The Idea of Rome in Late Antiquity

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IN MEMORIAM

This Thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my grandfather Constantine Nicolaou (1920-2011) and of my father Chris Papadopoulos (1953-2017) who departed too early to see this work complete, marking the beginning and the end of this research.

‘‘Ἀθάνατος ψυχὴ κοὐ χρῆμα σόν, ἀλλὰ προνοίας,

ἣ μετὰ σῶμα μαρανθέν, ἅτ’ ἐκ δεσμῶν θοὸς ἵππος,

ῥηιδίως προθοροῦσα κεράννυται ἠέρι κούφῳ

δεινὴν καὶ πολύτλητον ἀποστέρξασα λατρείην·

σοὶ δὲ τι τῶνδ’ ὄφελος, ὅ ποτ’ οὐκετ’ ἐὼν τότε δόξεις;

ἢ τι μετὰ ζωοῖσιν ἐὼν περὶ τῶνδε ματεύεις;’’

Philostratus, *Τὰ ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον*, IX, 31

Abstract

The aim of this research is to approach and analyse the manifestation and evolution of the idea of Rome as an expression of Roman patriotism and as an (urban) archetype of utopia in late Roman thought in a period extending from AD 357 to 417. Within this period of about a human lifetime, the concept of Rome and *Romanitas* was reshaped and used for various ideological causes. This research is unfolding through a selection of sources that represent the patterns and diversity of this ideological process. The theme of Rome as a personified and anthropomorphic figure and as an epitomized notion 'applied' on the urban landscape of the city would become part of the identity of the Romans of Rome highlighting a sense of cultural uniqueness in comparison to the inhabitants of other cities. Towards the end of the chronological limits set in this thesis various versions of *Romanitas* would emerge indicating new physical and spiritual potentials.

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Introduction: Between a Physical and an Imaginary City

i)   Rome: Deconstructing an Idea

In our days there has been a rising interest and multiple publications regarding the role of cities as habitats, theater of events and ideological workshops, hosts of forces of change in contemporary history and survivors against all odds in a post-industrial world, that often exceed the norms of the established field of Urban Studies.[1] Various works such as P. Virilio's *City of Panic* (2007), the *World City* by D. Masses (2007) and S. Graham's *Cities under Siege* (2011) are just samples of a constantly expanding bibliography on the subject.[2] In pre-modern Europe the cities also played a crucial role in reflecting and epitomizing human culture and ideas. The *Sovereign-City* in the form of city-state, head of confederate league or imperial capital has been dominating the Mediterranean landscapes for millennia.[3] In a sense, the old Brownian maxim which describes Greco-Roman civilization as 'a world of cities' maybe sounds generalizing but is not entirely wrong in summarizing their function as the core of classical culture and institutions.[4] Within the frame of this complicated relationship between the cities and their inhabitants, a bond of dependence that has been studied and celebrated for so long in social sciences and literature from G. Simmel's *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben* (1903), L. Mumford's *The City in History* (1961) to I. Calvino's *Città Invisibili* (1972), P. Manent's *Les Métamorphoses de la cité* (2010) and T. Fuhrer's, F. Mundt and J. Stenger's (eds.) *Cityscaping* (2015) one must consider how ideas represent cities and vice versa, interconnecting, interrelating and finally contributing to the

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[1] See R. Paddison, "Studying Cities", R. Paddison (ed.) *Handbook of Urban Studies* (London: SAGE, 2001), pp. 1-10. Also L. Hunt, T. R. Martin, B. H. Rosenwein, R. P. Hsia, B. G. Smith, *The Challenge of the West* (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1995), pp. 752-754.

[2] See P. Virilio, *City of Panic* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), D. Masses, *World City* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), S. Graham, *Cities under Siege: The New military Urbanism* (London: Verso, 2011).

[3] See G. Parker, *The Sovereign City: The City-State through History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), pp. 7-27, 57-77. Also M. Hammond, *City-state and World State in Greek and Roman political theory until Augustus* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1951) and R. S. Lopez, *The Birth of Europe* (London: Phoenix, 1966), pp. 14-15.

[4] See P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity, AD 150-750* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), p. 11-13. Also P. Grimal, *The Civilization of Rome* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1963), p. 252.

shaping of new mentalities by adapting and adjusting to changing physical and spiritual needs.[5] From that point of view, the city of Rome during late antiquity appeared to have a unique cultural and ideological importance regarding the abstract and complex relationship which was developed between the urban landscape, its inhabitants and their identity and feelings as Romans of Rome. The eternal city was embodying and reflecting different ideas to various audiences yet the symbolism and cultural burden of Rome as *patria communis* was omnipresent in late Roman thought. This tension was rapidly evolving and becoming constantly more complex as we move towards late antiquity. We will observe how Rome as archetype of the ideal/utopian city by the fourth century AD would be difficult to be distinguished from the concept of *Romanitas* since by then both were evolving side by side to follow each other to new ideological pathways.

Approaching the subject of this thesis one must consider the idea of Rome and its context in general before focusing on its evolution in late antiquity thought and for that purpose we need to analyze what *Romanitas* came to mean before the fourth century AD. By the beginning of the 350s which is the *terminus postquem* of the period covered in this work, *Romanitas* was already a multidimensional and ambiguous concept, open to multiple interpretations and at least for the Romans of the eternal city bound to its symbolic geography. Therefore we first need to clarify the context that we give in that term when it appears in the pages of this thesis. Right from the start we ought to address that the manifestation of this dual concept was rather invisible to the eyes of the ordinary Roman. On the contrary it appears as an intellectual process with all its debates and potentials destined for the selected few, limited audiences and most of time even among them was nothing more but a literary *topos*. Despite its limited scale in quantity however, it developed qualities that contributed to some extent to what Rome came to mean as the cradle of the Empire in

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[5] See G. Simmel, 'Die Großstadt. Vorträge und Aufsätze zur Städteausstellung', T. Peterman (ed.) *Jahrbuch der Gehe-Stiftung Dresden*, vol. 9 (Dresden, 1903), p. 185-206. L. Mumford, *The City in History: Its origins, its transformations, and its prospects* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1961), I. Calvino, *Le Città Invisibili* (Turin: Einaudi, 1972). P. Manent, *Les Métamorphoses de la cité: Essai sur la dynamique de l' Occident* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), T. Fuhrer, F. Mundt, J. Stenger (eds.) *Cityscaping: Constructing and Modeling Images of the City* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015).

the ages to come, something of course not monolithic and always open to multiple interpretations according to the needs and standards of certain circumstances. The evolution of *Romanitas* as well as Rome as its urban archetype is something far bigger than the inevitable chronological limits of this thesis (both backwards and forwards) but the study of the manifestation of those ideas over the period covered here is a snapshot of this process in a very crucial period, a *momentum* of change and of potentials when it seemed that each possible orientation was plausible; a time when Roman society was on the crossroads of a quest for new self-perceptions and all the ideological paths were still laying open.

During the early imperial period, Rome had, by definition, the symbolic primacy over the empire it had created. However, by the end of the first century AD Tacitus was admitting that the *Empire's secret* had been revealed and that emperors could be made outside Rome as well (*finis Neronis ut laetus primo gaudentium impetu fuerat, ita varios motus animorum non modo in urbe apud patres aut populum aut urbanum militem, sed omnis legiones ducesque conciverat, evulgato imperii arcano posse principem alibi quam Romae fieri*).[6] One hundred years later a new notion appeared, one that considered Rome as something portable and identical to the emperor. Herodian portrayed Commodus expressing it clearly that 'where Caesar is, there Rome is' (*ἐκεῖ τε ἡ Ῥώμη, ὅπου ποτ' ἂν ὁ βασιλεὺς ᾖ*).[7] A little more than three centuries after Tacitus, the *Empire's secret* was not only revealed but betrayed, at least according to Rutilius Namatianus who portrayed Stilicho as *proditor arcani imperii*.[8] In this thesis we will attempt to penetrate the context of this 'betrayal' and its meaning by deconstructing the actual image of Rome as a symbol and collective representation in the late Roman imaginary. When in the late third and early fourth century the emperors were settling to new administrative centers in the provinces they carried with them this political theory of a 'portable Rome' which was justified after all by the fact this change was taking place for the repelling of the invaders and therefore for the safety of the Empire and Rome

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[6] See Tacitus, *Historiae*, I, 4.
[7] See Herodian, *Τῆς μετὰ Μάρκον βασιλείας ἱστορία*, I, 6.5
[8] See Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, II, 43-44.

itself. The 'long' fourth century AD re-shaped the perceptions about Rome as an (urban) archetype of the ideal society and of *Romanitas* itself as a manifestation of late Roman patriotism.[9] Within this context a new problem gradually arose, how Rome should be represented in the new realities of the Empire? The status of the city of Rome and of its privileged position would be a sensitive issue during this period and especially in times when there was no emperor established in the West (as in the later period of the reign of Constantius II and later of Theodosius I). Therefore the more frequent appearance of references to the symbolic importance of Rome or its personifications as the *Dea Roma* in the late fourth century literature is something that goes beyond any interpretation of it as a plain literary scheme. On the contrary it is the evidence of a continuous debate about the status of the old capital in a period of paramount political, social and religious change. That alone and the significant attention which was paid to Rome reflected the interest of its aristocracy and *intelligentsia* to highlight the uniqueness of their city in comparison to 'rival' alternatives or collateral capitals such as Constantinople, as was promoted by Themistius, or Milan during the active years of Ambrose. The Roman response to the challenging of its symbolic primacy or to the threating of its physical existence as happened in 410, could vary depending on the audience and religious orientations producing various discourses such as the 'Christian' Rome (City of the Apostles and Martyrs) that was manufactured by Damasus

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[9] The definition of the fourth century as 'long' is used here an adjustment to describe the establishment of a new governmentality and political theology applied in late Roman politics over a period which overextends the conventional dates of periodization. The term was introduced by Ilya Ehrenburg and later was further developed by Eric Hobsbawm (The 'long' 19th century) and Fernand Braudel (*le long seizième siècle*) in their publications on modern European history. The 'long' fourth century describes a period that we could symbolically mark its starting (at least from the perspective of the Braudelian *longue durée* of ideas and mentalities) from the rise of Diocletian, the establishment of the Tetrarchy (284) and the crystallization of the political theology of the Dominatus that transformed the Roman Empire to a new 'Orwellian' State of defined social stratification and predetermined individual duties and obligations to the commonwealth, to up until the sack of Rome by Alaric (410) which officially terminated both narratives of the restored Empire as the Tetrarchs and later Constantine saw it as well as the Eusebian discourse of the Christian Empire and its privileged position in the divine plan. See E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), p. 1-4. F. Braudel, A. Coll, 'Histoire et sciences sociales: La longue durée', *Réseaux*, 5 (1987) p.7-37. Also H. Chadwick, 'Christian and Roman Universalism in the Fourth Century', R. Lionel, C. Wickham, P. Bammel, (eds.) *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity - Essays in Tribute to George Christopher Stead Leiden. Vigiliae Christianae Supplements* 19 (1993), pp. 26-42. Also P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200-1000* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 86 and J. Pelican, *The Excellent Empire: The Fall of Rome and the Triumph of the Church* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 67-78.

I, or the 'celestial' Rome (*City of God*) shaped by Prudentius and Augustine.[10] Also another city rises from the relations of Symmachus, a 'ceremonial' Rome, safe-keeper of traditions and ancestral rites while emperors that visited the city or 'professional' poets and panegyrists like Claudian would treat it as a 'city-stage' that would add gravity to their own acts. After all the following chapters will reveal that different *Romes* would narrate different *Histories*.

The use of the plural here is something more than poetic abstractness, the idea that a late antique visitor had about Rome was dependent not so much on the landscape itself but on the expectations and ideology that the person was carrying as well as the criteria and expectations of the audience when the individual happened to be an author/narrator. The different *Romes* represent various perceptions of the capital that co-existed on the same physical city. Senatorial Rome, imperial Rome, Christian Rome, Rome of outsiders/visitors, Rome of its *populus* (a city of spectacles and active public life), administrative Rome (the city as living organization with physical needs like the securing of provisions such as the arrival of the *annona*). These different versions of Rome will be unfolded in the different chapters of this thesis. Each one is not simply a different perspective on the landscape of Rome but a narrative of different cities under one label. Rome was endlessly re-written, re-invented and re-imagined in late Roman thought. Different ideological orientations and motives shaped and unfolded different *Romanitates*.

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[10] See A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of a Christian Discourse* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 15-46.

ii)   Rome: The global capital on the mental map of the Empire

The city imposes itself on the consciousness of its inhabitants by its symbolic and sacral geography and the historical and cultural burden that it bears, functioning as a theatrical stage for individual or collective agents of force, action or change just like the neighborhoods' squares as *loci* of interaction in *Commedia dell' arte* where the real protagonist is the urban landscape and not the people that live in it like C. Goldoni's *Il campiello* (1756). Yet the city is not just 'a spatial entity hosting a series of social functions; on the contrary it is a social manifestation which unfolds spatially.'[11] By late antique standards Rome had been the social and ideological workshop of the later Roman Empire, functioning as a transcultural third space, a neutral ground where different cultures and ideas came across, reflecting, by the intellectual and religious 'experiments' conducted there, the flexibility and coexistence of different elements and causes in a society that had been portrayed for so long with the dramatic old-fashioned tones of decline and stagnation.[12] The capability of the Romans of Rome to secure the continuity of their traditions and values mingled by the new necessities and trends revitalized and strengthened even more the idea of Rome. This story of continuity against all odds added persistence and nurtured even more the long tradition of exceptionalism that haunted the Romans of Rome regarding the uniqueness of their cultural and ideological legacy. In the absence of emperors, the elites of Rome were standing, for the first time since the Republican period, to express themselves in relation to the eternal city and take their own decisions in times of crisis in order to ensure its safety and interests, almost turning their home to a city-state (once again after almost a millennium). The outcome of these circumstances was the flaming of a sense of duty and devotion to the *Urbs*, nurtured by their feelings of local patriotism which could not be compared to any other regionalist expression of the inhabitants of other cities since Rome

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[11] See G. Simmel, 'sociologie des Raummes', *Jahrbuch für Gesetzebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft*, vol. 27 (1903), p.35

[12] See H. K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 55.

was the cradle and starting point of the Roman achievements of the previous centuries. This sense of uniqueness had given them the special position of being able to judge the level of 'Romanness' of everybody else, and anyone who was seeking political and ideological legitimacy could not simply by-pass the city of Rome and its sensitive and demanding audience.

For a fourth-century visitor Rome was still the *cosmopolis*, the global center which was mirroring the Empire, the universal capital which had incorporated the entire world and reflected culturally the regions which it had annexed.[13] It managed not only to rule the conquered territories but also to create its own world and become its center.[14] Rome had become identical to the *oikoumene*. The connection between the *world* and the *city* was something deeper than a plain literary scheme. Even the size and the sacred limits of the city were connected to the expansion of the Empire.[15] Tacitus mentioned how Claudius expanded the *pomerium* of the city since it was something permitted to take place only when the Empire had been expanded as well (in that case after the establishment of the Roman province of Britain): *et pomerium urbis auxit Caesar, more prisco, quo iis qui protulere imperium etiam terminos urbis propagare datur. nec tamen duces Romani, quamquam magnis nationibus subactis, usurpaverant nisi L. Sulla et divus Augustus.*[16] The fate of the city was interconnected to that of the Roman world.

Rome was above all the ideal model of the city; all new towns across the Empire which had been founded as *coloniae*, were imitating the urban Roman archetype, creating similar microcosms and framing an element of utopian uniformity.[17] The term *urbs* came to mean Rome itself *par excellence* since the capital of the Empire had been mingled with the

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[13] See Edwards C. and Woolf G., *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 5.

[14] See Hardt M. and Negri A., *Αυτοκρατορία* (Athens: Scripta, 2002), p. 18.

[15] See J. Rykwert, *The idea of a Town: The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999), pp. 91-92, 117-126.

[16] Tacitus, *Annales*, XII, 23.

[17] See Mumford L., *The City in History: Its Origins, its Transformations, and its prospects* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), p. 239.

concept of the city in Roman imaginary.[18] These ideas were not a novelty of the late Empire; Romulus is depicted by Livy as being aware that the city of Rome would become by divine commandment the capital of the world ("Romanis, caelestes ita velle ut mea Roma caput orbis terrarum sit; proinde rem militarem colant sciantque et ita posteris tradant nullas opes humanas armis Romanis resistere posse").[19] In the second century A.D. Aelius Aristides celebrated with enthusiasm in his panegyric to Rome (Ῥώμης ἐγκώμιον) the unification of the entire *oikoumene* into a 'common marketplace' (κοινὴν ἀγορὰν) and a 'common republic of the world' (κοινὴ τῆς γῆς δημοκρατία), signifying the epitome of the cosmos in its perfect form and he praised Rome for securing the urban civilization and way of life, expanding Roman values to the conquered people, enabling them to share the same ideals as the Romans and adapt the Empire as their common fatherland.[20] According to the Greek orator, Rome was to the world what a city was to its suburban areas; from there the *princeps* was safeguarding the Empire as the soul did for all body parts.[21] Likewise, Rutilius Namatianus would later emphasize to the incorporation of the world into the city.[22] The concept of utopia had abandoned the distant fringes of the old Hellenistic maps and had settled in the core of the Roman world. Rome appeared to have reached the ideal timeless state of existence beyond which there was no need for any change, the future had come to the present. The merry 'citizens of the world' could travel anywhere carrying with them the universal identity of the *Romanitas* and having the sense that they never left home and at the same time they might chose never to leave the city's *pomerium* for their entire life but they had still seen on a micro-level a cultural sample of every corner of the world sandwiched in the neighborhoods of Rome. The walls of the city would be identical with the limits of the world and cosmopolitanism was the universally accepted 'doctrine' that functioned as an adhesive

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[18] See D. J. Georgacas, 'The Names of Constantinople' in *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* vol. 78 (1947), pp. 347-367, pp. 358-59.

[19] See Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, I, xvi, 7.

[20] See Aelius Aristides, Ῥώμης ἐγκώμιον, 63. 5-11,64.15, 213, 348-349 and 372-375, Keil B. (ed.) *Aelii Aristidis Smyrnaei quae supersunt Omnia*, vol. 2, *Orationes* XVII – LIII (Berlin: Weidmann, 1898). Also G. Alföldy, *Ιστορία της Ρωμαϊκής Κοινωνίας* (Athens: MIET, 2006), p. 201.

[21] See Aelius Aristides, Ῥώμης ἐγκώμιον, 29, 61.

[22] See A. Clifford, *Imperial Theology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 63.

substance that held together the belief of global dominion and assimilation.[23] The inhabitants of the provinces could thus enjoy the same privileges and values with those of the capital. It was through the universal expansion of citizenship two centuries ago that Rome managed to include the whole world within its walls. Rome's accomplishment was so successful that by the late fourth century John Chrysostom was struggling to explain to his audience why Paul had to prove in Jerusalem that he was a Roman citizen since it was unthinkable for his contemporaries to imagine a past in which not everyone had access to this aspect of the *Romanitas.*[24] So, after the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in the early third century (212), and the absence of any legal criteria of separation, the distinction among the Romans had to be made at another basis, from then on, *Romanitas* would involve a new kind of moral consciousness, the pride of being carrier of a cultural burden of values and traditions and also a sense of ethical superiority especially for the aristocracy of Rome itself.[25] Among those elitist circles, the devotion to the Roman fatherland and the city that gave birth to the Roman civilization was something more than a factor of unity, it was consisting the essence of their identity as individuals and as members of the nobility in a time when the emperors themselves were (mentally and even culturally) alien to Rome.

The eternal city was also an embodiment of the metaphysical needs of its inhabitants as well as of all the rest of the citizens of the Empire. It had been a sacred ground for so long, Livy claimed in the times of Augustus, that there was no part in the city that it was not full of holiness and full of gods (*Urbem auspicato inauguratoque conditam habemus; nullus locus in ea non religionum deorumque est plenus; sacrificiis sollemnibus non dies magis stati quam loca sunt in quibus fiant*).[26] This kind of osmosis was legitimized by the meeting of Aeneas and Evander (who had previously brought the laws and alphabet from Greece to

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[23] See L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought: From Walled City Spiritual Commonwealth* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1970), p. 182.

[24] See John Chryssostom, *Homiliae in Acta Apostolorum*, 48,1 (*Patrologia Graeca* 60. 333)

[25] See C. Bourazelis, *Θεία Δωρεά. Μελέτες πάνω στην πολιτική της δυναστείας των Σεβήρων και την Constitutio Antoniniana* (Athens: Academy of Athens, 1989) and *Οι Τρόφιμοι της Λύκαινας* (Athens: MIET, 2017). p. 382.

[26] See Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, V, lii, 2.

Italy) and their joint sacrifice that they performed to Hercules, unified Greece with Rome already from the 'prehistoric' period of the Roman people.[27] Therefore, a pattern had been set and sanctified with the most valid process. Already from the early imperial period Rome was more and more frequently called as *Urbs Aeterna*, *Caput Mundi*, *Caput Orbis Terrarum*, and *Caput Rerum*.[28] Towards the late Empire and as the State was experiencing shockwaves of internal and external challenges, the cult of Rome (*Dea Roma*) and of the *genius populi Romani* was spreading widely among the citizens, symbolizing the respect and the devotion to the *Urbs Roma*, expressing in that manner a religious aspect of Roman patriotism.[29] Ausonius placed Rome on the top of his *Ordo Urbium Nobilium* describing it as *prima urbes inter, divum domus, aurea Roma*.[30] Rome had gathered all the deities of the captured regions and included their cults to its pantheon, completing the conquests in a spiritual manner assuring thus divine protection from every possible supernatural source. From that point of view the city was already a consecrated ground before the public material manifestation of Christianity in the fourth century.

The institutionalization of Christianity and its incorporation into the civic and court establishment during the course of the fourth century would raise the issue of being a Roman and a Christian. In the midst of this identity crisis, Rome would become a disputed territory, a spiritual no man's land where the dominion upon its *loci* of symbolic and religious importance would be the price that would reshape *Romanitas* itself. A city reinvents itself for a reason; the search for a new past disturbed from a long term perspective its traditional sacred geography, pointing and highlighting the city of the apostles, the evidence of which was all around and just needed a promotion campaign, emphasizing to the christian contribution to the glory of the eternal city. But beyond any competition over the dominance over the urban (and suburban) sacred landscape there was a race of superiority, to prove

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[27] See Virgil, *Aeneid*, VIII, 102.
[28] See Tibullus, 2.5.23, Lucan, *Pharsalia* 2.655, Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 1.16.7, Tacitus, *Historiae* 2.32
[29] See Kantorowicz E., 'Pro Patria Mori in Medieval Political Thought', *The American Historical Review*, vol. 56, 3 (1951), pp. 472-492, p.474.
[30] See Ausonius, *Ordo Urbium Nobilium*, I.

which religious faction was more 'Roman' than the others, something that could be proven by searching for the links that would bound their cause to the history of the city. By the waning of the fourth century Christianity had been visibly manifested on the urban landscape. This new confidence however, based on the mingling of Christianity and *Romanitas* under the patronage of Christian emperors would be proven too fragile to survive the challenges of a new era that the fifth century would prove to be. Despite the sack of 410 and its symbolic blow to the image of the city as *urbs aeterna*, the position of Rome remained intact in the mental map of its citizens. Jerome was lamenting from the East that 'the city that had once captured the entire worlds, had now been conquered' (*Capitur urbs, que totam cepit orbem*).[31] But as soon as the physical Rome became vulnerable, a new idea emerged, the plausibility of a portable, spiritual and ever-safe Rome which could be found anywhere from the Heavens to the tops of the Alps as we will find out in the last part of this thesis. Rome would be upgraded in late fourth century Christian thought to a timeless spiritual *locus* and that concept itself would leave a permanent imprint in medieval and early modern thought.[32] Almost a millennium after Jerome and Prudentius, Dante would still describe a celestial Rome where even Christ is a Roman citizen (*Qui sarai tu poco tempo silvano; / e sarai meco sanza fine cive / di quella Roma onde Christo é Romano*).[33] Although Christianity did not obviously save the eternal city a new narrative of Rome had been unfolding in abstract time and space where the material was mingling with the irrational and miraculous as an experience and part of reality manifesting a christian discourse of *heavenly Rome* which gradually developed its own lore as some kind of late antique Christian *Magical Realism* if we could borrow this term from the field of literary criticism and the works of Jorge Luis Borges and Gabriel García Márquez.[34]

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[31] See Jerome, ep. 127.12

[32] See J. Straub, *Ο Ιερός Αυγουστίνος περί της Παλιγγενεσίας της Ρωμαϊκής Αυτοκρατορίας (Regeneratio Imperii)*(Athens: Αρχείον Κοινωνιολογίας και Ηθικής, 1962), p. 5-35.

[33] See Dante, *La Divina Commedia*, ''Purgatorio'', Canto XXII, 100-105.

[34] See M. A. Bowers, *Magic(al) Realism, the New Criticism Idiom* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 19-30. Also A. Liakos, *Αποκάλυψη, Ουτοπία και Ιστορία: Οι Μεταμορφώσεις της Ιστορικής Συνείδησης* (Athens: ΠΟΛΙΣ, 2011), p. 75.

iii)   Defining *Romanitas*

Before moving any further, we need to clarify one term which will appear again and again in this thesis, that of *Romanitas*. Its first mention appears in a digression of Tertullian in order to describe the Roman manner of things although two centuries earlier Augustus promoted a revival of the old Roman values in his cultural agenda without however using a specific terminology to name it, a policy that has been often seen as a 'Cultural Revolution.'[35] By the fourth century however when several versions of what Rome and *Romanita*s used to be were circulated around various audiences those standard set of values were under question and from that point of view a trend of return to the study of Augustan literature and especially Virgil, or to moralists like Varro (as Augustine did in his *De Civitate Dei*) or Cato (the *Dicta Catonis* which by the fourth century there was a need to be written down and preserved) reveal such a need/tension to re-interpret the *mos maiorum*, the ancestral manner (the equivalent of the Greek ἀρχαῖον ἔθος) which epitomized the Roman cultural consciousness.[36] *Romanitas* in late antiquity was perceived as a *Heritage*, an embodied cultural capital, consciously acquired, and passively inherited through tradition, more like a social asset which was open to anyone willing to absorbed and be incorporated into a Roman lifestyle. A sense of identity and self-image which could bind one to another and to their ancestors, supplying them with intellectual tools which would help them to interpret the often unpredictable and sudden changes of an uncertain world with some degree of confidence.[37]

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[35] See R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (OUP, 1956). Also A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The idea of a Cultural Revolution', T. Habinek, A. Schiesaro (eds.) *The Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 3-22.

[36] See R. Rees, 'Dead Poet's Society' in R. Rees (ed.) *Romane Memento: Virgil in the Fourth Century* (London: Duckworth, 2004), pp. 1-16, p. 6. Also P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων* (Athens: MIET, 2009), p. 211-212.

[37] C. J. Richard, *The Founders of the Classics: Greece, Rome and the American Enlightenment,* p. 6-7

When Tertullian introduced the term 'Romanitas' (*De Pallio* 4.1) he did so in order to describe a complex relation between Greek and Roman culture in a place which traditionally followed the *more punico*.[38] He described those in Carthage who claimed to follow the Roman lifestyle yet they were more inclined to Greek manners in certain aspects of their daily life (*quid nunc, si est Romanitas omni salus, nec honestis tamen modis as Graios estis?*).[39] Here the definition of 'Roman' identity is manifesting by admitting that it is to the benefit of all.[40] In contrast to Hellenism (Greeks required language and religion before admitting anyone to their institutions), the Roman customs, religion and the feasts of the calendar was one aspect of *Romanitas* open to anyone willing to follow it, a portable set of Roman values open to anyone wishing to be assimilated to Roman culture The contemporary American holidays for instance such as *Thanksgivings* is a close example which illustrates the contribution of the openness of annual festivals to the incorporation of immigrants to the American society, values and way of life through the years.[41]

Romanitas combined the ideals of *mos maiorum* and incorporated the symbolic importance of the city of Rome and its landscape and traditions bound to it. By the late fourth century these values were associated with the literary description of *Dea Roma* in prose and verse forms, a result of a long process of familiarity with the roman cultural heritage. A figure which in the period of focus of this thesis had been functioning as an ideogram or a pictogram that summarized the essence of Romanness that anyone could understand and instantly decode. Concerning the values and themes that the terminology of *Romanitas* had acquired by the fourth century which is the context in which the term will be used in this thesis we could summarize them as the following:

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[38] B. Green, *Christianity in ancient Rome: The first three centuries* (New York: 2010), p. 129. Also M. Edwards, 'Severan Christianity', S. Swain, S. Harrison, J. Elsner (eds.) *Severan Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 401-418, p.414-418.

[39] See Tertullian, *De Pallio*, 4.1

[40] E. Dench: *Romulus asylum: Roman identity from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian*, p. 368.

[41] C. Winterer, The culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American intellectual life 1780-1910 (Baltimore: Baltimore University Press, 2004), p. 10-40.

a)   An Idealization of heroic *exempla* of a distant past (real or imaginary), the illustrious ancestors (*summi viri*) as described in authors like Polybius, Livy and Vergil, by the fourth century however this included emperors like Augustus, Trajan and Marcus Aurelius.

b)   The expression of Piety and Devotion to the cults that comprised Roman religion especially those linked with certain historical or mythical events, (foundation myths, epiphanies, introduction of foreign cults etc.).

c)   A Notion of the *Eternity* of Rome and of perpetuity of the Empire that by the late fourth century had gained metaphysical proportions, identifying the safety of the empire with the existence of the world itself.

d)   A teleological sense of a Roman 'mission' to *civilize* the world by the introduction of law and civic institutions in all cultures, as was expressed in Augustan poetry and the orations of the second Sophistic, a *Manifest Destiny* which would be fully unfolded when the Empire will have incorporated the entire world (as was the promise given to Aeneas of an *imperium sine fine*).[42] The Roman Empire appeared to have fulfilled that destiny in the second century AD, as Aelius Aristides declared in his *Roman Oration* (143 AD), counting the achievements of Rome as the *omega* phase of a long inevitable and predetermined process that portrayed the capital of the Empire as the epitome of the entire world and an ideal life of utopian proportions, preserving an almost post–apocalyptic notion of the perpetuity of Empire in this condition.

e)   Traditional Roman virtues like *Pietas*, *Dignitas*, *Virtus*, *Gravitas*, *Severitas, Clementia* that appear in Greek and Roman sources which described the character and attitude of the early Romans, the *mores maiorum*.

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[42] See Virgil, *Aeneid* I, 279.

iv)   Planet Augustus

Another theme that deserves a special mention since there will be several references in the following chapters is the constant and deliberate return to the motives of Augustan political theology and the context of Augustan literature regarding the return to the *Aetas Aurea* and the (re)framing of the ancestral Roman ideals.[43] The concept of circular return to the first golden age is not without a connection to a *Roma* growing old and then rejuvenated as we will see for instance in the works of Claudian. It is connected to the idea of *Aeternitas*, a never-ending Rome deemed to survive and regenerate. It was an expression of an articulated folkloric and institutional patriotism as was promoted by the cultural agenda of the Augustan regime and the poets of his time. The influence of this scheme however expanded beyond the fields of literature and political rhetoric and certainly beyond the age of Augustus. Dio Cassius in the early third century portrayed the era which he considered that it began with Commodus (180-192) as the transition from an age of *Gold* to one of *Iron* (ἀπὸ χρυσῆς τε βασιλείας ἐς σιδηρᾶν καὶ κατιωμένην τῶν τε πραγμάτων τοῖς τότε Ῥωμαίοις καὶ ἡμῖν νῦν καταπεσούσης τῆς ἱστορίας).[44]

The commemoration of Augustus and the reference or imitation of Augustan *civilitas* during the fourth century imperial visits at Rome reveals the need to shape the imperial profile according to the archetype of the ruler of the *principatus* era. Of course *civilitas* meant something more than plain courtesy of civility in the modern sense. It described the attitude of a prince who was still the first among equals in a society of citizens. I also meant that he respected individual and collective rights and freedoms as well as institutions, laws and traditions. The term *civilis* itself appears only at the end of the Republic when Cicero explained in his *De Republica* the nature of the *societas civilis* (*quare cum lex sit civilis*

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[43] See W. Eder, "Augustus and the Power of Tradition", K. Galinsky, (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, (Cambrdge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 13-32.

[44] See D. Cassius, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία,* LXXII, 36.4.

societatis vinculum, ius autem legis aequale, quo iure societas civium teneri potest).[45] *Civilis* however, still had only a philosophical context. It was not until the early years of the Principatus that the concept of *civilitas* was idealized and gradually transformed into *étiquette* of public behavior according to which emperors could be praised or criticized. The term appeared for the first time in the biography of Augustus by Suetonius who described about imperial attitude *clementiae civilitatisquae eius multa est magna documenta sunt*.[46] In fact Suetonius advanced even further in conceptualizing and contextualizing Augustan *civilitas* and in a sense provided a definition that set the standards of imperial biographies of the following centuries. From then on the authors' judgment of any emperor being *civilis* or *incivilis* followed the context that Suetonius set in portraying Augustus.[47]

The main pillar of imperial *civilitas* was actually based on a demonstration of denial (*recusatio*) of privileges granted to the emperor by the Senate.[48] If an emperor wished to promote himself as *primus inter pares* had to voluntarily submit himself to the status of a citizen. However, balancing between *de facto auctoritas* and *de jure* supremacy of ancient institutions was not always easy. Ideally an emperor ought to excersise *modestia, moderatio, comitas, clementia* and *civilitas* while he had to avoid *superbia* and *arrogantia* (the opposite of *civilitas*).[49] Augustus himself, for instance, denied the title of *Dominus* (*Domini apellationem ut maledictum et obprobrium semper exhorruit*).[50] Fourth century court protocol however, emphasized the opposite. Late antique emperors who happened to visit Rome had still to act as *principes civiles* at least according to what late Roman imaginary dictated as such. Following the steps of Suetonius, Pliny the Younger used the same descriptions of *civilitas* to shape the profile of Trajan as an exemplary emperor. In the late fourth century Pacatus would follow the same pattern in his panegyric to Theodosius I on the latter's

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[45] See Cicero, *De Republica*, I.49

[46] See Suetonius, *Divus Augustus*, LI.1

[47] See A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis Princeps: Between Citizen and King', *The Journal of Roman Studies* vol. 72 (1982), pp. 32-48, p. 44.

[48] A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis Princeps: Between Citizen and King,'p. 36. Also D. Wardle, 'Suetonius on Augustus as God and Man', *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 62, n. 1 (May 2012), pp. 307-326, p. 308.

[49] A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis Princeps: Between Citizen and King,'p. 41-43.

[50] Suetonius, *Divus Augustus*, LIII.1

adventus at Rome (389). According to Suetonius, Augustus never went outside the city of Rome without any particular reason and if he did it was always after nightfall in order not to disturb anyone because of protocol ceremonial procedures. Also, during his consulships, he was crossing the city's streets on foot and greeted the common people. When he was in the Senate-house he was greeting the Senators in person remembering each individual's name. Furthermore, he used to conduct visits in homes of private citizens on various occasions (*Non temere urbe oppidove ullo egressus aut quoquam ingressus est nisi vespera aut noctu, ne quem officii causa inquietaret. In consulatu pedibus fere.* […]*Promiscuis salutationibus admittebat et plebem* […].*Die senatus numquam patres nisi in curia salutavit et quidem sedentis ac nominatim singulos nullo submonente* […].*Officia cum multis mutuo exercuit, nec prius dies cuiusque sollemnes frequentare desiit*).[51] Pliny also mentioned that Trajan entered Rome on foot as well and visited his friends as an ordinary citizen.[52] According to Pacatus, Theodosius I followed the same example when he entered the city in 389.[53]

The imitation of the ritual parade of the *Ara Pacis* by Julian as Claudius Mamertinus described in his *Gratiarum Actio* and the controversy regarding the removal of the altar of Victory which was standing at the Senate-House since the era of Augustus were in a sense revealing a *trauma* of loss of bonds with Augustan Rome.[54] Despite its rather controversial impressions the *adventus* of Constantius II (357) was a re-enactment of the *civilitas* of Augustus, following a tradition of comparison of late antique emperors entering Rome to Augustan measures of *civilitas* in order to judge whether or not this imperial visit was successful. After all, the emperor remained still a *primus inter pares* within the city's *pomerium* where the shadow of the *princeps ob cives servatos* was still chasing the late

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[51] Suetonius, *Divus Augustus*, LIII, 2-3.

[52] See Pliny, *Panegyrici Latini* I, 22.4.

[53] See Pacatus, *Panegyrici Latini* II, 47.3

[54] See Claudius Mamertinus, *Gratiarum Actio*, 28, 3-4. Also R. C. Blockley, 'The Panegyric of Claudius Mamertinus on the Emperor Julian', *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 93, 3 (1972), pp. 437-450, p. 445, J.Fears, 'The Theology of Victory at Rome: Approaches and Problems', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, 17, 2 (1981), pp. 736-826. Also K. Lamp, 'The Ara Pacis Augustae: Visual Rhetoric in Augustus' Principate', *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, vol. 39, No. 1 (Winter, 2009), pp. 1-24 and S. N. C. Lieu, *The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), p. 5.

Roman imagination.[55] By late antiquity an imperial entry to the eternal city was a combination of both rite and performance, something the *populus Romanus* was expecting to see and the emperors well aware of this as well as the special case of Rome in relation to how they ought to behave while being there. For if Augustan *civilitas* really meant something was the paradigm shift of Rome from *nobody's city* to *everyone's city*. Since time of the Gracchi and until the end of civil wars the fast growth of empire and of private wealth left little interest for the public space of the capital. The Augustan regime changed all that by making a shift of interest from the Private to the Public once again after a century of neglect, transforming Rome in almost half a century (31 BC-14AD) to a landscape that would later be familiar to the late antiquity aristocrats.[56] This revival of interest for the urban space, similar to the *amor civicus* and the concept of the civic benefactor that was already present in the Greek East managed to turn the interest of the elites from the private splendor and luxury to a new sense of collective aesthetics regarding the place of their city as an imperial capital. That feeling would revive in late antiquity when in the absence of emperors the Senate would reclaim the power vacuum and the public space of the city by restoring and preserving the historic monuments of Rome. By the late fourth century generations of Roman senators were setting the portraits of their illustrious ancestors in the imperial fora of Rome, promoting the history of their families and advertising themselves by turning the public space into 'an open-air gallery of civic love.'[57] It was the architectural program of Augustus that created a particularly 'Roman' form in the topography of places like the Forum Romanum and the Campus Martius; the majority of the monuments that Ammianus Marcellinus describes as impressive for instance in his digression on the *adventus* of Constantius II are anyway Augustan (the rest are Trajanic).[58] The Augustan impression on the Roman landscape would define the measure of Romanness in the many centuries to follow. Almost a millennium and

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[55] See P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων* (Athens: MIET, 2009), p. 131.

[56] P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων*, p. 46.

[57] See P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome and the making of Christianity in the West, 350-550AD* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 2012), p. 64

[58] See Strabo, *Γεωγραφικά*, V, 3.8, Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, 10. Also P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων*, p. 208 and D. Favro, 'Pater urbis': Augustus as City-Father of Rome', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 51, No. 1 (Mar. 1992), pp. 61-84.

a half later, scholars like Flavio Biondo would still struggle to recover that spatial sense in treatises like *De Roma Instaurata* (1444-48) or *De Roma Triumphante* (1479). The late fourth century aristocrats of Rome shared also a sense of recovery or at least of the preserving of their cultural (both material and spiritual) legacy hoping to maintain the uniqueness of Rome with a similar zeal that Ettore Roesler Franz (1845-1907) was trying to capture the image of aspects of a Rome about to fade away in his "Roma Sparita" series of paintings, after the *Risorgimento* (1871).

Another motif which will also be traced was the constant search of an Augustan image or at least of the archetype of an Augustan ruler on every imperial succession or visit to Rome. The two centuries that separated their time from the Antonine era were marked by civil wars and social turmoil just like the century before Augustus, and as their ancestors after the battle of Actium (31 BC) who were rather pessimistic about the future until Augustus announced the return of the *Aetas Aurea*, there was a similar sense of political messianism and expectation in the politics of the fourth century, a quest for an emperor that would deliver them from the calamities of their present. The Augustan literary scheme of the circle of the ages and the return to the golden age after a period of decline had deeply influenced Roman thought ever-since. Likewise the fourth century aristocrats who studied Augustan classics were constantly expecting a similar revival which had almost eschatological proportions. The artwork of monuments like the *Ara Pacis* or the temple of Mars *Ultor* were still witnessing that the coming of a golden age was still possible. The powerful message of their images was not just a fragment of a glorious past; they were still advertising a potential destiny for Rome, the coming of a saturnine era. It was the long shadow of the Augustan state-myth of a long expected Restoration to a previous state of felicity. Aristocratic circles like those of Symmachus and Nicomachus Flavianus were constantly hoping for the appearance of such a ruler who would turn his attention to Rome once again. Symmachus hoped initially that Gratian would be such a ruler mainly because of the aristocratic influence over him by educated men like Ausonius and his good relations to the Senate, by declaring with hope the

coming of the *novi saeculi* and *spes sperata*, later however he would be disappointed.[59] Claudian might have thought the same about Honorius if we are to give any credit to the context of his panegyrics while Rutilius Namatianus appears to place his hopes for the future on Flavius Constantius (future emperor Constantius III, 421AD).[60] The quest for a 'Roman' Emperor based at Rome or at least in Italy reveals the extent that the ghost of the Augustan ruler of the *principatus* haunted the late Roman imaginary, an ideal that rustics like Constantius II or Valentinian I could never reach or understand.

When Augustus had declared by 17BC the beginning of the golden age his agenda included a religious renovation with a revival of ancestral cults and rituals (*cultus deorum*) and a preservation and restoration of public buildings (*publica magnificentia*).[61] Thus he tried to promote a new wave of *pietas*, aiming to imitate the religious devotion of the early Romans and purging the Roman public life of the Greek *luxuria*.[62] The late fourth century aristocrats of Rome had a similar agenda within their capacity as Urban Prefects, setting inscriptions to celebrate their restoration activities just like Augustus did in his *Res Gestae* by commemorating the re-opening of eighty-two temples within the city's *pomerium* during his reign.[63] Similarly, as we will see in the chapter about the era of Symmachus the aristocracy of the late fourth century was trying to promote another wave of religious piety. This new sensitivity was manifested by treating the old temples of the city-center not plainly as monuments but as living organizations that needed the public rites in order to sustain themselves. The notion of (each) city as a living organism with its own *genius* that needed care and devotion would also play a vital role in the Julianic vision of the restoration of the role of cities and temples in the public life of empire. Again the model of Rome had a crucial role to play in that process along with Athens as cities famous for their multitude of temples

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[59] See Symmachus, Orat. III, 1. Also J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, AD 364-425* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 69-87.

[60] See P. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (London: Pan Books, 2006), pp. 236-238.

[61] P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων*, p. 144. Also J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), pp. 55-86.

[62] See N. Petrocheilos, *Ρωμαίοι και Ελληνισμός: Μια Διαλεκτική Σχέση* (Athens: Παπαζήση, 1984), pp. 47-48.

[63] See *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 20.

and their public piety. Towards this direction late antiquity pagans used again Augustan literature as guides of an 'orthodoxy' in religious practices, texts like the *Fasti* of Ovid a new value in late fourth century.[64] It was only a part of a revived interest in copying and correcting important works of Augustan literature like Virgil's *Aeneid* or Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* which in turn contributed to a revival of archaic rituals 'by-the-book' or invention of new ones (*mutatio morum*) revitalizing public life at Rome at the end of the fourth century AD.[65] Some samples of this late antiquity focus to the *classics* of the Augustan era have been preserved, illuminated manuscripts like the *Vatican Vergil* (c. 400) or the *Roman Vergil* (early fifth century) commissioned for aristocratic libraries preserved the late Roman *interpretatio* of they considered as ancestral heritage.[66] In the scenes depicted there is a rather unfamiliar for late fourth century standards emphasis on sacrifice offerings something that was not unrelated to the religious tensions of Rome during the 380s and 390s as we will examine in chapter three.[67] The intensive study and editing of Augustan literature in the late fourth and early fifth century from a linguistic and antiquarian point of view is also mirrored in the works of grammarians like Arusianus Messius (*Exempla Elocutionum*), Aelius Donatus (*Vita Vergiliana*), Maurus Servius Honoratus (*In Vergilii Aeneidem commentarii*), Tiberius Claudius Donatus (*Interpretationes Vergilianae*).[68]

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[64] See R. Rees, 'Dead Poet's Society', p. 5-11.

[65] See G. Schmeling, 'Urbs Aeterna: Rome, a Monument of the Mind', S. K. Dickson, J. P. Hallet (eds.) *Rome and her monuments: Essays on the city and literature of Rome in honor of Katherine A. Geffcken* (Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2000), p. 89-98, p. 96.

[66] See *Vergilius Vaticanus* (Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica, Cod. Vat. lat. 3225), available online at: http://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3225 (accessed 6/8/2017) and *Vergilius Romanus* (Vatican City, Bibliotheca Apostolica, Cod. Vat. lat. 3867). Also E. Rosenthal, *The Illuminations of the Vergilius Romanus (Cod. Vat. Lat. 3867). A Stylistic and Iconographic Analysis* (Zürich: Urs Graf-Verlag, 1972), T. B. Stevenson, *Miniature decoration in the Vatican Virgil: A study in late antique iconography* (Tübingen: Verlag E. Wasmuth, 1983), D. H. Wright, *The Vatican Vergil, a Masterpiece of Late Antique Art* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993) and - *The Roman Vergil and the Origins of Medieval Book Design* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

[67] P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, p. 121.

[68] See R. Linn, 'Augustine, the grammarians and the Cultural Authority of Vergil', R. Rees (ed.) *Romane Memento: Virgil in the fourth century*, pp. 112-127, pp. 122-123. Also A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, pp. 567-626.

v)   Rome personified: The *Dea Roma* figure as an ideogram in late Roman literature

People experienced Rome as a collective entity and they attributed to the city itself the qualities of a personality that epitomized at best the elements of the place as an imperial capital. The city of Rome began to appear in Augustan and post-Augustan literature as a female or maternal figure.[69] Generations of Greek and Roman authors perceived the beauty and glory of Rome not in the appearance of its structures but in the symbolic stature of the city within the Empire, its anthropomorphisation was almost inevitable.[70] This is therefore another important aspect of the *Romanitas* which by the second half of the late fourth century AD would have been crystallized as the goddess *Roma*. The cult of the personified Rome however first appeared in the Greek East during the Hellenistic period.[71] Initially, the *Dea Roma* was the personification of the *Res Publica Romana*, which, according to Tacitus, was institutionalized as a cult by the citizens of Smyrna in Asia Minor who were the first to erect a temple to *urbs Roma* in 195 BC when they were still threatened by Antiochus III. [72] Also Athenian inscriptions dated to the end of the third century inform us about the establishment of the cult of the personified *demos* (i.e. the people and state) of Athens.[73] Later on by the middle of the second century BC this cult soon twinned with that of the goddess *Rome* under the responsibility of the same priest who managed the cult of the

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[69] See Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, II.40 and Martial, *De Spectaculis*, XII.21. Also C. C. Vermeule, *The Goddess Roma in the Art of the Roman Empire*, (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1974).

[70] See V. Hope, 'The City of Rome: Capital and Symbol', J. Huskinson (ed.) *Experiencing Rome: Culture, identity and Power in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 63-93, pp. 69-70. Also D. Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 45.

[71] See C. Ando, *Imperial ideology and provincial loyalty in the Roman Empire* (University of California Press, 2000), p. 45. Also C. Habicht, 'Die Augusteische Zeit und das erste Jahrhundert nach Christi Geburt', S. R. F. Price (ed.), *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 41–88 and J. Champeaux, 'Images célestes de Rome: La Ville et ses incarnations divines', P. Fleury and O. Desbordes (eds.) *Roma Illustrata* (Caen: Presses Universitaires de Caen, 2008), pp. 85-96.

[72] See Tacitus, *Annales*, IV.56.1

[73] See http://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/3053?&bookid=5&location=7 *<Inscriptiones Graecae* I-III Attica, IG II, 834>[accessed 2/8/2017]

personified Athens.[74] Later, a small circular temple dedicated to Roma and Augustus by the east end of the Parthenon on the Acropolis of the city would appear as the final stage in the settlement of the goddess Roma in Athens.[75] The model followed for that purpose was the familiar archetype of the Hellenistic ruler cult.[76] The style of the Graeco-Roman goddess *Roma* on Greek coinage usually portrayed her with a mural crown, signifying Rome's status as a loyal protector of Hellenic city-states.[77] Initially, the *corona muralis* was a golden crown, or a circle of gold intended to resemble to a battlement, and it was bestowed upon the soldier who would manage to be the first to climb the wall of a besieged city and successfully place the standard of the attacking army upon it.[78] During the Hellenistic period, the mural crown had been identified with deities such as the goddess Tyche/Fortuna (the embodiment of the fortune of a city). Furthermore, the high cylindrical *polos* of Cybele could be rendered as a mural crown in Hellenistic times, specifically designating the mother goddess as patron of a city.[79]

Ammianus Marcellinus, writing in the early 390s, portrayed Roma as an elder woman, something that appeared already in Greek literature with the personification of Greece as an elder lady in Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* (*Βίοι Παράλληλοι*), where the Achaean *strategos* Philopoemen is presented as the last-born child of an elder Hellas (*καὶ γὰρ ὥσπερ ὀψίγονον ἐν γήρᾳ ἐπιτεκοῦσα τοῦτον ἡ Ἑλλὰς*).[80] Also Pausanias narrated that the figures of Hellas and Salamis were depicted on the outer wall of the temple of Zeus in Olympia.[81] Philostratus as well described how Apollonius of Tyana dreamt of the island of Crete personified as an

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[74] See C. Habicht, *Ελληνιστική Αθήνα* (Athens: Οδυσσέας, 1998), p. 239

[75] See S. E Alcock, *Graecia Capta: The landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 181-182.

[76] See R. Mellor, *ΘΕΑ ΡΩΜΗ: The Worship of the Goddess Roma in the Greek World* (Hypomnemata, 1975), pp. 5, 14-16.

[77] See R. Mellor, "The Goddess Roma", W. Haase, H. Temporini (eds), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romischen Welt* (de Gruyter, 1991), p. 60-63.

[78] See Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, V.6.4, Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, XXVI.48. Also E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, vol. I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 178.

[79] See F. Allègre. *Étude sur la déesse grecque Tyché* (Paris: 1889), p. 187–92. Also J. Ferguson, *The Religions of the Roman Empire* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), pp. 84-87.

[80] See Plutarch, *Philopoemen,* 1.4

[81] See A. C. Smith, *Athenian Political Art from the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BCE: Images of Political Personifications*, 2003.

elder woman (*γυναῖκα μεγίστην τε καὶ πρεσβυτάτην*) who begged him not to depart to Italy before visiting her.[82] But the portrait of an elder Rome (*vergens in senium*) was not image of exhaustion, decline, or resignation to the fatalism of an inevitable end of an era.[83]   On the contrary it is a middle-aged Rome, at the highlight of her life, sitting aside and inspecting her past deeds, recognized by all as supreme and prosperous with the validity and gravity of old age, reflecting respect and prestige.

The archetype of *Dea Roma* became a familiar literary scheme in the ages that followed in various places and circumstances but with the same role, as an embodiment of ideals and personifications of countries. Such examples are the following:

a) The figure of *Europa regina*, in early modern cartography as a personification of the European continent and bearing a turreted crown (see the famous *Cosmographia* by S. Münster, 1588).[84]

b) The *Marianne* as a personification of the France and of the French Republic(s) which first appeared in 1792 on the new seal of the State after the National Convention of the same year. She was depicted wearing the Phrygian cap instead of the *corona muralis* and she is still depicted on the coat of arms of France. One characteristic example of the archetype of Rome as Marianne is the statue complex *Le triomphe de la République* by Aimé-Jules Dalou (1899), on the Place de la Nation in Paris where the female figure is depicted on a chariot with two lions, mingling thus Roma and Cybele. The latter had been already associated with the figure of *Dea Roma* already in depictions of goddess Rome in ivory diptychs and numismatics.

c) The depiction of *Athena/Minerva-Hellas* as a personification of Greece in the nineteenth century during and after the war of independence (1821-1830) such as in

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[82] Philostratus, *Τὰ ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον*, IV, 34

[83] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XIV, vi, 4. Also Claudian, *De Bello Gildonico* I.24-25 and Sozomen, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, II, 3.4.

[84] See A. Bennholdt-Thomsen, A. Guzzoni, (eds.) *Zur Hermetik des Spätwerks*, Analecta Hölderliana 1. (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1999), p. 22. Also D. Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh university Press, 1968), p. 119.

the paintings of Eugène Delacroix (*Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi* , 1826) and of Theodoros Vryzakis (*Grateful Hellas*, 1858) and later in propaganda posters and political caricatures in newspapers.[85]

d) The depictions of *Italia Turrita* which is definitely the closest iconographically and in a sense predates the archetype of *Dea Roma*, as an allegory of Italy with laurels and a turreted crown. It first appears on the coins during the *Social War* (91-88BC). Under the emperor Augustus, a figure which might have been an allegorical representation of Italy known as *Saturnia Tellus* (The Earth of the Saturnine/golden age) was carved on the external wall of the *Ara Pacis* (13-9 BC) in Rome.[86] A century later, the allegory of Italy appears on the coins during the reign of emperor Nerva (96-98 AD) and starting from 130s, under Hadrian and later Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Septimius Severus and Caracalla, the allegorical representation of Italy kept re-appearing on Roman coinage as a female figure with a turreted crown and occasionally a cornucopia.

The image or the reference to the *Dea Roma* as it appears in the descriptions of Symmachus, Ammianus Marcellinus and Claudian functioned more like the modern-day emoticons which as schematic widely recognized corresponding images have globally replaced standard word and phrases in social-media playing a crucial role in communicating a message and they did so by using this familiar image which implied the qualities mentioned in section iii. Therefore the *Dea Roma* symbolized and epitomized all that the concept of *Romanitas* could carry or imply and added accuracy and validity to the message of the speaker/author.

The expression of a devotion to a personified *Roma* was something quite popular in the waning of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth and was not discouraged by the

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[85] See G. Thomas, *History of the Greek Revolution* (Kessenger Publishing, 2004)
[86] P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων*, p. 234-236.

Christian authorities. Various depictions of an anthropomorphic Rome appeared in numismatics and in prose and verse literature of diverse religious backgrounds. Such an example is the appearance of the *genius publicus* in Ammianus Marcellinus, or the personified *Roma* in the *Relationes* of Symmachus, the panegyrics of Claudian and the *De Reditu Suo* of Rutilius Namatianus. But its appearance was something more than a plain literary scheme, it was a form of devotion to the state and the Roman values that form an unofficial creed of deistic proportions similar perhaps only to the cult of the *Supreme Being* during the French Revolution (which was after all influenced by the Greco-Roman civic ideals and the public virtues of an ideal republican society).[87] This form of cult of the State defined as *Genius Publicus* or otherwise mentioned as *genius populi Romani* appears in the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus as a form of pagan monotheism which in contrast to the Robespierrist *Supreme Being* never had its own public festivals or rites but remained as a rather elusive concept among the intellectuals and court officials. The fact that this 'cult' was limited to the circles of public administration and court reveales, perhaps, its function as a tool of popularizing Roman politics in a simple, portable and religiously-neutral way to introduce or reinterpret the values of the *Romanitas*. A more recent example of a similar mechanism was the introduction of the *Marianne*-figure and its popularization as a bearer of *Frenchness* in the French education during the *Third Republic* (1871-1940) in an attempt to spread the civic/republican virtues and a sense of Nationhood to the population of the French country-side through the Education system, transforming, as E. Weber put it, *Peasants into Frenchmen* for the cause of an 'One and Indivisible France'.[88]

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[87] S. Žižek, *Robespierre: Virtue and Terror* (New York: Verso, 2007), p. 111. Also W. Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 276.

[88] See E. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), pp. 95-114, 303-338. Also G. Wright, *France in Modern Times: From the Enlightenment to the Present* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1995), p. 313.

vi)   A Rome too much: The uncomfortable relationship between Rome and Constantinople in the fourth century AD

The fourth century AD was an era of political and ideological experimentation starting with the model of the Tetrarchy and later the gradual establishment of a new dynastic capital in the East that would acquire during the time of Theodosius I the title of *New Rome* at the second Ecumenical Council (381). Initially rather few would have believed that Constantine's venture of (re)founding a city as a substitute for Rome would last or at least outlive him since that was the case in the past with several 'personal' capitals since their status as such was mostly depending on the emperor's presence.[89] Diocletian wished to transform Nicomedia to 'another district of Rome' (*regio quaedam Urbis* […] *aeternae*).[90] Galerius had founded Felix Romuliana in *Dacia Ripensis* in order to function as his own 'Spalatum'. Constantine himself was earlier in his reign referring to Serdica as 'my Rome' (Ἡ ἐμὴ Ῥώμη Σαρδική ἐστιν).[91] Later on the western branch of the Valentinian dynasty (Gratian and Valentinian II) as well as the usurper Magnus Maximus (383-385) would have their own 'Rome' at Trier where a century earlier Tetricus (270-274)ruled the Gallic Empire (260-274) along with his own Senate. Also various cities of Northern Italy were gaining importance already from the third century. Among them was Mediolanum where the emperor Gallienus (253-268) had established his court, a city which would occasionally serve as imperial base during the fourth and early fifth centuries AD and even smaller cities like Aquileia and Verona gained disproportionally large attention from the mid-third century at a time when the primacy of Rome was still theoretically unchallenged.

