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**THE ROLES OF IMPERIAL WOMEN IN THE LATER
ROMAN EMPIRE
(AD 306-455)**

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**Doctorate of Philosophy
The University of Edinburgh
2015**

Signed Declaration

I hereby declare that that this thesis is entirely my own composition and work. It contains no material previously submitted for the award of any other degree or professional degree.

Belinda Washington

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the roles of imperial women in the later Roman Empire, with a central focus on the period from Constantine I to Valentinian III (306-455 AD). In this period the emperor's role evolved from a military leader presiding over an itinerant court to a court-based figure, often a child, who was reliant on ceremonial presentation to display imperial prestige. In my analysis, I explore how the roles of imperial women developed alongside this evolution of the emperor's own position. I also trace their roles in relation to other important developments of the period: the introduction of Christianity as the imperially favoured religion, the permanent division of Empire, and the series of military crises which affected the West in particular.

Following an introduction that considers why relatively little is written on the women of the late antique court, the thesis is divided into two parts. In the first (Historical Overview and Models), Chapter 1 reviews the roles of imperial women in the period from Augustus to the establishment of the Tetrarchy, looking at nomenclature, coins and inscriptions, patronage activities, movements, literary portrayals, and cases where they were removed from their position. In Chapter 2, after providing a historical survey of the evidence for imperial women in the three dynasties of this period, I look in detail at their changing roles in the various areas considered in Chapter 1.

In Part Two (Praise, Criticism, and Mischance), I consider particular case studies, divided into three general themes. Chapter 3 examines the positive portrayal and reception of imperial women in literature. In Chapter 4, I consider negative portrayals, as well as the changing reception of their images in later literature. Chapter 5 examines the consequences for women when they lost imperial protection.

My conclusion summarises the trends that emerge from Part One and the case studies examined in Part Two. It is neither possible, nor is it my intention, to establish a biography of such women beyond their appearances in literary narratives. This thesis seeks instead to establish a comprehensive picture of imperial women whose roles have been neglected.

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Besides this academic encouragement that made me want to do a PhD, and the people that kept me going, I would not have been able to have undertaken this thesis without the generosity of the Kerr Fry PhD Award which supported me for the first three years, and then for an additional year's funding. I was also helped along the way by my extremely accommodating parents, who have always been supportive, and the rest of my family who have encouraged in the idiosyncratic manner that only families can.

When I attended the induction at the start of my PhD the member of staff welcomed us by warning that life would happen in the course of our studies. I thought I knew what he meant. There have been many wonderful events: new friendships made and old ones reaffirmed, and the arrivals of my wonderful niece and nephews. There have also been harder periods and many people have had to deal with more serious things than a thesis of one's own devising. They have kept my moaning in perspective and so in a small way this is dedicated to them all, but in particular my wonderful cousin, Bella Cooke, another Edinburgh alumnus.

MAIN TEXTS USED AND LISTS OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TABLES

Where available I consulted the texts in the *Patrologia Latina*, *Patrologiae Graecae* (Migne's editions) and the online Latin Library. For John Chrysostom's *Letter to a Young Widow* I consulted Grillet's edition, but the translation is my own. I referred to the text of Paschoud's Budé edition for Zosimus; however, I used Ridley's English translation where I quote Zosimus directly. I note the other texts and translations used when first referred to in the thesis. In the case of any Loeb translations which I quote, these are often amended for archaisms. Below are a list of the abbreviations for the texts that I consult. These are mainly based on those provided by the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (Volumes 1 and 2), or the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. My abbreviations of biblical texts follow those provided by the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACO		Acts of the Ecumenical Councils.
Agnellus		Agnellus, <i>The Book of Pontiffs of the Church of Ravenna</i> .
Ambr.	<i>De Obit. Theod.</i>	Ambrose, <i>Funeral Oration for Theodosius</i> .
	<i>De Obit. Val.</i>	Ambrose, <i>Funeral Oration for Valentinian II</i> .
	<i>Ep.</i>	Ambrose, <i>Letters</i> .
Amm. Marc.		Ammianus Marcellinus.
<i>Anth. Gr.</i>		<i>The Greek Anthology</i> .
Arist.	<i>Mag. Mor.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Magna Moralia</i> .
Athan.	<i>Ap. Const.</i>	Athanasius, <i>Apology to Constantius</i> .
Aug.	<i>Civ. Dei</i>	Augustine, <i>City of God</i> .
	<i>Conf.</i>	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> .
Ausonius	<i>Grat. Act.</i>	Ausonius, <i>Gratiarum Actio</i> .
<i>Chron. Alt.</i>		<i>Chronicon Altinate</i> .
<i>Chron. Min.</i>		<i>Chronica Minora</i> .
<i>Chron. Pasch.</i>		<i>Chronicon Paschale</i> .
Cicero	<i>Tusc.</i>	<i>Tusculan Disputations</i> .
CIL		<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> .
Claud.	3Cos.	Claudian, <i>Panegyric on the Third Consulship of Honorius</i> .
	4Cos.	Claudian, <i>Panegyric on the Fourth Consulship of Honorius</i> .
	6Cos.	Claudian, <i>Panegyric on the Sixth Consulship of Honorius</i> .
	<i>Carm. Min.</i>	Claudian, <i>Shorter Poems</i> .
	<i>Epith.</i>	Claudian, <i>Epithalamium of Honorius and Maria</i> .

	<i>Eutr.</i>	Claudian, <i>Against Eutropius</i> .
	<i>Fesc.</i>	Claudian, <i>Fescennine Verses in Honour of the Marriage of Honorius</i> .
	<i>Gild.</i>	Claudian, <i>The War against Gildo</i> .
	<i>OP</i>	Claudian, <i>Panegyric on the Consuls Probinus and Olybrius</i> .
	<i>Ruf.</i>	Claudian, <i>Against Rufinus</i> .
	<i>Stil.</i>	Claudian, <i>On Stilicho's Consulship</i> .
	<i>Coll. Avell.</i>	<i>Collectio Avellana</i> .
	<i>Cons. Const.</i>	<i>Consularia Constantinopolitana</i> .
	<i>CTh.</i>	The Theodosian Code.
	<i>Dio</i>	Dio Cassius, <i>Roman History</i> .
	<i>Epit. Caes.</i>	<i>Epitome of the Caesars</i> .
	<i>Eunap. fr.</i>	Eunapius, <i>Fragments</i> .
	<i>Euseb. HE</i>	Eusebius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
	<i>V. Const.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Life of Constantine</i> .
	<i>Eutr.</i>	Eutropius, <i>Breviarium</i> .
	<i>Evagr. HE</i>	Evagrius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
	<i>Exodus</i>	Book of Exodus.
	<i>Fronto Ep.</i>	Fronto, <i>Letters</i> .
	<i>Gen.</i>	Book of Genesis.
	<i>Greg. Naz. Or.</i>	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Orations</i> .
	<i>HA.</i>	<i>Historia Augusta</i> .
	<i>Alex. Sev.</i>	<i>Life of Alexander Severus</i> .
	<i>Elagab.</i>	<i>Life of Elagabalus</i> .
	<i>Had.</i>	<i>Life of Hadrian</i> .
	<i>M. Aur.</i>	<i>Life of Marcus Aurelius</i> .
	<i>Pert.</i>	<i>Life of Pertinax</i> .
	<i>Homer Od.</i>	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> .
	<i>Hyd.</i>	Hydatius, <i>Chronicle</i> .
	<i>ILS</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i> .
	<i>Isaiah</i>	Book of Isaiah.
	<i>Jer. Chr.</i>	Jerome, <i>Chronicle</i> .
	<i>Job</i>	Book of Job.
	<i>Joh. Ant. fr.</i>	John of Antioch, <i>Fragments</i> .
	<i>Joh. Chrys. ad vid.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>Letter to a Young Widow</i> .
	<i>Ep. ad Phil. Comm.</i>	John Chrysostom, <i>On Paul's Letter to the Philippians</i> .
	<i>Joh. Mal.</i>	John Malalas, <i>Chronicle</i> .
	<i>Jord. Rom.</i>	Jordanes, <i>Romana</i> .
	<i>Julian Ep. ad Ath.</i>	Julian, <i>Letter to the Athenians</i> .
	<i>Or.</i>	Julian, <i>Orations</i> .

Juv.		Juvenal, <i>Satires</i> .
Kgs		Book of Kings.
Lact.	<i>DMP</i> .	Lactantius, <i>On the Death of the Persecutors</i> .
Leo	<i>Ep</i> .	Pope Leo I, <i>Letters</i> .
Lib.	<i>Or</i> .	Libanius, <i>Orations</i> .
<i>Lib. Pont.</i>		Book of Pontiffs.
<i>LSJ</i>		Liddell-Scott-Jones, <i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> .
Luk.		Gospel of Luke.
Macc.		Book of Maccabees.
<i>Museo Capitolini Magazin. Inv.</i>		Museo Capitolini, Magazzino de Mecenaziani inventory number.
Marcell. Com.		Marcellinus Comes, <i>Chronicle</i> .
Matt.		Gospel of Matthew.
Men. Rhet.		Menander Rhetor, <i>Basilikos Logos</i> .
Mrk		Gospel of Mark.
<i>Not. Urbs. Const.</i>		<i>Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae</i> .
Olymp.	<i>fr</i> .	Olympiodorus, <i>Fragments</i> .
<i>Origo</i>		<i>Origo Constantini imperatoris</i> .
Oros.		Orosius, <i>History Against the Pagans</i> .
Palladius	<i>Dial.</i>	Palladius, <i>Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom</i> .
<i>Pan. Lat.</i>		<i>Panegyrici Latini</i>
Paul. Nol.	<i>Ep</i> .	Paulinus of Nola, <i>Letters</i> .
	<i>Carm. in S. Feliciem</i>	Paulinus of Nola, <i>Poems to St. Felix</i> .
Paulin.	<i>V. Ambr.</i>	Paulinus of Milan, <i>Life of Ambrose</i> .
Petrus Patricius	<i>fr</i> .	Petrus Patricius, <i>Fragments</i> .
<i>PG</i>		<i>Patrologiae Graecae</i> .
Philost.		Philostorgius, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
<i>PL</i>		<i>Patrologia Latina</i> .
Pliny	<i>NH</i>	Pliny the Elder, <i>Natural History</i> .
Pliny.	<i>Pan.</i>	Pliny the Younger, <i>Panegyricus</i> .
<i>PLRE</i>		<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i> .
Plut.	<i>Marc.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Life of Marcellus</i> .
Prisc.	<i>fr</i> .	Priscus, <i>Fragment</i> .
Pseudo-Martyrius		Pseudo-Martyrius, <i>Funerary Speech</i> .
<i>RE</i>		<i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> .
<i>Res Gest.</i>		Augustus, <i>Res Gestae</i> .
<i>RIC</i>		<i>Roman Imperial Coinage</i> .
<i>RPC</i>		<i>Roman Provincial Coinage</i> .
Ruf.	<i>HE</i>	Rufinus, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
Sen.	<i>Polyb.</i>	Seneca, <i>Consolation to Polybius</i> .

Sid. Ap.	<i>Ep.</i>	Sidonius Apollinaris, <i>Letters</i> .
Soc.		Socrates, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
Soz.		Sozomen, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
Stat.	<i>Silv.</i>	Statius, <i>Silvae</i> .
Suet.	<i>Aug.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Augustus</i> .
	<i>Calig.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Gaius</i> .
	<i>Claud.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Claudius</i> .
	<i>Dom.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Domitian</i> .
	<i>Galb.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Galba</i> .
	<i>Jul. Caes.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Julius Caesar</i> .
	<i>Nero</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Nero</i> .
	<i>Tib.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Tiberius</i> .
	<i>Titus</i>	Suetonius, <i>Life of Titus</i> .
Sulp. Sev.	<i>Chron.</i>	Sulpicius Severus, <i>Chronicle</i> .
	<i>Dial.</i>	Sulpicius Severus, <i>Dialogues</i> .
Symm.	<i>Rel.</i>	Symmachus, <i>Relationes</i> .
Tac.	<i>Ann.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> .
	<i>Hist.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Histories</i> .
Them.	<i>Or.</i>	Themistius, <i>Orations</i> .
Theod.	<i>HE</i>	Theodoret, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> .
Theoph.		Theophanes, <i>Chronicles</i> .
<i>V. Mel.</i>		<i>Life of Saint Melania</i> .
Vell. Pat.		Velleius Paterculus.
Zon.		Zonaras.
Zos.		Zosimus, <i>New History</i> .

TABLES¹

Table 1: Emperors, Caesars and imperial women (284-324AD).

Table 2: Emperors, Caesars and imperial women (324-364AD).

Table 3: Emperors, Caesars and imperial women (364-378AD).

Table 4: Emperors, Caesars and imperial women (378-392AD).

Table 5: Emperors, Caesars and imperial women (392-457AD).

Table 6: Structure proposed by Menander Rhetor's Βασιλικὸς Λόγος, and the structures of Julian's *Oration 3* and *Oration 1*.

Table 7: Structure proposed by Menander Rhetor's Βασιλικὸς Λόγος, and the structures of Claudian's *Laus Serenae* and Julian's *Oration 3*.

Table 8: Possible combination of living emperors in John Chrysostom's *Letter to a Young Widow*.

Table 9: Possible identities of the imperial women in John Chrysostom's *Letter to a Young Widow*.

¹ Tables 1-5 are also given in Appendix Three as a compilation.

INTRODUCTION

My thesis considers the roles of imperial women in the later Roman Empire. My main focus is the period from Constantine I to Valentinian III (306-455). Much of what makes the study of imperial dynasties in the fourth and fifth centuries so fascinating is equally a source of frustration. The narratives for imperial women in this period typify this incongruity. Over the course of the Constantinian, Valentinianic and Theodosian dynasties there were many important developments in the empire, its administration, and the emperor's own role. These developments impacted upon imperial women's roles, and how these were perceived in later literary narratives within the period. The nature of sources changes too: the flourishing of imperial panegyrics, the Theodosian Code, fifth-century ecclesiastical histories and much later chronicles. Yet even when literary and material evidence are combined, the study of imperial women is one of the many topics in the period where there are substantial gaps. These lacunae make it difficult to establish how women's positions developed as the emperor's own role was renegotiated over the course of the century and a half.

My thesis aims to trace women's roles through these changes, and their changing portrayals, and establish how these roles relate to the broader political context. For the majority of the fourth century, the emperor was required to perform an active military role in civil wars and on threatened frontiers, which meant he was often apart from his female relatives. The Tetrarchy established a college of emperors who ruled over a divided empire alongside each other: their alliances were confirmed by the women to whom they were married, but who otherwise barely featured in imperial presentation. The dynastic principle was re-established by Constantine I, whose patronage of Christianity informed the roles of his female relatives and imperial presentation in general. The succeeding Valentinianic dynasty reconfirmed the East/West divide of the Tetrarchy, but without subordinate Caesars. The division of empire was consolidated by the succession of Theodosius I's young sons, Arcadius and Honorius, at the turn of the fifth century. By the time of their accessions the role of emperor had already been transformed from a military to a court-based figure. Such a figure, therefore, had to find innovative means to display

his authority in the absence of military victories, and often focused on displaying Christian piety. Women's roles in such displays redefined their value to the court, where all members of the imperial family were now resident – in close proximity to the emperor. In the fifth century, all of Theodosius II's sisters took vows of virginity; this demonstrated their religious faith, but also protected his position as a young court-based figure potentially at the mercy of local ambitious parties. Such Christian roles evolved and were reinterpreted across the two centuries, driven by the constant redefinition of what was viewed as orthodox Christianity, while also governed by contemporary political concerns.

Alongside these internal changes to the imperial office, external pressures reduced the physical territory of the empire itself, particularly in the West, which experienced a succession of usurpations. Both parts of the empire were affected by the Hunnic Empire. Moreover, Gothic and Vandal groups were able to acquire territories within the Roman Empire, and, in the case of the former, could be recruited into the imperial military. Imperial women are often marginalised in narratives of such military matters. However, some of the limited information we have about lesser-known women is from their appearances at such points of crisis: most dramatically, the forced marriages of two fifth-century imperial women to leaders of the Goths and Vandals respectively following two sacks of Rome.

Amidst these different narratives, the roles of imperial women have only fairly recently been reconsidered in modern scholarship. In a recent article, James summarised why they are often overlooked: their literary portrayals reduce them to 'ciphers' of the emperors.² Certain women of the late antique court draw attention in the general historical narrative and become the focus of their own individual studies. Galla Placidia, who held a variety of roles at the fifth-century western court, dominates in terms of individual biographies.³ The later canonisation of Helena, mother of Constantine I, made her an intriguing subject for the biographical examination of Drijvers, who calibrates the political purpose of her religious role,

² James (2013), 112, argues that their political value cannot be discerned from such distorting literary presentations. I do not agree and intend to demonstrate why in the case studies of Part Two.

³ See Oost (1968), Sirago (1996) and Sivan (2011).

and traces the development of her legendary discovery of the True Cross.⁴ There have also been articles regarding specific aspects of other women's lives: in particular, Tougher's work on Eusebia's presentation in Julian's panegyric and Ammianus Marcellinus' history – two key contemporary sources for the fourth century.⁵ The death of Constantine's wife Fausta has also attracted much debate.⁶ Her death provides a microcosm for the frustrating nature of many literary accounts for imperial women of the late antique period. Constantine's contemporary dominance influenced writers at the time, while the most detailed narratives of her death were written much later and were clearly shaped, positively or negatively, by Constantine's role as the first Christian emperor.

The only wide-ranging general overview of imperial women is Temporini's edited volume, which provides an impressive range of concise biographies for imperial women from the period of Augustus to Justinian.⁷ Given the broad scope of the survey and the concise aim of each section, this work provides a good introduction to these figures, rather than a detailed analysis of their roles within the changing political context, which a more restricted timeframe would allow.⁸ Recently, scholars have made insightful observations about specific trends in the roles of women during the late antique period. Of particular interest are Longo's late antique numismatic survey, Harries' chapter and article (focusing on neglected fourth-century women), Brubaker on later imitation of Helena's Christian role, and Lenski on independent travel, which was a new development in the period.⁹ These diverse studies on a variety of different subjects have shown that there are many areas open

⁴ Drijvers (1992a). He has recently revisited his subject in an article – (2011).

⁵ Tougher (1998a) and (1998b), considers her presentation in Julian's panegyric; in (2000), he addresses her paradoxical presentation within Ammianus' narrative.

⁶ Her death is the specific focus of Desnier (1987), Woods (1998) and Potter (2011). Her death is also considered in a wider context by Guthrie (1966), Austin (1980), Pohlsander (1984), and Varner (2004); as well as Drijvers (1992a) and James (2013).

⁷ Temporini (2002a); the relevant chapters in the collection are by Clauss (2002a) and (2002b). For a more skeletal delineation of both emperors and empresses throughout the imperial period see Kienast (2004).

⁸ Kolb (2010), 1-22, has developed Temporini's wide-ranging approach in her more recent volume. Part two of the work considers the effect of the political context on the roles of Augustae: 91-236. The chapter by Wieber on Julian's *Oration 3* is the only one to discuss the fourth century: see Chapter Three.

⁹ Longo (2009), Harries (2012), 257-73 and (2014), Brubaker (1997), and Lenski (2004).

for discussion when exploring imperial women's roles, in contrast with the first impression given by the piecemeal information in primary sources.

The single most important study in terms of my thesis is Holum's 1982 book on the eastern Theodosian court. His approach considers the roles of multiple imperial women, with a specific focus on the female relatives of Theodosius II, in particular the emperor's sister, Pulcheria. However, little attempt has been made to build on Holum's analysis by considering the women of other fourth- and fifth-century courts, which preceded, or were contemporary to, Holum's topic. My thesis seeks to complement Holum's study by looking at the less public roles played by other women of the Theodosian dynasty, as well as those in the fourth century, such as the peripheral figures of the Valentinianic dynasty. One important consideration is how the emperor's own role marginalised those of his female relatives in such periods, an image which contrasts with the more lively portrayals of women at Theodosius II's court.

Most general works on specific emperors have had little to say about imperial women.¹⁰ McEvoy's recent examination of child emperors of the western court emphasises the important developments in the western Valentinianic dynasty, from which the emperor emerged as a court-based figure.¹¹ This development created the later court environment that interested Holum, in which women had a prominent role to play. McEvoy's re-appreciation of the emperors' changing roles in the western Valentinianic and Theodosian dynasties confirms the need to broaden the scope of Holum's study to consider women of earlier reigns. This is the aim of my thesis: to consider the roles of imperial women over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries against the larger changes in the imperial court and the political concerns of the period. My particular focus will be the imperial women who are generally neglected in modern scholarship: those in the intervening period between Helena, mother of

¹⁰ Harries (2012), 257-73 and (2014), has made the most inroads into the relatively uncharted fourth century, focusing on later Constantinian women. Williams and Friell (1999), 47-56, offer the most sympathetic reading of women's imprint on court politics within a general narrative, but the scope of their study focuses on the women already analysed in detail by Holum, whose influence they acknowledge (48 n.5).

¹¹ McEvoy's monograph (2013a) expands ideas she presented in an earlier article (2010).

Constantine I, and the multiple women of Theodosius II's court, who were the main interest for Holum. A study of such figures is long overdue.

This thesis aims to provide a re-appreciation of imperial women's roles at the court. I also aim to shed light on the political concerns at the time the women were alive, and the concerns which were contemporary to the period of composition (still within the timeframe of my thesis) of later narratives. These retrospective interpretations of earlier women's roles were informed by the prominence of imperial women at the time such sources were written: such as the anachronistic use of the term *Augusta* by the fifth-century ecclesiastical historian Philostorgius for the fourth-century women, Constantina and Justina – women who never received formal titles.

I also contextualise women's roles in terms of the earlier imperial period. Late antique imperial women continued to play the same important role in dynastic continuation, which they had performed throughout Roman imperial history. However, the simple matter of succession was more complex in the fourth and fifth centuries with the consolidation, bar some isolated reigns, of an imperial college of emperors who presided over a divided empire. This provided many points of conflict – regardless of whether the emperors themselves were related. Despite this clear disjuncture, the college was presented as a harmonious unit in between eruptions of military discord. It is in the periods of perceived harmony where an examination of the roles of women can particularly benefit the study of late antique imperial history. Women were often vital to an emperor's claims to legitimacy. Therefore the role they played can indicate what their specific value was to the idiosyncratic concerns of each regime. At the same time, women's appearances in both literary and material evidence often hint at the subversive undercurrents within the colleges, which are otherwise glossed over by contemporary propaganda, or warped by later hostile accounts.

The study of this period is exciting, because there is so much scope to investigate the constantly changing political situation. A comprehensive examination of the roles of imperial women across the fourth and fifth centuries offers a fresh perspective by which to gauge the political climate that dictated both women's contemporary roles and later interpretations of them. My analysis of the three late antique dynasties

allows for comparisons between East and West as these administrative (and sometimes religious) divisions within the empire became more entrenched.

My thesis is divided into two parts, with Part One (Historical Overview and Models) establishing the chronological context. Chapter One sets out the framework for the rest of my analysis with an overview of imperial women's roles from Augustus to the establishment of the Tetrarchy. This chapter is divided into six sections, which informs the structure of the rest of my thesis: nomenclature, coinage, patronage, travel, literary portraits, and finally exiles and violent deaths. Chapter Two provides a historical survey of the evidence for imperial women from 306 to 455: from Constantine's proclamation as Augustus to the end of the Theodosian dynasty. I then consider women's roles in terms of the first four sections approached in Chapter One: nomenclature, coinage, patronage and travel. From this analysis, I establish how women's roles developed from pre-existing models and how they were reshaped in consideration of the larger changes that were taking place.

In Part Two (Praise, Criticism and Mischance), I analyse in more detail the remaining areas that were addressed for the earlier imperial period in Chapter One: literary portrayals and loss of imperial protection. Literary depictions warrant a focused analysis due to the clear change in the nature of the relevant sources. Meanwhile a survey of women who were no longer considered useful to the court exposes the limits of their value in a regime. In Chapter Three I consider the positive literary presentations of imperial women, my main focus being a comparative study of two women who were each the subject of their own panegyric: Eusebia and Serena. These women are the earliest female protagonists of extant panegyrics, an important literary genre for the late antique period. These works offer a rare contemporary literary perspective on women's roles. I then examine the posthumous reception of Helena, mother of Constantine I, in the later Theodosian dynasty, which confirmed her as a paragon of imperial female piety. I look at the motivations for such presentations, which were shaped by the prominent women at Theodosius II's court.

In Chapter Four I turn to negative portrayals, specifically the narratives for the disputes between imperial women and local bishops: Justina vs. Ambrose in the West,

and Eudoxia vs. John Chrysostom in the East. This comparative examination allows me to explore women's roles at different stages in the evolution of the court-based emperor, and in terms of the different political concerns faced by the western and eastern courts, as well as the impact of women's different Christian beliefs on their later literary portrayals. I also determine how these negative depictions obscure the political value that the women's actions offered the imperial court. An examination of the women who lost imperial protection in Chapter Five contextualises the other case studies of Part Two. This chapter offers a counterpoint to the study of the praise women received (Chapter Three), and the later negative perceptions of roles which had been deemed useful to the court (Chapter Four).

In my conclusion, Chapter Six, I discern how women's presentation changed in accordance with the transformation of the emperor's position and the empire itself. I establish how radical such changes were when viewed alongside women's roles in the earlier imperial period. I will then consider how my study in a transformative period of Roman imperial history can be developed and used when exploring other areas of imperial politics.

An investigation into the presentation of late antique imperial women offers a fresh perspective on the relationships within the imperial college, an emperor's local concerns, and the changes that were taking place in the wider political landscape. The potential of such a study has so far not been fully appreciated, and western women of the fourth century in particular have been neglected. My thesis seeks to rectify this by showing the potential of such an approach for our wider understanding of the machinations of imperial politics in Late Antiquity and the value of imperial women in this landscape.

PART ONE
CONTEXT
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND MODELS

CHAPTER ONE

ROLE MODELS: EARLIER IMPERIAL WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

Because I have an equal share in your blessings and your ills, and as long as you are safe I also have my part in reigning, whereas if you come to any harm, (which Heaven forbid!), I shall perish with you.
Dio, 55.16.2

In this speech that Livia delivers to Augustus in Dio's history, Livia identifies her interests as inherently bound up with her husband's. The speech conveys the concept of how narratives featuring imperial women served as a commentary, positive or negative, on the respective emperor's rule. All the women of the fourth and fifth century who are considered in this thesis inherited certain expectations of their position from earlier women in terms of their presentation, as is manifest in both the literary and material sources. However, even imperial women's roles in the preceding centuries varied depending on the particular issues faced by the emperors to whom such women were adjuncts: such issues as dynastic establishment or consolidation. A brief overview of the first three centuries of Roman imperial women will set out the key parameters by which they were defined in relation to the court. From this I can then set out what continuities and changes can be anticipated in the timeframe of my thesis. The key areas I will focus on in this chapter are nomenclature (section 1.1), coinage (1.2), patronage (1.3), travel (1.4), literary portrayals (1.5), and finally exiles and violent deaths (1.6).

Nomenclature, in particular the title of Augusta, is useful in determining trends in female presentation and how this reflected the immediate political context. Coinage presents a key facet of material evidence both for women who were Augustae, and other imperial women. Individual acts of patronage provide an opportunity to view how much independence an imperial woman could possess, and how such displays compared to official messages conveyed through nomenclature and coinage. The section on travel considers the location of imperial women in relation to the emperor: in particular, how this varied depending on their relationship to him and where he travelled. The last two sections provide the opportunity to view a negative

counterbalance to the positive promotion of women in terms of nomenclature, coinage and patronage. Literary presentation often takes the form of a later assessment of the relevant emperor's reign, presenting certain imperial women as overstepping acceptable expectations for their gender through their proximity to the centre of power. Accounts of exiles and violent deaths provide valuable insight into the treatment incurred by imperial women when they were deemed to have deviated from acceptable female roles.

Each of these sections reveals the different roles that imperial women could play for specific audiences. Looking at the development of each area individually across the three centuries, I will then consider how such roles developed: generally as the dynastic principle became established; and specifically in relation to the different succession issues faced by each emperor. The first four sections show the positive representations of nomenclature, coinage and patronage, as well as their roles and locations. The last two sections, by contrast, examine negative perspectives. These areas display diverse facets of imperial women's presentation, contemporaneous and later, demonstrating both the historical reality of their roles, and the often pejorative depictions that appear when they no longer filled their ideological all-important positions.

1.1 NOMENCLATURE

Of all the titles given to women, *Augusta*, as the female equivalent of *Augustus*, presents the best opportunity to see who were considered the most important women of an emperor's family, and how their value developed once the dynastic principle became confirmed. I will first examine the honours Octavian gave to the women of his incipient court, before looking at the later awards of the title *Augusta*.¹² I will then examine other important honours, in particular the title *mater castrorum*, which became a regular part of women's nomenclature from the end of the second century until the Tetrarchy. Finally, I will consider which women were deified across the three centuries and how these compare to the honours given to imperial women in their lifetimes.

¹² Kienast (2004), succinctly sets out *Augustae* (and other honours) from the Julio-Claudian dynasty to the early Theodosian dynasty; for my occasional disagreements with his assessment in Late Antiquity see section 2.3. Kolb (2010), 23-35, provides an even longer list of potential *Augustae*.

1.1.1 Honourable Women: Octavia and Livia

Octavian did not award titles to his wife Livia after he became Augustus (16 January 27 BC); however, he had granted special privileges, approved by the senate, to both his wife and his sister, Octavia, in 35 BC. In this year he gave them financial independence through the grant of the tribunician power *sacrosanctitas*, a male privilege which had only previously been extended to Vestal Virgins.¹³ Augustus also drew on the reverence for these priestesses, perhaps the most publicly visible women at Rome, by later extending some of their other rights to Octavia and Livia as well: such as the use of a *carpentum* and special seating privileges at games.¹⁴ These priestesses presented the acceptable face of women in a public role, because if a woman's public exaltation appeared divorced from the field of religion it reflected poorly on their male associates: such as the image of Cleopatra in Rome, which Octavian would have been conscious to avoid when he honoured his female kin. It is interesting to note that this first set of honours was given to both Octavian's wife and sister. At the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty imperial wives were more consistently given public honours than their sisters-in-law.

Having granted Octavia and Livia the rights concomitant with revered priestesses in Rome, Augustus then gave to Livia in 9 BC the same privileges as those permitted for mothers with three children by the *ius liberorum*, complementing his earlier marriage legislation, *lex Iulia et Papia* (19-18 BC).¹⁵ This privilege showed how Augustus used public honours for the women of his family for specifically calculated political aims and to set them up as examples to the populace. These unprecedented honours had real benefits for Octavia and Livia; however, although the first title of Augusta was only given during Tiberius' reign, it was dictated by Augustus' will.

¹³ Their privileges are outlined by Dio, 56.47.1-2. Boatwright (1991), 519, describes this edict as 'quite unusual and a mark of honour'. She also describes how Livia in AD 9 was permitted by Augustus to inherit in excess of the sum prescribed for elite women by the *lex Voconia* in 169 BC. Both women would use their financial independence to fund public acts of patronage: see section 1.3.1. Antonia Minor was later granted the same privileges by Gaius: Suet. *Calig.* 15.2 and Dio, 59.3.4; see also Kokkinos (1992), 27.

¹⁴ These two honours were later awarded to Messalina and Agrippina the Younger under Claudius: Dio, 50.22.2 and 61.33. For further discussion see Boatwright (1991), 518-9.

¹⁵ See Dio, 55.2.5-7. The honours for Octavia in 35 BC may well have been because of her dynastic function as the mistreated wife of Mark Antony, since she did not receive this later honour that was given to Livia. For the motivations behind the honours of 35 BC see Temporini (2002b), and Kleiner (2005), 252.

1.1.2 Augusta

The female derivation of the title Augustus, although without the express conferral of power denoted by the masculine form, was given to Livia in accordance with Augustus' will by her son, Tiberius, in AD 14.¹⁶ Augustus' bequest of a new title to his widow and her adoption into the Julian family (becoming Julia Augusta) may have had personal meaning, but it also carried a political benefit for his successor, Tiberius. Livia's adoption meant that Tiberius was now a descendant of the Julian *gens* on both sides, and the title advertised continuity with Augustus' regime.¹⁷ However, Tiberius did refuse other honours for his mother from the senate, including *mater patriae*.¹⁸ Tiberius' reluctance was interpreted by later sources, when the title Augusta had become a standard part of nomenclature, as hostility towards his mother.¹⁹ However, the title Augusta itself was unprecedented, and the status and privileges it entailed were ill-defined, which led to apparent conflict between Livia and Tiberius.²⁰ Any further titles would not have been in keeping with the conservative presentation of Tiberius' own authority or the precedent set by Augustus, whose privileges granted to Octavia and Livia were already given to the most public of senatorial women in Rome, the Vestal Virgins.²¹

Tiberius had no consort as emperor; and his successor Gaius did not give any of his wives the title Augusta. However, Gaius did grant other honours to his sisters (including the first deification of an imperial woman – Drusilla). He gave the title Augusta to his paternal grandmother, Antonia the Younger, signifying that the

¹⁶ This process is narrated by Tac. *Ann.* 1.8.1; Suet. *Aug.* 101.2; and Vell. Pat. 2.75.3. She became a priestess of Augustus' cult; see section 1.1.3. Barrett (2002), 312-3, provides an overview of the award of the title Augusta in the Julio-Claudian dynasty, while Levick (2007), 57-73 and Kolb (2010), 14-22, discuss the award in more general terms and consider to what extent a woman could have real power. See also Kienast (2004), 54-8.

¹⁷ Barrett (2002), 148-59, sets out the complexity of the situation; at 141 he describes the benefits Livia's adoption provided for her son's position.

¹⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 1.14.1-3. Dio, 58.2.3, describes the senate nevertheless referring to Livia as *mater patriae* after her death. The title would later be formerly given to Julia Domna; see 1.1.3.

¹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.14.1-3, describes the reasons Tiberius gave the senate for refusing her further honours: they would not be commensurate with the honours he gave to himself.

²⁰ Suet. *Tib.* 50.2-3 and Tac. *Ann.* 1.14.2, at least present this as a point of conflict. Barrett (2002) 150-9, describes the difficulties presented by the unprecedented title and the division between Tiberius and the senate over the variety of new honours proposed for Livia.

²¹ Flory (1993), 305-6, demonstrates that Tiberius' restraint in terms of female honours was in imitation of Augustus, rather than because he disliked his mother.

appellation was no longer a special designation for Augustus' widow alone.²² Agrippina the Younger, Claudius' fourth wife, was the first consort of an emperor to receive the title in her husband's lifetime, which was given when he adopted her son Nero.²³ Just as Livia's award of the title augmented the legitimacy of Tiberius' succession, the same mentality can be seen behind Agrippina gaining the title thirty-five years later. Claudius' rule always appeared fragile: he had been overlooked for public office until Gaius' reign, was aged 51 when he was unexpectedly made Augustus, and (unlike his two predecessors) he could not claim descent from Augustus himself.²⁴ It was in this last area that his marriage to Agrippina helped because she was of Julian ancestry, hence the variety of honours given to her as his wife.²⁵

Nero's second wife, Poppaea, was the first Augusta who was not descended from the Julio-Claudian dynasty.²⁶ This second grant of the title Augusta to an emperor's wife did not set a precedent after the end of the dynasty. This was partly happenstance since, after the civil wars of 69, the succeeding Flavian dynasty lacked women.²⁷ Vespasian's wife and daughter, both called Domitilla, died before his accession, but it appears that he did make one of them Augusta posthumously.²⁸

²² There is debate over whether she was given this title posthumously (she died in AD 37): Kokkinos (1992), 27-8, is ambivalent; for opposing views on the matter compare Kienast (2003), 88-9, and Brennan (2007), 21. Barrett (2002), 324-5, notes that the first confirmation of the title is a posthumous reference made in a fragment of an inscription of the Arval Brethren. Hemelrijk (1991), 111, asserts that, like other imperial women, she was recognised as Augusta in some provinces in her lifetime. Levick (2012), 46, suggests Gaius was dissuaded from making his sister, Drusilla, Augusta because her husband would then have warranted honours too.

²³ Tacitus, *Ann.* 12.26.1.

²⁴ Levick (2012), 41-8, sets out Claudius' position when he came to power.

²⁵ Osgood (2011), 211-23, describes Agrippina's politically useful descent and how this worked to her benefit against Messalina; see also Kienast (2004), 55. Osgood, 207, and Levick (2012), 55-7, set out Messalina's own good connections.

²⁶ Her daughter, Claudia, received the title posthumously; Kienast (2004), 55, argues that Claudia's death was a reason for Poppaea's investiture with the title. Nero's first wife, Octavia, in spite of being the daughter of his predecessor, was not made Augusta. Statilia Messalina, Nero's last wife, is recorded on a couple of provincial inscriptions as Augusta, *ILS* 8794 (on which the name is erased) and *RPC* 1.2061, but these are not firm indications that it was an official title: see Burnett (2011), 1-30, for this common discrepancy between provincial and centrally produced coinage. Kienast (2004), 100, attributes the title to her, but it is unclear on what basis.

²⁷ Vitellius possibly made his mother Sextilia an Augusta in 69: Kienast (2004), 106.

²⁸ Kienast (2004), 113-14, is ambivalent about the identification. Levick (2014), 35, argues that Vespasian made his wife Augusta posthumously in order to benefit his sons. Mattingly (1926), 114, also thinks the Domitilla is Vespasian's wife. I am inclined to agree based on *RIC* 2.69, which commemorates the deified Vespasian and Domitilla with a legend that is evocative of the commemorative issue struck by Claudius for Augustus and Livia, *RIC* 1.101; compare the legends

Titus had no consort in the two years he was Augustus. However, he did make Julia Titi, Augusta, only the second daughter to receive the title and the first while still alive.²⁹ In contrast to Julio-Claudian practice, this award to Julia arose from her kinship to the emperor, rather than asserting his legitimacy.³⁰ Domitian gave the title Augusta to his wife, Domitia Longina, and together with Julia Titi, his niece, they became the first multiple Augustae at court, a situation replicated during Trajan's reign after Nerva's brief spell as Augustus.

In his panegyric delivered early in Trajan's reign, Pliny celebrates the emperor's restraint in awarding the title Augusta as emblematic of his traditional ideals and a break with the practices of Domitian (*Pan.* 84.6-9).³¹ Such restraint clearly did not continue to seem beneficial: Trajan's wife, Pompeia Plotina, his sister, Ulpia Marciana, and niece, Matidia the elder, were all Augustae in their lifetimes and posthumously *divae*.³² Like the award to Julia Titi, the position of Trajan's sister, Marciana, was because she was his relative, rather than reinforcing his ties to his predecessor, which was often the case in the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Her daughter, Matidia the Elder, also received the title, because she represented the future of the dynasty as the only progeny.³³

Trajan's wife Plotina continued to be honoured by his successor Hadrian, who gave her a public funeral to complement the posthumous honours he had also paid to Trajan.³⁴ This was a more typical example of a ruler legitimizing his own position by finding ways to honour his predecessor, in this case via Plotina. Hadrian also made his own wife, Sabina, Augusta, who, as Trajan's great niece, strengthened her husband's relationship to his immediate predecessor. The title thereafter became a

DIVUS AUGUSTUS/DIVA AUGUSTA and DIVUS VESPASIANUS/ DIVA DOMITILLA AUGUSTA. The recent assessment by Wood (2010), 45-51, concludes that it is Vespasian's wife who features on the coinage of both Titus and Domitian.

²⁹ Nero's daughter, Claudia, had received the title posthumously – see footnote 26. Julia Titi appears as Augusta on coinage struck by Titus: for example, *RIC* 2.55b.

³⁰ Similarly, Trajan awarded the title to his sister Marciana. Kienast (2004), 114, suggests Julia was made Augusta before she married her cousin T. Flavius Sabinus.

³¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 84.8 (discussed at 1.5.1). Pliny delivered his panegyric when he was made suffect consul in AD 100.

³² Kienast (2004), 125-7, sets out the honours for Marciana, Plotina and Matidia.

³³ Her daughter, Sabina, married Trajan's eventual successor Hadrian in ca. 100.

³⁴ Dio, 69.10.3.

regular part of nomenclature for emperors' wives throughout the rest of the imperial period, until the Tetrarchy.³⁵

As well as Trajan's widespread use of the title in the absence of his own heirs, Antoninus' daughter, Faustina the Younger, became Augusta before her husband Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus' Caesar, was appointed Augustus.³⁶ She received the award upon the birth of their first child, a daughter, and so the title seemed to advertise the stability of the dynasty, which had been achieved through her marriage.³⁷ The last two Augustae were given their titles upon their marriages to men who had already been appointed Augusti by Marcus: his daughter, Lucilla, wife of Lucius Verus; and later Bruttia Crispina, the wife of Commodus – Marcus' son.³⁸ While Faustina the Younger's award had signified Marcus as her father's future successor, Lucilla's and especially Bruttia Crispina's award seemed driven less by political context than recent habit.

Following the Antonine precedent, all the wives of the Severan emperors were made Augustae.³⁹ Elagabalus and Severus Alexander were only related to the founding dynast via his marriage to Julia Domna. The importance of this cognate descent from their grandmother Julia Maesa, Domna's sister, was reflected in Elagabalus'

³⁵ So far in this overview Titus was the only son to succeed his father, and he was no longer married when he became emperor; however, he did give the title to his daughter and strike coinage for both her and the deified Domitilla.

³⁶ Antoninus' wife, Faustina the Elder, was also made Augusta. Faustina's receipt of the title, while Marcus was Caesar, was an innovative way by her father, Antoninus, to signify his successor. Marcus himself was given tribunician power and proconsular imperium: see Temporini (2002c), 234. There was no expectation for Marcus to be made co-Augustus; he was the first to do so with his appointment of Lucius Verus, who, as Antoninus' other Caesar, had not received the same honours as Marcus: see Levick (2014), 62-3 and 67-72.

³⁷ Temporini (2002c), 233-4, discusses the impact of this award, comparing her central position within the family to that of Julia the Elder, Marciana and Matidia, who all functioned as mediators of power, legitimizing positions. Corbier (1995), 181-6, analyses the Julio-Claudian women who were 'vehicles of power' through their marriages.

³⁸ Lucius Verus became Augustus in 161 and married Lucilla in 163. Bruttia Crispina was made Augusta in 178 when she married Commodus, the year after his appointment to Augustus by Marcus.

³⁹ These were Julia Domna (Severus' wife), Plautilla (Caracalla's wife), Julia Cornelia Paula, Julia Aquilia Severa and Annia Aurelia Faustina (Elagabalus' three wives), and lastly Sallustia Barbia Orbiana (Alexander Severus' wife). Levick (2014), 7, and Gorrie (2004), 63-4, discuss how Domna's public image was modelled on Faustina. Immediately preceding the Severan dynasty, Didius Julianus made both his wife (Manlia Scantilla) and daughter (Didia Clara) Augusta: *RIC* 4.7 and 9 respectively. Julianus' predecessor, Pertinax, did not give his wife, Flavia Titiana, the title: Dio, 74.7.1-2 and *HA. Pert.* 13.7, write that he rejected the title, which the senate proposed. For further discussion of Pertinax's restraint see Langford (2013), 15. Flavia Titiana is styled as Augusta on a provincial inscription: *ILS* 410 (Belgica).

and Alexander's other distributions of the title Augusta. As well as the expected award to their wives, Elagabalus' mother, Julia Soaemias, Alexander's mother, Julia Mamaea, and the grandmother, Julia Maesa, were all made Augustae. Such wide use of the title served to emphasise dynastic continuity when once again there was no direct male descent.

The deployment of the title Augusta seemed most often associated with the idea of dynastic consolidation when this appeared to be at risk. In these terms it is not surprising that until the late third century the title continued to be given to emperors' wives. These awards were not comprehensive, but only four emperors in this period who reigned for more than a year did not take such a step.⁴⁰ This is a small number in comparison with the emperors reigning for more than a year, who did create Augustae: the last being Magnia Urbica, wife of Carinus. Given the fairly frequent distribution of the title, in spite of rapid regime change in the second half of the third century, it is more surprising in the Tetrarchy to find that the emperors did not make their female relatives Augustae.⁴¹

1.1.3 Other Honours

As well as being made Augusta in her husband's will, another important honour for Livia, which Tiberius did permit, was that she became a priestess of Augustus' cult.⁴² Her role as priestess entailed further privileges, including the attendance of a lictor when she carried out her responsibilities.⁴³ Livia provided a short-term precedent for such a role, which did not extend beyond the Julio-Claudian dynasty: Antonia the Younger was also made a priestess of Augustus' cult (by Gaius) and Agrippina was

⁴⁰ The emperors whose reigns lasted more than year (but who did not create any Augusta that we know) were: Trebonianus Gallus, Claudius Gothicus, Tacitus, and Probus. For an overview of the late third-century Augustae see Kienast (2004), 181-262; it was rarer in the Gallic Empire (Kienast, 56-7).

⁴¹ This period will be discussed in Chapter Two.

⁴² Vell. Pat. 2.75.3, summarises Livia's progression from Augustus' wife to his *sacerdos* and *filia*.

⁴³ Dio, 56.46.1-2. Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.14.2, suggests Tiberius denied the attendance of the lictors to her; however, Barrett (2002), 161, argues this is a deliberate misrepresentation and that she was permitted lictors when performing her role as priestess. Barrett, 159-61, outlines the position's privileges, which once again were based on those of the Vestal Virgins. He makes the valid point that this shows Tiberius gave his mother an official role in the public presentation of his reign. See also Grether (1946), 235-6.

made a priestess for her deceased husband Claudius.⁴⁴ These displays of familial devotion by women to deceased Augusti reflected favourably on the new ruler (who were for both Livia and Agrippina their sons; and for Antonia her grandson). This new position also benefitted the senate, who voted for such honours as it provided an indirect way of expressing loyalty to the current regime, cloaked in an act of remembrance.⁴⁵

Livia's and Agrippina's roles as priestesses of their husbands' cults celebrated their conjugal relationship, but profited their sons' reigns.⁴⁶ In the second century the public presentation of imperial women's maternal role was emphasised for Faustina the Younger. Not only were new coin types produced for the birth of each of her many children, but she was also the first woman to receive the title *mater castrorum*, given when she was with Marcus on campaign.⁴⁷ This title then became a standard part of nomenclature for emperor's wives until Valeria during the Tetrarchy. Severus augmented this title for Julia Domna by adding other maternal-themed titulature: *mater caesaris*, *mater augusti et caesaris*, *mater augustorum*, *pia felix mater augusti/imperatoris*, as well as *mater castrorum et senatus et patriae*.⁴⁸

This variety of honours did not continue, in the same form at least, in the late antique period; however, the more rarefied honour of renaming of towns did.⁴⁹ Livia was the first honoured by renaming two towns after her: Liviopolis (in Pontus) and Livias (in

⁴⁴ Hemelrijk (2007), 319-20, discusses this role for the three women (Agrippina was the last imperial woman to perform the role). A coin reverse for Antonia celebrates her position as the cult's priestess (*RIC* 1.67). Kienast (2004), 94, discusses the title *mater Augusti flaminica divi Claudii*.

⁴⁵ Hemelrijk (2007), 318-49, provides an overview of western provincial priestesses of the imperial cult (in Rome the role was reserved exclusively for imperial women). The main thrust of Hemelrijk's argument is that the presentation of empresses in this role influenced the practice for priestesses in the provinces in terms of attire and ritual – although she bases this on what she acknowledges is a limited amount of evidence: 323-4.

⁴⁶ According to Flory (1993), 299-301, motherhood was a key element of Augustan propaganda featuring imperial women.

⁴⁷ Boatwright (2003), 250, contrasts the title's military connotations with Faustina's general presentation, which emphasised 'her fecundity and domesticity'; at 259-64, she also points out that the idea of women's involvement in military matters normally carried negative associations. Examining the numismatic and epigraphic evidence, Langford (2013), 31-2, 36-8 and 47, concludes that the award to Faustina and Julia Domna, despite its military connotations, was directed at the civilian populace in Rome. By granting the title to Domna, Severus probably was imitating the nomenclature given to Faustina, as part of his reverence for the Antonine dynasty; Severus himself was retrospectively adopted into the dynasty.

⁴⁸ Langford's main focus is the presentation of Julia Domna's maternal role to different strata of society: she summarises her purpose at (2013), 5-6.

⁴⁹ See 3.2 for the renaming of a Pontic diocese for Eusebia.

Judea).⁵⁰ Faustinopolis was renamed by Marcus Aurelius upon the death of his wife, but other manifestations often appeared within an empress' lifetime. Tacitus describes Agrippina engineering a further honour for herself by renaming a colony (*Ann.* 12.27.1):

But Agrippina, to display her influence to the allied nations too, successfully requested that at the town of the Ubii, in which she had been born, a colony of veterans should be settled, to which the name assigned was derived from her own designation.⁵¹

In this passage the award is presented as evidence for Agrippina's manipulation of Claudius; however, this new honour also illustrates how she helped to stabilize Claudius' position. This stabilization was also the motivating factor behind awarding her the title of Augusta.⁵² Trajan also named both a city and colony after his sister Marciana; another honour from the emperor whom Pliny had praised for his restraint in distributing awards to female relatives.⁵³

1.1.4 Posthumous Honours

Like the title of Augusta, the posthumous honour *diva* was only slowly introduced in the Julio-Claudian dynasty and most widely distributed during the second century to the plethora of Augustae created in the Trajanic-Antonine period.⁵⁴ The first Augusta, Livia, was only deified by Claudius.⁵⁵ However, the first deification of an imperial woman was Drusilla by her brother Gaius, who had already honoured all his sisters on coinage.⁵⁶ While Augusta was in no way equal to the male equivalent in terms of privileges and power; *divae* were honoured with a cult just as the imperial

⁵⁰ These places are referred to in passing by Pliny, *NH* 6.11 and 13.44 respectively.

⁵¹ All translations of Tacitus' *Annales* are from Woodman (2004). The colony was at modern-day Cologne. Kolb (2010), 18-20, emphasises the importance of this passage as part of Tacitus' character sketch of Agrippina.

⁵² See 1.1.2.

⁵³ Marcianopolis is referred to by Zos. 1.42.1 and 4.10.3, although he does not give the origin of the city's name.

⁵⁴ Varner (2001), 43, lists all the deifications of imperial women in the first three centuries. Burnett (2011), 19-20, shows that women appeared more frequently as deities than their male counterparts on provincial coinage.

⁵⁵ Grether (1946), 246, argues that Claudius used his deification of Livia to promote his own legitimacy to rule (as he was her descendant, rather than Augustus'). Livia was already worshipped in the eastern provinces – see Flory (1995), 130-1.

⁵⁶ Dio, 59.11.1-5, Suet. *Calig.* 24.2 and Sen. *Polyb.* 17.5. Flory (1995), 133-4, describes the posthumous honours Drusilla received, which only lasted during Gaius' reign.

divi were.⁵⁷ Like Augustus, Livia had her own cult after her death, managed by appointed priestesses.⁵⁸ Posthumous honours were also given to the small number of Flavian women. This later dynasty deified not only Julia Titi, who had been Augusta in her lifetime, but also Flavia Domitilla (probably Vespasian's wife), who died before the family came to power.⁵⁹

In the second century, deification seemed to be an assumed posthumous honour for an Augusta, often alongside other elaborate forms of commemoration. Matidia the Elder, Trajan's niece, was the first woman to have a temple constructed specifically in her memory, which was dedicated by her son-in-law Hadrian, who also delivered her funeral eulogy.⁶⁰ Such excessive and unprecedented honours by Hadrian showed his dependence on the cognate lineage of his wife, Sabina, for his own position.⁶¹ Overt displays of commemoration were continued and developed by Antoninus Pius, who built a temple in memory of Faustina the Elder.⁶² Both Faustinae were made *divae*, and their memory was celebrated with posthumous coin issues. Antoninus and Marcus also set up charitable schemes in their wives' memories.⁶³ That such honours reached their peak in the second century was due to political circumstance, in particular, as Flory observed 'when the concept of power as family-based had emerged as an accepted principle of political life'.⁶⁴ Like the Julio-Claudian dynasty,

⁵⁷ Not all deifications were well received: for a sense of incredulity regarding Poppaea's, see Tac. *Ann.* 16.22.3.

⁵⁸ Appropriately, given her honours from Augustus, Livia's priestesses were originally Vestal Virgins. Grether (1946), 248, and Hemelrijk (2007), 11-12, discuss the priestesses who attended imperial women's cults in the provinces. The senate voted for an arch and other honours to Livia upon her death, but these were apparently prohibited by Tiberius: Dio, 58.2.3.

⁵⁹ They are described as *diva* on *RIC* 2.70 and 219.

⁶⁰ Hadrian's eulogy for her is preserved on *CIL* 14.3579, which also mentions his wife Sabina in line 5, thereby emphasising the familial connection. Trajan had already given his sister, Marciana, a public funeral. Kokkinos (1992), 31, suggests that the *Diva Augusta* temple was dedicated by Claudius to Antonia Minor.

⁶¹ Domitian's widow, Domitia, also died during Hadrian's reign. One of her freedmen erected a temple in her honour: *CIL* 14.2795 and *ILS* 272.

⁶² The temple of Faustina was later rededicated to include Antoninus. Levick (2014), 96, argues that Faustina the Elder's greatest role was in death, glorifying her husband for his uxorial fidelity and their daughter, who presented the future of the dynasty with her marriage to Marcus Aurelius.

⁶³ Faustina the Elder's scheme is commemorated on *ILS* 348 and *RIC* 3.397; for the younger Faustina see *ILS* 6065. See Levick (2014), 57 and 89. Marcus also renamed Faustina's place of death after her – see 1.1.3.

⁶⁴ Flory (1995), 127. Her article traces the development of divine honours for women until Livia's deification in AD 41, looking at the concept of *iuno*, an approximate female equivalent to the male *genius*. Julia Domna and her sister Julia Maesa appear to have been the only Severan women who

second-century succession was mainly ensured by the female line.⁶⁵ But it was also the case that smooth succession between the emperors in the second century created an environment where the successor could celebrate their predecessor posthumously with lavish displays for the women that connected them.

1.1.5 Conclusion

The honours which Octavian had granted Octavia and Livia in 35 BC had been based on those that already existed for the Vestal Virgins. Such awards, therefore, were defined by the select group of women who already played an acceptable public role at Rome. Before Poppaea, all the Augustae of the Julio-Claudian dynasty were descended from the first Augustus and so their receipt of the title profited the emperor by re-emphasising his own legitimacy. However, the awards in the Flavian dynasty presented a new motivation, centrifugal rather than centripetal; again their award celebrated the recipient's relationship with the emperor. This was not because they were of more auspicious lineage, like Agrippina for Claudius, or had defined their succession, like Livia for Tiberius; but rather they shared in and advertised the emperor's prestige through their new titles.

The variety of honours for imperial women, like the title Augusta, peaked in the second century, and extended to posthumous deification. In part this seemed happy circumstance at a time when the dynastic principle was firmly established and importantly there were repeated smooth transitions between regimes, which were based upon the marriage alliances arranged for the imperial women. The title Augusta seemed to indicate a woman's preeminent status among other women of the imperial family and the title was often concomitant with other honours and appearances on coinage. However, women who were never made Augusta also featured in the numismatic evidence, particularly in the Julio-Claudian dynasty when the formalisation of imperial women's positions was still in its early development.

were deified. Domna was deified by either Macrinus or Elagabalus: see Kienast (2004), 167-8. Maesa was deified by Severus Alexander: Kienast, 181.

⁶⁵ Corbier (1995), 191-2, contrasts the shortage of male heirs in the Julio-Claudian dynasty with the situation in the Flavian dynasty.

1.2 COINAGE

Coinage provides an opportunity to view how an imperial regime chose to depict its female members on images disseminated throughout the empire and to gauge their value in contemporary propaganda.⁶⁶ There was also a wide variety of statuary produced during the three centuries relevant to this thesis; however, due to the paucity of identifiable statues for the late antique period, I will not be discussing it here.⁶⁷

1.2.1 Numismatic Evidence

As with the slow introduction of distinctive nomenclature for imperial women, it was only later in the Julio-Claudian dynasty that women had their own individual coin types, rather than appearing on an emperor's coin reverses. The only woman to appear on Augustus' coinage was his daughter Julia, rather than Livia and Octavia, who had received the most honours from him.⁶⁸ Augustus' daughter appeared, unnamed, on two reverse types produced in 13 BC alongside her sons, Gaius and Lucius, while the obverses bore the portrait of Augustus himself.⁶⁹ This familial portrait set out Augustus' dynastic hopes by illustrating how he envisioned that his line would continue through his grandchildren.

Livia first appeared on Tiberius' coin reverses as personifications of *Salus*, *Iustitia* and *Pietas*.⁷⁰ Gaius made more use of his female relatives, including a reverse type which featured all three of his sisters, now with identifying legends, and still styled as personifications of virtues: *Securitas*, *Concordia* and *Fortuna*.⁷¹ The one woman

⁶⁶ My focus will be coinage struck at Rome. Provincial coinage offered a greater variety of issues for imperial women and denoted women as *Augustae* and *divae* who had not been recognised at Rome. Burnett (2011), 1-30, provides an overview of such provincial coinage. Rowan (2012), 2, compares coinage and state art.

⁶⁷ Instead, I briefly consider important representations of the imperial family at the start of the next section: 1.3.

⁶⁸ For Livia's and Octavia's honours see section 1.1.1.

⁶⁹ *RIC* 1.404 and 405. These are discussed by Kleiner (1996), 57-8.

⁷⁰ Portraiture without an identifying rubric was also a common feature of early imperial coinage for emperors: see Burnett (2011), 12. Such anonymity became less frequent (this therefore coincides with the trend for women's coinage). *Salus* and *Pietas* in particular were popular virtues on later reverses for women. Kleiner (1996), 58-60, discusses the coinage which featured Julia; the reverse legends on these coins mention her sons Tiberius or Drusus, rather than her. For further discussion see Grether (1946), 236 n.82. Goddesses appeared on coinage of imperial women before those for their male counterparts: see Howgego (1995), 85.

⁷¹ For example, *RIC* 1.33. Kleiner (1996), 65 n.17, discusses an example of this type. Gaius did not produce coinage that featured his wives or daughter.

to feature on her own obverse was his mother, Agrippina the Elder, in a posthumous issue.⁷² Unlike the later dynasties, none of these women were Augustae, although Gaius' sisters had been honoured in other ways.⁷³

Claudius also struck posthumous issues for his mother Antonia and a commemorative type for Augustus with a Livia reverse portrait, adding an identifying legend.⁷⁴ The first living woman to be depicted on an obverse portrait was Agrippina the Younger on coinage struck under Claudius and then Nero.⁷⁵ She also appeared on these emperors' own coin reverses and in jugate portraiture with her son on obverses.⁷⁶ On this later coinage, Agrippina's status as both the mother of Nero and wife of the deified Claudius was celebrated, demonstrating the central role she played in confirming the legitimacy of both reigns.⁷⁷

Imperial women continued to appear on emperors' reverses, and sometimes shared an obverse as well. In the subsequent dynasties, however, they more frequently had their own coin types. After the Julio-Claudian dynasty, coinage seemed to be reserved for those women who received the title Augusta. Although obverse portraits varied from dynasty to dynasty, many reverse images that were employed in Julio-Claudian coinage continued to be used in other dynasties. Three of the most consistently used deities were Juno and Venus (both in various manifestations), and Vesta, whose priestesses Augustus clearly had in mind when he honoured Octavia and Livia.⁷⁸ One interesting type produced during Domitian's reign featured two different women on the same coin: his wife Domitia on the obverse, styled as Venus,

⁷² *RIC* 1.55; this type is discussed by Kleiner (1996), 64 n.16. The reverse features a *carpentum*; a privilege which had been given to both Livia and Octavia, and an emblem which became a common motif on imperial women's posthumous issues.

⁷³ See 1.1.2.

⁷⁴ For Antonia's coin type see *RIC* 1.67, and *RIC* 1.101, for the Augustus and Livia type. Claudius was Livia's direct descendant and so it served him well to promote her (he also deified her – see 1.1.4).

⁷⁵ She also appeared on some of Claudius' coin types, for example: *RIC* 1.80. In the same reign she appeared on her own obverses with Nero on the reverse: 1.79. Claudius' third wife, Messalina, appeared in provincial coinage with their children, e.g. *RIC* 1.124 (Cappadocia).

⁷⁶ *RIC* 1.1.

⁷⁷ Corbier (1995), 185-6, looks at the importance of mothers in the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The relationship of women to both the current and deified emperors was commonly celebrated in later dynasties: for example Julia Titi is normally defined on her Domitianic issues as the daughter of the divine Titus: *RIC* 2.218.

⁷⁸ See 1.1.1. The peacock, an emblem of Juno, appeared on many women's coinage from the Flavian dynasty onwards: e.g. Domitia in *RIC* 2.212. Gorrie (2007), 15-16, points to Severus' and Domna's coin iconography drawing connections to Jupiter and Juno with the same emblem.

and his niece Julia Titi on the reverse, as Vesta.⁷⁹ In keeping with the evocation of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and its claimed descent from Venus, Livia herself appeared in later coinage produced by Galba, Otho and Titus.⁸⁰ While Galba and Otho had been acquainted with Livia, Titus had no association with her.⁸¹ Therefore, the use of Livia's image in the coinage of Titus, who was unmarried while emperor, suggests that she was presented as a paradigm for imperial womanhood.⁸²

The second century saw an increase in coin types produced for imperial women, including a large number of posthumous issues. Trajan's sister, Marciana, mainly appeared on commemorative issues while Hadrian, in complement to the public funerals he decreed for his predecessor's family, also produced commemorative coinage for them and later for his own wife Sabina.⁸³ Like Hadrian's promotion of the legitimacy of his succession, the first year of coinage produced by his successor Antoninus Pius were dominated by images of Hadrian and Sabina, rather than the reigning couple themselves.⁸⁴ Antoninus' own wife, Faustina the Elder, had a greater variety of posthumous issues than those produced during her lifetime. Her types included the traditional deities and personifications of Juno, Venus, *Concordia* and, most frequently, *Aeternitas*.⁸⁵ Her posthumous issues also incorporated more

⁷⁹ *RIC* 2.230.

⁸⁰ Longo (2009), 89, suggests Trajan and Hadrian made less use of Venus to draw associations with the founding dynasty.

⁸¹ Barrett (2002), 189, establishes the personal connections between Galba and Otho with Livia. Suet. *Galb.* 5.2, refers to Galba as a beneficiary of Livia's will. For the posthumous issues for Livia see Grether (1946), 251. *RIC* 2.13 and *RIC* 2.218 are examples of Livia coin types struck by Galba and Titus; although the identification of the Titus coin is more problematic – see the *RIC* entry for further discussion.

⁸² In the fifth century Helena (Constantine I's mother) would present a similar position for the eastern Theodosian dynasty – sixty years after her death. Titus also struck coinage for his daughter, Julia Titi, and posthumous coin types for a Domitilla – for the debate over her identification see 1.1.2.

⁸³ See *RIC* 2.742, for Marciana's coin type (which features Matidia on the reverse). For examples in Hadrian's reign see 2.31 (a *diva* Plotina obverse with Trajan referred to in the reverse legend accompanying a Vesta personification), and 2.422 and 423 for *divae* Sabina and Matidia types.

⁸⁴ See Mattingly (1930), 3.

⁸⁵ New personifications were introduced to women's coinage under these dynasties: for example, a popular virtue in the next two centuries was *Pudicitia*, who first appeared on Plotina's coinage; another example was *Hilaritas* who was common on both Hadrian's and Sabina's coinage. Noreña (2001), 159, noted the 'regular collocation' of *Pudicitia* with empresses and sisters of the emperor in the early and High Empire. A particularly common virtue for wives was *Concordia*. Imrie (2014), 311-312, examines the virtue's unusual appearance on a type struck for Domna during her son Caracalla's reign. Another unusual *Concordia* type was struck for Aurelian's wife, Severina, promoting the military aspect of the virtue: see *RIC* 5(1).2, for which the reverse legend was *CONCORDIAE MILITUM*.

individual types, in particular commemorating the *Faustinae Puellae* alimentary scheme set up by her widower.⁸⁶

The variety and number of coin types struck for a single woman reached its apogee in the late second century with those issued for Faustina the Younger and Julia Domna. Both women were rare examples of imperial wives who had produced male heirs: Commodus, and Caracalla and Geta.⁸⁷ Faustina was the vital dynastic link between Marcus and his predecessors.⁸⁸ Domna, however, did not provide any connection to the preceding dynasty for Severus; but her wealthy and well-connected eastern family were beneficial to him during the civil war when he came to power.⁸⁹

Many of the virtues and deities which appeared on the second- and early-third century women's coin reverses continued to be produced throughout the rest of the third century. Given the range produced for Etruscilla (wife of Decius) and Severina (Aurelian's wife), one gets the impression that it was the brevity of many third-century emperors' reigns which caused the decrease in coin types for women, rather than a conscious decisions made by the court.⁹⁰ This is an important consideration for when I later examine the reintroduction of women's coinage in the fourth century, since these do not demonstrate the same variety as those produced for second- and third-century women.⁹¹

1.2.2 Conclusion

Centrally disseminated coinage displayed women as the emperor's regime wanted them to be seen. In the first three reigns of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, the women

⁸⁶ *RIC* 3.69-77 provides a list of Faustina's posthumous coin types.

⁸⁷ Levick (2014), 94-6, discusses the coinage struck for Faustina; while Gorrie (2004), 63 n.9, describes Domna's. Severus' wife was the first mother of two Augusti in her lifetime and her importance to the success of the dynasty was reflected by the *spes* legends on her coinage: discussed by Levick (2007), 82.

⁸⁸ Newlands (2006), 203-26, argues for the diminished praise for motherhood in the Flavian period, and in fact negative treatment in Statius' poems, which she attributes to Domitian's lack of heirs. However, Domitia Longina had types that celebrated her as the mother of her deceased son: *RIC* 2.441-3.

⁸⁹ Levick (2007), 42, describes Domna as one of Septimius' assets in the East because of her local knowledge. The military loyalty to the dynasty there was later demonstrated by Domna's female relatives' sponsorship of the army to reinstate the dynasty: Dio 79.38.3-4 and more explicitly Herodian 5.3.11.

⁹⁰ Many of the types were continuations of those featured in the second century; such as *Pudicitia*, which was the main reverse on Etruscilla's coinage, for example *RIC* 4(3).60 and 136.

⁹¹ See 2.3.1.

who featured on coinage only appeared on the reverses, and the first Augusta, Livia, did not have an identifying rubric. The first women to have their own coin types were the deceased Antonia and Agrippina the Elder. However, Agrippina the Younger was the first living woman to appear on her own coin types. The political benefits that accompanied marrying Agrippina warranted this unprecedented measure by Claudius. Hadrian similarly made great use of his wife's imperial lineage, producing coinage for her many female relatives who had been made Augusta during Trajan's reign. Close identification with deities and religious personifications were common reverse motifs across all the dynasties. This imagery was augmented by other deities and personifications, reaching its widest extent in the late second century, by which time coinage seemed to be only produced for those women who had been made Augusta. Notably the two wives who fulfilled the expectation of producing male heirs, Faustina the Younger and Julia Domna, also had the most coin types.

1.3 PATRONAGE

Although Augustus never struck coinage for his wife, he made use of her image through other means, which naturally reflected well upon himself as her husband. A prominent example of this was her appearance next to Augustus and alongside other members of the imperial family on the Ara Pacis, which was erected on her birthday in 9BC, the same year that Augustus gave her the rights of the *ius liberorum*.⁹² Building dedications featuring the wider imperial family in this way advertised the stability that the ruler would provide with heirs. This image also was projected by the different coin types produced for Faustina the Younger with each child's birth. Just as coinage and statuary of imperial wives complemented the image of the emperor, so too can their own acts of patronage be viewed as an extension of the emperor's self-presentation and his policies.

⁹² Kleiner (1992), 90-9, discusses examples of familial state reliefs across the dynasties. Perhaps the most obvious evocation were two arches constructed in the Severan period: the Arch of the Argentarii and the imperial arch at Lepcis Magna; however, Levick (2007), 78, draws a contrast between the depictions of the imperial women on the Ara Pacis and Lepcis Arch. Gorrie (2004), 70, discusses how Severus imitated Augustus both in terms of his building programme and moral legislation and Julia Domna's coordination with this aim in acts such as her restoration of the temple of Fortuna Muliebris; see Langford (2013), 19. The Sebasteion at Aphrodisias provides examples of other imperial family statuary groups (including the fourth and fifth centuries). Kleiner, 158-61, discusses the Augustan dedications there.

The different forms of patronage which imperial women carried out provide an opportunity to view more personalised acts of public display.⁹³ As well as identifying key areas of patronage, Hemelrijk argued in her extensive survey of female patronage that social constraints (i.e. those of gender) were lessened for imperial women in comparison with those for other wealthy women.⁹⁴ This may have been true, but an imperial woman's interests were so dependent on her relationship with the emperor that it was natural that this association would inform her role as a patron. In this section I will first look at some examples of building patronage, in particular Livia's *aedes Concordiae* dedication, and establish how examples such as this benefitted Augustus' position, and influenced later benefactions. I will then turn to two prominent examples of other forms of patronage, political and communal: Livia's intervention in the trial of Cn. Calpurnius Piso on behalf of her friend Plancina; and Plotina's cultural patronage of the Epicurean school in Athens.

1.3.1 Acts of Building Patronage

Two well-known examples of building projects of the early Principate were the Porticus of Octavia and Livia.⁹⁵ The Porticus Octaviae was completed in 27 BC, and the Porticus Liviae was dedicated in 7 BC. Both women funded structures in their Porticus: Octavia dedicated a library, while Livia contributed the *aedes Concordiae*.⁹⁶ Both structures celebrated the women's familial *pietas*: the Porticus Octaviae was finished after her son Marcellus' death whose theatre was adjacent to the complex, while the Porticus Liviae was dedicated two years' after the death of Livia's son Drusus.⁹⁷ Both benefactions set up by Livia and Octavia can be seen as

⁹³ Brubaker (1997), 53, argues that monuments reveal more about women than literary portrayals of them, which are determined by the male author's own perspective of what their role should be.

⁹⁴ Hemelrijk (1991), 100-1. Her overview, 98-100, categorises different forms of patronage wealthy women in general could undertake in the imperial period.

⁹⁵ Dio, 55.8 described the precinct of Livia. Barrett (2002), 186-215, provides examples of Livia's role as a patron. Livia's and Octavia's influence as patrons is discussed by Cooley (2013), 28-31.

⁹⁶ There is debate over how involved Augustus was in both buildings. Richardson (1976), 62, suggests we should not trust Suetonius, *Aug.* 29, in regard to the Porticus Octaviae – Suetonius attributes both buildings to Augustus. Barrett (2002), 201, argues that Augustus was the main patron of Livia's Porticus, following Dio, 54.23.1, 5-6. Roller (2013), 126-30, focuses on the political significance of the Porticus Liviae.

⁹⁷ Augustus referred to his construction of Marcellus' theatre: *Res Gest.* 4.21; see also Plut. *Marc.* 30.6, who refers to Octavia's library dedication as well. Octavia funded many buildings with her son: see Richardson (1976), 61-2.

highly individualised responses to specific political circumstances (the loss of Augustus' heirs), while also adding the benefit of continuing Augustus' extensive building programme.

Livia's *Concordia* dedication within her Porticus is a good example of how women's patronage could complement the emperor's political concerns.⁹⁸ The Porticus Liviae was built over Vedius Pollio's palace, which had been razed by Augustus after he inherited it. Although dedicated to Livia, the Porticus was designed for public use, appropriating an extravagant private residence of someone who had become unpopular with Augustus' regime.⁹⁹ Livia's later dedication of the *aedes Concordiae* inside the complex created a relationship of intersignification, as Roller defined it, with the surrounding Porticus which together served Augustus' contemporary political concerns.¹⁰⁰ As later imperial women's coin issues demonstrate, *Concordia* was a virtue closely associated with married couples, and this *aedes* seemed to convey such a message, in keeping with Augustus' marriage legislation and reforms aimed at restoring *mos maiorum*.¹⁰¹

Other dedications set up by Livia also complemented those of Augustus, hers often focusing on women.¹⁰² This can clearly be seen in her restoration of temples for Fortuna Muliebris and Bona Dea Subsaxana, the latter of which housed a cult exclusive to women.¹⁰³ The couple's individual dedications complemented each

⁹⁸ Barrett (2002), 201-2, stresses the fluidity of the word *aedes*. Flory (1984), 310 n.6, disputes Richardson's assessment of its location outside of the Porticus: (1976), 62.

⁹⁹ Dio, 54.23.1-6, describes Augustus as constructing the Porticus a decade after inheriting Vedius' house. Given the public spirit with which the Porticus was intended, calling it after Livia rather than himself disassociated this public act of patronage from Vedius' private indulgence.

¹⁰⁰ The underlying political nature of the *aedes* within the Porticus has been well set out by Flory (1984), 330. The Porticus is Roller's second case study to illustrate the intersignification (the monumental equivalent of intertextuality) of Augustus' building program in Rome: (2013), 126-30. He summarises how this structure benefitted the emperor's political aims at 128. See also Barrett (2002), 201.

¹⁰¹ See 1.2.1 for *Concordia* types. Flory (1984), 309 n.10, cautions against an overly political interpretation of Livia's dedication to *Concordia*, given that it was not a key theme of Augustan propaganda; however, at 312, 316-17 and especially 319, she shows that the conjugal implications of *Concordia* deliberately complemented Augustus' contemporary ideology in regard to family life. Flory (1995), 129, discusses the imperial couple's promotion of their own relationship as 'the *exemplum* of the ideal marriage'.

¹⁰² Barrett (2002), 199, describes Livia's small-scale private dedications throughout Rome.

¹⁰³ Flory (1984), 317-18, discusses how Livia's restoration of the Bona Dea temple complemented Augustus' building program and also points out the cult's association with the Vestal Virgins. Barrett (2002), 203 and 205, argues that both restorations carried a clear political message. Cooley (2013),

other. Together they targeted different strata of society in order to promote the same Augustan ideals of marriage and the family's religious piety. After Augustus' death, and in keeping with her position as a priestess of his cult, Livia also funded alongside Tiberius a temple for Augustus.¹⁰⁴ This joint benefaction displayed the family unity and reverence for the deceased *princeps* to whom they owed their preeminent positions.

As well as complementing the emperor's own acts of patronage, women's benefactions indicated a degree of financial freedom over a sizable personal fortune. Octavia and Livia had obtained financial independence through an edict issued by Augustus in 35 BC, which must have facilitated their acts of patronage.¹⁰⁵ Boatwright has compiled a survey of early second-century imperial women's acts of public benefactions.¹⁰⁶ Matidia the Younger appears to have possessed the most property and acted visibly as a patron, yet, like Antonia Minor and Octavia in the Augustan period, she was never the wife of an emperor.¹⁰⁷ It may be this relative independence from the court that allowed her more freedom in the exhibition of her wealth through benefactions; however, her appearance on coinage indicates that she held an important role in the dynasty's presentation since she facilitated its continuity for the childless Trajan. Matidia's own prominence in Trajan's presentation of the future of the dynasty suggests that her acts of patronage were important for the emperor and his projection of family unity in a period when dynastic continuity proved especially difficult to ensure. However personally motivated their

31, lists other examples of religious building benefactions, arguing, however, that their building patronage was not just restricted to this area.

¹⁰⁴ See Dio, 56.46.3.

¹⁰⁵ See 1.1.1. Levick (2007), 19, presents Livia as atypical among imperial women, because of her access to independent finance to fund personal building projects. However, Octavia's displays also indicated large wealth, as pointed out by Richardson (1976), 62. Antonia Minor also enjoyed enough financial independence to carry out her own acts of patronage: see Kokkinos (1992), 160. Hemelrijk (1991), 104-13, sets out Antonia's and Octavia's acts of patronage. Levick (2014), 66, discusses the issues Faustina the Younger faced as the main beneficiary of Matidia's will. Domitian's wife, Domitia Longina, was incredibly wealthy in her own right; see Wood (2010), 56.

¹⁰⁶ Boatwright (1991), 513-40, demonstrates second-century imperial women's extensive wealth. At 521-23 she provides a table of 'unambiguous information' for the women of Trajan's and Hadrian's reigns (and suggests there were likely more than this). Cooley (2013), 23, argues that between the first century BC and second century AD both imperial and non-imperial women emerged as public benefactors.

¹⁰⁷ Cenerini (2013), 16, describes Matidia's large personal wealth and lists some of her building dedications. Boatwright (1991), 524, suggests her property was probably similar to those of her less well-attested Augustae relatives.

dedications were, these imperial women's acts of patronage reflected on the emperor's regime, and were, therefore, of an ostentatiously public-spirited nature.¹⁰⁸

1.3.2 Other Forms of Patronage

One would assume that forms of intellectual patronage carried out by women would exhibit their own interests and therefore be more idiosyncratic than building patronage, which was so often designed to complement the emperor's dedications.¹⁰⁹ Most public displays by imperial women could be construed as a form of patronage, all of which implicated the emperor by association. Here I will look at two examples of political and cultural patronage which illustrate how closely the emperor was involved. The first is Livia's intervention on her friend Plancina's behalf in the Pisonian conspiracy; and the second is Plotina's patronage of the Epicurean community in Athens. Both these women were former emperors' wives, but these acts were carried out after they had been widowed.

Livia's intervention on behalf of her friend Plancina is related by both epigraphic and literary records: the *Senatus Consultum Pisone Patre (SCPP)*, and Tacitus' *Annals*, 3.15.1-17.2.¹¹⁰ The *SCPP* was published across the empire, setting out the decree of the senate regarding the trial of *maiestas* against Piso (10 December AD 20), who had already committed suicide. Livia's role in proceedings is publically declared in the decree, 109-20, stating that she made a request to Tiberius regarding Plancina, Piso's widow. Tiberius pardoned Plancina as a result of Livia's request. Livia's acknowledged role is justified in the decree (116-19):

Julia Augusta, who was most well deserving of the republic not only because she gave birth to our *princeps* but also because of her many

¹⁰⁸ Boatwright (1991), 520, contrasts Octavia's and Livia's great display of financial freedom with the women of the early-second century and the difficulty in firmly ascribing benefactions to any individual woman in the later period. At, 540, she summarises the women's roles in Trajan's and Hadrian's reigns.

¹⁰⁹ Hemelrijk (1991), 101, compares imperial women's acts of patronage with other high-ranking women and, at 104-13, she sets out the early examples of Octavia's and her daughter Antonia's acts of intellectual and literary patronage. Senatorial women in the imperial period were also involved in such acts of patronage: see Statius' mention of Polla's close involvement in his poem of commemoration for her husband Lucan (*Silv.* 2.7); this is discussed by Newlands (2006), 212.

¹¹⁰ The decree was published throughout the Roman Empire and mentions Plancina's acquittal. Potter and Damon (1999), 13-42, provide a translation and commentary. Tac. *Ann.* 3.15.1-17.2, describes the fallout from the affair, at 17.1-2, it would appear that Livia's intervention was met with hostility by some senators. Cooley (1998), 199, compares the two sources and sets out their different agenda. Wood (2010), 55-6, summarises similar acts of patronage carried out by later imperial women.

and great kindnesses to men of every order – although she rightly and deservedly should have the greatest influence in what she requested from the senate, she used it most sparingly – and the very great devotion of our *princeps* to his mother should be supported and indulged.

The reference to Livia's patronage of other senatorial members was also included in Tacitus' description of the senate's desire to grant her honours, which Tiberius refused (*Ann.* 1.14.1-3).¹¹¹ The decree complements this later image, but also provides a contemporary perspective and one endorsed by the emperor, which was advertised publicly across the empire. The public nature of her mention, and that of other women of the household, specifically those connected to Germanicus (whom Piso had been accused of poisoning) suggests that such a presentation of imperial women was palatable to the public. Throughout the decree Livia is praised as a positive influence on other members of the family, but always within an encomiastic hierarchy in which Tiberius is the pinnacle.¹¹² Livia's influence in this important political issue was justified in the decree because she deferred to the emperor, who, in turn, observed the senate's authority. Such couching of praise in deference to the emperor was a common element in positive portrayals of later imperial women as well.¹¹³

The *SCPP* shows that imperial women presented a means of communication for individuals to the emperor and demonstrates that Livia formed patronage networks with members of the senate, for which she was publicly praised.¹¹⁴ A similar role was demonstrated by an interaction almost a century later between Plotina and Hadrian, again recorded by a contemporary epigraphic source: *ILS* 7784.¹¹⁵ Plotina's

¹¹¹ A similar statement is made by Dio, 58.2.3, who describes her payment for some daughters' dowries – an act of patronage which mirrored her promotion of the Augustan ideal of marriage in her dedication of the *aedes Concordiae*.

¹¹² For example, Livia and Drusus are praised for 'emulating the justice of our princeps' (132-3). Other imperial women mentioned were Germanicus' wife, Agrippina (137-9), his mother, Antonia Minor, and sister, Livia (141-4). Livia (also known as Livilla) was specifically praised because, although not a member of the household, she acted as if she was: 143-5. Kokkinos (1992), 23, describes Antonia's involvement. Cooley (1998), 210, argues that the decree presents the whole *domus Augusta* as examples of virtue to the empire's subjects, in contrast to the negative exemplum of Piso, and therefore the decree served a didactic purpose.

¹¹³ See Chapter Three.

¹¹⁴ See 1.2.1 for the familiarity between Livia and the future Emperors Galba and Otho.

¹¹⁵ Hemelrijk (1991), 116-18, outlines the correspondence, which comprises a very incomplete Greek version of her letter, a Latin version and Hadrian's positive reply to the head of the school.

patronage of the local Epicurean community in Athens was manifested by her successful request to Hadrian for Popilius Theotimus, a non-citizen, to become the head of school.¹¹⁶ The incident shows the potential geographical extent of such patronage and how an imperial woman's personal interests could benefit a community, as well as reflect positively on the emperor himself.¹¹⁷ It also shows that Plotina had influence with her deceased husband's successor and that such influence could be celebrated in such an inscription.¹¹⁸

1.3.3 Conclusion

Imperial women's benefactions commonly benefitted the emperor's own presentation and often reflected current political concerns. The frequent religious aspect of these benefactions provided justification for such public displays by women. The building dedications celebrated women's piety, rather than their influence and wealth, even though these elements facilitated such patronage in the first place. A similar impetus can be seen behind the early honours for Octavia and Livia, which were extensions of those granted to Vestal Virgins, because of their religious role.

