THE PALLADIUM AND THE PENTATEUCH: TOWARDS A SACRED TOPOGRAPHY OF THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE

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HISTORIANS OF RELIGION IN LATE ANTIQUITY tend to adopt one of two perspectives. Either we seek to understand Christianization, a process ultimately reducible to acts of individual choice whose aggregate effects can be described in purely demographic terms, or we investigate the demise of paganism, a set of discrete rituals and practices, some of which survived in Christian Europe, robbed of their religious significance through cult acts and conciliar decrees. Understood in these terms, the Christianization of the Roman empire passed a milestone in the early fifth century, the last age attesting a senator who publicly professed paganism. Similarly, paganism was either dying from the moment of its conception, as its constituent practices fell into abeyance, or it survives to this day.[1] The self-understandings of these religions, developed in fractious dialogue with each other, thus yield incompatible narratives and inconsistent periodizations. Assuming rather than interrogating the ontological integrity of their taxonomies, historiography grounded in these perspectives can be erudite but it cannot explain anything.[2]

If we are now to forge histories of religious change in late antiquity that do more than count Christian conversions or pagan survivals, we must avoid conceptual categories derived from the failed apologetics and willful misconstruals of pagan-Christian dialogue. We must also shun easy reliance on the distorted and misleading claims to novelty of Christian hagiography, a modern counterpart to the faith that late-antique ecclesiastical historians placed in Providence. We should have asked long ago whether the transfer of charisma from one individual to another did in fact constitute a change in the locus of the sacred. Insofar as that transfer did not require contemporaries to reconceptualize the holiness of individuals or the nature of divine immanence, the answer is no. Change in the religious mentality of late-antique Europe should instead be charted first at an epistemological level, one prior, as it were, to religious or doctrinal commitment.

This essay adumbrates such an approach by juxtaposing and conjoining two famous problems: the surge in antiquarianism in the west in the early fifth century and the contest for supremacy between Rome and Constantinople. Scholars have tended to assume that Christians and pagans thought about the sacralization of landscape in very different ways: insofar as paganism consisted of rites bereft of theological significance, pagans (it is assumed) sacralized space through ritual

[1] For recent literature on the historiography of Roman paganism, see Ando 2002: Section 1.

[2] Cf. Smith 1990: *passim*, but esp. 36–53.

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actions governed by pontifical and augural law. Christians, on the other hand, relied on sacred narratives and sacred relics, conducting pilgrimages to the lands where Jesus actually walked or to sites sacralized by the contingencies of martyrdoms and miracles.[3] These distinctions are misleading. Sacred topographies may have been maintained through ritual, pilgrimage, and liturgy; but spaces were made holy by actions of the gods, their particular identities notwithstanding. Proponents of particular sacred topographies in late antiquity, therefore, faced two problems, one theological and one of memory. How was one to understand the actions of the divine in this world? What traces did it leave, and how should one memorialize them? Understood in these terms, the differences between pagan and Christian arguments for Rome and Constantinople begin to dissolve, and the contemporaneous political significance of antiquarianism in their respective historical and religious traditions in the fifth and sixth centuries emerges with real clarity.

This approach has ramifications for how we periodize religious change in late antiquity. Concentrating on the rise of holy men, the importance of relics and pilgrimage, or the prominence of Constantinople and the holy land does not, I would argue, allow one successfully to distinguish the classical and late antique. On the contrary: understood in philosophical terms, Christian and pagan sacred topographies for the late Roman empire can be shown to rest on similar theological presuppositions. Above all, they both assumed theories of materiality that bound human and divine to concrete landscapes and endowed word and action with like power and equivalent metaphysical status. We might once have described Macrobian antiquarianism as nostalgic or, at best, as a retreat from cult and its topographic concerns to the discursive world of texts; we might similarly have accused Hesychius of pedantry or superstition when he sought to locate the Palladium. We would have been in error.

Through its ability to narrate a particular sacred history, language enabled Macrobius to establish a sacred topography for the empire no less cogent than those grounded in a purely materialist devotion to sacred objects. In fact, these ready binarisms of word and object, speech and action, here break down. For even as discursive topographies describe the sacralization of space as a function of historical action and divine immanence, so sacred objects derive their meaning and continued legitimacy from their inscription in sacred histories and utility in reconstitutive ritual actions. Adherents of Athens and Jerusalem, or Rome and Constantinople, all required, even as they assumed, understandings of history and theology that stand apart from the Platonizing metaphysics that have dominated histories and historians of religion, and theories and theorists of matter to this day.

[3] See Salzman 1999, on Rome, and Fowden 1978, on the eastern provinces, which largely treat the Christian appropriation of pagan holy sites as a political problem. For rather different portraits of classical Roman thought on the sacralization of space, see Cancik 1985–86; Ando 2002.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the first six decades of the twentieth century, scholars could be described with some confidence as having reached a general consensus on the conflict between pagans and Christians in the fourth century. Most agreed that pagans and Christians actively disliked each other and that each side sought to do the other harm, at least to the extent permitted by the government. Of the work published in that era, the studies of Andreas Alföldi and Herbert Bloch remain notable for their rigor and influence. Each scholar attempted to identify pagans in the city of Rome and to prove their commitment to traditional religions and their corresponding opposition to Christianity. Alföldi launched his programme in 1937 with his study of coins representing Isis and Serapis from the mint of Rome and followed it with volumes on the so-called contorniate medallions and his essay on the religious policies of Constantine. Throughout he attempted to document the "relentless struggle" of "the last representatives of the old Roman traditions against Christianity" "in defense of the religion of their fathers," as well as the increasing "religious intolerance" of the church and state from Constantine to Theodosius.[4] Bloch first conducted a prosopographical study of holders of priesthoods in the later fourth century and subsequently argued that committed pagans had been responsible for reading, copying, and editing classical texts.[5] Together these scholars persuaded many of the existence of a circle of committed pagan aristocrats at Rome, whose leader was undoubtedly Vettius Agorius Praetextatus but which they called the circle of Symmachus largely because our knowledge of them comes predominantly from the preserved letters of Quintus Aurelius Symmachus.[6] Finally, the intellectual and religious interests of the circle's members were documented by a contemporary witness, Macrobius, who made Praetextatus, Symmachus, Servius, and their acquaintances interlocutors in his *Saturnalia*. What is more, Macrobius borrowed heavily from Iamblichus and Porphyry, and in so doing declared an allegiance to Hellenic philosophy and religion, even if he and his friends—the "last pagan generation"—"did not dare make a frontal attack on Christianity triumphant."[7]

Many of these trends received classic treatment in a famous collection of lectures delivered at the Warburg Institute and edited by Arnaldo Momigliano.[8] Although that volume was no doubt intended to provoke further work, in many

[4] Alföldi 1937; 1942–43; 1948; 1952.

[5] Bloch 1945 and 1963. English-speaking scholars tend to ignore Bloch's debts to earlier work, especially Marrou 1932. Marrou's essay well illustrates the greater nuance that continental scholars brought to the study of religious conflict and cultural history in this period.

[6] Cf. Robinson 1915: 92, labelling Symmachus "one of the most distinguished members of the aristocratic pagan party," while admitting that evidence for the party "is supplied chiefly by the works of Symmachus himself."

[7] Courcelle (1969: 13–47) provides a characteristically accurate representation of much earlier work on Macrobius, his aims, and his sources; the quotation is from p. 46.

[8] Momigliano 1963.

ways it marked the end of an era. For while that book was in production, Peter Brown and Alan Cameron subjected the foundations of earlier scholarship to what seemed to be devastating scrutiny. First, in 1961 Brown advanced what we might call his pillow-talk theory of Christianization. Proceeding from the observation that the conversion of the Roman aristocracy had taken much longer than a single generation, Brown argued that the religious legislation passed by Theodosius in the last years of his reign could account for neither the scope nor the pace of senatorial conversions. His central thesis arose from his observation that "it is the wives, themselves, that are often an insoluble problem."[9] He concluded that aristocratic women converted first and then converted their husbands through their gentle powers of persuasion.

A few years later, Alan Cameron disbanded the circle of Symmachus and assigned Macrobius to the early 430s, confirming an hypothesis advanced by Santo Mazzarino three decades earlier.[10] He then subjected the editorial work of fourth- and fifth-century intellectuals to similar scrutiny. Following Marrou, he argued that both Christians and pagans read, copied, and corrected classical texts: literary culture was literary, and nothing more.[11] The consequences for readers of Macrobius were stark: the *Saturnalia* had to be seen as the product of "sentimental antiquarianism and nostalgic idealization of the past," while its paganism was "essentially nostalgic and literary" and its participants appeared "simply as great and learned men of an almost incidentally pagan past."[12]

Brown and Cameron's arguments have shaped the study of religious conflict in the fourth and fifth centuries, particularly in the English-speaking world.[13] Indeed, some of their arguments have received valuable support. Two decades of counting Christians have suggested that the conversion of the aristocracy began sooner, and proceeded more regularly, than late-antique narratives would have us believe.[14] And yet, if the government did genuinely favor Christians in the distribution of honors, we might expect public declarations of religious allegiance to respond accordingly, and patterns of apostasy and indictments for hypocritical conversions largely bear out this suspicion.[15] Others have subjected Christian historiography to scrutiny and concluded that it constructed its relationship with paganism as one of latent hostility, punctuated by persecutions and periods of conflict: in other words, generations of historians saw religious history in late

[9] Brown 1961: 173.

[10] Cameron 1964; Mazzarino 1937–38: 255–258; Cameron 1966. Cameron persuaded all but a few—Syme (1968: 146) hesitated, while Flamant (1977: 96–141) and Döpp (1978) disagreed—and his work has been confirmed by Panciera (1982).

[11] Cameron 1977; 1984; 1999. Matthews (1967: 507–509) anticipated some of these arguments.

[12] Cameron 1966: 36; 1977: 23, cf. 28. Matthews 1970: 466 was typical in its praise and in its inability to develop some new interpretive framework to accommodate the *Saturnalia*.

[13] Notable participants in this tradition are O'Donnell 1978; 1979; Salzman 1990. Cameron (1999) cites some recent voices of dissent in Europe.

[14] Eck 1971; van Haehling 1978; Barnes 1987; 1995.

[15] Ando 1996: 198–205; 1997: 88.

antiquity as a sequence of crises because that is what they were intended to see.[16]

Revisiting the religious politics of the fourth and fifth centuries will require a return to the figures who were once central to this period and who have been largely ignored by those studying "the transformation of the classical heritage." For what we have not learned in the last quarter century is what Symmachus, Servius, Praetextatus, and Macrobius thought they were doing, if they were not engaged in the preservation of a cultural system then under assault by the government of their empire. After all, late-antique Christians were not alone in viewing their age as one of struggle. Some pagans certainly understood the threat posed by Christianity's imperialist impulse. For Antoninus the son of Sosipatra, for example, the destruction of the Serapeum heralded the end of his way of life: after his death, he predicted, that temple would fall into a formless shadow, while an awesome darkness would seize power over the beautiful things of this world.[17] The *Asclepius* could be understood to depict religious change in similar terms:

> A penalty of so-called laws will be laid down against religion, piety, and acts of worship. This most holy land, the home of shrines and temples, will overflow with graves and corpses .... I call upon you, most holy river, and I predict your future: you will burst your banks, filled by a torrent of blood.[18]

Again, as Julian denounced Constantine as "an innovator and destroyer of hallowed laws and ancient tradition," so Julian's partisans described him as "the restorer of Roman religion."[19] What is more, but two decades before Macrobius indulged his "literary paganism" in an extended exercise in nostalgic antiquarianism, Augustine had been drafted by Marcellinus to respond to the legions of pagan critics who blamed Christianity and its emperors for the fall of Rome.[20] For Servius and Macrobius, Vergil preeminently deserved the title *pontifex maximus*.[21] Should

[16] Thelamon 1981; cf. Brown 1961: 166; 1993: esp. 95–96; 1995: 3–8.

[17] Eunap. *V. Soph.* 6.9.17. The significance of this event lingered long in Christian memories: see Rufinus *Hist. Eccl.* 11.23–25, 29–30: the Serapeum was the *caput idolatriae*; once it was overthrown, no temple of any other god could remain standing. See also August. *Div. Daem.* 1.1 (written ca 407); Socrates 5.16; Sozom. 7.15.

[18] *Asclepius* 24, cited in its extant Latin version for the first time in August. *De civ. D.* 8.23–24. For useful cautions about the dating of *Asclepius*, see Lane Fox 1990: 237–238. While I am tempted to agree with Hunink 1996 that Apuleius could have written this text, I am concerned here with its reception in the aftermath of 392. Cameron (1965: 24, n. 48) argues brilliantly for dating the text to 391, but it is not clear to me that his argument requires dating the whole text to that period; cf. Frankfurter 1998: 247, 252–253, discussing its initial reception.

[19] Amm. Marc. 21.10.8; *ILS* 752, from Numidia: *Iuliano pio felici* [*Aug.*] .... *invicto principi, restitutori libertatis et Romanae religionis ac triumfatori orbis.*

[20] Marcellinus at August. *Ep.* 136. On pagan and Christian literary recriminations in the years following 410, see Courcelle 1964: 56–77; on Augustine in particular, see Barnes 1982 and, more briefly, O'Daly 1999: 27–33.

