing at the end of the reign of Constantius, among which one can note the brief treatises of Phoebadius of Agen and Gregory of Elvira, the historically oriented polemics of Hilary of Poitiers, the seditious fulminations of Lucifer of Cagliari and the dense philosophical defence of Nicene orthodoxy by Marius Victorinus.[11] On the other hand, it appears that Hilary had already composed his long *Commentary on Matthew* before his deposition in early 356.[12] In Greek, there is of course much from the pen of Athanasius, but here too little else which can with certainty be assigned to the years 337-355 except the latest works of Eusebius of Caesarea [13] and the *Catechetical Homelies* of Cyril of Jerusalem.[14] The *Life of Antony* may have been composed in Coptic in 355/6 and at once adapted for a Greek reading public in Alexandria:[15] whether an original composition or not, the latter

[9] Themistius' *Lament for his Father* was delivered in September or October 355 and refers to philosophical writings (*Or.* XX pp. 287-289 Dindorf), which are normally dated to the decade 345-355, cf. W. STEGEMANN, in *RE* V A (1934), 1651 ff.

[10] In fact, less than one hundred letters out of a collection whose total exceeds 1500 were written before the end of 355: see O. SEECK, *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet* (Leipzig 1906), 316 ff.; 466.

[11] J. QUASTEN, in *Patrologia* III (Roma 1978), 33 ff. Lucifer may have written *De non conveniendo cum haereticis* and *De regibus apostaticis* before late 357, cf. G.F. DIERCKS (ed.), Luciferi Calaritani *Opera quae supersunt, CCL* 8 (1978), XVIII ff.

[12] For the fullest discussion, J. DOIGNON, *Hilaire de Poitiers avant l'exil* (Paris 1971), 159 ff.

[13] Viz. *Against Marcellus, Ecclesiastical Theology* and the *Life of Constantine.*

[14] *PG* XXXIII 331-1060: delivered during Lent, probably between 348 and 351.

[15] See "Angel of Light or Mystic Initiate? The Problem of the *Life of Antony*", in *JThS* N.S. 37 (1986), 353-368.

version is by far the most influential literary product of the reign of Constantius.

In these circumstances, the present essay can only have a provisional nature. It falls into three main sections: first, Christianity among high officials between 317 and 361; second, the treatment of pagan cults in east and west; and third the attitudes of pagans towards the Christian empire between 337 and 361. Certain central theses argued elsewhere [16] will be assumed rather than justified anew, since my present assignment is not to defend those views, but to ask what implications they have for the decades during which the sons of Constantine ruled the Roman Empire. I shall try to incorporate valid criticisms into the present discussion, but I hope that my main conclusions about the Constantinian empire may receive some indirect confirmation from their application to a later period.

I

Two principal views of the "mission and expansion of Christianity" dominate modern treatments. The traditional view, given classic expression by Edward Gibbon, has been that before 312 Christians were a small, persecuted and insignificant minority of the population of the Roman Empire, small clusters of believers obliged to conceal their religion in an alien society: conversion to Christianity on a large scale came after and as a result of the conversion of Constantine in 312, or at least as a direct consequence of the pro-Christian policies which he began to adopt after he defeated Maxentius.[17] The alternative view goes back to Jacob Burckhardt, through it is in fact untenable in the

[16] In *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981).

[17] *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London 1776), chs. 15, 16.

form in which he expressed it.[18] It has been developed recently in the work of English-speaking historians such as William Frend, Peter Brown, Fergus Millar, Graeme Clarke and myself.[19] On this view, the decisive shift came during the third century rather than the fourth, so that "the triumph of Christianity" can be seen as occuring in the period between 260 and 303. Effective toleration of Christianity began with the capture of Valerian by the Persians in 260 and the accession of Gallienus to sole rule, and the 'Great Persecution' of 303-313 was not the final titanic struggle of two religions long set on a collision course, but a desperate attempt of die-hard pagans to reverse the course of history before it was too late. This view derives both its origin and strength from close study of the writers and the history of the third century: Tertullian in North Africa, Clement of Alexandria, the career of Origen, the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, the correspondence of Cyprian, the appeal to the emperor Aurelian in 270 to oust the deposed bishop Paul from the church of Antioch, the writings of Eusebius of Caesarea—all these attest the growing respectability of Christianity from c. 200 and its expanding role in Roman provincial society. By 300, the Christian bishop was a prominent figure in many an eastern city and a large church stood facing Diocletian's palace in Nicomedia.

[18] *Die Zeit Constantins des Grossen* (Leipzig ²1880), ch. 8. Burckhardt mistakenly dismissed both the primary literary witnesses for the early fourth century (Lactantius and Eusebius) as outright liars.

[19] W.H.C. FREND, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (London 1965), esp. ch. 14 ("The Triumph of Christianity, 260-303"); P. BROWN, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London 1971), 60 ff.; *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 54 ff.; F. MILLAR, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture and Political Allegiance in Third-Century Syria", in *JRS* 61 (1971), 1-17; *The Emperor in the Roman World 31 B.C.-A.D. 337* (London 1977), 551 ff.; G.W. CLARKE (ed.), *The Octavius of Minucius Felix,* Ancient Christian Writers 39 (1974), 32 ff.; *The Letters of St. Cyprian of Carthage* I-III, Ancient Christian Writers 43-44 (1984); 46 (1986); T.D. BARNES, *Constantine and Eusebius*, esp. 21; 49 ff.; 82 ff.; 130 ff.; 142 ff.; *Tertullian. A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford ²1985), 332.

How can this apparently impressive mass of evidence be gainsaid? The traditional view has recently been restated by Ramsey MacMullen and Robin Lane Fox. Their arguments deserve serious attention. MacMullen's case is the easier to disprove. He takes his stand on two central propositions. First, that c. 300 there were only about five million Christians in the Roman Empire out of a total population of some sixty millions and they included only a 'tiny share' of the ruling élite; second, that conversion normally occurred before 312 through miracles and after 312 as a result of coercion or political or social pressure. Both propositions are underpinned by the assumptions that toleration of Christianity began in 312, so that until 312 Christians "avoided attention", and that Christianity was "a predominantly lower-class religious movement."[20] In fact, toleration began in 260 and MacMullen ignores the striking evidence for the advance of Christianity among the intelligentsia in the third century. Even Porphyry, the author of an enormous *Against the Christians*, probably c. 300, had earlier allowed Christianity a place among the established religions of mankind.[21] MacMullen's estimate that Christians formed close to one tenth of the population in the eastern provinces is probably too low for Asia Minor, Syria, the coastal areas of Palestine and Egypt; more important, it is clear that Christians formed the dynamic element in Roman society and that by 300 no emperor could rule securely without the acquiescence of his Christian subjects.[22]

[20] R. MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (A.D. 100-400)* (New Haven 1984), esp. 29; 32-33 with n. 26 (135-6); 38; 50.

[21] In his *Philosophy from Oracles*, probably written before he came to Rome in 260, cf. J. Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre, le philosophe néo-platonicien* (Gent 1913), 15 ff. On the context of *Against the Christians*, see now W.H.C. Frend, "Prelude to the Great Persecution: The Propaganda War", in *JEH* 38 (1987), 1-18.

[22] T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 37 ff.

Lane Fox presents a subtler, carefully argued and documented case, whose validity must in part be conceded. Drawing on the conclusions and techniques of Louis Robert, he breathes vivid life into the epigraphic, papyrological and literary evidence for pagan cult, worship of traditional deities and the functioning of oracles in the second and third centuries: he demonstrates brilliantly and at length the persistence of old forms of civic life and civic cult into the middle of the third century, beyond the time when they have often been supposed moribund.[23] However, the corollary which Lane Fox draws for Christianity simply does not follow: if Christianity shows only a "low profile" in inscriptions and papyri before 312, that reflects the nature of the evidence rather than the absence of Christians, who can only be detected by certain criteria.[24] Lane Fox presents the conversion of Constantine as "an entirely unexpected event" quoting with approval Norman Baynes's phrase "an erratic block which has diverted the stream of history".[25] That interpretation (I believe) cannot stand against Lactantius' clear statement that Constantine began his reign in 306 with a gesture of support for Christianity or against the evidence that Constantius, Constantine and Helen were sympathetic to Christianity long before 312.[26] Moreover, though Lane Fox grapples with the evidence for the social prominence of Christianity, his case depends upon a systematic late dating of crucial docu-

[23] R. LANE FOX, *Pagans and Christians* (Harmondsworth 1986), esp. chs. 2-5 (on paganism). The book is peppered with minor inaccuracies such as "the destruction of Jerusalem in 135" (429).

[24] Contrast R. LANE FOX, *Pagans and Christians*, 590: "the great expansion of Christianity belongs where we would expect it, after Constantine's victories, not before."

[25] R. LANE FOX, *Pagans...*, 609 ff.; cf. N.H. BAYNES, *Constantine the Great and the Christian Church* (London 1931), 3.