The public acknowledgement in the *SCPP* of Livia's involvement in a political matter was extraordinary. It recognised her influence over the emperor and how she had benefitted members of the senate. Usually any public praise of imperial women sought to diminish their influence over the emperor; their virtues were rather to be seen as an extension of those of the *princeps*. Notably this decree framed Livia's role as deferential to her son, but the senate also recognised her influential position with other family members, suggesting she was a popular public figure, who could be celebrated in such a way. Tacitus' interpretation of the affair, in which he presents

¹¹⁶ Pomeroy (1994), 131-2, argues that Epicureanism and Cynicism were the most appealing philosophies for women in the Hellenistic period. Hemelrijk (1991), 117, notes that the tone of Plotina's letter to the community denoted a longstanding relationship to the school.

¹¹⁷ Barrett (2002), 196-7, outlines Livia's community patronage around the empire.

¹¹⁸ Plotina's act of patronage nicely shows how she benefitted from her association with Hadrian, who reciprocally profited from her position as Trajan's widow. Not all petitions were as successful as these: Levick (2007), 49, and Barrett (2002), 195, provide examples of unsuccessful requests made by Livia. Hemelrijk (1991), 118, suggests that Plotina had to be careful not to make too ambitious a request since a refusal from Hadrian would affect her ability to make further requests. I think the various rebuttals which Livia and others received would suggest that these were not prohibitive to making similar requests later, rather such petitions (regardless of their success) were concomitant with the operation of imperial politics and one in which women could play a role. Boatwright (1991), 530-1, compares the deference shown by Plotina in the inscriptions to Dio's quotation from Hadrian's eulogy for her: 69.10.3.

Livia and Tiberius as complicit in Piso's unproven poisoning of Germanicus, shows a warping of the close mother-son relationship advertised in the official decree. In the decree Livia influences Tiberius, but only because she shares in his excellent character. Like all forms of patronage involving imperial women, their relationship with the emperor was key to its success and vital to its functioning. Plotina's request to Hadrian shows that as an emperor's widow she still held influence at court. Her patronage network in Athens was facilitated by her travel in the imperial entourage, an area to which I will now turn.

1.4 TRAVEL

Possibilities for travel for senatorial women in the early imperial period was restricted, although this stratum of society had at least the opportunity to travel to multiple villas.¹¹⁹ Generally any further travel was done in the company of the woman's husband. This applied to imperial women as well, although their journeys could traverse the whole empire.¹²⁰ In this section I will look at some notable examples, which show the extent to which imperial women travelled, as well as the anomaly presented by Julia Domna, who partook in independent travel.

1.4.1 Imperial Itineraries

In the fifteen years following the battle of Actium (31 BC), Livia often accompanied Augustus on his long tours across the empire.¹²¹ Unlike later imperial women, Livia's accompanying Augustus to the East carried a clear political benefit. Her presence allowed Augustus to draw on the connections she forged while in exile with her first husband, Tiberius Claudius Nero, in particular in Sicily and Sparta.¹²²

Livia's pre-existing social network in the East was manifested through political patronage in regard to her assistance in King Herod's dispute with his sister Salome

¹¹⁹ Woolf (2013), 354, sets out different kinds of female 'social cages'; at 363 he suggests that upper-class women had the most mobility, but could only travel with their husbands. See also Lenski (2004), 119 (especially n.31).

¹²⁰ For their travel because of exile see section 1.6.1.

¹²¹ Tac. *Ann.* 3.34.5.

¹²² Livia's exile is described by Suet. *Tib.* 4.2-3 and 6.2, and Tac. *Ann.* 5.1.1. For the exiled family's residency in Sicily see Suet. *Tib.* 4.2, and Vell. Pat. 2.75.3. Livia's family, the Claudii, had a longstanding patronal relationship with Sparta: see Spawforth (2012), 97-8. Temporini (2002b), 48-52, sets out Augustus' and Livia's itinerary away from Rome (22-19 BC).

over her marriage.¹²³ Livia's intervention on Herod's behalf to her friend Salome secured an eastern ally for Augustus as he sought to consolidate his authority over the territory of his former opponent Antony. It would appear that she also provided companionship to Augustus, following him westwards where she did not have the same useful network of contacts. Other women of the Julio-Claudian dynasty did not possess the same range of political contacts as Livia provided Augustus, not least because of the many marriages within the family, which negated such a possibility.¹²⁴ However, other imperial women did accompany their husbands on their travels. For instance, while Augustus and Tiberius were on campaign in the west, Livia and her daughter-in-law, Vipsania Agrippina, were based in Lugdunum.¹²⁵

The most famous of Livia's younger contemporaries to travel with her husband was Agrippina the Elder, who accompanied her husband Germanicus to Germany, quelling a mutiny in the process.¹²⁶ Although wives could accompany their husbands on such campaigns it would appear that their children generally did not. Again Agrippina presents a good example, as, while pregnant, she accompanied Germanicus on his last expedition to Syria, taking Gaius with her; but it seems that she left her other children behind (presumably in Rome).¹²⁷

The norm was for the imperial family to be based in Italy, although imperial women were not necessarily with the emperor. For example, after Tiberius took himself to

¹²³ Livia's associations with Judaea are discussed by Barrett (2002), 205, and Temporini (2002b), 49.

¹²⁴ However, Kokkinos (1992), 20, describes Antonia Minor's good relationship with Berenice I and Agrippa I.

¹²⁵ Temporini (2002b), 58, suggests this as their probable location in 16 BC. Antonia was also based there with Drusus. Her son, Claudius, was born in the city: Suet. *Claud.* 2.1. Kokkinos (1992), 159, describes Antonia's accompaniment of her husband Drusus on campaign.

¹²⁶ Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.34.1-45.2, discusses the uprising to which Agrippina came to her husband's aid. Suet. *Calig.* 8.1, discusses the conflicting reports of Gaius' place of birth, indicating the degree to which his mother travelled.

¹²⁷ Suet. *Calig.* 10.1. At 8.2, Suetonius relates a letter from Augustus to Agrippina saying that he will send one of her children to her. Kokkinos (1992), 17-22, describes Germanicus' eastern tour, suggesting that his entourage included his mother Antonia and probably his daughters for part of the journey. After Germanicus' death, Gaius lived with his mother in Rome until her exile. On their journey to Syria, Agrippina and Germanicus met his sister Livilla and Drusus in Illyria: Temporini (2002b), 83-4. Tac. *Ann.* 3.34.5 attributes a speech to Drusus where he cites Livia's companionship of Augustus as reason for his own wife, Livilla, to accompany him on his travels. The pregnant Julia journeyed as far north as Aquileia with Tiberius, who continued to the frontier; see Suet. *Tib.* 2.7.

Capri, both Livia and Antonia remained in Rome.¹²⁸ There were of course many exiles in the first dynasty, which also resulted in women's long-term absences from court.¹²⁹ In the Flavian dynasty, Domitian's wife, Domitia, was absent from court long enough for the sources to present it as a divorce; but where she went is not known.¹³⁰

Once emperors started to make extended tours away from Rome in the second century their wives again travelled with them, although their presences are only incidentally mentioned. Although epigraphic evidence does not amount to a physical presence by the relevant member of the imperial dynasty, Plotina's benefaction to the Athenian Epicurean community does indicate that she visited the city at some point either with Trajan or Hadrian.¹³¹ Plotina travelled east with Trajan on his Parthian campaign, but probably remained at his winter base in Antioch.¹³² She was close enough to Trajan when he died at Selinus in Cilicia that she could, allegedly, delay news of his death long enough to engineer Hadrian's smooth succession.¹³³ Similar tales had surfaced for the Julio-Claudian dynasty which, if not unquestionably true, at least indicate the relevant wives' proximity to the emperor at the time of death to facilitate such rumours: both Livia and Agrippina the Younger were able to delay news of Augustus' and Claudius' deaths long enough for their sons to be proclaimed emperor.¹³⁴

¹²⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 5.2.1, mentions Tiberius' absence when Livia died.

¹²⁹ See 1.6.1.

¹³⁰ Dio, 67.3.1-2 and Suet. *Dom.* 3.1, says that Domitian divorced her for an affair with the actor Paris; however, she later returned to court. Jones (1992), 34-5, argues that she was exiled, but not divorced, as this would undermine Dio's moral legislation.

¹³¹ Temporini (2002c), 217, describes Hadrian's close relationship with the city. Hadrian's wife, Sabina, also went on imperial tours: graffiti on a statue of Memnon in Egypt of her and a travelling companion, Balbilla, is attested in *I. Col. Memnon 32/IGR 1186* and *I. Col. Memnon 28-31*.

¹³² Temporini (2002c), 203. Trajan was in the city during an earthquake: Dio, 68.21.1.

¹³³ Trajan's death is narrated by Dio 68.33.3; Hadrian was made emperor at Antioch: 69.2.1 – for Plotina's alleged involvement in his election see footnote 165. *HA. Had.* 5.9 describes Plotina's and Matidia's accompanying Hadrian to pay their respects to Trajan's body in Antioch. Later Lucilla travelled independently of her father's court (but accompanied by her aunt) in order to marry Lucius Verus in Ephesos: *HA. M. Aur.* 9.4-6; see Levick (2013), 70-1.

¹³⁴ See 1.5.2.

Like her predecessors, Julia Domna, is firmly attested as accompanying her husband around the empire.¹³⁵ Like Livia, but few others, Domna presented a means for her husband to forge new political contacts in the East following his victory in civil war.¹³⁶ However, as the mother of the Emperor Caracalla she was permitted more distance from the political centre due to her trusted position at the centre of the family. Dio reports that while she was based in Antioch she was in charge of imperial correspondence and of receiving envoys while her son travelled around the eastern provinces.¹³⁷ She was still there when her son died following Macrinus' usurpation. Dio's very fragmentary account of this period reveals that in this independent capacity she had an attendant imperial guard and presumably the funds to pay them, Macrinus only removed these after she conspired against him.¹³⁸

When the dynasty was reinstalled, funded by Julia Maesa, Domna's sister, the young age of the emperors seemed to necessitate the close presence of the senior female figures, who ensured their sequential successions.¹³⁹ Soaemias' and Mammaea's deaths alongside their sons indicate their perceived importance and vested interests in their sons' successive reigns, which resulted in continued close proximity to them.¹⁴⁰

1.4.2 Conclusion

Imperial women did travel, but in the company of their husbands. Those that did not go on such journeys generally stayed in Rome, while others seemed content to be based at their husband's winter quarters when he was on campaign. However, Agrippina the Elder was one of the rare examples of a woman who journeyed to the frontier with her husband. Julia Domna provides a notable exception to these

¹³⁵ For other second-century empresses accompanying their husbands see Levick (2014), 96-9. Herodian, 3.15.6, refers to Domna's presence with the rest of the family in Britain. However, Langford (2013), 47-8, notes from this passage that she and Geta did not go to the frontier.

¹³⁶ Domna was with Severus' court when he died in Britain: Dio 77.16.5. For a contrary view see Levick (2007), 48-9, who argues that Domna was often separated from her husband.

¹³⁷ Dio, 78.18.2-3, distinguishes Domna's public receptions from those held by Caracalla. Langford (2013), 22, observes that this role was not recorded in official records, because it would reflect badly on Caracalla's own presentation.

¹³⁸ Dio, 79.22.1-3.

¹³⁹ Dio, 79.30.3 and Herodian, 5.8.3 mention that Maesa lived with Domna when she was empress. For the proximity to the emperors of Maesa, Soaemias and Mamaea respectively see: *HA. Elagab.* 13.3-4 and 2.1, and *HA. Alex. Sev.* 14.7. The unreliable nature of these biographies means such episodes should be treated with extreme caution.

¹⁴⁰ The congregation of many female relatives around an emperor re-emerged in Late Antiquity, dictated again by the emperor's youth: see 2.1.5 and 2.5.3.

patterns, as she was the first mother of a sole Augustus in more than a century.¹⁴¹ Domna's trusted role in her son's entourage granted her a level of independence away from the centre of power, although it does not seem that she ventured far from her base at Antioch. Her female relatives, by contrast, maintained a close proximity to her great-nephews. The main difference between the circumstances of these women seems to be in the age of the emperor; an important consideration when I look at late antique travel in the next chapter.¹⁴²

1.5 LITERARY PORTRAITS

But who can stand a wife who is perfection itself?¹⁴³

Juvenal, *Satire* 6.166.

Juvenal's exasperation after a tirade against more conventionally wayward women, which culminated in his excoriating description of Messalina, introduces his criticism of women, some haughty concerning their own virtuousness and, others, such as in lines 434-56, who are more intelligent than their husbands. Negative images of Julio-Claudian women were presented in a particularly effective and memorable way by Tacitus. His account shaded later portrayals, in particular those of the Severan dynasty in Dio's *History* and the more salacious and much later account in the *Historia Augusta*. All these authors employed similar tropes to criticise their subjects. These more lively portraits saw women overstepping the boundaries of acceptability for their gender, which had severe repercussions because these transgressions impacted on the pinnacle of the ruling elite. In between these portrayals, we have the 'dull and virtuous' women of the Trajanic and Antonine period.¹⁴⁴ Why can such a sharp distinction be made between the women of this intervening period, about whom relatively little is said in either primary or modern accounts? I will now turn my attention to particularly effective literary depictions of women that sought to praise or to criticise. I will then establish what effect this had on the image of the relevant ruler in such narratives.

¹⁴¹ The last emperor's mother prior to this was Agrippina the Younger, who was killed on the orders of her son.

¹⁴² See 2.5.

¹⁴³ The translations of Juvenal are taken from Braund's Loeb.

¹⁴⁴ Boatwright (1991), 530, and Levick (2014), 6-8, observe the contrasting tone of women's representations between the Julio-Claudian dynasty and the second century.

1.5.1 Positive Portraits

In terms of contemporary praise for women, Pliny's *Panegyricus* is the obvious example.¹⁴⁵ In his encomium for Trajan, Pliny refers to the emperor's positive influence on his wife and sister, Plotina and Marciana, who are not mentioned by name. This anonymous praise fits with Pliny's image of their dutiful obedience to Trajan. In consecutive passages Pliny complimented both women, couched in terms of Trajan's training of them (83.1-84.2).

For Pliny, Plotina was the embodiment of ancient female virtues, which were moulded by her devotion to Trajan (83.8).¹⁴⁶ Marciana is praised for sharing similar virtues, which are again ultimately attributed to the emperor. Pointedly, Pliny observes the exceptional nature of two women at court who were not engaged in a bitter rivalry (a likely criticism of the courts of Claudius and Nero¹⁴⁷), *Pan.* 84.3-4:

all the more remarkable then must it appear when two women in the same position can share a home without a sign of envy or rivalry. Their respect and consideration for each other is mutual, and as each loves you with all her heart, they think it makes no difference which of them stands first in your affection.¹⁴⁸

Pliny draws attention here to the harmony between the women of Trajan's household. The material sources for imperial women, coinage and building patronage, regularly promoted marital concord throughout the three centuries.¹⁴⁹ Such physical representations often contrasted with later historical narratives, which portrayed women in conflict with both male members of the household and other women. There were many such antagonistic double acts in the Julio-Claudian dynasty, such as Livia and Agrippina the Elder, and Messalina and Agrippina the Younger. Therefore, the concord that Pliny describes in his panegyric serves to promote Trajan's imperial women as unique and praiseworthy in comparison with their

¹⁴⁵ His encomium also provides an important point of comparison with the panegyrics I discuss in Chapter Three.

¹⁴⁶ In these lines Pliny draws attention to the virtue of *modestia* for Plotina, and this continued to be an important virtue for women in panegyric: see Chapter Three.

¹⁴⁷ Pliny also precedes his praise of Trajan's women with explicit criticism of Claudius' and Nero's families: *Pan.* 83.2. Osgood (2011), 223, sums up nicely the effect of Pliny's comparison, describing Messalina and Agrippina as 'the dark inversion of the virtuous pair'.

¹⁴⁸ All *Panegyricus* translations are taken from Radice's Loeb edition.

¹⁴⁹ For *Concordia* reverse types see 1.2.1; see 1.3.1 for building patronage.

predecessors. This ultimately serves to praise his male protagonist for the successful management of his household.¹⁵⁰

The ‘dull and virtuous’ description that has been applied to these second-century women is concomitant with such praise. In order to be virtuous in a literary narrative a wife had to be seen as deferential to her husband, or, in the case of any imperial woman, to the emperor. The best way to achieve this was to invite barely any comment at all.¹⁵¹ In her analysis of building dedications by these second-century women, Boatwright noted that it is often hard to determine what their specific benefactions were, as it was often not possible to distinguish individual dedications. This idea matches Pliny’s contemporary praise of Trajan’s women.¹⁵² There was no distinction between their actions for Trajan because they were part of the harmonious imperial *domus*; the Augustus instructed all roles within the household.

The emphasis on the *modestia* of Plotina and Marciana in the panegyric, when viewed alongside the observations made by Boatwright about building patronage, reinforces the idea that the public presentation of imperial women in this period was seen to be as discreet as possible, while paradoxically making sure that such discretion was recognised. The unusual process by which Trajan came to power was complemented by his innovative presentation of his wider family, in which his sister played an unexpectedly prominent role.¹⁵³ The smooth nature of Trajan’s potentially complicated accession was complemented by the initially low-key presentation of his wife and sister. This served as a response to Domitian’s public celebration of his wife and niece.¹⁵⁴

Besides Pliny’s dual focus in his *Panegyricus*, most second-century imperial women were praised in isolation from their female counterparts, despite there often being

¹⁵⁰ A similar idea was conveyed for Tiberius’ household in the *SCPP* – discussed at 1.3.2.

¹⁵¹ The unusual nature of Pliny’s encomium was that two women, not related by blood, were celebrated together. Imperial women were freely celebrated in death, as illustrated by the lavish commemorations erected for Faustina the Elder and other second-century women; see 1.1.4.

¹⁵² Boatwright (1991), 520.

¹⁵³ Temporini (2002c), 217, points out that, like Trajan, Hadrian had an older sister and yet he did not give her the honours which Marciana received. Gaius’ sisters had appeared prominently in his public presentation, but they and Titus’ daughter, Julia, were exceptions; the general focus was on mothers or wives.

¹⁵⁴ Trajan later, like his Flavian predecessors, awarded titles to his female relatives: see 1.1.2.

numerous women at court.¹⁵⁵ During her four years as Augusta, Faustina the Elder was celebrated mainly, it seems, in association with her husband; her marriage also being the focus of her posthumous commemoration. Faustina the Younger shared her position as Augusta with her daughter Lucilla (married to Verus); but it was Faustina who was the preeminent Augusta in numismatic evidence.¹⁵⁶ In his own writings Marcus Aurelius makes only one brief mention of Faustina in his *Meditations* (1.17.7). The emperor deployed very similar terms to those Pliny had used for Faustina's predecessors. In Faustina's case such praise was contextualised by her role as a mother: 'That I have been blessed with a wife so docile, so affectionate, so unaffected'.¹⁵⁷

The greater the public role an imperial woman played, the more of a target she presented to later writers, who wished to criticise that emperor's rule. Imperial women were praised in such narratives, but they were often presented in tandem with a correspondingly 'bad' woman (in particular by Tacitus). A particularly emotive example of this can be found in Tacitus' description of Octavia's unhappy marriage to Nero (*Ann.* 14.63.3). This contrast served to underline the 'bad' woman's character traits, in this case those of Poppaea, as well as to pass judgement on the ruler.¹⁵⁸

Octavia's sad fate allowed Tacitus to emphasise the negative aspects of Nero's character. Such skilful craftsmanship by Tacitus in his vivid characterisation of the Julio-Claudian women is not matched by later historians of other dynasties, which

¹⁵⁵ This is partly the result of a paucity of literary narratives for the period (Dio's history is very fragmentary at this point).

¹⁵⁶ Lucilla, unusually, was made an Augusta before she had produced any children (unlike her mother): Levick (2014), 71.

¹⁵⁷ This is Haines' translation (1916) of: τὸ τὴν γυναῖκα τοιαύτην εἶναι, οὕτως μὲν πειθήνιον, οὕτω δὲ φιλόστοργον, οὕτω δὲ ἀφελῆ. Antoninus Pius, in a letter to Fronto, *Ep.* 2.2, praises the recipient for a recent speech that complimented *mea Faustina*. Haines (1919), 129, identifies this Faustina as the Younger; however, Champlin's more detailed analysis is to be preferred, which suggests the Elder: (1980), 86. For the possible context of the speech see Champlin (1974), 149. Faustina the Younger is cursorily referred to in Fronto's and Marcus' correspondence: *Ep.* 1.1, 5.11, 5.25, 5.35, 5.42, 5.52 (4.11 and 12 relate to the sickness of her daughter, Faustina). The most interesting is the letter from Fronto (2.16), a petition, and the reply from Marcus (2.17), regarding Faustina's position as the main beneficiary of Matidia's inheritance. The large amount of wealth she was to inherit exceeded that prescribed in the *lex Falcidia*, the point at issue; see Champlin (1980), 71-2.

¹⁵⁸ Earlier in Tacitus' history, Agrippina the Elder was presented as the opposite of Livia: *Ann.* 3.3.3. Mallan (2013), 736-7, describes Domna as an 'ethical foil' to Plautianus and Caracalla in Dio's history.

has led in part to Julio-Claudian women dominating any discussion of imperial women.¹⁵⁹ Tacitus, of course, did not always need to provide a paradoxical juxtaposition to present one woman as bad, and in fact he could denigrate two in rapid succession, in particular Messalina and Agrippina.

1.5.2 Negative Portraits

Juvenal's tirade in *Satire 6* presented all types of women, vice-ridden and virtuous, as reasons for his friend not to marry.¹⁶⁰ Not coincidentally both Tacitus and Juvenal single out Claudius' last two wives as obvious examples of bad imperial women. Messalina's schemes are put down to sexual desire, although her motives have been rehabilitated by some modern scholars: Fagan, in his detailed discussion of Messalina's acts of adultery, has convincingly argued that her affair with Silius was a political act regardless of whether she conspired with him to bring about Claudius' downfall.¹⁶¹ However, for ancient writers Agrippina presented a greater threat to the male realm of power than Messalina because she reasoned like a man and was a prime example of a *dux femina*, as defined by Santoro L'Hoir – a stereotype that is apparently redundant in the fourth and fifth centuries.¹⁶² However, although he achieves different effects in terms of his characterisation of Messalina and Agrippina, Tacitus used both women to emphasise Claudius' incapacity as a ruler.¹⁶³ This was even communicated through the structures of books 11 and 12 of his supposed annalistic history: the change in books was signified by Claudius' change of wife, rather than a change of year.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Dio's description of his female Severan contemporaries is not as powerful a commentary on the rulers as Tacitus' constructions. The closest to such a representation is Domna in Dio's narrative for Caracalla's reign – see Mallan (2013), 734-60.

¹⁶⁰ For Juvenal, virtuous women lord it over their poor husbands, while others use sex to manipulate men and poison to finish them off e.g. *Satire*, 6.631. Kruschwitz (2012), 220, discusses Juvenal's subtler criticism of women displaying their education in a mixed-sex environment.

¹⁶¹ Fagan (2002), 566-79.

¹⁶² Santoro L'Hoir (1994), 5, argues that the figure of the *dux femina* is a stereotype, which Tacitus borrows from Vergil and Seneca. She cites Livia and both Agrippina the Elder and Younger as examples (and Piso's widow, Plancina, as a non-imperial case): 12-13.

¹⁶³ This is at least what emerges from the extant part of the *Annals*; much of his account of Claudius' reign when Messalina was his wife is missing.

¹⁶⁴ Similarly Tiberius' reign is divided into four eras of dominant relationships by Tacitus in his obituary for the emperor: these are Germanicus, Drusus, Livia and Sejanus. Woodman (1989), 199-200, discusses Livia's role in this reign and compares it with Dio's presentation of the mother and son partnership.

While any political motives behind Messalina's acts of infidelity are dismissed, and categorised simply as lustful acts, Livia and Agrippina manipulate and scheme to ensure their sons' accessions; both competing with rival claimants in the process.¹⁶⁵ These women deviate from the acceptable roles for their gender, but in different ways. Messalina may exhibit more typically female vices, but she does not fulfil her role as mother and fails to protect her son Britannicus' position: in fact she uses both her children to try and save her own life (*Ann.* 11.34.2-3). In contrast, Livia and Agrippina interfere in political areas, but they are motivated by their maternal role. Tacitus often focusses on Agrippina's callous interference in political matters in which she should not be involved as a woman; however, he poignantly communicates her motherly concern in a story about her response to her prophesied death (*Ann.* 14.9.3):

when she was consulting the Chaldaeans about Nero, they replied that he would achieve command and would slaughter his mother; and she for her part said, "Let him slaughter, provided he achieves command."¹⁶⁶

The Severan women's depictions demonstrate a continuation of the emphasis on motherhood.¹⁶⁷ After the re-establishment of the Severan dynasty, following Macrinus' usurpation, there was also the rivalry between the Julias Soemias and Mamaea as the mothers of Elagabalus and Alexander Severus respectively. Although the arbitrator of the imperial proclamations, as portrayed in the literary sources, was the grandmother Julia Maesa.¹⁶⁸ The portrayals of all these women are

¹⁶⁵ Both Livia and Agrippina are described by Tacitus as delaying news of their husband's deaths in order to ensure their sons' accessions: *Ann.* 1.5.3-4; and 12.68.1-69.2. Similarly, Plotina makes one of her few appearances in a historical narrative as ensuring Hadrian's succession: see *HA Had.* 10.1 and Dio, 69.1.2-2.1, who describes her delaying the news of Trajan's death out of love for Hadrian. Plotina's close association with Hadrian is discussed by Levick (2014), 28-9.

¹⁶⁶ Herodian, 5.3.11, describes Julia Maesa resenting her loss of status when Macrinus usurped. Dio conveys a similar motivation behind Faustina's alleged involvement in Avidius Cassius' revolt: 72.22.3. For further discussion of this revolt, see Levick (2014), 83-7.

¹⁶⁷ For example, Domna features most prominently in Dio's narrative as 'queen mother' to Caracalla: see Mallan (2013), 734-60, and Langford (2013), 21-22.

¹⁶⁸ Herodian explicitly sets out Maesa's control over Elagabalus and her role as kingmaker at 5.8.3-4. Maesa's dominance is best shown when she manoeuvres the dynasty back into power: Herodian, 5.3.3-5.5.2 narrates her exile home after Domna's death, and her use of her wealth and patronage network there to muster a military usurpation against Macrinus. Dio, 79.38.1, describes Macrinus declaring war not only on Elagabalus, but his female relatives as well. The most vivid portraits of the later Severan women are found in the unreliable *Historia Augusta*. In this ancient biography Soemias comes across as a Messalina-type figure, driven by her sexual urges: *Elagab.* 2.1. Mamaea's

not consistently negative: Domna, in particular, is often presented sympathetically in contrast to Caracalla, but the maternal role is still consistently emphasised.¹⁶⁹ Like the contrasting characterisations of Messalina and Agrippina, there was a discernible variation in the portrayals of Severan women, but all their appearances in the narratives served to criticise the respective regime.

1.5.3 Conclusion

In numismatic evidence it was the women who produced heirs, Faustina the Younger and Julia Domna, who were honoured with the most titles and received the most coin types. However, in terms of contemporary literary praise the only women who were focused on in works of encomia, Plotina and Marciana, were celebrated purely through their relationship with the reigning emperor, Trajan, rather than the promised future of the dynasty. It was the maternal role – so celebrated in material evidence – that was distorted to most effectively criticise imperial women in later literary sources. The most vivid negative portraits were provided by Tacitus, whose contrasting portrayals of Messalina and Agrippina illustrated the different tropes by which a woman could be criticised. Such topoi were picked up in later historical narratives for other women, but they were not executed to produce the same excoriating level of political criticism as that achieved by Tacitus. It seems, in fact, that the absence of a writer like Tacitus was a major contributing factor to the generally more positive image of second-century imperial women, about whom so little is written.

1.6 EXILES AND VIOLENT DEATHS

The second-century imperial women up to Faustina the Younger all died natural deaths and were celebrated posthumously.¹⁷⁰ These commemorations honoured their devotion to their husbands and implicitly their crucial position connecting rulers, who were otherwise only related through adoption. However, outside this period, many imperial women suffered exiles and violent deaths with a surprisingly high

portrait is presented more like Agrippina, displaying masculine-type reasoning, *HA. Alex.* 14.7 and Herodian, 6.1.1-5.

¹⁶⁹ Julia Domna draws sympathy in Dio's portrayal of her as a mother of two fierce rivals, resulting in Geta's murder by Caracalla: 78.2.1-6. Dio is similarly sympathetic in her obituary: 79.24.1. Langford (2013), 7, discusses the different presentation of Domna's role in relation to each ruler.

¹⁷⁰ See 1.1.4.

frequency in the first dynasty. During this period the emperors were also mainly connected through adoption. In this section I will consider which imperial women lost imperial protection, what precipitated such punishments and how this related to the broader political context.

1.6.1 Loss of Imperial Protection

As Varner has pointed out in his comprehensive study, far more women were exiled or suffered *damnatio* than were deified.¹⁷¹ For the Julio-Claudian dynasty there was at least one exile or death of an imperial woman during each reign.¹⁷² Augustus exiled his daughter Julia, his only female relative to appear on his (centrally-produced) coinage, and his granddaughter, Julia the Younger.¹⁷³ Given the incipient nature of the honours awarded to Julio-Claudian women it is surprising how formalised the terms of exile were imposed with almost immediate effect, beginning with Julia the Elder.

Both Julias were placed under guard and exiled initially to the island of Pandateria, with restrictions placed on visitors and food items.¹⁷⁴ This form of exile for women seemed to have been modelled on those imposed on men. But it is unclear whether such measures similarly served to isolate them from a power base.¹⁷⁵ Using islands for exile continued: Pandateria served this purpose again for Agrippina the Elder (exiled by Tiberius) and Octavia (by Nero). Other island exiles were suffered by Agrippina the Younger and her sister Livilla (both exiled by their brother Gaius, and the latter by Claudius as well), Lucilla and Crispina (Commodus' sister and wife),

¹⁷¹ Varner (2001), 43, lists the imperial female *damnationes* and deifications for the first four centuries – see also Kienast (2004).

¹⁷² Corbier (1995), 186-90, and Flower (2006), 160-96, discuss the punitive measures against Julio-Claudian women. At 160, Flower notes that the only Republican women to have official sanctions made against their memory were Vestal Virgins – the same women upon whom Augustus modelled his honours for Octavia and Livia.

¹⁷³ Their exiles are related by Suetonius, *Aug.* 150.4. Flower (2006), 163-9, describes how both were treated as private matters by Augustus (even if their punishment was public knowledge). The first official sanction against an imperial woman's memory was the case of Livilla in AD 32 (see footnote 177). The last *damnatio memoriae* (a modern term, which Flower avoids) before the Tetrarchy was Magnia Urbica, whose name was erased on *ILS* 610.

¹⁷⁴ Julia the Elder was eventually moved back to the mainland: Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.1. Julia the Younger would eventually die on Trimerus: Tac. *Ann.* 4.71.4.

¹⁷⁵ Suet. *Aug.* 65.4, describes the exiles Augustus carried out amongst members of his family. Cohen (2008), 217, argues that Augustus' specific banishment of Julia the Elder to Pandataria led to the standardisation of exile to an island as a form of punishment (for both men and women) during the Principate. If Cohen is correct, the practice had stopped by the fourth century.

and Plautilla (Caracalla's wife). Orbiana (Alexander Severus' wife) was an exception, as she was instead exiled to Africa.¹⁷⁶

Along with this general uniformity in terms of exile, many of the women were punished on charges of adultery and went on to suffer violent deaths.¹⁷⁷ The case of Messalina presents an anomaly to this pattern: a rare example because she was a wife of a living emperor and mother of his heir, yet she was killed without any intermediary measure of exile.¹⁷⁸ Although imperial women who fell out of favour at court were not charged with *maiestas*, the act of adultery itself was political, regardless of any further subversive intentions or absence of a formal trial.¹⁷⁹ Sex could be a political tool for an imperial woman and the rumour of adultery, even if unfounded, had repercussions for the imperial *domus*, which warranted the punitive measures taken against them.¹⁸⁰ Just as imperial women had a positive role in the public display of the dynasty, any perceived negative action could also be seen as harming the presentation of the emperor's authority.

Although the measure of exile was regularly enacted against imperial women, the charge of adultery is often only reported in later narratives. The exile of Domitian's cousin Domitilla Flavia is an exception: she was accused of atheism along with her

¹⁷⁶ Kienast (2004), 179, dates her exile to 227.

¹⁷⁷ Agrippina the Elder, exiled by Tiberius, starved herself to death: Suet. *Tib.* 53.2. Agrippina the Younger and Livilla were both exiled by their brother Gaius, and later recalled by Claudius. Livilla was then exiled (for an affair with Seneca), where she died (Suet. *Claud.* 19.1). Livilla's two exiles and that of Agrippina the Younger are used by Tacitus in order to draw a comparison to the completely unhappy life of Octavia, who was killed in a forced suicide that initially failed: Tac. *Ann.* 14.63.1-64.3. Soaemias died violently with Elagabalus: she was decapitated and thrown into the Tiber (Herodian, 5.8.8-10).

¹⁷⁸ Tacitus presents the fullest description: *Ann.* 11.29.3-34.3. He also gives details for the elder Livilla's adulteries and subsequent death during Tiberius' reign: 4.3.2-5; at 6.2.1, he narrates the formal actions decreed by the senate against her memory. Flower (2006), 169-82, describes these measures and the lack of precise information about how she died; she presents Livilla as a precedent for the measures taken against Messalina's memory (182-9). The other women who were executed rather than exiled were victims of regime change: in particular the deaths of Soaemias and Mammaea (Herodian, 5.8.8-10 and 6.9.6-8) and later third-century empresses.

¹⁷⁹ The common distinction often made between adultery and treason is discussed by Varner (1995), 199-200 (in relation to Domitia Longina's 'exile'). For the close association between the two see Fagan (2002), 79. Such an overlap could be argued most clearly for Julia the Younger: she was charged with adultery in the same year that her husband was exiled on the charge of *maiestas* (Tac. *Ann.* 3.24.1-4). Flower (2006), 169, suggests that Julia's adultery charge was political.

¹⁸⁰ Flower (2006), 183, argues that many of Messalina's sexual misdemeanours served to protect Claudius and the succession of their son: for example her dispute with Valerius Asiaticus (Tac. *Ann.* 1-3.2).

husband.¹⁸¹ However, like most other imperial females exiled she was also removed to an island: either Pandateria (Dio, 67.14.2) or Pontia (Euseb. *HE* 3.18.5). An even more unusual charge than that levelled against Domitilla was that against Commodus' sister Lucilla, who was exiled and executed on the charge of conspiracy against him (acting as an accomplice to her second husband Pompeianus).¹⁸²

1.6.2 Conclusion

The greatest frequency of exiles and unnatural deaths for imperial women occurred during the Julio-Claudian and Severan dynasties. In the intervening period the notable examples of exile, Domitilla Flavia and Livilla, were also the two women who were not charged with adultery as a pretext for their executions. Despite the close association of an imperial couple in contemporary propaganda, not all women suffered at points of regime upheaval. Stilia Messalina and Domitia Longina (widows of Nero and Domitian respectively) survived and prospered in successive reigns.¹⁸³ Such survival from regime change became the norm in the late antique period.

1.7 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

I shall now turn to what trends emerge from this overview after having surveyed different facets of imperial women's presentation. I will use this as a basis to look ahead to where such trends may emerge in my examination of fourth- and fifth-century women.

When considering nomenclature, it emerged that the title of Augusta only began to be regularly given to imperial wives in the second century. This period saw the title widely used and a greater range of posthumous honours granted. The title Augusta even continued to be awarded in the second half of the third century often during very brief reigns. The title seemed to have become such an assumed element of female nomenclature by the third century that it is a surprise that it stopped being

¹⁸¹ Dio 67.14.2 uses ἀθεότης to describe the charge. Suet. *Dom.* 15.1, describes the accusation against her husband. Eusebius, writing in the fourth century, implies the charge was for Christian worship: *HE* 3.18.5.

¹⁸² Dio 73.4.3-6. In the same passage he vaguely describes the exile and execution of Commodus' wife Bruttia Crispina 'having become angry with her for some act of adultery'.

¹⁸³ There was no general pattern though: Gaius' wife, Caesonia, suffered a brutal death along with their infant daughter when he was deposed: Suet, *Calig.* 59.1. Domitia's alleged involvement in Domitian's death is described by Dio, 67.15.1-6.

used when Diocletian came to power and was only deployed again intermittently, before widespread use in the fifth century.

Coinage was produced for more women than were made Augustae in the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Again, although she did appear on coinage eventually, the manner in which Livia featured on this media had little influence on later dynasties. The lack of explicit identification on her coinage reflected Augustus' and Tiberius' more restrained displays of the women in their family, at a time when the role of emperor itself was still being defined. However, Livia did feature on later rulers' coinage, beyond the Julio-Claudian dynasty, suggesting that she was viewed by some as the model imperial woman. In a similar fashion Helena, Constantine I's mother is posthumously featured in literary texts of the Theodosian dynasty as a paradigm of a virtuous Christian empress. In both women's cases this later veneration was due to their close association with Augustus and Constantine respectively.

From Augustus onwards, all acts of patronage carried out by imperial women ultimately served as an extension of the ideals promoted by the emperor. This is not to say that such patronage did not celebrate the personal interests of the patroness; but these interests often naturally coalesced with those of the emperor, especially, if it involved the imperial mother, who was always greatly invested in her son's prospects. Many acts of building patronage displayed religious piety and this continued to be the case in the late antique period, but in a Christian form. Religious *pietas* had always been bound up with imperial women's public status in general, since Livia and Octavia started to receive honours previously only given to the Vestal Virgins.

The restrictions placed on imperial women in terms of travel remained relatively unchanged throughout the early imperial period. Women either travelled with their husbands, or remained in Rome. One exception was Julia Domna, who came to be based in Antioch during her son's reign, where she was placed in charge of imperial correspondence. This trusted position of an emperor's mother re-emerged early in the fourth century when Helena travelled independently of Constantine to Jerusalem where she carried out benefactions with imperial funds. Helena's independent travel set a precedent for later imperial women, which marked a contrast with the first three

centuries. Another development in the fourth century was the loss of Rome's status as an imperial capital; although it continued to be an attractive imperial residence for women.

In contrast to the brief mention of Plotina and Marciana in Pliny's *Panegyricus*, there were two panegyrics written specifically for imperial women in the fourth and fifth centuries: Julian on Eusebia and Claudian on Serena. In terms of literary presentation, the most indelible portraits were the negative descriptions of Julio-Claudian women in the narratives by Suetonius, Dio and, in particular, Tacitus. Such material for late antique women is less prevalent; the main historical narrative for the fourth century, by Ammianus Marcellinus, is not fully extant and does not include carefully constructed portrayals of females like those found in Tacitus, or even Dio. Criticism of imperial women in late antique literary accounts is often framed in terms of Christian transgressions. Although this Christian tone presents a clear difference from the preceding centuries, the devices used to criticise the women in such texts were inherited from the earlier character assassinations by writers like Tacitus.

Although Augustus did not give a formal title to any of his female relatives, he was the first to exile an imperial woman. The accusations which precipitated exiles were often reported as adultery; however, regardless of what the charge was, the punishment seemed to have been swiftly established and generally involved banishment to an island. Exiles also occurred in the late antique period, but there was far more variety in regard to how these were enacted and how they were reported. As in the earlier empire, the circumstances surrounding a woman's loss of imperial protection in Late Antiquity are often obscure and only related by later sources as rumours.

The different areas discussed in this chapter indicate imperial women's roles in the dynastic machine across the first three dynasties. I will now consider the more sporadic information that exists for the women of the fourth and fifth centuries and see how they also served to reflect imperial policy. Rather than attempt to move beyond the façade presented by the imperial administration in order to decipher the 'real women', I will instead examine the images that are presented and set them within the broader political context. Why were they presented in such a manner and

what did this suggest about their roles at court? Did their roles represent an evolution of those played by women in the earlier imperial era, or were they distinct in their own right? How did Christianity, but also the Christian-influenced evolution of the emperor's own role, change a woman's role in the imperial machine from what it had been before?

CHAPTER TWO

LATE ANTIQUE SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

The imperial women of the Constantinian, Valentinianic and Theodosian dynasties appear sporadically in the general historical narratives for the period AD 306-455. When they do feature, they generally appear incidental to the main narrative. This is true, at least, for the first two dynasties under examination: the Constantinian and Valentinianic dynasties, which include the eight-month reign of Jovian. Yet even amongst the better documented female figures of Theodosius II's court there are other, less well known, imperial women whose lives pass virtually without comment other than some record of their births and building dedications. Therefore when imperial women do feature in historical narratives it leads to the question: why them in particular and why then?

In this chapter I will first provide a brief historical overview of the three dynasties, placing imperial women in the context of the overarching political landscape (2.1). I will then consider the roles imperial women played in relation to the areas examined in Chapter One, except for literary portraits and violent deaths and exiles, since these form the basis of my case studies in Part Two. After sketching the historical background for the late antique period, I will then look at nomenclature (2.2). My particular focus is the use of the title *Augusta*, but also the new titles that appeared in this period: *Nobilissima Femina* and the *nomen Aelia*. I also consider the significance of the epithet *regina* (and the title *Augusta*) in literary sources to describe women who did not receive a formal title. In the material evidence section (2.3), I examine the continuation of traditional coin types for imperial women in the fourth century and the new Christian symbolism, which appeared in the fifth century. I then briefly look at limited surviving epigraphy to establish how it corresponds to the numismatic evidence. In the next section (2.4), I consider building and other forms of patronage carried out by women, often expressing personal Christian piety. Finally, I look at women's residences and how this changed in relation to where the emperor was in the fourth and fifth centuries, as well as a new trend for independent travel to Jerusalem in particular (2.5).

2.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

In this section I will establish where in the general historical narrative imperial women of each dynasty feature and what the important literary sources are. Each dynastic section is divided further by changes within the imperial college, and includes, where necessary, a table listing the imperial women related to that college. Since Constantine became Augustus during the Tetrarchy, I examine this era first in conjunction with his subsequent dyarchy with Licinius.

2.1.1 From Dyarchy to Tetrarchy to Dyarchy (284-324)

Table 1

Emperors	Mother	Wife ¹⁸⁴	Daughters and other Female Relatives
Diocletian	Anon.	Prisca ¹⁸⁵	Galeria Valeria
Maximian	Anon.	Eutropia (I)	Theodora ¹⁸⁶ ; Fausta
Constantius I	Anon.	[Helena (I)] ¹⁸⁷ Theodora	Constantia; Eutropia (II); Anastasia
Galerius	Romula	[Anon.] ¹⁸⁸ Galeria Valeria	Valeria Maximilla
Severus	Anon.	Anon.	
Maximinus Daza ¹⁸⁹	Galerius' sister ¹⁹⁰	Anon.	Daughter ¹⁹¹
Licinius	Anon.	Constantia	
Constantine I	Helena (I)	Minervina ¹⁹² Fausta	Constantina; Helena (II)

¹⁸⁴ Square brackets indicate probable concubines, whose relationships preceded this period.

¹⁸⁵ *PLRE* 1 s.v. Eleutheria, suggests Prisca was also known by this name, but it is only given in the later source *Lib. Pont.* 61.6.

¹⁸⁶ *Epit. Caes.* 40.12 describes Theodora as the stepdaughter, *privignam*, of Maximian; see also *Eutr.* 9.22. This could well have been true; however, such a story also conveniently discredits the lineage of Theodora's and Constantius' offspring, who were Constantine's rivals for power. Therefore, this could be just another piece of Constantinian propaganda like the story of Maxentius' illegitimacy, which was designed to discredit Constantine's rival and made Fausta Maximian's only legitimate descendant: *Pan. Lat.* 9.4.3 and Varner (2004), 215 n.14. See also Barnes (1982), 33-4.

¹⁸⁷ There is considerable debate over the nature of Helena's and Constantius' relationship, but it is not important for my purposes here. Writing in the twelfth century, Zon. 13.1.1, refers to the lack of consensus. Drijvers (1992a), 17-19, argues that they were not married, disagreeing with Barnes (1982), 36.

¹⁸⁸ There is uncertainty, despite the name, whether Valeria Maximilla was the daughter of Valeria; see 5.3.1. I have conservatively added anonymous in the table.

¹⁸⁹ Mackay (1999), 207-9, argues Daza is to be preferred to Daia (used by Lactantius), based on the name's Illyrian origin.

¹⁹⁰ See *Lact. DMP.* 18.13-14, *Epit. Caes.* 40.18, *Zos.* 2.8.1. Mackay (1999): 202-3, discusses Lactantius' use of the term *adfinis* to describe Galerius' and Maximinus' relationship.

¹⁹¹ Maximinus' son and daughter are mentioned by *Lact. DMP.* 50.6.

¹⁹² Minervina was probably dead when Constantine became Augustus. The status of her union with Constantine is a matter of debate, which is summarised by Pohlsander (1984), 80, and discussed in more detail by Lucien-Brun (1970), in particular 401-2. Her marriage to Constantine is possibly referred to in *Pan. Lat.* 7.4.1, discussed by Nixon and Rodgers (1994), 195 n.10 and Barnes (1982), 43.

Maxentius ¹⁹³	Eutropia (I)	Valeria Maximilla	Sisters: Theodora and Fausta
Bassianus ¹⁹⁴	Anon.	Anastasia ¹⁹⁵	

Imperial women are largely absent from the extant narratives of the Tetrarchy. The most complete single narrative that survives is Lactantius' *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, which was written during Constantine's and Licinius' dyarchy with a clear negative perspective on most of the Tetrarchs.¹⁹⁶ Otherwise we are mainly reliant upon material evidence such as coinage, which was only produced for imperial women in the second generation of the Tetrarchy after Diocletian's and Maximian's retirement in 305. Neither Diocletian, the founding tetrarch, nor his co-Augustus, Maximian, made any of their female relatives Augustae. The main role imperial women played at this time was in forging political alliances among the college. Valeria was married to her father's Caesar, Galerius, while Maximian's stepdaughter, Theodora, wed his Caesar, Constantius I. Later Galerius' daughter, Valeria Maximilla, was married to Maximian's son, Maxentius.¹⁹⁷ The last marriage alliance was between Maximian's daughter Fausta and Constantius' son Constantine I in 307.

Imperial women played a more important public role once the tetrarchic system began to falter.¹⁹⁸ The only Augusta of the period was Valeria, who was appointed by the senior Augustus Galerius, her husband. This award was made after Diocletian's and Maximian's retirements in 305 and, more particularly, following Constantius I's unexpected death on 25 July 306 in York when his son, Constantine I, was proclaimed Augustus by his father's troops. The imperial politics of the next

¹⁹³ Maxentius was never recognised by the senior Augustus, Galerius.

¹⁹⁴ Bassianus was only ever Caesar. Barnes (2011), 100-3, discusses the unclear circumstances surrounding both his appointment by Constantine and his death ca.315, which precipitated Constantine's first conflict with Licinius. Barnes' reconstruction is based on the one slender piece of evidence in *Origo* 5.14-15.

¹⁹⁵ Constantine I's half-sister.

¹⁹⁶ Nakamura (2003), 286, questions Lactantius' reliability. Nakamura's recent re-assessment of the date of Diocletian's death (crucial in the dating of Lactantius' work) to 3 December 312 (see 289) has been countered by Barnes (2010), 319, who dates Diocletian's death to exactly a year earlier. Barnes (1973), 29-46, and Creed (1984), xxxiii-xxxv, suggest an early date in the dyarchy for the *DMP*'s composition: Barnes argues it was composed before 316, while Creed suggests 314-15.

¹⁹⁷ There is no direct evidence for the date of Valeria Maximilla's marriage. *PLRE* 1 s.v. Valeria Maximilla, suggests a date ca. 305. See also Barnes (2010), 321-2.

¹⁹⁸ See 2.3.1 for the resumed coin production for imperial women.

couple of years was tangled and chaotic.¹⁹⁹ In spring 307 Constantine wed Fausta sealing his short-lived political alliance with her father Maximian. Constantine's allegiance with the former western Augustus supplanted his recently gained recognition as Caesar by Galerius in the East.²⁰⁰ Constantine's recognised status may have encouraged Maximian to form the alliance in the first place, since his own son Maxentius, who had declared himself *princeps* not long after Constantine was proclaimed in York, was never accepted into Galerius' imperial college.

The Carnuntum conference in November 308, presided over by the retired Augustus Diocletian, temporarily ratified positions in the imperial college.²⁰¹ Galerius was confirmed as senior Augustus with his former officer Licinius appointed his new counterpart. Maximinus Daza and Constantine became their respective Caesars while Maxentius was overlooked. In accounts of this poorly attested yet important political conference, no mention is made of any imperial woman and no marriage alliances resulted from it.

The settlement at Carnuntum did not last long and the final collapse of the Tetrarchy occurred in 313. In these five years the persecutors who were the focus of Lactantius' narrative met a variety of unpleasant deaths.²⁰² Constantine I and Licinius formed an alliance confirmed by Licinius' marriage to Constantine's sister Constantia in Milan in 313, after which Licinius defeated the last 'persecutor' Maximinus Daza.²⁰³ Maximinus' demise was accompanied not only by the violent death of his wife, but also by those of Valeria and her mother Prisca who had both been in exile since Galerius' death. This marks the denouement of Lactantius' narrative.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ The complexity is nicely illustrated by Barnes (2011), 89, in a table showing the changing status of Constantine from his own perspective and that of the senior Augustus Galerius.

²⁰⁰ Barnes (2011), 89.

²⁰¹ See Lact. *DMP*. 29.1-2 and Zos. 2.10.4. For the latter's misinterpretation of where Carnuntum was, see Creed (1984), 109. Mócsy (1970), 585, suggests the conference was held at the villa Murocincta.

²⁰² The exact date of Diocletian's death is uncertain, but he was still alive when Galerius died: *DMP*. 41.1-3. Maximian committed suicide apparently after his plot against Constantine was foiled by Fausta (30.1-6); Galerius died from cancer (33.1-35.4); and Maxentius, defeated by Constantine at Milvian Bridge, was drowned the Tiber (44.9).

²⁰³ The date of the marriage is well attested: see Pohlsander (1993), 154, for a summary.

²⁰⁴ The deaths of Maximinus and his family are described in *DMP*. 49.1-7 and 50.6-7 respectively. Valeria and Prisca's deaths are described at 51.1-2.

The Tetrarchy had become a dyarchy: Constantine I and Licinius were the Augusti of the West and East respectively. Their alliance, however, was not stable, and was interrupted by a civil war from 315 to 316.²⁰⁵ After their reconciliation Constantine and Licinius recognised each other's sons as Caesars on 1 March 317: Constantine's eldest sons, Crispus and Constantine II, and Licinius' only son, also called Licinius.²⁰⁶ Imperial women, specifically those connected to Constantine, did feature at important points during the dyarchy. Their appearances hinted at the underlying antagonism between the co-Augusti at periods when they were not in open conflict.²⁰⁷ In 324, eight years after their last conflict, Constantine and Licinius went to war again, which resulted in Licinius' defeat and in his death the next year. The younger Licinius was executed in 326; however, his mother, Constantia, would subsequently feature on coinage produced by her brother, Constantine.²⁰⁸ Almost two decades after his proclamation, Constantine had established himself as sole Augustus with four sons who could succeed him. The defeat of Licinius also saw Constantine appoint two Augustae: his mother Helena and his wife Fausta, both of whom he had previously made *Nobilissima Femina*.

2.1.2 The Constantinian Dynasty and Jovian's Reign

Table 2

Emperors and Others ²⁰⁹	Mother	Wife	Daughters and Other Female Relatives
Constantine I	Helena (I)	Fausta	Constantina; Helena (II)
<i>Crispus</i>	Minervina	Helena (III)	Anon.
Constantine II	Fausta	Anon.?	
Constantius II	Fausta	Daughter of Julius Constantius Eusebia Faustina	Constantia (II)
Constans	Fausta	Olympias ²¹⁰	
<i>Dalmatius</i>	Wife of Fl. Dalmatius	Helena (II)? ²¹¹	
<i>Hannibalianus</i>	Wife of Fl. Dalmatius	Constantina	

²⁰⁵ It was at this time that Bassianus, Constantine's brother-in-law, was executed. His wife, Anastasia, may have given her name to baths at Constantinople: see 2.4.1.4.

²⁰⁶ Barnes (1982), 7-8, itinerises the appointments.

²⁰⁷ See 2.3.1.

²⁰⁸ See 2.3.1.1.

²⁰⁹ Subordinate statuses to Augustus are denoted in italics. There were more usurpers than are included here, but for the sake of brevity I only include those referred to in my analysis.

²¹⁰ Olympias was only engaged to Constans: Amm. Marc. 20.11.3.

²¹¹ Barnes (2011), 171-2, suggests that Helena married Dalmatius, since Hannibalianus wed her sister Constantina.

Magnentius ²¹²	Anon. ²¹³	Anon. Justina	Anon.
Vetranio			
Iulius Nepotianus	Eutropia (II)		
Gallus	Galla	Constantina	Anon. ²¹⁴ Sister: wife of Constantius II
Julian	Basilina	Helena (II)	Half-sister: wife of Constantius II
Jovian ²¹⁵	Anon.	Charito	

2.1.2.1 Constantine I's Sole Reign (324-37)

The remainder of Constantine I's reign lasted more than a decade, yet, despite appointing all his sons and one nephew as Caesar, he never had another co-Augustus after Licinius. Constantine's female relatives would continue to appear at important epochs in his reign, in particular during his *vicennalia* and *tricennalia* celebrations. Constantine's *vicennalia* year, 326, was marred by the execution of his eldest son, Crispus (the only Caesar old enough to have gained military experience), and a few months later by the death of his wife, Fausta.²¹⁶

In the years immediately preceding his *tricennalia*, in 336, the imperial women of Constantine's family performed the traditional role of securing political alliances through marriage. It was in these final years that Constantine expanded his imperial college to include his nephews Dalmatius as Caesar and Hannibalianus as *rex regum* of Armenia.²¹⁷ Capitalising on, and uniting, Constantius I's two lines of descent via Helena and Theodora, Constantine married Constantius II to the daughter of his half-brother Iulius Constantius, and Hannibalianus to his own daughter Constantina. Given Hannibalianus' marriage it seems likely that Dalmatius, in the senior position of Caesar, was also married, but there is no evidence.²¹⁸ Like the alliances formed

²¹² Magnentius, Vetranio and Iulius Nepotianus usurped in 350.

²¹³ Magnentius' mother was possibly of Frankish descent see Jul. *Or.* 1.33D-34A. Drinkwater (2000), 143, dismisses this as later slander designed to discredit him.

²¹⁴ Julian, *Ep. Ad Ath.* 272D, describes Gallus as the father of Constantius' niece.

²¹⁵ Jovian and Charito had a son, Varronianus.

²¹⁶ Crispus' date of birth is discussed by Pohlsander (1984), 81-2. Fausta's death is discussed in Chapter Five. Licinius II's death is referred to as one of a number that occurred in 326: Jer. *Chr.* 325 (who dates Fausta's death to 328), Eutr. 10.6 and Oros. 7.28.26.

²¹⁷ Their father was Constantine's half-brother Flavius Dalmatius.

²¹⁸ Barnes (2011), 171-2. Euseb. *V. Const.* 4.49 (written after the death and *damnatio* of Crispus) describes the marriage of Constantine's 'second son' in 336. Constantine also formed marital connections between his female relatives and senatorial families at Rome: see Harries (2012), xii-xiii, and (2014), 208.

under the Tetrarchy, these marital arrangements did not ensure dynastic harmony when Constantine suddenly died on 22 May 337.

2.1.2.2 Constantine I's Successors (337-53)

The three-month interregnum that immediately followed Constantine's death, and lasted until his sons' joint proclamation on 9 September 337, has recently been reconstructed by Burgess.²¹⁹ During this transitional period the majority of the male descendants from Constantius I's marriage to Theodora were killed by Constantius II's troops in Constantinople; the fatalities included Dalmatius and Hannibalianus.²²⁰ It appears that the female descendants avoided this purge along with the youngest male relatives: Iulius Nepotianus, and Iulius Constantius' youngest sons Gallus and Julian, whose sister was Constantius II's first wife.²²¹ Julian's later writings provide an important contemporary perspective to this obscure period and Constantius II's later sole reign.

Apart from posthumous coin issues for Helena and Theodora, no other imperial woman featured in either the literary or material sources. This lacuna continued into the dyarchy of Constantius II and Constans (340-50).²²² However, three women were actively involved in the struggle for power following Constans' death in January 350: Eutropia (Constantius I's daughter and mother of Iulius Nepotianus), Justina (later the wife of Valentinian I), and Constantina (daughter of Constantine I and the widow of Hannibalianus). These women featured in sources for the usurpations of Magnentius, (350-3), Vetranio (March to December 350) and Iulius Nepotianus (June 350).

Of the three women, only Justina assumed the traditional role of confirming a political alliance for her family through marriage. Magnentius, the first to usurp in January 350, married a very young Justina, after apparently failing to secure a

²¹⁹ Burgess (2008), 5-51.

²²⁰ Julian, *Ep. ad Ath.* 270C.

²²¹ Burgess (2008), 10 n.34, argues that Nepotianus survived the 337 massacre because he was *in utero*, if this was the case then he was very young when he was acclaimed Augustus (ca. 12 years old) – see 5.3.2.1.

²²² Helena died ca. 328, she was the last woman to appear on Constantine I's coinage.

marriage alliance with Constantina.²²³ The marriage, although not as politically useful as that to Constantius II's sister, was beneficial for the usurper; Chausson has argued that Justina was of Constantinian descent.²²⁴

Eutropia and Constantina were directly involved in Iulius Nepotianus' and Vetranio's revolts respectively, both of which seemed to have been motivated by Magnentius' initial usurpation.²²⁵ Eutropia was living in Rome during her son's short-lived reign there, which ended with his death at the hands of Magnentius' troops.²²⁶ The bishop Athanasius, writing later under Constantius II's sole reign, alludes to Eutropia's death, in a way which suggests that she too was a victim of her son's downfall.²²⁷ Eutropia's appearance at this point in the literary narrative demonstrates how closely associated mothers were with their sons' ambitions, a recurring topos in literary sources ever since Livia's scheming on Tiberius' behalf.²²⁸ Eutropia's visibility was also the first of many imperial women's appearances during military crises, a contrast with the preceding tetrarchic period.²²⁹

According to Philostorgius, Constantina promoted Vetranio to Augustus, acting in her capacity as Augusta (which she was not).²³⁰ The description of Vetranio's revolt as a usurpation is in some ways misleading since he, and therefore also Constantina,

²²³ Magnentius' usurpation resulted in Constans' death. Petrus Patricius, *fr.* 16, describes Magnentius' proposal of a reciprocal marriage arrangement with Constantius, offering him one of his daughters in exchange for marriage to Constantina (referred to as Κωνσταντία). Jones (2007), 118 n.10, suggests that Magnentius proposed after she had shown her support for Vetranio.

²²⁴ Justina's father, Justus, appeared to have been killed by Constantius as a result of his support for Magnentius; Rougé (1974), 676-7. Chausson (2007), 179-84, traces Justina's maternal line through Galla, wife of Julius Constantianus; see also Lenski (2002), 103. Chausson's onomastic study is compelling, but not conclusive proof of Justina's Constantinian descent. Barnes (1975), 181, (1982), 44, and Woods (2004), 326-7, suggest Justina was a granddaughter of Crispus; Woods cites a reference by Themistius, *Or.* 3.43b, to the threat of Magnentius producing 'bastard and spurious successors'.

²²⁵ Both women's roles in these crises were played out in 350, while Justina's marriage presumably lasted until Magnentius' defeat in 353. The date of their marriage is unknown, but Drinkwater (2000), 137 n.36, suggests that Magnentius married Justina quickly (because of her Constantinian descent), but adds that this did not preclude him rejecting her if Constantius then accepted his request to marry Constantina.

²²⁶ Nepotianus was proclaimed by Magnentius' opponents in early July 350 and killed in the same month. See Barnes (1993), 53 and 101-2.

²²⁷ Barnes (1993), 53, argues for this link based on Athan. *Ap. Const.* 6.5.

²²⁸ See 1.5.2.

²²⁹ In particular Procopius' usurpation at Constantinople (363-4) and the sacks of Rome in 410 and 455, which I discuss later.

²³⁰ The title for Constantina can be dismissed as an anachronism: see 2.2.4. For her involvement in his appointment see Drinkwater (2000), 151, and Bleckmann (1994) 42-9.

acted in the interests of Constantius II. This is strongly suggested by Vetricano's subsequent relinquishing of the title and retirement after Constantius met him at his camp.²³¹ It is this clemency towards Vetricano that suggests he acted on behalf of Constantius, who had already demonstrated a ruthless disposition in protecting his position in 337. Constantina's continued value to Constantius was shown by her marriage to Constantius' Caesar, Gallus, the following year.

If Philostorgius' information is right, Constantina's involvement at this juncture is an anomaly in perhaps the entire imperial period. Besides being actively involved at a moment of military crisis she performed this role solely in her capacity as sister of the emperor, instead of acting in the interests of a son or to form an expedient political alliance, as was the case with Eutropia and Justina. Both Constantina's and Eutropia's appearances in 350 ultimately served the interests of Constantius II and the survival of the Constantinian dynasty, because the usurpations they were involved in seemed to be responses to Magnentius'.²³²

2.1.2.3 Constantius II, Julian and Jovian (353-64)

By the time Constantius II had defeated Magnentius in 353, his cousin Gallus was already Caesar in the East.²³³ Constantius was married at least three times, but only two of his wives can be identified by name and it is Gallus' wife, Constantina, who appears first in the extant part of Ammianus' history. This is the most expansive surviving narrative for the fourth century. The extant part begins during Gallus' tenure as Caesar and ends with the battle of Adrianople in 378.²³⁴

Among the few references Ammianus made to women (imperial or otherwise), Eusebia and in particular Constantina, as Gallus' partner-in-crime, have the most developed depictions.²³⁵ Eusebia's prominence was informed by her involvement in the promotion of Constantius' second Caesar, Julian, who was the main focus of Ammianus' history and whose own writings are another important source when

²³¹ Jul. *Or.* 1.26C and 2.76C, and *Epit. Caes.* 41.25.

²³² Bleckmann (1994), 49, underlines Constantina's vested interest in Constantius' position.

²³³ Gallus was appointed in 351.

²³⁴ He also lived during the events described in the surviving narrative.

²³⁵ See 2.2.4.

discussing Eusebia.²³⁶ Julian's own wife, Constantius' youngest sister Helena, appears in this narrative with the same frequency as her sister, but does not dominate in the way that Constantina is portrayed in regard to Gallus. Julian never remarried after Helena's death; when he died on campaign in Persia the only direct descendant of a Constantinian Augustus was Constantius' posthumous daughter Constantia, who featured later in Ammianus' work along with her mother Faustina.²³⁷

Julian's immediate successor Jovian was elected from the Augustus' campaign retinue and only reigned for eight months, from 363 to 364. His wife, Charito, was only named in much later sources and received no titles during his reign. Jovian did find the time to appoint his infant son, Varronianus, consul. The appointment was forced by the unexpected death of the consul designate Varronianus, Jovian's father. This election hinted at the possibility of children holding imperial offices.²³⁸ This new development became fully realised in the succeeding Valentinianic dynasty with the emergence of child Augusti, which eventually led to greater roles for women in imperial presentation.

2.1.3 The Valentinianic Dynasty

Table 3

Emperor	Mother	Wife	Daughters and other female relatives
Valentinian I	Anon.	Marina Severa ²³⁹ Justina	Galla; Iusta; Grata
Valens	Anon.	Domnica	Carosa; Anastasia
Procopius ²⁴⁰	Julian's maternal aunt ²⁴¹	Artemisia ²⁴²	Anon. ²⁴³
Gratian	Marina Severa	Constantia ²⁴⁴	

²³⁶ His panegyric to Eusebia is examined in Chapter Three.

²³⁷ Amm. Marc. 26.7.10.

²³⁸ McEvoy (2013a), 3-13, traces the slow and uncertain trajectory that led to a situation where child Augusti were an acceptable reality. She notes, 9, that Christianity was a crucial element in this development.

²³⁹ She has also been referred to as Mariana Severa; Lenski (2002), 103 n.213, discusses the variations. Woods (2006), 174-6, argues that Valentinian had a wife called Marina and that there was another figure called Severa based on his reading of Joh. Mal. 13.31-2 – an often unreliable source.

²⁴⁰ He usurped early in Valens' reign.

²⁴¹ See Lib. Or. 24.13, Eunap. fr. 34.3, Philost. 9.5, Zos. 3.35.2 and 4.4.2. Amm. Marc. 23.3.2. Procopius' Constantinian 'pretence' is discussed by Lenski (2002), 69.

²⁴² This identity is suggested by *PLRE* 1 s.v. Procopius.

²⁴³ Procopius had children, but their identities and gender are unknown: Zos. 4.4.3. One of his descendants was the Emperor Anthemius.

²⁴⁴ *PLRE* 1 s.v. Fl. Gratianus 2 refers to a child of the couple who died in infancy, followed by Cameron (2012), 345. However, the sources cited for this, Aug. *Civ. Dei*, 5.25, Theod. *HE* 5.12 and

		Laeta	
Valentinian II	Justina		Sisters: Galla; Iusta; Grata

2.1.3.1 Valentinian I, Valens and Gratian (364-75)

The imperial women of Valentinian I's and Valens' reigns are generally absent from both the material evidence and Ammianus' history. However, key events of the brothers' joint reign left a legacy in which imperial women often played important roles: the permanent division of the empire into East and West; and the election of the young Gratian to Augustus. However, the roles that developed for women as a result of these events only started to emerge in the second generation of the dynasty, after Valentinian II became senior Augustus.

Both Valentinian I and Valens were married with children when they were proclaimed Augusti by the army after Jovian's sudden death as the apparent victim of dubious ventilation.²⁴⁵ While Valens remained married to Domnica until his death, Valentinian I divorced Marina Severa in order to marry Justina, the former child bride of Magnentius.²⁴⁶ The prospects of the new dynasty seemed well poised: Valentinian I already had a male heir, Gratian, by Marina Severa, and Justina would provide another son, Valentinian II.²⁴⁷ Soon after he became emperor, Valens' wife Domnica became pregnant with their son, Valentinian Galates, as well.²⁴⁸ However, months before the birth of Galates, Valens faced a direct threat to his reign with the usurpation of Procopius, a cognate relative of Julian, who occupied Constantinople from September 365 to ca. May 366. In order to garner support from the local military Procopius made use of the surviving Constantinian women: Faustina,

Symm. *Rel.* 3.19, do not mention this child; they only refer to Valentinian II (Augustine and Theodoret) and Valentinian I (Symmachus).

²⁴⁵ Amm. Marc. 25.10.13-16 (Jovian's death), 26.1.5 to 26.2.11 (Valentinian's accession) and 26.4.1-3 (Valens' appointment). Valens was proclaimed more than a month after his brother: see Lenski (2002), 22-5, and Seeck (1919), 214-15.

²⁴⁶ Justina's two brothers, Constantianus and Cerealis, held offices in Valentinian's new administration: see Amm. Marc. 28.2.10.

²⁴⁷ Valentinian II was born in 371. For a timeframe of his sisters' births see section 2.5.2.

²⁴⁸ Lenski (2002), 53; at 31 he points to Themistius' expression, *Or.* 9.127C and 128A, of dynastic stability with future Caesars for both the eastern and western Augusti.

Constantius II's widow, and his posthumous daughter Constantia who was less than four years old.²⁴⁹

Constantia was eventually married to Gratian, Valentinian I's eldest son.²⁵⁰ As McEvoy has recently observed, the appointment of the young Gratian had seismic repercussions for the office of emperor in both halves of the empire, which in turn affected the roles of imperial women.²⁵¹ Initially, however, such impact was minimised because Valentinian, whose poor health had prompted his eldest son's election, recovered; and so Gratian was effectively the silent partner in the new imperial college.²⁵²

2.1.3.2 Valens, Gratian and Valentinian II (375-8)

By the time of Valentinian I's death in 375 while on campaign in Illyricum, the dynastic prospects of his family seemed less certain than at the time of Gratian's appointment. In the East, Valentinian Galates had already died.²⁵³ Following Valentinian I's death, the leading military and civilian figures in his entourage sent for his four-year old son Valentinian II, who was living with his mother Justina, and proclaimed him Augustus, without deferring to Gratian (who was in Trier) or the now senior Augustus Valens (in the East).²⁵⁴ The partial nature of the evidence makes it unclear whether Valentinian II's election, certainly a coup, was out of necessity or opportunity. After a notable delay his appointment was recognised by

²⁴⁹ Constantia was born after her father's death in November 361. Amm. Marc. 26.7.10, describes Constantia being paraded in front of the military, many of whom would have served under the former eastern Augustus Constantius, and Procopius then receiving imperial insignia in Faustina's presence.

²⁵⁰ Ammianus describes her near-kidnap by the Quadi, while travelling to Gaul to marry Gratian in 374: 29.6.7-8.

²⁵¹ McEvoy (2013a), 48-70, makes clear the precedent set by both Gratian's and Valentinian II's appointments, which themselves were *ad hoc* responses to political crises.

²⁵² Amm. Marc. 27.6.1-16.

²⁵³ Lenski (2002), 91-2, suggests he died in early 372 in Caesarea based on the contemporary account by Greg. Naz. *Or.* 43.54-55, 68. Lenski describes the impact it had on Valens' reign, which, without an heir, seemed more unstable. Rufinus writes that Galates died around 370: *HE* 11.9. For further discussion see Amidon (1997), 94 n.19, and also Soc. 4.26, Soz. 6.16. and Theod. *HE* 4.16.

²⁵⁴ Amm. Marc. 30.10.4-5 describes how Cerealis was sent to collect his nephew from his sister and bring him to the military camp at Aquincum where he was proclaimed. Justina's and Valentinian II's location at the time of Valentinian I's death is discussed in section 2.5.2. Cameron (2012), 350, argues that Ammianus' emphasis on Justina's distance from where Valentinian II was elected was designed to remove any accusation of interference on her part, because Valentinian II was alive when Ammianus was writing.

Gratian and Valens, upon which Valentinian II was taken under the guardianship of his half-brother.²⁵⁵

Although both the non-Nicene Christian Valens and his Nicene Christian nephew Gratian took active roles in religious matters, the major concern for both emperors was the incursion into the empire of a conglomeration of Goths in 376.²⁵⁶ This serious military concern culminated in the battle of Adrianople in August 378 where Valens died.²⁵⁷ Justina and her eastern counterpart, Valens' wife Domnica, featured most often in the literary sources for a generally poorly attested period for imperial women.²⁵⁸ However, in general, the women of the dynasty were not very prominent; the title of Augusta remained unused.

2.1.4 The Valentinianic-Theodosian Dynasty

Table 4

Emperor	Mother	Wife	Daughters and other female relatives
Gratian	Marina Severa	Constantia Laeta	
Valentinian II	Justina		Sisters: Galla; Iusta; Grata
Theodosius I	Thermantia (I)	Aelia Flaccilla Galla	Pulcheria Galla Placidia
Arcadius ²⁵⁹	Aelia Flaccilla		
Magnus Maximus ²⁶⁰	Kinsman of Theodosius I? ²⁶¹	Anon. ²⁶²	Daughters

²⁵⁵ Ammianus' very brief summary of events concludes with Gratian's paternal care of Valentinian II (30.10.6); his phrasing is discussed by Cameron (2012), 344. Kelly (2013), 360-74, unpicks the complex chronology of events from Valentinian I's death to Valentinian II's recognition by Gratian, in late February/mid-March 376, and Valens, by May/June of the same year.

²⁵⁶ I agree with Errington (2006), 264-5, that the Gothic war was 'the most important single series of events of the period'. The importance of the dynasty's different Christian beliefs, which included those of the women, will be discussed in Chapter Four.

²⁵⁷ Ammianus' narrative ends with this event. Domnica helped in the defence of Constantinople after Adrianople: see Soc. 5.1.3, Soz. 7.1.2 and Theoph. 5870. Her involvement is discussed by Lenski (2002), 52, and Woods (1996), 275-9.

²⁵⁸ Justina and Domnica were portrayed as negative influences on Valentinian II's and Valens' religious beliefs. Justina's influence is discussed in section 4.2; Domnica's is described by Theod. *HE* 4.11.

²⁵⁹ Arcadius' wife and children are listed in Table 5.

²⁶⁰ Maximus was briefly recognised by the imperial college.

²⁶¹ Maximus is described as an *adfinis* of Theodosius in *Pan. Lat.* 12.24.1.

²⁶² Ambr. *Ep.* 40.32, refers to Maximus' wife and daughters, who were assisted by Theodosius after Maximus' defeat.

2.1.4.1 Gratian, Valentinian II and Theodosius I (378-83)

The main histories for the remaining period were written with a clear, but contrasting, religious agenda: the fifth-century mainly Nicene-Christian ecclesiastical histories; and the sixth-century pointedly polytheistic historian Zosimus, who provides the longest single historical account of the three dynasties.²⁶³ Like the events that followed Valentinian I's death, Gratian's and Valentinian II's dyarchy is relatively undocumented, and resulted in another seemingly grudging recognition of a new Augustus. Theodosius' acclamation as emperor on 19 January 379 just over five months after Valens' death marked the end of Valentinianic rule in the East.²⁶⁴ The new junior partner in the empire already had military experience and a wife and children (including his son Arcadius). He was almost fifteen years older than the senior Augustus Gratian, who had been emperor when Theodosius' father, also called Theodosius, was executed.²⁶⁵

Even if Gratian had not originally intended for Theodosius to be Augustus, the latter's military experience probably recommended his eventual recognition, which overlooked Valentinian II as Valens' successor.²⁶⁶ As suggested in Themistius' orations delivered on Theodosius' behalf, this era was dominated in the first three years by the Gothic presence in the empire.²⁶⁷ Imperial women are virtually absent in the narratives for this period. However, the negotiated peace treaty in 382 that confirmed the permanent Gothic presence within the empire, with recruitment

²⁶³ Zosimus composed his work at the turn of the sixth century; however, he closely followed the earlier histories by Eunapius and Olympiodorus. Matthews (1970), 81, discusses both Sozomen's and Zosimus' use of Olympiodorus as a source and demonstrates how in many ways Sozomen's earlier account is to be preferred to Zosimus. Paschoud (1987), 207-8, suggests they used Olympiodorus as a source independently of each other. In comparison to Paschoud, Blockley (1980a), 396, credits Zosimus with more independence in his use of Eunapius.

²⁶⁴ The gap between Valens' death and Theodosius' appointment suggests a period of negotiation, at least; see Cameron (2012), 345. Sivan (1996), 208-10, and McLynn (2005), 92-4, argue that Theodosius I was proclaimed by his troops and subsequently, but quickly, recognised by Gratian. Errington (1996), 451-2, suggests that, after Adrianople, Theodosius was the only viable eastern appointment because he was the only person to enjoy military success in 378.

²⁶⁵ After his father's death in ca.376, Theodosius I retired to Spain where it seems he married Aelia Flaccilla; see Errington (1996), 443-4.

²⁶⁶ See Aug. *Civ. Dei* 5.25. Valentinian II was seven years old (at most). Errington (1996), 451-2, stresses the imperative at the time for the new eastern appointment to have military experience in order to deal with the Gothic threat.

²⁶⁷ Sivan (1996), 202-4, analyses Themistius' *Or.* 14, 15 and 16, which trace Theodosius' variable attitude to Gratian over the course of the Gothic conflict.

obligations into the imperial military, had major implications, which would eventually impact upon imperial women.²⁶⁸

The 382 treaty freed Gratian and Theodosius to focus on internal matters in their areas of jurisdiction.²⁶⁹ The eastern Councils held in 381, 382 and 383 demonstrated Theodosius' increasing civic focus, by which he shored up his position as eastern emperor when his Gothic campaign appeared unsteady.²⁷⁰ Besides his attention to religious matters in the East, Theodosius also had to build up his administration, which had been depleted by the losses at Adrianople; this had included relatives of his wife Aelia Flaccilla.²⁷¹ Aelia Flaccilla, along with their son Arcadius, was a party in the boldest of Theodosius' acts of assertion as eastern Augustus, one which simultaneously challenged his junior status in the imperial college. On 19 January 383, just a couple of months after the Gothic treaty had been agreed, Theodosius gave his son, and probably at the same time his wife, the titles Augustus and Augusta on the fifth anniversary of his own election. This showed clear dynastic ambition.²⁷²

Soon after Theodosius' conferral of these titles, Gratian was killed in Gaul, a victim of Magnus Maximus' usurpation. Despite having been married twice Gratian left no heirs. Valentinian II, who was in Italy when Gratian died, now became the senior Augustus at the age of 12. He was the first child emperor independent of another Augustus' court. With both limited territory and choice of avenues to assert his imperial prestige, Valentinian's display of Christian piety became a crucial facet of

²⁶⁸ Matthews (1975), 93-4, and Lenski (1997), 148, discuss the Gothic recruitment into the eastern army following the treaty. Errington (2006), 30-31, discusses the negative long-term effects of the treaty. At 32-3 he examines the military problems caused by Adrianople, which dictated Theodosius' reactions to Gratian's death. See also Heather (2006), 188-9.

²⁶⁹ Croke (2010), 244, suggests that by 381 Theodosius had already changed focus to civic matters. McLynn (2005), 107, stresses Theodosius' reliance on Christian ceremonial in the absence of military success.

²⁷⁰ For a brief summary of the orthodoxy established at the 381 Council see Kelly (1958), 263-4.

²⁷¹ Errington (1996), 448, mentions some appointments of Theodosius' family that preceded his own election, including Flaccilla's relative Fl. Cl. Antonius being appointed prefect of Gaul in 376. Sivan (1996), 200 and 209, suggests these relatives had limited influence over Theodosius' appointment. McLynn (2005), 95-8, discusses Theodosius' early appointments; at 97, he points to Theodosius' female relatives as the most important Spaniards in the new regime as they helped him to form alliances.

²⁷² There is no date for Aelia Flaccilla's title; it was never recognised in the West. Stebnicka (2012), 148, thinks that Aelia Flaccilla was made Augusta in 379.

his presentation. In this he was influenced by his mother, Justina, who, unlike Gratian and Theodosius II, was a homoian Christian.²⁷³

2.1.4.2 Valentinian II, Theodosius I, Arcadius and Magnus Maximus (383-92)

Valentinian II and Theodosius I (along with Arcadius) were mainly resident in one city for the rest of their reigns: Milan and Constantinople respectively. Both these courts included a number of women. Although in terms of titles Aelia Flaccilla was the dominant woman of this era, Justina attracts the most attention in the literary sources for her dispute with Ambrose (known as the basilica conflict, which is discussed in Chapter Four).

Justina's and Ambrose's dispute was intrinsically bound up with Valentinian's need for public display of Christian piety. The court also needed a space for the considerable contingent of homoian-Christian Goths, who had been recruited into the army as part of the 382 peace treaty. Valentinian II's homoian theology, which informs the accounts of the later Nicene church historians, was also a point of issue with the western usurper Magnus Maximus, who continually sought recognition from the co-Augusti. These political and religious concerns faced by Valentinian's court reinforced each other, leading to an important role for Justina.

Theodosius' laissez-faire policy towards the standoff in the West developed into subversion of imperial hierarchy when he recognised Magnus Maximus as Augustus in 385.²⁷⁴ However, for reasons that are unclear, in 387 Magnus Maximus invaded Italy sparking Theodosius I's active involvement on Valentinian's behalf after the two courts met at Thessalonica.²⁷⁵ According to some literary sources, Justina brokered an alliance there, which was sealed by the marriage of Theodosius to Valentinian's sister Galla.²⁷⁶

²⁷³ Cameron (2012), 349, and McEvoy (2013a), 120 and 124-5, underline Justina's personal influence over Valentinian.

²⁷⁴ Zos. 4.37.3, describes Theodosius' recognition of Maximus; Soz. 5.12, describes Valentinian's reluctant recognition. Lunn-Rockliffe (2010), 320-1, discusses Theodosius' recognition of the consulship of Maximus' prefect Evodius in 386. Maximus' own consulships of 384 and 388 were not recognised.

²⁷⁵ Aug. *Civ. Dei* 5.26, describes Theodosius acting out of paternal affection (*paterno...affectu*) for Valentinian. This is similar to the sentiment conveyed by Ammianus, 30.10.6, in regard to Gratian's guardianship of Valentinian after his accession (see 2.1.3.2).

²⁷⁶ Zos. 4.44.2-3 and Philost. 10.7.

Valentinian's court achieved their desired outcome of Maximus' defeat and death with eastern assistance, but the ultimate denouement of the war was the end of the Valentinianic dynasty. While Theodosius directly engaged in the war and later celebrated a triumph in Rome, Valentinian II sailed around Italy, avoiding direct participation in both the conflict and the celebrations.²⁷⁷ Valentinian, having successfully avoided being placed under Maximus' control in Gaul, came to live there under the control of Theodosius' general Arbogast. He died there in May 392, a possible suicide.²⁷⁸ Justina predeceased him in this period after the Thessalonica conference; like many imperial mothers, she seems to have been wholly committed to her son's interests.²⁷⁹ Valentinian was survived by all his sisters. Iusta and Grata did not accompany him to Gaul, but appeared to remain in Milan unmarried, while Galla through her marriage to Theodosius ensured the continuance of the dynasty through the cognate line.

2.1.5 The Theodosian Dynasty and Immediate Successors

Table 5

Emperors and Others	Mother	Wife	Daughters and other female relatives
Theodosius I	Thermantia (I)	Galla	Galla Placidia Nieces: Serena and Thermantia (II)
Arcadius	Aelia Flaccilla	Eudoxia	Flaccilla (I); Pulcheria (II); Marina; Arcadia
Honorius	Aelia Flaccilla	Maria Thermantia (III)	Cousin and mother-in-law: Serena Half-sister: Galla Placidia
Theodosius II	Eudoxia	Aelia Eudocia (I)	Licinia Eudoxia; Flaccilla (II) Sisters: Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina
Athaulf ²⁸⁰		Galla Placidia	
Constantius III		Galla Placidia	Iusta Grata Honoria
Constantine III ²⁸¹		Anon.	
Valentinian III	Galla Placidia	Licinia Eudoxia	Eudocia (II) ²⁸² ; Placidia (II)

²⁷⁷ Zos. 4.45.4. Croke (1976), 236, and Errington (2006), 238, describe Valentinian II as becoming a background figure when Theodosius took on his cause.