[21] See, e.g., Macrob. *Sat.* 1.24.16; cf. 1.24.17, where Flavianus finds in Vergil *tantam scientiam iuris auguralis* that it alone would make him famous, even if he lacked all other knowledge; 1.24.13

they not be numbered among the *parvuli* whose tender souls were intoxicated by that great and most famous poet, who did not see, as Augustine did, the truths about Rome's conquered gods that Vergil had been forced by *Veritas* to confess?[22]

About the *Saturnalia* in particular we might ask, what does it mean that a text once presumed to be thoroughly pagan dates from a time when the Roman aristocracy publicly and almost unanimously professed Christianity? The intellectual and religious interests of its interlocutors were, of course, many and varied, whether measured by the words of Macrobius or by independent evidence of their activities. Others have investigated the ideological bases of fourth-century grammar and education: to adapt Gellius, Servius and Macrobius were fully aware that *humanitas* does not properly indicate indiscriminate goodwill toward all human beings, but rather "learning and training in the liberal arts."[23] It is eloquent testimony to the power of Cameron's work that sophisticated readings of Servius and Macrobius as religious figures have only recently begun to appear. Bruggisser, for example, has argued that Servius deliberately presented Romulus and Remus so as to deflect Christian criticisms of the fratricide, all the while participating in contemporary political debates over the concord of imperial brothers, while MacCormack and Hedrick have revisited with renewed vigor and insight pagan and Christian modes of reading and interpreting Vergil and the politics of editing classical texts.[24]

The political and religious implications of antiquarian research in the fifth century cannot emerge from a reading of the *Saturnalia* so long as prejudice about the nature of religious history overdetermines those readings, nor, in fact, can they be elucidated by reading the *Saturnalia* alone.[25] Antiquarian research did not take place in ivory towers. In this essay, I examine the actions of "the last pagan generation" and the role played by their researches into the Roman past in one arena of undeniable contemporary importance, the rivalry of Rome and Constantinople and the construction of a sacred topography for the later Roman empire. Macrobian antiquarianism emerges from this inquiry as a reaction to the suppression of those mechanisms whereby his heroes, those men who used to belong to the circle of Symmachus, had formerly debated the locus of the holy

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(a passage of unmistakeable religious significance): *sed nos, quos crassa Minerva dedecet, non patiamur abstrusa esse adyta sacri poematis, sed arcanorum sensuum investigato aditu doctorum cultu celebranda praebeamus reclusa penetralia*; 5.1.18–20. Servius: see below, Section III. On Vergil's significance in late-antique pagan life, see Klingner 1965: 527–578, esp. 543–544; MacCormack 1998. Turk 1963 is often described as having discussed Servius' description of Vergil as *pontifex* (see, e.g., Cameron 1968: 101–102; Hedrick 2000: 85), but he cites not a single passage from that author.

[22] August. *De civ. D.* 1.3.

[23] Gell. *NA* 13.17.1. On grammar as a marker of class, Kaster 1978; 1980; Uhl 1998; Cameron 1999: 119–120.

[24] Bruggisser 1987, esp. 125–160; MacCormack 1998; Hedrick 2000, esp. 171–213. Syske 1993 does not fulfill its promise to discuss the "aims" of Macrobius (2–3); I have not been able to acquire Kahlos 1998.

[25] Cf. Hedrick 2000: 210.

in the later Roman empire. That Macrobius made claims on behalf of Rome in language of immediate intelligibility and undeniable contemporary import is best seen by reading the very similar claims and language deployed on behalf of Constantinople in the same period. The ancient past emerges from their works as more than a guide to the constitution of the present. Rather, by concretizing presuppositions about relations between corporeal and divine reality, narratives of the past legitimated particular visions of the sacralization of space and took their place beside philosophy, politics, and law among the tools of late-antique political life.

II. THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE FOURTH CENTURY

Until Constantine founded his new capital on the Bosporus, no one had questioned and certainly no one had threatened the centrality of Rome. Neither titulature nor iconography distinguishes the Tetrarchic foundations or residences in this way, nor is it possible to detect in literature of the early fourth century any sense that these detracted from the ideological and religious preeminence of Rome.[26] Constantinople was clearly different, and this was true already at its dedication. As early as 324, Porfyrius described that city as "another Rome," and a decade later Constantine allowed that he called his city an *urbs aeterna* at the behest of his God.[27]

The foundation of Constantinople altered the topography of the empire in several ways. The new capital on the Bosporus rapidly assumed an iconographic status roughly equivalent to that of Rome.[28] By the middle of the fourth century a hierarchy had developed that accorded preeminence to Rome and Constantinople and second rank to Antioch and Alexandria, Carthage and Trier; within each rank, partisans advanced the claims of their city and contested those of others.[29] Writers in both east and west took note of the competition between Rome and Constantinople, and very soon after Constantine's foundation it was commonly understood that he had intended the new capital to rival the old.[30] We can trace

[26] Bréhier 1915: 241, 247, 249–250; Lathoud 1924: 294; Alföldi 1947: 12; *contra* Mango 1985: 24.

[27] Porfyrius *Carm.* 4.5–6; for its date of composition, see Barnes 1975: 179, 184–185. Constantine: *Cod. Theod.* 13.5.7: *pro commoditate urbis, quam aeterno nomine iubente deo donavimus* .... Cf. *Cod. Iust.* 1.17.1.10: *Romam autem intellegendum est non solum veterem, sed etiam regiam nostram, quae deo propitio cum melioribus condita est auguriis.* Themistius wrote his fourth oration thirty-three years later, but referring specifically to November 324 he called Constantinople πόλις ἡ τῆς βασιλείας ἡλικιῶτις (*Or.* 4.58b). On "the names of Constantinople," see Georgacas 1947; cf. Dagron 1984b: 48–60. Too much has been made of the third canon of the Council of Constantinople in 381, the first "official" document to style Constantinople "New Rome."

[28] Toynbee 1947; 1953; cf. Salzman 1990: 27–28.

[29] Auson. *Ordo nob. urb.* (XXIV Green) 1–27 presents a somewhat idiosyncratic, western view. More typical formulations are Lib. *Or.* 15.59 and 33.24.

[30] Lib. *Or.* 19.19; cf. 20.24, 30.37; *Origo Constantini* 6.30; Eutr. 10.8.1; Festus 19.4. See also Claud. *Ruf.* 2.54; *Gild.* 61–63; Zos. 2.30.1. Our picture might be clearer if we had the letters of

the institutional and ideological rivalry of the cities in a number of ways, but most easily—and perhaps most deceptively—through the privileges and ranks accorded to their respective Senates and senators.[31] In 379, for example, Themistius led an embassy from the Senate of Constantinople to Gratian. Although he styled Constantinople the equivalent of Rome—they were the two *metropoleis* of the world, the cities of Romulus and Constantine—he did so in order to justify the request with which he closed: Gratian should glorify the Senate of the east with honors, so that it would truly be his city, a second Rome.[32] And if the organization of Constantinople around seven hills and fourteen regions can indeed be traced to Constantine, his intentions become even clearer.[33]

The religious politics of the age lent the rivalry between the two capitals additional import and complexity. We can not now know what Constantine did or did not do at the *limitatio*, *consecratio*, *inauguratio*, and *dedicatio* of his city.[34] What is clear is that Christians almost immediately understood and represented Constantine's foundation as a religious act and his city as the new, Christian capital of a Christian empire. Immediately after Constantine's death, Eusebius insisted that he had "celebrated his eponymous city by dedicating there magnificent *martyria* and spectacular buildings" and had "consecrated his city to the god of the martyrs," while purging it of all traces of idolatry and superstition.[35] To display the power of his triumphant god, Constantine likewise stripped the idols from temple precincts throughout the east and displayed them as *spolia* in his new city.[36] Some of these idols, we are told, he tore from their pedestals by heaping them with ropes and pulling them along the ground, as though they were captives. He also ordered agents to scrape the gold and silver leaf from any idols they did not confiscate and to pluck away their decorative gems.[37] An idiosyncratic eighth-century guidebook to the public monuments of Constantinople insists, quite plausibly, that Constantine also took statues from Rome, including one of Augustus.[38] It may be that it was precisely his paganism that led Julian to

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Constantine in which he justified the privileges he granted to Constantinople's food supply and grain dole, but we know of his establishment only through references in later legislation (e.g., *Cod. Theod.* 14.16.2, 12).

[31] Dagron 1984b: 119–210; Vanderspoel 1995: 53–66.

[32] Them. *Or.* 14.182a, 183a–184a.

[33] Janin 1964: 4–7, 24, 43–58.

[34] See Cracco Ruggini 1980 and below, Section IV.

[35] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.48.

[36] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.54.2–4; cf. Eunap. *VS* 6.1.5. Libanius (*Or.* 30.6, 37) complains of expenditures on Constantinople and hints that this involved stealing religious art; Zosimus (2.31–32) writes in similar terms; John Malalas (13.7) mentions in passing statues taken from Ilium and Rome but does not suggest that these were part of a systematic transfer.

[37] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.54.1–2, 5–7. Eusebius signally fails to understand popular attitudes to religious statuary. In Gaza, even the Christians refused to walk on pavements made from smashed idols (Mark *Vita Porph.* 76); cf. Mango 1963.

[38] *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai* 60.

disparage Constantinople, the city of his birth, by insisting that it surpassed all other cities by as much as it fell short of Rome, while noting that being second to Rome was a greater honor than preeminence over all other cities.[39]

Later Christians found this picture of Constantine and this image of Constantinople useful. Augustine numbered the foundation of Constantinople one of the blessings granted by the Christian God to its pious champion: "to him God granted that he should found a city, an aid to the Roman empire and the daughter, as it were, of Rome itself, but without any temple or image of demons."[40] Socrates acknowledged his debt to Eusebius but adds details not present in that author's *Life*: Constantine made his city equal to "ruling Rome," named it Constantinople, and ordered by law that it should be called "Second Rome."[41] According to Socrates, this law was inscribed on a pillar near Constantine's equestrian statue. He also followed Eusebius in seeing Constantinople as a Christian foundation, connecting Constantine's dedication of churches there with his prohibitions against paganism and his humiliation of idols. We will return to Sozomen's much fuller narrative; let it suffice now to observe that he, too, attributed to Constantine the desire that his city "should rule equally with Rome and should share with her in the empire." Seeking to found a city "equal in honor to Rome," Constantine was directed by God to Byzantium, which city he renamed "New Rome" and "Constantinople" and designated as the capitol for the eastern half of the empire. What is more, God revealed his power in the fervor with which the inhabitants of the city took to the faith of its founder.[42] Philostorgius likewise reports that Constantine named his city *alma Roma*, "which in the Roman tongue means 'honored'," and so established its government and buildings that its fame began to rival that of "the earlier Rome."[43]

Christian intellectuals thus valorized Constantinople for its lack of idols and idolatrous cult. In this they reveal an understanding of the sacred and of its immanence in the material world seemingly fundamentally different than that loosely shared by their pagan opponents. Christians almost universally regarded idols and cult statues as the proper and exclusive recipients of pagan worship, and their understanding of the mechanics of conversion developed from this simple fact. So, writing of Constantine's appropriation of religious art, Eusebius wrote that "those suffering from superstition then at last learned to think properly, when the emperor held up their baubles to the laughter and mockery of all beholders."[44] Similarly, when in early July 399 Arcadius and Honorius ordered

[39] Julian *Or.* 1.6 (8b–c).

[40] August. *De civ. D.* 5.25.

[41] Socrates 1.16.1.

[42] Sozom. 2.3.1, 2, 5.

[43] Philostorgius 2.9; cf. Hsch. *Patria* 1, naming Rome ἡ πρεσβυτέρα Ῥώμη and Constantinople ἡ νέα Ῥώμη and arguing that Constantine made the latter equal to the former.

[44] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.54.3.

the destruction of pagan temples in the countryside, they claimed that their action would destroy "the material basis of all superstition" (*his enim deiectis atque sublatis omnis superstitioni materia consumetur, Cod. Theod.* 16.10.16). Yet progress won by methods based on these premises was slow. This is true in spite of Eusebius, who tended to magnify both the scope and effects of imperial legislation against paganism.[46] As emperors knew better than bishops, "sudden changes are hard on subjects." An idolatrous city that consistently paid its taxes had to be subjected to gradual pressure: let civic honors be available only to Christians and the temples shut, and the people will eventually acknowledge the truth.[47] A pragmatic toleration or, perhaps, a pragmatic restraint from religious coercion, glossed by intolerant rhetoric from pulpits and rostra and interrupted by occasional bursts of local violence, thus governed religious politics between Constantine and the last decade of the fourth century.[48]

Between the foundation of Constantinople, then, and the outpouring of Catholic legislation in the 390s, how did pagans articulate the unique status of Rome? Through cult.[49] Symmachus provides both a positive and negative formulation of this position. On the one hand, the goodwill of the gods, if not retained through cult, is lost.[50] On the birthday of Rome in 401, the state was disturbed by several omens, most particularly the crash of the suffect consul's chariot. Decorated with the insignia of his office, the magistrate had broken his leg. "Even narrating it causes me concern—doing so is unlucky—and so in this telling I will be brief."[51] An omen at Spoleto worried him, as a citizen with a duty to the public good: it should have been expiated *publico nomine.* As it was, eight victims improperly sacrificed had failed to satisfy Jupiter.[52] Symmachus changed the itinerary of his travels to take action on behalf of his ailing homeland, "since my security seemed to me quite worthless in comparison to the ills of the commonwealth." He, therefore, yielded to the demands of pontifical office.[53] Famine, likewise, could be averted by the gods, as it could be caused by their displeasure. "Gods of my fatherland, pardon the neglect of your rites! Stave

[46] Cf. Bradbury 1994; Drake 2000: 360–367, 402, 419.

[47] Mark *Vita Porph.* 41.

[48] Barnes 1982: 68.

