

REVIEW ARTICLE/DISCUSSION

CONSULS AND CONSULAR DATING IN THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE

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THOUGH THEIR NAMES WERE THE SAME, the consulate in the Roman Republic and the consulate in the Late Empire were in fact two completely different magistracies. In both cases, it is true, there were only two consuls who gave their names to each year, but the Republican consuls were elected by the *Comitia Centuriata* and were the supreme civil and military officials of the state, possessing power in Rome and on the field of battle. The late imperial consuls, on the other hand, were chosen by the emperors and held a sinecure: far from confronting Hannibal on the plains of Cannae the most difficult task they had to face was providing funds for their consular games. These were men of a different mettle indeed from their consular forebears.

Consuls of the Later Roman Empire,¹ however, is not about the consuls of the Later Roman Empire; rather it is concerned solely with the use of consular names from 284 to 541, the year of the last non-imperial consul, as the contemporary means of identifying individual years. The principal problem is not to discover the names of the consuls or what years they represent as it is for the early Republic, since the names of the Late Roman consuls are abundantly well attested, but to discover which consuls any particular emperor accepted and disseminated as part of the official formula for naming each year. The casual reader of this book (or this review) might wonder why such an apparently trivial concern should be worth the effort of research and why it warranted such a massive tome (over 750 quarto pages), but these are questions which are never seriously confronted by the authors, let alone answered (though hints are given on pp. v and 25). While no one could seriously justify the size of the volume (because of the tabular nature of the format much of the book is blank; photo-reduction and more attention to layout, especially in the indices, could have substantially reduced the bulk), there is no question of the importance of this research for those interested in, among other things, the political relations between the two halves of the empire, the workings of the imperial bureaucracy, Late Roman

¹Roger S. Bagnall, Alan Cameron, Seth R. Swartz, and K. A. Worp, *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire* (Atlanta, Georgia 1987, Philological Monographs of the American Philological Association, 36).

communications, the dating of contemporary inscriptions and papyri, and the contemporary understanding and usage of an important yet extremely difficult aspect of chronology, namely, the designation of the years, something which we, with our simple system of numerical dates, take completely for granted. The collection and analysis of so many diverse documents, from such a wide chronological and geographical range, should have solved numerous puzzles concerning the use of consular dating in the Late Empire and provided many valuable new insights in related fields of research, but *CLRE* will probably only serve to confuse and frustrate, much as the first volume of *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* has done.

When discussing a work as detailed and complex as *CLRE*, any reviewer is hampered by constraints of space, and such constraints are felt more acutely in this case, not only because *CLRE*'s overwhelming impression of exhaustive completeness and accuracy and its authors' justified reputation for excellence will alone guarantee that this work will remain on library shelves as the standard work of reference for the foreseeable future, but also because the detailed analysis that such a work demands is far beyond the scope of any review. I shall therefore concentrate on several topics within what I consider to be the two most important aspects of the work: the compilation and the synthesis.² That this review will be an essentially negative exposition is not because *CLRE* is completely without merit—indeed much is worthy of praise—but because the failings of this work as a whole are both so serious and so unexpected.

The compilation of the evidence necessary for the synthesis involved the massive task of searching out and recording every possible consular date from the ancient sources, the immediately contemporary material being of the most value. *CLRE* presents this evidence year by year on a double-page spread, with evidence relating to the Western half of the Empire on the left page (identified below as "W") and the Eastern half on the right ("E"), all divided into categories: "Fasti," "Laws," "Inscriptions" (usually only for the West), "Papyri" (only for the East; in the West papyri are placed under "Other"), "Coins," and "Other" (which usually means literary references). At the top of each page is the synthesis of the compiled evidence, the lemma; that is, the name(s) of the consul(s) accepted in that part of the Empire to name that year. The work of compilation is preceded by an introduction of eight chapters, totalling almost one hundred pages, which deals with general historical aspects of the consulate, proclamation, dissemination, and nomenclature (1–3), and analyses in detail the various types of evidence used (4–8). Much of this material is disappointing, however, since it is mainly reworkings of previously or soon-to-be published material, and would have

²The reader is also to be referred to the penetrating comments of Jill Harries and Michael Whitby in *CR* ns 39 (1989) 90–92.

benefited greatly from extensive editing. The yearly lists are followed by a Critical Appendix (which for the most part deals with problems created by the inscriptions and papyri), a Bibliography, and extensive Indices (including a reverse index of consular names for epigraphers and papyrologists).

For the purposes of this review I have examined the sections on "Fasti" and "Coins" in detail for the entire period covered by *CLRE*, "Inscriptions" and "Papyri" in detail from 450 to 496, and "Other" only very generally for the late fourth and fifth centuries. This material divides quite neatly into two sections: "Inscriptions" and "Papyri," and "Fasti," "Coins," and "Other."