[26] *Constantine and Eusebius*, 44 ff.; "The Conversion of Constantine", in *Classical Views* N.S. 5 (1985), 371-391.

ments. Two central examples will illustrate. First, the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, which was originally written in Greek in Syria before 250. Lane Fox's exposition is brilliant, but he rejects the correct date with the lame argument that "there is no certainty and the second half of the century is also possible".[27] On the contrary, the *Didascalia* alludes to persecution in the same way as Tertullian: therefore, it documents the social organisation and prominence of the Christian church before 250.[28] Second, the first edition of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. Lane Fox argues that it was in nine books, "born in the wake of Constantine's conversion" and completed in late 313.[29] That is patently impossible, a true *reductio ad absurdum*. For it entails that Eusebius composed the *Ecclesiastical History*, a massive and original work, in no more than nine months or so, and that he had already written the first version of the *Martyrs of Palestine*—a work whose conception presupposes that Eusebius had already written the *History*. Analysis of the two versions of the *Martyrs*, the textual evidence for successive editions of the *History* and the nature of the *History* itself suggest rather that the original edition of the latter was in seven books and completed before 303.[30] But if Eusebius wrote a history of the Christian church down to c. 280, then it follows that he at least believed that Christianity had triumphed before 300. His verdict (I have argued at length elsewhere) should be accepted as approximately correct.[31]

[27] R. LANE FOX, *Pagans...*, 499 ff.; 557 ff.

[28] T.D. BARNES, in *The Crake Lectures 1984* (Sackville, N.B., 1986), 43 f. (see below n. 102); cf. P. GALTIER, "La date de la Didascalie des Apôtres", in *RHE* 42 (1947), 315-351.

[29] R. LANE FOX, *Pagans...*, 271; 607-8.

[30] T.D. BARNES, "The Editions of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*", in *GRBS* 21 (1980), 191-201.

[31] *Constantine and Eusebius*, esp. 126 ff.; 191 ff.

Against this background, and on the non-traditional view, it becomes plausible to accept Eusebius' claim that in the reign of Diocletian there were Christian provincial governors who were exempted from performing the traditional act of sacrifice before conducting official business.[32] It is undeniably true that none of these Christian senators or governors can be identified by name. But that is not an adequate reason for doubting their existence.[33] The able survey by Werner Eck identified only a handful of certain Christians in the senatorial class before 312, but Eck correctly argued that his "extremely meagre result" was due largely to the nature of the surviving evidence and to the fact that Christian senators and governors were the class least likely to advertise their religion.[34] Moreover, we move suddenly from a period in which no Christians can be identified as holders of the highest offices to one where attested pagans become extremely rare. The first consul who can certainly be identified as a Christian is the Campanian Ovinius Gallicanus, consul in 317, who donated a *massa Gargiliana* in the territory of Suessa Aurunca to the church of Saints Peter, Paul and John at Ostia.[35] There was, therefore, already a "small group among the highest aristocracy who converted early to the religion of their emperor" before the defeat of Licinius.[36]

[32] Eus. *HE* VIII 1, 2.

[33] R. Lane Fox, *Pagans...*, 586, implicitly accuses Eusebius of romancing.

[34] W. Eck, "Das Eindringen des Christentums in den Senatorenstand bis zu Konstantin d. Gr.", in *Chiron* 1 (1971), 381-406, esp. 395 ff. Eck's seven certain Christians in the senatorial class before 312 include the martyr Crispina, whose true social status was much lower, cf. T.D. Barnes, in *Phoenix* 27 (1973), 142.

[35] *Liber Pontificalis* XXXIV 29, cf. E.J. Champlin, "Saint Gallicanus (Consul 317)", in *Phoenix* 36 (1982), 71-76. Gallicanus belonged to a Campanian family and had been *curator* of Teanum Sidicinum (*CIL* X 4785).

[36] E.J. Champlin, *art. cit.*, 76, adding Severus (consul 323) and Anicius Paulinus (consul 325).

It has often been claimed, even after the article which proved that the Gallicanus who donated lands to the church was the blue-blooded aristocratic consul of 317, not the obscurely attested Flavius Gallicanus, consul in 330, that the upper class was still "mostly pagan".[37] That claim could be correct for the traditional senatorial western landowning aristocracy of Italy and Africa, especially for the aristocracy of Rome itself,[38] but it is demonstrably untrue for the new ruling class of the fourth century whose careers depended on imperial patronage. In order to estimate the proportion of Christians among office-holders, it is advisable to minimise unknowns by considering the holders of offices for which there exist complete or virtually complete lists, most obviously the ordinary consulate, the praetorian prefecture and the prefecture of the city of Rome.[39] To be sure, the religion of a consul or a prefect will often be indiscoverable on present evidence, but we know the names of virtually all the ordinary consuls and prefects appointed by Constantine and his sons between 317 and 361, so that new discoveries are unlikely to alter our conclusions significantly. However, before we proceed to figures, it will be wise to reflect on the vagaries of our evidence.

[37] Averil CAMERON, in *JRS* 73 (1983), 185.

[38] As assumed, for example, in the survey by H.D. ALTENDORF, "Römische Senatsaristokratie und Christentum am Ende des 4. Jahrhunderts", in *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte* I (München 1974), 227-243. On the other hand, below the senatorial level, it can be argued that in the third century clergy were normally recruited from the curial class, i.e. the local aristocracy: see, briefly, H. MONTGOMERY, "Decurions and the Clergy: Some Suggestions", in *Opuscula Romana* 15 (1985), 93-95.

[39] The following discussion draws on R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amtsträger des Römischen Reiches seit Constantins I. Alleinherrschaft bis zum Ende der Theodosianischen Dynastie* (Bonn 1978), though it takes issue with Haehling's conclusions about both individuals and categories.

The nature or quality of an official's Christianity is deliberately waived here: what is significant for social trends in the fourth century is how men presented themselves to others, whatever their inner convictions.

The period between 317 and 361 is poorly documented in comparison with the later fourth century. How then is the religion of high officials known? Often by the merest accident. If a western aristocrat possesses a Roman priesthood in a cursus inscription, then he is clearly a pagan. But does the absence of any such priesthood indicate that a man was a Christian? The inference may be correct, but it cannot legitimately be regarded as certain. For other categories, no similar systematic documentation is available. A significant number of high officials are known to be Christians only from incidental evidence in Athanasius and Epiphanius. The *Historia Arianorum* records the names of six *comites* who wrote to Athanasius in 345/6 at Constantius' bidding to urge him to return to Alexandria. They were

1 Polemius, presumably the consul of 338, otherwise unknown;
2 Datianus, the consul of 358, known to be a Christian from a letter of Libanius;[40]
3 Bardio, apparently the predecessor of Eusebius as *praepositus sacri cubiculi*;[41]
4 Thalassius, later praetorian prefect of Gallus;[42]
5 Taurus, consul in 361, who supervised the Council of Ariminum in 359 but is nowhere expressly stated to be a Christian;[43]
6 Florentius, praetorian prefect in Gaul and Illyricum (357-361) and consul in 361.[44]

It seems clear that all six men must be Christians, since Athanasius sarcastically remarks that it was more possible

[40] Lib. *Ep.* 81,5.

[41] See the fourth petition appended to Athanasius' *Letter to Jovian* (in *PG* XXVI 823). Bardio is not named elsewhere.

[42] *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* I (Cambridge 1971), 886.

[43] *PLRE* I 879-80.

[44] *PLRE* I 365. O. Seeck, *Die Briefe des Libanius*, 156, correctly noted: "worauf man schliessen darf, dass er Christ war."

to believe their assurances of benevolence than the emperor's.[45] Yet only one is elsewhere described as a Christian, and only one more can be identified with certainty as a Christian from his official actions (viz. Taurus from his conduct in 359). Epiphanius provides a list of high officials who were present as official witnesses when Basil of Ancyra questioned Photinus about his theological beliefs at Sirmium early in 351. Again, all the men named must be Christians, since their function was to certify the accuracy of the official verbatim record of Photinus' interrogation on matters of Christian doctrine.[46] Significantly, the praetorian prefect Vulcacius Rufinus, who was at hand but a known pagan, did not attend, though his *exceptor* Callicrates was present. Epiphanius describes the men as *comites* and supplies the following names:

1 Thalassius, the praetorian prefect of Gallus;
2 Datianus, the consul of 358;
3 Cerealis, consul with Datianus in 358, whom Constantius appointed *praefectus urbi* in September 352 when he wrested Italy from Magnentius;[47]
4 Taurus, the consul of 361;
5 Marcellinus, perhaps identical with men of that name attested as *praeses* of Phoenice in 342 and *comes Orientis* in 349;[48]
6 Euanthius, otherwise unknown;

[45] Athan. *Hist. Arian.* 22,1.