²⁷⁸ Ruf. HE 11.31 and Soz. 7.22, note the uncertainty surrounding his death; whether it was murder or suicide; discussed by Lunn-Rockliffe (2008), 206, and Croke (1976), 238-42 – who concludes at 244, that it was probably suicide.

²⁷⁹ Ruf. HE 11.17 and Soz. 7.14 indicate that she died soon after the Thessalonica conference, so before Valentinian moved to Trier in 389.

²⁸⁰ Athaulf, Alaric's successor as leader of the Goths, is included in this table because he was Galla Placidia's first husband. The couple had a son, Theodosius (III), who died in infancy.

²⁸¹ Constantine III was fleetingly recognised by Honorius: Zos. 5.43.1-2 and Olymp. fr. 13.1. See Kulikowski (2000), 337 (especially notes 79 and 80).

		Sister: Iusta Grata Honoria
Marcian	Anon. Pulcheria	Aelia Marcia Euphemia
Petronius Maximus ²⁸³	Licina Eudoxia	
Palladius ²⁸⁴	Eudocia (II)	
Huneric ²⁸⁵	Eudocia (II)	
Olybrius	Placidia (II)	Anicia Juliana

2.1.5.1 Theodosius I, Arcadius and Honorius (392-5)

Theodosius I ruled for only three years as senior Augustus and was a widower again when he died in the West in 395. Unlike the regime changes in the fourth century, his death did not generate a succession crisis. Instead his sons and designated heirs succeeded him: the teenaged Arcadius in the East and nine-year-old Honorius in the West.²⁸⁶ Honorius had been made Augustus by Theodosius at Constantinople in 393, ten years after Arcadius' succession and less than a year after Valentinian II's death. Honorius' appointment may have been prompted by the western usurpation of Eugenius, which was sponsored by Theodosius' former general Arbogast, who had dominated Valentinian's final years in Gaul.²⁸⁷

Sources are surprisingly silent about Theodosius's second wife, Galla. She had two sons, but only her daughter Galla Placidia survived into adulthood. Thus Galla Placidia is a better documented figure than her mother.²⁸⁸ Galla died in childbirth probably just before Theodosius made his final journey westwards to fight Eugenius.²⁸⁹ After the usurper's defeat in 394, Theodosius displayed his shrewd sense of dynastic perspicuity and sent for his youngest co-Augustus, Honorius, to join him. Accompanying Honorius were his half-sister Galla Placidia and

²⁸² I include numerals to avoid confusion with Theodosius II's wife (even though she had a different *nomen*); likewise for Placidia (II), to distinguish her from her grandmother, Galla Placidia.

²⁸³ Petronius and Olybrius were emperors of the West in 455 and 472 respectively, and therefore after the period which is the focus of my thesis. They are included, along with Petronius' son, Palladius, because of their marriages to Valentinian III's daughters.

²⁸⁴ Palladius was made Caesar by his father, Petronius Maximus: Hyd. 455.

²⁸⁵ Huneric was the son of the Vandal leader Geiseric.

²⁸⁶ *PLRE* 1, s.v. Arcadius, suggests he was born ca. 377. He would have been about eighteen when he became senior Augustus. Honorius was born 9 September 384 (according to *Cons. Const.* 384 and *Soc.* 5.12.).

²⁸⁷ McEvoy (2013a), 137-8, argues for this connection, and also argues that Honorius was made Caesar before he became Augustus. However, Kelly (2016), Section III, has shown that such an appointment is unlikely and could not have happened in 389 when Honorius first visited Rome with Theodosius: Claud. *6Cos.* 65-76.

²⁸⁸ For the sake of clarity I will always refer to her as Galla Placidia.

²⁸⁹ See Zos. 4.57.3 and John Ant. *fr.* 187.

Theodosius' niece Serena, who with her sister, Thermantia, had lived at their uncle's court following their parents' deaths.²⁹⁰ Like most of his predecessors Theodosius used his nieces to forge beneficial alliances. At the same time, these unions seemed to restrict succession, which was a new innovation to an established practice. Serena and her sister, Thermantia, were married to generals, indicating the links Theodosius was forging with the army, which was still recovering after Adrianople.²⁹¹ The identity of Thermantia's husband is unknown, but Serena's husband, Stilicho, was half-Vandal, a fact which seemed to preclude any attempt to usurp, despite his marriage into the imperial family.²⁹²

Theodosius' appointments of his sons to Augustus and carefully restrictive marriage alliances for his nieces indicated his careful dynastic construction. Both sons were controlled by a coterie of advisors throughout their reigns. Arcadius was initially dominated by the civilian prefect Rufinus, while Honorius' administration was managed by Stilicho, who was able to exploit his familial connection to Honorius via Serena over the next decade.

2.1.5.2 Arcadius and Honorius (395-408)

The co-rule of Arcadius and Honorius from 395 signified definitively the evolution of permanent court-based emperors in both parts of the empire, a development set in motion by Valentinian II's reign. This evolution of the emperor's role meant that without a military career he was dependent on displays of Christian piety to project his authority.²⁹³ One consequence was the more frequent appearances by imperial women in both material and literary sources. In the East they appeared with

²⁹⁰ See section 3.3.2.

²⁹¹ For Thermantia's marriage see Claud. *Laus Serenae*, 186-7. Matthews (1975), discusses the other political marriages arranged by Theodosius. For further discussion of Theodosius' nephew (Nebridius) and nieces see Lançon (2014), 139-41.

²⁹² Similarly, Drinkwater (2000), 143, refutes claims of Magnentius' Frankish descent, because he did usurp. Cameron (1970), 38, argues the point in regard to Stilicho's origins preventing him from usurping. McEvoy (2013a), 141, counters Cameron's argument, citing the fourth-century usurpation by the Frank Silvanus, but the circumstances surrounding this event are obfuscated by Ammianus' account: 15.5.1-38. McEvoy also points out, at n.26, that Eudoxia (Theodosius II's wife) was the daughter of the Frankish general Bauto. Lançon (2014), 146, describes the benefit for Theodosius of forming an alliance through marriage with Stilicho.

²⁹³ McEvoy (2013a), 103-31, sets out thematically how the emperor's role was renegotiated in the successive reigns of Gratian and Valentinian II, the latter in particular presenting a paradigm for the successive court-based emperors. At 117-27, she looks at the importance of their religious role in establishing a sense of authority; see also McLynn (1994), 174.

increasing regularity on coinage, while their early western counterparts initially featured only in Claudian's contemporary poems, which are a chief source of information for the early part of Honorius' reign.²⁹⁴

Both courts faced external and internal pressures including the continued presence of a group of Goths in Illyricum, who over time became a mainly western concern. This autonomous group, led for most of this period by Alaric, invaded Italy twice in the first decade of the fifth century and struck a number of treaties with Stilicho.²⁹⁵ In conjunction with this sustained military pressure, the West also faced Gildo's African revolt (397-8), an Italian invasion by another Gothic group under Radagaisus, which coincided with Constantine III's usurpation in Gaul (406-11), and a volatile relationship with the eastern court.²⁹⁶ Such pressures often precluded imperial women's involvement; but where they do appear should be considered against this broader political backdrop.

Stilicho's longevity as an effective ruler in the West brought him into conflict with a series of advisors for Arcadius, over whom Stilicho initially claimed guardianship.²⁹⁷ Stilicho's eastern designs may well have prompted Arcadius' marriage to Eudoxia, which took place only three months after Theodosius' death. This union benefitted the eastern court in two ways: Eudoxia was the daughter of a successful, but now deceased, general and the marriage precluded Arcadius' marriage to one of Stilicho's daughters or indeed an ambitious local figure.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁴ Claudian's poems are discussed in Chapter Three.

²⁹⁵ Stilicho had to gain financial support from the senate at Rome for such treaties: Zosimus, 5.29.5-9, describes his request of 4000lb of gold from the senate.

²⁹⁶ The East was implicated in Gildo's revolt: Zos. 5.11.2. For a contemporary perspective see Claud. *Gild.* Kulikowski (2000), 325-45, nicely summarises Constantine III's usurpation and the barbarian movements in Gaul, as well as Radagaisus' second Gothic threat. See also Williams and Friell (1999), 5-14 and Cameron (1970), 93-123.

²⁹⁷ Claud. *3Cos.* 152-8, recreated Theodosius' death-bed scene where he grants Stilicho guardianship. Errington (2006), 41-2, provides a summary of events. He adds that the division of empire established by Valentinian I and Valens was 'merely confirmed' by Arcadius and Honorius' succession and Stilicho had little say in the matter. Cameron (1970), 38-9, discredits the joint claim since Arcadius was technically old enough to rule in his own right.

²⁹⁸ Eudoxia was the daughter of Bauto, a general of Valentinian II whose efforts against Maximus are mentioned by Ambr. *Ep.* 24.4.6. Eunap. *fr.* 58.2 refers to Arbogast as Bauto's son. Zos. 4.33.1, suggests a close connection between Bauto and Arbogast. Zos. 5.1.4-5.3 reports that Rufinus wanted to marry his daughter to Arcadius but was thwarted by Eutropius.

Stilicho's occidental dominance established the partnership model for western court-based emperors, which has recently been defined by McEvoy.²⁹⁹ This model was developed from Stilicho's practical administration including the important military role, while Honorius' ceremonial role centred on displays of Christian piety.³⁰⁰ Stilicho confirmed his dominance at court with the marriage of his eldest daughter Maria to Honorius in 398; and then his younger daughter, Thermantia, when Maria died.³⁰¹

In contrast to this initial internal stability of the western court brought about by Stilicho's complete dominance, the first five years of Arcadius' reign were turbulent. Among the regime changes in Constantinople, the city also faced an uprising by the *magister militum* Gainas, which resulted in a bloody massacre of his troops within the city (399-400).³⁰² Arcadius' court later faced riots in the city when the popular bishop John Chrysostom was exiled. However, after Gainas' defeat there were no other direct threats to the survival of the court itself. Arcadius died peacefully in 408, followed in the same year by the violent ends of Stilicho and Serena, both victims of the crises that subsumed the western court.

2.1.5.3 Honorius, Theodosius II and Constantius III (408-23)

The ecclesiastical histories of Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret were all written during Theodosius' long reign and so their narratives have contemporary, but differing, perspectives and a primary focus on church affairs. For the West there is a lack of a cohesive narrative. Sozomen's account provides the most information written from an eastern perspective, but Claudian's poems cease by 404 and Zosimus' history ends shortly before the Gothic sack of Rome in 410.³⁰³

²⁹⁹ McEvoy (2013a), 162-9, defines this 'corporate imperial rule', which developed from Stilicho's long-term position as *magister militum* and the marriage alliances he forged.

³⁰⁰ McEvoy (2013a), 153-4, sets out the challenge that Stilicho faced to maintain his influence as Honorius grew to maturity.

³⁰¹ Thermantia was not married prior to this.

³⁰² Gainas died later in Thrace: Soc. 6.6. Cameron and Long (1993), 323-33, provides a chronology for the rebellion. See also Williams and Friell (1999), 5-14, who offer a different interpretation of the repercussions at court afterwards. Gainas' revolt seems likely to have prompted Eudoxia's title of Augusta: see 2.2.1. Cameron and Long, 328-9, refer to the East's problems with Alaric, 396-402.

³⁰³ Both Sozomen and Zosimus used the well informed account by Olympiodorus for their western narratives after 406/7. See footnote 263.

Arcadius' death in May 408 saw the smooth succession of his seven-year old son Theodosius II in the East. The new emperor was again surrounded by a coterie of advisors, as well as his sisters Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina. Over the course of his forty-two year reign all family members were involved in various displays of religious piety.³⁰⁴ Pulcheria, his oldest sister, was the best documented of these siblings, and is often described as an effective regent for at least the early period of her brother's reign, before his marriage to Eudocia, with whom Pulcheria developed a rivalry.³⁰⁵ A new innovation in this period seemed to be a restriction on marriage alliances: Valentinian II's sisters Iusta and Grata never married, and in the next generation Pulcheria, Arcadia and Marina all took oaths of virginity, which meant Theodosius II had no threat to his position from ambitious brothers-in-law before he was old enough to marry.³⁰⁶

At the time of Theodosius' succession, the western court was in flux and facing military pressures, from which only Honorius, now the senior Augustus, would remain unscathed among his family. In 408, when Constantine III still had control of Gaul, the West faced another Italian invasion by Alaric's Goths, which reached a climax with the 410 sack of Rome. The exact chronology for this final incursion is unclear, but it was precipitated by the execution of Stilicho whose treaties with Alaric had been spun by his enemies as a conspiracy against Honorius.³⁰⁷

Stilicho's death in August 408 by the emperor's troops in northern Italy was followed by that of his son Eucherius.³⁰⁸ Honorius' break with Stilicho's regime was further marked by the expulsion from court of his wife Thermantia, who then joined Serena in Rome. In the next two years (408-10), Alaric, attempting to strike a deal

³⁰⁴ See patronage section 2.4.

³⁰⁵ Soc. 9.1, opens his account of the current reign with an effective encomium of Pulcheria; see 3.1. Philost 12.7, states that Pulcheria was put in charge of imperial rescripts. Holum (1982), 111, argues that Pulcheria exercised 'real power'. I think such a term should always be used tentatively for imperial women. Elton (2009), 141-2, argues that Theodosius II was more in control than is assumed by many modern scholars.

³⁰⁶ Their vow's political benefit is discussed by Holum (1982), 93-4, based on Soz. 9.1, who describes how it protected Theodosius' position from male pretenders. McEvoy (2013a), 293, discusses Iusta Grata Honoria's marriage: that she was in her thirties suggests she was prevented from marrying earlier. Stilicho's youngest daughter Thermantia did not marry until she replaced her sister, Maria, as Honorius' wife.

³⁰⁷ McEvoy (2013a), 174-86, presents the various factors which precipitated Stilicho's execution.

³⁰⁸ Olymp. fr. 5.1-2.

with Honorius in northern Italy, besieged Rome and temporarily appointed his own emperor, Priscus Attalus, from the senate. Against the background of Alaric's fraught negotiations with Honorius' generally unresponsive court, Serena was strangled in autumn 408 at Rome.³⁰⁹ Serena's death was carried out seemingly by the order of the senate and, more contentiously, the urging of Galla Placidia, Honorius' half-sister.³¹⁰ Galla Placidia was abducted by the Goths after they sacked Rome in 410. She lived with their camp for six years as it moved from Italy through France and into Spain. In January 414 Galla Placidia married Alaric's successor Athaulf, and then bore Theodosius (III). Before this boy's early death he was the only male offspring of either the western or eastern courts.³¹¹

While Galla Placidia resided with the Gothic camp, a power struggle took place at Honorius' court to take over Stilicho's position of influence. Honorius himself seemed content to continue in his purely ceremonial role, which, as McEvoy has suggested, was perhaps the best means of survival.³¹² Eventually the general Constantius wrested control as the military partner, and restored a degree of stability to the court until his death in 421. Constantius ended Constantine III's usurpation and oversaw Galla Placidia's return from the Gothic camp. Like Stilicho, Constantius confirmed his position as the power behind the throne through marriage to the imperial family; in this case his marriage to Galla Placidia on 1 January 417. The couple had two children who reached maturity: Iusta Grata Honoria and Valentinian III. Galla Placidia's second son was the sole male heir of either half of the empire, just as his deceased half-brother Theodosius (III) had been.

³⁰⁹ See Olymp. *fr.* 7.3. I will discuss her death in 5.3.2.2. McEvoy (2013a), 192-7, outlines Alaric's negotiations and altercations with Honorius' court after Stilicho's execution.

³¹⁰ Galla Placidia's intended marriage to Serena's son, Eucherius, is indicated by Claudian: *Stil.* 2.351-61. The passage is discussed by Sanz-Serrano (2013), 55, McEvoy (2013a), 161, and Cameron (1970), 46-8, 54, 154 and 272. Honorius was emperor for a further fifteen years, yet he never married again.

³¹¹ For Galla Placidia's marriage in Narbonne see Olymp. *fr.* 24.4-10, Philost. 12.4 and Oros. 7.40.2. McEvoy (2013a), 200-1, summarises the Gothic movements after 410 until Galla Placidia's return. Sivan (2011), 9-37, attempts to reconstruct Galla Placidia's life in the Gothic camp. At 41, she suggests Galla Placidia became pregnant soon after her marriage (414/15). I think Sanz-Serrano (2013), 60, goes too far to say that Galla Placidia married Athaulf as an act of rebellion against Honorius; she would have little agency in the decision.

³¹² McEvoy (2013a), 188; 298-304, contrasts the success of Honorius' continued passivity with Valentinian III's ultimately failed attempt to wield authority once he reached maturity.

Constantius would eventually achieve greater assurance of his position than Stilicho when he was recognised as Honorius' co-Augustus in 421, the last military emperor of the dynasty.³¹³ This seemed to have been a grudging recognition by Honorius and was not recognised by Theodosius II, who in the same year married Eudocia.³¹⁴ Constantius' recognition was short-lived as he died in the same year as his proclamation. Although his marriage to Galla Placidia was reportedly an unhappy one, it was her poor relationship with Honorius following Constantius' death that resulted in her family's departure from court under unclear circumstances.³¹⁵

The final two years of Honorius' reign were spent without any member of his immediate family around him, which contrasted with the start of his reign. He had survived internal disputes and a number of serious military pressures. Upon his death, John usurped at Rome, which provoked direct intervention from the East in order to reinstate the Theodosian dynasty. The new court was indebted to the East for its position. This marked an era of greater cooperation between the two courts.

2.1.5.4 Theodosius II and Valentinian III (423-50)

Theodosius' support for Valentinian's installation in the West was marked by Valentinian's election to Caesar at Thessalonica in 424.³¹⁶ The defeat of John the next year resulted in Valentinian's appointment to Augustus in Rome where he was joined by his sister, Iusta Grata Honoria, and their mother, Galla Placidia, who like her grandmother, Justina, was placed in a potentially influential position as mother of a child emperor.³¹⁷ These women of Valentinian's court were the first western Augustae since the Constantinian dynasty. They were later joined by Theodosius II's daughter, Licinia Eudoxia, whom Valentinian married at Constantinople in 437.

³¹³ See Theoph. 5913, Soz. 9.16 and Olymp. *fr.* 33.1-2. McEvoy (2013a), 213-15, summarises Constantius' tenure as Augustus.

³¹⁴ Olymp. *fr.* 33.1-2, describes Constantius' award which was not recognised in the East. Holum (1982), 120-1, argues that the choice of Eudocia was orchestrated by Pulcheria's enemies at court.

³¹⁵ McEvoy (2013a), 216, describes it as an exile; such a formalised term should be used carefully.

³¹⁶ Valentinian was the first Caesar since Julian: see Kelly (2016), 23-4.

³¹⁷ McEvoy (2013a), 234-7, follows the now established viewpoint that her influence is overstated, while Sanz-Serrano (2013), 64-5, attributes to her a more active role in the regime, as a result of her familiarity with barbarian forces. I agree with McEvoy that any influence Galla Placidia wielded was behind the scenes, but she was also an important public figure as the only adult family member at court, who had been a part of Honorius' court.

The stability enjoyed by the eastern court in regard to external pressures seemed to engender a court environment in which women played an important role, in particular in religious display. Pulcheria and Eudocia were directly involved in one schismatic dispute which affected Theodosius' court: the Monophysite controversy. The Italian court, along with the pope in Rome, were in correspondence with the East about these ecclesiastical matters. But such issues were overshadowed by continued military pressures in general historical narratives of the West.³¹⁸

Such military concerns ensured that the partnership model established in Honorius' reign eventually emerged again with Valentinian III and his *magister militum* Aëtius who, unlike his predecessors, had a private army at his disposal.³¹⁹ Valentinian's sister, Iusta Grata Honoria, unlike her eastern counterparts, did not take a vow of virginity to protect her brother's position as Augustus. In fact, she was accused in some accounts of actively damaging Valentinian's position by inviting Attila the Hun to invade the West, a surely apocryphal story.³²⁰ The military pressures that developed during the Hunnic invasion (led by Attila, ca. 440-53) had repercussions for the whole empire. However, like the earlier Gothic incursion, the Hunnic invasion had more serious repercussions for the West, who suffered another sack of Rome, this time by the Vandals. This resulted once again in the abduction of imperial women.³²¹ This incursion was mainly played out after Theodosius II's death, which created the first serious succession crisis in the East since the death of Valens in 378.

2.1.5.5 Valentinian III and the Eastern and Western Successors (450-5)

Theodosius' death in a horse-riding accident in July 450 left Valentinian III as the sole emperor and the only Theodosian male; both emperors only had daughters. In

³¹⁸ Pope Leo's collection of letters included imperial women as writers or addressees: Galla Placidia, Licia Eudoxia, Pulcheria and Eudocia: *Ep.* 30-31, 45-46, 56-58, 60, 63-64, 70, 77, 79, 84, 95, 105, 112, 123.

³¹⁹ McEvoy (2013a), 252-4, sets out Aëtius' dominance at court, which he achieved in 433 with Hunnic support. For a period of ca. 12 years, Aëtius had vied with Felix and Bonifatius for the position of *de facto* ruler: see *Prisc. fr.* 30.1. Bonifatius was closely associated with Galla Placidia (see *Olymp. fr.* 38). For a narrative of this period and the development of private armies see McEvoy, 246-50, Heather (2006), 260-2, and Wijnendaele (2015), 87-103, the last of whom overstates Galla Placidia's autonomy: he mentions her as a shorthand reference for the decision-making process at court.

³²⁰ This anecdote by *Prisc. fr.* 17 is discussed by Holum (1982), 1-5 and Baldwin (1980), 24.

³²¹ Heather (2006), 251-348, sets out the different barbarian movements within the empire, including the Vandal and Alan conglomeration, which in the 420s moved into, and subsequently settled in, north Africa, and the Hunnic invasion. See also Williams and Friell (1999), 54-6.

theory Valentinian should have decided the eastern succession. Instead Marcian was made Augustus, without Valentinian's authority, a month after Theodosius' death.³²² This appointment was confirmed through Marcian's marriage to Pulcheria, who was now in her early fifties.

Although Pulcheria kept her vow of virginity, she ultimately performed the traditional role of pawn in a marriage alliance, which confirmed the political appointment of her husband and ensured the short-term continuation of the eastern Theodosian dynasty. The union benefitted Pulcheria because it confirmed monophysitism as heterodox at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, where she was hailed the new Helena. However, Marcian's appointment was ultimately engineered by the general Aspar. His agreement with Pulcheria facilitated his designs and ultimately precluded any ambitions Valentinian may have had in regard to the East.³²³ Pulcheria died in 453: the last Theodosian descendant at court, although Theodosius' widow, Eudocia, died later in Jerusalem in 460.³²⁴

In these final years of the Theodosian dynasty Valentinian III sought to break free of Aëtius' dominance and assert his own position as a now adult Augustus. His mother, Galla Placidia, had died a few months after Theodosius II in 450.³²⁵ Aëtius was assassinated by the emperor in September 454, but Valentinian III's independence was short-lived as he too was murdered on 16 March 455. The final years of his reign were dominated by the Hunnic invasion of Italy, and the immovable Vandal presence in Africa.³²⁶

Valentinian III's death marked the end of the Theodosian dynasty and created a power vacuum in the West, in which his surviving female relatives were directly involved in a series of complicated marriage alliances. Valentinian's widow Licinia Eudoxia was married to the usurper Petronius Maximus, and her eldest daughter,

³²² Joh. Mal. 14.28, is one of the many later sources for events. Burgess (1993-4), 63-4, sets out Valentinian III's anger at Marcian's acclamation, and his incapacity to respond.

³²³ See Burgess (1993-1994), 47-68.

³²⁴ See 2.5.4.

³²⁵ For Galla Placidia's burial see 2.5.4.

³²⁶ McEvoy (2013a), 292-5, outlines Aëtius' treaties with the Huns.

Eudocia (II), to his son, Palladius.³²⁷ Following Geiseric's sack of Rome in the same year as Petronius' short-lived usurpation (455), Licinia Eudoxia and her two daughters, Eudocia and Placidia, accompanied him to Africa where Eudocia married Huneric.³²⁸ Unlike Galla Placidia's marriage to Athaulf, this union had in fact been arranged by Valentinian III before his death. This signified a greater association between the imperial court and important barbarian groups – a relationship which was often facilitated by imperial women.³²⁹ None of these women returned to the West. Licinia Eudoxia and Placidia were eventually released to the eastern court, and Placidia married Olybrius, who later became western Augustus in 472.³³⁰ Eudocia had remained in Africa where she produced a male heir, but she eventually moved to Jerusalem, dying soon after her arrival in ca. 471.³³¹

The younger Eudocia's life epitomised two important features of imperial women's lives at the western and eastern courts in the fifth century. Like Galla Placidia, Eudocia had provided legitimation through marriage for a leader of a barbarian group, while in the footsteps of her eastern namesake, Theodosius II's widow Eudocia, she ultimately sought refuge in Jerusalem – away from court.³³²

2.1.6 Conclusion

Imperial women's prominence ebbed and flowed across the century and a half. After the early Tetrarchy, Constantine I was responsible for the greater role of imperial women in the promotion of his reign, as he gave titles to three women and also

³²⁷ See Heather (2006), 378-9. She married Petronius against her will; she had championed Majorian to succeed (Prisc. *fr.* 30.1). Suspiciously like Iusta Grata Honoria and Attila, Licinia Eudoxia was rumoured to have invited Geiseric to sack Rome as revenge for her marriage. Prisc. *fr.* 30.1, emphasises the spurious nature of the report with the phrase *οἱ δὲ φάσι*. Geiseric already had a pretext to invade: the engagement of his son to Eudocia, also discussed by Heather, 389-9.

³²⁸ *Chron. Pasch.* 455.

³²⁹ Heather (2006), 371-2, discusses the engagement as part of the peace deal agreed with the Vandals in the 440s. McEvoy (2013a), 266-8, argues that Valentinian never intended for a marriage to take place, but used it to stall Geiseric. For the opposite view see Oost (1968), 302. Regardless of the sincerity, it was a bold move on Valentinian's part to make such an arrangement with a formerly hostile leader of an unassimilated barbarian group. At 290-2 and 298-300, McEvoy discusses the various engagements which were made for Valentinian's other daughter Placidia; the last of these was to Olybrius, to whom she had been engaged in 455, but only married when she came to live in Constantinople. See also Gillett (2001), 153-4, and Heather (2006), 371-2.

³³⁰ See Joh. Mal. 14.31 and 14.45.

³³¹ *PLRE* 2 s.v. Eudocia, surmises this date from the reference in Theoph. 5964 and Zon. 13.25.29, who both relate that she lived in Africa for sixteen years, and died in Jerusalem after having recently arrived from Africa.

³³² The imperial women who visited Jerusalem are discussed in section 2.5.

established important political alliances through marriages. There was then a gap of nearly sixty years before another imperial woman appeared in a leading role in imperial propaganda: Theodosius I's first wife Aelia Flaccilla. It was during the Theodosian dynasty, after the emperor had become a court-based figure that imperial women featured with more regularity in the general political landscape. In this dynasty they are seen playing important roles during times of military and succession crises, and in particular in Christian disputes. Early western women's roles have been less discussed; it is these that I will examine in depth in Part Two. However, general observations can be made across both halves of the dynasty, which will be my focus for the rest of this chapter.

2.2 NOMENCLATURE

Between 285 and 307 imperial women had minimal involvement in the public presentation of the Tetrarchy. This is indicated by the absence of titles that had been so regularly distributed throughout the third century. From 307 there were then three phases of nomenclature: in the first phase the most awards were given by Constantine; the second was driven by Theodosius I's reintroduction of the practice in the East at the end of the fourth century; and the last was by the late-western Theodosian dynasty. The majority of these attributions were for the title *Augusta*; however, in the early fourth and fifth centuries respectively there was also a surprising level of innovation with the title *Nobilissima Femina* and the forename *Aelia*. In this section I will look at the senior title of *Augusta* and then analyse the other two appellations. Finally I will look at the use of the term *Augusta* and the epithet *regina* in the literary sources for women who did not receive a formal title.

2.2.1 Augusta

Valeria appears to have been the only female during the Tetrarchy who received the title *Augusta*, and only after her husband, Galerius, became senior *Augustus*. Galerius wanted to assert his authority in a complex and ever changing situation, following Constantine's proclamation in York and Maxentius' in Rome. This was not the only title to be used at the time. As we shall see in more detail below Constantine and Maxentius both gave their wives the title *Nobilissima Femina*.³³³

³³³ See 2.2.2.

The flurry of awards at this juncture indicates that the three Augusti were responding to each other in terms of public presentation and using imperial women to achieve this.³³⁴ It was only after his defeat of Licinius in 324 that Constantine, as sole Augustus, made Fausta and Helena Augustae.³³⁵ The freedom in use of nomenclature displayed by Constantine was not followed by either his immediate or Valentinianic successors, apart from a posthumous award to Constantius I's wife, Theodora, during Constantine's sons' joint reign from 337-340.³³⁶

The title of Augusta was not conferred again until the end of the fourth century for Aelia Flaccilla, which again was motivated by specific political context. The titles of Augusta for Aelia Flaccilla and Augustus for Arcadius promoted the stability of Theodosius' relatively new eastern regime. As the nominally junior partner in empire, these awards were also an aggressive assertion of his authority, since his senior imperial partners, Gratian and Valentinian II, had no heirs and neither of Gratian's wives had been made Augustae.³³⁷

After Theodosius' reintroduction of the title it was then given to every wife of his eastern successors: Aelia Eudoxia, Arcadius' wife, and Aelia Eudocia, Theodosius II's wife. However, while it seems that Aelia Flaccilla received the title because she was the mother of the new Augustus, Arcadius, her son's award to his wife was not connected to the production of an heir.³³⁸ As Holum has argued, Eudoxia's title on 9

³³⁴ This is evident regardless of who awarded their title first. Sutherland (1967), 15, based on the numismatic evidence, suggests Valeria was being styled Augusta well in advance of the Carnuntum conference (308), if so then her award may have predated the other titles – see 2.2.2.

³³⁵ Euseb. *V. Const.* 3.47.2, suggests that Constantine struck coinage for Helena and gave her the title Augusta *Imperatrix* because 'she seemed to him to have been a disciple of the common Saviour from the first'. This is not reflected by the imagery on the coinage and neglects Fausta's similar honours.

³³⁶ The title appeared on posthumous coin types for Helena and Theodora. Burgess (2008), 21-4, argues that Theodora's posthumous coinage does not preclude the possibility of the award in her lifetime, but there is no evidence and little reason for it: see 22 and especially n.72.

³³⁷ Given that Valentinian II's authority was undermined by both Maximus and Theodosius, it seems bizarre that he did not try to fortify his position through a politically-expedient marriage, even if he was very young. The lack of titles and coinage for Theodosius' second wife, Galla, also seems to indicate a lackadaisical attitude towards his Valentinianic partners.

³³⁸ She was, however, pregnant with Arcadia. Consolino (1986), 30, suggests that Arcadius' action of making Eudoxia Augusta was a conscious attempt to emulate Helena and Aelia Flaccilla. This seems to me a retrospective interpretation of Eudoxia's award, which itself made the title an expected honour for an emperor's wife. But Arcadius did not need to make Eudoxia Augusta; Aelia Flaccilla had been the first Augusta created for nearly 60 years.

January 400 was a response by the court to Gainas' revolt the year before.³³⁹ This event marked the end of a sustained period of upheaval, when the emperor needed to promote stability and the new incarnation of his court-based role was still in its early stages in the East. Eudoxia had been a prominent opponent of Gainas, and had acted alongside the popular local bishop John Chrysostom against Gainas' request for a public space of worship within the city for homoians. Therefore the bestowal of this public honour had strong appeal.³⁴⁰

While Eudoxia eventually did give birth to a son, her successor Aelia Eudocia had only daughters who survived into adulthood. Yet she too became Augusta – two years after her marriage.³⁴¹ She was not the first Augusta created by Theodosius II, since his eldest sister Pulcheria had received the title in 414 when he was still a child.³⁴² Compared to the three earlier appointments in the dynasty Eudocia's proclamation seemed inevitable, because there was now a precedent and it gave her the same imperial status as her sister-in-law. The two awards within Theodosius II's regime show women forming an important part of the court's public presentation.

The early bestowal of the title Augusta on Pulcheria is surprising, especially because her two sisters did not receive the title.³⁴³ Once again the timing of the award can be related to specific political circumstances. Pulcheria became Augusta on 4 July 414, seven months after Galla Placidia's marriage to the Gothic leader Athaulf.³⁴⁴ This delay suggests that the marriage itself was not the impetus for Pulcheria's title; however, Galla Placidia was probably pregnant by July with Theodosius (III). The possibility of another claimant to a share in the empire who was of Theodosian descent as well as more imminent threats at court may have led to Pulcheria's

³³⁹ The award is described by *Chron. Pasch.* 400 which relates that she received it on 4 January 400. Holum (1982), 64-5 and 69, argues that the six-month gap between the two events suggests that they were connected. Cameron and Long (1993), 171, agree that the title was a response to the rebellion, but differs on the motivations. Heather (2006), 215, describes the massacre of thousands of Goths following Gainas' defeat.

³⁴⁰ Pseudo-Martyrius, 49, describes John Chrysostom and Eudoxia acting together in opposition to Gainas' request for a public space of homoian worship in Constantinople.

³⁴¹ The marriage was followed a month later by Constantius III's acclamation to Augustus in the West, which was unrecognised in the East.

³⁴² She was the first sister to receive a title since Constantia was made *Nobilissima Femina* by Constantine.

³⁴³ They were made *Nobilissimae Feminae* instead: see 2.2.2.

³⁴⁴ They married in January: see footnote 311.

acclamation in order to protect her brother's interests while he was too young to marry.³⁴⁵

Galla Placidia was the third Augusta to appear on coinage produced by Theodosius. It could be argued that she was initially recognised in the East, since there is no numismatic evidence for her earlier receipt of the title in the West.³⁴⁶ Honorius had given neither of his wives the title of Augusta nor were his foster sister and mother-in-law, Serena, given any form of distinction. He also seemed to resent the award of Augustus to Galla Placidia's husband Constantius III.³⁴⁷ The most emphatic piece of evidence for Honorius' aversion to distribution of female nomenclature appears in his letter to his brother Arcadius, in which he criticised the provincial festivities surrounding the celebration of Eudoxia as Augusta.³⁴⁸ This missive indicates the two emperors' divergent opinions on the public role of female relatives. This changed in the West with Valentinian III's succession.

The two later Augustae created in Theodosius II's long reign, Iusta Grata Honoria and Licinia Eudoxia, were western appointments by Valentinian III, who seemed to have brought the practice back from Constantinople when he was installed as emperor.³⁴⁹ Like Pulcheria, Iusta Grata Honoria was an older sister who became an Augusta before her brother was old enough to marry. She was the only Augusta not to appear on eastern coinage, which suggests the specific local appeal of her award.

³⁴⁵ If so, it was concomitant with all three sisters' vows of virginity: see 2.1.5.3.

³⁴⁶ In the scope of this thesis I generally disregard attributions that are only attested in later literary narratives, since these are anachronistic (see section 2.2.4); however, Olymp. *fr.* 33.1, who describes Galla Placidia's award, is a generally reliable source and at *fr.* 43.1 he refers to Galla Placidia and Valentinian being re-awarded (the verb is *ἐπαναλαμβάνω*) the titles Augusta and *Nobilissimus* when they left Constantinople. For further discussion see Sivan (2011), 88. Longo (2009), 181-3, summarises the coinage for women produced by Theodosius II.

³⁴⁷ Olymp. *fr.* 33.1-2, conveys Honorius' reluctance to award the title to Constantius with the phrase *ἀλλὰ σχεδόν τι ἄκοντος*. In the same passage he describes Galla Placidia's insistence that Honorius make Valentinian *Nobilissimus* – see McEvoy (2013a), 214. Philost. 12.12 and Soz. 9.16, say nothing about the title Augusta. Bagnall and Cameron (1987), 375, discusses Constantius' appointment further.

³⁴⁸ See 4.3.1.

³⁴⁹ McEvoy (2013a), 238-9, suggests that Honoria was made Augusta simultaneously with her brother by Theodosius II. This is based in part on her reading of the Ravenna inscription discussed at 2.4.1.2. I agree that she received the title at a young age, but it is more likely that she was given the award by her brother since she only appeared on coinage in his territory. Theodosius II only made Valentinian Caesar after John had usurped in the West: see Heather (2006), 259-60, and McEvoy, 225-34.

2.2.2 *Nobilissima Femina*

Around the time that Galerius made his wife Augusta, Valeria Maximilla and Fausta received the title *Nobilissima Femina* from their husbands. This cluster of titles appeared within only three years of each other when the tetrarchic system seemed to falter: between Constantius I's death in 306 and the Carnuntum conference in November 308. Fausta's title is the one dateable attestation and appears on coinage struck for her marriage in 307.³⁵⁰ Valeria Maximilla's receipt of the title is attested in one inscription found at Rome where her husband Maxentius was based, and can be conservatively dated to between 306 and 309.³⁵¹ This title *Nobilissima Femina* seems to have been created during this period, as there is no earlier attestation for it. Fausta's coin issue, the first numismatic evidence for the title, does not use an abbreviated form, which suggests that it was unfamiliar to its audience. This new title provides an insight into the contemporaneous aims of each Augustus responsible for the awards. Maxentius' and Constantine's use of a newly created, and clearly subordinate, title to Augusta showed they were promoting the stability of their rule through their family, but at the same time maintaining a level of deference to Galerius.

Constantine's use of the title *Nobilissima Femina* in 318-19 for Helena and Fausta was also prompted by political circumstances, chiefly his relationship with his co-Augustus Licinius. Coinage that featured the title was produced the year after Constantine's and Licinius' first civil war at the Thessalonica mint, which bordered Licinius' territory.³⁵² This coinage therefore indicates Constantine's intent to subvert Licinius' authority through the promotion of his own family. Just like Constantine's use of the title when Galerius was Augustus, he once again was using female nomenclature to promote his rule and dynastic aims.

³⁵⁰ See 2.3.1. Sutherland (1967), 157 n.5, describes the title as a 'prelude' to her later award of Augusta, but makes no note of its novelty. See also Longo (2009), 91. *RE* s.v. *Nobilissimus* provides a list of recipients for the title, beginning with Valeria Maximilla. It is uncertain whether the inscription mentioning her award was set up before or after Fausta's coin type was produced.

³⁵¹ See Appendix 1.5. This dating bracket is based upon when Maxentius started styling himself as *princeps*, but before the death of his young son Romulus, who was the nominal dedicator of the inscription.

³⁵² I discuss this coinage more fully in the next section. *Nobilissima Femina* types produced at other mints in this period are discussed by Longo (2009), 90-1.

Constantine also awarded the title to his sister Constantia, two years after her husband's defeat in 324 when the title had been replaced in Helena's and Fausta's nomenclature by Augusta. These rare *Nobilissima Femina* types were struck at the Constantinople mint. Despite the temporal proximity of this production to the deaths of Crispus and Fausta in 326, it seems more likely that Constantia's issues were prompted by the political context of Licinius' defeat and residual opposition in his former territory where her coinage was produced.³⁵³

In the Theodosian dynasty Pulcheria's younger sisters, Arcadia and Marina, also received the title, which was an indication of their subordinate status to Pulcheria who became Augusta.³⁵⁴ Before Pulcheria and Galla Placidia became Augustae, they both received the title *Nobilissima Puella*,³⁵⁵ a female approximation of the title *Nobilissimus Puer*, which was part of Gratian's, Honorius' and Valentinian III's nomenclature before they became Augustus. While the awards to the sons of emperors indicated their future elevation to Augustus, there is no indication that a similar foreshadowing lay behind the female variants given to the future Augustae Pulcheria and Galla Placidia.³⁵⁶

2.2.3 Aelia

Like the award of *Nobilissima Femina* at the start of the fourth century, the Theodosian reintroduction of Augusta at the end of it led to another development in female nomenclature. Eudoxia, and later Eudocia, were presented on coinage with

³⁵³ For a production date of 326-7, I follow Bruun (1966), e.g. 571, and Longo (2009), 56. The two-year delay after Licinius I's death does not negate the argument, since the issues followed the more recent death of Licinius II: see Pohlsander (1993), 159-60, for the debate over the precise date of his death. The presence of the title for Constantia, who was never made Augusta, negates Longo's argument that the title indicated future promotion to Augusta: (2009), 90. Further, there was a gap of six years before Helena and Fausta were made Augusta. Pohlsander, 163-4, is wrong to date Constantia's coinage to 330 on the basis of the dedication of Constantinople itself: the mint was in production in the 320s, clearly shown by the Fausta types from there e.g. *RIC* 7.12. He suggests, 163, that the coinage was posthumous. I believe this is conceivable (*Pietas* reverses appeared on Theodora's later posthumous types), but it would then counter his argument that she died ca.330: see 163. For a general introduction to the Constantinople mint see Sutherland (1966), 562-8.

³⁵⁴ *Not. Urbs. Const.* regions 1 and 9 describe *domus* for *Nobilissimae* Marina and Arcadia. Theodosius I's mother, Thermantia, appears with the title on an inscription at Rome – see Appendix 1.30, and Kelly (2016), 32.

³⁵⁵ For Galla Placidia's title see Appendix 1.47, which also addresses her as *Domina Nostra*. Pulcheria's is given in *Chron. Pasch.* 399 and Arcadia's in 400 (described in reference to their births).

³⁵⁶ There was no precedent if this was the intention.

the *nomen* Aelia.³⁵⁷ This *nomen* was also adopted by Galla Placidia on her eastern issues, but reverted to Galla on her later western coinage.³⁵⁸ These women's adoption of Aelia showed a clear reverence to the first Theodosian Augusta, Aelia Flaccilla. The later use of Aelia by women who were not Aelia Flaccilla's descendants further illustrates the success of Theodosius I's dynasty building in the East, in which his promotion of his wife had formed a prominent part.³⁵⁹

2.2.4 Literary Attestations: Augusta and Regina

Constantina and Justina were both referred to as Augusta in Philostorgius' *Ecclesiastical History*, which was composed in the early fifth century, but is transmitted via a much later epitome.³⁶⁰ In the case of Constantina, Philostorgius' reference explicitly states that she appointed Vetricianus Augustus in her capacity as an Augusta, which was a title she had received from her father Constantine.³⁶¹ This statement is surprising on two counts: firstly, Constantine made none of his sons Augustus; and secondly, Constantina's husband, Hannibalianus, was *rex* of Armenia, clearly a subordinate position to both his own brother, Dalmatius, and Constantine's sons, who were all Caesars.³⁶² So why were these two women in particular described in this way by this ecclesiastical historian? It is important to consider that when Philostorgius was writing in the fifth century there were many Augustae in the eastern court. His use of the title in reference to the previous century, which has no evidence to support it, can be explained as an anachronism and a convenient way to convey their perceived importance.

³⁵⁷ Pulcheria inherited the *nomen*. Fausta and Helena were referred to on their obverse legends as Flavia (for example, *RIC* 7.11 and 12 from Constantinople), which could have been a model for Eudoxia's appropriation of Aelia.

³⁵⁸ She appears on later eastern issues as Galla Placidia: see *RIC* 10.263 (Constantinople). Licinia Eudoxia's eastern coinage bore the *nomen* Aelia as well, whereas her western issues varied between Elia and Licinia: for example, *RIC* 10.2074 and 10.2056 respectively. See Longo (2009), 72, for further discussion.

³⁵⁹ Later Aelias were: Maria Euphemia, Verina and Zenonis. Holum (1982), 65, suggests it amounts to a title for Eudoxia; see also Clauss (2002b), 371 and Longo (2009), 71-2, who cites a probable literary allusion to the title in the West by Claudian, *Laus Serenae*, 56.

³⁶⁰ Philostorgius' work was epitomised by Photius in the ninth century, whose contrasting Nicene theology obscures the original source material. See Blockley (1980a), 195.

³⁶¹ Philost. 3.22. Harries (2014), 198, suggests Philostorgius, influenced by the powerful empresses of his own day, anachronistically viewed Constantina as a precursor to Pulcheria.

³⁶² On this basis I disagree with Drinkwater (2000), 153, who stresses Philostorgius' reliability in regard to imperial titles. Bleckmann (1994), 33, suggests Philostorgius was influenced by Ammianus' character portrait of Constantina.

Ammianus Marcellinus made no use of official nomenclature for an imperial woman, despite being a contemporary of both women, whom Philostorgius retrospectively referred to as Augusta. However, he did bestow a regal epithet to Constantina and Eusebia, the most prominent imperial women in his history; neither of whom received titles from Constantius II. Both women were described as *regina*, a term Ammianus uses fourteen times in the extant part of the history and mostly in association with these two women.³⁶³ Given Constantina's and Eusebia's prominence in the work, it would seem that the term illustrates that these women influence their husbands: Constantina as a negative influence on Gallus, and Eusebia as a positive one on Constantius.³⁶⁴ However, Ammianus uses the term *regina* in various ways for other women, and not always with negative connotations, for example the deity Justice is described by the term. Later Paulinus of Nola used *regina* to describe Justina when she came into conflict with Ambrose (*Carm.* 11 in *S. Felicem*, 328). This was yet another description by a near-contemporary source for an imperial woman who did not receive a formal title.³⁶⁵

Ammianus otherwise used *regina* for foreign queens including the archetype, Cleopatra.³⁶⁶ This is the most standard application of the term: to denote foreign female power, not just in Late Antiquity, but also in the works of Tacitus, Suetonius and in the *Historia Augusta*.³⁶⁷ Of these earlier examples, only the *Historia Augusta*

³⁶³ Amm. Marc. 15.2.8, 15.8.3, 16.10.18 and 18.3.2 (Eusebia); 14.1.3, 14.1.8 and 14.9.3 (Constantia); 14.6.17 (Samiramis); 22.16.10 (Cleopatra); 23.6.7 (Scythian queen Tomyris); 14.11.26 (*Iustitia*); 14.6.6 (Rome); 23.6.27 (Susa); and 27.12.6 (an Armenian queen). Pohlsander (1993), 157, translates βασιλίσα as Augusta in Eusebius' letter to Constantia, *PG* 20.1546; however, *regina* seems a closer approximation. Σεβαστή is used in other instances for women who were definitely made Augusta. See for example Appendix 1.42 for the later empress Eudoxia. I agree with Pohlsander, 158, that Constantia was never made Augusta, which my reading of βασιλίσα in this letter would account for, while strengthening the argument that *regina* was used for imperial women who were never given a formal title. Joh. Ant. *fr.* 187 also uses this term to refer to Galla (Theodosius I's second wife), who also did not receive a title. Julian mainly refers to Eusebia as Βασιλίς in his oration to her: *Or.* 3.115C.

³⁶⁴ For example Amm. Marc. 14.1.8, criticises Constantina's negative influence, while 15.2.8 describes Eusebia's patronage of Julian. But see 16.10.18 where Eusebia is described with this term when acting against Julian's wife Helena.

³⁶⁵ Philost. 10.7, narrates that Justina was made Augusta as a result of the Thessalonica conference.

³⁶⁶ See footnote 363.

³⁶⁷ Suetonius refers to Cleopatra with the term in *Jul. Caes.* 49, *Aug.* 17 and 69; to Berenice in *Titus*, 7; and three eastern queens who were married to Claudius' freedmen in *Claud.* 28. He also uses the term to refer to Dido in *Nero*, 31.4, probably influenced by Virgil's description of the Carthaginian queen, e.g. *Aen.* 6.460. Tacitus applies the term to Berenice as well, *Hist.* 2.2 and 81, but mainly for Queen Cartimandua of the Brigantes: *Hist.* 3.45 (three times) and *Ann.* 12.36 and 40. Typical uses in Late

uses *regina* when describing a Roman empress, Severus Alexander's wife Orbiana (*Alex. Sev.* 51.3).³⁶⁸ However, this reference does not serve to show her influence, as could be argued for some usages by Ammianus. Later, Claudian freely uses the term *regina*, clearly without a negative bias, to describe Serena and Maria in his poems. Both of these women never received a formal title. Conversely, Aelia Flaccilla, who was an Augusta, is also described as *regina* by Claudian – she would certainly not have been denoted by her actual title as that would subordinate Serena.³⁶⁹

The biggest anomaly across the imperial period is the use of *regina* in the mid-fifth century chronicle by Hydatius to describe Pulcheria: *Chron.* 138 and 139.³⁷⁰ Unlike the appearances in Ammianus' and Paulinus' works, Hydatius referred to a woman who did receive a formal title, Augusta no less. In both instances it is used in relation to her marriage to Marcian, whom Hydatius describes as *princeps*, rather than Augustus. It is hard to discern a subversive intent in these brief notices by Hydatius as he displays consistency in his choice of epithet for the imperial couple.³⁷¹

2.2.5 Conclusion

Constantine was far more proactive in his distribution of titles to women than his tetrarchic contemporaries. His long reign revealed his adeptness and perspicuity in using familial honours to entrench his position: he awarded titles to his mother, wife and sister, and possibly invented the title *Nobilissima Femina*. The titles for his mother, Helena, were in spite of her humble origins, a factor which had, perhaps, precluded such awards to other Tetrarchs' mothers.

Antiquity replicate Tacitus' application: Gregory of Tours uses it at various points to describe tribal queens, e.g. Chrotchilde (throughout *Hist.* 2.29), and Sidonius Apollinaris for Ragnadhilda: *Ep.* 4.8.5. Eutropius uses it twice, both times to refer to Cleopatra: 7.6-7.

³⁶⁸ Zonaras is one of the few sources to use the term *imperatrix*, which like this instance in the *HA* describes a Severan woman, Julia Domna, 13: *cum autem Maesa Juliae imperatricis soror, duas haberet filias*. This twelfth-century author describes Zenobia as *regina*, 27.

³⁶⁹ The description of Serena as *regina* is the most striking because she was not married to the emperor: see *Stil.* 1.82 (Maria is described as *virgo* in the relevant passage: 80-88); *3Cos.* 155; and *Carm. Min.* 30.5 and 31.57. Claud. *4Cos.* refers to Aelia Flaccilla with the term at 166 and Maria at 646. In the epithalamium for Maria's marriage, Claudian describes the bride informally as *augusta*: 252.

³⁷⁰ I follow Burgess' numbering: (1993). These passages pertain to AD 450.

³⁷¹ In the same passage, Hyd. 138, he refers to Theodosius as *imperator*. Augustus appears elsewhere in the chronicle, for instance for Valentinian II, Hyd. 75, but Augusta does not; so while a case may be made for selective use of the male title, a similar case cannot be made for the female equivalent.

Until the title *Augusta* became once again an assumed part of nomenclature in the later generations of the Theodosian dynasty, its appearances in both the fourth and early-fifth centuries were prompted by specific political circumstances. Even more interesting were the innovations in nomenclature that developed alongside these two phases: the creation of the subordinate title *Nobilissima Femina*, which denoted a hierarchy amongst imperial women; and the adoption of Aelia Flaccilla's nomen by her eastern successors, which showed the success of Theodosius I's dynastic construction. The literary attestations of titles that do not appear elsewhere provide an answer to the problem of how to define an imperial wife's position at court when she had no official title.

2.3 MATERIAL EVIDENCE: COINAGE AND EPIGRAPHY

In the previous section I gauged official attribution of titles by their appearances on coin obverses. Therefore my focus in the first section here will be on the reverses, and the messages they convey about women's roles.³⁷² Coinage was produced for imperial women in the early Constantinian dynasty, but it was only in the Theodosian dynasty that Christian imagery appeared on the reverses of women's coinage.³⁷³ The later appearance of Christian emblems was either in combination with traditional personifications, in particular *Salus* and *Victoria*, or on more abstract types. I will then examine epigraphic attestations, since few firm statuary identifications can be made for imperial women in the period.³⁷⁴ The evidence for this second section encompasses more women than those who appeared on coinage, and features a wider variety of epithets than official nomenclature. This kind of evidence therefore provides an opportunity to consider the public presentation of women who were not honoured in official media, and whether this affected their presentation.

³⁷² The one exception is the epigraphic attestation for Valeria Maximilla as *Nobilissima Femina*; see 2.2.2. In his overview of the entire imperial period, Kienast (2004), included titles only attested in literary sources, which I do not do here.

³⁷³ No coinage was produced between the late 330s and the 380s.

³⁷⁴ This is why I did not look at statuary in Chapter One (1.3.1), since it is not possible to draw comparisons here. My main points of reference for coinage are *RIC* 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 (see Appendix Two), which I supplement with Longo's recent survey. She provides tables, at (2009) 55-8, for the different coin types produced for fourth- and fifth-century imperial women.

2.3.1 Coinage

2.3.1.1 Constantinian Coinage

Despite Constantine's proactive distribution of titles to women within his family, the accompanying imagery on coinage was very conservative. Both Galeria Valeria's and Fausta's tetrarchic coin reverses depicted aspects of Venus accompanied by an identifying legend: Valeria's featured Venus *Victrix*, while Fausta's displayed Venus *Felix*.³⁷⁵ This goddess was one of the most common deities, along with Juno, to appear on women's coinage in the earlier imperial period.³⁷⁶

The Augusta coinage produced for Fausta and Helena, and the later posthumous issues for Helena and Theodora, again were very traditional in terms of reverse imagery and legends. The most common reverse types for Fausta's and Helena's coinage in the 320s were *Salus* or *Spes Reipublicae* for Fausta, and *Securitas Reipublicae* for Helena.³⁷⁷ These reverses focused on different aspects of Constantine's rule: Fausta's promoted the future of the dynasty that she provided with Constantine's heirs, while Helena's advertised the present stability achieved by her son.³⁷⁸ While there were other types produced for both women in the 320s, the later posthumous issues for Helena and Theodora (337-40) were more uniform.³⁷⁹ Again, the reverses bore traditional personifications of virtues and accompanying

³⁷⁵ For example, *RIC* 6.196 (Serdica) for Valeria, and 6.756 (Trier) for the Fausta type. Fausta's type played on her name: see Longo (2009), 89. Eudoxia's name may have been the inspiration for her *Gloria Romanorum* reverse legend – see Carson (1994), 70.

³⁷⁶ Longo (2009), 85-90, discusses Fausta's Venus *Victrix* coinage, but also a Juno *Regina* type, which was also struck at the Trier mint. Despite her reference, 91 n.2, this Juno type does not appear in *RIC* 6 (however, she does provide an image of the coin: 24). It is surprising that such a type exists for Fausta and not Valeria, who was the daughter of Diocletian: Jupiter to Maximian's Hercules in early tetrarchic propaganda.

³⁷⁷ Examples of Fausta's types are *RIC* 7.55 (Sirmium) for *Salus*, and 7.466 (Trier) for *Spes* varieties; for Helena, see *RIC* 7.54 (Sirmium). Brennan (2007), 69, argues that *Salus* carried religious connotations on types for Helena, and presented the idea of Christian salvation. I find this unlikely given it would be the only example for women's coinage in the early fourth century. Longo (2009), 132, more convincingly argues that *Salus* in this period promoted maternity. For further discussion of Helena's and Fausta's various types see Longo, 97-118; for specifically the *Salus* and *Securitas* types see Brubaker and Tobler (2000), 576-7.

³⁷⁸ Fausta's reverses often feature the personification breast-feeding two babies. This imagery appears to have stopped being used in the Theodosian period when the personifications are usually fully-clothed. Brubaker (1997), 58-9, discusses Helena's coinage.

³⁷⁹ These issues were first produced before Constantine's sons were formally acclaimed by the army as Augusti on 9 September 337 and struck at only one mint in each of their respective territories: at Trier (Constantine II), Rome (Constans) and Constantinople (Constantius II).

legends: *Pax Publica* for Helena and *Pietas Romana* for Theodora.³⁸⁰ This posthumous coinage, and the dual *Nobilissima Femina* issues produced earlier for Helena and Fausta at Thessalonica, carried similar subversive political messages in periods of uneasy alliance within the imperial college.³⁸¹ The Thessalonica issues promoted the stability of Constantine's rule, via his relatives' images, in territory that was controlled by Licinius, with whom he had recently concluded a civil war. Burgess has argued for a similar rationale behind the production of Theodora's issues, in particular.³⁸² These were struck initially, and in the largest quantity, by Constantine II. Their production implicitly undermined Constantius II, who had been responsible for the deaths of Theodora's male descendants.

The most distinctive imagery produced for Constantinian women was the *Nobilissima Femina* types struck for Fausta and Helena in ca.317-19, followed by those produced for Constantia in 326-7.³⁸³ Fausta's and Helena's types had no obverse legend, instead they featured either a star with a crescent, or an eight-pointed star in a wreath.³⁸⁴ Constantia's legend, SOROR CONSTANTINI AUG, explicitly celebrated her kinship with Constantine in Constantinople, at a time when he was consolidating his rule in the East.³⁸⁵ Like the Thessalonica *Nobilissima Femina* reverses, Constantia's imagery also included a wreath, but with *Pietas Publica* written inside. These types, without an accompanying legend, present a counterpoint to the later Theodosian coinage for imperial women. Like other reverse types, this

³⁸⁰ For Helena: *RIC* 8.42 (Trier), 8.53 (Rome) and 8.33 (Constantinople); and for Theodora see 8.43, 8.54 and 8.36 (for the same mints). Fausta had similar *Pietas* reverse types: for example 7.240 (Rome).

³⁸¹ See 2.2.2. Longo (2009), 91, analyses the ideology behind these images.

³⁸² Burgess (2008), 24 and 41-3. Notably, Licinius gave no such award to his wife, Constantia.

³⁸³ Longo (2009), 55-6, dates the star in crescent types to 317-18, while Bruun (1966), 503, prefers 318-19 for the Thessalonica issues. Both dating brackets allow for the end of the first civil war between Constantine and Licinius, and so does not affect my argument that they were produced after open conflict. For further discussion of the dating see Drijvers (1992a), 39-40.

³⁸⁴ See *RIC* 7.48 and 50 for Helena, and 49 and 51 for Fausta. The wreath issues were produced at the Thessalonica mint, while the other reverses were from the Antioch and Rome mints. Longo (2009), 55 and 90-1, notes wreath types at Arles, Lyons and Rome as well. James (2013), 101, wrongly argues that Constantine only struck issues for the females of his family once he had attained sole power.

³⁸⁵ See *RIC* 7.15. Her coinage is discussed by Pohlsander (1993), 163-4, who misdates its production.

imagery was modified by the later dynasty to incorporate Christian symbolism, which replaced the star/*Pietas Publica* inside the wreath.³⁸⁶

2.3.1.2 Theodosian Coinage

Aelia Flaccilla's issues set the trend for eastern women's reverses, and combined traditional virtues in the legends with new Christian imagery. Her reverses consistently displayed the legend *Salus Reipublicae* which, like Fausta's issues, indicated dynastic security.³⁸⁷ However, Aelia Flaccilla's reverse imagery was more innovative than her predecessors. In particular, the accompanying personification did not re-emphasise the legend (with a figure holding children); instead the image promoted Aelia Flaccilla's Christian piety with the adoption of Victory inscribing the *chi-rho* emblem onto her shield. This composition became a common reverse for eastern female coinage.³⁸⁸

Aelia Flaccilla's daughter-in-law Eudoxia, had a far greater variety of reverse legends. As well as the standard *Salus Reipublicae*, Eudoxia's early legends (400-1) included *Virtus Exerciti* (sic) and *Gloria Romanorum*, which were produced at the Antioch and Constantinople mints respectively.³⁸⁹ The unusual military tone of the first of these legends suggests that Eudoxia's receipt of the title Augusta was prompted by Gainas' revolt, after which the court would have been keen to assert its military loyalty by any means.³⁹⁰ Eudoxia's imagery developed the Christian tone of Aelia Flaccilla's coinage by incorporating the *manus dei* above her obverse portrait, a motif copied by her successors.³⁹¹ Subsequent eastern coinage for the imperial women had greater consistency in terms of their legends. *Vota* types were common

³⁸⁶ See *RIC* 10.334-6 and 2092-3 for eastern and western examples.

³⁸⁷ *RIC* 9.48 (Constantinople).

³⁸⁸ Longo (2009), 194-202, discusses the many *Victoria* types produced during the fifth century. At 131-2, she examines the transformation of the *Salus* type between the Constantinian and Theodosian dynasties. The personification lost the maternal connotation in the later dynasty, as they were replaced by Christian ones.

³⁸⁹ See *RIC* 10.74 (Antioch) for the *Virtus Exerciti* type, which had the emperor as its reverse image, and 10.77 (Constantinople) for *Gloria Romanorum*.

³⁹⁰ For Gainas' revolt see 2.1.5. Longo (2009), 179-80, argues that the military tone indicates it was directed at the army; however, consider Langford (2013), 47, for the civic audience of *mater castrorum* coinage in the third century (1.1.3).

³⁹¹ For Eudoxia's type, see *RIC* 10.77 (Constantinople). MacIsaac (1975), 324-7, suggests the *manus dei* was a mainly Theodosian numismatic phenomenon in particular for the women's coinage. Valentinian III was the only emperor for whom the motif featured after isolated appearances on Arcadius' coinage (at the time of his accession) and one type for Honorius.

(mirroring the emperor's issues), as were SALUS REIPUBLICAE types accompanying an image of Victory, complete with Christian imperial insignia.³⁹²

The western re-introduction of coinage for women prompted the next phase of innovation, at a time when the court was seeking to establish its position within the existing collegial framework. The reverse imagery for Galla Placidia, Iusta Grata Honoria, and later Licinia Eudoxia borrowed a great deal from coinage from the East, where Galla Placidia's earliest issues had been produced.³⁹³ However, the western coinage had greater variation in terms of obverse legends. All three women had types with *Domina Nostra* and *Pia/Perpetua Felix*. Previously Constantinian and Theodosian women's obverse legends had exclusively displayed their name and title (Augusta or *Nobilissima Femina*).³⁹⁴

The last western Augusta within the scope of my thesis, Licinia Eudoxia, was the only woman other than Galla Placidia to feature in both eastern and western issues. In addition, Licinia, and later her aunt Pulcheria, were the only women to appear on their husband's coinage in this period.³⁹⁵ The first type was for Theodosius II, which bore a reverse group portrait celebrating his daughter Licinia Eudoxia's marriage to Valentinian III.³⁹⁶ The reverse depicted the marriage ceremony, with Theodosius II officiating. The senior Augustus' central position in this image advertised his position as the architect of eastern and western harmony, which was also the theme

³⁹² Longo (2009), 56-7, provides a full list of types. All had coinage that featured the *manus dei* and the *chi-rho* or cross emblem, as well as some types with no legends.

³⁹³ Galla Placidia's coinage was first produced in the East (for example, *RIC* 10.231 – a *vota* type). Her first western type, AD 423-5, was closely modelled on eastern coinage: see Carson (1994), 155, and Longo (2009), 183.

³⁹⁴ Julia Domna's later coinage included *Pia Felix* – see Langford (2013), 21. I agree with Longo (2009), 73, that the Theodosian coinage with *PF* was an abbreviation of this legend; see Sivan (2011), 93. Carson (1994), 51 and 53, prefers *Perpetua Felix*. The western court's adoption of *Domina Nostra* reflected its use in Constantinian epigraphy: Carson, 50. For further discussion see Longo, 73. The cross was the dominant Christian emblem, rather than the *chi-rho*. Iusta Grata Honoria had the very unusual *Bono Reipublicae* legend: referred to by Carson, 56.

³⁹⁵ Group portraiture was common in the Julio-Claudian dynasty, and for imperial couples in the first three centuries. Licinia had the most ornate obverse portraiture in the late antique period. A particularly striking reverse in her own types portrayed the imperial couple standing side-by-side in consular robes: *RIC* 10.2046. See Longo (2009), 160-2, for further discussion.

³⁹⁶ *RIC* 10.267, the legend reads FELICITER NUBTIIS.

of one of his daughter's later legends: SALUS ORIENTIS FELICITAS OCCIDENTIS.³⁹⁷

The later issue was produced for the marriage of Pulcheria to Marcian, the union that confirmed his eastern succession. The group portrait clearly replicates the composition of the earlier issue, but with Theodosius II replaced by Christ.³⁹⁸ This issue presents a neat culmination to the Christian symbolism that had developed throughout the Theodosian dynasty. The innovative reverse underlined the couple's Christian piety and Pulcheria's sustained vow of virginity, despite her performance of the traditional marriage role.³⁹⁹

2.3.2 Epigraphy

The information for statuary in this period can be gained either from surviving bases, or via literary records such as the Byzantine *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* for Constantinople. My focus in this section will be on the epigraphic evidence, rather than the accompanying imagery.⁴⁰⁰ In the fragmentary material for Valeria and Fausta, the former acquired a greater range of titles, referred to as Σεβαστή, Δέσποινα, Βασιλίσα and, of course, Αὐγούστα.⁴⁰¹ Valeria appears to have been the last woman described as μήτηρ κάστρων, the Hellenized version of *mater castrorum* which had been a formal title used throughout the third century.⁴⁰² Besides the emphasis on her imperial status and the military loyalty she engendered, Valeria's religious piety was also celebrated explicitly in one inscription as θιοτάτη Αὐγούστα.⁴⁰³

Just as in the earlier imperial period, family ties appear to have been the main theme of statuary, indicating probable group compositions. In the Constantinian dynasty

³⁹⁷ It appears on a medallion: *RIC* 10.269 (Constantinople).

³⁹⁸ *RIC* 10.502; this has the same reverse legend as for Theodosius II's type – both types are discussed by Burgess (1993-4), 49-50. A later reverse for Anastasius and Ariadne imitated the composition with Christ officiating: see Carson (1994), 59, and Longo (2009), 152-6; see also Brubaker and Tobler (2000), 573-4.

³⁹⁹ See 2.1.5.3 above for her early vow of virginity.

⁴⁰⁰ There is a prevalence of literary attestations for Helena in Constantinople – discussed by Brubaker (1997), 58-9.

⁴⁰¹ See Appendix 1.1-4. βασιλίσα was an approximation in Greek of the term *regina*; see 2.2.4.

⁴⁰² See 1.1.3. The one inscription for her daughter, Valeria Maximilla, celebrated her as mother of Maxentius' heir, Romulus, with the epithets *dominae matri* and *matri carissimae*. See Appendix 1.5.

⁴⁰³ Correspondingly, the epithet *piissima* appeared on many of the Christian imperial women's inscriptions. Serena is described as *fida*: Appendix 1.33.

the epigraphic record for Helena and Fausta advertised their familial connections with epithets such as *avia*, *mater* and *noverca*. Constantia was described as *amita* and *venerabilis soror*, which reflected her coin legend that emphasised her kinship with Constantine I.⁴⁰⁴ As well as this strong familial theme, Helena and Theodora were celebrated posthumously for their religious piety with the terms *piissima* and *diva*.⁴⁰⁵

Like the Constantinian dynasty, all the Theodosian imperial women who featured on coinage also appear in the epigraphic material. Once again such attestations celebrated Christian piety and familial connections. Aelia Flaccilla was referred to as θεοφιλεστάτη and εὐσεβεστάτη Αὐγούστα.⁴⁰⁶ She was also described as ἡ δέσποινα τῆς οἰκουμένης, ‘mistress of the inhabited world’ (though her coinage and the inscriptions only appeared in the East⁴⁰⁷). The epigraphy for Eudoxia showed a variety in epithets, including Σεβαστή, which had last appeared on an inscription for Valeria.⁴⁰⁸ The most surprising element of the epigraphic evidence is that Pulcheria only features in later literary records. She is the sole Augusta of Theodosius II’s court from 414 to 421 and the one with the most eastern coin types.⁴⁰⁹

There were also attestations for women who were not given official titles, including a possible dedication to an anonymous Valentinianic empress, probably Gratian’s wife Constantia.⁴¹⁰ The most prominent woman without a formal title to feature in the surviving inscriptions was Constantina, later Gallus’ wife. Inscriptions that feature her in Rome are emblematic of the other epigraphic evidence for imperial women. They celebrate her familial connections and her religious piety. In the first inscription she is referred to in terms of her relationship to the Augusti Constantine I,

⁴⁰⁴ Two inscriptions mention Constantia: one was dedicated under the dyarchy (celebrating her relationship to both Constantine and Licinius); the other defines her solely by her Constantinian kinship. See Appendix 1.25-26.

⁴⁰⁵ See Appendix 1.20. *Divā* was not used in Helena’s or Theodora’s posthumous coin issues, which contrast with earlier centuries. Eutropia, Fausta’s mother, was described in a letter by Constantine as ἡ ὀσιωτάτης κηδέστρια: Euseb. *V. Const.* 52.1.

⁴⁰⁶ Appendix 1.31-2.

⁴⁰⁷ Appendix 1.32. The unnamed Valentinianic empress also has the title, as does Eudoxia, but only because her name later replaced that of this earlier empress. See footnote 409.

⁴⁰⁸ See Appendix 1.1 and 1.42. For the late antique trend for emperors to *Augoustos*, away from *Sebastos* see Salway (2007).

⁴⁰⁹ Appendix 2.2; Galla Placidia is the only empress to have more types.

⁴¹⁰ Waelkens and Jacobs (2014), 96-104, also make this identification; see Appendix 1.27.

Constantius II and Constans.⁴¹¹ The second commemorates her dedication of the church to St Agnes, appropriately emphasising her Christian fidelity with the acrostic: CONSTANTINA DEO.⁴¹² Later Italian epigraphy for non-Augustae also emphasise familial and Christian piety: inscriptions for Thermantia (mother of Theodosius I), Serena (wife of Stilicho), and Maria and Thermantia (the wives of Honorius).⁴¹³ These later attestations occurred in a period when no coinage was being struck for western imperial women. The themes expressed in these unofficial presentations show continuity with the epigraphy for imperial women in the fourth and fifth centuries in general, and in particular with the later acts of patronage by Galla Placidia, which were driven by political concerns.⁴¹⁴

2.3.3 Conclusion

Despite the novelty of the title *Nobilissima Femina* on early coin obverses and the accompanying reverse imagery, the Augusta coinage for Constantinian women displayed traditional themes that seem unrelated to Christianity. In this period, Constantia's type had the most distinctive reverse legend, SOROR CONSTANTINI AUG, which made clear with whom Licinius' widow was now associated. The largest variety in coin legends and imagery occurred during the Theodosian dynasty, which reflected the importance of Christian display for these later emperors. Aelia Flaccilla's types combined the traditional themes that had been used in Constantinian coinage with Christian emblems, which were embellished on her successors' coinage. The western reintroduction of coinage for women showed further innovation, in particular with more elaborate obverse rubrics.

Just as in the early imperial period, the limited epigraphy that referred to women in the late antique dynasties mentioned other women, not only those who received formal titles. Across the five centuries these attestations commonly framed imperial women within a familial context and advertised her religious piety. Such epigraphy

⁴¹¹ See Appendix 1.28 for the full inscription. She is described in terms of her familial connections as *divina prosapia...procrea[tae]/ filiae divi Consta[ntini]/ pii maximi/ sororiqu[e]/ dominorum nostrorum*.

⁴¹² Appendix 1.29, and discussed at 2.4.1.3.

⁴¹³ For the elder Thermantia's inscription see Appendix 1.30. Appendix 1.33-8 and 47-8 provide the inscriptions of the women at Honorius' court. Maria and the younger Thermantia only appear in inscriptions with the rest of their family.

⁴¹⁴ See section 2.4.1.3.

emphasised women's Christian piety at an earlier stage than coinage. The most striking early example was the CONSTANTINA DEO acrostic. With the emergence of a permanently court-based emperor who had begun his reign at a young age, and the concomitant dependence on displays of Christian piety, familial and religious emphases took on a greater importance in court presentation. The re-emergence of women's public roles was entwined with this development.

2.4 PATRONAGE

Imperial women's acts of patronage are dominated by displays of Christian fidelity throughout the limited range of evidence across all three dynasties. In this section I will discuss illuminating examples of building patronage in Milan, Ravenna, Rome, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. The last of these cities benefitted from the new manifestation of religious patronage, Christian pilgrimage, which I will re-contextualise against the political backdrop, building on Drijvers' reassessment of Helena's journey there. I will then consider other forms of patronage and how these related to the trends that emerge from building dedications.

2.4.1 Building Patronage

2.4.1.1 Milan

The short inscription for Serena's late fourth-century dedication at La Basilica di San Nazaro in Milan encompassed many aspects displayed in the inscriptions discussed in the preceding section: religious and familial *pietas*. The epigraph (*ILCV* 1801) commemorates Serena's financial contributions to the church, which housed Saint Nazarius' remains. Serena's marble furnishing of the building is mentioned alongside Ambrose's contribution for the martyr's tomb. The coordination between them advertised Serena's Nicene Christian beliefs, and so emphasised the court's religious position, which differed from that of Valentinian II, who earlier had come into conflict with Ambrose over this issue. The inscription therefore had a clear political message of the new court's allegiance with the local bishop.⁴¹⁵ A further political aim of the benefaction is demonstrated in the last few lines of the inscription: Serena's wish for her husband Stilicho's return 'so that she may happily delight in

⁴¹⁵ McLynn (1994), 363-4, describes Ambrose's discovery of the relics, and the political message of the inscription. Burrus (1995), 34, discusses Ambrose's 'topographical strategies' related to such finds.

her pious brothers and her own children'.⁴¹⁶ The act of patronage may have been funded independently by Serena, but it defined her by her imperial kinsmen and advertised the political benefit this gave her husband. Just as patronage by emperors' wives in the first three centuries were closely identified with their husband's interests, Serena's dedication showed this continued to be the case when the husband was *de facto* ruler. This clear familial emphasis was a dominant feature in western women's patronage throughout the next century.

2.4.1.2 Ravenna

The dedication by Galla Placidia to St John the Evangelist is the most extensive example of collective imperial family presentation in this period.⁴¹⁷ It celebrates the harmony between the eastern and western courts, which was a recurring theme in coinage produced in Valentinian III's reign.⁴¹⁸ The church was built after he became Augustus in 425 to commemorate the family's safe passage to Italy, after they had experienced a storm at sea that was recorded by an inscription in the central apse.⁴¹⁹ The epigraph referred to Galla Placidia's eastern and western relatives in two columns, including her two brothers, Gratianus and Johannes, who died in infancy and Constantine I, who headed the inscription alongside Theodosius I.⁴²⁰ As well as

⁴¹⁶ See Appendix 1.33.

⁴¹⁷ *CIL* 11.276; see Appendix 1.49. The original construction does not survive – the inscription was preserved by Agnellus, 42. Rebenich (1985), 373, describes the history of the inscription's transmission and the lost mosaic that accompanied it. See also McEvoy (2013a), 237-9, and Sivan (2011), 164-5. For a history of the building see Deliyannis (2010), 68. Brubaker (1997), 53, emphasises its importance in regard to Roman imperial women. Honorius was the main imperial occupant of Ravenna. Valentinian III later preferred Rome: Gillett (2001), 162; Sivan, 161, wrongly emphasises Galla Placidia's residency in Ravenna.

⁴¹⁸ See 2.3.1.2. McEvoy (2013a), 238, argues for the inscription celebrating the court's eastern sponsorship.

⁴¹⁹ Agnellus 42, describes the storm. The dating bracket for the dedication is dependent on the identity of the DN EUDOXIA AUG as either Eudoxia (Arcadius' wife) or Licinia Eudoxia (Valentinian III's wife). The latter seems preferable, which would put the date of the inscription to after her marriage in 437. Rebenich (1985), 374-5, argues for this identification, based on Licinia Eudoxia's position in the list below a second Arcadius (described as *DN* rather than with the posthumous *D*). Rebenich suggests that this Arcadius was a son of Theodosius II and Eudocia who died young. This Eudoxia is the only woman who has the abbreviation 'Aug' after her name, apart from the dedicators, Galla Placidia and Iusta Grata Honoria. McEvoy (2013a), 237-9, argues that this Eudoxia is Arcadius' wife; see also Sivan (2011), 165.

⁴²⁰ Rebenich (1985), 381, argues that Gratianus was a son of Theodosius and Galla. Both boys and a Theodosius are each referred to as *Nobilissimus Puer*. The young age indicated by this title suggests Theodosius (III), Galla Placidia's son. See McEvoy (2013a), 237, and Rebenich, 376. The positioning of his name in the eastern list makes it possible that he was another son of the Emperor Arcadius.

commemorating deceased members of Galla Placidia's family, the inscription included the current eastern imperial couple, Theodosius II and Eudocia.

This wide circle of family members makes the omissions more pointed, especially in regard to Galla Placidia's Valentinianic ancestors. The inclusion of Valentinian I (who heads the western list of family members) and Gratian seemed to serve two purposes. The first was a clear political message to advertise the current imperial family's long-reaching western heritage, even if Valentinian III had been installed by eastern forces.⁴²¹ The second purpose is revealed by the omissions of Galla Placidia's other Valentinianic ancestors. Although Valentinian I, Gratian and a Constantine, in fact Constantius III, are mentioned, neither Valens, her uncle, Valentinian II, nor her own mother, Galla, appear.⁴²² The common factor between those who are named is their adherence to the Nicene Creed. This dedication makes clear what form of Christianity the family endorses, and sends a clear message to the locals who had been governed by the non-Nicene Valentinian II a generation earlier.⁴²³

2.4.1.3 Rome

Although imperial visits to Rome were scarce throughout the fourth century, it was regularly the site of benefactions made by Constantinian women. Theodosian women also contributed to the city's landscape, but at a time when the emperor was based in Italy and a regular visitor, if not always a permanent resident.⁴²⁴ Therefore, besides looking at prominent examples of building patronage in the city, I will consider whether the change in location of the imperial court affected such dedications.

⁴²¹ The identification of Valentinian I is based on his position at the head of the western list.

⁴²² This Constantine is positioned below Valentinian and Gratian in the list of western emperors. I agree with Rebenich (1985), 376, that this was an error in the inscription's transmission for Constantius III, the most likely identification, because it was set up by his wife and children.

⁴²³ Sivan (2011), 165, makes this connection. This religious division is the most likely explanation for the strange omission of Galla, since the inscription does mention her sons and her omission probably determined Aelia Flaccilla's absence. All the names included were Augusti or Augustae, which may have been a convenient reason to exclude Serena and her two daughters, who had been wives of Galla Placidia's brother Honorius (himself included in the dedication).

⁴²⁴ Valentinian II was the only emperor of his dynasty to visit the city, which was on his return from Thessalonica, accompanied by his mother Justina, and sisters Iusta and Grata; they left no trace of their visit.

Many Constantinian women owned property in Rome, the earliest being Fausta, if the name of the *Domus Faustae* is accurate. This building is mentioned in passing by the mid-fourth-century writer Optatus (1.23), in regard to a synod held there about the Donatists in 312, when Fausta was still alive.⁴²⁵ Unlike her daughter-in-law's inherited imperial property, it would appear that Helena's wealth was derived from her son Constantine.⁴²⁶ Helena's acts of patronage at Rome and the central Italian focus of dedications to her indicate a close relationship with the area, which was probably established by her long-term residency in the city.⁴²⁷ One inscription commemorates a public act of Helena's patronage in the city, a bath restoration following a fire near the later church of Santa Croce.⁴²⁸ The baths were in the same area as the Sessorian palace where she lived and constructed the St Marcellinus and St Peter basilica and her own mausoleum.⁴²⁹ Church building was an area of patronage later heavily exploited by eastern Theodosian women, but Helena's dedications were also closely replicated by the most prominent of Rome's imperial patronesses, her granddaughter Constantina.⁴³⁰ Like her grandmother, Constantina

⁴²⁵ Curran (2000), 93, suggests Fausta owned the house before her marriage. Pohlsander (2004), 38, argues that the *Domus Faustae* was part of the Lateran palace, which Constantine received as Fausta's dowry. Fausta's property and familial connections to the city (her brother Maxentius was the last emperor based there until the fifth century) may have recommended it as a place of residence for her daughters – see 2.5.1.

⁴²⁶ Constantine gave her financial control over his treasury when she went to Jerusalem: Euseb. *V. Const.* 3.43.4; *PG.* 20.1107-8; and *Soz.* 2.2. Many imperial women seemed to possess considerable private wealth. Julian lived for a while on his mother Basilina's estate: *Or.* 5.273B. Palladius *Dial.* 13 describes other property Basilina left to the church. Ambrose referred to a legal dispute regarding some of Justina's property in his obituary for Valentinian II, 37. Laeta (Gratian's second wife) distributed alms in Rome during Alaric's siege: *Zos.* 5.39.4. McEvoy (2013a), 236, suggests that the wealth of Galla Placidia and her daughter was comparable to that of their eastern counterparts.

⁴²⁷ However, see section 2.3.2, for the scarcity of epigraphic evidence. For her residency see Barnes (1981), 220-1. Drijvers (1992a), 21-34, addresses the debate over whether she lived mainly in Trier or Rome (after Constantius had married Theodora), concluding in Rome's favour. At 45-52, he discusses the Latin inscriptions for Helena.

⁴²⁸ See Appendix 1.7. She carried out this restoration while she was still *Nobilissima Femina* (316-24).

⁴²⁹ Most of these buildings were located in the *Fundus Laurentus*; see Brubaker (1997), 57. Pohlsander (2004), 38, describes Constantine's dedications in this area.

⁴³⁰ Brubaker (1997), 52-75, and Jones (2007), 139, argue that Constantina and later imperial women in Rome, Jerusalem and Constantinople directly imitated Helena's example. This makes the absence of such patronage during the intervening Valentinianic dynasty more surprising, especially for Valentinian II's Italian-based court.

also constructed her own mausoleum, which was next to her church dedication for St Agnes.⁴³¹

Constantina's benefactions in Rome were carried out after the death of her first husband, Hannibalianus, in 337, and before her marriage to Gallus in 351.⁴³² She had considerable financial independence as both a widow and sister of the Augusti, but her display of this wealth and status was carried out at a distance from her brothers.⁴³³ Her church for St Agnes in particular indicates this financial independence as well as her religious piety. The latter aspect was conveyed by the accompanying acrostic inscription CONSTANTINA DEO. Unusually no other family member is mentioned.⁴³⁴ The dedication was therefore a display of Constantina's personal Christian piety, not that of the imperial family in general, which was the prevailing theme in fifth-century western dedications by imperial women.

Galla Placidia was the most prominent Theodosian patroness at Rome.⁴³⁵ Her inscriptions in the city are typical of the period, and celebrate the imperial family as a whole. An interesting early piece of patronage was a gold statue set up in the senate house by her to Honorius and Theodosius II, for which only the epigraphic attestation remains.⁴³⁶ This seems to be the only dedication set up by an individual imperial woman to the emperors, and represents a mixture of the self-assertiveness displayed by Constantina's St Agnes inscription, and the familial loyalty of Galla Placidia's later dedication in San Giovanni at Ravenna.⁴³⁷

⁴³¹ See section 2.5.4. Johnson (2009), 110-18 and 139-56, and Brubaker (1997), 59, describe their mausolea and sarcophagi. Harries (2012), 267, describes the close association, developed by Constantina, between imperial women and Agnes.

