

documented that *fiere* is also in use as the second-person singular future.<sup>10</sup> Only do Neue–Wagener come close (3.269). They observe that in Augustine’s quotation of *Gen.* 27:29 at *Ciu. Dei* 16.37, *et fiere dominus, fiere* might be taken as the future, but they decide, sensibly and correctly, to take it as the imperative.<sup>11</sup>

But there is at least one virtually certain instance of *fiere* as the second-person future. In the fourth-century work attributed to Philo and known as the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, the author writes, *facies tibi idola et erunt tibi in deos et tu fiere eis sacerdos* (44.2). The fact that *fiere* is clearly parallel to *erunt* makes it highly likely that *fiere* is a future. In addition, there is a parallel textual tradition that here reads, instead of *fiere*, *eris*,<sup>12</sup> thus making it virtually certain that *fiere* here is the future.<sup>13</sup>

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### JULIAN, THE HIEROPHANT OF ELEUSIS, AND THE ABOLITION OF CONSTANTIUS’ TYRANNY

In his *Lives of the Philosophers and the Sophists*, Eunapius mentions the esteem in which the last Eumolpid hierophant of Eleusis was held by the future Caesar Julian, who in the final years of his private life was developing a deep interest in the gods and rituals of antiquity. Eunapius goes on to recount how Julian, after pacifying Gaul, ‘summoned the hierophant from Greece and having with his aid performed certain rites known to them alone, he mustered up courage to abolish the tyranny of Constantius. His accomplices were Oribasius of Pergamon and a certain Euhemerus, a native of Libya . . . But all this has been described in fuller detail in my work on Julian’ (476)—a reference to Eunapius’ lost *History*. Later, in the section devoted to Oribasius, Eunapius refers again to his *History*, where he had apparently described how Oribasius’ great virtues had actually made Julian emperor (498). We will come back to this ambiguous statement at the end of our discussion.<sup>1</sup>

As far as I am aware, all historians who have discussed these passages have linked them to the acclamation of Julian as Augustus by his troops in Paris in the spring of 360.<sup>2</sup> We have a number of more or less detailed accounts of that event, by Julian

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. *TLL* s.v. *facio*, col. 85 (with several examples in Augustine and Jerome); A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire Latin-Français des Auteurs Chrétiens* (Paris, 1954), 354, s.v. *fiō*, ‘impér. *fiere*’, with examples from Augustine.

<sup>11</sup> In so doing, they follow H. Rönisch, *Italia und Vulgata* (repr. Munich, 1965), 294.

<sup>12</sup> See D. J. Harrington’s *apparatus criticus* ad loc., *Pseudo-Philon, Les Antiquités Bibliques* 1 (Paris, 1976).

<sup>13</sup> Very possibly, they are both translations of γενήσῃ.

<sup>1</sup> Translated by W. C. Wright, *Philostratus and Eunapius: The Lives of the Sophists* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1921), 438–41, 532–3. The fragments of Eunapius’ *History* are gathered and translated in R. C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus* (Liverpool, 1981–3, 2 vols), 32–3 (fr. 21.1–2).

<sup>2</sup> For example, in B. Baldwin, ‘The Career of Oribasius’, *Acta Classica* 18 (1975), 85–97 at 89–93; G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (London, 1978), 50–1; J. F. Drinkwater, ‘The “pagan underground”, Constantius II’s “secret service”, and the survival, and the usurpation of Julian the Apostate’, *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 3 (1983), 348–87 at 370ff., 382–3, citing other previous discussions; J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989), 93, 115; and P. Athanassiadi, *Julian: An Intellectual Biography* (London and New York, 1992), 185–6.

himself, and by Libanius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and others, all of them denying that Julian orchestrated the acclamation, which was a spontaneous reaction by the troops to unpopular orders by Constantius. To be sure, our chief sources are friendly to Julian and would not wish to contradict his oath that he had not instigated the revolt. Yet none of those hostile to Julian, such as Gregorius of Nazianzus, contradicted his version of events either. The most recent discussion finds no reasonable grounds on which to deny the official version,<sup>3</sup> and the level of cynicism necessary to deny it would invalidate the legitimacy of all imperial accessions.

Be that as it may, this is not the place to go into the narrative details and the strategic and political context of the Paris acclamation. Our concern is with what the hierophant of Eleusis, Oribasius, and Euhemerus did to promote Julian's rise to power and when they did it. Eunapius' seemingly cryptic remarks seem to undermine the official version and to point toward a conspiracy of pagan priests and intellectuals to elevate Julian to the throne and displace Constantius.

Nothing more known of Euhemerus. The hierophant is identified as Nestorius, the grandfather of the Neoplatonist Plutarchus.<sup>4</sup> In any case, he was almost certainly versed in the theurgic and Neoplatonic version of Greek paganism that Julian favoured and would have been regarded by him as a genuine philosopher. More is known about Oribasius, who produced a successful medical encyclopedia, but all we need to note here is that he was a friend of Julian and wrote a memoir used by Eunapius, making the latter's lost *History* a second-hand source of information.<sup>5</sup> Oribasius accompanied Julian, probably as his physician, at least from Milan in 355 to the young emperor's death in Persia in 363.

Julian and the hierophant, therefore, in the company of Oribasius and Euhemerus, performed certain rituals that enabled Julian to overthrow Constantius. These may have been auguries (for example, to discover when Constantius would die), or they may have theurgically invoked some supernatural power to come to their aid. In any case, Eunapius does not tell us *when* all of this happened, which is the crucial point. These rituals were in fact probably performed *after* the acclamation at Paris, in the eighteen months or so before Constantius' death in November 361. It is likely that they had nothing whatever to do with the Paris acclamation of 360.