The finalization of Constantinople as a permanent imperial capital would be a long process that would start with Constantius II (337-361) only to be completed by Theodosius I (379-

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[89] See L. Grig and G. Kelly, 'Rome and Constantinople in Context' in L. grig and G. Kelly (eds.) *Two Romes: Rome and Constantinople in late antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 2012), pp. 3-30, p. 7.

[90] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* XXII, 9.3). Also Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 7.10.

[91] See Anonymus post Dionem (Dio Continuatus), *frag*. 15.1.

395). Even the latter, on the aftermath of Adrianople (378), wished to move the see of imperial residence to Thessalonica and it was only by the persuasion of Themistius that he finally settled in Constantinople in early 381.[92] It was Themistius who during the previous years insisted on inviting Constantius II to conduct frequent visits at Constantinople in order to secure the status of his father's foundation. In a time when Rome could be as portable as a campaigning emperor the frequency of imperial visits could confirm the city's place in the symbolic geography of the Empire.[93] It has been suggested that Constantinople was designed to be a *New Rome* right from its foundation mainly because of three pieces of evidence: Socrates's account who mentioned the existence of a constantinian inscription on the *Strategion* which refered to the city as ''Second Rome'', the reference to a constantinian law which referred to Constantinople *quam aeterno nomine iubente deo donavimus* and a mention of the city as *altera Roma* in a poem by Publius Optatianus Porphyrius and the *populus Romanus* inscribed coins from the city's mints is considered as intentional attempt to appear the city as (a model of) Rome.[94] I disagree with that interpretation of the aforementioned evidence for the following reasons:

a) The mention of the inscription by Socrates must be treated with certain caution, skepticism and suspicion since it comes from such a chronologically late source from the reign of Theodosius II (408-450) when the Constantinopolitan and Eastern court wished indeed to compare their city to Rome (if not to surpass it).[95]

b) As for the reference to Constantinople as the city of *aeterno nomine* in Constantinian legislation is at least a misinterpretation of a rather frequent late Roman imperial addressing which could result to a misleading conclusion. The phrase 'aeternitas mea' is a rather usual post-Diocletianic form of self-address of emperors as it

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[92] See P. Heather and D. Moncur, *Politics, Philosophy and Empire in the Fourth Century: Select Orations of Themistius* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2001), p. 218. Also Themistius, Orat. XIV, 181.d.

[93] See J. Vanderspoel, *Themistius and the Imperial Court: Oratory, Civic Duty and Paideia from Constantius to Theodosius* (Ann Arbor: University of Michingan Press, 1995), p. 54.

[94] See Socrates Scholasticus, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, I, 16.1. *Codex Theodosianus*, XIII, 5.7 (1 December 334). Porphyrius, *Carmen* 4.6 cited from L. Grig, G. Kelly, 'Rome and Constantinople in Context', p. 11.

[95] See P. Van Nuffelen, 'Olympiodorus of Thebes and Eastern Triumphalism' in C. Kelly (ed.) *Theodosius II: Rethinking the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 130-152.

appears in the narrative of Ammianus Marcellinus where Constantius II is described referring to himself as 'aeternitas mea' and signing the imperial documents with that phrase (*ut "Aeternitatem meam" aliquotiens subsereret ipse dictando scribendoque propria manu orbis totius se dominum appellaret*).[96] Therefore the phrase *aeterno nomine* is not a reference to (a) Rome as an eternal city but to the eternity of Constantine's name itself which was given to the city he (re)founded. It was all about the narcissistic 'eternity' of Constantine, not of (any) Rome.

c) Regarding the mention of *altera Roma* in Porphyrius's verse we must consider that it was composed by someone who lost imperial favor and was attempting to regain it by trying to maximize the deeds of the emperor.[97] The fact that he compares Constantine's foundation to Rome does not reveal whether or not this had been the emperor's intention as well since what mattered the most for the author was to compliment the ruler. In fact, his choice of characterizing the city as another Rome would be no praise at all if this was an established imperial policy at the time on the contrary Porphyrius must have wished to maximize its praise for Constantine by using a comparison which might have appeared rather exaggerating and paradoxical since no city could ever reach the status of Rome.

d) Lastly, the 'Populus Romanus' motto inscribed on Constantinopolitan coins is a rather abstract reference which by the early fourth century had become to mean citizens/subjects and was used in a rather generalizing context. Julian for instance is addressing in one of his epistles the people of Alexandria as 'fellow –citizens' (*τοῖς ἐμοῖς πολίταις Ἀλεξανδρεῦσιν*), that didn't make Julian an Alexandrian neither upgraded the Alexandrian *populus* in comparison to the inhabitants of any other

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[96] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XV, 1.3.
[97] See T. D. Barnes, 'Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius', *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 96, no. 2 (Summer, 1975), pp. 173-186, pp. 174-175.

city.[98] So a 'Populus Romanus' inscription outside Rome in the fourth century could mean anything or nothing in particular.

Therefore there is not solid evidence in order to understand or decode Constantine's agenda about the role, function and status of his new city which, given the fact of a lack of real evidence, remains at least a mystery. What is our concern here however is not the first evidence of Constantinopolitan ambitions to match Rome but the first time when news of such intentions reached the Senate and the people of the eternal city. It appears that the first time that such rhetoric appears to have posed a threat to the symbolic and privileged position that Rome enjoyed in the Empire was during the imperial *adventus* of 357 when they first encountered representatives of 'another' Senate. The other terminus which consolidates the loss of uniqueness of the status of the old capital was the first clear and confirmed mentioned of Constantinople as 'New Rome' in the acts of the synod of 381, which cannot be disputed or interpreted otherwise. In any case the whole issue appears to engage contemporary scholars a lot more than the fourth century emperors.

Septimius Severus (193-211) was to begin with, the first late Roman emperor to realize the importance of Byzantium's location during his conflict with Pescennius Niger, a city he could not by-pass, standing in the frontier zone between the two imperial pretenders.[99] Later Licinius preferred to settle himself there instead of Nicomedia and perhaps Constantine after his victory over his former imperial colleague established his authority there and renamed it to cast Licinius' memory to oblivion.[100] After all he did the same in Rome with imposing his signature in all monuments of Maxentius (306-312) although he could not alter the name of the city.[101] Rome must have been a rather inhospitable place for him since after the Milvian

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[98] See Julian, ep. 60, 380d.

[99] See Dio Cassius, Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία, LXXIV, 6-14, Herodian, Τῆς μετὰ Μάρκον βασιλείας ἱστορία, II, 14, III, 6. Also G. Dagron, Η Γέννηση Μιας Πρωτεύουσας: Η Κωνσταντινούπολη και οι Θεσμοί της (330-451), (Athens: MIET, 2009), p. 17 and R. Van Dam, *Rome and Constantinople: Rewriting Roman History during Late Antiquity* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010), p. 51.

[100] D. J. Georgacas, 'The Names of Constantinople', pp. 355.

[101] See L. Kerr, L, 'A topography of death: the buildings of the emperor Maxentius on the Via Appia, Rome', M. Carruthers et al. (eds.) *Eleventh Annual Proceedings of the Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*

Bridge (312) he had been in the awkward position of being in control of a city that so much had hoped for a victory of Maxentius who had been by far the most 'Roman' emperor of his time (spending his entire reign within the *pomerium* of Rome, naming his son Romulus and promoting his image as *conservator Urbis* is just a glimpse of his connection to the eternal city that survived the waves of Constantinian propaganda about the 'tyrant' which would follow).[102] Constantinople would be the city of Constantine's victory over Licinius; it was to stand as his own 'Nicopolis' for his own 'Actium'.

Constantinople was a city designed as Rome ought to be according to fourth century post-tetrarchic autocratic standards with no republican past or annoying ritual protocols of the *principatus* era and civilian forms of attitude, a city adjusted to the late Roman military militaristic style. Despite that fact the new city was designed with a utopian planning which indicated what Rome ought to be according to the imperial aims and needs of the time. A palace and a circus with an Egyptian obelisk and a forum to begin with, later Theodosius would add another one trying to match that of Trajan with a similar spiral column and equestrian statue. Constantinople in its early phase would grow up within the ideological territory of Rome.[103] Yet the new capital, as a new city was lacking the antiquity of the institutions of Rome not to mention the regionalism and the civic pride that the citizens of the eternal city shared. The fact that Constantine was buried there must have surprised the citizens of Rome. We don't know if that his personal wish however he was preparing a circular mausoleum for himself at Rome attached to St Marcellinus and Peter's church outside the walls of the city, where his mother Helena was buried. Also the bodies of his two daughters Constantia and Helena were also placed in a mausoleum next to the church of

(Oxford: Oxbow, 2001), pp. 24-33. Also J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 76-90 and G. Kalas, *The Restoration of the Roman Forum in Late Antiquity: Transforming the Public Space* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), pp. 47-54.

[102] See R. Van Dam, *The Roman Revolution of Constantine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 45. Also R. MacMullen, *Constantine* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), p. 88, M. Cullhed, *Conservator Urbis Suae: Studies in the Politics and Propaganda of the Emperor Maxentius* (Stockholm: Paul Aströms, 1994) and J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century*, pp. 43-63.

[103] See B. Ward-Perkins, 'Constantinople: A City and its Ideological Territory', G. P. Brogiolo, N. Gauthier and N. Christie (eds.) *Towns and their Territories between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 325-345, pp.325-326.

St Agnes. We don't have to trust the account of Eusebius that he had prepared a place for himself in the church of the Holy Apostles.[104] After all not all the emperors that followed were buried at Constantinople while the first emperor to die in the city would be Arcadius (395-408). It seems that the imperial visit of 326 and its unhappy outcome might have caused a change of plans. The uncomfortable relationship between Constantine and the *populus Romanus* turned to almost open hostility due to the emperor's denial to comply with the protocol and the politically-correct attitude regarding the religious obligations of an emperor at Rome. Something that Constantine openly disagreed for reasons related to his 'personal' religion and anti-sacrificial beliefs which was a quite strong trend in late Roman polytheism/ non-Christian monotheism.[105] It seems that after this visit his personal foundation of Constantinople gained a new importance which was the place where he could set the rules without the annoying presence of the ever-demanding *populus Romanus*. From that point of view the function that Constantinople came to have was to some extent the outcome of Constantine's psychological repression.

The institutional architect of Constantinople would be Constantius II with the establishment of a Senate and a *Praefectus Urbi* in imitation of Rome. The eastern Senate would plainly have a decorative role since it did not represent any institutional continuity and it was not standing as guardian of ancestral customs as it did at Rome. In fact it was just a plain upgrade of the pre-existing *comitium* of the city that functioned already under Constantine and could potentially play the role of a Senate as long as the emperor was residing at the city. However the *comitium* of Constantinople was in no way considered a Senate, its members had the title of *clari*, not of *clarissimi* which reveals that Constantine had no intention of establishing a second Senate.[106] Again Themistius would try to bridge the gap of legitimacy and antiquity that separated the two bodies. The *Praefectura Urbis* was for Rome a primarily Augustan institution with its own history that was later modified by Septimius

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[104] See Eusebius, *Βίος Μεγάλου Κωνσταντίνου*, 4.58-60. Also R. Van Dam, *The Roman Revolution of Constantine*, p. 58-59.

[105] See D. Bowder, *The Age of Constantine and Julian* (London: Elek, 1978), p. 34.

[106] D. Bowder, *The Age of Constantine and Julian*, p. 37.

Severus and was linked to its urban history as necessity. On the contrary, it was a luxury for Constantinople, just another artificial institution in order to match Rome.[107] The first *praefectus Urbi* of Constantinople was Honoratus in 359 succeeding the last proconsul of Constantinople, none other than Themistius himself. This is a milestone date since after 359 there were no more institutional differences or inequalities between Rome and Constantinople.[108]

Themistius had a significant role to play in promoting the new foundation as *daughter* of Constantine, *sister* to Constantius II and *mother of kingship* (*μητέρα τῆς βασιλείας*) which would guarantee the continuation of the legitimacy of the Constantinian dynasty.[109] Of course there was no intention to downgrade Rome as we will see in chapter on the *adventus* of Constantius but probably their vision was that of a united Empire under a single monarch but with a dual head (two capitals). The closest similar example in modern history was the dual system of rule in the post-1867 *Compromise* (*Ausgleich*) in Habsburg Austria, a system of corporative federalism with two parliaments (one in Vienna, the other at Budapest) and two major administrative divisions (Austria-Hungary) under a single monarch (Franz-Joseph, 1848-1916).[110] The new capital still required a *new history*, a new discourse of legitimization of its status. Later, in the sixth century, Hesychius would provide that new past with a narrative linking the history of Constantinople to Troy, Rome and Byzantium, associating the city to both Greek culture and Roman rule.[111] Back in the fourth century however there was an issue of legitimacy regarding the status of the eastern capital, something that Themistius attempted to smooth defining the mutual relationship of the two cities as *ἀνανέωσις* (renewal) with Rome being the metropolis of Constantinople and not the Byzantium of the

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[107] See G. Dagron, *Η Γέννηση μιας Πρωτεύουσας*, p. 42. Also A. Chastagnol, *La Préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960), p. vii-viii.

[108] G. Dagron, *Η Γέννηση μιας Πρωτεύουσας*, p. 258.

[109] See Themistius, *Orat*. III, 40.c, IV, 53.a-c, 58.b, 59.a-b. Also R. J. Panella, *The Private Orations of Themistius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 2.

[110] See R. W. Seton-Watson, 'The Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich of 1867', *The Slavonic and East European Review* 19.53/54(1939), pp. 123–40. Also L. C. Tihany,(1969), 'The Austro-Hungarian Compromise, 1867–1918: A Half Century of Diagnosis; Fifty Years of Post-Mortem', *Central European History* vol. 2.2 (1969), pp. 114–38.

[111] R. Van Dam, *Rome and Constantinople*, p. 68. Also G. Dagron, *Constantinople Imaginaire: Études sur le recueil des Patria* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1984).

Megarians. By doing so he admitted that the foundation of Constantine had no Past of its own and it did not need so since its metropolis was the metropolis of the world. While Rome claimed its legitimacy from its Antiquity, the new capital would do so by being exactly the opposite, a new foundation of the *vetus* Rome. This dual scheme of *aeternitas* and *rejuvenatio* which is *continuity* and *change*, encapsulated the motif of a minimum of change in order to secure continuity and that legitimized Constantinople as a twin capital.[112]

This perception of the *eternity* of Rome in the east however was not a fourth century novelty. It was based upon a pre-existing regional 'mutation' of Rome's eternity by a specific theological interpretation.[113] While the concept of the personified Rome had been identified with stability and integrity by aging, a literary scheme popular with a Roman audience (as Symmachus and Ammianus Marcellinus portrayed in their works), the eastern provinces, especially Egypt produced a new theme of rejuvenation/rebirth of the eternity of Rome which had deep theological roots extending as back as the Osiris mythological circle. From that point of view the discourse of an ever-rejuvenating Rome was the *interpretatio aegyptica* of the representation of idea of eternal Rome.[114] It seems that the cult of Αἰών (Aion) in Alexandria as a personification of the abstract philosophical concept of eternity was associated at some point with the imperial authority as the depictions on coinage of the Antonine era confirm by representing Aion and phoenix (as a symbol of rebirth).[115] Thus the gradual association of Aion to the eternity of Roman authority which also encapsulated transformation and rejuvenation was introduced. Also an inscription from Eleusis appears to identify Aion with the eternity and durability of the Roman authority (<Αἰῶνα εἰς κράτος Ῥώμης καὶ διαμονὴν μυστηρίων. Αἰὼν ὁ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς αἰεὶ φύσει θείαι μένων κόσμος

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[112] See Table 2, p. 233
[113] See G. W. Bowersock, *Ο Ελληνισμός στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα* (Athens: MIET, 2000), pp. 55-60.
[114] G. W. Bowersock, *Ο Ελληνισμός στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα,* p. 59.
[115] G. W. Bowersock, *Ο Ελληνισμός στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα*, p. 55. Also F. Cummont, *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans* (New York: Dover, 1960), pp. 58-62, J. R. Fears, 'The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.17.2 (1981), p. 939, I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 310–311 and J. Fossum, 'The Myth of the Eternal Rebirth: Critical Notes on G. W. Bowersock, Hellenism in Late Antiquity', *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (Aug., 1999), pp. 305-315.

τε εἷς κατὰ τὰ αὐτά, ὁποῖος ἔστι καὶ ἦν καὶ ἔσται, ἀρχὴν μεσότητα τέλος οὐκ ἔχων, μεταβολῆς ἀμέτοχος, θείας φύσεως ἐργάτης αἰωνίου πάντα.>).[116] Similar to that context is the inscription that Plutarch preserved in his work on Isis and Osiris (*Περὶ Ἴσιδος καὶ Ὀσίριδος*) which was visible at the site of the temple of Neith (a deity identified to Isis and Minerva/Athena) at Sais (*ἐγώ εἰμι πᾶν τὸ γεγονὸς καὶ ὂν καὶ ἐσόμενον καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν πέπλον οὐδείς πω θνητὸς ἀπεκάλυψεν*).[117] Furthermore, Nonnus, in his epic poem *Dionysiaca* (*Διονυσιακά*) described Aion as rejuvenating like a snake that emerges from its old skin (*Αἴων, / μάντις ἐπεσσομένων, ὅτι γήραος ἄχθος ἀμείβων, / ὡς ὄφις ἀδρανέων φολίδων σπείρημα τινάξας, / ἔμπαλιν ἡβήσειε λελουμένος οἴδμασι θεσμῶν: / θεσπεσίην δὲ θύγατρα λοχευομένης Ἀφροδίτης / σύνθροον ἐκρούσαντο μέλος τετράζυγες Ὧραι*).[118] Additionally the fact that Aion is often depicted in the company of an earth or mother goddess like Tellus or Cybele (see the artwork of the Parabiago plate) which are also associated with the figure of a personified Rome confirms the influence of the archetype of that deity in an eastern version of a Roma gaining eternity by rejuvenation.[119] After all Claudian, who first introduced the image of a rejuvenated *Roma* in the west, was an Alexandrian Greek.

Claudian portrayed the personified *Roma* as rejuvenating after the suppression of Gildo's rebellion (*meliore iuventa*). She appeared to have reclaimed her old strength and her hair ceased to be grey, a description of the consequences of Gildo's defeat that was totally understood by the audience.[120] Prudentius portrayed a similar version of rejuvenated *Roma* (despite his initial criticism of her cult)[121] but it was only because so many of her old senatorial families (*sanguine prisco*), the *excellentior ordo* to which the *urbs* owed its *status*,

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[116] See *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* (3rd edition) <*Inscriptiones Graecae* II 4705> http://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/7003?&bookid=5&location=7 [accessed 9/8/2017]

[117] See Plutarch, *Περὶ Ἴσιδος καὶ Ὀσίριδος*, 8.c

[118] See Nonnus, *Διονυσιακά*, 41.180-184.

[119] See R. E. Leader-Newby, *Silver and Society in Late Antiquity: Functions and Meanings of Silver Plate in the Fourth to Seventh Centuries* (Ashgate, 2004), p. 146, J. A. Ezquerra, *Romanising Oriental Gods: Myth, Salvation, and Ethics in the Cults of Cybele* (Brill, 2008), p. 140 and G. S. Gasparro, *Soteriology and Mystic Aspects in the Cult of Cybele and Attis* (Brill, 1985), p. 99.

[120] See P. G. Christiansen, *The Use of Images by Claudius Claudianus* (Hague, Mouton, 1969), p. 52.

[121] See Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, I, 217-25.

had been converted to Christianity, giving thus to the goddess, a perpetual lifting.[122] While (Old) Rome was structuring its prestige, validity and venerability to its *aeternitas*, Constantinople would base its legitimacy in the concept of the everlasting rebirth of Rome as a timeless and portable symbol.[123] Menander Rhetor advised his contemporary panegyrists in the making that they could use the concept of old and young age personified when the city to be praised has older neighbors (*αἱ μέν κεκμήκασι χρόνῳ, ἡ δ' ἀνθεῖ*).[124] Traditionally the Idea of an *aged Rome*, as in the case of Ammianus Marcellinus's description ([Roma] *vergens in senium*) was a part of dialectic of authority and superiority justifying the privileged position of the eternal city in the cosmos.[125] The everlasting duration of Rome and its Empire would be bound to the repeating circles of crisis and restoration, an idea that Rutilius Namatianus would later promote in his *De Reditu Suo*.[126]

The next-key date in relation to the institutional equilibrium between Rome and Constantinople is the upgrading of the authority of the Constantinopolitan Christian bishop and the declaration of the Eastern Capital as *New Rome* in the acts of the council of 381.[127] It was a synod with no representatives from old Rome since it included only bishops within the jurisdiction of Theodosius I (at that time emperor only in the East). The third synodic canon elevated Constantinople to the status of a *New Rome* and its bishop would hold from then on *τὰ πρεσβεῖα τῆς τιμῆς* since his city comes second after Rome.[128] Later on at the synod of Chalcedon (451) the third canon of the council of 381 would be reaffirmed by adding that 'the city which is honored with the emperorship and the (second) senate enjoys

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[122] Prudentius, *Contra Sym*. I, 569-570 and II, 655.

[123] See Constantinos Manasses, *Σύνοψις Χρονική,* 2313-2332. Also I. Karagiannopoulos, *Το Βυζαντινό Κράτος* (Thessalonica: Vanias, 2001), p. 286.

[124] See Menander Rhetor 350. 20 in D. A. Russel and N. G. Wilson (eds.) *Menander Rhetor: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 40.

[125] See See Ammianus Marcellinus*, Res Gestae*, XIV, vi, 4. Also D. Burgersdijk, *Emperors and Historiography: Collected Essays on the Literature of the Roman Empire by Danil Den Hengst* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 264.

[126] See Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 139-140.

[127] See C. Freeman, *A.D. 381: Heretics, Pagans and the Dawn of the Monotheistic State* (Woodstock: The Overlook Press, 2009), pp. 91-104.

[128] G. Dagron, p. 521.

equal privileges with the Old Rome.[129] The Acts of that synod of 381 placed the new bishop of Constantinople Nectarius (381-397) in a privileged position since its see now had replaced the old dual 'leadership' of the Christian church that until that time Rome shared with Alexandria. This position of confidence allowed Nectarius to be diplomatic and tolerant towards the other churches and even 'heretics', marking a period of internal peace in ecclesiastical matters. But most importantly as G. Dagron summarized in his *Naissance d' une Capitale* (1984) 'up until 381 'orthodox' meant complying to the 'doctrine' of Nicaea (325), after the synod of 381 meant agreeing to Nectarius'.[130] But for what concerned the church of Rome during that period, the authority of the *episcopus Romanus* was overshadowed by someone closer to home, the bishop Ambrose of Milan (374-397) who took advantage of the moving of the imperial see in his bishopric (until 387) during the reign of Valentinian II (375-392) in order to impose his own agenda and upgrade his see.[131]

vii)   Conceptualization and Contextualization of Terms

In this point there is a need of devoting some space in order to explain certain terms which will appear several times in the following chapter that might need some explanation regarding the context in which I am going to use them and some justification about my intention to do so. Despite the fact that some of them might appear as anachronistic or irrelevant they were used according to specific criteria which will be explained below. First of all the emphasis of this thesis to Rome as an urban archetype of Utopia has already been explained in the first two sections of the introduction but I need to clarify the interrelation between the concepts of Rome and Utopia as will appear again and again in this thesis.

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[129] J. Pelikan, *The Excellent Empire*, pp. 76-77.
[130] G. Dagron, p. 517.
[131] C. Freeman, *A.D. 381: Heretics, Pagans and the Dawn of the Monotheistic State*, pp. 105-116.

Indeed by attempting to do so I am not only using a necessary anachronism but also I am moving to a rather unchartered territory in what appears to be a gap in the modern bibliography on Utopian Studies which generally is dominated by the assumption that there is a break of two thousand years between Plato's *Republic* and Thomas More's *Utopia*, a gap in political idealism, planning and vision, overshadowed by the Christian eschatological concept of the 'New Jerusalem'. Thus traces of utopian thought in the period between the two monumental works of western political thought are generally ignored by modern writers like L. Mumford, M.-L. Berneri, F. and F. Manuel and R. Levitas who chose to skip the fifteen centuries between Classical Antiquity and the Renaissance claiming a break in utopian political thinking, due to the dominance of Christian Eschatology.[132] However by doing so they ignored the potentials created by the values and idealism of the late antique mind. A chance for an alternative present and future in an age of political, social and religious transition was not far from the late Roman imagination as we will see in the chapter on Augustine and his *City of God*.

The connection between City and Utopia had been established already since Plato's *Commonwealth* (*Πολιτεία*) where a strong urban archetype dominated political idealism. The Articulation/manifestation of utopian vision in urban terms continued in the works of the *Second Sophistic* in the second and early third centuries AD when the *laudatio Urbis/ ekphrasis* had been already an established literary genre, as many other cities Rome soon fitted in. Since the time of the Antonine era the archetype of Utopia as a condition of ideal living/ideal city-scape had been identified with the city of Rome and its Empire. For enthusiasts like Aelius Aristides the old Hellenistic descriptions of isolated insular societies beyond the *Orbis Romanus* made no sense at all since Rome brought the ideal condition to the *Here* and to *Now*. Utopia had abandoned the fringes of the Hellenistic maps and geographical treatises and resettled within the Roman Imperial space, the *Universal* Empire

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[132] See L. Mumford, *The Story of Utopias* (New York: Harrap, 1922), M. L. Berneri, *Journey Through Utopia* (London: Routledge, 1950), F.E. Manuel and F. P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979) and R. Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1990).

seemed to have reached the ideal state and form where no change was needed.[133] The strong connection between City and Utopia was of course transplanted through Neoplatonism in late antique thought.[134] The term *Civitas* itself had by Augustine's time (354-430) adapted a more complex content beyond the obvious meaning. Its importance had shifted from the place, to the people (*civitas, quae nihil est aliud quam hominum multitude aliquot societatis vincula conligata*).[135]

The term 'Utopia(n)' may be another anachronism since it was invented by Thomas More (*De optimo rei publicae deque nova insula Utopia* - 1516) from the Greek: *οὐ* ("not") and *τόπος* ("place") in order to use it in a rather humoristic or ironic context. Utopia however never appeared before the modern times as a non-existent, imaginary society, its purpose was to depict the ideal, not the impossible.[136] The impossibility of the state of perfection is rather modern point of view.[137] The literature of Antiquity appears to have a far more optimistic view of the ideal as something that deserves to be achieved. The fact that this pattern of thought kept re-emerging towards the late Empire seemed to mean that the utopian context of Rome as an idea was something that the people or at least the intelligentsia needed. The fourth century realities which presented multiple intellectual and ideological paths appear to have a series of similarities with More's times (also an era of transition) in challenging pre-existing beliefs and searching for new potentials.

Within the context of this thesis the term 'utopia' will be used to describe an abstract place/ condition ideally perfect in respect of laws and customs which is not very far away from the

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[133] See R. Evans, *Utopia Antiqua*, pp. 8, 13.

[134] See D. J. O' Meara, *Platonopolis: Platonic Political Philosophy in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), pp. 87-98.

[135] See Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XV, 8. Also P. Brown*, Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber & Faber, 2000), pp. 312-319. J. Van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: A Study of Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 102-15.

[136] See M. Abensour, *L' Utopie de Thomas More à Walter Benjamin* (Paris: sens et tonka, 2002), pp. 14-15. Also E. Bloch, T. W. Adorno, *Κάτι Λείπει* (Athens: Έρασμος, 2000), p. 11. M. Buber, *Μονοπάτια στην Ουτοπία* (Athens: Νησίδες, 2000), p. 18. E. Bloch, *L' Esprit de l' Utopie* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), p.11. S. Rozanis, *Τρία Κείμενα για την Ουτοπία: Thomas More Ουτοπία, Francis Bacon Νέα Ατλαντίς, Henry Neville Η Νήσος των Πάιν* (Athens: Μεταίχμιο, 2007), pp. 9-15. T. Paquot, *Η Ουτοπία ή το παγιδευμένο ιδεώδες* (Athens: Scripta, 1998), pp. 29-31.

[137] See R. Levitas, *The Concept of Utopia*, p. 3.

collective representations of the pre-classical golden age concept return to *Aetas Aurea* of the Classical and Post-Classical thought. From that point of view utopia functioned as some kind of goal and in that scope Prudentius and Augustine used the idea of Rome, as an agent of change in order to reach an ideal mental state. Therefore utopia functioned as means to an end. Oscar Wilde summarized this by saying that 'a map of the world that does not include Utopia is not even worth glancing at, for it leaves out the country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias.'[138] The notion of moving forward by looking backwards was not something theoretical; it was a sense of a cultural and mental 'revolution', similar to the concept of the return to the *aetas aurea* which Augustus had unleashed back in the first century.[139] In the frame of this thesis Progress seems to be as another anachronistic concept but we could see as construction alternatives and evolving a concept according to the spiritual and political needs of different periods. When *Roma* is described for instance as *vergens in senium*, or rejuvenating reflects the need for change if not announcing it as already happening. Evolution and continuity offers validity, after all the adaptability made the idea of Rome timeless by changing as the time went on and yet remaining the same. Therefore utopianism and evolution did not occurred as an accident in late Roman thought but as a necessity.

A terminology which also needs clarification in order to avoid possible misunderstands or misinterpretations is the use of concepts like *patria*/patriotism/fatherland and the rather problematic nature of how the late antique Roman understood his devotion to (Rome as) *patria communis*. The use of terms 'fatherland' and 'patriotism' are a necessary anachronism to describe more accurately terms like 'patria' and devotion to the 'mos maiorum' and they must not be confused with the modern twisted meaning of those terms which were heavily

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[138] See O. Wilde, 'The soul of man under socialism', *Selected Essays and Poems* (London: Penguin, 1954), p. 34.
[139] P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων*, pp. 224-254. Also R. Heinberg, *Memories and Visions of Paradise: Exploring the Universal Myth of a Lost Golden Age* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1989), pp. 46-50, 116-17 and A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1935), pp. 23-102.

marked and abused by the nationalist movements in Europe during the last three centuries. To a contemporary audience the term 'fatherland' bears with it a particular ideological and cultural burden quite different to what the ancients perceived when coming across to the term 'patria' which really makes the use of it rather complicated and demanding an explanation at least regarding its context when it will appear in this work. Since our perceptions of what fatherland and patriotism is were heavily influenced by the Enlightenment and the nineteenth and twentieth century nationalism(s) we need to trace what the Romans understood when they used the term 'patria'. Its primal meaning had been of course an expression of regionalism indicating the place of birth with the specific cultural burden that this geographical location implied. The concept of fatherland had a very specific and limited place within the walls of the Greek city-states where the term πατρίς originated. The early Romans shared similar perceptions when their territorial domain was no larger than that of a classical Greek *polis* and the borders of the Roman domain were identical to the archaic *ager Romanus*.[140] Within the cosmopolitanism of the late Hellenistic era however and the rapid expansion of the Roman state and annexation of other cultures after consecutive wars and occasionally no easy victories the relationship between the individual and the state and what the sense of devotion to the patria was, began to adapt new meanings.

Patriotism as an attachment to a homeland can be viewed in terms of different features relating to one's own homeland, including ethnic, cultural, political or historical aspects. During the Augustan era, this devotion to the fatherland becomes something far more complicated and in a sense more familiar to our contemporary understanding of what devotion to a fatherland is. In a marble replica of an Augustan *clipeus virtutis* from Arles (26 BC) the dedicator leaves us with no doubt about how he perceives himself and also Augustus in relation to the Roman *patria*: 'Virtutis, clementiamque, iustitiae pietatisque erga

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[140] See R. E. A. Palmer, *The Archaic Community of The Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 5-9, 26-34.

deos patriamque'.[141] The appearance of the *erga deos patriamque* reveals not only the importance of the role and cause of the *princeps* but also the new complicated context of the term *patria* which already resembles the 'For God, King and Country' motto which we encounter today in every memorial dedicated to the *Unknown Soldier* not to mention the famous verse *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* by Horace.[142] It signifies the beginning of a more complicated relationship between the individual and society by a set of values that defined the fatherland beyond any obvious geographical/regional limits.

By the late fourth century we read in the *Dicta Catonis* (a collection of sayings attributed to Cato by an anonymous fourth century author) among other moral supposed sayings of Cato the maxim 'pugna pro patria' which by fourth century was judged to be important enough and fitting to be said by none other than the famous Roman politician of the Republican era.[143] Apparently a similar Greek version of it survived in a form of 'Delphic' maxim as Θνῆσκε ὑπέρ πατρίδος ('die for your country') attributed by Stobaeus to Periander, tyrant of Corinth (627-585BC).[144] Although it was traditionally considered as an archaic Greek maxim carved upon the temple of Apollo at Delphi it survived only in the *Florilegium* (Ἀνθολόγιον) of Stobaeus and it seems that it was coined or at least re-emerged in Late Antiquity.[145] However the evolution of the context of the term was not clear or linear since in late sixth century AD the term *patriota*, still means 'countryman' (derived from the Greek πατριώτης defining someone from the same country).[146] The context I chose to attribute to this term when I use it in the text is always in relation to the sense of devotion to the civic virtues and the ideals of *Romanitas* as Augustan poets perceived them mirroring the historical and cultural uniqueness of the city of Rome. It was a pattern of thought which would heavily influence the late fourth century aristocratic audiences. Despite its abstract and allusive nature however, a devotion to a Roman *patria* appears to gain a relative precision within the

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[141] See P. Zanker, *Ο Αύγουστος και η Δύναμη των Εικόνων*, pp. 135-136.

[142] See Horace, *Ode* III, 2.13.

[143] See *Dicta Catonis*, Prologus, I, 23.

[144] Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, Περί Φρονήσως, III, 8

[145] H. Parke, D. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956), vol. 1, p. 389

[146] See Gregory, Ep. 8, 37.

chronological limits of the period covered in this thesis (c. 357-417). While the idea of a personified Roma was getting standardized as a literary *topos* the idea of Rome as a notion of patriotism is gaining some precision surpassing any geographic or regional limitations to more abstract expression of portable concepts open to everyone (see section iii). The personification of Rome and the embodiment and encapsulation of a set of ideals and values not necessarily related to the Roman urban landscape (even if they originated there) on the figure of *Dea Roma* was a manifestation of the *Romanitas* as a universal idea and component of collective and individual provincial identities. Of course that was not a linear or easily-defined transformation and we cannot be sure about how these ideas where perceived or functioned outside the narrow world of the *intelligentsia*, after all 'a history of transformation cannot seek certainties.'[147] The existence of a *communis patria* relied not on a genuine identity of patriotic sentiments between people C. Ando summarizes, but on their faith in the existence of such an identity.[148] By the fourth century Rome had been identified primarily to a set of concepts articulated by the notion of universality without being clear whether this was the result of an evolution inwards or outwards (i. e. whether this notion appeared in the provinces and later reached Rome or vice versa).

This portable *Romanitas* had been transplanted even in the Greek east with its particular strong sense of a pre-existing cultural identity. The Greek elites however perceived it more as an asset than a necessity and its spread was based not on imposition but on the comfort of an individual's preference. This local consensus was a key-factor in the spread of *Romanitas* as an identity coexisting with cultural heritage/background.[149] The closest modern example is the distinct yet co-existing elements of American citizenship and ethnic heritage that individuals or groups in the United States share. It is the participation in aspects of public life like the celebrations of national holidays like 'Thanksgivings' which consist of a portable set of American values and ideals open to anyone that allowed first generation

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[147] C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*, p. 19.
[148] C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty*, pp. 19-23.
[149] See P. Veyne, *Η Ελληνορωμαϊκή Αυτοκρατορία* (Athens: Εστία, 2013), pp. 207-210.

immigrants to build an attachment to the dominant culture. Likewise the conducting of Roman festivals and participations in them that promoted the organization of private and public life *more Romano* help the provincial elites to re-organize their routine according to the ritual time of the Roman calendar without neglecting their own cultural background. Pliny the Younger for instance described during his years of service in Asia Minor how Greeks offered the *toga virilis* to their sons and celebrate the *saturnalia*.[150] No matter of their motives to do so they appeared to have faith in the existence of a portable set of values that epitomized *Romanitas*. Yet this preferential attachment within the social networks of the provincial elites was not any obstacle for expressing their regional/local patriotism. Aelius Aristides had summarized *το Ῥωμαῖον εἶναι ἐποιήσατε οὐ πόλεως ἀλλὰ γένους ὄνομα κοῖνου τινος, καὶ τούτον οὐχ ἑνὸς τῶν πάντων, ἀλλ' ἀντιρρόπου πᾶσι τοῖς λοιποῖς*.[151] Despite the fact that the Greek orator portrays the expansion of the Roman indentity in an almost colonial *mission civilisatrice* context (if we could anachronistically use a term from the field of Colonial Studies), the choice of a common name without omitting but balancing all the rest transformed *Romanitas* a rather attractive concept even for the Greeks who still perceived their city-states as independent in partnership to the Roman people (*socii populi Romani*) and still considered Rome a city-state in what appeared to be an Empire of confederate cities.[152] When in AD 221-222 for instance several Greek cities of the Peloponnesus sent an embassy to the emperor Elagabalus (218-222AD) they did it as members of the Achaean League (*Κοινὸν Ἀχαιῶν*), preserving the old mindset of self-definition beyond labels.[153] Here however we are not going to deal with the provincial expression(s) of Romanitas unless there is a strong urban archetype of the city of Rome dominating it. From that point of view

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[150] See Pliny, ep. 10. 116. Also C. Vout, 'The Myth of the Toga: Understanding the History of Roman Dress' in *Greece & Rome*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Oct., 1996), pp. 204-220, pp. 213-218.

[151] Aelius Aristides, *Ῥώμης ἐγκώμιον*, 63

[152] See K. Harl, *Political Attitudes of Rome's Eastern Provinces*, (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 2008), p. 301 and C. Ando, 'Was Rome a Polis?' *Classical Antiquity*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Apr. 1999), pp. 5-34. A. L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press (1998), D. Costantini, *Mission civilisatrice: Le rôle de l'histoire coloniale dans la construction de l'identité politique française* (Paris: Editions La Découverte, 2008) and M. Falser, *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission: From Decay to Recovery* (New York: Springer, 2015).

[153] See http://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/3309 <*Inscriptiones Graecae* I-III Attica, IG II 1094> [accessed 2/8/2017]

Romanitas had a dual nature, one for the provincials and one for the Romans of Rome whose sense of uniqueness as such was an unreachable frontier, a separate privileged identity and heritage which they were not willing to share with anyone else outside the eternal city.[154]

The expansion of the title of the *vir clarissimus* as an award of service in public offices for the provincial elites as was introduced by Constantine's reforms might have made the aristocracy appear as a legally defined class however the nobility of Rome never perceived their identity as a result of a legal definition but rather on the contribution of their families to the glory of the city. Their social status was patrolled by themselves and by imperial legislation.[155] They had no need to approach any emperor, the latter had to approach them and offer offices in order to consolidate his authority in Italy and west by collaborating with the class the considered itself as the *noblissimi humani generis* and *pars mellior humani generis.*[156] It was that special distinction due to the historical and cultural uniqueness of their city which was their power-base, source of status and field of conducting politics and expanding influence; a place where the post-Constantinian *noblesse de robe* had little space to maneuver.[157]

Also the use of the term *manifest-destiny* was rather necessary in order to attribute the teleological context in which Augustan literature was framing the destiny of Rome by using mythological images and references. This notion became even stronger in late antiquity, especially in late fourth and early fifth centuries when the aristocrats would pay particular attention to the preserving and editing of Augustan literature. Initially the term *manifest-destiny* was coined in nineteenth century United States in order to encapsulate in it the belief in special virtues of American people and institutions and propagate the so-called 'mission'

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[154] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, pp. 93-96.

[155] See C. Badel, *La noblesse de l' Empire Romain: Les masques et la vertu* (Seyssel: Hamp Vallon, 2005), pp. 12, 65-105, 188.

[156] Symmachus, Or. VI,1 and ep. 1.52. 9ad

[157] See R. L. Testa, *Senatori, popolo, papi: Il Governo di Roma al tempo dei Valentiniani*, (Bari: Edipuglia, 2004), pp. 361-364.

of the country to expand westwards. It was a concept which represented the USA as a 'young' state and nation that would be better articulated not by the remembrance of a glorious past but by a 'metaphysical' belief that achievements of the American people still lie in the future.[158] Therefore a reverse legitimization of the existence of an identity in contrast to the national uprisings in Europe during the century that followed. It was a concept that was introduced by the newspaper editor John O' Sullivan in 1845 in order to describe the essence of this manifest-destiny while arguing for the annexation of the republic of Texas.[159] In a similar way there was already a belief in the Hellenistic era of Roman exceptionalism and a 'mission' to expand the limits of the Empire until it would incorporate the entire world. Polybius first understood the inevitable future dominance of Rome (*Ῥωμαίων ὑπεροχήν*) and invented a theoretical construction to prove that this was not an outcome shaped out of luck.[160] He portrayed the Achaean leader Philopoemen admitting that an annexation by Rome was a matter of time and what was at stake was whether this would be a smooth or painful transition to the new order of things (*ὅτι μὲν γὰρ ἥξει ποτὲ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν ὁ καιρὸς οὗτος, ἐν ᾧ δεήσει ποιεῖν κατ' ἀνάγκην πᾶν τὸ παραγγελλόμενον, σαφῶς ἔφη γιγνώσκειν· "ἀλλὰ πότερα τοῦτον ὡς τάχιστα τις ἂν ἰδεῖν βουληθείη [γενόμενον] ἢ τοὐναντίον ὡς βραδύτατα; δοκῶ μὲν γὰρ ὡς βραδύτατα"*).[161] Later on, Roman and Greek authors like Virgil and later Aelius Aristides described this manifest-destiny when it was fully unfolded in an age of confidence, summarizing this vision as it appeared to be at the end of its unfolding by looking backwards at the city-cradle of their world with respect and gratitude for being part of it (see section ii). In the same sense the post-cold war western world was dominated by a similar perception of the final victory of western democracy and capitalism as a way of life during the 1990s and 2000s as the work of F. Fukuyama *The End of History and the Last*

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[158] See R. Miller, *Native America discovered and conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark and Manifest Destiny* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 2006), p. 120. Also F. Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 3.

[159] See J. L. O' Sullivan, ''Annexation,'' *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 17, 1 (July – August 1845), pp. 5-11.

[160] See Polybius, *Ἱστοριῶν*, I, 2.1-2. Also F. W. Walbank, 'Polybius and the Roman State' in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 5 (1964), pp. 239-260.

[161] Polybius, *Ἱστοριῶν*, XXIV, 13.6

Man (1992) reflected by celebrating the so-called 'End of History.'[162] It was an Illusion that ended with the 9/11 incident as it did for Rome with sack of 410. It marked the end of confidence of the ruling elites terminating the concept of a *Restored Empire* as it emerged during the era of the tetrarchy. From then on there was a need of a new narrative regarding the future of Rome in a time that it was proved to be no longer unreachable by foreign foes. The *ordo renascendi* discourse of Rutilius Namatianus as we will see in the last chapter as well as Augustine's *City of God* were providing new survival models in what appeared to be a post-apocalyptic landscape from an ideological and symbolic point of view.[163]

Another important issue is the use of the term pagan/paganism in the following chapters. Of course there has been a lot of debate during past decades about its content and use in ancient source and/or even in modern bibliography.[164] It is indeed a concept that demands explanation regarding its usage at least within the limits of this thesis. Initially it was a term derived from *pagus* (= a country district or a community) but it was also used in the Roman military jargon in order to describe a rather untrained soldier although it could also defy a 'civilian' way as opposed to the 'military' one (*mox infensus praetorianis 'vos' inquit, 'nisi vincitis, pagani, quis alius imperator, quae castra alia excipient?*).[165] Persius defined himself as *semipaganus* in comparison to more experienced poets in a context which rather means

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[162] See F. Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1992).

[163] Rutilius Namatinaus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 140.

[164] See T. Zahn, 'Paganus', *Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift* vol. 16 (1899), pp. 18-44, J. Zeiller, *Paganus: Étude de terminologie historique* (Freiburg and Paris: 1917), pp. 29-35, B. Altaner, 'Paganus: Eine bedeutungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung,' *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 38(1939), pp. 130-41, C. Mohrmann, 'Encore une fois: Paganus,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 6(1952), pp. 109-21 and C. Mohrmann, *Études sur le latin des Chrétiens* (Rome 1958-65) vol. III., pp. 277-79. Also J. J. O'Donnell, 'Paganus: Evolution and Use', *Classical Folia* 31 (1977), pp. 163–69 and A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 14-32.

[165] See Cicero, *Pro Domo*, 74. Also Tacitus, *Historiae*, III, 24. See 'Paganus', *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*: https://www.degruyter.com/view/TLL/10-1-01/10_1_1_paganus_v2007.xml?pi=0&moduleId=tll-entries&dbJumpTo=paganus (accessed: 11/3/2018). Also P.G.W. Glare, *Oxfrod Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 'pagus', p. 1413, T. Jürgasch, 'Christians and the Invention of Paganism in the Late Roman Empire' in M. R. Salzman, M. Sághy, R. Lizzi-Testa (eds.) *Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome: Conflict, Competition and Coexistence in the fourth century* (Cambridge: Cambridhe University Press, 2016), pp. 115-138, p. 116-117, P. Brown, 'Pagan' in G.W Bowersock, P. Brown and O. Grabar (eds.) *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post-Classical World* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 625.

'newbie.'[166] However it took a very specific content when it began to be used by some Christian authors in an inter-religious context. Tertullian, the first Christian author who left a significant amount of works in Latin still used terms like *gentes*, *ethnici* and *nationes* in order to refer to polytheists while the term *paganus* occurred only twice in his texts and only with the context of 'civilian' (*apud hunc tam miles est paganus fidelis quam paganos est miles fidelis*).[167] The same author represents the body of the Christian Church from a militaristic perspective. Christ appears as *imperator*, bishops as *duces* while the laity appears as the *gregarious miles*.[168] From that point of view the pagans appear of course as untrained potential soldiers. But still 'pagan' was a very vulgar term and any educated Christian rather avoided using it without a proper explanation as to why he did so. Even when it appears in imperial legislation still it refers to *quod vulgo paganus appellant*.[169] The first mention of pagans as such comes only in the 360s with Marius Victorinus who considered necessary to clarify that *graecus erat, id est apud paganos*.[170] However we are not going to deal here with the identification of *paganus* to *Hellene*/Greek which is another big issue which goes as back as the apostolic era but it is rather a concern to those who study the Christian literature of the Eastern Empire.[171] Even Augustine in the early fifth century was not feeling comfortable to use that term without an explanation in order not to appear as uneducated.[172] However the Christians used the term as convenient shorthand for a variety of cults.[173] The non-Christians had never a sense of a monolithic religious identity as there was in Christianity and later in Islam. Paganism was a genuine Christian construction of otherness imposed to all outsiders either for convenience or self-exclusion. Only Julian would attempt to promote a

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[166] See Persius, *Saturae*, Prologus, 6.

[167] See Tertullian, *De Corona Militis*, 11, *De Palio*, 4.

[168] See Tertullian, *De Fuga Persecutione*, 10-11.

[169] See *Codex Theodosianus*, XVI, 5.46 (409).

[170] See Marius Victorinus, *De homoousio recipendo*, 1.13

[171] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 17.

[172] See Augustine, *ep*. 184, 3.5

[173] See J. North, 'The Development of Religious Pluralism', J. lieu, J. North and T. Rajan (eds.) *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 174-193.

more articulated 'pagan' identity but only because of his Christian background and a convert's religious enthusiasm. It was that sort of 'pagan' that the Christians had created.[174]

Although 'pagan' and 'paganism' were inherited by the Middle Ages and modern times as a Christian stereotype and many modern scholars like A. Cameron and G. Fowden rather prefer to use the more neutral and pejorative-free term 'polytheist' I still prefer to use the term 'pagan' in this thesis.[175] Indeed a respected proportion of modern relevant bibliography is still dominated by this traditional binary opposition between pagans and Christians.[176] The term polytheism however is rather too generalizing and insufficient when we have to approach belief-systems like pagan monotheism or neo-Pythagorean messianism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism and the various individualistic cults and creeds that emerged from the second century AD. The label paganism is rather misleading when used for the more internalized and and spiritual forms of devotion which were dominant mainly among educated individuals or groups who occasionally shared many common beliefs with the Christians regarding the relationship between the material and spiritual world.[177] It was the sort of new wave of religious expression that P. Veyne attempted to summarize as 'The second Paganism'.[178] Furthermore the conventional labeling of authors/ works as pagan or Christian is something to be treated with certain skepticism. As R. A. Markus summarized, 'there was a wide no man's land between explicit pagan worship and

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[174] See G.W. Bowersock, *Ο Ελληνισμός στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα*, p. 25.

[175] See G. Fowden, 'Constantine's Porphyry Column: the earliest literary allusion', *Journal of Roman Studies* 81 (1991), pp. 119-131, p. 119. Also A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, pp. 25-27.

[176] See E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an age of anxiety: Aspects of religious experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), R. MacMulLen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981) and *Christianity and paganism in the fourth to eighth centuries* (New Haven, Conn. : Yale University Press, c1997), R. L. Fox, *Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World form the second century AD to the Conversion of Constantine* (London: Penguin. 1988) and M. Kahlos, *Debate and Dialogue: Christian and Pagan Cultures c. 360-430 AD* (London: Ashgate, 2007).

[177] See P. Athanassiadi, M. Freed (eds.) *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: oxford University Press, 1999).

[178] See P. Veyne, 'Tranqilizers' in P. Ariès, G. Duby (eds.) *A History of Private Life*, vol. I, *From Pagan Rome to Byzantium* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 207-233, pp. 217-219.

uncompromising Christian rejection of all its associations.'[179] It appears that the identification and classifying of religious affiliations of texts and authors is often a far more important issue for contemporary scholars than actual individuals in late Antiquity. I'm intending to use the term pagan/paganism which despite its problems it still encapsulates all non-Christian heterodoxies including those of dualist nature which is still not polytheism. After all the term 'pagan' has no longer a negative connotation even outside Academy.[180]

The next term which I believe deserves a special mention even it has been already standardized and universally accepted is that of the 'invented traditions'. It was a concept first introduced by E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger in their book *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) in order to describe a variety of public ceremonies, customs and symbols which despite their consideration as old or ancient are often products of nineteenth century national imagination, a tension which can be traced in various parts of the globe during the period 1870-1914.[181] It was a process developed as a consequence of the rise of nationalism and contributed to the creation of a national identity by legitimizing certain institutions or cultural practices in a rather simplistic and monolithic manner. Within this context the actual origin of those traditions (if they existed indeed) is often ignored or twisted in order to appear as more articulate and legitimate.[182] Within the context of the present research the phenomenon of invented tradition will occur several times when there will be a focus on the public religious life at Rome towards the end of the fourth century when new rites would appear as revived when in fact were late antique inventions. Therefore the use of that term in a pre-modern, late antiquity context is justified to be used in order to describe a series of religious activities in late fourth century Rome that aimed to re-connect the present with a past (real or

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[179] See R. A. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 33. Also R. Shorrock, *The Myth of Paganism: Nonnus, Dionysus and the world of Late Antiquity* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011), p. 4.

[180] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 26.

[181] See E. J. Hobsbawm, T. O. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[182] E. J. Hobsbawm, 'Inventing Traditions', E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 1-14, p. 1.

imagined) which have been often seen as plain 'reaction' in opposition to the rise of christian influence.[183]

Another concept which will appear in the text, not indigenous in late antiquity studies, is that of the *paradigm-shift*, a concept introduced by the American philosopher T. Kuhn (1962), in order to describe a fundamental change in the basic concepts and experimental practices of a scientific discipline.[184] Kuhn contrasted these shifts, which characterize a 'scientific revolution', to the activity of science, which he described as scientific work done within a prevailing framework (or paradigm). The term gradually expanded from epistemology to social sciences, arts and even political rhetoric. Again within the context of this thesis the term will attempt to describe a change or an innovation/addition in the continuity of an ideological evolution that challenged or altered pre-existing symbols or beliefs, implying therefore, a change of paradigm/pattern of thought.

Also the term 'governmentality' which will also emerge in the following pages is a concept first developed by the philosopher M. Foucault in his lectures at the Collège de France (1977-1984) defining the manners, organized practices, mentalities and techniques through which a regime governs its subjects.[185] From a late Roman point of view the transition from the *Principatus* to the *Dominatus* model of rule, political symbolism and religious attitude during the Tetrarchy marks indeed the shift from one *governmentality* to another.[186] The imposition of a state of 'forced duty' is the manifestation of this new governmentality often described as *spätantiker Zwangsstaat* which appeared as a response to the combination of

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[183] See P. de Labriolle, *La Réaction païenne: étude sur la polémique antichrétienne du Ier au VIe siècle*, (Paris: L'Artisan du Livre, 1934).

[184] T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[185] See M. Foucault, 'Governmentality' in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 87–104.

[186] See F. Kolb, *Diocletian und die Erste Tetrarchie. Improvisation oder Experiment in der Organisation monarchischer Herrschaft?* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987). S. Williams, *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 102-114 and 140-150. T. D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982). R. Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), pp. 46-75,Also H. P. L' Orange, *Art-forms and Civic Life in the Late Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 39-55. J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, pp. 235-252.

internal and external problems that the Empire was facing for the entire century before Diocletian.[187]

viii) Methodological Approaches, Selection of Sources, Limitations and Current Status of Research

The principal criterion for the selection of the material used for the needs of the present research was the potential indication of the development of a variety of discourses and versions of *Romanitas* between the defined chronological limits which to the author's judgment represent better the aspects of the evolution of the idea of Rome and to many different mental pathways. This thesis focuses on the evolution of the idea of Rome in late roman thought which manifests as an abstract expression of local patriotism/regionalism and was dominated by the urban archetype of Rome and its symbolic geography as a personified *dea Roma*. Therefore from a spatial perspective the primal focus will be on the city of Rome and its management by the local aristocracy. From an ideological point of view however this research will also focus on ideological concepts developed outside the Italian peninsula yet still dominated by the archetype of Rome as we will examine the case of the emperor Julian and of Augustine of Hippo. Also this research excludes the idea of Rome as an Empire in late Roman thought which would be the case for another extensive study and should not be confused with the idea of (the city of) Rome.

The selection of chapters represents the different approaches to Rome and various versions of *Romanitas* that developed during the late fourth and early fifth centuries. These many faces of Romaness had a variety of utilities and each one a unique perspective on the city of Rome. These separate worlds encountered very rarely each other: The thesis first focuses

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[187] See C. Bourazelis, *Οι Τρόφιμοι της Λύκαινας*, pp. 339. Also A. Rouselle, *L' Empire romain en mutation, des Sévères à Constantin* 192-337 (Paris: Seuil, 1999).

on the Imperial perspective on Rome (The *adventus* of Constantius II) and afterwards to the unique relation that was developed between *Romanitas* and Hellenism in the ideological agenda of Julian. The next chapter focuses on the senatorial perspective of Rome and how the aristocracy of the eternal city guarded the ceremonial elements which had been identified for centuries to the symbolic uniqueness of Rome (chapter on Symmachus). The chapter that focuses on the activities of Claudian focuses on Rome as stage for panegyrics while the chapter on Christian Rome and the contribution of Damasus to this new Christian interpretation of the history of the old capital and its landscape. The penultimate chapter is dedicated to the Augustinian thought on Rome as a spiritual commonwealth which manifested in his *magnum opus* (*De Civitate Dei*) and simultaneously offers a provincial Christian perspective which is still dominated by the portable archetypical urban elements of Rome. Last but not least the final chapter which analyses the work of poem *De Reditu Suo* by Rutilius Namatianus deals with the recovery of (the physical city) of Rome and a renewed hope about its destiny which in fact comprises the opposite of Augustinian ideological position. The selected manifestations of *Romanitas* which are examined in this thesis are set in chronological order to the degree which is possible although there are always references to events and ideological tensions which are analyzed in previous or next chapters. The criteria to focus on those was mainly the author's judgment regarding where, when and by whom those ideas were expressed in a more clear and articulated way and revealed other potential dominant or competitive ideological trends and simultaneously signifying the adaptability of *Romanitas* and its unfolding to multiple interpretations, uses and orientations. From that point of view this thesis is not just a more up to date version of works like F. Paschoud's *Roma Aeterna* (1967) or an attempt to include all possible sources in something like an *almanaque* of late Roman patriotism or a *Reader*/guide/text-book to late antiquity thought but from the scope of approaching *Romanitas* and Rome as a paradigm-shift in late Roman thought towards utopianism.

