



PROJECT MUSE®

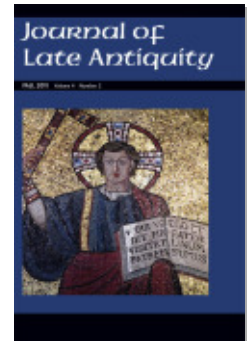
---

## Roman Consuls, Imperial Politics, and Egyptian Papyri: The Consulates of 325 and 344 CE

Benet Salway

Journal of Late Antiquity, Volume 1, Number 2, Fall 2008, pp. 278-310  
(Article)

Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press  
DOI: 10.1353/jla.0.0013



➔ For additional information about this article

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/jla/summary/v001/1.2.salway.html>

## Roman Consuls, Imperial Politics, and Egyptian Papyri: The Consulates of 325 and 344 CE<sup>1</sup>

*This study re-evaluates the evidence for the consuls in two years when consular proclamations were revoked for unspecified reasons. Thanks to work done in recent decades to index and analyze the evidence for Roman consuls from Diocletian onward, it now is much easier to gain an overview of contemporary understanding of the identity of the consuls of each year. The ever-growing body of epigraphic and, above all, papyrological documentation helps to put flesh on the bare bones of the names preserved in the consular lists of the manuscript tradition. These documentary sources have the virtue of representing a contemporary perspective that is largely free from retrospective editorial manipulation. To appreciate fully the significance of the evidence of the consular formulae employed in late Roman Egypt, it needs to be assessed within the wider context of the use of consular dating both within Egypt in earlier periods and elsewhere.*

For much of the first half of the fourth century we lack any adequate historical narrative. In such periods, artifacts such as the list of the annual pairs of ordinary consuls provide more than just a basic framework. As Sir Ronald Syme averred, “Inspection of the *Fasti* in any age can lend sudden illumination to history, even from bare names—if due regard is paid to the limits of method and guesswork.”<sup>2</sup> Given that nomination to the consulship had been in the gift of the emperor since the reign of Augustus, tenure of the office is

<sup>1</sup> The work of T.D. Barnes is the inspiration for this paper. Any felicity in what follows may be credited to the salutary scepticism of Professors Barnes and W. Eck and the critical insight of Dr S.J.J. Corcoran, without implying their assent to any of the views expressed. Editions of inscriptions are abbreviated according to F. Bérard et al., *Guide de l'épigraphiste. Bibliographie choisie des épigraphies antiques et médiévales*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 2000), and those of papyri according to J.F. Oates, et al., eds., *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri*, 5th ed. (Atlanta, 2001): <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html#pap>.

<sup>2</sup> R. Syme, “The Early Tiberian Consuls,” *Historia* 30 (1981), 189–202, at 189 = A.R. Birley, ed., *Roman Papers*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1984), no. 94, 1350–1363, at 1350.

a fairly good guide to political favor.<sup>3</sup> Long after it had ceased to have any intrinsic political power, the ordinary consulship, entered on 1 January of each year, retained a particular cachet because of its status as Rome's eponymous magistracy. Consequently, far more than simply providing the official dating scheme of the Roman state, the ordinary consulship allowed emperors to reward their most important subjects with the honor of perpetual memorialization. Even for the emperors themselves, the consulship was important as a strategic opportunity for advertising accessions, commemorating significant imperial anniversaries, disbursing largesse, and staging public festivities. With the office of ordinary consul strictly limited to two per annum, in an era of multiple emperors there were consequently more imperial consulships<sup>4</sup> and proportionately fewer opportunities for private citizens to achieve this prestigious office.<sup>5</sup> Whether the consulship was held by an emperor or one of his subjects, the consular nomination clearly was a matter deserving of attention at the very highest level. Thus, viewed in their appropriate context, anomalies in the naming of consuls can be especially illuminating.

Two such oddities will be highlighted here, in the years 325 and 344 CE, when there were contemporary problems with the consular pairing that led to three names being associated with the year. Because these two cases are superficially similar, recent scholarship has tended to see them as resulting from similar sequences of events.<sup>6</sup> There is evidence, however, to suggest that the causes and circumstances of these two events were quite different. In particular, contemporary Egyptian papyrus documents, which have been described as "unique sources for our better knowledge both of the names of the consuls themselves and for our understanding of the workings of the consular dating system," provide the key to fresh interpretations of the consulates of these two years.<sup>7</sup> In order to evaluate the Egyptian evidence, it is important first to understand consular dating in Egypt at this period.

<sup>3</sup> As seen in the debate over the Christianization of the Roman elite: e.g., R. von Haehling, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amtsträger des römischen Reiches seit Constantins I. Alleinherrschaft bis zum Ende der theodosianischen Dynastie (325—450 bzw. 455 n.Chr.)* (Bonn, 1978); D.M. Novak, "Constantine and the Senate: An Early Phase of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy," *AncSoc* 10 (1979), 271–310; T.D. Barnes, "Christians and Pagans in the Reign of Constantius" in A. Dihle, ed., *L'Église et l'empire au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle, Vandoeuvres-Genève 31 août—3 septembre 1987* (Geneva, 1989), 301–343; Idem, "The Religious Affiliation of Consuls and Prefects, 317–361" in Idem, *From Eusebius to Augustine: Selected Papers 1982–1993*, Variorum Collected Studies Series 438 (Aldershot, 1994), VII, 1–11; and Idem, "Statistics and the Conversion of the Roman Aristocracy," *JRS* 85 (1995), 135–147.

<sup>4</sup> See R.S. Bagnall, A.D.E. Cameron, S.R. Schwartz, K.A. Worp, *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire* (Atlanta, 1987) (hereafter *CLRE*), 4–6, 23–24.

<sup>5</sup> T.D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, MA, 1982), 91.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., *CLRE*, 21, 222.

<sup>7</sup> *CLRE*, 67.

## *The Egyptian Formula*

Dating by consuls did not become widespread in Egypt until the tetrarchic period.<sup>8</sup> Previously, from the reign of Augustus onward, consular dating largely was confined to documents relating to Roman law (such as citizens' wills) or military record-keeping, and undoubtedly derived from Latin models and sometimes even was expressed in Latin.<sup>9</sup> The earliest attested example is a fragmentary *stipulatio* dated "C. Marcio Censor[ino, C. Asinio Gallo co(n)s(ulibus) . . . ]," that is, 8 BCE.<sup>10</sup> That consular dating was not usual in Greek documents is witnessed by the habitual use of the dative case for consuls, an obvious calque on the ablative of the Latin formula (that is, δεινὶ καὶ δεῖνι ὑπάτοις).

Moreover, pre-tetrarchic consular dates often were accompanied by an Egyptian formula, employed both locally and by the Roman provincial administration, that included the regnal year of the ruler (who, since the death of Cleopatra VII, was the Roman emperor) and the day and month of the Egyptian calendar, for example, *P.Oxy.* 2857, lines 31–34, "ἡ διαθήκη ἐγένετο ἐν Ὁξυρύγχ(ων) πόλ(εως) τῆς Θεβαΐδος πρὸ 1ς' Καλανδ(ῶν) Ἰουνίων Λουκίῳ Ἰουλίῳ Οὐρσῳ Σερουιανῶ τὸ γ' Τίτο [sic] Οὐβίῳ Οὐ[ά]ρῳ ὑπάτοις L (ἔτους) 1η' αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Τραϊανοῦ Ἀ[δρι]ανοῦ Σε[βα]στοῦ Παχῶν κβ'" ("The will made in the city of the Oxyrhynchi of the Thebaid on the 16<sup>th</sup> day before the Kalends of June, Lucius Iulius Ursus Servianus III, Titus Vibius Varus consuls, year 18 of Emperor Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, Pachon 22 [17 May 134])." Both the awkward grammar and the need for equivalences indicate that before the Tetrarchy, consular dating, like the Julian calendar, remained essentially foreign to Egypt, as it often was elsewhere in the Greek east.<sup>11</sup>

In 293, dating by the consular year (ὑπατεία) became the norm in formal legal and official documents in Egypt,<sup>12</sup> and soon superseded the regnal

<sup>8</sup> For dating in Egyptian Greek documents, see P.W. Pestman, *The New Papyrological Primer*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1994), 34ff; for Late Antiquity, see R.S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993), 327–329.

<sup>9</sup> R.S. Bagnall, K.A. Worp, *Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 2004) (hereafter *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>), 3, 88. For use in wills, see L. Migliardi Zingale, *I testamenti romani nei papiri e nelle tavolette d'Egitto. Silloge di documenti dal I al IV secolo d.C.*, 3rd ed. (Turin, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> *P.IFAO* inv. 314 = *ChLA* 13. 1239; see R. Haensch, "Die älteste Datierung nach consules auf einem lateinischen Papyrus aus Ägypten," *ZPE* 128 (1999), 212.

<sup>11</sup> On difficulties in using the Julian calendar, see P.J. Sijpestein, "Some Remarks on Roman Dates in Greek Papyri," *ZPE* 33 (1979), 229–240, esp. 233–235, 239–240. The index of J.H. Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri* (Philadelphia, 1988), 634, illustrates translations of Latin consular dates into Greek down to 258.

<sup>12</sup> R.S. Bagnall, K.A. Worp, "Chronological Reckoning in Byzantine Egypt," *GRBS* 20 (1979), 279–295, at 282; Eidem, "Papyrus Documentation in the Period of Diocletian and Constantine," *BES* 4 (1982), 25–33, esp. 28–30; and *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 3, 173.

year.<sup>13</sup> This posed some practical disadvantages. At the most basic level, consular dates did not enjoy the sequentiality of regnal years, which unofficially lived on in various forms. Secondly, regnal year dating had been susceptible to harmonization with the Egyptian calendar year beginning on Thoth 1 (29 August, or 30 August in leap years), so that the first Thoth 1 following an emperor's accession marked the beginning of year 2 of his reign, but the consulate, based on the Julian calendar, which was not widely adopted in Egypt,<sup>14</sup> changed every 1 January (Tybi 6, or 5 in leap years).<sup>15</sup> The result was an awkward hybrid in which the dating formula for official documents married consular years to the traditional Egyptian months.<sup>16</sup>

This change in practice is not likely to have been voluntary and must reflect a central directive equivalent to Justinian's *Novel* 47 (31 August 537), which decreed that documents were to be dated by regnal year as well as consuls and indiction. It must have entailed a new responsibility of the office of the prefect of Egypt to translate and disseminate the names of the consuls to the provincial nomes, for, despite some regional variations, the general uniformity of consular dating throughout Egypt suggests centrally coordinated dissemination of the annual formula.<sup>17</sup> The change has been connected with the inception of the Tetrarchy on 1 March 293,<sup>18</sup> but, by analogy, the nearly two-year time lag between the issuing of *Nov.* 47 and its first reflection in Egyptian practice (April 539) suggests that any imperial directive may have been a year or so earlier. Based on usage from 293 on, the order apparently stipulated that no document would be legally valid unless dated by consuls, month, and day. The author (presumably Diocletian) no doubt assumed the use of the Julian calendar but the new regulation was interpreted in Egypt to permit the use of the entrenched traditional calendar.

This change was just part of a series of administrative revolutions introduced under Diocletian over a decade or more, by which Egypt "joined the world."<sup>19</sup> These included the reorganization of the financial administration (286); the introduction of a new taxation cycle (287/8); the first subdivision of the unitary prefecture of Egypt, when the upper Nile valley was hived off as a

<sup>13</sup> The eclipse of the traditional system explains the indifference of Constantine in 324 to the discrepancy between his own and Egyptian reckoning of the length of his reign that Barnes, *New Empire*, 29, found so puzzling.

<sup>14</sup> See Sijpestein, "Some Remarks," 230–232, 235–237.

<sup>15</sup> A conversion table is provided in *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 161–165.

<sup>16</sup> E.g., *P.Oxy.* 1626, l. 23: "[ὑπατείας Παυλί]νου καὶ Ἰουλιανοῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων Παῦνι α'" (= 26 May 325).

<sup>17</sup> *CLRE*, 67–68, *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 91–104.

<sup>18</sup> *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 3, 45, 88.

<sup>19</sup> P.J. Parsons, *City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish: Greek Lives in Roman Egypt* (London, 2007), 173–174.

separate province under a *praeses* of the Thebaid at some time between 292/3 and 296; the ending of Egypt's closed monetary system, when the mint at Alexandria switched from producing the tetradrachm, inherited from the Ptolemies, to the mainstream imperial coinage (296); and a new system of tax assessment (297).<sup>20</sup> These changes may have provoked political resistance. In 293/4, the recently appointed Caesar Galerius quelled rebellion in the Thebaid, and general revolt throughout Egypt in 297/8 required the presence of Diocletian.<sup>21</sup> In light of these more high profile administrative changes and political events, the switch to consular dating has understandably excited relatively little discussion.<sup>22</sup>

What perhaps is most significant about the switch is that it was accompanied by a change in the dating formula. In place of the frequent calque on the Latin ablative formula, consular dating became more often assimilated to Greek grammar, in which events take place in the genitive. Initially, Egyptian scribes used two alternative formulae: (1) ἐπὶ [rather than ἐφ'] ὑπάτων δεῖνος καὶ δεῖνος (under the consuls X and Y), which from an early date was widely used in the Greek world,<sup>23</sup> or (2) ὑπατείας δεῖνος καὶ δεῖνος (in the consulship of X and Y), which is paralleled in the Greek world from the early third century on.<sup>24</sup> By 310, the latter style had become almost universal in Egypt.<sup>25</sup> The distinctiveness of Egyptian practice can be seen in comparison with practice in neighboring Palestine and Arabia, which from the first half of the third century had favored a third formula: (ἐν) ὑπατεία.<sup>26</sup> The variety of practice

<sup>20</sup> See A.K. Bowman, "Egypt from Septimius Severus to the Death of Constantine," in Idem, P.D.A. Garnsey, Av. Cameron, eds., *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed., vol.12, *The Crisis of Empire AD 193–337* (Cambridge, 2005), 313–326, esp. 319–321; C.E.P. Adams, "Transition and Change in Diocletian's Egypt: Province and Empire in the Late Third Century" in S. Swain, M.J. Edwards, eds., *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire* (Oxford, 2004), 82–108, esp. 86–89.