[46] Epiph. *Panarion Haer.* 71, 1,1. This was not, as is often assumed, "the committee which tried Photinus" (*PLRE* I 879). The proceedings were a preliminary enquiry: three sealed copies were produced, one for Constantius, one for the *comites* who acted as witnesses, and one for the use of the Council of Sirmium which subsequently tried and condemned Photinus (*Panar. Haer.* 71, 1,8). For the assumption made here, viz. that all the men named must have been Christians, A. CHASTAGNOL, *Les fastes de la Préfecture de Rome au Bas-Empire* (Paris 1962), 137; 149.

[47] *PLRE* I 197-199.

[48] *PLRE* I 545; 546.

7 Olympius, whose career is otherwise obscure;[49]
8 Leontius, who is plausibly identified with the Flavius Leontius who was *praefectus urbi* in 355/6.[50]

Again, Datianus is the only man elsewhere expressly certified as a Christian, though Constantius' appointment of Cerealis and Leontius as *praefecti urbis* in 352 and 355/6 implies that, like Taurus, they too were Christians,[51] and a letter of Jerome written in 412 alludes to Cerealis in terms which strongly support the inference in his case.[52]

It is highly probable, therefore, that it will be impossible to document the religion of all the consuls and prefects who were Christians on the evidence that survives. Nevertheless, and with all due caution, an attempt can be made to estimate the proportion of Christians among the holders of the highest honours in the Roman state.[53] Among ordinary consuls between 317 and 337, other than emperors, I find the following totals:

(1) seven certain Christians, viz. Ovinius Gallicanus (317), Severus (323),[54] Junius Bassus (331),[55] Flavius Ablabius

[49] *PLRE* I 645 suggests identification with the Olympius whom Libanius, *Ep.* 554 describes as influential at court in 357.

[50] *PLRE* I 503.

[51] A. CHASTAGNOL, *La préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire* (Paris 1960), 422 ff.; R. O. EDBROOKE, in *AJP* 97 (1976), 42 ff.

[52] Hier. *Epist.* 127, 2; cf. A. CHASTAGNOL, *Fastes...*, 138 f.

[53] Documentation of the lists which follow must necessarily be selective, and concentrates on evidence relevant to the religion of each man listed. For their careers, a general reference may be made to *PLRE* I (1971), and, for consuls and prefects down to 337, to T. D. BARNES, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982), chs. 6-8.

[54] Hier. *Vir. ill.* 111.

[55] Classified as a pagan by R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit...*, 284; 289; 331. But there are strong iconographic arguments for identifying Bassus as the Christian consul depicted on a sarcophagus of c. 330: see W. N. SCHUMACHER, in *Röm. Mitt.* 65 (1958), 100 ff., cf. H. FUHRMANN, in *Röm. Mitt.* 54 (1939), 161 ff.

(331),[56] Flavius Dalmatius (333), Julius Constantius (335),[57] Flavius Felicianus (337); [58]
(2) seven probable Christians, viz. Petronius Probianus (322),[59] Flavius Constantius (327), Valerius Maximus (327),[60] Flavius Januarinus (328),[61] Domitius Zenophilus (333),[62] Flavius Optatus (334),[63] Virius Nepotianus (336); [64]
(3) ten men whose religious sympathies appear uncertain, viz. Caesonius Bassus (317), Anicius Julianus (322),[65] Vettius Rufinus (323), Anicius Paulinus (325), Vettius Justus (328), Flavius Gallicanus (330), Papius Pacatianus (332),

[56] *Const. Sirmond.* 1; Athan. *Ep. fest.* 4,5.

[57] The religion of Dalmatius and Constantius is not explicitly attested, but as half-brothers of Constantine they must surely have professed themselves Christians.

[58] Ioannes Malalas, *Chron.* XIII pp. 318-9, ed. L. DINDORF (Bonn 1831).

[59] In *Phoenix* 27 (1973), 149, I argued that the Probus to whom Lactantius dedicated a lost work in four books (*CSEL* XXVII pp. 155-6; cf. Hier. *Vir. ill.* 80) may be Petronius Probianus.

[60] Eusebius, *Vit. Const.* II 44, indirectly implies that both Constantius and Maximus were Christians. The consul of 327, who was praetorian prefect between 327 and 337, must be distinguished from the aristocratic Valerius Maximus *signo* Basilius, who was *praefectus urbi* from 319 to 323, cf. T. D. BARNES, in *CPh* 82 (1987), 217.

[61] The Christian sarcophagus of Januarinus' wife with an inscription in which he honours her memory has been found at Arles: J.-M. ROQUETTE, in *CRAI* 1974, 257-263.

[62] Zenophilus' Christianity is implied by his spectacular career, on which see T. D. BARNES, *The New Empire...*, 106-7.

[63] Probably an imperial relative, cf. *The New Empire...*, 107.

[64] Probably husband of Constantine's half-sister Eutropia, cf. *The New Empire...*, 108.

[65] Prudentius, *C. Symm.* I 544 ff., is not good evidence that any of the Anicii who where consuls in 322, 325 and 334 were Christian converts: Prudentius has selected names prominent in the Roman aristocracy under Theodosius. On the other hand, the career inscription of the consul of 334 (*ILS* 1220) omits any pagan priesthood, and the consul of 325 is praised as *benignus, sanctus* (*CIL* VI 1651). E. J. CHAMPLIN, in *Phoenix* 36 (1982), 76, accepts the latter as a certain Christian.

Mecilius Hilarianus (332), Anicius Paulinus (334), Tettius Facundus (336);
(4) two probable pagans, viz. Proculus (325), Julianus (325);[66]
(5) three certain pagans, viz. Aurelius Valerius Tullianus Symmachus (330),[67] Rufius Albinus (335),[68] Fabius Titianus (337).[69]

For the period 338 to 361, excluding emperors and consuls appointed by Magnentius, I find the following totals:

(1) nine certain Christians, viz. Flavius Polemius (338), Flavius Philippus (348),[70] Flavius Salia (348),[71] Datianus (358), Naeratius Cerealis (358), Flavius Eusebius (359), Flavius Hypatius (359),[72] Flavius Taurus (361), Flavius Florentius (361);
(2) four probable Christians, viz. Septimius Acindynus (340),[73] Petronius Probinus (341),[74] Flavius Domitius Leontius (344),[75] Flavius Eusebius (347);[76]

[66] For these two consuls, see briefly *The New Empire...*, 102-3.

[67] Firmicus Maternus, *Math.* VIII 15, 4, implies that he was a practising Stoic philosopher.

[68] For his career, *The New Empire...*, 108. Both his son and grandson were pagans.

[69] Attested as *xvvir sacris faciundis* (*ILS* 8983: Cumae).

[70] Athanasius, *Apol. de fuga sua* 3, 6, describes him as a patron of the Arian heresy.

[71] Thdt. *HE* II 8, 54.

[72] The consuls of 359 were the brothers of the Christian Eusebia, whom Constantius married c. 352 (*PLRE* I 300-1).

[73] The preservation and details of the story told c. 393 by Augustine, *De serm. dom.* I 50, in *PL* XXXIV 1254, suggest that Acindynus was a Christian.

[74] Son of Petronius Probianus, consul in 322 (*PLRE* I 735).

[75] Praetorian prefect of Constantius from 340 to 344 (*PLRE* I 502).

[76] Probably father of Eusebia, the wife of Constantius (*PLRE* I 308).

(3) twelve whose religious sympathies are uncertain, viz. Flavius Ursus (338), Antonius Marcellinus (341), Flavius Romulus (343), Flavius Bonosus (344), Flavius Julius Sallustius (344), Flavius Amantius (345), M. Nummius Albinus (345), Flavius Sergius (350), Flavius Nigrinianus (350), Flavius Arbitio (355);
(4) one probable pagan, viz. Ulpius Limenius (349);[77]
(5) five certain pagans, viz. L. Aradius Valerius Proculus (340),[78] M. Maecius Furius Baburius Caecilianus Placidus (343),[79] Vulcacius Rufinus (347),[80] Aconius Catullinus (349),[81] Q. Flavius Maesius Egnatius Lollianus (355).[82]

This survey indicates a significant contrast. Constantius appointed no known pagan consul except Lollianus in 355, who had been excluded from the consulate of 338 to which Constantine designated him.[83] As ruler of the West, however, Constans was obliged to satisfy the aspirations of pagans in the Roman aristocracy.

A similar predominance of Christians over pagans can be detected among praetorian prefects between 324 and 361. Of the twelve prefects of Constantine after the defeat of Licinius, two were certainly Christians (Junius Bassus and Flavius Ablabius) and at least another three probably so (Flavius Constantius, Valerius Maximus and Grego-

[77] R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit...*, 291-2, deduces that Limenius was a pagan from Libanius' accusation that, as proconsul of Constantinople in 342, Limenius prayed to Tyche to let him stay in office long enough to kill him (*Or.* I 46).

[78] *ILS* 1240; 1242 (Rome).

[79] *ILS* 1231 (Puteoli).

[80] *ILS* 1237 (Rome).

[81] *CIL* II 2635 (Asturica); cf. *CTh* XVI 10, 3 (342).