[49] Verbal expressions of patriotism by Greek and Latin authors in late antiquity have received a great deal of careful attention, but few have concentrated on the religious aspects and non-verbal expressions of patriotic sentiment. Among a vast literature see Dölger 1937; Klingner 1965: 645–666; Paschoud 1967; Klein 1986; Brodka 1998.

[50] Symm. *Ep.* 1.46.2: *benignitas enim superiorum, nisi cultu tenatur, amittitur.*

[51] Symm. *Ep.* 6.40.1.

[52] Symm. *Ep.* 1.49; the phrase *ut civis ad bonum commune genitus* is actually applied by Symmachus to Praetextatus.

[53] Symm. *Ep.* 1.51; cf. 1.47.1: *me impedit pontificalis officii cura*; 2.59: Symmachus was staying at his suburban villa along the *via Appia*, whence he returned to Rome for the festival of Vesta; 2.34, writing to his son: *adornare te reditum, quod sacra Deum Matris adpeterent, arbitrabar.* At 1.71 he praises Caecilianus to Celsinus Titianus, writing that he loves that man because he is *religiosae civitatis commodis obsequentem.*

off this pitiless famine."[54] Nothing illustrates the seriousness of Symmachus' commitment to the customs and institutions of the *maiores* more clearly than his determination to punish errant Vestals: the duty of a pontiff and the loyalty of a senator demanded no less. As he wrote when one Primigenia was proven guilty of breaking her vows, "it remains only to enforce the severity of the laws against those who have polluted the rites of the state by an unspeakable crime."[55] His son listed on his epitaph no religious office save the pontificate: the ceremonies of the gods and the rites demanded by divinity were known to him.[56]

Symmachus also argued that proper worship earned the favor of the gods. As proof he offered the evidence of history:

> Do not forget the argument from advantage, which more than anything reveals the gods to mankind. As all reason lies in the dark, from what source might we better draw our knowledge of the divine than from memory and the evidence of past benefactions.

In a *prosopopeia* moments later Rome confirmed the sentiment: "*Hic cultus* subjected the world to my laws."[57] In the same decade on the other side of the empire, Libanius advanced an almost identical set of arguments in defense of pagan temples and the rituals practiced in them. Like Symmachus, Libanius insisted that the history of the empire proved the efficacy and truthfulness of traditional forms of worship:

> And it was with these gods to aid them that the Romans used to march against their foes, engage them in battle, conquer them and, as conquerors, grant the vanquished a condition of life better than that which they had before their defeat, removing their fears and allowed them a share in their own civil life.[58]

In fact, Libanius took this argument a step further, describing the evolution of religious practices as part and parcel of the increasing complexity of societies and development of technology.[59]

Libanius was not so foolish as to believe that the extension of the franchise and expansion of the empire had correspondingly diluted the gods' interest in Rome. On the contrary:

> If the security of the empire rests on the sacrifices performed there, then we must believe sacrifice everywhere to be profitable. Indeed, just as the gods in Rome give greater things, so those in the fields and the other villages give lesser things.[60]

[54] Symm. *Ep.* 2.7.3; see also *Rel.* 3.15–16: depriving the Vestals of support granted them by *lex parentum* had brought about a famine. The land was not at fault, nor was the wind: *sacrilegio annus exaruit.*

[55] Symm. *Ep.* 9.108, 147–148.

[56] *ILS* 2946; Symm. *Ep.* 2.53, writing to his brother: *notae nobis sunt caerimoniae deorum et festa divinitatis imperata.*

[57] Symm. *Rel.* 3.8–9.

[58] Lib. *Or.* 30.5 (tr. Norman); cf. 30.31.

[59] Lib. *Or.* 30.4.

[60] Lib. *Or.* 30.33 (tr. after Norman).

The theological basis of this position deserves careful scrutiny. It was not that the gods could not or did not receive worship in multiple locations, nor even that the Capitoline triad was resident on the Capitol. By the fourth century, *Capitolia* existed in cities throughout the empire, from Spain to Africa to Egypt and throughout the Danubian provinces.[61] But if the gods of Rome were not Platonic gods, whose interest in sacrifices and whose figural representation required elaborate and somewhat illogical defense, neither did they become the objects of a complex theological tradition.[62] When Cicero contrasted Persian cult and its theological basis with that of the Greeks and Romans, he provided as careful an articulation of the issue as now survives:

> I propose that there should be shrines in cities. On this issue I do not follow the magi of Persia, on whose authority Xerxes is said to have burned the temples of Greece, because the Greeks confined the gods within walls, although all places should be open and free to them as this entire world is their home and temple. The better position is that adopted by the Greeks and by us, who desire to increase piety toward the gods and so have wanted them to live in the same cities that we inhabit.

Men will act more chaste, Cicero concludes, following Thales, when they believe that all things are full of gods.[63]

Symmachus thus subscribed to the theology of a Cicero and spoke to the concerns of Libanius when he wrote of the altar of Victory:

> Where shall we swear to obey your laws and decrees? By what scruple will the deceitful mind be terrified, lest it perjure itself under oath? To be sure, all things are full of god, nor is any place safe for perjurers. Nevertheless, the presence of a god is a powerful inducement to a fear of wrong-doing.[64]

It is insufficient to say that Symmachus has elided the distinction between image and prototype, because more is at stake than a philosophy of representation. He presupposed a notion of divinity, and a theory of materiality, fundamentally at odds with those of Platonic or Christian metaphysics; and within the theology of a Symmachus or Libanius, the gods have interests in, and attachments to, particular landscapes, of which humans take account through the performance of ritual, and it was through ritual that humans might affect or alter the gods' attachments.[65] If the theological underpinnings of these arguments on behalf of Rome did not then require articulation and therefore elude satisfactory explication today, we can grasp their implications more clearly by studying the place of Rome in the religious landscape mapped and inhabited by Ammianus Marcellinus.[66] Writing

[61] Ando 2000: 208.

[62] See, e.g., Sallustius 15–16.

[63] Cic. *Leg.* 2.26.

[64] Symm. *Rel.* 3.5.

[65] The theological basis of Roman ritual, particularly in its understanding of topography and materiality, requires much more careful attention than it has received. For now, see the suggestive comments in MacCormack 1982: 290–291; see also Ando 2002.

[66] Camus 1967: 133–269 is far the best treatment of Ammianus' religious thought.

in the early 390s of events some three decades earlier, Ammianus described the famine at Rome in 359, during the prefecture of Tertullus. The eternal city was gripped by fear of a coming shortage of grain: harsher storms than usual and unpredictable squalls disturbed the seas. But the fears of the populace were rapidly allayed:

> Soon, by the will of that divine *numen* that nurtured Rome from its infancy and promised that it would last forever, while Tertullus the prefect was sacrificing at Ostia before the temple of the Dioscuri, tranquillity calmed the sea, the wind became a gentle southern breeze, and ships full of grain entered the port and refilled the stores of grain.[67]

Ammianus highlights the place of Rome in the sacred topography of the later empire most pointedly when he juxtaposes events at Rome and elsewhere so as to reveal the centrality of the capital. So, for example, just prior to the successful assassination of Silvanus in Gaul in 355, "the people at Rome in the Circus Maximus shouted in a loud voice, 'Silvanus is conquered,'—whether the populace was aroused by some report or by a presentiment is unknown."[68] Ammianus more clearly attributed to divine causes knowledge at Rome of events around the empire when he narrated the election of Valentinian in 364: the emperor-elect had to travel from his post at Ancyra to the army and so for ten days no one held the helm of the empire. "This fact the *haruspex* Marcus reported to have happened at the time, when he inspected entrails at Rome."[69]

Ammianus reported on religious matters at no time more densely than during Julian's Parthian campaign. At its start he provided a list of the omens that presaged ill for that undertaking. Closing the list, in a position of priority, is a report from the Sibylline books at Rome: in clear language they forbade the emperor from leaving his own borders that year.[70] Soon after leaving Antioch, Julian was disturbed by dreams. When he woke up, he ordered that careful watch should be taken for omens throughout the day, 19 March 363.

> As it was afterwards learned, on that same night, in the prefecture of Apronianus, the temple of Palatine Apollo in the eternal city burned; had aid of every kind not been brought to bear, the magnitude of the fires would have consumed even the songs of the Cumaean Sibyl.[71]

Other events on the campaign are merely dated by the ritual calendar of the eternal city, and Julian himself attempted to establish a temporal and sacramental connection with Rome through cult:

> Six days before the kalends of April, on the day when the annual processions for the Mother of the Gods are performed at Rome and the cart in which her image is carried is

[67] Amm. Marc. 19.10.4.

[68] Amm. Marc. 15.5.34.

[69] Amm. Marc. 26.1.5. In her note on this passage, Marié (1984: 205, n. 12) cites 15.5.34 and compares Gellius 15.18. See also Camus 1967: 209, writing of divination without concern for where it takes place.

[70] Amm. Marc. 23.1.7.

[71] Amm. Marc. 23.3.3.

said to be washed in the waters of the Almo, the solemnity of the rites was performed in hallowed fashion, and Julian slept well, passing the night in happy confidence.[72]

Julian himself testified to his interest in Cybele in the hymn he addressed to her. Like Symmachus writing of Victory, Julian's narrative of her arrival in Rome elides the distinction between image and Goddess. Although it was a most holy image (τῆς θεοῦ τὸ ἁγιώτατον ἄγαλμα) of the goddess that sailed to Rome, the goddess herself revealed that the ship transported no lifeless idol (ξόανον ἄψυχον); rather, the object taken from the Phrygians held some greater and more divine power.[73] Of course, Julian did not doubt that one could honor the Great Mother at shrines located outside of Rome. He himself visited her ancient temple at Pessinus.[74] But it is equally clear that she was present at Rome, and Rome was thus privileged, through and by the contingent presence of her most sacred image in that city. Anyone who doubted his narrative, Julian added, could read its details as preserved on bronze statues in the most powerful and god-beloved city of Rome.[75]

Ammianus nowhere asserted the centrality of Rome in the sacred topography of his world more vigorously than when he described the arrival in Rome of a giant obelisk taken from the temple of the Sun at Thebes. Augustus, he argued, had thought of moving this obelisk but had refrained, not because the obelisk was too big, but because it had been dedicated as a special gift to the Sun and had been placed within the shrine of its glorious temple. But Constantine, Ammianus continued, rightly thought that he was committing no sacrilege if, having torn the obelisk from one temple, he should rededicate it at Rome, that is, in the *templum totius mundi*, the temple of the entire world.[76] As much as this remark reveals about Ammianus and his feelings for Rome, it also reveals his ignorance. In point of fact, Constantine had intended the obelisk as another decoration for Constantinople, and it was Constantius who misunderstood the significance of that desire and sent the obelisk on to Rome, to celebrate his capture of the city and victory over the usurper Magnentius.[77]

At the enigmatic center of modern essays on Roman religious life stands Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, augur, pontifex of Vesta, pontifex of the Sun, *quindecemvir*, *curialis* of Hercules, a devotee of Liber and the Eleusinian mysteries, hierophant, overseer of temples, and initiate of the *taurobolium*.[78] Praetextatus and his wife Fabia Aconia Paulina lived together for forty years, marked by piety and mutual

[72] Amm. Marc. 23.3.7. Cf. Prudent. *Peristephanon* 10.151–160.

[73] Julian *Or.* 8.2 (5.159c–160a).

[74] Amm. Marc. 22.9.5.

[75] Julian *Or.* 8.2 (5.161b).

[76] Amm. Marc. 17.4.12–13.

[77] *ILS* 736, esp. lines 1–6: *patris opus munusqu*[*e suum*] *tibi, Roma, dicavit / Augustus* [*toto Constan*]*tius orbe recepto, / et quod nulla tulit tellus nec viderat aetas / condidit, ut claris exa*[*equ*]*et dona triumfis. / hoc decus ornatum genitor cognominis urbis / esse volens, caesa Thebis de rupe revellit.*

[78] *ILS* 1259, front, lines 2–7. On the "centrality" of Praetextatus, see Cameron 1999: 111–115.

devotion. While initiation in all the mysteries made Paulina the friend of the gods, Praetextatus "concealed in the recesses of his mind secrets discovered in sacred rites and, being learned, worshipped the manifold and divine *numen*."[79] Scorning those offices and dignities sought by other men, Praetextatus wished to be known only as a priest of the gods.[80] For Praetextatus, then, as for Symmachus, religious devotion was properly expressed through ritual, and it was through ritual that men interacted or united with the divine.[81] Like Symmachus, Praetextatus and Paulina honored Vesta and the Vestals: dedicating a statue of Caelia Concordia, they spoke of her outstanding modesty and noteworthy piety toward the cult of the gods.[82]

Nothing typifies the form of piety exhibited by Praetextatus better than his restoration of the images of the *di consentes*. In the first century B.C. their golden images had stood around the forum, six male and six female, and scattered inscriptions attest their worship in Dacia, Moesia, and in Italy at Picenum, Ocriculi, and Reate.[83] During his prefecture of the city in 367/8, Praetextatus repaired and replaced their sacred statues, decorated their site with all possible care, and, most particularly, restored their cult to its ancient form.[84] This interest in performing rites according to their ancient form in a particular, hallowed location mirrors the attention paid by Julian, Libanius, and Symmachus to the evidences of history; it formed the basis of Julian's criticism of Constantine; and it will be the clarion call of the last generation of pagans in the West: "Verily do I promise that I will maintain and preserve, so long as I am able, that which has been handed down and sanctioned by antiquity."[85]

III. WITHOUT CULT, WHITHER ROME?

The last two decades of the fourth century saw the government of the empire move with increasing severity against the institutions and practices that ordered

[79] *ILS* 1259, right side line 2; back, lines 13–15, 25; on Paulina's initiations, see also *ILS* 1260. On the *divum multiplex numen*, see Nock 1972: 37–41; cf. Camus 1967: 134–138.