<sup>21</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 55–54, 62; Idem, "Emperors, Panegyrics, Prefects, Provinces and Palaces (284–317)," *JRA* 9 (1996), 532–552, at 542–544; W. Leadbetter, "Galerius and the Revolt of the Thebaid in 293/4," *Antichthon* 34 (2000), 83–95.

<sup>22</sup> Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 328.

<sup>23</sup> E.g. *IG* 12.3 173, l. 15, Astypalaea (105 BCE); *IG* 9.1<sup>2</sup> 2, 242, l. 2, Thyrrheion, Acarnania (94 BCE); R.K. Sherk, *Roman Documents of the Greek East: Senatus Consulta and Epistulae to the Age of Augustus* (Baltimore, 1969), 139, 24, l. A.1, Salona, Dalmatia (56 BCE); *IK* 4, 26, l. 1, Assos, Troad (37 CE); *SEG* 40 (1990), 1231, l. 1, 1232, l. 1, Kırkpınar, Phrygia (both 79 CE); *IGRR* 3. 81 = *AE* (1991), 1461 B, ll. 2–5, Heraclea Pontica (130 CE).

<sup>24</sup> E.g. Y.E. Meimaris, *Chronological Systems in Roman-Byzantine Palestine and Arabia: The Evidence of the Dated Greek Inscriptions* (Athens, 1992), no.18, l.7, Zebîré, Arabia (213); no. 39 (= *Syria-Princeton* 3A, p. 325), l. a.1, El-Mushennef, Arabia (235); and no. 20 (= *IGRR* 3. 1213), l.3, Kefr-Lahâ, Arabia (236); also *CIG* 3. 4303.i = *IGRR* 3. 711, l.4, Myra, Lycia (237).

<sup>25</sup> *P.Lips.* 4 and 5 of 10 September 293. *SB* 16495 preserves the consular date of 290 with the "ἐπὶ ὑπάτων" formula, but nothing else, leaving it unclear whether it is contemporary or a retrospective date in a later document.

<sup>26</sup> Meimaris, *Chronological Systems*, 342–343, with nos. 40 (238), 21 (249), 41 (301), 42 (331), 43 (350), 24 (352), 25 (354), 27 (365), 46 (530), 47 (535).

indicates that the annual consular pairs, disseminated from the imperial court in Latin, were translated into Greek at the level of the provincial administration and also could undergo differing simplification and abbreviation at a local level.<sup>27</sup>

In fact, contemporary epigraphic documents demonstrate that the new Egyptian practice diverged significantly from established Latin style in its presentation of the consuls. Traditional Latin practice gave the names of the consuls either alone (*D. Haterio Agrippa, C. Sulpicio Galba cos.*) or, usually in the absence of *praenomina*, punctuated with *et* (*Haterio Agrippa et Sulpicio Galba cos.*), or frequently abbreviated to *cognomina* alone (*Agrippa et Galba cos.*).<sup>28</sup> The only consuls given additional description were princes and emperors, who were qualified as *Caesar* or *Augustus*, elements that justifiably could be considered as integral to their names. In Egyptian scribal practice, however, such descriptions also were used for citizen consuls. Three documents from 295 qualify the consuls Nummius Tuscus and Annius Anullinus as οἱ λαμπρότατοι (*virī clarissimi*), the conventional marker of senatorial status.<sup>29</sup> These represent half of the consular dating attestations for this year and their disparate provenances (Oxyrhynchus and Hermopolis) suggest that the addition of the epithet was more than just a local aberration.<sup>30</sup> This usage does not appear to be repeated in the next two years of citizen consuls (298 and 301) but, after eight years of imperial consulates, reappears in 310, attached to the names of Tattius Andronicus and Pompeius Probus.<sup>31</sup> The next pair of citizen consuls, Rufius Volusianus and Petronius Annianus in 314, again are styled *clarissimi*.<sup>32</sup> These epithets then remained a consistent feature in the papyrus record until the last citizen consul in 541.<sup>33</sup>

This development also occurred, albeit more slowly, in the rest of the Greek world, as attested near Cyzicus in Mysia in 314 and at Umm ez-Zeitun in Arabia in 331.<sup>34</sup> The style did not become common, however, until the

<sup>27</sup> E.g., Aurelius Valerius Symmachus *agnomine* Tullianus (*cos.* 330), attested in Egypt variously as Aurelius Symmachus (Panopolis and Kellis), Valerius Symmachus (Oxyrhynchus), and Valerius Tullianus (Hermopolis and Arsinoe); see *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 182; also A.D.E. Cameron, "The Antiquity of the Symmachi," *Historia* 48 (1999), 477–505, at 480–484.

<sup>28</sup> For Latin consular formulae, see R. Paribeni, "Consul," in E. de Ruggiero, ed., *Dizionario epigrafico di antichità romane* 2.1 (Rome, 1900), 679–862, at 680–681, 705–709.

<sup>29</sup> *P.Oxy.* 23 and 43; *P.Lips.* 29; ὁ λαμπρότατος as a technical translation of *vir clarissimus*: see H.J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: A Lexicon and Analysis* (Toronto, 1974), 65.

<sup>30</sup> See *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 173.

<sup>31</sup> See *CLRE*, 138–155; *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 173–176.

<sup>32</sup> See *CLRE*, 163; *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 177–178.

<sup>33</sup> See *CLRE*, 617; *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 206.

<sup>34</sup> *SEG* 30 (1980), 1051, ll. 5–7: "ὑπατεῖα Οὐλοουσειανοῦ ἰ καὶ Ἀννιανοῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων"; *CIG* 3. 4593 = *LBW* 3. 2546a and Meimaris, *Chronological Systems*, no.42, l. 1: "ὑπατεῖα Βάσσου καὶ Ἀβλαβίου τῶν λαμπροτάτων."

fifth century.<sup>35</sup> The Latin west was even more conservative. An isolated early example of *vv(iri) cc(larissimi)* is attested in 346,<sup>36</sup> but the style did not really appear in Latin epigraphy until the 370s and did not become standard until the late 380s.<sup>37</sup>

The Egyptian formula for 310 also saw the first appearance of the addition of titles of office to the names of citizen consuls. In fifteen out of eighted examples, Tatius Andronicus and Pompeius Probus are qualified as οἱ λαμπρότατοι ἑπαρχοί, representing the Latin *clarissimi viri, praefecti [praetorio]*.<sup>38</sup> Such titles were a regular feature from 327 until 423, with sporadic revivals in 499, 500, and 538.<sup>39</sup> The compilers of *CLRE*, who tend to treat the Egyptian formula as the benchmark, comment on this phenomenon only in terms of the omission of such titles,<sup>40</sup> but the Latin formula in fact remained tenaciously conservative and this novelty never penetrated Latin epigraphic practice.

It might be imagined that the fashion for rank epithets and other descriptors occurred at the provincial level, where the formula attained a more sycophantic register when translated into Greek. But isolated examples of Latin consular dates from Egypt suggest that this phenomenon is authentic to the formula as received in Egypt, especially because one example emanated from the prefect's own chancery.<sup>41</sup> It is in any case more likely that superfluous decoration and inessential information would be edited out rather than added in during the process of dissemination. One might suggest that the appearance of these descriptors is symptomatic of a new conception of the consulship as an honor given in reward for other services rather than as an office per se or a stepping-stone in a traditional public career, for the descriptors almost invariably describe positions and honors, such as *comes, magister militum,*

<sup>35</sup> E.g. *CIL* 3. 9505 + *Add.* p. 2139 = *ILJug* 2385, ll. 1–2, Salona, Dalmatia (372); *IG* 14. 159, ll. 6–7, Syracuse, Sicily (427); *SEG* 34 (1984), 1262 = *IK* 20, 21, ll. 6–7, 14–15, Chalcedon, Bithynia (450, 452); *ILJug* 2459, l.4, Salona, Dalmatia (454).

<sup>36</sup> *ICUR* n.s. 5. 13101, perhaps anticipated by *AE* (1995), 271 (Formiae, Campania), if the date is correctly identified as 331; and certainly by a text from Arabia, see D. Kennedy, H.I. MacAdam, "Latin Inscriptions from Jordan, 1985," *ZPE* 65 (1986), 231–236, at 232, whose location and grammar (unless a post-consulate is involved) suggest the strong influence of its Hellenophone milieu (l. 7): "[ - - - Dalma]ti et Zenofili vv. cc. cos."

<sup>37</sup> See E. Diehl, *ILCV* 3. (Berlin, 1961), index VI.A, 229–263; *CLRE*, 63, 276–278, 282–616.

<sup>38</sup> E.g. *P.Cair.Isid.* 50, ll. 29–30: "ὑπατείας Τατίου Ἀνδρονίκου καὶ Πομπηίου Πρόβου τῶν λαμπροτάτων ἐπάρχων." See *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 176 for full details.

<sup>39</sup> *CLRE*, 188–381, 533–537, 611; *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 181–195, 202, 206.

<sup>40</sup> *CLRE*, 68.

<sup>41</sup> *P.Oxy.* 3129; see *SPP* 20. 284 = *C.Epist.Lat.* 221, l. 4: "Gallicano et Basso vv. cc. coss" (317); *P.Harrauer* 46, l. 1: "[ - - - et ?Hilar]iano v.c. cos." (?332); *P.Oxy.* 3129 = *ChLA* 47. 1419, ll. 10–11: "[Julio Consta]ntio v. c. pat[r]icio | fratre d(omini) n(ostri) [ - - -]" (335).



*patricius*, and *praefectus praetorio*, that were outside the traditional senatorial career of the Principate.<sup>42</sup>

The official dissemination of these descriptors would have been almost equivalent to a demonstration of the appointee's qualification for the consular honor and would have reflected the perspective of the imperial court rather than of aristocratic circles at Rome. Thus the habit would have arisen in a tetrarchic chancery more accustomed to the promulgation of imperial than citizen consuls and to which the inclusion of the honorific epithets Caesar and Augustus was a reflex. It is understandable that, after centuries of tradition, such novelties were vigorously resisted in Latin practice. Conversely, precisely because consular dating was a novelty in Egypt, it is entirely comprehensible that Egyptian scribes would have faithfully reproduced the consular formula much as they received it. Indeed, this sensitivity of Egyptian scribal practice to court style, and the lack of desire to maintain tradition, is demonstrated by the speed with which it switched from the translation Σεβαστός to the transliteration Αὐγουστος to describe Constantine after 324,<sup>43</sup> despite the traditional use of the former since Augustus himself.<sup>44</sup> By contrast, it took literary writers a few more decades to adjust.<sup>45</sup> Thus, it seems probable that the descriptions accompanying citizen consuls in the Egyptian papyri reflect court usage rather than local creation and that they therefore are integral to the emperors' thinking concerning the nomination of the ordinary consuls.

### *The Year 325*

With this background, we return to the first problematic year, 325, whose consuls present two conundra, one of long standing, the other more recent. The identity of the consuls in 325 is significant because this was the first full year of Constantine's rule as sole Augustus: after losing battles at Adrianople in Thrace in July and at Chrysopolis in Bithynia in September, Constantine's erstwhile colleague Licinius had abdicated after a negotiated surrender at

<sup>42</sup> Seniority in these honors and offices became an issue in deciding the relative order of consuls; see R.W. Mathisen, "Emperors, Consuls, and Patricians: Some Problems of Personal Preference, Precedence and Protocol," *ByzZ* 17 (1991), 173–190.

<sup>43</sup> R.W.B. Salway, "Constantine *Augoustos* (not *Sebastos*)," in J.F. Drinkwater, B. Salway, eds., *Wolf Liebeschuetz Reflected: Essays Presented by Colleagues, Friends, and Pupils* (London, 2007), 37–50.

<sup>44</sup> On the established position of Σεβαστός as equivalent of *Augustus*, see Mason, *Greek Terms*, 11–12; P. Bureth, *Les titulatures impériales dans les papyrus, les ostraka et les inscriptions d'Égypte (30 a.C.—284 p.C)* (Brussels, 1964), 21–126; and M. Peachin, *Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, 235–284* (Amsterdam, 1990), *passim*.