[82] *ILS* 3425 (Rome); 1223 (Suessa); 1224 a-c (Puteoli), cf. Firmicus Maternus, *Math.* VIII 33.

[83] Firmicus Maternus, *Math. prooem.* 8, cf. T. D. BARNES, in *JRS* 65 (1975), 40.

rius).[84] Only one is a certain pagan, viz. Valerius Proculus (consul 340), who became prefect briefly in Africa while proconsul [85]—hardly a normal appointment to the praetorian prefecture. The evidence for prefects, therefore, indirectly supports Eusebius' claim that after 324 Constantine preferred Christians as provincial governors.[86]

The oldest of Constantine's surviving sons had one known prefect after 337, viz. the Christian Ambrosius.[87] Constantius appointed eighteen prefects including two to serve Gallus and one to supervise Julian: among them are eight certain Christians (viz. Maiorinus,[88] Flavius Philippus, Thalassius, Strategius Musonianus,[89] Flavius Taurus, Flavius Florentius, Helpidius,[90] and Honoratus),[91] while the three certain pagans are Roman aristocrats whom Constantius rewarded for dynastic loyalty during the usurpation of Magnentius, viz. Vulcacius Rufinus, who was kept on as prefect in Illyricum in 351, then transferred to Gaul, C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus who succeeded Rufinus in Gaul,[92] and Lollianus (consul 355). By contrast, the prefects

[84] For the attested names, *The New Empire...*, 131 ff., cf. D. FEISSEL, in *Travaux et Mémoires* 9 (1985), 421 ff. (an inscription from Antioch which matches *ILT* 814 (Tubernuc) and supplies the erased name as Valerius Felix). For the probable Catholic sympathies of Gregorius, see R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit...*, 356. It is hard to believe that Evagrius, who served as prefect from 326 to 336, was not also a Christian.

[85] *ILS* 1240; 1241.

[86] Eus. *Vit. Const.* II 44.

[87] Paulinus, *Vita Ambr.* 3 ff., assumes that Ambrose was born into a Christian family, while Ambrose himself records a martyr among his sister's ancestors (*Exhort. virg.* 12, 82, in *PL* XVI 376).

[88] L. ROBERT, *Hellenica* XI-XII (Paris 1960), 302-305.

[89] Eus. *Vit. Const.* III 62, 1; Amm. XV 13, 1-2.

[90] Hier. *Vita Hilar.* 14.

[91] Soz. *HE* IV 23, 3; cf. R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit...*, 115.

[92] *PLRE* I 978-980. Of the other seven prefects of Constantius, Septimius Acindynus and Flavius Domitius Leontius, consuls in 340 and 344, were probably Christians, while the religion of Domitianus, Mecilius Hilarianus, Anatolius

of Constans were overwhelmingly pagan, viz. four pagan Roman aristocrats (Aconius Catullinus, Fabius Titianus, Furius Placidus and Vulcacius Rufinus, consuls in 349, 337, 343 and 347 respectively), Antonius Marcellinus (consul 341), also an aristocrat but whose religious sympathies are uncertain, and Anatolius from Berytus, a "lover of sacrifice even when the tenor of the times was adverse".[93]

The *praefecti urbis* predictably contain a higher proportion of attested pagans, since they were usually drawn from the aristocracy of Italy.[94] But Constantine appointed known Christians even in this bastion of the aristocracy: the first Christian *praefectus* is Ovinius Gallicanus in 316/7; thereafter, of the twelve prefects appointed by Constantine before his death, another four are known or probable Christians, viz. Locrius Verinus (323-325),[95] Acilius Severus (325/6), Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius (329 and 333)[96] and Petronius Probianus (329-331).

(prefect of Illyricum from 357 to 360) and Nebridius is unclear. R. von HAEHLING, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit...*, 63, classifies Hermogenes as a pagan on the strength of Libanius, *Ep.* 21, 1.

[93] Eunapius, *Vit.phil.* X 6, 1-3, p. 490 Didot. This prefect c. 344 must be distinguished from the Anatolius, also from Berytus, who was prefect of Illyricum from 357 to 360, cf. A. F. NORMAN, "The Illyrian Prefecture of Anatolius", in *RhM* N.F. 100 (1957), 253-259.

Ulpius Limenius and Hermogenes, who served as *praefecti praetorio et urbis* at Rome from 347 to 350 are easterners whom Constans agreed to appoint to high office in Italy, cf. A. CHASTAGNOL, in *AAntHung* 24 (1976), 348 ff. The phenomenon is a puzzling one, for which the present discussion may suggest an explanation — viz. that Constantius sent these two men to hold high office in the West because they were pagans.

[94] For full discussion of the *praefecti urbis* of Constantine, see A. CHASTAGNOL, *Les fastes...*, 63-102.

[95] On Verinus as a Christian, D. M. NOVAK, in *AncSoc* 10 (1979), 299 ff. He may have been a close associate of Constantine from 298, cf. *The New Empire...*, 118 f.

[96] The *carmina intexta* contain Christian messages and were written in 324/5, cf. T. D. BARNES, "Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius", in *AJP* 96 (1975), 173-186.

A clear pattern emerges from this survey. Both Constantine and Constantius preferred Christians to pagans as ordinary consuls and praetorian prefects. Constans did not, either from conviction or, more probably, because he needed the political support of the landed aristocracy in the west. Yet the Christianisation of even the aristocracy of Rome, and the development of a Christian Latin culture had already begun under Constantine.[97]

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* *

A brief postscript may be added to this discussion of Christian consuls. The emperor Julian reproached Constantine for advancing barbarians to the consular *fasces* and robes, while Ammianus Marcellinus in turn criticised Julian for inconsistency, in making the boorish and brutal Nevitta consul in 362.[98] Moderns have repeated the charge that Constantine "summoned German generals to the greatest honours of the state".[99] But the presumed German consuls cannot be found,[100] and Julian was not being inconsistent. Ammianus misunderstood him: by 'barbarian' Julian meant 'non-Hellene', i.e. 'Christian' [101]—and it was indeed Constantine who began to appoint Christians to the ordinary consulate as a matter of policy.

[97] D. M. Novak, "Constantine and the Senate: An Early Phase of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy", in *AncSoc* 10 (1979), 271-310, esp. 306.

[98] Amm. XXI 10,8.

[99] A. Piganiol, *L'empire chrétien* (Paris ²1972), 79.

[100] Hence the bizarre claim that the grandfather of the orator Symmachus, consul in 330, was a barbarian (O. Seeck, in *Hermes* 41 (1906), 533; in *RE* IV A 1 (1931), 1141).

[101] *Constantine and Eusebius*, 403 n. 3.

II

In ancient history, what appear to be profound and subtle problems of historical interpretation often devolve into straightforward (if not always simple) issues of fact. With the religious policies of the emperor Constantine and the general religious atmosphere of his reign, a great deal depends on whether we accept Eusebius' clear statement that he prohibited pagan sacrifice. If he did so, then it is plausible to speak of the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, even of a Constantinian reformation comparable in significance with the great religious movement of the sixteenth century.[102] On the other hand, the majority of recent writers have deemed such an outright prohibition "very improbable":[103] for example, MacMullen has reaffirmed that Constantine's basic policy was that "everyone should respect everyone else's religion", while Lane Fox discounts the law prohibiting sacrifice with the observation that "this claim is highly contestable and was certainly not fulfilled", discusses Constantine's religious policies in 325 as if it never existed—and concludes that the emperor was tolerant in matters of religion.[104] Such interpretations are incompatible with the existence of the law which Eusebius reports. But can the factual issue be decided conclusively?

The evidence is clear and unambiguous. Eusebius reports a series of enactments by Constantine after the defeat of Licinius:

[102] See T. D. BARNES, "The Constantinian Reformation", in *The Crake Lectures 1984* (Sackville, N.B., 1986), 39-57.

[103] J. GEFFCKEN, *Der Ausgang des griechisch-römischen Heidentums* (Heidelberg ^{2}1929), 39 f.

[104] R. MACMULLEN, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 50; R. LANE FOX, *Pagans and Christians*, 667; 635 ff. The latter asserts that "most of the governors" who had to enforce the disputed law "were themselves still pagans" (667).

1 two edicts sent to every province undid the effects of Licinius' persecution: one was sent to the churches and the other to non-Christians, and Eusebius quotes in full the copy sent to the provincials of Palestine;
2 the emperor began to appoint Christians as provincial governors, and forbade governors, *vicarii* of dioceses and praetorian prefects who were still pagan to perform sacrifice before conducting official business;
3 a law prohibited "the disgusting practices of idolatry practised of old in city and countryside, so that no-one should venture to erect cult-statues, consult oracles or sacrifice at all";
4 another law issued at the same time urged the enlarging of existing churches and the construction of new ones for the expected converts: it was put into effect by means of letters to governors and bishops arranging for the latter to draw freely on imperial funds, and Eusebius quotes the letter which he received;
5 a long and sometimes abusive letter to the eastern provincials, often described as an 'edict of toleration', implicitly reaffirmed the preceding prohibition of sacrifice.[105]

There is no call to reject Eusebius' reports (2,3) while accepting his quotations (1, 4 and 5): he does not quote the crucial law about cult acts because he did not possess a copy of Constantine's original pronouncement.[106] In 341 the emperor Constans threatened condign punishment for any who dared to sacrifice "against the law of the divine emperor our father and this order of our clemency".[107]

[105] Eus. *Vit. Const.* II 24-60.