The best compilations are those for "Inscriptions" and "Papyri"; these are for the most part complete, accurate, meticulously researched and analysed, and free from most of the grosser typographical errors which plague the rest of the book (see below). Indeed, the section on the papyri is easily the most accurate and up-to-date account of this material available. The Critical Appendix again mirrors the excellence and skill of the scholarship, though some judicious pruning of the comments would not have hurt. Major errors are few; the worst, and the one most typical of the rest of *CLRE*, is probably that on p. 676 (s.a. 444W), where it is stated that several inscriptions dated "Albinus" have in the past been assigned to 493 "though they lack the 'iunior' normally found in the inscriptions of that year. We think that they belong under 444." But there is only *one* inscription with "Albinus iunior" (p. 520) and there is no other source which so distinguishes him (cf. p. 41, n. 28). It would therefore seem likely that some inscriptions from 493 have been placed under 444.

Only a few very minor points of interpretation and correction could be mentioned. *CIL* XIII 2363 of Lyons (458W) I am convinced belongs in 473 as the authors suggest on p. 451. In 460W read "Recemedes" for "Ricomeri" (*CIL* IX 1372 [Italy]). In the same year *CIL* III 9522 (Dalmatia) is excessively problematic and I would consign it to the Critical Appendix. The inscription assigned to Rome in 469W (*ILCV* 3114) is described in *ILCV* as near Beneventum). The large gap in *CIL* V 6627 (Italy; 469W) indicates that the inscription probably had "Marcianus et Zeno," rather than just Marcian. The date of the Ravenna papyrus of 474W should read "5.xi" not "13.xi." In 475E and 476E the phrase τῆς θείας λήξεως ("of the divine lot") has been missed in *P.Oxy.* XVI 1899 and 1958, and *BGU* XII 2151, obviously an integral part of the post-consular formula after Leo's death on 17 November 474. In 482W *CIL* VI 37741, a fragment which reads "O[.]DO C[.]" should probably be consigned to the Critical Apparatus, as should *CIL* V 6742a of 490W, which reads "[T]O IV[.]"

The remainder of the evidence, unfortunately, is poorly researched and riddled with gross inaccuracy and error. The "Fasti" is the worst; barely one quarter of all years are free of error, chiefly a result of poor transcription and reporting (made all the worse by an attempt to record every detail of

every list, including the appearance of *Aug.*, *Caes.*, *nob. puer*, *v.c.*, *iun.*, *solus*, and the like, as well as all the variations and errors). A complete list of these errors and omissions would take up half of this review, and so instead of citing specific examples I shall simply describe some general types of error. Two minor problems to begin with. First, every consular reference in Mommsen's three *Chronica minora* volumes, be it from a chronicle, a preface, a history, or whatever, is cited under "Fasti" (with the peculiar exception of the *Anonymus Valesianus*). Only documents with extended consular lists should appear here; all the others should appear under "Other." Second, there is an utter lack of uniformity in citation. The method of reporting variations, additions, and omissions in the various texts alters wildly from year to year making it very confusing to follow individual sources.

The most pervasive and serious problem is the almost complete inability to record the consular formulae from the ancient lists accurately. This is most commonly manifested in a failure to indicate correctly which sources in any given year have *Aug.*, *Caes.*, *v.c.*, and so on. Sometimes sources which have these variants are not indicated as having them; others which do not, are; sometimes variants are marked in the evidence (with brackets), but their source is not indicated. The failure to distinguish among "Constantinus," "Constantius," and "Constans," and "Maximianus," "Maximinus," and "Maximus" is rampant. When the sources are in error, these names are often simply standardized into the "correct" forms (even when more than one source is involved) or sometimes, in the case of the first three, reduced to a deceptive abbreviation (e.g., "Scal." in 327E where *CLRE*'s "Const." twice masks an original "Constans," not the "Constantius" of the lemma). In a few cases the first three names are abbreviated in the sources (usually "Constant.") but are expanded into complete names in *CLRE*, though not necessarily those in the lemma (e.g., in 326W "Constant. VI et Constant." of "VindPr." is expanded to "Constantius" and "Constans," though the consuls of that year were Constantine and Constantius). Other names are standardized as well (e.g., in 328E all four fasti have "Ianuarus," not "Ianuarinus"). There are even cases where a completely incorrect name appears (e.g., "Tatianus" where "VindPost." has "Taurus" in 359W). Reporting of the iteration numbers and their variants too is often wildly inaccurate (e.g., p. 120, n. 4; p. 128, n. 9; p. 134, n. 11; and esp. p. 132, n. 10, where the correct numerals are listed as corruptions). There is also a serious problem with the frequent omission of sources and their evidence in given years; the *Excerpta Sangallensia*, for example, are almost completely overlooked. On the other hand, the "Fasti Hydatiani" ("Hyd.") are listed in both East and West in the years 390-392 (it is Western from 389; the date of 390 is incorrectly given on p. 54). The papyrus "Gol." is cited as supporting two names each year in 389-391 when only eight letters remain in total, while "Berol." is omitted in 312-313 when it has two names each