<sup>45</sup> L. Dinneen, *Titles of Address in Christian Greek Epistolography* (Patristic Studies 18; Washington D.C., 1929), 27; G. Rösch, *ONOMA ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑΣ: Studien der Kaisertitel in spätantiker und frühbyzantinischer Zeit* (Vienna, 1978), Appendix, 159–60.

Nicomedia on 19 September 324 and been sent into internal exile at Thessalonica.<sup>46</sup> Even though Constantine now was sole master of the Roman world, he probably made, or at least revised, the consular nominations for 325 in the politically delicate few weeks to a month after Licinius' abdication. The remaining months of the year also witnessed the elevation of Constantine's son Constantius as a third Caesar (8 November),<sup>47</sup> the selection of Byzantium as the site for his new foundation, Constantinople, and possibly a sojourn in Antioch, capital of the diocese of Oriens, from which he could survey the strategically important frontier with the Persians.<sup>48</sup> By 16 December, Licinius had been publicly branded a tyrant and his enactments (*constitutiones*) and legislation (*leges*) abolished.<sup>49</sup> Licinius appears to have been alive into the next year, although the precise date of his death is not known.<sup>50</sup>

## *Iulianus*

Before the advent of the Egyptian papyrus evidence, revealed from the 1890s on, the ancient sources, such as manuscript *fasti*, dated subscriptions in the law codes, and epigraphy, seemed almost unanimous in their report of Paulinus and Iulianus as the consular pair for 325.<sup>51</sup> The only divergence was the entry in the *fasti* of Theon of Alexandria, "Πρόκλος ἦτοι Παυλῖνος καὶ Ἰουλιανός" ("Proculus or Paulinus and Iulianus"), which appeared to propose Proculus as an alternative name for the first consul.<sup>52</sup> Otto Seeck initially identified Paulinus and Iulianus as Sex. Anicius Paulinus and M. Ceionius Iulianus.<sup>53</sup> The latter stages of the traditional senatorial career of Anicius

<sup>46</sup> For the chronology, see T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 76–77; Idem, *New Empire*, 75.

<sup>47</sup> *Chronographer of 354* (CIL 1<sup>2</sup>.276), *Consularia Constantinopolitana seu descriptio consulum*, s.a. 324, 3; R.W. Burgess, ed., *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana: Two Contemporary Accounts of the Final Years of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1993), 326; Barnes, *New Empire*, 8.

<sup>48</sup> T.D. Barnes, "Emperor and Bishops, 324–344: Some Problems," *AJAH* 3 (1978), 53–75, at 54–56; Idem, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 212; cf. R.J. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London, 1986), 635–662, who puts the period in Antioch in the spring of 325.

<sup>49</sup> *CTh* 15.14.1, accepting the conventional emendation of "xvii kal. Iun." to "xvii kal. Ian."; O. Seeck, ed., *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 475 n.Chr.: Vorarbeit einer Prosopographie der christlichen Kaiserzeit* (Stuttgart, 1919), 99; *PLRE* I, 225, "Constantius 5."

<sup>50</sup> Eusebius/Jerome, *Chron.* Olymp. 276.1 (Helm, ed., 231e); *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, s.a. 325 (Burgess, ed., 236).

<sup>51</sup> J.R. Rea, commentary on *P.Oxy.* 3125 in *P.Oxy.* vol. 43 (London, 1975), p. 92; cf. *CLRE*, 184–185.

<sup>52</sup> *Fasti Theonis Alexandrini*, Th. Mommsen, ed., *MGH AA* 13 (Berlin, 1898), 380.

<sup>53</sup> O. Seeck, in G. Wissowa, ed., *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft, neue Bearbeitung* (hereafter *RE*) 1 (Stuttgart, 1894), col. 2199, "Anicius 25" and *RE* 3.2 (1899), cols. 1859–1860, "Ceionius 19"; whence D. Vaglieri, "Consules," in de Ruggiero, *Dizionario* 2.2 (1905), 869–1181, at 976 (Sex. Cocceius Anicius Faustus Paulinus), 968 (P. [sic] Ceionius

Paulinus, a member of the *gens Anicia* and almost certainly a Christian, are known from an inscription from Rome:<sup>54</sup> he was proconsul of Africa for two years at some point before this consulship and went on to be prefect of Rome in 331–333.<sup>55</sup> M. Ceionius Iulianus had a similar career; he was Paulinus' successor as *praefectus urbi* in 333 and held the proconsulship of Africa at some time between 326 and 333.<sup>56</sup> Seeck's identification of Ceionius Iulianus as the consul of 325 arose because he conflated him with the Iulianus who served as Licinius' praetorian prefect from 315.<sup>57</sup> The identification of a hereditary senator in this traditionally equestrian post was rendered plausible by the recent precedent of C. Ceionius Rufius Volusianus, praetorian prefect to Maxentius (309/10), who was honored with an ordinary consulship by Constantine in 314.<sup>58</sup> Seeck's justification for the identification came from Libanius' funeral oration on the emperor Julian, in which he described the emperor's homonymous maternal grandfather as a wise and virtuous prefect, held in high favor by Constantine,<sup>59</sup> as evidenced by the marriage of Iulianus' daughter, Basilina, to Constantine's half-brother Iulius Constantius.

Seeck later revised his opinions after the publication of an inscription from Tropaeum Traiani revealed the *nomen* of the praetorian prefect to have been Iulius rather than Ceionius and his social status to have been equestrian rather than senatorial.<sup>60</sup> Separating the two individuals, Seeck preferred the prefect Iulius Iulianus to the noble Ceionius Iulianus as the consul of 325.<sup>61</sup> Seeck's identification was generally adopted,<sup>62</sup> and subsequent evidence

---

Iulianus) and 1170, followed by W. Liebenam, *Fasti consulares imperii romani von 30 v.Chr. bis 565 n.Chr.* (Bonn, 1909), 35. Vaglieri seems to have created "P. Ceionius Iulianus" by a misreading of Seeck's stemma of the Ceionii (*RE* III.2, cols. 1861–1862).

<sup>54</sup> *CIL* 6.1680; on his religious affiliation, see A.H.M. Jones, J.R. Martindale, J. Morris, eds., *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire, Volume I. AD 260-395* (Cambridge, 1971) [hereafter *PLRE I*], 679–680, "Paulinus 15"; von Haehling, *Religionszugehörigkeit*, 366, no.5; and M.R. Salzman, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy: Social and Religious Change in the Western Roman Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2002), 100, 262, 302 n.180.

<sup>55</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 171, suggests that Ceionius Iulianus was *proconsul Africae* in the biennium immediately preceding, i.e. 322–324.

<sup>56</sup> See *PLRE I*, 476, "Iulianus 26," for details.

<sup>57</sup> Then otherwise attested only as "Iulianus," co-author of a letter, dated 28 April, with Petronius Annianus, Constantine's praetorian prefect, to the *vicarius Africae* Domitius Celsus, who had been succeeded by one Eumelius by that date in 316 (*Optatus, App.* 8; Barnes, *New Empire*, 146).

<sup>58</sup> See *PLRE I*, 976–978, "Volusianus 4," for details.

<sup>59</sup> Libanius, *Oration* 18.8–9.

<sup>60</sup> *Archäologische-epigraphische Mitteilungen aus Oesterreich-Ungarn* 17 (1894), 109 (Tropaeum Traiani, Scythia minor) = *AE* (1894), 111 (= *CIL* 3.13743, *ILS* 8938), l. 9: "Petr(oni)us Annianus v(ir) c(larissimus) et Iul(ius) Iulianus v(ir) em(inentissimus) praeff(ecti) praetorio."

<sup>61</sup> O. Seeck, *RE* 10 (1919), cols. 92–93, "Iulianus 32" (Iulius Iulianus) and col. 93, "Iulianus 33" (Ceionius Iulianus).

<sup>62</sup> *PLRE I*, 476, "Iulianus"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 102–103.

confirmed Iulius Iulianus as a key figure in Licinius' regime. Papyri revealed him as prefect of Egypt in 314, most probably as Licinius' first prefect after the downfall of Maximinus in the summer of 313,<sup>63</sup> before his swift promotion to vicar on the subdivision of the province into Aegyptus Iovia and Herculia later in 314.<sup>64</sup> In this light, Constantine's supposed honoring of Iulius Iulianus as consul has been taken as indicative of a policy of conciliation toward the party of Licinius.<sup>65</sup>

The first known papyrus documents for 325 CE commonly employed the simple formula “ὑπατείας Παυλίνου καὶ Ἰουλιανοῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων” (“Paulino et Iuliano vv.cc. cons.”), but two published in 1948 attested a fuller formula, “ὑπατείας Ἀνικίου Παυλίνου καὶ Ἰωνίου Ἰουλιανοῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων” (“Anicio Paulino et Ionio Iuliano vv.cc. cons.”).<sup>66</sup> This confirmed Seeck's identification of Anicius Paulinus, but Iulianus' curious *nomen*, Ionius, not otherwise attested as a Roman *gentilicium* (family name), aroused suspicion,<sup>67</sup> and left opinion divided as to the identification of Iulianus. Some scholars maintained Seeck's identification with Ceionius Iulianus, on the grounds that the *nomen* was the result of haplography of the καί of the dating formula and the initial syllable of the *gentilicium* (that is, “Ἀνικίου Παυλίνου καὶ <Κα>ιονίου Ἰουλιανοῦ”):<sup>68</sup> a restoration on these terms would yield “Καιωνίου Ἰουλιανοῦ.”<sup>69</sup> On the other hand, those who preferred identification with Iulius Iulianus saw the strange form Ἰώνιος as simply an error for the more familiar “Iulius” (Ἰούλιος);<sup>70</sup> and it also has been suggested that Ἰώνιος represents Latin Iunius.<sup>71</sup> But there are considerable impediments to all three views.

First of all, the three papyri that give both consuls two names (*P.Stras.* 137, 138 and, more recently, *P.Charite* 13) consistently use the form Ionius.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 7, 150.

<sup>64</sup> If he is correctly identified with the “Iulianus v(ir) perfectissimus) a(gens) v(ice) praef(ectorum) praet(orio)” of *P.Oxy.* 2952; Barnes, *New Empire*, 141. On Iovia and Herculia (later Mercuriana) see Barnes, *JRA* 9 (1996), 548–549.

<sup>65</sup> E.g., R. Van Dam, *The Roman Revolution of Constantine* (Cambridge, 2007), 173.

<sup>66</sup> *P.Stras.* 137, 138 = SB 8019, 8020.

<sup>67</sup> E.g. Barnes, *New Empire*, 98, 102, considers the form “Ionius” to be corrupt and accordingly places it between *cruces* in his list of consuls.

<sup>68</sup> A. Degrassi, *I fasti consolari dell'impero romano dal 30 avanti Cristo al 613 dopo Cristo* (Rome, 1952), 59; where, however, he reproduces Vaglieri's error (de Ruggiero, *Dizionario* 2.2, 968) in crediting him with the *praenomen* Publius; see Rea, *P.Oxy.*, vol. 43 (1975), 93 on no.3125, l. 9.

<sup>69</sup> The form cited in *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 181.

<sup>70</sup> A. Chastagnol, *Les fastes de la Préfecture de Rome au Bas-Empire* (Paris, 1962), 85 n.89; *PLRE I*, 478–479, “Iulianus 35”; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 70, 214; Idem, *New Empire*, 102, 128.

<sup>71</sup> P. Porena, *Le origini della prefettura del pretorio tardoantica* (Rome, 2003), 299.

<sup>72</sup> *CLRE*, 629, whence *BL* 9, pp. 56, 325.

All three originate from the Hermopolite nome, but were written in different hands, and one, *P.Stras.* 138, has official standing, having been written by the *logistes* (*curator*) of Hermopolis, Flavius Asclepiades: his scribe even picked out the initial iota of Ionius with a diaeresis to distinguish it from the preceding καί.<sup>73</sup> This suggests that the form Ionius goes back to the nome level or even higher in the dissemination process, although this is not to say that the central administration itself was not perfectly capable of distorting an unfamiliar name, as demonstrated by the example of Caecina Sabinus, *consul prior* of 316. Although rendered correctly (as Καικίννας Σαβεῖνος) in papyri from the Thebaid, those from the province of Aegyptus Herculia consistently give his *nomen* as Caecinius (Καικίνιος).<sup>74</sup> But the corruption of Caecina into Caecinius clearly results from *lectio facilior* whereas if the unusual name Ionius were an error, it is hard to understand how it could be a corruption of the familiar name Iulius.<sup>75</sup> The same objection applies to imagining Ionius as a rendering of Iunius, which had long been transliterated as Ἰούνιος, as in reproducing the name of the Roman month and, not long afterward, in writing the *gentilicium* of the *consul prior* of 331, Iunius Bassus.<sup>76</sup> For these reasons, other scholars rightly prefer to uphold the reading Ionius, albeit without offering any argument as to why this might be considered a *nomen gentile*.<sup>77</sup>

Although it is not impossible that Iulianus belonged to an otherwise unknown aristocratic *gens Ionia*, a more satisfactory solution might be to understand Ionius as a *signum* or *supernomen* used in the papyrological formulae in place of several *nomina*.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, Ionius is recorded nearly a century earlier as a Roman *signum*,<sup>79</sup> and the use of a *signum* as a shorthand way of referring to a polyonymous consul is attested in thirteen papyri related to another fourth-century Roman aristocrat, L. Aradius Valerius Proculus *signo* Populonium.<sup>80</sup> In the consular dating formula for 340, rather than appearing,

<sup>73</sup> *P.Stras.* 138 (with *BL* 9, p. 325), ll. 16–18: “[ - - - ὑπατείας Ἰ Ἀνικίου] Παυλίνου καὶ Ἰονίου [ Ἰουλιανο]ῦ τῶν λαμπροτάτων.”

