

The Date of Eunapius' *Vitae Sophistarum*

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DEBATE REGARDING the relationship of the ἐκδόσεις of the lost *History* of Eunapius of Sardis¹ to the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus and the anonymous *Epitome de Caesaribus* has focused increasingly on chronological considerations. T. D. Barnes' theory that the initial installment of the *History* covered A.D. 270–378 and was published shortly thereafter has found favor among many students of late antiquity.² Against this, F. Paschoud has maintained that the impetus for the first ἐκδοσις was Theodosius' ban on sacrifice (8 Nov. 392), that its terminus was the death of the same emperor (17 Jan. 395), and that its publication could not have been until ca 410.³ Central to both their arguments are cross-references to the *History* from Eunapius' other known work, the extant *Vitae Sophistarum*.⁴ Some of these references note that particular events have already been dealt with in the *History*, while others promise that certain topics will be treated therein in the future, presumably in a new installment or in a revision of the whole.

On the basis of two mentions of Alaric's invasion of Greece in 395/6,⁵ the publication of the *VS* is often set ca 396, which, if true, would render Paschoud's thesis untenable. As Paschoud himself em-

¹ For what is known of Eunapius see W. Schmid, *RE* 6 (1907) 1121–27 s.v. "Eunapios 2," and I. Opelt, *ReallexAntChrist* 6 (1965) 928–36 s.v. R. C. BLOCKLEY, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire* (Liverpool 1981–83: hereafter 'Blockley') I 1–26, 97–106, discusses the character of the *History*; II (text, translation, and commentary) is far superior to older collections of Eunapius' historical fragments.

² *The Sources of the Historia Augusta* (Coll.Latomus 155 [1978]) 114–23, and *CP* 71 (1976) 258–68. Blockley I 2–5 refines Barnes' thesis, positing three installments which covered 270–365, 365–378, and 378–404 respectively. Upon scrutiny, the arguments of R. Goulet, *JHS* 100 (1980) 60–72, collapse.

³ *Cinq études sur Zosime* (Paris 1976) 169–80, and *Bonner Historia Augusta Colloquium* 1977/78 (Bonn 1980) 149–62. *Cod.Theod.* 16.10.12 preserves the prohibition of sacrifice.

⁴ Unarguable cross-references are *VS* 464 (p.22.13–15, 18–19 Giangrande), 472 (39.20–21), 473 (41.15–18), 476 (46.2–5, 47.5–6), 478 (50.15–16), 480 (55.5–6), 482 (58.25–59.3), 483 (59.20–21), 485 (63.16–18), 493 (79.1–2), 495 (82.26–27), and 498 (88.6–7). *VS* 473 (40.9) may refer to an otherwise unknown work by Eunapius on Iamblichus rather than to the *History*. On the problematic *VS* 486 (66.16–17), concerning Prohaeresius, see T. M. Banchich, *RhM*, forthcoming.

⁵ *VS* 476 (46.4–6) and 482 (58.22–25).

phasizes, however, these passages merely establish a *terminus post quem* for the *VS*, rather than the publication date, which he, because of his date for the *History*, is compelled to place *ca* 413.⁶ In fact, a neglected passage in the *VS* points toward 399, and in the process sheds valuable light on the strategy by which Eutropius the eunuch sought to insure his omnipotence at the court of Arcadius.

In his discussion of Clearchus, vicar and later proconsul of Asia under Valens,⁷ Eunapius observes that Asia "is the most esteemed of provinces, and is not subject to the praetorian prefect, except exactly in so far as now, again, in respect of this more recent disturbance, everything has been confused and confounded. But then Clearchus received a healthy Asia":

ἔστι δὲ ἀρχῶν ἐνδοξοτάτη, καὶ οὐ κατήκοος τοῦ τῆς αὐλῆς ἐπάρχου, πλὴν ὅσα γε νῦν πάλιν ἐς τὸν νεώτερον τουτονὶ θόρυβον ἅπαντα συμπεφύραται καὶ ἀνατετάρακται. τότε δὲ τὴν ὑγιαίνουσαν Ἀσίαν ἀπολαβὼν ὁ Κλέαρχος . . . (*VS* 479 [53.10–14]).