Also this research is entirely focusing on the field of Ideas and will leave aside as much as possible the archaeological evidence and artworks since the whole attempt was to trace the mental evolution of the idea of Rome and not its expression in art-forms such as ivory diptychs and numismatics which could be the topic of another doctoral thesis perhaps of an Art-Historian or Archaeologist. Furthermore the evolution of the idea of the 'New Rome' in the East will be ignored as much as possible since it is an entire different issue that is related to the Byzantine political theology and would not fit to the limited space of a single thesis. Finally, the attempt made by this thesis was in hope of contributing to the field of history of ideas and intellectual movements of late antiquity and enriching our understanding about the role of Rome as a physical and symbolic topos and as an urban archetype of Utopia that concerned the late Roman elites and Intellectuals of the eternal city in an age of transition. From that point of view this research might also contribute to the field of utopian studies and also to that of urban history by examining the importance of the city-scape of Rome from the perspective of symbolic and sacred geography.

The rise of a *rival* 'Rome' in the East would challenge the symbolic primacy of the eternal city in the Roman world, that struggle would be based on the emphasis on the antiquity of the city and its legitimacy towards Constantinople which had no past and only artificial traditions and claims, based on imperial favor. This tension appeared officially for the first time during the reign of Constantius II, the first emperor who tried to legitimize and promote the new Senate of the East to a status equal to that of Rome. It was perhaps the first time Romans of Rome feared that the privileged position of their city could be abused. Finally the thesis terminates with the two different narratives of recovery on physical Rutilius Namatianus confident of Rome's survival post 410 within atmosphere of restoration. Confidence in continuity of Rome as a physical locus same period between 410 and 417 Augustine publishes his first books of the *City of God* introducing concept of a celestial *Rome* that cannot be reached, an *invisible* Rome in parallel to the physical. This concept was developed already by Prudentius but Augustine transformed it to a timeless and spaceless

concept. This work finishes with that optimism of two different potentials for *Romanitas.* One is a secular vision of Rome regionalist and fundamentally urban connected with the fate of the physical city; the other Christian and spiritual yet still Roman in its context no matter if empire as nothing exceptional in divine plan yet still its urban since ideal state still within the walls of a commonwealth. This illusion of a 'happy ending' or a restored order of fourth century certainties would crumble by the realities of the fifth, making both *De Reditu Suo* and *De Civitate Dei* appear as narratives of lost *futures* of Rome.

 'Can there possibly be any vision of the eternal city, any reaction to its manifold variety and continuity which has not already been set down, romantically or painstakingly according to the writer's ability?'[188] Indeed I could only start with a rhetorical question in order to mention the lineage of research regarding the idea of Rome. Inevitably there was a need for a selection of them according to the criteria and starting points of this research. There was a particular focus on the idea of Rome already from the mid-war period in French bibliography and here I have to mention J. Perret's *Pour une étude de «l'idée de Rome»* (1932) and later F. Paschoud's *Roma Aeterna. Études sur le patriotisme romain dans l'Occident latin à l'époque des grandes invasions* (1967).[189] The latter included a variety of sources in a quite extended chronological period between the battle of Adrianople (378) and the death of Leo III (461) however is a rather outdated and inadequate study in a sense that there is an absence of a utopian context which the present research hopes to contribute by highlighting it. Also D. Thompson's, *The idea of Rome from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (1971) is another interesting approach on the topic extending in a wide chronological period in a sense it emphasizes on the variety of aspects of *Romantas* through the ages as well as their functions which is often omitted or underestimated.[190] Another work that deserves a mention is *Roma Aeterna: Lateinische und Griechische Romdichtung von der Antike bis in die*

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[188] See D. B. Ellis, 'Eternal City', *Greece & Rome*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Oct., 1959), pp. 189-192, p. 189.
[189] See J. Perret, Pour une étude de «l'idée de Rome»: La légende des origines de Rome, (Paris: Belles-lettres, 1932) and F. Paschoud, *Roma Aeterna. Études sur le patriotisme romain dans l'Occident latin à l'époque des grandes invasions* (Rome Institut Suisse de Rome, 1967).
[190] See D. Thompson, *The idea of Rome form Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971).

Gegenwart by B. Von Kytzler (1972) which contains a series of texts from antiquity to modern times highlighting the continuity and variations of the idea of Rome form antiquity to modern times.[191] Also the work of C. Edwards *Writing Rome: Textual Approaches to the City* (1996) has a similar approach.[192] More recently the study by D. Brodka, *Die Romideologie in der lateinischen Literatur der Spätantike* (1998) offers a fresher look on the topic.[193] Also it is closer to the chronological *termina* set for the purposes of the present thesis however the utopian context of the idea of Rome is still absent from its pages. From that point of view this research follows a different approach from the aforementioned works and focuses on selected sources of the available material.

Furthermore, the following works had an important influence in my research and reflecting on the concept of urban archetype(s) functioning in that sense as *manifestos*: L. S. Mazzolani's, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought* presents the urban archetype of Rome and its evolution in Roman thought from the republican times to the age of Augustine.[194] I must also mention L. Mumford's book *The City in History* which moves beyond the obvious spatial/material manifestations of city and traces the evolution of city as an idea(l) through the ages highlighting the common pathways of the concepts of the city and utopia.[195] Last but not least J. Rykwert's book *The Idea of a Town* emphasizes to the anthropological and sociological aspects of the spatial layout of the city from its founding to further stages of development highlighting the institutional and ritual functions of the public space.[196] Following the sequence of these works the present thesis attempts to emphasize not only to the variations of the idea of Rome during a defined chronological period but also to bring to

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[191] See B. Von Kytzler, *Roma Aeterna: Lateinische und Griechische Romdichtung von der Antike bis in die Gegenwart* (Zürich: Verlag, 1972).

[192] See C. Edwards, *Writing Rome: Textual Approaches to the City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1996).

[193] See D. Brodka, *Die Romideologie in der lateinischen Literatur der Spätantike* (Frankfurt: Europäische Hochschulschriften, 1998).

[194] See L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought: From Walled City to Spiritual Commonwealth* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1970).

[195] See L. Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, its Transformations, and its prospects* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961).

[196] J. Rykwert, *The Idea of a Town: The anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1999).

attention the paramount importance of the strong utopian context of the idea of Rome and

Romanitas.

I.   The *Adventus* of Constantius

The first chapter of the thesis approaches the ceremonial entry of the emperor Constantius II in Rome (357) and focuses on the significance of the city's sacral landscape in relation to fourth century political realities. By that period an imperial *adventus* in the old capital was itself something exceptional and rather rare. Despite that our main source of the event is the account of Ammianus Marcellinus composed almost half a century later there are several factors in his narrative which ought to be studied with caution. The imperial agenda was perhaps aiming to appease the Roman aristocracy due to the recent institutional upgrade of the status of Constantinople with the installation of a twin Senate in the East. The visit of Constantius II was the first opportunity that representatives of the two institutions met. Themistius, the head of the Constantinopolitan senatorial delegation that accompanied the emperor would attemot in a speech to appease the Senate of Rome and legitimize its eastern equivalent. Another aspect of his visit was the special treatment of the symbolic geography of Rome and its people by an emperor temporary residing outside Italy. This chapter will attempt to deconstruct and interpret that form of exceptionalism as well as its material expression in the public space of the city. First however we must examine the nature and evolution of the imperial *adventus* and its significance in late Roman politics as well on the layout of the sacral topography of the city that Constantius II and later Ammianus Marcellinus would encounter.

The realities of the third and early fourth centuries as well as the gradual rise of a new imperial political theology which began crystallizing in the Severan period and was fully manifested with the Tetrarchy (*Dominatus*) identified the figure of the emperor to Rome itself.[197] The (public) appearance of the emperor was promoted and treated as a case of divine epiphany. This new context of the imperial public image gave a new context to the

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[197] See Introduction, p. 10. Also C. Bourazelis, *ΘΕΙΑ ΔΩΡΕΑ: Μελέτες πάνω στην πολιτική της δυναστείας των Σεβήρων και την Constitutio Antoniniana*, p. 29-37.

ceremony of adventus. Therefore the ritualization of the public politics was not an innovation of the post-tetrarchy fourth century. The Constantinian dynasty, which emerged in that period, followed the same pattern. This framework of political symbolism essentially represented Roman emperors as divine figures and ever-victors over foreign enemies and potential usurpers. Their appearance in public was by definition a cause of celebration. Furthermore the fact that triumphs were by then taking place in new regional capitals far away from the sacred topography of Rome caused further alteration in what used to be for centuries a rather monolithic and solid tradition.[198] Additionally, the fourth century witnessed the gradual Christian integration with the imperial ceremonial protocol. The *adventus* had been mingled with the imperial triumph that initially were two distinct ceremonies.[199] Even the basic distinction between their civil and military aspect had been lost by the middle of the fourth century. It also became religiously neutral since the procession did not end at the Capitol. Instead the forum Romanum became the new focal point of the celebrations and in particular the Curia itself. It was something which contributed to the rising senatorial self-awareness and to a new sense of local pride as we will examine in the following pages.[200]

For the longest part of the Republican period the triumphal ceremony was fundamentally an archaic ritual of Roman religion. The context of the ceremony gradually changed in the last century BC, when political necessities and individual agendas during the civil wars overshadowed its initial religious significance. During the *Principatus*, the triumphal celebration of military victories still preserved three distinctive parts: The supplication days, the triumphal parade and the victory games.[201] The emperor's triumph, however, was still distinct from the *adventus* ceremony. Their different nature manifested in their distinct contexts. They differed on their topographical character and targeted audiences. The first

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[198] See M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 21

[199] M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, p. 11-16.

[200] See M. T. W. Arnheim, *The Senatorial Aristocracy in the Late Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 49. Also McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 90-91.

[201] McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 13.

phase of the triumph was taking place outside the *pomerium* where the Senate and government officials greeted the returning ruler. The next stage was targeting the *populus* itself with a parade in the city's streets. The third part had a predominantly religious character and a rather limited audience mainly due to the narrow space of the Capitoline. Finally the imperial banquet, which was taking place afterwards, was anyway narrowed to an even smaller group of guests.[202] The *adventus* usually followed several days after the conducting of the triumph ceremony and had a more vulgar character since it was orientated to the urban population. Therefore, while approaching the narrative of Ammianus Marcellinus one might understand the degree of mingling of the adventus and triumph ceremonies as well the alienation of the practice from its initial archaic religious context. However, we must also consider the evolution of the urban landscape and its symbolism which constituted the exceptional character that any imperial initiative had when dealing with the city of Rome, its *populus* and institutions.

In order to understand and interpret the landscape of the city of Rome that Constantius II encountered during his visit (357) we must turn our attention to the changes that occurred in the city itself in the decades prior to the event. Changes which implied a paradigm shift on what the public space at Rome and especially the Forum Romanum was symbolizing for the authorities (both civic and imperial) and the *populus*. The material expression of the tetrarchic ideology contributed to the forging of a new architectural language which honoured the past by connecting contemporary individuals to the city's ancestral traditions and institutions thus redefining late Roman public history. To a fourth century eyewitness who was unfamiliar with the landscape of the eternal city (as many fourth century emperors), a walk in the imperial fora would have given the impression that he was walking and gazing at the same landscape as Augustus or Trajan would have encountered, but that would be a rather wrong impression since the area in and around the historic centre of the city

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[202] McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 16.

witnessed significant alterations and interventions during the third and early fourth centuries AD.

Every time there was a repair or restoration/preservation projet, the image of the city-centre was inevitably changing in a process of re-contextualization as for example happened during the reign of Septimius Severus who aimed to the promotion of an Augustan public profile for his regime by attempting, after the fire of 191, to restore the forum to an artificial pristine condition as it would have looked two centuries earlier.[203] The next milestone would be the period of the Tetrarchy, when Diocletian and Maximian (286-305) wished to set their achievements and their new political theology in stone at the heart of the Roman capital and adjust the public space to their autocratic standards.

On the occasion of the joint imperial visit of 303, the area of the Augustan *rostra* was reworked with the addition of five columns over the orators' platform, towered by five statues dedicated to the tetrarchs and Jupiter. The same frame was applied to the eastern rostra with the addition of another set of five columns with a similar appearance and function signifying the principle of the *collegialitas* between the *Augusti* and the *Caesares.*[204] It was an anniversary of particular significance marking for the first time since the reign of Antoninius Pius (138-161) a celebration of a reign of twenty years. That visit however ended suddenly, much earlier than expected since Diocletian couldn't endure the liberal spirit of the Roman *populus* and preferred to enter his ninth consulship at Ravenna.[205] It was clear that the new imperial despotic ideology didn't fit with Rome as its background. The diocletianic regime needed a 'virgin' landscape to develop, from that point of view; the tetrarchic capitals had served as *terrae novae* for the spatial unfolding of the imperial plans.

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[203] See G. Kalas, *The Restoration of the Roman Forum in Late Antiquity: Transforming Public Space* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2015), p. 5. Also A. Wilson, 'Urban Development in the Severan Empire', S. Swain, S. Harrison, J. Elsner (eds.) *Severan Culture*, pp. 290-326, pp. 291-294.
[204] G. Kalas, *The Restoration of the Roman Forum in Late Antiquity*, pp. 31-39.
[205] See Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 17.2

Previously, Rome had been subjugated to regular taxation for the first time after more than four centuries as a consequence of the Diocletianic administrative reforms. This implied that in the new administrative map of the Empire the city of Rome had the same status as any other provincial town or regional capital. Later on, the government of Maxentius stepped into the authority-vacuum that was left by the resignation of the first tetrarchy and established itself –for a change- at Rome. During this period the eternal city witnessed a significant program of restoration and construction of new buildings in its centre. Maxentius was promoting himself as *conservator Urbis* and he must have been popular enough among the aristocracy and masses that later Constantine had to unleash a propaganda campaign in order to impose a *damnatio memoriae* on his opponent. Maxentius promoted himself as 'preserver' of his own city and Rome as the emperor's 'protector'. It was a declaration of the exceptionalism of Rome within the Empire. The emphasis on *Romanitas* was expressed through the intervention in the monumental core of the city.[206] Maxentius refurbished the temple of Venus and Roma in an age that the monument was more widely known as 'temple of the city' (*Urbis fanum*, *Urbis templum*) mingling the personified *Dea Roma* with the city.[207] Also, when Maxentius's son, Romulus died, the Neronian colossus that was standing near the flavian Amphitheatre was recarved in order to match the appearance of the deceased prince. The name given to his son is no coincidence, revealing a re-discovery of the Roman past and perhaps an attempt of setting an example in order to encourage people to use the Roman names of the heroic age for their children in 'back to origins' policy. The reign of Maxentius was an era of revitalisation of the public life after a long period of neglect and stagnation with the preservation and revival of the city's traditions being the cornerstone of his government.

When Constantine entered Rome, which by no means expected him, he had to promote himself as 'liberator' from a regime of tyranny. Libanius however preserved a collective impression that Constantine entered Rome leading an 'army of Gauls', appearing therefore

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[206] See J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century AD*, pp. 54-63.

[207] See Aurelius Victor, *Epitoma De Caesaribus* 40.26 and Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae,* XVI, x.14.

no better than Brennus who led the Senonian invasion and sack of 390BC.[208] It was an echo of what must have been the Roman point of view on the outcome of Constantine's victory over Maxentius. The memories of the cruelty of another outsider, Galerius, were after all only five years away, when Italy suffered an unparalleled devastation by an army which treated the heartland of the Empire as a hostile territory (*Romanus quondam imperator, nunc populator Italiae*).[209] That incident in turn was paralleled in the collective imagination with the invasion of Septimius Severus in 193 AD who also came from the East, defeated an emperor at Rome and celebrated afterwards with an *adventus* that ended with the performing of sacrifices to Jupiter Capitolinus while the inhabitants of the *Urbs togata* were anxious regarding the attitude of the new emperor towards their city (*ingressus Severi odiosus atque terribilis*).[210] During the following day, Septimius Severus delivered a speech to the Senate, promising to respect the institution and its traditional place in public life, a declaration that faded away after a failed coup against him in 197 that resulted to persecutions during which Severus praised in another 'revised' speech at the Senate-House the cruelty of Marius, Sulla and Octavian while criticised Pompey and Caesar for their *clementia* which contributed to their doom. Everyone therefore feared that they would see a new Severus in the face of Constantine. The latter however used an extensive propaganda machine, reversing the public image of his defeated rival.

Since Maxentius portrayed himself as a 'new Romulus', Constantine presented him as a new Tarquin the Proud, an oppressor of the people and a seducer of wives.[211] Furthermore he promoted for himself the slogan of the 'liberator' to prohibit the carrying of arms and the military clothing within the city limits as it had been in the days of the *Res Publica*.[212] It was a chance for him to display his unknown until then civilian face, inspiring the notion that the Senate would reclaim its old status. If Maxentius after all presented himself as a 'pious' king

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[208] See Libanius, *Oratio* 30.6.

[209] See Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 27.7

[210] See Dio Cassius, Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία, 75(74) 1.3-5, Herodian, Τῆς μετὰ Μάρκον βασιλείας ἱστορία, 2.14.1, Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, 12.56 and *Historia Augusta*, Severus, 7. 1-3.

[211] See Nazarius, *Panegyrici Latini*, 4(10) 8.3, 31 and Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, 1. 33-36.

[212] R. R. Chenault, *Rome without Emperors*, p. 21.

of the distant past like Romulus or Numa, Constantine would be a new Brutus, an 'avenger' of the Roman institutions by surrendering all power within the city's *pomerium* to the Senate. Another symbolic aspect of Constantine's policy of demilitarization of the city was the levelling of the camp of the *equites singulares* (the cavalry of the Praetorian Guard) on the Caelian Hill and in its place he erected the Lateran basilica.[213]

Constantine erased Maxentius's name from the public space while he continued, altered and finished the building projects of his defeted rival. Even the colossus of Nero was re-carved once more to appear like the Sun-God while the inscription at the base which mentioned the name of Romulus was removed. After staying in the eternal city for about two months, the emperor departed after entrusting the administration of the city to the new *prefectus Urbi*, Rufinus, predecessor of Caeionius Rufius Volusianus, men who had been in the service of Maxentius and of course members of the illustrious families of Rome.[214] The latter was still in power when the emperor returned to Rome in 315 to celebrate his *decennalia* and he must have supervised the dedication of the new triumphal arch. The dedicatory inscription recalled the old Augustan theme of the 'avenger of the Republic' (*cum exercitu suo tam de tyranno quam de omni eius factione uno tempore iustis rempublicam ultus est armis*).[215] The Senate was therefore expressing the hope that Constantine would imitate the exempla of the civilian emperors of the past, something that was emphasized with the re-use of elements taken from second century monuments, re-carving the image of Constantine as an 'Antoninian' emperor, hoping that he would avoid the example of Septimius Severus.[216]

While there were expectations that Constantine would return again to Rome in order to celebrate his vicennalia in 325 that did not happen. Furthermore, in an attempt to promote his authority in the old territory of his former colleague, Licinius, he founded Constantinople while he celebrated his vicennalia in Nicomedia, a city that Diocletian was once planning to

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[213] J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, pp. 90-96.
[214] See J. Morris, A. H. M. Jones, *Prosopography of the Late Roman Empire*, vol. 1:978-78, "C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus 4.
[215] See *Inscirptiones Latinae Selectae*, 1:156, no 694.
[216] R. R. Chenault, *Rome without Emperors*, p. 30.

make it equal to Rome (*Nicomediam studens urbi Romae coaequare*).[217] The next imperial *adventus* in Rome took place in 326, but on that occasion there was no dedication or monument to celebrate it. It appears that during that visit Constantine was targeted by the people who were shouting at him (*τοῦ Ῥωμαίων γάρ ποτε δήμου βοαῖς αὐτὸν ἀσελγεστέραις βεβληκότος*).[218] This was later interpreted as a protest because of the emperor's lack of zeal for Roman traditions and especially, religious sacrifices (*εἰς μῖσος τὴν γερουσίαν καὶ τὸν δῆμον ἀνέστησεν*).[219] From that perspective the visit of 326 looked more like Diocletian's in 303 and it probably explains why Constantine didn't return to the city for the thirtieth anniversary in 335-6 which he preferred to celebrate at Constantinople. The audience at Rome probably had come to the conclusion that Constantine rather resembled Severus. The fact that he established himself in Byzantium and expanded it (within the former domain of Licinius), the city which Septimius Severus had also rebuilt, after laying siege to it as the base of Pescenius Niger, must have harmed Constantine's popularity in the Senate. Between 337 and 357 there were no more imperial visits in Rome and in the absence of the imperial *auctoritas* it was the senatorial aristocracy that filled this symbolic vacuum.

By the mid-fourth century AD the state of affairs in the western provinces of the Roman Empire had been dominated by conflict and political instability. The imperial family itself was dominated by the dynastic struggles of the sons of Constantine I. Dalmatius was already killed by his own soldiers in 337 and Constantine II died while fighting his brother Constans I (340) who was later murdered by the usurper Magnentius (350). The latter was defeated by the last surviving son, Constantius II at Mursa (351) and at Mons Seleucus in Gaul (353). At the same time, the Rhine frontier was invaded several times by the Alamanni during the 340s and 350s bringing turbulence and insecurity in Gaul.[220] Julian however, as Caesar in the West, managed to repel them decisively in the battle of Argentoratum (357). In the

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[217] See Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 7. 10.
[218] See Libanius, *Oratio* 19.9
[219] See Zosimus, *Ἱστορία Νέα*, 2.29.5
[220] See J. F. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome 213-496 (Caracalla to Clovis)* (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 2007), pp. 199-265.

meantime the religious landscape of the Empire was dominated by the controversy regarding Athanasius of Alexandria and his struggle against Constantius II and his pro-Arian policy. The Alexandrian bishop was exiled and soon moved to Rome were the bishop Julius I (337-352) had openly declared his support to his cause.

In the spring of 357 Constantius II entered Rome in a manner which did not recall the triumphal processions of the classical era. The ceremonial nature of the event was fundamentally an opportunity for any emperor to demonstrate his attitude as the ideal ruler who continued to promote the public behaviour that a Roman *princeps* traditionally ought to exercise. The audience of Rome was expecting to witness this kind of theatrical expression as it had been their part to do in circumstances like this already from the times the early Empire. Ammianus Marcellinus appeared critical towards this attitude in the aftermath of a recent civil war and the emperor's victory over Magnentius at Mursa but he still considered it necessary to provide a detailed description of the ceremony.[221] According to the Greek historian the emperor's ceremonial entry seemed to be out of context since the military *adventus* used to be exercised on the occasion of a victory celebration over a foreign foe. He considered ironic the fact that Constantius II was entering Rome *ex sanguine Romano triumphaturus* in a time when time the Empire was threatened by a multitude of enemies.[222] When the Antiochene historian was composing his *Res Gestae,* in the early 390's, the appearance of an emperor in public was anyway a ceremonial event and from that perspective the theatrical *adventus* of 357 was not something unusual but what made it unique was that it took place in Rome in a manner which rather surprised its *'tranquillius populo'*.[223] The imperial power display which followed was more suitable for places like settlements along the *limes* of the Euphrates or the Rhine where it would be really important for the Roman authorities to demonstrate their military strength not for the citizens of Rome

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[221] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 1-3
[222] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 1
[223] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 2

who had the rare opportunity to witness an imperial visit.[224] In fact the people and the senate of Rome were expecting such an occasion since they had already erected an equestrian statue to honor Consantius II as a '*Restorer*' back in 352 when he had regained control of Italy, expressing their loyalty and hope that the emperor will come to the city to celebrate his thirtieth anniversary in 353. Instead he chose the city of Arles to do so where a Church council had been summoned after his wish in order to condemn Athanasius.[225]

The narrative of the *Res Gestae* is dominated by an antithesis between the attitude of Constantius II and the ideal image of the Augustan prince. The emperor was trying to compromise ideas and concepts of two different approaches to monarchy, authority and tradition. From one side Constantine's successor was born and raised as a soldier-emperor and *defensor* of the frontier bearing simultaneously the typicall post-Diocletianic ideas of the *Dominatus* model of authority and on the other hand he had to adapt to the old Augustan civilian motif of the *primus inter pares* for the occasion of the imperial visit. This notion was nothing more than a collective illusion after the third century AD when the emperors were constantly promoting themselves as semi-divine figures but the image of a prince demonstarting his *civilitas* or *hilaritas* when he would come in direct contact with the people and the aristocracy of the city was deeply imprinted in collective imagination.[226] From that point of view Ammianus Marcellinus contrasts Constantius II and his attitude to the various heroes of the Roman past who always functioned as *exempla* of patriotism, simplicity of way of life and self-sacrifice.[227] He emphasized the theatrical appearance and narcissism of the emperor who is represented as thinking that the whole world had assembled to see him and that he entered the city in a manner of a conqueror or a victorious military leader, encircled by standards and followed by a long military procession arranged in battle formation.[228] He impressed the crowd of the city as he was sitting alone upon a golden chariot, accompanied

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[224] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 6
[225] R. Van Dam, *The Roman Revolution of Constantine*, p. 73.
[226] See Mathews J., *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court AD 364-425* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 228.
[227] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 3
[228] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 6-7

by the *draconarii* and the *clibanarii*, and appearing as a figure of divine manifestation, remaining motionless and resembling more to a statue than a living man.[229]

The description continues with the emperor's amazement and admiration upon visiting the *rostra* and all the historic monuments of the *priscae potentiae forum.*[230] He is portrayed wandering among them, gazing and admitting that he could never achieve anything similar to the Pantheon or the Forum of Trajan and he was constantly followed by the senators who were eager to show their emperor all the important symbols that manifested Rome's uniqueness.[231] Constantius II, appearing more like a tourist or a pilgrim to a sacred place was asking about the builders or the benefactors and the cults that certain temples were accommodating. He stood amazed at the view of Trajan's equestrian statue, expressing his wish to erect a similar horse figure, to which Hormisdas, the Persian prince who accompanied the emperor in his visit, replied that he should first undertake the construction of a stable of the appropriate size, something that it would be on its own an accomplishment of no lesser importance.[232]

A few years before, during the struggle against Magnentius, successive Urban Prefects of the city, being well aware of the symbolic importance of the city's monuments, were conducting preparations for a possible imperial visit in the near future. Prior to the *adventus* of 357 honorary monuments of Constantius II were placed at the heart of the eternal city. Neratius Cerealis who was the urban prefect between September and December 352 sponsored the installation of an equestrian statue of Constantius II on via sacra near the Senate-house on the opposite to a similar one of his father. The installation of the monument took place a year after the battle of Mursa and the first victory over Magnentius. The inscription on the base of the statue was celebrating Constantius II as a 'Restorer of the city of Rome' (*Restitutori Urbis Romae*) reshaping the emperor's profile in order to match that of

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[229] See J. Mathews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London: Duckworth, 1989), p. 11.
[230] Amminaus Marcellinus, *Res Getae,* XVI, x. 13
[231] Symmachus, *Relationes*, III, 7.
[232] See Zosimus, Ἱστορία Νέα, II, 27 and Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 15-16

his father.[233] The twin statues functioned as a symbol of the restitutio concept that many emperors also used before in promoting themselves as restorers (See table 3).[234] Both father and son had defeated usurpers with vocally almost identical names (Ma-x-entius/Ma-gn-entius) and 'liberated' the city of Rome. During his first term (352-3) as urban prefect Memmius Vitrasius Orfitus, the successor of Cerealis, erected three statues of Constantius II in front of the Senate-house on the right side of the entrance after the final defeat of Magnentius the same year (353). Thus the image of the emperor was linked to the curia and the monumental core of the city that would so much impress Constantius II in 357. The three statues were decorated on their marble bases with the same inscription celebrating the emperor as enlarger of the Empire and triumphant over the entire world. (*Propagatori imperii Romani* […] *toto orbe victori*).[235] The erection of monuments such as those played a crucial role in the symbolic dialogue between monuments and rituals in order to crate meaningful impressions.[236] Another symbolic artistic intervention in the monumental heart of the city was the restoration of the statue of Flavius Eugenius (d. 349), *magister admissionum* (342) *magister officiorum* (342-349) under Constans I (337-350) and consul designate for the year 350.[237] During the usurpation of Magnentius and the violent death of his emperor and patron the statue of Eugenius (initially been set up by Constans I c.342-349) was destroyed. At some point after the victory of Constantius over the usurper (c. 355/361) a new statue of Eugenius was re-erected in its original position in basilica Ulpia.[238] Perhaps the restoration process occurred around the adventus of 357 in a symbolic gesture which matched to the new profile of Constantius II as 'Restorer'. The memory of his brother's reign was reclaiming

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[233] See CIL VI.1158, Appendix of inscripstions, p. 234-235

[234] G. Kalas, *The Restoration of the Roman Forum in Late Antiquity*, p. 81

[235] See CIL VI.31395, Appendix of inscriptions, p. 234-235

[236] G. Kalas, *The Restoration of the Roman Forum in Late Antiquity*, p. 83

[237] See A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Late Roman Empire*, vol. I (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 292

[238] See M. Moser, *Emperor and Senators in the reign of Constantius II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 115

its place in the sacral geography of the city. The inscription carved on the base of the statue is a testimony of the artistic interventions around the time of the imperial visit.[239]

As a memorial of his coming the emperor erected an obelisk in the *Circus Maximus*, a monument dating back to the reign of the eighteenth dynasty Pharaoh Tuthmosis III (1479-1425 B.C.) which was initially erected in the area of Aswan and later moved to Thebes. Constantine wished to transport it to his new capital and place it in the hippodrome but the obelisk was at the harbor of Alexandria when the emperor died (May 337 A.D.). During the fourth century emperors would install obelisks in Constantinople, although they would never surpass in number those of Rome. In 390 Theodosius I would construct a new one of stone blocks instead of importing an authentic from Egypt, placing it on the spina of the Constantinopolitan Circus.[240] Constantius II wanted to imprint his mark in the eternal city and decided to bring the obelisk to Rome and place it on the *euripus* of the *Circus Maximus* near that of Augustus.[241] Thus he contributed to the non-Christian art in the city since the inscriptions on the obelisk were considered as dedication to the cult of *Sol-Invictus*. Even in the sixth century Cassiodorus mentions that the obelisk of Augustus was dedicated to the moon while the one of Constantius II to the Sun.[242] It was a monument which appears to have impressed Ammianus Marcellinus in order describe the nature of the monument to his audience as well as to transcribe and translate the hieroglyphs carved on its four surfaces in his seventeenth book.[243] After staying for thirty days in Rome, Constantius II departed unexpectedly (May 29th) to repel the raids of the Sueves in Rhaetia and the Quadi and the Sarmatians in Pannonia.[244]

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[239] See CIL VI.1721, Appendix of inscriptions p. 234-235

[240] See B. Ward-Perkins, 'Old and New Rome Compared: The Rise of Constantinople', L Grig, G. Kelly (eds.) *Two Romes*, pp. 53-78, p.59-60

[241] See B. Lançon, *Rome in Late Antiquity: Everyday Life and Urban Change, AD 312-609* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), pp. 24-25.

[242] Cassiodorus, *Variae*, III, 51, 8.

[243] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVII, iv. 18-23.

[244] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 20

During his visit, the emperor performed (perhaps with some lack of enthusiasm) the traditional duty of appointing appointing new members in the pontifical colleges as a *Pontifex Maximus* which by this time had more social than religious importance.[245] Despite the fact that (due to the rare imperial appearances in Rome) several priests could have been appointed without imperial approval it was vital for Constantius II to strengthen the ties with the pagan senatorial families of Rome in the aftermath of Mursa.[246] He also needed to satisfy the Christian 'wing' of the Senate so he ordered the removal of the altar of Victory from the Curia in order to appease the Christian members who felt insulted by the burning of incense as a pagan offering within the hall. The altar was later restored by Julian, starting a controversy that would last for the rest of the century, revealing the symbolic bond between the Senate and the public cults in Rome.[247] Constantius II however appeared to have treated the old Roman traditions with great respect. A few decades later Symmachus confirmed so in his *Relationes* by reminding that Constantius II funded the public rituals and respected the privileges of the Vestals (in contrast to Gratian).[248] He also addressed the Senate and he might have sacrificed before the opening of the senatorial new session but he refused to do the same at the temple of Jupiter *Capitolinus* like his father before him.[249] The emperor tried indeed to preserve the balance between his Christian and Pagan subjects and each time that he was fulfilling a Christian petition he was trying to calm the pagan side as well.

He must have also practiced the expected act of *sparsio*, the dispensing coins to the people, as he is portrayed doing so in the Calendar of Philocalus.[250] He granted amnesty to all Roman aristocrats who had previously supported Magnentius, displaying in that manner his

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[245] A. Cameron., *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p.33.
[246] A. Cameron, The *Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 116
[247] See Symmachus, *Relationes* 3.4-3.6 and Ambrose, *ep.* 17,18. Also M. R. Salzman, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy, Social and Religious Change in the Western Roman Empire* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), p.65.
[248] Symmachus, *Relationes*, III,7
[249] Ambrose, *ep.* 18, 32.
[250] See M. R. Salzman, *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), fig. 13, p. 34.

imperial *Clementia.*[251] He rewarded Memmius Vitrasius Orfitus for his loyalty during the recent turbulent times by appointing him to the rank of the Urban Prefect for the next two years even though he was also Prefect for the term 353-355. However he limited the authority of this office by removing the right of appealing to the Urban Prefect for the greatest part of Italy, Sicily and Sardinia, preserving only Tuscia, Umbria and Valeria. On the contrary he granted to the Prefect of Constantinople (an institution introduced by Constantius II in 359 with Honoratus being the first one to be appointed in the office) the right to receive hearings from the nine provinces near the city.[252] He also instituted that the provinces of Achaea, Macedonia and Illyricum should be under the jurisdiction of Constantinopolitan Senate thus favouring Constantinople at the expense of Rome.

Another important aspect of the ceremony was the panegyric speech, commemorating the occasion. The task was given to the orator Themistius, a member of the recently established Constantinopolitan Senate who had the opportunity to deliver his speech in the Roman Curia. Themistius compared Constantius' victory over Magnentius to Constantine's over Maxentius, considering it of equal importance for Rome and recalling the beneficial impact which its aftermath had for the city. He used the rhetorical motif that Nazarius had used before him commemorating Constantine, the liberation from an 'illegitimate' and 'tyrannical' regime and the return of the people to the *tranquilitas* of their ordinary life. The Constantinian dynasty appeared as Rome's guarantee for *eternity*, restoring the city to its initial respected status.[253] He also tried to justify the atmosphere of celebration that the *adventus* of his patron had caused despite the recent civil wars by saying that it was an opportunity to establish links of communication between the two cities on the aftermath of the recent Roman victories over the Alamanni in the West and the Sassanids in the East.[254]

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[251] Zosimus, *Ἱστορία Νέα*, II, 53, ii

[252] See *Codex Theodosianus*, I.6.1 (AD 361). Also G. Dagron, *Η Γέννηση μιας Πρωτεύουσας*, p. 245

[253] See Nazarius, *Panegyric of Constantine*, 6.6 in Mynors R. A. B., Nixon C.E.V. and Rodgers B. S., *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: The Panegyrici Latini* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 350.

[254] Themistius, *Πρεσβευτικός ὑπὲρ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ῥηθεὶς ἐν Ῥώμῃ* 43 a-b. Also J. Vanderspoel, *Themistius and the Imperil Court: Oratory, Civic Duty, and Paideia from Constantius to Theodosius* (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1995), p. 102.

Furthermore he pointed out that Constantius II was superior even to Camillus who was considered second only to Romulus.[255] The victorious emperor had therefore every right to parade in the streets of the 'Metropolis of the Trophies' (μητρόπολιν τῶν τροπαίων).[256]

Themistius however had one additional aim, to promote the recently-established Senate of Constantinople to the same status as that of Rome; the occasion was after all the first official meeting of the two Senates. It must have been an awkward moment for the orator since his first speech as an official representative of his city would be in front of the most demanding and suspicious audience he could ever encounter. The 'watchtower of the world' (σκοπιᾷ τῆς οἰκουμένης) was watching him and he was cautious enough not to provoke them in such a sensitive moment.[257] Constantius II had previously promoted the policy of equilibrium and was trying to promote the equality of the two institutions.[258] He was aware that, in contrast to the eastern Senate, in Rome he was dealing with an ancient institution and he ought to be careful with his arguments while he was aiming to gain the recognition of the *patres conscripti* for their new eastern colleagues. Themistius clarified that there is only one queen of the cities (Rome) and likewise there is only one ruler (emperor) in a style which much resembled that of Aelius Aristides. He addressed the senators by saying that within this city (Rome) the one city who became the second queen (Constantinople) praises the peoples' prince (Constantius) and bears for witness the only city which is more honorable than herself (Rome).[259] He also emphasized that his city also has a share in the destiny and name of Rome since the latter was the metropolis of Constantinople.[260]

Regarding the contemporary ecclesiastical politics, the recent controversy on Athanasius had led to the deposition of bishop Liberius in 355 and his replacement by Felix II due to his support of the case of Athanasius. Constantius II was favoring Arianism from the beginning

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[255] Themistius, *Πρεσβευτικός*, 43c-d.
[256] Themistius, *Πρεσβευτικός*, 42c.
[257] See Themistius, *Πρεσβευτικός* 41.b. Also J. R. Melville-Jones, 'Constantinople as 'New Rome,'' *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα*, vol. 24 (2014), pp. 247-262, p. 252.
[258] G. Dagron, *Η Γέννηση μιας Πρωτεύουσας: Η Κωνσταντινούπολη και οι Θεσμοί της,* p. 147.
[259] Themistius, *Πρεσβευτικός,* 41c-d.
[260] Themistius, *Πρεσβευτικός*, 42a-b.

of his reign and he managed to condemn Athanasius in the synods of Arles (353), Milan (355) and in the synods of Sirmium (347, 351, 357, 358).[261] In an attempt to reconcile with the people of Rome, the emperor recalled Liberius from exile and restored him to his see.[262] One year later Liberius condemned both the *homoousion* and *homoiousion* in the fourth council of Sirmium, the one that Hilary of Poitiers simply called the '*Blasphemy* of Sirmium' perhaps as an act of gratitude for his restoration.[263] The emperor's attempt to apply the principle of equilibrium had failed and the controversy in Rome did not end with the death of Felix II in 355 but for Constantius II this was nothing more than a regional dispute and he was not involved any further after the arrangement of the joint papacy that he had proposed with the return of Liberius. Despite Ammianus Marcellinus' silence on this episode we may presume with some confidence that the visit of 357 had this additional cause and could be seen as one more aspect in the Arian controversy of the fourth century AD.

During the imperial visit a series of placards depicting the hand of God displayed in the *Circus Maximus* which were placed there under the supervision of Hormisdas after the end of the procession.[264] It was a justification of the contemporary Church leaders' attempt to add a theological legitimacy to Constantius' cause as they did for his father's war in 312. Cyril of Jerusalem, according to Philostorgius, saw a gigantic cross in the sky over Jerusalem on May 7th 351 which was interpreted as a sign of divine favour to the imperial cause. Sulpicius Severus as well narrated how the emperor had spent a significant part of the day of the battle praying in a basilica near Mursa and having been informed by the local bishop Valens about a vision in which an angel announced the future victory of Constantius II.[265]

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[261] See J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1980), p. 238.
[262] See Theodoretus, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, 2, 13 and Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XV, vii. 6-10, XXI, xvi. 18. Also Sozomen, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία IV, 11. 9-12.
[263] See Hilary of Poitiers, *De Synodiis*, 6
[264] See Woods D., 'Ammianus and Eunapius, FRG. 68' in: Drijvers J. W. and Hunt D. (eds.) *The Late Roman World and its Historian: Interpreting Ammianus Marcellinus* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 156-165, p. 161.
[265] See Philostorgius, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, 3. 26 and Sulpicius Severus, *Chronica*, 2, 38.5-7.

Some decades later Claudian would represent the figure of Rome lamenting that all imperial triumphs performed within the living memory were all commemorating civil wars.[266] The imperial presence had almost linked with a soteriological interpretation which considered that a single advent to place could secure its permanent felicity and welfare.[267] The additional event of celebrating a victory was instantly another cause for celebration that marked a new beginning for the people transforming the *adventus* to a proper triumph. The crystallization of the imperial figure as a manifestation of the divine (*deus praesens*) by the Tetrarchic political theology added an almost metaphysical context to the ceremony of *adventus*. On the aftermath of this period, Constantius' coming to Rome had one more significant aspect not just an imperial visit but supposed to be a home-coming. The visit of 357 therefore would be a restoration; the emperor would be reunified to his institutional *patria*.

One additional factor for the historian's ironic treatment of the emperor could be explained by approaching and interpreting the narrative as a comparison between the visit of Constantius II and that of Theodosius I (389) which Ammianus Marcellinus had probably witnessed.[268] The Antiochene historian might have tried to praise the emperor and his attitude towards Rome and its aristocracy by describing the inapprochable attitude of Constantine's son and thus enabling the reader (who could have witnessed the entry of 389) to come to his own conclusion. Theodosius, like Constantius II before him, had defeated a usurper (Magnus Maximus at the battle of Save in 388) and made his visit to Rome quite memorable as well. In contrast to the provincial attitude of Constantius II, the visit of Theodosius I must have left a more positive impression since he was skillful enough and better adapted to the ceremonial protocol.[269] In 389 Pacatus praised Theodosius I for his behavior at the Senate House and the *rostra* and his choice to enter the city on foot instead of upon a chariot and

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[266] Claudian, *Panegyricus de Sexto Consulato Honorii Augusti,* 393-406.

[267] See H. S. Versnel, *Triumphus: An Inquiry into the Origin, development and meaning of the Roman Triumph* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), pp. 371, 385, 389-390.

[268] See Van Dam R., *Rome and Constantinople, Rewriting Roman History during Late Antiquity* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2010), p. 37. Also R. Behrwald, *Die Stadt als Museum? Die Wahrnehmung der Monumente Roms in der Spätantike* (KLIO / Beihefte. Neue Folge, Band 12, 2009), pp. 78-80.

[269] See Williams S., *Theodosius: The Empire at Bay* (London: Batsford, 1994), p. 65.

thus being triumphant not only in war but also upon pride.[270] This is an image which comes in contrast to the attitude of Constantius II who according to Ammianus Marcellinus was referring to himself as '*Aeternitas Mea*' and as '*Dominus totius Orbis*'.[271] Pacatus commemorated as well the emperor's friendly attitude, emphasizing the fact that he visited not only the public places but private houses and he did so without the presence of his guard, confident enough about his subjects' devotion. He chose not to remain a distant figure like Constantius II but on the contrary he was approachable by everyone. He could act like a ruler, senator or citizen depending on the circumstances and the audience.[272] This is something which Constantius II apparently failed to do or was not even interested in trying. Pacatus was confident enough to say that he had seen Rome and Theodosius I together like the ruler and the father of the ruler himself and that on the emperor he saw the avenger and the restorer of the ruler.[273] Despite their differences in attitude both emperors more or less had paid homage to the *eternal* city, respecting the ancient traditions and trying to imitate the manners of *princeps civilis* by addressing the Senate in the Curia and the people from the *rostra*, by receiving petitions and by adapting various archaisms which were recalling the distant Augustan era.[274] One century after Ammianus and Pacatus however, Zosimus, described the Theodosian *adventus* in Constantinople (380) in a similar tone to that of Ammianus in 357, with the emperor entering the city in a manner of a triumph as if he had won a victory (**ὥσπερ ἐπὶ νίκῃ σεμνῇ θρίαμβον ἐκτελῶν** *εἰς τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν εἰσῄει*) without considering the recent calamities (the turbulence caused by the Goths on the aftermath of Adrianople) and adding a disproportional amount of luxury and indolence to the city.[275] It is a passage of striking similarity with the opening of the *adventus* of 357 '*Constantius* **quasi recluso Iani templo stratisque hostibus cunctis** *Romam visere*

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[270] See Pacatus Drepanius, *Panegyric*, 47.3.

[271] *Res Gestae*, XV, i. 3

[272] Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, p. 234.

[273] Pacatus Drepanius, *Panegyric*, 47.5.

[274] See McCormick, Eternal Victory, p.88.

[275] See Zosimus, Ἰστορία Νέα, IV, 33.1. Also M. Kulikowski, *Rome's Gothic Wars from the Third century to Alaric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 150-151. Also S. Williams and G. Friell, *Theodosius: The Empire at Bay* (London: Batsford, 1994), p. 31-31.

gestiebat post Magnenti exitium absque nomine ex sanguine Romano triumphaturus,'[276] an indication that Ammianus had set some kind of standard critical approach on emperors that ignored the ceremonial protocol regarding their close contacts with the people.

Ammianus Marcellinus might have composed his description of the events of 357 with the *adventus* of Theodosius I in mind and we cannot be sure if the historian's critique on Constantius II had any indirect reference to Theodosius I. Behind the emperor's impression about the city's monuments might be nothing more than the amazement of Ammianus Marcellinus as an outsider and the reflection of his feelings upon visiting the metropolis of the Roman world.[277] He describes the splendour of Jupiter's temple upon the Capitoline superior to everything else all divine things those of earth. It was the symbol of Roman invincibility the only part of the city where no invader ever penetrated even during the attack of Lars Porsena and later of Brennus. The baths which 'had the size of provinces', the Pantheon which 'was similar to a rounded city district', the temple of Venus and Roma, the Forum *Pacis*, the Theater of Pompey, the Stadium of Domitian and the forum of Trajan had captivated the emperor's attention.[278] The geographical allegories which the author uses to provide the sense of a scale to the reader almost give the impression that all the 'provinces' and 'city districts' of the *orbis Romanus* were incorporated to the architectural landscape of the eternal city. The fact that even the emperor himself is impressed by the nature of the monuments adds even more credibility to the narrative and validates the author's point of view indicating what ought to be admired by a visitor coming to Rome.[279] By creating this digression, the historian attempted to leave aside his main narrative and to give to the reader a glimpse of the city of Rome, revealing his own beliefs regarding the idea of Rome and emphasize its perpetual symbolism.[280] The size of the city and the multitude of its

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[276] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 1

[277] J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, p. 12. Also G. Kelly, *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 132-141.

[278] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, x. 14.

[279] See L. Grig, 'Competing Capitals, Competing representations: Late Antique Cityscapes in Words and Pictures,' L. Grig and G. Kelly, *Two Romes: Rome and Constantinople in Late Antiquity*, pp. 31-52, p. 33.

[280] J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, p. 12.

monuments were requiring a separate treatise and Ammianus had to try and fit the most significant of them in a parenthesis of his narrative.[281] From a technical point of view he encapsulates Rome in a bird's eye view by focusing on distinctive monuments that 'pop out' of the landscape, marking all the significant points of Rome's religious and political history. Following the semiotics of artistic icons, his point of view of the city-scape was manifested in a rather *religious* manner.[282] The monumental core of Rome is represented spiritually-wise fitting more to the medieval archetype of depicting cities where the emphasis is given to verticality with the horizontal planes foreshortened in contrast to the openness of the classical forms.[283] The selection of the monuments however reveals more about the beliefs of the author than providing information about the mid-fourth century Rome. It is a fundamentally pagan description of Rome, there is no mention of the Constantinian basilicas or of any other sign of Christian presence within the *pomerium* and as such it is the last classicizing overview of Rome's topography in fourth century sources. All the monuments which supposed to have impressed Constantius II were at least two centuries old. He did not even appear to say anything about his father's basilica in the forum and the colossal statue that he erected there to emphasize his imposition in a landscape previously marked by Maxentius.

The criticism of Ammianus Marcellinus, a few decades in the future might have been rather biased since portraying Constantius II as an autocrat and rather ignorant of ceremonial protocol regarding the eternal city could function as an indirect justification of Julian's rebellion against his cousin a few years later. Probably the impression of the adventus of 357 to the Roman audience might not have been as odd as the Greek historian had imagined. Constantius II wished to reinvigorate his relationship with the aristocracy of Rome in a crucial period for the status of both Rome and Constantinople. His presence perpetuated the unique relationship between the populus Romanus and the emperor (even if

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[281] See C. Edwards, *Writing Rome: textual Approaches to the City*, p. 97.
[282] L. Grig, 'Competing Capitals, Competing representations: Late Antique Cityscapes in Words and Pictures,' p. 34-36.
[283] See L. Mumford, *The City in History,* p. 283.

the latter was no longer based in Rome). Furthermore, the addition of his statues in the heart of the sacral geography of the city contributed to the ever-updating of the monumental topography of the city validated its manifest-destiny, the *Aeternitas*.

II.   Between Rome and Athens: The Artificial *Romanitas* of Julian

Approaching Julian's conception and interpretation of *Romanitas* as a case-study one will encounter a paradox regarding his person as a historical figure and a Roman emperor: He was an active author during his entire adult life and by far the most productive of all Roman emperors who composed or attempted to compose anything (like Claudius, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius and even Constantine).[284] This element alone makes Julian an almost unique case since he not only has a voice of his own in our sources but his emphasis on altering certain social norms of his contemporary reality puzzled generations of historians on how to interpret his thought. Julian's version of *Romanitas* was a unique case; it was a result of a mix of ideas and concepts originated in his readings and imagination regarding the distant past of democratic Athens and republican Rome. From that point of view the combination and mingling of those ideas were never really expressed or implemented in real time before or after his brief reign. This conception of *Romanitas* had been therefore an artificial product of Julian's interpretation and reflection on the classical Greek and Roman literature and of the utopian context of his approach on the City-State and its institutions as *modus vivendi*.The present chapter is an attempt to deconstruct aspects of the julianic thought and explore his artificial *Romanitas* as well as the place and form of the archetype of Rome within it which nurtured his vision of restoration. It will also show the flexibility and capability of Romanitas to be evolved in different ways and expressed by new sub-concepts as will be demonstrated by the example of Julian. From that point of view, this case-study is useful in order to understand multiple forms of Roanitas that co-evolved during the fourth century.The emperor's program was dominated by the strategic role of urban public life and the traditional institutions which he perceived defined Hellenism and *Romanitas* for centuries. Within this framework the urban archetypes of Rome and Athens set a paradigm-shift

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[284] See T. D. Barnes, 'The Emperor Constantine's Good Friday Sermon', *Journal of Theological Studies*, XXVII (1976), p. 414-423. Also P. Brown, *Η Κοινωνία και το Άγιο στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα* (Athens: Άρτος Ζωής, 2000), p. 107.

contributing to a redefinition of *Romanitas* after what Julian considered an age of turbulence which his goverment supposed to have terminated.

Being influenced by his Neoplatonic creed and his impressions of how public life ought to function from the panegyric orations and the *laudationes urbium* of the Second Sophistic, Julian was convinced that the emperors of the previous two centuries had gone astray, neglecting the principles of *Romanitas* and the *mos maiorum* that once made Rome great. He thought this had turned the once sophisticated citizens of the proud communities of the Empire into rather indolent and passive subjects of an oriental domain. Julian wished to revive a form of *Romanitas* that combined the Roman *mos maiorum*, the Greek *παιδεία* and the local patriotism as was manifested in the concept of the *πόλις*/*polis* (classical Greek city-state) and the representation of archaic Rome through the classical Greek and Latin sources.

The evolution of Julian's ideas which occasionally surprised even his pagan contemporaries was to a significant extent a result of his bipolar educational background (a mix of the basic classical education along with the 'starter-pack' of Christian literature that a member of the imperial family ought to have in Constantius' court) and of course his family experiences. Already from an early stage, he experienced the risk of being related to Constantine's family *sanguine et genere*.[285] At the age of five (337AD), his father, Julius Constantius, Constantine's younger brother, was killed by orders of Constantius II as well as his first son.[286] After the call of Gallus (Julian's elder brother) by Constantius II in 348 to join him in the imperial administration by appointing him to the rank of Caesar, Julian moved to Constantinople where he was introduced to rhetoric by the pagan Neocles and the Christian Ecebolius. It was through the study of oratory that Julian was influenced of the Attic rhetorical tradition and the image of classical Athens as an *exemplum* of the ideal state. That was an image similar to early republican Rome with its vivid institutions and *moral* civic life. It

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[285] Ammianus Marcellinus*, Res Gestae*, XXI, xvi. 8.
[286] Zosimus, *Ἱστορία Νέα*, II, 40, 2. Also Libanius, *Oratio,* XVIII, 31.

was this dual vision that Julian would promote as an emperor in contrast to the centralism and bureaucratic mechanisms that characterised the Roman Empire of the late third and fourth centuries AD.

After the execution of Gallus in 354, Constantius II was targeting at his only surviving male relative, Julian, suspecting him as a potential conspirator. However, it was the intervention[287] of the empress Eusebia that saved the life of the young prince and managed to ensure her husband's consensus in order to allow his cousin to travel to Athens for studies. The opportunity that allowed him to go to the city of his dreams was an unexpected surprise for Julian who described Athens in his *Panegyric in Honour of the Empress Eusebia* (357) as his 'only true and beloved fatherland' (*ὅτι μοι τὴν ἀληθινὴν ποθοῦντι καὶ ἀγαπῶντι πατρίδα παρέσχον ἰδεῖν*).[288] Julian perceived his journey (355) to the sacred city of Hellenism and cradle of Philosophy as more like an intellectual pilgrimage. What impressed Julian the most in Athens beyond its historic significance was the variety of its public life. The city's intellectual activity was characterized by the combination of both traditional and innovative elements.[289] Christian and Pagan tutors, philosophers and sophists were continuing the legacy of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Demosthenes, teaching at the very same place as they once did and developing even further the philosophical conceptions and thought of their distant precursors. He considered himself rather privileged for having the chance to pay homage to the cradle of all philosophical schools of Antiquity, Plato's Academy, the Lyceum of Aristotle, Zeno's Poikile Stoa and the Garden of Epicurus. As Julian would later argue, Athens was wealthy in the only part where Wealth is truly desired (*πλουτεῖν ἐθέλοντες οὗ μόνου σχεδὸν ὁ πλοῦτος ζηλωτόν*).[290]

The engagement with public life, the holding of pre-Roman offices and the contempt for Roman ones was part of the typical Athenian aristocratic attitude regarding civic

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[287] See S. Tougher, 'The Advocacy of an Empress: Julian and Eusebia', *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 48, 2 (1998), pp. 595-599, pp. 595-597.
[288] Julian, *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Εὐσεβίαν*, 118. d.
[289] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 87.
[290] Julian, *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Εὐσεβίαν*, 119. d.

administration. It was this element that had impressed Julian in Athens, a strong sense of civic patriotism which was evident in the city's atmosphere, a long-established tradition of engagement with public life and offices that constituted the privileged position of this city in the symbolic and cultural geography of the Empire.[291] Julian treated Athens not in a spirit of plain antiquarianism but with religious zeal since the city was embodying the ideals of the concept of the *polis* (πόλις) which was the institutional core of the classical Greek civilization and it was towards this organization of public life that Julian was aiming by his later administrative reforms.[292] His devotion to Athens and its patron goddess Athena/Minerva (Ἀθηνᾶ) was so great that he wished to have the consent of the Hierophant of the Eleusinian mysteries before agreeing to the proclamation as Augustus by his troops in Lutetia (360).[293] After spending a few months in his beloved city, Julian was ordered to abandon his studies and travel to Milan where Constantius II was stationed. He would later describe his grief in his *Letter to the Senate and People of Athens* (Ἀθηναίων τῇ Βουλῇ καί τῷ Δήμῳ) for leaving their city which by then was also his own. The emperor narrated that he was begging Athena (whom he considered from then on as his guardian *genius*)[294] with his hands raised towards the Acropolis to save him from that journey, preferring to die in Athens than travelling away (*ὅτι καὶ θάνατον ᾐτησάμην παρ' αὑτῆς Ἀθήνησι πρὸ τῆς τότε ὁδοῦ*).[295]

Julian's anxiety about the outcome of his cousin's invitation ended when on November 6th 355 he was elevated to the rank of Caesar. Ammianus Marcellinus described the anti-authoritarian attitude of the young prince who was unwilling to join the purple, reflecting on the vanity of imperial power by quoting from the Illiad ''ἔλλαβε πορφύρεος θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή''.[296] Nevertheless he interpreted his sudden change of luck as a *genesis imperatoria*, a supernatural sign of the new destiny that would follow him from then on,

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[291] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 92.
[292] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 93.
[293] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 93. Also A. Kaldellis, 'Julian, the Hierophant of Eleusis and the Abolition of Constantnius' Tyranny' in *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 55, 2 (2005), pp.652-655, pp. 653-654.
[294] Julian, *Ἀθηναίων τῇ Βουλῇ καί τῷ Δήμῳ*, 275. a-b
[295] Julian, *Ἀθηναίων τῇ Βουλῇ καί τῷ Δήμῳ*, 275. a
[296] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XV, 8, 17. Also *Illiad*, 5, 83.

linking him to the fate of Rome itself. Being a devoted neoplatonic, the new Caesar considered authority as a necessity and not the purpose, something that would be used for a collectively beneficial cause.[297] When early in 360 his troops proclaimed him Augustus, Julian was planning to use his *auctoritas* to promote the social, administrative and religious reforms and later to retire from public life just like Diocletian had done half a century ago.[298]

While Julian was still wavering about his next move, he experienced according to Ammianus Marcellinus, the manifestation of the *Genius Publicus*, the guardian spirit of Rome, informing him that he was its chosen one and that he should not deny a rank which additionally was given to him *concordante multorum*, resembling the elevation to public offices by popular vote according to the Athenian democratic constitution which dated back to the times of Cleisthenes in the late 6th century BC.[299] The use of this literary scheme in the *Res Gestae* recalls the early stages of manifestation of the *genius publicus*. Its first appearance can be traced back to the *Annales* of Tacitus where the historian mentioned how Curtius Rufus, while walking in a portico at Hadrumentum, encountered a numen of a woman of unusual size which informed him of his future illustrious career (*dum in oppido Adrumeto vacuis per medium diei porticibus secretus agitat, oblata ei species muliebris ultra modum humanum et audita est vox 'tu es, Rufe, qui in hanc provinciam pro consule venies'* […] *atque ibi defunctus fatale praesagium implevit*).[300] Pliny the Younger also mentioned the fact in a letter to Lucius Licinius Sura debating about the nature and the possibility of existence of *phantasmata* / ghosts (*Ego ut esse credam in primis eo ducor, quod audio accidisse Curtio Rufo. Tenuis adhuc et obscurus, obtinenti Africam comes haeserat. Inclinato die spatiabatur in porticu; offertur ei mulieris figura humana grandior pulchriorque. Perterrito Africam se futurorum praenuntiam dixit: iturum enim Romam honoresque gesturum, atque etiam cum*

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[297] See S. MacCormack, 'Roma, Constantinopolis, the Emperor and his Genius', *The Classical Quarterly* 25, 1, pp. 131-150, p. 144. Also P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 100.