year and in 315–316 when it has one. Little if any care has been taken to explain what is happening when lists get the consuls in the wrong order, insert pairs in the wrong place, or incorrectly combine one consul from one year and one from another (as “VindPost.” does from 313–335). Incorrect consular pairs are generally omitted without explanation and errors are surreptitiously corrected (e.g., 346W where the unproclaimed pair of Eastern consuls in fact appear in the cited fasti as a separate year between 344 and 345, not as an alternative to the post-consulate of 346). The record of the evidence of one source often gets confused with that of another, in some cases even between East and West: e.g., on p. 114 (290W), the “(Diocl. Aug., Max. Herc. Aug.)” after “Prosp.” actually belongs after “Pasch.” in the East. Worse still is a general incomprehension of the fasti and misunderstanding of Mommsen’s editions. This is manifested in both the lists and the introductory chapter (pp. 47–57). For instance, the *Paschale Campanum* and ms N of the continuation of Victorius of Aquitaine, though cited as separate lists in *CLRE* (“Camp.” and “AqS (N)”), are in fact the same thing (MS Vat. reg. 2077, ff. 96v–98r). More serious, *CLRE* does not understand the complex manuscript tradition of Prosper (“Prosp.”) and his continuators, and so before 456, especially in 452W and 453W, the listings become hopelessly confused. A major problem is that *CLRE* believes that before 456 the text of the Havniensis manuscript (“Haun.”) was simply a collection of excerpts from Prosper (cf. pp. 48–49) when it is in fact a full text of the chronicle, cited by Mommsen as ms H. Thus before 456 it is incorrectly cited separately from “Prosp.”—and even from “Prosp. (H)” in one case. A final example: “Dionys. (1, 752)” is cited in 525W and 526W; the first is the work of Mommsen (identifying *his* *conss.* in an excerpt from the chronicle of Marius Aventicensis used in the introduction to his edition of “Dionys.”) and miscopied to boot, the second is a figment.

“Coins” is a hardly more accurate compilation and seems to have been added at a late stage. Again there are a great many errors and omissions. I am not sure why coins from Antioch, Cyzicus, Serdica, Nicomedia, Thessalonica, and Constantinople are listed under the West (287, 288, 290, 293, 296, 297, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 310, 320, 321, 363, 365, 368, and 425) and another from Aquileia under the East (425); in some cases (425 especially) attribution would seem to be based on which emperor’s portrait appears on the coin, not where the coin was minted, an obvious sign of the compiler’s confusion in understanding the purpose of these lists. In 387 and 390 the reference to “Pearce, *NC* 5 ser. 18 (1938)” should be deleted; these coins are the same as those already cited by the *RIC* references. The coins listed in 422E belong in 420E (see J. P. C. Kent, *Roman Coins* (London 1978) no. 744, and my paper, “Quinquennial Vota and the Imperial Consulship in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries, 337–511,” *Numismatic Chronicle* 148 [1988], 86, n. 37, 93, and plate 27, 3).

It should also be noted that Constans controlled Siscia in 346. The Siscian consular issues (*RIC* VIII, Siscia 106–107 with pp. 341–342) therefore show that at some point in late 345 Constans *must* have been intending to take the consulship with Constantius. In spite of *CLRE* (p. 227 and the especially bizarre statement on p. 25), no emperor would have refused to recognize his own consulate, so for some reason Constans must not have taken up the fasces on 1 January; but he did not proclaim Constantius alone in the West. Constantius on the other hand assumed that the arrangements of 345 still stood and proclaimed Constans as his partner on 1 January and retained the name throughout the year. This is, therefore, probably the only example of a non-existent consulate which was proclaimed, disseminated, and never revoked.

Like “Fasti,” “Other” appears competent enough on the surface but is revealed as a vast quagmire when even a few references are checked: citations are incorrect, names are cited incorrectly, the evidence of cited sources is omitted, sources are missed. The most frequent and serious problem is the failure to cite the evidence after citing the source. In a few cases this might be explained by a tendency in *CLRE* to omit the names of the consuls after citing a source if the formula is identical to that cited immediately above, though this is a highly inconsistent practice and one which should have been avoided altogether. However, there must be some other explanation for omission, as is shown by the following list of years where the evidence omitted under “Other” is in fact different (often substantially) from that cited just above it: 304E, 313E, 354W, 356W, 357W, 363WE, 368W, 369E, 371W, 374W, 377WE, 390W, 391W, 401E, 404E, 419E, 434E, 438W, 450W, 456W, 458W, 461W, 469E, 470E, 498E, 499E, 520E, 522W, 523W, 525E, 535E. An embarrassing example of incorrect quotation of the evidence comes in 438E where for Socrates *HE* 6.6 and 7.45—“(Theodosius XVI)” —*CLRE* states, “it is . . . not clear if [Socrates] did not bother to mention Faustus or if he did not know of him.” Yet Faustus is explicitly named as Theodosius’ consular colleague in 6.6. There are also the strange cases of a single inscription cited from different editions as if it were two (440E), and of Libanius cited in the West (314) and Ammianus in the East (364, 370). The papal letters are a particular mess; epistles are cited from *PL*, *ACO*, the *Collectio Avellana*, and Thiel’s edition with little or no regard for correlation or consistency. After *Ep.* 3 of Symmachus (500W) Thiel appears to have been abandoned and the remaining dated letters of Symmachus (5, 6, 8, 13–15), with the exception of *Ep.* 16 (cited as “Pope Symmachus to Caesarius of Arles”; 514W), are not listed. Thiel’s 150 letters of Pope Hormisdas are completely ignored in favour of those in *Coll. Avell.* Epigraphic attestations of individual consulates, as opposed to consular formulae, are most often omitted from this section. It is not clear why these were ignored when so many diptychs (which offer the same information) were included.