<sup>74</sup> *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 178. Cf. also the reading of the *Fasti Heracliani* for 316 (Mommsen, ed., *MGH AA* 13.397, ll. 23–24): “Καικίνα Σαβήνου.”

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *P.Oxy.* 3771, l. 1, where the scribe writes the more familiar “Σεκούνδου” for the unfamiliar “Φακούνδου.” On the process of dissemination, see above; also *CLRE*, 629.

<sup>76</sup> For the month, see, e.g. *P.Oxy.* 2857, quoted above; on the formula of 331, see *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 180.

<sup>77</sup> *CLRE*, 629, arguing that “there are other parallels for such fanciful names,” and noting a fifth-century Ionius (*PLRE II*, 619), although this would appear to be a *cognomen*.

<sup>78</sup> Ionius might even have a consular forerunner in the *Fasti Caleni*, if the name Ionius Proculus is not amended, as usually done, to [Ce]ionius Proculus (*CIL* 10. 4631).

<sup>79</sup> Borne by Q. Axius Aelianus and his son in Dacia in 238 (*CIL* 3. 1422, 1432; *CIG* 3. 6813, Sarmizegetusa); see I. Kajanto, *Supernomina: A Study in Latin Epigraphy* (Helsinki, 1966), 70–71.

<sup>80</sup> *PLRE I*, 747–748, “Proculus 11”; *CLRE*, 215; and Cameron, Symmachi, 483. For the papyri witnessing Populonium Proculus, see *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 184 (but note that *CPR* 17A 31 cannot be taken as

as might have been expected, in reduced form as Aradius Proculus or Valerius Proculus, he is presented consistently as Populonium Proculus, as in *P.Cair. Goodspeed* 12, lines 19–21: “ὑπατείας Σεπτιμίου Ἀκινδύνου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου ἐπάρχου τοῦ ἱεροῦ πραιτωρίου καὶ Ποπλωνίου Προκούλου τοῦ λαμπροτάτου” (“Septimio Acindyno v.c. praefecto sacri praetorii et Populonio Proculo v.c. cons”).<sup>81</sup> Because no source besides the Egyptian papyri gives the formula any more fully than Acindynus and Proculus, it is impossible to prove incontrovertibly whether the shorthand Populonium Proculus was devised in Egypt or came from the imperial chancery. But given, as seen above, the general Egyptian practice at this date to be extremely faithful to the formula disseminated from the imperial court, we can be fairly certain that the style with the *signum* was current at Constantius II’s court at Antioch in January 340, whence Egypt would have received the consuls’ names. Furthermore, because Proculus was based in Constans’ rather than Constantius’ portion of the empire, it seems likely that the style Populonium Proculus was transmitted from the western court in the nomination of Constans’ candidate for consul (the *consul prior*, Septimius Acindynus, praetorian prefect to Constantius II, clearly was the latter’s candidate) and then simply repeated in the formula disseminated from Antioch.<sup>82</sup> Thus, the Egyptian formula probably reflects Italian usage, if not Proculus’ very own, for it may have served to distinguish him from similarly named relatives, such as, perhaps, Proculus, proconsul of Africa in 319–320.<sup>83</sup>

Based on analogy with Proculus, there is good reason to consider the enigmatic Ionius Iulianus, consul in 325, to be a polyonymous Iulianus *signo* Ionius whose *gentilicium* remains unknown.<sup>84</sup> The interpretation of the formula’s

---

unequivocal testimony). On metathesis of the *cognomen* and *signum*, see B. Salway, “What’s in a Name? A Survey of Roman Onomastic Practice from c. 700 BC to 700,” *JRS* 84 (1994), 124–145, at 137.

<sup>81</sup> Note also the slight variant “Ποπου[λωνίου] Πρόκλου” (*P.Oxy.* 3984, ll. 1–3). Cf. the equally noble consul, M. Maecius Memmius Furius Baburius Caecilianus Placidus (*cos.* 343), whose polyonymy is reduced to Furius Placidus in the consular formula employed in Egypt (see *CLRE*, 221; *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 184–185).

<sup>82</sup> On the patterns of patronage in the consular nominations of the 340s, see below.

<sup>83</sup> *PLRE I*, 745, “Proculus 3” and “Stemma 30”, p.1147, where this Proculus and Populonium Proculus are conjectured to be uncle and nephew through Aradius Rufinus (*cos.* 311). Chastagnol, *Fastes de la Préfecture*, 295, made the two Proculi brothers, both sons of Aradius Rufinus; and T.D. Barnes, “Three Imperial Edicts,” *ZPE* 21 (1976), 275–281, at 281, preferred to see the Proculi as father and son.

<sup>84</sup> A solution made all the more attractive by the popularity of Greek *signa* among the Roman aristocracy: e.g. Clodius Celsinus *signo* Adelphius (*consularis Numidiae* 333/7); L. Aurelius Avianus Symmachus *signo* Phosphorius (*praefectus urbis Romae* 364–5); and Aconius Catullinus *signo* Philematius (*cos.* 349), on the orthography and etymology of whose *signum*, see O. Masson, “Quelques noms grecs récents en -μάτιος (type Κλημάτιος),” *Arctos* 21 (1987), 73–77, at 74.

Ἰώνιος Ἰουλιανός as a *signum* plus a *cognomen* has two corollaries. First of all, it precludes the identification of Ionius Iulianus with Ceionius Iulianus (*praefectus urbi* 333)—which Barnes excluded because it required the higher honor (*consul ordinarius*) to precede the lesser (*proconsul Africae*)<sup>85</sup>—because Ceionius’ *signum* is attested as Kamenius.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the identification of the consul with the easterner Iulius Iulianus is rendered less probable. The latter’s service in equestrian offices under Licinius, as well as his identification as a Iulianus who corresponded with the Syrian philosophers Iamblichus of Chalcis, whose pupil he was, and Sopater of Apamaea,<sup>87</sup> render it improbable that he would have imitated an onomastic practice characteristic of senatorial circles in Rome. We therefore should resist the temptation to create an eastern Iulius Iulianus *signo* Ionius,<sup>88</sup> and this would mean that this pairing of consuls for 325 did not exhibit any generosity by Constantine toward the entourage of his defeated rival. Rather, the pairing Paulinus and Iulianus adhered to the conventional pattern of honoring hereditary members of the senatorial aristocracy that is witnessed also in the majority of citizen consular pairs of the preceding decade.<sup>89</sup>

### *Proculus*

The publication in 1975 of *P.Oxy.* 3125, in conjunction with the subsequently published 3756 and 3758 (*P.Oxy.* vol. 54), presented another conundrum relating to the consuls of 325. They revealed that the consular pair current in Egypt during the early months of 325, until at least some time in Pharmouthi (27 March–25 April), was not Paulinus and Iulianus but Proculus and Paulinus. This clarified the entry in Theon’s *fasti*<sup>90</sup> and vindicated the reading “Proculo et Paulino consss” found in *CTh* 2.25.1 = *CJ* 3.38.11, an imperial letter dated 25/29 April. This dating generally had been considered an aberration for the

<sup>85</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 102.

<sup>86</sup> *CIL* 8.25525 from Bulla Regia in Africa Proconsularis

<sup>87</sup> See J. Vanderspoel, “Correspondence and Correspondents of Julius Julianus,” *Byzantion* 49 (1999), 396–478; also T.D. Barnes, “A Correspondent of Iamblichus,” *GRBS* 19 (1978), 99–106.

<sup>88</sup> It is tempting, though wildly speculative, to imagine that Iulianus preferred this particular form of his name to distinguish himself from a close homonym, e.g. (Anicius) Iulianus (*cos.* 322), in which case he may have been another polyonymous relative of the *consul prior* Paulinus; see C. Settapani, *Continuité gentilice et continuité familiale dans les familles sénatoriales à l’époque impériale: mythe et réalité* (Oxford, 2000), 346–348.

<sup>89</sup> Viz. Caecina Sabinus, Vettius Rufinus (316), Ovinius Gallicanus, Caesonius Bassus (317), Petronius Probianus, Anicius Iulianus (322); on whom see Barnes, *New Empire*, 100–102; and *CLRE*, 166–169, 178–179.

<sup>90</sup> Theon (or his source) perhaps originally wrote “Πρόκλος <καὶ Παυλίνο> ἦτοι Παυλίνο καὶ Ἰουλιανός,” which may be understood as his comment on divergent testimonia.

formula of 334, “Optato et Paulino cons.,”<sup>91</sup> although Seeck had seen it simply as an error for “Paulino et Iuliano” of 325.<sup>92</sup>

The possibility that Proculus was dropped from the consular formula as the result of his death in office from natural causes can be excluded because by this period such consuls were retained in the dating formula, as seen in the case of emperors, whose decease was marked by their transformation from *d(ominus) n(oster)* to *divus*.<sup>93</sup> This means that at some point not earlier than *CTh* 2.25.1 Proculus’ consular honor had been revoked; Anicius Paulinus was promoted to *consul prior* and Ionius Iulianus appointed to fill the vacant place.<sup>94</sup> Proculus’ disgrace also would explain the relative thoroughness of the extirpation of his consulship. Not only were the majority of dates in the Theodosian Code corrected but the consular date was even retrospectively altered in a neat copy of proceedings before a *logistes* of Oxyrhynchus dated Phamenoth 17 (= 13 March).<sup>95</sup> If Proculus had been a candidate nominated by Licinius but permitted to assume office by Constantine, or a supporter of Licinius nominated by Constantine, his fate might have followed upon that of the abdicated emperor; Licinius and his son, Constantine’s own nephew, were executed on charges of treason on Constantine’s orders in 325.<sup>96</sup>

## P.Oxy. 889

In 1976, Proculus was supplied with a *nomen* on the basis of a new analysis of *P.Oxy.* 889, which bears the fragments of a petition to the *boule* (council) of Oxyrhynchus (lines 11–21).<sup>97</sup> It is dated Pachon 29 (= 24 May) in a year of which only “ὕπατ<ε>ίας Ὀκ[ - - ]” or “Οὐ[ - - ]” remains of the consular date. The petition is prefaced by a Greek translation of an imperial edict or letter (lines 1–11) that provided the basis for the legal action.<sup>98</sup> This is dated, by the Julian calendar, to 12 December (line 10: “τῆ α’ εἰδῶν Δεκεμβρίων”

<sup>91</sup> Whence Liebenam, *Fasti consulares*, 35, created the chimaera “Proculus Optatus” as the *consul prior* of 334. Cf. Degraffi, *Fasti consulari*, and *PLRE I*, who both ignored Proculus.

<sup>92</sup> Seeck, *Regesten*, 88–89, 174; followed by *PLRE I*, 394, “Gerulus.”

<sup>93</sup> E.g., Galerius in 311 and Jovian in 364; see *CLRE*, 156–157, 262–263, 640–641.

<sup>94</sup> See Rea, commentary on no.3125, l. 9 in *P.Oxy.* vol. 43, pp. 92–93.

<sup>95</sup> *P.Oxy.* 3757; cf. the associated documents *P.Oxy.* 3756, dated to Mecheir (Jan./Feb.) in l. 26, and 3758, dated Phamenoth 7 (3 March) and Phamenoth 21 (17 March) in ll. 39 and 133 respectively, all by the original consuls Proculus and Paulinus; see R.A. Coles, *P.Oxy.* vol. 54 (London, 1987), p. 138.

<sup>96</sup> For these events, Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 214, 379 n.48; Idem, *New Empire*, 44.

<sup>97</sup> See B.P. Grenfell, A.S. Hunt, *P.Oxy.* vol. 6 (London, 1908), p. 207; T.G. Parkin, *Old Age in the Roman World: A Cultural History* (Baltimore, 2003), 152. J.D. Thomas, “An Unrecognized Edict of Constantine (*P.Oxy.* 889),” *AncSoc* 7 (1976), 301–308, at 305–306, with a photograph between 306–307, proposed that it was addressed to the *prytanis* deputizing for the *exactor civitatis* (the successor of the *strategos*).

<sup>98</sup> The wording strongly suggests an edict or letter rather than a private rescript.



[that is, “*pridie Idus Decembres*”]) in a year when two Caesars were consuls for the third time (line 11: “[- - -Καίσαρ]σιν τὸ γ’ ὑπάτοις”). The dative case, as seen above, is a telltale sign of translation and contrasts with the petition’s consular dating (lines 11–12), composed *ab initio* in Greek using the standard Graeco-Egyptian formula with the consuls’ names in the genitive.