There is abundant evidence that Julian made use of supernatural means after he decided to march against Constantius. Libanius notes that Julian was not surprised by the announcement of Constantius' death as he had been forewarned by an oracle. His account implies that this oracle was of recent vintage and directed to Julian personally (*Or.* 18.117–18). It is also in the year after Paris that Ammianus places his account of Julian's trust in prophetic dreams, signs, and oracles (21.1–2). He quotes an oracle predicting the death of Constantius, different from the one mentioned by Libanius (though they are sometimes conflated in modern accounts). The historian mentions more 'secret rites' to Bellona before the march eastward (21.5.1). In the Balkans, and before learning of his cousin's death, Julian continued

<sup>3</sup> Matthews, *ibid.*, 93–100.

<sup>4</sup> For the debate, see Athanassiadi (n. 2), 186 n. 99. For Nestorios, see A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale, and J. Morris (edd.), *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire. Vol. 1. A.D. 260–395* (Cambridge, 1971), 626; and K. Clinton, *The Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Philadelphia, 1974), 43–4.

<sup>5</sup> For Oribasius in general, see Baldwin (n. 2). For his *hypomnema*, see Eunapius, fr. 15, in Blockley (n. 1), 2.20–1.

to consult soothsayers and augurs (22.1). Zosimus tells us that at Naïssus, Julian consulted 'with the soothsayers' (3.11).<sup>6</sup> The hierophant could have been involved in any or all of the episodes recounted in these sources. In fact, in his *Lives*, Eunapius expounds specifically on his ability to predict the future (475–6). We should also remember that Julian did not remove his Christian mask until after the death of Constantius, so Eunapius' claim that the rites performed by the hierophant were secret can apply to any time before November 361.

Julian himself claimed in a letter to his uncle Julian, written just after Constantius' death, that he sought divine assistance in his war against him. At the same time he wrote to the philosopher Maximus and informed him that during the war he had feared for his safety and 'kept inquiring of the gods—not that I ventured to do this myself . . . but I entrusted the task to others'.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, there is nothing sinister or subversive in Eunapius' hints. They appear cryptic to us only because we do not possess the book in which he explained at length what he meant. But it is highly unlikely that his lost *History* contained an account of the Paris acclamation that refuted Julian's protestations of innocence. Even if Julian had lied, would Eunapius or his source Oribasius have wanted to prove their hero a liar? In his *Lives*, Eunapius praised Julian as 'most godlike' (474, 475, 496), 'marvelous' (477), and 'possessed of divine soul' (474), and elsewhere called him 'as great as God' (fr. 28.1). Photius claimed that Eunapius' *History* 'was written as an elaborate panegyric upon Julian'.<sup>8</sup> Oribasius, probably Eunapius' main source for the events in question, knew that Julian's denial of responsibility for the acclamation was an important component of his propaganda, which he himself may have helped to shape. The suggestion that he wanted to set the record straight is speculative, highly implausible, and made by those who uncritically link Eunapius' hints to the events at Paris.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, later historians who in turn relied on Eunapius' *History* give no knowledge of alternative versions. Zosimus, generally regarded as an epitomator of Eunapius,<sup>10</sup> presents the same version offered by Julian, Libanius, and Ammianus.

Finally, we come to Eunapius' statement that Oribasius made Julian emperor through his virtues. It is unclear what *apedeixe* means: orchestrated his accession? Prepared him morally for the office? Gave him encouragement? At the very least, Oribasius stood by Julian as a good friend and encouraged him in difficult times, or perhaps even saved him at one particular moment, though we will never know what that was. There is no reason to relate this statement to the Paris acclamation in particular. One attempt to do so, by trying also to retain the veracity of the official account, produced an insecure Julian unknowingly driven to rebellion by Oribasius.<sup>11</sup> But this reconstruction relies on an almost superhuman ability in Oribasius to manipulate Julian's psychology. By all accounts, it was Julian who marshalled the supernatural in the war against his cousin. It is, in fact, possible to link this statement (498) to Eunapius' brief account in 476 of the conspiracy involving the hierophant and

<sup>6</sup> Pace W. E. Kaegi, 'The Emperor Julian at Naïssus,' *L'antiquité classique* 44 (1975), 161–71 at 165, the stories about the soothsayers are attested in independent sources and are consistent with Julian's interests; they need not be 'a rationalization after the fact of Julian's military inability to proceed further against Constantius'.

<sup>7</sup> Julian, *Letters* 9.382b and 8.415a–b, trans. W. C. Wright, *The Works of the Emperor Julian* 3 (Cambridge, MA and London, 1923), 20–9.

<sup>8</sup> Photius, *Bibliothèque* 77.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. Bowersock (n. 2), 51. For a better explanation, see Baldwin (n. 2), 90–1.

<sup>10</sup> On the basis of Photius, *Bibliothèque* 98.

<sup>11</sup> Drinkwater (n. 2), 370–1.

Euhemerus. What Eunapius says more precisely is that Julian was impressed with Oribasius' medical skill (*technê*) and that Oribasius ἀπέδειξε the former as emperor 'through his other virtues (*aretai*)'. It is possible that these other virtues are a reference to his skill in divination,<sup>12</sup> in which he did not actually 'make' Julian emperor but rather 'revealed' him as emperor (before the fact). In any case, we must not forget that it took Julian almost two years to 'abolish the tyranny of Constantius' after the Paris acclamation.

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