So it seems that *contemporaneous* (as emphasized by *νῦν*, *νεώτερον*, and deictic *τουτονί*) with the composition of the *VS* there was some general disruption of affairs in Asia itself *coincident* with that province coming under the purview of the *praefectus praetorio Orientis*. It follows, then, that the discovery of such a conjunction should provide a proximate date for the production of the work.

The increase in authority attributed by Eunapius to the praetorian prefect would have come at the expense of the *proconsul Asiae*. As a rule the latter stood with his counterpart in Africa outside the standard bureaucratic hierarchy, for, unlike *vicarii*, *comites*, and *praefecti Augustales*, proconsuls of Asia and Africa were directly responsible not to the praetorian prefect but to the emperor himself.⁸ Such a shift might reasonably be linked to the prefectures of Fl. Rufinus (392–395) or Anthemius (405–414), were it not for the attendant circumstance, the *θόρυβος* in Asia. Instead, it is the final months of the first prefecture through the seven months of the second prefecture of Fl. Eutychianus which alone provide such a context.⁹

⁶ *Cinq études* (*supra* n.3) 171.

⁷ See *PLRE* I 211–12 s.v. "Clearchus 1."

⁸ As the *Notitia Dignitatum* reflects this arrangement in its omission of Asia from those provinces answerable to the prefect of the East (*Or.* 2.1–58), and in its ranking of Asia's proconsuls above *vicarii* (1.26–27) the section dealing with the *Oriens* should antedate the *VS*, and in fact is placed between 395 and 413 on other grounds by A. H. M. Jones, *Later Roman Empire* (Norman 1964) II 1417–21.

⁹ Eutychianus (*PLRE* I 319–21 s.v. 5) was prefect from *ca* 4 Sept. 397 to 25 July 399, possibly from *ca* 11 Dec. 399 to 12 July 400, and finally from *ca* 3 Feb. 404 to 11 June 405. The existence of the second tenure is highly debatable, but as its elimination

The immediate cause of the *θόρυβος* of 399 was the rebellion of Tribigild the Goth, then commander of some barbarian *alae* posted in Phrygia.¹⁰ Zosimus, whose account derives from Eunapius' *History*, describes the burgeoning threat (5.13.4):

ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ τοσοῦτο πλῆθος [of Tribigild's force] συνήγαγεν οἰκετῶν καὶ ἄλλως ἀπερριμμένων ἀνθρώπων ὥστε εἰς ἔσχατον κίνδυνον τὴν Ἀσίαν ἄπασαν ἀπαγαγεῖν. ἢ τε γὰρ Λυδία πάσης ἐπέπληστο ταραχῆς, πάντων ὡς εἰπεῖν ἐπὶ τὰ θαλάσσια φυγόντων καὶ ἅμα τοῖς σφετέροις ἄπασιν ἐπὶ τὰς νήσους ἢ ἄλλοθι ποὶ διαπλεόντων· καὶ ἡ παράλος δὲ Ἀσία τὸν κίνδυνον ὅσον οὐδέπω θεωρήσειν ἐπιστησόμενον αὐτῇ προσεδόκα.

Arcadius reacted by entrusting the administration of the East to the then-*praepositus sacri cubiculi* and consul Eutropius, who in turn sent one army under Leo across the Hellespont and positioned another under Gainas in Thrace.¹¹ The successes of the rebels as they moved through Pisidia and Pamphylia and Leo's reluctance to engage his

does not materially affect the matter at hand, a possible error of commission has been preferred over one of omission. Fl. Caesarius (*PLRE* I 171 s.v. 6) held the post from ca 30 Nov. 395 to 1 July 397 and again from ca 8 Dec. 400 to 11 June 403. If Euty-chianus was in fact thrice prefect, the prefecture of Aurelianus (*PLRE* I 128–29 s.v. 3) would fall between his first two tenures. While these dates depend on the case made against O. Seeck's hypothesis of collegiate prefectures, *Philologus* 52 (1894) 442–83 and *RhM* N.F. 69 (1914) 1–39, by A. H. M. Jones, *JRS* 54 (1964) 78–89, they do not demand the acceptance of Jones' identification (81) of Euty-chianus, rather than Caesarius, with the "Typho" of Synesius of Cyrene's *Aegyptii* (or *de Providentia*; N. Terzaghi, *Synesii Cyrenensis Opuscula* II [Rome 1944] 63–131), or justify the inclusion in *PLRE* of material contingent on the identification. R. von Haehlung, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amtsträger des römischen Reiches* (Bonn 1978) 74–78, criticizes Jones on Euty-chianus/Typho, then takes the additional, arguably unnecessary, step of championing prefectural collegiality. A. Cameron's promised study (see *Claudian* [Oxford 1970] 245 n.1) may help resolve the issue. Meanwhile, Synesius *Ep.* 31 (*Synesii Cyrenensis Epistolae*, ed. A. Garzya [Rome 1979], 45–46) confirms Aurelianus as "Osiris" and the son of Taurus (*PLRE* I 879–80 s.v. "Taurus 3")