⁴³² Appendix 1.28 seems to confirm her residency in Rome in this period (337-40) – it refers to her in relation to her three brothers (Constantine II's name was later erased).

⁴³³ Constans (in whose territory Rome belonged) was mainly based between Trier, Milan and Sirmium (340-50; his main residence in 337-40 was possibly at Naissus). Barnes (1993), 224-6, provides his full itinerary. See also Seeck (1919), 189-97.

⁴³⁴ Jones (2007) examines the appeal of Agnes' cult in Rome in the fourth century, and Constantina's role in popularising it.

⁴³⁵ However, Sivan (2011), 160, argues that her contributions to Rome's landscape were less than some of the contemporary local elite.

⁴³⁶ See Appendix 1.48. Galla Placidia is also the recipient of a dedication in Rome before 410: Appendix 1.47, in which she is addressed as *Nobilissima Puella*.

⁴³⁷ Although the San Giovanni inscription refers to other family members, it is dedicated to the eponymous saint. Appendix 1.50 commemorates the dedication of the church Santa Croce in

2.4.1.4 Constantinople

The *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*, composed in the first two decades of Theodosius II's reign, provides an opportunity to view secular works of patronage at a time when ecclesiastical matters seemed to dominate the court's presentation.⁴³⁸

The list of fourteen regions of the city shows the *domus* and palaces for various members of the imperial family as well as public amenities, which in the case of those named after imperial women were exclusively baths.⁴³⁹

In keeping with the period of the *Notitia*'s composition during Theodosius II's reign, all his sisters (Pulcheria, Marina and Arcadia) have *domus* in their names, and Arcadia also had baths.⁴⁴⁰ Marina's and Arcadia's structures are two examples of patronage by women who are otherwise not well-attested in the literary sources.⁴⁴¹ There were also baths built in the name of Valens' daughters Carosa and Anastasia. The last of these may have been originally named for Constantine I's sister.⁴⁴² These baths demonstrate that lesser known imperial women could play a public role in their local city and that not all benefactions had a Christian focus.⁴⁴³

Gerusalemme by Galla Placidia and her children; once again displaying the family's collective familial and Christian piety.

⁴³⁸ I follow the recent translation by Matthews (2012), 86-98.

⁴³⁹ Lenski (2002), 395, notes the bath constructions built by Valentinian I and Valens.

⁴⁴⁰ Arcadia's baths were in the ninth region. Pulcheria had two *domus* in the third and eleventh respectively. I have not translated this term (although Matthews does), since it seemed to indicate a larger structure than a house. Holum (1982), 131, describes them as 'private palaces'.

⁴⁴¹ Such private residences often attracted local businesses: Holum (1982), 132-4, mentions bakeries, workshops and baths, which Pulcheria dedicated near her *domus*, an area (in the eleventh region) known as the *Pulcherianai*. See also Clark (1982), 151 n.79. Holum also describes some of her properties in the provinces. There were also regions called after Marina, and the prefect Rufinus, whose property was confiscated upon his death.

⁴⁴² Amm. Marc. 26.6.14 states explicitly that baths were named after the Constantinian Anastasia. Soz. 6.9.3, refers to baths named after Valens' daughters Carosa and Anastasia – for the latter see also Soc. 4.9.4. Lenski (2002), 399 n.32, suggests a neat compromise: that the Constantinian baths were rededicated to the later Anastasia.

⁴⁴³ There were also buildings in the *Notitia* named after Galla Placidia and Honorius, who were both born in Constantinople. Galla Placidia's two *domus* refer to her as an Augusta, which indicates a possible construction date after she returned to the court in 423; however, Matthews (2012), 22 n.36, suggests that the *Notitia* was composed before 421. Alternatively they could also have been inherited from her mother Galla: see Rebenich (1985), 382. There is also a *palatium* in region one for a Placidia, whom Matthews, 101, suggests was a deceased daughter of Valentinian I, though Valentinian only visited Constantinople once as emperor and there is no information that he had a daughter called Placidia. The only other *palatium* in the work is for Aelia Flaccilla, which I think suggests that the other *palatium* was named after Galla Placidia, who was also a resident of the city, and that the *Notitia* is later than 423. *Anth. Gr.* 16.41, celebrates a portrait set up in a Placidia's property who Sivan (2011), 112 n.78, infers to be Galla Placidia.

As in the West, church building was a common form of building patronage for imperial women, but none are referred to in the *Notitia*.⁴⁴⁴ Pulcheria dedicated three churches to the Virgin Mary and one to St Lawrence where she deposited some relics of St Stephen, brought from Jerusalem by Eudocia.⁴⁴⁵ The translation of relics was part of a bigger empire-wide trend in the fifth century. In the case of St Stephen this vogue was capitalised on by the Theodosian dynasty to celebrate their own piety: Pulcheria in Constantinople and Eudocia in Jerusalem, where she built a basilica to the saint.⁴⁴⁶

Pulcheria was the preeminent imperial female patron in terms of religious display in the capital, and her churches that honoured Mary set her in contention with both Nestorius and her brother Theodosius II, who initially supported the local bishop.⁴⁴⁷ Around this time Constantine I's mother, Helena, was presented in the city as an important imperial example of Christian piety. Her statues were set up around Constantinople in juxtaposition with statues of Constantine and the cross emblem.⁴⁴⁸

2.4.1.5 Jerusalem

Jerusalem provides a striking contrast to the other cities I have so far considered, since initially women's patronage in the area was a result of travel, rather than residency; however, this changed in the fifth century. The women who carried out

⁴⁴⁴ Fourteen churches are mentioned in the *Notitia*. Matthews (2012), 37, argues against a systematic church building programme in Constantinople, in contrast with Rome.

⁴⁴⁵ See Marcell. Com. 439.2. Clark (1982), 151 and Cameron (1981), 278, discuss the interment. Pulcheria completed a special chapel for the relics after Eudocia's exile – Cameron suggests, however, that Eudocia was involved in the inauguration ceremony in 439. *Anth. Gr.* 1.10, describes another church dedication by Eudocia to St. Polyeuctus the Martyr. *Anth. Gr.* 1.12, refers to three generations of imperial women's dedications to the church of St Euphemia of Olybrius: by Licinia Eudocia, Placidia (II) and Anicia Juliana.

⁴⁴⁶ Sivan (2011), 111, underlines the importance of relics in enabling imperial women to play a public role: for example, they would be involved in the processions for such relics' interments. For an overview of this kind of *adventus* see Holum and Vikan (1979), 116-20 and MacCormack (1981), 21-4. Brown (1981), 91-3 and 104, discusses the popularity among other social strata for St Stephen's relics and their circulation around the West around this time. Clark (1982), 151 and 153-4, discusses the specific political benefit of Eudocia's involvement in the consecration of Stephen's relics in both Jerusalem and Constantinople. Soz. 9.2, describes Pulcheria's dedications to the relics of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, which included a festival in their honour.

⁴⁴⁷ For some of Pulcheria's acts of patronage see Soz. 9.1 and Theoph. 5901. Her dedications are summarised by Holum (1982), 131-46. At 142-3 he discusses her churches dedicated to Mary, which advertised her endorsement of the title *Theotokos*. Williams and Friell (1999), 49, describe the political subtleties behind Pulcheria's endorsement of the term; see also Cooper (1998), 42.

⁴⁴⁸ Helena's popularity in later dynasties is summarised by Brubaker (1997), 62-3. I discuss the contemporary literary praise of Helena in 3.4.

benefactions in Jerusalem and the surrounding area travelled there independently of the emperor. These included: Constantine I's mother, Helena; his mother-in-law, Eutropia; Theodosius II's wife, Eudocia; and finally Eudocia the younger, Valentinian III's daughter and Huneric's wife, who was buried there but did not seem to fund buildings.⁴⁴⁹ Helena's patronage in Jerusalem ca. 327 set a precedent for later Theodosian women, a line argued by both Lenski and Brubaker.⁴⁵⁰ The focus on Helena's church dedications and the later story of her discovery of the Cross demonstrate how these acts of patronage were later defined as part of a pilgrimage. This image has been reassessed by Drijvers, who considers the political context and suggests that her benefactions were designed to promote the imperial family and Constantine in particular.⁴⁵¹ A different view is presented by Lenski who argues that the imperial women who patronised the area did so on their own initiative and while seeking personal redemption and refuge from a now hostile imperial court. I will consider these women's patronage in terms of these two different arguments to establish how their benefactions were influenced by the contemporary political climate.

In his *Vita Constantini* Eusebius refers to visits by Helena and Eutropia to Jerusalem.⁴⁵² Both women's acts of patronage were endorsed in some way by Constantine I: Helena's dedications were funded by the imperial treasury, while Eutropia successfully petitioned the emperor for a church at Mamre.⁴⁵³ Their actions showed that imperial widows, like sisters, had greater independence than wives to

⁴⁴⁹ See Lenski (2004), 113-24. According to Theoph. 5964, the younger Eudocia died soon after arriving in Jerusalem, leaving her inheritance to the church.

⁴⁵⁰ Lenski (2004), 121-2, suggests that Helena's journey re-imagined the concept of 'leisure travel'.

⁴⁵¹ Drijvers (1992a), 55-72, describes the perception as a pilgrimage, and the political reality of her journey.

⁴⁵² See Eusebius, *V. Const.* 3.42.1-47.3 and 3.52.1-53.4. Drijvers (1992a), 71, thinks that they travelled at the same time. If so, then it suggests that Helena was not necessarily specially selected to carry out building benefactions in the East.

⁴⁵³ Eusebius, *V. Const.* 3.52.1-4 and *Soz.* 2.4.6. I think Drijvers (1992a), 71 n.72 is wrong to suggest that Eusebius' reference to Eutropia as Constantine's mother-in-law (ἡ κηδέστρια) in the letter would distract from the fact that she was Fausta's mother. The references to her in this letter are more notable for the praise of her religious piety than this family connection. Euseb. *V. Const.* 3.41.1-43.4, describes Constantine's and Helena's complementary acts of patronage in the area. Pohlsander (1993), 160-2, discusses Constantine's regard for Eutropia, drawing comparisons with his sister Constantia – both were widows of his former rivals (Maximian and Licinius respectively).

carry out such acts of patronage.⁴⁵⁴ Eutropia's communication with Constantine and Helena's return to court afterwards indicates that their dedications were assertive acts on the court's behalf. Lenski has drawn a temporal connection between these women's journeys to Jerusalem with the deaths of Crispus and Fausta.⁴⁵⁵ However, there is a clearer impetus to be found for Helena's eastern patronage: Constantine's consolidation of the East following his victory over Licinius in 324.⁴⁵⁶

Eudocia fostered the strongest relationship with Jerusalem and the local area through an initial journey in 438 to 439, before permanently moving there in ca. 440 where she remained until her death in 460.⁴⁵⁷ The first journey clearly served part of a political tour: she delivered a speech to the Antiochene senate on her way to Jerusalem where she held an audience with Melania and brought back some of Stephen's relics to Constantinople.⁴⁵⁸ Eudocia's acts of patronage after she had permanently left Constantinople, showed that even as the disgraced wife of the emperor she possessed wealth and status.⁴⁵⁹ These dedications were not limited to Christian displays; she also developed the city's walls and funded baths, which included a dedicatory poem of her own composition.⁴⁶⁰ Eudocia's patronage, in a

⁴⁵⁴ Lenski (2004), 114-16, connects their travel to seeking refuge after the deaths of Crispus and Fausta in 326. Drijvers (1992a), 62-3 and 66-7, considers their deaths as a possible ancillary motivation, but argues the continuing eastern unrest following Licinius' defeat was a more pressing issue. This mirrors my argument for Constantia's coin issues at Constantinople (see 2.2.2).

⁴⁵⁵ Lenski (2004), 114-17. See also Cameron and Hall (1999), 295, and Drijvers (1992a), 67.

⁴⁵⁶ I find this more plausible since Crispus (who was mainly based in Trier) and Fausta (daughter, sister and wife of Augusti whose territories, until Constantine's victory in 324, were western) has little connection to the East. Barnes (2011), 107-43, describes Constantine's 'transformation of the East' following his final defeat of Licinius, which is supported by the re-dating of Palladas to the first half of the fourth century by Wilkinson (2009), 51-2. For the importance of this re-dating see Barnes, 13-16.

⁴⁵⁷ Her second journey, therefore, best supports Lenski's argument that Jerusalem acted as a place of refuge for imperial women: he describes both journeys at (2004), 117-118. Her first visit in 439 is described by Marcell. Com. 439.2.

⁴⁵⁸ Evagr. *HE* 1.20, describes her speech in Antioch and the benefactions she was involved in there. Eudocia's first journey reflects Drijvers' political interpretation of Helena's journey, while her second follows Lenski's view of the city as a place of political refuge. See *V. Mel.* 56 and 58, for her interaction with Melania. The different literary portrayals of their meeting are described by Clark (1982), 151-6. At 146-7, she describes Melania's building dedications for the relics, and at 154-5 the scattered and conflicting information for Eudocia's dedications. For an overview of Melania's and Eudocia's buildings to Stephen see Bovon (2003), 284. Relic dedications were popular in general for fourth- and fifth-century elites – see Brown (1981), 89-90. Eudocia was also responsible for the translation of the relics of three martyrs in Jerusalem: Appendix 1.42.

⁴⁵⁹ The complexity of the nature of her permanent departure from Constantinople is discussed by Cameron (1981), 260.

⁴⁶⁰ Eudocia's poem is given in Appendix 1.45. A sample of her dedications are described by Evagr. *HE* 1.21-2. For further discussion of her benefactions see Lenski (2004), 117-18.

city where she was now resident, was executed at a safe distance from the imperial court, suggests it was carried out on her own initiative. However, Eudocia was still the wife of the reigning court-based emperor and was clearly not welcome back. Her self-assertion therefore may have been a way of rehabilitating her own reputation, which led to her permanent residence in Jerusalem in the first place.⁴⁶¹

2.4.2 Other Forms of Patronage

There were many variations of the intellectual, cultural and political patronage discussed in Chapter One: those that draw the most attention in the late antique period concern ecclesiastical matters.⁴⁶² A particular focus lay on the involvement of imperial women in clerical appointments and depositions, as well as schismatic disputes. This showed that they took the lead from many of their wealthy female contemporaries.⁴⁶³ However, in many ways such relationships were a variation on the acts of patronage discussed in Chapter One.

A prime example of a traditional form of patronage, and the one which I examine in detail in Part Two, was Eusebia's involvement in Julian's career. Tougher has argued that such acts by Eusebia were instigated by her husband, Constantius II, in order to vet his candidate to replace Gallus as his Caesar.⁴⁶⁴ In order to facilitate such a relationship, Eusebia had to be on good terms with Julian however political such interactions ultimately were. Forms of Christian patronage were in many ways an extension of the type that Eusebia exercised, but transposed to a different setting.⁴⁶⁵ While Eusebia's patronage of Julian seemed to have been carried out privately in the court environment, Valentinianic and Theodosian women were publically involved in ecclesiastical matters. However, the issue remains of how distinct a woman's actions could be when compared to those of the emperor, on

⁴⁶¹ See 5.4.2.

⁴⁶² See 1.3 and Chapter Four.

⁴⁶³ Olympias, a wealthy widow, supported John Chrysostom in exile (his exiles are my topic in 4.3); she had been brought up at Theodosius I's court: Lançon (2014), 140. Mayer (1999), throughout her article, argues that there was a wider group of aristocratic women who Chrysostom relied on and who had their own agenda, separate from both his and that of the civic authorities – see for example 287. At 175, she suggests that both his female allies and enemies had a degree of financial independence because of their status as widows. A similar situation can be seen in Rome.

⁴⁶⁴ Tougher (1998a), 595-9.

⁴⁶⁵ An underlying sincerity is likely to have been present in all the patronal relationships I examine in this section, even though my focus is on the political context.

whom her influential position depended (a question I will consider in Part Two).⁴⁶⁶ Just like more traditional forms, Christian patronage by imperial women created a network of loyal clients for the emperor. However, these women's acts of patronage, which at the time were seen to benefit an Augustus, were often redefined in later literary accounts as negative interference, according to what was then considered orthodox.

In the Valentinianic period there seemed to be freedom of religious expression among family members, while in the Theodosian dynasty different beliefs created clear internal fissures. Eudocia was a supporter of the Monophysite cause when she took up residence in Jerusalem. Pulcheria, after the death of Theodosius II in 450, saw her theological beliefs triumph at the Council of Chalcedon.⁴⁶⁷ Pulcheria and her sisters were clearly involved in religious matters and could champion specific factions more than Theodosius, who as emperor strove to create ecclesiastical harmony.⁴⁶⁸ Such Christian patronage also held a personal benefit for Pulcheria's position at court. Her championing of *Theotokos* as an epithet for Mary, mother of Jesus, clearly promoted her own status as an avowed virgin.⁴⁶⁹ However, the bishop Nestorius' challenging of the term undermined Pulcheria's position of influence with Theodosius II. The Augusta's patronage seemed more individualistic and benefitted her more fully than the mothers or wives of emperors. But her actions held political value because she lived in the same city as the emperor.

⁴⁶⁶ Philost. 1.9, describes Constantia's involvement in the Council of Nicaea, discussed by Pohlsander (1993), 162. Athanasius, *Ap. Const.* 6.5, emphasised Eutropia's Christian fidelity, and so she may well have been involved in acts of Christian patronage around Rome (where she lived). Barnes (1993), 53, suggests she may have petitioned the emperors for Athanasius. Justina's dispute with Ambrose and Eudoxia's role in John Chrysostom's exiles are considered in Chapter Four. Eunapius, *fr.* 72.1, describes Eudoxia's administrative appointments in the provinces; however, this empress has been conjecturally re-identified, by Blockley (1980b), 174-5, who replaces the transmitted name of Pulcheria, and puts forward that given its place in the narrative (the fragment in question in the article is numbered 87). Justina was also accused of selling offices (in order to challenge Ambrose's position): *V. Ambr.* 12. Leo's collection of letters include those by and to women of both Valentinian III's and Theodosius II's court concerning ecclesiastical matters: *PL.* 30, 31, 79, 84 and 123. For Pulcheria's influence at court see appendix I in Cameron and Long (1993), 399-403.

⁴⁶⁷ Holum (1982), 213-16, discusses her role in the Council.

⁴⁶⁸ Holum (1982), 147-74, describes the conflict between Nestorius and Theodosius' sisters, who allied themselves with Cyril of Alexandria.

⁴⁶⁹ For Pulcheria's dedications to Mary see section 2.4.1.4. Holum (1982), 142-3, believes these churches promoted Pulcheria's own position as 'the virgin Augusta'. See also Williams and Friell (1999), 49. Cooper (1998), 41-2, argues that Pulcheria wielded considerable influence through her religious devotion. At 42 she summarises Pulcheria's dispute with Nestorius.

2.4.3 Conclusion

Helena's early dedications in Jerusalem were funded by the imperial treasury, which suggests that her benefactions were designed to serve her son's interests. Galla Placidia's dedications under Valentinian III were carried out very much on her son's behalf. The celebration of her family's collective Christian piety in the inscription for San Giovanni in Ravenna is the most expansive example of dynastic unity. When the patron was a sister, rather than a mother or consort of the emperor, the patronage seemed more an act of self-assertion. This is exemplified, in particular, by the actions of Constantina and Pulcheria, regardless of the latter's residency at court.

Christian acts of patronage were developed from the traditional role women had always performed and continued to carry out. They fostered relationships with specific individuals or communities who then had an avenue of communication with the emperor. This system flourished in the fifth century when different imperial members patronised different Christian sects, which brought them into conflict with each other especially at the eastern court. Such forms of patronage reflected upon, and directly involved, the emperor. These acts were, therefore, political both during their own time and in the eyes of later writers, who regarded them either as forms of guidance or interference in imperial policy. Women's individual interests also meant that although communities were in conflict with each other, they could still be loyal to the dynasty, so long as they were endorsed by different members of the imperial court. This was an approach that the eastern court seemed to favour more than the West.

2.5 LOCATIONS

Specific information on imperial women's locations, especially in the fourth century, is only found when it is relevant to broader narratives, often at moments of crisis. Apart from the effect by the emperor's transition to a court-based figure on women's locations, new developments also emerged over the course of both the fourth and fifth centuries in terms of independent travel; in particular with regard to Jerusalem, a location already discussed. I will look more closely here at where imperial women were in relation to the emperor. I will examine each dynasty in turn and then

consider the political motivations behind where the women were buried, or reburied, in particular after the permanent division of the empire into East and West.

For the purpose of tracking imperial women's locations, they can be divided, approximately, into two groups: the wives of emperors and their young daughters; and other female relatives.⁴⁷⁰ The principal difference between these groups was that an imperial wife seemed required to maintain a degree of proximity with a military emperor. However, she only needed to reside with him in winter when he was not on campaign.⁴⁷¹ A cursory mention by Ammianus (15.8.3) indicates this proximity between the emperor and his wife: Eusebia championed Julian's appointment, because she did not want to travel to Gaul.⁴⁷² This is slim evidence from one source, but it indicates that the emperor's wife was (unsurprisingly) expected to stay in her husband's territory when he was in his winter quarters. The same seemed to have been true for the emperor's subordinates: Constantina resided with Gallus Caesar in Antioch.⁴⁷³ However, they were not obliged to remain there in the summer months: in his panegyric for Eusebia, Julian refers to her having travelled to Rome to carry out benefactions while Constantius was on campaign (*Or.* 3.129B-C).⁴⁷⁴

2.5.1 Constantinian Locations

The most popular location for Helena, mother of Constantine I, and early Constantinian women was Rome, which in this dynasty meant that they were living at a distance from the emperor himself.⁴⁷⁵ Imperial women's continued residency in the city emerges from the narratives of military crises that affected Italy. The first of these was Magnentius' Italian incursion in 350 when Constantine's half-sister Eutropia was in Rome.⁴⁷⁶ The imperial family in general also congregated in the city

⁴⁷⁰ Mothers often seemed to accompany their daughters to court: Julian comments that Eusebia was accompanied by her mother when she travelled to marry Constantius (*Or.* 3.110A); and in the Tetrarchy Valeria was joined by her mother, Prisca, who also joined her in exile: Lactantius, *DMP*, 39.5.

⁴⁷¹ Agrippina the Elder's presence with Germanicus on the frontier seems to have been a rarity, rather than the norm: see 1.4.1. Pohlsander (1993), 155-6, discusses Constantia's (and Licinius (II)'s) accompaniment of Licinius during his first war with Constantine based on the reference in *Origo* 5.17.

⁴⁷² Incidentally, this is one example where she is referred to as *regina* (see 2.2.4).

⁴⁷³ Many of Constantina's appearances in book 14 of Ammianus relate to this period in Antioch: e.g. *Amm. Marc.* 14.9.3.

⁴⁷⁴ See 3.2.2.

⁴⁷⁵ For their local benefactions see 2.4.1.3.

⁴⁷⁶ Athanasius, *Ap. Const.* 6.5.

for important ceremonies like Constantine's *vicennalia* in 326, and Constantius II's *adventus* in 357, the event at which Ammianus describes Eusebia's first alleged conspiracy against Julian's wife Helena.⁴⁷⁷ In the Valentinianic dynasty, Constantius II's widow, Faustina, was in Constantinople when Procopius usurped. Her residency in the city as a widow suggested that Constantinople, like Rome, became an attractive residence for imperial women in the fourth century, perhaps because it had the infrastructure of a court and offered considerable scope to be important, but the emperor was often not present.

The most novel aspect when considering how imperial women travelled in the late antique period involved their independent journeys to Jerusalem.⁴⁷⁸ As Lenski observed, such long-distance travel posed a physical risk, and laid them open to slander, a factor which may well have discouraged such journeys before.⁴⁷⁹ Notably the first women to embark on this tour, Helena and Eutropia, were older widows, whose reputations were less likely to be compromised. The Christian aspect of some of their dedications in Jerusalem also protected their reputation, even if such benefactions also served a clear political benefit for the distant emperor as well.⁴⁸⁰

2.5.2 Valentinianic Locations

Once again, Valentinianic women seemed to break with the general pattern established by Constantine I's reign. The information we have for their locations indicates that the imperial family was based wherever the emperor's winter quarters were.⁴⁸¹ In the West it would appear that Valentinian I's wives lived in succession at his principal winter quarters in Trier; however, the main source for this is the unreliable *Dialogue* by Sulpicius Severus (*Dial.* 2.5).⁴⁸² Based on John Chrysostom's *Letter to a Young Widow* (285-89), it would appear that Marina Severa was banished from court following her divorce as she was recalled by her son

⁴⁷⁷ Amm. Marc. 26.10.1-20.

⁴⁷⁸ Constantina travelled without the court to the Danube following Magnentius' usurpation; for the alternative view that she was based in Rome see Harries (2014), 197-8. As discussed in 1.4.1, many early Julio-Claudian women travelled from Rome, but in the company of their husbands.

⁴⁷⁹ Lenski (2004), 119, compares this innovation in independent travel with previous restrictions.

⁴⁸⁰ Lenski (2004), 112, emphasises their Christian dedications as enabling them to make such journeys. Drijvers (1992a), 65, and 69 suggests that Helena was actually enforcing imperial policy on behalf of Constantine during her eastern travels.

⁴⁸¹ Valens' winter quarters were Marcianople, Constantinople and Antioch.

⁴⁸² The work is not noted for its historicity; in the passage Valentinian's wife is called 'Arriana'.

Gratian from exile beyond the frontiers. This was conceivably outside the empire but more feasibly reached from the East, and outside Valentinian's territories.⁴⁸³ Justina's long term residency at Trier is indicated by the probable date of her marriage to Valentinian I and the narrow timeframe this allows for the births of their children before Valentinian's death in 375.⁴⁸⁴

Valentinian I's death provides the next point of reference for Justina's location. She was not with him when he died in Brigetio preparing for campaign, however, nor was she at Trier with her stepson Gratian.⁴⁸⁵ It would appear that when Valentinian travelled into Illyricum in 375, Justina and her son, and presumably their young daughters as well, accompanied him for at least part of the way.⁴⁸⁶ According to Ammianus, 30.10.4, when Valentinian I died Justina and Valentinian II were a hundred miles away at a villa called Murocincta. The most likely location for this villa is Parndorf (eastern Austria), sixty miles from Brigetio and a hundred miles from Aquincum – where Valentinian II was proclaimed.⁴⁸⁷

During Gratian's reign as senior emperor (375-83), Justina's location is unknown. Because Valentinian II returned to Trier under Gratian's care, it is assumed that Justina accompanied him; but it was only necessary for his sisters to return to court, since they could be married to potential usurpers.⁴⁸⁸ It is unclear where Gratian's

⁴⁸³ Amm. 28.1.57, describes Gratian taking his mother's counsel; Cameron (2012), 345, overstates her influence. Lenski (2002), 103, discusses Marina Severa's recall in *Chron. Pasch.* 378, Joh. Mal. 13.32 and John of Nikiu, 82.14; see also Cameron, 349-50. Whitby and Whitby (2007), 49 n.153, suggest that she was swiftly recalled in 375/6. Chrysostom indicates the place of exile with the word ἡ ὑπεροπία – his letter is discussed in 5.1.

⁴⁸⁴ Lenski (2002), 103, argues that Valentinian divorced Marina Severa in 369. Given that Valentinian II's birth date was ca.371 (and therefore she was pregnant with him in 370) this would mean she had her three daughters in the consecutive years after Valentinian's birth.

⁴⁸⁵ Amm. Marc. 30.5.18, describes Valentinian I's dream of his absent wife the night before he died. The modern chapter headings are misleading (see Kelly (2009) 235-236): Valentinian II was not proclaimed at Brigetio, which was where Valentinian I died.

⁴⁸⁶ See Errington (1996), 447, Girardet (2004), 109, and Cameron (2012), 350, who discusses Ammianus' emphasis on Justina's absence from the military camp where Valentinian II was proclaimed.

⁴⁸⁷ Ammianus writes that the villa was 100 miles from where Valentinian I died. The location of Parndorf (near Carnuntum) is suggested by Mócsy (1970), 585-6. For a fuller discussion of the geography and chronology of Valentinian II's election see Kelly (2013), 360-3, and Errington (1996), 440-7.

⁴⁸⁸ Amm. Marc. 30.10.6 describes Gratian's guardianship of his brother. Valentinian's residence in Trier is confirmed by Ausonius, *Epigram* 29. A convincing case can be made for his sisters' residence there as well, but I think there is reasonable doubt for Justina. McLynn (1994), 85, argues that Valentinian's female relatives lived in Sirmium, based on Paulinus' reference to Justina's

widow Laeta was when he died in Gaul; but it is unlikely that she joined him on his military campaign.⁴⁸⁹ A more probable conclusion is that Laeta remained in his most recent winter quarters at Milan, where Valentinian II and his female relatives lived when he succeeded Gratian as senior emperor.⁴⁹⁰ Despite his residency in Italy, Valentinian II, Justina and his sisters, Iusta and Grata, made only one brief visit to Rome.⁴⁹¹ However, Laeta was resident there during the Gothic siege, 408-410, where she is described by Zosimus as funding relief efforts with her mother, Tisamene.⁴⁹²

2.5.3 Theodosian Locations

Theodosius I's whole family lived in Constantinople from 380. Although Arcadius, in Theodosius' absence, was reported to have banished Galla from the palace in summer 390.⁴⁹³ If this story is true, it is unlikely that as the wife of the senior emperor Galla left the city; rather she retired to a private palace in the suburbs.⁴⁹⁴ As already discussed, Galla's daughter, Galla Placidia, seems to have travelled with Serena and Honorius to Milan in January 395. Honorius' court included from its early stages Serena's children as well.⁴⁹⁵

involvement in local ecclesiastical matters: *V. Ambr.* 11-12 – see also Cameron (2012), 350 n.57. Errington (1996), 442 n.24, disagrees with McLynn's reading of Paulinus. Errington's argument that the danger posed by Valentinian's female relatives if they were not at court is certainly plausible for Valentinian's sisters. Barnes (1999), 166 and 169-70, suggests that Justina was in Sirmium, based on Paulinus, and therefore so too was Gratian's court.

⁴⁸⁹ However, *Soz.* 5.13 presents Gratian's death at the hands of Andragathius as a result of crossing the river to meet his wife. There is no other evidence to support this unlikely story.

⁴⁹⁰ Barnes (1999), 166-8, provides itineraries and winter quarters for Gratian as senior Augustus. Barnes locates Gratian in his last winter in Milan, 382/3, before he moved back north in May 383 to deal with Maximus' usurpation in Gaul; Gratian had been based in northern Italy since 381. I disagree with Errington (1996), 442 and Barnes, 166 and 170, that Justina had to be present with Valentinian II at Gratian's court.

⁴⁹¹ Valentinian visited Rome in 388, after the Thessalonica conference. His other sister Galla presumably remained with Theodosius' court. I disagree with the face-value interpretation by Rebenich (1985), 381, of Zosimus' references, 4.43.1 and 45.4, that only one sister made the return journey with Valentinian. Zosimus' specific mention of Galla in Thessalonica does not preclude the other sisters' presence, and it is unlikely that they remained in Italy following Maximus' invasion. Valentinian briefly returned to Milan in early 389, but was definitely in Trier from June: Seeck (1919), 274. *Soc.* 7.14.7 and *Ruf. HE* 17, are in agreement that Justina died soon after the Thessalonica conference. Only Zosimus' much later account suggests that she lived longer: 4.47.2. Iusta and Grata were in Milan for Valentinian's funeral; see *Ambr. De Obit. Val.* 38.

⁴⁹² Zosimus, 5.39.4.

⁴⁹³ See *Chron. Min.* 390. The incident is discussed by Rebenich (1985), 382.

⁴⁹⁴ See Rebenich (1985), 382.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ambr. De Obit. Theod.* 35, refer to Theodosius' children, who must be Honorius and Galla Placidia, joining him in Italy: see Liebeschuetz (2005), 193 n.5 and McEvoy (2013a), 139. Claud.

After a hiatus during the Valentinianic dynasty it would appear that Rome once again held appeal as a place of residence for imperial women during Honorius' reign. However, unlike the Constantinian era, Honorius himself was now also a visitor, at least until the Gothic invasion of Italy, after which he resided in Ravenna.⁴⁹⁶

Galla Placidia was the only woman to return to Honorius' court, after she became Constantius III's wife. However, she left again, along with her children, for Constantinople soon after her husband's death in late 421. After the family's return to Rome in 424, it is unclear to what extent Galla Placidia travelled with Valentinian III's court. Both Galla Placidia and her son spent more time in Rome than their predecessors so it seems they were often there together, even if they did not travel in tandem once he reached maturity.⁴⁹⁷ The only other imperial woman to leave Constantinople was Theodosius II's wife Eudocia.⁴⁹⁸ Unusually for the wife of a living emperor, Eudocia travelled independently of her husband to Jerusalem twice: in 438-9, and for the last time as an (unofficial) exile ca. 440 where she remained, even though her husband reigned for another ten years at Constantinople.⁴⁹⁹

6Cos. 92-100, describes Serena's accompaniment of Honorius. The emperor's main residences were Milan, Rome and Ravenna until the Gothic invasion of Italy in 408, after which he mainly lived in Ravenna: Gillett (2001), 137-8 and 162-5. Sanz-Serrano (2013), 54, argues that Galla Placidia was sent from Constantinople to protect her from Arcadius; see also McEvoy, 139 n.15.

⁴⁹⁶ The whole family would have been expected to be in Rome for major celebrations there, such as Honorius' sixth consulship, which was celebrated by Claudian in a panegyric. For a similar idea in the Constantinian dynasty see 2.5.1. According to Zos. 5.30.1-3, Serena advised Honorius to move to Ravenna for his own protection, in which case it seems strange the whole family did not go as well. Gillett (2001), 140-1, argues that Ravenna was preferable to Rome because the army was based there.

⁴⁹⁷ Gillett (2001), 142-4, sets out Valentinian's residences. Humphries (2012), 161-79, analyses the various means by which he established Rome as his powerbase.

⁴⁹⁸ It is unclear whether Galla Placidia returned to Constantinople for Valentinian III's wedding to Licinia Eudoxia in 437.

⁴⁹⁹ Evagr. *HE* 1.21, describes her journeys and dismisses rumours surrounding the second. Her final departure was not presented as exile at the time: the complexity of the situation is laid out by Cameron (1981), 258-63 (especially 260). There is no consensus in either modern or ancient accounts as to when Eudocia left court. The two most likely dates are 440 and 444, given by Marcell. Comes and *Chron. Pasch.* Cameron suggests that primary sources must have seen a temporal connection between Eudocia's absence and the death of Paulinus. Cameron, 263, prefers Marcellinus (a generally more reliable source), but his suggestion of a delay to 441 to avoid an exact correlation with the execution of Paulinus in 440 seems more uncertain. Holum (1982), 193, argues against Cameron, opting instead for 443, the year of the departure of prefect Cyrus (*Prisc. fr.* 8) – who was the main focus of Cameron's article. Lenski (2004), 117, dates her second journey to 442.

2.5.4 Burials

Imperial women's final resting places had always had the potential to benefit an emperor's successor, by augmenting their legitimacy.⁵⁰⁰ There is only intermittent information for the burial sites for imperial women, especially in the fourth century.⁵⁰¹ The whereabouts of the final resting places of the tetrarchic women, including Fausta are largely unknown.⁵⁰² Helena, however, was buried in her own mausoleum in Rome, which seems to have set a precedent for her immediate descendants. Both Constantina and her sister Helena (Julian's wife) were buried in Constantina's mausoleum.⁵⁰³ These two burial sites are the only firm locations for the dynasty's females. None of these women, the two Helenas or Constantina, died in Rome; however, the elder Helena and Constantina had clearly intended it to be their final resting place given their mausolea constructions.⁵⁰⁴

In contrast to the Constantinian women, the emperors after Constantine were generally buried in the Apostoleion in Constantinople (unless some mishap occurred), until the second generation of the Valentinianic dynasty. Valentinian I's burial there shows his successors were observing recent Constantinian tradition, even though he had only visited the city once.⁵⁰⁵ Only two Valentinianic women's burials are firmly attested, and both were at Constantinople: Valentinian I's divorced first wife, Marina

⁵⁰⁰ See Corbier (1995), 182-6.

⁵⁰¹ Johnson, (1991a), (1991b) and most comprehensively (2009), provides overviews for imperial burial places.

⁵⁰² Grierson (1962), 21, and Johnson (2009), 208, follow Symeon Log. 88 and Cedrenus 1.519-20 (Bonn). They suggest that she shared a tomb with Constantine and Helena. Helena's burial is not commented on by contemporary sources. Surprisingly, two of the more likely burial sites (both in Serbia) were for lesser-known imperial women of the Tetrarchy: Galerius' mother, Romula, seems to have been buried in his mausoleum in Gamzigrad; and Maximinus Daza's mother in Šarkamen. Both are discussed by Johnson (2009), 74-82 and 82-6.

⁵⁰³ See Amm. Marc. 15.8.18. Johnson (2009), 110-18 and 139-56, provides a detailed discussion of these mausolea. Grierson (1962), 24, suggests their burials in Rome indicate that Constantius II did not perceive the Apostoleion in Constantinople as a family mausoleum.

⁵⁰⁴ The elder Helena and Constantina were long-term residents of the city (see 2.5.1). Helena the younger and Constantina were the nieces of Rome's last resident emperor, Maxentius, who had also built a mausoleum there: Johnson (2009), 86-93 – it may not have been finished at the time of his death. Sivan (2011), 143-5, describes Rome's appeal in terms of funerary displays for imperial women in particular.

⁵⁰⁵ Amm. Marc. 26.4.3-4 narrates his visit in 364 when he appointed Valens his co-Augustus. Johnson (2009), 129-39, describes Constans' probable resting place in Centelles, Spain (Constantine II's body was not buried). For the Apostoleion see Johnson, 118-29. Julian was first buried at Tarsus: Amm. Marc. 25.9.12-13; Leo Grammaticus, 93-4 (Bonn), writes that he was reburied in Constantinople alongside his wife, Helena (which would indicate her remains were removed from Rome) – see Grierson (1962), 40-1.

Severa, and Gratian's first wife, Constantia.⁵⁰⁶ Constantia's remains were interred in the city by Theodosius I in 383, the summer after Gratian's death.⁵⁰⁷ The transference of her remains from the West seemed a political move forming part of Theodosius I's exaltation of her grandfather, Constantine I.⁵⁰⁸

Theodosius I felt no need to bury Gratian in his capital (after his body was eventually recovered from Maximus), or Valentinian II, to whom he had shown little respect in life. The burial locations for imperial females of the Valentinianic dynasty are all conjectural, except for Constantia. Given their long-term residence in Milan and because it also seemed to be the final resting place of Gratian and Valentinian II, it is likely that Justina, Iusta and Grata were also buried there.⁵⁰⁹ No information survives for Gratian's last wife Laeta or for Valens' family, but Johnson argues that Galla, Theodosius I's second wife, was buried in Milan, despite dying in Constantinople.⁵¹⁰

Honorius' construction of an imperial mausoleum attached to St Peter's in Rome provided the western emperors, and their family, with an equivalent of the Apostoleion in Constantinople.⁵¹¹ From this period onwards family members were

⁵⁰⁶ If this is true for Marina Severa then it is likely she died during Gratian's reign. See *Chron. Alt.* 105, for Marina Severa and *Cons. Const.* 383 and *Chron. Pasch.* 383 for Constantia. Johnson (1991a), 502 and 505, discusses both. Eusebia was reportedly buried in Constantius II's sarcophagus in the Apostoleion: Symeon Log. 91 (Bonn.), and Johnson (2009), 121 and 208.

⁵⁰⁷ *Chron. Pasch.* 383 provides 31 August as the date of the arrival of her remains and 1 December for their burial.

⁵⁰⁸ Croke (2010), 253-4, sets out Theodosius' transferral of any imperial corpse he could obtain in his mausoleum as part of his wider program to consolidate his rule and to set Constantinople up as a rival to Rome (which did not have an equivalent of the Apostoleion at this point). See also Grierson (1962), 41.

⁵⁰⁹ Johnson (1991a), 502-5, suggests Sant'Aquilino as the location for Gratian, Valentinian II (based on Ambrose's funeral orations, discussed 4.2.3) and, on this premise, Justina as well: see also Johnson (2009), 167, and, for Justina, Brubaker (1997), 73 n.64. McEvoy (2013b), 126, suggests that Gratian and Valentinian were buried in the West, rather than at Constantinople, because of 'embarrassing or compromised circumstances'.

⁵¹⁰ Johnson (1991a), 506 (especially n.31), substitutes her burial there in place of Galla Placidia after whom a local mausoleum is named, see Agnellus, 42 (Galla Placidia was buried in Rome); see Deliyannis (2004), 151 n.33. Grierson (1962), 21, tentatively suggests that Galla was buried with Theodosius I and Aelia Flaccilla in Constantinople, followed by Croke (2010), 253. This seems more logical than Johnson's argument, since, regardless of Arcadius' feelings about his stepmother, Galla predeceased her husband Theodosius I, with whom the decision rested.

⁵¹¹ See Johnson (1992b), 339. McEvoy (2013b), 125-6, describes the significance of this construction and how it advertised the imperial family's commitment to Rome. The appeal of Rome as the burial location for the western dynasty was demonstrated by the interment of Galla Placidia's and Athaulf's son, Theodosius (III), whose remains were moved from Barcelona. For his original burial see Olymp.

buried either in Rome or Constantinople, with the exception of Theodosius II's estranged wife, Eudocia, who was laid to rest in Jerusalem at her basilica for St Stephen in 460.⁵¹² Eudocia's burial outside the imperial mausoleum in Constantinople was a return to the early Constantinian practice of an imperial woman's burial where she had been a prominent local patron. Her burial also shows that she held little political currency to the new eastern regime.⁵¹³

2.5.5 Conclusion

It would appear that in the fourth century many imperial women were not with the emperor. Only the emperor's wife (and by extension, young daughters) maintained a degree of proximity, but only when he was not on campaign. Otherwise, for the Constantinian women, Rome in particular held a strong appeal. With the emergence of the court-based emperor at the end of the fourth century imperial women were more often found with the Augustus away from Rome, but in the fifth century the city again became their residence of choice. In the East, few women left Constantinople for long stretches of time after the court became firmly established in the city.

A surprising number of imperial women also embarked on independent travel. The senior women of Constantine I's family, Helena and Eutropia, both travelled to Jerusalem where they engaged in building patronage. More surprisingly, Theodosius II's wife, Eudocia, travelled without him to Jerusalem on what amounted to a political tour. Eudocia did not return from her second journey there and she was the only eastern family member not to be buried in Constantinople. Most of the female burials in the capital were a result of local residency, while emperors' burials continued a Constantinian and early-Valentinianic imperial tradition.

fr. 26.1, and for his transferal see Prosper Tironis, 12.489. This is discussed further by Gillett (2001), 147-8, Sivan (2011), 143, and McEvoy (2013b), 120-1.

⁵¹² See *Chron. Pasch.* 444 (referred to in the year of her exile), *Joh. Mal.* 14.8 and *Evagr. HE* 1.22, who entertains the idea that she died before Theodosius II (dismissed by Whitby (2000), 53 n.187). Grierson (1962), 43 n.47, queries her date of death, but it was certainly after Pulcheria's. Licinia Eudoxia and Placidia eventually lived in Constantinople, so may have been buried with the rest of their family there. *Joh. Mal.* 14.45, suggests that Placidia did not go west from Constantinople with her husband Olybrius; however, this source is often unreliable.

⁵¹³ Valentinian III's daughter, Eudocia, was buried in Jerusalem alongside her grandmother: *Theoph.* 5964.

2.6 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Imperial women's public roles over this century and a half seemed to have been most affected by the evolution of the role of emperor to a court-based figure. However, we have much less information for this period than for the Julio-Claudian dynasty, which was mainly court-based. Like the early imperial period, women continued to be involved in religious matters, which took on a place of importance in the emperor's changing public presentation. A more surprising development was the frequent appearances of imperial women at moments of military crises, especially in the West, and the independent roles which the emperors' sisters, in particular, were able to fashion for themselves.

Imperial women were used in public presentation for Constantine I and Theodosius I at the beginning and end of the fourth century, both after periods in which this had not been done. However, Constantine's award of titles and striking of coinage for three women was replicated by neither his immediate nor the dynasty's successors; however, Theodosius I's descendants did develop his award of Augusta and struck coinage for his first wife Aelia Flaccilla, in the East. This change correlated with the establishment of Constantinople as the permanent imperial residence in the East. The award of the title Augusta to Aelia Flaccilla simultaneously promoted Theodosius' position as eastern Augustus, appointed by an emperor to whom he was not related, and subverted the seniority of his western colleagues, who either did not or could not respond with similar awards. The western Theodosian dynasty only started to give imperial women titles and produce coinage during Valentinian III's reign. This greater degree of public presentation was clearly influenced by the family's brief residency at the eastern court.

In the second half of Valentinian III's reign, the family again started to cultivate strong links with Rome. But their benefactions here and at other Italian capitals often celebrated the family as a whole, and they seemed to act as a united force in ecclesiastical matters. The emphasis on group familial presentation can be seen as a consequence of the political situation. Valentinian had only been proclaimed emperor after eastern forces had defeated the usurper John. Prior to this his predecessor,

Honorius, had visited Rome only minimally in the last fifteen years of his reign and had alienated himself from both his eastern and western family.

At Constantinople, in contrast, imperial women's patronage seemed driven by individual impetus, and resulted in their dedicating their own churches and championing different Christian causes. In a way this multi-faceted form could, counter-intuitively, benefit the emperor, who was resident in the same city, because sections of the populace who were at odds with each other could still be loyal to members of the same dynasty.

After Constantine I's death and before Theodosius I made Aelia Flaccilla Augusta, women had a much less public role in the promotion of the dynasty. However, important developments emerged during this period that either were influenced by Constantine's actions or subsequently had an impact on imperial women's more prominent public role in the Theodosian dynasty. Following Helena's example during her son's reign, Constantine's daughter, Constantina, built her own mausoleum and other structures in Rome when she lived in the city, at a distance from the emperors. Her celebration of her own piety through her construction of St Agnes was repeated in Constantinople by another imperial sister, Pulcheria, and by the emperor's wife, Eudocia, when she was living at a distance from the emperor in Jerusalem. The Valentinianic dynasty made little use of their imperial women in public presentation, but the establishment of the first young, court-based senior Augustus, Valentinian II, led to a greater role for women of the successive Theodosian dynasty. In this intervening period of relative silence, women did have an impact on literary sources and just as during the early imperial period they could still suffer exiles and violent deaths: the focus of Part Two.

PART TWO
CASE STUDIES
PRAISE, CRITICISM AND MISCHANCE

*The infamy of vice and praise of virtue are both alike eternal*⁵¹⁴
Sid. Ap. Ep. 5.8. 3

⁵¹⁴ This is Dalton's translation, in the main text I consult Anderson's Loeb edition.

CHAPTER THREE

POSITIVE PORTRAITS OF IMPERIAL WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

But the proper function of encomium is to amplify and to embellish.⁵¹⁵
Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.6

It is ironic that panegyric, a genre that is designed to praise, is viewed so negatively. In the fourth century panegyrics were, it seems, a standard means by which subjects and the imperial centre could communicate with each other. The variety of reasons for such a line of communication is evident in the corpus of imperial encomia known as the *Panegyrici Latini*, which were delivered in Gaul between 289 and 389 – with the exception of Pliny's *Panegyricus* of AD 100.⁵¹⁶ The corpus provides only a glimpse from one area into the range of panegyrics that could be addressed to an emperor in the course of a year, but the pervasiveness of the genre and its perceived contamination of other literature is evident in passages of *recusatio* found in the panegyrics themselves, and in Ammianus' closing comment at the end of his historical narrative.⁵¹⁷

Despite the ubiquity of panegyrics in late antique imperial discourse, among the extant corpora there are only two which are addressed to women: Julian's *Oration 3* to Eusebia and Claudian's *Laus Serenae* to Serena. This may seem a small quantity, but prior to this period the only surviving encomium addressed to a woman was Gorgias' work on Helen of Troy, which was written in the mid-fifth century BC as a clearly rhetorical exercise. In the mid-second century, Antoninus Pius thanked Fronto, *Ep.* 2.2, for devoting part, but not the whole, of an oration to a panegyric for

⁵¹⁵ This is Russell's Loeb translation.

⁵¹⁶ Rees (2002), 29-31, summarises the various motivations for the speeches in the corpus. A prompt for one of these orations was the mundane request for funding for a school in Autun (*Pan. Lat.* 9). For more general discussion of the practicality of panegyric as a means of communication in the late antique period see Gillett (2012), 267, and MacCormack (1981), 6-7 and 21.

⁵¹⁷ Amm. Marc. 31.16.9, advises those who choose to write about the present reign (Theodosius I) to adopt a loftier style. These closing remarks are analysed by Kelly (2007), 229-31. Julian frequently employs *recusatio* when addressing Eusebia in *Oration 3* e.g. 121C-234A. Rees (2002), 5-8, discusses the panegyric tone of historiography in the early imperial period.

Faustina.⁵¹⁸ In the late third century, Menander Rhetor wrote a treatise on panegyrics addressed to emperors⁵¹⁹; one was not necessary for imperial wives.

Although the subjects of *Oration 3* and the *Laus Serenae* were both women, neither of them had received formal titles (as discussed in 2.2). The two encomia also provide neat comparisons with each other in terms of form, and the relationship of the author to the protagonist and the emperor. These variations allow us to interpret the value of women's roles displayed in such encomia in relation to the court with which they were associated. Julian's Greek prose oration for Eusebia was composed over forty years before Claudian's poem for Serena, and although both were delivered in the West they were written at different stages in the development of the imperial office. Julian as a panegyrist is exceptional because he was a member of the imperial college. His tumultuous life prior to becoming Caesar and his later usurpation encourages a subversive reading of his intent in early works such as *Oration 3*, perhaps too excessively.⁵²⁰ Claudian did not have an equally vested interest in promoting his own position; however, Serena, the subject of his poetic encomium, was not the wife of the emperor, but rather of the *de facto* ruler, Stilicho, whose central position at court was confirmed through his marriage to a close relative of the emperor. The political tensions that make up the context of these encomia add to their interest and inform their composition. Such examination has to be sifted from the required hyperbolic flattery that often overwhelms panegyrics and exasperates the modern reader. An important consideration for both works is how much sincerity can be discerned from the praise given, and how the subject's gender presents an appealing literary novelty in such a pervasive genre.

⁵¹⁸ The letter is discussed at 1.5.1. For the debate over whether this referred to Faustina the Elder or Younger see Champlin (1974), 149. For discussion of the Helen panegyric see Russell and Wilson (1981), xiv.

⁵¹⁹ See Russell and Wilson (1981), xi, whose translation and commentary I refer to throughout this chapter. They discuss, at xxii-xxix, the history of such treatises (including Quintillian). Gillett (2012), 266-7, notes the socio-political and literary conventions, which the existence of such treatises indicated. I use Wright's Loeb translations of Julian's orations and Platnauer's Loeb translations for Claudian's poems, which are amended for archaisms.

⁵²⁰ Bartsch (1994), 173-4, discusses the idea of a subversive private transcript for Pliny's *Panegyricus* (the speech itself providing the public transcript) and the orator's refutation of such a subversive reading.

In this chapter I will first look at women's appearances in other late antique encomia (3.1). While considering Menander's advice concerning male imperial protagonists, I will examine Julian's panegyric to Eusebia (3.2), and Claudian's treatment of Serena and her female relatives in both the *Laus Serenae* and other poems in his corpus (3.3). It is striking that neither Julian nor Claudian make reference to their subject's Christian piety, which so often dominated other portraits, both positive and negative, of imperial women. To address this discrepancy, I will then survey the changing emphasis on the Christian role of Helena, Constantine I's mother (3.4). The evolution of her portrayal over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries was informed by the changing context when such works were composed. In the conclusion I will consider where Julian's and Claudian's works fit into this landscape (3.5).

3.1 WOMEN IN PANEGYRICS

In general, imperial panegyrics that mention women do so cursorily, and their descriptions often serve to complement the emperor in terms of his own virtues. This treatment is encapsulated by the two chapters in Pliny's *Panegyricus* (83.1-84.8) that describe Trajan's sister, Marciana, and wife, Plotina, whose *modestia* is emphasised, but only as an extension of Trajan's own temperance.⁵²¹ As already discussed, the *Panegyricus* opened the *Panegyrici Latini* collection, which also provides the earliest example in the late antique period of an empress' appearance in such encomia: *Panegyric* 7. This speech was composed for the marriage of Constantine I and Fausta in 307.⁵²² Praise of Fausta, who was later celebrated on coinage for her fertility, is limited in the panegyric to the nexus of connections she provided her new husband (7.8.2-3). She is not referred to at all in the second part of the oration; in fact the main focus throughout is her father Maximian, whose alliance with Constantine I was confirmed by this marriage.⁵²³

⁵²¹ I discuss these passages in section 1.5.1. Cicero, *Tusc.* 3.16, associates *modestia* with the Greek virtue of σωφροσύνη: one of the key virtues suggested by Menander. Kolb (2010), 16, discusses the imperial women's *modestia*.

⁵²² For the *Panegyrici Latini* collection, I follow the numbering used by Nixon and Rodgers (1994).

⁵²³ Nixon and Rodgers (1994), 185, note the prioritisation of the political marriage in the epithalamium; see also Rees (2002), 171, Gineste (2004), 269, and Clauss (2002a), 347. This sentiment is confirmed by *Pan. Lat.* 7.13.3.

The subordination of Fausta's role in the panegyric to her husband and, in particular, her father was typical of women's presentations in encomiastic works.⁵²⁴ As will be discussed in section 3.4.1, Helena's appearance in Eusebius' *Vita Constantini*, served as an extension of Constantine's piety. Just as the greatest literary praise was given to Helena after she died, the other most prominent literary encomia for imperial women can be found in the funerary orations delivered by Gregory of Nyssa for Aelia Flaccilla and her daughter, Pulcheria, who died in infancy.⁵²⁵ Once again these female subjects simply provide the means for Gregory's other purposes. Little insight is given into their character, which for the infant Pulcheria is to be expected, but is more surprising for Flaccilla, who later writers celebrated for her (orthodox) piety.⁵²⁶ In the case of Flaccilla, Gregory attacks Arianism and otherwise focuses on the nature of grief. When dealing with the subject of grief, his real protagonists are his mourning congregation – not the emperor in particular, but the public in general (*PG* 46.885):

But she is cloaked in a coffin, her face hidden by the sombre covering, which creates an unnerving and pitiful sight and causes those who come to meet her to well up with tears and weep. Everyone who is gathered together, both strangers and residents, do not remain silent but receive her entry with loud wailing.⁵²⁷

In the second century, the funeral orations delivered by emperors for imperial women and the temples erected in these women's memories show that posthumous praise was a safe arena in which to have a female subject.⁵²⁸ Their memory could be freely celebrated in order to promote the reigning emperor's familial *pietas*. A living female protagonist of an oration, however, was avoided. Apart from Julian's and

⁵²⁴ This dismissive attitude was evident in non-imperial encomia: Vanderspoel (2006), 377, describes Themistius' 'conventional' treatment of women. Vanderspoel, 374-5, makes the point that, unlike later writers like John Chrysostom (whom I discuss in the next chapter), Themistius is not as critical of female adornment.

⁵²⁵ These funerary orations are not exceptional in the imperial period: see 1.1.4 for Hadrian's eulogy for Plotina. Lançon (2014), 133-5, discusses Gregory's promotion of Flaccilla's Christian virtues to show the benefits of the faith.

⁵²⁶ For example see Theod. *HE* 5.18. The revision of her role at court by later sources echoes that of Helena: see 3.4.1. Clauss (2002b), 371-2, notes Gregory's focus on the general nature of grief for Pulcheria in particular; at 372-3, he discusses Gregory's emphasis on Aelia Flaccilla's Nicene piety and the emphasis on this aspect by later ecclesiastical historians.

⁵²⁷ I thank Calum Maciver for his help with these lines.

⁵²⁸ See 1.1.4. Wieber (2010), 254-7, notes the close association between panegyric and funeral orations.

Claudian's panegyrics, the most significant encomiastic treatment for a woman is Sozomen's praise of Pulcheria in the opening chapters of book nine (9.1-3), the last book of his incomplete history. These passages break the mould so far described: that praise of women ultimately served to benefit the emperor.

Sozomen's focus on Pulcheria's qualities does not benefit her brother, Theodosius II. In fact the encomiastic passages incidentally depreciate Theodosius' abilities as a ruler; this shows Sozomen's dedication of his history to the emperor to be nothing more than lip service.⁵²⁹ This negative attitude becomes more pronounced when the history is compared with Socrates' earlier ecclesiastical history (also composed during Theodosius II's reign), which documented the same period Sozomen sought to cover and was also a continuation of Eusebius' ecclesiastical history.⁵³⁰ In contrast with Sozomen's clear praise of Pulcheria, Socrates does not refer to her by name, instead he mentions her along with her sisters as part of the cloistered environment at Theodosius' court (7.22):

He rendered his palace little different from a monastery: for he, together with his sisters, rose early in the morning, and recited responsive hymns in praise of the Deity.

Socrates describes Theodosius as dictating the pious environment at court, with his sisters following his example. This is a clear continuation of the established model for imperial women in panegyric.⁵³¹ In contrast, Sozomen specifies that it was Pulcheria who instructed her brother. The historian then suggests that while Theodosius was young enough to be under his sister's influence (she was only a little over two years older) the court and empire profited (9.1):

The Divine Power, which is the guardian of the universe, foresaw that the emperor would be distinguished by his piety, and therefore determined that Pulcheria, his sister, should be the protector of him

⁵²⁹ Soz. *Praef.* emphasises Theodosius' virtues, with particular emphasis on his piety. In book 9, Sozomen praises Pulcheria for instructing Theodosius in his Christian piety. Urbainczyk (1997b), 145-6, discusses both presentations and notes Sozomen's prioritisation of their *pietas*. She also discusses, 146-52, the focus on Christian virtues for an emperor in this period.

⁵³⁰ Urbainczyk (1997a), 355-73, discusses the differences between the two ecclesiastical histories. She notes that Sozomen emphasises episcopal authority over imperial authority, in contrast to Socrates who promotes the emperor's active role in achieving Church unity. See also Urbainczyk (1997b), 167. Barnes (1993), 205-8, discusses the historians' different sources. Nuffelen (2004), 82-4, gives a summary comparison of the historians' outlooks.

⁵³¹ This image is also presented in the later description provided by Theodoret: *HE* 5.36.

and of his government. This princess was not yet fifteen years of age, but had received a mind most wise and divine above her years. She first devoted her virginity to God, and instructed her sisters in the same course of life.⁵³²

The contrast in these portrayals of Pulcheria's religious authority is underlined by her absence from Socrates' description of Nestorius' deposition, which instead focuses on Theodosius, and glosses over the emperor's former support of his local bishop.⁵³³ Sozomen's later praise of Pulcheria then was prompted, at least in part, by the fact that she and her brother held different religious views.⁵³⁴ In contrast, Eudocia, who shared her husband's religious sympathies, was neglected in the later history, but praised by Socrates, who concludes his narrative with her first tour of the East (7.47).⁵³⁵ Sozomen's later encomium illustrates that an imperial woman could be praised in her own right, and that this was influenced by the writer's attitude towards imperial policy. Broader political context also informed the earlier panegyrics by Julian and Claudian who, for different reasons, had difficulty praising the emperor himself.

3.2 JULIAN'S PANEGYRIC TO EUSEBIA.

Julian delivered two panegyrics in quick succession after his appointment as Caesar in 355: *Oration 1* to Constantius and *Oration 3* to the emperor's wife Eusebia – the longest panegyric composed for an imperial woman.⁵³⁶ These panegyrics were written in Greek, but delivered in the West. The events that bracket this period of

⁵³² Socrates attributes a similar regency to Galla Placidia over her son Valentinian III: 7.47.

⁵³³ Soc. 7.29 and 32.

⁵³⁴ In conjunction with his praise of Pulcheria's vow of virginity, Sozomen frequently finds time to praise such vows earlier in his history: see, for example, 1.14, for his description of Ammon's wife.

⁵³⁵ Urbainczyk (1997b), 33, argues instead that Eudocia's treatment is cursory. The references to her are certainly less pronounced than Sozomen's focused praise of Pulcheria, but her first eastern tour concludes the narrative (before the peroration), which I think suggests a degree of reverence by Socrates. The discrepancies in book structure between the two ecclesiastical histories reveal a surprising amount about the authors' attitudes to events in their lifetime, which is discussed in Chapter Four; for an overview see Nuffelen (2004), 290-93. Socrates also praises Eudocia's literary knowledge and her apposite name change at her baptism in view of her later benefactions: 7.21. Imperial women's names often presented admired virtues: see 2.3.1.1 for Fausta's Venus *Felix* coin type. Constantius named a diocese Pietas after Eusebia. Constantine I's sisters, Constantia and Anastasia, showed an early pattern of virtuous imperial names.

⁵³⁶ I use the numbering in Wright's Loeb edition (1913) of Julian's orations, since I follow his translation (occasionally amended for archaisms). However, Bidez's organisation makes more sense chronologically, since he places Eusebia's oration second in the corpus – in between the two addressed to Constantius. Tougher (1998b) 110, discusses the pretext of *Oration 3*.

Julian's life encourage a subversive reading of his early panegyrics: the murder of his male relatives in 337 by Constantius II's troops and Julian's later proclamation as Augustus in 361 by his army. One consideration of this chapter is whether such an interpretation is fair for a genre recognised at the time as expressing (required) false platitudes. I will see how such a consideration affects the reading of, and motivation for, Eusebia's panegyric. Although Julian later revised his depiction of Constantius, there is no evidence he did so for Eusebia.⁵³⁷ When examining Eusebia's role, some consideration must also be given to Julian's literary ambition. His choice of protagonist was perhaps an enticing challenge, allowing him to play with the genre while keeping to a structured formula advised in works such as Menander Rhetor's *Βασιλικὸς Λόγος*. I will first sketch out the immediate context of *Oration* 3, and then examine how Julian approached his unconventional subject matter. I will then finally reconcile his approach with the historical context to determine his perspective on Eusebia's role at court.

3.2.1 Historical Background

Julian's fraught relationship with Constantius invites a subversive interpretation of his panegyrics, a genre which, Julian himself comments, often depended upon false platitudes.⁵³⁸ Julian delivered *Orations* 1 and 3 at the turning point of his fortune, when he was recalled from his 'peaceful obscurity'⁵³⁹ in Athens to become Caesar, an office he held for five years (355-60) until his proclamation as Augustus by his own troops.⁵⁴⁰ As Athanassiadi-Fowden argues, *Orations* 1 and 3 were probably composed as a pair; they were certainly both written soon after Julian's appointment as Caesar.⁵⁴¹ A passage in *Oration* 3 suggests two possible dates for its composition.

⁵³⁷ She is still referred to favourably in *Ep. Ad Ath.*, a work which is openly hostile to Constantius: 273A (where she is described as *καλή* and *ἀγαθή*); 274A-B; and 275B-D.

⁵³⁸ See *Or.* 3.102C-103C, 2.79C-80A, and especially *Or.* 1.4B-C: 'the department of panegyric has come to incur grave suspicion due to its misuse.' This anxiety over the charge of insincerity was often expressed in such speeches: for an early example see Plin. *Pan.* 34. Bartsch (1994), 174, argues that there was always a close relationship between invective and praise; see also Quint. *Instit.* 3.7.19.

⁵³⁹ *Or.* 3.117B: *ὅτε ἔτι ζῆν ἐξῆν ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ*. See Tougher (1998b), 105-6.

⁵⁴⁰ He was sent to Athens in late August/early September 355: see *Ep. Ad Ath.* 273D-274A and Seeck (1919), 201. His forced seclusion lasted only a few months: he was appointed Caesar in Milan on 6 November and then left for Gaul via Turin on 1 December 355. A full itinerary for his movements is provided by Barnes (1993), 226-8. Tougher (1998b), 106-7, gives a truncated summary of Julian's wilderness years; see also Athanassiadi-Fowden (1981), 13-52.

⁵⁴¹ Wright (1913), 273, also suggests an early date: either shortly before, or soon after Julian's posting to Gaul. Athanassiadi-Fowden (1981), 61-3, suggests that *Orations* 1 and 3 were written ca.356/7.

Julian mentions a recent visit by Eusebia to Rome when Constantius was on campaign on the Rhine (129B-C), which would date the panegyric to after the summer of 356, or conceivably 355 when he had been campaigning in Raetia.⁵⁴² Either of these dates was an early stage in Julian's rehabilitation by Constantius, hence Julian's eagerness to thank him, and anyone else, who had secured his appointment. The general tone of the oration suggests that Julian had only recently been promoted and therefore needed to reassure Constantius that his decision had been a sound one.⁵⁴³

The delivery of a panegyric was part of the ceremony connected to the emperor. Whether the empress was allowed to participate in this period is open to conjecture, but there is no evidence for it. In any case, *Oration 3* was not, it seems, delivered by Julian directly to Constantius or Eusebia. Despite being the subject, the empress is not addressed directly in the speech; however, the use of the second person pronoun in *Oration 1* is not necessarily indicative of the emperor's presence at its delivery either.⁵⁴⁴ Instead, *Oration 3* was addressed to a small audience (104A) probably in Gaul, although it could then have been sent to the imperial couple, a very likely scenario since it was the newly-appointed Caesar who had composed it.⁵⁴⁵

Tougher (1998b), 107 n.7, argues that *Oration 1* was written in early 356 because there is no indication of the Caesar's own military success. Tougher, 109, suggests that *Oration 3* was composed with *Oration 1*, or soon after; at 109-10 he discusses the different interpretations of the connection between the orations.

⁵⁴² If it was delivered in 355, then it must follow Julian's appointment in November. Barnes (1993), 221-2, locates Constantius' winter quarters in Milan during these years. Wright (1913), 343 n.1, dates her visit to Constantius' *adventus* in AD 357, but Eusebia is clearly portrayed as being separated from her husband: 129B-C. See Tougher (1998b), 109 n.19. Wieber (2010), 257, and Clauss (2002a), 361, suggest a later date of 356/7.

⁵⁴³ Eusebia had been married to Constantius for a couple of years by the time of Julian's appointment. In *Or.* 3.110C-D, Julian refers to marriage torches being set up after Constantius' victories, which surely refer to those over Vetranio (in 350) and Magnentius (in 353). Vetranio's "defeat" is a clear example of hyperbole by Julian: see 2.1.2.2. These successes by Constantius are frequently mentioned in *Oration 1*, in most detail at 1.30C-40C, which I think reinforces the idea that they were composed as a pair. *PLRE* 1 s.v. Eusebia dates the marriage to ca. 353; see also Tougher (1998b), 106.

⁵⁴⁴ The later description of Julian's meeting with Eusebia seems to reaffirm that she was not present at *Oration 3*'s delivery: 123A-B. Julian only refers to Eusebia by name twice in the panegyric (*Or.* 3.106A and 109A), otherwise preferring βασιλῆς e.g. 115C. Penella (2000), 204-5, argues that the male equivalent, βασιλεύς, in the strictest sense referred to the ideal king described by Plato and Aristotle. Julian uses the second person pronoun in *Orations 2* and *3*: for example *Or.* 1.1A-2A and *Or.* 2.50C. I agree with Wright (1913), 131, that *Oration 2* was 'probably never delivered' to its subject because of the barbed comments that puncture the speech.

⁵⁴⁵ Tougher (1998b), 109-110, prefers the idea of a select audience in Gaul, but acknowledges that it was possibly then sent to Constantius as a companion piece with *Oration 1*. Athanassiadi-Fowden

3.2.2 Oration 3

The main structural focus of Menander Rhetor's work, the Βασιλικὸς Λόγος, was four canonical virtues (373.7-8): courage (ἀνδρεία), justice (δικαιοσύνη), temperance (σωφροσύνη) and wisdom (φρόνησις).⁵⁴⁶ These virtues fell into two main categories. One focused on the emperor's exploits in war and emphasised courage. The other focused on the emperor's actions during peacetime, and the other virtues he embodied.⁵⁴⁷ It is under the category of temperance that Menander recommends the inclusion of the subject's marriages, if the empress was praiseworthy.⁵⁴⁸ Appropriately then, it was this virtue, which was emphasised in both Julian's and Claudian's encomia for imperial women.⁵⁴⁹

Set out below is the basic structure of *Oration 3* beside the structures for imperial encomia proposed by Menander Rhetor in his Βασιλικὸς Λόγος, and *Oration 1* (Julian's first panegyric to Constantius). *Oration 1* provides a useful contemporary point of comparison to a panegyric by Julian with a conventional male protagonist. Such a comparison indicates the different expectations of virtues according to gender, and the actions that demonstrate them. Even if Julian was not aware of Menander's earlier treatise, the striking similarity of the virtues and the structure show how formulaic panegyric often was.⁵⁵⁰

Table 6

	Βασιλικὸς Λόγος	<i>Oration 1</i>	<i>Oration 3</i>
Prooemium	2.368.5-369.17	1A-5A	102A-106B
	Begin with amplification and	Julian sets out the idea that	The importance of

(1981), 61, asserts that both orations were sent to Constantius. Wieber (2010), 258, suggests that Julian's wife, Helena, was in the audience.

⁵⁴⁶ The treatise is far more programmatic than the late first-century AD Latin equivalent: Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, 3.7.10-18. Quintilian proposes more approximate divisions: events before and after the subject's birth. He also recommends virtue subdivisions: courage [*fortitudo*], justice [*iustitia*] and temperance [*continentia*] and any more that come to mind [*ceterumque*]. For the wide appeal of Menander's work see Nixon and Rodgers (1994), 11. Wallace-Hadrill (1981), 303 and 318, contests that it was the quantity of four virtues that was more important than the specific virtues; however, Julian does seem to adhere to those suggested by Menander. Noreña (2001), 152-3, follows Wallace-Hadrill's argument, and suggests that the virtues by which Augustus was referred to in the *Res Gestae* 34.2 (*virtus*, *clementia*, *iustitia* and *pietas*) were adapted to suit individual emperors.

⁵⁴⁷ See Men. Rhet. 2.374.6-376.5.

⁵⁴⁸ See Men. Rhet. 2.376.9-13.

⁵⁴⁹ The changed role of emperor from military leader to court-based figure also necessitated Claudian to refocus the virtues for which he praised Honorius – see 3.3.2.

⁵⁵⁰ This idea is reinforced by the structural similarities to Claudian's Latin *Laus Serenae*: see 3.3.2.

	use Homeric quotations.	he is unequal to Constantius' praises.	repaying kindness, regardless of the gender of the benefactor. Structure based on Athena's encomium to Arete.
Native Country	2.369.17-370.9 If nothing to say about this, then focus on the emperor himself.	5B-6C Focuses mainly on Rome, although Constantius was born in Illyricum.	106B-107D Macedonia, in particular Thessalonica
Ancestry	2.370.9-30 The main suggestion is to make comparisons with deities (2.370.21).	6C-10A Constantius' parents and grandparents.	108A-109A Father's consulship (9B-D).
Birth, Nature and Nurture	2.370.30-371.14; 371.14-17; and 371.17-372.2 These three sections present the best opportunity to invent, such as portents at the subject's birth. ⁵⁵¹	10B-12B Birth (10B-C) Nature (10C-D) Nurture (10D-12C)	109A-112A Main focus is on her marriage, which incorporates Eusebia's physical qualities, noble stature and beauty (109C) and her inherited qualities from her mother (110A-C).
Accomplishments and Actions: War and Peace	2.372.2-13; and 372.14-377.9 Prioritise courage and where possible wisdom, more than other virtues (372.29-30).	Wisdom (12C-13D) Justice (14A-16D) Accomplishments in War (17A-40C) ⁵⁵² Benevolence (40C-45B)	112B-129D Eusebia's virtues are listed: 112B-C and 129D. Justice (114C-D).

⁵⁵¹ Menander is always ready to recommend a digression if there is a lack of material: here he suggests that if the subject lacks a good education then the orator should focus on Fortune (2.371.23-372.2), an attribute which Julian describes when discussing Constantius' military achievements in the next section *Or.* 1.25D-26A.

⁵⁵² The entirety of this section discusses virtues other than courage, in particular Justice, Temperance and Clemency.

		Temperance (45B-47A) Wisdom (47A-49A) Clemency (49A) ⁵⁵³	Benevolence (115A-123D). Wisdom (123C-126B). Φιλανδρία is more important than exploits in War (127C-129B).
Peroration and Prayer	2.377.9-30	Not extant	130A ⁵⁵⁴ Concludes 'case'. ⁵⁵⁵
		Praise the happiness of the empire and the longevity of the reign and offspring of the subject.	

As can be seen from the table above, the structure of *Oration 3* reflects that proposed by Menander's treatise, and only digresses in the penultimate section 'Accomplishments in War and Peace'. Because of the gender of his subject Julian reverses the order of this section so that Eusebia's actions at court are emphasised, before illustrating why these peaceful actions are to be preferred to those of famous female military leaders (126B-128B). The section still adheres to Menander's main provision: division by the subject's virtues. More surprisingly, in *Oration 1* Julian also emphasises Constantius' non-martial virtues: he focuses first on the emperor's negotiating skills (12C-D), which is categorised under the virtue of φρόνησις. By emphasising this, Julian celebrates Constantius for engineering peace during war, another neat inversion of what is suggested by Menander. Julian is limited in regard to Constantius' military victories because, as Ammianus observed, his greatest successes were obtained in civil war.⁵⁵⁶ Julian, therefore, places emphasis on Constantius' negotiating skills, a variation on Eusebia's advisory role. It is more

⁵⁵³ The speech breaks off here.

⁵⁵⁴ Tougher (1998b), 111, suggests that the epilogue starts at 126B instead; I otherwise follow his structure.

⁵⁵⁵ The second half of the oration is presented through a law court metaphor from 116A onwards.

⁵⁵⁶ Amm. Marc. 21.16.15. See also Julian's reinterpretation of Vetrician's proclamation as a usurpation: *Or.* 1.30C-33C; and his promotion of Magnentius' barbarian roots to suggest that this conflict was not a civil war, *Or.* 1.42B.

surprising that Julian has to readjust the virtues for a male imperial subject, Constantius, rather than for Eusebia whose gender is the novel subject matter.⁵⁵⁷

Although *Oration 3* is described by Wright as the most simple and direct of Julian's panegyrics, it still displays hyperbole and a number of digressions and rhetorical devices that were typical of the genre. Julian only begins to focus in more detail on Eusebia in 115A – into the fifth section.⁵⁵⁸ As Menander advises, Julian fills his prooemium with comparisons of his subject to various Homeric heroines (104C-105D): Nausicaa, Arete and, most importantly, Penelope, with whom Eusebia is compared throughout the speech.⁵⁵⁹ In his first mention of Penelope, Julian suggests that such a comparison is pioneering (104C), which serves as a distraction from the fact that she is the obvious example for an ideal wife, especially if following Menander's advice on Homeric comparisons.⁵⁶⁰ Julian employs similar tactics throughout the speech, including in the native land section (106B-107D). In this section he espouses conciseness before discussing the most obvious examples of her Macedonian ancestors, Philip and Alexander. This is a lengthy digression that fleshes out his concluding statement for the section that Eusebia came from

⁵⁵⁷ A key virtue for both subjects is σωφροσύνη.

⁵⁵⁸ Wright (1913), 273; see also Tougher (1998b), 110. In comparison, *Oration 1* tends to include lengthy descriptive passages, rather than complete digressions.

⁵⁵⁹ Wieber (2010), 258-60, notes the ubiquity of these Homeric examples, and Penelope in particular. Appropriately for the hyperbolic tone of panegyric, Eusebia of course surpasses Penelope (because of her husband): 114B. While Eusebia is mentioned by name only twice, Penelope is referred to directly five times: 110C, 112D, 113D, 114B and 127C. Julian describes how the structure of his oration will follow that of Athena's praise for Arete in Hom. *Od.* 7.53-77 (106B). Interestingly this allusion makes Odysseus comparable to Julian, as both must gain favour with the preeminent women at court; see Wieber (2010), 266. I disagree with the emphasis placed by Tougher (1998b), 111-2, on Julian's statement that he will model the structure on Athena's praise. The encomium follows a generic structure, as recommended in Menander's guidelines, and this first comparison serves merely to distract from this fact.

⁵⁶⁰ Appropriately, *Oration 1* compares Constantius' negotiating skills with those of Odysseus (12D-13A) and so complements Eusebia's comparisons here. Consolino (1986), 13, draws attention to Julian's and Claudian's comparisons of their subjects with Penelope, and observes that it was the most obvious shorthand for the ideal wife. Later in the fifth century Eudocia used Penelope as the main analogy of Mary in her Homeric cento: see 240, 241, 243, 244, 246, 253-7 and 259-60. The empress also made shorter comparisons with Nausicaa (209). These passages in the cento are discussed by Usher (1998), 93.

Thessalonica.⁵⁶¹ The speech is filled with similarly lengthy digressions, often acknowledged as such in the course of his speech.⁵⁶²

One of the more interesting digressions, which reveals a potential glimpse of sincerity, or, at least, originality, is a music man metaphor (111B-D). This metaphor appears as a segue between the last contextualising section (birth, nature and nurture) and before Eusebia's specific virtues are celebrated. The digression expresses a concern already expressed in the oration in relation to the gender of Julian's protagonist.⁵⁶³ The embellished point of the metaphor is that Julian will not define Eusebia merely by commenting on her good looks and the fact that she exceeds womanly expectations in a manner similar to Penelope.⁵⁶⁴ This anxiety about the gender of his subject is the main point of interest in the first four sections, which are otherwise filled with derivative passages.

One other interesting theme in this part is Julian's attention to Constantius when discussing the imperial couple's marriage (109A-112A).⁵⁶⁵ Julian is keen to emphasise that Eusebia is set apart from the rest of her sex, as demonstrated by Constantius' selection of her as his wife, and emphasised by the music man metaphor. In discussing her marriage, Julian pre-empts his list of Eusebia's virtues by detailing those of Constantius (109A):

Now Eusebia, the subject of my speech, was the daughter of a consul, and is the consort of an emperor who is brave [ἀνδρείος], temperate [σώφρων], wise [συνετός], just [δίκαιος], virtuous [χρηστός], mild [πρᾶος] and magnanimous [μεγαλόψυχος]

Julian then reinforces his praise of Constantius' virtues, by showing how they are manifested by his selection of Eusebia as a wife (109C-D):

For no single one of these endowments is thought to suffice for an alliance with an emperor, but all together, as though some god were

⁵⁶¹ This section in *Oration 1* is even more derivative: 5B-6C.

⁵⁶² Julian's praise of Greece (119A-120A) and a comparison between Eusebia's mother and Penelope (110A-C) provide two of the longest digressions, along with the music man metaphor (111B-D).

⁵⁶³ See 109C.

⁵⁶⁴ In contrast to Helen, who can only be praised for her beauty. For a general discussion of earlier imperial attitudes to women's voices in relation to music see Kruschwitz (2012), 227.

⁵⁶⁵ This section includes a quote from Sappho (109C), something Menander advises for epithalamia, 2.399.11-405.14, therefore complementing the theme of this section and playing with genre expectations.

fashioning for a virtuous [ἀγαθός] emperor a fair [καλή] and chaste⁵⁶⁶
[σώφρων] bride⁵⁶⁷

The re-emphasis of σωφροσύνη [temperance]⁵⁶⁸ is key to presenting Eusebia's other virtues. Her actions are done in a temperate manner appropriate for a woman, which allows her to display her other attributes. Julian draws particular attention to σωφροσύνη in the description of his first meeting with Eusebia, where he compares her to a statue of the virtue (123B-C). It is also listed in his initial description of her virtues (112B-C): wisdom [φρόνησις], clemency [πραότης], temperance [σωφροσύνη] and benevolence [φιλανθρωπία]; as well as in his final list of virtues which otherwise refers to her goodness [ἐπιείκεια] and wisdom [φρόνησις].

Σωφροσύνη is the key attribute that informs Julian's examples of Eusebia's other virtues, in particular her benevolence [φιλανθρωπία]. The virtue σωφροσύνη allows Julian to praise her benevolence for actions done for his benefit, which is the underlying purpose of his encomium. The portrayal of her as a deferential figure distances her from the image of a meddling empress exerting undue influence.⁵⁶⁹ Importantly Eusebia's demonstration of this quality allows her to fulfil her role in amplifying Constantius' (even better) character. This is a nice reversal of the dynamic Pliny focused on when he praised Trajan's wife and sister. Pliny's praise of Trajan's female relatives celebrated his male subject because they reflected back well on him through their displays of *modestia*. In *Oration 3*, the dynamic is inverted and Eusebia reveals Constantius' better qualities: in particular, the virtues of Justice [δικαιοσύνη] and Clemency [συγγνώμη⁵⁷⁰]. However, Julian is careful to emphasise that it is Constantius' decision to show more leniency; he is only encouraged by his wife's passive example (114C).⁵⁷¹ Eusebia reveals these virtues of Constantius through her possession of φρόνησις (practical wisdom). This is an important

⁵⁶⁶ Wright (1913) translates this term as modest; however, chaste seems closer to the idea of temperance expressed here.

⁵⁶⁷ For a brief discussion of these virtues in relation to Eusebia see Clauss (2002a), 362.

⁵⁶⁸ For the translation of this term as temperance see Wallace-Hadrill (1981), 301, and Russell and Wilson (1981), 85.

⁵⁶⁹ Clauss (2002a), 361, suggests that Ammianus' portrait of Eusebia served as a counterpoint to the negative scheming image of Constantina. Wieber (2010), 274-5, suggests that Eusebia's reported deference to Constantius is a necessary stereotype for which she can be praised.

⁵⁷⁰ See in particular *Or.* 3.114C. Julian refers to Constantius with the same term in *Or.* 2.50C.

⁵⁷¹ Constantius' leniency is the main emphasis in the closing extant passages of *Oration 1*, in which Julian alludes to his half-brother Gallus' recent disastrous tenure as Caesar: see especially 45B.

imperial virtue because it dictates how a ‘good’ emperor treats his subjects, which in this speech specifically refers to Julian.