[80] *ILS* 1259, back, lines 18–21.

[81] Cf. Sallustius 4: πρέπουσι δὲ τῶν μύθων οἱ μὲν θεολογικοὶ φιλοσόφοις, οἱ δὲ φυσικοὶ καὶ ψυχικοὶ ποιηταῖς, οἱ δὲ μικτοὶ τελεταῖς, ἐπειδὴ καὶ πᾶσα τελετὴ πρὸς τὸν κόσμον ἡμᾶς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς συνάπτειν ἐθέλει; see also Lib. *Or.* 24.36; Nock 1926: xcviii–ci.

[82] *ILS* 1261.

[83] Varro *Rust.* 1.1.4 (Jupiter and Tellus, Sol and Luna, Ceres and Liber, Robigus and Flora, Minerva and Venus, and Lympha and Bonus Eventus); cf. Enn. *Ann.* 240–241 [Skutsch] (Iuno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercurius, Iovis, Neptunus, Volcanus, and Apollo), almost definitely listing the twelve gods honored in the first *lectisternium*, whose inspiration and performance is described at Livy 22.10.9, but the sentence must be read with the whole paragraph in mind. On these gods, see Wissowa 1912: 61, n. 6; Latte 1967: 253, 334. Dacia: *ILS* 4004–6; Moesia: *IGRR* 1.664; Picenum: *ILS* 4001; Ocriculi: *ILS* 4002; Reate: *ILS* 4007.

[84] *ILS* 4003: [*deorum c*]*onsentium sacrosancta simulacra cum omni lo*[*ci totius adornatio*]*ne, cultu in* [*formam antiquam restituto, / V*]*ettius Praetextatus v.c. pra*[*efectus u*]*rbi* [*reposuit*] . . . .

[85] Longinianus at August. *Ep.* 234.2; on their correspondence, see Ando 1996: 192–193.

the religious lives of contemporary pagans. The stakes were clear. As Ambrose pointed out in his first letter to Valentinian on the altar of Victory, the presence of the altar in the Senate would force Christian senators to practice idolatry. Valentinian had to choose between two religions, and the choice for a Christian emperor was clear.[86] The general tenor of the conversation emerges from Christian reactions to the death of Praetextatus. A contemporary invective in verse crowed that his divine knowledge, ascension of the Capitol, and three-month purification of the city had availed him naught: he had reached the limits of his life, suffering madness of soul and insanity of mind.[87] Writing a letter of consolation immediately after the event, Jerome compared the fate of a recently-deceased Christian to that of Praetextatus, that sacrilegious devotee of idols, who had recently been dragged to Tartarus. In doing so, he alluded with savage irony to the epitaph Paulina wrote for her husband:

> How great the change in affairs! That man, whom but days ago the heights of all honors preceded, who climbed the citadels of the Capitol as though triumphing over defeated enemies, whom the Roman people received with applause and ovations: at his death the whole city is disturbed. Now he is abandoned, naked, not in a milky palace in heaven, as his pathetic wife believes; rather, he is imprisoned in the squalid shadows.[88]

The events that led from the confrontation over the altar of Victory to the revolt and subsequent defeat of Eugenius lie buried in the pages of partisan historiography.[89] Whatever the motivation of Eugenius' supporters, the final battle at the Frigidus took place under the watchful eyes of opposing gods.[90] According to Ambrose, after his victory Theodosius "put away the images of the gentiles; his faith put away all worship of the idols; he laid waste all their ceremonies."[91] In fact, Theodosius had begun issuing increasingly severe legislation against paganism in 391, taking action first against public and then against private forms of worship. He did not order pagans to convert, but simply outlawed all public and private behaviors intended to express devotion. No one could perform a sacrifice, visit a temple, or revere an altar; honors to the gods of hearth, home, and individual were forbidden, whether paid in incense, flame, light, or garlands.[92] Although earlier legislation had threatened pagans with dire punishments, those laws had rarely been enforced. Now Theodosius struck at the institutional and social supports of pagan practice: the property of anyone

[86] Ambrose *Ep.* 17.9; cf. *Ep.* 18.31.

[87] *Carmen contra paganos* 25–30; cf. Cracco Ruggini 1979: 84–89.

[88] Jerome *Ep.* 23.2–3, interpreting *ILS* 1259, back, lines 9, 38–41 as alluding to an afterlife of the sort envisioned at Macrob. *In Somn.* 1.4.4–5, 1.15.1; cf. Jer. *Contra Ioann. Hieros.* 8.

[89] On the history and historiography of these years, see Hedrick 2000: 37–88, esp. 39–58; Cracco Ruggini 1979 is characteristically iconoclastic, insightful, and well-documented.

[90] August. *De civ. D.* 5.26; cf. Ambrose *De obitu Theodosiani* 10; Rufinus *Hist. Eccl.* 11.33; Socrates 5.25; Sozom. 7.24.3–7; Theodoret *Hist. Eccl.* 5.24.3–17.

[91] Ambrose *De obitu Theodosiani* 4.

[92] *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.10–12, on which see Matthews 1975: 231–237.

engaging in pagan rites would be confiscated, as would the land and buildings in which such activities took place. All privileges and exemptions for pagan priests of any description were now revoked. Five years later, Arcadius and Honorius granted two concessions, in the interest of public order: public holidays were to continue, so long as they were devoid of religious content, and pagan temples empty of illicit things were not to be destroyed.[93]

According to Augustine, Theodosius spared the sons of his slain enemies because he wanted them to take this opportunity to convert.[94] In the literary tradition, Theodosius entered Rome in triumph and addressed the Senate. The occasion, once invented, was too delicious to impugn. Prudentius depicted the arrival of Theodosius in Rome as a watershed. Theodosius addressed Rome itself and chastised it for its worship of the monstrous images of decaying gods. Rome silently and immediately converted: "Then for the first time, in its old age, did Rome blush and become docile; it was ashamed of its past, and hated the years spent in foul superstition."[95] Then, having named several great families that converted on that day, Prudentius confessed himself unable to list them all,[96] offering the caveat that all did not convert, and indeed evidence of publicly professing pagans survives for another forty years. In sum, a rebuke from Theodosius produced immediate assent and silent contrition, and thus were the remnants of the pagan aristocracy converted.

What Prudentius does not provide, indeed, what he consigns to oblivion, is any report or summary of the arguments that might have been advanced for paganism on that occasion. For that, we must turn to Zosimus. In the pages of his history, Theodosius summoned the Senate and chided its members for clinging to their ancestral ways and not yet choosing to despise the gods. He exhorted them to renounce their "error, as he called it," and adhere to the faith of the Christians.[98] No one heeded his invitation, nor did anyone choose to depart from the customs handed down from the time when the city had been founded: by maintaining their ancestral customs they had already occupied Rome, unsacked, for twelve hundred years, and they did not know what would happen if they exchanged those customs for new ones. Theodosius then said that the treasury was burdened by expenditures for rites and ceremonies and that he wanted to end them all.

Those speaking for the Senate affirmed that the rites could not be performed duly and properly (μὴ κατὰ θεσμόν) without public support ....[99] Religious scruple being abandoned for this reason, and such cults as had been handed down by ancestral custom falling into abeyance, [they argued that] the Roman empire would weaken gradually and become a habitation for barbarians or that, in the end, deprived of inhabitants, the empire

[93] For "illicit things," see *Cod. Theod.* 16.10.18.
[94] August. *De civ. D.* 5.26.
[95] Prudent. *C. Symm.* 1.511–513.
[96] Prudent. *C. Symm.* 1.408–577 at 566–568; Chastagnol 1956.
[98] Zos. 4.59.1.
[99] Mendelssohn identified a lacuna at this point; Paschoud agrees (1979: 329).

would be reduced to such a state that no one would recognize the sites where its cities once stood.

As Zosimus reminded his audience, a simple narrative of subsequent events would clearly reveal that this did in fact eventuate, and he observed with some satisfaction that Theodosius handed over the lands of the west to his son Honorius and immediately succumbed to disease, even before he could return to Constantinople.[100]

Christians responded to the actions and arguments of late fourth-century pagans on two levels. First, they drew attention to what they regarded as the immorality or illogicality of pagan cult. The Palladium, the Lares of Priam, Vesta and her virgins, and hallowed forms of divination—all dear to Praetextatus, Symmachus, and their friends—these were attacked in sermons, books, and verse invective.[101] Praetextatus earned particular scorn for his faith in the purification offered by the *taurobolium*.[102] Just as Praetextatus had restored the statues of the *di consentes*, whom Varro had identified as gods of ancient Rome, so his "heir," Quintus Aurelius Symmachus himself, built a temple to Flora, whose worship at Rome, Varro claimed, had begun in the regal period; in doing so, he too earned the disapprobation of his Christian contemporaries.[103] It is easy for readers of the *City of God* to argue, incorrectly, that Augustine attacked paganism's literary heritage and not its content or practice. If anything is clear from Christians' obsession with the rites for Cybele, it is that they had seen them performed.[104]

Christians also responded to pagans' privileging of Rome and its religious traditions on intellectual grounds. Among such critics, Augustine is by far the most famous, not least because his response to the sack of Rome in 410 led him to reflect more generally on whether Christian teachings were opposed to the *mores* of the *res publica*. Was it in fact true that great woes had befallen the state because Christian emperors esteemed the church before the commonwealth?[105] In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, Augustine had taken the radical position that Rome was a city like any other, and that cities fall. Earthly kingdoms end.[106] But Augustine also argued the subtler point that it had only been Rome's walls

[100] Zos. 4.59.3–4.

[101] *Carmen contra paganos* 1–5; ps.-Paulinus *Carm.* 32.52–67, 128–150. For the date of ps.-Paulinus, see Cracco Ruggini 1979: 124–128, inclining to the 380s.

[102] *Carmen contra paganos* 57–62; on the controversial history of this rite in Christian invective and modern scholarship, see McLynn 1996.

[103] *Carmen contra paganos* 112–114; Varro *Ling.* 5.74. On the identity of the *heres*, see Cracco Ruggini 1979: 110–112.

[104] See esp. August. *De civ. D.* 7.26; cf. Ambrose *Ep.* 18.30; ps.-Cyprian *Carmen ad senatorem* 5–24; *Carmen contra paganos* 72–77; ps.-Paulinus *Carm.* 32.6–24; Prudent. *C. Symm.* 2.51–52; *Perist.* 10.151–160, 1056–75. For fourth-century dedications to the Great Mother and Attis, see Bloch 1945: 245–247; Duthoy 1969.

[105] Marcellinus to Augustine at August. *Ep.* 136.2. On Augustine's feeling for and writings about Rome, see MacCormack 1998: 175–224. Zwierlein (1978) considers Augustine's arguments alongside those of his Christian contemporaries.

[106] August. *Serm.* 81.8–9, delivered late in 410 or early in 411 (Verbraken 1976: 73).

and buildings that had suffered in Alaric's attack. Alluding to Cicero, he asked what Rome was, if not the Romans.[107] And among the material detritus of a city were its idols, whether or not the pagans understood them thus. "Behold the sort of guardians to whom those learned men entrusted Rome: they have eyes and do not see. If they had the power to save Rome, why did they perish first?"[108]

Augustine later returned to precisely the problem of the status of those pagan idols and pagan gods that had failed to save the city of Rome.[109] In the second and third books of the City of God, he refuted those who insisted that divine favor followed on cult, piously and properly performed.[110]

> If the idols were not able to repel fire from themselves, how were they going to help the city whose safety they were thought to guard, in the face of fire and flame? Events have shown that they were not able to help at all. We wouldn't put forward these attacks if those people would only say that their idols had been established not to protect purely temporal goods, but to signify eternal ones. Saying that, they could argue that when their idols happened to perish because they were corporeal and visible, nothing was detracted from those things because of which they were established. And then their idols could be eventually be restored for the same purposes as before. As it is, with remarkable blindness they think that the terrestrial and temporal happiness of the city could be prevented from perishing by idols that could themselves perish. Hence, when they are shown that harm and unhappiness fell upon their city even when their idols still existed, they are ashamed to change a belief that they are unable to defend.[111]

What Augustine here accepts and elsewhere advocated is a theory of materiality that recognizes further hypostases beyond the idol's irreducible materiality and the cult statue's "relation of iconic resemblance to some immaterial reality."[112] Indeed, according to Augustine, many misrecognized the metaphysical status of spiritual creatures, believing their lack of materiality to be a sign of their power and worth.[113] But what Augustine knew was that creatures of spiritual substance, like the anthropomorphic idols that figuratively represented them, stood apart from the transcendent status of the divine.[114] Materiality was thus not defined by susceptibility to sense-perception: no late-antique metaphysician made that

[107] August. *Serm.* 81.9: *Roma enim quid est, nisi Romani?* Cf. *Serm. de excidio urbis* 6. On Cicero's definition of *civitas* and its influence on Augustine and Macrobius, see Ando 2000: 9–10; on Roman understandings of the significance of the destruction of cities, see Laurence 1996.

[108] August. *Serm.* 105.9.12, delivered 410–411 (Verbraken 1976: 79).

[109] The mutual recriminations that followed the sack of Rome were complicated by the temporary revival of cult immediately prior to the arrival of Alaric in Italy: Olympiodorus fr. 7.5 = Sozom. 9.6.1–5.

[110] *De civ. D.* 1.36 announces the topic of the next two books: *sed adhuc mihi quaedam dicenda sunt adversus eos, qui Romanae rei publicae clades in religionem nostram referunt, qua diis suis sacrificare prohibentur.*

[111] August. *De civ. D.* 3.18.