The original editors attributed the edict to Diocletian in 300 (“*Constantio et Maximiano Caess. III cons*”) but were unable to fix the year of the petition.<sup>99</sup> In 1976, Barnes and Thomas dated the petition to the Constantinian period,<sup>100</sup> the key being the title *vikητής* (*victor*), visible in line 2, which first was assumed by Constantine in September 324.<sup>101</sup> This left 324, “*Crispo et Constantino Caess. III cons*,” as the only remaining possibility for the edict, which thus belongs to the immediate aftermath of Licinius’ defeat and precedes the letter to the praetorian prefect Flavius Constantius, *CTh* 15.14.1 (16 December 324), annulling Licinius’ legislation, by only four days. Thomas argued that the constitution lowered the age-limit for liability for liturgies from seventy to sixty,<sup>102</sup> and Barnes more specifically connected the law with a revocation of Licinius’ raising in 321 of the age of liability to poll tax from sixty to seventy, suggesting that the appended petition from a seventy-two year-old man was a request for the removal of his name from the tax registers.<sup>103</sup> This act, like *CTh* 15.14.1, thus would have advertised the beneficent nature of Constantine *victor*.

The redating of the constitution to the year 324, combined with the re-emergence of Proculus (*cos.* 325), allowed new suggestions to be made for the consular date of the petition of 24 May. Given the size of the lacuna, it was clear that the formula must have been fuller than *cognomina* (i.e. Proculus and Paulinus) alone.<sup>104</sup> There was more than enough space for the consuls to have been cited by two names each, and Ὅκ[- - -] or Οὐ[- - -] ought to represent the beginning of the senior consul’s *nomen*. Thomas, preferring Οὐ[,

<sup>99</sup> *P.Oxy.* vol. 6, p. 206.

<sup>100</sup> Barnes, “Three Imperial Edicts,” 279–281; Thomas, “Unrecognized Edict,” 279–308.

<sup>101</sup> T. Grünwald, *Constantinus Maximus Augustus: Herrschaftspropaganda in der Zeitgenössischen Überlieferung* (Wiesbaden, 1990), 134–144.

<sup>102</sup> Thomas, “Unrecognized Edict,” 308, citing the parallel of *P.Panop.* 29, in which an *exactor civitatis* is petitioned for exemption from liturgies on the basis of old age.

<sup>103</sup> Barnes, “Three Imperial Edicts,” 280; Idem, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 69–70; Idem, *New Empire*, 237; also S.J.J. Corcoran, *Empire of the Tetrarchs: Imperial Pronouncements and Government, 284–324* (Oxford, 1996, 2nd ed. 2000), 197.

<sup>104</sup> Grenfell, Hunt, *P.Oxy.* vol. 6, p. 207, proposed an initial lacuna of no less than forty-five letters throughout, declaring that “the names must have been given in full.” Thomas, “Unrecognized Edict,” 304–305, suggested a loss of sixty-four letters at the beginning of l. 1, whereas Barnes, *New Empire*, 236, suggested sixty-six letters for the lacuna between the end of l. 1 and beginning of l. 2.

suggested several likely *consules priores* ranging from 336 to 349.<sup>105</sup> Such a gap between the date of issue of an imperial constitution and its citation in petitions has good parallels.<sup>106</sup>

But on Barnes' interpretation of the content, these dates were too late. In addition, had the petition been drawn up after the execution and *damnatio memoriae* of Crispus in mid-326,<sup>107</sup> the scribe might have taken the precaution of excising his name from the heading, as Eusebius did with Maximinus and later Licinius in the heading of Galerius' edict recanting the persecution of the Christians in successive editions of his *Ecclesiastical History*.<sup>108</sup> With the imperial consulship of Constantine Augustus III and Constantius Caesar of 326 excluded as a possibility and the traces not suiting any of the known citizen *consules priores* of the decade after 324, Barnes suggested restoring the names of the original consuls of 325 and, on prosopographical grounds, discussed below, proposed reading "Οὐ[αλερίου]" at the end of line 11, and identified the *consul prior* as one Valerius Proculus. To fill the remaining space Barnes fancied that Anicius Paulinus ought to be given extra names, whereas Thomas more plausibly suggested that the *consul prior* may have been credited with a title of office, such as ἑπαρχος τοῦ (ἱεροῦ) πραιτωρίου, which, as seen above, is a phenomenon attested elsewhere in papyri of the period.<sup>109</sup>

As Barnes and Worp subsequently saw, however, because it is necessary to restore in the lacuna in lines 10–11 the names of the consuls of 324 (the Caesars Crispus and Constantine) immediately after the day and month date, a somewhat shorter lacuna in lines 11–12 was implied than hitherto had been presumed, that is, approximately 38–40 letters.<sup>110</sup> This reconstruction left no room for consuls with multiple *gentilicia* or titles of office. Instead, a new restoration—"ὑπατίας Οὐ[αλερίου Πρόκλου καὶ Ἀνικίου Παυλίνου τῶν λαμ] προτάτων"—appeared to fit quite snugly into the shortened lacuna. This reconstruction, however, is vulnerable to criticism because it depends on ignoring

<sup>105</sup> Viz. Virius Nepotianus, Vulcacius Rufinus, or Ulpian Limenius, the *consules priores* of 336, 347 and 349 respectively: Thomas, "Unrecognized Edict," 307.

<sup>106</sup> E.g., a rescript of Severus and Caracalla, posted in Alexandria in 200 (Oliver, *Greek Constitutions*, 240A-B), was reproduced in petitions addressed to Aurelius Leonides, *strategos* of Oxyrhynchus, by three different individuals and at different dates between 228–236/7 (*P.Oxy.* 1405, 3105, 4435).

<sup>107</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 8, 84; Idem, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 220.

<sup>108</sup> Eusebius, *HE* 8.17.4–5; Corcoran, *Empire of the Tetrarchs*<sup>2</sup>, 278.

<sup>109</sup> Barnes, "Three Imperial Edicts," 280, and *New Empire*, 237. R.S. Bagnall, K.A. Worp, "Further Chronological Notes on Byzantine Documents," *ZPE* 56 (1984), 127–136, at 128, demonstrate, à propos of *P.Flor.* 1.3, that the aesthetic of papyrological consular formulae required a balancing number of names for each consul, whether it be one or two; also Thomas, "Unrecognized Edict," 307, with nn. 34–35.

<sup>110</sup> T.D. Barnes, K.A. Worp, "P.Oxy. 889 Again," *ZPE* 53 (1983), 276–278, at 278 (giving rise to *SB* 12306).

the problem of the placement of line breaks and requires an uncomfortable abbreviation of the epithet of the Caesars in the preceding line: “Κρίσπῳ καὶ Κωνσταντίνῳ τοῖς ἐπιφανεστ(άτοις) Καίσαρ]σιν.” Although the lacuna is likely to have been closer to 45 letters,<sup>111</sup> we still may imagine a supplement for lines 11–12 along the lines of that proposed by Barnes and Worp. The lengthier end of the range of possibility would allow for a title of office after Proculus’ name (e.g. “τοῦ ἐπάρχου”), whereas the shorter might more comfortably be filled by a version of the formula with the unsyncopated form of Proculus, which is attested in some instances for Populonium Proculus (*cos.* 340), though admittedly not yet at Oxyrhynchus: “ὑπατίας Οὐ[αλερίου Προκούλου καὶ Ἀνικίου Παυλίνου τῶν λαμ]προτάτων.”<sup>112</sup> Overall it seems best to understand *P.Oxy.* 889, as it survives, as representing approximately 33–40% of an original which bore lines of between 60–65 letters in length, with most of the loss having occurred at the left-hand side and only a few letters having perished in the damage to the right-hand edge. In general, Barnes’ proposal of Valerius remains convincing and has found general acceptance, being endorsed, for example, by the compilers of *CLRE*.<sup>113</sup> Accepting the dating to 325, *P.Oxy.* 889 bears witness to the remarkably prompt dissemination and active legal employment of an imperial constitution issued, probably in Antioch, on 12 December: its text had been transmitted, translated, and was being cited by a private individual in a petition in Oxyrhynchus on 24 May following.<sup>114</sup>

Barnes identifies his newly revealed Valerius Proculus, *consul prior* in 325, as a member of an aristocratic *gens Valeria*, and specifically with Proculus the proconsul of Africa of 319–320, suggesting, furthermore, that he was the father of L. Aradius Valerius Proculus *signo* Populonium.<sup>115</sup> As Rea had done, Barnes very reasonably associates the consul Proculus’ downfall with that of Licinius. Furthermore, he speculates as to a religious motive, a pagan protest against Constantine.<sup>116</sup> Barnes would seem to envisage unrest among Constantine’s religious opponents in the Roman nobility leading to the execution and *damnatio memoriae* of Proculus and this in turn provok-

<sup>111</sup> As demonstrated by the reconstruction in *SB* 12306.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 184. *P.Oxy.* 3984 has “Πρόκλου.”

<sup>113</sup> *CLRE*, 184–185, which bears the lemma “Valerius Proculus et Anicius Paulinus.”

<sup>114</sup> Grenfell, Hunt, *P.Oxy.* vol. 6, pp. 205–206, however, considered 12 December to be the date of posting of the edict in Alexandria; and Thomas, “Unrecognized Edict,” 306–307, suggested Nicomedia. Barnes, *New Empire*, 236, suspended judgement between issue in Nicomedia and posting in Alexandria. See Corcoran, *Empire of the Tetrarchs*<sup>2</sup>, 197, for issue in Antioch. The dating by the Julian calendar would seem to exclude Alexandria, because, as seen above, the Julian calendar was not in regular use in Egypt.

<sup>115</sup> Barnes, “Three Imperial Edicts,” 281, *New Empire*, 102; supported tentatively by *CLRE*, 184.

<sup>116</sup> Barnes, “Christians and Pagans,” 334.

ing the conclusion that, unless removed, Licinius would remain a potential focus for opposition.<sup>117</sup> As to the timing of these events, Barnes' placing of the petition of *P.Oxy.* 889 of Pachon 29 (24 May) under the first consuls of 325 has extended the period of their known currency in Egypt by over a month, bringing it, as Coles commented, uncomfortably, but not impossibly, close to the first genuinely contemporary dating by Paulinus and Iulianus (*P.Oxy.* 1626, line 23) on Pauni 1 (26 May).<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, assuming a fairly rapid dissemination of this news from the court, we may legitimately suppose that Proculus' disgrace may be dated as late as April or early May 325.<sup>119</sup>

### *Proculus: nobilis or novus homo?*

If one accepts that Proculus (*cos.* 325) possessed the *nomen* Valerius and that his striking off and replacement as consul reflects condemnation in relation to the downfall of Licinius, there still may be a more plausible alternative to considering the original two consuls of the year an aristocratic pairing. For the *nomen* Valerius is suggestive of another explanation. It is to be remembered that this was Diocletian's own *nomen* and the dynastic *nomen* of the tetrarchs, the forerunner of Constantine's own Flavius, which later became ubiquitous as the badge of the imperial servant, as opposed to the ordinary citizen.<sup>120</sup> Accordingly, for instance, all seven witnesses (no doubt soldiers or veterans) to a praetorian diploma of 306 are Valerii and the scribe of the military roll from 312, preserved on *P.Mich.* X 593, credited "Valer(ius)" to every soldier in the list.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, the *nomen* was borne by no fewer than three of Constantine's praetorian prefects of the 320s and 330s: Valerius Maximus, Valerius Evagrius, and Valerius Felix.<sup>122</sup> Thus it is equally as pos-

<sup>117</sup> Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 214.

<sup>118</sup> Coles, *P.Oxy.* vol. 54, p. 143, commentary on no.3756, l. 26.

<sup>119</sup> If the news travelled by land and the court was in Nicomedia, we may estimate a delay of about 59 days, if at Antioch (see above n. 50), about 26 days, on the basis of the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, in which the trip from Nicomedia to Antioch took 33 days in June-July 333 (*Itin. Burd.* 573,1–581,5; F. Glorie, ed., *CCSL* 185, 10–11) and of Theophanes of Hermopolis who took 28 days to return from Antioch to his hometown in July-August of 322 or 323: J.F. Matthews, *The Journey of Theophanes: Travel, Business, and Daily Life in the Roman East* (New Haven, 2006), 125, 207. The news would have travelled more quickly by ship.

<sup>120</sup> See J.G. Keenan, "The Names Flavius and Aurelius as Status Designations in Later Roman Egypt," *ZPE* 11 (1973), 33–63 and 13 (1974), 283–304; for the frequency of the name Valerius, see the "Index of Persons" to Barnes, *New Empire*, 295–305: of 283 individuals with 82 different *nomina* between 284–337, Aurelius has 43 examples (15.2%), Valerius has 29 (10.2%), and Flavius has 28 (9.9%), followed by Iulius, with 14 (4.9%); see further *JRS* 84 (1994), 137–140.

<sup>121</sup> Diploma witnesses: *AE* (1961), 240 = *RMD* 1. 78, extrinsecus, tab. II, ll. 19–25.