In the second half of the speech, which from 115A focuses on Eusebia’s actions, Julian shows more ingenuity. This creativity is necessitated by his choice of subject, but also because of another point of anxiety: his relationship with Constantius.⁵⁷² Julian celebrates his appointment as Caesar, which he attributes to Eusebia’s actions at court on his behalf (121C-123A). However, the very reason for this praise of Eusebia necessitates some discussion as to why he needed her help: Constantius’ suspicions about him. Julian glosses over how Constantius saved him from danger in 337 (117D). Julian then acknowledges the recent harshening [τραχυτέρως] of Constantius’ attitude towards him (118A-B), which Eusebia was able to rectify by obtaining for Julian two audiences with the emperor (118B-C and 121B).⁵⁷³ Throughout this section Julian carefully avoids portraying Eusebia as actively petitioning Constantius on his behalf. It is instead, her love for her husband and self-control that encourages Constantius, once again, to show his own better nature. This idea is present in the most focused comparison between Eusebia and Penelope in which Odysseus’ wife is regarded as a better example than women from epic who were active in war (127C):

And yet in her case Homer had no more to tell than of her discretion [σωφροσύνη] and her love for her husband [φιλανδρία] and the good care she took of her father-in-law and her son.⁵⁷⁴

Once again Eusebia’s σωφροσύνη is stressed, while her display of φιλανδρία validates her actions in gaining Julian the position of Caesar as she is motivated by

⁵⁷² One of the more interesting literary flourishes Julian includes through his speech is the reoccurring motif of gold and silver (for instance 119A and 125D-126A), which concludes at 126B when he writes that Eusebia’s kindness to him was more important than such gifts.

⁵⁷³ This image of social circles at court who were hostile to Julian is also indicated in *Or.* 1.48C-D. Ammianus, 15.8.2-3, refers to anonymous enemies using the example of Gallus, to prey on Constantius’ suspicious nature. See also *Ep. Ad Ath.* 274A. Ammianus suggests that Constantius decided to appoint Julian following the lone counsel of Eusebia (15.8.3); see Tougher (1998a), 596. Clauss (2002a), 361, refers to Ammianus’ lack of detail when discussing the manner of Eusebia’s persuasion. He suggests that this was intentional because such an account would demonstrate the undue influence a woman could have over the emperor in a private setting.

⁵⁷⁴ This comparison is juxtaposed with references to various warrior women, including the Amazons, whose military exploits are described as benefitting no one (126C-128B).

her love for the emperor. Her virtuous actions emphasise her benefit to Constantius, which Julian strives to demonstrate through the encomium.

Besides expressing anxiety about the gender of his subject, which may have been representative of contemporary attitudes in society, and about his difficult relationship with the emperor, the speech also gives some indication of Eusebia's practical role at court. This role is shown to extend beyond her actions on Julian's behalf, which led to his appointment as Caesar.⁵⁷⁵ Like many other imperial wives in the late antique period, Eusebia's marriage was concomitant with her family's appointments to positions in the imperial administration: 116A-C.⁵⁷⁶ Contrary to Julian's depiction of Eusebia's agency in these appointments, her status as the wife of the emperor was likely a reflection of the family's existing prominence.⁵⁷⁷ However, Julian's distortion enables him to praise Eusebia for a physical action in which she has some agency, rather than her innate and passive qualities.

Towards the end of his speech Julian mentions Eusebia's benefactions during her recent trip to Rome, which was carried out independently of the court (129B-D). Like many references to her benefactions, Julian indicates through *praeteritio* that there were a multitude of other examples. The Roman episode described by Julian demonstrates the formality with which she was greeted in the city (129C-D):

I could indeed very properly have given an account of this visit, and described how the people and the senate welcomed her with rejoicings and went to meet her with enthusiasm, and received her as is their custom to receive an empress [βασιλίδα], and told the amount of the expenditure, how generous and splendid it was, and the costliness of

⁵⁷⁵ Her actions in ensuring Julian's appointment have been reappraised by Tougher, who believes they served Constantius' interests: (1998a), 595-9. This may be too cynical a reading (see 3.3.4). She also gave Julian the gift of a library in Gaul, which naturally leads to a digression on literature (123C-125D).

⁵⁷⁶ He adds that the honours were calibrated to the family member's relevant experience (116A). At 107D-109A, Julian describes Eusebia's deceased father's consulship. Eusebia's brothers, Eusebius and Hypatius, later held a joint consulship in 359. Tougher (2000), 99-100, argues that the positive treatment of Eusebia by Ammianus was due to his friendship with her brothers. Later Justina's and Eudocia's brothers held offices in their imperial brother-in-laws' administrations, and Aelia Flaccilla's relatives formed part of Theodosius' government. Eudocia's deceased father (a common theme and understandably an advantage among brides marrying into the imperial family) was Valentinian II's distinguished general, Bauto.

⁵⁷⁷ Similarly, Julian credits Eusebia, along with Constantius, of arranging his marriage to Helena (123C-D). In reality, Constantius (Helena's brother) was solely responsible; he had already arranged Gallus' marriage to his other sister, Constantina. Tougher (1998b), 116, describes Julian's awareness of Constantius' ultimate authority to sanction Eusebia's actions.

the preparations, and reckoned up the sums she distributed to the presidents of the tribes and the centurions of the people.

The passage suggests a familiarity with such visits, as described in 2.5.1 above. Imperial women maintained a presence in the city in the early Constantinian dynasty and Eusebia's visit suggests that this was to continue. Her visit seems comparable to Helena's earlier journey (and Eudocia's later initial visit) to Jerusalem, where benefactions were funded by the imperial treasury.⁵⁷⁸ These visits seem to have been exercised on behalf of the court and showed that, while the emperor was otherwise engaged, his female relatives could promote his rule away from court.⁵⁷⁹

As well as this act of communal patronage, Julian emphasises elsewhere that others benefitted individually from her attention (115D).⁵⁸⁰ His description of her protection evokes the early imperial example of Livia, whom, as Tacitus relates (*Ann.* 1.14.1-3), the senate wanted to honour as a thank you for her political protection and the benefits she had bestowed upon them. This image is best presented by the contemporary decree, *Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone Patre (SCPP)*, which also qualified Livia's actions in the political arena because she acted in deference to the emperor.⁵⁸¹ Evidence of political patronage by women, as opposed to the negative literary presentation of such actions, is limited to this portrait of Livia in the *SCPP*, until *Oration 3* written for Eusebia. This is not to suggest that these two women were exceptions to the rule, but it rather indicates the scarcity of surviving evidence. It is notable that after the account of Livia's influence in the *SCPP*, it took a panegyric dedicated specifically to an empress to provide another positive insight into such a role.⁵⁸²

3.2.3 Conclusion

Julian's panegyric for Eusebia follows a structure that Menander's treatise demonstrated was common to the genre. Like many other encomia, *Oration 3* also

⁵⁷⁸ See 2.4.1.5.

⁵⁷⁹ Eusebia could well have made church dedications as well. This would certainly have been in keeping with recent precedents in Rome, in particular Constantina's dedication to St Agnes – see 2.4.1.3. However, there is no epigraphic evidence to support this, although Constantius' posthumous renaming of a diocese, Pietas, may have referred to her religious piety. See Clauss (2002a), 361.

⁵⁸⁰ Wieber (2010), 265-9, discusses Eusebia's acts of patronage.

⁵⁸¹ For Livia's patronage see 1.3.2.

⁵⁸² Boatwright (1991), 520 and 540, describes the discreet presentation of second-century women's benefactions.

contains some unimaginative exempla and lengthy digressions, which call into question the sincerity of his praise. Julian's frequently expressed anxiety over the gender of his protagonist could, of course, have been another rhetorical construct.⁵⁸³ However, to me this seems a genuine anxiety, because the gender of his protagonist was unprecedented and he had to couch her actions in suitably deferential terms. Similarly, Julian's anxiety concerning his standing with his cousin Constantius likely also encouraged his unusual subject choice in *Oration 3*. Eusebia slowly emerges in the panegyric as someone praiseworthy on her own terms. While Trajan's female relatives serve to amplify the emperor's virtues in Pliny's *Panegyricus*, Eusebia's actions reverse Constantius' opinion of Julian. Her interference may have inspired the panegyric, but it was justified through repeated emphasis of her σωφροσύνη and φιλανδρία.

The benefactions Julian describes Eusebia carrying out for both himself and others were not unprecedented, even if a panegyric recording these actions was. Tougher is right to reassess Eusebia's role in terms of the benefit it presented to Constantius, who had reason to be wary of his previous Caesar's brother. However, it would be wrong to overlook the value she held for Julian as a means to communicate with the emperor and how she assuaged the emperor's concerns in regard to Julian's loyalty.⁵⁸⁴ Eusebia functioned to both the Caesar and Augustus as a valuable interface through which they could communicate with each other; *Oration 3* provided an unorthodox recognition of this important role.

3.3 IMPERIAL WOMEN IN THE POEMS OF CLAUDIAN

Julian's anxiety about addressing his panegyric to a woman was not shared by Claudian, who wrote at the turn of the next century.⁵⁸⁵ Claudian made many references to Honorius' female relatives in the course of his western imperial poems and addressed one incomplete encomium, *Laus Serenae*, to Serena – the wife of his

⁵⁸³ For example, *Or.* 3.104B.

⁵⁸⁴ Wieber (2010), 262, describes imperial women's roles as a means of courtly communication.

⁵⁸⁵ Julian only referred to Eusebia by name twice in *Oration 3*: in contrast Serena is directly mentioned throughout Claudian's imperial poems and is the most-named individual in her panegyric. Cameron (2015), 137, describes Claudian producing poetry two or three times a year over the course of a decade for the imperial court.

patron Stilicho.⁵⁸⁶ The ease with which Claudian made such references reflected, and maybe even responded to, the increased visibility of eastern imperial women via nomenclature and coin types.⁵⁸⁷ In this section I will first set out the changed political context in which Claudian composed his poems. I will then consider how Claudian's approach to Serena in the *Laus Serenae* compares with Eusebia's portrayal in *Oration 3*, and Claudian's depictions of Honorius which, like those of Serena, were informed by the poet's view of Stilicho.⁵⁸⁸ I then look at Claudian's other poems where Serena appears alongside her female relatives, and determine how these portraits complement each other. I will then examine the consistencies and variation in these portraits, and also whether these women's roles were affected by the change in the emperor's presentation as a court-based figure.

3.3.1 Historical Background

Claudian's own position at court does not inform his shorter panegyric to the extent that Julian's did, but it is important to note the different relationship between the subject, speaker, and court, as well as the changed role of the emperor.⁵⁸⁹ Claudian was writing on behalf of, rather than from within, the imperial college.⁵⁹⁰ While Julian subversively sought to assuage Constantius' concerns about his own appointment in *Oration 3*, Claudian's praise of various members of the imperial

⁵⁸⁶ Eusebia only appears in one other work from Julian's corpus: *Ep. Ad Ath.* 273A, 274B, and 275B-C. The *Laus Serenae* is *Carm. Min.* 30 in the corpus, but for the sake of clarity I use its full title in this section; otherwise I follow Platnauer's Loeb numbering. I agree with Consolino (1986), 15 that it is almost complete, except for this last section, since Claudian seems to follow closely the structure advised by Menander Rhetor. Cameron (1970), 406, argues that the *Laus Serenae* was unfinished rather than transmitted incomplete. The nuances of Claudian's role at court is reflected in Cameron's revised opinion: Cameron (1970), 42, argues that Claudian was Stilicho's official propagandist, but he reconsiders this definition in (2000), 133-5, and warns against using such a term too anachronistically.

⁵⁸⁷ Honorius personally reprimanded Arcadius, *Coll. Avell.* 38, about the award of Augusta for Eudoxia: see 4.3.1.

⁵⁸⁸ For this focus on Stilicho see Cameron (2015), 137-8.

⁵⁸⁹ This was identified as a key difference between the two encomia by Consolino (1986), 12-13. For the similarities in structure see Table 7.

⁵⁹⁰ If the work had been completed it is unclear to whom it would have been delivered: Cameron (2015), 137, suggests that, after their initial delivery, the poems were circulated in written form. Cameron (1970), 228-52, and Gillett (2012), 269, discuss Claudian's imperial audience in Milan and senatorial audience in Rome. Gillett, 280-9, describes the shift in dynamic between panegyrist, honorand and audience which Claudian's encomia for Stilicho revolutionised; see especially 382, for a diagram displaying the change.

family ultimately served the political aims of Stilicho.⁵⁹¹ Serena was a key component in Claudian's presentation of the *magister militum*'s position at court, demonstrated by her repeated mentions in the corpus; she was referred to more than any of her female relatives.⁵⁹² Constantius was a challenging figure for Julian to praise given their personal history, but Honorius presented an equally problematic subject for Claudian. The poet's natural focus was Stilicho, but he was also an easier figure to praise than the court-based, militarily inactive Honorius.⁵⁹³ Claudian approaches his praise of Serena in a similar manner to that of the emperor.⁵⁹⁴

3.3.2 *Laus Serenae*

Despite the differences in genre and language, the basic structure of Claudian's poem, like Julian's *Oration 3*, approximately corresponds with the divisions provided by Menander Rhetor, as can be seen in the table below.⁵⁹⁵ The one obvious difference in the structure of Claudian's poem is the inversion of the order of native country and ancestry section.⁵⁹⁶ Also, the fifth section of the poem is less clearly divided by virtues. However, the main virtue emphasised is the same as in *Oration 3*: temperance and its different aspects.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹¹ I agree with Cameron (2015), 145, that even if the term of propaganda is misused, Claudian's political poems were shaped by Stilicho's policies. Gillett (2012), 278, describes the poems as 'direct propaganda' for Stilicho.

⁵⁹² Cameron (1970), xvi and 409, argues for a later date of composition for *Laus Serenae*: ca. 404. I prefer an early date since there is no reference made to Maria the Younger in the work, but this is irrelevant if it was unfinished rather than incomplete. I would suggest a date in the 390s since Claudian refers to Rufinus stirring up the Goths against the West (232-6). Claudian composed the final book of his invective against Rufinus in late summer 397 – see Cameron (1970), xv.

⁵⁹³ The only poem in which Honorius is not described via his relationship to Stilicho is the one poem with a clear Christian theme: *Carm. Min. 31 (Of the Saviour)*. The emphasis on Honorius' Christian piety in this poem correlates with the new ruling model for the West described by McEvoy (2013a), 162-9. The only mention of Serena's religious (not specifically Christian) devotion in the *Laus Serenae* appears in the last section at 223-5. The lines refer to Serena praying while Stilicho is away from court. Cameron (1970), 190, suggests that the audience would be able to infer that this was an act of Christian piety.

⁵⁹⁴ Consolino (1986), 15, notes the similarities between the *Laus Serenae*, *3Cos.* and *4Cos.* and the structure of the Βασιλικὸς Λόγος.

⁵⁹⁵ Consolino (1986), 13, discusses the Greek influences on both *Oration 3* and the *Laus Serenae*. Cameron (2015), 146, describes the Latin influence on Claudian's work.

⁵⁹⁶ Like the corresponding section in *Oration 3*, Claudian also focuses on Serena's immediate ancestry: her (adopted) father, Theodosius I, and grandfather, Theodosius the Elder.

⁵⁹⁷ Claudian more explicitly follows Menander's structural advice in regard to virtues for Stilicho in the second book on his consulship, *Stil.* 100-31. These lines are discussed by McEvoy (2013a), 166-7.

Table 7

	Βασιλικὸς Λόγος	Oration 3	Laus Serenae⁵⁹⁸
Prooemium	2.368.5-369.17 Begin with amplification and use Homeric quotations.	102A-106B The importance of repaying kindness, regardless of the gender of the benefactor. Structure based on Athena's encomium to Arete.	1-33 Comparison with Penelope and Claudia, concluding that Serena is even better.
Native Country	2.369.17-370.9 If nothing to say about this, then focus on the emperor himself.	106B-107D Macedonia, in particular Thessalonica	50-69⁵⁹⁹ Spain
Ancestry	2.370.9-30 The main suggestion is to make comparisons with deities (2.370.21).	108A-109A Father's consulship (9B-D).	34-49 Theodosius I and Theodosius the Elder.
Birth, Nature and Nurture	2.370.30-371.14; 371.14-17; and 371.17-372.2 These three sections present the best opportunity to invent, such as portents at the subject's birth.	109A-112A Main focus is on her marriage, which incorporates Eusebia's physical qualities, noble stature and beauty (109C) and her inherited qualities from her mother (110A-C).	70-114 Birth (70-85 ⁶⁰⁰) Nature (86-96) Nurture (96-114) Focuses on Theodosius' guardianship of Serena and Thermantia.
Accomplishments and Actions: War and Peace	2.372.2-13; and 372.14-377.9 Prioritise courage and where possible wisdom, more than other virtues (372.29-30).	Virtues: 112B-129D Eusebia's virtues are listed: 112B-C and 129D. Justice (114C-D). Benevolence (115A-123D). Wisdom (123C-126B).	Virtues: 115-236 Main emphasis is different aspects of temperance shown

⁵⁹⁸ For a more detailed breakdown of the poem's structure see Consolino (1986), 14.

⁵⁹⁹ This is where the poem differs in terms of sequence in the structure.

⁶⁰⁰ This category employs Menander's advice to use portents.

	Φιλανδρία is more important than exploits in War (127C-129B).	through the sisters' journey eastwards (115-159) and marriage (159-236)
Peroration and Prayer	2.377.9-30 Praise the happiness of the empire and the longevity of the reign and offspring of the subject.	130A Concludes 'case'.

The approach Claudian adopts to praise Serena shares many similarities with Julian's speech of thanksgiving, but Claudian does not express the same anxiety about his subject's gender.⁶⁰¹ Appropriately for a work composed in Latin, Claudian's digressions maintain a balance throughout of Greek and Roman mythical exempla, for which he provides even more unnecessary detail than Julian. In the prooemium (1-33), Claudian includes a long list of examples from his recap of the Odyssey story, which Julian also drew on for the same section.⁶⁰² This sets up the main point of comparison for his subject, which is yet again Penelope (25-34), for whom the whole narrative of the Odyssey is established as a demonstration of her *pudicitia*.⁶⁰³ Through this comparison Claudian evokes the virtues of σωφροσύνη and φιλανδρία that were so important to Julian's presentation of Eusebia.⁶⁰⁴ As already discussed, Penelope represented the ideal wife and so Claudian's use of her as an example indicates that praise of Serena is associated with her husband, Stilicho. Claudian does not continue the comparison with Penelope, unlike Julian; however, through

⁶⁰¹ Claudian's digressions contain more florid mythical examples: for example the fourth section (70-114) describes Serena having Nymphs for wet nurses, and being raised by the three Graces.

⁶⁰² The main Latin example in the prooemium is Claudia Quinta, 28-30, whose chastity (*casta*) is emphasised.

⁶⁰³ Consolino (1986), 13 and 18, highlights the predictability of the Penelope comparisons in both *Oration 3* and the *Laus Serenae*. At 13, she draws attention to the key quality of φιλανδρία, which this comparison served to emphasise.

⁶⁰⁴ See *Laus Serenae*, 25-6: *Penelopae decus est atque uni tanta paratur/ scaena pudicitiae*.

this one reference, Claudian foreshadows the later description (225-36) of Serena's role at court in Stilicho's absence.⁶⁰⁵

Claudian, again like Julian, emphasises his subject's wifely role through a long section devoted to her marriage (159-236). Reminiscent of the earlier panegyric, Serena is presented as a worthy enough bride to marry Stilicho because of his military successes (180). However, the marriage section, in combination with other parts of the poem, also provides a point of contrast with Julian's encomium. Of Eusebia's relatives, only her deceased father warranted a mention in *Oration 3*. In contrast, Serena's kinship with the ruling dynasty is vital to Claudian's underlying purpose of promoting Stilicho. Claudian positions Serena firmly at the centre of her imperial family, especially in the affections of Theodosius I, despite only being his niece and ward.⁶⁰⁶ The most detailed image of Serena's relationship with Theodosius is found after Claudian moves his focus to Theodosius' promotion to Augustus. Claudian identifies Serena as Theodosius' sole comfort in times of crisis and anger (132-9).⁶⁰⁷ This role is markedly similar to that of Honorius in Claudian's panegyric that celebrates the Augustus' third consulship, but is differently sculpted to fit gender expectations:

Often when he was troubled by the anxieties of public business,
he returned home overwhelmed by sadness or burning with anger,
when his own sons fled their father and even Flaccilla feared
to approach her exasperated husband, you alone were able to subdue
his rage, you alone could assuage him with small talk,
hanging on your reassuring words he would confess his secret
thoughts.

Laus Serenae, 134-9

As a child you crawled among shields, and fresh-won spoils
of monarchs were your entertainment, and you were used to being the
first
to embrace your stern father after harsh battles

3Cos. 3.22-4

⁶⁰⁵ Eusebia also acted against hostile court circles that were opposed to Julian, rather than her husband (see 3.2.1).

⁶⁰⁶ Cameron (1970), 38, takes Claudian's interpretation of Serena's and Theodosius' relationship at face value, describing her as his 'favourite niece'; see also Mazzarino (1946), 7. She may well have been, but Claudian's assertion primarily serves to promote Stilicho, regardless of the reality. Mazzarino (1946) often takes Claudian's portrayal too literally, but I think he is correct in suggesting, at 8, that her relationship with Theodosius helped Stilicho's claims of guardianship.

⁶⁰⁷ The end of this section is corrupt in the manuscripts.

In both passages Claudian portrays his protagonists as closest to Theodosius and therefore occupying a central role within the family. In Serena's case, Claudian presents the image to the disservice of Theodosius' first wife, Aelia Flaccilla, and their sons.⁶⁰⁸ In Honorius' case he was the focus of his father's affection to the detriment of his older brother Arcadius.⁶⁰⁹ Serena serves to curb Theodosius' temper, much like Eusebia with Constantius, and makes him conform more to his virtues. She is portrayed as achieving this by acting as his confidante.⁶¹⁰ In contrast, Honorius' actions as a child are designed to portray him as sharing in his father's military deeds. Claudian attempts to cover up Honorius' inadequacies by meshing the ideal of emperor as military leader with the reality that his young protagonist was court-based and never actively involved in campaigns.⁶¹¹ The difficulty of continually finding a way to praise Honorius, who is not mentioned by name in the *Laus Serenae*, encourages Claudian to focus on other members of his family, such as Serena.⁶¹² In Claudian's description of their marriages, Serena takes precedence over her elder sister Thermantia, who was also married to a general (184-8).⁶¹³ While Theodosius is referred to as Thermantia's uncle in these lines (*patruus*), for Serena's union Theodosius is Stilicho's grateful father-in-law (*socer*), who arranges his daughter's marriage in gratitude for Stilicho's military successes.

⁶⁰⁸ The same image of Serena being dearer to Theodosius than his sons is presented at 104-7. In other poems Serena is portrayed as being more of a mother to Honorius than Aelia Flaccilla: see *Epith.* 42-43 (quoted in 3.3.3.1).

⁶⁰⁹ In turn, Claudian makes the most of Honorius' lack of military experience to celebrate Stilicho: for example, *3Cos.* 143-62 and *4Cos.* 431-3. This, and Claudian's focus on Theodosius the Elder's military victories in *Laus Serenae*, 57-61, enables him to style Stilicho as Theodosius' (both of them) true successor, at the expense of Honorius.

⁶¹⁰ See *Laus Serenae*, 132-9.

⁶¹¹ Claudian's other method of grafting the martial virtue of courage onto Honorius is to establish Stilicho as the emperor's representative in the field. There are many examples of such sentiments, for example: *4Cos.* 431-3 and *Stil.* 1.116-37. This fits with McEvoy's partnership model for western child emperors and their military leaders: (2013a), 321-2 and 162-9 in reference to Honorius and Stilicho. At 143, she discusses the unofficial nature of Stilicho's effective regency and Claudian's emphasis on Stilicho's family ties with the court.

⁶¹² All members of Serena's and Stilicho's family appear at some point in his poems: see *Epith.* 338-9, for direct mentions of their other children: Eucherius and Thermantia; Galla Placidia is described via her familial connections in *Stil.* 354-7.

⁶¹³ Claudian's description of the arrangement for Serena's marriage, 188-90, seems to indicate that Thermantia married an eastern general: *Alio tibi numine taedas/ accendit Romana Salus magnisque coronis/ coniugium fit causa tuum.* Claud. *Ruf.* 2.86-99 refers to Serena's marriage in Constantinople and so the lines in *Laus Serenae* seem to refer to the couple's later residence in the West. All the other women mentioned in the poem are deceased; it is uncertain what became of Thermantia.

The closing image of the extant lines of the *Laus Serenae* ties together the Penelope comparison in the prooemium and the subsequent emphasis on the marriage of Stilicho and Serena. These last lines (225-36), about Serena's role at court, convey her most important virtues, which are less clearly defined than in Julian's panegyric. While Julian presents Eusebia's actions as more praiseworthy than those in war (Menander's main emphasis for a male subject's virtues), Claudian more tenuously involves Serena in Stilicho's military successes (226-8):

As far as it could a woman's watchful care [*prudencia*]⁶¹⁴ seconds
his deeds of glory. While he clashes with foreign nations,
you, vigilant, look out for every opinion.

This passage quickly leads to an account of Serena sending letters to the absent Stilicho, informing him of Rufinus' plots (232-6).⁶¹⁵ Serena's clear interference in a political matter, which expresses the virtue of φρόνησις, is made palatable by the quality of φιλανδρία she shows for Stilicho. It is this quality that the comparison with Penelope clearly evokes in the prooemium, the section that also emphasised Serena's temperance [*pudicitia*] through comparisons with other mythical women.⁶¹⁶ The image of Serena's relationship with her husband in these final lines, also creates an interesting dynamic with the earlier description of her relationship with Theodosius. While Serena had to soothe her adoptive father's temper, she does not need to exert such influence on her husband.

Serena, like Eusebia, held a position of influence at court, but these women's roles differed in terms of their relationship with the emperor. While Eusebia's actions appeared to change Constantius' position, Honorius' opinion is of little consequence in the extant lines of the *Laus Serenae*. In terms of their wifely role, both women seemed to hold a position of trust, but Serena's importance was presented to the detriment of other family members at court, including Honorius. This image of Serena is used and developed by Claudian in other poems.

⁶¹⁴ The use of this term evokes Eusebia's virtue of φρόνησις.

⁶¹⁵ For the next imperial generation, a number of letters survive from Pope Leo's collection, which involve imperial women of both the eastern and western courts. These later missives also provide advice for what the authors deem wayward actions by their relatives: see 2.1.5.

⁶¹⁶ Consolino (1986), 28, suggests that Serena's display of *pudicitia* was the prevalent motif of the *Laus Serenae*. See also 29, where she argues that Claudian's presentation of Serena's anxiety ameliorated the problem of a woman participating in political matters.

3.3.3 Women in Claudian's Other Poems

3.3.3.1 Serena's Other Appearances

Claudian addresses another minor poem to Serena, *Epistula ad Serenam* (*Carm. Min.* 31), and refers to her in ten others: *Fescennine Verse 2*, *Epithalamium*, *Honorius' Third Consulship*, *On Stilicho's Consulship* (1.69-88 and 3.176-81), *Honorius' Sixth Consulship*, *The Gothic War*, *The War against Gildo* (2.308-12) and *Carm. Min.* 46, 47 and 48.⁶¹⁷ In these other appearances Claudian once again uses Serena to illustrate Stilicho's kinship with the imperial family and, implicitly, Honorius' subordinate position to his *magister militum*, through their different relationships with Serena.

The *Epistula ad Serenam* provides the sole example of Claudian addressing Serena directly, rather than on Stilicho's behalf.⁶¹⁸ Like *Oration 3*, it appears that the poem was written as thanks for Serena's arrangement of Claudian's marriage.⁶¹⁹ As with Julian's claim that Eusebia orchestrated his nuptials, it is debateable how much influence Serena had in this arrangement, because any imperial marriage carried political importance.⁶²⁰ Even if Serena was not ultimately responsible for Claudian's marriage, his description of her role at the end of the *Laus Serenae* shows that she, like Eusebia, did provide an avenue of communication to the centre of power.⁶²¹

Serena's appearances in Claudian's other poems reinforce the image of her relationship with Stilicho, which is conveyed in the *Laus Serenae*. They also offer, however, a perspective on her relationship with Honorius, the notable absentee from Serena's panegyric. The key to the presentation of both Honorius and Serena in these poems is Stilicho. Honorius can achieve his desire for military glory through the

⁶¹⁷ Her marriage to Stilicho is also mentioned in book two of Claudian's invective: *Ruf.* 2.96. *Carm. Min.* 45, refers to a poet called Serena – unlikely to be the imperial Serena, since he would surely have been keen to celebrate this.

⁶¹⁸ Cameron (1970), xv, dates the poem to 400/1.

⁶¹⁹ See Consolino (1986), 27, for the idea of the poem presenting a debt of gratitude. Cameron (1970), 408-9, discusses the poem.

⁶²⁰ Julian, *Or.* 3.123C-D This is particularly the case for Julian because he was Caesar. Claud. *Carm. Min.* 25.93-4, refers to Stilicho arranging the marriage of Celerina to Palladius.

⁶²¹ This role for Serena extends Tougher's argument that Eusebia acted as an intermediary between Constantius and Julian: (1998a), 597-9.

actions of his *magister militum*.⁶²² Serena's kinship with both Theodosius I and Honorius was crucial to her husband Stilicho confirming his hegemony at court, but Serena's familial ties are portrayed in the poems as due reward to her husband for his imperial-like abilities.⁶²³

Serena's relationship with Honorius and its benefits for Stilicho are best conveyed in the epithalamium for Honorius and Maria and the panegyric celebrating the emperor's sixth consulship:

Sister by lineage, parent in *pietas*, entrusted to you
As a child, and I grew up on your lap; save for my birth, you,
Rather than Flaccilla, are my mother.

Epith. 39-43

Serena herself left the East and was your companion
through Illyrian cities: fearless in the face of danger,
she cherished with a mother's care, you who would be
both ruler of Latium and her own son-in-law
after Theodosius' translation to the heavenly skies.
Through the dangers of that critical time
she kept careful guard over the child entrusted to her protection
and brought you safe to her uncle's throne and her husband's army.
Your family competed in their affection for you
and what Serena's care had brought safe home
Stilicho's affection welcomed there.⁶²⁴

6Cos. 92-100.

Claudian contextualises Serena's position at court in terms of Theodosius and Honorius, but these all ultimately serve to celebrate her marital role, where Serena occupies a truly subordinate position as the modest, temperate wife. Therefore, although the frequency of her appearances in Claudian's corpus is unprecedented in the extant evidence, the image Claudian presents of Serena is firmly within the traditional presentation of imperial women dating back to Trajan. Her virtues serve as a reflection, and amplification, of her husband's qualities.

⁶²² Claud. *4Cos.* 352-83, describes Honorius wanting to replicate Theodosius I's successes; Theodosius replies (beyond the grave) that Honorius already has, because Stilicho represents him.

⁶²³ Claudian celebrates Stilicho's closer association with Honorius after the emperor's marriage to Maria: *Epith.* 335-6. See also *Fesc.* 3.12.

⁶²⁴ These closing lines show that Serena accompanied Honorius westwards when Theodosius was dying.

3.3.3.2 Maria

Serena's eldest daughter, Maria, makes the second-most appearances among the imperial woman in Claudian's poems. Apart from in the four Fescennine verses and the epithalamium that celebrates her marriage to Honorius, Maria is referred to in *On Stilicho's Consulship* (2.239-40), *The War against Gildo* (1.347), and *Carm. Min.* 1.⁶²⁵ The frequency of Maria's and Serena's appearances compared to others, in particular Serena's other daughter Thermantia, is a reflection of their preeminent position at court when Claudian was writing (ca. 395-ca. 404).

Maria's interaction with Honorius in the Fescennine verses and the epithalamium are more suited to the marriage theme than Fausta's marginal appearance in *Pan. Lat.* 7 in 307.⁶²⁶ The definite emphasis in the earlier panegyric was on the political marriage being forged. This is also the ultimate motivation for Claudian's compositions; however, he also provides a more intimate portrait of the newly-weds. Maria's chastity, an aspect of the important female virtue of temperance, is appropriately emphasised in her role as the young bride.⁶²⁷ Maria's character is otherwise undefined in the poems, but her passive presence serves to illustrate broader political aims.

Like her mother, Maria is presented within the context of her imperial family, reinforcing Honorius' close association with Stilicho, who is often described by his marriage connections.⁶²⁸ In the epithalamium, where Maria appears alongside her mother, the relative status of each woman becomes clear. Serena appropriately emerges as the senior figure taking responsibility for the education of her daughter who also inherits her mother's beauty. Their relationship is set out in one important passage (228-81), where Claudian moves his focus from the bridegroom to the bride.

⁶²⁵ The Fescennine verses were of course composed for her marriage. However, in the first she makes only a fleeting appearance – the main focus is on Honorius' beauty: *pulcher* (1.31).

⁶²⁶ *Men. Rhet.* 2.6, also provides advice for epithalamia, which Claudian's poem reflects in terms of content.

⁶²⁷ In *Epith.* 256-7, Claudian praises her domesticity, while *Fesc.* 4 provides a very intimate portrait of the couple's marriage night, see especially 25-9. In the same verse, Claudian illustrates Maria's chastity in refusing Honorius' advances, *Fesc.* 4.11-15.

⁶²⁸ *Claud. Epith.* 21 and *Fesc.* 3.8-9 refers to Stilicho as *socer* to Honorius; this image complements Serena's maternal-like relationship with Honorius. Claudian's emphasis on Maria's familial connections is complemented by the epigraph on a surviving bulla which was buried with Maria: see Appendix 1.35.

In this section (230-2) Claudian draws attention to the women's chastity [*pudicitia*].⁶²⁹ The mother and daughter relationship provides a counterpoint to the dual focus of Honorius and Stilicho in the rest of the poem. As always Stilicho is the ultimate focal point, but his and Serena's pre-eminent qualities within the gender divisions in the poem inform the virtues of the imperial bride and groom, who are the nominal focus.⁶³⁰

Besides the hierarchy within the western court, at various points Claudian presents Maria as a superior choice of bride to her eastern sister-in-law, Eudoxia, which reflects the simmering tensions between Stilicho and the eastern court.⁶³¹ Like the native country section in the *Laus Serenae*, Claudian celebrates Maria's common Spanish ancestry with Honorius in the second Fescennine verse (21-30). Here, the focus on common descent and the subsequent exaltation of Spain has the added benefit of complementing Maria, who contrasts greatly with Eudoxia.⁶³² Maria's superiority to Arcadius' wife, who married into the imperial family, is presented even more forcefully in *Epithalamium* 23-7:

I do not follow the luxurious habit of kings and seek a fair face in paintings, so that the picture goes like a bawd announcing her beauty through many houses, and I have not, in order to find an uncertain bride from various chambers, entrusted the difficulties of marriage to deceptive wax.

This passage conveys Honorius' superiority over Arcadius. While Honorius chose a wife who was related to the dynasty, Arcadius is denigrated for marrying outside of

⁶²⁹ In one particularly effective simile, mother and daughter are presented as a full and a crescent moon (243). Maria is distinguished at the start of the poem as the descendant of Livia and subsequent imperial wives. This is symbolised by the jewellery Honorius gives her to wear for the marriage: 10-12.

⁶³⁰ Claud. *Epith.* 309-24, sets out Stilicho's virtues which include *pudor* (323). Stilicho's military abilities are reiterated throughout the poem: firstly his comradeship of Theodosius I is described (220-1) and then his representation of Honorius in the field is discussed. This is conveyed through a piece of *praeteritio* (308-12). In the third Fescennine verse, Serena's presentation as Theodosius' daughter allows Claudian to present Maria's and Honorius' marriage as the re-unification of imperial blood (3.5-7).

⁶³¹ Cameron (1970), 98-102, discusses the political content of the marriage poems, which concerned the tense relationship with the East. See also Gineste (2004).

⁶³² Despite this, Claudian presents the whole empire as celebrating the marriage: 2.21-45.

the family.⁶³³ This image supports Cameron's theory that Stilicho hoped that Arcadius would divorce Eudoxia and marry Thermantia.⁶³⁴

3.3.3.3 Claudian's Presentation of Non-imperial Women

Claudian's descriptions of non-imperial women, both positive and negative, complement his approach to Serena and Maria. In his earliest panegyric, Claudian's focus on Probinus' mother, Proba, is very similar to his later approach to Serena.⁶³⁵ In a brief two-line reference, Claudian presents the key attribute of a female subject, modesty (*OP* 194-6):

Proba, the world's glory, by whose offspring Roman power
is increased. You would believe that Modesty [*Pudicitia*] herself had
fallen from the sky⁶³⁶, or, summoned with sacred
incense, Juno was turning her eyes toward Argive temples.⁶³⁷

These qualities are reiterated a few lines later where Proba and Probus are presented as the best of all spouses. The passage illustrates the traditional form of praise for a wife: as an adjunct of her husband and with an emphasis on temperance. These key elements of Proba's depiction ties in with the comparisons made between imperial women and Penelope, who personified the concept of *φιλανδρία*.

Claudian's invective against Eutropius is interesting since this attack on the eastern chamberlain reflects the worst attributes of women close to the centre of power, which Claudian sought to avoid in his presentation of Serena and Maria.⁶³⁸ Throughout the work, Claudian refers to Eutropius as having the worst traits of a woman; but he is, in fact, more disgraceful because at least women are known to

⁶³³ See Zos. 5.3.3 and Cameron (1970), 53.

⁶³⁴ This is a tentative hypothesis. As will be discussed in Chapter Five the greater emphasis on an emperor's Christian faith later precluded Theodosius II from divorcing Eudocia. Cameron (1970), 53-4, suggests that Eudoxia's position at court was uncertain until the downfall of Eutropius in 399. Eudoxia's position would have been confirmed by the birth of Theodosius II in 400, which gave the East the prospect of dynastic stability, in contrast with the fruitless marriages of Honorius.

⁶³⁵ Gillett (2012), 268, describes the very conventional nature of this early panegyric in terms of genre.

⁶³⁶ This is very similar to the image Julian creates of his meeting with Eusebia in which the empress is likened to a statue of Modesty: *Or.* 3.123A-B.

⁶³⁷ Juno was one of the most common deities on women's coinage of the early imperial period: see 1.2.1.

⁶³⁸ See Long (1996) for a detailed analysis of the poem.

have ruled in ‘barbarian’ lands, unlike a eunuch (1.317-45).⁶³⁹ At one point in the second book, Eutropius is criticised for his close association with the women at court. Claudian ridicules the chamberlain’s authority by presenting him as subservient to his sister and wife. This criticism provides an inversion of the laudable quality of *φιλανδρία* (2.88-94).⁶⁴⁰ In the preface of the second book Eudoxia once again becomes a target of rebuke for Claudian, as she was in the *Epithalamium*. Claudian suggests that Eutropius’ power came from his control over the women’s quarters: (2 *Praef.* 2.21-2):

The unsexed tyrant [*mollis feminea*] has been routed from out his stronghold in the women’s quarters and, driven from the bedchamber, has lost his power.⁶⁴¹

Eutropius is criticised because he wields his power from the woman’s quarters, a location where political decisions were not to be made. This negative association that Claudian draws between Eutropius and harmful womanly influence demonstrates why Julian and Claudian emphasise the virtue of temperance in their encomia. This quality allows women in panegyric to play a positive role; their possession of this virtue prevents them from transgressing in their display of other virtues. The virtue of temperance, combined with *φιλανδρία*, meant that the women’s praiseworthy actions were an extension of, but peripheral to, their husbands’ stellar qualities.

3.3.4 Conclusion

Claudian’s objective in his imperial poems was to celebrate (and justify) Stilicho’s central position at court through his close association with Honorius. The poet achieves this by drawing attention to Stilicho’s paternal relationship with the emperor. He casts Stilicho’s military policies as acts of familial *pietas* carried out on behalf of his son-in-law and in memory of Theodosius I. Stilicho’s position was strengthened by his marriage to Serena and their daughter’s marriage to Honorius. It

⁶³⁹ This also presents Claudian with an opportunity to denigrate the effeminate East compared to the virile West: see 427-513. Julian drew on such comparisons to praise Penelope’s domestic virtues: see 3.2.2.

⁶⁴⁰ Kelly (2012), 251-7, discusses the work as a whole and the differences between the two books: the first is styled like ‘a panegyric in reverse’, serving as a personal attack on Eutropius; the second book denigrates the East as a whole, and Constantinople in particular.

⁶⁴¹ See 2.1.5 for the background.

was Serena who became the main focus among the imperial women in Claudian's poems, which reflects Claudian's principal focus on her husband. Maria is always described within a familial context: as subordinate to her mother, but superior to her eastern sister-in-law because of her imperial pedigree, which of course was inherited from her mother. While Eusebia's actions in the earlier encomium correct her husband's opinion, Claudian's depiction of Serena presents her more as the traditional adjunct of her husband, and yet another facet of his virtues.⁶⁴² However, the key to both female presentations, and the non-imperial example of Proba, was the virtue of temperance.

3.4 A MODEL OF CHRISTIAN PIETY: HELENA

Forgetfulness did not conceal her though she was dead – the coming age has the pledge of her perpetual memory.

Soz. 2.2

Although both Julian and Claudian promoted their female subjects' familial *pietas*, neither made explicit reference to their protagonists' religious piety. This is despite the fact that piety was a dominant theme (in conjunction with familial connections) in material evidence particularly prevalent on fifth-century coinage and in literary accounts.⁶⁴³ Beyond Claudian's poems, Serena had a reputation as a (zealously) pious Christian, for which she was praised in the *Vita Melaniae Junioris*, and derided by Zosimus.⁶⁴⁴ The one posthumous honour granted to Eusebia by Constantius also possibly referred to her faith: the naming of a diocese as *Pietas* in her honour.⁶⁴⁵ The building benefactions that Eusebia carried out in Rome, which are mentioned in passing by Julian, would probably have included churches.⁶⁴⁶ This was a common form of such patronage by her Constantinian predecessors. One of the early fourth-century imperial patronesses was Helena, who attracts a surprising amount of

⁶⁴² Harries (2012), xii-xiii, uses the effective term of adjunct to refer to imperial women in general.

⁶⁴³ See 2.3.1.

⁶⁴⁴ *V. Mel.* 11-14 describes Serena's intervention on Melania's and Pinian's behalf in regard to the sale of their estates. Demandt and Brummer (1977), 482-9, examine Serena's appearance in the *Vita Melania* in detail. *Zos.* 5.38.2-5 relates her destruction of the Magna Mater shrine in Rome, and later depicts her execution as retribution for this act (see 5.3.2.2). Cameron (1970), 190, dates this to 394; however, see Kelly (2016), 29-30.

⁶⁴⁵ See *Amm. Marc.* 17.7.6. This was a rare honour in the earlier imperial period (see 1.1.3). There had been a recent precedent for the practice in the early fourth century: Galerius named places after both his mother, Romula, and wife, Valeria. See respectively *Epit. Caes.* 40.16 and *Amm. Marc.* 16.10.20 and 29.6.3.

⁶⁴⁶ See 2.4.1.1 above for Serena's church dedication to St Nazarius in Milan.

attention in Theodosian literary sources as indicated in the quote above by the ecclesiastical historian, Sozomen. In this section I will focus on the development of literary praise for Helena's Christian faith.⁶⁴⁷ Of particular interest is the later source tradition for her discovery of the True Cross while on tour in Jerusalem, which was informed by the evolution of the emperor as a court-based figure in the Theodosian dynasty. I will examine how Helena's example as a paragon of Christian faith was used first in the West by Ambrose, and then in the East by the ecclesiastical historians writing during the reign of Theodosius II.

3.4.1 Helena's Posthumous Christian Role

3.4.1.1 Eusebius' account of Helena

Helena was first singled out for praise by Eusebius' encomiastic biography of Constantine, *Vita Constantini*, written during the co-rule of the emperor's sons. Eusebius, although he praises Helen for her eastern tour in 326 (3.42.1-47.3), shares in Julian's anxiety when eulogising a woman whose actions could be construed as an intrusion into the male realm of politics. Consequently, Eusebius also presents Helena's actions as an extension of the emperor's virtues, in this case her son, Constantine (3.47.3):

It was therefore right that while recording his memory we should also record those things wherein, by honouring his mother for her supreme piety [εὐσεβεία], he satisfied the divine principles which impose duty of honouring parents.⁶⁴⁸

This passage expresses two aspects of *pietas*, devotion to family and religion, which came to dominate praise for all imperial women in material evidence.⁶⁴⁹ Eusebius follows the traditional model used by Pliny to present Helena as an adjunct of his male protagonist. This is further demonstrated in a passage describing her death (3.47):

⁶⁴⁷ I refer to Drijvers (1992a), 79-180 and Georgiou (2013), 597-624, and the analysis of the posthumous appropriation of Helena's image in material evidence by Brubaker (1997), 52-75. Clauss (2002a), 355-6, places a great emphasis on her increased prominence in the literary sources after her death, and the particular focus on her Christian role.

⁶⁴⁸ The translation is taken from Cameron and Hall (1999), 295, who discuss this passage and its design to celebrate Constantine's religious and familial *pietas*.

⁶⁴⁹ For the emphasis on *pietas* of imperial women in the early empire see Noreña (2001), 158.

He rendered her through his influence so devout a worshipper of God (though she had not previously been such) that she seemed to have been instructed from the first by the Saviour of mankind.

Constantine's conversion of his own mother not only underlines his own piety, likening him to Christ, but it also contextualises Helena's Christian benefactions in Jerusalem as directly attributable to her son.⁶⁵⁰ This dynamic is reversed in the later accounts, where it is Helena who informs her son's religious beliefs.

Eusebius presents Helena as a deferential and pious Christian woman, and overlooks the political purpose of her journey to Jerusalem.⁶⁵¹ Drijvers has rightly drawn attention to the political importance of Helena's tour, and connected it to dissatisfaction in the East towards Constantine's pro-Christian policies following his defeat of Licinius.⁶⁵² The fact that she was entrusted with such a journey and carrying out benefactions made with imperial funds, indicates the special position of trust she held with her son.⁶⁵³ Later Christian emperors were keen to associate themselves with the first emperor to endorse the religion; the later establishment of court-based emperors and consequently the increased visibility of imperial women meant that a female role model from this period was also necessary – Helena was the obvious choice.⁶⁵⁴ Just as her actual journey to Jerusalem served a political purpose,

⁶⁵⁰ Eusebius *V. Const.* 3.47.1: 'Thus passed away the emperor's mother, one worthy of unfading memory both for her own God loving deeds and for those of the extraordinary and astonishing offspring which arose from her.' See also 3.42-43.2, where Eusebius details Helena and Constantine finishing off each other's building dedications in Palestine.

⁶⁵¹ Eusebius *V. Const.* 3.44, indicates that she travelled there in an official capacity. See 2.5.1 above for my discussion of her tour's purpose.

⁶⁵² Constantine's mother-in-law, Eutropia, also travelled to Palestine: see patronage 2.5.1. Drijvers (1992a), 66-70, draws attention to Eusebius' report of Helena's release of prisoners and exiles: *V. Const.* 54. The political purpose of the tour is also indicated by Eusebius' description of Helena's benefactions to the military: *V. Const.* 3.44.1.

⁶⁵³ Euseb. *V. Const.* 3.47.3 and Soz. 2.2, describe her control over the imperial treasury when carrying out her benefactions.

⁶⁵⁴ The dubious circumstances of Fausta's death, and Constantia's marriage to Constantine's rival, Licinius, left only Helena as a viable model of female imperial faith. I agree with Drijvers (1992a), 62, that Helena was the preeminent woman at court after 326. Pohlsander (1993), 160-1, argues that after Fausta's death, Constantia (Licinius' widow) also held an important position at court, citing Ruf. *HE* 10.12; however, this passage was set up to explain Constantine's restoration of Arius and therefore presents Constantia as a scapegoat. If Pohlsander is correct then it is surprising that Constantia was not given more honours. Eutropia, who Eusebius also described as travelling to Jerusalem, is omitted from later accounts, even though Sozomen describes the benefaction at Mamre that Eusebius attributed to Eutropia: compare Soz. 2.4 and *V. Const.* 3.52-3. Lançon (2014), 124-5, discusses Ambrose's and Rufinus' presentation of Theodosius as the new Constantine, and the shared virtues of Helena and Aelia Flaccilla; see also Georgiou (2013), 607-8. Brubaker (1997), 64, argues

the presentation of Helena's Christian role in Theodosian literary sources was informed by the political context: the emergence of the court-based emperor who was surrounded by female relatives.⁶⁵⁵

3.4.1.2 Helena, the Cross, and the Theodosian Narratives.

The literary accounts of Helena in the Theodosian dynasty drew on Eusebius' presentation of her familial and religious *pietas*.⁶⁵⁶ These later narratives embellished the story of Helena's eastern pilgrimage to include the discovery of the Cross. Drijvers sets out the two literary traditions in which this legend appears: the first includes the ecclesiastical histories of Rufinus (*HE* 10.78), Socrates (1.17), Sozomen (2.1-2) and Theodoret (*HE* 1.17); and the other is found in accounts by Ambrose (*De Obit. Theod.* 41-51), Paulinus of Nola (*Ep.* 31.4-5), and Sulpicius Severus (*Chron.* 2.33-35.5).⁶⁵⁷ These accounts share certain elements: the real Cross is identified from three possibilities⁶⁵⁸; Helena constructs a church on the site of its discovery; she enshrines part of the relic in a silver casket to remain in the city while sending other parts of the relic to court to secure Constantine's future successes.

The first fully developed account of Helena's discovery was by Ambrose in his funerary oration for Theodosius I in 395, which was delivered in Milan.⁶⁵⁹ Helena's appearance augments the speech's clear political purpose: to assuage anxiety about a new unfamiliar regime headed by a child emperor.⁶⁶⁰ Clearly the administration

that the evocation of Helena in the Theodosian period formed an important part of imperial women's 'public personae'; however, she suggests that it was only shown by monuments.

⁶⁵⁵ See 2.1.5.

⁶⁵⁶ Eusebius, *V. Const.* 3.42 suggests that she visited Jerusalem due to piety for her son and grandsons, the future Augusti who were in power when Eusebius composed his biography.

⁶⁵⁷ Drijvers (1992a), 101-8, outlines the structures of Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret – all of which he argued were derived from Gelasius; at 109-117, he gives the structural outlines for the other group headed by Ambrose. Drijvers, 81-93 and 97-9, sets out Eusebius's influence on the work of Gelasius. Liebeschuetz (2005), 175, refers to Ambrose's version as the earliest. Drijvers, 79, argues that Rufinus is nearest to the original source for the legend. Sozomen provides the longest narrative. Clauss (2002a), 364-5, summarises the literary tradition in between Eusebius and Ambrose, and the appearance of the legend of the Cross in languages other than Latin and Greek.

⁶⁵⁸ In Ambrose's account it is Helena herself who identifies the True Cross. In Paulinus' and Severus' more fantastical accounts the cross resurrects a dead man. In the ecclesiastical histories a sick woman is cured by the real Cross.

⁶⁵⁹ Drijvers (1992a), 124, suggests that Ambrose tailored the legend to suit his message of *hereditas fidei* to Honorius.

⁶⁶⁰ Theodosius' death brought about the accession in both parts of the empire of two Augusti who could not rule for themselves: see 2.1.5. Liebeschuetz (2005), 176, argues that the digression about Helena was absent from the original speech. Drijvers (1992a), 109-10, argues that it was in the

around the new young western Augustus would hold a great deal of power, as it had done at Valentinian II's court. This was a cause for concern for Ambrose given his altercations with the earlier court in the basilica conflict.⁶⁶¹

The main theme of Ambrose's oration was to emphasise Arcadius' and Honorius' Christian piety, an important means by which to display their authority in the absence of any military achievement.⁶⁶² The wider family has a greater role in such display, as shown in *De Obit. Theod.* 40, which describes Theodosius' ascendancy to heaven where he is welcomed by members of his family and Constantine. This leads to the digression on Helena (41-51).⁶⁶³ Gratian is also referred to in the oration, which confirms Ambrose's emphasis on Nicene-Christian members of the imperial family: Valentinian II is not mentioned, and nor is Theodosius' second wife Galla.⁶⁶⁴ Ambrose extends this exaltation of the Nicene adherents among the imperial family when relating Helena's discovery of the Cross and the subsequent use of the relic in Constantine's diadem (49):

Emperors carry the nail of his cross on the front of their diadem, and yet the Arians [Ariani] belittle His power!⁶⁶⁵

Ambrose then describes Gratian and Theodosius as the inheritors of Constantine's Christian piety, first bestowed by Helena on Constantine (52). While emphasising

original delivery since it is central to the main emphasis of *hereditas fidei*. These different interpretations are not at issue here: the relevant point was its inclusion in the published corpus where the oration immediately follows the letters documenting the basilica conflict – see 4.2.2. Lunn-Rockcliffe (2008), 197-200, discusses the political elements of Ambrose's funeral orations for Valentinian II and Theodosius; at 201, she discusses the influence of Menander Rhetor on Ambrose's descriptions of the emperors' virtues.

⁶⁶¹ See 4.2.2. Georgiou (2013), 604-7, nicely summarises the contemporary influence on Ambrose's oration. She points to how the recent memory of Justina affected Ambrose's portrayal of Helena.

⁶⁶² This is a central aspect of McEvoy's thesis (2013a). Ambrose seems to be addressing the concerns of his audience regarding the youth of the emperors in *De Obit. Theod.* 2 and 6; at 8 and 15 Ambrose expresses anxiety regarding the succession – see Lunn-Rockcliffe (2008), 200-1.

⁶⁶³ The translation reads: 'Now he [Theodosius] is a king in his own eyes, now that he also welcomes Gratian, his son, and Pulcheria, the children so very dear to him, whom he had lost on earth; now that his Flaccilla, a soul faithful to God, embraces him, now that he rejoices that his father has been restored to him; now that he embraces Constantine.'

⁶⁶⁴ Another motivation for Gratian's inclusion was his appointment of Theodosius. Galla's omission suggests that she was non-Nicene. Her son, Gratian, is mentioned in the passage. The careful prioritisation of Nicene Christian family members was also employed by Galla Placidia in her dedication for San Giovanni: see 2.4.1.2. Georgiou (2013), 607, discusses the absence of Galla.

⁶⁶⁵ Anti-Arian sentiments dominate the closing passage of Sulpicius' account: *Chron.* 35.1-5. The ecclesiastical historians in general reserve a large amount of space for the Arian heresy. Soz. 2.27, Soc. 1.25 and Theod. *HE* 2.2, attribute Constantine's association with the non-Nicene presbyter Eusebius (a follower of Arius) to Constantia's misguided influence over her brother.

three Nicene emperors (Constantine, Gratian and Theodosius), Ambrose guides Honorius, along with Arcadius, to be the imperial inheritors of Nicene Christianity. This emphasises the importance of the church and therefore Ambrose's own position, which was a constant point of conflict in Valentinian II's regime.⁶⁶⁶ The digression on Helena augments this image, by presenting an example of how other imperial family members can perform a dutiful Christian role that benefits the emperor.⁶⁶⁷ Ambrose describes Helena as divinely inspired to act outside the expected arena of female actions. This was one of the few ways Helena's actions could be viewed as positive and that she normally occupied a dutiful feminine role (46):

The wood shone, and grace sparkled, because just as previously Christ had visited a woman in the person of Mary, so now the Spirit visited a woman in the person of Helena. He taught her what being a woman she did not know, and led her on to a path that could not be known by any mortal.⁶⁶⁸

This image of Helena deferring to religious authority complements the prevailing image of the digression: Helena's positive influence on her son. With this portrait of positive womanly influence, Ambrose called to mind the more recent abuse of moral authority (as Ambrose viewed it) of Justina's influence over Valentinian II, both of whom are notably absent from the speech.⁶⁶⁹ This resonated with Ambrose's audience because a woman named Serena, who was a senior member of the imperial family, also resided at the court of the young Honorius.⁶⁷⁰ Ambrose's positive example of Helena through her relationship with the emperor therefore provides a pointed message about how a woman's Christian faith could benefit imperial rule.

Many aspects of Ambrose's presentation of Helena were used by later eastern ecclesiastical historians. This included their renditions of the Cross legend which

⁶⁶⁶ Ambrose, Rufinus and the eastern ecclesiastical historians all describe Helena deferring to the local bishop of Jerusalem, who guides her towards finding the Cross.

⁶⁶⁷ Georgiou (2013), 607, discusses Ambrose's use of the digression to promote his perspective on the correct relationship between church and state.

⁶⁶⁸ For the funeral orations I use the translation by Liebeschuetz (2005). The sentiment of this passage is similar to Julian's musical man metaphor in *Oration 3*, in which he described Eusebia surpassing her female counterparts in a positive manner.

⁶⁶⁹ This image is conveyed by the order in the manuscript, since the oration follows the letters that describe the basilica conflict with Justina – see 4.2.2.

⁶⁷⁰ Even if the speech was included later in the published corpus the example could still hold importance for the new court. Georgiou (2013), 606-8, argues for Serena being the target of the digression. Baert (2004), 29, discusses the possible imperial women present in the congregation at the speech's delivery.

illustrates the positive religious role a women could play for the court.⁶⁷¹ Both Ambrose and the ecclesiastical historians refer to Helena taking the nails of the cross and sending them to Constantine for use in his bridle: Rufinus, *HE* 10.7, Soc. 1.17, Soz. 2.2, and Theodoret, *HE* 1.17.⁶⁷² In this image, Helena is celebrated because her pious actions ensured future victories for Constantine. This demonstrated how imperial women could benefit an emperor's rule, in terms of their own Christian piety.

The depictions of Helena by Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret reverse the relationship dynamic between the empress and her son, which Eusebius first described. Eusebius' portrayal conformed to the traditional form of praise for an imperial woman, her actions instructed by the emperor; like Pliny's model. However, the later accounts made Helena the figure of religious influence over her son.⁶⁷³ This revision of Constantine's and Helena's relationship can be attributed to the contemporary context of Theodosius II's court in which his sister Pulcheria played a prominent role.⁶⁷⁴ Sozomen invites such a comparison between Helena and Pulcheria by positioning his praise of both in the opening chapters of books 2 (1-2) and 9 (1-2).⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷¹ Liebeschuetz (2005), 175, points out that Helena dominates Ambrose's account at the expense of Constantine. This reflects the influential position that women senior in age to the emperor were perceived to hold during Ambrose's lifetime: Justina and Valentinian II, and now Serena and Honorius. Georgiou (2013), 615-21, discusses the differences in the eastern tradition, and the contemporary influences that informed the individual portraits of Helena by the eastern writers.

⁶⁷² Theodoret and Sozomen explicitly connect this to the prophecy by Zechariah, 14.20. In view of this, Claudian's poem describing Serena's gift of an embroidered bridle to Honorius may have been an allusion to her religious influence over the emperor: *Carm. Min.* 47 and 48.

⁶⁷³ The latest account by Theodoret, *HE* 1.17, best conveys the new dynamic: 'she [Helena] was glorious in her offspring, whose piety [εὐσέβεια] was celebrated by all; she who brought forth that great luminary and nurtured him in piety'.

⁶⁷⁴ In keeping with his attitude to Theodosius' sister, Socrates depicts Helena's religious piety as informing, rather than dominating, her son's Christian faith. Soc. 1.17, follows his description of Helena's discovery with the detail that Constantine provided the funds for her church dedications.

⁶⁷⁵ Sozomen's account of Helena's deference to virgins in Jerusalem (a detail related in all the ecclesiastical histories) takes on greater resonance when considered alongside his encomium to Pulcheria in book 9, since it places the later Augusta in a preeminent position; the apogee of female imperial piety. Both Sozomen and Theodoret describe Aelia Flaccilla in similar terms to Helena: the former describes her prevention of an audience between Theodosius and the non-Nicene Amphilius (7.6), an action driven by her adherence to the Nicene Creed; Theodoret, *HE* 5.18, describes how she 'watered the seeds of virtue planted in her husband's heart.' Drijvers (1992a), 182, and Holum (1982), 26-28, suggest that praise for Aelia Flaccilla was modelled on Helena. For the contemporary cultivation of her pious image, see 3.1 for Gregory of Nyssa's funeral oration.

The contemporary court context clearly informs the eastern ecclesiastical historians' depictions of Helena.⁶⁷⁶ Ambrose's styling of Helena as a New Mary preceded Theodosius II's sisters' devotion to a life of virginity from adolescence, which was at least partially motivated by the need to secure their brother's position.⁶⁷⁷ The East was perhaps conscious of the situation in the West where Stilicho had been able to exploit his family connections, further facilitated by his marriage to Serena, in order to dominate Honorius.

The presentation in the eastern ecclesiastical histories of Helena as a new Mary would resonate with an audience familiar with Pulcheria's endorsement of the term *Theotokos* and Eudocia's first eastern tour of Jerusalem, from where she, like Helena brought back relics.⁶⁷⁸ Pulcheria clearly wanted to be associated with Helena: she was proclaimed as the New Helena at the Council of Chalcedon.⁶⁷⁹ Pulcheria's self-promotion through this association celebrated the religious influence she had over her family, which now included her husband Marcian, who was proclaimed the New Constantine at the same time. This joint proclamation emphasised the platonic nature of their relationship, and demonstrated how Helena's image had been successfully cultivated as an example of the ideal Christian imperial woman.⁶⁸⁰

3.4.2 Conclusion

Eusebius demonstrates Helena's devotion to her son through her Christian actions, a theme reinterpreted by Ambrose and later ecclesiastical historians. Eusebius' praise

⁶⁷⁶ Georgiou (2013), 619-21, discusses the restrained treatment by Socrates and Theodoret, which she suggests was influenced by their attitudes to Pulcheria.

⁶⁷⁷ The comparison also emphasised Helena's devotion to her son, Constantine. Drijvers (1992a), 112-113, suggests that Ambrose depicted Helena as 'a second Mary' by his reference to her defeat of Satan; see Ambr. *De Obit. Theod.* 44. Drijvers, 113 n.66, also argues for a possible influence of the Theodosian empresses on this parallel between Helena and Mary, but the funeral speech was delivered before the birth of Arcadius' daughters for whom this parallel would have been most relevant. See Cooper (1996), 76, for the public benefits of avowed virginity.

⁶⁷⁸ Eudocia's pilgrimage is recorded in *V. Mel.* 56-9. Her modesty in deferring to the saint is recorded in chapter 59. Holum (1982), 188, argues that Eudocia was consciously emulating Helena in her pilgrimage.

⁶⁷⁹ Price (2009), 82, describes the proclamation, for which he refers to *ACO* 2.1, 2,155.11. Brubaker (1997), 60-2, describes Pulcheria's proclamation at Chalcedon as belated recognition by a male audience of the close association between Helena and Theodosian imperial women in regard to Christian patronage. Georgiou (2013), 611, discusses later Byzantine empresses' proclamations as 'New Helenas'.

⁶⁸⁰ Burgess (1993-1994), 56, notes the one epithet not given to Marcian and Pulcheria at Chalcedon was husband and wife.

of Helena conformed to the traditional presentation of women in panegyric, her piety serving as an extension of that of the emperors, who were the real focus of the praise. The later portrayals of Helena's Christian role, however, can be closely identified with the contemporary political climate. Ambrose's focus on Helena celebrates the positive religious role a woman could play, which was as a subordinate to religious authority (i.e. his own). This seems to be informed by Ambrose's conflict with Valentinian II's court where Justina seems to present the negative aspect of such a role. In Theodosius II's court, imperial women played a prominent role in imperial religious display, through which they modelled themselves on the example of Helena in her re-envisioned Christian image. The eastern ecclesiastical historians who wrote during this reign were influenced by the contemporary court environment, rather than using the image to deliver a clearly political message to the court as Ambrose had done.

3.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Although the posthumous presentation of Helena as a paragon of Christian faith differs from the portrayals of Eusebia and Serena in their encomia, there were common strands running throughout the presentations of all these women. Julian and Eusebius both expressed a degree of anxiety about praising women, and qualified their encomia by presenting Eusebia and Helena as adjuncts of the emperor. Claudian also adopted such an approach when praising Serena, but not because of an anxiety about her gender, but rather because her connections simply provided the poet with an important means by which to promote Stilicho's position. Using women as a means to increase the ruler's virtues (in the case of Stilicho, the *de facto* ruler) was an established model in panegyric, which had been used by Pliny at the turn of the second century. Informed by the promotion of eastern women through titulature and coinage, and the restricted aspects by which to praise Honorius, Claudian freely wrote descriptions of the imperial women who were resident at court in his poems. However, there is still a degree of caution in his presentation of Serena for which, like Julian's *Oration 3*, the virtues of σωφροσύνη and φιλανδρία were vital. Julian and Claudian constructed their praise of Eusebia and Serena by using the standard structure for imperial panegyrics (celebrating males) advised by Menander

Rhetor. They justify their protagonists' actions by emphasizing their positions as dutiful wives. This allowed the women to be praised without detracting from the authority of the emperor, who Claudian simply omitted from the *Laus Serenae*. However, while Serena's praise was concomitant to that of her husband, Julian's conservative presentation seemed a necessary justification for his encomium. Julian's expression of thanks to Eusebia seems sincere, because it expressed gratitude for actions that changed the emperor's opinion of him. The delicate subject matter recommended Julian himself to adopt a temperate approach, which in fact reversed the dynamic of Pliny's model: in *Oration 3* Constantius ultimately responds to Eusebia's virtues, not the other way around.

Extant Christian praise of Helena is largely posthumous; piety was not an important element for her coinage. Eusebius praised her for her piety, which was guided by Constantine. The appropriation of Helena's image at the turn of the fifth century as a female paragon of imperial faith carried very real political currency for the authors' audience and, as with Claudian's poems, was informed by the fact that the emperor now reigned from a stable court. Perhaps the most politically charged was Ambrose's digression in his funerary oration to Theodosius, which similar to the fifth-century ecclesiastical histories was composed when a young emperor lived with a woman who was the eldest member of the family. It is striking that in these later accounts Helena took on a more influential role in Constantine's own piety than in Eusebius' earlier portrayal. This was shaped by the contemporary climate. Ambrose's digression on Helena was aimed at the new court, which succeeded a regime that Ambrose had clashed with on the basis of Justina's religious influence on her son, Valentinian II. The eastern ecclesiastical historians were writing when there were multiple Augustae at Theodosius II's court who had a public role in the court's presentation. This is demonstrated by the images found on their coins, personal acts of patronage and their involvement in religious affairs. The closer connection between women's individual acts of patronage, which in the fourth century Constantina had carried out at a distance from the court, and the established permanent residency of an emperor led to reshaping how one could criticize women as well, which is the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

NEGATIVE PORTRAITS OF IMPERIAL WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

Do I need to add that Jezebel persecuted even Elijah most cruelly, that Herodias had John the Baptist killed. Particular women have been a trial for particular individuals. For myself, the trials are all the harder because my worth is so much less. My strength is weaker, my danger greater. One generation of women follow another. The objects of their hatred shift. Their intrigues change. Men in high positions are summoned to appear in court, and a charge of 'an insult to the emperor' is trumped up. What motive could there be for inflicting such a trial on a worm like me, unless it is not me but the Church which they are persecuting.

Ambrose, *Ep.* 76.18.

In the above quotation, Ambrose argues that the 'wicked' woman is a constant throughout history. Even if their objectives and the mechanics by which they persecute pious men change, their character remains consistent and they continue to conspire by associating themselves closely with the ruler's power. They act on their own misguided initiative, displaying a discernible lack of the virtue of temperance for which other women were praised. The two biblical examples Ambrose cites, Jezebel and Herodias, were made in reference to his dispute with Justina (mother of Valentinian II), but were also used in accounts written about the later eastern conflict between Eudoxia (wife of Arcadius) and John Chrysostom, ca. 403-4. Both were perceived as disputes between the senior imperial woman at court and the popular local bishop: Ambrose in Milan, and John Chrysostom in Constantinople.⁶⁸¹ Less than two decades separate these conflicts, which both took place in difficult circumstances created respectively by the usurpation of Maximus in the West, and the revolt of Gainas in the East.⁶⁸² In between these conflicts the Theodosian dynasty succeeded to both parts of the empire and consequently the 'Arian' cause ceased to have an imperial champion: Justina had been the last.⁶⁸³ These rivalries encompass a change in the empire in terms of dynasty, geography and perception of

⁶⁸¹ Liebeschuetz (2011), 5-6, presents the two conflicts using the concepts of cultural unity and imperial authority. At 266, he describes the circumstances for the conflicts as 'exceptional'.

⁶⁸² See 2.1.5 for an overview.

⁶⁸³ Kelly (1958), 247-51, provides a good summary of the different 'anti-Nicene' parties in the fourth century. Homoians are described as 'the party of compromise' and not a distinct theological position, although they viewed God and Son as of 'like' substance and so were viewed by Nicene opponents as effectively Arian: see Kelly, 251.

orthodoxy and so they warrant a comparative study. The same problem posed by positive portrayals of women in panegyrics remains: how can these literary portrayals be reconciled with the historical reality of their roles?

Unlike the two encomia discussed in the preceding chapter, there are no corresponding invectives directed at imperial women. Instead, information about the conflicts is found in a variety of sources, many written from a later Nicene perspective. In the case of Justina's conflict with Ambrose regarding homoian worship in Milan, this Nicene bias in later accounts shapes the portrait of Justina as a heretic who malignly influences her young imperial son. However, similar biblical exempla are used for the pejorative descriptions of Eudoxia, a devoutly Nicene empress, by the same Nicene ecclesiastical historians. These sources, written under Theodosius II, create interesting yet different dynamics in their portrayals of a western Valentinianic imperial woman, and the former Augusta of the eastern regime.

In this chapter, I will first briefly set out the negative female stereotypes frequently used in the late antique period and the specific biblical examples which appear in accounts of the two conflicts (4.1). The biblical examples employed in the Nicene sources seem to have been shaped by sermons delivered by Ambrose and Chrysostom at the time of the conflicts.⁶⁸⁴ Therefore, just as the epideictic genre of panegyric informed the temperate presentation of the women described, the negative examples used in sermons were designed to capture the imagination of the audience and to teach Scripture.⁶⁸⁵ The performative aspect of sermons was something for which John Chrysostom 'the golden mouth' was particularly celebrated. It would appear that his *παρρησία* (freedom of speech) was one of the causes for the deterioration of his relationship with the court.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁴ Liebeschuetz (2011), 81, describes Ambrose's development of classical models in his presentation of biblical figures.

⁶⁸⁵ Lunn-Rockliffe (2008), 195-7, discusses the performance aspect of Ambrose's sermons, which were not delivered in the presence of the court. Raschle (2013), 357, sets out Chrysostom's habit of using shock value in his speeches to hold the attention of his audience and to influence the actions of the powerful. He argues, at 372, that Chrysostom was naive as to the potential political consequences of his sermons, as his main aim was to seize the attention of the congregation.

⁶⁸⁶ Brown (1992), 61, describes how the success of *παρρησία* depended upon the receptiveness of the imperial addressee, which seems to be a discernible difference between the two conflicts examined here. Pseudo-Martyrius, 4, Palladius, *Dial.* 5, Soc. 6.21, and Soz. 8.20 describe Chrysostom's *παρρησία*; I discuss all these sources below. Soc. (6.3 and 6.21) is the only account to suggest that this

Having established the negative stereotypes, I will then examine the conflict between Justina and Ambrose (4.2), and Eudoxia and John Chrysostom (4.3) by first establishing the broader political context and then looking at the accounts of the conflicts, in particular the roles of the women involved. Finally, I consider how the period of composition, particularly in regard to dynasty, informed the portrayals (4.4). In these sections I explore the gap between the posthumous reception of these women's roles and their contemporary value to newly established court-based emperors, who differed in terms of dynasty, geography and religious beliefs. The way in which these differences affect individual portrayals of imperial women will then be evaluated.

4.1 NEGATIVE EXAMPLES OF LATE ANTIQUE IMPERIAL WOMEN

The Christian tone of the disputes is mirrored by the uses of negative biblical examples in the sources.⁶⁸⁷ The most popular examples were Eve (Gen. 3.1-24), Job's wife (Job 2.9-10, 19.17, 31.9-10), Jezebel (1 Kgs 21.1-29), and Herodias (Matt. 14.3-12; Mrk 6.14-24; and Luk. 3.19-20).⁶⁸⁸ The acts of misguided temptation by Eve and Job's wife are performed in a straightforward dialogue, with Eve succeeding in her influence of Adam, while Job remains steadfast in his piety. Both women are ultimately manipulated themselves by the Devil. Jezebel's and Herodias' acts of manipulation take place in a three-person dynamic. The women negatively influence a male ruler, and the couple are opposed by a spiritual leader who vocally objects to

presented a possible character flaw. Raschle (2013), 358, describes how Chrysostom's sermons relied upon his audience being well-informed enough to supply the contemporary context themselves. Problematically, his enemies could easily do this as well. Liebeschuetz (2011), 268, describes Ambrose's display of the quality; at 4, he discusses the different purposes of their sermons: Chrysostom hoped to reform society as a whole, rather than just his congregation. Brown (1992), 111, suggests that Ambrose showed *καρτερία* (obstinacy) against Valentinian, and *παρρησία* later against Theodosius.

⁶⁸⁷ There were negative examples drawn from the epic tradition. Amm. Marc. 14.1.2, describes Constantina as *Megaera quaedam mortalis*; this passage is analysed by Clauss (2002a), 360-1. Eudocia substitutes Clytemnestra for Eve in her Homeric cento (77-9 and 84); the counterpoint to her use of Penelope for Mary (discussed in footnote 560). The particular lines she refers to, *Od.* 24.200-1, refer to the legacy of infamy Clytemnestra's actions leave for all women. Such a negative legacy is an appropriate allusion for Eve. The passage in the cento is discussed by Usher (1998), 14-15.

⁶⁸⁸ Herodias is the only New Testament example. Writing with the endorsement of Pulcheria, Proclus, *PG* 65.720, also includes these examples in his catalogue of 'cursed' (*κατάρρα*) women, which also features the Egyptian women (Exodus 1.19) and Delilah. These appear in his fifth oration to Mary, after the negative catalogue, Proclus then provides a list of admirable women, who are led by his main subject.

the women's abuse of royal power. The stories involving Jezebel and Herodias had special resonance for those who described Justina's and Eudoxia's confrontations; the balance of power between state and church was a continuous point of contention in Late Antiquity.⁶⁸⁹

Ambrose's main point of reference for Justina was Jezebel, whose schemes on behalf of Ahab, king of Israel, brings them into conflict with the prophet Elijah (1 Kgs 19.1-2). Jezebel acts in her husband's name, forging his seal to manipulate local elders in order to make a victim of Naboth (1 Kgs 21.1-29). The story of Naboth's vineyard forms part of the broader narrative of Elijah's conflict with the king (1 Kgs 17.1-21.28), which features repeatedly in Ambrose's exegesis.⁶⁹⁰

Like Jezebel, Herodias manipulates her husband Herod, playing on his incestuous desire for his niece, who was her daughter (Matt. 14.1-12). Herod is bound by the oath that he makes to Herodias' daughter to behead John the Baptist, even though the latter's popularity had prevented the king from doing this when he had imprisoned him (Matt. 14.5). This element is articulated in accounts of Ambrose and John Chrysostom, who are presented as having overwhelming popular support in their opposition to the court. The Herodias example had contemporary resonance for the eastern Theodosian dynasty: Theodosius I had interred the Baptist's relics in Constantinople (Soz. 7.21). How ironic then that his son's wife acted like John's persecutor, resulting (albeit indirectly) in another John's death.⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁹ Liebeschuetz (2011), 50-2, describes in general terms the tension between the competing authorities. Hunt (2007), 74-5, also discusses the tension, and the expression of it in fourth- and fifth-century literary sources which describe Valentinian I's laissez-faire policy. Urbainczyk (1997b), 164-5, summarises the different perspectives of Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret in regard to what form this relationship should take.

⁶⁹⁰ In particular, Ambr. *On Naboth*, criticises opulent women (5.26). Ramsey (1997), 117, suggests this sermon was delivered in the late 380s, which was in the same period as Ambrose's conflict with the court. The treatise contains echoes of Ambrose's negative depiction of Justina: at 9.43 he describes Jezebel as a false agent for the king; at 11.49, the queen is shown to be a pernicious influence on Ahab. For a discussion of Elijah's relationship with Ahab in 1 Kgs see Walsh (1996), 293-367. Stebnicka (2012), 146 n.12, describes the treatise and relates it to Chrysostom's literary treatment of Jezebel.

⁶⁹¹ Duval (1967), 773-5, describes Theodosius' use of the remains against local homoian opponents. John the Baptist's criticism of the marriage of Herod and Herodias, the former wife of his brother Philip, would also have resonated with those aware of Valentinian I's divorce and subsequent marriage to Justina: see 5.1.

The women's roles in the stories of Naboth's vineyard and the death of John the Baptist share traits with some of the negative descriptions of imperial women discussed in section 1.5.2. In particular, the binary negative examples of Messalina and Agrippina by Tacitus. Jezebel, like Agrippina, usurps the male role of ruler, while Herodias, like Messalina, exploits female sexuality to achieve her aims.⁶⁹² Messalina's sexual promiscuity reflects her other intemperate desires, such as the episode in the *Annales* where she confiscates the gardens of Asiaticus (11.1.1-3.2). Jezebel similarly covets Naboth's vineyard and usurps her husband's authority in order to obtain it, persecuting Naboth in the process. She therefore presents a suitable biblical model for Ambrose's discussion of Justina's desire for a basilica within Milan. Agrippina was described by Tacitus as more frightening than even Messalina because she manipulated Claudius with a masculine-like reasoning to achieve her objectives (*Ann.* 12.7.3).

In the negative portraits of Justina and Eudoxia, the emperor is a faint presence while they carry out their schemes through a misplaced sense of imperial authority. Jezebel colludes with local elders to frame Naboth on a false charge of blasphemy, bypassing Ahab (1 Kgs 21.8). This story found resonance in those conflicts where the bishops were also summoned to appear before juries: one consisting of laymen for Ambrose, the other of clerical peers for Chrysostom. The perceived involvement of imperial women in these judicial proceedings was presented as a transgression of the acceptable limits for their gender, as well as a demonstration of their intemperance.

Tacitus uses his negative portraits of Messalina and Agrippina to criticise Claudius' political impotency. In the process he fails to acknowledge the benefit such actions may have had in sustaining Claudius' fragile regime.⁶⁹³ Justina's and Eudoxia's actions can also be reconciled to wider imperial policy, but unlike their Julio-Claudian predecessors they retained their position at court as the senior imperial women until their natural deaths. The political benefit of their roles is overlooked in

⁶⁹² Messalina is described as *meretrix* Augusta by Juv. 6.117.

⁶⁹³ Flower (2006), 183, discusses the benefit to Claudius of Messalina's acquisition of Asiaticus' gardens. The confiscation removed a possible venue for conspiracy, of which there were many during Claudius' regime.

negative portraits that isolate their actions, removing the emperor's agency. This dominance of the emperor in turn shows his deficiencies not only as a ruler but as a man with poor control of his *domus*. In his commentary on 1 Kings, Walsh has argued for Ahab's increased agency in the story of Naboth's vineyard. The king is able to bring about his own aims by slyly manipulating Jezebel's actions on his behalf, which are superficially perceived to be on her own initiative.⁶⁹⁴ All of these women's roles at some point can be reconstructed as acting in the ruler's interests, in whose regime their own position was inherently invested. A similar case can be made for the late antique conflicts.

4.2 JUSTINA VS. AMBROSE

Ambrose's rivalry with Justina occurred after Valentinian II had become senior Augustus following Gratian's murder in August 383 by supporters of the Gallic usurper Magnus Maximus. Valentinian's court mostly resided in Milan, where Ambrose was bishop, until Maximus' invasion of Italy in 387.⁶⁹⁵ It was in these intervening years that the dispute between Ambrose and the court took place: what is referred to as the basilica conflict (385-6). This conflict revolved around two issues regarding homoian worship, which the court observed: a law legislating for freedom of religious assembly (*CTh.* 16.1.4); and the court's appropriation of a basilica for Easter 386. During its residency in Milan, the court also sent the Nicene bishop Ambrose on two embassies to Maximus, another Nicene Christian whose position as emperor was recognised by Theodosius and (reluctantly) by Valentinian II in ca. 385.

In the first section, I will set out the political situation faced by Valentinian's court during the years of the basilica conflict. From there, I will consider whether it is fair to represent Justina as conducting a vendetta against Ambrose, considering the military pressures facing a court in which the emperor was a child. I then turn to the basilica conflict itself. The contemporary source material for the conflict consists almost entirely of letters composed by Ambrose, from a corpus which was published,

⁶⁹⁴ Walsh (1996), 332, points to Jezebel's and Ahab's mutual guilt over the death of Naboth: Ahab is culpable because he allowed his wife to act for him. At 27, Walsh suggests it is Ahab who manipulates his wife.

⁶⁹⁵ Aquileia was the only other Italian city where Valentinian spent a significant amount of time: in late 385 – see Seeck (1919), 266-8.

probably by him, after the death in 395 of Theodosius I, whose dynasty now ruled over the whole empire.⁶⁹⁶ Subsequent editing of the letters adds another layer to an already complicated dispute. Even the chronology is distorted in order to serve Ambrose's main purpose: the retrospective celebration of his defence of the western Nicene cause and his assertion of episcopal authority in church matters.⁶⁹⁷ This section will then move on to consider Justina's depiction in later Nicene accounts: the biography by Paulinus and the ecclesiastical histories by Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret. Ecclesiastical histories in particular skew the presentation of Justina in order to present Theodosius as the hero of imperial Nicene Christianity.

Portrayals of Justina after the basilica conflict will then be considered. I first examine Ambrose's treatment of her in his funerary oration for Valentinian. The muted appearance by Justina in his later work tempers his harsher portrayal of her actions in the basilica conflict. From there, the discussion will address the accounts of Justina's role in the Thessalonica conference by Philostorgius and Zosimus; where the western and eastern courts agreed on a campaign against Maximus.⁶⁹⁸ Neither the heterodox-Christian Philostorgius, nor the anti-Christian Zosimus made any reference to either the basilica conflict, or indeed Ambrose. I will consider how the presentation of Justina's perceived interference at the conference served as a critique on Theodosius and the different dynamic achieved when the emperor in question was an autonomous adult, rather than a teenager clearly governed by others.

4.2.1 Historical Backdrop

The fragility of Valentinian's position as senior Augustus drove the court's actions in the basilica conflict, which Ambrose and the later Nicene tradition presented as a

⁶⁹⁶ Liebeschuetz (2005), 27-8, thinks it likely that Ambrose published the collection and that the corpus constituted his last work (AD 395-7).