My own general reading and limited attempts to corroborate *CLRE*'s references have also shown them to be hopelessly incomplete: I have been able to add almost 80 further citations, mostly from the fifth century, including a surprising number from the same works (and in some cases the same passages) already cited in *CLRE*. For example, Malalas names the consuls of at least 35 years between 288 and 538; *CLRE* cites just six of these (434, 464, 490, 518, 525, 526), three of them (434, 490, 525) incorrectly. A careful reading of just the sources quoted by *CLRE* would probably yield scores of additional citations and the correction of just as many.

None of the material cited under "Fasti," "Coins," or "Other" can be trusted in any respect and anyone using *CLRE* is to be warned that it is far from complete and all citations of source and evidence must be verified. One final example, I think, sums up much of what is wrong with the compilation of the evidence, and indeed *CLRE* as a whole. On p. 3 it is stated that the iteration number (II) of Volusianus (*cos.* 314) does not appear in the fasti. Under 314W (p. 162) it is stated that it appears in two of the fasti—"Hyd." and "Chr. 354 (fast.)." In fact, it appears in only one ("Hyd."). To quote their own warning against Mommsen: "The reader should be cautioned that [*CLRE*] . . . is not to be relied upon for details" (p. 99).

If we cannot trust the authors with the simple task of citing the evidence fully and accurately, can we nevertheless trust them to create an accurate synthesis of what there is and give us some idea of what was actually happening at the time? We cannot. As was the case with the compilation there is a vast array of details of fact and interpretation which one could take issue with. I wish to concentrate on what I consider to be the most serious drawbacks of *CLRE* and leave other aspects to other reviewers. There are three major flaws in *CLRE* and all form an interrelated nexus: the complete lack of explanation or discussion regarding the use of the evidence to determine the names of the consuls presented in the lemmata and a clear description of exactly what the appearance of these names means; the failure to deal seriously with all possible methods of proclamation and dissemination of the consular names; and the treatment of the Western Empire as a unity in the fifth century, even after 476. I wish to direct my discussion to the fifth and sixth centuries since the proclamation and dissemination of the consuls is much more problematical in these centuries than in the third and fourth, and the lemmata of this earlier period are generally accurate.³

The first major problem is that except to note an exception (p. 505) *CLRE* nowhere states what the lemmata actually represent. The evidence presented under the years 307–313WE, 324–325E, 344W, 351W, 352W,

³The most problematic aspects of the early fourth century (the years 284–324) had already been settled by T. D. Barnes in *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, Mass. 1982) 91–109. Otherwise *CLRE* is to be commended for its solution to the difficult problem of 383W.

383W, 384W, 388W, 394W, 399E, 409W, 410W, and 411W would suggest that the lemmata are intended to convey what consular formula was in use in any part of the Empire at any time during the year and this is supported by a statement at the outset: "Where there was division within a region or a change of consuls within a year, multiple versions are given in the heading" (p. 99). In this *CLRE* fulfils part of its function to give an accurate list of the contemporary usage of consular formulae to assist the dating of future epigraphical and papyrological discoveries (a large and important part of the work of compilation was the correction of the dating of many earlier misdated inscriptions and papyri). The statement on page 99, however, fails to hold true after 411, where almost invariably the names in the lemmata would seem to represent simply some attempt to establish what the retroactive "official" formula was, though even in this *CLRE* is not consistent (cf. 413W). The use of the post-consulate and, what is more important, the use of the name of the consul from one's own half of the Empire only, both of which appear with great frequency in this period, are usually (though not always) ignored, even when they were the official means of dating for a portion of the year. The regional variations which become more acute and noticeable in the fifth century are completely overlooked and in the years when such differences were significant some attempt should have been made to show the division in the lemma, dividing it up using letters for the regions and numbers for the changes within the year (with dates when possible). When there were undatable variations within the regions these should have been all listed together. This would have given the reader a quick, easily-digestible guide to the situation that year. As it is, one is forced to sift through all the evidence, often of more than one year, often ignoring the lemmata altogether.