<sup>122</sup> *PLRE I*, 590–591, "Maximus 49"; 284–285, "Evagrius 2"; and 331–332, "Felix 2." The *nomina* of Evagrius and Felix were revealed by *AE* (1981), 878 (Ain Rchine, Africa Proconsularis) and *AE* (1985), 823 (Antioch, Syria) respectively, on which see T.D. Barnes, "Praetorian

sible that Valerius Proculus was a military commander or imperial official of either of the last tetrarchic Valerii, namely Constantine and Licinius, as that he was a noble senatorial aristocrat. Other considerations make the former the more probable option. His fall from grace in tandem with that of Licinius suggests that he had been closely associated with the defeated emperor, something that is less likely for a Rome-based senator, because Licinius' rule had never extended to Italy. Constantine did encounter problems with both members of the aristocracy and the general populace at Rome but not until 326, when they were faced with the more aggressively Christian Constantine for the first time since his victory over Licinius.<sup>123</sup> In the early months of 325 an ex-general or praetorian prefect of Licinius is a more plausible candidate for being charged with conspiracy alongside his erstwhile master. Similarly, as argued for Iulius Iulianus, a close associate of Licinius, who may have played a key role in securing the emperor's surrender, is also a plausible candidate for the consulship of 325.

As a show of magnanimity and as a gesture of reconciliation after civil war, there was a relatively recent precedent for the honoring of the praetorian prefect of a defeated rival in Diocletian's retention of Carinus' prefect, T. Cl. Aurelius Aristobulus, both as a prefect and consul in 285. Indeed, following the defeat of Maxentius in 312, Constantine himself had reappointed one of his erstwhile rival's ex-praetorian prefects, Rufius Volusianus, to positions of honor: *praefectus urbi* in 313–315 and *consul ordinarius* in 314.<sup>124</sup> Given this pattern, the designation of Valerius Proculus as *consul prior* in 325 may have been part of the peace and abdication settlement with Licinius in September 324. If so, Proculus would not be the only one of Licinius' entourage to find favor under Constantine. Aside from Iulius Iulianus (discussed above), Flavius Optatus, *grammaticus* to Licinius Caesar, survived to become a close confidant of Constantine. In fact, he was the first person on whom Constantine bestowed the new personal, and non-heritable, honor of *patricius*, and became consul himself in 334.<sup>125</sup> If Proculus were Licinius' praetorian prefect in 324, it is not impossible that Constantine would have kept him on in that office in order to provide some interim continuity of administration,

---

Prefects, 337–361,” *ZPE* 94 (1992) [= *From Eusebius to Augustine*, XIII], 249–260, at 249 n.2, 250; R.W.B. Salway, “The Praetorian Prefecture of Africa under Constantine: A Phantom?,” in M. Mayer i Olivé, G. Baratta, A. Guzmán Almagro, eds., *XII Congressus Internationalis Epigraphiae Graecae et Latinae: Provinciae Imperii Romani inscriptionibus descriptae: Barcelona, 3–8 Septembris 2002* (Barcelona, 2007), 1281–1286; cf. Porena, *Origini della prefettura*, 448–451, who prefers to see Va[l. Felix] rather than Evagrius in *AE* (1981), 878.

<sup>123</sup> Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 219–221; H.-U. Wiemer, “Libanius on Constantine,” *CQ* 44 (1994), 511–524, at 516–518.

<sup>124</sup> See *PLRE I*, 977–978, “Volusianus 4.”

<sup>125</sup> *PLRE I*, 650, “Optatus 3”; Barnes, *New Empire*, 107.

as Diocletian had done with Aristobulus. Even if Proculus had been forcibly retired from effective office in September 324 and was preferred only with the honorific position of consul in 325, his previous close association with Licinius is sufficient enough explanation for his removal in the purge of the ex-emperor's supporters.

Nevertheless, it might be objected that Proculus' nomination as *consul prior*, taking precedence over Anicius Paulinus (a noble patrician and, moreover, an ex-proconsul of Africa and hence presumably ex-suffect consul), stands in the way of identifying him as an ex-equestrian official of Licinius. Certainly such an order would violate the accepted rules of precedence in operation since the first century CE. However, if the order of the consuls of 325 is examined in the context of the pattern of citizen consulships in Constantine's reign, then the impression is reversed. It was not until after his capture of Rome from Maxentius in October 312 that Constantine was responsible for the proclamation of any citizen consuls. Then, on 1 January 314, he and Licinius proclaimed Rufius Volusianus, currently *praefectus urbi*, and Petronius Annianus, Constantine's praetorian prefect.<sup>126</sup> Volusianus' lack of the expected mark of iteration, not on the basis of his Maxentian ordinary consulship of 311 but on that of the earlier suffect consulship implied by his proconsulate of Africa, is remarkable.<sup>127</sup> It would appear that, perhaps as a result of a decision originally contingent upon precisely the designation of Volusianus as consul alongside Annianus, Constantine made a ruling that had the effect of discounting previous suffect consulships as a criterion for determining the order of precedence of ordinary consuls.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, having broken with tradition in equating the first consulship of an ex-equestrian official and the second (but first ordinary) consulship of a noble aristocrat, Constantine seems to have shown favor in his consular nominations to the *novi homines* over those with a senatorial aristocratic background. This can be observed clearly in the pattern of consular pairs for the years of his rule

<sup>126</sup> See *PLRE I*, 68–69, “Annianus 2”; Barnes, *New Empire*, 127.

<sup>127</sup> Volusianus is explicitly *cos. I* (“τὸ α’”) in a dating formula of 314 (*CPR* 7. 22, l. 3). He probably was *proconsul Africae* ca. 305–306 and, therefore, suffect consul sometime in the 280s or 290s. On his career, recorded to 314 by *CIL* 6.1707 + p.3173 = *ILS* 1213 (Rome), see Barnes, *New Empire*, 100.

<sup>128</sup> A. Chastagnol, “Observations sur le consulat suffect et la préture du Bas-Empire,” *RevHist* 219 (1958), 221–253, at 221–225 = *L'Italie et l'Afrique au Bas-Empire: Études administratives et prosopographiques* (Lille, 1987), 83–115, at 83–87; B. Salway, “Equestrian Prefects and the Award of Senatorial Honours from the Severans to Constantine,” in A. Kolb, ed., *Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis: Konzepte, Prinzipien und Strategien der Administration im römischen Kaiserreich: Akten der Tagung an der Universität Zürich 18.-20. 10. 2004* (Berlin, 2006), 115–135, at 131–133. The formula for 301 (*Titianus II et Nepotianus*) is the latest attested case of an iteration based on a prior suffect consulship (see *CLRE*, 3–4, 136).

as sole Augustus (325–337). Leaving aside, for the moment, Proculus and Paulinus, and those years in which the consuls were emperors or an imperial relative was *consul prior*,<sup>129</sup> whenever a *novus homo* shared the *fascēs* with a man from an established senatorial family the *parvenu* consistently precedes the aristocrat.<sup>130</sup> Thus, if the original consular pairing for 325 placed a *novus homo* from Licinius' staff before a noble aristocrat, then, rather than being unorthodox, it is consistent with the pattern for the remainder of Constantine's reign. Moreover, as with most of the other years of citizen consuls in this period, the arrangement would have had the additional political benefit of affording the opportunity for consular celebrations at the imperial court (in Nicomedia or Antioch) and in Rome respectively.

Admittedly the identification of the mysterious Valerius Proculus as an ex-official of Licinius is highly speculative but no more so than the identification with the *proconsul Africae* of 319–320. A major difficulty for Barnes' attribution of the damned consul to the aristocratic *gens Valeria* is that his supposed son, Populonium Proculus (*cos.* 340), suffered no obvious hiccup in his career in the 320s.<sup>131</sup> On the contrary, he was conspicuously successful and served in Constantine's entourage as *comes* on at least two, and perhaps three, occasions. Nor, as his tenure of multiple traditional priesthoods demonstrates,<sup>132</sup> can this good fortune be explained by the embracing of Christianity. In contrast, as an explanation, the identification of Valerius Proculus (*cos.* 325) as *praefectus praetorio* (or similar) has a number of arguments in its positive favor. The appointment of such a man as *consul prior* and his subsequent dismissal is not only congruent with the political situation but also has historical parallels; moreover it is consistent with Constantine's policy of consular nominations. If these characterizations of Valerius Proculus and Ionius Iulianus are correct, then the year 325 began with a pairing of *novus homo* and patrician aristocrat (Proculus and Paulinus). On the disgrace of the *consul prior* in late April or early May, Iulianus was promoted to fill the gap. Certainly his likely aristocratic background would not be inconsistent with this reconstruction.

<sup>129</sup> Viz. Constantinus Aug. VII, Constantius Caes. (326), Constantinus Aug. VIII, Constantinus Caes. IIII (329), Fl. Dalmatius [Constantine's half-brother], Domitius Zenophilus (333), Iulius Constantius [another half-brother], Rufius Albinus (335), Virius Nepotianus [half-brother-in-law], Tettius Facundus (336).

<sup>130</sup> Viz. Fl. Ianuarinus, Vettius Iustus (328), Fl. Gallicanus, Valerius Symmachus (330), Papius Pacatianus, Mecilius Hilarianus (332), Fl. Optatus, Anicius Paulinus (334), and Fl. Felicianus, Fabius Titianus (337). Note perhaps also (?Acilius) Severus, Vettius Rufinus (323): Severus was a provincial (from Spain) and a Christian and thus plausibly a *parvenu* (*PLRE I*, 834–835, "Severus 16"). See Barnes, *New Empire*, 102–109, for individual analyses of each pair.

<sup>131</sup> *PLRE I*, 747–749, "Proculus 12"; cf. Barnes, "Three Imperial Edicts," 281.

<sup>132</sup> Viz. *augur, pontifex maior, XVvir sacris faciundis, pontifex Flavianalis* (*CIL* 6. 1690 = *ILS* 1240; *CIL* 6. 1691, Rome).

## The Year 344

Even in comparison with the period of Constantine's rule as sole Augustus, the political history of the years between his death in May 337 and the commencement of the surviving portion of Ammianus Marcellinus' *Histories* in 353 is poorly documented. As a result, it tends to be treated as an adjunct of the reign of either Constantine I or Constantius II as sole Augustus rather than as a period with a character of its own.<sup>133</sup> The one aspect about which we are reasonably well informed is ecclesiastical history, at that time dominated by the struggle over the definition of orthodoxy between Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, and the Latin church, on the one hand, and the majority of eastern bishops, on the other.<sup>134</sup> Constantine's successors, his sons Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans, were divided on the question. The western based Constantine II and Constans favored Athanasius, but Constantius favored Athanasius' opponents. In the absence of an adequate narrative of secular events, ecclesiastical politics have come to assume a, perhaps disproportionately, significant position in the interpretation of the political history. The second consular year scrutinized here, 344, falls right in the middle of this period. This case is particularly revealing of the mechanisms of nomination, proclamation, and dissemination of the consuls in a period when there existed more than one imperial court.

For most of the period from 338 to Constans' death in 350, the empire was divided between Constantius in the east and Constans in the west, in a fashion superficially similar to the division between Arcadius and Honorius in 395. This arrangement was not without tensions. Constantine was to have been succeeded by his four Caesars, Constantine II, Constantius II, Constans (his sons) and Dalmatius (his nephew). The planned division gave the elder two brothers, Constantine and Constantius, responsibility for the western and eastern extremes of the empire, whereas the central portion was divided between Constans in Italy and Africa and Dalmatius in Illyricum.<sup>135</sup> By the time the brothers were belatedly acclaimed Augusti on 9 September, however, Dalmatius had been eliminated and his portion divided between Constantius and Constans. Furthermore, in the winter of 339–340 hostilities

<sup>133</sup> See A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey* (Oxford, 1964) I, 112–115; Barnes, "Christians and Pagans," 302–306; and J.-P. Callu, "La dyarchie constantinide (340–350): les signes d'évolution," in M. Christol, S. Demougin, Y. Duval, C. Lepelley, L. Pietri, eds., *Institutions, société et vie politique dans l'empire romain au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle ap. J.-C.* (Rome, 1992), 39–68.

<sup>134</sup> See T.D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1993); also H. Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society from Galilee to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2001), 240–253.

<sup>135</sup> Barnes, *New Empire*, 198–200.



between Constantine II and Constans resulted in the death of the former, so that Constans, having profited from both crises, now was left in possession of all Roman territory from Britain to Macedonia.<sup>136</sup> Even without the added ingredient of theological squabbling, the aggrandizement of Constans' sphere was sufficient basis for political friction with his elder brother, Constantius. It is against this background that the consular *fasti* have to be interpreted. Traditionally, it has been presumed that after an early period of harmony, in which Constantius and Constans shared the consulates of 339 ("Constantio II et Constante Augg. cons.") and 342 ("Constantio III et Constante II Augg. cons."), the disparity in the consular pair attested for early 344 marked the beginning of a period of cooling relations that was ended by a third joint consulate in 346 ("Constantio IIII et Constante III Augg. cons").<sup>137</sup>

Although it once was argued that, following the Diocletianic model, the will of the senior Augustus (first Constantine II, then Constantius II) was decisive in fixing the consular pair during this period, the compilers of *CLRE* have shown that, certainly as of the 340s, Constans played a significant role in deciding the choice of consuls.<sup>138</sup> Still, they go too far in ascribing the failure of the eldest brother Constantine II to take the consulship in the years 338–340 to his weakness; Constantine II could afford to be magnanimous, having amassed four consulships by 329, a tally that Constantius II did not equal until 346 and which Constans never did equal by the time of his death in 350. In fact, as we shall see, the evidence suggests that the era of the sons of Constantine was a new one of relatively even-handed negotiation among the separate courts. The generally low instance of dating by post-consulates (that is, by the consuls of the previous Julian calendar year) in the papyri of the years 338–350 implies that consular nominations were coordinated sufficiently far in advance that they could be announced by each court simultaneously on or before 1 January.<sup>139</sup>

The pattern is more complex than the symmetrical pairs of consuls, representing east and west, that arose after 395. Moreover, even for the period after 340, it is anachronistic to think simply in terms of easterners as candidates of Constantius and westerners as candidates of Constans.<sup>140</sup> Rather, aside from

<sup>136</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 34–35.