⁶⁹⁷ Humphries (2000) gives a succinct overview of imperial relations with the northern Italian episcopacy during the fourth century; he provides a cogent summary of the basilica conflict at 122. These problems of dating do not largely affect my discussion: more important is the sequence of the letters in the published corpus and the effect it has on Ambrose's presentation of the conflict. Augustine's reference to the resolution of the conflict provides a *terminus ante quem* before his own baptism: *Conf.* 9.7. There is no consensus on the precise order of events of the conflict, and the sequence of letters is no indication of chronology: the funeral oration for Theodosius (February 395) appears between *Ep.* 76 and 77, both of which clearly relate to Valentinian II's reign. For more detailed (and conflicting) discussion see McLynn (1994), 185-6, and Liebeschuetz (2005), 126-8. Liebeschuetz (2005), 135, and (2011), 85-6, provides a summary of the possible chronology of events.

⁶⁹⁸ See 2.1.4.2.

vendetta led by Justina. Valentinian was about 12 years old when he became senior Augustus. At the time, his junior colleague Theodosius I (ca. 37 years old) had already proclaimed his son, Arcadius, Augustus.⁶⁹⁹ Theodosius showed little interest in assisting Valentinian against Maximus, who sought guardianship of Valentinian from Gaul in his attempt to achieve recognition by the imperial college.⁷⁰⁰

Although Maximus briefly achieved recognition from the Augusti, Valentinian managed to maintain his position in Milan, partly as a result, it seems, of two embassies in which Ambrose represented the court.⁷⁰¹ These embassies on Valentinian's behalf show the complicated nature of Ambrose's relationship with the imperial administration. This relationship was closer than the image presented in the letters on the basilica conflict. Ambrose vaguely describes his embassies in *Epistula* 30, addressed to Valentinian, to whom Ambrose provides a defensive account of his most recent embassy and summarises the first.⁷⁰² In his account of the events of this first embassy (*Ep.* 30.4-9), Ambrose presents Justina as a figure of sympathy.⁷⁰³

Epistula 30 illustrates some of the concerns that the court faced during the basilica conflict, but most are overlooked in the pro-Ambrosian accounts that emphasise Justina's role. The later emphasis on Justina's personal beliefs fails to acknowledge the support her actions had from the men who actually exercised political power at court.⁷⁰⁴ In *Epistula* 30, Ambrose refers to the military pressures faced by both

⁶⁹⁹ He probably made Aelia Flaccilla Augusta at the same time: see 2.2.1.

⁷⁰⁰ McEvoy (2013a), 87, suggests Theodosius was preoccupied by eastern military concerns.

⁷⁰¹ Rufinus nicely summarises the political stasis between the courts (*HE* 11.15): 'In Italy, Valentinian, terrified by his brother's murder and in dread of the enemy, gladly pretended to embrace the peace which Maximus pretended to offer.'

⁷⁰² Paulin. *V. Ambr.* 19, describes the return of Gratian's remains as the reason for Ambrose's second embassy. In his introduction to letter 30.1, Ambrose presents an anxious tone, explaining the delay for his return, a delay which seemed suspicious to some at court. McLynn (1994), 160-3, describes both of Ambrose's embassies. The one potentially dateable detail was a reference to Priscillian's execution (*Ep.* 30.12). Liebeschuetz (2005), 349, discusses the uncertainty of the precise date of composition. He suggests, at 351, it was after the basilica conflict and that his embassy brought about the court's retreat in the dispute. Liebeschuetz doubts that the published letter reflects the original content, although the basic details may be correct. Zos. 4.42.3-7 refers only to an embassy led by Dominus.

⁷⁰³ At *Ep.* 30.5, Ambrose cites Isaiah 1.17 to illustrate his pastoral duty to protect a widow.

⁷⁰⁴ See McLynn (1994), 170-1. McLynn, 159, identifies Probus, Nonnius, Atticus Maximus and Vettius Agorius Praetextatus as key figures at Valentinian's court. Probus' influence is described by Soc. 5.11 and Soz. 7.13; the prefect accompanied the court to Thessalonica following Maximus' invasion of Italy. Kelly (2013), 362, describes the clique which orchestrated Valentinian II's election to Augustus.

western courts in Raetia.⁷⁰⁵ Such military pressures compounded the problems already presented for Valentinian's court with loss of territory and accompanying revenue.⁷⁰⁶ The weakened state of the military meant that Valentinian now relied on the recruitment of Goths following the treaty of 382.⁷⁰⁷ This contingent of the army was crucial to protecting the court from the ongoing threat from Maximus. Many of these Goths were, like Justina, non-Nicene Christians, who required a place to worship. This, I would argue, was the main motivation for the court to seek a basilica for imperial worship and for the legislation which allowed freedom of homoian worship (*CTh.* 16.1.4), another cause of contention in the basilica conflict.⁷⁰⁸

The law shows that the court's endorsement of the local homoian community, possibly led by Justina, met with violent opposition from Ambrose's Nicene congregation.⁷⁰⁹ Like other court-based emperors, Valentinian was reliant on

⁷⁰⁵ Ambrose criticises Maximus for distracting imperial forces and praises Valentinian's financial settlement (*Ep.* 30.8).

⁷⁰⁶ Maximus had control of Britain, Gaul and Spain, while the Balkans, an important recruitment area, was still suffering from the effects of the recent Gothic incursion.

⁷⁰⁷ See McLynn (1994), 182-4. Ambrose refers to the variety of tribal recruits which formed both Maximus' and Valentinian's forces (*Ep.* 30.8). Valentinian's main general was the Frank Bauto, the father of the future eastern Augusta, Eudoxia, and, according to this letter, the main check on Maximus' western ambitions (4 and 6-8); see also Ambr. *Ep.* 24.4.6, where Maximus criticises Bauto. Errington (2006), 264-5, describes the effects the Gothic War had on the evolution of the imperial office. McEvoy (2013a), 84-5, describes Gratian's recruitment of Alans, whom he hoped would be loyal to his regime.

⁷⁰⁸ Humphries (2000), 132, and Maier (1994), 73, refer to the displacement of non-Nicene Christians from Illyricum into Milan before the arrival of the imperial court. Such an influx was created by the population displacement during the Gothic War of 376-82. Humphries (2000), 132, describes the consequential influx of homoian clerics into Milan. This may account for the appearance in the city of the bishop Auxentius, Ambrose's clerical rival in *Ep.* 75 and 75a. Ambrose often referred in xenophobic terms to the non-Nicene Gothic contingent of the army in the basilica conflict letters: *Ep.* 75.8, *Ep.* 76.9, 76.12 and 76.20. Humphries (2000), 121, suggests that Ambrose's actions against the court were driven by maintaining 'the integrity of the Milanese church' both in terms of the physical structures and the bishop's congregation.

⁷⁰⁹ He frequently refers to the possibility of martyrdom, for example: *Ep.* 75a.6-7. Ambrose is always careful to distance himself from the violent actions of his supporters: *Ep.* 76.5. Maier (1994), 88, suggests that Valentinian was well within his legislative rights to take possession of a basilica. McLynn (1994), 173, argues that Ambrose never challenged the legality of the court's actions. This is concomitant with the idea, which Ambrose reiterates in his letters, of the distinction between church and state jurisdiction: for example, *Ep.* 75.15, 75a.29 and 76.19. McLynn (2004), 250, describes the tension between the emperor and bishops in regard to religious authority; for example, see *Ep.* 76.8. Walsh (1996), 318, establishes the legal basis of Ahab's claims on Naboth's vineyard.

religious ceremony to bolster his authority.⁷¹⁰ A key part of such ceremony was church attendance, especially at Easter, when Ambrose's conflict with the court reached its apogee with the occupation of two basilicas by his congregation, and a confrontation with imperial guards.⁷¹¹ As a consequence of his opposition, Ambrose deprived Valentinian of one of the key expressions of his authority, already fragile after a usurpation that had been recognised by his colleague in the East.⁷¹² In turn, Ambrose resented the challenge presented by the imperial court's actions to his preeminent ecclesiastical position among the clergy of northern Italy.⁷¹³

Despite Ambrose's emphasis on the foreignness of the adherents, there was also a pre-existing homoian community in Milan. Ambrose's predecessor in the city's see had been a non-Nicene, Auxentius (not to be confused with Ambrose's later antagonist in the conflict, who was also called Auxentius).⁷¹⁴ This local community provided a fresh avenue of patronage for the court, because the previous emperor resident there had been the Nicene Gratian.

An increased contingent of non-Nicene Christians in Milan, Valentinian's need for imperial ceremony, and military concerns all demonstrate that the policy for the right of non-Nicene assembly was not only driven by Justina's beliefs.⁷¹⁵ The negative comparisons to biblical women in the course of the basilica letters contrast with the milder tone Ambrose adopts in *Epistula* 30. In this letter he celebrates his loyalty to

⁷¹⁰ See McEvoy (2013a), 40-3, for the development of an emperor's Christian role; and 86-8, for the dynamic between Valentinian II, Theodosius and Maximus. McLynn (1994), 174, and (2004), 262, describes Valentinian's reliance on ceremonial display.

⁷¹¹ McLynn (2004), 266, argues that the lack of a space in Milan for a private imperial service gave Ambrose leverage – in contrast with Constantinople. Hunt (2007), 75-6, describes Valentinian I's focusing of imperial religious ceremony around Easter.

⁷¹² Liebeschuetz (2011), 5-6, places emphasis on the western court's weaker position in its conflict with Ambrose, in contrast with the later eastern dispute involving Chrysostom.

⁷¹³ Humphries (2000), 120-6, points to Ambrose's preeminent position which was confirmed by the Council of Aquileia in 381, in which he was seen as acting for Gratian's benefit. Humphries then suggests that Ambrose needed to protect his position against Valentinian's court. McEvoy (2013a), 88-9, posits that the weakness of Valentinian II's regime appealed to Theodosius and Ambrose; the Nicene Maximus could prove more capable opposition to their interests.

⁷¹⁴ Ambrose's succession to the Milanese see is described by Paulin. *V. Ambr.* 6-9. Maier (1994), 72-93, sets out Ambrose's thirteen-year campaign against non-Nicene Christians in Milan, which predated the residency of Valentinian's court in the city.

⁷¹⁵ McLynn (1994), 170-1, argues convincingly that Justina's actions would have been prohibited by politically powerful figures at court if they felt that it would destabilise the court, therefore her actions must have had wider backing than that portrayed by Ambrose.

the court, including Justina, regardless of its specific Christian persuasion.⁷¹⁶ This modifies the image that Ambrose presents of the basilica conflict, although it does not preclude his resentment at Justina's actions in promoting the homoian cause.

4.2.2 The Basilica Conflict

4.2.2.1 Ambrose's Account of the Basilica Conflict

Ambrose's main account of the conflict is related in *Epistulae* 75, 75a and 76. The conclusion of the conflict, marked by his discovery of the relics of Gervasius and Protasius, is described in *Epistula* 77 – the last letter of his published corpus.⁷¹⁷ As discussed above, the conflict was driven by two issues: the non-Nicene right to public assembly; and securing a place of worship for the court for Easter 386. The first issue focused on a recently published law and Ambrose's refusal to attend a consistory with the non-Nicene bishop Auxentius. The military and local considerations of Valentinian's court led to the issue of a law, which was the focus of Ambrose's opposition to Auxentius in *Epistulae* 75 and 75a. *Epistula* 75 (addressed to Valentinian II) concerns Auxentius' role in drawing up the law.⁷¹⁸ The general consensus is that the law described in the letter refers to *CTh.* 16.1.4, which was issued in Milan on 23 January 386.⁷¹⁹ The published law prohibits violent opposition to other Christian assemblies in the city, with any such 'authors of sedition' being charged with high treason [*maiestas*] and the death penalty.

Auxentius was also Ambrose's target in *Epistula* 75a, a memorandum for Valentinian of Ambrose's sermon, the *Contra Auxentium*. In this sermon, Ambrose explains and justifies his refusal to attend a second consistory alongside Auxentius

⁷¹⁶ McLynn (1994), 161, argues that Ambrose's embassies ultimately demonstrate his sincere loyalty. From a literary perspective the presentation of Ambrose's underlying loyalty made his persecution by the imperial house appear even more unjust and highlights the likelihood that the letters were edited retrospectively.

⁷¹⁷ McLynn (1994), 185, notes the stylistic distinctions between the letters. He suggests that artistically each letter reflects a different aspect of the conflict and the opposition faced by Ambrose. Such reasoning supports the idea of a heavy editing process before the corpus was published; see also Liebeschuetz (2005), 40-2.

⁷¹⁸ The law appeared to have been unpopular and partially withdrawn by the time Ambrose composed this letter, as suggested by *Ep.* 75.10. Liebeschuetz (2005), 139 n.3, observes that if the court had organised a debate it indicated a willingness to negotiate.

⁷¹⁹ *Soz.* 7.33, is the only source to attribute direct responsibility to Justina for the law. Liebeschuetz (2005), 150 n.2, suggests Auxentius was behind the law; if this was so then, like Justina, he would have needed the support of the political administration at court.

following civil unrest.⁷²⁰ Ambrose's main argument for his non-attendance is because it is a church matter and therefore not to be adjudicated by a layman jury at the command of the court. Appropriately, *Epistula* 75a features the story of Naboth, the day's reading (17) in which Ambrose refers to Ahab as 'misled by a woman's trick'.⁷²¹ This is the briefest glimpse Ambrose offers of criticism of Justina, before it is developed in the next letter.

Epistula 76 draws together the themes that emerged in *Epistulae* 75 and 75a, and is the most emphatic in regard to Justina's culpability.⁷²² The pointed tone towards Justina can be partly attributed to the change in addressee from Valentinian (the recipient of the previous two letters) to Ambrose's sister Marcellina. The letter describes the apogee of the conflict in 386: the events over Easter where imperial forces took possession of a basilica for imperial worship, and Ambrose and his congregation assembled in another basilica surrounded by troops. Ambrose refers to a catalogue of impious biblical women, which present an unsubtle allusion to Justina who is not named in any of the letters. While Ambrose presents himself as acting for the *populus*,⁷²³ Auxentius and Justina represent the Gothic contingent of the army (distinct from the other soldiers).⁷²⁴ Ambrose frequently trivialises the size of the opposition, which makes the court's actions appear the more disproportionate and unfair. The unreasonable action against Ambrose is compounded by the fact that the opposition is led by a woman. This is demonstrated by the account of the sixth day of basilica occupation (*Ep.* 76.12):⁷²⁵

⁷²⁰ Ambrose's prior attendance had clearly set a precedent, which the court used against him and which Ambrose had to counter-argue, at 29.

⁷²¹ Walsh (1996), 322, describes Jezebel's letter (1 Kgs 21.8-10) to the elders, through whose involvement she upset the Israelite social order. Ambrose's reference underlines the support Justina had among members of the populace, perhaps the local elite who were present at court.

⁷²² The letter's position in the corpus (immediately after *Ep.* 75 and 75a) therefore seems natural from a literary perspective as it presents the climax of the themes expressed in the other two letters.

⁷²³ Liebeschuetz (2005), 158 n.8, comments on the frequency of Ambrose's use of this term for his congregation.

⁷²⁴ *Ep.* 76.12. Ambr. *Ep.* 75.8 also mentions Auxentius' Gothic support base: 'But if he (Auxentius) boasts of the support of a few foreigners, let him be bishop in the place where those people come from, who think that he should have the title of bishop conferred upon him.' A xenophobic tone runs through all the letters, suggesting that such a sentiment had popular appeal. Such sentiments were probably as much a result of the Gothic War, as their Christian theology.

⁷²⁵ According to Liebeschuetz's chronology (2005), 135, this happened on the Wednesday of Easter Week 386, after Ambrose had been ordered to surrender the New Basilica and imperial troops had consequently occupied it.

Not one of the Arians was brave enough to come out, since there were none of the citizens there, a few from the imperial household, and a number of Goths. At one time wagons were homes to these people, so now their wagon is the church. Wherever that woman makes her way she drags with her a swarm of followers.⁷²⁶

This passage demonstrates how Ambrose represents his opposition as a small clique led by Auxentius and Justina, who emerges as the imperial champion of the conflict in *Epistula* 76. Justina's culpability is established in lengthy biblical references to Job's wife and Eve.⁷²⁷ Ambrose juxtaposes Job's fidelity, despite his wife's pleas, with that of Adam, the ultimate example of a man misled by a woman. This focus on women's negative religious influence establishes Justina's culpability for Valentinian's actions. Her detrimental role is reinforced by the climax in this series of biblical examples: the description of Jezebel and Herodias (76.18).⁷²⁸ These last two references are appropriate allusions for a royal woman exercising undue influence.⁷²⁹ With the examples of Jezebel and Herodias, Ambrose emphasises that Justina is shaping imperial policy. Her actions, which are inappropriate for a woman anyway, see her wrongly usurping religious authority, which Ambrose seeks to defend.⁷³⁰ This point is best conveyed in *Ep.* 75a.36:

The emperor is within and not above the Church. For a good emperor seeks the assistance of the Church, he does not refuse it.

Ambrose asserts his spiritual authority over Valentinian, in contrast to Justina's negative influence. Justina was not an adjunct of the ruler in the way Eusebia and Serena were presented in their panegyrics. They were presented as drawing out the emperor's inherent virtues because their actions were deemed beneficial by the panegyrists. In contrast, Justina is a bad example of imperial womanhood because she exerts misplaced power and dominates the pliant emperor. In turn, she is a foil for the schemes of Auxentius, who is ultimately responsible for creating the law that

⁷²⁶ Paul. *V. Ambr.* 11-12, describes non-Nicene opposition faced by Ambrose in Sirmium and then in Milan; both are stirred up by Justina and so echo this image of her 'swarm' of homoian acolytes. See also *Ep.* 76.18, where Ambrose compares himself to Job in his opposition to her supporters.

⁷²⁷ Both women are referred to in chapter 17, in which Ambrose cites Job 2.10 and Gen. 3.9.

⁷²⁸ The passage is quoted at the start of this chapter.

⁷²⁹ *Ambr. Ep.* 76.18.

⁷³⁰ For Ambrose's perspective of imperial subordination to God's authority see Lunn-Rockliffe (2008), 204, and Liebeschuetz (2011), 53-4.

allows public homoian worship. In this hierarchy of impiety, the emperor, although in name the author of promulgated laws, is exonerated from responsibility.

In the published corpus, Ambrose's altercation with the imperial court is finally resolved with his discovery and reburial of the martyrs Gervasius and Protasius: the topic of *Epistula 77*. The letter adds little to Ambrose's portrayal of Justina; however, the position of the letter at the end of book 10 confirms his attitude towards her in the earlier letters. In all but one manuscript, *Epistula 77* is separated from the other letters by Ambrose's funeral oration for Theodosius, which contains a lengthy digression on Helena.⁷³¹ The juxtaposition of a positive example of a woman's imperial religious role, nestled between the letters about the conflict, emphasises Ambrose's critical treatment of Justina.⁷³²

Ambrose's perception of Justina's interference in the basilica conflict is complemented in a reference made by his contemporary Augustine. In his description of Ambrose's discovery of the relics, Augustine, whose mother was in Ambrose's congregation during the basilica occupation, more explicitly associates this discovery with the resolution of the conflict (*Conf. 9.7.15*):⁷³³

from where you [God] would opportunely bring them into view to check the feminine but also royal madness [*rabiem femineam sed regiam*]

Augustine's passing reference indicates that Ambrose was not alone among his immediate contemporaries in feeling that imperial policy in the basilica conflict was driven by Justina. This recognises Justina as the senior figure of the imperial family and therefore a definite religious influence over her children.

⁷³¹ Liebeschuetz (2005), 176, observes that the oration always appears in between *Ep. 76* and *77*. It was included in 63 out of 64 manuscripts of the corpus.

⁷³² In contrast, Liebeschuetz (2005), 176, argues that Ambrose chose to focus on Helena, rather than Constantine, because of Constantine's execution of Crispus and Fausta and his baptism by an Arian bishop.

⁷³³ Maier (1994), 89, describes the discovery of Gervasius and Protasius as the climax of a campaign of more than a decade led by Ambrose to reserve the basilicas exclusively for Nicene Christian worship. It is a fitting climax for the end of the corpus since it emphasises the triumph of the church, rather than imperial authority which might be suggested if the book finished in chronological order with Theodosius' funeral oration. Ambrose provides a different version of the martyrs' discovery in *Ep. 22.2*, which is discussed by Grig (2004), 2-3. She describes how the discovery is telescoped in Augustine's and Paulinus' accounts so that it becomes a fitting conclusion to the basilica conflict.

4.2.2.2 The Later Nicene Narratives

Justina's dominant position within her family during the conflict is exaggerated further by the later Nicene accounts, which, unlike Ambrose's letters, refer to Justina directly. Of these, Paulinus, Ambrose's biographer, offers the longest continuous narrative (*V. Ambr.* 13-14) and the closest version to Ambrose's presentation of Justina.⁷³⁴ In the biography, Justina, rather than Auxentius, is presented as the principal antagonist against whom Ambrose struggles to protect his congregation.⁷³⁵ Paulinus describes Justina as pursuing a sustained campaign against the bishop, which dates back to an earlier confrontation in Sirmium (*V. Ambr.* 11).⁷³⁶ During the conflict itself, in which Justina's main motive is to drive Ambrose from Milan, Paulinus attributes to Justina a greater political influence seen in the basilica letters.⁷³⁷ Paulinus suggests that as part of Justina's campaign against Ambrose she offers offices to anyone who might support her (*V. Ambr.* 12). Such an idea implies that she had the power to bestow such honours.⁷³⁸ While Justina is given a larger role in the biography, Valentinian remains a marginalised figure. The emperor is only mentioned once (*V. Ambr.* 19), in which he is referred to simply as the recipient of *Epistula* 30.⁷³⁹

The role of Valentinian in the basilica conflict is the main point of contrast between Paulinus' biography and the versions given in the ecclesiastical histories of Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret; the negative role of Justina essentially remains the same. The western ecclesiastical history by Rufinus provides the earliest

⁷³⁴ Paulinus wrote his biography at the request of Augustine (*V. Ambr.* 1) in either 412/13 or 422. Ramsey (1997), 195-6, prefers the earlier date. Either date is later than Rufinus' account, which is discussed below. Liebeschuetz (2005), 27-8, argues that Ambrose's letters were published before Paulinus wrote his biography. See also Liebeschuetz (2011), 265.

⁷³⁵ Paulin. *V. Ambr.* 13, has her concocting the basilica conflict through her fury and 'the insane Arians' madness'. [*vaesanorum Arianorum dementiam*].

⁷³⁶ Humphries (2000), 132-3, discusses the homoian clerics from the Balkans, against whom Ambrose directed the Council of Aquileia.

⁷³⁷ Paulin. *V. Ambr.* 20, refers to an assassination plot by Justina; see also *Ambr. Ep.* 75.18 and 75a.36.

⁷³⁸ This is similar to Eunapius' report of Eudoxia's distribution of offices: *fr.* 72.1. If Blockley's reattribution to Eudoxia (rather than Pulcheria) is correct then this would have happened in the East before Paulinus had composed his biography: (1980b), 174-5.

⁷³⁹ See 4.2.1.

description of the conflict of all these accounts (*HE* 11.15-17).⁷⁴⁰ He also produces the most vitriolic description of Justina's influence over her son (11.15):

Meanwhile his mother Justina, a disciple of the Arian sect, boldly uncorked [*fidenter aperuit*] for her gullible [*facile decepto*] son the poisons [*venena*] of her impiety [*impietas*] which she had kept hidden while her husband was alive.⁷⁴¹

Rufinus here emphasises Justina's lack of temperance. Her Nicene husband kept her 'Arian' (*Ariana*) views in check, but these could then be unleashed because of Valentinian II's youth. Rufinus is the first to give a greater role in the conflict to Valentinian, although he is always manipulated by Justina.⁷⁴² Criticism of the emperor is presented via the now established biblical reference to Naboth (*HE* 11.15). In this passage it is Valentinian who acts against Ambrose, although from a false charge invented by his mother. Meanwhile Ambrose, who is unjustifiably persecuted, is protected by his loyal Nicene congregation.

Rufinus clearly aligns Ambrose with Elijah, opposed to Justina as Jezebel, but he also makes more of Ahab's role in the story. Justina is seen as ultimately culpable for the court's conflict with Ambrose, but Rufinus recognises that Valentinian had to sanction such actions, even if for no other reason than a false pretext invented by his mother.⁷⁴³ Like Ambrose's version, this passage trivialises the court's motives, but by criticising Valentinian as well as Justina.⁷⁴⁴ Rufinus associates Justina's actions more closely with the broader political narrative because in his version Maximus uses the basilica conflict as the pretext for his invasion (11.16).⁷⁴⁵ By making Justina

⁷⁴⁰ Rufinus composed his ecclesiastical history ca. 402/3: Amidon (1997), x. For a general overview of Rufinus' literary output see Amidon (1997), viii-xii. Croke (1976), 238-9, suggests that Rufinus is more reliable when writing about events in his own lifetime.

⁷⁴¹ This idea is also conveyed by Soc. 5.11 and Theod. *HE* 5.13.

⁷⁴² The empress' agency over Valentinian is clearly stated in Rufinus' summation of Maximus' invasion, *HE* 11.17: '[Theodosius] restored to Valentinian both the Catholic faith violated [*violaverat*] by his irreligious [*impia*] mother, who died at this time, and the realm.'

⁷⁴³ The idea of an emperor acting on a false charge by an imperial woman appears in later accounts for the deaths of Crispus and Fausta, in which Helena is implicated: see 5.3.2.3.

⁷⁴⁴ The trivial motives for Ahab's desire for the vineyard as a vegetable patch is discussed by Walsh (1996), 319. At the end of *HE* 11.15, Rufinus develops the idea prevalent throughout Ambrose's letters that the bishop was not complicit in the violent actions carried out by his supporters: for example *Ambr. Ep.* 76.10.

⁷⁴⁵ In the passage Rufinus mentions a letter sent by Maximus to the court declaring 'what she was attempting was impious and that the faith of God was being attacked and the laws of the Catholic Church destroyed'. This letter still survives: *Coll. Avell.* 39 '*Contra Arrianos et Manicheos*'. McLynn

ultimately culpable for the invasion, Rufinus then presents Theodosius as piously avenging the memory of Gratian and, after Justina's death, converting Valentinian to Nicene Christianity (11.17). This image seems to have complemented Theodosian propaganda which overlooked the fact that Theodosius had not avenged Gratian's death for the five years since the usurpation of Maximus, who he had also recognised as Augustus.⁷⁴⁶

The eastern ecclesiastical histories of Socrates (5.11), Sozomen (7.13-14) and Theodoret (*HE* 5.13-14) continue in the same vein as Rufinus' account. All versions present a clear Theodosian bias, created in part by Valentinian's greater involvement in his mother's actions against the Nicene orthodox populace led by Ambrose. The emperor is still a passive figure, but his more prominent appearances in these accounts underline his incapability as a ruler because he is described as being dominated by his mother, something which Ambrose and Paulinus only implied. Theodoret gives Valentinian the most agency in an image similar to that projected by Rufinus in relation to Justina (5.13):

perceiving that her son's character was gentle and docile, she took courage to bring her deceitful doctrine forward. The lad supposed his mother's counsels to be wise and beneficial, for nature so disposed the bait that he could not see the deadly hook below.⁷⁴⁷

Justina is still depicted as driving the conflict, but her presentation also illustrates Valentinian's political impotency. She is able to manipulate him to act against Ambrose. In this version the imperial orders were issued by Valentinian II and so this makes him complicit, if not ultimately entirely culpable. Ambrose's version had suppressed this point, focusing only on who drove, rather than enacted, the policies. The clear focus of the conflict for Socrates and Sozomen is Theodosius. The eastern emperor emerges victorious through a truncated (and erroneous) chronology: Justina

(1994), 208, discusses Maximus' intimations that recent disturbances could endanger Valentinian if he were to become an enemy of Maximus.

⁷⁴⁶ This focus on Theodosius' shared Nicene Christianity with Gratian echoes the image Ambrose presents in his funeral oration for Theodosius, in which the two emperors are presented as Constantine's true successors. Zosimus, who was hostile to Theodosius, is unsurprisingly the only account to mention Theodosius' recognition of Maximus (4.37.3). The image of Theodosius as the sole avenger of Gratian is continued by Theod. *HE* 5.15, who also portrayed Theodosius as warning Valentinian of the errors of his actions.

⁷⁴⁷ Theod. *HE* 5.13, like Rufinus' account (*HE* 11.15), suggests that Justina's homoian sympathies were restrained under Valentinian I.

persecutes Ambrose before news of Gratian's death, which caused her to stop her vendetta.⁷⁴⁸ This creates the image that Theodosius responded immediately to the death of Gratian whom he avenged against Maximus.⁷⁴⁹

The common theme of these later Nicene accounts, apart from that of Paulinus, was the greater focus on Valentinian's weakness as a ruler compared to Theodosius I. In the ecclesiastical histories it is Theodosius who is the ultimate focus. From the perspective of these accounts, Valentinian is inferior to Theodosius in terms of Christian faithfulness, and Justina's domination of her son reflects this.

4.2.3 Beyond the Basilica Conflict: Other Portrayals of Justina

4.2.3.1 Ambrose's Funeral Oration for Valentinian

In his imperial funeral orations, Ambrose focuses to a surprising degree on imperial women, but not on Justina, who appears only cursorily in the oration for her son.⁷⁵⁰ However, her actions in the basilica conflict inform the treatment of other women who appear.⁷⁵¹ Tellingly, the funeral oration for Valentinian was not included in Ambrose's collection of letters, in contrast to his sermon for the Nicene Emperor Theodosius. The Helena digression in that oration conveys how an imperial woman could augment imperial piety. Ambrose's focus on Valentinian's sisters, Iusta and Grata, in their brother's oration presents them in sympathetic terms, which are more in line with the role he gave Justina in *Epistula 30 (De Obit. Val. 36)*:

Let us examine the affection he displayed towards his sisters. With them he took his recreation, with them he found his solace. With them he relaxed his mind with worry. If they seemed to have been offended by their brother through some boyish thoughtlessness of his, or by some remark, he used to ask them to pardon him, and to pray for the

⁷⁴⁸ See Soc. 5.11 and Soz. 7.13. Only Sozomen presents Justina as some sort of regent who could actually draw up laws (7.13, which echoes 1 Kgs 22.8). Ambrose attributes authorship of the law to Auxentius (*Ep.* 75a.15). Urbainczyk (1997a), 361, argues that Sozomen gives Ambrose more autonomy than Socrates and this is related to their different opinions regarding the correct relationship between emperors and bishops. In general, Sozomen provides a more expansive account of events in the West than Socrates.

⁷⁴⁹ Because of the death of Gratian, the Nicene Maximus is criticised by all the eastern accounts: for example, Soz. 7.13 only mentions that Valentinian recognised Maximus, not Theodosius.

⁷⁵⁰ Lunn-Rockliffe (2008), 196, analyses the editing process both speeches went through for publication. At 199-200, she discusses the political anxiety with regard to succession that lay behind the speeches.

⁷⁵¹ Lunn-Rockliffe (2008), 195, discusses the likely presence of imperial family members at both services.

Lord God's forgiveness on his behalf. He used to kiss the hands and heads of his sisters, forgetting that he was emperor, mindful that he was their brother. And the more he stood above others by the right of his power, the more humbly [*humilis*] he behaved towards his sisters.⁷⁵²

Ambrose's focus on the sisters emphasised intimacy and perhaps allowed him to take a more appreciative view of an emperor with whom he had been in conflict in the previous decade.⁷⁵³ The next chapter is the only reference to Justina (37), an indirect mention regarding a dispute over an estate she bequeathed to her children. The focus of this chapter remains on Valentinian's sisters, who defer to his decision to allow the relative to inherit. The sisters are praised because they act as adjuncts of Valentinian, unlike Justina who usurped her son's authority during the basilica conflict.⁷⁵⁴

4.2.3.2 Justina at the Thessalonica Conference

Justina emerges as a dominant force at the Thessalonica conference in the accounts by the non-Nicene Christian Philostorgius and fervently anti-Christian Zosimus, both of whom provide very different religious viewpoints to the sources discussed so far (and to each other). Valentinian is again a marginal figure, it is Justina who acts as the court's representative in the meeting with Theodosius following Maximus' invasion of Italy. However, Valentinian is not the implied focus of criticism in these presentations of Justina. Instead, Justina's arrangement for the marriage of her daughter, Galla, to Theodosius I serves to criticise the eastern Augustus.

Philostorgius' ecclesiastical history (the first eastern narrative) ought to provide a good opportunity for a non-Nicene Christian's viewpoint in the generation after the basilica conflict. However, his account (10.7) survives via the ninth-century epitome by Photius, whose theology was Nicene and whose constant interpolations upon

⁷⁵² For a similar description of the relationship between Theodosius II and his sisters see 3.1. Liebeschuetz (2005), 360, sets out Ambrose's structure: 1-8 is a lament; 9-39 outlined Valentinian's Christian virtues; 40-57 dealt with the theme of consolation; and 59-81 consists of a second lament and a prayer for both Gratian's and Valentinian's souls. In his introduction to the oration, Liebeschuetz, 358-9, describes the period of composition as one of political uncertainty in the West: before Eugenius' usurpation and therefore when Theodosius' intervention was uncertain. Theodosius and his family (including his wife, Galla, Valentinian's other sister) are not referred to at all.

⁷⁵³ A similar motivation can be inferred about Julian's choice of Eusebia for an encomium, given his tense relationship with Constantius; see 3.2.

⁷⁵⁴ Ambrose presents himself as a father-figure to Valentinian towards the end of the oration: 63.

Philostorgius' 'heretical' stance dominate his summary.⁷⁵⁵ Philostorgius describes Justina being made Augusta as a result of her daughter's marriage.⁷⁵⁶ From the complicated form in which it survives, Philostorgius seems to suggest that the conference was a diplomatic victory for Valentinian's court: Justina receives the title Augusta and Valentinian is credited with a role in the subsequent campaign against Maximus.⁷⁵⁷

Zosimus corroborates the impression given by Philostorgius of Justina at Thessalonica (4.44.2-4).⁷⁵⁸ Justina emerges from Zosimus' account as the most politically shrewd participant of the negotiations, able to manipulate Theodosius through her beautiful daughter. Valentinian is absent from the account almost entirely. The portrayal of Justina's forcefulness of character and assured appraisal of the situation was to the clear detriment of Theodosius, who is ultimately depicted as driven by lust for Galla.⁷⁵⁹ Theodosius' inability to engage with Justina's argument is more pronounced because her actions in arranging the marriage of her daughter are an appropriate duty for a woman.⁷⁶⁰ While Justina takes advantage of her young son's malleable character in the Nicene accounts, Zosimus uses the figure of Justina to demonstrate pre-existing character faults in the mature Theodosius.⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁵ Another problem, recurrent in Socrates' and Sozomen's accounts, is that the chapters are unchronological: the conference at Thessalonica is described before Maximus' invasion.

⁷⁵⁶ Philost. 3.22, also describes Constantina as Augusta, another non-Nicene Christian imperial woman who, like Justina, did not receive such a title – 2.2.4.

⁷⁵⁷ A reflection of their shared religious faith, Philostorgius credits Valentinian with a role in the defeat of Maximus: *HE* 10.8. The Nicene accounts attribute the victory solely to Theodosius. The emphasis of the Nicene accounts, and their influence by Theodosian propaganda, is discussed by McEvoy (2013a), 91-2.

⁷⁵⁸ Photius' transmission relates only that Philostorgius criticises the Augustus: 11.2.

⁷⁵⁹ In a similar vein, Soc. 4.31, suggests it was out of lust that Valentinian I abandoned his first wife, Severa, for Justina. McEvoy (2013a), 91, describes Theodosius' other more pragmatic motivations to act for Valentinian.

⁷⁶⁰ Julian and Claudian praise Eusebia and Serena respectively for the arrangement of their own nuptials: see Chapter Three.

⁷⁶¹ Only Zosimus describes Theodosius as reluctant to move against Maximus (4.43.2-44.2). Zos. 4.55.1 presents similar motives for Theodosius' actions when Eugenius usurped: Theodosius only acts when prompted by Galla's lamentations for her brother. According to Zosimus, Justina also uses the pretext of Gratian's death to persuade Theodosius to act against Maximus – the presented reason in the Nicene histories. Zos. 4.47.2 describes Justina's management of Valentinian's affairs after the conference; however, Soc. 7.14.7 and Ruf. *HE* 17 (both writing closer to events) relate that she died soon after the negotiations.

4.2.4 Conclusion

The basilica conflict demonstrates that with the evolution of a stationary court, imperial women could more readily provide access to an emperor, who might be young and impressionable. The problems imperial women's more active participation in court presentation caused is also neatly illustrated by the conflict. In contrast with Valentinian I, who would spend the summer months on the frontier, Valentinian II relied on involvement in ecclesiastical matters and public Christian worship.⁷⁶² Valentinian's homoian faith was a potential threat to Ambrose's authority over Italian ecclesiastical politics.⁷⁶³ It was on the basis of her adherence to non-Nicene Christianity that Justina was depicted as driving imperial policy. In reality, homoian beliefs of the pre-existing contingent of the populace, and the Gothic recruits in the imperial army, provided a fresh power base for the new court. Justina's personal beliefs may well have informed her patronage of these groups, but her actions were seen to benefit the court.

All the portrayals of Justina seem driven by ulterior motive, which often extended beyond her religious adherence. Ambrose, whose actions in the basilica conflict could have been construed as treason, as defined by *CTh.* 16.1.4, needed to defend his position to the court repeatedly, but to avoid criticism of Valentinian. By targeting Justina, Ambrose could restrict his focus to her actions, and therefore make them seem the unreasonable whims of a woman, rather than the result of broader political concerns. Even so, and despite the bold biblical references, Ambrose avoided referring to Justina directly. Although he opposed her religious beliefs, which challenged Ambrose's local authority, Ambrose's embassies for the court reveals a more complicated and closer relationship than the basilica letters present and the opposing religious beliefs of the parties suggest. The later Nicene traditions defended Ambrose's position in challenging imperial authority, but they were mainly concerned with defending Theodosius' inaction during Maximus' usurpation. The eastern sources promoted the Theodosian emperors as the inheritors of Nicene Christian rule, while simultaneously demoting Valentinian II, whose faith was

⁷⁶² Hunt (2007), 89, summarises Valentinian I's reticence over church matters, which was praised by both Christians and non-Christians. At 73, he suggests that Valentinian only became actively involved when such ecclesiastical matters created civic unrest.

⁷⁶³ Humphries (2000), 135-6.

dictated by his impious mother. This was despite Theodosius' marriage to Galla, presumably a homoian like her brother.

The succession of the Theodosian dynasty afforded subsequent Nicene ecclesiastical historians more freedom to deploy Justina as Ambrose's opponent. The changed political context for the production of these accounts informed the portrayal of Justina's involvement in ecclesiastical affairs, a role which was essentially the same as that played by many Theodosian women. The accounts may have been driven by a specific religious perspective, but such images of Justina benefited the incumbent Theodosian dynasty, because they denigrated its Valentinianic predecessors for the benefit of Theodosius.

Philostorgius and Zosimus did not make use of negative female exempla in their portrayals of Justina. Nevertheless, her depiction in these accounts still creates a negative shaping, which has the same intention as the Nicene accounts: to denigrate an emperor and his abilities as ruler.

4.3 EUDOXIA VS. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

As in external matters, as if by nature, so too in action and the conduct of business the two sexes, men and women, are distinct. For to women is assigned the care of the home, to men participation in political and business affairs. In contests on God's behalf and in labours for the Church, however, this is impossible: on the contrary, it is quite possible for a woman to join in these fine contests and labours with greater strength than a man.

Joh. Chrys. *Ep.* 29 'to Italica' (170M) Spring 406

The above quotation is from a letter written by John Chrysostom to Italica in Rome during his second and final exile (20 June 404-14 September 407).⁷⁶⁴ The terms in which he praises her are similar to those Ambrose had used for Helena in his funeral oration for Theodosius. Both bishops argue that a woman could have an active role when carrying out acts of Christian piety, but as subordinates within a clear ecclesiastical hierarchy. The issue of clerical versus imperial authority was the prevalent theme of the narratives for the conflict between Chrysostom and Eudoxia, both of whom emerge from the accounts as the figureheads for these opposing ideals.

⁷⁶⁴ Italica was a wealthy Christian widow in Rome: see *PLRE* 1 s.v. Italica.

Ambrose's comparison of Justina with Eve and, in particular, Jezebel and Herodias had presented his contemporary as an impious woman, who usurped her husband's position of authority. These negative references were also used in the narratives for John Chrysostom's dispute with Eudoxia. In some accounts, Chrysostom's references to these biblical women were reported to be the pretext for his exiles.

Unlike the basilica conflict, this later altercation was not construed as a schismatic dispute, but rather one clearly focused on the role of women in imperial Christian display.⁷⁶⁵ While Ambrose claimed that he was threatened with exile by the court, John Chrysostom's actions actually resulted in two exiles, the last precipitating his death. The different outcomes of the bishops' altercations with the court suggest different circumstances in the dynamic between bishop, empress and imperial authority.⁷⁶⁶

Eudoxia is overwhelmingly portrayed as the cause of Chrysostom's exiles. She is the means by which Chrysostom's clerical enemies could achieve the aims of their vendetta against him; a similar dynamic to the relationship between Auxentius and Justina in *Epistulae* 75 and 75a. Although the literary accounts agree that Eudoxia was complicit, the manner by which she was implicated varies between the early and later literary traditions. In the first section I will provide a summary of the context for the eastern dispute, looking at the contemporary evidence for the disturbances created by Chrysostom's exiles. From this overview it is easier to determine how the narratives differ in regard to Eudoxia's role. The literary accounts can be roughly divided chronologically to before and after the reburial of Chrysostom's remains in Constantinople in 438. The funeral oration by Pseudo-Martyrius and Palladius' *Dialogus* were both written in the same year as Arcadius' death, 408.⁷⁶⁷ The

⁷⁶⁵ References made to Arianism creep into the various accounts for the eastern conflict but these seem incidental. Palladius, *Dial.* 9, Soc. 6.18 and Soz. 8.20 refer to the 'Arian' law by which John Chrysostom was deposed a second time. See also Pseudo-Martyrius, 109. Stebnicka (2012), 153, suggests the conflict was essentially political and closely connected with Eudoxia's official presentation by the court.

⁷⁶⁶ For the threat of exile for Ambrose see *Ep.* 75a.36 and Ruf. *HE* 11.15. Liebeschuetz (2011), 5-6, connects the different fates for the bishops to the respective stability of the regime. He suggests that Valentinian's position was more precarious, which allowed Ambrose to emerge the victor. The different fates of the bishops underline Ambrose's retrospective presentation of his actions in his published corpus, which did not necessarily reflect the reality.

⁷⁶⁷ Liebeschuetz (2011), 265, compares these biographical accounts with Paulinus.

remaining sources are already familiar from the accounts of the basilica conflict: Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, the last of whom referred to Chrysostom's exiles in a series of sermons.⁷⁶⁸ The chronological difference between these two traditions, and the changed status of Chrysostom from the court's perspective, informs the different presentations of Arcadius' court and, in particular, Eudoxia.

4.3.1 Historical Backdrop

John Chrysostom became bishop of Constantinople on 15 December 397.⁷⁶⁹ His appointment was immediately followed by a series of crises. The next three years saw the deposition and execution of the consul Eutropius (in 399), and the military siege by Gainas in the capital followed by a massacre of Goths by the local populace (400) and Gainas' later defeat near the Danube in February 401.⁷⁷⁰ It appears that Eudoxia was made Augusta in response to Gainas' revolt.⁷⁷¹ The specific cause of Chrysostom's changing relationship with the court over the course of the next four years is difficult to disentangle from the often contradictory literary sources.

In the early years of his tenure as bishop, John Chrysostom acted closely with Eudoxia against the homoian contingent of the populace, which included Gothic soldiers for whom Gainas requested a space for worship in Constantinople.⁷⁷² From late 401 to 402, John Chrysostom toured the East making clerical depositions and appointments.⁷⁷³ His actions on this tour, in particular his appointment of Heraclides,

⁷⁶⁸ Theodoret makes a brief reference to the interment of Chrysostom's relics in Constantinople in his ecclesiastical history. Philostorgius wrote closer to events, but his history is transmitted via Photius' byzantine epitome. Ommeslaeghe (1979), 133, is dismissive of the value of the brief accounts by Philostorgius and Theodoret. He places emphasis, 135, on the value of the *Life of Porphyry*, a source which Barnes and Bevan (2013), 28-32, dismiss. There were also various byzantine hagiographies of Chrysostom, which are discussed by Ommeslaeghe (1979), 134-48. These later sources are derived from the accounts discussed here. See also Barnes and Bevan (2013), 9-12.

⁷⁶⁹ I base my chronology on the recent examination by Barnes and Bevan (2013), xii-xiii. At 15-24, they give a comprehensive summary of the accounts for Chrysostom's exile. Eudoxia married Arcadius on 27 April 395. Chrysostom was consecrated as bishop in December 398, when he was in his fifties.

⁷⁷⁰ Eutropius had been involved in Chrysostom's election as bishop. He was killed after sheltering in Chrysostom's church: Soc. 6.5. In a different version, Philost. 11.6, attributes Eutropius' downfall to Eudoxia.

⁷⁷¹ For an overview of events see section 2.1.5.

⁷⁷² Soz. 8.4.

⁷⁷³ Barnes and Bevan (2013), xii-xiii. Fournier (2006), 160, and Liebeschuetz (1985), 5, suggest that Chrysostom could make these journeys in the East because of imperial favour.

would later impact upon his own position.⁷⁷⁴ The bishop's appointments and dismissals alienated many of his fellow clergymen, who were ready to assist in his deposition.⁷⁷⁵

After John's return to Constantinople his relationship with the court disintegrated rapidly, which was typified by a change in his relationship with Eudoxia in the literary sources.⁷⁷⁶ In summer 403, Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, arrived in Constantinople to defend himself before a council, which Arcadius hoped would be adjudicated by Chrysostom.⁷⁷⁷ The council did not take place and in yet another dramatic twist, Chrysostom himself was called to defend thirteen charges in a trial known as the Council of the Oak, held in the suburbs of Constantinople in 403.⁷⁷⁸ According to the sources at least, Chrysostom's summons were due to the exertions by his clerical enemies; however, the pretext, according to the accounts by Palladius, Socrates and Sozomen, came from a perceived insult to Eudoxia.⁷⁷⁹ Fournier, in his analysis of Chrysostom's exiles, has pointed to the benefit for the court in allying themselves with Chrysostom's enemies, since it presented his actions as an ecclesiastical matter, rather than *maiestas*.⁷⁸⁰ Chrysostom was deposed *in absentia* and sent into exile, but was quickly recalled a couple of months later following civic

⁷⁷⁴ For the violence that followed Chrysostom's appointment of Heraclides in Ephesus see Soc. 6.17, who provides more detail on Heraclides' transgressions than Soz. 8.19. Heraclides was later charged at the Council of the Oak along with Chrysostom.

⁷⁷⁵ Palladius, *Dial.* 4, describes Chrysostom's clerical enemies as drawing on imperial support.

⁷⁷⁶ Barnes and Bevan (2013), 28-32, argue that Chrysostom's close association with Eutropius compromised his position and this was the origin of Eudoxia's enmity.

⁷⁷⁷ Theophilus emerges as the main villain in all accounts. For example see Soc. 6.17 and Soz. 8.19.

⁷⁷⁸ It probably took place in September 403. Palladius, *Dial.* 8 discusses the events prior to and during the Oak, before which Chrysostom refused to appear; Soc. 6.15 and Soz. 8.17, add that Chrysostom refused to attend four times. In the same passage Palladius refers to the charge of high treason. An epitomised version survives of the proceedings by Photius – translated by Barnes and Bevan (2013), appendix A: 153-9.

⁷⁷⁹ See 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 below.

⁷⁸⁰ Fournier (2006), 162-4, argues that for a bishop to be exiled he had to be isolated from both the clergy and the imperial court. He compares Chrysostom's case with Ambrose, who had the support of his north Italian peers; see also Liebeschuetz (1985), 6. Soc. 6.4-5 describes Chrysostom's underlying popular support, but also his isolation from first his peers within the church and then from powerful political figures, which is when Chrysostom's troubles begin. The nineteenth charge against Chrysostom at the Council of the Oak relates to the depositions he made; I follow the numbering used by Barnes and Bevan (2013), 153-6. A consistent request by Ambrose in his refusal to attend a consistory is that he should be tried by clergy, not laymen, because the dispute was an ecclesiastical issue: *Ep.* 75.2. Chrysostom refuses to attend the Oak because it comprises of his enemies and so he requests a general Council instead: Palladius, *Dial.* 8, Pseudo-Martyrius, 56, Soc. 6.16 and Soz. 8.17. For the accusation of treason see Ommeslaeghe (1979), 132.

disturbances and, reportedly, a change of opinion by Eudoxia.⁷⁸¹ In the same year, 403, the urban prefect Simplicius erected outside Hagia Sophia a silver statue of Eudoxia, which is presented in Socrates' and Sozomen's accounts as the catalyst for Chrysostom's final exile.⁷⁸²

Like the basilica conflict, Chrysostom's dispute with the court reached its apex in Easter week, after Chrysostom had been deposed again and his followers excommunicated. Technically Chrysostom had never been formally acquitted and therefore could be deposed without another council being held.⁷⁸³ During the night of 16 April 404 rioting broke out in the eastern capital. The bishop was sent into exile on 20 June, following a fire which destroyed the Hagia Sophia and the senate house.⁷⁸⁴

The violent rioting that took place in Constantinople is described by *Coll. Avell.* 38 'De persona sancti Iohannis', a letter written by Honorius to Arcadius soon after the bishop's departure.⁷⁸⁵ The themes that emerge in the later primary accounts correlate with the issues raised by the contemporary evidence in Honorius' letter. The whole letter amounts to a reproach of Arcadius by his brother: firstly for the promotion of Eudoxia to Augusta, marked by the parading of her image around the provinces; and secondly for Arcadius' handling of the Easter riots. The first aspect is briefly dealt with at the start of the letter, a reiteration of a prior objection made by Honorius:

Although, I reproached you in an earlier letter about the image of a woman being unprecedentedly [*nouo exemplo*] carried about throughout the provinces and the whispers of critics being spread abroad through the whole world, so that by repentance from such a deed and by cessation from this scheme envious rumour may grow

⁷⁸¹ For Pseudo-Martyrius and Palladius, Eudoxia's change of heart was brought about by a stillbirth.

⁷⁸² The statue base still survives (Appendix 1.39).

⁷⁸³ The primary sources are divided on what prompted John Chrysostom's second deposition – discussed below. The earliest narrative, by Pseudo-Martyrius, glossed over the specific details by introducing the Devil who sought to bring about John's downfall: 83-91.

⁷⁸⁴ Palladius, *Dial.* 10, argues that it was an act of God. Pseudo-Martyrius, 111, suggests that Chrysostom's female supporters were set up as the culprits for the fire; see also 112-14 and 118. Meyer (1985), 165 n.186, discusses the incident in more detail.

⁷⁸⁵ Honorius refers to his co-Augusti, which gives a timeframe for his letter of 402-7 (after Theodosius II's appointment, but before Chrysostom's death). The riots at Easter must be those of 404. Therefore the most plausible date would be early summer 404, so that the letter represents an immediate response to news reaching Rome of the riots. Palladius, *Dial.* 3, describes the support of the western church for Chrysostom demonstrated by another letter written by Honorius (which does not survive).

stale and the public discourse may have nothing to complain about in the character of the times⁷⁸⁶

The events described in this passage refer to the public ceremony that accompanied Eudoxia's promotion to Augusta, which occurred four years prior to the events described in the rest of the letter.⁷⁸⁷ Eudoxia's public presentation by the court represents the pinnacle of female ostentation. The parading of her image around the provinces was customary for the appointment of an emperor, but was objected to by Honorius for Eudoxia.⁷⁸⁸ The empress' promotion also led to the erection of statues. One such statue, and in particular the celebrations around it, was presented by Socrates and Sozomen as the origin of Chrysostom's criticism of Eudoxia.⁷⁸⁹ Even if Chrysostom did not specifically take offence at Eudoxia's acclamation, as Honorius seemed to do, he had certainly expressed criticism of female beautification and had previously praised Eudoxia for discarding such ornamentation at the dedication of the relics of Sisinnius, Martyrius and Alexander (*PG* 63.469).⁷⁹⁰

Honorius then goes on to chastise his brother over the Easter riots in 404. No mention is made of the celebrations around Eudoxia's statue:

And that all the mysteries were stirred up into a warlike mode, that some were slain in the very sanctuaries of the church, and such great violence raged around the altars that venerable bishops were thrust into

⁷⁸⁶ The translation of this letter is my own, with the kind assistance of Matthew Hoskin and Gavin Kelly.

⁷⁸⁷ Even though Eudoxia's promotion and the riots are mentioned in the same letter, this is not necessarily an indication that they are connected in Honorius' opinion; I thank Matthew Hoskin for his clarification of this point.

⁷⁸⁸ Holum and Vikan (1979), 116-20, describe the various types of *adventus* (which included those of imperial and relics *adventus*). The parade of imperial portraits was part of the first stage, *synantesis*, in which the crowds received the images outside the walls of a city. *Zos.* 4.37.3, describes the parading of Maximus' image in Alexandria upon his recognition as Augustus by the imperial college.

⁷⁸⁹ *Soc.* 6.18, refers to games held around Eudoxia's statue; *Soz.* 8.20 refers to mimes as well. Statues for other Theodosian Augustae are described by *Them. Or.* 19.228B (for Aelia Flaccilla), and *Chron. Pasch.* 444 (Eudocia). A statue of Aelia Flaccilla in Antioch was destroyed during rioting; see *Lib. Or.* 20.4 (who also refers to statues of Arcadius and Honorius) and *Zos.* 4.41.1-3.

⁷⁹⁰ This incident is translated and discussed by Barnes and Bevan (2013), 29-30: 'He waxed eloquent on how the empress had come on foot like everyone else and discarded her imperial finery so that she could stay as close as possible to the holy relics, in this imitating King David when he escorted the Ark of the Covenant'. For Chrysostom's negative attitude to female adornment see Palladius, *Dial.* 5 and 8.

exile, and human blood (a fact unholy to mention) flowed into the heavenly sacraments.⁷⁹¹

Later in the letter Honorius describes the fire where the ‘riches of so many emperors’ were ‘cremated as if in some funeral of the city’. The issue of imperial versus ecclesiastical authority was also raised by Honorius, but in favour of Chrysostom. Reminiscent of Ambrose’s earlier protests, Honorius argues that Chrysostom should be tried without imperial intervention because the dispute was an ecclesiastical issue: ‘For the interpretation of divine matters looks to them, to us the compliance of religion.’⁷⁹²

A series of portents in Constantinople was seen by many as showing divine disapproval for John’s deposition: a hailstorm at the end of September, the death of Eudoxia from a stillbirth on 6 October (both in 404), and in November 405 the death of Arsacius, Chrysostom’s successor as bishop of Constantinople. John would die in exile on 14 September 407, while his supporters in Constantinople, the Johannites, continued to worship separately from the rest of the Constantinople laity. Under Theodosius II, Eudoxia’s son, John’s memory was formally rehabilitated on 14 September 428. His remains were placed at the Church of the Apostles in 438, the date by which we can divide the sources for Chrysostom’s relationship with Eudoxia.⁷⁹³

4.3.2 The Early Accounts of the Conflict

If Barnes’ and Bevan’s chronological reconstruction is correct, then both Pseudo-Martyrius’ and Palladius’ *Dialogue* were written in 408.⁷⁹⁴ Neither account was composed in Constantinople; however, both authors refer to themselves as associates

⁷⁹¹ Palladius, *Dial.* 2, employs similar terms to describe the deaths of members of the clergy: ‘The baptismal fonts were filled with blood and the holy water was dyed red from their wounds’.

⁷⁹² Honorius’ words evoke Ambrose’s argument in explanation of his defiance of Valentinian II: *Ep.* 75a.36 (quoted at 4.2.2). From the eastern court’s perspective they thought that they were following the procedure of a clerical jury.

⁷⁹³ Barnes and Bevan (2013), xii-xiii, provide the full timeline of Chrysostom’s career and his posthumous rehabilitation. His name was restored first to the diptychs at Antioch in ca. 416, where he had first been bishop. Holum and Vikan (1979), 122-3, describe the interment ceremony for Chrysostom’s relics. Theod. *HE* 5.36, briefly describes the *adventus* of the relics into Constantinople; this specific ceremony is examined by Holum and Vikan (1979), 122-3.

⁷⁹⁴ Barnes and Bevan (2013), 9-10, suggest the original funerary speech was delivered in 407; Ommeslaeghe (1979), 151, also suggests a timeframe of 407-8. Barnes and Bevan tentatively attribute the funeral oration to Cosmas; see also Stebnicka (2012), 145.

of Chrysostom and among those persecuted following his deposition.⁷⁹⁵ John Chrysostom's death while travelling to a place of further exile on the Black Sea was still a recent memory when these narratives were written.⁷⁹⁶ Consequently, these close acquaintances of the bishop formulated their accounts to defend Chrysostom and his actions which the court had deemed treasonous.⁷⁹⁷ Palladius attributes the charge of treason to the accusation that Chrysostom had called Eudoxia, Jezebel (8). Both works, although highly polemical in nature, have rightly been re-evaluated for their historical value as contemporary accounts.⁷⁹⁸ Pseudo-Martyrius is particularly interesting because the vitriolic account of Eudoxia is from a speech which was originally delivered when Arcadius was alive.⁷⁹⁹

In the later accounts, Socrates and Sozomen refer to two sermons at which Eudoxia takes offence, prompting both of Chrysostom's exiles. Although Eudoxia plays a significant role in terms of structure in the earlier accounts, Pseudo-Martyrius and Palladius posit that hostility towards John originated from his attempts to build a leper hospital outside the city walls on land which was owned by local aristocracy.⁸⁰⁰ Neither Pseudo-Martyrius nor Palladius make reference to a defamatory speech by John Chrysostom in which he compares Eudoxia to Herodias, unlike the later

⁷⁹⁵ Barnes and Bevan (2013), xiii, suggest that the funerary speech was written near to Constantinople and then circulated around the capital. Palladius composed his *Dialogue* in Spring 408 having been exiled in the aftermath of Chrysostom's deposition: Meyer (1985), 4.

⁷⁹⁶ Barnes and Bevan (2013), 3-5.

⁷⁹⁷ Pseudo-Martyrius, 59, sets out his defence of Chrysostom and for the bishop's supporters to remain defiant. Ommeslaeghe (1979), 149, argues that the funerary oration's purpose was to denounce the injustice and irregularities of the judicial process. The charge Palladius describes is not among those given in the proceedings for the Oak that are summarised by Photius. Meyer (1985), 5, describes how Palladius formed the *Dialogue* as a defence. Fournier (2006), 162, suggests the court consciously avoided a *maiestas* charge; unlike the western conflict, they sought to keep Chrysostom's deposition an ecclesiastical matter.

⁷⁹⁸ Barnes and Bevan (2013), 32-3, reappraise Pseudo-Martyrius' value as the earliest narrative for Chrysostom's deposition and for the different perspective it provides in comparison with Palladius. Ommeslaeghe (1979), 149, praises Pseudo-Martyrius as an excellent witness to the situation in Constantinople at the time of Chrysostom's deposition. Liebeschuetz (2011), 265-6, notes that every account of the bishop defends his actions.

⁷⁹⁹ Barnes and Bevan (2013), xiii and 6.

⁸⁰⁰ Pseudo-Martyrius, 63, and Palladius, *Dial.* 5. In his detailed analysis of the literary sources, Ommeslaeghe (1979), 150-1, follows Palladius' and Pseudo-Martyrius' leper story as the origin of the conflict.

tradition.⁸⁰¹ However, both early sources compare Eudoxia with the negative examples of biblical women that Ambrose employed: Herodias, Jezebel, and Eve.⁸⁰²

The early defences of Chrysostom's actions present Eudoxia as the power at court scheming against him.⁸⁰³ The absence of a specific pretext for Eudoxia's animosity towards Chrysostom, unlike later accounts which refer to an inflammatory sermon made in response to her public presentation, make her actions against the bishop seem more unfair. Eudoxia's negative effect on Chrysostom is conveyed in both accounts through the descriptions of two stillbirths experienced by the empress. The empress' sufferings frame the accounts of Chrysostom's two exiles. The first stillbirth precipitates Chrysostom's rapid recall from his first exile⁸⁰⁴, while the second fatal stillbirth punishes Eudoxia for her actions orchestrating the bishop's second exile.⁸⁰⁵ This is conveyed particularly forcefully by Pseudo-Martyrius in a protracted and visceral account of her death (121):

Those who were there say that she often leapt up and suddenly burst out: 'Why do you attack me, John?' Nevertheless, her heart was hardened as she hastened towards her final punishment. She summoned the old man, and by nodding her head requested Holy Communion and prayer: this was the only sin she had not yet committed. As soon as she received them, she miscarried, so that <those present> said with joy that a great sign had been wrought for the old man and they even recited a collective chant giving thanks for what had already happened and praying for the future. As they were doing this, she took the infant in her arms and vomited out her soul together with the communion <that she had> only just <received>. Still breathing and half-alive, she filled the sensory organs of those standing around with stench that surpassed the plants of India and the flies of Persia and virtually all the skill of those who busy themselves

⁸⁰¹ Barnes and Bevan (2013), 26-8, use this to argue that Chrysostom never delivered such a speech.

⁸⁰² Palladius compares Eudoxia to all three biblical women: *Dial.* 8 refers to a quote by Chrysostom to John the Baptist and Herodias (see also 12) as well as the Jezebel allegation; 15 refers to the story of Job; 18 presents Chrysostom as the successor of both John the Baptist and Job. The mention of these biblical men brings to mind the respective women who challenged them. Pseudo-Martyrius describes Eudoxia as Jezebel three times (3, 36 and 138); however, his most common biblical comparison is Eve: for example, 6. Stebnicka (2012), 146-8, discusses the homilies by Chrysostom in which Jezebel appears.

⁸⁰³ Pseudo-Martyrius, 66 and 87, describes her assuming imperial authority.

⁸⁰⁴ Pseudo-Martyrius, 64. In discussion of Pseudo-Martyrius, 66, Barnes and Bevan (2013), 77 n.146, argue that the first was a stillbirth, rather than a miscarriage from the description of swaddling clothes. They disagree with Baur's reading of Palladius, *Dial.* 9, description of a calamity (θραῦσις): (1988b), 265.

⁸⁰⁵ To underline that her death is divine judgement, Pseudo-Martyrius cites Exodus 8.19.

with such things, with her suffering suggesting nothing else than that <the baby> had long been among the dead. In this way she brought her life to a close.⁸⁰⁶

The details that Pseudo-Martyrius provides at the start of the passage for Eudoxia's (natural) death are nearly identical to those suffered by earlier imperial male persecutors of Christians. The description is particularly evocative of Lactantius' early-fourth century description of Galerius' death from cancer, which is presented as retribution for his persecution of the Church (*DMP*, 33.1-11). In both passages, doctors try in vain to treat the symptoms; this is then followed by a description of the putrefaction of the patient's body, the smell of which attacks bystanders' olfactory senses (*DMP*, 33.6-7). Worms are described as emerging from inside Galerius and Eudoxia: *DMP*, 33.8 (*vermis*) and Pseudo-Martyrius, 121 (σκώληξ).⁸⁰⁷

The description of Eudoxia's death in childbirth also draws on Genesis 3.16, where Eve is told she will suffer the pain of childbirth as a consequence of her sin. At the start of this passage, Pseudo-Martyrius presents Eudoxia as worse than Eve who in pain gives birth to life, while Eudoxia dies in pain having given birth to a dead baby.⁸⁰⁸ The excoriating passage is typical of a general subversive tone throughout Pseudo-Martyrius' work, which constantly challenges imperial authority over ecclesiastical matters.⁸⁰⁹ Chrysostom presents a rival authority to the imperial court, rightly in the opinion of Pseudo-Martyrius.

Arcadius is mentioned sparingly in Pseudo-Martyrius' account; however, the attention paid to Eudoxia's actions, ultimately orchestrated by the Devil, emphasises Arcadius' political impotency (36):

⁸⁰⁶ At the start of this passage Pseudo-Martyrius echoes his description of her earlier stillbirth by using the same quotation from Genesis 3.16.

⁸⁰⁷ Sozomen offers a similar description for the death of Julian (with the same association of unpleasant odours), 5.8. Barnes and Bevan (2013), 105 n.260, note that the expression 'streams of worms' (καὶ πηγαὶ σκωλήκων ἔβρουον) is employed by Chrysostom 'almost exclusively'. The byzantine historian Zonaras uses similar terms for Maximinus' death, 13.34. Barnes and Bevan (2013), 105 n.264, note the 'prototype' biblical parallel of the persecuting king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, in 2 Macc. 9.5-28.

⁸⁰⁸ Earlier in the speech, 87, Eudoxia inadvertently compares herself with Eve, and then accuses Chrysostom of making the connection instead, suggesting by extension that he associates Arcadius with Adam.

⁸⁰⁹ This is demonstrated by the references made to the fallibility of the decrees by the homoian Constantius and Valens: see 99 and 12 respectively. Arcadius' own political impotency was demonstrated during Gainas' uprising, which is resolved by Chrysostom's affirmative action: see 48-51.

What then is the greatest weapon that I think I have? The one with which I once persuaded Jezebel to destroy the famous Naboth. I already have among the presbyters instruments practised in the arts of slander, and I have a woman of that sort, whom I have taken prisoner through her insatiable avarice, and who is invested with both power and wickedness, great wickedness. <John> is very troublesome to this woman who views him with suspicion. Theophilus the Egyptian will collaborate with me in this business

According to Pseudo-Martyrius, Eudoxia, like Jezebel, usurps her proper place at court because she perceives herself to be a partner in imperial power.⁸¹⁰ Despite this clear hostility to Eudoxia, in the hierarchy of those who persecute Chrysostom she is manipulated by Chrysostom's clerical enemies, just as Justina was seen as being driven on in her actions against Ambrose by Auxentius. It is Chrysostom's clerical peers who ultimately want Chrysostom exiled. These men bring their schemes to fruition through their manipulation of Eudoxia.⁸¹¹ Both of Chrysostom's exiles are precipitated by Eudoxia's misinterpretation of his spiritual message. Pseudo-Martyrius suggests she misconstrues a speech which refers to Eve (87). Eudoxia is then able to bring about Chrysostom's exile by suggesting that the allusion by extension compares Arcadius to Adam. In comparison, Palladius exonerates Arcadius from blame and suggests that others changed his 'most excellent decrees' (*Dial.* 9). However, like the descriptions of Valentinian II in the basilica conflict, this can be construed as criticism, because Arcadius' passivity permits others to act instead of him, such as Eudoxia.⁸¹²

While Justina is driven by her heretical views, Eudoxia is portrayed as simply vain; both women lack the virtue of temperance. At court, it is always Eudoxia who takes assertive actions, even the positive act of recalling Chrysostom from exile, which follows her first miscarriage (67).⁸¹³ Despite appearing as subordinate to

⁸¹⁰ See, for example, Pseudo-Martyrius, 84: 'He [the Devil] implanted in the woman who wielded power forgetfulness of the earlier blow and introduced in its stead a profound hatred, which he contrived with no great toil, spreading many lies through many mouths.'

⁸¹¹ Fournier (2006), 163, suggests it is Chrysostom's lack of clerical support which leads to his exile, in contrast to Ambrose.

⁸¹² Eudoxia is at one point described as misguided rather than inherently bad by Pseudo-Martyrius, 6. This image is undone by the violent portrayal of her death discussed above.

⁸¹³ Sozomen picks up on this idea, for example at 8.20, which describes her influence in church affairs.

Chrysostom's clerical enemies, Eudoxia is the dynamic focal point of these early narratives.

4.3.3 Literary Narratives after the Formal Rehabilitation of John Chrysostom

The later sources are familiar from the discussion of Justina's and Ambrose's conflict: (in chronological order) Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen and Theodoret. Like Philostorgius' *Ecclesiastical History*, the five sermons of Theodoret only survive via Photius' epitome.⁸¹⁴ These epitomes add little detail to the portrayal of Eudoxia, therefore I will discuss them briefly before examining the longer accounts by Socrates and Sozomen.⁸¹⁵

4.3.3.1 The Epitomes of Philostorgius and Theodoret

Philostorgius' description of Eudoxia is limited to one chapter and, like his earlier description of Justina, it is devoid of biblical comparisons. His is the only account to draw attention to her Frankish descent through her father, Bauto, from whom Eudoxia inherits barbarian traits (11.6), which are used to explain her active role at court more generally.⁸¹⁶ The description is not vehemently negative, but the contrast it creates between her and Arcadius' character traits explicitly underline Arcadius' impotency as a ruler.⁸¹⁷ Philostorgius makes no reference to John Chrysostom, but he does describe Eudoxia's influence over her husband in regard to Eutropius:

[Eutropius] threatened her that he would straightway turn her out of his palace; accordingly, embracing her two children in her arms, she came to her husband just as she was, and crying and stretching forth her children, she poured forth a flood of tears, adding also those other artifices which women in their anger are wont to adopt with the truly feminine design of exciting their husbands' feelings of pity more vehemently.⁸¹⁸

⁸¹⁴ Theodoret's sermons are translated by Barnes and Bevan (2013), 160-3.

⁸¹⁵ Ommeslaeghe (1979), 133, presents a similar assessment.

⁸¹⁶ The association of traits corresponds with the frequent use of the term *regina* to describe barbarian queens in Latin historiography: see 2.2.4. For further details about Bauto, see footnote 298.

⁸¹⁷ Even the hypercritical early accounts do not refer to Eudoxia's origins, which suggests that it was not a point of controversy. Stebnicka (2012), 148, draws comparisons between Philostorgius' description of Eudoxia and Chrysostom's characterisation of Jezebel in his homilies.

⁸¹⁸ This passage is very similar to Socrates' description of Eudoxia's persuasion of Chrysostom to make amends with Severian, who was another of Chrysostom's clerical enemies (6.11). To persuade him she uses the infant Theodosius II, Chrysostom's acquiescence shows his loyalty to the imperial court. Soc. 8.7 also attributes Eutropius' demise to offence taken by Eudoxia.

Eudoxia exploits her maternal role to interfere in political issues.⁸¹⁹ In the process, Philostorgius criticises Arcadius for his response to his wife's petition: it is only after she pleads with him that he acts like an emperor and sends Eutropius into exile. Once again Arcadius is shown to be inadequate because he is dominated by his wife, which subverts the expected gender roles. It is because of Arcadius' passivity that Eudoxia is able to act with misplaced imperial authority, a point which seems to have been implied by Pseudo-Martyrius.

Theodoret's sermons in their epitomised form make no direct reference to Eudoxia, whose children were present at the interment of Chrysostom's remains in Constantinople.⁸²⁰ Theodoret refers in only vague terms to Chrysostom's opponents; however, he does make two references to John the Baptist and Job. These biblical comparisons would remind his audience, if they chose to recall, of their encounters with impious women. Theodoret provides another possible veiled reference in his assessment of Chrysostom's key qualities (Photius, 273, 507b-509a):

How do you wish me to demonstrate John's excellence? From his hospitality? Who was a more generous host than John? From his firmness in championing just causes? What power intimidated him? From his enthusiasm in church matters?

For those who held Eudoxia responsible for Chrysostom's downfall, they would identify her as the intimidating power mentioned here, but it was up to the audience to supply their own private transcript.⁸²¹

4.3.3.2 Socrates' and Sozomen's Narratives

The similar accounts by Socrates and Sozomen differ from the early narratives in some key respects.⁸²² One such difference is the presentation of Chrysostom's exiles,

⁸¹⁹ This provides a continuation of the abuse of female roles exhibited by Agrippina and Messalina in Tacitus' *Annales*. See 1.5.2 for their different perversions of their maternal role.

⁸²⁰ Theod. *HE* 5.36, describes Theodosius asking for forgiveness for his parents who had 'ignorantly sinned'. The suppliant position adopted by Theodosius is discussed by Holum and Vikan (1979), 123. Photius provides an interpolation halfway through his epitome that Theodoret delivered his sermons after the transfer of John's relics.

⁸²¹ Public and hidden 'transcripts' in public discourse (especially panegyric) in the earlier imperial period are defined by Bartsch (1994), 150-2. Her analysis of these terms is developed from Scott's definition for modern discourse: (1990), 2-5. Liebeschuetz (2011), 268, describes Theodoret's dislike of imperial power following his exile after the second Council of Ephesus in 449 – such antipathy therefore only affects the reading of his later ecclesiastical history.

both in terms of cause and chronology. While Pseudo-Martyrius frames the bishop's exiles with Eudoxia's stillbirths, Socrates and Sozomen present Eudoxia objecting to two speeches as the cause for both exiles. In the two later accounts only Eudoxia's fatal labour is described, and in far less graphic detail than in Pseudo-Martyrius' version.

According to Socrates and Sozomen, the Council of the Oak (which precipitated Chrysostom's first exile) took place because, stirred up by Chrysostom's enemies, Eudoxia took offence at a speech in which he criticised women in general (Soz. 6.15):

John was informed by some person that the empress Eudoxia had stimulated Epiphanius against him. And being of a fiery temperament, and of a ready utterance, he soon after pronounced a public invective against women in general. The people readily took this as uttered indirectly against the empress and so the speech was laid hold of by evil-disposed persons, and reported to those in authority. At length on being informed of it the empress immediately complained to her husband, telling him that the insult offered to herself was equally an insult against him.⁸²³

Socrates' presentation of the dispute shows a more even clash of personalities than the unjustified persecution which the earlier narratives presented in defence of Chrysostom.⁸²⁴ In displaying such forthrightness, however, Eudoxia shows her unrestrained nature, which was especially inappropriate for a woman because temperance was one of the most important virtues for a woman. Eudoxia's ostensible reason for Arcadius to take action also verbalises what seems to emerge in the material evidence for the early fifth century: that the increased visibility of women's public roles make them adjuncts in the presentation of imperial power.⁸²⁵ Therefore, Chrysostom's criticism of Eudoxia's public image was a challenge to imperial prestige.

⁸²² The chapters by Sozomen which concern Eudoxia are 8. 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18, 20 and 27. Socrates' mentions occur at 6.8, 11, 15, 16, 18 and 19. Urbainczyk (1997a), 355, describes Sozomen's use of Socrates' account. Barnes and Bevan (2013), 23, argue that Sozomen supplements his version with details from the funeral oration. Ommeslaeghe (1979), 132-3, points to Socrates' particular value as a contemporary of Chrysostom; at 138, he points to Palladius' influence on later sources.

⁸²³ Soz. 8.16 was more defensive of Chrysostom regarding the same incident.

⁸²⁴ Liebeschuetz (2011), 265-6, also suggests that Socrates is the least of defensive of Chrysostom's actions.

⁸²⁵ The prominence of Eudoxia in imperial presentation is argued by Stebnicka (2012), 148-53, to be the key issue between the court and Chrysostom. For discussion of material evidence see 2.3.

In both ecclesiastical histories, the events of the second exile unfold after Chrysostom objects to the celebrations that take place around the statue erected for Eudoxia.⁸²⁶ This leads Chrysostom to deliver an incendiary sermon comparing Eudoxia with Herodias. Both Socrates and Sozomen cite the sermon directly in what seems an odd amalgamation of the biblical queen with her daughter, Salome: ‘Again Herodias raves; again she is troubled; she dances again; and again desires to receive John’s head in a charger.’ (Soc. 6.18 and Soz. 8.20). The authenticity of such a sermon is a matter of debate in modern scholarship; Barnes and Bevan have recently suggested a fair compromise, that it was a contemporary speech fabricated by Chrysostom’s enemies.⁸²⁷ The comparison with Herodias distills the different representation of Eudoxia between the two traditions: in these later accounts she manipulates Arcadius to get her way, while in the earlier versions she assumes power for herself, for which the closer biblical parallel is Jezebel. The original objection that prompts Chrysostom’s sermon can be extended if one considers the significance of the statue. Socrates makes the interesting remark that the celebration around the emperors’ statuary was customary (8.20). Like Honorius’ objection to the celebrations accompanying Eudoxia’s promotion to Augusta, Socrates conveys the sentiment that the celebrations around her statue were inappropriate because they centred upon the empress, rather than the emperor.

While Pseudo-Martyrius’ visceral description of the death of Eudoxia presented her as being justifiably punished as a persecutor of the church, Socrates’ and Sozomen’s descriptions of the fatal stillbirth provide far less detail. Socrates, in particular, treats the connotation of divine retribution circumspectly (6.19):⁸²⁸

⁸²⁶ Fournier (2006), 160, bases Chrysostom’s objection on the interference the celebrations created with liturgical ceremony.

⁸²⁷ This begs the question of who would amalgamate the two biblical figures. Barnes and Bevan (2013), 27, follow Ommeslaeghe (1979), 158: they argue that these later accounts were based on a homily written in ca. 420. Barnes and Bevan, 28, argue that Palladius is the only evidence that John himself referred to Eudoxia as either Jezebel or Herodias; however, see Stebnicka (2012), 148. Pseudo-Martyrius’ polemical account was designed to defend Chrysostom and therefore would have expunged any treasonous remark by Chrysostom. Palladius, *Dial.* 8, quotes Chrysostom referring to his own potential beheading as a result of his rash speech, a statement which draws comparisons with the fate of John the Baptist. Kelly (1995), 240, argues that there was an address, but that its inflammatory nature against the court meant it fell out of circulation.

⁸²⁸ Urbainczyk (1997b), 135-6, compares Socrates’ more moderated description of Chrysostom with the other sources.

But whether John's deposition was just, as his enemies declare, or Cyrinus suffered in chastisement for his slanderous revilings; whether the hail fell, or the empress died on John's account, or whether these things happened for other reasons, or for these in connection with others, God only knows, who is the discerner of secrets, and the just judge of truth itself. I have simply recorded the reports which were current at that time.⁸²⁹

The general details of Chrysostom's career in Constantinople are similar in Socrates' and Sozomen's histories. However, the structural differences reveal a discrepancy in their attitudes: not to Eudoxia, but to Arcadius, who is generally safely omitted in earlier narratives. The differences concern the same transition in the books discussed in Chapter Three (section 3.1). The beginning of the final books for Socrates (book 7) and Sozomen (book 9) demonstrate the latter's more positive opinion of Pulcheria, while Socrates focuses his praise on Theodosius II. This difference in the proemia for their final books affects the reading for the end of the preceding books as well: the climax of Socrates' book is the death of Arcadius, while Sozomen ends with Chrysostom's demise. Sozomen's structure provides a subversive commentary on Arcadius as emperor, since his death is postponed to an anti-climactic position in a summary passage at the start of book 9. These differences in structure are reflected by content, with Sozomen more reluctant to praise Arcadius generally.⁸³⁰ Sozomen's more negative attitude is augmented by his positive reference to Eudoxia's Christian piety, shown through her response to the attempted blackmail by Epiphanius following her request for prayers for her sick son, to which she counters that Epiphanius does not take precedence over God's will (8.15).

4.3.4 Conclusion

In the negative portrayals of Eudoxia, she abuses her position as the emperor's wife by presenting herself as his equal in order to exact revenge. This remains constant through all the literary narratives, regardless of discrepancies regarding the cause of the dispute. Unlike Pseudo-Martyrius and Palladius, Socrates and Sozomen affirm that John Chrysostom vocally objected to celebrations around the statue of

⁸²⁹ Soz. 8.27 is blunter in his assessment of these deaths: 'Four days afterwards, the wife of the emperor died. These occurrences were by many regarded as indications of Divine wrath on account of the persecution that had been carried out against John.'

⁸³⁰ Soc. 6.23 sets out Arcadius' virtues.

Eudoxia.⁸³¹ The court would have been especially sensitive to any affront to their imperial authority after their recent recovery from the military coup by Gainas, which had marred the first few years of Chrysostom's tenure as bishop in Constantinople.⁸³² The need to emphasise Arcadius' authority in the aftermath of this was demonstrated through every available avenue. One such avenue was the more prominent presentation of Eudoxia, who was given the title Augusta (treated with so much disdain by Honorius) and appeared on her own coin-types. This was a bold move by the court and one which clashed with Chrysostom's preaching on female modesty. Chrysostom was an immensely popular local figure, but this was often to the detriment of the imperial couple, who were reliant on display of Christian imperial piety to promote Arcadius' regime.⁸³³ Having created many enemies in the clergy, Chrysostom provided them with an opportunity to work against him by manipulating his *παρρησία*, a quality which was especially celebrated in the early narratives. That Chrysostom's enemies were able to do this demonstrates that Eudoxia was, at least in displays of Christian piety, seen as the adjunct of her husband.⁸³⁴ If Chrysostom threatened Eudoxia's actions, and by extension, those of her husband's, through his unwillingness to show deference in regard to their presentation of piety, then this could provide a strong motive for the court to have him exiled.⁸³⁵

Chrysostom remained in exile after the death of Eudoxia. Regardless of her death, the insult to the imperial court still remained and so this does not by itself diminish her role in his exile.⁸³⁶ It was only after the death of Arcadius that Chrysostom was rehabilitated. As much as the insult to the court was serious enough to warrant

⁸³¹ Soc. 6.18 describes Chrysostom regarding the festivities around the statue as 'an insult to the church'. See also Soz. 8.20.

⁸³² Ommeslaeghe (1979), refers to Chrysostom's conversion efforts of the Goths in the provinces upsetting the authorities after Gainas' uprising.

⁸³³ See the opening quotation for Chrysostom's outline of a Christian role for women. Soz. 8.11 describes Ammonius giving the petition against Theophilus to Eudoxia when she was traveling about the city as she could communicate their concerns to Arcadius. Mayer (1999), 284-5, describes the useful access to politics wealthy senatorial women provided in Constantinople for lower-ranked members of the clergy; Eudoxia also seemed involved in such patronage.

⁸³⁴ As demonstrated in the opening quotation to this section, Chrysostom himself permitted this possible dual role for a married couple. See also Soz. 8.11.

⁸³⁵ This could also be a central issue to Pulcheria's later conflict with Nestorius: see 2.1.2.4. Stebnicka (2012), 153-4, points to the political ramifications of Chrysostom's criticism of Eudoxia.

⁸³⁶ Liebeschuetz (1985), 5, argues that his continued exile after her death shows her to be less culpable.

Chrysostom's exile, once the protagonists in the conflict, including the imperial couple, had died the unification of the Constantinopolitan Nicene-Christian congregation became more important to the eastern government.⁸³⁷ Not only did this help to achieve unity in the local populace, but the reconciliation of Chrysostom's supporters with the general congregation allowed the court to re-establish a relationship with a group local to the court that might engage with imperial Christian patronage.