¹⁰ For Tribigild see *PLRE* II 1125–26. We possess as witnesses two texts nearly contemporary with the events they describe, but both exceedingly difficult to interpret. Claudian *In Eur.* 2 (T. Birt, *Claudii Claudiani Carmina* [MGH AA 10 (Berlin 1892)] 93–118), as Cameron (*supra* n.9) 124–55 has shown, is a vicious, albeit artful, propaganda piece composed as events transpired. Synesius *Aegyptii* (*supra* n.9), though written ca 400, is essentially a Neoplatonic allegory tinged with a strong pro-Aurelianus/Typho bias. Socrates *HE* 6.26–27 (Migne, *PG* 67.681) seems to have employed a hexameter epic in four books by an otherwise unknown Eusebius and entitled *Gainia*, which Socrates says won notoriety through its treatment of such recent matters. The relevant section of Eunapius' *History*, frs.65–67 (Blockley II 96–109), was certainly published after an interval of years and reflects its author's narrow provincial perspective. All other known accounts are either demonstrably or necessarily (because of their dates) derivative.

¹¹ Zos. 5.14.1. On the principals, see *PLRE* I 379–80 s.v. "Gainas," II 440–44 s.v. "Eutropius 1," and II 661–62 s.v. "Leo 2." Any attribution of motive by our sources must be taken *cum grano*.

enemy soon brought Gainas to Asia, where, if we may believe Zosimus, at the cost of Leo's life, he helped Tribigild escape a fierce local resistance to maraud his way back to Phrygia. This apparent botch of affairs so discredited Eutropius that, when Gainas set the eunuch's dismissal as a necessary condition for treating with the insurgents, Arcadius complied. Eutropius was first exiled to Cyprus, and it seems that as a result of his fall Eutychianus was dismissed as praetorian prefect and replaced by Aurelianus. After a brief interval, Eutropius was recalled and executed.¹²

Gainas seems meanwhile to have allied himself with Tribigild to ravage Phrygia and northern Lydia, Sardis herself escaping devastation only through a fortuitous downpour (Zos. 5.18.4–5). They next occupied Chalcedon, from where Gainas extorted from Arcadius the title of *magister utriusque militiae* and gained *de facto* control of Constantinople. To secure his position, he further demanded and received as hostages three men whom he regarded as potential threats—the prefect Aurelianus, the influential consul of 383 Saturninus, and the imperial confidant Ioannes. With Aurelianus gone, the resilient Eutychianus resumed his former office, which he retained until Gainas' expulsion from the capital some few months later.¹³

The ultimate fate of the Gothic adventurers is of no concern here.¹⁴ What is important is that the events of the summer of 399 mark the only time between 395/6, the acknowledged *terminus post quem* of the *VS*, and the reign of Heraclius (610–641) when Asia was an active theater of war.¹⁵ Eunapius stresses the novelty of the crisis—*τοιούτο γὰρ ὁ μακρὸς αἰὼν οὐδὲν ἤνεγκεν, οὐδέ τις περὶ τὸν βίον τὸν ἀνθρώπινον ἐνεοχμώθη τοιαύτη φορὰ καὶ κίνησις*¹⁶—and his shock and anxiety are echoed by Zosimus and the ecclesiastical historian Philostorgius, who couches his pagan source in appropriately apocalyptic language.¹⁷ But can this *θόρυβος* be linked to the debasement of the *proconsul Asiae* remarked upon in the *VS*?