This kind of lemma might seem like needless clutter but it becomes a matter of vital importance over the last 65 years of the evidence, if not before, especially in the West. What does the single name or pair of names at the top of the "Western" page mean after 476? Ravenna? Rome? Italy? Gaul? Are we to assume that the regular proclamation and dissemination of consular names continued as it had before, with Odoacar or the Ostrogothic kings acting as the sole source of Western information? *CLRE* would seem to assume so, even in Gaul, stating with apparent surprise in 486 when faced with three different consular formulae, "One has the distinct impression that all centralized dissemination has collapsed" (p. 507). It is 491 (p. 517) before it is finally admitted that centralized control over dissemination in Gaul "seems to have broken down," though who would have been responsible for centralized dissemination in "Gaul" after ca 475 is never stated. An examination of Gallic inscriptions after 476 shows not only that Eastern consuls were sometimes disseminated in Gaul and not Italy, but also that a consular pair appears once in Eastern rather than

Western order (that is, with the Eastern consul first, not the Western) and that on three occasions Eastern information appears in Gaul before Italy (486, 489, 491, 492, 508 [post-consulate of 507], 515 and post-consulate of 516, 517, 520 [post-consulate of 519], 520). This is spasmodic to be sure, but there is no doubt that after 476 some Gauls were getting their information directly from the East and not Italy. For the engravers of the inscriptions of 517 and 520 (post-consulate of 519) these Eastern names were the only consular information they possessed. *CLRE* refuses to take this situation seriously (cf. pp. 35, 41, n. 29, 513, 549, 565, 569). Further, these Gallic inscriptions (and the fasti; see below) are used as evidence for the dissemination of Eastern names in the "West" (i.e., Eastern names appear in Western lemmata) in 486, 489, 507, 515, and 520 when it is obvious from Italian evidence that they were never disseminated there. This is in spite of a statement on p. 25 that in the late fifth century "eastern names were never disseminated for general use, except sometimes perhaps in Gaul." On the other hand, in spite of the presence of Anastasius in a Gallic inscription of 517 and an Italian post-consulate from 518, of Iustinus in a Gallic post-consulate from 520, and of Justinian in a Roman inscription of 533, none of these names appears in the "Western" lemmata of 517, 519, or 533. Again we are forced to ask, what do the lemmata at the top of the fifth-century "Western" pages mean and how did the authors select them?

This situation brings up the whole question of what I call "unofficial" dissemination. But first one must establish what exactly the "official" method of dissemination was in the fifth century. Although proclamation and dissemination are discussed at great length in Chapter 2 (pp. 13-35), the actual method of dissemination within and between the two halves of the Empire is never explicitly discussed and assumptions are often made for the fifth century based on earlier practice, not the contemporary evidence. In the fifth century the evidence shows that one emperor generally did not proclaim the other's consul(s) until he had received official confirmation from his colleague after 1 January (i.e., after the consul had actually taken office) even if he knew who the consul was going to be through earlier correspondence, news of designation, or general practice (the latter applies only to the emperors themselves and includes first consulates and consulates taken to coincide with vota years). This is shown, for instance, in the late promulgations in the East of Honorius in 411 and 412, and of Valentinian in 430, 435, and 440, and in the West of Theodosius in 444, of the pair of Eastern consuls in 454 (cf. p. 441), and of Leo in 458.⁴ Likewise, if one emperor refused to inform the other, the latter could not proclaim his

⁴There can be no serious doubt that Majorian always recognized Leo as his imperial and consular colleague and that his consular solidi date to 1 January (cf. pp. 448-449; I shall be dealing with this matter in a future paper). Evidence for the striking of consular coins before official notification is accepted in *CLRE* itself on p. 17 for 411 and there

consul(s): in 451–452 the Western emperor Valentinian was not about to deal with an emperor whom he regarded as a usurper and therefore refused to notify Marcian officially of the Western consuls. This is why Marcian did not proclaim the Western consuls in those years, though he obviously knew, unofficially (e.g., from papal correspondence), who the Western consuls were (*CLRE* claims that he was “affecting not to have been informed,” p. 436). Upon notification the bureaucratic process would slowly come into action and proclamation notices would be handed down through the civil administration from the court officials to the praetorian prefects and on down to the civic magistrates who would each have been responsible for informing the inhabitants of his own city or town. After that, dissemination was a private matter. More often than not this would have been the second such notice made, for from 412 it was the practice to promulgate one’s own consul alone on 1 January. Thus, those who used the consular names could be exposed to at least three formulae during the year: a post-consulate in the early days of the year, the single consul and then the consular pair. Often later notices would be ignored, since scribes and other writers would be used to a particular formula and it would be very difficult for them to change in the middle of a year.

So much for “official” dissemination. What *CLRE* refuses to take into account is “unofficial” dissemination. This occurred when someone or some group obtained information which was not “officially” disseminated. Apart from the evidence cited above for Gaul, some examples in the West (from unique contemporary inscriptions) appear in 433 (Theodosius known in Syracuse but not the Western consul, Petronius Maximus), 452 (post-consulate of 451, Marcian’s name, not promulgated in the West, known in Numidia), 455 (Anthemius’ name known only in Gaul), 518 (post-consulate of 517, in Italy Anastasius’ name known only in Lodi), and 533 (Justinian’s name known only in Rome). The same situation probably obtained in the East as well, but the paucity of contemporary evidence makes it very difficult to discover definite examples.