[298] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXIV, 3, 7.

[299] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XX, 5, 10.

[300] See Tacitus, *Annales*, XI. 21

summo imperio in eandem provinciam reversurum, ibique moriturum).[301] Here the archetype

of a personified Rome functioned as a factor of legitimization and justification of individuals'

causes since in both cases it explained the sudden rise to prominence. It appeared as an

outsiders' *deus ex machina*. Additionally in Julian's case the *genius* of Rome legitimized a

coup d'état which according to the prince's point of view (that Ammianus Marcellinus

preserved in his narrative) it was instrumented or at least welcomed by it while himself

appeared more like an instrument in a wider metaphysical plan regarding the destiny of

Rome.

Therefore the *Genius populi Romani* was not a novelty of Julian. It was the expression of the

personified populus (and its Greek equivalent demos) of the city of Rome. The origins of this

symbol as well as its manifestation through a cult of the personified *demos/populus* emerged

in metropolitan Greece in an era of crisis of the old city-states of the classical age. The cult

of the anthropomorphized demos of Athens appeared in 289BC after the removal of the

Macedonian garrison from the city.[302] The devotion to such a cult seems to have a rather

strong democratic background. Perhaps it was a symbol of collegial/popular resistance to

Macedonian absolutism and incorporated the civic values of a society of citizens and their

pride for their democratic institutions. The personified demoi in Greece were always

masculine, but in the case of Athens the cult was soon paired with a feminine one. After

another crisis the Macedonians were once more expelled from Athens (229BC) and the

citizens expressed their relief by erecting a shrine to the demos of Athens and the three

Graces (Charites/Χάριτες).[303] A little more than a decade later (218/217BC) the cult of the

Genius Publicus appears in public (*Romae quoque et lectisternium Iuventati et supplicatio*

ad aedem Herculis nominatim, deinde universo populo circa omnia pulvinaria indicta, et

Genio maiores hostiae caesae quinque, et C. Atilius Serranus praetor vota suscipere iussus,

si in decem annos res publica eodem stetisset statu. Haec procurata votaque ex libris

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[301] See Pliny the Younger, ep. XXIII. 2

[302] See J. Rufus Fears, 'Ο ΔΗΜΟΣ Ο ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ Genius Populi Romani. A Note on the Origin of Dea Roma,' *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 31, Fasc. 3 (1978), pp. 274-286, p. 281

[303] Habicht, *Ελληνιστική Αθήνα*, p. 237

Sibyllinis magna ex parte levaverant religione animos).[304] There, as in the case of Athens the cult of the *Genius* of Roman people was paired to goddess Iuventa (the Roman version of the Greek Hebe/ Ἥβη) revealing the influence of the Greek equivalent practice. It was in the same year the cult of Cybele also introduced. Julian emphasized to that event in his relevant treatise on the Phrygian deity (*Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν*). Both deities arrived in a time of crisis when the traditional pantheon was perhaps in need of new partners to assist them in protecting Rome. The *numen* of the *Genius populi Romani* was an expression of divine protection towards the community. Additionally, it could symbolize the unity of the *populus Romanus* to a common cause and its collective labors and achievements. Despite its rapid expansion Rome still was in the third century BC a city-state and was acting likewise in times of crisis as the emergence of the aforementioned cult reveals. Julian's vision of an Empire of city-states with active institutions and effective local administration was aiming to capture that vivid spirit of local patriotism. This vision had a dual expression and was based on two main pillars, democratic Athens and republican Rome. After all, the *Genius populi* cult appeared in both cities at about the same period.

The first shrine in the Greek East dedicated to the worship of the demos of Rome appeared in Rhodes in 164BC. However, its first depiction in Roman context is traced towards the end of the *Res Publica* in the first century BC in a series of denarri issued by Gn. Lentulus where the *Genius populi Romani* appears as a male bearded figure bearing a scepter and cornucopia according its Greek archetype.[305] The first shrine dedicated to the *Genius populi Romani* (*νεώς τοῦ Γενίου τοῦ δήμου*) was erected in Rome, near the temple of Concordia, in the same period.[306] By the middle of the next century bronze coins issued in Alexandria during the reign of Nero depicted the same male figure as its republican predecessors bearing the inscription "ΔΗΜΟΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ."[307] The cult of the *Genius publicus* was entirely

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[304] Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, 21.62.9

[305] J. Rufus Fears, 'Ο ΔΗΜΟΣ Ο ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ Genius Populi Romani. A Note on the Origin of Dea Roma,'p. 277-278. Also M. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), no. 393

[306] Dio Cassius, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία*, XL.2

[307] J. Rufus Fears, 'Ο ΔΗΜΟΣ Ο ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ Genius Populi Romani, p. 279

separate to that of *Dea Roma*, but coexisted in the Greek East as two different aspects of devotion to *Romanitas*.

During his rapid march to the East and while he was stationed in Naissus for the coming winter, he demonstrated his imperial generosity by donating large amounts of money to the Boule of Athens, to Eleusis and to Nicopolis in Greece.[308] Also when news had reached him of the famine in Rome, Julian immediately ordered for the provision of the city and he covered the expenses (to some extent) from his own property.[309] He also wrote a letter addressed to the Senate of Rome in order to justify his decision to march against his cousin and also informed them of his priorities as an emperor.[310] This letter which has not survived is described by Ammianus Marcellinus as an *orationem acrem et invectivam*.[311] Julian's words had indeed received a rather cold (if not hostile) reception from the *patres conscripti* at Rome who appeared to be rather insulted by the manner which Julian portrayed his cousin. This exceptionally difficult audience had met Julian's predecessor in the flesh four years earlier (357) during his *adventus*[312] to the eternal city which might have impressed them more than a 'sharp' letter from a usurper who never visited Rome. Also they would certainly have preserved the best impression about the emperess Eusebia who had also visited Rome herself in 356 (while Constantius II was still campaigning in Gaul), an event whose distant echoes were preserved in Julian's panegyric in honour of the empress, describing the joy of the Senate and the People of Rome for the priveldge of this visit (*ταῦτα τοῦ δήμου μεμνῆσθαι καὶ τῆς γερουσίας, ὅπως αὐτὴν ὑπεδέχετο σὺν χαρμονῇ, προθύμως ὑπαντῶντες καὶ δεξιούμενοι καθάπερ νόμος βασιλίδα*).[313]

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[308] See Claudius Mamertinus, *Juliano Augusto Gratiarum Actio pro Consulatu*, 9.4
[309] Claudius Mamertinus, *Gratiarum Actio,* 14.2
[310] See J. W. Drijvers, 'Julian the Apostate and the City of Rome: Pagan-Christian Polemics in the Syriac Julian Romance,' W. J. van Bekkum, J. W. Drijvers, A. C. Klugkist (eds.), *Syriac Polemics: Studies in honour of Gerrit Jan Reinink* (Peeters: Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 2007), pp. 1-20, p. 9.
[311] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXI, 10, 7
[312] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XVI, 10, 9
[313] Julian, *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς Εὐσεβίαν*, 129.c.

Julian's inexperience of dealing with what Symmachus would later call with pride *pars melior humani generis* was more than apparent but the most peculiar element of the new emperor's thought was that he attempted to legitimize himself by appealing to the Senate of Rome and to the Boule of Athens, excluding Constantinople.[314] In Julian's idealistic view, Rome was the only capital of the Empire, while Athens was the intellectual core of the State. Constantinople had no place in this rather classicizing scheme partly perhaps due to its connection to Constantine and the unpleasant family memories. Julian had already proclaimed Rome's privileged and unchallenged place in his *Panegyric in Honour of Constantius* (356/7) as 'ἡ βασιλεύουσα τῶν ἀπάντων πόλις' (*queen of all the cities*), and the city beloved by Gods (*θεοφιλοῦς Ῥώμης*) in his *Hymn to the Mother of the Gods* (*Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν*) placing it as the symbol that best embodied materially and symbolically the concept of Empire.[315] It was an evident antithesis to his contemporary perceptions and depictions of the time which represent the figures of Rome and Constantinople as the two heads of the Empire. The dual face of the *Orbis Romanus* in julianic thought were Rome and Athens.[316] He did not consider this as an innovation; on the contrary it supposed to be the norm, a restoration of the natural order of things. He justified this theory in his *Hymn to King Helios* (*Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸς Σαλούστιον*) where he emphasizes that it was the Sun/Apollo that granted humanity the 'ἔνθεον σοφίαν'[317] and 'civilized' the greatest part of the world through the Greek colonies paving the way for the Romans who are not only part of the Greek world but their constitutions and conceptions of the Divine are Greek in their entirety. For that reason, he added, Apollo attributed the *polis* as Greek in both origin and constitutions.[318] Based in this old-fashioned ideal (by fourth century standards) Julian attempted to legitimize himself for his political actions by appealing to the Senate of Rome and for his ideas and ethics by writing to the Boule of Athens. The letter to the Athenians provides a description of his cousin's 'reign of terror' and Julian's unhappy and anxious early

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[314] See Symmachus, *Relatio* I, 52

[315] Julian, *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Κωνστάντιον*, 5.c and *Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν* 159.c.

[316] P. Athanassiadi, *Ἰουλιανός*, p. 133.

[317] Julian, *Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸς Σαλούστιον*, 152.d.

[318] Julian, *Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸς Σαλούστιον*, 152.d – 153.a.

days and humbly continues with his activity in Gaul and his encounter with the *genius publicus*. Julian also sent letters, probably with similar content, to Corinth and Sparta, two cities which provided hospitality to his father during the period of conflict with Constantine.[319]

After the death of Constantius II (November 361), Julian entered Constantinople and unfolded his ambitious reform programme, aiming to abolish the reforms of the Diocletianic and Constantinian periods and restore the regional, decentralized *modus vivendi* which was familiar to the classical Greco-Roman experience.[320] Inspired by this ideal he was aiming for the rejuvenation of the towns and their local assemblies, with Athens and Rome as models, restoring the equilibrium that was described by Aelius Aristedes in his *Panathinaic* and *Roman* orations before their economic and cultural downfall during the third century AD. For the last century before Julian, this local patriotism that he admired so much was threatened by the rapid development of the bureaucracy and the rise of this class of *technocrats* - *novi homines* with values culturally alien to the civic ideals of the antonine era. The old spirit of the civic benefactor, the *amator civicus*, was gradually lost and the ties between the city and its most eminent citizens had weakened.[321] The *polis* was consumed by a developing centralism which emerged a necessity of the time in administrative response to the challenges of the third century.[322] The *possesores* of the cities were forced to become *curiales*, something unthinkable in the past centuries when urban self-governance used to be elective and rather attractive and prestigious on its own. It was an office that was 'imposed' on anyone who had more than eight acres of land in his possession and was forced by the central authorities to engage in activities like conscription, imposing forced loans and collecting taxes, being condemn to function as executive tools of the imperial

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[319] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 135.
[320] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 148.
[321] See P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle,* p. 61-65.
[322] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 154. Also S. Williams, *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery* (London: Batsford, 1985), p. 122

mechanism on a local basis.[323] It had been an obligation passing from father to son; trapping the wealthier families of the cities in an extremely vulnerable position. When Julian reached Ancyra, during his eastern course in 362, he was approached by a multitude of desperate people who wished to submit their petitions; among them they were individuals who were 'selected' to be *curiales* and wished to relieve themselves from such a burden.[324] The municipalities were no longer functioning for the benefit of their inhabitants but for the needs of the state in manpower and resources. They had been smashed by the symmetrical state order of dystopian proportion that Diocletian had introduced.[325] The corporatization of the state was one of the most distinctive characteristics that signified the transition of the Empire from the *Principatus* to the *Dominatus* and it is no coincidence that Lactantius used the terms *militia* for the state officials and servants and *militia armata* for the army in order to make a distinction between the latter and the rest of the bureaucracy.[326]

The emperor was well aware of the crucial role of the *polis* and the *curiae* in the Greco-Roman way of life. So he issued a series of decrees in order to re-introduce the local assemblies to the active public life.[327] He restored back to the cities all lands that previously had passed to the State or the Church and he excluded from taxation all senators and members of assemblies who were not engaged with trade.[328] He also prevented the senators from the collection of taxes in order to protect the prestige of the class from such ''inferior and humiliating activities.''[329] Julian's attempt of decentralization of government was further promoted by issuing that the administration of the towns belonged only to their city councils and various activities like the construction and maintenance of the road network

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[323] See A. H. M. Jones, *The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), pp. 192-200. Also L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought,* p. 208-9 and P. Brown, 'Late antiquity' in P. Ariès and G. Duby (eds.) *A History of Private Life* vol. I, *From Pagan Rome to Byzantium*, pp. 235-297, pp. 271-274.

[324] See Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXII, ix. 8

[325] See A. H. M. Jones, *The Greek City,* pp. 147-155. Also H. P. L'Orange, *Art forms and Civic Life in the Late Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 5.

[326] See Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 31. Also S. Williams, *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery*, p. 108-109.

[327] See G. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 74-75.

[328] See *Codex Theodosianus* 11, 23.2 and 12, 1.50, 13, 1.4. Also Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXV, 4, 15 and Libanius, Sermo, 13, 45.

[329] *Codex Theodosianus*, 11,23.2

would be from then on their duty according to the old ways.[330] Also he restored the voluntary character of the *aurum coronarium* and erased the debts of the city councils.[331] His main motivation for these reforms was the nostalgia for the world of cities, an atmosphere familiar to the authors of the Second Sophistic movement and the Greek *Romanitas* of the first two centuries AD.

For Julian every city was a living organism, with its own *genius*, capable of receiving and returning devotion and respect. He personally set the example from what he wished to revive in the city "of new name but of ancient nobility" (*nominis novi sed antiquissimae nobilitatis*),[332] he ordered for the transportation to Constantinople of the obelisk that later Theodosius I would erect in the hippodrome just like Constantine I and Constantius II had done in Rome before him and he built a library where he donated his own books.[333] Even Christian authors admitted Julian's merits; Ambrose of Milan observed that the provinces were still praising Julian while Prudentius would describe him as *perfidus ille Deo, quamvis non perfidus Urbi,* a 'betrayer of God but not of Rome.'[334] While admitting the benefits of Julian's reform program of reviving urban public life Prudentius identifies the city of Rome to the State. This passage has a special significance since the emperor never visited Rome so the Urbs is the city in a wider sense; the empire itself. The narrative reveals an image of the Empire as an extension of the universal city (Rome). The world fitted within the concept of the city. It was a Christian recognition of Julian's patriotism and perhaps a posthumous consensus for his administrative policies.This atmosphere of restoration can be confirmed from the African provinces where governors like Claudius Hermogenianus Olybrius and Atilius Theodotus erected a new forum in the Numidian city of Thuburiscu while various restoration activities took place in Bulla Regia in *Africa Proconsularis*.[335] Furthermore, Julian

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[330] *Codex Theodosianus*, 15,3.2
[331] *Codex Theodosianus*, 12, 13.1
[332] See Claudius Mamertinus, *Gratiarum Actio*, 2.3. Also L. Grig and G. Kelly, *Two Romes: Rome and Constantinople in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 213.
[333] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* XVI, 10.17 and XVII, 4.16-23. Also Zosimus, Ἱστορία Νέα, III, 11, 3.
[334] See Ambrose, *De obitu Valentiniani*, 21 and Prudentius, *Apotheosis*, 454.
[335] D. Bowder, *The Age of Constantine and Julian*, p. 106.

commissioned for the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem by public expenses and the task had been assigned to Alypius. However the project was never completed.[336]

Apart from the revival of public life Julian turned his attention to education in order to prevent what he considered as decay. For Julian the concept of education (παιδεία) had a complex religious and ethical background and it would be the primary material for the reshaping of *Romanitas* and the return back to the classical golden age. According to his point of view the Christians should be excluded from all teaching activities since they abolished the ideals and concept of Hellenism and *Romanitas* by their conversion to the Christian doctrine. Therefore it was pointless for them to study and teach classics since they denied their actual message. To his mind Christianity was a particularly un-Roman doctrine, a religion of "bad citizenship" constituting a factor of alienation from tradition. The emperor wanted to spread to all citizens the notion of the cultural and religious uniqueness of their hometowns and the duty of guarding their ancestral traditions and ways of life. A prosperous city ought to be characterized by a multitude of sacred rituals performed by an educated clergy.[337] Therefore he ordered for the reopening of the temples and the conducting of public sacrifices restoring the *cultum deorum.*[338] Also, all the architectural parts and fragments that previously belonged to pagan temples and were reused for the construction of churches or other Christian monuments ought to be restored to their original place.[339] Julian's impatience was more than evident by June of 362 when he issued a decree in which he emphasized that the restoration and reopening of the temples should be the first priority of the city councils.[340] A number of cities like Athens, Emessa, Gaza, Hierapolis and Apameia rejoiced by the imperial initiative but the dominant reaction was rather negligence (if not hostility) as in the case of Edessa and Antioch.[341] This ambitious restoration plan was inevitably crushed by the previous polarization of the third century and the realities of the fourth. The balance

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[336] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXIII, i. 2-3. Also D. Bowder, *The Age of Constantine and Julian*, p. 111.
[337] Julian, *Εἰς τοὺς ἀπαιδεύτους κύνας*, 186.d.
[338] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXII, 5.2.
[339] See Libanius, *Sermo*, 18. 126.
[340] *Codex Theodosianus*, 15, 1.3
[341] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXII, 13.2.

between the centre and periphery and that of the city and its inhabitants would never be the same again.

Apart from his reforms about public life Julian also changed the imperial image itself so that it might reflect the *civilitas* and the Augustan principle of the *primus inter pares* as well as the Athenian democratic attitude of Pericles. In contrast to the mentality and manners of the Tetrarchy and the previous members of the Constantinian dynasty, Julian abolished the *adoratio,* this custom of *externo et regio more* which had been introduced by Diocletian.[342] He considered himself as 'κηδεμών τῆς ἀρχῆς' (a guardian/caretaker of the imperial power) and his authority as *potestas* and not *licentia* which according to Ammianus Marcellinus was the attitude of Constantius in contrast to the clemency and calmness of his successor.[343] The Antiochene historian also compared Julian's *modus gubernandi* to Cicero's description (probably from the *Oratio Metellina*) that when he possessed the power to spare or to punish, he was trying to find causes to act according to the first.[344] Claudius Mamertinus who was elevated to the consulship (along with Flavius Nevitta) for the year 362 mentioned in his panegyric to Julian that the emperor came to greet the consuls personally as soon as he was informed that they arrived in the palace at Constantinople. Additionally he preferred to walk to the Senate House instead of summoning the senators to meet him (in contrast to the protocol).[345] He accompanied his new consuls to the Senate, walking between them and wearing the *toga praetextata*, barely distinguishing himself from those standing next to him, resembling the image of Augustus walking side by side with the two appointed consuls as it is depicted on the Southern side of the *Ara Pacis* in Rome.[346] The re-enactment of the old Augustan ideals was of special significance to Julian. It was no coincidence the fact that intervention and maintenance works were carried out on the *Altar of Peace* of Augustus

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[342] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XV, 5.18.
[343] See Libanius, Oratio XVIII.181
[344] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XIX, 12.18.
[345] Claudius Mamertinus, *Gratiarum Actio*, 28, 3-4. Also R. C. Blockley, 'The Panegyric of Claudius Mamertinus on the Emperor Julian', *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 93, 3 (1972), pp. 437-450, p. 445. Also Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXII, vii. 3.
[346] Claudius Mamertinus, *Gratiarum Actio*, 29, 5.

before and during his reign.[347] It was something that indicated the emperor's personal interest for the revival of the civic virtues of early Rome as they were filtered by the first emperor during his 'cultural revolution.'[348] He respected the privileges of the consuls and the senators and when during the games at the circus he announced the emancipation of certain slaves he fined himself with ten pounds of gold for being hasty as soon as he was informed that this was not among the emperor's jurisdictions.[349] Julian's ascetic figure and his rather simplistic lifestyle had a negative impact on his subjects who remembered the spectacles and display of court of Constantius II.[350] However the emperor remained unaffected by the lack of enthusiasm of those around him and he was determined to move even further, applying his radical ideas of reorganizing public and religious life. What he thought was needed for reforming his subjects not only in theory but also in practice and rejuvenating the neglected form of *Romanitas* to which he was so much devoted would be the reorganization of religion by the establishment of Pagan 'Church'. It was an idea as strange for the classical standards as was his lifestyle and values for a fourth century ordinary mind.

This experiment would be too short-lived to leave any actual trace but a few things can be said based on Julian's ideas and correspondence with his circle. The pillar of this concept was the principle of the indivisible character of Greek religion and education.[351] The Greek and Roman achievements were for Julian a product of *Divine Revelation*,[352] the Knowledge of the Greek philosophers was inherited by their next of kin, the Romans, who would develop and apply them in their constitution.[353] As a ruler of the Greco-Roman *Orbis*, Julian considered it his main responsibility to preserve (if not impose) this tradition. Thirty years earlier, Eusebius wrote about the dual manifestation of divine providence in the form of the

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[347] See N. Hannestad, *Tradition in Late Antique* Sculpture (Aarhus, Aarhus University Press, 1994), p. 328. Also D. Atnally Conlin, *The Artists of the Ara Pacis: The Process of Hellenization in Roman Relief Sculpture* (Chapel Hill and London, The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p.47-52.
[348] R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, pp. 509-524.
[349] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXII, 7.2
[350] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 171.
[351] G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, p. 63
[352] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 186. Also P. Athanassiadi, 'A contribution to Mithraic Theology: The Emperor Julian's Hymn to King Helios', *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XXVIII, 2 (1977), pp. 360-371, p. 362.
[353] Julian, *Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸς Σαλούστιον*, 152.d – 153.a

Ῥωμαίων ἀρχή' (Roman Empire) and the Christian 'Διδασκαλία' (Doctrine).[354] Julian perceived in the same way the bond between religion and education, believing that the intellectual forces of Hellenism and *Romanitas* would reshape and improve his subjects. He considered Greek and Roman literature as sacred and he made no distinction between secular and religious works (as many Christian scholars did) and it was Divine Providence itself that validated the sacred character of Education, establishing the Greek *Paideia* as a *Religio Universalis.*[355]

The emperor's spiritual totalitarianism was manifested in his hymn to the *Mother of the Gods* (*Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν*) where he sets the principles that would form the core of a pagan 'doctrine.' In this declaration of late Roman patriotism, the ideals of Hellenism and *Romanitas* were the two pillars of Julianic theology representing the Divine knowledge that the Roman people ought to preserve unaltered. It was also a textbook addressed to the priests of Cybele for the catechism of her followers and it was no coincidence that Julian chose to start his religious and educational campaign by writing a hymn for the oldest oriental cult at Rome which by the fourth century AD was considered as one of the most *Roman* deities.[356] The Senate of Rome ordered in 204 BC, during the second Punic war, the transportation of the sacred *lapis* of the Phrygian goddess to the city and welcomed her according to the *mos maiorum* (*κατά τά πάτρια*).[357] The ceremony, which was supervised by Publius Scipio Nasica, was completed when the sacred object was placed within the city's *pomerium* in the temple of Victory.[358] The coming of the deity in Rome perceived as the decisive factor that caused the defeat of the Carthaginians. Julian therefore emphasized the debt of the Roman people to Cybele.[359] He also turned his attention to the popularity of the goddess among the Greeks and especially the Athenians, constructing thus a *translatio cultus* that would inevitably lead to the Roman Pantheon as her final destination and proving

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[354] See Eusebius, *Τριακονταετηρικός*, 16.4.
[355] Julian, *Εἰς τοὺς ἀπαιδεύτους κύνας*, 188.b
[356] See J. Ferguson, *The Religions of the Roman Empire* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), pp. 26-28.
[357] Julian, *Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν*, 159.d.
[358] See Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, XXIX, 14.5-14.
[359] Julian, *Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν*, 161.a

that Rome was the legitimate successor of Athens in a chain of sacred *loci*. After all, Apollo himself gave his consent through the oracle at Delphi that the cult of Cybele might be introduced to Rome. Additionally the goddess herself approved this decision by the aforementioned episode and in this manner a *religio externa* was successfully adapted to the *interpretatio Romana* through the Greek intermediation and validity. Further proof about Cybele's connection to the eternal city was according to Julian the Roman successes themselves that took place in the six centuries between the goddess's translation and his own time.[360] The purpose of the crystallization of her cult to a monolithic doctrine was aiming to guarantee the *aeternitas* of Rome itself. The revival of her long-established cult (already from the 160's) on the Vatican sanctuary must have been to some extent a result of Julian's attempt and the fruits of his persistence were still irritating the Christians around Rome in the 390's as the *Carmen contra Paganos* and the poem *To a Senator that has turned away from the Christian Religion to the Service of the Idols* (more specifically to the service of Cybele and Attis) reveals.[361]

The cult of Cybele was equally important to Constantinople as well since its patron deity Rhea, traditionally established by Vyzas himself, the legendary founder of the city from Megara, had been mingled with the *Magna Mater*. Rhea's statue in her temple, the *Tycheion* had been identified for long with the city's *Fortuna*. Constantine I had already erected at two of the edges of the Tetrastoon a statue of the Fortune of Rome and one of Rhea.[362] The latter which was initially depicting the *Magna Mater* had been transported from the mount Didymus near Cyzicus after removing the two lions which accompanied the figure from each side. The statue's arms were re-arranged in order to appear protecting the city instead of

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[360] Julian, *Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν*, 161.b

[361] See Pseudo-Cyprian, *Carmen ad senatorem ex Christiana religio ad idolorum servitutem conversum* in B. Croke and J. Harries, *Religious Conflict in Fourth-Century Rome* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1982), pp. 83-85. Also R. Smith, *Julian's Gods*, p. 176.

[362] Zosimus, *Ἱστορία Νέα* II, 31.2-3 and Hesychius Illustris, *Πάτρια Κωνσταντινοπόλεως* (*Origines Constantinopolitanae*), 15 in Theodorus Preger (ed.) *Scriptores Originum Constantinopolitanarum* I (Leipzig: Teubner, 1907). Also G. Dagron, *Η Γέννηση μιας Πρωτεύουσας: Η Κωνσατντινούπολη και οι Θεσμοί της από το 330 ως το 451*, p. 425.

restraining the two animals.[363] According to the legend the statue had been placed at the Didymus by the Argonauts and thenceforth the cult of Cybele was spread to the Greek coastal cities of Asia Minor. The other statue, depicting *Roma*, must have been the famous *Palladium* that Constantine brought from Rome, a symbol of Constantinople's share in imperial fate.[364] Therefore Rhea as Fortune of Constantinople gradually became identical with Cybele of Didymus as protector of the city. It was the equivalent of *Dea Roma* of Constantine's personal capital. The two statues functioned as a new pair of *Fortunae* for a new city. However the pre-existing cult of Rhea as well as the proximity of regions connected to religious traditions of the mythology of Cybele added an impression/illusion that the new imperial see had also its own past. Thus Constantinople's case was unique since it had the profile of a new city but still preserved elements of the history of Byzantium. Although this might appear as a paradox, it is perhaps an attempt on Constantine's behalf to carve a sense of historicity of his recent foundation's public space and construct a narrative of a past. After all the monuments of Rome were not only impressive as artistic/aesthetic accomplishments, their splendor was also due to the past events/history which they embodied that caused the amazement of the audience. This contributed to the development of perceptions regarding the historical past of Rome that dominated late Roman imaginary.

One of the closest friends and advisors of Julian, Sallustius, who shared Julian's Cosmo-theory and for whom the young Caesar (at that time in Gaul) had dedicated his *Consolation upon the departure of Sallustius* (Ἐπὶ τῇ ἐξόδῳ τοῦ ἀγαθωτάτου Σαλουστίου παραμυθητικὸς εἰς ἑαυτόν) wrote a short treatise of pagan catechism entitled *On the Gods and the World* (*Περὶ Θεῶν καὶ Κόσμου*) in which he argued that the *Fortuna* of the State was guarded by the Moon and that the secular character of the *genius publicus* perpetuates the prosperity of Rome, denying that any potentially malevolent supernatural forces in the cosmos could harm

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[363] *Zosimus: Ἱστορία Νέα* (ed.) R. Ridley (Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), p. 38, f. 1
[364] See Pseudo-Codinus, *Πάτρια Κωνσταντινοπόλεως* (*Origines Constantinopolitanae*) III (*Περὶ Κτισμάτων*), 131 in Theodorus Preger (ed.) *Scriptores Originum Constantinopolitanarum* II (Leipzig: Teibner, 1907). Also Dagron, *Η Γέννηση μιας Πρωτεύουσας*, pp. 51, 426.

the state.[365] Later, Ammianus Marcellinus would also portray this metaphysical dimension when he described Julian's death which according to him signified the end of the alliance between *Fortuna* and *Roma,* a point of no return for the Empire's condition.[366]

Julian replied to Sallustius through his *Hymn of the mother of the Gods* where he argued that the *Orbis* is a field upon which ambiguous cosmic forces act and react, so the cities, just like the individuals are able to secure their *Fortunae* by living according to the *mos maiorum* and the traditions established by their patron gods.[367] *Romanitas* was a fragile achievement, it should be not taken for granted and it could easily be at risk if people would abandon the way of life of their forefathers. In the epilogue of his work, the emperor invokes the goddess to purify the Romans from godlessness and impiety (ἀποτρίψασθαι τῆς ἀθεότητος τὴν κηλῖδα) and protect the Empire *in aeternum*.[368]

In the radical system of Julianic thought, all *gentes* were created by certain divinities that shaped their historical destiny. The emperor recounted the life of Romulus in his *Hymn to the King Helios* and narrates that despite the fact that Romulus was a descendant of Mars; his spirit held its origins to the Sun and it was Athena-Providentia that sent him to Earth.[369] Romulus set the standard of the imperial model and Julian thought of himself as the twin image of Rome's founder. In his *Letter to the Athenians* he described that when he had to depart from their city by order of Constantius and he turned his arms towards the Acropolis, praying to Athena not to let him leave (or live); the goddess responded by sending to him guardian angels from the Sun and the Moon so by arriving to his destination to be elevated to the rank of Caesar he was protected and guided by those *angels* of Rome.[370] Julian became aware of his destiny that night in Paris when the *genius publicus* appeared in front of him; Rome gave its consent for the rise of Julian to the supreme office. He never ceased

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[365] See Sallustius, Περὶ Θεῶν καὶ Κόσμου, 12.3

[366] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXV, 4.14-26 and 9.7. Also J. Mathews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*, p. 472.

[367] Julian, Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν, 175.b-c

[368] Julian, Εἰς τὴν μητέρα τῶν θεῶν, 180.b.

[369] Julian, Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸ Σαλούστιον, 154.c-d

[370] Julian, Ἀθηναίων τῇ Βουλῇ καὶ τῷ Δήμῳ, 275.b. Also P. Athanassiadi, Ιουλιανός, p. 250.

believing to that until one night during his campaign against the Persians in Mesopotamia, he encountered once again the *genius publicus* during his sleep; it passed in grief in front of him and left his tent wearing a veil over its head.[371] He realized his fate and he was prepared for it in calmness and serenity, according to his neoplatonic and mithraic principles, confident that he would join the sky and the stars[372] just like Romulus. In his *Hymn to King Helios*, Julian, emphasized that Aeneas was as well a descendant of the Sun[373] and several centuries later after the foundation of the *eternal* city, a philosopher-king, Numa Pompilius would come and fulfill his divine mission by the institutionalization of religious life.[374] Numa introduced the cult of the Sun and entrusted the *sacred fire* of the city to the Vestals. He also established the system of the solar year in a world still dependent in the phases of the Moon for the counting of time, paving the way, according to Julian, for the coming of the emperor Aurelian about a millennium later (who was considered in the Constantinian dynastic theology as the founder of the second Flavian dynasty) and the establishment of the cult of the *Sol Invictus Exsuperantissimus*, the worship of whom was Rome's ultimate divine mission.[375]

Later on he will express once again Rome's cultural and spiritual mission in his *Symposium* or *Saturnalia* (*Συμπόσιον ἢ Κρόνια*), written in late 362, a satirical work in which all the Greek and Roman Leaders of the Past are presented to be judged by Saturn and Jupiter while Quirinus (Romulus) is the advocate on behalf of Julius Caesar and the rest of the Romans and Hercules of Alexander the Great and the other Greeks. Julian emphasized the *eternity* and universality of Rome and recalled its unchallenged privileged position in world history. He wondered if there was any other city established by three thousand men that managed to expand its authority to the limits of the world within six centuries while he portrays his divine

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[371] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXV, 2.3.
[372] See Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXV, 3.22. Also R. L. Fox*: Pagans and Christians in the Mediterranean World from the second century AD to the conversion of Constantine* (London: Penguin, 1986), p. 199.
[373] Julian, *Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸς Σαλούστιον*, 153, d.
[374] Julian, *Κατὰ Γαλιλαίων*, 193.c-d. Also Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, I, 19.6-20.7.
[375] P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, p. 252.

ancestor, *Sol Invictus,* helping Aurelian to escape punishment for the murders that he committed because he established the Sun cult.[376] Julian developed his argument even further, considering that his earthly mission as a Roman emperor and a *Pontifex Maximus* would be the salvation and prosperity of Rome but his actions would not be enough for such a vital duty. He also required the necessary piety on behalf of his subjects since the *aeternitas* of Rome was dependent on the collective devotion towards her legacy.

Therefore, Julian's vision of Romanitas would base itself on two pillars. First of all the combined elements of religion and education (both inseparable in his thought) was crucial for his ideal of a Greek Romanitas. From that point of view the prohibition of Christian engagement with classical literature aimed to prevent further 'twisting' of the Greco-Roman spiritual inheritance. After all, the indoctrination of classical works into a system of belief was anyway narrowing the available space for alternative/heterodox interpretation.[377] The second pillar which supported his vision of Romanitas, the cities of the Empire, the revived local civic institutions and supported by politically active citizens consciously proud of their communities, would function as the shell where Julian's artificial Greek Romanitas would grow.[378] Participation in collective forms of local government, attendance to public rites and religious festivals as well as the idealization of local history by the citizens were elements drawn from democratic Athens and early republican Rome. The feature the two cities had in common already at an early stage was their city-state character. The emphasis to this dual nature of Romanitas as the identity of his subjects was the cornerstone of Julian's plan.

In the end, his defeat on the field of ideas in Antioch proved to be far more difficult to manage than any unfortunate outcome on the battlefield. However, Julian's personal fiasco had no reflection on the *Romanitas* which survived, evolved and reshaped by the minds of people that the emperor had previously forbidden to teach. Despite the fact that he never

[376] Julian, *Συμπόσιον*, 320.a-b
[377] G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, p. 79-94. Also P. Athanassiadi, *Η Άνοδος της Μονοδοξίας στην Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα* (Athens: Εστία, 2017), p. 130-146.
[378] G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate*, p. 66-78

managed to see Rome his acts as a bearer of the supreme Roman *auctoritas* were aiming to rejuvenate her image and symbolism. The revived religious activity on the Janiculum that started from the 360's and lasted until the end of the fourth century might echo some of Julian's ideas which might have reached the eternal city through Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, at that time Proconsul of Achaea (362-367) and later *Praefectus Urbi* (367-8) and initiate of various oriental cults in Rome including Mithras and Cybele.[379] His appointment as proconsul of Achaea was no doubt a sign of imperial favour towards the aristocracy of Rome. During the period of his service in Greece he had the chance to participate in the Eleusinian mysteries (as Julian did as well), it was a mystical experience that must have changed his worldview on religion ever-since. It was an element that he later brought with him to Rome. Also, his wife, Anicia Paulina was initiated to the mysteries of Dionysos in Lerna and of Hecate in Aigina, following the example of her husband.[380] The mystic and esoteric character of the Greek mysteries was thus transplanted to the religious life of the last pagan aristocrats in Rome. The emphasis of men like Praetextatus on the religious context of the public life of the eternal city must have been no coincidence in an age when the symbolic status of Rome was threatened by the attempt of imposition of a *condominium* with Constantinople as the twin capital of the Empire. The unique status of the Rome was confirmed through the traditional cults that Julian was struggling to revive, cults that signified the context of the *Romanitas* and the antiquity of the city.[381] We will never know if the Senate and the *populus Romanus* would react in the same way as their Antiochene contemporaries by seeing Julian in the flesh. Ammianus Marcellinus, argued, writing about three decades after the death of his favourite emperor, that Julian's remains ought at least to be transported and buried *ad perpetuandam gloriam* by the Tiber, in the heart of the eternal city which he so passionately adored.[382] Fortunately for the latter, his absence from Rome

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[379] D. Bowder, *The Age of Constantine and Julian*, p. 115, 123.

[380] See A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 150.

[381] C. Ando, 'The Palladium and the Pentateuch: Towards a Sacred Topography of the Later Roman Empire', *Phoenix*, vol. 55, 3 (Autumn-Winter 2001), pp. 369-410, p. 378.

[382] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gesate*, XXV, 10.5.

(while he was alive) preserved his idealism about her and inspired his plans and actions in aiming to reach his own imaginary Rome.

III.   Between the Altar and the Court: The Idea of Rome in the Age of Symmachus

The privileged position of Rome in the late Roman imaginary and in particular its imprint as a collectively-inherited unconscious idea and element of self-definition of the senatorial elite was linked to a significant extent to the treating and management of the eternal city as the archetype *locus* of *Romanitas.* This chapter will not focus on the activies of Symmachus as a senator and statesman regarding the religious policy of the imperial authorities of the city but rather on the issue of coexistence of different culutural aspects that embodied Rome and of the possibility that this could be replaced by a monolithic interpretation of Roman tradition and of the monopoly of the public space by a single religious faction. Also, there will be a focus on the ideological agenda of Ambrose and his own vision regarding the religious of the eternal city's monumental symbols such as the Senate-house. The aims of both men were not entirely different. They were both concerned with the profile of Rome and the context of Romanitas as a solidified Roman identity. The aristocrats were always fully aware of the importance of Rome but by the third quarter of the fourth century different aristocratic groups with diverse religious affiliations were questioning the orientation of the symbolic landscape of their city. The established multicultural and religiously multidimensional profile of the city did not match anymore to the religious tastes of (some proportion of) the senatorial elite, which gradually raised an issue regarding the emphasis on certain traditional features of the urban landscape such as the ancestral public rituals. In contrast to the traditional historiography however, there was no debate or clash of religions about the altar of victory or the funding of the old rites. Decades of academic studies portayed the issue as a debate between Ambrose and Symmachus in 'dramatic' tones even concluding that it was the last 'battle' of traditional paganism against Christianity.[383] If there was any kind of confrontation it

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[383] Indicative of this 'school of thought' are a series of publications: H. Bloch, 'A New Document of the Late Pagan Revival in the West, 393-394AD,' *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Oct., 1945), pp. 199-244, J. J. Sheridan, 'The Altar of Victory: Paganism's Last Battle,' *L'Antiquité Classique* vol. 35-1(1966), pp. 186-206, W, Evenpoel, 'Ambrose and Symmachus: Christians and Pagans in AD384,' *Ancient Society* Vol. 29 (1998-

was the occasional competition of influences of different aristocratic networks with complicated connections to the court and to each other in order to balance the outcome of imperial policies as we will see with the case of Ambrose and Symmachus. Those decisions could hardly be traced to the contemporaries outside these aristocratic networks yet their consequences were of paramount importance for the evolution of the Roman identity in the years to come.

By the time of Symmachus's active years the issue that was at stake was to what extent the public rituals of the city were an indispensable aspect of *Romanitas,* linked directly to the *devotio* to the *mos maiorum* and the symbolic legacy of the city as an imperial capital. Faced with the emergence of a new (Christian) concept of *Romanitas* characterized by the absence of any pagan elements, certain members of senatorial families had to redefine their cultural identity and re-interpret traditional values so that their lifestyle and the symbols they adorned would survive in the future. For the generation of Symmachus however this issue was both a dilemma and challenge; to what extend could the Roman identity survive without the traditional cults? How possible it was for the Roman aristocracy to make such a distinction?

Furthermore the marginalisation of the city by the fact that there were no imperial visits in the 360s and 370s and the trials of eminent members of the Roman aristocracy initiated by imperial suspicion was not the brightest start of relations between the city and the new dynasty. The expansion of Christianity among several aristocratic families in the same period revealed a tension among the members of the senatorial class to redefine their cultural identity and re-inteprpret their values and symbols of status in order to fit to the new realities of public relations and policy-making where Christinaity was more like an asset in the race for influence and favour-exchanging. However the percentage of non-christian senators should not be neglected or underestimated but the realities of the new political horizons

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1999), pp. 283-306, K. R. DerStreitumbden, *Victoriaalter: die dritte Relatio des Symmachus und die Brife 17, 18 und 57 des Mailänder Bischofs Ambrosius* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972), B. Crooke, J. D. Harries, *Religious Conflict in Fourth century Rome* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1982) and J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan: Political Letters and Speeches* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005).

under the Valentinian dynasty and the further rise of Christianity as a tool of public relations constituted a factor that could not be ignored. Approaching the way those aristocratic networks functioned and interacted one might find that religious diversity was never an issue. Anyone could trace however some anxiety on Symmachus's behalf on how to respond to the dilemma or the challenge as to what extent and in what form the Roman identity would survive without the public presence of the traditional cults and what this could mean for the city of Rome itself. The so-called debates about the public rituals or the altar of victory would hardly be an issue in any other city of the empire. The significance of the eternal city however and the privilege of preserving or altering elements linked to the public space, especially when it concerned such archetypical symbols of *Romanitas,* would be the cause of mutual protest between senators and churchmen.

For the imperial court at Milan, the regional character of the debates at Rome must seemed like a distant issue but the importance of the city-craddle of the empire and the archetypical idea of Roman-ness that it was representing was a key-factor in the forging of the Christian Roman identity. The fourth century was an era with an aboundance of examples of religion interacting with policy-making and when religious debate could influence secular aspects of the government it could threaten the public peace. For those reasons, the late Roman governmentality implied, under normal circumstances, the flexibility of imperial decisions especially when they were simultaneously addressed to audiences with different religious affiliations. It was a pathway of balancing between measures and counter-measures in order not to isolate any influential social group. Playing of course the card of neutrality was not easy in times of polarization or when the keeping of an equal distance between diverse religious groups could mutually be interpreted as 'joining' the other side. Especially since the Valentinian dynasty never hesitated to hide its Christian allegiance and background.

With the emperors being rather distant figures, Rome appeared like a state within the state where the senatorial elites had created their own world dominated by the distinctions of carreer (*honores*) and attitude (*mores*) that constituted along with the illustrious past of their

families the *nobilitas* of their class. Despite the mass entry of provincial senior office-holders in the Senate that was granted by Cosntantine during the early 320s, the old aristocratic families were jealously patrolling their status, never in fact accepting those *novi homines* as equals, persons that some of them never actually lived at Rome. When Nazarius delivered his speech to the Roman Senate in 321, celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the emperor's accession, he praised Constantine for admitting to the Senate *optimates viros ex omnibus provinciis* making the Senate illustrious in fact and not only in name by including the flowers of the entire world (*ex totius orbis florae*).[384] The senators who represented the old aristocratic *gentes* of Rome however would not yield very easily to this rhetorical *captatio benevolentiae* and they had a very clear and strong distinction between themselves, the *clarissimi* by birth and those who gained the senatorial office as a reward of their service (*clarissimi* by *adlectio*).[385] It was the equivalent of the division of the French aristocracy between the *noblesse d' épée* and the *noblesse de robe* during the *Ancien Régime*.

With the permanent absence of the court, the Senate regained some of its lost prestige, resembling ironically to the old days of the *Res Publica*. This upgrade of the Roman aristocracy would be proved vital for the difficult days to come when the imperial administration would be too weak or pre-occupied to intervene. The prestige of the Roman nobility was never higher and the public space of their city was their privileged playground. The office of the *Praefectus Urbani* was considered as the highlight of the public career of every Roman aristocrat making him in fact a *mini-emperor* since he had exclusive judicial authority in Rome and a hundred miles around it regarding all civil matters, receiving appeals from the *Prefectus Annonae* and the *Prefectus Vigilum,* controlling and managing therefore the provisions of food and taking care of the security of the city by commanding the *cohortes*

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[384] See Nazarius, *Pan. Lat*. 4 (10). 35. 1-2.

[385] See C. Sogno, *Q. Aurelius symmachus: A Political Biography* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2006), p. 28. Also J. Weisweiler, 'From Empire to World State: Ecumenical Language and Cosmopolitan Consciousness in the Later Roman Aristocracy' in M. Lavan, R. E. Payne, and J. Weisweiler (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism and Empire: Universal Rulers, Local Elites, and Cultural Integration in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 187-208, p. 206-207.

urbanae (known as *officium urbanum* by Symmachus's time).[386] Even as late as the sixth century the splendour of such a position was reflected in Cassiodorus' words, that no man could be more distinguished than the one who had the responsibility for the affairs of Rome.[387] Also, undertaking an office like the consulship was to preserve a bond that linked the illustrious men of the late fourth century with eight centuries of ancestral tradition that had shaped the history of the Roman 'fatherland'. These *amatores patriae* managed to exercise several duties which at an earlier stage were within the capacity of an emperor's authority like receiving petitions (*acta populi*) and forwarding them to the court, restoring monuments and occasionally supervising the placement of new architectural additions to the urban landscape. The descendants of the great aristocratic *gentes* had created their own world where social status, material display and cultural achievements were far more important criteria for someone to cross this social frontier than any legal termination.[388] They were jealously patrolling their values and way of life, elements that were common in both Christian and Pagan families and constituted the identity of the 'pars melior humani generis'.[389] The regional elites across the empire were always looking towards the social laboratory of Rome and its aristocracy for a model of civic rule and lifestyle, a tutorial of the *ars vivendi et gubernandi*.[390] Having left back the turbulent years of Valentinian I (364-375) and benefited from the moderate attitude that Gratian had adapted early in his reign (375-383), the senatorial aristocracy of the city was gazing at the near future with some confidence. Symmachus proclaimed, perhaps with some relief, the *novi saeculi*, *spes sperata*, *laetitia praesentium* and the *securitas posterorum* that the governance of Gratian appeared to signify.[391] However, the outcome of the coming military and political events was about to set the ground for the beginning of a new era and the forging of a new Roman

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[386] See Sogno, *Q. Aurelius symmachus:* p. 35-36.

[387] See Cassiodorus, *Variae*, VI, 4.6.

[388] See P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle,* p. 94.

[389] See Symmachus, *Relationes*, I. 52.

[390] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 111-112

[391] See Symmachus, Or. III.1

identity that would cause mentally and ideologicaly dislocating effects among the aristocratic circles of Rome.

In a city identified with its institutions and symbols to such a scale the preservation of this complex system of social representations was primarily a matter of public piety. The altar and the statue of Victory in the Senate-House represented this powerful concept. To begin with, the winged statute of the goddess Victoria in front of which the altar stood was never an issue. It was brought as loot from the sacking of Tarentum (272 BC), signifying the complete annexation of the Italian peninsula by Rome and it was placed at the Senate House. The altar however carried a different story, it was placed at the basilica by Octavian to celebrate the defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra VII at Actium (31BC) and from then on the senatorial sessions were starting with the offering of incense on behalf of the *princeps*.[392] By the time of Gratian there was already a long established tradition in Roman political theology which encouraged the emperor to consider himself as the manifestation and personification of Victory and that he was himself the guardian-spirit of the state. Therefore the imperial *Victoria* was placeless and the altars dedicated to such a purpose useless.[393] This mental confusion was also signifying a radical change in practices of public *devotio,* the externalization of a long process which had manifested not only in Christianity but also in the neo-platonic philosophy resulting in a gradual decline of sacrifices during the fourth century.[394] As a result of these tensions Rome appeared, at least to the eyes of the conservative aristocrats, to have abandoned the customs and practices which contributed to its former majesty and greatness. Constantius II had ordered the removal of the altar in 357 in accordance to his recently issued legislation and perhaps after a petition by Christian Senators.[395] The altar was restored during the reign of Julian and remained there for the entire reign of Valentnian I. Gratian however distanced himself from his father's policy of toleration when in 382 he confiscated the fees destined for the maintenance of the sacrifices.

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[392] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of the Needle*, p. 107.
[393] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 107.
[394] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 211.
[395] See *Codex Theodosianus*, XVI, 10.2, XVI, 10.3, XVI, 10.4, XVI, 10.5 and XVI, 10.6.

He did not spare even the properties which had been donated by senatorial wills and erased the exception of pagan priests from public duties. As a final act he ordered the removal of the Altar. It was a process of desacralization of such a scale that it would never again be experienced until the *Enlightenment* and the French Revolution. The end of public funding was not an issue *per se* but in the universe of late Roman traditions such an act was signifying a sense of alienation between state and religion after centuries of mutual association.

Symmachus was well-aware that the Christians had already started shaping a new present and re-inventing the past by treating pagan rites as a commodity in an age of destitution and turbulence. What appeared as far more threatening however was the sense that the old rituals were no more an essential part of the definition of Roman identity. For someone living in Gratian's time, the treating of the public rites or the altar of Victory in a plain religious context would appear at least odd since their antiquity and their long association to Rome's history and manifest-destiny as a global capital (seen from late antiquity perspective) made the majority of the *populus Romanus* view them more like a secular aspect of their public life and an indispensable part of the legacy of a glorious past (real or invented). Symmachus had no intention (and for that reason he was careful enough not) to appear as a *defensor* of the old cults but rather as a protestor regarding matters of protocol, indicating the disturbance of the old customs and traditions. He was old enough to remember that Vetius Agorius Praetextatus, within his capacity as a proconsul of Achaia in 364 protested against the legislation issued by Valentinian I, explaining that life for the Greeks would not be worth of living without the proper celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries.[396] Then the emperor instructed, as Zosimus confirmed, that the rites should be celebrated according to the ancestral tradition.[397] Valentinian I had not been persuaded out of respect for the mysteries themselves, instead he realised that he was disturbing the ancestral custom and it was on

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[396] See *Codex Theodosianus*, IX, 16.7. Also B. Croke & J. Harries, *Religious Conflict in Fourth Century Rome: A Documentary Study* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1982), p. 26.

[397] See Zosimus, *Ἱστορία Νέα* , IV, 3.2-3

that basis that Symmachus presented his argument. It was a protest pointing to the lack of respect which ought to be paid to certain aspects of *Romanitas* related to the public ceremonies. Furthermore, the performing of the festivals he was about to argue for had a mixed political and religious character since the deities which were involved had been identified for so long with the state itself and its earlier successes. The notion that the public festivals were no longer associated with the official ideology of the imperial regime was on its own alarming but what was threatening their own existence was the perception that they appeared out of place and purpose as if they were not related to the history of Rome itself. Until that time Christians and all the other religious factions were smoothly interacting and coexisting in parallel 'ritual worlds' in a city that traditionally provided space for every creed and belief. The rising influence of a Christian 'faction' in the Senate however and its influence towards a decision that violated a significant part of the established traditions was something new as well as the conception that religion could be separated from the ancestral traditions. The main obstacle for Symmachus and his cause proved to be Ambrose of Milan, whose skill and influence contributed significantly to the transformation of what had been up to that time established Roman (pagan) ideals to a clearly private matter of a local minority. This apparent shift on the public scene of Rome had been caused by factors that emerged away from the *eternal* city, in another late Roman capital.

Starting from the early 380's, Milan was at the centre of a significant political, economic and social activity caused by the moving of the imperial court there from Trier.[398] The development of this Northern-Italian model of Rome coincided with the active years of Ambrose in the public life of the West.[399] Despite his initial preoccupation with the religious matters of his bishopric, struggling against the Arian element of the city (the legacy of his predecessor Auxentius), he managed to establish his presence in the court during the reign of Valentinian's two sons. In 384 he managed to influence the emperor in order to reject

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[398] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 183-185.
[399] See R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 15-40.

Symmachus's petitions about the restoration of the privileges of the pagan priesthood. Five years later he struggled against the will of the empress Justina and the Arian party of the city regarding the occupation of the Basilica Portiana, humiliating his rivals. The confidence of the bishop was mainly based on the support of his zealots, a result of the gradual strengthening of the ties between the bishop and his flock that shaped a new urban factor of policy-making and intervening.[400] From then on he was capable of imposing his own will regarding all religious matters in Italy by playing the populist card and pressing or guiding the imperial authorities at Milan to the implementation or cancelation of certain decisions. The bishop revealed his intentions in his work *De Officiis,* written in the late 380s. Having been influenced by Cicero's work of the same title, Ambrose promoted his own agenda of values that should set the new Roman model of civic identity and the place of the bishop within it, in the same manner that the first century orator modelled the profile of the ideal citizen of the Roman Republic.[401] Ambrose used this work to introduce the new concept of Christian public duty in a language familiar to any Roman aristocrat or bishop. According to it, every city was a *res publica* itself and the bishop was its caretaker and as Cicero mentioned in his own *De Officiis*, no bound is stronger than the one which links the citizens to their *patria*.[402] He was introducing the shift from the loyalty to the secular *res publica* towards the *res publica Christiana* that would prove to be a new type of *Amor Patriae*. While the equivalent pagan concept of patronizing aspects of the public life involved the funding of spectacles and festivals of limited duration, Ambrose's network of activities demonstrated the new spirit of civic patriotism which included the liberating of captives and the caretaking of the poor and those in need, actions that tightened the community's bonds of solidarity. Additionally he criticised an anonymous pagan prefect of Rome (which was in fact an accusation against Symmachus, *Praefectus Urbi* until January 385) who expelled the foreigners from the city during the food shortage of 384. Ambrose characterised this as an inhuman act.[403] Thus he

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[400] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 122.
[401] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 129.
[402] See Cicero, *De Officiis*, 1.17. 57.
[403] Ambrose, *De Officiis*, 3.7.45-51.

managed to gain a strategic advantage by defending the *peregrini* of the city and therefore influencing a significant proportion of Rome's population who (from an institutional point of view) had no voice of their own. The atmosphere that dominated this work was a combination of nostalgia of a pre-classical golden age and the Christian concept of regaining Paradise.[404] Stepping on the threshold of an emerging Christian Utopia, he considered that the primary requirement for the achievement of this cause was religious uniformity. In a letter addressed to Flavius Pissidius Romulus he clarified his attitude towards pagan otherness and the priority of religious identity in comparison to the cultural.[405] When the bishop was asked to interpret the prophecy in the book of Deuteronomy of 'a heaven of Bronze and earth of Iron', he replied that this would be the divine punishment in form of natural disasters that all the non-Christians should expect. In another question by Pissidius Romulus regarding the interpretation of the episode of the three thousands followers of Aaron who were killed by those of Moses in the book of Exodus he replied that this was the fate of the people who worshiped the idols and that the Mosaic Law was linked to the new Christian Law.[406] According to Ambrose this could be an acceptable practice since he admitted that 'preferenda est religio' in comparison to the bonds of kinship.[407]

Many Christians of eminent social background were rather selective than hostile towards the pagan rituals as it is revealed by the evidence from the Calendar of Philocalus which includes all festivals celebrated in Rome in honour of the past emperors and the traditional gods, among them the *Victoria Senati*.[408] Despite its Christian dedication, the illustrations included the personified months of the year as figures committing pagan practices. January for instance is depicting as a figure offering incense to the *Lares Augusti* while April is probably celebrating the festival of the Magna Mater. Also there is a priest of Isis depicted on

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[404] Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 134. Also R. Heinberg, *Memories and Visions of Paradise: Exploring the Universal Myth of a Lost Golden Age* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1989), p. 140-142.

[405] See Ambrose, Ep. 88.

[406] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 193-194.

[407] Ambrose, Ep. 66.7.