¹² Zos. 5.14.3–18.3. Eunapius, as reflected in Zosimus, made Gainas responsible for Eutropius' death. Philostorg. *HE* 11.6 (J. Bidez, *Philostorgius Kirchengeschichte*² [Berlin 1972] 136) says that Eutropius was charged with usurping royal *κοσμήματα* and that Aurelianus ὁ ὑπαρχος (*i.e.* the praetorian prefect) *καὶ ἕτεροι τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀρχαῖς ἐπιφανῶν ἀρχόντων διεσκόπων τὰ κατηγορούμενα*.

¹³ Zos. 5.18.6–10. *Cf.* *PLRE* I 807–08 *s.v.* "Saturninus 10," II 593–94 *s.v.* "Ioannes 1." Eutychianus perhaps helped secure his second prefecture with the profits of his first.

¹⁴ For the sequel see Zos. 5.19–22.3.

¹⁵ As noted by C. Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1976) 9–10, 53–56.

¹⁶ *Fr.* 66.2 (Blockley II 102.17–18).

¹⁷ *Cf.* Zos. 5.13.4, Philostorg. *HE* 11.7–8 (137–39 Bidez). On Philostorgius' debt to Eunapius see Bidez (*supra* n.12) cxiii–cxxi, cxxxvii–cxxxix.

The proconsular *fasti* are uncertain for Asia from the lone attestation of Iulianus (9 Jan. 397) until *ca* 405.¹⁸ The extremely short tenures of Aeternalis, Simplicius, and Nebridius precede that of Iulianus.¹⁹ A pair of inscriptions from Ephesus may furnish the names of two of his successors: the first honors a Stephanus in terms befitting a proconsul; the second praises Andreas, whom it likens to Minos, Lycurgus, and Solon, for righting Asian affairs, and closes with the complaint that in recompense for his pains he gained but a *βραχέαυ ἀμοιβήυ* (another brief tenure?).²⁰ Though both Stephanus and Andreas may have been proconsuls *ca* 399, it would be unwise to build too much on the possibility. However, that Aeternalis, Simplicius, Nebridius, Iulianus, Stephanus, and Andreas are all virtual nonentities may itself be significant, especially when what is not known about them is compared with what is known about their immediate predecessors.²¹ For of the eight identifiable *proconsules Asiae* from Clearchus (366–367) through Victorius (last mentioned in a law dated 15 April 394), two reached the consulship (Clearchus in 384 and Eutropius in 387), Dexter became prefect of Italy (395), and Nicomachus Flavianus, son of the consul of 394, was later twice prefect of Rome (*ca* 399–400 and *ca* 408), and prefect of Italy, Illyricum, and Africa (*ca* 431–432). As for tenure, that of Festus was at least six years (372–378), those of Clearchus, Nicomachus, and Victorius around two each.²² The explanation of these marked differences, differences which add substance to Eunapius' testimony, is to be found in the policy of Eutropius.²³

¹⁸ See *PLRE* II 1280 and the thorough investigation of B. Malcus, *OpusAth* 7 (1967) 91–154, esp. 116–37, 141.

¹⁹ Respectively *PLRE* II 18, 1013 *s.v.* 1, 774, and 637 *s.v.* 3; the meager evidence places them in office 21 March 396, 25 March 396, 22 July 396, and 9 Jan. 397. Malcus (*supra* n.18) 127 would move Aeternalis to 402 to ease the congestion. But see Cameron (*supra* n.9) 393 n.1.

²⁰ See *PLRE* II 1028 *s.v.* “Stephanus 3” and 87 *s.v.* “Andreas 6.” For the evidence, see Malcus (*supra* n.18) 131–32, 135.

²¹ Aeternalis is known only through *Cod.Theod.* 4.4.3 and 11.39.12; Simplicius through *Cod.Theod.* 1.12.5; Nebridius through *Cod.Theod.* 11.30.56 and *Cod.Iust.* 11.50.2; and Iulianus through *Cod.Iust.* 7.45.12, where he is called proconsul of Africa. But see *PLRE* II 637 *s.v.* “Iulianus 3.”

²² Cf. *PLRE* I 1076 and Malcus (*supra* n.18) 141. For individual careers, see *PLRE* I 211–12 *s.v.* “Clearchus 1”; 317 “Eutropius 2”; 334–35 “Festus 3”; 251 “Dexter 3”; 345–47 “Nicomachus Flavianus 14”; 965 “Victorius 2.” Malcus 153–54 notes that “Wenn auch manche Aristokraten noch nach 400 das Prokonsulat bekleidet haben, liegt so die Vermutung auf der Hand, dass die Prokonsulate mehr und dahin mehr tendierten, dem Curialadel zuzufallen. Sie bezeichneten nicht mehr, wie im IV. Jahrhundert, einen entscheidenden Schritt hinüber in die Kreise der hohen Aristokratie.”