This leads us to a similar problem in the fasti of both East and West: how is it that the compilers had access to names which never appear in the contemporary evidence? *CLRE* never explains (on p. 25 it assumes that the appearance of Western consuls in the three main Eastern fasti proves Eastern recognition) and the problem is not an easy one to sort out.

is another example in 430 when Theodosius and Valentinian appear as consuls on consular solidi of Constantinople for distribution on 1 January, yet official notification from Valentinian was late and by 16 April his name still had not been officially proclaimed in the East. With regard to the Western solidi in the name of Leo mentioned on p. 449, n. 67, from a preliminary study of the die links it can be said with some certainty that these coins were struck within the periods of April–December 457, August–November 461, and late 465–early 467.

Compilers of *fasti* would appear to have been interested in making their lists of consuls as complete as possible; there is nothing to indicate that they were attempting to create "official" lists, which would, anyway, have limited the usefulness of their work. Indeed it seems most unlikely that they had any knowledge at all of the policies of recognition and non-recognition of the two courts. They simply realized from experience that the vagaries of dissemination often did not spread all the names of all the consuls and that the privately compiled lists which they possessed were probably not complete. As a result they actively sought out all possible names from all sources—letters, merchants, personal contacts—and it seems likely that lists from East and West circulated freely. In both halves of the Empire, post-consulates seem to have been regarded by the compilers as the result of incomplete dissemination and so on every occasion possible they were replaced with consular names. This occurs most often in the East where there would appear to have been easier access to Western lists; in the West only Cassiodorus had similar access to Eastern information. Only when it was obvious for some reason that a particular consul should not be included did they exclude his name (e.g., in 462E; Severus was regarded as a usurper).

As a result, most *fasti* are of no value in establishing which consuls were accepted in any part of the empire since they are a result of *post factum* scholarship. Thus the excessive detail which *CLRE* attempts to report from the *fasti*, and which is the source of much of the error in these lists, is valueless. Only the evidence which shows obvious year by year maintenance is of any value. This conclusion would appear to be acknowledged on p. 25 ("inclusion by chronicles and compilers after the fact is not a sure guide to contemporary practice"), but in the evidence section the reader is confronted with such conflicting statements, for example, as: "The eastern *fasti* for 463 and 464 are not contemporary evidence, and the one law in *CJ* (for 463) is hardly more reliable" and "despite the western *fasti*, the inscriptions are decisive" (p. 459; the *fasti* and the law are not accepted) and "It is clear from [a papyrus of 461] that Magnus was never disseminated in the East. The retroactive addition of his name to a law [*CJ* 2.7.11] and his inclusion in the *fasti*, however, suggest that he may have been officially proclaimed" (p. 455; the *fasti* and the law are accepted) and "Despite the *fasti*, Asterius and Praesidius never appear in the papyri" (p. 523, the *fasti* are not accepted) and "The testimony of the eastern *fasti* suggests that Placidus was ultimately recognized in the East, but the papyrus from 482 does not support them" (p. 497; the *fasti* are accepted; cf. also pp. 452, 505 [with p. 25], and 565 with pp. 361 and 417). On p. 436 it states "the eastern *fasti* suggest that Adelfius was eventually recognized," yet his name (correctly) does not appear in the lemma because the laws and the papyri (including a post-consulate in 452) never name him. An Eastern consul is

accepted for the West in 461 based solely on the fasti and in 534 on the basis of *only one* consular list (both lemmata are contradicted by all other contemporary Western evidence).

These quotations highlight another major problem of *CLRE*: the lack of discussion concerning the method of ascertaining the lemmata and how the evidence was evaluated and used. A systematic and consistent policy should have been devised, on the basis of a careful examination and understanding of all the evidence, in order to assign value or "weight" to each source: evidence which reflects contemporary practice must take precedence over later retrospection and compilation. Some situations require individual approaches but overall general rules should have been adhered to. As it is, the entire exercise has become completely *ad hoc* and without authority, and the resultant errors are obvious.

The lemmata ought to "cast welcome light on the darkness of fifth century politics" (p. 25) but they are inaccurate, inconsistent, and lack geographical and chronological detail, which robs them of any value they may have had. As a result, the following Western lemmata should be changed. The largest group of changes involves breaking each lemma down chronologically following the pattern of the lemmata of the third and fourth centuries to account for changes in the formula during the course of the year (i.e., promulgation of the late notification of the Eastern consul[s]). The lemmata of the following years should therefore be divided into two, the first being either a post-consulate or a Western consul alone, the second the Eastern or joint East-West consular formula: 414, 416, 418, 420, 423?, 429, 431, 432, 433, 435, 436, 439, 441, 442, 444, 445, 447, 448, 449, 454, 457, 458, 460, 466?, 469, 470, 471?, 472, 473, 478, 479, 482, 490 (in reverse order), 491?, and 492?. In the last three years, it may have been that the Eastern consuls (or in 492, half of the Eastern pair) were proclaimed and disseminated in Italy at the very end of each year, though for what reason seems unclear (on the other hand, the Eastern consuls in 491 and 492 may well be a result of unofficial dissemination). The epigraphic evidence of 423 and 471 is also very peculiar since it is the early inscriptions which show both consuls and the later ones which omit the Eastern colleague (cf. pp. 381 and 477).