[408] See M. R. Salzman, *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 185-186.

the November entry while the celebrations of the *Saturnalia* are decorating the section of December. Additionally the calendar contains a list of the Roman bishops, consuls, the feast days of the martyrs and a list of Easter dates starting from 312 and expanding for half a century after 358 AD. This could be interpreted as an early successful example of the new version of a hybrid *Romanitas* that was emerging independently of the dialectic of extremists and their disproportionately loud voice. The circulation of these works reflected the ideal image of Roman-ness expressed day by day through the indications about when to perform a ritual during the year. After all it was the annual circle of festivals that made the Roman system of beliefs accessible to everyone no matter of their social status or origin.[409] Moreover it was helping the individual to participate or at least pay his respect to his fellow heterodox citizens by reminding all the important dates in every major system of belief, focusing more to those which were more open and neutral to people of other creeds. The religious osmosis in Philocalus's calendar reveals an eclectic tension, typically characteristic of the Roman cosmopolitanism of the previous centuries which in those last years of the fourth century was still producing new modes of ideological accommodation. Furthermore the use of religiously neutral symbols of Roman tradition was a safe pathway to avoid tensions and emphasise the symbols of unity instead of division. This was an example of a society that cared about its internal peace.

Nevertheless it was just a glimpse of the world of the elite and their ideas that could be expressed with some relative comfort. Moving downwards in the scale of Roman social stratification where the bonds between the individual and the local bishop were stronger, the attitude could be less flexible since the scarce access to education and problems of social insecurity could allow persons or entire groups to be more vulnerable to extremism and voices of conflict. The preaching of Ambrose was mainly addressed to them without underestimating his aristocratic connections and his proximity to the imperial court that made him a respected player in the world of politics. Those lower strata were probably less

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[409] See M. Beard, 'A Complex of Times: No more sheep on Romulus Birthday', in C. Ando (ed.) *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press, 2003), pp. 273-288, p. 288

enthusiastic about religious diversity preferring the more simplistic and 'safe' uniformity of beliefs that Ambrose was dreaming about. From that point of view it was a polarization between populist quantity and aristocratic quality. After all we are still referring to a Roman elite that was still religiously diverse even within the members of the same family, therefore the toleration and openness which were part of their *modus vivendi* must have seem quite irritating to outsiders.

The pagans could be selective as well, choosing where to focus or what to ignore in their descriptions of Rome. Ammianus Marcellinus for example, is careful enough to refer to the Christian presence in the city and he mentions so only when he cannot avoid it while some decades earlier the author of the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (359 AD) has no reference of any Christian contribution to the city's landscape. This selective attitude does not indicate that heterodox groups were choosing to live in parallel realites avoiding each other, on the contrary such descriptions were modified according to the needs and curiosity of specific target-groups of readers that each author was aiming to impress. After all the purpose of the selective focusing of descriptions like these was not a fourth century innovation. As early as the *Descriptions of Greece* (Ἑλλάδος Περιήγησις) by Pausanias in the second century AD, the reader can find no mention of any monument or event dated after 146BC (i.e. after the yielding of the last Greek resistance against Rome), making therefore the entire work functioning not as a journey around space but a travel through time. After all even Ammianus Marcellinus does not mention in his description of Rome during the imperial adventus of 357 any monuments erected after the reign of Hadrian (117-138). Even if someone could interpret this as an ideologically biased narrative it cannot be perceived as an aggressive or hostile discourse towards religious otherness.

Apparently many Christians were unwilling to stop or they considered as a non-issue the celebration of the public rituals *more prisco* since they were contributing to the city's splendour and were appeasing every possible supernatural source. They did not share the Ambrosian dilemma on which form of Sanctity (Pagan or Christian) would dominate the

urban space. Some additional supporting evidence comes from the content of a calendar from Campania, dated in 387AD, which indicates the dates of both Christian and pagan local festivals, taking place in the region around Capua. Despite the fact that various pagan rituals are mentioned, like the festival of the *Rosalia* on May 13th or a ritual purification of a river near a temple of Diana on July 25th, there is no reference to any sacrifices. As late as the waning of the fifth century AD the celebration of the *Lupercalia* by the people of Rome caused the protest of bishop Hilarius (461-468) who complained to the emperor Anthemius of the dangers of religious diversity.[410] Later on Gelasius I (492-496) was annoyed not because of the survival of a pagan festival but of the manner that it was conducted by his contemporaries, by the absence of the piety that characterized their ancestors. He accused them that the celebration of the festivals was left to persons of 'vulgar character' without knowledge of its history while in the past it was the nobility of the city that supervised them. Therefore they were the participants themselves who conducted an offense against the spirit of the festival and it would be far better not to celebrate it at all than conduct it in an unworthy manner. It seems that for the aforementioned reasons he managed to replace the old festival with the feast of purification of Virgin Mary.[411] When the senator Andromachus accused the pope that the suppression of the *Lupercalia* had caused a pestilence in Campania, the *pontifex* replied that the festival was related to the fertility of women and had no connections to this calamity which occurred several times before the actual abandonment of the feast.[412] From Gelasius's point of view the Roman regional patriotism appeared to be superior to the *Religio* since the core of his argument or at least the pretext for his decision was the lack of respect to the *mos maiorum*. This position was fundamentally opposite to that of Ambrose and the priorities that he had set in his polarizing letters. From Symmachus's point of view, the bishop of Milan was one more link in a network of patronage and there is no evidence to suggest that he ever considered him an opponent. On the

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[410] See Gelasius I, *Letter against the Lupercalia*, 16. Also W. M. Green, 'The Lupercalia in the fifth century', *Classical Philology*, vol. 26, 1 (1931), pp. 60-69, p. 60.
[411] W. M. Green, 'Lupercalia in the Fifth century', p. 60.
[412] W. M. Green, 'Lupercalia', p. 62.

contrary they appeared to have mutual interests in promoting certain persons to the imperial court and their correspondence was more than careful and balanced.

In AD 382 after only some months of the recently issued legislation which imposed a *proscriptio* on anyone caught sacrificing, Gratian ordered the removal of the altar of Victory and denied the public fund of the pagan rituals, disturbing traditions aged more than eight hundred years.[413] The pagans interpreted it as an aggressive act against the most important aspect of *Romanitas*. In fact it appeared that it threatened the two main pillars of Roman paganism with one stone, the rituals (*sacra*) and the officially recognized sacred *loci*.[414] Cicero in his *De Natura Deorum* divided the Roman religion to the *sacra*, the *auspicia* and the *haruspices*[415] and four centuries later Symmachus was well aware of his constitutional duty as a Senator and an aristocrat to defend the *sacra populi Romani*. The state rituals were traditionally thought to be established during the reign of Numa Pompilius (715-673BC), the piety and the religious sensitivies of whom had set the model for the Roman religion and paved the way for the successful reign of Tullius Hostilius (673-642 BC).[416] The loss of the state patronage was a shock for the pagan aristocracy and a trauma for the late Roman traditionalism. The public ritual offered a chance of a symbolic re-enactment of the distant Roman past that was easily-approached and understood by the future generations in 'ritual time'.[417]

The conducting of public sacrifices also had a key-function in the Roman political system; it testified the relationship between religion and social order. One of the primary duties of the emperor as a *pontifex maximus* was the invigilation and safekeeping of this balance.[418] Additionally they were symbolizing an unofficial certificate of membership to the values of

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[413] *Codex Theodosianus*, XVI, 10, 7.
[414] See R. Gordon, 'From Republic to Principate: Priesthood, religion and ideology,.' in M. Beard & J. North (eds.) *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World*. (London: Duckworth, 1990), pp. 179-198, p. 182.
[415] See Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, III, 2.5
[416] Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, I. 21.2.
[417] See M. Beard, 'A Complex of Times', p. 288.
[418] See R. Gordon, 'The veil of Power: Emperors, sacrificers and benefactors' in M. Beard & J. North (eds.) *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World*. (London: Duckworth, 1990), pp. 199-231, p. 206.

Romanitas and it is no coincidence that the imperial persecutors of Christianity in the third century were requiring this sort of proof, defining the limits between the Roman and the culturally alien factor in public life. Another responsibility of the *pontifex maximus* over time was the ritual of *evocatio* which had a dual function, to sacralise or de-sacralize a certain *locus* and also to 'call forth' the deities of the conquered territories in order for them to settle permanently in Rome.[419] The next stage included the ritual transportation the cult-statue of the specific deity and its establishment in the eternal city. It was this function that had raised Rome to such a level of significant religious importance. Ulpian had emphasized the crucial role of the emperor on the religious dedication of a place since he was the only one able to legitimize such an act.[420] With the imperial abdication from those rights, the spiritual vacuum was soon to be occupied by the bishop of Rome. However there is no real clue that Gratian or Theodosius ever denied the title of the *Pontifex Maximus* since an edict of Marcian and Valentinian III dated in 452, refers to them as *Pontifices incliti* while more than half a century later (516) the emperor Anastasius I is using the same term in a letter to the Roman Senate.[421]

The deities that contributed to the greatness of Rome would be left without gratitude and the safety of the eternal city and its Empire were at risk. Without the prayers of the Vestals who constantly until that time were honouring the *pactum* between the guardian spirits and Rome, the old, safe and trusted *give and take* balance was disturbed and the Romans could no longer hope for the supernatural benevolence.[422] The tribute of a share of the *annona* coming from the provinces was a gift of state gratitude, confirming the perpetual relationship of Rome and its divine protectors that would guarantee the fertility of the regions which contributed to the annual *donatium*.[423] The pagans considered it as a symbolic attack to the institutional core of *Romanitas* which aimed to remove the spiritual veil that had protected

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[419] See C. Ando, 'A Religion for the Empire' in C. Ando (ed.) *Roman Religion* (Ediburgh: Edinbourgh University Press, 2003), pp. 220-243, p. 233.
[420] See Ulpian, *On the Edict*, book 68, fr. 1482-3
[421] See A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p.53
[422] Symmachus, *Ep.* 1. 46.2.
[423] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 106.

the city for so long. The fact that every region and city was under the divine care of specific entities and the inevitable conclusion that the entire world came to be reflected on the city of Rome implied that the cults of each place were concentrated on its sacred ground of the capital. The existence of those protector spirits themselves depended on the human devotion to them. Their potential neglect was putting the security of the city at risk. That was a permanent fear in Roman minds already in the time of Varro.[424] Therefore an alteration in the protocol regarding the conducting of the public rituals was considered an insult to the *Romanitas* itself.

The fall of Gratian a year after the publishing of the anti-pagan legislation might have served as a justification of the existential fears of the pagan wing which had gathered around Symmachus. After the establishement of Valentinian II at the court of Milan, Symmachus, within his capacity as a *praefectus urbi* along with Vetius Agorius Praetextatus as praetorian prefect of Italy, appealed to the young emperor for the restoration of the altar of Victory. The famous text classified as the third *relatio* contains the summary of the arguments of Symmachus and his followers. He was well aware that the odds were against him and he concentrated not on the cause of *religio* but on that of *tradition* so that he might have a chance to reverse the recent decisions. He was asking for the restoration of the religious institutions that have served the state and Rome itself for so long, arguing that only a friend of the barbarians would desire the permanent removal of such a powerful symbol as the altar (*Repetimus igitur religionum statum, qui rei publicae diu profuit. Certe dinumerentur principes utriusque sectae, utriusque sententiae: Pars eorum prior caerimonias patrum coluit, recentior non removit. Si exemplum non facit religio veterum, faciat dissimulatio proximorum. Quis ita familiaris est barbaris, ut aram Victoriae non requirat?*).[425] What follows in his narrative is a manifesto of Roman traditionalism, expressing the cautiousness with which every pious Roman must observe the future when the deities are not pleased. He also attempted to convince the emperor that he should permit the nobles to pass on to their

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[424] See R. M. Ogilvie, *The Romans and their Gods* (London: Hogarth, 1986), p. 42.

[425] Symmachus, *Relatio* III, 3.

children all those symbols that have been preserved by their forefathers (*Quodsi huius ominis non esset iusta vitatio, ornamentis saltem curiae decuit abstineri. Praestate, oro vos, ut ea, quae pueri suscepimus, senes posteris relinquamus. Consuetudinis amor magnus est).*[426] He emphasized the functional importance of the altar regarding the oath-taking and the integrity of the senatorial decisions. He also advised Valentinian II to follow the example of Constantius II who despite his Christian beliefs did not remove any of the privileges of the priesthood. In fact he approached with respect and admiration the wonders of Rome during his visit (*Nihil ille decerpsit sacrarum virginum privilegiis, decrevit nobilibus sacerdotia, Romanis caerimoniis non negavit inpensas et per omnes vias aeternae urbis laetum secutus senatum vidit placido ore delubra, legit inscripta fastigiis deorum nomina, percontatus templorum origines est, miratus est conditores cumque alias religiones ipse sequeretur, has servavit imperio*).[427] Symmachus also personified the goddess Rome addressing Valentinian II so that he might respect her old age which was ensured by the pious observation of the ancestral rituals and saying that it was the worship of those deities that elevated her to global dominion. Furthermore, the sacred objects, the *pignora imperii*, had repelled Hannibal and the Gauls from the city and it was towards to their devotion that she should continue to be attached unless she was accused because of surviving that long. Finally she asked of the emperor to leave in peace the gods of the ancestors.[428] The use of familiar and neutral symbols like the *Dea Roma* as a personification of the city and the *pignora* as objects that guaranteed its safety (adding to them a secular context) recalled the ties of the city to its symbols. After all the personified Rome was not a religious figure but the archetype of the city itself in the form of *genius*.

Ambrose, being initially unaware of the pagan arguments, composed a letter, warning the young emperor of the (spiritual) consequences of any potential yielding to the demands of Symmachus and reminded Valentinian II of the attitude that a Christian emperor ought to

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[426] Symmachus, *Relatio* III, 4.
[427] Symmachus, *Relatio* III, 7.
[428] Symmachus *Relatio* III, 9-10.

demonstrate.[429] He pointed out that when the pagans had protested to his elder brother, this was made without the senate's consensus as it was proved when the Christian senators and bishop Damasus I had counter-protested (*Huic igitur Deo vero quisquis militat, et qui intimo colendum recipit affectu, non dissimulationem, non conniventiam, sed fidei studium et devotionis impendit. Postremo si non ista, consensum saltem aliquem non debet colendis idolis, et profanis ceremoniarum cultibus exhibere*).[430] When a copy of the *relatio* was sent to him, Ambrose responded to Symmachus's arguments with another letter, answering one by one to what he considered as pagan challenges and vain protests against an inevitable Christian destiny of Rome.[431] He presented Symmachus's arguments about the preservation of the cults as nothing more but an expression of antiquarianism on behalf of a senatorial minority (*sectam gentilium*).[432] The bishop considered the recent measures of the disestablishment of the *sacerdotes publici* as a point of no return and as precursor of the *tempora Christiana*.[433] He de-constructed and de-mystified the power of the sacred objects by responding that Hannibal too worshiped the same gods and he was repelled not among the altars of the Capitol but at the battle-lines of the legions.[434] Also he used the pretence of a legal issue since the Christian senators could not swear an oath of loyalty to a Christian emperor upon a pagan altar, reminding to him that *no man can serve two masters* (*Non potestis duobus dominis servire*).[435] Ambrose was trying to present these series of open letters as a Christian-Pagan debate in an attempt to polarise the public life as he did so in the struggle against the Arian party in Milan but there was never such an intention on behalf of the pagans.

Ambrose's proximity to imperial court when Theodosius was at Milan was beneficial for the bishop's cause. He thought he had found in the face of the young emperor his 'David' while

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[429] Ambrose, Ep. 17
[430] Ambrose, Ep. 17,2
[431] Ambrose, Ep. 18
[432] Ambrose, Ep. 18,2
[433] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 104.
[434] Ambrose, Ep. 18.6.
[435] Ambrose, Ep. 17.14, quoted from Matthew, 6.24.

he thought himself of the prophet Nathan as he confessed in a letter to his sister Marcellina in 389.[436] Theodosius visited Rome in 389, perhaps in an attempt to avoid Ambrose's interventions, especially after the incident of riots at Callinicum (388) and also to strengthen his ties with the rather passive senatorial aristocracy. Possibly he presented his action as a pilgrimage to the churches of the old capital in order to emphasize its religious and symbolic importance in comparison to Milan. The emperor was accompanied by his two sons (Arcadius, at that time twelve years old and Honorius at the age of five) who were presented to the Senate. The orator Latinus Pacatus Drepanius was the spokesman selected for the occasion, welcoming the emperor in the city of the Apostles. He praised Theodosius as the saviour of Rome and compared him with the pagan heroes of the Republic who defended the city against foreign foes. He was also praised for demonstrating his imperial *civilitas*, his friendly attitude towards the nobility and the people. Symmachus was also present, apologizing to the emperor in his panegyric for his prior allegiance to the regime of Magnus Maximus, since he had travelled to Milan in 388 and attended the celebration of the usurper's consulship by delivering a panegyric to him. Thus Theodosius had the chance to display his imperial *Clementia* and not only in theory, by elevating the pagan senator to the consulship for 391.[437] Also Caeionius Rufius Albinus was made *praefectus urbi* from 389 to 391 and it was within this period of relief that his brother, Caeionius Rufius Volusianus renewed after a period of twenty years the *taurobolium* ritual in the Phrygianum on the Vatican Hill.[438]

After Valentinian's II death and Eugenius's imperial proclamation in 392, Theodosius elevated Honorius to the rank of the Augustus for the West. Perhaps in a desperate attempt for recognition Eugenius moved to Italy and in his anxiety he was willing to negotiate with various parties in exchange for support. Despite the fact that he had already twice rejected

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[436] Ambrose, Ep. 41,25
[437] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 228.
[438] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, pp. 231-232. Also S. Orloudi, 'Alan Cameron and the use of epigraphic sources' in R. Lizzi Testa (ed.) *The Strange Death of Pagan Rome: Reflections on a Historiographical Controversy* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), pp. 71-84, p. 79-80.

pagan petitions for the restoration of the altar while he was in Gaul, his coming to Italy and the narrowing of his political and diplomatic horizons pushed him to grant certain amounts of money to nobles willing to offer service to him. They were resources which could be assumed that would be spent even for conducting pagan rituals.[439] During the period of Eugenius's dominance only a few men supported the regime as much as Nicomachus Flavianus who had preserved his office as prefect of Italy, initially given to him by Theodosius, while his son, the younger Nichomachus Flavianus, undertook the *praefectura urbi* and it was during this period according to the epigraphic evidence a programm of preservation and restoration was encouraged by rebuilding and preserving several monuments in the city.[440] By the beginning of 394, the elder Flavianus was celebrating his consulship at Milan and some months later he travelled to Rome to join his son in the celebration of pagan festivals as the *Carmen contra Paganos* indicates (*Artibus heu magicis procerum dum quaeris honores,/ sic, miserande, iaces paruo donatus sepulcro./Sola tamen gaudet meretrix te consule Flora,/ludorum turpis genetrix uenerisque magistra,/composuit templum nuper cui Symmachus heres./Omnia quae in templis positus tot monstra colebas*).[441]

The rise and gradual imposition of Christianity changed the face of traditional paganism itself. Towards the end of the fourth century new festivals had been added to the pagan ceremonial protocol like the feasts dedicated to the birthdays of the gods Quirinus, Castor and Pollux who had no special commemoration of their *natalicia* in earlier periods. Another festival which appeared during this period was that of the mamuralia, dedicated to Veturius Mamurius. He was the craftsman who, following Numa's orders undertook the construction of the eleven shields (ancilia), copies of the original sacred shields of Mars.[442] The *ancilia* were classified by Servius Honoratus as one of the *pignora imperii* (*Septem fuerunt pignora, quae imperium Romanum tenent: acus matris deum, quadriga fictilis Veientanorum, cineres*

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[439] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 240-241.
[440] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, 241.
[441] See *Carmen contra Paganos*, 110-115. Also S. Ratti, *Polémiques entre Païens et Chrétiens*, p. 120-124
[442] Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* I, 20, Ovid, *Fasti*, III, 422. Also J. Rykwert, *The Idea of a Town*, p. 96

Orestis, sceptrum Priami, velum Ilionae, palladium, ancilia).[443] According to the calendar of Filocalus the festival was taking place on March 14th while Iohannes Lydus placed it on the day after (ides of March).[444] Plutarch however considered Veturius Mamurius as nothing more but a survival of the words 'veterem memoriam,' i.e. of traditionalism itself (*οἱ δ' οὐ Βετούριον Μαμούριον εἶναι φασι τὸν ἀδόμενον, ἀλλὰ 'Βέτερεμ Μεμόριαμ', ὅπερ ἐστί παλαιὰν μνήμην*).[445]

Although the pagans were not bound to any collective emotions as in the case of the Christians, the need to rescue their identity from real or imaginary threats (or interpretation of several facts and/or political decisions as such) solidified a more articulate and monolithic form of religious beliefs.[446] This slowly- emerged 'pagan doctrine' had its intellectual roots back to the philosophical thought of Cornelius Fronto, Marcus Aurelius, Apuleius and Plotinus. The interaction with Christianity before and after 313 (and the general tension towards monotheism already evident from the early third century) changed the image of the traditional paganism itself. Despite that traditional polytheism lost some of its old diversity it was flexible enough to invent traditions or revive old festivals. One representative example of this tension was the cult of the *Magna Mater* and the practice of *taurobolium*, accompanied by inscriptions commemorating that the worshippers would be 'reborn to eternity', adding to it a new radical message, similar to the Christian promise of Holy Communion. Despite its oriental origin, *Magna Mater* was honoured in Rome for more than five centuries. Being represented with a turreted crown, Cybele had gained the role of the city's patron thus manifesting an archetypical image of the *Dea Roma* and contributing significantly to her later personifications in art and literature.

One of Cybele's more important cult sites was the *Phrygianum* on the Janiculum edge of the Vatican Hill. It was a sanctuary which had been destroyed in the mid-third century but

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[443] See Servius, *In Vergilii Aeneidem commentarii*, 7. 188

[444] See W. W. Fowler, *The Roman Festivals of the Period of the Republic* (London: MacMillan, 1899), p. 45. Also Iohannes Lydus, *De mensibus*, 4. 36.

[445] Plutarch, *Numa*, 13

[446] J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, p. 234.

restored during the reign of Julian and became the centre of intense religious activity during the following decades. This sanctuary was so important that other temples dedicated to Cybele in cities like Lyon and Mainz were named 'Vaticans', imitating the sacral geography of Rome.[447] The discovery of a sliced human skull placed at the base of the statue of *Jupiter Heliopolitanus* indicated the conducting of human sacrifice on the site.[448] The growth of primitivist (by late Roman standards) tendencies in late fourth century paganism was not a development to counter-balance the recently-established Christian dominance. Perhaps a small group of desperate and frightened pagans offered the most exceptional form of offering in an attempt to appease the neglected deities, probably during the famine of 384. Nevertheless the available evidence reveals the rise of a 'militant' spirit among some of the most eminent followers of the traditional cults but this was more like an expression of a 'Julianic' wing of late Roman paganism reacting against institutional/legislating oppression and the neoplatonic antisacrificial movement of the entire past century before them. Perhaps it was an expression of a need for achieving religious uniformity with defined and monolithic practices and protocols that expands beyond plain reactionarism, antiquarianism or religious atavism. The evidence is open to multiple interpretations but there is an obvious tension for a re-discovery and re-interpretation of the Roman religion perhaps under the feeling of a wider anxiety caused by a crisis of identity. The *Phrygianum* was standing right at the opposite of the basilica of St. Peter, almost 'in defiance,' someone could say of the future destiny of the Vatican.[449] It must have been no coincidence that the site was already functioning as the See of the *Pater Patrum*, the priest of the highest rank in Mithraic sacral hierarchy, a kind of pagan 'Pope'.[450] During the fourth century, the Christian bishops took over the status of the Mithraic *Patres* on the site preserving its importance in the Roman religious geography. It seemed that the one building was almost contesting the other but both *Phrygianum* and St Peter's were demonstrating the status of the senatorial class,

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[447] See R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 100.

[448] See R. Turcan, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, p. 189.

[449] See M. J. Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis: The Myth and the Cult* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1977), p. 46.

[450] See J. M. Robertson, *Pagan Christs: Studies in Comparative Hierology* (London: Watts & Co, 1928), p. 335-337.

commemorating the aristocratic recapture of Rome in the absence of emperors. The co-existence of both cults on the same hill revealed not only the absence of competition between two different and apparently equally solidified creeds but also the diversity of expressions of the late Roman identity in its archetypical city. Nevertheless the existence of this kind of activity at Rome highlights the privileged position of the eternal city and its sacred geography in the collective imaginary.

One additional reference regarding the practice of human sacrifice among the late Roman elites comes from the *Carmen ad Antonium* by Pseudo-Paulinus. The poet laments of the vanity of sacrifices and mentions the establishment of the cult of Jupiter *Latiaris* on the Mons Albanus (*hinc Latiare malum prisci statuere Quirites*, / *ut mactatus homo nomen satiaret inane. / quae nox est animi, quae sunt improvida corda!*).[451] While the conducting of human sacrifice was most probably an imaginary reference to the distant republican past, the appearance of this festival in that timing confirmed the existence of a need of reinterpretation of Roman traditions towards the end of the fourth century.[452] The founding of the shrine of the *Jupiter Latiaris* was traditionally attributed to Ascanius, first king of Alba Longa and to Tarquinius Priscus who erected a temple for the annual celebration of the *Feriae Latinae*.[453] An additional reference comes from Livy's work regarding an incident during the reign of Ancus Marcius (642-617BC). The inhabitants of Alba Longa heard a loud voice from the forest at the top of the hill, demanding the performance of religious services according to the custom of their native country, something which during that time were neglected.[454] Not long after they were afflicted with a pestilence. The context was similar to the famine of 384 which as the pagans thought was caused by the religious policies of Gratian and Valentinian II. By combining the aforementioned references and the emphasis on the study of Livy's history by the circle of Symmachus can be concluded that some sort of revival of rites took place on

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[451] See *Carmen ad Antonium* 109-111, Paulinus of Nola, poem XXXII.
[452] See B. Croke and J. Harries, Religious Conflict in Fourth Century Rome, p. 86.
[453] See Greg Woolf, 'Polis-Religion and its Alternatives in the Roman Provinces' in C. Ando (ed.) *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh university Press, 2003), pp. 39-54, p. 331. Also R. E. A. Palmer, *The Archaic Community of the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 11.
[454] Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, I, 31.

the site by the closing years of the fourth century. The *Feriae Latinae* were criticised by Christian scholars as early as the times of Justin the Martyr, Minucius Felix, Tertullian and Cyprian in a tradition of anti-pagan and anti-sacrificial polemic that continued in the fourth century with Lactantius and Julius Firmicus Maternus.[455] During the festival the statue of Jupiter had to be ritually washed with the blood of a criminal that was killed in the gladiatorial combats.[456] The context of the ritual had a meaning of purification or reclaim which was re-emphasized in the late fourth century when an aristocratic group considered that the Roman (pagan) identity was under threat.[457] This process of course would remain as more like an uncompleted experiment but still proves the vitality of Roman paganism and its capability to adapt and adopt until its last days of public presence. However, even in its last days the late Roman paganism was still evolving alongside with the idea of Rome. The last time that such radical adaptations took place was during the Augustan period which witnessed the revival of neglected republican festivals, aiming to preserve an imaginary bridge to the heroic past, imitating the religious programme of the pious king Numa. Perhaps this revived expression of late paganism in Rome was targeting to a similar restoration. The (so called) last pagan revival was aiming to the preservation of a minimum of customs and practices that would ensure the preservation of their identity as Romans of Rome.

The (re)introduction of radical religious practices and the strong emphasis on them made classical paganism to appear even more distant. The attachment to such archaic elements was something that came in opposition (under normal circumstances) to the established cult principles of the Graeco-Roman civilization. There were of course some uncomfortable

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[455] See Justin, *Apologia* II. 12, Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 23. 6, Lactantius, *Institutiones Divinae*, I, 21.3, Cyprian, *De Spectaculis*, III, Tertullian, *Apologeticus pro Christianis*, IX.5, Firmicus Maternus, *De Errore Profanum Religionum*, XXVI, 2.

[456] See R. Sider, *Christian and Pagan in the Roman Empire: The Witness of Tertullian* (Washington: Catholic University of America, 2001), p. 24. Also J. Lennon, *Pollution and Religion in Ancient Rome*, p. 121

[457] See J. Lennon, 'Jupiter Latiaris and the ''Taurobolium:'' Inversions of Cleansing in Christian Polemic,' *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, vol. 59, 3 (2010), pp. 381-384, p. 381.

moments in Roman history when desperate situations called for desperate measures.[458] Human sacrifice had occurred in Rome but always had the form of sacro-legal executions.[459] The obsession of late Roman aristocracy with the work of Livy must have nurtured their interest for episodes that narrated how the 'pious' ancestors responded to internal and external challenges. Livy narrated how the Romans sacrificed 358 Tarquinians in 356 BC as an act of retaliation for the sacrifice of 307 Roman hostages.[460] More than a century later (228 BC), a lightining that struck the Capitol and the Senate House was interpreted as need for an offering to non-Roman Deities and for that purpose a Gallic and a Greek couples were sacrificed in the Forum Boarium.[461] Additionally, Minucius Felix narrated in his *Octavius* dialogue that Catilina bound the conspirators to their common oath by drinking *hominis sanguine*.[462] A *Senatus Consultum* of 97BC quoted by Pliny the Elder prohibited human sacrifice.[463] Later on, the emperor Elagabalus introduced the practice of systematic human and in particular child sacrifice to honour his patron Syrian deity which had been introduced to Rome from Emessa.[464] In the late fourth century, John Chryssostom was attacking the pagans in his *Homily on St. Babylas* by comparing the moral standards of Christianity to the practice of human sacrifice that the pagans were practicing even in his own time.[465]

During the last seven years of his life, Symmachus developed new pathways of communication and influence with the court. The military and political events by the waning of the fourth century were challenging not only the idea of Rome that Symmachus so

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[458] See L. R. Lanzillotta, 'The Early Christians and Human Sacrifice,' in J. N. Bremmer (ed.), *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 81-102, p. 81. Also J. Lennon, *Pollution and Religion in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 122.

[459] See D. G. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 40.

[460] See Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri*, VII, 15.10.

[461] Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita Libri* XXII, 57.6.

[462] See Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae,* XXII, 1-2, Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, 30, 4-6. Also J. B. Rives 'Human Sacrifice among Pagans and Christians,' *The Journal of Roman Studies*, Vol. 85 (1995), pp. 65-85, p. 72.

[463] See Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, 30. 12. Also J. B. Rives, 'Tertullian and Child Sacrifice', *Museum Helveticum*, vol. 51 (1994), pp. 54-63, p. 58.

[464] See Herodian, *History of the Empire from the Death of Marcus*, V. 5. Also Casius Dio, *Roman History*, LXXXII, 3 and *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Life of Elagabalus*, I, 8.

[465] See John Chrysostom, *Homily on St. Babylas against Julian and the Pagans*, 1-23 (*Patrologia Graeca*: 50. 533-9). Also S. N. C. Lieu, *The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic: Claudius Mamertinus, John Chrysostom, Ephraim the Syrian* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1986), p. 62.

courageously defended a decade earlier but they were physically threatening the eternal city. In 397 Stilicho encouraged the Senate to declare the rebel Gildo as 'hostis publicus' by issuing a *senatus consultum*. The senate absorbed much of the people's rage for the grain shortage and the senators themselves had to provide goods from their own estates in order to offer some temporary relief to the inhabitants of Rome. [466] This period marks the beginning of the collision of the senatorial and court interests, paving the way to the general disestablishment of the western empire in the fifth century. Stillicho's pressure for senatorial contributions of money and manpower from their estates and Alaric's arrival in Italy in 401 were threatening the senatorial way of life and their traditional values. The old capital was suddenly dangerously close to the intrigues of the court and the problematic and occasionally unpredicted behaviour of the Gothic *foederati*.

Both Ambrose and Symmachus were concerned and reflected about the form of an urban community which shared the same ideals and on the function of its symbols when expressed in monuments within the public space. Symmachus appeared to focus more on the preservation of collective public rites and traditions that bound the community by a common identity. On the other hand, Ambrose, given his background in state administration, used his experience as well as his education and readings to produce a vision of an ideal urban community in his *De Officiis*. Thus he emphasized on how the Christian clergy would function within a pre-existing urban environment and social norms. Furthermore, his attitude towards old non-Christian traditions was not necessarily hostile as long as they would not be an obstacle to the priorities (or the aesthetics) of a rising Christian elite. What united their visions was their active interest concerning the managing of public space of Rome and how this would reflect on the ideological orientation of Romanitas to the degree that the latter was defined by visible material symbols such as the altar and statue of Victory. By the end of the fourth century and in the absence of an eminent advocate of the traditional discourse of Romanitas like Symmachus the new Christian dialectic that portrayed Rome as the city of

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[466] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 268-269.

the Apostles was carving a new profile for the city. The combined work of bishop Damasus I and of intellectuals like Prudentius and later Augustine recarved the history of Rome in a new narrative that would create a new (Christian) *Romanitas*.[467]

Prudentius in his *Liber Peristephanon* paves the way for the Christian idea of Roman patriotism, replacing the old *exempla* of the pagan heroes with the more recent 'crowned martyrs'.[468] His account of the martyrdom of Lawrence, written between AD 382 and 395 is a manifestation of the coming Christian future of Rome.[469] Lawrence appeals to God so that Romulus and Numa might be converted to Christianity and that the shame of the senators, the celebration of the Saturnalia, should be erased. The only glory that remained for the *urbs togata* was the submission of Jupiter not with the strength of Camillus or Caesar but by the blood of Lawrence (*Antiqua fanorum parens*, / *iam Roma Christo dedita*, /*Laurentio uictrix duce*/ *ritum triumfas barbarum* […] *non turbulentis uiribus* / *Cossi, Camilli aut Caesaris*, / *sed martyris Laurentii* / *non incruento proelio*).[470] The apostles Peter and Paul were about to come and liberate the people of the old capital from the idols, prophesizing the advent of the emperor Constantine who would close the 'ivory doors' of the temples.[471] Finally the marbles of Rome would remain clean of the blood of the sacrifices and the statues of divinities would remain as innocent objects. The death of Lawrence, Prudentius concluded, was the death of the temples; a new Rome had replaced the old. The poet emphasizes the importance of Rome as the city of the martyrs with its ground being full of *sacris sepulchris*.[472] What followed in his poem was the depiction of Lawrence placed in heaven as a free citizen of the *Roma Caelestis* in which he would be a perpetual consul, still receiving petitions on behalf of the Roman people.[473] The archetype of Rome appears to have fully dominated Christian thought preluding Augustine's *City of God*. Heaven was perceived as a spiritual ever-lasting

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[467] See S. Ratti, *Polémiques entre Païens et Chrétiens* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012), p. 45-49

[468] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies*, p. 148

[469] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II. 433-536.

[470] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II. 1-4, 16-19.

[471] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II. 473.

[472] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II. 542-544.

[473] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II. 554-565.

image of Rome and its civic institutions. The only difference to the *Roma Terrena* was the perpetuity of its celestial copy.

IV.   Claudian's *Ornamenta Patriae*

By the end of the fourth century AD the idea of Rome and its personified conceptions in literature had been crystalized in a rather stereotypical image of venerable *Roma*-figure by the contribution of authors like Symmachus and Ambrose. A few years later, Claudian and Prudentius would solidify the persona of Rome in its most distinct and familiar image. The scheme of the personified *Romanitas* evolved as a tool of imposing religious and political agendas continuing the literary tension of the fourth century. The authors of the period who appeared as the manipulators of the personified Rome were in fact voluntarily trapped in its shadow and influence looking more like its ornaments than instructors. Claudian's extensive use of the literary figure of *Dea Roma* in his panegyrics (works fundamentally addressed to a wider group of people even only of the upper classes) reveals that the archetypical personified symbol of the eternal city must have been quite familiar to his audience. There was no need to over-simplify or explain about what goddess *Roma* stood for in his narrative. The frequent direct reference to that figure implied that his contemporaries were fully aware of the semiotics and context of Rome's allegorical representation with specific features and context. Additionally, its constant use reveals a potential popularity of the symbol since it kept reappearing in successive panegyrics. Simultaneously, it was safe and convenient to do so, given its religiously neutral character. As we examined in the previous chapter Christians and non-Christians claimed an equal share to *Romanitas*, its symbols and manifest-destiny. From this point of view, Claudian's literary references to *Dea Roma* deserve our attention since they rather signified the end/final shape of an ideological process/dialogue on the representation of goddess Rome as a personification of *Romanitas*.

The first decade of the fifth century witnessed the parallel course of two different dialectics regarding Rome, one traditional and one Christian represented by the prose and verse works of Claudian and Prudentius. Their expectations and confidence reshaped Roman

patriotism and framed a future of optimism entrusting *Roma* to the new off-springs of the Theodosian dynasty. Claudian on the one hand, an outsider from the Greek East, rejuvenated *Roma* in a familiar language and discourse continuing the neoclassicism of the fourth century while Prudentius on the other was forging a new radical vision of a Christian *Romanitas* which legitimized itself not by a distant heroic past but by a manifest-destiny guaranteed by the divine providence.[474]

Around the time of the battle of Frigidus (394), Claudian was arriving at Rome with some ambitious plans. Following the steps of Ammianus Marcellinus a few years earlier, the Alexandrian poet must have felt linguistically and intellectually mature enough to express his loyalty, devotion and Greek ideas of *Romanitas* in its cradle. The Greek veneration of Rome was not new since it was more than evident back in the carefree times of the Second Sophistic in the works of writers like Aelius Aristides and Dio Chryssostom, but by the end of the fourth century, Greek authors felt more than comfortable to express themselves in Latin and contribute to the already established literary genre of the *Laudes Romae.*[475] Claudian's motives for moving to the West probably involved something more than job-hunting. The anti-pagan pogrom unleashed by Theophilus of Alexandria in 391 must have affected his career plans if not his safety.[476]

Claudian's panegyric for the consulship of the young brothers Probinus and Olybrius for the year 395 (*Panegyricus dictus Probino et Olybrio consulibus*) provided the poet with an ideal opportunity to synthesize and praise the values of the Roman aristocracy with the goals and achievements of the Theodosian regime. The elevation of the two Anician members to the most prestigious and desired office signified the great but still fragile compromise between the emperor and the world of Roman aristocracy. Claudian was fully aware of the importance

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[474] See M. A. Malamud, *A Poetics of Transformation: Prudentius and Classical Mythology* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 24-25.

[475] See A. Cameron, *Claudian: Poetry and Propaganda at the Court of Honorius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 19.

[476] See I. Gualandri, 'Claudian in context,' in R. Lizzi Testa (ed.) *The Strange death of Pagan Rome: Reflection on a Historiographical Controversy*, pp. 141-149, p. 145-146.

of this event as well as of the honour made to him by this commission. For that reason he chose to validate this rapprochement with the appearance and mediation of the figure of Rome who appears here for the first time in his work. After an opening that contained the praise of the family's past, the poet moves to the battlefield of Frigidus where the triumphant Theodosius is visited by the *Dea Roma* who appears on a flying chariot of fire in a description that recalled the departure of the prophet Elijah in the Book of Kings or in a more familiar frame for Claudian, like Phaethon driving the Chariot of the Sun.[477] Her winged vehicle was driven by *Impetus* and *Metus* who accompanied her in all past wars and they were now leading her to her natural position in the sky after the conquest of all earthly realms. The panegyrist depicts the armoured goddess appearing like *innupta Minerva* and carrying the shield of Aeneas, forged by Vulcan himself that depicts Romulus and Remus, the she-wolf as well as Mars and Tiber in a scene influenced by the shields of Aeneas and of Achilles from the classical Greek and Latin tradition.[478] The goddess informed the emperor of the two brothers who were worthy to be compared to the old heroes of the *Decii*, *Metelli*, *Scipiones* and *Camili*.[479] Their ancestors were counted by the consular *fasces* since all of them were consuls and now this line of succession continued with Probinus and Olybrius who followed the *fatum* of their illustrious family.[480] Despite the fact that *Roma* now stands *ante ducem* the emperor addresses her as equal, greeting a *numen amicum*, the *genetrix* of law and consort of the Thunderer, dominant of an Empire that equals the heavens, an encomium that would pave the way for the praises of Rutilius Namatianus two decades later.[481] Theodosius consents to the elevation of the brothers as consuls and the joyful and proud Tiber asks Eurotas, the river of Sparta, if he had ever nurtured such men as the sons of Probus.[482] The figure of *Roma* overshadows the entire panegyric while Theodosius is

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[477] See Kings IV, 2. Also Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, II, 150-177.

[478] See Claudian, *Panegyricus Dictus Probino et Olybrio Consulibus*, 84. Also Virgil, *Aeneid*, book VIII, 631-636 and *Iliad*, Book XVIII, 478-608.

[479] Claudian, *Pan. Prob. et Olyb.*, 147-149

[480] Claudian, *Pan. Prob. et Oly.*, 16.

[481] Claudian, *Pan. Prob. et Olyb.* 124-128. Also Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 49-50.

[482] Claudian, *Pan. Prob. et Olyb.*, 236-237.

simply the recipient of the deity's request, confirming the illustrious ancestry of the *Anicii* and their contribution to Roman glory.

A few months later Claudian was travelling to Milan in order to deliver his next panegyric dedicated to the (third) consulship of the emperor Honorius (396). The timing of his arrival could not be more convenient for Stilicho who was struggling to prove to everyone that he was the regent for both East and West according to Theodosius's last wish. The panegyric for the young emperor's consulship (*Panegyricus de Tertio Consulatu Honorii Augusti*) would be a milestone for both Stilicho and the Alexandrian poet, marking the beginning of a mutual appreciation and the structuring of a complex propaganda machine which would last about a decade. Claudian emphasized in his panegyric the legitimacy of Stilicho's claims portraying Theodosius on his deathbed where he entrusts the guardianship of his sons to the barbarian general.[483] Later on he would also emphasize the connection of Stilicho's son, Eucherius, to the royal family as a grandson of Theodosius, that was born in Rome (unlike Theodosius II), serving well the long-term plans of his patron.[484] He defended his actions against Rufinus (*In Rufinum*, in 396) depicting the eastern general as the archetype of Evil while the half-Vandal general was appearing as the *defensor* of the *Romanitas*. When Eutropius declared Stilicho as *hostis publicus* in the East (397), Claudian was still there to defend him and his cause (*In Eutropium*, in 399). Finally when the Western Court managed to prevail over Gildo in 398 the victory was claimed for Honorius but it was more than obvious that it was Stilicho that took advantage of it, paving his own way to the consulship for the year 400.

Claudian decided to re-introduce goddess *Roma* in his *De Bello Gildonico* to glorify the cause of the general-regent and validate the recently achieved *concordia fratrum* that Stilicho was so eager to promote.[485] The poet appears to be impressed by the quick victory that took place, the news of which arrived at the court earlier than the rumours of the

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[483] Claudian, *Panegyricus de Tertio Consulatu Honorii Augusti,* 158-9.
[484] Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, III, 176. Also Cameron, *Claudian*, p. 46-47.
[485] Claudian, *De Bello Gildonico*, I, 4.

conflict.[486] Then the scene changes and the panegyrist take his audience to Olympus where the gods have gathered to hear Rome fearing for her fate. The exhausted goddess with her tired eyes and her deep voice, rusty helmet and grey hair appeals to Jupiter not for victories in distant regions, for that was something that occurred in the past, but for food, so that her people might survive the *extremam famem*.[487] She confesses her fear and anxiety about the Sibylline prophecy and begs Jupiter to relieve her from the recent calamities. She continues her grief by admitting that once she was ruling the world, performing triumphs, but now she gradually fell to the present decline. Once, she recalls, the emperors awarded her with Egypt in order to feed the *dominam plebem.[488]* Initially the Nile was arguing with Carthage as to which region would provide supplies to the eternal city but when the Empire was divided in two and the East was invested with an equal *toga,* Africa remained as the *spes unica* for Rome.[489] Finally even this last hope perished when Gildo appeared and abused this *altera Nilum* and with *barbarico fastu* he cut off the food supply of the Romans.[490] Anything would be better than this humiliation, even the sacrifices of the distant Punic Wars that resulted in the annexation of Africa now seemed vain. She even calls for Porsena to restore the monarchy of the Tarquins or surrender herself to Pyrrhus and the flames of Brennus.[491] The poet gave in that way voice to the complaints of the senatorial aristocracy of the old Rome for the upgrading of Constantinople and its new senate of *Graios Quirites*.[492] Despite his Greek origin Claudian adapts here a more 'Roman' rhetoric of the eternal city's political and symbolical primacy in order to convince the audience of the importance of Stilicho's benevolent actions. Africa, then, joins Rome and the rest of the gods in the scene and narrates her own calamities at the hands of Gildo. Jupiter in the end restores the natural order and commissions Honorius to restore Africa to the service of Rome.[493] At once *Roma*

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[486] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I, 12-13.

[487] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I, 35-36.

[488] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I, 53.

[489] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I, 61-62.

[490] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I, 113 and 73.

[491] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I, 123-126.

[492] Claudian, *In Eutropium*, II, 136.

[493] Claudian, *De Bello Gild.*, I 204-207.

was rejuvenated (*meliore iuventa*), reclaimed her old strength and her hair ceased to be grey. It was a revitalization achieved by Gildo's defeat.[494] Prudentius portrayed a similar version of rejuvenated *Roma* (despite his initial criticism of her cult) but it was only because so many of her old senatorial families (*sanguine prisco*), the *excellentior ordo* to which the *urbs* owed its *status*, had been converted to Christianity.[495] Despite the fact, the Christian poets adds, that Rome thought of herself as overwhelmed by her old age, her hair turned to golden once again, and the goddess saluted the *invicti principes* Arcadius and Honorius in her *omne renascens senium*, having learned to defy the very concept of the End, by her longevity and she rejoices for the Christian *reverentia* that she now receives.[496]

The rejuvenation of Rome is a theme repeated again and again, a common topos that can be traced in Martial's work, who praises the rapid recovery of Rome after the fire of AD 80 as the re-birth of the 'Assyrian Phoenix'; the eternal city was renewed appearing young again like her guardian (the emperor Domitian, at that time twenty nine years old).[497] This motif was inherited from then on and passed to later Roman literature as well as in the political theology of the *Nova Roma* in the East even up to the twelfth century chronicle of Konstantinos Manassess. While (Old) Rome was securing its prestige, validity and venerability by its *aeternitas*, Constantinople would achieve so by being portrayed as the symbol of everlasting rebirth of Rome.[498] Menander Rhetor advised his contemporary panegyrists in the making that they could use the concept of old and young age personified when the city to be praised has older neighbours (*αἱ μέν κεκμήκασι χρόνῳ, ἡ δ' ἀνθεῖ*).[499] Traditionally the idea of an aged Rome, as in the case of Ammianus Marcellinus's

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[494] See P. G. Christiansen, *The Use of Images by Claudius Claudianus* (Hague, Mouton, 1969), p. 52.

[495] Prudentius, Contra Symmachum, I, 217-25, 569-570 and *Contra Sym.*, II, 655.

[496] Prudentius, *Contra Sym.*, II, 655-661.

[497] See Martial, *Epigrammaton*, V, 7, 1-4. Also R. Evans, *Utopia Antiqua: Readings of the Golden Age and Decline at Rome* (Oxon: Routledge, 2008), p.12.

[498] See Constantinos Manasses, *Σύνοψις Χρονική,* 2313-2332. Also Karagiannopoulos I., *Το Βυζαντινό Κράτος* (Thessalonica: Βάνιας, 2001), p. 286.

[499] See Menander Rhetor 350. 20 in D. A. Russel and N. G. Wilson (eds.) *Menander Rhetor: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 40.

description ([Roma] *vergens in senium*)[500] was a part of a dialectic of authority and superiority, justifying the privileged position of the eternal city in the cosmos. The everlasting duration of the Rome and its Empire would be bound to the repeating circles of crisis and restoration, an idea that Rutilius Namatianus would later promote in his *De Reditu Suo*.[501] *Romanitas* was anyway familiar with this concept already from the time of Horace who introduced the *aliusque et idem* motif in his *Carmen Saeculare*.[502] Claudian however, who was fortunate enough not to survive his patron or to witness the sack of 410, had the opportunity to use the archetype of Rome in every possible way to justify the decisions and acts of the western court to his audience, a most handy technique to validate propaganda.

The poet's panegyric for the consulship of Stilicho is marked by *Roma's* appearance and praise of the general's deeds. Claudian celebrates Stilicho's recent achievements on the field of battle which overshadowed the victories over past enemies like Tigranes, Mithridates VI, Pyrrhus, Antiochus III, Jugurtha, Philip V and Perseus and declaring that the recent triumph over Gildo was a worthy continuation to the sequel of the Punic Wars.[503] The goddess, then, responds to their prayer and flies to the imperial palace of Milan faster than a shooting star, to meet Stilicho with the reflexion of her shield mirrored on the surface of the water of Eridanus (Po) while flying. It was a familiar journey for *Roma* since she had already done so in 399 to inform the emperor of Eutropius's provocation in the East.[504] She meets him by appearing mighty like Minerva and terrible like Mars while the palace was trembling by the shining of her armour and helmet.[505] She asks the general to accept the consulship, proclaiming that there was no better time for his elevation to the highest office so he had to stop neglecting the honour that even emperors were proud to hold and was now justly belonging to him.[506] Only Stilicho appeared to be able to restore the dignity and the prestige

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[500] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XIV, vi. 4.
[501] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 139-140.
[502] See Horace, *Carmen Saeculare*, 10.
[503] Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, II, 272-275.
[504] Claudian, *In Eutropium*, I, 374-380.
[505] Claudian, *De Cons.Stil.*, II, 277-280.
[506] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, II, 281-292.

of this institution back to its *priscus honos* after its abuse by Eutropius in the East. Brutus, *Roma* recounted, was the founder of the office but Stilicho would be its avenger.[507] The first one guaranteed the *libertas populi* with the fasces but the latter removed them of the stigma of servility and this last thing alone was far more important that the actual establishment of the office since Stilicho secured its perpetuity.[508] The poet introduces a motif familiar to him from his Greek intellectual background, bringing back the narrative of the 'People's liberator and avenger' which was part of the Athenian tradition of Harmodios and Aristogeiton who killed the tyrant Hipparchus in 514 BC.[509] Stilicho likewise deposed Eutropius and Gildo and revived the glorious days of the *Res Publica*. The goddess offers to the general the insignia of the consulship. The ivory staff and the investiture of Romulus now cover his military uniform and the toga covers his armour. Stilicho who is Mars personified is returning victorious as a god of peace, leaving his shield away.[510] Thus he enters the eternal city on a chariot drawn by white horses; Mars himself is holding the reins while Bellona escorts her father carrying the spoils of battle while Metus and Pavor are the lictors who place the iron chains around the necks of the captured enemies.[511]

The *adventus* of Stilicho was an answer to Rome's prayer for the return of the consul back to the eternal city. As soon as the goddess gazes upon the general's procession, she hastens to Elysium to inform the *Curii,* the *Fabricii*, the *Scipiones* and all the heroes of the glorious past of Stilcho's coming. The crowd gathered along the *via Flaminia* expects to see the consul's arrival and, as Claudian narrates, the *antiqui species* of the Roman Senate is emerging while the consuls climb the Pincian hill, a *collis* that originally was within the city's *pomerium* but was located outside the Aurelian wall.[512] The Murcian valley re-echoes Stilicho's name to the heavens as it sounds from the two opposite hills, the Palatine and the

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[507] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, II, 317-325.
[508] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, II, 326.
[509] See Evans, 'Embedding Rome in Athens', p. 91.
[510] See Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, II, 373.
[511] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, II, 370-377.
[512] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, II 405.

Aventine.[513] The panegyrist's emphasis on the landscape reveals his alternative technique of representing Rome, apart from the personified goddess; the landscape manifests itself as an encapsulated epitome of the imperial capital, having thus the same function and effect as the appearance of the female figure of *Roma*.[514] The reference to the seven hills, one of the most distinctive elements of the Roman landscape was already well established in Latin literature for centuries. Virgil portrayed the Arcadian Evander establishing his settlement among the seven hills after his arrival from Greece; it was a symbolism too important to escape Claudian's attention.[515] The latter used the Vergilian view of topography, which identified Rome with the *septem colles,* already quite early in his career when he described the arrival of Theodosius's messenger to announce the elevation of the two Anicii on the consulship. The Roman scene opens with the song of the *Salii* echoing from around the hills while Vergil portrayed the Salians singing a hymn to Hercules with their voices raising above the city's hills, epitomizing an Augustan invented tradition which would be re-filtered in the late fourth century.[516]

The poet delivers to Rome the man who fulfilled the common prayers of the people and the nobles.[517] Stilicho's advent appears to surpass the triumphs of Fabricius, Aemilius Paulus, Marius and Pompey and, unlike those heroes of old, he was unrivalled and unchallenged like Jupiter in the sky, and deserved to be called *parens* of Rome and *mundi communis amor*.[518] It was thanks to him that Rome's ambassadors ceased to humiliate themselves by kneeling to the arrogant East, the *aemula Romae,*[519] requesting the return of Africa.[520] The eternal city, grateful for relying once again to her own power and for having the eagles waiting once more for the Senate's *decreta* bestows the consulship to her avenger, a privilege she had

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[513] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, II, 407-408.

[514] See M. Roberts, 'Rome Personified, Rome Epitomized: Representations of Rome in the Poetry of Early Fifth Century,' in *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 122, n 4 (Winter 2001), pp. 533-565, p. 534.

[515] See Virgil, *Aeneid*, VIII, 53. Also C. Vout, *The Hills of Rome: Signature of an Eternal City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 103-115.

[516] Claudian, *Pan. Prob. et Olyb*, 175-6. Also Virgil, *Aeneid*, VIII, 305.

[517] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 1-2.

[518] Claudian, De Cons. Stil., III, 30-42 and *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 51-52.

[519] Claudian, *In Rufinum*, II 54.

[520] Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, III, 81-82.

lost for a long time.[521] The consul is *proximus* to the gods since he is protector of the greatest city on Earth whose size cannot be measured and no imagination can portray. There is no voice that can praise this city which raises her head among the stars with its seven hills that imitate the seven regions of Olympus. This association is linked anyway with the Greek landscape, since Athens was the first city to include seven hills. Claudian had already linked the customs and institutions of Pandion's city (the legendary fifth king of Athens) as they were re-framed by Solon and compared them to the renewed *reverentia patrum* and devotion to the *senium iuris* and the *leges vetustae* initiated by Honorius.[522] Almost half a century earlier, Julian emphasized the importance of Athens in relation to Rome, as the two privileged sister-cities within the Empire, with the first one signifying the spiritual and cultural cradle of the Greco-Roman civilization while the second was the actual political capital of the Empire.[523] The symbolic place of Athens was disproportionately significant in comparison to its actual political importance; Augustus first of all identified Rome and presented it as the new Athens while Parthia was seen as the revived Persian threat.[524] After all *Roma* appeared as Pallas (Athena) in front of Stilicho.[525]

Rome is portrayed by Claudian as the *armorum legumque parens,* a warlord and at the same time the mother of Justice, to disagree with her would be a crime and a sacrilege, a city that emerged from humble beginnings to incorporate the axes of the world in her domain and her power expanded as far as the light of the sun can reach, a parallelism familiar from the panegyric to Rome by Aelius Aristides, more than two centuries earlier.[526] But apart from signifying the extent of her dominion it was an association with the essence of the sun-light itself since all the regions outside the *limes* were covered by barbarian darkness. It was a city which fought *inmunera pugnas* and conquered Spain and Gaul by land and Carthage by

[521] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 83-86.
[522] Claudian, *De IV Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, 504-508.
[523] Julian, *Εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Ἥλιον πρὸ Σαλούστιον*, 152, d – 153, a. Also P. Athanassiadi, *Ιουλιανός*, pp. 92, 133.
[524] See N. Evans, 'Embedding Rome in Athens' in J. Brodd and J. L. Reed (eds.) *Rome and Religion: A Cross-disciplinary Dialogue on the Imperial Cult* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), p. 83-97, pp. 81, 93.
[525] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.* II, 278.
[526] Claudian, De Cons. Stil., III, 136-137. Also Aelius Aristides, *Ῥώμης ἐγκώμιον*, 349.

sea and laid siege and captured the cities of Sicily.[527] She never surrendered or gave up because of occasional defeats like Cannae and Trebia. When the enemy was outside her walls she was sending expeditions to distant Hiberia and not even Ocean could set an obstacle since she conquered the *orbe Britannos.*[528] It was the affectionate figure of *Roma* who, according to Claudian, accepted the defeated people into her *gremium* as a mother and not a *domina* and protected the *humanum genus* with a common name, embracing the defeated people with her citizenship, unifying by her peace all the various and alien to each other *mores.*[529] The panegyrist's depiction of Rome as an epitome of the world and a global metropolis was heavily influenced by previous praises of Rome in Greek literature as for example the description of Rome by Athenaeus as the *City of the Heavens* (οὐρανόπολις) since all nations have gathered within her, and of course the Roman oration of Aelius Aristides who declared with pride that Rome unified the world in a common forum (κοινὴν ἀγορὰν) so none could feel as a stranger within her domain, the universal commonwealth.[530] More recently Ammianus Marcellinus perceived the *urbs venerabilis* as a *prudes et dives* parent who, after subjugating savage *gentes* made laws which are the *fundamenta libertatis.*[531] Prudentius as well describes her as the *venerabilis caput orbis* and as a faithful parent who offered laws and institutions to the various *gentes* and unified distant regions and people *ad unum* in a *commune forum.*[532] Thanks to her authority everyone, he adds, could call the world as their home and live wherever they choose and even visiting the distant Thule is nothing but a leisure activity. Everybody can taste the waters of the Rhône and the Orontes and the entire *Oecoumeni* became a *gens una.*[533] The Roman citizenship, granted universally by the *Constitutio Antoniniana,* was a living reminder of *Roma's* generosity and *clementia* to the people, the *Romanitas,* with its legal confirmation, was a gift to everyone and by embracing it they participated to the universal offering made by Rome to the gods.