[112] Pietz 1985: 7.

[113] August. *Conf.* 10.42.67, on which see Ando 2001: 42.

[114] August. *En. Ps.* 113.2.3, 6.

mistake. Not only was all matter, whether created *ex nihilo* or pre-existent, not susceptible to sense-perception prior to its formation, but spiritual matter remained both beyond the corporeal and insistently the product of analogous creative acts.[115] Augustine, therefore, understood the theological presuppositions of a Symmachus or Julian; he simply displaced Victory and Cybele from their positions of priority and situated them closer to those idols that they were powerless to protect. Similarly, when Augustine examined pagan allegorical interpretations of myth and ritual, he saw "nothing that could not be referred to the temporal and earthly things and to a corporeal nature, or even to an invisible one—yet such a nature is still mutable, something that is in no way true of the true God."[116]

Augustine disposed of the evidences of history in a similar fashion. In the years after the fall of Rome he came to adopt a position closer to that of his fellow Christians, viewing Rome as one in a succession of divinely-ordained world empires, although he resisted assigning to it the eschatological significance that others did.[117] On the one hand, this chronological schema allowed him to situate Rome and its achievement in a much large historical panorama, before which its significance faded considerably; it became one among several possible representatives of the terrestrial city, each of which might be contrasted with the heavenly one, both in their excellence and in their destiny.[118] It also contributed to his larger effort to challenge the significance of providentialist historiographies of human communities. It is perhaps not surprising that he dismissed the task of recounting all the disasters of Roman history—attempting to narrate them would make him no more than a writer of history; but his rejection of Christian histories that saw God as favoring Christian emperors merely because they were Christian sprang from a like impulse and a similar metaphysics.[119]

Other Christians also contested the usefulness of historical arguments. What Symmachus called the *mos maiorum*, Prudentius called the *superstitio veterum avorum*.[120] According to him, *mos* itself was blind, passing from one depraved generation to another.[121] To arguments that privileged a purely Roman tradition, Prudentius contrasted Christian history and Christian revelation. On the one hand, he asked Symmachus why one should privilege ancient customs over new revelations, over faith in the truth, and over the rules of the correct religion; on the other, he insisted that historical arguments again favored his side.[122]

[115] Cf. Ando forthcoming.

[116] August. *De civ. D.* 7.27.

[117] Cf. Ando 2000: 343–351.

[118] See, e.g., *De civ. D.* 18.2 (Rome is one of *plurima regna terrarum, in quae terrenae utilitatis vel cupiditatis est divisa societas*) and 22 (Rome is *velut altera Babylon et velut prioris filia Babylonis*); see further MacCormack 1998: 202, 207–208.

[119] August. *De civ. D.* 3.18; 5.24–26.

[120] Prudent. *C. Symm.* 1.38–39; cf. 1.213; 2.368–369.

[121] Prudent. *C. Symm.* 1.244; cf. 2.295.

[122] Prudent. *C. Symm.* 2.269–276, 335–342.

With cult forbidden, how were pagans at Rome to assert the preeminence of their city? What new understanding of their way of life did they forge? The actions of Symmachus and Libanius were no longer possible; their arguments were suspect. Although some had construed the sack of Rome as the result of neglected rites, no text of their arguments survives.[123] To the victor, to Augustine, belonged the spoils.

If the public profession of paganism was no longer possible, one could still love Rome. Some two decades after the city was sacked, Macrobius Ambrosius Theodosius wrote his *Saturnalia*, a loving and passionate investigation of Rome's pagan past.[124] In the lead role he cast Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, a man whom the gods themselves chose for preeminence in matters of religion.[125] He alone, his interlocutors declared, knew the secret nature of the gods; he alone had the spirit to apprehend the divine and the talent to express what he knew; one praised his memory, another his learning, and all his piety.[126] Another participant was Nicomachus Flavianus, the senator most closely associated with the revolt of Eugenius, whose devotion to paganism profoundly shaped the understanding and representation of his cause, then and later.[127]

As a foil for Praetextatus, Macrobius introduced a Christian, Evangelus, who displayed a passion for sarcasm and a talent for ignorance in equal measure.[128] Macrobius exploited the moment of his arrival to discuss explicitly the political and legal implications of religious affiliation in that era. Looking around at the assembled company, Evangelus recognized something that united them and excluded him, and he asked whether they wished to continue without witnesses present. "If that is the case, as I think it is, I will depart rather than mix myself up in your secrets."[129] *Secrets* could mean many things, but it had long had as one of its meanings religious mystery; and in that meaning it had been employed by Symmachus and attracted the attention and ridicule of Ambrose and Prudentius.[130] Praetextatus rapidly revealed that he had understood Evangelus to be suggesting that their secret was a shared devotion to illicit religious practices. He immediately cited a maxim from Seneca, that one should talk among humans as though the gods were listening, and with the gods as though men were listening. He then added that their activities were in any event going to be legal: they had gathered in honor of the sacred holidays, the Saturnalia. "For if, during the performance of religious rites, no scruple forbids our cleansing a stream with sacred rites, while human and divine law permit us to dip our

[123] For a review of such limited evidence as does exist, see Barnes 1982: 71, 73–74.
[124] For the date and name, see Cameron 1966.
[125] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.17.1
[126] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.24.1.
[127] On Flavianus, his career, and its reception, see Hedrick 2000.
[128] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.1–2.
[129] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.4.
[130] Ambrose *Ep.* 18.8; Prudent. *C. Symm.* 2.87–103; cf. Ando 1996: 188–190.

sheep in healthy-giving water, why can respect not be paid to religious scruple by passing these holy days in the study of sacred texts?"[131] Macrobius thus drew attention to precisely what one might or might not do in the charged atmosphere of his own age, for such constraints as Praetextatus imagines in the text had not existed in his lifetime.[132] In 430 the locus of the holy for pagans had moved from ritual spaces in an urban landscape to the world of texts, and it is from and through texts that Macrobius would seek to define anew the centrality of Rome.

The participants began their conversation by seeking to know the origins of the Saturnalia. For an answer they turned to Praetextatus: as a pontifex, he was uniquely knowledgeable about all rites and could reveal their origins and causes. But Praetextatus hesitated:

> It is permissible for me to reveal the origin of the Saturnalia only insofar as it is discussed in literary myths or revealed to the vulgar by philosophers, but not as it relates to the hidden nature of divinity. For even during the rites themselves it is not permitted to reveal the hidden principles flowing from the fountain of truth, and anyone who pursues them is ordered to keep them within his conscience.[133]

What could be openly discussed was the text of Vergil, the sacred text to which Praetextatus alluded in his rebuke of Evangelus. The sacred knowledge it contained lay beyond arts of grammar, with its focus on the elucidation of the poem's words.

> But we, whom crude wisdom displeases, will not allow the innermost shrines of this sacred poem to remain hidden. Rather, by exploring the approach to its sacred and incommunicable meanings we will allow its hidden sanctuaries to be celebrated in cult by the learned.[134]

Yet one thing must have been clear to Macrobius in the early fifth century, as it is clear to us now. The sacred and incommunicable meanings inscribed in Vergil's poem in the Augustan age could not speak to his own in simple and unproblematic language. Jupiter's nod, like his promise of empire without end, now betokened information that lay beyond the exegetical powers of the grammarian: the passage of time, the rise of Christianity, and the deeds of Alaric had conspired at once to elevate and to obscure the meanings of that most holy text. If, as Servius knew, it had once been possible to read the *Aeneid* as a simple historical narrative, as an authoritative telling of the *gesta populi Romani*, in the political, religious, and discursive aftermath of 410 the *Aeneid* offered less narrative and more allegory, contained less history and more secrets, and provided not confirmation of one's

[131] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.8.

[132] Cf. Cameron 1999: 116–117, arguing that Servius' mid-fourth-century source described cults using verbs in the present tense, which Servius, writing perhaps around 420, attempted systematically to correct to imperfects.

[133] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.18.

[134] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.24.13 (quoted above, n. 21); cf. 1.17.2.

ambitions but sanctuary for one's dreams.[135] How then did Vergil replace the armaments of cult in debating the sacred topography of the empire?

In two ways. First, Macrobius, like Symmachus and Praetextatus, looked to ancient history. According to Furius Albinus, who was learned in ancient lore, "if we would be wise, we must always revere *vetustas*, antiquity."[136] But like Prudentius, Macrobius looked beyond the deeds of the Roman people and inquired of history prior even to the foundation of Rome. In doing so he constructed historical explanations that connected the secular past that he shared with all his contemporaries with a particular sacred history. Where Augustine looked past Rome to Babylon, where Prudentius looked past Romulus to Noah and to Adam, Macrobius looked to Saturn. When Janus ruled Italy from a city called Janiculum, he received Saturn and learned from him the arts of agriculture and in gratitude shared his kingdom with him. He also struck coins bearing the latter's portrait, and their joint reign was commemorated by Vergil through an allusion, if not in narrative.[137] Thus the very fact that the Saturnalia originated with Saturn showed "how very much older the festival is than the city of Rome."[138] Mythic history thus concretized the actions of the divine and located them within a material and historical landscape that remained visible and numinous even in the fifth century.[139] The consecration of particular loci by Roman priests thus did no more, and no less, than circumscribe, respect, and order the presence of the holy in the Roman landscape. For Macrobius, the materiality of the landscape did not divorce it from the divine; rather, it was for humans through ritually correct speech and action to understand and respect the divine in the world.

Macrobius was not alone in this historical project. Christian definitions of historical time had shifted the parameters of debate. The history of Rome in and of itself no longer sufficed to reveal the workings of providence and the rewards of piety. Christians citing the books of Moses trumpeted their claims to chronological priority, and these had to be met or refuted.[140] Fourth-century pagans chose to respond in kind. The *Origo gentis Romanorum* contained in the Calendar of 354 began with Picus, "the son of Saturn, who ruled for thirty-eight years in the Laurentine plain even to that point where Rome now stands. At that time there were no cities or villages, but people lived a nomadic existence."[141] The similarly-titled *Origo gentis Romanae* transmitted with Aurelius Victor's *Historia abbreviata* likewise aimed to reconstruct, through a reading of Vergil, the history

[135] Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.752. On the import of *historia* and the role of this concept in Servian hermeneutics, see Dietz 1995.

[136] Macrob. *Sat.* 3.14.2.

[137] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.19–24; cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.319 (and cf. *ad* 7.180).

[138] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.7.24.

[139] Cf. MacCormack 1990: 10–11.

[140] See, e.g., August. *Ep.* 102.8–15, where Augustine considers the sarcastic challenge posed by Porphyry Κατὰ Χριστιανῶν fr. 79: *ut dimittam, inquit, tempora ante Latium regnatum, ab ipso Latio quasi principium humani nominis sumamus. in ipso Latio ante Albam dii culti sunt* . . . .

[141] *Origo gentis Romanorum* in *Chron. Min.* 1.143.

of Italy from Janus and his alliance with Saturn down to Romulus and the foundation of Rome. That author showed a lack of scruple when he rehearsed the story of Hercules and Evander as told in the *libri pontificalium*, even though he confessed that "our Vergil was afraid to follow this version."[142] In the face of this industry, which stretched back to Ptolemy and Pliny, Hyginus and Cato, Servius occasionally threw up his hands. It was not possible to learn by diligent inquiry the origin of the city of Rome, for antiquity itself created uncertainty. And if clear reasoning was not possible about so great a city as Rome, there was little cause for wonder that there should be disagreement about others: it was antiquity itself that created the error.[143]

The second way in which Macrobius defended the primacy of Rome was by advocating the truth and efficacy of pontifical law. Earlier readers of Vergil, Servius among them, had found his poem littered with allusions to pontifical law and had argued that Vergil wished his readers to see Aeneas as a *pontifex maximus*, not least when, *ex persona Evandri*, he invited Aeneas to enter a house artfully sacralized by pontifical law before there were *pontifices*.[144] All Romans understood why Varro preceded his books on divine antiquities with those on human affairs; only the introduction of a Christian metaphysics, or post-Christian prejudice, could render his premises opaque.[145] Even in the expanded imperial community of the second century, Varro's understanding of the human and the sacred still obtained. While in Nicomedia, Pliny learned that its citizens wished to move an ancient temple of Magna Mater. He asked whether any particular *lex* governed such actions and discovered that the form of dedication practiced in that city was different than that practiced at Rome. He sought guidance from Trajan, who responded:

> You can transfer the temple without concern for religious scruple. . . . Nor let it trouble you that no law of dedication can be found, since the soil of an alien country is not susceptible to such dedication as is performed according to our law.[146]

When, therefore, Macrobius devoted his third book to showing that Vergil in every way observed proper scruple and diction in his religious terminology and

[142] *Origo gentis Romanae* 7.

[143] Serv. *ad Aen.* 7.678, but cf. *ad Aen.* 1.273: Servius there provides one version of the story of Amulius and Numitor, introducing it with the announcement that *historia hoc habet*. In the longer version of Servius auctus, the note continues with the allowance that *sed de origine et conditore urbis diversa a diversis traduntur*.

[144] Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.373 and cf. *ad* 1.373; 2.2; 3.607; 8.470, 552; 9.298. Servius identifies more than fifty passages in which Vergil demonstrates his awareness of, and strictly adheres to, the niceties of *ius pontificum* (*ad Aen.* 1.179; 2.119, 141, 351; 3.64; 4.103; 6.176; 8.363, 552) or *disciplina pontificalis* (*ad Aen.* 2.693; 4.577; 7.190; 9.298, 641; *ad Georg.* 1.270) or *ritus pontificalis* (*ad Aen.* 4.262; 6.366; 8.275; 10.228; *ad Ecl.* 5.20; *ad Georg.* 1.21, 31, 268, 270, 344; 2.162) or even uses properly some *verbum pontificale* (*ad Aen.* 1.519; 2.148; 3.35; 12.170, 603; *ad Ecl.* 5.66; *ad Georg.* 1.21; 3.16, 17).