4.4 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Justina's and Eudoxia's conflicts occurred in an early stage of the evolution of court-based emperors and thus when the court was adapting to new, untested, avenues to assert the emperor's authority over, and relationship with, the local populace. Both Justina and Eudoxia were portrayed as Jezebels who influenced the emperor, or acted as his proxy. Their prominence at court was allowed, and encouraged, because their actions benefitted the court, which now relied primarily on ceremonial displays to convey the emperor's authority. It was the clash of episcopal and imperial authority that was the underlying issue for both disputes.

The image of Justina in the sources is cohesive. She is shown to negatively influence the emperors Valentinian II and Theodosius I respectively. Ambrose uses the biblical example of Jezebel to convey Justina's abuse of imperial authority. Not only does this make Justina the culprit behind Valentinian's policies, but it also accounts for Ambrose's opposition to the court. However, Ambrose's embassies to Maximus show that he was not diametrically opposed to the court on all issues. The negative treatment of Justina in narratives of the basilica conflict is influenced by Ambrose's

⁸³⁷ Palladius and Pseudo-Martyrius beseech their readers to continue in their refusal of communion with Chrysostom's successors. See Pseudo-Martyrius, 138, who compares the continued fight with the story of Jezebel. Palladius conveys the same sentiment of resistance at the very end of the *Dialogus* (20); see Ommeslaeghe (1979), 149. Soz. 8.23, mentions the continued divisions among the populace in Constantinople. Holum and Vikan (1979), 122, suggest that Proclus, the bishop of Constantinople of the time, was responsible for the relics' interment; however, he was closely associated with Pulcheria.

retrospective editing of his corpus of letters after the establishment of the Theodosian dynasty in the West.⁸³⁸

The later Nicene accounts of the basilica conflict confirm Justina's impiety and make her the chief instigator at court of Ambrose's 'persecution', which by association illustrates Valentinian's incapacity as a ruler (in comparison with the Nicene Theodosius). The character of Justina performs a similar function in the accounts of the Thessalonica conference: her actions demonstrate Theodosius' vices. This picture was especially clear in Zosimus' history, because a capable ruler not governed by his personal failings would have been able to counter Justina's schemes, which in Zosimus' account are typically feminine.

Justina's patronage of the Christian community, which was part of the issue of the basilica conflict, continues a trend established by her Constantinian predecessors.⁸³⁹ However, while the prominent Constantinian patronesses (Helena and Constantina) acted independently from the emperor(s), Justina lived at court. Justina's Christian beliefs guided the imperial court when they set about acquiring a space of non-Nicene Christian worship at Easter. Justina's patronage of the non-Nicene cause benefitted the court because her patronage targeted a pre-existing contingent of the Milanese populace, who had not revealed support for Gratian. More importantly her patronage would appeal to the Gothic contingent of the army, which was an important consideration given the threat of Maximus in Gaul and doubtful alliance of Theodosius in the East.

In the same way we can see an important role for Eudoxia when the eastern court was realising its dependency on imperial Christian display. Eudoxia's early alliance with Chrysostom against heterodox Christians and her later support of bishops opposed to him can be linked with broader imperial policy, the aim of which was to maintain unity in the Church, even if this was ultimately to fail. Eudoxia's visible presence in the city and in imperial propaganda can be seen as part of the evolution of the court-based emperor, and a development of Justina's background role.

⁸³⁸ The Nicene opposition, to which Ambrose refers, was, however, real: as shown by the law issued and Augustine's aside about Justina's character.

⁸³⁹ See 2.4.1.

Imperial women could play a part in expression of imperial prestige through their individual acts of religious patronage, as we have seen. Such visibility was met with opposition not just at a local level, led by popular religious leaders like Chrysostom, but even by Arcadius' own brother Honorius. Interventions like Chrysostom's sermons against female vanity, if construed as a criticism of Eudoxia's public presentation, effectively challenged the emperor's authority.

While positive representations of women's influences over their husbands were dissociated from political machinations, negative portrayals of female subjects embroiled them in this very area and presented them as responsible for the court's actions. However, the actions ascribed to Justina and Eudoxia can be seen as responses to the wider political and military concerns the court faced, as well as the limited possibilities which the emperor could now possess to convey his authority.⁸⁴⁰ These practical concerns are neglected in the negative accounts in which the women are simply seen as intemperate and misguided in their actions. Like Justina, Eudoxia never received punishment for her actions, which indicates that her involvement in Chrysostom's exiles was not disapproved of by the court.

⁸⁴⁰ Liebeschuetz (2011), 5-6, attributes the bishops' fates to the different political stability of the courts.

CHAPTER FIVE LOSS OF IMPERIAL PROTECTION

INTRODUCTION

The later, often obscured, information that we have for the loss of protection of imperial women in the earlier imperial period continues to be the norm in the fourth and fifth centuries. In the late antique period there are few extreme examples of deaths and exiles, despite three dynastic changes and multiple usurpations. This provides a sharp contrast with the high mortality rate in the turbulent Julio-Claudian and Severan dynasties. An indication of the survival rate for imperial women in periods of upheaval in Late Antiquity is provided by John Chrysostom's *Letter to a Young Widow*, which will be the focus of 5.1. While this letter provides a remarkable amount of collective detail, the identities of the women can only be inferred. In contrast, with regard to information about the death and exile of particular women, it is the causes that are hard to identify. Before I turn to these extreme cases I will consider the larger number of women who survived regime change (5.2). I will then look at the three examples of violent deaths, alongside the greater frequency of tetrarchic examples (5.3) and I will establish why these women were the exception to the norm set out in 5.2. Then I will turn to exiles (5.4), in particular Theodosius II's wife, Eudocia, whose permanent absence from court was very different from the stringent measures enacted in the Julio-Claudian period. Eudocia's exile is reflective of the changes taking place within the imperial office over the course of this period and how such changes affected imperial women.

5.1 JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S *LETTER TO A YOUNG WIDOW*

John Chrysostom's description of the unlucky consorts of various emperors appears in his letter of consolation to a young widow: *ad vid.* 4.278-309.⁸⁴¹ The passage serves to contextualise the grief felt by the anonymous addressee, whose husband

⁸⁴¹ His sympathetic description of such imperial women clearly preceded his own conflict with Eudoxia. Grillet (1968), 15-20, sets out the different sections of the letter. For a general overview of Chrysostom's writings see Liebeschuetz (2011), 133, who classifies them as either treatises or sermons: the former was aimed at a small elite audience and feature more classicising elements. This letter was part of Chrysostom's early writings on widowhood, on which topic there are similar treatises by other Church Fathers: Liebeschuetz (2011), 140.

Therasios has died.⁸⁴² Chrysostom offers his addressee the perspective of an imperial widow, a more pitiful status.⁸⁴³ Not only is the widow never named in the letter, but neither are the emperors nor the imperial women. This makes the dating of the missive and the identification of the various members of the imperial dynasties problematic. The *terminus post quem* is the battle of Adrianople, 9 August 378, because of the reference made to an emperor burnt alive by barbarians after seeking refuge in a house during battle (*ad uid.* 5.331-40), which can only refer to Valens.⁸⁴⁴ The problem is ascertaining a *terminus ante quem*. Liebeschuetz has recently classified the letter among Chrysostom's early writings, which were mostly composed between ca. 378-86.⁸⁴⁵ The postulation of such a date is dependent upon the identity of the two living emperors described. Such speculation is hampered by Chrysostom's tendency to generalise, here in regard to the fluid term generation (γενεά).⁸⁴⁶

In order to determine the identities of the imperial women who are only vaguely described by Chrysostom, first the two reigning emperors have to be established and then the other emperors who are referred to in Chrysostom's timeframe.⁸⁴⁷ The

⁸⁴² The one entry for Therasius (sic) in either *PLRE* 1 or 2 appears in *PLRE* 1: a *praeses* of Cappadocia in 371. He is described as 'probably' the deceased husband referred to by Chrysostom. There is no firm evidence for this identification.

⁸⁴³ See *ad vid.* 4.273-7, for a summary of Chrysostom's sentiment.

⁸⁴⁴ Grillet (1968), 142 n.1, sets out the literary tradition for the accounts of the battle and Valens' death. Ammianus Marcellinus provides two possible versions: 31.16.2. Lenski (2002), 338-41, describes the appeal for both Christian and pagan writers of a conflagration story as divine punishment.

⁸⁴⁵ The latest living imperial partnership is Valentinian II and Theodosius I, which gives a definite *terminus ante quem* of 392. *PLRE* 1, s.v. Therasius, dates the letter to ca. 380. Liebeschuetz (2011), 152, suggests a timeframe for composition between January 379 and October 382. Liebeschuetz's timeframe is determined by Theodosius I's recognition as Augustus in 379 and before Chrysostom was ordained into the priesthood on 26 February 386. This firmly places the date well before he came into close proximity with the imperial court: Liebeschuetz (2011), 3; see also Barnes and Bevan (2013), xii-xiii. Grillet (1968), 11-12, tentatively suggests that Chrysostom composed the letter in 380 or 381 (soon after his appointment as deacon in Antioch). This date is preferred by most scholars whose views are summarised by Grillet, 12 n.2.

⁸⁴⁶ An important footnote by Grillet (1968), 136-8 n.2, summarises the various hypotheses that have been made regarding dating and the imperial identities in the text. As an example of Chrysostom's vague generalisation, Grillet cites Chrysostom's description of Fausta's death in *Homily* 15 'Letter to the Philippians' as occurring in his own time.

⁸⁴⁷ Grillet (1968), 136-8 n.2, outlines the scholarly debate over the number of emperors. The issues arise from Chrysostom's description of nine emperors (or rulers if Gallus is described) having reigned in his generation; he uses the past participles βασιλευσάντων and γεγεννημένων. Grillet observes that this would make the number, including reigning emperors, eleven. However, only six are described which correlates with the combination of Gratian and Theodosius I as the current rulers – discussed below. Grillet suggests the list begins with Constans and excludes usurpers.

living rulers are described towards the end of the passage (*ad vid.* 289-309): one is very young, and the other is preoccupied with barbarians who have overrun ‘our lands’ (ἡ ἡμέτερα χώρα). Given that the letter was written after the death of Valens, this allows for three possibilities, since only Gratian and Theodosius performed a military role after Valens’ death and within Chrysostom’s lifetime. The three combinations chronologically possible are:

- 1) Gratian and Valentinian II. This allows for a very narrow period of composition of five months: 9 August 378-January 379.
- 2) Gratian and Theodosius (with Valentinian II deemed insignificant): 19 January 379-25 August 383.⁸⁴⁸
- 3) Valentinian II and Theodosius (with Arcadius deemed insignificant): 25 August 383-15 May 392.

Chrysostom describes nine emperors who have reigned in his generation, two of whom I assume to be the living emperors. He describes the deaths of six of them: two from natural deaths, one by a tyrant, another in war, one from a plot from his palace guard⁸⁴⁹, and the last killed by his appointee. The possible identities of these dead emperors are summarised below, based on the three possible combinations of living emperors (*ad vid.* 4.278-83):

Table 8

Cause of Death ⁸⁵⁰	Gratian and Valentinian II	Gratian and Theodosius I	Valentinian II and Theodosius I
δύο μόνοι κοινῶ θανάτῳ	Constantius II and Valentinian I	Constantius II and Valentinian I	Constantius II and Valentinian I
ὁ ὑπὸ τυράννου	Constans	Constans	Gratian
ὁ ἐν πολέμῳ	Valens	Valens	Valens
ὁ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐνδον φυλαττότων αὐτὸν	Julian ⁸⁵¹	Julian	Julian ⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁸ Arcadius was made Augustus on 19 January 383.

⁸⁴⁹ The Greek is slightly unclear: ὑπὸ τῶν ἐνδον φυλαττότων αὐτὸν ἐπιβουλευθείς. I infer that this is made in reference to the ruler’s palace guard.

⁸⁵⁰ All the means of death agree with the phrase, ‘lost his life’ [τὸν βίον κατέλυσαν] (280).

⁸⁵¹ For the combinations of both Gratian and Valentinian, and Gratian and Theodosius this could refer to Constantine II – or for the first pair even Constans if ὁ ὑπὸ τυράννου refers to a different emperor.

⁸⁵² Another possibility is Constans.

This table shows my preference for the identities; however, there are often two options since Chrysostom could also have had in mind Constantius II's Caesar Gallus. Allowing for this possibility, the earliest emperor for each combination would be Constans if the living emperors were Gratian and Valentinian II; or Constantius II for the other two combinations.⁸⁵⁵ In all cases, the two who died of natural causes (κοινῶ θανάτῳ) are Constantius II and Valentinian I, and the one who died in battle (ἐν πολέμῳ) is Valens. The death by usurper (ὑπὸ τυράννου) is clearly dependent on whether Gratian was alive at the time of writing. The hardest to identify are the final two means of death: by a palace guard conspiracy (ὑπὸ τῶν ἔνδον φυλακτόνων αὐτὸν) or by the person who appointed him (ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ χειροτονήσαντος). The last means of death could well be a reference made to Gallus Caesar, which would lead to the problem of where to include Jovian. Part of the problem is that only six deaths are listed when Chrysostom says nine have ruled in his lifetime. It cannot be assumed that Chrysostom is simply being imprecise, but if he was being specific then by simple addition Gratian and Theodosius I seem the most probable identities of the living rulers. This combination would account for the existence, and non-existent imperium, of Valentinian II.⁸⁵⁶ Gratian and Theodosius are the preferred pairing for Liebeschuetz and Grillet, but for different reasons.⁸⁵⁷

⁸⁵³ This final means of death is described in the most detail: Chrysostom continues with καὶ τὴν ἀλουργίδα περιθέντος αὐτῷ.

⁸⁵⁴ Even though Gallus was only a Caesar, Chrysostom's vocabulary seems ambiguous enough to consider him a possibility in this category for each combination of reigning emperors; see Grillet (1968), 136-8 n.2. Gallus had been resident in Antioch where Chrysostom was writing. It is more unlikely that usurpers should be included; Maximus would be an important consideration since he was briefly recognised by Theodosius, but this was probably after Chrysostom composed his letter. Procopius is another possibility, but he seems to have been already referred to in the letter, along with his wife: *ad vid.* 4.258-64.

⁸⁵⁵ The combination of Gratian and Theodosius could include Valentinian II in the itinerary of rulers; however, if the youngest emperor was excluded entirely then the earliest emperors would be Dalmatius or Constantine II.

⁸⁵⁶ This identification corroborates the general impression cast elsewhere of Gratian's handling of his half-brother's unexpected election to Augustus: see Amm. Marc. 30.10.6. This is discussed at 2.1.3.2. Cameron (2012), 344, describes Gratian's 'paternal' care of his brother.

⁸⁵⁷ See Liebeschuetz (2011), 152 n.71, and Grillet (1968), 11. Liebeschuetz is rightly more cautious in accepting this combination. I think an element of doubt has to be conceded, whatever option is preferred.

Valentinian II and Theodosius I seem the most unlikely in my opinion, since Arcadius was also then Augustus.⁸⁵⁸

The real impact of the final combination of Valentinian II and Theodosius I, and what makes this combination unlikely, is the identity of the women who are adjuncts to them. These women's relationships with the emperors are defined by the verb συνοικέω. If Valentinian II is one of the emperors, this would require a literal translation of this verb as simply meaning to cohabit in the same dwelling place, rather than living in wedlock. As Valentinian II never married, Justina would be the only possible identification and the former translation must be taken. The vocabulary that Chrysostom uses is ambiguous and so this possibility cannot be excluded, but since the theme of the letter is widowhood, Justina as mother of the reigning emperor seems extraneous.⁸⁵⁹ On this tentative basis, and in conjunction with the problems of the number of rulers named, I am inclined to agree with Grillet and identify the living rulers as Gratian and Theodosius I.

More vague still is the description of imperial women, *ad vid.* 4.283-309, which is structured by those who are now deceased (αἱ δὲ τούτοις συνοικήσασαι γυναῖκες), imperial widows who are still alive (τῶν δὲ ἔτι περιουσῶν), and the present consorts (τῶν δὲ τοῖς νῦν βασιλεύουσι συνοικουσῶν). The first category is approximately divided into those who died by poison and those who died from despondency: αἱ μὲν ὡς φασι, φαρμάκοις ἀπέθανον, αἱ δὲ ὑπὸ τῆς ἀθυμίας αὐτῆς.⁸⁶⁰ The table below calibrates the likely identities in the last two categories that relate to living women, who are the main consideration here because they survived regime change. These identifications are based on the combination of living emperors described above being Gratian and Theodosius I.⁸⁶¹

⁸⁵⁸ It seems less likely that Arcadius would be relegated without mention than Valentinian II, because Arcadius was Augustus in the East and Theodosius I presented him as ruling in his absence. Valentinian II was never granted such autonomy (however illusory) by Gratian.

⁸⁵⁹ This could hardly be avoided if he was senior Augustus at the time of composition, although Chrysostom could then just have referred to Flaccilla. I think that Justina is mentioned earlier in the passage, but in her capacity as widow of Valentinian I, which is more apt given the theme.

⁸⁶⁰ Grillet (1968), 138 n.1, summarises the possibilities. Chrysostom suggests these are rumours by the phrase ὡς φασι (284).

⁸⁶¹ Domnica is mentioned receiving news of Valens' death in the next passage: *ad vid.* 5.339-40. Artemesia, Procopius' widow, is referred to earlier in the passage (*ad vid.* 4.258-64).

Table 9

Fates ⁸⁶²	Emperor	Wife
ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπερορίας ἐπανῆλθεν εἰς ἣν αὐτὴν ὁ κρατῶν ἐξέβαλε πρότερον	Valentinian I	Marina Severa
ἡ μὲν παῖδα ἔχουσα ὀρφανὸν τρέμει καὶ δέδοικε	Valentinian I	Justina ⁸⁶³
ἡ μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν προτέρων ἀναπνεύσασα	Gratian	Constantia
ἡ δὲ ἀποτέθηκε τῷ δέει καὶ τῶν καταδίκων ἀθλιώτερον ζῆ	Theodosius	Aelia Flaccilla

The most interesting part of the passage is the sympathetic depiction of the imperial widows who are still alive (285-89):

Of those who are still around, one who has a child is afraid that he might become an orphan and fears that one of those now ruling should kill him out of fear of what could happen. The other one, after being begged by many, has only just returned from foreign lands to which a ruler previously exiled her.⁸⁶⁴

The first woman could either be Charito, the widow of Jovian, whose son, Varronianus, had been a baby when her husband died in 364; or Justina, whose son, Valentinian II, was under the guardianship of her stepson Gratian.⁸⁶⁵ Based on Gratian and Theodosius being the living rulers, I would be inclined to prefer the latter option; however, either interpretation is interesting. If the widow was Justina then Chrysostom underlines the extent to which her position was dependent on her son's survival as well as corroborating evidence from elsewhere for Gratian's antipathy towards his half-brother.⁸⁶⁶

The identification of Marina Severa as the other woman seems more straightforward.⁸⁶⁷ She is one of only a few women to be exiled over the entire

⁸⁶² The Greek is translated below.

⁸⁶³ This is especially tentative. It could well be Jovian's widow.

⁸⁶⁴ Croke (2010), 242-3, lists the imperial women who were resident in Constantinople when Theodosius I assumed power, based on this letter.

⁸⁶⁵ *PLRE* 1, s.v. Charito, makes this identification.

⁸⁶⁶ Valentinian II was marginalised in a contemporary source, Themistius, *Or.* 15.198B, who describes Valentinian as the 'outrunner' [παρήγορος] to the two charioteers of empire, Gratian and Theodosius I. The sentiment of the passage is discussed by Heather and Moncur (2001), 253 n.158. See also Cameron (2012), 351.

⁸⁶⁷ Grillet (1968), 138 n.1, alongside this identification, entertains the possibility that the woman could have been Constantius II's widow, Faustina. He argues that Valens exiled her; however, there is no information for her in general after Procopius' usurpation. Woods (2006), 181-2, argues that it was

period. Severa's case would be extreme if she had been sent to a foreign land (ἡ ὑπερορία). This term, however, seems likely to refer to her being sent to the East, and therefore outside of Valentinian I's jurisdiction.⁸⁶⁸ Her recall would have been enacted by her son Gratian, which would confirm his identity as one of the living rulers.⁸⁶⁹

After describing the widows, Chrysostom then turns to the misery of those who live with the present rulers (*ad vid.* 289-309)

Of those who live together with those now ruling, one who recovered from earlier misfortunes has a great deal of pain mingled with her pleasure on account of the ruler still being very young and inexperienced and having many plots formed against him from many places; the other one is dead from fear⁸⁷⁰ and lives more wretchedly on account of her own husband who, from the moment he was crowned with the diadem until today, is embroiled in wars and battles and besides he is consumed by shame of the calamities and calumnies that come from everywhere. For that which has never happened is now coming to pass, and the barbarians, having left their own country, have so often overran so many thousands of stadia of ours.

Assuming that the emperors are Gratian and Theodosius, then the two women described here are Constantia and Aelia Flaccilla.⁸⁷¹ Constantia certainly fits the description of the woman who has recovered from former misfortunes (τῶν προτέρων ἀναπνεύσασα).⁸⁷² As the posthumous daughter of Constantius II she had experienced a definable period outside the imperial court's immediate orbit. She may have also suffered adversely after Procopius deployed her and her mother, Faustina,

Justina who was banished by Valentinian I; this seems unlikely, not least because Valentinian II was with her when Valentinian I died.

⁸⁶⁸ The word can simply mean the land beyond one's frontiers, which, strictly speaking, would be the case if she moved to the eastern empire.

⁸⁶⁹ Justina was possibly absent from the court, which would make for a neat parallel between the two examples from these lines. Charito and Procopius' wife are two further considerations, but even more tenuous in my opinion, because they are already referred to elsewhere in the letter. Cameron (2012), 345, describes Marina Severa's influence over Gratian when she returned to court, an idea hinted at by Amm. Marc. 28.1.57.

⁸⁷⁰ With thanks to Jennifer Nimmo Smith for her kind assistance, ἀποτέθηκε (293) is translated as the 'perfect tense with present meaning' to describe Flaccilla's state, which is worse than those who know that they are going to die; an allusion to Arist. *Mag. Mor.* 1191a 23-36. Grillet's translation also conveys this sense of the participle. His *apparatus criticus* refers to the imperfect tense of ζάω (ζῆν) as an alternative reading, which probably arose from confusion about how to translate the perfect participle. I thank Donncha O'Rourke for this clarification.

⁸⁷¹ See Grillet (1968), 139 n.2 for the identification of Constantia.

⁸⁷² Grillet (1968), 139 n.2, prefers this identification as well.

to promote his kinship with the Constantinian dynasty during his usurpation.⁸⁷³ Gratian was under twenty years old when he appointed Theodosius Augustus so could still be deemed young and inexperienced (ἔτι νέον εἶναι καὶ ἄπειρον τὸν κρατοῦντα). Chrysostom may well have had in mind the earlier unauthorised election of Valentinian II when he describes plots drawn against the ruler. If the first identification is Constantia, the second is definitely Aelia Flaccilla, Theodosius I's first wife, who outlived her western counterpart. The anxiety she felt would fit with the period after Adrianople when the conglomerate Gothic tribes became a permanent presence within the empire.⁸⁷⁴

John Chrysostom's sympathetic description of these women was designed to console his addressee of her fate. The succinctness of the passage shows the variety of misfortunes to which imperial women were exposed by the nature of their marital relationship. This made them figures of compassion, in contrast to Justina and Eudoxia in the previous chapter who were safely ensconced within the imperial machine when they were acting against bishops, which ironically included Chrysostom. The passage also demonstrates that the simplest way that imperial women suddenly found themselves in a precarious position was through regime change: even those associated with living emperors are shown to be anxious about the threat of upheavals. However, Chrysostom selected his examples for maximum dramatic effect.⁸⁷⁵ The normative model is more sedate.

5.2 THE NORMATIVE MODEL: LIFE BEYOND A ROYAL MARRIAGE

Despite the dramatic and often violent regime changes during Constantine's ascendancy to autocratic rule, and then within his dynasty after his death, the women who found themselves directly implicated when emperors died for the most part

⁸⁷³ Constantia was about four years old when Procopius revolted. Her marriage to Gratian was a suitable response by the presiding Valentinianic dynasty: see Lenski (2002), 102-4. For her marriage, see Amm. Marc. 29.6.7.

⁸⁷⁴ Theodosius I only achieved a semblance of peace with a treaty in 382, which is the *terminus ante quem* for this letter's composition in Grillet's opinion.

⁸⁷⁵ Liebeschuetz (2011), 153: 'Any inconsistency in Chrysostom's views on marriage and celibacy is magnified by his classical rhetoric, which invariably exaggerates, whether it is employed to praise or to condemn.'

survived.⁸⁷⁶ This suggests that they tended to be viewed, if anything, as an asset rather than a threat to incipient regimes. This trend continues into the later dynasties: even though Chrysostom had a wealth of imperial widows to draw on, those he described in detail were still alive. Most prominently Faustina, with her young daughter Constantia, not only survived Constantius II's death, but also their subsequent public association with Procopius' usurpation. Earlier in the fourth century, Constantine I's public presentation of his female relatives set him apart from his tetrarchic predecessors. Fausta later met a violent end, it seems, but neither she nor her mother Eutropia suffered immediately from the deaths of either Maximian or Maxentius, who both underwent a form of *damnatio memoriae* enacted by Constantine.⁸⁷⁷ The survival of Fausta and Eutropia, and Maximian's later posthumous rehabilitation illustrates how conscious Constantine was of the value retained by these connections. Fausta became a benign figurehead of the preceding regime for Constantine: a focus for residual support but one who was now closely associated with him.⁸⁷⁸

The parallel case of Constantia, Constantine's sister and Licinius' widow, supports this idea that imperial women retained their value after the end of a regime. The deployment of Constantia's image by Constantine after his defeat of Licinius and execution of Licinius II demonstrates the propaganda role that an imperial woman could play for the court even beyond marriage alliances formed for political benefit.⁸⁷⁹ The survival of Constantina, Faustina and Constantia the Younger was

⁸⁷⁶ Harries (2014), 200, compares the high mortality rate of imperial women in this era with the Julio-Claudian dynasty. However, an important contrast is that the earlier dynasty had a high mortality rate, despite internal succession. The deaths in the Tetrarchy and of the younger Eutropia, with which Harries draws comparison, should not be viewed as particularly exceptional because of the violent regime changes that precipitated their deaths, as will be explained below 5.3. More extraordinary, I would argue, are the large number who survived and continued to serve a purpose for the imperial court. Varner (2004), 8, discusses the concordance with regime change.

⁸⁷⁷ Varner (2004), 6, describes the necessary local process of *damnatio* against Maxentius, following Constantine's victory. Eutropia was the recipient of slander implying that Maxentius was illegitimate: *Pan. Lat.* 9.4.3. This is discussed by Varner (2004), 215 n.14. This rumour, and the doubts over the parentage of Eutropia's eldest daughter, Theodora, present Fausta as the only legitimate child of the former Augustus Maximian. *PLRE* 1 presents the standard view that Theodora was Fausta's half-sister, from Eutropia's first marriage. Harries (2014), 203, asserts that Lactantius' story about Fausta unveiling a plot by Maximian against Constantine was designed to justify the continuation of her marriage following deaths of the male members of her family: 'This 'proved' her suitability to remain as Constantine's consort, as she had chosen her husband over her father.'

⁸⁷⁸ This makes her eventual death more surprising.

⁸⁷⁹ See 2.2.2.

due to the fact that they also retained value after a change of regime, rather than of dynasty. Constantina survived the death of her first husband, Hannibalianus, in 337 (at Constantius' instigation) and could reportedly draw on the military loyalty to the dynasty by appointing Vetricianus as Augustus in 350.⁸⁸⁰ Through all this her position in the dynasty was valuable to Constantius, who then married her to his new Caesar, Gallus.⁸⁸¹ Eventual dynastic change did not then jeopardise the lives of Faustina and Constantia the Younger, despite the visible opposition they presented to Valens' rule during Procopius' revolt.⁸⁸²

The younger Constantia was much more valuable to the Valentinianic dynasty alive as she was the obvious candidate for marriage to Gratian. Through this arrangement her mother was probably also protected, if she followed the precedent set by Eutropia the Elder, wife of Maximian.⁸⁸³ These women held soft military value for new regimes, in comparison with their male relatives who were executed because they presented an active military threat. The military appeal that association with these women provided can also be seen in the marriages of Constantius II to Eusebia, and later Arcadius to Eudoxia: both women were the daughters of successful, but now deceased, generals.⁸⁸⁴

Even Charito, widow of Jovian, survived her husband's death alongside, more surprisingly, their young son, Varronianus.⁸⁸⁵ Justina survived the death of her first husband, the usurper Magnentius, and then married Valentinian I: her later eligibility

⁸⁸⁰ Philost. 3.22. Bleckmann (1994), 42-9.

⁸⁸¹ See 2.1.2.

⁸⁸² Amm. 26.7.10 and 26.9.3.

⁸⁸³ Eutropia not only survived under her son-in-law's regime, but even secured funds from Constantine for the church in Mamre, Jerusalem (see 2.4.1.5). The Valentinianic dynasty exploited the connection that Constantia's marriage provided with the Constantinian dynasty: see Ausonius, *Grat. Act.* 11. This is discussed by McEvoy (2013a), 105 and Lenski (2002), 102-4.

⁸⁸⁴ Eusebia's father was probably the Eusebius who was consul 347 and *magister equitum et peditum*: see *PLRE* 1. This identification is based on onomastic analysis and the identity of the author of *CTh.* 2.1.1 (AD 360) being the same as the person described by Julian, *Or.* 3.107D-110D. Eudoxia was the daughter of Valentinian II's *magister militum*, Bauto, who was so important in thwarting Maximus' designs on Valentinian II: Ambr. *Ep.* 24.4.6. Such practice was not unprecedented in the imperial period: Domitian married the daughter of the popular (yet now deceased) general Corbulo; see Cameron (2012), 343.

⁸⁸⁵ Croke (2010), 245 n.25, refers to Joh. Chrys. *ad vid.* 4.285-9 (discussed above), Philost. 8.8 and Them. *Or.* 16.8.204c, as evidence for Varronianus' survival.

was possibly recommended by Constantinian kinship.⁸⁸⁶ Therefore it should appear as no surprise that, providing there was a comparatively smooth regime change, imperial women survived: specifically Domnica and presumably her daughters Carosa and Anastasia, and Valentinian II's sisters, Iusta and Grata.⁸⁸⁷ Thermantia survived both her parents' and brother's executions.⁸⁸⁸

Although there was a high survival rate for imperial women, there were caveats with regard to marriage arrangements, which had always been chosen carefully.⁸⁸⁹ The restrictions placed on marriage allowed Constantina to engage in local patronage in Rome in the 340s when she was a *univira*, until Constantius required her to marry Gallus.⁸⁹⁰ As the position of a Christian emperor became more defined, such a non-traditional role for an imperial woman became more feasible. The religious aspect of the evolution of the emperor into a court-based figure eroded the value provided by the marriages of his female relatives to potential allies; in fact such marriages posed a risk. This entailed fewer marriage alliances. From the Valentinianic dynasty, only Galla is known to have wed, yet she was one of five daughters who survived Valentinian I and Valens. Galla's union with Theodosius, who was a recognised Augustus, only occurred after Valentinian II's court had been ejected from the West and were able to secure the recently widowed eastern Augustus' support.

All the daughters of the eastern Theodosian court remained single, except for Licinia Eudoxia, who married the western Augustus Valentinian III, and Licinia's aunt Pulcheria who (under extraordinary circumstances) married Marcian. Holum has

⁸⁸⁶ There is no need to associate Justina's survival with her potential descent from the Constantinian dynasty. As is demonstrated in this section, it was more unusual for a woman to suffer adversely from the end of a dynasty. Justina's Constantinian descent is most extensively argued by Chausson (2007), 179-84. His assessment is based on an onomastic survey of Justina's family and the Constantinian dynasty. McEvoy (2013a), 105, more cautiously follows this argument, allowing for the main association between the dynasties being established through Gratian's and Constantia's marriage. For further discussion see Lenski (2002), 103-4, Cameron (2012), 350, and Woods (2004).

⁸⁸⁷ Laeta survived Gratian's death in Gaul during Maximus' usurpation. However, as discussed at 2.5.2, she was probably with Valentinian II in Milan at the time.

⁸⁸⁸ According to the *Chronicon Paschale*, Thermantia's death was announced in Constantinople in 415.

⁸⁸⁹ Agrippina the Elder was prevented from remarrying: Tac. *Ann.* 4.53.1-2. In the second century, Lucilla was remarried to Pompeianus, who, as the son of an *eques*, could not become emperor. He was therefore a suitable match since Marcus Aurelius' son, Commodus, was now Caesar. For further discussion see Levick (2014), 71-4.

⁸⁹⁰ Harries (2014), 211, describes Constantina's building patronage in the intervening period between her two marriages as a radical departure from the role expected of her. Cooper (1996), 144-7, summarises the various Christian roles women could perform.

already pointed out that Pulcheria's and her sisters' vows of virginity at a young age protected the position of their brother Theodosius II.⁸⁹¹ Such a concept seemed to have been initially imitated in the West. When Iusta Grata Honoria eventually married, it was through forced circumstance and was presented in later sources as exposing the court to physical danger from Attila.⁸⁹² The potency of marriage in securing political contracts was most explicit in the clearly cynical union of the fifty-four-year-old avowed virgin Pulcheria to Marcian, which denied Valentinian III's claim to the eastern throne.⁸⁹³ Prior to Pulcheria performing this traditional role, she had become the most obvious proponent of the new Christian role that a woman could serve on behalf of the court, a role developed initially by her Constantinian predecessors.

The fates of the majority of Constantinian women were emblematic for those in the succeeding Valentinianic and Theodosian dynasties. Despite chaotic internal successions and the high number of male deaths in the imperial family, the women tended to survive not despite their connections, but rather because of them. Some widows, like Constantina after her first marriage, embraced their widowed status to engage in individual acts of Christian patronage. The marital and Christian roles that imperial women played illustrate the wider imperial family's importance to an emperor's prestige which ensured their survival, even if their position became compromised through these very factors. When women's Christian roles jeopardised the court's position the most extreme outcome for them was a form of exile, in particular for Pulcheria and her sister-in-law Eudocia. However, there were also three violent deaths, the last two of which were punished, not because of their religious role, but rather their marriages.

⁸⁹¹ Soz. 9.1 – discussed by Holum (1982), 93-4.

⁸⁹² If Marcell. Com. 434 is correct, then she was in her twenties when her affair with Eugenius was exposed – the prompt for her later marriage; however, Bury (1919), 11 suggests she was in her thirties. McEvoy (2013a), 293, suggests Honoria was in her thirties and had previously been prevented from marrying. Galla Placidia was in her twenties when she was abducted by Athaulf in 410: see Sivan (2011), 25.

⁸⁹³ See Burgess (1993-1994), 63-4.

5.3 EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE: DEATHS

Thus their virtue and their rank were their undoing.

Lactantius, *DMP*, 51.2.

This statement concludes Lactantius' account of Valeria's and Prisca's fifteen-month exile following the death of Valeria's husband, Galerius. Their exile and eventual executions were the result of two regime changes: Maximinus Daza sent them into exile upon Galerius' death from cancer, and they were then beheaded on Licinius' orders after he had defeated Maximinus. As discussed above, after the Tetrarchy the normative model for imperial women who lost imperial protection was survival.⁸⁹⁴ The isolated cases where this did not happen therefore require closer examination, since even those which were the result of regime change are not as straightforward as they first appear. There were three cases where the women seem to have suffered violent deaths: Fausta and Eutropia in the Constantinian dynasty, and Serena in the western Theodosian dynasty. The deaths of Valeria and Prisca, and the earlier fatality of Valeria's step-daughter, Valeria Maximilla, provide precedents to these extreme examples and so I shall examine these first, before turning to cases belonging to the three dynasties that represent my subject matter.

5.3.1 Tetrarchic Fatalities

Lactantius' *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, written during Constantine's and Licinius' dyarchy, is the literary account that supplies most of the limited information we have for tetrarchic imperial women.⁸⁹⁵ Writing in the East during the dyarchy of Constantine and Licinius, Lactantius only narrates the deaths of Prisca (wife of Diocletian), her daughter Valeria (wife of Galerius), and the unnamed wife of Maximinus. In terms of material evidence Varner has suggested that there is evidence for the enactment of *damnatio memoriae* against both Valeria and her step-

⁸⁹⁴ The mothers of Galerius and Maximinus seem to have experienced natural deaths, having predeceased their sons. Johnson (2009), 74-82 and 82-6, has identified these women's tombs (see 2.5.4).

⁸⁹⁵ The work appears to have been written before the first conflict between the two Augusti: from 316 to 1 March 317, the date at which their sons were recognised as Caesars. Barnes (1973), 39, suggests that the deaths of Valeria and Prisca at the end of *De Mortibus Persecutorum* could have been later additions. Creed (1984), xxxiv-v, suggests a date of composition of 314-15, which seems enticing, based on a subversive reading of the text in relation to Licinius (see 2.1.1).

daughter, Valeria Maximilla, who also suffered a violent death because of regime change.⁸⁹⁶

The deaths of Maximinus' wife and Valeria Maximilla are the most straightforward, and, it seems, the least protracted. Maximinus' wife was beheaded and thrown into the Orontes upon her husband's overthrow, a collateral victim of violent regime change (*DMP* 50.6).⁸⁹⁷ There is no direct information for Valeria Maximilla's death.⁸⁹⁸ However, the inscription that survives for her in Rome seems to be evidence of an act of *damnatio memoriae*.⁸⁹⁹ Valeria Maximilla's expunging from the material evidence demonstrates the punitive measures that could still be taken against women.⁹⁰⁰ Her death is most likely to have been associated with the overthrow and death of her husband Maxentius in October 312. Just as Maxentius' images were re-fashioned as Constantine, Varner has identified a statue for a Constantinian woman as a re-appropriation of one of Maximilla.⁹⁰¹

If Maximilla's demise was violent collateral to Maxentius' defeat (which is not entirely certain), then the fatality fulfils the expectations of when such a woman would be put to death: as a result of the deposition of a ruler with whom they were

⁸⁹⁶ Varner (2004), 214-24, lays out the *damnationes* of the Tetrarchic women and Fausta, in conjunction with their male counterparts. There is little firm evidence regarding Valeria Maximilla's life in general. She was the daughter of Galerius (*Lact. DMP* 26.1), but it is disputed in modern scholarship whether she was Valeria's daughter. Lactantius, *DMP* 50.2, describes Valeria as barren, but as Barnes points out this only definitely means that she produced no sons: (2010), 321-2. Barnes forcefully argues against a blood relationship between Valeria and Valeria Maximilla, mainly because of the young age at which she would have born children (by 307), which in turn is dependent on the date of Galerius' and Valeria's marriage being 293 (his appointment as Augustus). Conception in her early teenage years would not be totally inconceivable, however.

⁸⁹⁷ Varner (2001), 43, divides motivations for women's *damnationes* into two categories: because they were viewed as adjuncts of the male relative who was condemned; or were involved in controversy that related to the emperor. The casualties here fit the former category. The death of Soaemias because of the overthrow of her son, Elagabalus, was similar to the fate of Maximinus Daza's wife: see Herodian, 5.8.8-10 and 1.6.1 above. Pollini (2006), 591, discusses the similarities between Soaemias' and male *damnationes* over the whole imperial period.

⁸⁹⁸ She ceases to appear on the imperial record after a possible reference in *Pan. Lat.* 9.16.5, delivered in 312. *PLRE* 1, bases her date of death on this reference.

⁸⁹⁹ Varner (2004), 215-221, discusses the *damnationes* of Maxentius, Valeria Maximilla and their son Romulus. The inscription is Appendix 1.5.

⁹⁰⁰ For examples of such measures against women in the early imperial period see Flower (2006), 160-96.

⁹⁰¹ On the difficulty of identifying imperial female statuary in this period see James (2013), 100. Varner (2004), 220, identifies one mutilated statue as plausibly representing Maximilla, based on the likeness to Maxentius: *Museo Capitolini Magazin. Inv.* 1063. Varner (2004), 9, describes how successors 'cannibalised' their predecessors' images; this can be seen with Constantine's re-sculpting of Maxentius' statuary in his own image and so it is plausible the process was extended to the deposed emperor's wife.

identified. It has been shown in the succeeding period that this was not in fact normally the case, but Maximilla presented no asset to the remaining tetrarchs. As seen in the Constantinian dynasty, it was not just the marital relationship that determined an imperial woman's value to a ruler, but equally her family connections. Constantia was valuable to Constantine because he could exploit the fact that she was the widow of the ruler and his own sister. Eutropia did not pose a threat to Constantine because, despite being Maximian's widow, she was also his mother-in-law and a committed Christian who promoted an emerging religious aspect of imperial rule. If Maximilla was put to death following Maxentius' defeat by Constantine it was because she retained little value for Constantine and her survival posed a threat. Constantine was already married to Fausta, who presented him with better connections with former western Augusti (and their armies). Other than her marriage to Fausta's brother, Maxentius, Maximilla's good imperial connections were eastern, a territory which was still being fought over, and not by Constantine. Interestingly if Maximilla was put to death and suffered *damnatio*, as Varner argues, then this was at the instigation of Constantine.⁹⁰²

While Maximilla's death was the result of her husband's deposition, it is less clear why the same measure was eventually enacted against Valeria and her mother. Valeria survived Galerius' natural, if unpleasant, death (*DMP* 33.1-11), but she and Prisca were driven into exile in 311, the year before Maxentius' defeat and Maximilla's probable death.⁹⁰³ Valeria, the only Augusta of the Tetrarchy, retained value for the other Augusti because she was the only issue of the *pater Augustorum* Diocletian. According to Lactantius, *DMP* 39.1, Maximinus hoped to divorce his wife and marry Valeria because of her descent.⁹⁰⁴ Valeria's appearances in

⁹⁰² Varner (2004), 219-20. If Constantine did put her to death it would emphasise the Constantinian bias of Lactantius' work, which mentions only Licinius' executions of imperial women.

⁹⁰³ This shows that Prisca lived with her daughter at Galerius' court, rather than with Diocletian who, if Lactantius is correct, was still alive for part of the women's exile: *DMP* 41.1-2. Diocletian died before Maximinus, and therefore also before Valeria (42.1-3). For the debate over whether Diocletian died on 3 December 311 or 312 see Barnes (2010), 319, who prefers the earlier date, and Nakamura (2003), 286, who argues for the latter. Based on this passage in *DMP* 41.1-42.3, I prefer Barnes' hypothesis, since it allows for a longer period before the outbreak of war between Constantine and Licinius, before which the *DMP* was written.

⁹⁰⁴ Maximinus' son and daughter were also put to death by Licinius, before this their mother was thrown into the Orontes (*DMP* 50.6-7). In this passage Lactantius suggests it was an appropriate means of death because she enforced the same fate on 'chaste women' (*castas feminas*): *DMP*, 50.7.

Lactantius' work serve a clear rhetorical purpose.⁹⁰⁵ Recently James has suggested that Valeria's chaste actions, refusing Maximinus' request and going into exile instead (*DMP* 39.1-5), only serve to emphasise the depravity of Maximinus, one of the persecutors against whom the work was directed.⁹⁰⁶ Valeria's and her mother's deaths appear at the end of Lactantius' work and therefore provide part of the climax to the piece.⁹⁰⁷

According to the earlier or later norms, family connections would recommend these women's survivals, but they were not related to the surviving tetrarchs who were already in politically expedient marriages. Therefore the women's survival only posed a danger to the present college. Maximinus, who was a kinsman of Valeria's husband, notably only sent Valeria and Prisca into exile. Once the women were discovered by Licinius their fate was sealed, as his alliance with Constantine, which was confirmed by his marriage to Constantia, meant Valeria held no value to him if he wanted to maintain this alliance. Even if Valeria was 'barren', as she was described by Lactantius (*sterilitatem: DMP* 50.2), she could still lend her support to a loyal military opposition.⁹⁰⁸ The violent nature of Valeria's and Prisca's deaths can be attributed to regime change and a clear desire on the part of the new dyarchy to disassociate themselves from their former imperial colleagues in the Tetrarchy. These fatalities are therefore not so different from those of Maximinus' wife, described by Lactantius, and Valeria Maximilla's, whose death is omitted from Lactantius' work because it is the one death carried out in Constantine's territory and, presumably, at his command.

The conclusion of this passage 'Thus all the wicked suffered by the true and just judgement of God' is then followed by the description of Valeria's death. I view Lactantius' account of Valeria's and Prisca's deaths as distinct from the 'wicked' group; for the opposing view see James (2013), 106-7.

⁹⁰⁵ The earliest detailed reference made to her by Lactantius is in his description of Diocletian polluting (*pollui*) her and her mother by ordering them to perform a sacrifice: *DMP* 15.1. This has been inferred to mean that the women were Christians: see their entries in *PLRE* 1. This slim piece of evidence, like the later description of their exiles and deaths, mainly serves to condemn the relevant persecutor, rather than to glorify them.

⁹⁰⁶ James (2013), 106-7.

⁹⁰⁷ Valeria and Prisca were killed after Maximinus Daza, who died in ca. September 313; see Creed (1984), 123.

⁹⁰⁸ See footnote 896.

5.3.2 Late Antique Fatalities

Three women from within the Constantinian, Valentinianic and Theodosian dynasties suffered unnatural deaths. In chronological order these women are: Fausta, Constantine's wife; Eutropia, Constantine's half-sister and the mother of Iulius Nepotianus; and finally Serena, whose nexus of connections was exploited by Claudian in the poems described in section 3.3. I will look at these cases in terms of available evidence, rather than chronologically. I begin with the one account for Eutropia's demise, since the limited information informs the key conditions which led to Serena's death, which was the result of regime change, albeit not a change of emperors. I will then look at Fausta's death about which there is more extant information than for the other fatalities. The circumstances for her death also differ greatly from the tetrarchic examples, since it occurred during her husband's reign.

5.3.2.1 The Case of Eutropia

Eutropia died during Magnentius' usurpation in 350.⁹⁰⁹ Her violent death closely resembles the circumstances for the tetrarchic fatalities. Eutropia was identified with the losing side at a time of particularly chaotic regime upheaval. However, while Maximilla was viewed as an adjunct of her husband, Eutropia's death can be connected with that of her son, Iulius Nepotianus, who was Augustus for less than a month.⁹¹⁰ He was proclaimed on 3 June 350 as a response to Magnentius' invasion of Italy, and killed at the end of the same month.⁹¹¹ Athanasius (sporadically the bishop of Alexandria) is the only source to refer to Eutropia's death, setting it at the time of Magnentius' advance on Rome. The mention appears in his *Apology to Constantius*, which was originally delivered in 353, but circulated in written form ca. 357. The work therefore provides a contemporary perspective, written within a decade of Eutropia's death.⁹¹² Athanasius' mention of Eutropia appears in the

⁹⁰⁹ For a summary of Magnentius' usurpation see 2.1.2.

⁹¹⁰ *PLRE* 1, s.v. Nepotianus 7, tentatively identifies the consul in 336, Virius Nepotianus, as Eutropia's husband. This Nepotianus was probably killed in the family massacre at Constantinople in 337: Burgess (2008), 10.

⁹¹¹ If Burgess (2008), 10 n.34, is correct that Nepotianus was born after summer 337 then he was only thirteen years old when he was proclaimed Augustus. He therefore could only be a figurehead for Constantinian supporters in the face of Magnentius' usurpation.

⁹¹² Barnes (1993), 123-4, discusses the staggered dates of composition. The original speech, which includes this passage, was delivered in 353, but an embellished version was produced in 357. See also Barnes (2007), 398-400.

section in which he denies claims that he was in communication with Magnentius following Constans' death (*Ap. Const. 6*):

Could I have said, 'You have done well to murder the man who honoured me, whose kindness I shall never forget?' Or, 'I approve of your conduct in destroying our Christian friends, and most faithful brethren.' or, 'I approve of your proceedings in butchering those who so kindly entertained me at Rome; for instance, your departed aunt Eutropia, whose disposition answered to her name, that worthy man, Abuterius, the most faithful Spirantius, and many other excellent persons?'

From this passage it would appear that Eutropia was killed as a result of the ousting of her family from power in Rome.⁹¹³ Like Valeria and Valeria Maximilla, Eutropia was killed because she was identified as an adjunct of an emperor, after whose death she provided little of value to those in power. After the usurpations of 350, regime changes, although often carried out surreptitiously, were not the result of violent conflict. This must be a significant factor in later women's survival at such points of transition. In terms of the military crises resulting in the two fifth-century sacks of Rome, three women were abducted of whom Licinia Eudoxia, widow of Valentinian III, seems a comparable figure to Eutropia, since both were widows with teenaged children. Their different fates can be attributed to the gender of these children. Eutropia's son presented only a threat to Magnentius, while Eudocia II, Licinia Eudoxia's daughter, was an asset to the Vandals Geiseric and Huneric, to whom she had already been engaged. Eudocia's marriage therefore bolstered the Vandals' occupation of Africa. The survival of these women during the violent fifth-century epochs make the case of Serena the more arresting.

5.3.2.2 The Case of Serena.

The epitome of Olympiodorus summarises the key details about Serena's death (*fr. 7.3*):

⁹¹³ This hypothesis is cautiously made; as noted in *PLRE 1*, s.v. Eutropia, σοῦ seems to refer to Constantius', rather than Magnentius' aunt, since the work is addressed to Constantius. Eutropia was also a Constantinian name (see Table 1). Onomastic connections can be a hazardous means to determine descent: see my discussion of Chausson's Constantinian theory for Justina at 2.1.2.2. See also 5.3.1 for Valeria Maximilla not being the daughter of Valeria. Barnes (1993), 53 and 254 n.23, examines the passage and firmly connects the personal pronoun to Constantius. Barnes underlines her beneficial position for Athanasius because she presented a line of communication with the emperors.

After the death of Stilicho his wife Serena was killed by strangulation [ἐναποπνίγω]⁹¹⁴, since she was thought to be the reason for Alaric's march on Rome. Earlier, after the death of Stilicho, their son Eucherius was also put to death.⁹¹⁵

This short fragment, transmitted via Photius' epitome, provides the motive, manner, and approximate timeframe of Serena's death, which are repeated in the later, more detailed, account by Zosimus.⁹¹⁶ Serena was strangled because she was deemed guilty of collusion with Alaric, who at that point was besieging Rome, and her death followed her husband's and son's. Like many accounts of imperial women's deaths throughout the imperial period, Olympiodorus conveys an element of doubt regarding Serena's guilt with his use of the verb *voμίζω*.

Serena's demise fits within the regime-upheaval model already established; however, the emperor's position remained unaffected and the other imperial women who were in Rome with her, Thermantia and Galla Placidia, survived. Serena's death took place during the Gothic siege, probably in November 408, and can be clearly and directly associated with the violent deaths earlier in the same year of her husband Stilicho and their son Eucherius.⁹¹⁷ The most detailed account is provided by Zosimus, who adds to the details provided in the epitome of Olympiodorus. Zosimus' pejorative description also complements the laudatory mention of Serena's Christian piety in the hagiographic *Vita Melaniae*, which describes Serena's petition of Honorius on Melania's behalf about a property dispute. The hagiography was written by Gerontius after the reinstatement of the western Theodosian dynasty and survives in Greek and Latin.⁹¹⁸

While Serena's death can be associated with (internal) regime change, what makes her death extraordinary is that it appears to have been ratified by the senate in Rome.

⁹¹⁴ Blockley (1983), 159, and Demandt and Brummer (1977), 500, translate the verb as strangulation, but the definition in the *LSJ* is 'suffocate' or 'drown in'.

⁹¹⁵ The translations of Olympiodorus are taken from Blockley (1983).

⁹¹⁶ Paschoud (1987), 263-65, discusses whether Olympiodorus or Eunapius was the influence for this aspect of Zosimus' history (he thinks that it is Olympiodorus). See also Blockley (1980a), 396. For discussion of Photius see 4.2.3.2.

⁹¹⁷ See 2.1.5.

⁹¹⁸ Clark (1984), 24, suggests 452/3 as the date of composition. There is debate over which version appeared first: Clark in her introduction to her translation suggests the Greek version was the original: (1984), 10-17. Gerontius appears to have known Melania and lived in Rome, although he was not present at the events he describes here: Clark (1984), 15-16. No mention is made to Serena's death in the hagiography, even though it was composed afterwards.

The image that emerges from both the *Vitae Melaniae* and Zosimus' history is that Serena acts in Honorius' interests, in opposition to the senate.⁹¹⁹ This is at odds with the temporal connection between Serena's death and the military coup that precipitated the deaths of Stilicho and their son Eucherius.⁹²⁰ Her death should be considered in relation to these different perceptions, alongside the question: why did the senate take such an extraordinary measure against a woman who was cousin, foster-sister and mother-in-law of the still-reigning emperor? Other issues can be related to these central problems: in particular, the three-month gap between Stilicho's and Serena's deaths, and the survival of the other imperial women who were in Rome at the time of Alaric's siege.

As well as providing the same details as Olympiodorus, Zosimus' longer account (5.38.1-4) adds that it was the senate, with the collusion of Galla Placidia, who acted against Serena. He also provides a detailed back story of Serena's earlier desecration of the Magna Mater temple in which she removed a necklace from a statue. This act is presented as dictating her future death by strangulation.⁹²¹ Notably, like Olympiodorus (who is thought to be Zosimus' principal or only source in this section), Zosimus suggests that Serena was put to death on a false pretence, even though it was just retribution for her earlier actions (5.38.1-2):⁹²²

Now that Alaric was near Rome and settling down to besiege the barbarians against the city. The whole senate and Placidia, the emperor's half-sister, thought she should die because she was the cause of their present troubles; they said that with Serena out of the way, Alaric would withdraw from the city as there would be no-one left who might be expected to betray it. Although this suspicion was

⁹¹⁹ Paschoud (1987), 258-62, discusses Zos. 5.38.1-4 and relates it to the description of Serena in the hagiography.

⁹²⁰ The deaths of Stilicho and Eucherius are described by Olymp. *fr.* 5.1 and *fr.* 5.2 and Zos. 5.34.5 and 5.35.3-4.

⁹²¹ Immediately after this account Zosimus also attributes Stilicho's death to his impiety (ἀσεβεια) which is punished by Justice (5.38.5). For the providential aspect of Zosimus see Paschoud's commentary: (1987), 263-65; see also Demandt and Brummer (1977), 500. Paschoud, 265, dates her desecration of the shrine to 389; however, this date now seems unlikely following the reassessment of Theodosius' visit to Rome by Kelly (2016). Demandt and Brummer (1977), 497-9, date Serena's act to 394: which Paschoud argues is untenable, 264. Serena's presence in Rome in 394 seems also unlikely as it is based on a visit by Theodosius which has also been discredited: Kelly (2016). Demandt and Brummer, 500, point out that Zosimus himself (or Olympiodorus), rather than the senate, saw a providential causality linking this incident with Serena's later execution.

⁹²² Paschoud (1987), 207, and Blockley (1980a), 396, discuss Zosimus' sources.

in fact false, for Serena thought of no such thing, she was all the same justly punished for her impieties [δυσσέβηματα].

From this account it would appear that the senate acted against Serena because she was viewed as an adjunct of Stilicho.⁹²³ This close association between husband and wife is similar to the depiction of the couple by Claudian.⁹²⁴ This image is at odds, however, with the view presented elsewhere by Zosimus of Serena acting against her husband's interests on Honorius' behalf. At one point Zosimus has Stilicho rebuking his wife for her actions in front of the senate (5.29.8).⁹²⁵

Serena's actions against polytheistic worship in Zosimus' account augments the image of her in the *Vitae Melaniae* (11-14). In this encomiastic treatment, her actions are also identified as being in Honorius' interests; Stilicho is not referred to at all. In the *Life* Serena comes to the assistance of the ascetic couple, Melania and Pinian, when Pinian's brother, Severus, opposes the sale of their land for the church.⁹²⁶ Recognising the couple's Christian piety, because of her own faith, Serena intervenes on their behalf by communicating their concern to Honorius (12):

When the empress heard these things, she was much edified and straightaway informed her truly pious, devout brother, the very blessed emperor Honorius, who issued a decree in every province that their possessions should be sold by the agency of the governors and ministers, and that by their enterprise, the money deriving from them should be remitted to Melania and Pinian.

Serena's actions illustrate the political element in acts of patronage carried out by imperial women and how closely these actions were identified with the emperor. The possible connection with her death indicates how such assertive acts could go wrong. Serena is informed of the couple's property dispute by bishops through whom an

⁹²³ Stilicho's alliances with Alaric were reflected in the reported defection of Stilicho's troops to the Gothic leader after Stilicho's death. Zos. 3.35.5 describes ca. 35,000 barbarian recruits deserting the imperial army.

⁹²⁴ We have no poems from Claudian after 404.

⁹²⁵ In this passage Zosimus describes Stilicho's request for money from the senate to pay Alaric in Epirus. Zosimus refers to Serena interfering on Honorius' behalf in the negotiations between Stilicho and the senate. Compare Olymp. *fr.* 5.2, whose description of the same altercation omits any reference to Serena.

⁹²⁶ *V. Mel.* 10 and 11, attributes the principal culpability to Severus, who leads the opposition to the sale of their property. In this passage he is described as the Devil's instrument, a similar image to that created in the negative portrayals of Eudoxia (see 4.3.2).

audience is arranged between Serena and the couple (11-12).⁹²⁷ This shows that, like Theodosius II's court, western women acted as patrons to certain members of the clergy. The passage also shows that such patronage was not universally welcome. It seems that Melania and Pinian faced opposition from a large number of the senatorial elite, as well as widespread slave revolts on their many estates, which were located throughout the western empire.⁹²⁸

Demandt and Brummer have identified Serena's involvement in Melania's and Pinian's property dispute as the cause of senatorial hostility towards her that resulted in her eventual death.⁹²⁹ The property dispute certainly seems to have happened not long before the Gothic siege of Rome: the barbarian invasion of Italy is referred to at the end of this episode (*V. Mel.* 14).⁹³⁰ Even though Demandt's and Brummer's connection between the dispute and Serena's death cannot be corroborated, both events happened at a time of extraordinary military pressure in Italy, when the court seemed increasingly isolated from the senate in Rome. Melania's and Pinian's vow to give their property to the church would therefore draw criticism from others parts of the senatorial elite, whom Stilicho had to petition to get 4000lb of gold to pay off Alaric, according to Zosimus (5.29.5-9).⁹³¹ Serena's actions on their behalf were a political act, which in the short term was successful, but once Serena lost her association with power her own position became at risk.⁹³²

Zosimus' references about Serena throughout book five of his history, and the encounter between Serena and Melania in the hagiography emphasise Serena's

⁹²⁷ This passage provides an insight into the etiquette of such patronage: Melania and Pinian are described as bringing gifts for both Serena and the 'faithful eunuchs' before they go to meet her (11).

⁹²⁸ Their wealth from their many western estates is described in *V. Mel.* 11, 15, 18 and 19. At 11, Melania and Pinian express concern for the revolt of their slaves in the roman suburbs spreading to their other estates. As Demandt and Brummer (1977), 484, suggest this would have been a serious concern to the imperial administration. They suggest that in relation to other senatorial families the couple's wealth was relatively modest, but that the liquidation of their assets aroused greater political concerns. After the couple leave Rome their property is confiscated: *V. Mel.* 19.

⁹²⁹ Demandt and Brummer (1977).

⁹³⁰ The Gothic incursion is referred to again when the couple pass through Sicily: *V. Mel.* 19.

⁹³¹ McEvoy (2013a), 178-9, argues that Stilicho's debate in the senate was emblematic of his frequent displays of deference to their decision making, when he could have circumnavigated the process and got Honorius to draw up legislation.

⁹³² Such repercussions were never at issue with Justina and Eudoxia, since they predeceased the emperor with whom their actions were associated.

religious zeal and her association with Honorius.⁹³³ However, the charge with which Serena was deemed guilty by the senate was collusion with the Goths (5.38.1). This allegation clearly associated her with Stilicho, who was seen as acting in alliance with Alaric. Even if Zosimus dismisses the charge by which Serena was executed, it would appear from both this reference and the fragmentary information from Olympiodorus that Serena was killed because she was identified as an adjunct of her husband by the senate. That Serena was defined by her marital relationship seems confirmed by the apparent survival of her daughter, Thermantia (wife of Honorius), and the certain survival of Galla Placidia.⁹³⁴

Zosimus' general portrayal of Serena's actions is through her familial, rather than marital association.⁹³⁵ Gerontius conveys a similar image, but only because Stilicho, unpopular after his death, was eliminated from a story which concerned imperial piety.⁹³⁶ This is a reversal of Serena's image conveyed in Claudian's panegyric. For Claudian, Serena's actions are on Stilicho's behalf and she acts in his absence only because she was in tune with his interests. On Melania's behalf she petitions Honorius because she is a devout Christian who therefore recognises Melania's piety. Her death, in contrast to the survival of her female contemporaries in Rome, may have been because she demonstrated independence and was influential in her own right, which the senate viewed as impinging upon their interests at a time of great crisis. Her independent actions were only protected as long as Stilicho was alive. After his death, both the senate and Honorius were keen to distance themselves from him and therefore also Serena, who was an adjunct of her husband.

5.3.2.3 The Case of Fausta

The circumstances surrounding Fausta's death in 326 are markedly different from those already described. Like Serena's death the most detailed extant narrative is

⁹³³ Serena's refusal to buy the couple's house in Rome in return for her help could have been meant to demonstrate a lack of partisanship: *V. Mel.* 14. In the passage her refusal is attributed to her inherent piety.

⁹³⁴ Honorius' rejection of Thermantia is described by Zos. 5.35.3 and 5.37.6 (where the death of the husband of Stilicho's sister is also described). For Galla Placidia's abduction at the sack of Rome in 410 see Marcell. Com. 410.

⁹³⁵ This is most clearly indicated through Zosimus' story of her ensuring Maria's virginity after marriage: 5.28.2-3.

⁹³⁶ This is in contrast with the image that Claudian promoted of Serena acting on Stilicho's behalf in his absence from court (*Laus Serenae*, 232-6).

again provided by Zosimus, but following a much longer (and erratic) literary tradition. The complicated primary literature is reflected by the wide range of theories presented in modern scholarship. Recently, James has argued that Fausta died a natural death and in fact the initial silence surrounding her demise was emblematic of the imperial women in the period.⁹³⁷ This is an interesting consideration and would bear weight if not for the one unifying element in all of the sources describing Fausta's death in detail: that she died unnaturally in a bath at the instigation of her husband Constantine.⁹³⁸ The emperor's involvement is the main point of difference with the deaths so far examined. Instead of regime change, Fausta's death was enacted by the person with whom she was identified up until that point: her husband, Constantine.

Fausta's death is often linked to that of her stepson Crispus, who was killed possibly only a few months before Fausta died.⁹³⁹ The partial and often polemical nature of the much later literary accounts for both Crispus' and Fausta's deaths have encouraged a wide range of inferences and interpretations in modern scholarship which have established no general consensus.⁹⁴⁰ However, even if the causes remain

⁹³⁷ James (2013), 107-112, discusses the literary tradition for Fausta's death; at 110-11 she argues that evidence for Fausta's *damnatio memoriae* is inconclusive, as is the idea that her sons did not honour her memory. At 109, she describes some accounts of Fausta's death as anti-Christian propaganda to denigrate Constantine; this last point I do agree with, but in regard to the first point the literary evidence so clearly points towards an unnatural death, in spite of the different religious perspectives, that I do not think that they can be wholly discredited.

⁹³⁸ Only Chrysostom suggests that she died by other means, in a highly allegorical account, in which he compares the death of an anonymous imperial couple with the story of Phaedra and Hippolytus: *Ep. ad Phil. Comm.* 4.15.5. Pohlsander (1984), 101 and 103-4, notes the fantastical nature of Chrysostom's reference, but then presents it as evidence for a version of Fausta's death which did not relate to a bath.

⁹³⁹ Drijvers (1992b), 506, points to the close temporal proximity, shown by the cessation of coin types for both in the same year. James (2013), 111, in her reassessment of their deaths considers them coincidental.

⁹⁴⁰ Of all the theories (of which there are many), the most plausible is Drijvers' temperate assessment that Crispus' and Fausta's deaths were connected and that both *damnationes* remained in place after their death: (1992b), 500-6. The main arguments in modern scholarship (which mainly focus on Crispus) are: Guthrie (1966), 325-31, that Crispus was killed because he was illegitimate; Austin (1980), 133-8, that the death of Crispus was linked to magic trials, and Fausta's memory was later rehabilitated; Pohlsander (1984), 79-106, that the deaths of Crispus and Fausta were connected and Helena subsequently went on her 'pilgrimage' out of guilt for her part in the latter's death; Desnier (1987), 297-309, that Fausta's death was accidental, resulting from torture via a boiling bath as she was interrogated for perjury in regard to Crispus' death; Woods (1998), 70-86, that Fausta died due to a botched abortion of Crispus' baby and she was assisted in this procedure by Helena; and Potter (2011), 137-53, that Crispus died because he opposed Constantine in some way and was supported in this by Fausta who was therefore also killed. Varner (2004), 221, like Potter, suggests that both may have been involved in a plot to overthrow Constantine. Now there is James' assessment as well: see

obscure, trends can be observed from the narratives and broader conclusions made.⁹⁴¹ The first trend in the sources is ominous silence. In the panegyric *Life of Constantine*, written in the late 330s, Eusebius makes no reference to Crispus or Fausta.⁹⁴² The unclear circumstances of Crispus' and Fausta's deaths suggests they were meant to be blotted from the historical record, rather than serve as a reminder for their trespasses. This makes reconstruction of events difficult. The silence in this near-contemporary literary account, along with Fausta's expurgation from material evidence, heavily suggests that she suffered some process of *damnatio memoriae*, like her contemporaries Valeria and Valeria Maximilla.⁹⁴³ The silence surrounding Fausta's death was in contrast to her earlier presentation by Constantine as an intrinsic element of dynastic presentation. It was only after Constantius II's reign, that references to her death appear in the literary tradition following the emergence of similarly sparse references about Crispus' death.

The first extant mention of Fausta's death is in an oblique passage of Julian, *Caesars*. The possible reference occurs within the context of Julian's explanation for Constantine's conversion to Christianity, because only Jesus would absolve Constantine of the crimes of double murder and seduction (336A-B):

“He that is a seducer, he that is a murderer, he that is sacrilegious and infamous, let him approach without fear! For with this water will I wash him and will straightway make him clean. And though he should

footnote 937. There does seem to be a general consensus that the deaths were sudden: see for example Drijvers (1992b), 504. For the vagueness of the circumstances surrounding their deaths see Austin (1980), 135. For the common rhetorical topos of adultery being substituted for political intrigue in descriptions of imperial women's violent deaths and pursuant *damnatio* see Varner (2001), 42, and for an earlier parallel Fagan (2002), 79.

⁹⁴¹ Drijvers (1992b), 506, cautions against drawing any theories from the limited evidence available, other than that Crispus' and Fausta's deaths were likely connected.

⁹⁴² Pohlsander (1984), 98, sees this as a volte-face by Eusebius in regard to Crispus. Constantius II is referred to as the second eldest son at *V. Const.* 70 (he was the third if Crispus is included). Drijvers (1992b), 506, sees Eusebius' silence on the events as evidence of how serious the scandal was. Austin (1980), 135, argues that Eusebius' silence suggests that Constantine was in the wrong. The contemporary silence on the deaths differs from the denigration and mutilation of statues in other depositions of male rulers, which served to deter supporters: see Varner (2004), 3. At 223, he suggests that the lack of sculpture for Fausta was due to *damnatio* being enacted against her memory.

⁹⁴³ Potter (2011), 141, lays out the dichotomy in the literary tradition as he discusses his approach: 'The veil of silence cast over her existence in the later loyalist tradition, as well as the shadow of scandal cast by the alternative, less favourable, tradition, may only be lifted through the combination of references within the panegyric tradition that are supplemented by important anomalies in the numismatic evidence.' This division in the sources is not solely along religious lines.

be guilty of those same sins a second time, let him but smite his breast and beat his head and I will make him clean again.”

Prior to this Julian had referred to Fausta twice in *Oration 1* to Constantius: at *Or.* 1.7D, and more pertinently 1.9C ‘sister, mother, wife and daughter of kings.’ These fleeting references have been taken by Potter as indications of Fausta’s rehabilitation under Constantius, but the anodyne nature of the references makes this assessment seem an inference too far.⁹⁴⁴ Julian’s hostility to Constantine and his sons is the clearest target of his later account, when his relationship with Constantius II had soured. The reservation about the guilt of Crispus and Fausta was a continuous thread throughout all literary accounts that provide anything more than the bare details.

Eutropius, writing in 369/70, continues in a more cursory manner. At 10.6, he situates her death temporally with that of Licinius II and ‘afterwards numerous friends’.⁹⁴⁵ It is not until the Theodosian dynasty that the narratives become more embellished. The *Epitome of the Caesars*, composed shortly after Theodosius I’s reign, introduces the idea of Fausta’s culpability for Crispus’ end and describes Helena avenging her grandson by engineering Fausta’s death (41.11-12). This is similar to Eutropius’ version, in which Constantine’s change of character is seen as the impetus for the killing. Again the possibility of Crispus’ and Fausta’s innocence is entertained. These later more detailed versions are, however, questionable: indicated by the phrase *ut putant*.⁹⁴⁶ The literary accounts of the Theodosian period introduce an adultery theme to the story. Philostorgius describes Fausta’s death as punishment for an affair with a *cursor*. The charge of adultery in conjunction with an

⁹⁴⁴ Potter (2011), 149-50. In 1.9C, Julian also refers to her filial relationship with Maxentius, who definitely was not rehabilitated. I would tentatively argue that Fausta’s memory was not subsequently venerated, because to rehabilitate Fausta would denigrate the actions of Constantine who was more crucial in Constantius’ imperial presentation. Varner (2001), 85 n.313, argues for the rehabilitation theory.

⁹⁴⁵ Eutropius’ sequence of events describing the deaths of Crispus and Licinius II, followed by Fausta, was replicated by the perfunctory mention in Jerome’s *Chronicle*, which dates the death of Crispus to 325 and Fausta to 328.

⁹⁴⁶ See Pohlsander (1984), 100. Olympiodorus uses a similar phrase when describing Serena’s death: see 5.3.2.2.

imperial woman's *damnatio* was identified as a common feature by Varner because it denigrates the woman's character, thereby justifying the perpetrator's actions.⁹⁴⁷

The most interesting piece of literary evidence for Fausta's death is also one of the latest, a letter by Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* 5.8.2-3):

Indeed it seems to me that no greater power of satiric suggestion was shown by the consul Ablabius when in a couple of verses he stabbed at the life and family of Constantine and put his tooth into them with this distich posted up secretly on the door of the palace!

Who would now want the golden age of Saturn?
Ours is a diamond age —of Nero's pattern.

He wrote this, of course, because the aforesaid Augustus had almost simultaneously got rid of his wife Fausta with a hot bath and his son Crispus with cold poison.⁹⁴⁸

This account by a Christian writer is surprisingly critical of Constantine.⁹⁴⁹ Sidonius' reference to a contemporary witticism supports the idea that after the deaths there quickly emerged a subversive tradition which was still prevalent over a century (and three dynasties) later, even if it only first began to surface in literary narratives towards the end of the Constantinian dynasty.⁹⁵⁰ The allusion also suggests that

⁹⁴⁷ Varner (2001), 57-86, discusses it at length. For the benefits of such a story see in particular 58 (in discussion of Julia Maior's *damnatio*): 'the charge of adultery may have served a double purpose: not only did it provide for Julia's banishment but, together with related charges of sexual promiscuity, it functioned as an efficient way of blackening her character.' Varner (2004), 12, argues that such allegations served to obscure political machinations. James (2013), 112, argues that portrayals of women were not designed to be character portraits of them, but of the ruler with whom they were associated. See also Fagan (2002), 566-79.

⁹⁴⁸ Book three of Sidonius' letters was published in the late 470s: see Harries (1994), 7. The Neronian parallel which was made by Ablabius has been under-analysed. It was under Nero that the only other death of an imperial woman occurred in a bath, that of his wife Octavia (*Tac. Ann.* 14.64.2). The manner of her death was different, her forced suicide ended in a bath because her loss of blood was too slow after cutting her wrists. However, the charge of adultery (and also Octavia's imperial familial connections) matches one literary tradition for Fausta. Incidentally, given the wide speculation about Fausta's death generally, the absence of a theory that she died in a bath to finish off a similar forced suicide is surprising. Pohlsander (1984), 100, in reference to Sidonius Apollinaris' narrative, suggests it was merely a superficial comparison between Nero and Constantine. Mratschek (2013), 249 and 255, cautions against reading Sidonius too literally, as his tendency is to retell, rather than recall history.

⁹⁴⁹ The letter finishes in sentiments similar to those expressed in the opening quotation to this section by John Chrysostom: 'For the men whom our judgment, thanks to the perversity of this age, ranks as fortune's favourites are swollen with no such ordinary conceit that posterity will someday find it hard to remember their names; for the infamies of the wicked are no less immortal than the praises of the good.'

⁹⁵⁰ Austin (1980), 136, makes the most of the possible political nature of the deaths, and connects Albinus' death to the imperial fatalities. He goes too far, however, in suggesting that it was due to

some who were contemporary to the events themselves believed Fausta to be wrongly accused. The suppression of scandals involving imperial women is a common theme that runs throughout the imperial period. Stories often only emerge in later accounts, commonly to offer a reinterpretation of an emperor's reign.⁹⁵¹

Zosimus' account is the latest, and by far the most detailed. His version draws on many ideas present in the earlier extant accounts, especially Julian (2.29.2):

Without any consideration for natural law he killed his son, Crispus, on suspicion of having had intercourse with his step-mother, Fausta. And when Constantine's mother, Helena, was saddened by this atrocity and was inconsolable at the young man's death, Constantine as if to comfort her, applied a remedy worse than the disease: he ordered a bath to be overheated, and shut Fausta up in it until she was dead.

Zosimus presents these executions as reasons for Constantine's conversion to Christianity, because it is the only religion that will absolve him of the murders (2.29.3-4).⁹⁵² Constantine's actions are made worse because they are shown to be hypocritical by the preceding description of the emperor's legislation against adultery (2.29.1). The aim of Zosimus' description is to emphasise Constantine's bad character. Not only did Constantine perform such atrocities against his own family, but he was led to do such acts by the women of his house.

5.3.2.4 Conclusion

The circumstances surrounding Fausta's death are markedly different from those examined so far because it did not occur at a point of succession. Both Eutropia's and Serena's deaths were the result of violent regime change, even if Serena's was the result of an internal transition. The combination of Serena's close association with her son and husband, and in particular Stilicho's former alliances with the Goths, seems to have led to her death. In contrast, Serena's daughter and foster-sister survived, whose primary male association was with the still reigning Augustus, Honorius. It seems that Zosimus' given reason, of Serena's association with Stilicho,

Fausta's ambitions for her sons. Potter (2011), 152-3, also suggests a political element, and that Crispus and Fausta formed an alliance growing up in the same court.

⁹⁵¹ See 1.5.2.

⁹⁵² This is the same reason Julian presents for Constantine's conversion.

rather than that of her relationship with Honorius, which was emphasised elsewhere, drove the violent actions against her by the senate.

Fausta's death was unanticipated because she had been valuable to the public perception of the imperial family, shown in coins and titles.⁹⁵³ Whatever the events that precipitated her death, her sudden absence, in comparison to the continued praise for Helena seems abrupt.⁹⁵⁴ The temporal proximity of Fausta's death with the violent ends during the Tetrarchy do not provide a precedent because of the intervening example of Constantia's survival when her husband Licinius and their son died. Constantia's survival benefited her brother. Constantine's supplanting of Licinius in the East was perhaps a more straightforward regime change than the chaos that surrounded the deaths of Eutropia and Serena, from which there was no clear immediate successor. The contemporary silence surrounding Fausta's death indicates official obfuscation about events, which suggests scandal. Eudocia was the next imperial spouse to lose value within a regime. Her different fate suggests she benefitted from the wider changes in the imperial office after Constantine.

5.4 EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE: EXILES AND ABSENCES

Formalised exile, to the degree exercised in the early imperial period, was seemingly never reintroduced, although some women were forced to remove themselves from the imperial court. In keeping with the first three centuries, the causes for late antique banishments are obscure, with detailed accounts provided only by much later narratives. In this section I will first consider the general developments regarding exile (a term I use loosely) for late antique women. I then consider the best example of the change in this period: the case of Eudocia, wife of Theodosius II, whose exile I compare to some of her imperial female contemporaries.

5.4.1 Late Antique Exiles

As shown in Chapter One, exile for imperial women was first ordered by Augustus for his daughter and granddaughter, the two Julias.⁹⁵⁵ The process of exile seems to

⁹⁵³ See 2.2.

⁹⁵⁴ Helena's image notably was used on the coinage of Constantine's and Fausta's sons, but their mother's image was not.

⁹⁵⁵ See 1.6.1.

have been quickly formalised, and Julia the Elder's removal to the island Pandateria created a paradigm for this form of punishment until at least Plautilla (Caracalla's wife) in 205.⁹⁵⁶ Although some women were recalled from exile, for many others the measure eventually led to death; the highest number of both forms of punishment occurred in the Julio-Claudian dynasty. In the second generation of the Severan dynasty, during the third century, the high-profile female casualties often suffered violent deaths simply as a result of regime change, without the intermediary punishment of exile. As Chrysostom's letter shows, late antique women, in contrast, often survived such transitions.⁹⁵⁷

John Chrysostom's letter provides the closest example of a formal exile.⁹⁵⁸ His oblique reference to the banishment of an imperial woman, probably Marina Severa, to 'a foreign land' (ὑπερορία⁹⁵⁹) indicates a formal measure: she was forced out of Valentinian's territory. Even so, the admittedly vague details indicate that Marina Severa's removal, which seems connected to her divorce, was not as rigorous as the earliest examples of exile for imperial women. In contrast, the two Julias' banishment to an island was under an armed guard, which effectively amounted to house arrest.⁹⁶⁰

Aside from the case of Marina Severa, most exiles seem to have been voluntary absences from court. Galla's alleged expulsion by her stepson and Pulcheria's later withdrawal from court extended to the suburbs of Constantinople, where they had

⁹⁵⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 1.53, describes Julia the Elder's death in exile after she had been moved inland to Rhegium. Plautilla was exiled first to Sicily and then Lipari; she and her brother were swiftly killed when Caracalla became Augustus: Dio, 78.1.1.

⁹⁵⁷ See 1.6.1. Kienast (2004), 165-81, provides a summary of the exiles and deaths of the Severan women. The last empress before the Tetrarchy, Magnia Urbica, may also have died because of regime change. Her name was erased on an inscription in Timgad, *ILS* 610; this was a local gesture, which may not be indicative of a formal measure against her memory, but does seem to suggest that she died a violent death.

⁹⁵⁸ See 5.1.

⁹⁵⁹ The word carries connotations of exile, as illustrated in the second *LSJ* entry for ὑπερόριος. Woods (2006), 180-1, discusses the term in relation to his hypothesis that Justina is the exiled woman.

⁹⁶⁰ The circumstances for Marina's banishment are embellished by far later sources, such as the *Chronicon Paschale*, composed ca. 630, which dates events to 369. The chronicle is a year early, see Whitby and Whitby (1989), 47 n.144. Malalas 13.31-3 (who refers to Marina anachronistically as Augusta) describes her recall from exile, which is related to a property dispute. This tale had clear resonances with the biblical story of Jezebel and Naboth, a common allegory for a bad queen's interference – as seen in Chapter Four. Malalas should be used extremely cautiously: Cameron (1981), 270, notes his highly-romanticised biography of Eudocia (14.4-8); see also Woods (2006), 175.

their substantial private residences.⁹⁶¹ Thermantia's and Galla Placidia's expulsions from Honorius' court, also in the fifth century, seem more permanent. However, the variation in destination indicates a freedom of choice in where they went. Thermantia journeyed to Rome where her mother lived (until she was killed), while Galla Placidia went to her nephew's court in Constantinople.⁹⁶² After she had apparently invited Attila to take the western empire as her dowry, Iusta Grata Honoria was sent to Rome to live with her mother.⁹⁶³ Life in these wealthy cities, home to the senate for each half of the empire, hardly equates to the stringent island exiles of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

5.4.2 Eudocia

As with many instances where imperial women lost protection, the precise circumstances of Eudocia's permanent departure from court are unclear. Her subsequent residency in Jerusalem saw her continue with those acts of patronage that she had started on her first visit to the city in 439, as part of her eastern tour on behalf of the court.⁹⁶⁴ The city had also proved popular with the wife and daughter of the executed prefect, Rufinus, in the generation before Eudocia's exile.⁹⁶⁵ As Lenski argues, aside from the city's distance from the court, part of Jerusalem's

⁹⁶¹ Holum (1982), 191, suggests the powerful eunuch Chrysaphius removed Pulcheria and she regained power upon his demise; see also Burgess (1993-1994), 65. Cameron (1981), 271, generally dismisses Holum's assessment of the various factions at court with which Pulcheria and Eudocia were associated. For Galla's expulsion see *Chron. Min.* 390.2; her absence is discussed by Rebenich (1985), 382.

⁹⁶² Zos. 5.37.5-6, describes Honorius' repudiation of Thermantia. It is unclear whether Galla Placidia left willingly or was banished from court. Olymp. *fr.* 38, refers to her being forced out by courtiers, who were able to present her barbarian connections in a negative light to Honorius, with whom before it was rumoured that she had seemed too intimate. For her close association with barbarian groups see Sanz-Serrano (2013), 63. See 2.5.2 for Justina's probable absence from Gratian's court.

⁹⁶³ Priscus *fr.* 17.1 describes Iusta Grata Honoria being sent 'as a gift' to her mother in Rome. The same fragment relates that Honoria's initial punishment was because of her affair with Eugenius (who was executed). On account of her affair she was 'deprived of her royal authority and married to Herculanius'. Croke (1995), 80-1, discusses Marcellinus Comes' dating of 434 for Honoria's affair; a date discounted by Bury (1919), 13. It was her punishment for this affair, according to Priscus, which motivated Honoria to invite Attila to invade over a decade later. It is unclear what became of Honoria after her mother's death. Blockley's interpretation of Priscus suggests a grim fate: (1983), 390 n.102. For Honoria's alleged invitation to Attila, which seems a fiction, see McEvoy (2013a), 292-3. Licinia Eudoxia was later accused of inviting the Vandals to sack Rome (Prisc. *fr.* 30.1) a story which ignores the close association between Vandal Africa and the Italian court which was symbolised by Eudoxia II's engagement – see 2.1.5.5.