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[527] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 142-144.
[528] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 145-150.
[529] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 151-155.
[530] See Athenaeus, Δειπνοσοφισταί, 1, 20, b-c. Also Aelius Aristides, Ῥώμης ἐγκώμιον, 348-349 and 372-375.
[531] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XIV, vi. 5.
[532] Prudentius *Contra Symmachum*, I, 416, 455-57 and II, 613-18, 662.
[533] Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, III, 156-160.

After all, Caracalla granted the citizenship as *gratiarum actio* to his patron gods for protecting him ([δικαίως δ' ἂν κἀγὼ τοῖς θ]εοῖς τ[οῖ]ς ἀθ[αν]άτοις εὐχαριστήσαιμι, ὅτι τῆ[ς] τοιαύτη[ς] │[ἐπιβουλῆς γενομένης σῷο]ν ἐμὲ συν[ετήρ]ησαν.)[534] Thus the new citizens were turned instantly to new devotees to the Roman Pantheon with free admission. Claudian recounts afterwards the succession of Empires that led to the rise of Rome. Sparta yielded the *male sublimes* of Athens only to be defeated by Thebes. The Medes and Persians annihilated Assyria only to be conquered by the Greeks who in turn subjected themselves to Rome. The latter however only grew stronger by the Sibylline prophecies and the hallowed institutions of Numa Pompilius.[535] The pessimistic oracles as well as portents and divination were anyway of paramount importance for the preservation of Roman identity since the practices and traditions like these preserved the fragile social peace in times of crisis and confusion by inspiring and feeding the collective imaginary.[536] The panegyrist was well aware of the importance and influence of the old prophecies and their institutional role as a link between the contemporary society and its past and its future and since Claudian cannot bury the gloomy Sibylline oracles, he had to incorporate them in his rhetoric.

The eternal city was also the sacred *locus* of the gods; it was for Rome that Jupiter was unleashing his thunderbolts and Minerva was offering her protecting shield, Vesta brought her sacred flame and Bacchus his rituals and the *turrita* Cybele her Phrygian lions, while the sacred python of Epidaurus left Greece to settle on the *insula* of Tiber.[537] Thus the panegyric demonstrates the *translatio* of cults and deities of every region that established them within the *pomerium* of Rome after the *evocatio* on behalf of its people, enlarging the cultural and religious collection that made the city sacred to all creeds and belief systems.[538] That was

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[534] See C. Bourazelis, *Θεία Δωρεά: Μελέτες πάνω στην Πολιτική της Δυναστείας των Σεβήρων και την Constitutio Antoniniana*, p. 20-21.
[535] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 161-168.
[536] See S. W. Rasmussen, *Public Portents in Republican Rome* (Rome: Analecta Romana Instituti Danici, Suppl. XXXIV, 2003), p. 241.
[537] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 169-174
[538] See C. Ando, 'A Religion for the Empire' in C. Ando (ed.) *Roman Religion* (Ediburgh: Edinbourgh University Press, 2003), p. 220-243, p. 233. Also R. E. A. Palmer, *The Archaic Community of the Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 180-181.

the city, the poet reminds the new consul, that he protects, the *patria* of kings and generals and his homeland as well for it was there that Eucherius was born, a boy that justly deserved to be a citizen of the old capital since it was Rome that predetermined his future glory.[539] The general was proclaimed *dominus* of the people of Mars, and even Brutus could not deny this acclamation for it was offered by the people to demonstrate their love and affection for Stilicho on every occasion, when he enters the Circus and sits on the *sela curulis* or attributes justice in the forum along with his lictors and addresses the people from the *rostra*.[540] Claudian praised Stilicho by emphasising to him the importance of Rome and simultaneously flattered his audience by commemorating all those elements that contributed to the city's privileged and symbolic position and reminded them of who their restorer was.

Claudian recited his *De Bello Getico* probably in front of the Senate, whose vast estates were vulnerable to the invaders. He was trying to explain why Stilicho wasted the chance to destroy the Gothic force on the battlefield since the security of Rome was the first of his priorities.[541] The panegyrist emphasizes that when the Roman fatherland was defended by an army of citizens in the distant days of the *Res Publica*, all wars conducted on Italian soil had as their primary purpose the defence of the capital. When Pyrrhus invaded Italy, the Romans were trying to drive him away and not to achieve just an impressive military victory.[542] Rome would now have its seven hills standing in *securitas.* The hills, one of the most emblematic symbols of the city have a significant function in Claudian's panegyrics, a motif that is linked to Rome at least from the time of Virgil and gradually formed a particularly familiar and strong bond of the city with the landscape.[543] The Alexandrian poet used it again and again to achieve his purpose like the parallelism between the seven hills of Rome and the seven zones of Olympus or the use of the geography of the City to synthesize an

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[539] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 175-182.
[540] Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 192-202.
[541] Claudian, *De Bello Gettico*, 97.
[542] Claudian, *De Bello Get.*, 125-129.
[543] See Virgil, *Georgicon*, II, 534.

epitomized personification of Rome by using the natural symbols of its position.[544] The landscape reveals that nothing occurred by coincidence, the hills themselves and their number were considered as a symbol of universal perfection, a motif that can be traced at least as back as the Babylonian mythology and the concept of the seven heavens and celestial bodies that surround the Earth. Rome therefore was a sacred ground, an axis that linked the terrestrial world with the heavens, destined by the gods to obtain universal power and authority. The Romans were fully aware of this, celebrating already by the times of archaic Rome the festival of the *Septimontium* on December 11th and as Varro confirmed this was the first epithet by which Rome was known.[545] In the *Bello Getico,* Rome is portrayed as the *veneranda parens* and at the city that equals the heavens magnifying thus Stilicho's deeds of restoring her safety. Prudentius referred to Rome in the same manner, describing her as *fida parens* and *regina.*[546] Claudian however, tries to remind his audience of the unthinkable scenario of a Gothic sack of the eternal city, portraying the atrocities that would follow but fortunately the shrine of Numa and the temple of Romulus were safe.[547] He also criticized them for the panic that was spread around and of the murmurs of abandoning Rome and re-settling in other places like the Rhône, leaving their ancient cradle to the mercy of arctic tribes (*Arctois gentibus*).[548] Nevertheless it is interesting that Claudian portrayed the Goths as intenting to sack Rome in the first place (*penetrabis ad Urbem*), something which appears to be a common literary *topos* from then on, traced in the works of Prudentius and later Socrates Scholasticus.[549] All these however were pointless since Stilicho saved Rome and restored its pride at Pollentia. Despite this relief it was still difficult to convince the Roman aristocracy why the victorious general conducted negotiations with the defeated enemy, the first raiders to step into Italy since the Cimbri and the Teutones in the age of

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[544] Claudian, De Consulatu Stilichonis, III, 135, *De VI Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, 536.
[545] See Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, V, 41. Also Palmer, *The Archaic Community of the Romans*, pp. 122-23, 128.
[546] Claudian, *De Bello Get.*, 52-55. Also Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, I, 416 and 430.
[547] Claudian, *De Bello Get.*, 102.
[548] Claudian, *De Bello Get.* 298-304.
[549] Claudian, *De Bello Get.*, 546 and Prudentius, *Contra Sym.*, II, 696, Socrates Scholasticus, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία VII, 10. Also Cameron, *Claudian*, p. 184.

Marius and Claudian's explanation that an alive and defeated Gothic king would be a perpetual and vivid *tropaeum* of Roman glory was simply not quite acceptable.[550]

When Honorius came to the old capital in 404 to celebrate his triumph and his sixth consulship Claudian had the opportunity to celebrate the occasion with another panegyric (*De Sexto Conslulatu Honorii Augusti*). The poet was delighted to recite his panegyric for the first visit of Honorius in the Old Capital since 389 and there he had the opportunity to develop Stilicho's side of events by reshaping the perspectives of the audience and challenging the collective representations regarding the threat to Rome. In order to do so he would use the familiar motives of Stilicho's panegyric for his consulship four years earlier. It would be the highlight and swan song of the poet's career. The parental figure of goddess *Roma* appears complaining about Honorius's delay to pay her a visit and re-unite with her, something that did not take place after the suppression of Gildo's revolt. She could not forget that the *laurea* of the *belli Getici* had been won so close to the city, making thus this victory even more important. Afterwards she recounts that during the recent past she had seen her emperors only three times within her sacred *pomerium* and, despite the altered circumstances, the context was the same; civil wars were the *causa tropaei*. Mother *Roma* had no reason to celebrate, the usurpers were still her children, and she weeps for them with maternal affection.[551] Even Caesar, she admits, despite his Gallic deeds, remained silent about Pharsalus.[552]

By the end of the fourth century, however, there was barely a distinction in Roman imperial political theology between the celebration of the defeat of an internal enemy and a military triumph over an external threat, so the imperial advents were functioning as an occasion for power display allowing the individuals of having a chance to renew and/or confirm their loyalty to the legitimate emperor. However as later as the early 400's there was still a traditionalist minority, perhaps among the aristocratic circles, who were still quite sensitive

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[550] Claudian, *De VI Cons.Hon. Aug.*, 223.
[551] See Christiansen, *The Use of Images by Claudius Claudianus*, p. 54.
[552] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.,* 397-400.

on this issue and their echoes had somehow reached the narrative of Ammianus Marcellinus and Claudian. After all Septimius Severus had refused to conduct a triumph after his victory over Pescenius Niger (though his denial reveals an opposite tension that would gradually prevail) and as late as 389 Pacatus was struggling to persuade the Senate of Rome that the recent victory of Theodosius was not just a simple civil war but something exceptional and one of a kind that deserved to be commemorated.[553] Honorius indeed as in the past was the *de jure* ruler who visited the core of *Romanitas* after supressing a rebellion. But the *verior gloria* gained by the victory against a foreign enemy (for a change) could restore the *priscum morem*, bringing to an end the era of triumphs with spoils of fellow Romans.

The literary scheme of the lamenting *Roma* was not Claudian's innovation; Cicero portrayed Rome in his orations against Catilina as the *communis patria* and *parens omnium nostrum* complaining about the calamities that her children cause to each other. Symmachus described *Roma* begging Gratian and Valentinian II for tolerance and respect of her traditions. Prudentius would also use the same (reversed) motif.[554] The emperor addressed the Senate and the people in the Forum Romanum, re-enacting the old Augustan *civilitas* as Constantius II and his father did. Afterwards he reached the Palatine hill by the *via sacra* where he took residence in the Augustan mansion.[555] Again Roma appears to be complaining and wondering why the *Palatium* that gave its name to all other structures of the similar function was now neglected as if the world could no longer be ruled from there as in the past. The goddess continued to reflect as to why the old emperors were able to rule the Danube, the Rhine, the Tigris and the Euphrates from there and now it was for some reason not possible anymore. It was from those walls that the *Aelii*, descending from Nerva, the *tranquillii Pii* and later the *bellatores Severi* were ruling by *iudicio* and not *sanguine.* In the name of those *exempla virtutis*, Roma invites Honorius to join this glorious line by restoring

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[553] See *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Septimius Severus*, 9. Also Pacatus, *Panegyricus Theodosii*, 46, 4.
[554] See Cicero, *In Catilinam* I, 17. Also Symmachus, *Relatio* III, 9 and Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, II, 649-773.
[555] Claudian, *De VI Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, 603-604.

their spirit and mentality in his authority.[556] Antoninus Pius was already considered as a second Numa and Septimius Severus as a second Rumulus/Quirinus[557] so Claudian is not only indicating to Honorius, through *Roma,* to imitate his imperial predecessors but he goes as back as the golden age of early Rome and its actual founding fathers in his aim to portray Honorius as the re-founder of the re-born city. Hadrian also used the same symbolism when he issued coins with depictions of a phoenix sitting on a globe celebrating the return of the *saecula aurea* and he as well associated himself with the venerable Numa and its *pudicitia*.[558] The poet apparently expected Honorius to lead a similar revolution *ad priscum.* The emperor replies to the goddess that he would never go against the will of the mother of the laws and that he sent Stilicho in his place to be elevated in the consulship (400).[559] While the personified Rome is depicted as a maternal figure, suddenly after receiving the news of the emperor's arrival, she transformed to a young bride expecting her future husband.[560] Honorius's presence is the bringer of rejuvenation; he completes the reunion of the two lovers, of Rome and her emperor. The seven hills are now risen higher and the entire city is taking its most exceptional appearance in order to welcome the triumphant ruler. The walls have been restored and her beauty was further increased by this *renovatio*.[561] Even *timor* itself contributed to the reversing of her *senectus* which was caused by the long-lasting peace of the past centuries. The new towers that erected and strengthened the walls had restored her youth, a description which might be a direct reply to the pessimism of Paulinus of Nola who warned his contemporaries a couple of years earlier that there was no other safety than the Christian faith.[562] The *moenia Urbis* consist a symbolic *topos*, signifying (apart from the actual restoration project) the allegorical re-founding of the city. The sacred symbolism of the Aurelian defensive line is also noticed by Prudentius who places the martyrdom of Hippolytus outsides the walls of the City for his persecutors were unwilling to

[556] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.* 404-421.
[557] See *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Antoninus Pius* 13, 4 and *Septimius Severus*, 1, 8.
[558] See R. Evans, *Utopia Antiqua*, p, 12-13.
[559] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 427-433.
[560] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.,* 523-530.
[561] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug*., 532.
[562] See Paulinus of Nola, *Carmen* XXVI, 103.

commit such an atrocity within them.[563] He also praises Rome's achievement of uniting everyone within the walls of a single *urbs patria* as if they were members of the same family or sharing the same native land.[564] Paulinus of Nola would later clarify that the real walls of Rome were the tombs of the martyrs.[565]Augustine also declared through the mouth of Scipio Nasica that Fear is a guardian and protector and the city walls are useless when the citizens' morals are already in ruin.[566] For the time being Claudian was admitting that even the weather is improved for this special event; the importance of the occasion could not pass unnoticed, a familiar *adulatio* of Augustan proportions that can be traced in Horace who associates the elements with the coming of Octavian.[567] The *serenitas* of the emperor along with the Sun keeps the clouds away from the city.[568]

What follows in his narrative is a colourful and vivid description of Honorius's long-expected *adventus*. The expectations of the people ought to be fulfilled. The space between the Palatine and the Mulvian Bridge was filled with a crowd that looked like it had *una facies* or as if it was a single wave moving over the ground. Claudian is using once more a well-established rhetorical *topos* suggested by Menander Rhetor and used as well by Pliny and Pacatus.[569] But this was not a multitude gathered by the usual lust for *sparsio,* a practice long associated with the elevation of consuls; on the contrary they were a *populus* well aware of their saviour, whom they had come to greet. Men of every age saw something familiar by gazing at the emperor's appearance; the *iuvenes* recognized one of their own while the *senes* considered themselves fortunate for witnessing the dawn of a new era for Rome that Honorius was signifying and were praising the *tempora moderata* dominated by the emperor's mild nature and *serenitas*.[570] Honorius was chased by his father's image of the

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[563] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, XI, 43-44.
[564] Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum* II, 610-12.
[565] See Paulinus of Nola, *Natalicium* XI, *Carmen* XIX, 337-42.
[566] See Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, I, 30 and 33.
[567] See Horace, *Carmen* IV, 5,5
[568] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 540-542.
[569] See Menander Rhetor, 381,6, Pliny, *Panegyricus Plinii dictus Traiano*, 22 and Pacatus, *Panegyricus Theodosii*, 37, 3.
[570] Claudian, *De VI Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, 543-549.

Optimus Princeps performance as much as Claudian was haunted by the eloquent panegyric of Pacatus Drepanius. He appeared in the Circus where he was warmly welcomed by the people conducting the last gladiatorial games in Roman history.[571] The combats however were bloodless in an attempt to compromise the old-fashioned needs of an unforgiving audience and the pressure of Christian activists like Prudeentius who appealed to Honorius to abolish the practice.[572] The people were also amazed by the imperial *draconarii* and their waving dragon-standards, appearing ready to capture an enemy in their jaws, and they were gazing at the cataphracts, asking about the origin of the *viri ferrati* and if their horses were *metallo nascentes*.[573]

Apart from being the consul of that year, Honorius was also *triumphator* so the Senate had to pass and greet him in front of his chariot since that was the case in the past, but the present emperor did not allow this.[574] The imperial praise however functioned as an encomium of Stilicho and his son Eucherius who also was of *regius sanguis*.[575] Stilicho had already proved his respect for Roman traditions and the *mos maiorum* in the opening of the Gildonic war, when he had asked the Senate to declare the African rebel as *hostis publicus* and thus he had their consent before taking any measures against the rebel.[576] He also restored the old and long-forgotten *iudicia populi*, surrendering the captives of the Gildonc War to the peoples' judgement and reviving the authority of the *populus Romanus* through the *comitia centuriata*[577] and Claudian was thus encouraged to celebrate the restoration of the *Res Publica* and its constitutions. Now he was rewarded by standing next to the emperor on his triumphal chariot recalling the day that Theodosius had entrusted to him the care of his off springs.[578]A rather rare privilege, the *consessus vehiculi*, was never given to any other

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[571] See Theodoretus, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, V, 26.
[572] Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, II, 1126.
[573] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 566-573.
[574] Claudian, *De VI Cons.Hon. Aug.*, 548.
[575] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 551-553.
[576] Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, I, 325.
[577] Claudian, *De Cons.Stil.*, III, 113-119 and 125.
[578] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 578-583.

adult before.[579] The general's *variae virtutes, Fides, Constantia* and *Pietas* were rewarded at that very moment of entering the eternal city side by side with Honorius. The *puer* that had once been entrusted to his guidance and protection was now addressing the Romans from the rostra, greeting the *patres conscripti* and informing them of his deeds.[580] The winged goddess Victoria guards *Romanitas* in its *templum*, the Curia itself, blessing the divine union between *Roma* and the Emperor.[581] Claudian's verses manifest the Theodosian compromise on the aftermath of the debate on the altar of Victory. Despite Symmachus's last appeal in 402, the altar was not restored; however the statue of Victoria remained *in situ*, to appease the pagan side. Honorius and Stilicho preserved the equilibrium; the Curia would continue to function as the seat of the winged goddess; after all Victory was indeed accompanying Honorius and Stilicho in their dealings with barbarians and rebels until that time. Despite Claudian's careful praise, it seems that he was attacked by Prudentius, who criticised the deception of pagan poets perhaps responding to the panegyrist's previous mentions of goddess Victory.[582]

Claudian adds to the panegyric the *genius Imperii*, the familiar ghost that gave and later took away imperial authority from the hands of the emperor Julian, thus sealing his fate as the chosen one of the *genius populi Romani*.[583] The *numen secretum* appeared to be honoured by the *maiestas* of the emperor for whom the people's roars in the Circus sounded throughout the hollow valley between the Palatine and the Aventine hills and as high as the heavens, their echo was thundering the name of Augustus.[584] One more time the call of symbolic geography is shaping the narrative since the two opposite hills were known to be the cause of the conflict between Romulus and Remus regarding the location where the city should be erected, a dispute that resulted to the latter's death. Romulus camped on the

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[579] See McCormick, *Eternal Victory,* p. 124. Also Dewar, *Claudian*, p. 381.
[580] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 585-596.
[581] Claudian, *De VI Consulatu Honorii Augusti*, 597-602.
[582] Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum*, II, 30 in response to Claudian, *De Cons. Stil.*, III, 212 and *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.,* 597. Also Dewar, *Claudian*, p. 394-395.
[583] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XX, v. 10 and XXV, ii. 3
[584] Claudian, *De VI Cons. Hon. Aug.*, 611-617.

Palatine, planning to name the city Rome while Remus established himself on the Aventine and named his own settlement Remuria.[585] The space between them, the Murcian valley, would be the location where the Circus Maximus would later be constructed. Thus the presence of Honorius there, unites the voices of the Romans and pacifies the two hills, ending the old controversy between the divine twins, achieving at last the *Concordia fratrum*, in the same manner that was achieved (or Stilicho was hoping so) between the imperial brothers after the fall of Eutropius. Paulinus of Nola also uses the topography of Rome's city centre in his eleventh *Natalicium* for St. Felix but replaces the name of Augustus with the name of Christ not echoing but striking at the Capitol and the other desolate pagan temples of the city as well as the *vacuis simulacra* which were shaken by the *vocibus piis.*[586] Honorius's imperial majesty appears to be able to combine even the most obvious contradictory symbols, those of the founder of the monarchy and those of the bringer of the *Res Publica*, ascribing thus an almost eschatological dimension in Honorius' presence in Rome. The *Pallanteus apex* recognizes once again *post plurima saecula*, a consul, sitting on the *sella curulis* at the rostra accompanied by his *lictores* and celebrating a military victory over barbarians in the forum of Trajan. It was a symbolic revival of the celebrations of Roman expansion to the North of the Danube that Trajan conducted, signifying the annexation of an area were the Goths would later settle in the fourth century. The citizens of the old capital would have the chance to celebrate the coming of a new year which would mark the beginning of a new era, an age during which the perpetual *Victoria* ends all wars just like in the reign of Augustus whom Honorius proves to be his true and worthy successor. Claudian thus re-frames the fate of *Romanitas* marking its destiny not by past glory, but the splendour of an age to come. This version of Roman eschatology appears to have a dual foundation, based on the Virgilian triumphalism that can be traced in the fourth *Eclogue* where the *ultima aetas* of the Sibyls song is rising, the *ordo saeclorum* is reset and the reign of Saturn has been restored while the *nova progenies* has been descended from the

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[585] See Plutarch, *Romulus*, 9, 4, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, I, 85 and *Origo Gentis Romanae*, 23, 1. Also T. P. Wiseman, *Remus: A Roman Myth* (Cambridge:; Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 110-117.
[586] See Paulinus of Nola, *Natalicium* XI, *Carmen*, XIX, 67-70.

heavens.[587] It would be a late Roman version of the *End of History*, a final *terminus* where that would signify the universal triumph of the *Romanitas*, a notion that had been introduced and manipulated again in the past by the Augustan regime.[588] Moreover he sounds suspiciously similar to the young messianic figure that is portrayed in the prophecies of Isaiah,[589] the young boy that would lead the 'wolf and the lamb', the 'kid and the leopard', the 'calf and the lion', as Honorius managed to unite Romulus and Brutus by holding the sceptre and the *fasces*, two authorities that would normally exist by annihilating each other. The poet leaves his audience with no doubt, Honorius is the 'new' Augustus that celebrates a new *Principatus* not by the spoils of civil wars but by the laurels of the defeated Goths, appearing therefore even better than the first emperor. Augustus after all was described by Virgil as *divi genus* who would restore the *aurea saecula* in Latium, thus paving the way of the association of the emperor with Christ.[590] This optimism and hope for the Theodosian dynasty that is fully manifested here will survive as a distant echo in Augustine's *City of God*[591] with same issue at stake, a new beginning for Rome.

We will never be able to know the true ideas and affection of Claudian regarding Rome and *Romanitas*. He was trying to construct and invest the authority of Stilicho and he used *Roma* to achieve it. However by doing so he preserved a snapshot of the evolution of Roman patriotism in the beginning of the last imperial century in the West. The popularity and recognition of his work confirm that he managed to incorporate and re-produce all those elements and core-beliefs of *Romanitas* which constituted the identity and pride of the senatorial aristocracy.[592] Moreover, the religious neutrality of *Dea Roma* made it even more attractive for ideological (ab)use. In a sense this re-introduction of the personified *Romanitas* rejuvenated the idea of Rome and in all its allegorical and symbolic expressions in an age of

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[587] See Virgil, *Eclogues*, IV, 5-8.
[588] See F. Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *The National Interest* (Summer 1989), pp. 1-18, p. 1.
[589] See *Isaiah*, 11, 6.
[590] Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 791-5.
[591] See Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V, 23 and 26.
[592] See J. Long, 'Claudian and the City: Poetry and Pride of Place' in W.-W. Ehlers, F. Felgentreu, S. M. Wheeler (eds.) *Aetas Claudianea: Eine Tagung au der Freien Universität Berlin vom 28. Bis 30. Juni 2002* (Berlin: K. G., 2004), pp. 1-15, p. 1.

transition. Rome was indeed born again in the works of Claudian, Prudentius and later Rutilius Namatianus, confirming that the calamities 'restored her youth'. The intellectual response to the debate that opened in the aftermath of the Gothic sack accelerated the *interpretatio christiana* of *Romanitas*. Damasus I had already the prudence to re-write the history of the eternal city and invent the narrative of the ancient Christian Rome with some new heroic *exempla virtutis* that shaped a new *mos maiorum*. The sacrifice of the martyrs was interpreted as a (final) victory of Rome over herself after the end of the age of expansion permitted by Christ (the new Romulus) who established himself on the Capitol, unifying the world under his authority through Rome.[593]

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[593] See M. Mastrangelo, *The Roman Self in Late Antiquity: Prudentius and the Poetics of the Soul* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008), p. 74-79. Also Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon* II, 413-425.

V.   Between Christ and a Roman Place: The Emergence of Christian Rome in Time and Space

Approaching the issue of the Christianization of the idea of Rome and *Romanitas* as well as the emergence of Christian Roman patriotism during the second half of the fourth century AD, one must turn to the development and evolution of the various religious and social tensions within the old capital. In order to reflect on such a multidimensional and complex topic, one needs to combine the study of not only the ideas and motives of the protagonists of those interesting times but also the evolution of Rome's sacral geography and symbolism which would gradually be incorporated into the new image of the city as the capital of Christianity. While attempting to deconstruct and analyse layer by layer the stages of how the city of Romulus and Remus evolved to the city of the apostles and martyrs one must consider how Rome came to be a new city but simultaneously remained the same one. Indeed the city was in a state of a 'creative' turbulence which was expressed by conflicts regarding status and control over the public space within and outside the walls. Rome had been a spiritual and ideological battlefield but not, as traditional historiography once thought, between pagans and Christians, but within the Christian audience itself with its various factions and orientations. Rome was re-inventing itself in order to fit to the new Christian discourse of the *Imperium Christianum* and preserve its symbolic primacy in the post-Constantinian Roman Empire; to paraphrase the famous Shakespearean quote, the eternal city became a stage and bishop Damasus I (366-384) was a key-player who played indeed many parts in all his exits and his entrances.[594] In trying to combine its old idealism and its new needs as a Roman institution with a constantly expanding influence, the Roman Church was standing indeed between a rock and a hard place. The further mingling of Christianity and *Romanitas* came with a cost for the Church. The rising aristocratic involvement would carve a more systemic and authoritarian image of the ecclesiastical institutions, resulting in an identity crisis which would polarize even further the ideological differences of the fourth

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[594] See W. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene VII

century Christianity. None of those paramount changes of course, came out of the blue, the new tensions were dictated to a great extent by the nature of the city itself and the symbolic importance of its landscape and this will be the primary factor that deserves our attention.

One of the most striking features of the Roman city-scape, evident more than ever before in the mid-fourth century was the antithesis between the limited space within the Aurelian walls that incorporated, apart from the historic core of the fora and ceremonial space, some fourteen thousand blocks of houses, stuffed in the grounds of this global metropolis, accommodating approximately half a million people.[595] Also, the famous seven hills of Rome were crowned by the centuries-old aristocratic mansions of the great Roman *gentes.* Beyond the walls, away from the noisy centre there was 'another world', the *suburbium*, where hundreds of generations of Romans were burying their dead in catacombs or along the main roads leading to Rome, erecting monuments and mausolea to demonstrate the status of their family. The Aurelian walls were an outward starting point to the extramural luxurious 'hermitages'.[596] The areas around the city were the sanctuary of the aristocracy, who were erecting their villas there for generations, investing to the time of the *otium*, so valuable to their lifestyle. Jerome was praising the rich and pious widow Marcella for having the commodity to spend some time in her villa in the *suburbium*, in peace and tranquillity, away from the urban chaos.[597] Indeed, he had some good reasons to consider Marcella lucky, Rome was always unstable and riots could take place at any moment with unpredicted consequences for the senatorial aristocracy and public officials. It could turn to a collective chamber of torture, a city that could punish its population.[598]

By the middle of the fourth century however there were not that many signs of Christian presence on the urban landscape. There were about twenty five *tituli* (private buildings

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[595] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD,* p. 242.

[596] See H. W. Dey, *The Aurelian Wall and the Refashioning of Imperial Rome, AD 271-855* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 222.

[597] See Jerome, *ep.* XLIII, 3

[598] L. Mumford, *The City in History*, p. 267

converted to churches) to cover the needs of approximately twenty thousand followers.[599] The few Christian monuments were located in the city's periphery, bearing testimony of the Constantinian presence a quarter of a century earlier. The Church of St. Peter on the Vatican might have been commissioned by Constantine but it was Constantius II that probably founded the completion of the project. The other grand imperial project, the Lateran basilica of St. John was the only church to be erected on 'virgin' land where there was no pre-existing *locus* of martyrdom but the place was suitable for Constantine's architectural plans since the new church was standing exactly upon the ruins of the barracks of Maxentius.[600] Additionally the basilica of St John would serve as the bishop's see, laid in one of the most prestigious and wealthy areas in the city, not very far away from the Sessorian palace where the *Augusta* Helena used to dwell and a part of it was re-designed as a church in order to accommodate the *True Cross*.[601] There were also the mausolea of the imperial family members, the mausoleum of Constantina, erected by the tomb of St. Agnes and of Helena, standing by the tombs of the martyrs Peter and Marcellinus. In contrast to the periphery there were no visible Christian monuments within the city and for a visitor of the mid-fourth century Christianity could have been totally unnoticed in the public space. Constantine did nothing there in order to leave his mark or to improve the local churches, sandwiched between other private buildings. There was little change for the Christians in the neighbourhoods of Rome since the previous centuries, and the conversion of Constantine and his ambitious monumental projects left them almost untouched. The *tituli* were, in contrast to the later Churches, linked in the network of dioceses, completely independent, self-managed and self-sufficient.[602] They were not dependent on the authority or funding of the bishop, they were instead receiving the support of private patrons from the lower levels of the aristocracy. These *novi homines* who had emerged during the Diocletianic and

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[599] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 241.

[600] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 243. Also O. Hekster, 'The city of Rome in late imperial ideology: The Tetrarchs, Maxentius and Constantine,' *Mediterraneo Antico*, vol. 2 (1999), pp. 717-748, p. 740-741.

[601] See J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), p. 95-96.

[602] See K. Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values and religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 65-66, 69.

Constantinian administrative reforms were claiming their own limited share in public influence, in the shadow of the great families of Rome. These new rich bureaucrats were the intermediate class between the nobility and the rest of society; they were *clarissimi,* the late Roman equivalent of the *Noblesse de robe* and they were already showing all those vivid elements of a new rising order in the forms of piety and public material expression.[603]

The Roman bishops would soon use the opportunities and power that the new human and material resources could offer. After the death of Julius I (337-352) a rivalry over the papal succession broke out that would have long-term consequences in the city's population and sacral geography. His successor, Liberius had to face the controversy regarding Athanasius of Alexandria and the imposition of Constantius II in Church politics of the time. The synods of Arles (353) and Milan (354) were Liberius' primary concern during the early years of his papacy. He was exiled, however by Constantius II for his refusal to condemn Athanasius (355).[604] Despite the fact that the entire clergy of Rome had, according to the narrative preserved in the *Collectio Avellana*, promised that they would not elect another bishop while he was alive, one of his archdeacons was favoured and positioned by the imperial court in his place.[605] The Roman church had been officially divided and so was the *populus Romanus* had split into two rival factions, competing for dominance over the public space and the symbolic loci of the Christian Church within and around the city. According to Athanasius, the election was not valid and in absence of the people, far away from any holy place since it took place in the imperial palace in the presence of eunuchs instead of the pious crowd.[606] The rival bishop Felix II (355-365) however, must have remained a quite unpopular bishop and a large proportion of the people and the aristocracy were disturbed by this act of imperial imposition. During his short visit to Rome in 357, Constantius II was approached by some aristocratic ladies who petitioned the return of Liberius to the city. Their

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[603] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, pp. 248-249, 253.

[604] See C. Pietri, *Roma Christiana: Recherches sur l'Eglise de Rome, son organisation, sa politique, son idéologie de Miltiade à Sixte III (311-440)*(Rome, École Française de Rome, 1976), vol. I., pp. 237-268.

[605] See *Collectio Avellana*, I, 2.

[606] See Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum*, 75 and Socrates Scholasticus, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία II, 37.

appeal must have been influential enough to persuade the emperor to permit the return of the exiled bishop after the latter's compromise to the imperial Christological agenda at the council of Sirmium (358).

Liberius was rather careful upon his return. Initially he avoided an entry to the city while Felix was still around due to threat of public unrest and riots. He was waiting in the cemetery of St Agnes (where Constantina was buried in 354), until the city's see would be evacuated, confident about his popularity. The site appeared to be of particular importance for Liberius as the following years would reveal.[607] Not long after, the rival bishop was driven out of the city *a Senatu vel populo* and established himself in an estate on Via Portuensis.[608] The sacral geography of the two rival factions was gradually crystalizing. The partisans of Felix were holding various holy sites around Rome by the time of their leader's death (365). Liberius tried to approach the rival faction and unite the urban priesthood under his authority once again.[609] He also erected a new basilica on the Esquiline, in proximity to the market of Livia, in a site associated with Julius I and it was there that Liberius had his strongest popular support. One year later Liberius died leaving behind the open wounds of an undeclared war within the city. According to the anti-Damasian *Libellus Precum*, preserved in the *Collectio Avellana*, one of Liberius' deacons, Damasus, initially followed the bishop to exile but soon returned to support Felix and later he re-joined his old master after the reconciliation that he offered.[610] It was more than clear that the election for the next bishop would be disputed.

Damasus appeared to be favoured by Liberius but his rivals considered him dangerously Felician (and therefore pro-Arian/Constantian). They proposed instead another deacon of Liberius, Ursinus, for the episcopal see and soon gathered in the basilica of Julius and consecrated him as their bishop, having the support of three (out of the seven) deacons of

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[607] J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, p. 135.
[608] Collectio Avellana, I, 3. Also *Liber Pontificalis* I, 207.
[609] *Collectio Avellana*, I, 4.
[610] *Collectio Avellana*, I, 2 and 4

the city.[611] The choice of the site had apparently something to do with its meaning as a *locus* of defiance, since no attempts were made previously by Liberius to establish his influence on the landscape beyond the Aurelian walls and by the Tiber. In the midtime, the followers of Damasus elected him as their bishop in the *titulus* of Lucina. Neither side had temporarily enough power and men to occupy the episcopal basilica on the Lateran, which remained a no man's land. By the autumn of 366, however, Damasus and his supporters managed to capture it by blackmailing, according to the hostile for him Collectio Avellana, a *iudicem Urbis*, Viventius, and the *Prefectus Annonae* Julianus.[612] Damasus might have managed to control the centre but the periphery was still under the control of the Ursinian faction. He was determined not to allow a permanent division of the city between two bishops and as soon as he was informed that the consecration of Ursinus was performed by Paul, bishop of Tibur, having been outraged by this external intervention, he besieged the basilica of Julius with his followers (*omnes quadrigarios et imperitam multitudinem*)[613] and after three days of fighting he managed to prevail. [614] Just a week later, Damasus and his supporters were gathered in the Lateran basilica to perform the official consecration while the *Prefectus Urbi* and the *Praefectus Annonae* drove Ursinus and two deacons away from Rome.

Despite the fact that the Ursinians remained without the guidance of their leader they continued to fight against their rivals.[615] In October 366 they managed to obtain the liberation of seven presbyters who had been imprisoned by the authorities during the outbreak of violence and they invaded and captured the *basilica Liberii* on the Esquiline, in an attempt to claim the heritage of the previous bishop and the legitimacy that would link their favourite with his predecessor.[616] This association of course did not escape the attention of Damasus, who attacked the Ursinians, and after a fierce battle, recovered the

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[611] *Collectio Avellana*, I, 5.

[612] *Collectio Avellana* I, 6.

[613] *Collectio Avellana*, I, 5.

[614] *Collectio Avellana*, I, 6.

[615] See N. B. McLynn, 'Damasus of Rome: A Fourth century Pope in context', in T. Fuhrer (ed.), *Rom und Mailand in der Spätantike. Repräsentationen städtischer Räume in Literatur, Architektur und Kunst* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 305-325, pp. 308-312

[616] J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, p. 140.

site, after killing, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, 137 of their opponents (who referred to the site as the *basilica Siccini*) or 160, provided by the *Collectio Avellana,* which emphasises that none of the dead belonged to the party of Damasus.[617] Within this shocking outbreak of violence the authorities followed a rather moderate policy and by the autumn of 367 Ursinus returned to Rome. Violence however broke out again when the Ursinians occupied the site of the tomb of St Agnes on the Via Nomentana, another important Liberian *locus*, but the party of Damasus responded quickly and decisively, they stormed the place and unleashed a slaughter on their rivals.[618] Never before since the time of the persecutions was there such an outbreak of violence in the streets of Rome which now was instrumented by Christian factions acting as para-military organizations. Ammianus Marcellinus, who was indifferent to the Christian conflicts, was reflecting in his descriptions the point of view of the pagan aristocrats who were observing from a safe distance the *New Rome* that was gradually rising. They were men, according to the Antiochene, historian, of *supra humanum modum* in order to possess the episcopate and despite the fact that it is expected to fight when desiring such things they were hiding their faults behind the *magnitudine Urbis*.[619] Jerome describes how the *Prefectus Urbi* Praetextatus replied with humour to Damasus when the latter proposed him to convert, that he would become a Christian the next day if he could make him a bishop straight away.[620] The situation demanded an imperial intervention. The emperors Valentinian I, Valens and Gratian issued in 368 a rescript to the *vicarius Romae* Aginatius instructing the prohibition of meetings of the two parties within a distance of twenty miles from the city.[621] From then on Damasus turned his interest to the cause of Christian unity within his city and the experience he gained from the controversy with Ursinus taught him about the importance of the public space and sacral geography of the city. A lesson learned was indeed a lesson lived.

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[617] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXVII, iii. 12. Also *Collectio Avellana* I, 7.
[618] *Collectio Avellana*, I, 12.
[619] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXVII, 12-14.
[620] See Jerome, *Contra Iohannem Hierosolymitanum*, VIII.
[621] *Collectio Avellana*, IX, 1.

In a mix of personal motives and of a strong sense of local patriotism Damasus would leave his mark on the city-scape transforming forever the image of the eternal city. The victorious bishop had turned for support to the *clarissimi* 'sub-nobles'. He understood well their own taste of religious *devotio* and he turned his family house in the Campus Martius to a *titulus* (S. Damazo *in Lucina*) as those *mediocres* rich used to do. Towards this direction, his attitude had been rather traditional (safe) as so many before him did the same. Moreover, the fact that Ursinus was supported by some parts of the *nobiles* didn't make Damasus a pro-aristocratic enthusiast.[622] He had other options, having been born around 300 and being among the last persons in the mid-fourth century with living memories of the last persecutions was well aware of the important role of the presbyters and of ordinary people in the public piety and if necessary, in self-sacrifice. He was determined to transform the urban clergy to an independent factor in the politics of the city of Rome, something like a 'Third (Christian) Estate' along with the imperial patrons and the senatorial aristocracy.[623] He was also the first one to defy the hard-core pagan centre of the city by erecting the church of S. Anastasia at the west of the Palatine, by the corner of the *Circus Maximus*, leaving behind the periphery of the earlier imperial Christian projects which were already identified with the senatorial elites and their 'suburban' Christianity. He on the contrary, dared to invade the public heart of the city where no Christian emperor or aristocrat would intervene or disturb the religious balance of the landscape. In his cause for Christian unity Damasus turned to the reshaping of the Christian identity of his flock and of his city. His community was an assembly of 'holy people', descendants of martyrs; it was thanks to them and not to the imperial authorities or the aristocracy that the Church of Rome existed.[624] He was eager to emphasise the unique identity of the Christians of Rome, they were the Church of the *caput mundi* and therefore the greatest Church in the *Orbis Romanus*. This was their share in the Roman glory as it was for Aeneas the *dominium mundi*[625] which was in perfect compliance

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[622] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 251.
[623] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 251.
[624] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 253.
[625] See Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI. 851-2.

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with the legacy of the Holy People as it was presented in the Deuteronomy, destined to rule

but not to be ruled.[626] The third canon of the Council of Constantinople (381, three years

before the death of Damasus) defined that the bishop of Constantinople would have from

then on the prerogatives of honor after the bishop of the Church of Rome (*Τὸν Κωσνατνίνου*

πόλεως ἐπίσκοπον τὰ πρεσβεῖα ἔχει τῆς τιμῆς μετὰ τὸν Ῥώμης ἐπίσκοπον διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὑτήν

νέαν Ῥώμην).[627] The challenge of a 'New Rome' was now clearer than ever. It was the first

mention of another Rome in a canonical text.[628] The Church of Constantinople, however,

had different priorities since the third cannon wished to upgrade its status in relation to

Antioch and Alexandria.[629] Although they admitted that Rome was still the first among the

Churches, the legal results of the synod confirmed the existence of two Romes. A year after

the council of Constantinople, Damasus summoned a synod of western bishops in Rome,

where he expressed his opposition to the cannons produced in the East the year before. He

claimed that the status of the Roman Church was defined not by any synod, but by Christ

himself by his commandment to Peter (*ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω*

μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πύλαι Ἅδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς. Καὶ δώσω σοὶ τὰς κλεῖς τῆς

βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν: καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς: καὶ ὃ

ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς).[630] Although Damasus validated the

Nicene doctrine as it was re-confirmed in 381, he did not consent to the novelty regarding

the special status of Constantinople in comparison to the other eastern Churches.[631]

The bishop's vision was appealing to the *mediocres* of the Roman aristocracy, the moderate

patrons of the *tituli* for whom the great imperial basilicas in the fringes of the city were out of

reach, for that was the privileged field of the senatorial aristocracy. This class of Roman

bureaucrats, developed by the new needs of the post-Constantinian administrative and

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[626] See Deuteronomy, 15, 8.
[627] See P. P. Joannou, *Les canons des conciles oecuméniques* vol. I, part I(Grottaferrata: Pontificia commissione per la redazione del codice di diritto canonico orientale, 1962)
[628] See N. McLynn, 'Two Romes, Beacons of the Whole World: Cannonizing Constantinople,' in L. Grig, G. Kelly (eds.) *Two Romes: Rome and Constantinople in Late Antiquity*, pp. 345-363, p. 345.
[629] N. McLynn, 'Two Romes, Beacons of the Whole World: Cannonizing Constantinople,'p. 354.
[630] Matthew: 18-19
[631] N. McLynn, 'Two Romes, Beacons of the Whole World: Cannonizing Constantinople,'p. 355-357.

military mechanism were inspired by the life and manners of the court and the army in order to express their public devotion. They expected that their clergy would be in their image, having the same monolithic protocol and hierarchical structure as their environment.[632] This hierarchical fourth-century mentality penetrated the metaphysical quest of the individual, considering the relationship with the divine as that of the ruler and his subject or of the patron and the client. The old world of primitive Christianity where the saints were fellow-travellers in a hostile world was dead. The new realities reshaped them as intermediates and patrons just like the *nobiles.*[633] The emerging *Roma Christiana* was to a significant part a product of the alliance between the clergy and the *mediocres* rich.

The upgraded position of the city's clergy was reflected in the comments of the anonymous Ambrosiaster, who, in his commentaries on the letters of Paul, criticized the deacons for behaving like bureaucrats but he admitted however that this was a result *propter magnificentiam Urbis Romae*; the size of the global metropolis favoured the impersonal relations.[634] Distance was of course an issue of great importance, Ambrosiaster thought of God in the manner that his contemporaries thought of the emperor: They never saw him in person, yet he was always present in statues (*it et Deus visus est*); he was not revealed visually but he was always there through reason.[635] From that point of view he was recycling the long established neo-platonic tradition of interpreting and understanding the invisible everlasting presence of the Divine that dated at least as back as Porphyry's treatise *On the Statues* (*Περί ἀγαμάτων*).[636] Ambrosiaster also perceived the urban clergy acting as the *militia* of the imperial court and he had high expectations; it was the presbyters and deacons that were standing between the pious flock and the *potentes.*[637] The author perceived hierarchy not just as an institutionalized form of dominance but as the natural order of things.

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[632] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 253.

[633] P. Brown, *The Ransom of the Soul: Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 43.

[634] See Ambrosiaster, *Quaestio* 101.4.

[635] Ambrosiaster, *Quaestio* 71,1.

[636] See T. C. Krulak, '"Invisible Things on Visible Forms": Pedagogy and Anagogy in Porphyry's Περί ἀγαλμάτων', in *Journal of Late Antiquity*, vol. 4, 2 (Fall, 2011), pp. 343-364, p. 345-346.

[637] Ambrosiaster, *Commentarius in I ad Corinthios*, 12. 3, *Quaestio* 115. 59.

He admitted that change was inevitable since the Church had expanded so rapidly and had new needs that differed from those of the early Christian communities where *rectores non errant constitute.*[638]Thus he was using a secular term to describe the office of the *episopus* which he thought needed to be crystalized even further as an authority within the Church. This desire was not new among the ecclesiastical circles, since two and a half centuries earlier Ignatius of Antioch was emphasizing the need for a firm leadership for the Christian congregation and he was advising his correspondents to always consult their bishop before any action.[639] The *episcopus* would have the function of the *primus sacerdos* and *princeps sacerdotum* as well as prophet and evangelist and everything else that the flock needed.[640]. In a similar way the bishop of Rome would be the head of the universal Church as the city of Rome was for the Empire. Peter was *primus inter Apostolos* (in a similar way that Augustus was *primus inter pares*) and was the *caput eorum, ut pastor esset gregis dominici.*[641] Ambrosiaster was an idealist but his vision for Rome did not include the Senatorial Aristocracy or the emperors-outsiders, for that reason he demanded from the deacons to be aware of the importance of their duty towards their community. Damasus as well, as a man of an older age still remembered the days of pre-Constantinian Christianity and his plan didn't include the entire social structure but he had his own selective approach and it was the *populus Romanus* and the rich *novi homines* that were his target group. He was also aware of his privileged position as a successor of St. Peter as S. Lunn-Rockliffe suggested that the *Decretum Gelasianum* (*Explanatio Fidei*) regarding the Supremacy of the Roman Church might have been an actual work of Damasus that was re-used a century later.[642] There is no doubt however that the old Petrine reference 'Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church' became for the first time an important theoretical foundation for the Roman see

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[638] Ambrosiaster, *Commentarius in I ad Corinthios*, 1,2,1
[639] See Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Ephesians, XIII, 2, *Letter to the Philadelphians*, VII.
[640] Ambrosiaster, *Commentarius in Ephesios*, 4,12,2. Also See S. Rockliffe-Lunn, *Ambrosiaster's Political Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 106-107, 114.
[641] Ambrosiaster, *Quaestio* 79.3 and 4.
[642] S. Lunn-Rockliffe, *Ambrosiaster's Political Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)*,* p. 124.

during the pontificate of Damasus.[643] The latter would soon be ready to place his 'rock(s)' at the foundations of the Roman Christian community.

The Damasian vision had indeed changed the topography; apart from the Church of S. Anastasia in the city centre, the bishop dedicated a new titular church to the martyr Lawrence (*in Damaso*) at the *Campus Martius.* It was a significant Christian expansion in the area along with the *titulus Lucinae* if we consider that the nearest pre-Damasian church, the *titulus Marci,* was about half a kilometre away.[644] In this way he contributed to the unification of Christian topography within the city, for he would soon turn his attention beyond the walls to a far more ambitious project. He started the construction of the basilica of St. Paul, located at the spot of a previous memorial of the apostle on the Via Ostiensis; thus the other patron-saint of the city received the same honour as Peter who already had his own basilica erected by Constantine. Damasus completed in this way Rome's twin patronage that would shape its profile for the millennia to come.

Damasus's most active interest however was focus on the (re)discovery or (re)invention of the cult of the martyrs of Rome. There was plenty of primary material to begin with, he just had to turn his attention to the 'invisible' army that surrounded the city and its main roads leading there, laying just under the surface. He had of course many reasons for pursuing such an ambitious agenda. By his time, the Christians of the city were already confronted to a certain extent by an identity crisis since they were the first generation that had to combine Christianity and *Romanitas* in a single identity. The codex-calendar of 354 already provides some important evidence regarding the assimilation of Christianity within the context of Roman identity, the calendar, having been produced and dedicated for a Christian aristocrat named Valentinus reveals the intention of the Christian elite of Rome in participating actively in the city's public life. Apart from a catalogue of feast-days of martyrs and a chronological list of bishops and consuls, the calendar emphasized festivals which could unite the various

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[643] See Matthew, XVI, 18.
[644] J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, p. 144.

religious factions of the city like those related to the imperial cult or others commemorating events of civic and/or historical importance.[645]   Despite the fact that the accompanying illustrations which were portraying the personified months were containing a pagan content, there was absence of any scenes of (blood) sacrifice that could provoke a Christian audience. Instead the scenes were dominated by the more neutral practices of offering incense, in an attempt perhaps of accommodating multiple values by using the same semiology. The calendar of 354 was undertaken to convince that a potential conversion to Christianity meant in no way the abolition of the *mos maiorum* or of *Romanitas* as was expressed by the public events that were taking place in the ceremonial space of the old capital. It was a snapshot of a rapidly evolving urban microcosm and of a society which was way more flexible and mature towards change than we often tend to think. The *populus Romanus* was eager to focus on the cultural values that would unite them and confirm their privileged position as inhabitants of the eternal city. This renegotiation of their collective civic identity offered Damasus the chance to prove that they ought to be proud for being (Christian) Romans of Rome. In order to do so, he had to (re)write the history of the city itself. It was not of course the first time that such an attempt was made. Rome had rediscovered and re-enacted its past during the Augustan cultural and ideological revolution three and a half centuries earlier. Augustus himself actively promoted the restoration of lost practices, customs and traditions which inevitably led to the invention of new ones, re-interpreting the public history in order to respond another collective identity crisis of the Roman society in its transition from the *Res Publica* to the *Principatus*.[646] In doing so, the first emperor discovered that he could truly use the memories of the Roman past in order to promote his own political agenda and his own image.[647] It was all about advertising the safe option of *pietas* that could secure the citizen's loyalty to the state institutions. The Roman audience therefore was always open to the invention of traditions and the 'acceleration' of

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[645] See M. R. Salzman, *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the rhythms of urban life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 197.

[646] See D. E. Trout, 'Damasus and the Invention of Early Christian Rome', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol. 33, 3 (Fall 2003), pp. 517-536, p. 519.

[647] See R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 454.

history as a shortcut to the future. As E. Hobsbawm indicated, traditions which often appear as ancestral are often more recent than expected and occasionally they are invented, using old patterns for new purposes.[648] Rome had been for long an Inventory for such social experimentations and as before, in the case of Damasus and his agenda, *Romanitas* would prove to be a convenient and flexible concept, an empty shell capable to be filled with various contents. The vision of Damasus of having the martyrs represented as the new celestial guardians and patrons of Rome was setting a paradigm-shift regarding tradition and was providing a new model for the reshaping of the Roman identity in the fourth century. From this perspective he was simply following the steps of Augustus who had also thought of a spiritual 'bodyguard' of the fathers of the *Res Publica*, figures like Fabricius and Cato,[649] who would protect Rome and guarantee its safety and prosperity, all of them as 'martyrs' of their own time.

The martyrs' tombs were to be (re)discovered, cleaned, made approachable to visitors and also commemorated. Regarding the latter, Damasus, used all his skills and Virgilian influences to compose *elogia* of epic classicising style in order to celebrate the martyrs as well as the restoration project and himself as its architect. Jerome as well as the *Liber Pontificalis*, witnesses the eloquence of those verses.[650] The spread of those epigrams around the city was reaching the visitors like a radio broadcast in a language familiar for them, thus the pious *Quirites* were shedding their tears for the 'bones' that founded the *Urbs Romula Christiana*.[651] Three and a half centuries ago, Vergil had declared the return to the golden age and Livy re-interpreted the distant past of Rome in order to serve the purposes of the Augustan revolution and the regeneration of the Roman aristocracy. The *elogia* of Damasus were an apology of another imagined past, updating the foundation myth of Rome, redrawing the sacral geography of the city, turning the Christian *patria* to a synonym of the Roman fatherland itself. Additionally the epigrams had a function similar to the Augustan

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[648] E. Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', pp. 1-14, p. 1-5.
[649] See Virgil, *Aeneid*, VIII, 670 and Ovid, *Odes*, I, xii, 36.
[650] See Jerome, *De Viris illustribus*, 103. Also *Liber Pontificalis*, XXVIIII, 2.
[651] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II, 310.

Res Gestae, a defence of the deeds of Damasus addressed to his flock through his prayers and supplications to the martyrs, the new *patres patriae*.[652] As in the case of the mausoleum of Augustus, the tombs of the martyrs had been transformed to symbols of civic identity and pride through the *elogia*, as the *princeps* did with his *Res Gestae*, indicating how the *populus Romanus* ought to deal with his (and their) cultural legacy. First of course he had to construct the dialectic of oblivion, presenting the martyrs and their memory as almost entirely lost, paving the way for their re-presentation and if necessary invention.[653] The *Vetustas*, Damasus admits, in one of his *elogia* on a *locus* of a collective martyrdom in the cemetery of Thrason on Via Salaria Nova, could not preserve their name or their number.[654] The new discourse on the martyrdom and persecution constructed a huge gap between the Christian present and the Pagan past. But for a Bishop to admit that his congregation had practically ceased to 'remember'/commemorate the local martyrs and that their stories faded away was something quite brave, confessing more or less the discontinuity of religious observance in his community.[655] None of his contemporaries however paid attention to that detail for what was at stake was the monopoly over the martyrs' cult and their ideological (ab)use.

There is little evidence for the cult of the martyrs in Rome before Damasus but the existence of various unofficial cults performed by certain groups or individuals must have been flourishing around as the evidence from the graffiti on the tomb of presbyter Eulalios in the catacombs of Domitilla reveals.[656] The tradition of the martyrs was more carefully observed in North Africa already from the third century, long before other places, but as late as the early 360's Jerome recalled his carefree times as a young student in Rome where he was

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[652] D. E. Trout, 'Damasus and the Invention of Early Christian Rome', p. 520-521, 'Borrowed verse and broken narrative,' in J. Elsner, J. Huskinson (ed.) *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 337-358, p. 347 and *Damasus of Rome: The epigraphic poetry* (Oxford: oxford University Press, 2015), p. 19-26.

[653] See F. Lifshitz, 'The Martyr, the Tomb, and the Matron: Constructing the (Masculine) ''Past'' as a Female Power Base', in G. Althoff, J. Fried, P. J. Geary (eds*.) Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 311-341, p.317.

[654] See A. Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, (Rome: Pontificio Istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1942), n. 42.

[655] See M. Sághy : '*Renovatio memoriae*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome' in R. Behrwald, C. Witschel (eds.) *Rom in der Spätantike Historische Erinnerung im städtischen Raum*. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012), pp. 251-267, p. 248.

[656] M. Sághy, '*Renovatio memoriae*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome', p. 250.

wandering around with his classmates exploring the desolate dark catacombs.[657] The outbreak of violence and the polarization during the 350's and 360's however caused the emergence of 'purist' tensions within the Christians communities at Rome, accompanied by a distinctive sense of the 'chosen ones' and an idealism about what the martyrdom could mean. We don't know how the Ursinians treated the memory of their dead during the controversy with Damasus or if they considered them as martyrs but there were already other Christians with their own *martyrologia*. The Novatianists had regular meetings to honour the memory of their founder in the catacombs of Cyriaca on Via Tiburtina. They already had their own bishops and basilicas and cemeteries[658] separated from the Church that received back the 'idolaters' and coward 'apostates.' In 345 Constantius II persecuted the Novatianists in Paphlagonia and many had died for their beliefs paving the way for a martyr-cult. [659]

Damasus turned to the systematic identification of the martyrs even if he had nothing more to begin with but empty names which had to be filled with 'lives'. He had already in front of him the *depositiones* of the bishops and martyrs with their feast days as a guide to his renovation. Such lists were included in the calendar of 354, manufactured by Furius Dionysius Filocalus, a *cultor et amator* of Damasus, who carved the bishop's *epigrammata* all around the cemeteries of Rome.[660] Apart from this primary material however, the bishop invented at least thirteen new martyrs who did not appear until that time in any of the *depositiones* (Simplicius, Faustina, Anastasia, Rufus, Viatrix, Felix and Adauctus, Nereus and Achilleus, Ireneus and Abundius, Chrysanthius and Daria), all new recruits to the cause of Christian Rome.[661] The bishop had also the privilege of having talked to the last

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[657] See Jerome, *ep.* 108, 13. Also M. Sághy, 'Scinditur in partes populus: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome', *Early Medieval Europe* vol. 9, 3 (November 2000), pp. 273–287, p. 274.