[106] T. D. BARNES, "Constantine's Prohibition of Pagan Sacrifice", in *AJP* 105 (1984), 69-72.

[107] *CTh* XVI 10, 2.

That ought to suffice for proof. Why then is the existence of such a law so often denied?

The basic reason appears to be the weight of academic tradition: such a law contradicts the traditional picture of Constantine held by most historians from Gibbon to Lane Fox: therefore, it cannot have been issued.[108] More specifically, the general distrust of the *Life of Constantine*, evinced even by those who (like Jacob Burckhardt) accept Eusebius' authorship, seems to deprive its evidence of probative value.[109] Further, Libanius claimed that Constantine "made absolutely no change in the established forms of worship", that it was Constantius who prohibited sacrifice.[110] However, Libanius' assertion is special pleading for the benefit of Theodosius, while the relevant section of Eusebius' *Life of Constantine* is less a retrospective panegyric than part of what was intended as a documented ecclesiastical history of the last years of Constantine.[111] Furthermore, the religious history of the period between 324 and 361 makes more sense if Constantine prohibited sacrifice. Constantine conquered the East in 324 in a Christian crusade, a purge of prominent pagans (or at least persecutors) occurred, and the political situation allowed drastic action.[112] Constantine surely cannot have let such an opportunity slip. But enforcement of the law prohibiting sacrifice depended on local conditions and local initiative, Constantine was too canny a politician to send soldiers to suppress traditional cults throughout the East or to attack the existing rights of

[108] For a cautious recent formulation of this view, P. D. A. GARNSEY, "Religious Toleration in Classical Antiquity", in *Persecution and Toleration*, ed. W. J. SHIELS, Studies in Church History 21 (Oxford 1984), 1-27, esp. 18 n. 39.

[109] H. A. DRAKE, in *AJP* 103 (1982), 464 f.

[110] Lib. *Or.* XXX 6.

[111] For this analysis, see my "Panegyric, History and Hagiography in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine*" (forthcoming).

[112] T. D. BARNES, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 208 ff.; 245 ff.

those who had become his subjects in 306, 312 or even 316/7. Hence the religious situation of the Roman Empire after 324 was a varied one—and it long remained varied: the East was more Christian than the West, and the West had an entrenched landowning aristocracy which was more resistant to Christianity than any other stratum of society.

The earliest evidence for Christian attacks on pagan holy places comes from the West: one of the canons of the Council of Elvira alludes to the smashing of pagan idols, probably c. 300.[113] Such aggressiveness, however, does not appear to have become common in the West until late in the fourth century.[114] In the East, matters moved more swiftly. Constantine conducted a systematic confiscation of temple treasures accumulated over the centuries, and also suppressed certain cult-centres which Christians found particularly offensive on moral grounds (most conspicuously the shrine of Aphrodite at Aphaca in Phoenicia).[115] Under Constantius, local bishops went further and attacked pagan holy places on their own initiative.[116] When Julian exiled

[113] Canon 60. In favour of a date c. 300, see the classic statement by L. DUCHESNE, "Le concile d'Elvire et les flamines chrétiens", in *Mélanges Renier* (Paris 1887), 159-174, and my brief defence in *The Crake Lectures 1984*, 45; 55 n. 43. R. LANE FOX, *Pagans and Christians*, 664 ff., dates the council between 312 and 324 and argues that the canons "throw a sharp light on church life in Constantine's Christian era."

It is not clear exactly how to classify the removal of *cupae* and vinegar from a shrine of Serapis at Cirta apparently c. 303 (Optatus Milevitanus, ed. C. ZIWSA, Appendix I, p. 195, 20-24).

[114] When it is documented in Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini* 14, 1 ff.; cf. C. STANCLIFFE, *St. Martin and his Hagiographer. History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus* (Oxford 1983), 328 ff.

[115] Eus. *Triac.* 8, 1 ff.; *Vit. Const.* III 54, 4 ff. (also recording the destruction of shrines at Aegeae in Cilicia and Heliopolis in Phoenicia). Eunapius observes in passing that Constantine pulled down the most celebrated temples (*Vit.phil.* VI 1, 5, p. 461 Didot).

[116] G. FOWDEN, "Bishops and Temples in the Eastern Roman Empire, A. D. 320-435", in *JThS* N.S. 29 (1978), 53-78.

Eleusius from Cyzicus, the charges included despoiling temples, defiling sacred precincts and persuading pagans to abandon their ancestral rites.[117] When he reached Tarsus, Julian was approached by the priest of Asclepius at Aegeae in Cilicia, who asked for the return of columns which the local bishop had taken from the temple and used in building a church.[118] Mark of Arethusa became a martyr: under Constantius he had destroyed a pagan shrine "according to the power then given to Christians" in order to build a church; under Julian he refused to restore the shrine or offer even a single obol in compensation despite prolonged tortures.[119] At Heliopolis in Phoenicia, again probably in the reign of Constantius, the deacon Cyrillus smashed many of the idols worshipped there: when Julian came to power, the pagans remembered this boldness, killed Cyrillus and (it is alleged) ate his liver.[120] Martyrdoms also occurred in Gaza where the pagans were enraged at those who "had damaged shrines and employed the preceding period to destroy and insult Hellenism".[121] Such activity is most fully reported for George of Alexandria. He was lynched soon after news came of Constantius' death, and Socrates plausibly makes his lynching an act of vengeance by pagans for riots which occurred when George excavated a disused Mithraeum and found human skulls there.[122] Julian then

[117] Soz. *HE* V 15, 4-10.

[118] Zonaras XIII 12, 30-34. The sanctuary had been destroyed by soldiers acting on the orders of Constantine (Eus. *Vit. Const.* III 56): on its history, see L. Robert, "De Cilicie à Messine et à Plymouth", in *Journal des Savants* 1973, 161-211, esp. 183-193. Robert notes the relevance of Libanius, *Ep.* 695, 2, which refers to "the war of the atheists against his (*sc.* Asclepius') temple, its destruction, the fire, the desecrated altars, the wrong done to suppliants no longer allowed a release from their ills."

[119] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV 88-91; Soz. *HE* V 10, 5-14; Thdt. *HE* III 7, 6-10.

[120] Thdt. *HE* III 7, 3, where the majority of textual witnesses read ἐπὶ Κωνσταντίνου.

[121] Soz. *HE* V 9, 2.

[122] Socr. *HE* III 2.

wrote a letter of mild rebuke to the city which includes a description of George's misdeeds:

> Tell me by Serapis, for what injustices were you annoyed with George? You will doubtless say that he incited the blessed Constantius against you, then brought an army into the holy city, and that the general of Egypt (i.e. Artemius) siezed the holiest shrine of the god, stripping it of its statues, offerings and the ornaments in its sanctuaries. When you were quite justifiably enraged and tried to defend the god, or rather the god's possessions, he dared unjustly, illegally and impiously to send his heavily armed soldiers against you, perhaps because he feared George more than Constantius, who restrained himself so that he might deal with you from afar and appear to behave moderately and constitutionally, not like a tyrant.[123]

These six examples (be it observed) are known only because pagans exacted revenge under Julian. Similarly, Sozomenus notes that the Christians who formed the vast majority of the inhabitants of Caesarea in Cappadocia had destroyed the temples of Zeus and Apollo, but only in the context of Julian's punishment of the city and its citizens for such actions.[124] Bishops who destroyed temples but either died before Constantius or escaped notice under Julian simply do not show up in the surviving evidence. There were surely many of them. For Sozomenus speaks of Julian's general policy of "forcing those who had destroyed them to rebuild the temples dismantled in the reigns of Constantine and Constantius or to repay the cost of doing

[123] Iulian. *Ep.* 60 Bidez.

[124] Soz. *HE* V 4, 1-5.

so".[125] Julian himself makes a general accusation that the sons of Constantine demolished the ancestral temples which their father had despised and stripped of votive offerings, and that when the temples were destroyed, churches (his word is 'sepulchres') were built on new and old sites.[126]

The phenomenon was widespread. Even friends of Libanius profited from attacks on pagan shrines. Under Julian, Libanius wrote two letters to Belaeus, the governor of Arabia, on behalf of the Christian Orion, as well as interceding personally for him.[127] The letters are couched in polite and allusive language and set out to make a case. In some official capacity,[128] Orion had allowed the spoliation of pagan shrines: "he blamed rather than imitated those who used their power badly," and Libanius heard from the inhabitants of Bostra that "he neither waged war on the temples nor harried priests but alleviated the misfortunes of many by performing his office with great mildness." When Libanius wrote, however, Orion was despondent; he had been attacked by those whom he had protected, his brother was exiled, his family scattered, his land unsown, his furniture stolen—all because Julian had declared that anyone who possessed any holy objects should forfeit them. Libanius claims that, though a Christian, Orion is being wronged and asks Belaeus to protect him, above all not to turn him into a martyr like Mark of Arethusa. In the course of his pleading, however, Libanius admits that Orion received

[125] Soz. *HE* V 5, 5, cf. V 3, 1 (the reopening and restoration of temples and reconstruction of altars).