[145] August. *De civ. D.* 6.3–4; cf. Momigliano 1987: 62–65; Ando 2002: Section III.

[146] Plin. *Ep.* 10.49–50.

descriptions of rites, he implicitly tied Vergil to a particular landscape, to be sure. But insofar as Vergil's text was sacred and could reveal sacred and incommunicable truths, Vergil's propriety in matters of Roman pontifical law necessarily privileged Vergil's landscape. The nature and consequences of these assumptions emerge with particular clarity when Macrobius discusses the history of *evocatio*, the rite by which Romans called forth gods from objects they wished to move or cities they wished to conquer.[147] The rite presumed that every city was under the protection of some deity, a sentiment Macrobius shared with Symmachus, as with virtually all pagans in antiquity:

> Everyone has their own customs, their own religious practices; the divine mind has assigned to cities different religious practices to protect them. As souls are given to babies, so to nations are distributed *genii* to watch over their destinies.[148]

It was for this reason, Macrobius argued, that the Romans were careful not to reveal their tutelary deity or the secret name of Rome; what is more, the formulae for the rite, like the name of Rome, remained the special preserve of the pontiffs.[149]

If Praetextatus knew the secret name of Rome, he did not reveal it. Legend had it that one Valerius Soranus did just that, and he consequently came to a nasty end.[150] The contemporary relevance of this piece of antiquarian lore was clear even before 410, and not just to readers of Vergil. Claudian lamented in his *Gothic War* that the enemy had been allowed to escape, when he might have been trapped and destroyed in central Italy:

> But the destruction of the name and race of the Getae would have been too dearly bought. Let Jupiter on high instead prevent barbarians eyes from profaning with their sight the shrines of Numa or temples of Quirinus or learning the secret of this great empire (*arcanum tanti regni*).[151]

In 417 the Gallic pagan Rutilius Namatianus felt sure that Claudian's fear had been realized, through the treachery of Stilicho:

> So much more bitter is the crime of dread Stilicho, because he betrayed the secret of the empire (*proditor arcani quod fuit imperii*) .... He did more than betray Rome to the depredations of Gothic arms: he first burnt the books containing the Sibyl's aid ... and

[147] Macrob. *Sat.* 3.9.2; Basanoff 1947: esp. 25–44, a fascinating essay but unreliable on pontifical law; Ando 2002: Section IV.

[148] Symm. *Rel.* 3.8; see also MacCormack 1975.

[149] Plin. *NH* 28.18; cf. 3.65; Macrob. *Sat.* 1.10.7–8, on Angerona, who is represented *ore obligato*. On Angerona's candidacy as that god or goddess *in cuius tutela urbs Roma est*, see Wissowa 1912: 241, 338.

[150] Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 62 (= *Mor.* 278f); Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.277. On Valerius Soranus, see Cichorius 1906; Alfonsi 1948; 1949.

[151] Claud. *De bello Gothico* 99–103; Cracco Ruggini (1968) places the polemic against Stilicho in a much wider rhetorical and political context.

wished to cast headlong the fateful guarantors of our eternal rule (*aeterni fatalia pignora regni*).[152]

"There were seven *pignora* that maintained the Roman empire: the stone of the Mother of the Gods, the terracotta chariot of the Veientines, the ashes of Orestes, the sceptre of Priam, the veil of Iliona, the *palladium*, and the *ancilia*."[153] The term *pignus* defies translation; the only English equivalent of any accuracy is palladium, whose adoption here would cause confusion and whose usage would in any event beg several questions. I adopt "guarantor" rather than "guarantee" or "surety" or "pledge" because the *pignora* did not all function merely as material reminders or tokens, although some did.[154] Rather, the material objects themselves possessed power and exercised agency. Pliny the Elder compared the terracotta chariot of the Veientines to a human head discovered on the Tarpeian Hill during the digging of a foundation for a new shrine. Not knowing what the head portended but recognizing it as an omen, the Romans sent envoys to Olenus of Cales, the most famous seer (*vates*) in Etruria. He tried to transfer the blessing to his own people by tracing the outline of a temple and saying, "Is this what you say, Romans? 'Here will be the temple of Jupiter, best and greatest? Here we found the head?'" Warned by the seer's son that Olenus would attempt some trick, the Romans responded, "Not exactly here; we say that the head was found in Rome."[155] The *Annals* are in complete and total agreement, concluded Pliny, that the destiny of Rome would have been transferred to Etruria but for this astute reply.

Pliny told the story to illustrate the power of words and songs, and his telling lays significant stress on the power of speech acts. Had the Romans adopted the wording of Olenus, the power of the head would have passed to Etruria, quite in spite of the truth or falsity of their utterance. But the tale of the head is not one of divine perversity either: the Romans received no ambiguous oracle that tested their resolve or cleverness. Rather, the head was just a head, and yet it carried "some greater and more divine power," to use Julian's description of "the stone of the Mother of the Gods." Julian's misgivings about the status of the stone were typical. Cybele's *baitulos*, her black meteorite, had long tested the boundaries of traditional theories of representation. The earliest complete narratives of her transfer to Rome both waver uncomfortably between viewing the stone as an image of the goddess and as the goddess herself. Livy initially allowed that the Romans brought back from Pessinus "the sacred stone which the natives say is the mother of the gods," but his narrative of her arrival in Rome always speaks of her and not of the rock: Cornelius Scipio met *her* at Ostia; he carried *her* to shore and gave to the first women of Rome; the women passed *her* from hand to

[152] Rut. Namat. *De reditu* 2.41–42, 51–52, 55–56.

[153] Serv. *ad Aen.* 7.188.

[154] According to Ovid, for example, Jupiter gave the *ancile* to Numa after promising *imperii pignora certa* (*Fasti* 3.345–346). "Mindful that the fate of the empire was bound up in it" (*memor imperii sortem consistere in illo*), Numa arranged for the shield to be copied; hence the plural *ancilia* (*Fasti* 3.379–382).

[155] Plin. *NH* 28.15–16.

hand; they installed the *goddess* in temple of Victory on the Palatine.[156] Ovid only once alludes to the stone's ambiguous metaphysical status by describing it as "the image of the goddess"; otherwise he refers dozens of times to it as the goddess. It was the goddess herself who spoke from her innermost shrine (*et sic est adytis diva locuta suis*): "I wanted to be sought out; let there be no delay; let me go, as I am willing. Rome is a worthy place, to which every god might go."[157]

If the gods might go to Rome, there they might stay. We are returned to the sacred topographies of Libanius and Symmachus, and to the theological problems posed by Symmachus' equation of the altar and statue of Victory with the *praesentia numinis*, the presence of the god. What we must not do, in attempting to unravel the philosophical underpinnings of their arguments, is evade a profound ontological and metaphysical crux by labelling it one of representation. Symmachus did not employ *Victoria* in metonymy for her statue, nor did he simply believe that the statue and altar functioned allegorically to represent a goddess whom he could not see.[158] Again, the problem lies not with the materiality of the Tarpeian head, or Great Mother's stone, or Victory's altar, nor again with the representational capacity of their matter, but with the understanding of matter and representation that underlay ancient religiosity. Like those Romans who knew without being told that the Tarpeian head was not just a head, we must confess abiding ignorance before that shield on the Capitol that said, "to the Genius of the city of Rome, whether it be male or female." Servius compared this inscription to the opening formula of a prayer of the pontiffs, "Jupiter Optimus Maximus, or by whatever other name you wish to be called."[159] It may be that the shield was just a gift and that its inscription signified nothing more than ignorance of a god's name, in thanksgiving for a benefaction of unknown agency.[160] It could also be that the shield fell from heaven, like an *ancile* or *baitulos*, and so stood for, and also had once been, the Genius of the city. The power of words and objects existed in complex symbiosis: just as the pontiffs took care that no one should name the gods of Rome, lest they be spirited away through acts of augury, so the presence of sacred objects (*sacra*) made any site into a *sacrarium*, and the religious scruple attached to such a site could be removed only by "calling forth" (*evocare*) the *sacra*.[161]

Macrobius did allow Praetextatus to quote the formulae for an *evocatio* and a *devotio*, which he claims to have found in the fifth book of the *Res Reconditae* of Sammonicus Serenus, who was himself quoting one Furius.[162] It is at least possible that this citation is genuine and the prayer authentic, and that the

[156] Livy 29.11.7, 14.11–14.

[157] Ovid *Fasti* 4.179–348; for the *imago*, see 4.317–318; for her speech, see 4.268–270.

[158] Ando 2001, 2002: Sections II and IV, and forthcoming.

[159] Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.351.

[160] Compare *ILS* 4015: *sei deo sei deivae sac. C. Sextius C. f. Calvinus pr. de senati sententia restituit.* Cf. Basanoff 1947: 25–30, 89–90; Scheid 1999: 198–200; Ando 2002: Section IV.

[161] Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.351, on *exauguratio*; cf. Ulpian at *Dig.* 1.8.9.*pr.*-2.

[162] Macrob. *Sat.* 3.9.6–11.

Furius of Sammonicus Serenus should be identified with Lucius Furius Philus, consul 136 B.C. and friend of Scipio Aemilianus, who performed these rituals at Carthage.[163] What we can say for certain is that Servius in the late fourth century firmly believed that Juno had been summoned forth from Carthage and her rites transferred to Rome during the third Punic war, and Servius knew the same formula for this rite as did Macrobius.[164] Macrobius closed this chapter by listing cities whose gods had been summoned forth to Rome, whose identity he had discovered *in antiquitatibus*. His list includes several towns in Italy, Carthage, and Corinth, and closes with a flourish: "and many other armies and cities of the Gauls, Spaniards, Africans, Moors, and the other races of whom the ancient annals speak."[165] Accurate or not, the argument constitutes a stunning validation, from the perspective of pontifical law, of Rome as center, as the *templum totius mundi*.

Macrobius was not the first to construct a theological argument for the centrality of Rome, nor the first to see in it a defense for Roman imperialism. In fact, we know this tradition best from its Christian opponents. Minucius Felix, for example, criticized Roman polytheism for its lack of discrimination, though he allowed Caecilius, the advocate of paganism, to defend Roman piety as best he could. Every city has its own rites and local gods, Caecilius began, but the Romans worship them all. As their power and authority embraced the circuit of the earth, they continued to practice their particular form of piety. Even when besieged on the soil of the Capitol they worshipped gods whom others might have spurned as angry.

> They go forth armed with the performance of religious scruple, while in captured cities, their victory still raging, they worship the conquered gods of their enemies, invite them to Rome as their guests, and make them their own. As they have taken up the rites of all people, so they have earned their empire.[166]

Prudentius gave voice to the Christian critique of this tradition in its developed form: Roman piety may have created "a single home for every earth-born divinity," but the tradition began with "such *numina* as fled the flames of Troy."[167]

On this question, namely, what it meant that the gods of Troy had been defeated and fled to Rome, there could be no satisfactory dialogue. Fortunately, the differing ethical and theological presuppositions of the participants in these

[163] Thus Fraenkel 1957: 238, arguing that App. *Pun.* 639 describes a *devotio*, tacitly assuming (no doubt correctly) that a *devotio* presumed a successful *evocatio*. Wissowa (1912: 374, 384) views the *evocatio* of Carthaginian Juno as an invention of the second century A.D., both because App. *Pun.* 639 makes no mention of an *evocatio* and because Cicero's vague language at *Leg. agr.* 1.5 and 2.51 is difficult to understand if Juno of Carthage had in fact been transferred and was at that time worshipped at Rome.

[164] Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.244 and 12.841; cf. Fraenkel 1957: 237–238.

[165] Macrob. *Sat.* 3.9.13.

[166] Minucius Felix 6.1–2.

[167] Prudent. *C. Symm.* 1.189–196.

debates lie outside my concerns.[168] What is worth noting is that the gods of Troy did not die in 410. They survived the flames of Troy and the sack of Rome and retained their potency and their function in the new Christian capital of the eastern Roman empire. It is to their fate in that city that I now turn.

IV. THE PASSING OF THE PALLADIUM

The residency of these gods in Constantinople might well surprise. The citizens of that city should not have needed them to assert its priority over Rome. Constantine and Eusebius had supplied them with a foundation on which to base their claims, one, moreover, that supplied internal justification for denying any legitimacy to the arguments of Macrobius. If it was possible for westerners like Prudentius and Augustine to privilege recent revelations and thus to denigrate Rome and its *mos maiorum*, it should have been easy for easterners to do the same.

But old habits die hard. The rivalry of cities had a distinguished history in Greek and Roman culture and, like diplomatic negotiations, it had long been conducted by continual reference to each city's legendary past.[169] Themistius, for example, urged that Constantine's act of refoundation, his ἀνανέωσις, had severed the Constantinopolitan present from the site's Byzantine past. He, therefore, told his fellow citizens that their metropolis "was not ancient Megara, whence sprang the people who first settled on the Bosporus, but that city that rules over others and rules together with ours." In so doing he accepted too uncritically Constantine's propaganda without considering its ideological repercussions.[170] In the ancient Mediterranean, a city without a past was no city at all.