<sup>137</sup> E.g. A. Piganiol, *L'Empire chrétien (325–395)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris, 1972); Callu, "Dyarchie constantinide," 56 n.69; P.A. Barceló, *Constantius II. und seine Zeit: Die Anfänge des Staatskirchentums* (Stuttgart, 2004), 78–91.

<sup>138</sup> J.-R. Palanque, "Collégialité et partages dans l'empire romain aux IV<sup>e</sup> et V<sup>e</sup> siècles," *REA* 46 (1944), 47–64, 280–299, at 283; refuted in *CLRE*, 13–14.

<sup>139</sup> *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 183–186. The latest known post-consulate is *PSI* 804, l.14 (4 March). This compares favorably with the comparable period from 396–410 (*CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 192–193).

<sup>140</sup> Implicit in Barnes, "Christians and Pagans," 313–321.

the emperors, there were three competing, and sometimes overlapping, groups of candidates: (1–2) members of the new aristocracy of service in the imperial entourages of Constantius and Constans respectively, and (3) senior members of the hereditary Roman senatorial order. As of 340, both emperors no doubt saw themselves as patrons to the senatorial class in Rome; for until the creation of the urban prefecture of Constantinople and the drastic augmentation in the numbers and prestige of its Senate in the later 350s, the supremacy of the Roman Senate remained unrivalled.<sup>141</sup> Thus, in the 340s, nominations of leading members of the Roman Senate to the ordinary consulship or prefecture of the city would be the rightful concern of both emperors, and not simply in the gift of the Augustus in whose sphere of control Rome lay. At the same time, members of the hereditary Roman aristocracy were appointed to senior positions in Constantius' eastern administration: Septimius Acindynus, praetorian prefect ca. 338–340, and Furius Placidus, *comes Orientis* ca. 340/1.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, it seems hasty to credit the consular nominations of Roman senators such as Populonium Proculus (340), Petronius Probinus (341), Nummius Albinus (345), and Aconius Catullinus (349) solely to Constans' patronage, for these men were just as representative of the *amplissimus ordo* as of Constans' regime.

### *East and West*

Against this background, the consular formula of 344 can be examined afresh. In all eastern and western manuscript *fasti*, the consuls are attested as Fl(avius) Leontius and Fl(avius) Sallustius.<sup>143</sup> But contemporary epigraphic evidence, from Rome, provincial Italy, and Dalmatia, shows that the formula initially disseminated in Constans' realm was Leontius and Bonosus. Moreover, none of these shows any subsequent attempt at deletion or alteration. The latest epigraphic dating by Leontius and Bonosus (*CIL* 3. 9563, 12867 = *ILCV* 3042 Salona) dates to 3 May, whereas the earliest western dating by Leontius and Sallustius is a law of Constans (*CTh* 12.1.37) issued on 28 May. Although, as with the laws from the early months of 325 discussed above, this may be the result of retrospective correction, so that the earliest secure dating by Leontius and Sallustius is to 28 July (*CIL* 11. 7788 = *ILCV* 2960, Capena,

<sup>141</sup> See P.J. Heather, "New Men for New Constantines," in P. Magdalino, ed., *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium 4<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Papers from the Twenty-Sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St. Andrews, March 1992* (Aldershot, 1994), 12–13; Idem, "Senators and Senates" in Av. Cameron, P.D.A. Garnsey, eds., *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 13: *The Late Empire, AD 337–425* (Cambridge, 1998), 184–210, at 187–188.

<sup>142</sup> *PLRE* I, 11, "Acindynus 2" and 705–706, "Placidus 2."

<sup>143</sup> See *CLRE*, 222–223, 225; *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 185.

Etruria). There is no evidence that Bonosus was ever cited in the east, where the earliest securely dated papyrus, from 17 April, attests the consular pair as Leontius and Sallustius.<sup>144</sup> The existing evidence thus indicates that Bonosus' consulate was confined to Constans' realm.

As to the identity of the consuls, the contemporary papyrus documents provide crucial supplementary information: Leontius is described as a praetorian prefect and Sallustius is credited variously with the rank *comes* or the office *magister peditum* (which are not mutually exclusive) as well as with the *gentilicium* Iulius.<sup>145</sup> The consul Flavius Leontius is thus clearly identical with the Domitius Leontius who is attested in epigraphic and legal texts as praetorian prefect of Constantius II between 341/2 and 344 and to whom, as praetorian prefect and ordinary consul, the decurions of Beirut set up a bronze togate statue.<sup>146</sup> Of Sallustius no more is known.<sup>147</sup> And as for Bonosus, various, apparently contradictory, items can be attached to the consul's name. A Bonosus *magister equitum* was the recipient of *CTh* 5.6.1, issued at Hierapolis in Syria on 11 May 347. And a Bono(sus) *mag(ister)*, apparently of equestrian rank (*vir perfectissimus*), appears on brick stamps from Pannonia dated to the 350s.<sup>148</sup>

Given that these indicators place a Bonosus on the staff of Constantius II, the appearance of the name as a consul in western documents has eluded satisfactory explanation. A nineteenth-century suggestion that Bonosus was a secondary *cognomen* of Sallustius, thus creating a *magister militum* named Flavius Sallustius Bonosus, consul in 344, received much support.<sup>149</sup> But Seeck rejected this amalgamation and maintained the identification of the consul of 344 with the *magister equitum* of 347, arguing that Bonosus' consulship

<sup>144</sup> *P.Neph.* 32, l. 1; see *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 185.

<sup>145</sup> Sallustius is qualified once in Greek as *comes* (*P.Princ.* 81 = 181) and once in Latin as *magister peditum* (*P.Abinn.* 2). See *PLRE I*, 798, "Sallustius 7"; *CLRE*, 223; and *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 185.

<sup>146</sup> *PLRE I*, 798, "Leontius 11"; *CIL* 3. 167 + p. 971 = *ILS* 1234 (Beirut, Phoenice): "Leontio [v(iro) c(larissimo) praefecto]o praetorio adque o[r]d[inario] consuli . . . ordo Berytiorum statuum sumptibus suis e[x] aere locatam civili habito dedicavit."

<sup>147</sup> See, e.g., *PLRE I*, 798, "Flavius Iulius Sallustius 7."

<sup>148</sup> *PLRE I*, 164, "Bonosus 4." All but one stamp (*CIL* 3. 4669a-b, 11376a-g) have "OF. ARN. BONO. MAG." (or similar). The other, *CIL* 3. 14360<sup>3</sup>, ad n. 11376 (p. 2328<sup>43</sup>), reads "OF. ARN. BONO. P.V.[ . . . ]." The date is implied from associated stamps, *CIL* 3. 4668, 11856, *AE* (1955), 16, bearing "OF. ARN. VRSICINI M(a)G.", presumably Ursicinus, *magister militum* of Constantius II 349–360 (*PLRE I*, 985–986, "Ursicinus 2").

<sup>149</sup> B. Borghesi, in a letter of 9 September 1836 published in his *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. VII, L. Renier, W.H. Waddington, eds., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris, 1872), 172–176; whence the Flavius Sallustius Bonosus of Liebenam, *Fasti consulares*, 36; Vaglieri, "Consules," 1004, 1008, 1171; and Degrossi, *Fasti consolari*, 81. Followed by G.B. de Rossi, *ICUR* vol. 1 (Rome, 1857), at nos. 78, 80, cf. 75–77, 79; T. Mommsen, *MGH AA* 13, index s.v. "Consules," 521; W. Enßlin, "Zum Heermeisteramt des spätrömischen Reiches II: Die *magistri militum* des 4. Jahrhunderts," *Klio* 24 (1931), 102–147, at 102; and C. Vogler, *Constance II et l'administration impériale* (Strasbourg, 1979), 25.

was annulled by Constantius in accordance with a principle attributed to that emperor by Ammianus Marcellinus that generals, lacking the polish of a traditional rhetorical education, should not be raised to senatorial rank.<sup>150</sup> Here, however, Ammianus is referring to Constantius' policy of maintaining the equestrian rank of senior military commands (*dux, comes rei militaris, magister militum*) rather than to any unwillingness to promote individual holders of such posts to the consulship. Indeed, Chastagnol suggested that Bonosus was the first late Roman career soldier to be so honored, although Barnes has convincingly argued that the enigmatic consuls of 338, Ursus and Polemius, should be identified as generals behind the elimination of the Caesar Dalmatius and other dynastic rivals in 337.<sup>151</sup> Indeed, another plausible candidate may be the consul Flavius Gallicanus (*cos.* 330), who may have served as the inspiration for an aspect of the fictitious *Acta S. Gallicani*; that is, the saint's service as a military commander of Constantine in the Danubian region.<sup>152</sup>

The publication of *P.Lond.* 233 in 1898 vindicated Seeck's separation of Bonosus and Sallustius because it provided the consul Sallustius with the alternative *nomen* Iulius,<sup>153</sup> and since then the trend has been to dissociate Iulius Sallustius from Flavius Bonosus. Bonosus' individuality restored, there is no modern consensus as to whether he served Constantius or Constans. *PLRE* identified the shadowy consul of 344 with Constantius' *magister equitum* of 347.<sup>154</sup> On the other hand, given the confinement of Bonosus' consulship to the west, *CLRE* and Barnes dissociated him from Constantius' cavalry commander and considered him a candidate of Constans who was deposed from office part way through the year.<sup>155</sup> The arguments for dissociation of the two Bonosi are undeniably cogent if the retraction of the consulship reflected a political cause, as was the case with the deposed consuls of the years 325, 399, 413 and 520.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>150</sup> O. Seeck, *RE* 3.1 (1897), col. 714, "Bonosus 2", citing Amm. Marc. 21.16.1–2.

<sup>151</sup> A. Chastagnol, *Le sénat romain à l'époque impériale. Recherches sur la composition de l'Assemblée et le statut de ses membres* (Paris, 1992), 248 ; see also Barnes *Constantine and Eusebius*, 262, 398–399 n. 17; *PLRE I*, 710, "Polemius 4," and 989, "Ursus 4."

<sup>152</sup> See E.J. Champlin, "Saint Gallicanus (Consul 317)," *Phoenix* 36 (1982), 71–76, at 74, who identifies Ovinus Gallicanus (*cos.* 317) and the Caesar Constantius Gallus as two inspirations of the author of the *Acta*.

<sup>153</sup> F.G. Kenyon, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, vol. 2 (London, 1898), pp. 272–273 = *P. Abinn.* 58, l. 1: "μετὰ τὴν ὑπατεύσαν Φλ. Λεοντίου καὶ Ἰουλίου Σαλουστίου τῶν λαμπροτά[των]." Otherwise, both consuls are known only by the *nomen* Flavius. See also O. Seeck, *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet* (Leipzig, 1906), 262; Idem, *RE* 2.1.2 (1920), cols. 1958–1959, "Sallustius 24."

<sup>154</sup> *PLRE I*, 164, "Bonosus 4", cf. 986, "Ursicinus 2", with doubts expressed as to whether the *magistri* of the brick stamps designate *magistri militum* or more junior officials.

<sup>155</sup> *CLRE*, 21, 222; Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 313 n.22, "Religious Affiliation," 5.

<sup>156</sup> *CLRE*, s.a.

This interpretation presumes that Bonosus had been proclaimed by Constans in rivalry to Constantius' proclamation of Sallustius. If so, it would be another occasion when strained relations between Constans and Constantius were expressed in differences over the naming of consuls. A more certain instance of discord is the third joint consulate of Constantius and Constans ("Constantio IIII et Constante IIII Augg. cons.") in 346.<sup>157</sup> The dating by a post-consular formula in Egypt into May suggests that only after a hiatus of some months, either in an attempt at conciliation or in fulfillment of what he considered to be a previously agreed arrangement, did Constantius proclaim himself and his brother consuls,<sup>158</sup> and the use of the post-consular formula throughout the year in the west, ("p(ost) cons(ulatum) Amanti et Albini"), shows that Constans never recognized Constantius' action.<sup>159</sup> Constantius' hesitancy and Constans' rebuff show negotiations over consular nominations between the imperial courts had failed.