[126] Iulian. *Or.* 7, 228 BC Hertlein.

[127] Lib. *Ep.* 763; 819. Julian appointed Belaeus *praeses Arabiae* in 362 precisely because of his staunch paganism: there were riots in Bostra when Julian tried to enforce his religious policies there (Iulian. *Ep.* 114).

[128] Orion, who is not in *PLRE* I, is held to be a native of Bostra rather than a governor by G. R. Sievers, *Das Leben des Libanius* (Berlin 1868), 117; W. Enßlin, in *RE* XVIII 1 (1939), 1087.

some proceeds from pagan temples, which he has spent. We must surely suspect that many officials under Constantius had behaved like Orion.[129]

Official policy was clear and there is evidence that pagan shrines were suppressed by local initiative. But how effective was action at either level? In one area at least, almost totally. Mithraism was a religion of soldiers and officials, prominent as late as 308 when, at the Conference of Carnuntum, Diocletian and Galerius declared on behalf of themselves and their imperial colleagues that the Roman Empire was under the protection of Mithras.[130] Yet after 312, only two Mithraic dedications seem to be known outside Rome.[131] When Eusebius records that, besides prohibiting sacrifice, consultation of oracles and the erection of cult-statues, Constantine forbade 'secret rites', it seems probable that he alludes to a law which specifically condemned Mithraism.[132] Soldiers and officials had little choice but to obey, whatever their private inclinations.

Pagans without ambitions to rise in imperial service had more freedom. Libanius' autobiographical oration provides some striking examples of non-conformity. Libanius' uncle Phasganius presided over the Olympic Games at Antioch in 328: he disregarded Constantine's recent prohibition and exhibited gladiators.[133] (There is no evidence that these games ever again included gladiators.[134]) As a student in

[129] Compare Libanius' defence of Theodulus for buying objects forcibly removed from a temple (*Ep.* 724).

[130] *ILS* 659.

[131] R. Turcan, "Les motivations de l'intolérance chrétienne et la fin du mithriacisme au IVe siècle ap. J.-C.", in *Actes du VIIe Congrès de la F.I.E.C.* II (Budapest 1984), 209-226, esp. 222-3.

[132] Eus. *Vit. Const.* IV 25; cf. R. Turcan, *art. cit.*, 220 ff.

[133] Lib. *Or.* I 5, cf. *CTh* XV 12, 1 (325); Eus. *Vit. Const.* IV 25.

[134] P. Petit, *Libanius et la vie municipale à Antioche au IVe siècle après J.-C.* (Paris 1955), 125.

Athens (336-339), Libanius himself travelled in Greece and went to Argos to be initiated into the local mysteries; he was probably also initiated into the mysteries at Eleusis. He formed a close friendship with Crispinus of Heraclea whose uncle was an ostentatious pagan:

> he consorted more with gods than with men on earth: even though a law banned it and the penalty for one who dared was death, nevertheless he journeyed through life in the company of gods and mocked that evil law and its impious enactor.[135]

Constantine could easily tolerate such harmless bravado. The eastern intelligentsia long continued to boast of outspoken pagans,[136] as did the Roman aristocracy. But both bodies were divided. Many pagan intellectuals could accept the prohibition of sacrifice with equanimity, for Porphyry had argued forcefully that sacrifice was not necessary for worshipping the gods, indeed that it hindered the higher forms of devotion.[137] In the reign of Constantius, the pagan Themistius composed commentaries on Aristotle, turned out official panegyrics and accepted a position of dignity in the Christian Senate of Constantinople, while the Christian Proaeresius taught rhetoric in the still pagan atmosphere of Athens.[138]

An outspoken claim for the continuing vitality of traditional cults in the East appears to be made in the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*:

[135] Lib. *Or.* I 27. The "impious enactor" of the "evil law" is clearly Constantine: no need, therefore, to detect an anachronistic reference to the law of 341, as does A.F. NORMAN (ed.), *Libanius' Autobiography (Oration I)* (London 1965), 155, followed by P. PETIT (ed.), *Libanios: Discours* I (Paris 1979), 215.

[136] G. FOWDEN, "The Pagan Holy Man in Late Antique Society", in *JHS* 102 (1982), 33-59.

[137] R. TURCAN, *art. cit.*, 214 ff.

[138] *PLRE* I 731.

> [in Egypt you have] men similarly noble who worship the gods eminently: for nowhere are the mysteries of the gods so performed as there from antiquity until now, and almost of itself [Egypt] taught the whole world to worship the gods... We know that the gods lived and still live there.[139]

To judge from his interests and enthusiasms, the author of the *Expositio* was a pagan merchant from Palestine.[140] His insights are not profound and what impressed him most about Egypt was its sacred architecture, including the Serapeum. In the passage quoted he speaks more as an awe-struck tourist than as an acute observer of present reality.

In the West, Constantine probably did not even promulgate the prohibition of sacrifice formally. It was Constans who did so in 341, in a constitution addressed to Crepereius Madalianus, the *vicarius Italiae*.[141] That law had some immediate effect, since in the following year Constans instructed the *praefectus urbi* to protect temple buildings outside cities so that they could continue as the focus of games and contests.[142] Yet many Christians were dissatisfied at the pace of change. In 343, the senator Firmicus Maternus, who had in 337 addressed a treatise on astrology to a prominent aristocrat, urged the emperor to suppress traditional rites altogether. The bulk of Maternus' *On the Error of Profane Religions* rehearses apologetic arguments against paganism familiar from writers such as Tertullian and Arnobius with a fullness which makes the treatise a

[139] *Expositio* 34.

[140] J. ROUGÉ (ed.), *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, Sources chrétiennes 124 (Paris 1966), 27 ff.

[141] *CTh* XVI 10, 1.

[142] *CTh* XVI 10, 2.

valuable source for religious history.[143] Maternus' purpose, however, was not a rational refutation of all varieties of paganism, but their forcible suppression. He urges Constantius and Constans to use the power given them by God to lay low the Devil, to extinguish idolatry. Better to save the unwilling by force than to let them destroy themselves. The adornments of the temples should be seized and turned into coin or arms, for God will reward such a destruction with even greater success than the emperors have so far enjoyed.[144]

Firmicus Maternus may have presented his work to Constans. The emperor was not impelled to action. On the contrary, Constans needed the cooperation of the Senate and appointed aristocrats to high office. And Magnentius, who supplanted him in 350, had even less cause to risk alienating potential supporters by attacking paganism: although he was a Christian himself and sought the support of eastern Christians who opposed Constantius (such as Athanasius), he relaxed the existing prohibition on nocturnal sacrifices.[145] When Constantius conquered the West, he introduced a more restrictive policy: he ordered the closure of all temples, the complete cessation of sacrifice and execution as the penalty for disobedience.[146] Yet in Rome itself, even Constantius needed to tread carefully. In 357, he entered the city with carefully staged ceremonial and made gestures of deference to the Senate.[147] As *pontifex maximus* he coopted new members into the traditional priesthoods,

[143] See the full commentary by R. TURCAN (éd.), Firmicus Maternus: *L'erreur des religions païennes* (Paris 1982).

[144] Firmicus Maternus, *Err.* 16, 4; 20, 7; 29, 3-4.

[145] *CTh* XVI 10, 5 (23 November 353).

[146] *CTh* XVI 10, 6 (19 February 356); XVI 10, 4. The transmitted date of the latter is 1 December 346, but the addressee is the praetorian prefect Taurus: the year, therefore, should be emended to 356, cf. O. SEECK, *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste* (Stuttgart 1919), 41; 203.

[147] Amm. XVI 10, 1-17.

and he confirmed their endowments.[148] To balance this, however, he removed the altar of Victory from the senate-house where it had stood since the days of Augustus. The emperor clearly wished to prevent the possibility that any Christian senator might be compelled, by etiquette or social pressure, to participate in a pagan ritual.

III

The war of 324 and its consequences must have cowed pagans throughout the Roman Empire. As in 313, an emperor who persecuted the Christians had gone down to military defeat and, as in 313, the friends, relatives and sympathisers of the victims of the persecuting regime exacted revenge. For the purge of 313 only a handful of names can be recovered (of governors and priests),[149] but the bloodletting was widespread enough for Licinius to issue an edict making accusations for treason more difficult, of which copies survive from six eastern cities.[150] For the purge of 324 we have only the piously self-satisfied remark of Eusebius that the advocates of fighting God paid the appropriate penalty.[151] Yet lack of proper documentation should not blind us to the seriousness or importance of what may have been a systematic settling of accounts in Asia Minor and the East. It may help to explain the lack of Greek pagan literature for the next thirty years. The pagan Praxagoras produced a panegyrical history of Constantine,[152] and under Constantius the sophist Bemarchius,

[148] Symmachus, *Rel.* 3, 7.