It should be noted here, unfortunately only briefly, that *CLRE* refuses to accept the use of post-consulates in the imperial court before 477 (cf. the attempts to eradicate all post-consulates from the laws, pp. 79–83; the comments on pp. 393, 409, and 421; and the use of "(Zeno Aug. II)" instead of "p.c. Diui Leonis iun." in 475EW which even contradicts the Notes). In most cases *CLRE* is correct to seek alternative ways of explaining post-consulates in the laws, but in 429W, 437E, 443E, and 450E the "anti-post-consulate" zeal is carried too far (cf. pp. 81–83, though 450E is accepted in the Notes on p. 435; for some reason, the post-consulates of 441W do not

seem to bother the authors). In these years both consuls were nominated from one half of the Empire. Therefore, until official notification arrived, the court in the other half of the Empire had no choice but to use a post-consulate; what else could it do? Thus, the post-consulates in the laws of these four years must stand. Although there is no contemporary evidence for it, the courts may well have used post-consulates in the early months of many of the other years in which both consuls (or a single consul when only one was appointed) were nominated by the other half of the Empire (e.g., 417E, 419W, 427W, 446E, 454W, 457W).

In 413 instead of "Heraclianus (to 8.iii)" the lemma should read "(1) Heraclianus (to 3.viii); (2) p.c. Honorii IX et Theodosii V Augg.; (3) Lucius (retrospectively)." It should also be noted that the three most important sources for Heraclianus' consulship this year are not even quoted (Orosius VII.42.10, Prosper 1249, and *CTh* 15.14.13) though two (the first and last) are mentioned in the Notes. The Ravenna Annals in 421 (missed by *CLRE*) mirrors the order in the laws and the papal letter, not the other fasti; while the laws probably were "easternized" that does not explain the order of the Annals or the letter. Add "(to iv)" after "Iohannes Aug." in 425. The Eastern consuls should be deleted from the lemmata in 455, 461, 475 (it should read "p.c. Diui Leonis iun."), 486, 489, 507, 515, 520, and 534. An official "p.c. Armati" should appear above the existing lemma in 477 (cf. Notes, p. 488 and the other formulae in 477E and 478WE). In 536 remove all inscriptions with "p.c. Belisari" to 537 and delete "p.c. Fl. Belisari" from the lemma of 536. Belisarius did not enter Rome until December 536 (Evagrius *HE* 4.19) and before then was marching on Rome after the siege and bloody sack of Naples. In such circumstances it is unlikely that any Romans would have used his post-consulate; it was disseminated, in Rome only—there is only one non-Roman inscription which uses his post-consulate (Nola in 538)—, after his arrival (*contra CLRE*: "His consulate was disseminated in the West only after the conquest of Italy in 536," p. 605).

For the East, it is very difficult to present an accurate lemma after 455 since that is the date at which the *Novellae* end. The lack of uncorrected laws (almost all of the dates in the *Codex Iustinianus* have been retroactively regularized against the fasti) and the incredible slowness of the papyri to respond to changes in the formulae make it difficult to know which consuls were officially proclaimed and disseminated. The proclamation of Western consuls in the East occurs more often than the proclamation of Eastern consuls in the West but is still haphazard, and the lack of adequate contemporary evidence in many cases (see below) makes certainty impossible. The lemmata of *CLRE* as they stand now however imply certainty (cf., however, p. 505) and a policy of marking Western consuls for whom there is no secure contemporary evidence should have been adopted. As in the West, where possible, the Eastern lemmata should be divided to show

early and late formulae, again with a post-consulate or single Eastern consul first, followed by the Western or joint East-West consular formula in the following years: 416, 420, 428, 430, 431, 435, 438, 439, 440, 443, 444, 447, 449, 450, 455, 461, 471, 480, 495, 502, 507, 517, 520, 521, and 534.

There are twelve examples where there is no definite contemporary evidence for the acceptance of a Western consul in the East: 432, 437, 460, 472, 481, 501, 503, 506, 510, 517, 519, and 525. The Western names in all these years should have been marked as uncertain. In my opinion those in 437 and 517 (and 503?) were probably only proclaimed late; the others may well not have been proclaimed at all. In 519, could the bishop of Constantinople in March and the engraver of a Thracian inscription in November "officially" know of a Western consul who was unknown to the emperor in November? There must be a strong possibility that the former two are a result of unofficial information.⁵ In 525 the Thessalonica inscription which names the Western consul is contradicted by 15 papyri (six from 526); it too seems a result of unofficial information. A multiple lemma, then, with chronological changes marked and uncertain Western consuls bracketed or asterisked, followed by contemporary Egyptian usages (for papyrologists), would probably have been the best for the Eastern pages.