[658] See *Codex Theodosianus* XVI, 5.2.

[659] See M. A. Tilley, *Donatist Martyr Stories: The Church in Conflict in Roman North Africa* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), p.61.

[660] See Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, no. 18. Also D. E. Trout, *Damasus of Rome: The epigraphic poetry*, p. 47-52.

[661] See M. Sághy, 'Martyr Cult and Collective Identity in Fourth-Century Rome,' in A Marinkovic, T. Vedris (eds.) *Identity and Alterity in Hagiography and the Cult of Saints*. (Zagreb: Hagiotheca, 2010), pp. 17-35, p. 22.

eyewitnesses of the age of persecutions as in the case of martyrs Peter and Marcellinus that Damasus had the chance to speak with their executioner (who had later converted) and indicated to the bishop the place of their martyrdom. Of course there were always more ways for the relocation of martyrdom as in the case of Eutychius who revealed his *locus* to Damasus while the latter was sleeping.[662] But here it was not only a case of numbers but also of quality, such as Eusebius, bishop during the reign of Maxentius who is portrayed by Damasus calling the people to weep for their errors and unite themselves, abandoning the quarrels and discord.[663] Hagiographical tradition was used by Damasus to legitimise his person over the rival faction(s) and since violence was not sufficient to eliminate his rivals he would try to unify them under the banner of the *Concordia Apostolorum*. The fraternity promoted by the image of the two founders of the Roman Church would unify the 'Holy People' of the city of Rome. From the 360's onward the *concordia* motif would dominate the Roman Christian art, an evidence of the bishop's success in communicating his cause.[664]

Damasus had to re-carve the image of Peter and Paul who were not anymore simply the leaders (and founders) of the Christian community at Rome but were about to become honorary citizens of the eternal city. They followed Christ to the heavens *Sanguinis ob meritum*[665] and, since their sacrifice took place in Rome they proved their devotion to the Roman fatherland in the most meaningful way. From then on they deserved a place among the symbols of Roman patriotism, and Damasus emphasized that 'Rome should watch over her own citizens.'[666] This new concept of the *sanguinis patria* would change once and for all the way that late antiquity Christianity was interpreting the Petrine and Pauline martyrdoms. However, there was a precursor of this pattern if we consider the wish of Cyprian to die in Carthage instead of his birthplace, Utica, a wish that came true.[667] Ambrose would later admit that that the two apostles were the true founders of Rome (*fundata tali sanguine*),

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[662] See L. Hertling and E. Kirschbaum, *The Roman Catacombs and their Martyrs*, p. 74.
[663] Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, no. 18.
[664] J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, p. 152.
[665] Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, no. 20.
[666] Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, no. 20.
[667] See Cyprian, Ep. 81.

having no choice but to admit the symbolic importance of Rome despite his personal influence in the Church politics of his time.[668] Damasus advertised the new stars of his city by placing an epigram dedicated to both Peter and Paul in the *basilica Apostolorum* on Via Appia, a cult site which was not established on a previous locus of *martyrium*. It was however the oldest Christian Church (c. 311) before the (so-called) conversion of Constantine and was particularly important for the Novatianist Christian community that Damasus was interested to bring them back to the 'mainstream' Church. Thus the double apostolic martyrdom secured both a place in heaven and a citizenship in earthly Rome; they deserved it for being sacrificed for the idea of (future) Christian Rome. Simultaneously the *concordia* between them was symbolizing the unity that Christianity ought to promote in theory and practice. It was Rome alone that could claim a 'twin' apostolic foundation and Damasus was eager to emphasize their sacrifice which took place within the *Urbs* exorcizing the pagan cults with their blood, replacing Romulus and Remus or Castor and Pollux as the twin patrons of Rome. Since no other city could compete with the symbolic position and the prestige of Rome in the Empire, likewise no other martyr could be compared to the *principes* of the apostles.[669] The cult of the Dioscuri in Rome can be traced as early as the fifth century BC and the battle of Lake Regillus (499/496 BC), introduced from Greece and honoured in the Forum Romanum with a temple that was still there in the time of Damasus.[670] Peter and Paul also arrived from the East and they were now settling on the urban landscape, overshadowing (if not annexing) the old 'tenants'.[671] The bishop celebrated the feast of the two saints on the 29th of June by a great procession from the basilica of Peter to that of Paul, unifying the two patrons with the stational liturgies and forging a new sacred bond on the (sub)urban landscape that bound the fate of Rome with their veneration. The concept of the 'twin' cults fitted perfectly in the Damasan agenda of self-promotion as a peace-making bishop. Therefore, as he did with the apostles, he organised the cult of various martyrs in

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[668] See Ambrose, *Hymn*, 12. 23.
[669] See Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II, 469-472.
[670] See Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*, II, 20.12. Also Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, VI, 13.
[671] D. E. Trout, 'Damasus and the Invention of Early Christian Rome', p. 523-524.

pairs like the case of Faustinus and Viatricus, Felix and Auductus and Felicissimus and Agapetus in an attempt to achieve an atmosphere of *concordia* and balance.[672]

Furthermore, and as in the case of the apostles, what mattered was not the origin of the person but the place of his death that defined his loyalty to a *patria*. In this manner it was the violent events of Alexandria during the late fourth and early fifth century, the resistance of traditional Greco-Egyptian paganism and the public martyrdom of Hypatia the philosopher that vindicated Alexandria, once considered by the Egyptians as a 'city of Greeks', but from then on considered a *locus* of Egyptianism.[673] Thus Christian martyrs changed fatherland, Saturninus of Carthage *sanguine mutavit patriam nomenque genusque │ Romanum civem sanctorum fecit origo*.[674] Rome became a community of the saints and martyrdom was a factor of Romanization. Likewise, Hermes whom *Graecia misit │ sanguine mutasti patriam: civemque fratremque*, the citizenship of blood was the next milestone of Roman patriotism. More than two centuries ago, the Severan *Constitutio Antoniniana* had granted citizenship to all free subjects of the Empire, Damasus was now granting the citizenship of Christian Rome through his *epigrammata*. *Romanitas* would be a spiritual issue and in that sense the martyrs appeared to be more Roman that their imperial persecutors. It was no longer the military victories and the triumphal advent that formed the *gloria Romanorum* but it was the dedication to a higher cause and the endurance against the calamities that really mattered.[675] In contrast to the early Christian notion of the earthly life as a pilgrimage and temporary passage, the *patria terrena* of the martyrs became a big issue during the fourth century since the glory of the city was counted martyr by martyr. For that reason, the *amor religionis* brought the Latins and the *peregrini* together, as Prudentius would later argue, in a time when the *peregrini* were anytime at the risk of exclusion from the city as Ammianus

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[672] Ferrua, Epigrammata Damasiana, 6, 7, 25. Also M. Sághy, '*Scinditur in partes populus*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome', p. 278.

[673] See P. Athanassiadi, 'Persecution and Response in Late Paganism: The Evidence of Damascius', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. 113, (1993), p. 1-29, p. 17.

[674] Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, no. 46.

[675] See G. Heyman, *The Power of Sacrifice: Roman and Christian Discourses in Conflict* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), p. 197.

Marcellinus would experience some decades later.[676] The city united the Romans in a single stream; patricians and plebeians joined in a single *phalanx* since faith removed all distinctions of birth and God's flock was unified in venerating their (Christian) ancestral *exempla*. This kind of artificial egalitarianism and solidarity revitalised and redefined the civic identity of the Romans of Rome, making them aware of their unique and privileged legacy. Jerome had indeed captured this tension in snapshot, describing the citizens walking among the empty shrines of the city-centre towards the crowded sites of the tombs of the martyrs, turning the city from the inside out (*movetur Urbs sedibus suis*).[677] He not only portrayed this evolution that the city was undergoing, something of an unconscious process for the ordinary contemporary eye but the description of Rome as full of ruins of Antiquity provides to the audience a sense of a decaying elegance that must have impressed outsiders like Jerome. The people were forming a vivid river while passing by the ruins as almost a collective silent ritual, hasting to reach a new destiny. The *suburbium* had evolved into a rival pole, similar to that of the city centre, redrawing outwards Rome's *pomerium* in order to link the town and the tombs. The social hierarchy was placed in a new context, the new celestial patrons had levelled the old social barriers and within it they transformed the mentalities and perceptions of the classical mind regarding the balance and the limits of the space between the living and the dead. The old separation between the community of the living and the extra-mural areas of the dead was no longer there.[678]

One other element that made the sacral landscape of Rome unique in comparison to the other Christian *metropoleis* was that in contrast to the general trends of the fourth century, the Roman Church during (and after) Damasus's papacy opposed the *translationes* of relics from their initial *loci*. While other ecclesiastical leaders like Ambrose of Milan and Paulinus of Nola had copied the Damasian models of the invention of traditions regarding the martyrs

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[676] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, 11, 191-2. Also Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XIV, vi.9

[677] See Jerome, *ep.* 107.1. Also See L. Grig, 'Deconstructing the Symbolic City: Jerome as Guide to Late Antique Rome', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, vol. 80 (October 2012), pp 125-143, p. 136-137.

[678] See H. Härke, 'Cemeteries as Places of Power' in M. de Jong, F. Theuws and C. van Rhijn (eds.) *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 9-30, p. 23.

they moved the relics from their tombs to the urban Churches but the Roman approach appeared to be far more strict and conservative. Damasus disproved of moving, dismemberment and trade of the holy relics; he preferred not to disturb them.   The veneration of the martyrs was taking place *in situ* linking the community with the landscape where the early Christians were supposed to have held their congregations. The spatial form of the catacombs was encouraging the cohesion of the congregation and was aiming to the creation of collective bonds in opposition to the individualism inspired by the Roman funerary monuments of the elites that displayed the prestige of the deceased person and the glory of his *gens*. The uniformity of the subterranean *loculi* as a form of egalitarianism in the face of death was expressing the ideal solidarity between the members of the community.[679] It was a message from Damasus to the nobility and their selective approach towards Christianity since in contrast to the great imperial projects that emphasised the veneration of specific individual martyrs this plan was aiming to promote the anonymous 'next door' heroes-martyrs that would set an ideal to the ordinary Christian Roman. It was the populist answer against the privatizing of the cult and of the relics of the saints. Constantine might have linked himself with Peter through the Vatican project and Helena with Peter and Marcellinus due to her mausoleum or even Constantina with St. Agnes but from now on the *populus Romanus* would have their own patrons. Moreover, this conservative approach to the relics confirmed the unique case of Rome in time as in space in an age when the relics of Andrew and Timothy were transferred to Constantinople in an attempt to increase its prestige as a recently-established Patriarchy with disproportional claims about its past and future status but all these were nothing but forlorn hopes in comparison to the propaganda machine that Damasus was possessing.

This powerful weapon however required authorisation and there were already plenty of competitors around that celebrated martyrs of their own cause, (Donatists, Novatianists, followers of Ursinus) not to mention the private (mainly aristocratic cults) that claimed a

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[679] M. Sághy, 'Martyr Cult and Collective Identity in Fourth-Century Rome,' p. 26.

monopoly in the patronage of certain saints. Damasus attempted to impose a *Damnatio Memoriae* on the cults of the rival factions and he was always marking with his name all the epigrams that he placed as a signature or copyright claim in order to guide his faction to the legitimate 'safe to consume' cults. This process of authorization was recognized by standard phrases like *Damasus episcopus fecit* or *Expressit Damasus meritum* at the end of each epigram.[680] The members of other congregations were of course prohibited from worshiping these martyrs or approaching their site. When in 365 the bishop of the Donatist community of Rome, Macrobius (author of the *Passio Maximiani*, where the 'mainstream' Church is presented as the persecutor),[681] attempted to visit the tombs of the Apostles, access was not permitted to him.[682] Apart from consolidating his power and influence over the sites that he already controlled, Damasus was also eager to expand and leave his mark in disputed areas, like the cemetery of St Agnes where the Ursinians used to meet. In his epigram he is appealing to the saint in order to listen to his prayers, imposing thus, himself on landscape so closely related to Ursinus and Liberius.[683] As for the private cults, he followed the same process of authorization, as in the case of the recently martyred (during the reign of Julian) John and Paul. Their bodies, kept in their house on the Caelian hill, were another Damasan signature[684] was apparently signifying some kind of papal toleration of these cults. The circumstances however could always turn to complicated issues as in the case of the martyrdom of the preacher Macarius, affiliated to the 'purist' group of Lucifer of Cagliari, who was attacked by a group of partisans of Damasus and taken outside the *urbs* where he died of his wounds in Ostia. Not long afterwards a cult was developed around his tomb but Damasus had his body transferred to the basilica of Asterius, hoping to distract the *devotio* of the crowd towards the (accredited) veneration of another priest of Ostia who had been

[680] Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, 18, 21
[681] See M. Edwards, *Optatus: Against the Donatists* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), p. 33.
[682] See Optatus, *Against the Donatists*, II, 4.
[683] See M. Sághy, 'Pope Damasus and the Beginnings of Roman Hagiography', in O. Gecser, J. Laszlovszky, B. Nagy, M. Sebők, K. Szende, *Promoting the Saints: Cults and Their Contexts from Late Antiquity until the Early Modern Period; Essays in Honor of Gábor Klaniczay for his 60th Birthday* (Budapest; New York: CEU Press, 2011), pp. 1-17, p. 2.
[684] M. Sághy, 'Pope Damasus and the Beginnings of Roman Hagiography', p. 6

martyred more than a century earlier.[685] The followers of Lucifer of Cagliari were mocking the size and luxury of the Nicene Churches while they were holding their congregations in an ascetic atmosphere, far away from the destructive and alienating material wealth; now they had to enter a Nicene church in order to approach the sepulchre of their martyr.[686]

Another aspect of the renovation project was the attention paid to the restoration and preservation of the 'crypt of the Popes' that Zephyrinus (198-217) had commissioned to Callixtus. During the third century several bishops were buried there including Sixtus II (257-258) who had been martyred *in situ* along with his six deacons (Felicissimus, Agapitus, Ianuarius, Magnus, Vicentius and Stephanus)[687] during the persecution of Decius. Damasus converted the chamber to a small church by adding an altar, decorating the walls with marble and by placing two spiral columns. Instead of commemorating only Sixtus II he sanctified the entire collection of bodies allowing the memory of the early bishops to be fused in a single *turba piorum*, signifying the self-sacrifice, altruism and commitment of the Roman pontiffs to the Christian cause.[688] Another 'resident' of the crypt, Eusebius (309/10) who faced as well the danger of a schism from the faction of Heraclius who challenged the return of the *lapsi* (fallen) that happened to denounce the Church during the persecutions, was used as an archetype of unifier and pacifier.[689] It was because of the tyrant's brutality that the division within the congregation occurred, pointing indirectly to the intervention of Constantius II during the papacy of Liberius. Also the bishop paid particular attention to the martyr Lawrence, arch-deacon of Sixtus II, who was martyred in 258. He set the archetype of the deaconate, already a position of interest to certain circles of the new aristocratic *mediocres* which partly explains the popularity of his cult in their circles.[690] It was this type of court-discipline that Lawrence was inspiring to the Christian aristocracy who perceived the

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[685] M. Sághy, '*Scinditur in partes populus*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome', p. 283.
[686] See G. l. Thompson, 'The Pax Constantiniana and the Roman Episcopate' in G. D. Dunn (ed*.) The Bishop of Rome in Late Antiquity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 17-36, p. 26.
[687] *Liber Pontificalis*, XXV, 2.
[688] M. Sághy, 'Martyr Cult and Collective Identity in Fourth-Century Rome,' p. 27-28.
[689] M. Sághy, '*Renovatio memoriae*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome', p. 255-256.
[690] See M. Sághy, 'Pope Damasus and the Beginnings of Roman Hagiography', p. 9.

Heavenly Court in the same way they did with the imperial court. He was another *exemplum* of a distinguished official in the celestial Rome, an everlasting consul in the heavenly Curia.[691] The (ab)use of the Christian past however was even more evident with the case of Hippolytus, buried on the via Tiburtina, who was portrayed by Damasus as a repentant Novatianist who was later supposed to admit that *Catholicam dixisse fidem sequentur ut omnes*.[692] During the third century of course there was no single leadership within the Church of Rome which was divided in separate congregations with different leaderships. Despite the misinterpretation of the third century realities however, the conflict of Calixtus and Hippolytus was used by Damasus as a representation of his conflict with Ursinus where Hippolytus was portrayed as a usurper. It had also one additional function; the tomb of Novatus was located opposite that of Hippolytus on the Via Tiburtina. Any Novatianist passing by would be easily 'intoxicated' with the Damasan propaganda from the epigram of Hippolytus. It was this fourth century papal re-interpretation of this controversial figure that made the cult of this saint one of the most famous saints in Rome during the fourth century.[693] The institutionalization of the cult of the Roman bishops was already evident by the inclusion of the list of bishops in the codex-calendar of 354 which listed them in a catalogue corresponding with consular and imperial dates revealing the attempt of the Christian aristocracy to portray the Church of Rome as an old and respected institution with an undisturbed continuity from the Apostolic days until the fourth century. It was the first such attempt of listing the Roman pontiffs (leaving aside of course *depositio episcoporum*). The *successio apostolica* demonstrated the solid tradition of the Church of Rome and its firm leadership in a time when the Constantian regime had favoured the option of two bishops in the city (Liberius and Felix II).[694]

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[691] Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II, 551-564.

[692] Ferrua, *Epigrammata Damasiana*, 35.

[693] M. Sághy, '*Renovatio memoriae*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome', p. 256-257.

[694] See M. Sághy, 'Martyr Bishops and the Bishop's Martyrs in Fourth-Century Rome', in J. S. Ott, T. Vedriš (eds.) *Saintly Bishops and Bishops' Saints* (Zagreb: Hagiotheca, 2012), pp. 31-45, p. 15-17.

The new status acquired to the Roman Church by the efforts of Damasus placed the Church among the most prominent factors in the politics of the Old Capital; the Papacy was not anymore an exclusively Christian matter, it could not be ignored even by the pagan aristocracy of the city, the members of which were appointed to various public offices and they had common interests and understanding for the preservation of balance and peace with and around the city. During the urban Prefecture of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, when the rivalry with Ursinus was at its peak, the pagan prefect assisted Damasus and restored the order.[695] Their common understanding had been continued and in 384 the bishop intervened to help Symmachus, friend of Praetextatus who was accused of persecuting the Christians due to his brutal methods of investigation when he was entrusted by the imperial court at Milan to find those who plundered pagan temples. Symmachus claimed that he did not even started investigating and Damasus testified indeed that no Christians had been offended.[696] Jerome of course confirmed this easy-going atmosphere between them by preserving the famous saying of Praetextatus to the bishop 'Facite me Romanae urbis episcopum et ero protinus christianus'.[697] The Church of Rome had been fully incorporated as a qualified and universally recognized and respected institution to the scene of Roman politics. The influence of the Roman primacy however was not limited to the old capital and its surrounding areas since it was Damasus who had to respond and defend the idea of Rome against the challenges and the provocations of a rival Rome in the East that claimed a condominium of prestige within the *orbis Romanus*.

The upgrade of Constantinople as the only imperial see during the sole rule of Constantius II (350-361) and later during the reign of Theodosius I as *Senior Augustus* (until 393) and as sole emperor until his death (395) had changed the equilibrium between the status of the major administrative centres in East and West. The new ideological status of Constantine's foundation became more evident in the contemporary ecclesiastical politics and in the

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[695] See M. Kahlos, 'Vettius Agorius Praetextatus and the Rivalry between Bishops in Rome in 366-367', *Arctos*, 31 (1997), pp. 41-54, pp. 45, 51-52.

[696] See Symmachus, *Relatio* XXI, 3-5.

[697] See Jerome, *Contra Iohannem Hierosolymitanum*, 377-379.

Second Ecumenical Council (381). The clash of authority was going to be inevitable. Rome's unique position as the only apostolic foundation in the Western Empire in combination with its pre-existing status as the core of *Romanitas* and cradle of the Empire secured a monopoly of prestige and respect, unparalleled by any Church in the Greek East. The Church of Antioch had of course been of great (but mainly regional) importance, despite the fact that it was founded by Peter before going to Rome. The Church of Jerusalem had its undoubted universal recognition as the cradle of Christianity but it would not become an influential force in ecclesiastical politics until the fifth century. As late as the 370s it was only the Church of Alexandria, (founded by Mark) which functioned as the 'Other' pole of Christianity in symbolic status and influence. Rome was left undisturbed to expand her influence to the West. Bishops from regions like Gaul and Spain were sending their requests for guidance directly to Rome in the same manner that a *vicarius* or a prefect would send to the emperor.[698] The bishops willingly responded to this 'call of duty' and were replying by issuing *decretalia* such as the *Canones Romanorum ad Gallos episcopos* composed by Damasus even if they were formalised only by his successor, Siricius. However when the council of 381 was summoned in Constantinople, there was no Roman representative. The council decided to upgrade the Church of Constantinople as a Patriarchate and additionally the city was recognised officially as the *Nova Roma*, and as such claimed an equal status to the Church of Rome (canon III).[699] The latter's symbolic status was of course recognised but the primacy supposed to be a matter of secular standing.[700] Rome had not been (officially) challenged but this decision was perceived as an Eastern imposition and an act of aggression; and since Constantinople wished to present itself as a new city (and therefore a city with no history) had no legitimacy to claim equality with the (old) Rome. Gregory of Nazianzus was among the most mild and moderate presences in the Council of Constantinople, attempting to bridge the distance between the two capitals justifying that there were 'Two Romes in order to light the entire World', 'one in the East and one in the

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[698] H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 239.

[699] See J. T. Shotwell, L. R. Loomis, *The See of Peter* (New York: Columbia university Press, 1991), p. 686.

[700] H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 161.

West'.[701] Seven decades later, Leo I (440-461) would address the emperor Marcian (450-457) and patriarch Anatolius (449-458) by reminding them that independently of the secular status, the divine order of things is a completely different issue and that no other foundation was more stable than the Rock where upon the Christ would laid His Church.[702] That was threatening the position of both Rome and Alexandria. Additionally, the council confirmed that the ecclesiastical jurisdiction should follow the boundaries of the administrative division of the Empire; the provinces of Greece would be transferred from Rome to Constantinople. In order for Damasus to preserve his influence in the Greek regions he introduced the appointment of the bishops of Thessalonica as his *de jure* Apostolic *vicarii* ever since (a practice continued until the eighth century), towards this direction, the bishop of Thessalonica, Ascholius, was his ally.[703] Damasus called for another council in Rome for the year 382, hoping to regain some of the lost ground and to discuss the status of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, but he was ignored.[704]

In the mean-time, the Christian aristocracy was reaping the benefits of having the same religious affiliations with the Theodosian regime and in 395 the two sons of Petronius Probus were awarded with the consulship. Less than five years earlier their father was buried in an elaborate mausoleum near St Peter's, following (or trying to do so) the example of the Constantinian family about half a century earlier. The stratification of the social orders within the Church had been already completed. The strengthening of the ties between the papacy and the senatorial aristocracy towards the end of the fourth century had achieved a new level of confidence, self-realization and esteem which reflected upon the concept of the Roman identity, the ways that they should preserve and protect it.[705] The spiritual inheritance of Damasus re-forged the idealism of the Romans of Rome reagarding their unique

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[701] See Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carmen de Vita sua*, II, 562-572.
[702] See Leo I, *ep.* CIV.3, CVI.2, 5.
[703] H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 241-242. Also C. Pietri, *Roma Christiana*, vol. II pp. 1086-1147.
[704] Theodoretus, Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία, V, 8-9.
[705] J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, pp. 320, 323.

inheritance that would later help them to recover mentally and ideologically from the sack of 410.

By the beginning of the fifth century Rome had a crystallized Christian identity in parallel to the pre-existing pagan(s). The efforts of Damasus as well as Christian authors and intellectuals in an age when Christianity was gradually expanding in the elite circles of Rome contributed to the flourishing of a new *Romanitas*. The profile of the eternal city was recarved by the addition of new celestial patrons; the martyrs of the city had now redefined local sacral geography. By the early 400s the local Christian saints of Rome were barely distinguishable to the old heroes of the city's past celebrated long ago by authors like Livy and Vergil. Christian *Romanitas* however, despite its regional character, bound to the local narratives of the city religious history, was developed within the protective shell of the fourth century Empire. The next decades would be years of trial for both the Empire and the city of Rome and its symbolic importance in the spiritual geography of its inhabitants. In the fifth century the self-confidence of that *Romanitas* would be tested by the Gothic invasion and sack of the eternal city. Thus, intellectuals would soon have to reflect on Rome beyond its material form.

VI. Between Jerusalem and Babylon: The Archetype of Rome in the *City of God*

The sack of the eternal city by the forces of Alaric left a deep mark (in contrast to the actual material damage) on the intellectual landscape of the West. This acceleration of history and the confirmation of the most pessimistic voices of the intellectual landscape regarding the fate of *Romanitas* in an age of internal conflict and external pressure caused the re-emergence of two opposite dialectics regarding the approach and interpretation of the shocking news of Alaric's storming of Rome. Despite the fact that this clash of the Christian and Pagan dialectics can be traced back to the time of Origen and Celsus, late in the second century AD, the harsh realities of the early fifth century made the search for answers more imperative than ever before. Both sides wept for this calamity considering religious Otherness as the cause which contributed to this outcome. Accusations such as blasphemy, immorality and provocation must have replaced the atmosphere of the creative and mutually beneficial dialogue which had been developed in the late fourth century among the religious communities of the old capital. As the collective trauma was solidifying in the Roman imaginary, during the course of the fifth century, several authors like Jerome (*Epistula ad Heliodorum de laude vitae solitariae*), Pelagius (*Epistula ad Demetriadem*), Augustine of Hippo (*De Civitate Dei adversus Paganos*), Orosius (*Libri Historiarum adversus Paganos*) and later Salvian (*De Gubernatione Dei)*, attempted to answer this challenge. Augustine's position however is in a sense unique since he moved away from the conflict between pagans and Christians and instead of expressing defeatism about the fate of *Romanitas* he indicated an alternative destiny for Rome by re-writing the entire history of the *oikoumene* and drawing a potential future in very familiar Roman terms.

While Augustine was already gathering material for the composition of a *prolixum opus* which would explain the meeting of Rome and Christianity and their relation to the contemporary turbulent realities of the early fifth century as the correspondence with Victorianus reveals the course of politics by the end of the first decade of the new century

made it necessary for him to re-arrange his writing priorities.[706] Not long after the dramatic events the first waves of refugees started arriving in Carthage, not very far away from his see. It was an audience composed of all social and religious backgrounds but had the same question: How could something like that happen in the *tempora Christiana*? The radical approach of the *City of God* was not dominated by the unlucky events of 410 which appeared to concern Augustine only to a limited extent; on the contrary it revealed Augustine's interpretation of the divine plan regarding the Roman Empire and its position within it. The disastrous event that occurred in Italy left the bishop with no choice but to reflect on the concept and idea of Rome and what that must have meant to his contemporaries. From that point of view, the *City of God* is not an anti-pagan polemic; the author's approach incorporated several elements of the pre-Christian past of Rome that deserved universal respect (if not imitation). It is more than obvious that the structure of his *magnum opus* is dominated by the antithesis of the *Heavenly City* (*Civitas Caelestis*) which represents the body of the Christian Church and the *Earthly City* (*Civitas Terrena*) which includes all the rest. Despite the fact that he was influenced by the very attractive biblical concept of Jerusalem and Babylon, the two societies, represented by these Cities or dimensions were not fundamentally a division between the pious and the impious. They were symbolising the clash of two moral *topoi* in human History as it is presented in the Scriptures.[707] It was a separation based on spiritual condition and not on any chronological or geographical distance. The Donatist Tyconius, back in the 370s, had introduced, in his *Liber Regularum*, a similar model of interpretation which perceived the Church as a *corpus bibertitum* (a body in two parts), a mingling of saints and sinners, it was an idea that Augustine was opposing as late as the 390s.[708] Similar concepts could be traced at least as back as the Apocryphal *Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles* as well as the *Shepherd of*

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[706] See Augustine, Ep. 111, 11.

[707] See R. W. Dyson, *The Pilgrim City: Social and Political Ideas in the Writings of St Augustine of Hippo* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), p.11. Also L. S. Mazzolani*, The Idea of the City in Roman Thought*, p. 256 and P. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire* (London: Pan Books, 2005), pp. 230-231.

[708] See Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, 3.42-56. Also O' Daly, *Augustine's City of God*, p. 57.

Hermas,[709] the anonymous *Letter to Diognetus*[710] and the *De Corona Militis*[711] of Tertullian, where the Church is represented as a *municipatus* on the Heaven. Origen also mentioned the 'City of God' which was identified with the Church.[712] Moreover, Plotinus had represented the Reality in his fourth *Ennead* as a division between a 'City above' and a 'City of the things below.'[713] The young Augustine had already identified the realm of God with the Neo-platonic *mundus intelligibilis* of the philosophers, a dimension accessible only through reflection and intellectual practice.[714] Augustine had already made his own draft of this idea in his *De Vera Religione* (c. 389-391) where he mentioned *duo genera hominum*, the 'Old' man of material desires and the 'New' man of spirituality.[715] Those categories of people were to obey respectively in two diiferent categories of law, the *lex temporalis* which was consisted by the rules of the earthly dominions and the *lex aeterna* which were the commandments of God.[716]

Augustine was convinced that the calamities which were taking place around him were just inevitable symptoms of a universal phenomenon, the *senectus mundi*. The disasters that battered the society of his own time could only be explained by eavesdropping to the surrounding environment; the world was growing old, exhausted like an old man, and as such had all the natural symptoms of this age, the shaking, the failing eyesight and an anxiety of the approaching departure.[717] It was a continuation of discourse of universal decline that went as far back as Hesiod as well as the 'Vegoic' books of the Etruscans which

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[709] See G. J. P. O' Daly, *Augustine's City of God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 54.

[710] See *Letter to Diognetus*, 5, 17.

[711] See Tertullian, *De Corona Militis*, 13. 1-4.

[712] See Origen, *Contra Celsum* VIII, 68-75.

[713] See Plotinus, *Enneads*, IV, 4, 17, Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, IX, 17. Also G. J. P. O' Daly, *Augustine's City of God*, p. 59.

[714] See Augustine, *Soliloquia*, I. 1. 3.

[715] See Augustine, *De vera religione*, 50.

[716] See Augustine, *De Libero Arbitrio* I. Also *Retractiones* I, 9.1.

[717] See Augustine, *Sermo* 81, 8

had for too long nurtured Roman literary imagination through authors like Cicero, and, later Lucretius.[718]

In order to support this argument, Augustine had divided the History of the World in six major ages based on the Biblical narrative. The first one, lasted from the creation until the time of Noah, the second one extended until Abraham, the third one ended with the reign of David, the fourth lasted to the Babylonian captivity and was succeeded by the fifth which lasted until the advent of Christ, and finally the last one, went one until the uncertain present of the early fifth century and would end only with the last judgement.[719] This perspective was of course not an Augustinian innovation since authors like Ammianus Marcellinus and Claudian had already portrayed *Roma* as an exhausted elder figure who had (or was about to) enter a quitter period of life.[720] The old capital had been for long encapsulated to the narrative of the *urbs venerabilis* in both Christian and Pagan dialectics. Despite this fragile image, many Christian writers had imagined Rome as carrying a special mission in the divine plan. Ageing was not, after all, something fundamentally negative but rather a condition that was naturally to occur by the passing of time, and as in the case of men, the late period of life was symbolizing intellectual maturity in contrast to the *pericula mentis* of youth.[721] The bishop assured his audience that independently of the old age, the youth will be renewed like that of an eagle, and he was indeed hoping of such rejuvenation if his contemporaries would embrace the City of God.[722]

The Roman Empire was gradually becoming more and more Christian, Augustine witnessed this tension during his lifetime (354-430) and many writers considered that the *Imperium Christianum* would have a special mission set by divine providence in order to expand Christianity to the fringes of the *oikoumeni*. Authors like Prudentius and Ambrose were

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[718] See S. Mazzarino, *The End of the Ancient World* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), pp. 17-31. Also H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics*, vol. I (Gothenburg: Elander, 1967), p. 769.

[719] See Augustine, *De catehizandis rudibus*, III-V.

[720] Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XIV, vi.4 and Claudian, *De Bello Gildonico*, I, 17

[721] See Augustine, *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus*, 32.9, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 36.9, *Sermo* 391, 1-2.

[722] See Augustine, *Sermo* 81, 8. Also P. Brown, *Augustine*, p. 298.

responsible for the establishment of this dialectic but they were fortunate enough to die before their ideas were tested.[723] Rome could not function as God's instrument and could not save the terrestrial *patria*, that was obvious after 410.[724] Already in the previous centuries, Melito of Sardis, Origen and later Eusebius saluted the coming of a new era for the Roman Empire when the state would function as 'vehicle' of God's will. It was such an attractive theory that as late as 418 Augustine was trying to convince the bishop Hesychius of Salona to cease promoting such out-dated and old-fashioned ideas.[725] But not all Christian authors agreed to this perception. Hippolytus of Rome for instance, thought of the Roman Empire as the Last of the 'Four Beasts' (traditionally interpreted as the monarchies of the Assyrians, Medians, Persians and Greeks) in the prophecies of Daniel.[726] The context of this text as an anti-Roman treatise can be confirmed by the fact that it took its final form by Theodotion of Ephesus (c. 180AD) in an apocalyptic and anti-authoritarian orientation that was in reality a *vaticinium ex eventu*.[727] The concept of the Succession of Empires had been anyway influential in Roman literature as it was already evident in the work of Aemilius Sura (quoted by Velleius Paterculus).[728] In addition to this narrative there was an expectation of the appearance of a fifth monarchy that was added to the initial scheme during the Hellenistic Era, prophesising the rising of a 'final' kingdom which would replace all others.[729] It was a modification that occurred when Rome penetrated the politics of the Greek East in the aftermath of the battle of Magnesia (190BC). During the turmoil that the war of Antiochus III had caused, a Persian oracle, at the location of Hiera Kome, in Asia Minor, rejoiced in the

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[723] See R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 29.

[724] See P. I. Kaufman, 'Augustine's Dystopia', in Wetzel J. (ed.) *Augustine's City of God: A Critical Guide*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 55-74, p. 55.

[725] See Augustine, *ep.* 198, 6, *De Civitate Dei*, XX, 5. Also R. Marcus, *Saeculum*, p. 40.

[726] See Daniel, 7.

[727] See A. Liakos, *Αποκάλυψη, Ιστορία, Ουτοπία: Οι Μεταμορφώσεις της Ιστορικής Συνείδησης* (Athens: ΠΟΛΙΣ, 2011), p. 50.

[728] A. Liakos, *Αποκάλυψη, Ιστορία, Ουτοπία*, p. 58.

[729] See T. Mommsen, 'St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress: The Background of the City of God', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 12, 3 (1951), pp. 346-374, p. 348.

news of the Greek defeat and announced the rise of a fifth monarchy.[730] After the end of the last Mithridatic War (75-63 BC), prophecies of anti-Roman context began to spread as well. History was interpreted by prophecies and vice versa. Phlegon of Tralles recorded a prophecy of the end of Rome which would occur when a king from the east would avenge Rome on behalf of the Greeks.[731] Pompeius Trogus claimed, in the Augustan era, that the fourth monarchy would be indeed succeeded by a fifth one.[732] Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Appian hastened to celebrate Rome as the fifth monarchy.[733] During the second and early third centuries AD ecclesiastical authors like Irenaeus of Lyon and Tertullian thought of Rome as the fourth monarchy and during the fourth century, several editors of Daniel like Eusebius, John Chrysostom, Jerome and Sulpicius Severus continued to identify Rome with that archetype.[734] Commodian was 'prophesizing' in the mid-third century that there would be a day when the senators will weep and curse the chains with which the barbarians would bind them and that the city which was proud of its *aeternitas* would eternally weep (*Luget in aeternum quae se iactabat aeterna*).[735] Lactantius informed his audience that the world would come to an end but not as long as Rome remained unharmed, only when the city would fall (*cum caput ille orbis occiderit*), the last obstacle for the end of the world would be removed.[736] It was no coincidence, therefore that the events of 410 were interpreted as signs of the world's end.[737]

Augustine was not so willing to share this hostile view towards Rome as those who promoted the apocalyptic interpretation of the political reality did but he was rather unwilling and hesitant to celebrate the conjoining of Christianity with the Roman *Imperium.* From a theological point of view he considered Rome as a neutral ground, the *civitas inmixta*, where

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[730] See A. Liakos, *Αποκάλυψη, Ιστορία, Ουτοπία*, p. 60. Also J. W. Swain, 'The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire', *Classical Philology*, 35, 1 (1940), pp. 1-21, p. 12.

[731] See Phlegon, *Περὶ Θαυμασίων*, 3. Also A. Momigliano, *Τὰ Ὅρια του Εξελληνισμού στην Αρχαιότητα* (Athens: Αλεξάνδρεια, 1998), pp. 75-76.

[732] See A. Liakos, *Αποκάλυψη, Ιστορία, Ουτοπία*, pp. 59-60.

[733] See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, I, 2, 2-4 and Appian, *Roman History*, Praefatio, 9.

[734] See Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, V, 26, 1 and Tertullian, *Apologeticus Pro Christianis*, 32, 1.

[735] See Commodian, *Carmen Apologeticum*, 801, 923.

[736] See Lactantius, *Institutiones Divinae*, VII, xxv.

[737] T. Mommsen, 'St. Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress', p. 349.

the two *Cities* overlaped.[738] It was a no man's land where many (secular) Christians were more pious than their clergy who proved by their 'deeds' that they probably belonged to the *Earthly City* and it would also be inhabited by pagans who would sooner or later embrace the Christian message. It would be only during the last judgement that the two Cities would be separated and until then both would suffer by the same calamities and evils.[739] He admitted of course that the Roman Empire managed to rise to global dominion because it was planned accordingly by the divine providence but that was the case for all the other kingdoms and political entities of previous ages.[740] Therefore Rome had no special privilege in doing what Greece, Persia and Babylon had done before. Rome was just the most recent incarnation of the *Civitas Terrena*, the Empire of the material world with all the faults and vices that such an accomplishment had brought. The peace and stability that Rome provided had indeed helped the Church to expand but that could be achieved by any state.[741] For Augustine, all terrestrial political entities were nothing but the institutionalisation of men's ambitions and interests which were imposed by violence, if that was necessary. He reminded his audience, in his fifteenth book, that Cain founded the first city while Abel was only a *peregrinus* during his lifetime, tracing the genealogy of the two *Cities* back to the book of Genesis.[742] Romulus could be compared to Cain, but Remus was in no way Abel since the Roman fratricide symbolized the conflicts of the *Eartlhy City* while the Biblical narrative represented the momentum of the beginning of the parallel course of the two *civitates* in time and space.[743] At this point, even pagan writers of the imperial period could agree that the murder of Remus was the beginning of the fall from the golden age that had slowly led to the

[738] R. Markus, *Saeculum,* p. 98. Also R. W. Dyson, *The Pilgrim City: Social and Political Ideas in the Writings of St. Augustine of Hippo* (New York: Boydell Press, 2001), p. 37.

[739] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XVIII, 54. Also See J. Ferguson, *Utopias of the Classical World*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), p. 184.

[740] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V. 16.

[741] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XIX, 17. Also see J. B. Elshtain, *Augustine and the Limits of Politics* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), p. 21.

[742] Genesis, 4, 17.

[743] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XV, 5.

iron age of the civil wars of the late *Res Publica*.[744] The narrative of fall and the degeneration

of men can be traced at least as far back as Hesiod (late 8th century BC), who described the

succession of the Ages starting from the golden one which was succeeded by the silver,

bronze, heroic and iron, with the last one being especially linked with the absence of morality

among men.[745]

It was of paramount importance for Augustine that his audience ought to understand the

inevitable course of this literary scheme and also the distinction between the Salvation plan

and what seemed to be the accidental christianization of Rome. He warned that the age of

persecutions might have not necessarily ended.[746] Ironically enough, the coming of the

Vandals in his region after 430 would turn his anxiety into a self-fulfilling prophecy. There

was however a great potential, the further christianization of imperial subjects, which would

automatically upgrade Rome to the *City of God*. The past, the present and the future were

from that point of view only aspects of the conflicts of the two *Cities*. The sack of 410 had

been of course a terrible shock even for the most calm and careful observers like Augustine

who was forced to revise his earlier trust and confidence he had in the Theodosian regime

and the sense of renovation that dominated the atmosphere during the 380s and 390s. It

appeared that Rome ceased to be God's instrument, thus Augustine had to put all his

emphasis on the only aspect of the *Romanitas* that could not be sacked, the ideas. The

concepts had been already established; all that was needed was direction towards a gradual

spiritual renovation.

The position of Rome in the Augustinian vision was vital; it was naturally the center of his

world; to indicate an alternative to this would have been unthinkable. Unconsciously, Rome

was the ecumenical archetype of human civilization. Jerome for instance, whose sentimental

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[744] See R. Evans, *Utopia Antiqua: Readings of the Golden Age and Decline at Rome* (Oxon: Routledge, 2008), p. 41. Also See R. Heinberg, *Memories and Visions of Paradise: Exploring the Universal Myth of the Lost Golden Age* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1989), pp. 46-49.
[745] See Hesiod, *Work and Days*, 106-201. Also A. Lovejoy & G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (New York: Octagon Books, 1965), p. 31.
[746] R. Markus, *Saeculum*, p. 54.

ties with Rome went as far back as his early adulthood, feeling nostalgia and depression as any individual would about his student-city, while lamenting, expressed his anxiety about salvation since it could no longer be found in Rome.[747] He was in Bethelem when he received the sad news, having just completed his commentary on Isaiah and he was about to begin his one on Ezekiel; he could not write for days upon hearing the shocking news: his entire reality was destroyed with the fall of the city. In his mind as well as in his contemporaries, the Empire was just an extension of the capital, the one could not survive the other, the boundaries of the city had encapsulated the world: *Postquam vero clarissimum terrarum omnium lumen extinctum est, immo Romani imperii truncatum caput, et, ut verius dicam, in una urbe totus orbis interiit.*[748]

Augustine had approached the sack of the eternal city in a familiar Old Testament scheme; the disasters would correct the immoral character of the Roman people. The world had been under pressure (*pressurae mundi*) but this might have been actually beneficial for the fulfilment of his vision.[749] The Goths were nothing more than a divine instrument that served the purpose of the purification of the *Orbis Romanus*. It had proven to be a test for the Christians as well who had shown their solidarity at their fellow pagan citizens by accepting them into the basilicas of the city, the only safe place during the days the Christian Goths were pillaging the old capital.[750] Even when, according to Orosius, some Goths had stolen some sacred vessels from a Church within the city, they were instructed by Alaric to place them back and this act of restoration turned to a common procession of Goths and Romans, accompanied by the singing of hymns. The name of Christ could unite separate (until that moment) destinies in serving the cause of venerating God, with the eternal city as the sacred

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[747] See Jerome, *ep.* 123, 16. Also P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967), p. 289.
[748] See Jerome, *Comentarii in Ezechielem*, I, praefatio.
[749] See Augustine, ep. 111. 2
[750] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, I, 1.

ground.[751] The pagans who were around would be future members of the community of the saints, for which they had, according to Augustine, an unconditional open invitation.[752]

The City of God was on pilgrimage in this world, its future citizens were hidden among its present enemies.[753] The pagans ought not to blame the Christians for the disaster that took place, nor to mourn for the material damage, because what was really lost was the spiritual condition of the citizens, the restoration of which was actually the ultimate challenge. He critizised his pagan contemporaries for being 'the sworn enemies of the glory of their ancestors' reminding them that the Roman heroes of the past held virtue and morality in high esteem and their example could not be compared to the spiritual condition of their descendants.[754] He admits however that those illustrious men of Antiquity were dominated by the 'love for praise'(*amor laudis*) and the desire to set themselves as models of Roman virtue that inevitably drove them to expand the limits of their territory.[755] God, according to Augustine, appreciated their devotion to the Roman fatherland.[756] For this reason he entrusted the Roman folk with the mission of ruling such an Empire in order that at some point in the future the City of God might be realised.

Augustine recalls that during the era of the Punic Wars, Scipio Nasica had opposed the plans of Cato for the destruction of Carthage because he considered security as a potential danger for the weak characters while 'fear is a kind of suitable guardian, giving the protection they needed.'[757] The people's attitude during the age that followed fully justified, according to the African bishop, the fears of Scipio, since in the absence of any direct external threat that would keep Rome in balance, harmony and order, the moral levels of the *Quirites* collapsed under the greed and corruption that prosperity and carefree times had brought. The bishop of Hippo warned his contemporaries that a 'city is not fortunate when its walls are standing

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[751] See Orosius, *Libri Historiarum Adversus Paganos VII*, 39.8
[752] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II, 29.
[753] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, I, 35.
[754] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II, 2.
[755] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V. 12, 16.
[756] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V. 16.
[757] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, I. 30.

while the morals are in ruins';[758] the sack of 410 had proven that Scipio's warning was a timeless and valuable advice that his distant descendants ought not to forget. The Romans had been for long seeking safety through conquests only to secure the undisturbed impunity, lust and sensuality that dominated their lives. After all, the lust that inflamed the hearts of the Romans was far more dangerous than the flames which damaged many of the buildings within the walls of the eternal city during the sack.[759] The bishop also used passages from the works of Sallust in order to praise the just and righteous character of the Romans of the old days in the face of threats (*Igitur domi militaeque boni mores colebantur; concordia maxuma, minuma avaritia erat; ius bonumque apud eos non legibus magis quam natura valebat*) referring of course to the period before the second Punic War (218-201 BC) when the moral character of the Roman people began to fade.[760] He also quotes from Cicero, in order to bring testimony for the moral decline and fragmentation of the Roman commonwealth long before the appearance and establishment of Christianity.[761] The first-century orator admitted that the foundation of such a vast commonwealth as Rome would not be possible without morality in the community but this legacy was already fading away during his own lifetime.[762] *Romanitas* had been turned to any empty shell that was no longer containing the qualities that made them so distinct and superior to all other cultures.

It was of course a familiar narrative in both pagan and Christian audiences, it was the established literary motif of the fall from the golden age, a pessimistic expression of men about the morals of their contemporary times and the constant decline in comparison to an idealized (often imaginary) past. Symptoms of the global *senectus*, were therefore visible long before the coming of Christ and those who blamed the Christians for the condition of the state did so in vain (if not ignorance).[763] Additionally he offered an alternative path: Christian teaching could instruct people about avoiding corruption and promoting the highest

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[758] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, I. 33.
[759] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II. 2.
[760] See Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, 9. 1.
[761] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II. 21.
[762] See Cicero, *De Republica,* V.
[763] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II, 21.

morality.[764] It was a call for the remaining pagans to embrace the Christian message and join the rest of the congregation in heavenly city which unlike the *terrena patria* had no Vestal hearth or the Capitoline rock *sed Deus unus et uerus nec metas rerum nec tempora ponit, Imperium sine fine dabit.*[765] He used Virgil's description of Jupiter ceding to Aeneas and the Romans an Empire without end or limits in space and time (*His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono*: │ *imperium sine fine dedi*).[766] But far from being just a common conception, the selection of the Virgilian verse had been a strategy of assimilation and mutual communication, it was a very careful and well planned strategy in an age when the *Aeneid* was treated in the circles of the last pagan intellectuals as a manual of theology.[767] Many of the pagan refugees who came to Africa after 410 treated this epic in this way and the fact that they had been already cut off from their regional and religious roots must have nurtured their religious interpretation of this literary context.[768] Damasus had used the same code of communication in his *elogia* in order to impose his agenda of the cult of the martyrs and, as in the case of the Rome half a century earlier, Augustine imagined that in the City of God, the martyrs would be venerated in the same way, that the illustrious heroes of the great Senatorial *gentes* like the *Curtii* and the *Decii* were honoured in the *Earthly City*, setting thus a new kind of exemplum for the contemporary Christian Romans.[769] Moreover, the Christian martyrs had surpassed the glory of the old pagan heroes since the latter had been sacrificed for the sake of the earthly glory while the martyrs had been sacrificed for the *Celestial City*.

Augustine appeared to admire the famous heroes of Rome's History but he considered the wars and sacrifices that they conducted as vanity and empty ambition for expanding their territories (*libido dominandi*).[770] Rome under the kings, the bishop narrates shed so much

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[764] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II, 25.

[765] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II. 29.

[766] See Virgil, *Aeneid,* I, 278-279.

[767] See R. Lim, 'Augustine, the Grammarians and the Cultural Authority of Vergil', in R. Rees (ed.) *Romane Memento: Vergil in the Fourth Century* (London: Duckworth, 2004), pp. 112-127.

[768] See J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon: A Study of Augustine's City of God and the Sources of his Doctrine of the Two Cities* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 61.

[769] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V. 14.

[770] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* I, *prefatio*.

blood only to expand its borders twenty miles away from the *pomerium*.[771] It was more than just a critical approach to History; it was also criticism of Roman theory of historiography. Ammianus Marcellinus, the last 'Old School' historian who continued the Tacitan methodology, had also expressed his concern for the orientation of historiography in his epilogue of the *Res Gestae*: *opus veritatem professum numquam sciens silentio ausus corrumpere, vel mendacio*.[772] From this perspective, the direction of Cleio's craft in the late fourth and early fifth centuries must have also been in fragile balance between Christian post-apocalyptic narrative (after the sack of 410) and imperial praise (for historians who had to cover the early period of the Theodosian dynasty). Additionally, Rome's central role in History as the Romans saw it had to be disestablished. Any past kingdom of the East had been at least as successful as the Romans. Rome's rise was an evolution due to the necessity of times and Augustine developed this idea even further, to the extent that he offered an alternative to Rome. Instead of a world dominated by Empires succeeding each other there could be a reality of small peaceful kingdoms which would be far safer than the violent and unstable empires.[773]

Furthermore, Augustine demystified the famous sacred objects which were supposed to guarantee the eternal city's safety and prosperity. They were the seven *pignora imperii,* the sacred stone of *Magna Mater*, the terracotta chariot of the Veientines, the ashes of Orestes, the sceptre of Priam, the veil of Iliona, the *Palladium* and the *Ancilia*.[774] The author of the *City of God* made a special reference to the Palladium and its story; the statue of Minerva which was brought from Troy to Italy by Aeneas and was kept in the temple of Vesta in the Forum Romanum had connected its fortune to the City as its perpetual guardian.[775] When it was threatened by fire in 241BC Lucius Metellus saved it. Later it was moved in the *Elagabalium*, the great temple constructed by Elagabalus (218-222AD), and by the age of

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[771] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, III, 16.

[772] See Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae*, XXXI, ix.

[773] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, IV, 15. Also G. J. P. O' Daly, *Augustine's City of God: A Reader's Guide*, p. 92.

[774] See C. Ando, 'The Palladium and the Pentateuch: Towards a Sacred Topography of the Later Roman Empire', *Phoenix*, vol. 55, No. 3/4 (Autumn - Winter, 2001), pp. 369-410, p. 394.

[775] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, III, 18.

Augustine there were rumours that this lost artefact had been transferred to Constantinople. Augustine warned his audience not to believe in perishable 'sacred' objects. He reassured his audience that the survival and lasting of the Empire did not depend on 'sacred' objects but on God's will and it was His providence that secured the emergence and expansion of the Roman state so far. It was God that rewarded right from the beginning, the moral character of the Romans.[776] This divine favour was granted to them because they loved to be praised, they were generous and aimed at honourable riches and they did not hesitate to die for the sake of the Empire. Their virtues were superior to their vices, it was a fact admitted even by Christians like Augustine, who encouraged his audience to imitate the example of the struggles of their ancestors but now only for the cause of the Heavenly City. The Roman devotion to the fatherland could be thus justified from a Christian perspective as well. Men like Augustine were expecting to see the beneficial effects that the conjoining of Christianity and Empire would bring. The sack of 410 however had fragmented their expectations. The fact that it occurred during the reign of Honorius, the offspring of none other than the Theodosius who had contributed so much to the solidity and promotion of the Nicene doctrine, was a serious blow to Christian confidence. Even a government of Christian emperors could not save the terrestrial Rome.

The shocking event of 410 remained of course as a trauma in (pagan and Christian) Roman imaginary. The hopes invested to the vision of the *tempora Christiana* had been shaken. The *City of God* however, along with other contemporary examples like the *De Reditu Suo* of Rutilius Namatianus had initiated the discourse of a general recovery. Even if the Empire was doomed to an inevitable End, certainly it did not take place in 410. In this atmosphere of artificial optimism Augustine turned to Scipio and Cicero in order to warn his contemporaries for their vanity. The *Res Publica Romana* as an expression of the 'Will of the people' never actually existed, Scipio appears in this work to describe the Roman Commonwealth as the ''Will of the people''. 'If this is a true definition' Augustine adds, 'there was never a will of the

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[776] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V, 12.

people […] for he defined a people as a multitude "united in association by a common sense of right and a community of interest".[777] That common sense of right Augustine interpreted as the element of *Justitia* and where there is no justice there cannot be a people and no commonwealth. According to the Ciceronian 'Social Contract' that Augustine used from *De Republica,* the ideal Rome was a dream that was never actually materialized.[778] The size of Rome itself after all proved that it was ruled by a multitude of unjust men driven by the *libido dominandi*.[779] Therefore he quotes 'No people match the definition of Scipio, or Cicero.'[780] It was just an Idea, a vision which preserved the people united for a common interest and preventing them from being just a mob.

Rome's place in the Augustinian concept was in no way static as the concept was evolving in his mind during the years. In the first books of the City of God, when the sack of 410 was still a recent event, Rome was the incarnation of the *Civitas terrena*. It was from the eleventh book onwards that the *populus Romanus* was described in rather neutral terms. They were gradually represented as a *genus hominum qui secundum hominem vivunt* instead of *secundum Deum*.[781] Nevertheless, they were in way condemned. They still remained a subject of criticism. By the time Augustine published the last books of his treatise in the early 420s, Roman society was presented as having the potential of upgrading themselves to the city of God.[782] Finally, they had the chance to embrace a new manifest-destiny.

Already in his fifth book, Augustine made an interesting comparison between Rome and the city of God. The author compared the Christian practice of remission of sins to the conditions around the time of the early days of Rome when the city was the 'asylum of Romulus.' The latter was supposed to have given amnesty to all past crimes committed by the inhabitants of his new city (*praesertim quia remissio peccatorum, quae ciues ad aeternam colligit*

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[777] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XIX, 21.
[778] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, II, 21, XIX, 21.
[779] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, IV, 15.
[780] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XIX, 21.
[781] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XV.1
[782] H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin classics*, vol II, p.409-410

patriam, habet aliquid, cui per umbram quandam simile fuit asylum illud Romuleum, quo multitudinem, qua illa ciuitas conderetur, quorumlibet delictorum congregauit inpunitas).[783] The act of Romulus, Augustine thought, was a sign of the coming of the city of God which in the mid-time was waiting in the shade (*Verum hoc ideo feci, ut prius, ex quo apertiores Dei promissiones esse coeperunt, usque ad eius ex uirgine natiuitatem, in quo fuerant quae primo promittebantur implenda, sine interpellatione a contrario alterius ciuitatis ista, quae Dei est, procurrens distinctius appareret quamuis usque ad reuelationem testamenti noui non in lumine, sed in umbra cucurrerit*).[784] Therefore, the city of Rome was the city of God in waiting.

Additionally, according to Augustine, the foundation of the city of Rome by Romulus, foretold the foundation of the Church by Christ. The author commented on the deification of Romulus by the Romans in order to support his argument. While the deification of a hero was a mistake, the Romans chose to worship him not out of love for their mistake, but by subjecting themselves to the mistake of their love (*quae id non amore quidem huius erroris, sed tamen amoris errore crediderat*).[785] The celestial city, been founded by Christ, does not worship him as an act of gratitude for the foundation. On the contrary, it was because they worship him that their city deserved to be founded. (*Christus autem quamquam sit Caelestis et sempiternae conditor civitatis, non tamen eum, quoniam ab illo condita est Deum credidit, sed ideo potius est condenda, quia credidit*).[786] The city of God had its own Romulus (Christ). It was simply a reflection of the city of Rome, which Augustine appears to have as an archetype in his vision of the celestial *Civitas*.

The idea of Rome had a vital role to play for both Pagans and Christians. The city of Romulus might have been praised as the 'Stone upon which the Lord would erect his Church' but it always would be just a shadow of the Heavenly City unless people could

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[783] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V.17

[784] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XVIII.1 Also P. Manent, *Οι Μεταμορφώσεις της Πόλεως: Δοκίμιο για τη Δυναμική της Δύσης* (Athens: ΠΟΛΙΣ, 2014), p. 433-34.