What is more, by the middle of the fifth century, Rome was no longer a pagan city, to be dismissed as the dying relic of an earlier age. The heirs of Theodosius in the fifth century could not claim to have converted the Senate of Rome without weakening what had been fourth-century Constantinople's salient claim to primacy. Nor did Christianity itself provide any assistance. Christian understandings of God's immanence in this world did not allow for any obvious mechanism for sacralizing particular spaces or negotiating the topography of cities and empires.[171] By identifying within Christ a human nature, certain Christologies accepted through Christ a form of immanence that sacralized his world and so encouraged pilgrimage to Palestine, but Christ did not visit Rome or Byzantium. Rufinus might have believed that Constantine used the nails from the true cross to render his helmet impermeable, but there is no evidence that Constantine did, in

[168] Cf. MacCormack 1998: 156–174.

[169] In addition to the bibliography cited at Ando 2000: 55, see Curty 1995; Ando 1999: 10–11; Jones 1999.

[170] Them. *Or.* 23.298a–b. For the term "refoundation" or "renewal," see *Chron. Pasc.* (Bonn 528); Malalas 13.7.

[171] MacCormack 1990: 12–14.

fact, transfer relics from Jerusalem to Constantinople. If anything, Constantine's endowments in Jerusalem made it the capital of Christianity.[172]

As we turn to Constantinople and its conceits in the middle of the fifth century, let me begin with a caution. Byzantine historians, travel writers, and theologians articulated their claims to preeminence primarily by retelling the foundation narrative of their city. It might be possible on the basis of their accounts to determine, with greater or lesser certainty, what Constantine actually did on 13 November 324 or 11 May 330 or sometime in 328 or 334 or whenever he did whatever it is he did.[173] But that is not my concern here. My focus is on the role these narratives played at the moment of their telling, and the bases on which they sacralized Constantinople within the geography of the empire.[174]

First, by the end of the fifth century there was clearly a strong tradition that Constantine transferred to his new city the gods of Rome and the guarantors of its empire. One of these was the Palladium. The Palladium resembled the corpse of Iphigeneia: just about every city in Greece claimed to have it.[175] Indeed, insofar as Troy was supposed to have lost the Palladium, Rome had perhaps the least credible claim to possess it. Nevertheless, Romans had insisted at least since the age of Augustus that the Palladium was housed in the temple of Vesta, its existence becoming attached in the literary tradition to the actions of Lucius Caecilius Metellus, who saved the contents of that temple when it caught fire in 241 B.C.[176] Indeed, it is tempting to speculate that the Romans discovered their possession of it when the temple of Vesta burned in 14 B.C.[177] Its existence in Rome was known to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who numbered the Palladium among the gods brought by Aeneas to Italy that could not by law be viewed by normal citizens.[178] Although Ovid did not know how the statue came to Rome, he understood its import, assigning to Apollo the admonition that Ilus and his

[172] The nails of the true cross: Rufinus *Hist. Eccl.* 10.8. Constantine's endowments in the holy land: Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.25–43; cf. Dagron 1984b: 388–389.

[173] 11 May 330 remains the most securely attested date: *Consularia Constantinopolitana sub anno* 330; Malalas 13.7–8; Hsch. *Patria* 42. Malalas may have extrapolated from the date on which the city's anniversary was celebrated in his day, but the date of the festival surely originated somewhere. 13 November 324: Them. *Or.* 4.58b. Starting work in 328, with dedication in 330: *Chron. Pasc.* (Bonn 528 and 529–530) and Theophanes s.a. 5821 (p. 28, lines 23–29 de Boor). Cf. *Cod. Theod.* 2.8.19.2, declaring the *natales* of Rome and Constantinople to be holidays; cf. Sozom. 5.17.8; Cassiod. *Hist. trip.* 6.30. The literature on the foundation narratives is large. Important contributions include Brehier 1915; Lathoud 1924 and 1925; Frolow 1944; Alföldi 1947; Janin 1964: esp. 21–31; Dagron 1984b: esp. 13–47; Cracco Ruggini 1980; Mango 1985.

[174] Dagron 1984a is essential to any understanding of the historiographic tradition surrounding the foundation of Constantinople.

[175] See Dobschütz 1899: vol. 2; Lippold 1949: 171–187; Kjellberg 1916: 1589–98; Burkert 1970: 360; Dubourdieu 1989: 460–467.

[176] Ovid *Fasti* 6.419–436; Val. Max. 1.4.5.

[177] Dio 54.24.2; cf. Tac. Ann. 15.14.1 on the great fire, mentioning the *delubrum Vestae* along with the *penates*. Narrating the great fire under Commodus, Herodian is certain of his facts: his generation was the first to see the Palladium since it had reached Rome (1.14.4–5; 5.6.3).

[178] Dion. Hal. *Ant. rom.* 1.67–69, esp. 1.69.4; 2.66.3–5.

descendents should "keep the heavenly goddess, and you will save your city: she transfers with herself the seat of empire."[179] Late in the fourth century, Servius, like Dionysius and Ovid before him, knew that the fate of the Palladium was contested, and yet he firmly believed that Vergil wrote as though Aeneas brought the Palladium with him. It was after its arrival in Rome, he observed, that Mamurius had made multiple copies of the original, to prevent its falling into enemy hands.[180]

In the Byzantine tradition of the sixth century, Constantine brought the Palladium from Rome and buried it beneath his porphyry column.[181] Advocates of Rome and Constantinople continued to contest the issue. Procopius of Caesarea tells us that the Romans of his day continued to show visitors an image of the statue, chiselled on stone and set in the temple of Fortune, where it lay before a bronze statue of Athena. And, in his words, the image did not resemble any Greek statue of Athena, but looked like the work of ancient Egyptians. Without taking a stand on the issue, he observed that Constantinopolitans believed that Constantine removed the statue to his city and buried it in his forum.[182] In the same forum stood the Milion, Constantinople's analog for the Golden Milestone at Rome. The latter had been erected by Augustus to mark the point at which all the roads of Italy and the empire converged; it declared Rome the center of the *orbis terrarum*.[183] Constantinopolitan tradition naturally and probably correctly identified Constantine as the source of its Milion. It must have displayed a dedicatory text and was in any event grouped with portraits of Constantine, Helena, and the Tyche of the city. Like Constantine's other attempts to reproduce in his city the ideological and material markers of a capital, this one required no explication.[184]

A similar tradition existed about the Genius or Tyche of the city.[185] Constantinopolitans agreed that Constantine established a temple for the Tyche of his city and that he named her Anthousa, which was clearly intended to be a translation of *Flora* and so understood by John Lydus.[186] They disagreed on the origin of her cult statue: almost everyone, including Zosimus, John Lydus, and ps.-Kodinos, believed that Constantine had taken it from Rome, while Hesychius of Miletus insisted that Constantine had reused a cult statue of Rhea from an

[179] Ovid *Fasti* 6.419–436, at 427–428 (tr. after Frazer).

[180] Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.162–179, esp. *ad* 166 and 178–179.

[181] Malalas 13.7; *Chron. Pasch.* (Bonn 528), closing its almost identical narrative with the qualification ὥς τινες λέγουσι τῶν Βυζαντίων ἐκ διαδοχῆς ἀκούσαντες; *Patria* 2.45 (Preger 1901: 174); cf. Hsch. *Patria* 41, writing of δύο τῆς Παλλάδος ἱδρύματα.

[182] Procop. *Goth.* 1.15.8–14, esp. 13; see also *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai* 23.

[183] Dio 54.8.4; Plut. *Galb.* 24.4. For further sources and a discussion of the monument's ideological significance, see Ando 2000: 151–152.

[184] *Parastaseis* 34, 38; Suda s.v. Μιλιον (M 1065); *Patria* 2.42 (Preger 1901: 172–173); cf. Janin 1964: 51, 91–92, and esp. 103–104; Dagron 1984b: 36.

[185] See Lathoud 1925: esp. 180–187; Dagron 1984b: 43–45.

[186] See, e.g., Malalas 13.7; *Chron. Pasch.* (Bonn 528); Lydus *Mens.* 4.75: Ῥώμη Φλῶρα καὶ ἡ Κωνσταντίνου πόλις ἤγουν Ἄνθουσα.

earlier Byzantine precinct.[187] The cult and temple of the city's Tyche was certainly well-established in the fourth-century, since we are told that Julian sacrificed to her in the basilica where she lived.[188] And by the end of the fourth century that temple required restoration, work financed by one Theodorus, prefect of the city. His generosity is celebrated by an epigram in the Palatine anthology, which insists that his action honored Tyche and, by extension, "Rome of the golden shield."[189] It is very tempting to connect this name to the precious information provided by Servius on the Genius of Rome:

Before the sack of a city, the *numina* are called forth from the enemy out of respect for religious scruple. That is why the Romans wish to keep secret the identity of that god in whose protection lies the city of Rome. Thus pontifical law forbids anyone from naming the *Dii Romani*, lest anyone should augur them away. And there is on the Capitol a consecrated shield, on which the inscription runs, "To the Genius of the City of Rome, whether male or female." And for the same reason, the *pontifices* pray, "Jupiter Optimus Maximus, or by whatever other name you wish to be called."[190]

In spite of pontifical law and the secrecy it enjoined, John Lydus knew or thought he knew the laws and traditions about the names of Rome. Describing the foundation of Rome, he says that Romulus took up a holy war-trumpet—which the Romans, he observed, call a *lituus*—and called out the name of Rome, completing a sacred rite:

For that city has three names, its ritual name, its sacred name, and its political name. The ritual name in Greek is Eros, as if everything concerning the city lay in the power of the god Eros, wherefore the poet, writing allegorically in his Bucolics, calls the city Amaryllis (Lydus *Mens.* 4.73).

The poet, of course, is Vergil. About the same passage in the *Eclogues* Servius wrote:

Although he had left Galatea behind, he was detained by love of Amaryllis. Here the poet speaks allegorically, saying, after I left Mantua behind I took myself to Rome: for he wants Galatea to be Mantua, and Rome to be Amaryllis.[191]

Lydus continued:

The sacred name is Flora, in Greek *Anthousa*, whence comes the festival Anthesteria. The political name is Rome. The ritual name was known to all and used openly, but the sacred one was entrusted only to the *pontifices* for the completion of sacred rites.[192]

[187] Zos. 2.31.1–3; Lydus *Mag.* 2.10 (cf. 2.12); ps.-Codinus *Patria* 3.131 (Preger 1901: 257); Hsch. *Patria* 15.

[188] Socrates 3.11.4.

[189] *Anth. Pal.* 9.697.

[190] Serv. *ad Aen.* 2.351.

[191] Servius *ad Ecl.* 1.29.

[192] Lydus *Mens.* 4.73, on which see Wittig 1910: 44–48.

As Servius might have told John, according to an ancient custom known to Vergil, the Romans built temples only after the proposed site had been freed from religious scruple and blessed by the augurs, then consecrated by the *pontifices*; then, at last, the *sacra* were dedicated on and to the site.[193]

We know from several sources that the Tyche of Constantinople was brought forth every year on the birthday of the city, paraded through the Hippodrome, and acclaimed with hymns, a celebration that, according to Byzantine tradition, had been started by Constantine as a ritual reenactment of the founding of the city.[194] John Malalas even explained how Constantine transferred these cult images away from Rome: he insisted that Constantine undertook a formal procession from Rome to Constantinople to dedicate his city in the spring of 330.[195] And according to Sozomen, Constantine established a council in his new city, which he called a Senate, and he arranged for his new city to celebrate "all those honors and festivals that were customary among the old Romans, since he wanted to show that the city which bore his name was, in every respect, equivalent to the Rome that is in Italy; nor did he fail in this desire."[196]

By the middle of the sixth century John Lydus could identify the moment and the ritual at which and through which Constantine endowed his city with its culture and identity.

> As the monad is an archetypal form, and 'one' is an example of a monad, in just such a relationship was our blessed city in its first days considered in its relations with that Rome that used to surpass it in every way. For this reason Constantine never called it "New Rome" prior to its consecration (κωνσεκράτιω), for that is what the Romans call its dedication (ἀποθέωσις).[197]

But Lydus is simply the most verbally precise in a long succession of historians who wrote in similar terms. As Sozomen's beliefs about the festival calendar of Constantinople make clear, by the middle of the fifth century many had began to understand Constantine's foundational act in terms derived from pontifical law. It was, after all, Praetextatus the pontiff who in the *Saturnalia* explicated the organization and history of the calendar. According to his exposition, histories of the calendar ultimately relied on the "books of the pontiffs," and

[193] Serv. *ad Aen.* 1.446; *ad Georg.* 3.16, 17.

[194] Malalas 13.8; cf. *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai* 5, 38, 56.

[195] Malalas 13.7: καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ βασιλείας ἀνεκαινίσθη τό ποτε Βυζάντιον ἐπὶ τῆς ὑπατείας Γαλλιανοῦ καὶ Συμμάχου, τοῦ αὐτοῦ δὲ βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου ποιήσαντος πρόκεσσον ἐπὶ πολὺν χρόνον, ἀπὸ Ῥώμης ἐλθόντος ἐν τῷ Βυζαντίῳ. Lydus may allude this this story at *Mag.* 2.10: Κωνστανίνου γὰρ μετὰ τῆς Τύχης τὴν Ῥώμην ἀπολιπόντος .... No dictionary adequately deals with the constitutional and ceremonial significance of the imperial *processus*, and *LSJ* omits its Greek derivative altogether; see instead Alföldi 1970: 95–97, 146–148. Had Constantine made such a triumphal march, the significance of his direction would have been stunning: in the fourth century, imperial arrivals and imperial triumphs presupposed Rome: see MacCormack 1981: 33–55.

[196] Sozom. 2.3.6.