The following lemmata should also be altered. In 412 add "Honorius Aug. IX et"; the existing lemma contradicts the correct testimony of the Notes and p. 16, n. 24, and is a holdover from an earlier draft of the page. The lemma of 475 should read "(1) Zeno Aug. II (to 9.i); (2) p.c. Diui Leonis iun." As in the West (noted above), add an alternative and official "p.c. Armati" to the lemma of 477. In 482 delete the Western consul, Severinus (cf. the lemma and evidence of 483E). In 488 add "iterum" before "p.c. Fl. Longini." In 520 some attempt should have been made to show the effect of the *damnatio memoriae* of Vitalianus: "(1) Vitalianus; (2) Vitalianus et Rusticius (to vi); (3) Rusticius."

CLRE is further marred by a vast number of typographical errors and other often rather odd confusions of text. A select list of the typical: "Epp." appears throughout instead of "Ep." for "*Epistula*"; p. 4, line 6, for "section II" read "section 2"; p. 13, line 10, for "see §4" read "see §5, p. 23"; p. 17, n. 26, the last line is missing: after "W. E. Kaegi," add "*Byzantium and the Decline of Rome* (Princeton 1968), 18-19."; p. 19, n. 29, after "*supersunt*" add "*MGH:AA VI*"; p. 21, last three lines of paragraph 3, *CLRE* has missed Claudian's point that it was only after civil war that emperors had on three occasions visited Rome over the last 100 years, and emperors were in fact in Rome on five occasions (Constantine in 312-313, 315, 326; Constantius in 357 [not 353] and Theodosius in 389); p. 26, line 4 after the quotations, for "Constantius" read "Constantine"; p. 32, last line, add "ones" after "Italian"; p. 40, lines 2 and 3 from the bottom, add "Boethius (510)" after "Inportunus (509)," and "Iustinus (540)" after

⁵Note that in his preface Marcellinus comes names only the Eastern consul of this year, Justinus.

"Paulinus (534)"; p. 42, line 7 from the bottom, for "(i.e., *véoçā*" read "(i.e., *véoç*)"; p. 43, lines 5–6 from the bottom, read "(2) 'Basilio Venantio' (N; i.e., *Paschale Campanum*), (3) 'Venantio II Basilio' (S), and (4) 'Venanti v.c. cons.' (L)"; p. 49, line 12, for "422–423" read "421–423"; p. 50, n. 9, for "Chapter 5" read "Chapter 2.7.4 above (p. 35)"; p. 51, line 5 under section "6," for "541" read "559"; p. 53, line 14 from the bottom, for "419" read "420"; p. 54, last line, for "458" read "456"; p. 61, line 18, for "p.64" read "p.65"; p. 67, n. 6, for "three" read "four"; p. 69, line 2, for "509" read "508"; p. 87, lines 11 and 14, for "441" read "443"; p. 128, under COINS, for "soliduis" read "solidus"; p. 356, under LAWS, remove *CTh* 15.1.48 to 410 (cf. p. 668); p. 360, under LAWS read "Honori"; and lines 3–5 from bottom, for "*PLRE* I" read "*PLRE* II," for "411" read "413," for "loc. cit." read "VII.42.10"; p. 384, under COINS, for "Biróné-Sey, *Numizmatikai Közlöny*" read "Katalin Bíró-Sey, *Numizmatikai Közlöny*" (also on p. 405); p. 385, under COINS, for "*Litterae Vindobonenses, Robert Goebel dedicatae*" read "*Litterae Numismaticae Vindobonenses, Roberto Goebel dedicatae*," and after "no.22–23" add "(Constantinople)"; p. 399, last line, for "Aesemination" read "Aetius"; p. 668, for "*CTh* 6.26.15" in line 1 and "*CTh* 6.25.15" (sic) in line 9, read "*CTh* 15.1.48"; and p. 683, last word, read "Majorian."

There are also some surprisingly sloppy errors of formatting in the text, all typical (but easily-avoidable) word-processor problems: paragraphs are always indented after imbedded quotations or tables when no new paragraph is needed (or intended); pp. 15 and 23, there are gaps at the top of the page (originally separating sections) which should have been deleted; p. 51, the title "8. *Fasti Veronenses*, 439–494 (*Ver.*)" has been orphaned at the bottom of the page. In the Critical Appendix page 660 is a duplicate of p. 659, and 688 is a duplicate of 689. In the first case, the following pages have just been advanced by one, in the second, the original p. 688 (with the exception of the header) has been completely lost in the duplication of 689.

In its conception *CLRE* had the potential to be an immensely valuable, important and useful book for epigraphers, papyrologists and historians of the Late Empire, but this potential has not been realized. The gross errors of compilation and printing betray a serious lack of care in preparation, writing and proofreading on the part of the authors. And in the end those who wish to use it, especially for the fifth and sixth centuries where the advances in scholarship were needed the most, will have to do much of what they had to do before *CLRE* was published. Given the known scholarly abilities of the authors and the vast amount of evidence compiled, *CLRE* is not as much an advance on previous fasti as it should have been, and this is perhaps where the greatest disappointment lies, in the promise and potential unfulfilled.

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