[149] *Constantine and Eusebius*, 64.

[150] See now C. HABICHT and P. KUSSMAUL, "Ein neues Fragment des Edictum de Accusationibus", in *MH* 43 (1986), 135-144.

[151] Eus. *Vit. Const.* II 18.

[152] *FGrH* 219.

"though sacrificing to the gods", travelled the East reciting a panegyric on the glorious new church at Antioch.[153] Themistius and Libanius, born c. 317 and in 314 respectively, made their débuts as imperial panegyrists in 347 and 348/9: it may be significant that Libanius' speech in praise of Constantius and Constans was composed and delivered at the behest of the Christian praetorian prefect Flavius Philippus.[154]

In the circumstances of 324/5 a puzzling fact cannot help exciting speculation. One of the ordinary consuls of 325 seems to have been disgraced in April or May and replaced by Julius Julianus, the former praetorian prefect of Licinius.[155] His name is indisputably documented as Proculus,[156] while a fragmentary papyrus can be restored to supply the *nomen* Valerius.[157] It is tempting, therefore, to see in Valerius Proculus as the presumed consul of 325 a Roman aristocrat involved in a pagan protest against Constantine, and to connect his disgrace with the murder of Licinius at Thessalonica.[158] All admittedly speculation—but there is a historical void to be explained.

Constantine's court was not closed to pagans. Yet they were not as prominent as is often supposed. Against the emperor's alleged favours to Sopater, the pupil of Iamblichus, must be set the fact that Constantine executed him for using magic to cause a food shortage in Constantinople.[159] And two favourite examples of pagans at the court of Constantine must be discarded: the pupil of Iamblichus, six of whose letters are transmitted under the name of the

153 Lib. *Or.* I 39.

154 Lib. *Or.* LIX 1 ff.

155 *The New Empire...*, 102-3.

156 *POxy.* 3125; *CTh* II 25, 1 = *CJ* III 38, 11 (29 April).

157 *POxy.* 889, cf. T.D. BARNES and K.A. WORP, in *ZPE* 53 (1983), 276-278.

158 *Constantine and Eusebius*, 214.

159 Eunapius, *Vit.phil.* VI 2, 2-11, pp. 462-3 Didot; Zos. II 40, 3.

emperor Julian, went to the court of Licinius, not Constantine,[160] while the philosophical Hermogenes, whose career has been taken as a paradigm of pagans who prospered in the newly Christian empire,[161] probably served Gallus, Julian and Valens, not Licinius and Constantine.[162] The ethos of the court of Constantine was openly, perhaps even stridently, Christian.[163]

It is against this background that we must set the conversion of Julian from the Christianity in which he was brought up. In 351, at the age of twenty, Julian went to Pergamum and Ephesus. At Pergamum he listened to the Neoplatonic philosophers Aedesius, Chrysanthius and Eusebius. In Ephesus he met the wonderworker Maximus and underwent a conversion to the philosophy of Iamblichus and its theurgical practices.[164] According to Libanius, news of the event spread quickly and devotees of the Muses and the pagan gods flocked to see the prince.[165] Although Libanius made this claim after Julian's death, it should not be completely discounted.[166] Gallus was worried enough to send Aetius from Antioch to bring his brother to his senses.[167] Julian listened and behaved himself: for the next decade he studiously composed himself as a pious Chris-

[160] Iulian. *Ep.* 181; 183-187 Bidez; cf. T.D. BARNES, in *GRBS* 19 (1978), 99-106.

[161] F. MILLAR, in *JRS* 60 (1970), 216.

[162] T.D. BARNES, in *CPh* 82 (1987), 220 f. For the traditional picture of Hermogenes and Sopater as influential advisers of Constantine, L. de GIOVANNI, *Costantino e il mondo pagano* (Napoli ^{3}1983), 155 ff.

[163] As argued in *Constantine and Eusebius*, 221 f.; 248 ff. For a different view, H.A. DRAKE, *In Praise of Constantine. A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations* (Berkeley 1976), 12 ff.; 46 ff.

[164] J. BIDEZ, *La Vie de l'Empereur Julien* (Paris 1930), 67 ff.

[165] Lib. *Or.* XVIII 20 ff.

[166] J. BIDEZ, *op. cit.*, 93 ff.

[167] Philostorgius, *HE* III 27.

tian.[168] Yet his sympathy for the old religion was known: when the bishop of Ilium, conducted Julian round the shrines of his city, he revealed that he too was a worshipper of the gods obliged by the temper of the times to conform to the ascendant religion.[169] It would be mistaken, however, to imagine a 'pagan underground' actively working for the elevation of Julian.[170] On the contrary, when Julian became Caesar, Priscus and other philosophers refused to go to him in Gaul.[171] Oribasius of Pergamum attended as his physician, but only two other men came, of no real prominence (the African Euhemerus and the hierophant of the Eleusinian mysteries).[172]

It would be equally mistaken to imagine a group of pagans in Gaul working to manœuvre an unwilling Julian into rebellion in the winter of 359/60.[173] Julian possessed an unquenchable ambition to replace Constantius as emperor: though repressed at the conscious level, his aspirations broke through in matters such as his dream of two trees, one tall and about to collapse, the other young and vigorous, and his depiction of himself as Achilles to Constantius' Agamemnon.[174] Yet it seems clear that most eastern pagans had little confidence in Julian—or at least expected Constantius to defeat him. And many eastern pagans kept their distance even when Constantius unexpectedly died. Against

[168] G.W. BOWERSOCK, *Julian the Apostate* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 29 ff.

[169] Iulian. *Ep.* 79. Iulian was assiduously active on behalf of friends with pagan connections (*Ad Them.* 259 CD Hertlein).

[170] See J.F. DRINKWATER, "The "Pagan Underground", Constantius II's "Secret Service", and the Survival, and the Usurpation of Julian the Apostate", in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, ed. C. DEROUX, III, Collection Latomus 180 (Bruxelles 1983), 348-387.

[171] Iulian. *Ep.* 11-13.

[172] Iulian. *Ad Ath.* 277 C Hertlein; Eunapius, *Vit.phil.* VII 3, 7-8, p. 476 Didot.

[173] As does J.F. DRINKWATER, *art. cit.*, 370 ff.

[174] Iulian. *Ep.* 14; *Or.* 2, 49 C ff. Hertlein.

the shallow enthusiasm of Himerius, who hastened to the court of Julian, must be set the reluctance of the prudent Themistius, who had long before decided that there was a place for the traditions of Hellenism (correctly defined) in the new Christian Empire.[175] Indeed, it can be claimed that until the death of Constantius in November 361 Julian derived more political benefit from his support of catholic opponents of Constantius' ecclesiastical policies in the West than from the badly kept secret of his apostasy.[176] It was only when Constantius was removed that Julian dared to sacrifice openly as a declared pagan. He knew that to challenge Constantius as an avowed pagan would have been to ensure defeat in the strongly Christian Roman Empire of 361.

[175] On Himerius' career, see *CPh* 82 (1987), 206 ff.; for Themistius' attitudes, the massive study of G. DAGRON, *L'empire romain d'Orient au IV^e siècle et les traditions politiques de l'hellénisme. Le témoignage de Thémistios*, Travaux et Mémoires 3 (Paris 1967), 1-242.

[176] *Athanasius of Alexandria* (forthcoming), ch 8.

DISCUSSION

M. Dihle: Julians Verwendung des Wortes 'Barbar' zur Bezeichnung der Christen hat sein Gegenstück in der christlichen Verwendung des Wortes 'Grieche' zur Bezeichnung des Heiden. Die Geschichte des Wortes 'Barbar' in der Spätantike kompliziert sich dadurch, dass jeweils seine negativen (fehlende Teilhabe an der griechisch-römischen Zivilisation, Gefahr der Barbareneinfälle) oder positiven Konnotationen (Philosophie der Barbaren, moralische Überlegenheit der Barbaren) vorwiegen können. Deshalb die verschiedenartige Verwendung in der Literatur des 4. und 5. Jhdts.

M^me Cracco Ruggini: Ho l'impressione che termini come *barbarus*, βάρβαρος, nel IV secolo non siano stati mai o quasi mai usati in accezione positiva. Non si è più nel II secolo a.C., quando la 'filosofia dei barbari' aveva cominciato ad essere altamente apprezzata dalla cultura tardo-ellenistica. La minaccia militare barbarica aveva ormai riaposto irrimediabilmente le posizioni, e un barbaro — etnicamente barbaro — poteva venire apprezzato sia da pagani sia da cristiani (pur ostilissimi ai 'barbari' come tali) soltanto nella misura in cui non era più sentito come tale culturalmente, o perchè «totalmente ellenico per educazione e per fede» (come scrisse Eunapio di alcuni generali barbari), o perchè fatto cristiano e, quindi, «Romano» (Orosio, Patrizio).