But, on the other hand, this was precisely the time when ecclesiastical relations were improving, notably with an agreement in 345 that allowed bishop Athanasius, exiled in the west, to return to his see in Alexandria.<sup>160</sup> Relations seem to have been restored fully by January 347, when the consular colleagues, both related by marriage to the imperial family, were Constans' praetorian prefect, Vulcacius Rufinus, and Constantius' *magister militum*, Flavius Eusebius.<sup>161</sup> And even the non-recognition of 346 is a far cry from the full-blown proclamation of a rival consul,<sup>162</sup> which the current model proposes. For, rival consular nominations had been common during the breakdown of the tetrarchic system (307–324) but represent a level of active hostility for which we have no evidence, aside from the proposed instance in 344, between Constantius and Constans, and the proclamation of a rival consul in 344 would seem a disproportionate reaction to any frustration Constans may have felt at the ineffectual results of the Council of Serdica.<sup>163</sup> Moreover, up to this period, when rival proclamations had occurred, the rival imperial courts had disagreed on the validity of both consuls. The

<sup>157</sup> As shown in *CLRE*, 226–227.

<sup>158</sup> *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 185.

<sup>159</sup> *CLRE*, 226. On non-recognition generally, *ibid.* 24–26.

<sup>160</sup> See Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 91–93.

<sup>161</sup> *PLRE I*, 782–783, "Rufinus 25," and 307–308, "Eusebius 39"; *CLRE*, 228–229.

<sup>162</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 91, misleadingly implies that different consuls were proclaimed in 346.

<sup>163</sup> See O. Seeck, *RE* 2.1.2, col. 1959; for Serdica, see Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 71–81; H. Hess, *The Early Development of Canon Law and the Council of Serdica* (Oxford, 2002), 95–113.

proclamation, or disagreement, in the case of just one of the consular appointments has no precedent.<sup>164</sup>

It might be better, then, to look for some other explanation of the appearance of Bonosus in the consular formulae, one that would also help to clarify his identity. In the latter regard, it seems inherently unlikely that there were two different individuals bearing the same, relatively uncommon, *cognomen*, active within three years of each other, one as consul and the other in an office whose holders were no strangers to the consular dignity.<sup>165</sup> From a prosopographical point of view, it is easier to identify consul and general than to dissociate them. But how, then, can one explain the cancellation of the consulship? One might construct a rather elaborate scenario in which Bonosus fell from grace with Constans in 344 and fled to Constantius, who accepted his removal from the consular *fasti* but rewarded him with high office. But this hypothesis simply demonstrates how difficult it is to imagine a credible political context for explaining Bonosus' consulate.

The actual explanation may be much more mundane—a simple error arising from the problems of coordinating the simultaneous proclamation of the annual consuls from two imperial courts separated by considerable distance. As seen above, the consular nominations of the 340s exhibit a high degree of careful negotiation between Constantius and Constans. Thus, an examination of the consular nominations for the years immediately preceding 344 might provide the necessary context for understanding that year. The consular pairings of 340 and 341 appear to balance each other: 340 saw Constantius' praetorian prefect, Septimius Acindynus, as consular colleague of a leading member of the Roman Senate, Populonium Proculus, who would have been the nominee of Constantine II.<sup>166</sup> In 341, Constans' prefect, Antonius Marcellinus, shared the honor with a leading Roman senator Petronius Probinus.<sup>167</sup> In 342, Constantius and Constans themselves were consuls, and then in 343 Constans' latest prefect, Furius Placidus, and a certain Flavius Romulus shared the *fascēs*.<sup>168</sup> Romulus, who generally is considered to be otherwise unknown,<sup>169</sup> could be identified as the *magister equitum* Romulus who commanded the forces of the western usurper Magnentius at the battle of Mursa

<sup>164</sup> As observed for 307–312 and 321–324: see *CLRE*, 148–159, 176–183 and, on the latter period, *CSBE*<sup>2</sup>, 179–181.

<sup>165</sup> *PLRE I*, 163–164, lists four Bonosi compared with seven Sallustii (796–798) and no less than twenty-three Leontii (499–503).

<sup>166</sup> *PLRE I*, 11, “Acindynus 2,” and 1, 747–749, “Proculus 11”; *CLRE*, 214–215.

<sup>167</sup> *PLRE I*, 548–549, “Marcellinus 16,” and 735, “Probinus 2”; *CLRE*, 216–217.

<sup>168</sup> *PLRE I*, 705–706, “Placidus 2”; *CLRE*, 218–221. On Placidus' family, see R. Mathisen, “‘Qui genus, unde patres’: The Case of Arcadius Placidus Magnus Felix,” *Medieval Prosopography* 24 (2004), 55–71.

<sup>169</sup> Vogler, *Constance II*, 77; *CLRE*, 220; Barnes, “Religious Affiliation,” 5.

on 28 September 351 and thus may have filled the same office for Constans,<sup>170</sup> for the coup that overthrew Constans originated among the highest echelons of his military and civil officials.<sup>171</sup> If both consuls of 343 thus were Constans' candidates, it is to be expected that the following pair would have been nominated by Constantius. And, indeed, Leontius was, as observed above, Constantius' current praetorian prefect. On this basis, the *magister peditum* Sallustius also may legitimately be credited to that emperor.<sup>172</sup>

### *The Wrong General*

To return to the consuls of 344, it has been established that in the early 340s Constantius and Constans respected a careful balance in their nomination of consular pairs, perhaps even pre-arranging them a number of years in advance, and thought of the consuls according to specific categories. If, as argued above, both consuls of 343 were candidates of Constans, we thus might legitimately expect 344 to exhibit a balancing pair nominated by Constantius. And, indeed, the papyrological formulae show that the eastern imperial court advertised the consuls as a praetorian prefect (Domitius Leontius) and a *magister peditum* (Iulius Sallustius). If the alternative *consul posterior* Bonosus is identified as the *magister equitum* of Constantius known from 347, Bonosus should not be thought of as a western consul at all, but as a candidate of Constantius, and his proclamation by Constans in the place of Sallustius is not sinister. On the contrary, his proclamation seems to have been the result of a simple blunder; that is, Constans' court proclaimed as consul the wrong *magister militum* of Constantius, and it took a few months for the westerners to realize their mistake.

This solution simultaneously explains how Bonosus can be Constantius' general without there being (as yet) any attestation of his consulship in Constantius' realm. It also accounts for his exclusion from the manuscript *fasti* but the lack of erasure of his name from contemporary public documents.<sup>173</sup> Leaving aside private funerary monuments, which account for the majority of the datings by Bonosus' consulship, his name was most notably unmo-  
lestled on two bronze *tabulae patronatus*,<sup>174</sup> whose status as public documents

<sup>170</sup> Date of battle: *Consularia Constantinopolitana*, s.a. 351, 1 (Burgess, ed., 237). On the *magister equitum*, see *PLRE I*, 771, "Romulus 2."

<sup>171</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 101–102; E.D. Hunt, "The Successors of Constantine," in *CAH* 13, 1–43, at 10.

<sup>172</sup> As suggested by *PLRE I*, 798, and *CLRE*, 222; Barnes, "Religious Affiliation," 5, is more cautious.

<sup>173</sup> For the manuscript *fasti*, see *CLRE*, 222.

<sup>174</sup> *CIL* 10. 478 = *ILS* 6114 (Paestum) and *AE* (1992), 301 (Larinum) = N. Stelluti, *Epigrafi di Larino* (Campobasso, 1997), 100b (with photo, p. 374).

would lead one to expect an attempt at correction if Bonosus really had suffered *damnatio memoriae*. This forms a striking contrast with the near contemporary case of Flavius Felicianus (*cos.* 337), whose name was subsequently erased on at least two documents from Italy, including a *tabula patronatus* that shares its provenance, Paestum in Lucania, with one of those preserving Bonosus' name.<sup>175</sup> Had Bonosus really suffered *damnatio memoriae*, we would expect his name to have received the same treatment. Nevertheless, as soon as the mistake was discovered, it was right that the name of Sallustius, who always had been the correct consul of the year, should supplant that of Bonosus in subsequent citations, in manuscript lists, and for purposes of retrospective dating.

Finally, this interpretation also allows the identification of (1) Bonosus, consul in the west only in 344, not only with (2) Bonosus, *magister equitum* in the east in 347, but also with (3) Bonosus, *v(ir) p(erfectissimus) magister* on the Pannonian brick stamps. Because his consulship never really existed, Bonosus would have remained an *eques* as far as Constantius was concerned, so the brick stamps can plausibly be attributed to the period after the battle of Mursa, when Constantius' forces recaptured western Illyricum from Magnentius.

Embarrassing as the erroneous proclamation must have been to Constans, it probably originated not at his court but either somewhere in Constantius' chancery or at some stage in the subsequent transmission of the names. Careless phrasing by a superior, for example, might have led a clerk to jump to the wrong conclusion as to the identity of the intended *consul posterior*, and once transmitted to Constans, the error would not have been easy to correct. The line of communication was at that juncture particularly long: in this period, Constantius was usually based at Antioch in Syria, whereas Constans was regularly resident in Trier in northern Gaul and rarely came further east than Milan.<sup>176</sup> Thus, whereas the documentary record suggests that Constans was in possession of the consuls' names in time for their proclamation on 1 January, the distance and season would not have been conducive to a double-check even if Constans had had any suspicion that the names were not entirely correct. It was presumably only as a result of a response from Constantius' court, once the news of the erroneous proclamation had filtered through, or upon Constans' receipt of a document from the east dated by Leontius and Sallustius, that the mistake was realized and corrected. So there were no drastic repercussions to the mix-up and Bonosus, no doubt occupied with the

<sup>175</sup> *CIL* 10. 476 = *ILS* 6112 (Paestum), also *AE* (1988), 491, from near Trebiae in Umbria.

<sup>176</sup> Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 219–220, 225, with nn. 18, 312.



on-going Persian campaign, may never have learned that he had ever been considered consul.

The very nature of the mistake made in 344 demonstrates the significance of the epithets of rank and titles of office preserved in the consular dating formulae of the Egyptian papyri. These were integral to the formulae as proclaimed and disseminated by the imperial court, at least in the east, and reflect the categories according to which Constantius and Constans determined the pattern of consular nominations (such as imperial civil official, imperial military official, senatorial aristocrat). This pattern clarifies the rhythm of alternating consular nominations for 340–344, that is, Acindynus, Proculus (official of Constantius, senatorial aristocrat); Marcellinus, Probinus (official of Constans, senatorial aristocrat); Constantius III, Constans II (both imperial); Placidus, Romulus (both officials of Constans); and Leontius, Sallustius (both officials of Constantius), so demonstrating that they were a matter of negotiation between the emperors rather than chosen solely by the senior Augustus.

### *Conclusions*

It is largely thanks to the evidence of contemporary papyrus documentation from Egypt, and to the newly instituted consular dating practice after 293, that it is possible to offer revised identifications for the consuls of 325 and 344. Egyptian scribes developed independent habits of writing the new consular formula that generally preserved much more information than the manuscript or Latin epigraphic traditions. The Egyptian formula remained more faithful to the original formula of proclamation in which the imperial court provided concise background information on the consuls that served to clarify their identity and, to some extent, to advertise their qualification for appointment. Whereas the Latin formula in particular tended to delete this additional information, the Egyptian formula retained it and thus treated the consuls to some degree as personalities rather than simply a pair of names. The rise in the employment of titles of rank and office to describe consuls appears to correspond to the increasing proportion among private citizen consuls of those coming to the consulship by civil and military avenues other than the traditional progression of offices keyed into the sequence of magistracies of the city of Rome.

The proposed identifications of the mysterious consuls Valerius Proculus, Ionius Iulianus, and Flavius Bonosus have several historical implications. In particular, despite their superficial similarity, the cancellation of Proculus' consulship in 325 and Bonosus' in 344 are not similarly sinister. The removal of Proculus' name from the current dating formula in 325 and the retrospective correction of references to the months of his tenure in the

majority of surviving laws and manuscript *fasti* does reflect the condemnation of his memory, which probably resulted from a conviction for treason associated with the final condemnation and execution of Constantine's erstwhile imperial colleague, Licinius, in early 325. And seeing Valerius Proculus as an ex-equestrian official of Licinius and a *novus homo*, rather than as a member of the aristocratic and presumably pagan *gens Valeria*, renders it less likely that his removal reflects resistance by the Roman senatorial aristocracy to Christian triumph at this juncture. Moreover, given the probability that Ionius Iulianus ought to be dissociated from Licinius' ex-prefect Iulius Iulianus, it seems likely that Constantine fell back on the ranks of the Roman senatorial aristocracy in his choice of Proculus' replacement, again suggesting that no anti-pagan agenda lay behind the revisions in the consular pair.

On the other hand, the substitution of Bonosus' name by that of Sallustius in western documents for the second half of 344 probably resulted not from a similar political explanation but from a simple clerical error. This proposal accounts for all the paradoxical evidence relating to Bonosus, and explains how Bonosus can be identified as a servant of Constantius at the same time that his consulship was solely a phenomenon of Constans' realm. It also does not require there to have been any political rift between the imperial brothers in 343-344 to match the one that did appear in 345-346. This analysis suggests that political relations were not entirely dictated by the rhythm of ecclesiastic affairs. On the contrary, the nature of the error and the pattern of consulships of preceding years testify to close co-operation in the operation, even if imperfectly, of a system of pre-arranged and balancing consular nominations in which Constantius and Constans conceived of the ordering of consular pairs as much in terms of what the consuls were as who they were. In addition, they probably inherited this way of thinking from their father, for it also can be seen at work in the latter part of his reign. Thus, poor communication, not political or religious discord, explains the ephemeral nature of Bonosus' consulship.

*University College London, United Kingdom*