⁹⁶⁴ See 2.4.1.5.

⁹⁶⁵ Zos. 5.8.2-3. Lenski (2004), 117-18, describes Eudocia's journeys to Jerusalem.

appeal was the possibility of redemption through display of Christian piety, which Eudocia certainly seemed to embrace.⁹⁶⁶

The later sources that report Eudocia's withdrawal in ca. 440 imply an affair with Theodosius II's *magister officiorum*, Paulinus, who was killed around this time. The affair is not explicitly mentioned, but rather indicated through a story of misunderstanding regarding an apple.⁹⁶⁷ However, Cameron has asserted that Eudocia was not forced from court. Instead he suggests that she could not return after clerical appointments that she made in Jerusalem on a second tour resulted in the death of Theodosius' *comes domesticorum*, Saturninus, in 444.⁹⁶⁸ Like the death of Fausta, the silence in contemporary accounts, followed by unreliable stories seems ominous. This pattern gives the impression of some form of damage control being exercised at the time to minimise scandal, which, if revealed, would have reflected poorly on the emperor.

More telling about Eudocia's loss of imperial favour than the later narratives is the shift in emphasis between the contemporary ecclesiastical histories by Socrates and

⁹⁶⁶ Lenski (2004), 113-24.

⁹⁶⁷ Joh. Mal. 14.8 is the earliest and one of the most detailed accounts for both the event and Eudocia's life in general. He suggests that Eudocia was the victim of chaste misunderstanding. Jeffreys and Jeffreys (1986), xxii-iii, suggest Malalas was writing in the 530s. The different versions, some of whom substitute Pulcheria for Eudocia (and Marcian for Paulinus) in the affair, are examined by Burgess (1993-1994), 50. He argues that the Eudocia version was concocted as orthodox 'damage control', as the symbolism of the apple works better for the chaste Pulcheria. I agree with Lenski (2004), 117, that apples are a heavily-loaded symbol of female transgression (in both classical and biblical traditions). Scott (2010), 115-28, outlines the Byzantine accounts which feature the apple story and the contemporary political motivations. Holum (1982), 177, argues that the apple story was designed to obfuscate a genuine act of adultery by Eudocia. See also Burgess (1993-1994), 50 n.14.

⁹⁶⁸ Cameron (1981), 254-70, discusses Eudocia's departure, and at 260, asserts she did not leave court because of scandal. At 269, he compares her withdrawal to that of Pulcheria and the prefect Cyrus and suggests these removals were politically, rather than religiously, motivated; each person voluntarily removed themselves when they realised their position at court was untenable. Holum (1982), 190-4, discusses the departures of Cyrus and Eudocia and the death of Paulinus, which all occurred 443-4. Marcell. Com. 444.4, describes Saturninus being sent to Jerusalem to kill Severus and John, clerics in the service of Eudocia, to which Eudocia reacted by murdering Saturninus. As a result Theodosius, removed her royal entourage and she remained in Jerusalem. The passage is discussed by Croke (1995), 87. Prisc. fr. 14.1, relates that Saturninus was killed because of Eudocia. Blockley (1983), 388 n.86, suggests he was killed on her order in 444; see also Cameron (1981), 271. Many details of this story are puzzling, not least the discordance already evident between the imperial couple by 444. Eudocia's independent actions leads me to think that she was already in exile. Theoph. 5942, describes Eudocia asking to be removed from court, because of the eunuch Chrysaphius' exile. Strangely, her alleged affair with Paulinus is already known at court in the account. The whole passage is focused on Pulcheria's return to court which is precipitated by Eudocia's fall from grace. Cameron (1981), 256, describes Chrysaphius' influence at court.

Sozomen.⁹⁶⁹ Both historians sought to write a continuation of Eusebius' history and intended to cover the same period, Sozomen writing later and seeking to improve the earlier history of Socrates. One such key improvement was Sozomen's focused praise on Pulcheria. Sozomen's emphasis on the emperor's sister comes almost at Theodosius' expense, and certainly at Eudocia's. In contrast, Eudocia features to a greater extent in Socrates' earlier work, while Pulcheria is marginalized.⁹⁷⁰ This difference between the accounts may well have reflected Socrates' and Sozomen's different religious sympathies, but they were also responding to the political changes in the decade between their histories' composition. The implicit changed attitude to each woman after Eudocia's later exile shows the problem with the information for the exile of late antique imperial women: conclusions can largely only be inferred from silence in the sources.

Regardless of whether Eudocia left court as an exile, or her journey became one, the banishment of an Augusta who was the wife of the reigning emperor had repercussions for her husband. Theodosius' reliance on Christian piety to assert his authority seemed to prevent divorce, which the banishment of Eudocia and the western empress Thermantia would suggest. Neither Theodosius II or Honorius remarried after their wives left court, despite neither having a male heir and both continuing to reign for more than a decade.⁹⁷¹ Meanwhile, Eudocia's continued patronage in Jerusalem indicates the wealth that she still possessed and the independence she had to spend it.⁹⁷² Although her coin types ceased around the time she permanently left court, it does not seem that she was stripped of the title

⁹⁶⁹ See 4.3.3.2, for how this difference affected their portrayal of Arcadius. Georgiou (2013), 618-19, summarises the different portrayals of Eudocia by Socrates and Sozomen.

⁹⁷⁰ Soz. 9.1, describes Theodosius' accession with a clear focus on the merits of Pulcheria who instructed her younger brother. Urbainczyk (1997b), 34, suggests Sozomen's praise of Pulcheria was a response to Socrates brief account of Eudocia; at 32-5, she suggests that although Eudocia is described in more detail by Socrates, the historian's main focus was Theodosius II.

⁹⁷¹ The last recorded divorce had been the earlier exile of Marina Severa, a measure which had brought condemnation upon Valentinian I in some later sources (some of whom accused him of bigamy): Soc. 4.31.10-18; Joh. Ant. fr. 187; Jord. Rom. 310; Theoph. 5860; Zon. 13.15. The sources are discussed by Lenski (2002), 267. Barnes (1998), 124, reasonably prefers Socrates' account, which does not seem to suggest bigamy (an incredibly unlikely action by Valentinian). For an alternate view, see Woods (2006), 174-5n.5, who disagrees with Barnes' reading of Socrates and argues that it was bigamy. Constantius I, Constantine I and Valentinian I all had sons from their first relationships and yet went on to marry other women, while Constantius II married at least three times.

⁹⁷² Scott (2010), 120-1, describes the huge funds she must have had at her disposal to carry out such patronage, which leads him to surmise she was not sent from court as an exile.

Augusta.⁹⁷³ She continued to draw on her imperial position to form close links to her new place of residence.⁹⁷⁴

5.4.3 Conclusion

Throughout the imperial period, the reasons for women's exiles from court were often only related by later sources, writing under different regimes. The punishments enacted against imperial women in late antiquity seemed less stringent than previous centuries. In part, the lack of sources in general for fourth- and fifth-century women can explain this contrast, but other contributing factors should also be considered.

The changes in imperial women's exile can be related to larger transformations in the late antique period. It seems that, instead of exile to an island to isolate a woman, it was enough for them to travel to the other, now separate, half of the empire, and sometimes not even as far as that, so long as they left court. Aside from the violent deaths as a result of regime change (and the anomalies discussed in the previous section), most women evaded death for perceived wrongdoing. In part this was because there seemed to be fewer instances of such misdemeanours. However, perhaps the moderate form of exile in the fifth century, when most exiles occur, was due to the changed political role for the emperor as well. This can certainly be argued for Eudocia. Theodosius II was praised for his clemency, a virtue which compensated for his lack of military vigour, and was a facet of his presentation of Christian piety.⁹⁷⁵ Because of the necessity of his presentation as a pious Christian emperor, Theodosius could not divorce, not just because of the opprobrium that would result from such an action, but also because of the traditional idea that it showed his poor control of his *domus*. His reliance on such a passive quality protected Eudocia from a harsher punishment, like those exacted on the court-based Julio-Claudian women. When Eudocia left court she went with an entourage and

⁹⁷³ Marcell. Com. 444.4 refers only to the removal of her entourage by Theodosius. Holum (1982), 194, argues that Eudocia was not stripped of her title, but Honoria was; if true this was a result of Eudocia's more important position as an emperor's wife.

⁹⁷⁴ See Appendix 1.45 for her bath dedication and 2.4.1.5 for her other acts of patronage. Cameron (1981), 282, describes her literary output in this period. She also briefly patronised the Monophysite cause while in exile: Holum (1982), 222-4. Holum (1982), 194, argues that her exertions in Jerusalem led to an intervention by Theodosius to reduce her guard and ordering Saturninus to execute members of her entourage; see Marcell. Com 444.4 and Theoph. 5942.

⁹⁷⁵ For the emphasis on martial virtues in encomia see Men. Rhet., 2.374.6-376.5. For Theodosius' espoused clemency see Cameron (1981), 272.

still in control of her wealth to a city of Christian significance where she engaged in various acts of building patronage and was involved in local political matters. Even if this journey only later became an exile, she remained a prominent local patron and remained unscathed by the later regime changes that she lived through.

5.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Despite the many usurpations and regime changes that took place in the fourth and fifth centuries, imperial women on the whole survived. This normative model presents a clear disjuncture from the early imperial period and the Tetrarchy. Valeria and her mother and step-daughter were collateral victims of the especially turbulent regime changes which took place in the last years of the Tetrarchy. They presented no value to the surviving emperors, Constantine and Licinius, since their alliance was confirmed by Licinius' marriage to Constantia. Therefore the continued survival of women associated with the dyarchy's rivals could only present a threat. The general policy of accommodation ensured the survival of imperial women in later regime changes. Many such survivors resided in major cities, in particular Rome and Constantinople, where they could present themselves as independent patrons who were, in the fourth century, at a safe distance from the political intrigues at court.

It was when women were in close proximity to the court that disruptions to this pattern appear. Eutropia the Younger resided with her son when he was briefly Augustus, but her death through association was symptomatic of those in the Tetrarchy. Serena was the victim of a more unorthodox regime change, but one that proved equally chaotic and also took her son as a victim. Serena's marital relationship was clearly deemed more important than her kinship with the emperor. However, it is interesting that she was the only imperial woman to suffer, despite her daughter and cousin also being in Rome. This suggests another reason for Serena's death, and not because of a close relationship with Honorius, since at this point it seemed the emperor had isolated himself from his whole family.⁹⁷⁶ Serena's involvement in patronage at Rome was typical of other imperial women. The hostility shown by the senate shows that not all patronage was popular and in a time

⁹⁷⁶ Despite the Gothic presence in Italy, only Honorius resided in Ravenna from where he could quickly travel to Thessalonica.

of extreme military pressures it seems they could be seen as dangerous to local interests, on which the senate acted, rather than in conjunction with the court in Ravenna.⁹⁷⁷

The death of Fausta and the exile of Eudocia, over a century apart, are symptomatic of the change of the emperor's role to a court-based figure. Prior to their loss of imperial protection these women had been involved in imperial presentation, while the reasons for their loss of imperial protection were suppressed by contemporary accounts and related via scurrilous reports in later sources. The accounts of Fausta's death seem to have been designed as a commentary on Constantine as a ruler and as such were less sophisticated versions of Tacitus' early attacks on imperial women to denigrate the ruler. In contrast, the accounts of Eudocia and a misunderstanding over an apple, although loaded with symbolism, do not cast light on what actually happened. The survival of Eudocia, despite her clearly not being welcome at court, can be related to a relaxation in the penalties inflicted on late antique imperial women. In the Julio-Claudian period loss of imperial protection for misdemeanours would have warranted, at least, a harsher form of exile. Both Eudocia and Pulcheria withdrew from court at different points in Theodosius II's reign, that no stricter form of punishment was taken against them indicates the impact of Christianity on an emperor's role. A fifth-century imperial woman could lose imperial protection because they lost value in their familial role, but the importance of the emperor's religious *pietas* ensured their survival.

⁹⁷⁷ The senate's opposition to Ravenna is best demonstrated by their election of Attalus as emperor: Olymp. *fr.* 10.3.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Previous studies of late antique imperial women have attempted to give some sense of these figures from the rare glimpses to be found in general historical narratives; alternatively they have presented them (particularly the women of Theodosius II's court) as forerunners to Byzantine imperial women. I have sought instead to establish how their roles developed from those of earlier imperial women in order to appreciate the value of such individuals within their own period. I have looked at the women of the fourth and fifth centuries collectively across three dynasties and in both eastern and western courts. I considered why women feature when they do rather than trying to reconstruct their biographies. With this approach, I was able to make sense of their roles as part of the broader political landscape. Adopting this approach benefits our understanding of the changing political context in Late Antiquity. Until my study, considering such changes through the representation of women has been a surprisingly neglected approach.

In Chapter One I looked at the various areas in which imperial women played a role in the first three centuries AD. I examined these earlier women in terms of their presentation in imperial ideology (with regard to titles and coinage), before turning to practical and literary presentations of their roles, and the causes and repercussions in those instances where they lost imperial protection. I demonstrated that imperial women's roles were constantly renegotiated alongside the shifting dynamic of imperial rule itself. In the first three centuries, after the early Julio-Claudian dynasty, the presentation of imperial women was incrementally augmented. By the second century, there were multiple Augustae and frequent deifications, regardless of whether the women confirmed an emperor's succession (as in the Antonine period) or were celebrated simply for being related to the emperor (as under Trajan and Severus). The presentation of imperial women often focused on their religious *pietas* to make their increased prominence palatable to their audience. The motivation for such presentation was to promote the emperor's familial *pietas*. Imperial women derived their prominent position from their relationship with the emperor; hence the

women themselves provided an enticing target for writers like Tacitus to criticise specific regimes.

Next, in Chapter Two I mapped out the appearance of imperial women in the broader historical narrative of Late Antiquity. By establishing this context it becomes possible to appreciate how women's roles and presentation in the areas discussed in Chapter One were affected by the political developments of the late antique period. The presentation of imperial women continued to focus on familial and religious *pietas*, but what these concepts presented in Late Antiquity had changed. This change to women's roles was made more complex (and fascinating) by the shifting perception of orthodoxy and dynastic successions, which informed the negative posthumous reputation of Justina and the positive presentation of Helena. Display of familial *pietas* was no less complicated by the existence of multiple Augusti, who were often only connected to each other through the marriage alliances that were secured through imperial women.

Through my holistic approach I was able to survey the variations in imperial female presentation across the fourth century. During the Tetrarchy, the transition to a college of multiple Augusti led to a neglect in honours for women, whose roles were mainly limited to confirming political alliances through their marriages. Constantine then made use of what seems to have been the newly created title of *Nobilissima Femina* to establish a hierarchy among his female relatives, whose images were used on coinage to consolidate his position. However, other fourth-century imperial women barely featured in official presentation. It took another, equally shrewd Augustus at the end of the fourth century to capitalise on the value an imperial woman could present. Theodosius I was able to assert his family's new imperial status in the East through promotions that subverted the imperial hierarchy. I argued that Theodosius, like Constantine, could employ his female relatives to surreptitiously undermine the position of other Augusti. This point clearly shows the value of looking at a specific epoch through the presentation of women, since their presentation often reveals the undertones within a regime that were suppressed in contemporary propaganda and neglected by later sources. Theodosius' court-based successors grasped the benefit all family members could play in bolstering a new

style of imperial government, one in which the emperor was often restricted to a ceremonial role – as defined for the West by McEvoy. Aelia's successors adopted her forename, but also presented themselves as the new Helena, who was presented posthumously as the ideal of imperial womanhood. Helena's close association with the emperor and independent travel on his behalf appealed to an imperial woman like Pulcheria, who was not (until a very late stage) the wife of the emperor, but whose position was wholly invested in his reign.

Similarly I showed how the acts of patronage by Aelia Flaccilla's successors were informed by the permanent division of the empire. Patronage by imperial women reached a sophisticated level in the East, which was enabled by greater political stability. The diverse avenues of patronage that the women of Theodosius II's court adopted, while superficially at odds with each other and, at times, even the emperor, in reality engendered loyalty to the court from different religious groups among the populace. In the more uncertain political climate in the West, the family relied on united displays of *pietas* and demonstrations of their adherence to the Nicene Creed. This fissure in the different expectations for eastern and western women's roles occurred at a time when the role of emperor was similar in both parts of the empire. These differences therefore allow us to view in the late antique context what had been established for the early imperial period: that women's roles were always being readapted to suit the needs of specific regimes. The contrast between eastern and western women demonstrates how the specific political context informed their presentation.

Fourth-century women also engaged in patronage, but often at a distance from the court and with their roles unrecognised in the formal ideology of a regime. Helena's benefactions in Jerusalem, Constantina's building patronage in Rome and Justina's maligned involvement in the ecclesiastical disputes at the court in Milan share similarities with the acts of patronage by fifth-century imperial women. This demonstrates why it is important to consider the better-attested later women that attracted Holum's attention in terms of the roles that were already being carved out in the background during the fourth century.

In Part Two I considered some exceptional pieces of literary evidence describing late antique imperial women. In Chapter Three, I discussed the panegyrics that were delivered to Eusebia and Serena. My analysis demonstrated how the panegyrics reveal the value these women held for the respective regime. Although both panegyrics focused on the women's temperance, their portraits were intended for different purposes. Julian justified his praise of a female subject through his emphasis on this virtue, so that he could praise Eusebia for actions that seemed to moderate Constantius' former position towards him. Claudian's multiple references to Serena throughout his corpus served a purpose more akin to the mould set by Pliny's *Panegyricus*, where the praise of the woman served simply as an extension of the husband. However, I argued that this traditional purpose was renegotiated for the contemporary setting. It was Stilicho who ultimately benefitted from praising Serena, rather than the Emperor Honorius. Both women's encomia demonstrate the integral part women had to play within the imperial machine, regardless of their absence from official representation. I then described how Helena's posthumous praise was informed by concerns about contemporary women's roles at court.

Contemporary concerns also informed the negative literary portrayals of imperial women, the topic of Chapter Four. Helena the Christian exemplar was first exploited (in the extant evidence) by Ambrose to criticise Justina's actions towards him. The basilica conflict was essentially a clash over imperial involvement in local ecclesiastical issues, a form of negotiation that concerned all emperors in the fourth and fifth centuries as the political system came to terms with the position of a Christian emperor. I showed how the portrayals of women reflect this overarching concern. That both the non-Nicene Justina and Nicene Eudoxia could be presented as Jezebels by later Theodosian literary sources demonstrates that their specific theological adherence was not the dominant factor in this tension between ecclesiastical and church authority. The development of the court-based emperor allowed Justina greater participation in imperial matters that were local to the court, but driven by bigger political concerns. Such a role was not so different from Justina's Nicene successors.

In Chapter Five I turned to cases where women lost imperial protection. I showed the contrasting circumstances which precipitated such events, in comparison with the negative roles described in Chapter Four. Women's negative portrayals were shaped by their abuse of religious *pietas*, which was more a concern for the writers than the courts with which the women were associated. When an imperial woman lost imperial protection it was because she had no role to play in the display of familial *pietas*. The deaths that resulted from this were often along the Severan pattern of fatalities at moments of regime change, rather than the exiles and suicides of the Julio-Claudian period. The tetrarchic women were victims of violent upheavals, circumstances which apply to the deaths of Eutropia and Serena in the fourth and fifth centuries. Fausta's death was more along the lines of the Julio-Claudian model: her violent end was driven by her loss in value to the dynasty's display of familial *pietas*. Eudocia's exile showed that she too lost a place in such display, but her husband's reliance on religious *pietas* ensured her survival. Eudocia was one of the many imperial women of the period to survive frequent regime upheavals, as I demonstrated in my detailed analysis of John Chrysostom's *Letter to a Young Widow*. This high survival rate can be attributed to the development of multiple Augusti within a single college. The concerns faced by a new ruler meant that women associated with former regimes often retained value to incumbent emperors as passive representatives of their family.

By analysing imperial women's roles in a variety of areas over an extended period of time, I have developed and extended the insights made by previous individual studies and by Holum's isolated analysis of eastern Theodosian women. I have shown that a panoramic study of women in the fourth and fifth centuries not only draws together these separate examinations, but can be reconciled with the developments taking place in the period to the empire as a whole. My study has shown that the dynamic pursued most successfully by Holum, and by Drijvers in his study of Helena, can be reversed. They showed that the political context shaped women's roles; I have demonstrated that the political context can be re-evaluated from the perspective of women's roles. Such an approach offers a fresh angle from which to view the dynastic shifts and tensions behind the rhetorical flourishes of regimes within often discordant imperial colleges, not just while the women were alive, but also when

such accounts describing them were being composed. By considering the roles of imperial women in this way, we gain another context in which to appreciate the changing political landscape. While their presentation in imperial ideology may have fluctuated across the century and a half, the women themselves always had a role to play in the imperial machine.

APPENDIX 1

EPIGRAPHIC COLLATION

This appendix is a collation of epigraphic attestations for the imperial women referred to in my thesis. Over the course of 2012/13, I searched for all the women's names in three online databases: Clauss-Slaby; Last Statues of Antiquity, and Packard Humanities Institute Inscriptions. Where the same inscription occurs in more than one of these databases and the layout varies, I have prioritised the first database mentioned, but noted where the differences appear in the inscription. The databases are often very conservative in their dating for each attestation; where possible I have tried to be more specific. My search in Last Statues of Antiquity also provided literary attestations of statues, which I do not include here since I do not discuss them in my thesis. In my search of these databases I found attestations for eighteen imperial women, who are listed below. In the cases where there are attestations for women with the same name I have used the numerical identifications I gave for them in Tables 1-5 in Chapter Two, which are also given in Appendix Three.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR DATABASES CONSULTED:

CS: Clauss-Slaby Database, <http://www.manfredclauss.de/gb/index.html>.

LSA: Last Statues of Antiquity Database, <http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/>.

PHI: Packard Humanities Institute Inscriptions Database, epigraphy.packhum.org.

IMPERIAL WOMEN MENTIONED:⁹⁷⁸

Valeria:	Wife of Galerius.
Valeria Maximilla:	Wife of Maxentius.
Helena I:	Mother of Constantine I.
Theodora:	Second wife of Constantius II.
Fausta:	Wife of Constantine I.
Constantia I:	Sister of Constantine I.
Constantia II:	First wife of Gratian.
Constantina:	Wife of Gallus.
Thermantia I:	Mother of Theodosius I.
Aelia Flaccilla:	Wife of Theodosius I.
Serena:	Wife of Stilicho.
Maria:	Wife of Honorius.
Thermantia III:	Second wife of Honorius.
Eudoxia:	Wife of Arcadius.
Eudocia:	Wife of Theodosius II.

⁹⁷⁸ For a full list of these women's familial connections see Tables 1-5 and Appendix Three.

Galla Placidia:	Wife of Constantius III.
Iusta Grata Honoria:	Sister of Valentinian III.
Licinia Eudoxia:	Wife of Valentinian III.

ORDER OF LAYOUT FOR INSCRIPTION DETAILS:

Below is an outline of the layout for the information above each inscription. I follow the line order and highlighting in bold shown here for each attestation.

- (Database consulted) **Publication details.**

- **Original location.**

- **Date.**⁹⁷⁹

- Further information.

VALERIA	
<p>1. (PHI) IG 7.2503 Thebes, Boeotia Between 1 May 305 and 311 I revise the original dating bracket of 305-15 provided by PHI. Such an inscription can only have been set up while her husband, Galerius, was alive because she went into exile afterwards.</p>	
<p>[τὴν] δέσποιναν ἡμῶν [Σεβασ]τὴν Γαλ(ερίαν) Βαλερίαν, [μητέ]ρα κάστρων, ἡ πόλις.</p>	<p>Our mistress, [Augusta] Galeria Valeria mother of the camps the city</p>
<p>2. (PHI) SEG 54.638 = SEG 42.646b Kabyle, Thrace After November 308, before mid-310. Set up after the Carnuntum Conference – where Constantine was recognised in the East as <i>filius Augustorum</i>.⁹⁸⁰</p>	
<p>ἀγαθῆι τύχηι ὑπὲρ ὑγίας κα[ὶ νείκη]ς καὶ ἐωνίου δι[αμονῆ]ς τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν Γαλ(ερίου) Οὐαλ(ερίου) Μα[ξιμιανοῦ] καὶ Λικ[ιννιανοῦ] Λικι[ννίου] [Σεβ(αστῶν)] καὶ Γαλ(ερίου) Οὐαλ(ερίου)] Μαξιμ[ίνου] Καίσαρος [καὶ Φλαουίου Οὐαλερίου] [Κωνσ]ταντίνου ὑἱῷ βασιλ[έων καὶ βασι]-</p>	<p>By good fortune [] for the health and victory and eternal permanence of our masters Galerius Valerius Maximian and Licinianus Licinius Augusti and Galerius Valerius Maximin Caesar and Flavius Valerius Constantine son of the Augusti and our queen Galeria Valeria [] [] <i>vir perfectissimus</i>, governor of</p>

⁹⁷⁹ These dates are all AD.

⁹⁸⁰ I base my dating on Barnes (2011), 89, who provides a useful table setting out the variation in Constantine's perceived status in the imperial college in East and West from 25 July 306 to April 311.

<p>[λίσση]ης ἡμῶν Γαλερίας Οὐα[λερίας ...] [] δ]ιασημότητος [ἡγε]μῶν τ[ῆς Θράκης] []Ν κατεσκευά[σεν] []ιν [τῶν] Καβυληνῶν [] τηλαν[]νιου ν ἐπιμε[λ]ουμ[ένων] Μάρ(κου) Αὐρ(ηλίου) Συ[....]αίνου δεκαπ[] λιανοῦ καὶ []ιβιανοῦ καὶ Πύρο[ς] []χ[] εὐτυ]χῶς.</p>	<p>Thrace [] built [] [] of the Cabyleans [] telan[]niou have charge of [] Marcus Aurelius Su[] Dekap[] []lianos and [] and Pyros [] [] with good fortune.</p>
<p>3. (PHI) <i>Teos 110 = IGN 4.1562</i> Ulamiş, West Turkey Between 1 May 305 and 311 This dating is based on the same reasoning as inscription 1 i.e. that it was set up when Galerius was Augustus.</p>	
<p>ἀγαθῆ τύχη. τὴν κυρίαν ἡμῶν Γαλερ(ίαν) Οὐαλερίαν εὐσεβε[στ]άτην σ[ε]βαστ[ῆν] μητέ[ρα]⁹⁸¹</p>	<p>By good fortune. Our lady Galeria Valeria most pious Augusta mother [of the camps?]</p>
<p>4. (PHI) <i>TAM 5.2.1235</i> Hermokapeleia, NW Lydia (modern day Büknüş) After November 308, before 310⁹⁸² On a milestone with three successive inscriptions. The text is heavily damaged.⁹⁸³</p>	
<p>[τοὺς γῆς καὶ θαλ]άσση[ς] [καὶ παντὸς ἀνθρώπων] [ἔθνους δεσπό]τας [ἡμῶν] []π]ρεσβύτερον Σεβ(αστὸν) καὶ Γα[λ(έριον)] Μα[ξ]ιμ[ια]γὸν Σεβ(αστὸν) καὶ Λικιννιανὸν Λικίννιον Σεβ(αστὸν) καὶ Γαλ(ερίαν) [Οὐα]λερίαν <θ>ιοτάτην(?)⁹⁸⁴ Αὐγούσταν [καὶ Μαξιμεινον], υἱὸν βασιλέων καὶ Κ[ων]σταντεῖνον, υἱὸν βασιλέων [ἀπὸ Ἐρ]μοκαπηλίων μί(λιον) α⁹⁸⁵</p>	<p>Our masters of land and sea, and every race of man. [] senior Augustus and Galerius Maximian Augustus and Licinianus Licinius Augustus and Galeria Valeria most-holy Augusta [and Maximin] son of the Augusti and Constantine son of the Augusti; one mile from Hermokapeleia.</p>

⁹⁸¹ The rest of the inscription is lost.

⁹⁸² This dating is based on Constantine's status of *filius Augustorum* (see footnote 980 above).

⁹⁸³ The inscription is discussed by Petzel and Pleket (1979), 281-4.

⁹⁸⁴ This is the emendation provided by *PHI*.

VALERIA MAXIMILLA	
<p>5. (CS) <i>CIL</i> 14.2826 = <i>ILS</i> 667 Zagarolo, Latium et Campania Between ca. 306 and 309.⁹⁸⁶ Set up while Maximilla's husband, Maxentius, was Augustus and before the premature death of their son Valerius Romulus.</p>	
Dominae matri Val(eriae) Maximillae nob(ilissimae) fem(inae) Val(erius) Romulus c(larissimus) p(uer) pro amore adfectionis eius matri carissimae	To our lady mother Valeria Maximilla <i>nobilissima femina.</i> Valerius Romulus <i>clarissimus puer</i> out of the love of his affection for his dearest mother
HELENA I	
<p>6. (LSA) <i>LSA</i> 262 Side, Pamphylia Between Autumn 324 and ca. 329⁹⁸⁷ The inscription was found on the base of a bronze statue at a theatre. It was probably set up while Helena was Augusta.</p>	
Ἐλένην τὴν βασιλίσσαν τὴν μητέρα τοῦ Αὐγούστου ἢ λαμπρὰ Σιδητῶν μητρόπολις	The empress Helena, mother of the Augustus. The shining metropolis of the Sidetans [honours her] ⁹⁸⁸
<p>7. (CS) <i>CIL</i> 6.1136 (p.3071, 4327, 4340) = <i>CIL</i> 6.31244 = <i>Epigraphica</i> 2009.251 Rome, near Santa Croce Between 1 March 317 and Autumn 324 Set up while Helena was <i>Nobilissima Femina</i>, so before she was made Augusta in 324.</p>	
D(omina) n(ostra) He[lena venerabilis do]mini [n(ostri) Constantini A]ug(usti)	Our mistress Helena, mother of our master Constantine

⁹⁸⁵ Two other inscriptions follow this one (neither of which refer to imperial women and so are omitted here): the first is dedicated to Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans (presumably dated to 333-5); the other is to Valentinian I (before the election of Valens to Augustus so probably March 364).

⁹⁸⁶ Romulus died in 309. I disagree with *PLRE* 1 s.v. Romulus 6, which dates both inscriptions that feature Valerius Romulus to before October 306 when Maxentius (his father) appointed himself emperor. I think it more likely that Valeria Maximilla could only be styled *Nobilissima Femina* once Maxentius (her husband) started presenting himself as *princeps*; Constantine made Fausta *Nobilissima Femina* upon their marriage in 307 when he had already been proclaimed Augustus. *PLRE* 1 s.v. Maxentius 5 dates Valeria and Maxentius' marriage to ca. 305. Valerius Romulus did not actually dedicate this inscription on his own initiative since he died while still an infant (after which he was posthumously made Augustus).

⁹⁸⁷ Drijvers (1992a), 73, argues that Helena died either in late 328 or early 329, based on the end of coin-types for her around this period. This had to be after her pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 328.

⁹⁸⁸ The translation is taken from the 'Last Statues of Antiquity' website (accessed: 22/07/13).

mater e[t] avia beatis[simor(um) et flore]ntis[simor(um)] [Caesarum nostr]oru[m] therm[as incendio] [de]stru[ctas restituit] ⁹⁸⁹	Augustus and grandmother of our most fortunate and prosperous Caesars, restores these baths which were destroyed by fire.
<p>8. (CS) <i>CIL 6.*3373 = CIL 13.*1023 = IBR *5</i> Curia, Raetia (now in Liechtenstein) After ca. 329 Doubted authenticity. Appears to honour Helena posthumously.⁹⁹⁰</p>	
Divae Helenae nobilissimae ac venerabili matri d n Fl Val Constantini pii felicitis victoris semper Aug M Avidius Priscus Proc. hered in Dalmatia d n m q eius	To the most-noble and venerable deified Helena mother of our master Flavius Valerius Constantine pious happy and victorious, always Augustus Marcus Avidius Priscus procurator of <i>hereditatum</i> in Dalmatia devoted to his divine will and majesty.
<p>9. (CS), (LSA) <i>LSA 835 = CIL 6.1134 (p.3071, 3778, 4327, 4340) = CIL 6. 31243 = CIL 10.*1089, 19 = ILS 709 = IMCCatania 377 = Epigraphica 2009.253</i> Rome, near Santa Croce Between the first-half of 326, and before early 329 After the death of Crispus and before Helena's death.⁹⁹¹</p>	
Dominae nostrae Fl(aviae) Iul(iae) Helenae piissimae Aug(ustae) genetrici d(omini) n(ostri) Constan tini Maximi victoris clementissimi semper Augusti aviae Constan tini et Constanti beatis simorum ac florentis simorum Caesarum Iulius Maximilianus v(ir) c(larissimus) comes pietati eius semper dicatis(simus)	To our mistress Flavia Iulia Helena most pious Augusta, mother of our master Constantine mightiest and most clement victor always Augustus, grandmother of Constantine and Constantius most fortunate and prosperous Caesars Iulius Maximilianus, <i>vir clarissimus</i> and <i>comes</i> always most devoted to her piety
<p>10. (LSA), (CS) <i>LSA 1261 = CIL 6.1135 (p.4327) = CIL 9.*225.6 = Epigraphica 2009.255</i></p>	

⁹⁸⁹ Drijvers (1992a), 47, thinks this is a reliable reconstruction.

⁹⁹⁰ Drijvers (1992a), 45 n.27, describes it as 'inauthentic', saying that it is too similar to *CIL 10.517*. It also seems that it is too late for the use of the abbreviation 'M'. There is no Avidius Priscus in *PLRE 1*.

⁹⁹¹ Drijvers (1992a), 48, thinks this is connected to the dedication of the *Thermae Helenae*. Iulius Maximilianus was *consularis aquarum* 18 May 330.

<p>Rome, near to Santa Croce at the basilica of S. Giovanni in the Laterano. ca. 325⁹⁹² Now lost statue base which was discovered in the Sancta Sanctorum, near the Lateran Basilica.</p>	
<p>Dominae nostrae venerabili Helenae Augustae genetrici d(omini) n(ostri) Constantini maximi victoris et triumphatoris semper Augusti Fl(avius) Pistius v(ir) p(erfectissimus) p(rae)p(ositus) rerum privatarum pietati eorum semper devotissimus</p>	<p>To our mistress the venerable Helena Augusta mother of our master Constantine mightiest victor and <i>triumphator</i>, always Augustus Flavius Pistius <i>vir perfectissimus</i>, placed in command of private affairs always completely devoted to their piety.</p>
<p>11. (CS) CIL 10.1484 = Epigraphica 2009.247 Neapolis, Latium et Campania After Autumn 324, before ca.329⁹⁹³ Dedicated when Helena was Augusta.</p>	
<p>Piissimae ac venerabili dominae nostrae Helaenae⁹⁹⁴ Augustae matri domini nostri victoris semper Aug(usti) Constantini et aviae dominorum nostrorum beatissimorum Caesarum ordo et populus Neapolitanus</p>	<p>To our mistress most pious and venerable Helena Augusta, mother of our master always victorious Augustus Constantine and grandmother of our masters the most fortunate Caesars. The senate and people of Neapolis.</p>
<p>12. (CS), (LSA) LSA 1540 = CIL 6.36950 (p.4354) Roma Between the first half of 326, and ca.329 It was found in a re-used wall next to S. Croce, Gerusalemme. The inscription is now mostly lost.</p>	
<p>D(ominae) n(ostrae) piissi[mae ac venerabili] Aug(ustae) Fl(aviae) [Iul(iae) Helenae genetrici] [d(omini) n(ostri) Constantini maximi victo] [ris ac triumf]atoris sem[per]</p>	<p>To our mistress, most pious [and venerable] Augusta Flavia Iulia Helena, mother of our master Constantine mightiest victor and <i>triumphator</i> always Augustus. Grandmother of our masters Constantine and Constantius most fortunate and</p>

⁹⁹² PLRE 1: 1063 lists Fl. Pistius as *comes rei privatae* (provincial) ca.325/30. It would have to be when Helena was still alive, so therefore 325 seems the likely date because it coincides with when she was Augusta. Drijvers (1992a), 48, thinks the inscription is connected to the construction of the *Thermae Helenae*.

⁹⁹³ The inscription was probably dedicated after Constantius II was made Caesar on 8 November 324.

⁹⁹⁴ This is the spelling in the inscription.

<p>[Augusti aviae d]d(ominorum) nn(ostrorum) Const[an] [tini et Cons]tanti bea[tissi] [morum ac florentissimorum] [Caesaru]m. [Iul]ius M[aximilianus v(ir) c(larissimus)] [com]es dica[tissimus excellen] [tiae pietatique eius].</p>	<p>prosperous Caesars. Iulius Maximilianus <i>vir clarissimus</i> and <i>comes</i> completely devoted to his excellence and piety.</p>
<p>13. (CS), (LSA) LSA 1887 = CIL 8.1633 = C. Lepelley = Epigraphica 2009.249 Sicca Veneria, Africa Proconsularis (NW Tunisia) First-half of 326, before early 329⁹⁹⁵ After the execution of Crispus in early 326. No recent record survives – was on a marble statue base.</p>	
<p>Dominae nostrae [Fl]aviae Helena Aug(ustae) M(arcus) Valer(ius) Gypasius v(ir) c(larissimus) cur(ator) rei p(ublicae) et d(eae) V(eneris) de vot(us) numini ma iestatique eius.</p>	<p>To our mistress Flavia Helena Augusta Marcus Valerius Gypasius <i>vir clarissimus</i> keeper of public affairs and the goddess Venus devoted to her divine-will and majesty.</p>
<p>14. (CS), (LSA) LSA 1751 = CIL 9.2446 = Epigraphica 2009.248 Atilliae, Samnium (S. Italy) Between 312 and 316 After Constantine defeated Maxentius, but apparently before Helena was made <i>Nobilissima Femina</i>. The inscription was found near the ancient forum. No recent record survives.</p>	
<p>Helena matri domini nostri Constantini maximi victo ris semper Aug(usti) ordo et populus Saepinatium.</p>	<p>To Helena mother of our master Constantine mightiest victor, always Augustus. The senate and the people of Saepinum.</p>
<p>15. (CS), (LSA) LSA 1875 = CIL 10.1483 Neapolis, Campania (S. Italy)</p>	

⁹⁹⁵ PLRE 1 s.v. Gypasius suggests this dating bracket.

<p>Between the first half of 326 and ca.329 A statue base found in vicinity of Chiesa del Gesù Vecchio, now lost. Set up after the death of Crispus in early 326.</p>	
<p>Piissimae ac clementissimae dominae nostrae Augustae Helenae matri domini nostri victoris semper Augusti Constanti tini et aviae dominorum nostrorum Caesarum beatorum uxori divi Constantii ordo Neapolitanorum et populus.</p>	<p>To our mistress the most pious and most merciful Augusta Helena mother of our master victorious, always Augustus Constantine and grandmother of our masters the blessed Caesars wife of divine Constantius. The senate and the people of Neapolis.</p>
<p>16. (CS), (LSA) LSA 1876 = CIL 10.1484⁹⁹⁶ = Epigraphica 2009.247 Neapolis, Campania (S. Italy) Between the first half of 326 and ca.329 Now lost statue base.</p>	
<p>Piissimae ac venerabili dominae nostrae Helae⁹⁹⁷ Augustae matri domini nostri victoris semper Aug(usti) Constantini et aviae dominorum nostrorum beatissimorum Caesarum ordo et populus Neapolitanus</p>	<p>To our mistress the most pious and venerable Helena Augusta, mother of our master victorious and always Augustus Constantine and grandmother of our masters the most blessed Caesars. The senate and the people of Neapolis.</p>
<p>17. (LSA) LSA 263 = CIG 4349 Side, Pamphylia Between 324 and ca. 329 The base of a bronze statue at a theatre which is now lost. It was found in the south corner, built into a vault – probably during fifth-century restoration of the theatre.</p>	
<p>[] Ἑλένην μητέρα Αὐγούστων⁹⁹⁸</p>	<p>[] Helena Mother Of the Augusti</p>
<p>18. (LSA), (CS) LSA 1847 = CIL 10.517 = ILS 708 = Inscript. Ital., Rome (1931)</p>	

⁹⁹⁶ See Drijvers (1992a), 51.

⁹⁹⁷ This is the spelling given in the inscription.

⁹⁹⁸ The discussion on the *LSA* website for this inscription suggests that the plural of Augustus should not be taken literally and that it possibly refers to her as mother of the whole dynasty; hence the timeframe for this inscription precedes the succession of Constantine's sons to Augusti.

<p>1.1.6 = AE 1993, 451 Salernum, Lucania et Bruttii (S. Italy) Between Autumn 324 and May 326 Marble Statue base now at the Museo Archeologico.⁹⁹⁹</p>	
<p>Dominae nostrae¹⁰⁰⁰ Flaviae Augustae Helenaе divi Constanti¹⁰⁰¹ castissimae coniugi procreatrici d(omini) n(ostri) Constantini maximi piissimi ac victoris Augusti aviae dominorum nostrorum [Crispi] [et] Constantini et Constanti beatissi morum ac felicium Caesarum Alpinus Magnus v(ir) c(larissimus) corr(ector) Lucaniae et Brittorum statuit devotus excellen tiaе pietatique eius.</p>	<p>To our mistress Flavia Augusta Helena, most pious wife of divine Constantius, mother of our master Constantine, the greatest most pious and victorious Augustus, grandmother of our masters [Crispus] [and] Constantine and Constantius most blessed and happy Caesars Alpinus Magnus <i>vir clarissimus</i> and governor of Lucania and Bruttii built this devoted to her superiority and piety.</p>
<p>19. (LSA) LSA 2098 = SEG 56 (2006) 1711 Side, Pamphylia Between the first half of 326 and ca.329 Marble statue base still in agora in front of theatre.</p>	
<p>[ή λαμπρα] Σιδ[ητῶν μητρόπολις] Ἐλέ[νην αὐγουσταν τήν] μ[ητέρα Αὐγούστου τήν] βασ[ίλισσαν]</p>	<p>The shining metropolis of the people of Side Helena Augusta, the mother of the Augustus, the [empress]</p>
<p>20. (CS) AE 1993, 339a Rome 315-333¹⁰⁰² The inscription was originally set up during Licinius' fourth consulship, but Constans is later described as Caesar, a position to which he was appointed in 333 (hence the large dating bracket).</p>	
<p>Imp(erator?) Lic(inius?) Licini nos(tri?) IV co(n)s(ul?)]m alumnum pat[] suum []in []n[]</p>	<p>Our Emperor Licinius Licinianus, consul for the fourth time [] his protégé [] [] []</p>

⁹⁹⁹ Drijvers (1992a), 45 n.27, thinks that the inscription is not authentic.

¹⁰⁰⁰ The CS entry for this inscription gives this title as *Dominae Nostra*.

¹⁰⁰¹ The CS entry gives this as *divi Constantini*, which is improbable as Helena predeceased her son.

¹⁰⁰² This seems to be the same inscription as *CIL* 6.40769, which is given as a separate entry in that corpus.

[] signo [h]oc est patris victoria	[] the victory of the father by this sign [
[] Constantius []s[]] Constantius []
[]nnn[]n[]e	[]
[]n[]i[]prin[]	[] [princeps][]
[]p	Julian Portico
[port]icum Iuliam[]	they praise in the whole wide world
lau[dant in] mu[ndo] uni[verso]	[] he prophesises Caesars [] Crispus [
[] Caesares []a Crisp[um]]]
[] annuntiat	Hope of the Roman Empire
spes imperi(i) r[omani]	[] Constantine our Emperor
[]s[] Co]nstantinus n(o)s(ter)	Constantine our [] consul
im[p(erator?)]	[] Caesar] Crispus
[Con]stantinus nos(ter) r() pf()	idi
co(n)s(ul)	[]
[] C]aes(arem) Crispum	[]
idi	[]
so	at the height
[]mv[]a[]n	[] Caesar Constans
[]naniv []a[]a[]	[]
culmini a	[] Caesars
[] Caes(ar?) Constans	servant?
[]a [] m[]	Constans [Emperor]
[] Caesares	of the Romans
s r	[] lords] Our most pious Augusta
Constans imp(erator?)	[] Augusta []
[ro]manorum	[] Helena []
[] nn(ostri?) piissi[mi] Augusta	[holy] Caesars always happy
[]s[] Augusta []	[Constans]
[] Helena[]	Fausta
s Caesares semp(er) felices	our lords
Cons(tans?)	Fausta Constans Constantine []
Fa[u]sta	consul [] []
ddd(omini) nnn(ostri)	He/she withstands [] Consta[]
Fausta Constans Constantinus []	[]
co(n)s(ul?) []pp[]iii cos[]n[]n[]	Impious []
obstat [] Consta[]	[] Safe[ty]
[] nos []	[]
impiis i[]s vl[]	Constantine father of the fatherland
[]i[]	[] great Emperor
[] sal[us]	[]
[]flos[]	[] Licinius, consul for the fourth-time
[] Fausta Au[gusta]	[] consul, father of the fatherland,

<p>[] Constantinus p(ater) p(atriae) [] Ma[x(imus) imp(erator?) [] mi pi[] [] lic iv co(n)s(ul) [] Cons(ul) p(ater) p(atriae) Imp(erator) Constantiu[s] Chlorus sempiterna imm[ortalitas] [] d paa Theod[ora] Theod[ora] Hele[na] [] os [] os av[] s[] [] is Crisp(us) I co(n)s(ul) svm [Con]s[tant]i[u]s div[us] b() m() [Constan]tius filios tuit[us]</p>	<p>Emperor Constantius Chlorus¹⁰⁰³ everlasting divinity [] piissimae (?) Augustae Theodora Theodora Helena [] [] Crispus, consul for the first time [] [divine Constantine] [] Constantius having protected his sons.</p>
THEODORA	
<p>21. See 20 above: she is referred to, along with other family members, in an inscription originally set up in Licinius' reign.</p>	
FAUSTA ¹⁰⁰⁴	
<p>22. (CIL), (LSA) LSA 1852 = ILS 710 (p.172) = CIL 10.678 = Magalhaes (2003) Surrentum, Campania Between 324 and 326 Set up when Fausta was Augusta. Marble statue base first recorded to be in the cathedral but now at Museo Correale di Terranova. Possible evidence of <i>damnatio memoriae</i>.</p>	
<p>Piissimae ac veneravi li d(ominae) n(ostrae) [Faustae] Aug(ustae) [u[x]ori] d(omini) n(ostri) maximi victoris Aug(usti) Constantini [novaerc(ae)] [et matri] ddd(ominorum) nnn(ostrorum) [Cr]is[pi] Constantini Constanti baea</p>	<p>To our mistress, the most pious and venerable Fausta Augusta [wife] of our master mightiest victor the Augustus Constantine [stepmother] [and mother] of our masters [Crispus], Constantine, Constantius most blessed Caesars. The city of Surrentum.</p>

¹⁰⁰³ If this inscription is genuine then it provides the earliest record of Constantius I being referred to as Constantius Chlorus.

¹⁰⁰⁴ There is also an inscription that refers to a Fausta which is too fragmentary to be attributed with any certainty to the empress and so it is not included in this appendix: *SEG* 14.145, found in Athens: Φαῦστα Ἀσ Α] ζην[ιέως γυνή].

tissimorum (sic) [Caesarum] [re]s p(ublica) S[urrentin]or(um)	
23. (LSA) LSA 2570 = LAE 2007, 354 = Evangelisti (2007). Privernum, Campania Between 324 and 326 Fragmentary marble statue base found re-used as capital in abbey at Fossanova.	
[Piissimae] ac benerabil[i] [dominae n]ostra[e] [Fa]usta[e] [Aug(ustae) uxori] d(omini) n(ostri) victo[ris] [sempe]r Aug(usti) Con[stan] [tini novaercae et matri] [ddd(ominorum) nnn(ostrorum) [Crispi] Constan] ¹⁰⁰⁵ [tini Constanti beatis] [simorum Caesarum] [Privernates] ¹⁰⁰⁶	To our [mistress], [the most pious] and venerable [Fausta] [Augusta, wife] of our master victorious, always Augustus Constantine, [stepmother and mother] [of our masters Crispus, Constantine, Constantius most blessed of the Caesars. The people of Privernum.
24. See 20.	
CONSTANTIA I	
25. (CS), (LSA) CIL 6.40777 = CIL 6.1153 (p.3071, 3778) = ILS 711 = LSA 1385 Rome After the first half of 326, but before December 333 The inscription is possibly incomplete. It was set up after 326 when Constantine II and Constantius II were the two Caesars (before Constans became the third Caesar in 333). ¹⁰⁰⁷ Now at the Musei Capitolini.	
Inlustri et divinae prosap[iae] genitae venerabili soror[i] d(omini) n(ostri) Constantini Aug(usti) et amitae dd(ominorum) nn(ostrorum) b{a}eatissimorum Ca[ess(arum)] d(ominae) n(ostrae) Fl(aviae) Iul(iae) Constantiae nob[iliss(imae)] [feminae]	Born of illustrious and divine ancestry, venerable sister of our master Constantine Augustus and (paternal) aunt of our masters, most blessed Caesars to our mistress Flavia Iulia Constantia [Nobilissima Femina] []
26. (CS) CIL 17-2.183a = CAG 07, p407 = ILN 6, 118 = AE 1969/70, 375 = AE 1971, 259 Alba Helviorum, Gallia Narbonensis (modern Le Teil)	

¹⁰⁰⁵ This line 5 does not correlate with the actual number of lines because the LSA supplement misses a line.

¹⁰⁰⁶ This word is supplied by LSA.

¹⁰⁰⁷ See Pohlsander (1993), 160-1. I would argue that it was set up around the time Constantine I struck coin-types for Constantia in 326 and 327.

<p>After 1 March 317, before 324 Set up in Constantine's territory after the elevation of Licinius' son, Licinius II, to Caesar on 1 March 317</p>	
<p>Divo Con stan tio d(omino) n(ostro) val(erio) l[i] cinianno¹⁰⁰⁸ Licinio iuni ori nob(ilissimo) Ca esari d(omini) n(ostri) Constantini maximi¹⁰⁰⁹ et perpetui Aug(usti) soro r[e]s filio a[] n[]c fo[]nis princi pis bon[o rei] pu[blic]e na[to]¹⁰¹⁰</p>	<p>To divine Constantius, to our master Valerius Licinianus Licinius the younger, Most noble Caesar our master Constantine greatest and eternal Augustus sister to the son [] a n c fo nis princeps born for the good [of the republic]</p>
CONSTANTIA II	
<p>27. (LSA) <i>LSA 2531</i> Sagalassus, Pisidia Between 374 and ca.382 The dating is dependent upon who the empress was. It features alongside similar inscriptions for either Valentinian I or II, and also Gratian which suggests that it was for a western Valentinianic empress. It was rededicated to Eudoxia, wife of Arcadius.¹⁰¹¹</p>	
<p>[] τὴν δέσποιναν τῆς οἰκουμένης</p>	<p>[] the mistress of the inhabited world.</p>

¹⁰⁰⁸ The spelling on the inscription.

¹⁰⁰⁹ This is an unusual order of these emperors.

¹⁰¹⁰ This same rubric appears in coinage – see Appendix Two s.v. Iusta Grata Honoria.

¹⁰¹¹ *LSA* attributes this inscription to Constantia based upon the two similar inscriptions to Valentinianic emperors. Waelkens and Jacobs (2014), 96-104, discuss the inscription and accompanying set of statues (which are now lost). They suggest that these were dedicated after the death of Valens, but before Theodosius was appointed Augustus, so between 9 August 378 and 19 January 379, because they were set up in the East and yet refer to only western emperors.

CONSTANTINA	
<p>28. (CS), (LSA) <i>CIL 6.40790 = AE 1989, 76 = AE 1995, 195 = LSA 1563 = Scrinari (1989 and 1995)</i> Rome Between 337 and 340 Marble statue base found under Ospedale di S. Giovanni Laterano. This inscription indicates that Constantina was resident in Rome. It was set up in the period when Constantine II was co-Augustus with his brothers and modified after his death in 340 to omit his name.</p>	
<p>Divina prosapia ab auctore Rom[ani] imperii procrea[tae] filiae divi Consta[ntini] pii maximi sororiqu[e] dominorum nostrorum¹⁰¹² Constanti et Constantis perpetuorum Auggg(ustorum) d(ominae) n(ostrae) Fl(aviae) Constantinae nob(ili) ac venerabili Fl(avius) Gavianus v(ir) p(erfectissimus)¹⁰¹³ p(rae)p(ositus) rer(um) privatar(um) semper vester</p>	<p>To one born from divine ancestry going back to the founder of the Roman Empire, daughter of divine Constantine <i>pious maximus</i> and to the sister of <i>domini nostri</i> Constantius and Constans eternal Augusti, to our mistress Flavia Constantina noble and venerable Flavius Gavianus <i>vir perfectissimus</i> placed in charge of private affairs, always yours.</p>
<p>29. (CS) <i>ICUR 8.20752 = ILCV 1768 = CLE 301 (p.855)</i> St Agnes, Rome Between 337 and 350 An acrostic inscription which appears to have been set up by Constantina personally while she was in Rome. This gives the dating bracket of after summer 337 (when her first husband, Hannibalianus, was killed) and before her involvement in Vetrician's usurpation in 350, or, at the very latest, her marriage to Gallus Caesar in the East in 351.</p>	
<p>Constantina d(eu)m venerans Christoq(ue) dicata omnibus inpensis devota mente paratis numine divino multum Christoq(ue) iuvante sacravit templum victricis virginis Agnes templorum quod vincit opus terrenaq(ue) cuncta aurea cui rutilant summi fastigia tecti nomen enim Christi celebratur sedibus istis tartaream solus potuit qui vincere mortem invectus caelo solusq(ue) inferre triumphum</p>	<p>I, Constantina, venerating God and consecrated to Christ, having devoutly provided for all expenses, with considerable divine inspiration and Christ assisting, have dedicated the temple of the victorious virgin Agnes, which surpasses the workmanship of temples</p>

¹⁰¹² LSA gives an extra line after this: *ddd(ominorum) nnn(ostrorum) Flll(aviorum) Constantini*, which is not in the CS version of the inscription.

¹⁰¹³ Flavius Gavianus is not listed in *PLRE* 1.

<p>nomen Aadae referens et corpus et omnia membra a mortis tenebris et caeca nocte levata. dignum igitur munus martyr devota(ue) Christo ex opibus nostris per s(a)ecula longa teneris o felix virgo memorandi nominis Agnes Constantina deo</p>	<p>and all earthly (buildings) That the golden gables of lofty roofs illumine with reddish glow. For the name of Christ is celebrated in this hall, Who alone was able to vanquish infernal death, borne to heaven, and alone carry in the triumph, restoring the name of Adam and the body and all the limbs released from the shadows of death and dark night. Therefore, martyr and devotee of Christ, this worthy gift from our resources you will possess through the long ages, o happy maid of the noteworthy name Agnes. Constantina to God.¹⁰¹⁴</p>
THERMANTIA 1	
<p>30. (CS) <i>CIL</i> 6.36960 (p4356) = <i>ILS</i> 8950 = <i>AE</i> 1903, 121 = <i>AE</i> 1903, +167 = <i>AE</i> 1903, +360 = <i>AE</i> 1973, 19 Rome ca.389 Rufius Albinus was prefect 389-91. The inscription seems most likely to have been set up when Theodosius visited Rome in 389.</p>	
<p>[Thermantia]e [sanctissimae] ac nobilissimae [memoriae femi]nae coniugi divi [Theodosi inlust]ris comitis utrius [que militiae mag(istri) m]atri d(omini) n(ostri)Theodosi perpetui Aug(usti) aviae dd(ominorum) nn(ostorum)¹⁰¹⁵ [Arcadi fortis]simi principis [et Honori nobilis]simi iuvenis [praestantia ind]olis suae [augenti divinam] prosapiam [Ceionius Ruf]ius Albinus v(ir) c(larissimus) [praefectus urbi] iudex iterum</p>	<p>To [Thermantia], the [most holy] woman and of most noble memory, wife of divine Theodosius, [illustrious] <i>comes</i> [and master of both armies] mother of our master Theodosius eternal Augustus grandmother of our masters [Arcadius bravest] princeps [and Honorius the most noble] young man</p>

¹⁰¹⁴ The translation is by Trout (2014), 222. For further discussion see Jones (2007), 116-117.

¹⁰¹⁵ No closing bracket is given on the CS database to indicate a blank of unknown length at the end of the line.

[sacrarium co]gnitionum d(edi)c(avit)	[with the outstandingness of her character] [increasing the divine] lineage [Ceionius Rufus] Albinus dedicated this, <i>vir clarissimus</i> [urban prefect] and judge of appeals for the second time
AELIA FLACCILLA	
31. (PHI), (LSA) <i>Aphrodisias</i> 659 = <i>LSA</i> 185 = <i>Roueché</i> (1989) Aphrodisias, Caria (near Geyre, Turkey) ca.383 Columnar base in the forecourt of the Hadrianic Baths. The inscription was probably set up soon after Flaccilla had been made Augusta in early 383.	
[τ]ὴν αἰωνίαν καὶ θεοφιλε- [σ]τάτην Αὔγουσταν Αἰλίαν Φλαβίαν Φλακκίλλαν τὴν δέσποιναν τῆς οἰκουμένης Κᾶρες ἴδρυσαν ἐν τῇ ἑαυτῶν μητροπόλει †	The eternal and most god-loving Augusta Aelia Flavia Flaccilla, mistress of the inhabited world. The people of Caria set this up in their metropolis †
32. (PHI), (LSA) <i>Ephesos</i> 2990 = 2989 = <i>LSA</i> 723 and 745; <i>Wankel</i> (1979), <i>Rouché</i> (2002) Ephesos (W. Turkey) 383-386 Marble statue base found in eastern part of the north side of Curetes Street; next to the base for Julian in the street between theatre and stadium.	
[ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ·] [Αἰλ(ίαν) Φλάκι]λλ[αν] [εὐσεβεστάτην Αὐγοῦσταν] [ἡ βο]υλῆ κ(αὶ) ὁ δῆμος [τῆς μ]εγάλης Ἐφέσου [τὴν] δέσποιναν τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀνθυπατεύοντος Σεπτιμ(ίου) Μαιαδίου τοῦ λαμ(προτάτου) πρεσβεύοντος Σεπτ(ιμίου) Μαιαδίου νε(ωτέρου) τοῦ λαμ(προτάτου)· εὐτυχῶς.	[By good fortune] [Aelia Flaci]ll[a] [most pious Augusta] the senate and people of great Ephesos mistress of the inhabited world. Septimius Maiadius the elder, senator, was proconsul, Septimius Maiadius the younger ¹⁰¹⁶ , senator, with good fortune.
SERENA	
33. (CS) <i>CIL</i> 5.6250 = <i>ILCV</i> 1801	

¹⁰¹⁶ *PLRE* 1: 530-1 bases their entries about these men upon the information from this inscription.

<p>Milan Between 389 and 397 Reconstruction of an inscription found at La Basilica di San Nazaro. It was set up set up after Theodosius had travelled West and before the death of Ambrose.</p>	
<p>Qua sinuata cavo consurgunt tecta recessu sacrataeque crucis flectitur orbe caput Nazarius vitae immaculabilis integer artus conditus exultat hunc tumulo esse locum quem pius Ambrosius signavit imagine Christi marmoribus libycis fida Serena polit coniugis ut reditu Stiliconis laeta fruatur germanisque piis pignoribus propriis</p>	<p>Where the ceilings rise by a curve in a hollowed recess and the top of the holy cross is bent by a circle, Nazarius of the immaculate life is buried, [his] body untouched, exults that this place is his tomb. This pious Ambrose marked with the image of Christ, faithful Serena polishes with Libyan marble, so that at the return of her husband Stilicho, she may happily delight in her pious brothers and her own children.</p>
<p>34. (CS) <i>ILCV 15c-e</i> Rome Between 398 and ca. 407¹⁰¹⁷ Set up during Maria's marriage to Honorius. The unusual name order may be because of the picture arrangement.</p>	
<p>Michael Gabriel Raphael Uriel domina nostra Maria dominus noster Honorius Maria domina nostra florentissima Stilic(h)o vivat Serena</p>	<p>Michael Gabriel Raphael Uriel our mistress Maria, our master Honorius Maria our most-prosperous mistress may Stilicho live, <may> Serena <live>.</p>
<p>35. (CS) <i>ILS 800 = ILCV 15a-b = AE 2003, +12</i> Rome Between 398 and ca.407 The 'Maria bulla', which is now at the Louvre.¹⁰¹⁸ The names are arranged to form an obverse and reverse chi-rho.</p>	
<p>Honori Maria St[i]lichō Serena vivatis St[i]lichō Serena Thermantia Euchari vivatis</p>	<p>Honorius, Maria, Stilicho and Serena may you live! Stilicho, Serena, Thermantia and Eucherius may you live!</p>
<p>MARIA</p>	
<p>36. See 34 above: referred to alongside Serena.</p>	
<p>37. See 35 above: referred to alongside Serena and Thermantia III.</p>	
<p>THERMANTIA III</p>	

¹⁰¹⁷ *PLRE* 2 s.v. Maria 1 suggests these dates for her marriage to Honorius, although it is unclear exactly when she died.

¹⁰¹⁸ The bulla was found in her tomb in Rome. For further discussion see McEvoy (2013a), 212 n.319.

38. See 35 above: one of the family members referred to in the 'Maria bulla'.	
EUDOXIA	
39. (CS), (LSA) <i>CIL 3.736 = CIG 8614 = ILS 822 = LSA 27</i> Pittakia, Constantinople 403 Bilingual inscription statue base for a now lost porphyry column, which once bore a silver statue of Eudoxia. The statue base is now situated in the courtyard of Santa Sophia (Ayasofya Müzesi). ¹⁰¹⁹	
d n ael evdoxiae semper avgvstae v c simplicivus praef vrb dedicavit κιονα πορφυρεην και ἀργυρεην βασιλειαν δερχεο ἐνθα ποληι θεμιστευουσιν ἀνακτες ουνομα δ' εἰ ποθεισι εὐδοξια τις δ' ἀνεθηκεν σιμπλικιος μεγαλων ὑπατων γονος ἐσθλος ὑπαρχος	To our mistress Aelia Eudoxia always Augusta <i>vir clarissimus</i> Simplicius, urban prefect, dedicated [this]. Look on favour the porphyry pillar and silver empress dedicated where the lords give justice to the city. If you ask the name, Eudoxia, and who set it up, Simplicius the elder, the faithful prefect.
40. (LSA) <i>LSA 2529 = Devijver (1995)</i> Sagalassus, Pisidia 395-404 The statue base is still in its original position on the southern side of the Upper Agora. The statue base is in local stone made to support a statue of Flavia Eudoxia (probably Aelia Eudoxia). The column is at the centre of four other columns for emperors. ¹⁰²⁰	
Φλαβίαν Εὐδοξίαν τὴν δέσποιναν τῆς οἰκουμένης.	Flavia Eudoxia mistress of the inhabited world.
41. See 49 below: potentially one of the family members mentioned in Galla Placidia's inscription to Saint John the Evangelist.	
EUDOCIA	
42. (PHI) <i>SEG 8.192</i> Jerusalem After January 423, before late 460. ¹⁰²¹ Commemorates the interment of three martyrs. Possibly dedicated while in exile	

¹⁰¹⁹ This seems to be the statue mentioned in the dispute between Eudoxia and John Chrysostom: see 4.3.

¹⁰²⁰ Originally set up for a Valentinianic empress: see inscription 27 above.

¹⁰²¹ If Eudocia was not stripped of her title when she made her final trip to Jerusalem then this inscription could have been set up during the reign of Marcian. Therefore it could have been set up at any point before her death on 20 October 460.

and therefore after 440.	
[† τά]δ' ὅστ[ᾶ τὰ τίμια] [ἄ ἦ]γεν τό[δ' ἠ σεμνῆ] [E]ὐδοκία Σ[εβαστή] ¹⁰²² τῶν ἐνδο[ξοτάτων] μαρτύρων [] Καλλινίκου [] Δομνίνου Τ[] Θέκλης κ[αὶ τῶν ἄλλων] †αὐτοῖς ἀγί[οις δόξα.†]	†These honoured bones which the reverend Eudocia Augusta brought here of the most honoured martyrs [] Callinicos [] Domninos t[] Thekla and [all the others] †The glory to the saints themselves.†
43. (LSA) LSA 139 = IG II/III(2) 13285 = SEG 40.184 Athens 421-3 The inscription appears to have been set up before Eudocia was made Augusta. The inscription is from two parts of a marble column base. The inscription is written in elegiac couplets.	
ε[ἴνε]κα φ βασιληίδος Εὐδ[οκίης τε] Θεοδόσι[ος βασιλε]ῦς στῆσεν ἀγαλ[μα τόδε] πιστοτα[τ]εθον θεραποντ Θεοδοσισ ολ [] ἔχοντ·	On account of the empress Eudocia the Emperor Theodosius set up this statue [most] faithful servant [] Theodosius [] [having]
44. (PHI) Ephesos 2946 Ephesos After January 423 and before 439. ¹⁰²³	
† Εὐδοκίας τῆς εὐσεβες τάτης ἡμῶν δεσποίνης	Of Eudocia our most pious mistress.
45. (PHI) SEG 32.1502 = IEJ 32 (1982) 77, 1 = Qadmaiot 16 (1983) 28-36 Palaestina, Gadara (Umm Qais), Emmatha Gadarorum (el-Hammah) ca. 455 A poem written by Eudocia. ¹⁰²⁴	
† Εὐδοκίας Αὐγουστής † πολλὰ μὲν ἐν βίῳτῳ κ(αὶ) ἀπίρονα θαύματ' ὅποπα. τίς δέ κεν ἐξερέοι πόσα δὲ στόματ' ὦ Κλίβαν' ἐσθλέ σὸν μένος οὐτιδανὸς γεγαῶς βροτός;	† By Eudocia Augusta † In my life and infinite wonders have I seen. but who, however many his mouths, could proclaim, o noble Clibanus, your strength, having been born a

¹⁰²² It is unusual that she is not referred to as Augusta.

¹⁰²³ PHI attributes this inscription to Eudocia, the wife of Theodosius II.

¹⁰²⁴ For further discussion of this poem see Scheiber (1984), 180-1, and Van Deun (1993), 275-6.

<p>ἀλλά σε μᾶλλο(ν) ὠκεανὸν πυρόεντα νέον θέμις ἐστὶ καλεῖσθαι παιάνα καὶ γενέτην γλυκερῶν [τε] δοτῆρα ῥεέθρων ἐκ σέο τίκτεται οἶδμα τὸ μύριον, ἄλλυδις ἄλλη ὄππῃ μὲν ζεῖον πῆ δ' αὔ κρυερὸν τε μέσον τε τετράδας ἐς πίσυρας κρηνῶν προχέεις σέο κάλλος Ἰνδὴ · Ματρῶνα τε · Ῥεπέντινος · Ἡλίας ἀγνός · Ἀντωνῖνος εὖς · Δροσερὰ Γαλατία · καὶ αὐτὴ Ἵγεία · καὶ χλιαρὰ μεγάλα · χλιαρὰ δὲ τὰ μικρὰ · Μαργαρίτης · κλίβανος παλεός · Ἰνδὴ τε · καὶ ἄλλη Ματρῶνα · Βριαρὴ τε Μονάστρια · κ' ἢ Πατριάρχου. ὠδείνουσι τεδὸν μένος ὄβριμον ἠνεκ[ἐς αἰέν] ἀλλὰ θεὸν κλυτόμητιν ἀείσο[μαι] εἰς εὐεργεσεῖην μερόπων τε χρ[].</p>	<p>worthless mortal? But rather it is just that you be called a new fiery ocean, paean and life source, provider of sweet streams, from you is born the infinite swell, here one, there another. On this side boiling, but there in turn cold and tepid. You pour forth your beauty into four tetrads of springs. Indian and Matrona, Repentinus, Elijah the Holy, Antoninus the Good, dewy Galatia and Hygieia herself, the large warm (baths) and the small warm (baths). The Pearl, the old Clibanus, Indian, and also another Matrona, Briara and the Nun, and the (spring) of the Patriarch.¹⁰²⁵ For those in pain your mighty strength (is ever constant). But (I will sing) of god, famous for wisdom [] for the benefit of men and [].¹⁰²⁶</p>
<p>46. See 49 below: one of the family members mentioned in Galla Placidia's inscription to Saint John the Evangelist.</p>	
<p>GALLA PLACIDIA</p>	
<p>47. (CS) <i>CIL</i> 6.36964 (p.4356) = <i>CIL</i> 15.7153 = <i>ILS</i> 8953 = <i>ILCV</i> 19 (add) = <i>AE</i> 1894, 157 Rome Between 394 and ca.410 After Theodosius heads West, but probably before Placidia taken in the sack of Rome 410.¹⁰²⁷</p>	
<p>D(ominae) n(ostrae) Galla e Placidi ae n(obilissimae) p(uellae)¹⁰²⁸</p>	<p>To our mistress Galla Placidia <i>nobilissima puella</i></p>

¹⁰²⁵ These appear to be names for the different pools in the bath complex.

¹⁰²⁶ This is the translation by Green and Tsafir (1982), 80.

¹⁰²⁷ I argue this as a *terminus ante quem* because she was subsequently married to Athaulf, and did not return to Rome again until she was married to Constantius III.

48. (CS) *CIL* 6.40804 = *AE* 1934, +147

Rome

Between 408 and 423

The inscription was set up while Honorius and Theodosius II were co-Augusti.

[t]erminis culmen as[]	The height of the limits []
[Gal]la Placidia pat[]	[Galla] Placidia []
[]r et quantum []	[] and how much []
[]num nomina dia[de]ma []	[] family name [diadem]
[]itur ad purpu[ram []	[] to the purple
[]evecta huic sen[atus []	[] exalted to this [senate]
[]mus sub auro sta[tuam? []	[] under gold [statue]
[]cepto [] H]onori et Theo[dosi []	[received] by Honorius and Theodosius
[]sanct]issimorum(?) prin[cipum []	[] most [holy] <i>principes</i>
[]cu]ra a(uri) cc meru[]	the care of riches cc []
[]om[]nsv[]	[]
] inseruit []	[] serves in the interests of []
[]germanitatis	[] of their brotherhood
[]a venturis	[] in order to come
[]relegendum	[] to be read again
[]mae curiae	[] of the curia
[]co]nlocandum	[] to be set in place
[]saeculis	[] for the ages
[]s hoc fuisse	[] for this has been
[]um	[]

49. (CS) *CIL* 11.276 = *ILS* 818 = *ILCV* 20 = *ILCV* +2414 = *ILCV* +2432 = *ILCV* +2462 = *ILCV* +2474 = *ILCV* +2498 = *BE* 585 = *BE* 586 = *AE* 2000, +43 = *AE* 2000, 574 = *AE* 2001, 971 = *AE* 2007, 560

Ravenna

After February 421¹⁰²⁹

The inscription accompanied a picture, which are both now lost. The inscription is partly preserved in the literary record by Agnellus 42.

Sanctus Ioa[nn]es Euangelista amore Christi nobilis et filius tonitru Sanctus Iohannes arcana vidit Galla Placidia Augusta pro se et his omnibus hoc votum solvit d(ivus) Constantinus d(ivus) Theodosius d(ivus) Arcadius	Saint John the Evangelist noble with the love of Christ and son of thunder Saint John saw the mysteries. Galla Placidia Augusta pays back this offering on her behalf and for all these people: deified Constantine, deified Theodosius, deified Arcadius, deified Honorius, Theodosius <i>nobilissimus puer</i> , deified Valentinian,
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¹⁰²⁸ This is the only reference to the title *nobilissima puella* I found in my epigraphic search.

¹⁰²⁹ I discuss this inscription (and the dating issues) in 2.4.1.2.

<p>d(ivus) Honorius Theodosius n(obilissimus) p(uer) d(ivus) Valentinianus d(ivus) Gratianus d(ivus) Constantinus Gratianus n(obilissimus) p(uer) Ioannes n(obilissimus) p(uer) d(ominus) n(oster) Theodosius d(omina) n(ostra) Eudocia d(ominus) n(oster) Arcadius d(omina) n(ostra) Eudoxia Aug(usta) sancto ac beatissimo apostolo Iohanni Euangelistae Galla Placidia Augustus¹⁰³⁰ cum filio suo Placido Valentiniano Augusto et filia sua Iusta Grata Honoria Augusta liberationis pericul(or)um maris votum solvent beati misericordes quoniam miserebitur deus confirma hoc deus quod operatus es in nobis a te[m]plo tuo Ierusalem tibi offerent reges munera</p>	<p>deified Gratian, deified Constantius, Gratian <i>nobilissimus puer</i>, John <i>nobilissimus puer</i>, our master Theodosius, our mistress Eudocia, our master Arcadius, our mistress Eudoxia Augusta, to the Saint and most blessed apostle John the Evangelist, Galla Placidia Augusta, with her son Placidus Valentinian Augustus, and her daughter Iusta Grata Honoria Augusta, pay back an offering of deliverance of the dangers of the sea. Blessed are the merciful since God will have mercy. Confirm by this God that you have worked among us from your temple of Jerusalem. Kings shall bring you presents.¹⁰³¹</p>
<p>50. (CS) ILS 817 = ILCV 1775 = BE 651 Rome Between 430 and 437 Set up after Iusta Grata Honoria became Augusta, and before Licinia Eudocia married Valentinian III.</p>	
<p>Reges terrae et omnes populi principes et omnes iudices terrae laudent nomen domini sanctae ecclesiae Hierusalem Valentinianus Placidia et Honoria Augusti votum solverunt</p>	<p>Let the kings of the earth and all leaders of the people and all judges of the earth praise the name of the lord. Valentinian, Placidia and Honoria Augusti pay back this offering to the Holy Church of Jerusalem.</p>
<p>IUSTA GRATA HONORIA</p>	
<p>51. See 49: she is referred to as a dedicatee alongside her mother and brother.</p>	
<p>52. See 50: she is referred to as a dedicatee alongside with her mother and brother.</p>	
<p>LICINIA EUDOXIA</p>	
<p>53. (CS) CIL 6.40806 = AE 1989, 77 = AE 1995, 196 Rome</p>	

¹⁰³⁰ This is the spelling on the database. McEvoy (2013a), 237, translates it as Augusta. While this seems more logical, Galla Placidia was also referred to as Augustus in the *salutatio* in Leo, *Ep.* 56: *Augusto filio*.

¹⁰³¹ This phrase is from Psalm 68.29.

Between 437 and 455

Set up while Licinia Eudoxia was married to Valentinian III.

Dominae nostrae Eudoxiae Augustae coniugi d(omini) n(ostri) Placidi Valentiniani perpetui victoris et triumphatoris semper Augusti Flavius Florinus v(ir) c(larissimus) devotissimus pietati[s] eorum	To our mistress Eudoxia Augusta wife of our master Placidus Valentinian everlasting victorious and <i>triumphator</i> always Augustus Flavius Florinus <i>vir clarissimus</i> most-devoted to their piety.
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APPENDIX 2

COINAGE SUMMARIES

Below are two tables showing the different coin types for each imperial woman of the Constantinian and Theodosian dynasties (no coinage was produced for the Valentinianic women). The tables show: the women who have their own coin types; the titles shown on their obverses; their reverse legends; and the number of mints where their coinage was produced. In the East, coinage was eventually struck only at the Constantinople mint. My data is based on the types given in the relevant *Roman Imperial Coinage (RIC)* volumes for the period. However, Longo's recent work provides further coin types, which I discuss in section 2.3.1. Given the extra material that is not included here, the quantities that I provide (based on my search of the *RIC* volumes) is meant merely to serve as an indication of the range of different coin types for each woman: the quantities are demonstrative, rather than definitive.

1. CONSTANTINIAN DYNASTY

Emperresses [period coins were minted]	Valeria [306-11]	Fausta [307-8; 318-19; 324-7]	Helena [318-19; 324-30]	Constantia [326-7]	Theodora [337-40]
Titles	Augusta: 117	Augusta: 103 Nobilissima Femina: 4	Augusta: 143 (15 posthumous) Nobilissima Femina: 4	Nobilissima Femina: 2	Augusta: 26 ¹⁰³²
Reverse legends [only on medallions]	<i>Veneri Victrici</i>	<i>Venus Felix;</i> <i>Salus Reipublicae;</i> <i>Spes Reipublicae;</i> <i>Securitas Reipublicae;</i> <i>[Pietas Augustae]</i>	<i>Securitas</i> <i>Reipublice;</i> <i>Pax Publica</i>	<i>Soror</i> <i>Constantini</i> <i>Aug</i>	<i>Pietas Romana</i>
Mints ¹⁰³³	8 [16]	15 [17]	15 [17]	1 [17]	3 [16]
Precious metals	26	7	5	0	0
Base metals	83	86	135	2	26
Medallions	0	14	8	0	0
Total coin-types	109	107	148	2	26

¹⁰³² All her coins were struck posthumously for her.

¹⁰³³ The total number of imperial mints which were operational at the time are given in square brackets.

2. THEodosian DYNASTY

Empresses [period coins were minted]	Aelia Flaccilla [383-ca.386]	Eudoxia [400-4]	Pulcheria [414-53]	Eudocia [423-ca.50]	Galla Placidia [421/3-50]	Iusta Grata Honoria [430-49]	Licinia Eudoxia [439-55]
Titles	Augusta	Augusta	Augusta	Augusta	Augusta; Domina Nostra; Perpetua Felix	Augusta; Domina Nostra; Perpetua Felix	Augusta; Domina Nostra; Perpetua Felix
Reverse legends	<i>Salus Reipublicae</i>	<i>Salus Republicae</i> ; <i>e</i> ; <i>Virtus Exerciti</i> ; <i>Gloria Romanorum</i> ; <i>m</i> ; No Legend	<i>Salus Reipublicae</i> ; <i>Vota</i> ; <i>IMP/COS</i> ; <i>Concordia</i> ; <i>Victoria</i> ; No Legend	<i>Vota</i> ; <i>IMP/COS</i> ; <i>Concordia</i> ; <i>Victoria</i> ; No Legend	<i>Salus Reipublicae</i> ; <i>Vota</i> ; <i>IMP/COS</i> ; <i>Concordia</i> ; No Legend	<i>Salus Reipublicae</i> ; <i>Vota</i> ; <i>Bono Reipublicae</i> ¹⁰³⁴ ; No Legend	<i>Salus Reipublicae</i> ; <i>Salus Orientis Felicitas Occidentis</i> ; <i>Vota</i> ; <i>IMP/COS</i> ; <i>Victoria Aug</i> ; No Legend
Mints	8	5	1/2 ¹⁰³⁵	1	4	1/2	3
Precious metals ¹⁰³⁶	20	38	173	120	217 [135]	112 [70]	164
Base metals	88	31	19	3	80	0	0
Total coin-types ¹⁰³⁷	108	69	192	123	297 [215]	112 [70]	164

¹⁰³⁴ This legend also featured in Appendix 1.26, which celebrates Constantia and her son Licinius II. The legend also appeared on coinage struck for Magnentius, who usurped in the West in 350 and was the first husband of Iusta Grata's great-grandmother Justina.

¹⁰³⁵ Two different mint marks.

¹⁰³⁶ The minimum amounts are given in square brackets.

¹⁰³⁷ The minimum amounts are given in square brackets.

APPENDIX 3

TABLE OF IMPERIAL WOMEN (306-455)

Below is a compilation of Tables 1-5, which I provide in Chapter Two in the course of my historical overview. The table here is for ease of reference; I provide annotations for the tables in Chapter Two and so I do not include them here.

Emperors and Others	Mother	Wife and Others	Daughters and Other Female Relatives
Diocletian	Anon.	Prisca	Galeria Valeria
Maximian	Anon.	Eutropia (I)	Theodora; Fausta
Constantius I	Anon.	Helena (I) Theodora	Constantia; Eutropia (II); Anastasia
Galerius	Romula	Anon. Galeria Valeria	Valeria Maximilla
Severus	Anon.	Anon.	
Maximinus Daza	Galerius' sister	Anon.	Daughter
Licinius	Anon.	Constantia	
Constantine I	Helena (I)	Minervina Fausta	Constantina; Helena (II)
Maxentius	Eutropia (I)	Valeria Maximilla	Sisters: Theodora and Fausta
Bassianus	Anon.	Anastasia	
Crispus	Minervina	Helena (III)	Anon.
Constantine II	Fausta	Anon.?	
Constantius II	Fausta	Daughter of Julius Constantius Eusebia Faustina	Constantia (II)
Constans	Fausta	Olympias	
Dalmatius	Wife of Fl. Dalmatius	Helena (II)?	
Hannibalianus	Wife of Fl. Dalmatius	Constantina	
Magnentius	Anon.	Anon. Justina	Anon.
Vetranio			
Iulius Nepotianus	Eutropia (II)		
Gallus	Galla (I)	Constantina	Anon. Sister: wife of Constantius II
Julian	Basilina	Helena (II)	Half-sister: wife of Constantius II
Jovian	Anon.	Charito	
Valentinian I	Anon.	Marina Severa	

		Justina	Galla (II); Iusta; Grata
Valens	Anon.	Domnica	Carosa; Anastasia
Procopius	Julian's maternal aunt	Artemisia	Anon.?
Gratian	Marina Severa	Constantia (II) Laeta	
Valentinian II	Justina		Sisters: Galla (II); Iusta; Grata
Theodosius I	Thermantia I	Aelia Flaccilla Galla (II)	Pulcheria (I) Galla Placidia Nieces: Serena and Thermantia (II)
Magnus Maximus	Kinsman of Theodosius I?	Anon.	Daughters
Arcadius	Aelia Flaccilla	Eudoxia	Flaccilla (I); Pulcheria (II); Marina; Arcadia
Honorius	Aelia Flaccilla	Maria Thermantia (III)	Cousin and mother-in-law: Serena Half-sister: Galla Placidia
Theodosius II	Eudoxia	Aelia Eudocia (I)	Licinia Eudoxia; Flaccilla (II) Sisters: Pulcheria (II), Arcadia and Marina
Athaulf		Galla Placidia	
Constantius III		Galla Placidia	Iusta Grata Honoria
Constantine III		Anon.	
Valentinian III	Galla Placidia	Licinia Eudoxia	Eudocia (II); Placidia (II) Sister: Iusta Grata Honoria
Marcian		Anon. Pulcheria (II)	Aelia Marcia Euphemia
Petronius Maximus		Licinia Eudoxia	
Palladius		Eudocia (II)	
Huneric		Eudocia (II)	
Olybrius		Placidia (II)	Anicia Juliana

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