[785] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XXII.6

[786] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XXII.6

change themselves.[787] After all Rome was the common home and in Augustine's mind there was also a common destination: the City on High. The fact that Rome was sacked but not destroyed could be interpreted as God's sign for a new potential.[788] A Christian empire was simply not enough since its interests were not fundamentally identical to the City of God. Barbarians for instance were threatening the terrestrial city but not the celestial one.[789] Augustine placed his hope on the people and not on the elites or the imperial authorities, Rome would collapse only if its citizens would allow this to happen.[790] He chose to name his treatise *Civitas*, continuing the tradition of utopian thought and political idealism of the *Republic* (*Πολιτεία*) of Plato and of Cicero.[791] Even the Augustinian division of the *opus* in twenty two books might actually have a special significance, since it is the sum of the number of books of Plato's *Republic* and *Laws* combined, strengthening thus the utopian orientation of the treatise. As in the previous cases, the Augustinian alternative was still based on the strong urban archetype (Rome). Additionally it is not a coincidence that all three works were composed in times of social and political crisis.[792] The concept of the civitas/polis city-state is undoubtedly dominant, inseparable from the idea of a community bound by the factors of politics and religion. While the other cities were linked with the cults of certain deities, Augustine's *Civitas* would be devoted to the worship of the Christian God. This vision would become a reality only if the pagans would embrace his doctrine in order for the *vita beata* to be collectively manifest. The kingdom of God was already within them, it just needed to be activated.[793] The desperation of the times revived the hope for a change which would need to be embraced collectively.[794] The more fragile the everyday realities were becoming, the louder was the call for reaching the ideal, individually and collectively. The City of God as spiritual and material condition becomes remote from the Roman capital

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[787] Matthew 16.18
[788] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, IV, 7. Also G. J. P. O' Daly, *Augustine's City of God*, p. 98.
[789] H. Chadwick, *The Early Church*, p. 226.
[790] See H. Chadwick, *Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 101, 106
[791] See H. Chadwick, *Augustine of Hippo: A Life*, p. 129.
[792] J. van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon*, p. 89. Also L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought*, p. 252.
[793] Luke, 17:21.
[794] L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought,* p. 227.

and the latter has no longer the context of the universal fatherland. All ideals that Rome once was incarnating had been transplanted to the invisible celestial refection of the eternal city which thought to gradually come closer while the condition of the *Civitas terrena* was constantly deteriorating. The idea of Rome was no longer accomondated in (the city of) Rome, from then on eternity could be found anywhere.[795] The concept of Rome became portable, abandoning all material and geographical aspects. Independently of the individualist, elitist or collective forms that this vision could take it provided the one thing that the Empire, Rome itself and the State Church had fail to do: to preserve hope.[796]

The idealism about Rome in combination with the (post) apocalyptic discourse of the 'New Heaven' and the 'New Earth'[797] had produced new kinds of ideological twists and complexities that nurtured collective imagination occasionally to the extent of attempting social experimentation. We have already seen the manifestation of the arrival of a (potential) future in the *City of God* but passing from theory to practice was an entirely different issue. In contrast to the long-established tradition that perceived Augustine's *magnum opus*, as a rather unnoticed work in its contemporary intellectual horizon, the example of Claudius Postumus Dardanus and his active interest to the realization of the City of God could prove otherwise.

The fading of the *tempora Christiana* dialectic after 410 must have strengthened the seclusionist and isolationist tensions. Dardanus (praetorian prefect of Gaul in 406-7 and 414) had an active role in the contemporary politics in negotiating with the Visigothic king Athaulf in order to remove his support from the usurper Jovinus (finally executed by Dardanus in Narbonne along with many other Gallic nobles in 413).[798] Dardanus was a rather typical

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[795] See C. Edwards, *Writing Rome: Textual Approaches to the City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 134.

[796] L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought*, p. 227.

[797] Revelations, 21:1 and 5.

[798] See A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris, *The Prosopography of the Late Roman Empire*, vol. II 395-527 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 346-47. Also Olympiodorus, *History*, fragment 20 in R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire. Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, vol. I (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1981), p. 182-184. Also C. Chaffin, *Olympiodorus of Thebes and*

example of the *novi homines* that emerged during the reign of Gratian (375-383) and managed to hold important offices in court and administration due to their education and talent.[799] Sidonius Apollinaris would later express his hatred for Dardanus in a letter to his friend and fellow-aristocrat Aquilinus, whose grandfather had been executed along with Jovinus (a *vir Galliarum nobilissimus*) for plotting against Honorius.[800] Therefore Dardanus contributed significantly to the restoration of order in Gaul which was completed with the final arrangement of the 'Gothic Question' by Constantius III.

After this outcome however, the former prefect of Gauls must have felt rather uneasy among the hostile local aristocracy or he was worried because of turbulence that the barbarian crossing of the Rhine in 407 must have caused.[801] Perhaps the combination of both led him to retire from all public activities and establish himself along with his family in one of his estates in the Alps, in the region of Sisteron. After constructing fortifications on the site he carved an inscription on a nearby rock located by a narrow passage leading to the place, declaring the foundation of the *Theopolis* (City of God).[802]

Dardanus and his wife, Nevia Galla were naming themselves as caretakers of Theopolis, declaring that that this place was destined for the security of all. It appears that they did so as an act of devotion to the community. Dardanus's brother, Claudius Lepidus (otherwise unknown), former consul of Upper Germany, *Magister Memoriae* and *Comes* of the *Res Privatae*, also gave his support in order for this notice to be displayed. Rutilius Namatianus might have actually mentioned this Lepidus in his *De Reditu Suo* when he praised 'another of the *Lepidi*' who he never got the praise he deserved, evidence of the efforts of the two

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the sack of Rome: A Study of the Historikoi Logoi, With Translated Fragments, Commentary and Additional Material (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993), p. 84.

[799] *See M. R. Salzman, The Making of a Christian Aristocracy: Social and religious Change in the Western Roman Empire*, p. 87.

[800] See Sidonius Apollinaris, Ep. V, 9. Also Orosius, *Historiarum Libri Adversus Paganos* VII, VII, 42, 5. Also J. Harries, *Sidonius Apollinaris and the Fall of Rome, AD 407-485* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), p. 29-30.

[801] See J. F. Mathews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, A.D. 364-425* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 322-323.

[802] See Appendix of inscriptions, p. 234-235

brothers for the re-establishment of imperial control in Gaul.[803] It has been argued that the inscription of Dardanus in the *Alpes Maritimae* was a declaration of loyalty to the Honorian regime or as a display of legitimacy to the local administrative authorities in order to appease their concerns about erected fortifications in private estates.[804] A Theodosian law of 420 from the section of *De aedificiis publicis et privatis* which has been preserved in the *Lex Romana Burgundiorum* declared that fortification of private properties was possible only if there was an external threat and after having the consensus of the local community.[805] Before the issuing of this regulation, establishments like Theopolis could not be erected without direct imperial permission. Salvian would later portray the evolution of this tension during the 440's in his *De Gubernatione Dei*, narrated of individuals and groups who erected small fortresses (*castella*) because of the fear of barbarians, imperial tax collectors and *Bagaudae* rebels.[806] There is no doubt that the context of the inscription reveals some anxiety to explain that the effort of establishing Theopolis was to the benefit of the community and not to a certain individual, though Dardanus might have had good reasons to feel insecure especially because of the neighbouring Gallic aristocrats who never forgot his brutality towards their relatives. The fact that there is no mention in the inscription of Dardanus' second prefecture places the foundation of Theopolis between 407 and 414. By that time some of the early books of Augustine's *City of God* must have been circulated to certain individuals. In any case, the mention in the inscription of the offices that he held must have had an additional apotropaic use apart from the standard traditional style of addressing or mentioning an individual in an inscription. The place would stand away from the conflicts

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[803] Rutilius Namatianus, De Reditu Suo, I, 307. Also D. Fry, 'Is Claudius Postumus Dardanus the Lepidus of *De Reditu Suo* I. 307?,' *Hermes*, 121, 3 (1993), pp. 382-383, p. 382-383. Also S. Muhlberger 'Looking back from the mid-century: The Gallic Chronicler of 452 and the Crisis of Honorius' reign' in J. Drinkwater, H. Elton (eds.), *Fifth Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp.28-37, p. 34.

[804] See R. J. Goodreach, *Contextualizing Cassian: Aristocrats, Asceticism, and Reformation in fifth century Gaul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 20. Also S. Connolly, 'Fortifying the City of God: Dardanus' Inscription Revisited,' *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 102, No. 2 (Dec. - Jan., 2006/2007), pp. 145-154, p. 145.

[805] See J.F. Matthews, *Laying down the law: A study of the Theodosian code* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), p.113. Also S. Conolly, 'Fortifying the City of God: Dardanus' Inscription Revisited,' p. 146.

[806] See Salvian *De Gubernatione Dei*, V, 8. Also R. W. Mathisen, *Roman Aristocrats in Barbarian Gaul: Strategies for Survival in an Age of Transition* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1993), p. 55.

and struggles of emperors, usurpers and nobles but it appears that it serves also a higher purpose.

The inscription of Dardanus reveals more about his fears than of his intentions regarding Theopolis. Apparently he was afraid that his intentions might be misinterpreted. He declares his loyalty to the imperial court. Theopolis was not a fortified villa. The settlement's fortification was a proof of loyalty. The walls were aiming to the protection of everyone, not only of his family. The asylum of Romulus was moved to the Alpes Maritimae. It was a refuge for all. In doing so he might have wished to distance himself from his unpopular past career as an administrator. The language of the inscription as well as the reference to his past career resembled similar ones placed on public buildings and monuments in any city's forum.[807] Probably, he had an urban archetype while planning the settlement's foundation. The emphasis given to the collective character of that attempt recalls an egalitarian utopian spirit. Dardanus however, counted more on the protection of God than of the imperial authorities or the walls of his foundation.

Dardanus appeared to be in contact with some of the most significant ecclesiastical authors of his time. There are two letters addressed to him, one by Augustine (c. 417) and another by Jerome (414) which reveal not only the metaphysical reflections of the former prefect but perhaps his agenda regarding the purpose and function of Theopolis.[808] Augustine held him in high esteem and praised him for his known charity.[809] It appears that he answered the prefect's questions that must have related to the exact location of Paradise and God's presence. Dardanus must have anticipated too much for the *Civitas Caelestis* that he started planning of accelerating time by trying to build a reflection of the Heavenly City on Earth. Maybe he saw himself as a praetorian prefect of souls of his community as he once had been for their bodies. To think after all of heaven as a Roman place was not new since

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[807] P. Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, p. 399.
[808] See Augustine, ep. 187. Also Jerome, ep. 129.
[809] Augustine, *ep.* 187, 41.

Prudentius had already portrayed so in his *Liber Peristephanon*.[810] Augustine quoted from the book of Job that human life was in warfare on this earth.[811] Dardanus might have been thinking in a similar manner by reflecting on his contemporary rapidly changing political realities. Theopolis was perhaps a temporary 'Paradise' until the City of God could be fully manifested. The bishop of Hippo had already described Church as Heaven on Earth which was raised up to be blessed as the eternal dwelling of God and this temple would be erected by the hands of men who according to Peter would build a spiritual house as living stones (ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες).[812] Perhaps the former prefect was persuaded that Rome could no longer be the City of God despite its importance as the sacred *locus* of the apostles and martyrs.

Jerome praised Dardanus as the *Christianorum Nobilissimus* and the *Nobilium Christianissimus*; informing him that Paradise could be located anywhere, anytime.[813] When Jerome undertook his *Commentariorum in Hiezechielem* in 410 just after the sack of the eternal city, he interpreted a passage from Ezekiel as a vision of the *aedeficium civitatis*, a city that will be restored, and in particular its temple, which would surpass those constructed by Solomon and Zorobabel.[814] This hope of recovery comes in contrast with the position that he took in his *Commentary on Isaiah* which was completed just before the sack and indicated a sense of a realized eschatology reflected upon the fate of Rome which was only a prelude to the coming of the New Jerusalem.[815] *Roma factam Hierosolymam* he admitted, since both holy cities were destroyed, Paradise could be anywhere, so why not in a settlement on the Alps?[816] Likewise he advised his friend Rusticus in 412 to see the *terram repromissionis* under the guidance of his bishop in Marseilles.[817] Augustine's *City of God* must had a similar impact on Dardanus, a manual to his own utopia, consisting the only

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[810] See Prudentius, *Liber Peristephanon*, II. 554-565.
[811] Job, 7:1.
[812] Peter, I: 2,5.
[813] Jerome, ep. 129, 8.
[814] Ezekiel, 40-43. Also Jerome, *Commentariorum in Hiezechielem*, 12.40.1-4.
[815] See F. W. Schlatter, 'A Mosaic Interpretation of Jerome, "In Hiezechielem,"' *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 49, 1 (March 1995), pp. 64-81, p. 76.
[816] See Jerome, ep. 127, 8. 3.
[817] See Jerome, *ep.* 125.20.

contemporary proof that the work of the African bishop had any influence during his own lifetime. Augustine however had clarified that the *Civitas Caelestis* was existing as a parallel to the terrestrial one and it was not located anywhere specifically. Nevertheless it seems that the experiment of Dardanus was influenced, if not guided to some extent, by Augustine.

The evidence provided by the existence of such a community reveals the respected influence that Augustine's ideas received and especially the notion that, despite the disappointment caused by the sack of Rome and the postponing of the arrival of the heavenly city after the sack of Rome, people kept hoping that they would not sink with the Empire or its old capital. Augustine's vision had now a life of its own; it became a parallel, invisible city that could not be sacked like its earthly shadow.[818] Augustine clearly gave a new content to the idea of the city as a spiritual refuge and in order to do so he had to compare and contrast it with the city of Rome, the Heavenly city however was just an idealized form of the latter. But it was only the fall of the terrestrial Rome and the smokes rising from its buildings that exposed the celestial city which was lying underneath since it was the Gothic threat that re-forged the collective classless bonds of community in times of danger. The heavenly city was ready to receive the refugees of the old capital as Romulus had once offered asylum to criminals in order to increase Rome's population.[819] The post-apocalyptic city could not have been anything else but an image of an idealized Rome, a proof that *Romanitas* and its urban archetype had evolved into a cultural 'nest' of concepts and filters from which there was no escape, consisting the *interpretatio Romana*, the only way to interpret reality. Augustine's City of God was not only standing as a potential destiny for Rome based on the reflection of on its urban archetype, it was also fulfilling an old neo-platonic vision of a spiritual community which would remained unharmed by the threats of the material world. When Alexander promised to Crates, Philostratus narrated, that he would rebuild Thebes for his shake, the philosopher replied that he did not care for a fatherland which can be ruined by the force of arms (*οὐκ ἂν ἔφη δεηθῆναι πατρίδος, ἣν κατασκάψει τις*

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[818] L. S. Mazzolani, *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought*, p. 252.

[819] See Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V. 16.

ὅπλοις ἰσχύσας).[820] This desire of separation between the physical and spiritual aspects of the city which Crates defined summarized at best the Augustinian position on the transformation of Rome from a physical city to a spiritual commonwealth.

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[820] Philostratus, *Τὰ ἐς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον*, VIII, 2

VII.   Towards a Restored World: *Ordo Renascendi*

With the fading of the discourse of the *Tempora Christiana*, the intellectuals who reflected upon the fate of Rome and *Romanitas* in the post-410 world had to shape another narrative that would not focus on the calamities of the recent past and present but on the great potential that could come. We have already examined Augustine's vision of the New *Celestial Rome* that could not be damaged by any material disaster. The last chapter of this thesis will turn to Rutilius Claudius Namatianus, who in his *De Reditu Suo* (417) leaves us with an impression of the eternal city recovering from the Gothic invaders, admitting with relief that his world, the Rome of the great aristocratic families and their patronage had survived along with the ideals that the existence of this city was signifying. The *De Reditu Suo* is however, a contradictory report, dominated by the author's sorrow of leaving behind his beloved Rome, his probable anxiety about the condition of his ancestral property in the Gallic countryside in the aftermath of the Gothic passing there and, at the same time, shows the inner optimism and hope that the material and ideological recovery of Rome as it was expressed by the restoration projects that the city officials were conducting. The city was recovering with the help of its most eminent members, its aristocratic *gentes*, which, as in the past, had contributed to the old capital's preservation and glory. During siege of 410 the aristocracy of Rome was divided. Pompeianus, the urban prefect, suggested that the Senators could contribute from their wealth to the defense of the city (*praefectus quidam erat tunc gentilis, cuius etiam minime nomen recordor, qui consilium deberat senatoribus Urbis ut facultates eorum deberent sociari senatui, et absurdum esse eos illos domino abtulisse sed magis reipublicae viribus et senatui debere*).[821] Many aristocrats had already chosen to flee as in the case of Melania and Pinianus.[822] Pope Innocent I was also absent. He managed to escape to the safety of the imperial court at Ravenna (*ut beatus Innocentius Romane Urbis*

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[821] See Gerontius, *Vita Melaniae Senatricis*, I.19

[822] See R. W. Mathisen, 'Roma a Gothis Alarico duce capta est: Ancient accounts of the sack of Rome in 410CE,' J. Lipps, C. Machado, P. von Rummel (eds.), *The sack of Rome in 410AD: The event, its context and its impact* (Rome: Deutches Arcäologisches Institut, 2013), pp. 87-102, p. 98.

episcopus […] *apud Ravenam tunc positus*).[823]) A few years later, in the time Rutilius Namatianus was about to leave Rome, the attention Christians and Pagans alike was turned to other priorities. Most important of all was the restoration of the eternal city. It was a statement of survival and perpetuity that unified both Pagans and Christians with a feeling of living in a post-apocalyptic time.

In this atmosphere a restoration program of the public and private monuments of Rome took place. The Senate-house which was burned down by the Goths was rebuilt two years later (412). However it was not only a material restoration but also a symbolic demonstration, showing that the eternal city was in recovery, despite the severe wound which marked from then on the Roman Idealism the end of the Empire was not in 410.[824] The restoration of the Basilica Curia by the prefect Naevatius Palmatus was something more than a material repair; it was a symbolic rebirth of the Roman social life and its institutions. Also during the prefecture of Valerius Bellicius he repaired the building of the *Praefectura Urbis* and gradually expanded the restoration process to other parts of the Forum Romanum. Additionally many statues were transported from the suburban areas to the City center in order to enrich the public space.[825] The implementation of this policy continued at least until the prefecture of Anicius Acilius Gabrio Faustus (421/423) marking in this way the whole reign of Honorius with this re-constructive activity.[826] The aristocrats undertook a massive program of expanding their private squares in front of their mansions and placing many new statues. They were attempting to promote the message of recovery and continuity, reflecting the perpetuity of Rome.

The *urbs aeterna* that Rutilius Namatianus was about to leave behind as he was preparing for his homecoming was not only a Rome which had prevailed once more but also a city with a promising future for itself and the entire Empire. When he undertook his sorrowful journey

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[823] Orosius, *Libri Historiarum adversus Paganos*, VII.39
[824] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, pp. 355-356.
[825] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 356.
[826] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 356.

to his native land in Gaul, in October 417, Rome was experiencing a period of material renovation. Since the invaders were by then far away in Gaul, having being forced to sign a treaty with Rome by Flavius Constantius, the sack was now a distant memory.[827] The latter was mainly responsible for this new launch of Roman optimism by achieving a series of military victories as *magister militum* and among them was the suppression of the rebellion of the *comes Africae* Heraclianus in 413. He also conducted a triumph at Rome, celebrating in the presence of Honorius the humiliation of the Visigoths and of their puppet, Priscus Attalus. The poet must have felt safe enough by 417 to attempt this journey from his dearest Rome to his ancestral land.

The author composed his work during his journey along the shores of Italy, traveling by Alsium, Pyrgi, Cosa, Populonia, Pisa and Luna while he was probably going to inspect what remained of his family property in Gaul which might have been damaged. The birthplace of the author of *De Reditu Suo* is still unclear though it has been suggested that his family was from the area of Toulouse.[828] The preserved parts of the poem describe the journey from Rome to Luna and it is unsure whether the journey ended suddenly there or not. The initial title of his work is lost but it is obvious that the poem could be classified as a *Laudatio Ubris* just like the *Iter Siculum* of Lucilius, the *Iter Brundisium* of Horace, the *Propempticon* of Statius and the *Mosella* of Ausonius. It was part of a tradition which continued in Medieval Greek literature as late as the 12th century Byzantium with the *Odoiporikon* of Constantinos Manasses.[829] These works praise major cities and describe journeys through the countryside, containing some interesting rhetorical digressions.[830] The latter was a typical method of this genre which was used as a parenthesis between parts that contained mainly geographical and naturalistic information.

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[827] See P. Heather, *Empires and Barbarians: Migration, Development and the Birth of Europe* (London: Pan Books, 2009), p. 197.

[828] See E. J. Kenney, W. V. Clausen, *Ιστορια της Λατινικής Λογοτεχνίας* (Athens: Παπαδήμα, 2005), p. 959.

[829] See I. Karagiannopoulos, *Το Βυζαντινό Κράτος* (Thessalonica: Βάνιας, 2001), p. 286. Also A. Christophilopoulou, *Βυζαντινή Ιστορία*, vol. iii 1081-1204 (Athens: Ηρόδοτος, 2001), p. 23.

[830] E. J. Kenney W. V. Clausen, *Ιστορια της Λατινικής Λογοτεχνίας*, p. 959

It seems that the author's loyalty and love is divided between his native land and his adapted home, the Roman *Cosmopolis*. Rutilius Namatianus appeared to have the same feelings as Ausonius before him who admitted that he loved his birthplace, Bordeaux, but he venerated Rome since the latter was superior to all individual fatherlands (*omnes patrias supervenit*).[831] Ausonius belonged to a recently-established family among the Gallo-Roman Elites and owned much of his successes and influence to his position as teacher of the young emperor Gratian (375-383).[832] He managed to gain the title of '*consularis*' for himself and his family by becoming consul for the year 379 and by promoting his father to the office of prefect of Illyricum, something quite exceptional for the Gallic aristocracy of the time.[833] He married his daughter to Thalassius, an officer from Illricum who was *vicarius* of Macedonia in 377, adding in this manner a vast property to his family possessions within that region and also in Epirus.[834] A year later Thalassius was made proconsul of Africa. Afterwards he travelled to Rome to show to his son Paulinus the splendor of the eternal city before they would reach Bordeaux and meet Ausonius. The latter could not have been more proud of his family as it is obvious in his *Protrepticon*, a poem dedicated to the brother of Paulinus Censorius Magnus Ausonius, expressing the hope that prosperity would continue for his family.[835] A few decades later, Paulinus, witnessed the downward shift of his *gens* and of the entire Empire as well. Although he was involved in politics by holding the office of the *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum* of Priscus Attalus he had no ambition to follow a political career and he preferred the management of his property. It appears that the combination of his personal tragedy (the death of his father) and of the barbarian invasions after 406 turned his world upside down and forced him to dedicate the rest of his life in a '*perpetuum exilium*',

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[831] See Ausonius, *Ordo Urbium Nobilium*, XX, 39. Also H. Sivan, *Ausonius of Bordeaux: Genesis of a Gallic Aristocracy* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 3-4.

[832] See A. Cameron, *Η Ύστερη Ρωμαϊκή Αυτοκρατορία* (Athens: Καρδαμίτσα, 2000), pp. 37, 163. Also R. Collins, *Early Medieval Europe 300-1000* (London: MacMillan, 1991), p. 42.

[833] See R. Van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), p. 303.

[834] See C. Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400-800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 164.

[835] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 71.

struggling to preserve and protect his belongings.[836] He complained that his house was the only one that was lacking the protection of the Goths and his property was pillaged as a result of an unsuccessful outcome of negotiations.[837] Later, in his eighty-fourth year, he wrote his *Eucharisticus*, a thanksgiving poem addressed to God, expressing his gratitude because his life could have been worse. He describes the happy years of his childhood and the calamities of his later life, admitting that his world had crossed the point of no return and that the Roman Empire had fallen.[838] Rutilius Namatianus had equally serious reasons as Paulinus to attempt his journey in order to inspect what remained of his property or to negotiate with the invaders so that he might preserve it (as many Gallo-Romans did) but he had a different and far more optimistic opinion concerning Rome and its fate.[839]

The fragments of *De Reditu Suo* provide valuable information about the image of the eternal city in the mind of a successful man and *vir clarissimus*, mirroring to some extent the patriotic ideas of the Roman aristocratic families. He held the office of *magister officiorum* in 412 and afterwards that of the *prefectus urbi* for the year 414. It appears that his father Lachanius held public offices as well: the text mentions that he had been *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum, Quaestor* and *Praefectus Urbi* though the author emphasizes mainly in the period that his father was governor of Tuscia and he was popular enough to be honored with the erection of a statue dedicated to him by the people of Pisa in the city's forum.[840] Therefore there is no doubt about his significant social background and the ideas that he was promoting through the text which were typical of his class. However the image of the old capital comes in contrast with the description of the countryside and the provinces which

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[836] See R. Benveniste R., *Από τους Βαρβάρους στους Μοντέρνους, Κοινωνική Ιστορία και Ιστοριογραφικά Προβλήματα της Μεσαιωνικής Δύσης* (Athens: ΠΟΛΙΣ, 2007), p. 93. Also E. J. Kenney, W. V. Clausen, *Ιστορία της Λατινικής Λογοτεχνίας*, p. 969 and J. Le Goff, *Ο Πολιτισμός της Μεσαιωνικής Δύσης* (Thessalonica: Βάνιας, 1991), p. 37. Paulinus of Pella, *Eucharisticus*, 491. Also W. R. Mathisen, 'Emigrants, Exiles and Survivors: Aristocratic Options in Visigothic Aquitania', *Phoenix*, vol. 38, 2 (1984), pp. 159-170, p. 162.

[837] Paulinus of Pella, *Eucharisticus*, 285-286. Also J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Barbarian West 400-1000* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1972), p. 27.

[838] Paulinus of Pella, *Eucharisticus*, 232

[839] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 27. Also P. Heather, 'The Emergence of the Visigothic Kingdom' in J. Drinkwater, H. Elton (eds.), *Fifth Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 84-94, p. 89.

[840] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 583, 584, 585, 575-590

were devastated by the invaders and, unlike Rome, there was little evidence of recovery.[841] At about the same time a Gallic anonymous writer stressed in his *Carmen De Providentia Dei* the need to recover from the calamities and preserving all those ideas and values which were beneficial for the common good.[842] Apparently Rutillius Namatianus would agree at this point since the emphasis was given at an ideal Rome that no barbarian could ever reach. The old pagan cult of (Goddess) *Roma* was transformed to a new political *ekphrasis* of devotion to the Roman fatherland and self-determination in a rapidly changing social environment. That recently-evolved vision was primarily secular and could be easily incorporated to the Christian political theory.

Rutilius Namatianus was influenced by several classical writers; among them were Ovid, Virgil and Juvenal and there are no signs of any Christian expression but the interpretation of the poem and the classification of the author as a pagan is still a controversial matter. The traditional image of *De Reditu Suo* as a praise of late Roman paganism has been shaken and he is only one in a series of writers of the time whose religious ideas have been put under re-consideration; among them are Ausonius, Claudian, Macrobius and Martianus Capella.[843] Despite the attack against the Christian Stilicho and his actions, the poem appears as an indirect praise of Flavius Constantius (also Christian). The poem also criticizes the radical ascetic tensions among the Roman Christian aristocracy but that was because it was considered by many (and not only pagans) as a danger to the traditional values of the Senatorial class.[844] It seems that religion was not the only significant factor; the security and the prestige of Rome seemed equally important. The poet emphasizes the privilege of being part of the Roman inheritance and admires the nobles who were born in Rome.[845] This characteristic was very significant in the eyes of a Gallo-Roman aristocrat who originated from the provinces. He was struggling to prove that his provincial family was equal

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[841] See P. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 234. Also G. Norwood, 'Rutilius Claudius Namatianus', *Phoenix*, vol. 1, Supplement to vol. 1 (1947), pp. 36-41, p. 36.

[842] P. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, p. 235

[843] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, pp. 206, 208

[844] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 212

[845] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 7

to the members of the senatorial houses of the city (*sortiti Latias obtinuere domos*) that he was so eloquently praising.[846] The core and the symbol of this world of the late Roman elites was the Senate, the oldest surviving institution. It was through the Senate that the provincial nobility, people like Rutilius Namatianus, could be legitimized as part of the Roman aristocracy and have a share in the prestige of *Romanitas*.

The poet feels grief for leaving behind this atmosphere of restoration, knowing that the spirit was very different in the pillaged provinces. Rutilius Namatianus expressed his return more like a feeling of exile from Rome. Thus we have the paradox of a description of homecoming as a negative experience.[847] It comes in contrast to the traditional narratives of homecoming in Greek and Roman literature. There is no nostalgia for home in *De Reditu Suo*. The entire work is a protest against the prospect of return. Rome is presented as the only true destination; home was where his heart was placed. Rutilius Namatianus expresses the 'trauma' of his movement in two different literary dimensions, centripetally and centrifugally. The centripetal one is manifested in terms of proximity to the eternal city (while the poet was still in close distance to Rome). The centrifugal movement is expressed in terms of separation from his beloved city where the antithesis between a restored order within Rome and the devastated countryside dominates his narrative.[848] Despite its character as a poem of displacement, *De Reditu Suo* carried the memories of a city re-emerging from its ashes. It was functioned as a portable talisman to protect its bearer from a hostile country-side by reminding the *Aeternitas* of Rome. He sensed that as he was crossing the city's *pomerium*, its walls and gates, this sacred border of the *Cosmopolis*, he was about to go to a turbulent external world.[849] He expresses this sorrow by praising Rome. This is a typical sample of the genre of the *laudes Romae* reminding the style of Aelius Aristides and the rhetoric tradition

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[846] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 12

[847] See M. Formisono, 'Displacing Tradition: A New Allegorical Reading of Ausonius, Claudian and Rutilius Namatianus,' J. Elsner, J. H. Lobato (eds.) *The Poetics of Late Latin Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.207-235, p. 228.

[848] M. Formisono, 'Displacing Tradition: A New Allegorical Reading of Ausonius, Claudian and Rutilius Namatianus,' p. 228.

[849] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 43-44

of the Second Sophistic movement. He personifies it as the celestial Queen of the World, *genetrix hominum genetrixque deorum*, welcomed in heaven due to her temples and sacred places, so important to various religious groups.[850] A place with so many beautiful shrines could indeed be the home of the gods themselves but this is not necessarily a pagan description; everyone could express himself through this verse since *Dea Roma* was a very strong symbol of the common fatherland, the *Orbis Romanus*.[851] It was the pious city, reflecting every cult and culture. In the mind of Rutilius Namatianus Rome was already a holy city, in contrast to Augustine's thought in which the archetype of Rome as the City of God remained only a potential. The devotion to it was something more than a cult. It was an act of unity which was most precious in times of external threats. He reminds that Rome stood above all religious and social divisions. He emphasizes that without it no one could be safe (*sospes nemo potest*).[852] That city had incorporated the world in its self and made a *patriam diversis gentibus unam*.[853] The greatest achievement and highlight of its legacy was the fact that the conquered had been benefited by their contact with Rome. The latter managed to reshape the world in its own image, turning the various *gentes* to a single monolithic *Romanitas*. The personification of the city appears in the poem as a female figure with triumphal laurels, wearing a golden tower-crown diadem.[854] The triumphant *Roma*, an image depicted so many times in consular diptychs, a warrior-queen, rising once again, wounded by barbarian raids and now recovering.[855] Rome would be once more rejuvenated just like after the defeats from Galls, Samnites, Pyrrhus and Hannibal.[856] The *Dea Roma* was leaving behind the calamities of the recent past and she was about to enter into a new age of prosperity. This was something that could be possible only through a disaster.[857] There would be no *salvation* without *purification* through *misery* and no *restoration of the temple*

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[850] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 49-50.

[851] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 95-96. Also A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 217.

[852] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 52.

[853] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 63.

[854] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 115-118.

[855] See M. Roberts, 'Rome Personified, Rome Epitomized: Representations of Rome in the Poetry of the early Fifth Century', *The American Journal of Philology*, vol. 122, No. 4 (2001), pp. 533-565, p. 539-540.

[856] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 125-128.

[857] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 119-120.

without the *Babylonian captivity*. The eternal city was about to start a new orbit, just like the moon after the fulfillment of a celestial circle.[858] This fresh start would be the *Ordo Renascendi* of Flavius Constantius who would forge a new manifest-destiny for Rome. The foundation of Romulus appeared to be too great to be destroyed (…*quae mergi nequeunt nisu maiore resurgunt*).[859] It would end when the world perished because Rome had been identified with it. The very same malevolent force, the sack of the capital city, which would destroy other realms, caused Rome's rebirth.[860]

The protagonist of this restoration is the *patricius* Flavius Constnantius who appears as a protective figure, dominating the poem as a savior of Rome and punisher of the Goths who had been forced by him to capitulate and pay tribute.[861] On the other side stands Stilicho as an anti-hero and traitor of the Empire (*proditor arcani imperii*).[862] The poet compares him with Nero and considers him worse than the latter since the emperor killed his own mother while Stilicho killed the mother of the world.[863] The general had burned the Sibylline books at the most critical moment for Rome in order to prevent the further spread of pessimistic and eschatological views. This is considered by many scholars as an act against paganism and in turn they considered Rutilius Namatianus as pagan poet, but this might not necessarily be the case.[864] The emperor Augustus did the same as a *Pontifex Maximus*, destroying all the Sibylline prophecies which were not convenient at the time.[865] Zosimus reports that Stilicho stripped the Capitol's gate in order to fulfill the demands of Alaric in 405, an act which definitely offended both Pagan and Christian Romans alike.[866] The fact that Stilicho promoted certain individuals from the eastern parts of the Empire who managed to hold

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[858] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 123-124.
[859] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 129. Also H. Isbell, *The Last Poets of Imperial Rome* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), p. 219.
[860] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 137-140.
[861] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, I, 141-142. Also A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 208, 210.
[862] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, II, 43-44.
[863] Rutilius Namatianus, *De Reditu Suo*, II, 58-60.
[864] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, pp. 206-208, 217-218.
[865] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 217.
[866] Zosimus, Ἰστορία Νέα, V, 38,5

important offices in the West was another factor of hatred towards him.[867] Also, the compulsory contribution in men and money of the Senatorial families which was imposed by Stilicho for the sake of defense against Alaric can explain the hostile description of a nobleman like Rutilius Namatianus.

After the battle of Adrianople (378) various prophecies about the end of Rome appeared in Christian and pagan versions, the spread of those beliefs was therefore nothing new in early fifth century.[868] Jerome published his *Commentarii in Danielem* only a couple of years before the sack of 410 and he interpreted a passage from Daniel as a prophecy about the end of Rome.[869] In the optimistic times of the supremacy of Flavius Constantius the Gothic sack might have seemed a distant memory and so the prophecies about the fall of Rome. The latter celebrated in the year of Rutilius Namatianus' departure his second consulship and his marriage to Galla Placidia opening new promising horizons for the Imperial court of Ravenna. Daniel's prophecy was soon re-interpreted and this time for the benefit of Rome since the latter appeared to be 'the Kingdom which shall never be destroyed'.[870] From the Roman point of view History was the tale of Rome's legitimization through dominance according to its destiny as it was described by Vergil.[871] In contrast to this historical model as a ritual of power there was the Biblical form of anti-History which included the concept of the fall, humiliation, exile, purification and restoration; promoting a vision of hope to the defeated that justification would come in the end after this chain of stages.[872] Rutilius Namatianus fused the aforementioned concepts and though he presents the unshaken *auctoritas* of Rome, he appears at the same time to be attracted by the biblical interpretation of destruction and restoration. After all it was obvious to him that stability was gradually returning to the city.

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[867] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, pp. 261-263.
[868] A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 215.
[869] Daniel, 8, 11. Also A. Cameron, *The Last Pagans of Rome*, p. 217.
[870] Daniel, 2, 44.
[871] See Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 278-282.
[872] A. Liakos, *Αποκάλυψη, Ιστορία και Ουτοπία*, p. 49.

The same year that the poet undertook his journey (417), the emperor Honorius visited Rome and encouraged the citizens to continue the restoration activities. Three years earlier (414) the *praefectus Urbi* Caecina Decius Aginatius Albinus had informed the emperor in a *relation* that not only the refugees, who had left Rome after the sack, returned but also that the city had by then many more new inhabitants, revealing the rapid recovery of the old capital.[873] The writers of the time, like Rutilius Namatianus, witnessed the fact and it was through their efforts that the city re-invented itself. Rome managed to preserve its status and adapt new forms and urban ideals. It legitimized the present through its past, paving the way to the future. Rome appears in *De Reditu Suo* as the incarnation of the late antique Roman patriotism that would preserve *Romanitas* among the western aristocracies during the fifth century. It was a contribution to the image of Rome as a symbolic and cultural cradle, the *communis patria.[874]* Rome was already a spiritual arsenal and a model of the New Jerusalem that would gradually transform the West to a New Israel, the *Imperium Christianum.* Rutilius Namatianus promoted an archetype of the universal metropolis, a symbol and element of common origin shaped by a series of moral, cultural and aesthetic values concerning Rome as it was or ought to be and representing them as the only possible way of life in his time. The idea of Rome re-emerged in this period as a response to social insecurity and anxiety. It was a spiritual reaction as it was the case with the framing of various ideologies in other periods, emerging as a result of collective threats, calamities and turbulence, a factor of unity which could strengthen the ties of solidarity between people.[875] Most importantly, in the work of Rutilius Namatianus Rome appears to preserve its old symbolic status and it remains in the minds of the (educated) Romans a parallel fatherland next to their individual birthplace. He emphasized the perpetual duration of Rome (*aeternitas*) and its ability of constant rejuvenation (*renovatio*).[876] It was a declaration of the

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[873] J. Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court*, p. 355.

[874] See E. Kantorowicz, *The Kings Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Priceton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 246-248

[875] See C. Geertz, *Η Ερμηνεία των Πολιτισμών* (Athens: Αλεξάνδρεια, 2003) p. 206

[876] I. Karagiannopoulos, *Το Βυζαντινό Κράτος*, p. 286

survival and the recovery of *Romanitas* during the perilous times of the late fourth and early fifth centuries A.D.

Conclusion: From Rome to Eternity

Approaching the end of this work we could observe the patterns that characterized the reshaping of the idea of Rome in the period covered in this thesis. This evolution was neither linear nor smooth but eventually secured the survival of *Romanitas* as a set of values, traditions and behaviour in the turbulent world of the fifth century. Furthermore the urban archetype of utopia as it was inherited from classical thought was deeply rooted in the city's landscape and nurtured Roman exceptionalism during the fourth century, indicating new ideological pathways and spiritual potentials.

Back in 357 the old capital was still seen as a neutral, symbolic landscape, at least this is what Ammianus Marcellinus thinks of Constantius's attitude to the old capital which he treated as a foreign visitor, a hidden gem in his Empire, of which he was previously totally unaware. The emperor's awkward style however revealed the systematic negligence that Rome experienced for at least one century. This evident loss of touch with the core and cradle of the civilization within which they were still living was depressing and alarming even to someone with a military background as Ammianus. Furthermore the *modus vivendi* of the *Nobilitas* and the *Populus Romanus* was also a cause of concern for the Antiochene historian who portrayed them as unworthy of their ancestral history and of their cultural legacy. At the same time, the attempt of equalization of the Senate of the *Vetus* and *Nova Roma* which was promoted by the emperor and implemented by the arrival of the embassy of Themistius created new circumstances. By listening to the oration of Themistius, the Senate of Rome accepted *in silentio* the existence of 'another' Senate and 'another' Rome, though in no way equal to their own.

The *adventus* however was the living proof of the universal respect for Roman exceptionalism in the fourth century. There was a special protocol to be followed in organizing an exceptional event for an exceptional place. Beyond the selective description of Ammianus Marcellinus there was a city in transition, about to be reclaimed by its aristocracy.

The timeless character of the imperial monuments of the city impressed the emperor-outsider. The linear course between the past and the present is getting disturbed within the city's *pomerium*. Constantius is wandering in a city of a different age.

Only a few years later, Julian performed a series of experimentations with a vision of an artificial *Romanitas* but the imposition 'from above' in combination with the brief duration of his reign and his bad 'marketing' policy in promoting the blood sacrifices resulted in failure of the entire plan. Since he never visited Rome, his relation to the city had been virtually textual. Julian's idealism regarding *Romanitas* was nurtured by the Graeco-Roman literature of the previous centuries. Rome remained in his thought as an imagined community, not necessarily indicating a Rome that existed but Rome as ought to be. He was fortunate enough never to encounter the angry mob of the eternal city in times of food shortage (as it happened in Antioch in 362-363). Although his unreplied letter to the Roman Senate after his elevation to the imperial office indicated a potential cold welcome in case of a Julianic *adventus*. However, his idealization of Rome and the favour his showed to the (pagan) aristocracy of Rome as manifested by the promotion of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus to the prestigious proconsulate of Achaea revived the idea of Rome since the later re-introduced the vigour, mysticism and vividness of the Greek mysteries to the public life of the eternal city. Thus the imperial enthusiasm inspired indirectly the Roman aristocracy with a new radical message that was aiming to preserve the pagan core of *Romanitas*. It was a social experiment that was left uncompleted. Julian's attempt was to be the last desperate attempt to restore Rome back to its political (along with its symbolic) primacy in the Empire by passing the decades of Constantinian totalitarianism and ideological abuse. It was a call for moving back to the civic roots of the *principatus* and the principle of the *primus inter pares*, yet the Roman aristocracy remained rather apathetic. Their interests were far more material even if the context of the imperial message was in agreement with their values.

The traditional notions of *Romanitas* would be the core of the debate that the generation of Quintus Aurelius Symmachus conducted against the establishment of the imperial court of

Milan represented by the intrusive bishop Ambrose. The debate of the altar of Victory however did not take place within a narrow Christian-pagan antithesis. It was a clash of two different attitudes regarding the public space its use for expressing the institutional and ritual continuity with the past. Symmachus treated the monumental core of the city and its open spaces in a totemisitc context, inseparable from the traditions that were representing. The disturbance of the public space was equal to a disturbance of the comsic order. Rome after all was an epitome of the cosmos. Despite his failure however, the debate was a clash of ideas and beliefs that solidified the personification of *Romanitas* (*Dea Roma*) in its most pure and detailed expression, finalizing a process which had started back in the days of the *Principatus*. This form of allegory was used by both sides, being eager to secure the monopoly on Roman patriotism but among their fruitless bickering, the figure of Roma flowered and soon passed from the field of intellectual and religious debate to that of politics and diplomacy.

The personified *Romanitas* became a popular and safe choice, available for all kinds of (ab)use, (re)presented as advocate and judge of political decisions and court factionalism. Claudian shaped its ultimate expression in order to praise the actions of Stilicho and the milestones in the life of Honorius. *Romanitas* evolved into a religiously apathetic, indifferent, non-provocative figure, functioning as a factor of unity but it preserved its classicising forms, familiar to all audiences. It became a safe choice, appealing to the collective imaginary. Yet *Romanitas* remained an elitist expression until a more popular form of it appeared with the christianisation and re-interpretation of the urban public space during the papacy of Damasus.

With the invention of the tradition of the martyrs' cult during the papacy of Damasus a redeployment of the city took place but the cultural context remained unaltered. The Roman primacy was confirmed in the field of ideas and mentalities where Rome continued to be the *Urbs Sacra*, encircled by a ring of *loci* of martyrdom and protected by new celestial guardians who appeared to have died for the 'idea of Christian Rome.' The city was

reframed and reshaped for the shake of a Christian utopia. This implied the invention of a Christian past unfolded on the Roman landscape. The *pomerium* of the city was redrawn in order to incorporate the *loci* of Christian martyrdom. The city was now guarded by new celestial patrons and the Christian narrative incorporated to the landscape and the Roman regionalist pride. This redefined landscape offered an abundance of new opportunities for patronage and influence that suddenly made conversion an appealing choice for the aristocratic *gentes* of the city. It would be an additional source of splendour and wealth display for the world of senators. The institutionalization of the Church at the eternal city did not mean that Rome was Christianized; on the contrary it signified that Christinaity was romanized.

Rome was not defined only as a city in a materialist context, beyond its obvious physical epression by the symbols that epitomized its *aeternitas* over the public space. Its material reflection proved to be an empty shell exposed to invasions like that of 410 (and later 455 and the Justinianic sieges of the sixth century that would eventually ruin the monumental core of the city). However it was the legacy of the immaterial symbols and values of *Romanitas* which matched with Christian ideals and resulted in a mingled modified version that would form the Roman identity from then on. Augustine's vision was a philosophical extension of Romanitas aiming to a new potential that Christianity could still provide. The City of God was an open everlasting invitation to this new philosophical vision of Rome's future. Even in this new (invisible) reality Rome was persistently present as an archetype, confirming that even the alternatives to Rome were just a reflection of the eternal city in its ideal form. It was still Rome as a symbolic and metaphysical expression that would inspire a message of hope and would guarantee the comfort of a civilization that people had been used to for so long. The Theopolis project of Claudius Postumus Dardanus was a manifestation of this vision although its regional character and limited duration contributed to the fact that his attempt passed rather unnoticed by his contemporaries.

The reflections of Rutilius Namatianus during his journey to Gaul confirm the survival of Rome despite the Gothic sack. The rapid material recovery of the city and the atmosphere of optimism that the poet witnessed while leaving the city confirmed the eternity of Rome which was tested the hard way some years earlier (410). Again the antithesis between the urban utopia (Rome) and the dystopian world (countryside) dominates the narrative. Only the city of Rome was in recovery, the provinces were still in poor condition. This snapshot of optimism that was preserved in *De Reditu Suo* was alternative response to what Augustine preserved in his *De Civitate Dei* during the same period. Rutilius Namatianus still placed his hope on the physical city and the decisive victory of Flavius Constantius over the Goths. The thesis ends with this illusion of a happy ending during the second decade of the fifth century when the Roman elites where still unaware of the challenges of the following decades.

To summarize we could say that the ideas of pagan and Christian *Romanitas* continued to evolve in all their forms (see table 1) in a parallel course during the first half of the fourth century. By the 350s there is the gradual rise of the concept of the *Nova Roma* which evolved coextensively as well and came 'officially' in collision with the *Vetus Roma* only in 357 and 381. Julian's *Romanitas* was to large extent a digression or a parenthesis in the evolution of *Romanitas*. After the disappearance of any public pagan protest the traditional pagan idea of Rome must have been alive in the minds of the pagan aristocrats as long as they existed as a separate community approximately until the 420s. By the 430s, however, the pagan idea of Rome was only a literary form of late antique romanticism and nostalgia found in the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius, where it is described not as a reality but a condition of the past, so by the time of the daydreaming of those intellectual circles the *vetus Romanitas* was no longer around. *Roma Christiana* on the contrary, despite its early celebration in Constantinian literature by Eusebius, Lactantius and later Julius Firmicus Maternus, had no clear exprssion until the time of Gratian, Valentinain II and Theodosius I. The controversy regarding the altar of Victory and the public advocacy of Ambrose and later Prudentius gave it a more distinct and solid form that made it appear as articulate as its pagan parallel. At the

same time Damasus invented the past of Christian *Romanitas* and added legitimacy and validity to the cause of Christian Rome. After the 390s without the public opposition of paganism the idea of *Roma Christiana* evolved undisturbed in the Roman mental geography and gradually it became a monopoly of the Church. By the passing of the fifth century and especially from the middle sixth, when there was no more a Senate in Rome and the building of the *Curia* was remodelled as a church (a rather representative evidence of the transformation of the idea of Christian *Romanitas*) and in the absence of any secular authorities to represent and guarantee the safety of the city, the ideals of Romanness became mainly an ecclesiastical issue.

The idea of Rome as a secular expression was manifested by an individual of Christian background, Rutilius Namatianus, who emphasized the material symbols of *Romanitas* that implied continuity with the past in the familiar form of Roman traditionalism. Another example are the *Novellae* of the emperor Majorian (457-461) which aimed to protect the ancient monuments of the city as works of art and symbols of Rome. This expression of antiquarianism can be also traced in the panegyrics of Sidonius Apollinaris, addressed to some of the last western Roman emperors (Avitus, Majorian, Anthemius) where the figure of *Roma* appears in a manner resembling to the personified *Romanitas* of the panegyrics of Claudian seven decades earlier. Also other works could be classified as well to this same tension like the depiction of the old capital in description of the *adventus* of Theodoric in Rome (5oo) preserved in the *Pars Posterior* of the *Excerpta Valesiana*.

The ideology of the *Romanitas* and the archetype of Rome proved to be flexible under the pressure of a rapidly changing environment, revealing the deep imprint that Rome left in the collective imaginary of the late imperial and post-imperial world. It was a triumph of continuity, cultural diversity and ideological pluralism, a victory of the people and of their needs for new ways of spiritual expression over the less flexible norms inherited from the past, an achievement that ensured the survival and transformation of their Roman identity *in perpetuum*.

Table 1

Diagram of the Evolution of the Idea(s) of Rome in the fourth and early fifth centuries AD

Foundation of Constantinople (330)

Fourth century | Fifth century

Liberius

Damasus I

Ambrose   Prudentius

Jerome

Julian

Praetextatus

Symmachus

Claudian

able

RC

Sack of Rome (410)

SRC Rutilius Namatianus (*De Reditu Suo*) 417

Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*) 427

Constantius II - *Adventus* of 357

Second Ecumenical Council (381)

Themistius – *Oratio* III

P/VR

NR

Index: **RC:** Roma Christiana

P/VR: Pagan/ Vetus Roma

NR: Nova Roma

SRC: Secular Roma Christiana

: Interaction/ Intervention/ Interruption in the evolution or content of an idea

: Sack of Rome / Event that accelerated ideological process

Table 2

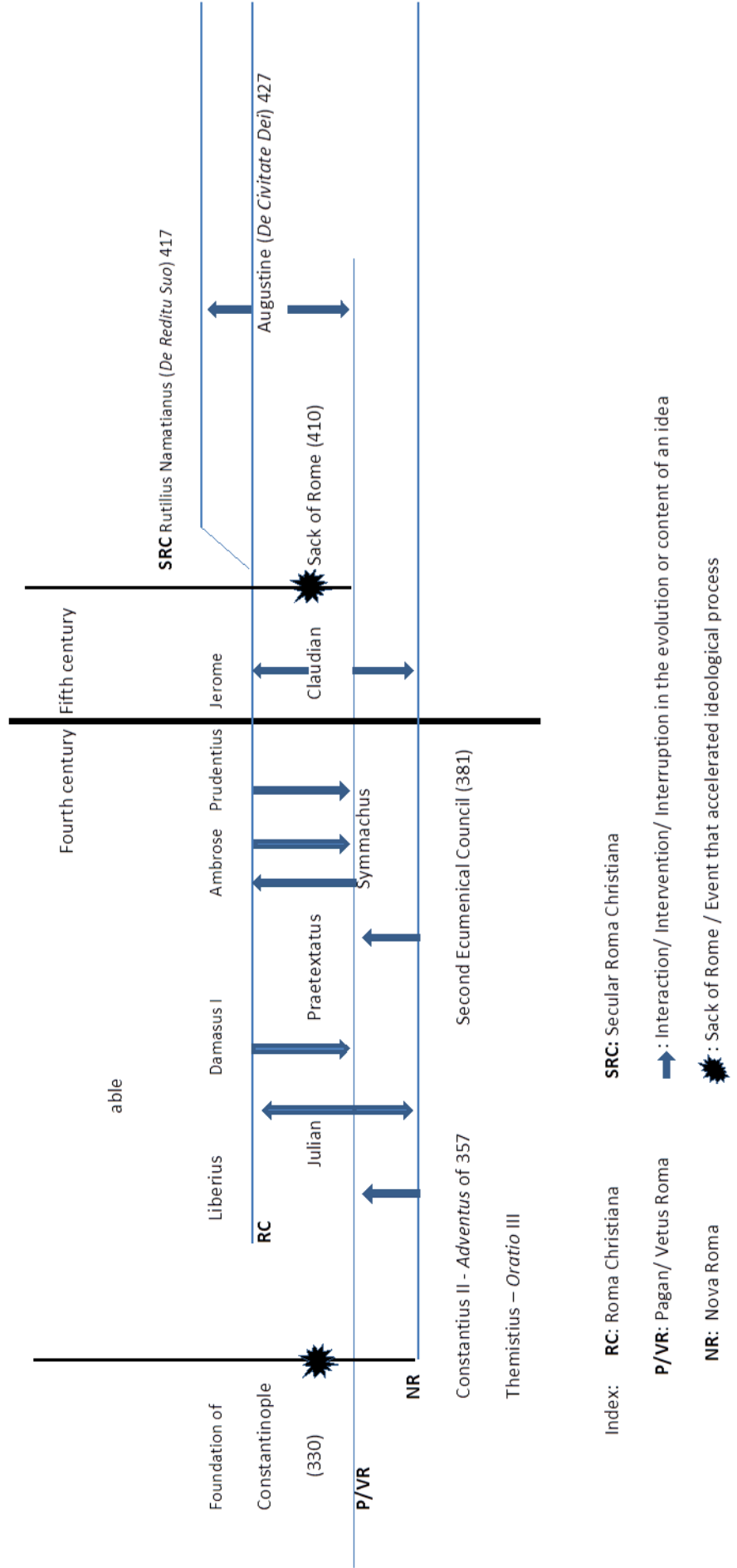The two heads of the Empire: A contradictive legitimacy

ROME   CONSTANTINOPLE

αἰώνιος (eternal)   ≠   ἀέναος (ever-lasting)

Prestige = Antiquity   Prestige = Ceaseless Rejuvenation

vergens in senium (Am. M., *Res Gestae* XIX,vi,4)   ἀνανέωσις (Themistius, Or. 23. 298 a-b)

Both claim eternity by the opposite way:

Rome by aging,   =   Constantinople by rejuvenation

Appendix of inscriptions

    A.   The dedicatory inscription of the equestrian statue of Constantius II (CIL VI.1158)

"RESTITUTORI URBIS ROMAE ADQUE ORB[IS] / ET EXTINCTORI PESTIFERAE TYRANNIDIS / D(omino) N(ostro) FL(avio) IUL(io) CONSTANTIO VICTORI AC TRIUMFATORI / SEMPER AUGUSTO / NERATIUS CEREALIS V(ir) C(larissimus) PRAEFECTUS URBI / VICE SACRA(rum) IUDICANS D(evotus) N(umini) M(aiestati)QUE EIUS"[877]

    B.   The dedicatory inscription(s) of the three statues of Constantius II (CIL VI.31395)

"PROPAGATORI IMPERII / ROMANI D(omino) N(ostro) / Fl(avio) IUL(io) CONSTANTIO MAXIMO / TOTO ORBE VICTORI AC / TRIUMFATORI SEMPER AUG(usto) / MEMMIUS VITRASIUS ORFITUS V(ir) C(larissimus) / ITERUM PRAEF(ectus) URBI IUD(ex) SAC(rarum) COGN(itionum) / TERTIUM D(evotus) N(umini) M(aiestati)Q(ue) E(ius)."[878]

    C.   The dedicatory inscription of the statue of Flavius Eugenius (CIL VI.1721)

"FL(avio) EUGENIO V(iri) C(larissimo) EX PRAEFECTO PRAETORIO / CONSULI ORDINARIO DESIGNATO MAGISTRO / OFFICIORUM OMNIUM COMITI DOMESTICO / ORDINIS PRIMI OMNIBUSQUE PALATINIS / DIGNITATIBUS FUNCTO OB EGRAEGIA EIUS / IN REMPUBLICAM MERITA HUIC D(omini) N(ostri) CONSTANTIUS VICTOR AC/

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[877] See *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* vol. VI, pars i, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae*, 1158
[878] See *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* vol. VI, pars i, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae*, 31395

TRIUMFATOR SEMPER AUGUSTUS ET/ IULIANUS NOBILISSIMUS CAESAR / STATUAM SUB AURO IN FORO DIVI / TRAIANI QUAM ANTE SUB DIVO / CONSTANTE VITAE ET FIDELISSIMAE / DEVOTIONIS GRATIA MERUIT / ADPROBANTE AMPLISSIMO SENATU / SUMPTU PUBLICO LOCO SUO / RESTITUENDAM CENSUERUNT."[879]

D. The dedicatory inscription of Claudius Postumus Dardanus (ILS I.1279)

"Cl(audius) Postumus Dardanus v(ir) inl(ustris) et pa│triciae dignitatis, ex consularis pro│vinciae Viennensis, ex magistro scri│nii lib(ellorum), ex quaest(ore), ex praef(ecto), pr(a)et(orio) Gall(iarum), et │Nevia Galla, clar(issima) et inl(ustris)fem(ina), materfam(ilias)│eius, loco cui nomen Theopoli est │viarum usum, caesis utrumque mon│tium laterib(us), praestiterunt, muros│et portas dederunt; quod in agro│proprio constitutum tuetioni om│nium voluerunt esse commune, adni│tente etian(!) vir(o) inl(ustri) com(ite) ac fratre me│morati viri Cl(audio) Lepido ex consulari│ Germaniae Primae, ex mag(istro) memor(iae),│ex com(ite) rerum privat(arum), ut erga omni│um salutem eoru│m studi<or>um e│t devo/tionis public[ae] ti │tulus possi[t] ostendi"[880]

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[879] See *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* vol. VI, pars i, *Inscriptiones Urbis Romae Latinae*, 1721
[880] See *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* vol. I, 1279 (Berlin Weidmann, 1892-1916), p. 284-285.

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