[197] Lydus *Mag.* 2.30; see also Cracco Ruggini 1980: 601–602.

supervision of the calendar had originally been the responsibility of a *pontifex minor*.[198]

But the observance of pontifical law in the foundation of Constantinople grew more strict as the legends about that event developed. As early as 357, Themistius seems to have believed that Constantine traced the boundaries of his new city on the same day that he honored his son with the purple.[199] By the middle of the next century Philostorgius could claim that Constantine had performed a *limitatio*, tracing the boundaries of his new city with a spear.[200] How did Constantine know the proper formulae with which to perform these acts? According to John Lydus, he brought a young *pontifex* from Rome to supervise the ritual.[201] John digressed momentarily to explain to his readers that the *pontifices*, whom he calls οἱ Ῥωμαίων ἱεροφάνται, were a college of priests that supervised the cult of the Palladium. He also observed that the Greek word for *pontifex* was γεφυριστής, a translation based on etymology that can also be found in Servius.[202] Whom did John cite as his authorities on pontifical law and religious affairs? The sources of Macrobius: Ateius Capito, Marcus Messalla, Gavius Bassus, Q. Lutatius Catulus,

[198] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.12.21, 15.9.

[199] Them. *Or.* 4.58b.

[200] Philostorgius 2.9.

[201] Lydus *Mens.* 4.2.

[202] Servius *ad Aen.* 2.166: *dicunt sane alii, unum simulacrum caelo lapsum, quod nubibus advectum et in ponte depositum, apud Athenas tantum fuisse, unde et* γεφυριστὴς *dicta est. ex qua etiam causa pontifices nuncupatos volunt: quamvis quidam pontifices a ponte sublicio, qui primus Tybri impositus est, appellatos tradunt, sicut Saliorum carmina loquuntur.* Lydus *Mens.* 4.15: ὅτι ποντίφικες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις ἐλέγοντο, καθάπερ ἐν Ἀθήναις τὸ πάλαι γεφυραῖοι πάντες οἱ περὶ τὰ πάτρια ἱερὰ ἐξηγηταὶ καὶ ἀρχιερεῖς–διοικηταὶ τῶν ὅλων ὠνομάζοντο, διὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς γεφύρας τοῦ Σπερχειοῦ ποταμοῦ ἱερατεύειν τῷ Παλλαδίῳ. πόντην γὰρ οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι τὴν γέφυραν καλοῦσι, καὶ ποντίλια τὰ γεφυραῖα ξύλα. ὅθεν καὶ πραξιεργίαι δῆθεν ἐκαλοῦντο ὡσανεὶ τελεσταί. τοῦτο γὰρ σημαίνει τὸ πόντιφεξ ἀπὸ τοῦ δυνατοῦ ἐν ἔργοις. See also Lydus *Mag.* 2.4, writing of Augustus: ἐχρῆτο δὲ στολῇ ἐπ' εἰρήνης, οἷα πόντιφεξ, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀρχιερεὺς γεφυραῖος, πορφυρᾷ, ποδήρει, ἱερατικῇ, χρυσῷ λελογχωμένῃ ...; cf. Varro *Ling.* 5.83 and Plut. *Numa* 9.1–3. Plutarch cites different etymologies. Some derive *pontifex* from *potens*; other say that the name was assigned because the priests were charged to perform only such sacred duties as were possible (ἱερουργίας ... δυνατάς, which Plutarch has already translated πότνης). But most writers, he adds, teach a laughable etymology: ὡς οὐδὲν ἀλλ' ἢ γεφυροποιοὺς τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐπικληθέντας ἀπὸ τῶν ποιουμένων περὶ τὴν γέφυραν ἱερῶν, ἁγιωτάτων καὶ παλαιοτάτων ὄντων· πόντεμ γὰρ οἱ Λατῖνοι τὴν γέφυραν ὀνομάζουσιν. In official documents of the imperial era *pontifex* was either transliterated or, most commonly, rendered as ἀρχιερεύς (Magie 1905: 21, 39–40, 64, 142; more briefly, Mason 1974: 77), although literary usage varied somewhat more widely (Magie 1905: 32, 142–143). Further etymologies common to Servius and Lydus include that of Quirinus (*ad Aen.* 1.292; *Mag.* 1.5); they cite the same passage of Asper on *sella* (*ad Aen.* 7.169; *Mag.* 1.7); they similarly distinguish between *clipei* and *scuta* (*ad Aen.* 9.368; *Mag.* 1.9); and they offer the same history and etymology for *ancile* (*ad Aen.* 8.664; *Mag.* 1.11); many more such passages could be cited. On the sources of Lydus, see Reifferscheid 1860: 466–467; Schultze 1862: 6–39, esp. 20–28; Wittig 1910. Each of those scholars stands back from identifying any given author or authors as sources for Lydus. Reifferscheid is certainly correct that Suetonius received an enthusiastic reception in Byzantium; the number of correspondences between Servius, Macrobius, and Lydus is astonishing.

Serenus Sammonicus, M. Terentius Varro, Cornelius Labeo, Tarquitius Priscus, a certain Cincius who wrote on the calendar, and one Xenon, author of books on Italy.[203] And who, according to John, was the *pontifex* who aided Constantine? Vettius Agorius Praetextatus.[204]

Easterners and westerners continued for centuries to debate the merits of the old and new Rome, but the later tradition lies beyond the scope of this essay. When the Christians did discover a Christian method for sacralizing Constantinople, they merely found their own palladia, among which the icon of Camuliana held pride of place, and insofar as their palladia were not made by human hands, they shared with the stone of the Great Mother a power and agency that transcended their materiality.[205] This much is clear, that the actions of Constantine and the preservation of specifically Roman customs remained central to this debate.[206] Hesychius of Miletus went so far as to rewrite early Byzantine history on analogy with Rome: Byzas had a half-brother named Strombos, with whom he quarreled at the foundation of his city; and Byzantium had been saved from the siege of Philip by the barking of dogs.[207] But in this endeavor he departed from common practice, which followed fourth-century authors in rejecting and ultimately erasing the city's Byzantine past.[208]

Here I suspect that the arrival of a new Tyche signalled a break with the past more severe than we can easily comprehend. Some knew that Byzantium must have had a Tyche before the arrival of Anthousa. Indeed, her name was Keroe.[209] But in the Byzantine imagination, Anthousa brought with her new customs, new holidays, a new identity, and a new history. The fifth-century appropriation of the Palladium and Genius of Rome was masterful, on several levels, for even as Pallas and Flora endowed their new home with a sacred identity and mythological past, their departure deprived Rome of those same things.[210] And who in the middle of the fifth century could contest that Constantinople and not Rome had the true

[203] Lydus *Mens.* 4.1–2, citing Μεσσαλᾶς, Βάρρων, Γάβιος Βάσσος, and Λουτάτιος. M. Messalla: Macrobius *Sat.* 1.9.14. Macrobius and Lydus cite Varro continually. Gavius Bassus: Macrob. *Sat.* 1.9.13; 3.6.17, 18.2–3. Macrobius does not quote Q. Lutatius Catulus but does list him as a pontiff: *Sat.* 3.13.11. Ateius Capito: Macrob. 1.14.5; 3.10.3, 7; 7.13.11; Lydus *Mens.* 1.37, fr. 6. Serenus Sammonicus: Macrob. 3.9.3, 16.6, 17.4; Lydus *Mag.* 3.32. Cornelius Labeo: Macrob. 1.16.29; Lydus *Mens.* 3.10; 4.1, 25. Cincius: Macrob. 1.12.12–13, 18, 20; Lydus *Mens.* 4.144. Xenon: Macrob. 1.9.3; Lydus *Mens.* 1.2.

[204] Lydus *Mens.* 4.2: ὁ δὲ Πραιτέξτατος ὁ ἱεροφάντης, ὁ Σωπάτρῳ τε τῷ τελεστῇ καὶ Κωνσταντίνῳ τῷ αὐτοκράτωρι συλλαβὼν ἐπὶ τῷ πολισμῷ τῆς εὐδαίμονος ταύτης πόλεως ....

[205] See Frolow 1944; cf. Kitzinger 1954: 111–115; Baynes 1955: 240–260; MacCormack 1975: 148–149; Cameron 1978; Geary 1986; MacCormack 1990: 17–18, 28.

[206] See, for example, Liudprand *Relatio de legatione* 50–51.

[207] Hsch. *Patria* 19–20; on his work see Dagron 1984a: 23–29.

[208] Cf. Them. *Or.* 14.182a.

[209] Malalas 13.7.

[210] The *Constitutum Constantini* was, of course, equally brilliant in its appropriation of Constantine. Who better to undermine the legitimacy of his own foundation? See *Constitutum* 12: *atque decernentes sancimus, ut principatum teneat tam super quattuor paecipuas sedes Antiochenam, Alexandrinam,*

Palladium or that Constantine had brought it to the east in triumph? Whoever would admit its efficacy had to allow that it could not have been in Rome in 410.

V. THE POLITICS OF ANTIQUARIANISM

The pontifical lore and ancient artifacts through and with which Romans and Constantinopolitans contested the sacred topography of the Roman empire achieved a new importance in the fifth century, when neither city could claim preeminence for its episcopate or its relics. Their turn to antiquarianism was, under the circumstances, anything but nostalgic, interesting only to bookish pedants like John Lydus. Not only did Macrobius and Malalas write for their contemporaries about issues of contemporary importance, but their particular arguments appealed to their audiences, indeed, derived their power over them from their shared commitment to the traditions and beliefs that their narratives concretized. It meant something to passers-by that the Palladium lay beneath Constantine's column, just as recycling building material from pagan temples did not desacralize them. The antiquarianism of Hesychius or the *Patria* acquired its power from a sense that the gods were, in fact, *in Rome*, as Libanius had said. It was that belief that made *evocatio* meaningful. This had been apparent even to Plutarch, the first Greek to discuss the ritual.[211] If the power that Plutarch assigned to words ritually spoken and the link he posited between material idol and immaterial deity presumed beliefs that still defy satisfactory articulation, we should at least recognize in them the bases on which the sacred topography of the later Roman empire was negotiated.

Constantine's death on 22 May 337 was not the turning-point it might seem to be. Rather, it opened the curtain on a new scene, in a drama that had begun whenever it was that Constantine ordered the construction of a mausoleum for himself and his family in "the imperial city," in Rome. It was there that he laid his mother to rest, perhaps in the same year that he consecrated Constantinople.[212] According to Eusebius, when Constantine died seven years later in Nicomedia:

> those inhabiting the imperial city, namely, the Senate and people of Rome ... indulged in limitless grief .... They acclaimed his sons alone and no others *Imperatores* and *Augusti*, and with pitiful cries they asked that the corpse of their emperor be sent to them and that it be laid to rest in the imperial city.[213]

Eusebius continued, effecting a dramatic shift in geographic perspective:

Constantinopolitanam et Hierosolymitanam, quamque etiam super omnes in universo orbe terrarum dei ecclesias ....

[211] Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 61 (= *Mor.* 278f). For a collection of evidence on "chained gods," see Frazer 1913: 3.336–338; Merkelbach 1970–71.

[212] Her death and resting place: Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.47.1; but cf. Theophanes s.a. 5817 (p. 27, lines 10–14 de Boor). Further sources listed in *PLRE* 1, s.v. Helena 3.

[213] Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 4.69.

But those *here* looked after the one honored by God. The second of his children came to the city and sent forth his father's corpse, and he himself led the procession.

Like the residents of Rome, Eusebius understood the power latent in Constantine's body, a power more potent and less contestable in death than it had been in life.

A little less than six decades later Theodosius lay dead at Milan. His corpse, too, was taken to Constantinople, although his son and successor in the West, Honorius, did not accompany his body on that journey. A short while later, before an audience that included Honorius himself, Ambrose delivered a eulogy to the fallen emperor. Reflecting on the direction in which Theodosius then travelled, Ambrose offered no criticism and suffered no sense of loss. Speaking to Honorius in closing, Ambrose told him:

not to fear lest his triumphant remains seem to lack honor wherever they go. Italy, who witnessed his triumphs, feels no such lack; Italy, twice freed from tyrants, celebrates the author of its liberty. Nor does Constantinople, who twice sent forth the emperor to victory, think him dishonored, although that city was not able to keep what it wanted. Constantinople awaited triumphal processions on his return and the titles of his victories; it awaited the emperor of the world, accompanied by the army of Gaul and supported by the strength of the whole world. But now Theodosius returns there stronger and more glorious; a throng of angels walks before him, and a crowd of saints follows. Clearly you are blessed, Constantinople, you who receive an inhabitant of paradise, for through your august care over his buried corpse you will possess a citizen of the heavenly city.[214]

Ambrose adhered at once to Christian doctrine and Christian politics. On the one hand, he dismissed any interest in the topography of this world and constructed instead a binarism contrasting this world and the next. On the other, he so privileged Constantinople as a Christian capital that he dispensed with the older Rome altogether. Of course, he had other reasons to cite Italy rather than Rome as the rival for Constantinople, not least a desire to include himself and his city among those who celebrated the author of their liberty. Nevertheless, in his mapping of the world, Rome has vanished from any contest for the affective heart of the empire, even of its western half. Ambrose died two years later; Prudentius perhaps a decade after that. Neither lived to rue their victories over Symmachus and the Roman past. Surrendering naively to the allure of a Christian capital, they sacrificed Rome, Italy, and the west to a Roman empire that numbered Pallas among the citizens of heaven.

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[214]Ambrose *De obitu Theodosiani* 56. For comments and questions my thanks to Ruth Abbey, Sabine MacCormack, and David Smith. The final draft of this paper was prepared with support from the American Council of Learned Societies.

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