M. Frend: I have sometimes disagreed with Barnes on the exact dating of events in the period of Diocletian-Constantine, but I agree wholeheartedly with his view that Christianity had been gaining ground decisively since Gallienus' rescripts giving the Church *de facto* toleration. There's not only the well-known evidence of how in Nicomedia the Church stood in full view of the imperial palace, but scattered yet cumulative evidence for a gradual loss of confidence in the traditional goals and progressive acceptance of Christianity. In North Africa, one

asks why the lack of inscriptions in honour of Saturn throughout Numidia in Diocletian's reign even though temples to the gods of the empire were being restored. Why no dedications to Saturn at Bou Kournein (Carthage) at this period, and why in the Numidian village sites explored by the French 1932-1940 not single shrine to Saturn (a few earlier inscriptions lying on the ground, as at Bir Younken) contrasting with the great number of churches and chapels in these villages. One can put the literary and archeological evidence together and they tell the same story.

Then, in the reign of Constantius, one can appreciate the difficulties in enforcing any anti-pagan policy on provincial populations. In Roman Britain the best period, i.e. most prosperous period for the Romano-British temples is Constantine-Valens. This is when they were stone-built, with offerings of coins and objects, with no suggestion of closure. In Roman Britain Christianity was never a popular religion, and its disappearance after the end of the Roman occupation is not wholly surprising.

M. Barnes: There is an unfortunate gap in the history of the Christian Church in the late third century because Eusebius did not (as is often assumed) write a history of the church from its origins down to 324, but a history of the church down to c. 280 in seven books, to which he later added an account of persecution between 303 and 324 (the present *HE* VIII-X).

M. Meijering: What is your explanation of the fact that Athanasius—unlike Eusebius—in the *De incarnatione Verbi* is silent on the political change which has taken place?

M. Barnes: The feature to which you draw attention favours an early date for the *De incarnatione*. It may be that even in this early work Athanasius shows his grasp of political reality. Unlike Eusebius of Caesarea, he surely realised at once that Licinius was no Christian—and he may have written the *De incarnatione* at a time when Licinius' policies were becoming anti-Christian. On the other hand, it may be preferable to

date the *De incarnatione* c. 326, and hence to construe Athanasius' silence as reflecting a certain reticence towards the new Christian empire. However, I should not like to hazard a definite answer to the question without further reflection on the date of the *Contra gentes* and *De incarnatione*.

M. Pietri: Il n'est pas toujours facile d'identifier, dans la haute administration, païens et chrétiens. Certes, il y a, dans quelques cas, des indications grâce à l'épigraphie (une épitaphe: Maiorinus, Iunius Bassus). L'intervention dans les affaires de l'Eglise ne donne pas toujours un indice suffisant. Mais je suis tenté de supposer que dans certains cas, il y a là, peut-être, un critère de distinction: j'imaginerais volontiers que les membres du consistoire jugeant le cas de Photin à Sirmium en 351 sont chrétiens, sauf indication explicitement contraire. A l'inverse, on trouve en Occident ou en Orient des gouverneurs, des vicaires païens, qui soutiennent avec efficacité la politique religieuse du prince (par ex. Clementinus, vicaire d'Espagne).

Une autre difficulté tient à l'attitude des polémistes comme Athanase, bien décidé à traiter de païens ses persécuteurs et à insister sur la perversion d'un prince qui utilise de tels agents pour traiter des affaires d'Eglise et de foi.

Mais au-delà de la polémique, il y a une réalité qui doit être fortement soulignée: l'empereur emploie aussi de hauts fonctionnaires païens pour l'administration courante de la politique religieuse. Pour les opérations délicates, en revanche, il recourt à des fonctionnaires chrétiens (pour la déposition d'Athanase et celle de Libère). Enfin, il utilise contre tous les hauts personnages de la *militia* civile ou militaire un système de surveillance (notaires, *cubicularii*) confié à des serviteurs humbles et sûrs; ceux-ci, chaque fois qu'il est possible de préciser leurs attaches religieuses, se révèlent être des chrétiens.

Julien, je crois, est beaucoup moins tolérant dans ce domaine quand il écarte systématiquement les fidèles (après la purge de Chalcédoine, qui a frappé particulièrement des chrétiens qui servaient dans la maison du prince). Du reste, cette position 'exclusiviste' est efficace: elle entraîne l'apostasie de ceux qui veulent continuer à faire carrière.

M^me Cracco Ruggini: Non sarei troppo recisa e 'manichea' nel delineare le scelte dei funzionari e dei collaboratori di responsabilità, da parte di Costanzo, come sempre orientate (ove possibile) verso personaggi di fede pagana. A parte i casi — già da Lei sottolineati — che coinvolsero illustri rappresentanti nell' aristocrazia di Roma e ove giocavano considerazioni evidenti di opportunità politica, a me pare ad esempio significativa la valorizzazione da parte di Costanzo II — e frutto di una sua scelta affatto libera — d'un filosofo pagano quale Temistio, cui l'Augusto offrì ne cariche (da costui rifiutate) ne compiti straordinari ma delicatissimi come il completamento del senato di Costantinopoli.

Del resto anche vari lustri più tardi sotto principi cristianissimi come il giovane Valentiniano II, al tempo della celebre contesa *de ara Victoriae* tra Simmaco e Ambrogio, presso la corte di Milano, nel 384 — è testimoniata la presenza nel *consistorium* di personaggi influenti di fede pagana, che rischiarono di far approvare dall'Augusto le richieste avanzate dalla delegazione senatoria pagana.

Io credo che, nel vagliare le scelte imperiali in base alla discriminante religiosa, si debba distinguere tra paganesimo e paganesimo (e pure fra cristianesimo e cristianesimo, al tempo di Giuliano), come ho cercato di mostrare in alcuni miei contributi. In entrambi i versanti — pagano e cristiano — vi furono posizioni più radicali, giudicate quindi politicamente più pericolose, e altre più concilianti.

M. Barnes: Let me reply briefly and schematically:

1) The main purpose of the first part of my paper was negative, to disprove the *communis opinio* that most high officials were still pagan under Constantius;

2) my analysis seems to point to a significant difference between east and west;

3) the factual question of whether Constantine prohibited pagan sacrifice in 324/5 is unavoidable and our decision on the issue has enormous consequences for our overall interpretation of this emperor's religious policies. My view is that Constantine's victory in 324 and the attendant purge of pagans created a revolutionary situation in which Constantine

could (and did) act decisively to establish Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire.

M^me Cracco Ruggini: Non intendo mettere in dubbio la testimonianza di Eusebio di Cesarea su certe decisioni di Costantino in ambito politico-religioso (sebbene io nutro forti dubbi circa la completezza di certe informazioni eusebiane — si ho prova di silenzi deliberati e quanto mai significativi — e circa alcune interpretazioni preconcette di fatti senza dubbio reali). Ho comunque l'impressione che, sotto il regno dei figli di Costantino, l'applicazione concreta delle misure anti-pagane si facesse più blanda e saltuaria: altrimenti come spiegare l'appassionato invito rivolto a Costante e Costanzo da parte di Firmico Materno, teste convertito, nel *De errore profanarum religionum*, affinchè distruggessero con i loro editi il culto pagano reprimandone con efficacia le manifestazioni? Vuol dire che, di fatto, gli Augusti non stavano facendo nulla di simile (nè Costanzo sarebbe stato acconciato al fratello nell'indirizzo 'unanime' se la sua politica si fosse realmente distinta, in tale settore, da quella del fratello).

M. Noethlichs: Ich teile zwar nicht Ihr Vertrauen in Eusebius und bin im Gegenteil gerade davon überzeugt, dass man einmal versuchen müsste, die Geschichte Konstantins *ohne* Eusebius zu schreiben; aber meine Frage ist eine andere: Sie haben, m.E. mit Recht, auf methodische Probleme bei R. von Haehling hingewiesen. Wenn ich Sie aber recht verstanden habe, akzeptieren Sie als Kriterium der Religionsbestimmung die *Tätigkeit* offizieller Funktionäre in kirchlichen Dingen. Muss man aber nicht grundsätzlich davon ausgehen, dass solche Funktionäre 'Beamte' sind, die zu tun haben, was man ihnen befiehlt, zumal es ja auch kein 'department of ecclesiastical affairs' gab. Würden Sie mir zustimmen, dass dieses Kriterium als ein *generelles* unbrauchbar ist und jeweils nur differenziert angewandt werden kann?

M. Barnes: The case which I argued does not (I think) depend on a general assumption that Constantius employed only Christians on important ecclesiastical business. It does rely, however, on the specific

argument that the officials named by Athanasius and Epiphanius in particular contexts must be Christians because of the precise nature of the actions which they performed.