²³ This is not to deny other factors, such as the split between East and West, or that the same tendencies are observable during the prefecture of Rufinus (*PLRE* I 778–81 *s.v.* 18).

Eutropius' rise to *praepositus sacri cubiculi* (ca 396) had been hastened by Abundantius (cos. 393), and it was perhaps as much for Abundantius' good as for his own benefit that the eunuch had helped manipulate Arcadius into snubbing Rufinus' daughter for Aelia Eudoxia.²⁴ Nevertheless, whatever his rôle in the subsequent murder of Rufinus,²⁵ it is evident that Eutropius quickly moved to secure his already firm grip on the emperor. An initial step was the elimination of rivals who possessed a surfeit of power along with the *dignitas* of high office that Eutropius might justly fear could be used to overawe Arcadius. The instrument of the ruin of Timasius, *magister equitum et peditum* ca 388–395 and consul in 389, was the parvenu Bargus, who, having in the process revealed himself suspect, was expeditiously destroyed through the machinations of his own wife. Far different from Bargus were Eutropius' other accomplices, a clique of aristocrats, among whom the aforementioned Saturninus, a *novus homo*, willingly, and Procopius, a relative of the former emperor Valens, reluctantly, condemned Timasius.²⁶ Suspicion soon fell on Eutropius' erstwhile benefactor Abundantius, and exile followed.²⁷ By the close of 396, the chamberlain, together with what has become known as the 'Roman' or 'national' party, had preempted every potential adversary who had parlayed the renown of a major command into the dignity of a consulship.²⁸ Furthermore, the pedigrees of the new generals, coupled with a reduction of troops under any one leader, made advancement from the camp to the consulship unlikely; indeed, of the next three consuls—Fl. Caesarius (cos. 397), Eutychianus (cos. 398), and Eutropius himself (cos. 399)—none was a soldier.²⁹

Eutropius and his recent allies now turned on one another in a struggle which the former was well prepared to wage, for by this time the imperial consistory was composed of men who owed their positions primarily to the chamberlain's patronage.³⁰ Claudian, perhaps

²⁴ Claudian *In Eutr.* 1.151–70 alludes to the rôle of Abundantius (*PLRE* I 4–5) in Eutropius' advancement, and Zosimus 5.3 relates the circumstances surrounding Arcadius' marriage to Aelia Eudoxia (*PLRE* II 410 s.v. 1).

²⁵ On the sources for Rufinus' life and death see *PLRE* I 778–81, and, on the latter, Cameron (*supra* n.9) 89–92.

²⁶ Zos. 5.8.3–10.3, Eunap. fr.65.3–4 (Blockley II 96–98). Cf. *PLRE* I 914–15 s.v. "Timasius," I 744 "Procopius 9," II 210–11 "Bargus"; Saturninus, *supra* n.13.

²⁷ Zos. 5.10.4–5, Claud. *In Eutr.* 1.151–70.

²⁸ Indeed, Saturninus may have been the only consular alive in the East whose office antedated Eutropius' rise, though Clearchus (cos. 384) is another possibility.

²⁹ The military reorganization is outlined in *Not.Dign.Or.* 5–6. For discussion see Jones (*supra* n.8) I 177–78, II 1418–19. There may be some connection with the separation of military and civilian courts dictated by *Cod.Theod.* 2.1.9 of 24 Nov. 397.

³⁰ As J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*² I (London 1923) 118, suggested, this new round may have begun with an attempt on Eutropius' life by a coalition of

employing the license of invective, brands the Spanish *magister officiorum* Hosius a *cocus* and *verna*;³¹ Eunapius presents the *comes domesticorum* Subarmachius, *πιστότατος τῷ εὐνούχῳ Εὐτροπίῳ*, as a robust sot;³² and both savage the unfortunate *magister* Leo.³³ Saturninus was pliable and, as a former consul, lent an aura of respectability, as did Caesarius and Eutychianus, despite their consulships being patent rewards for services rendered while prefects. Martinianus, the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, and Laurentius, *comes rei privatae*, on the other hand, were both little more than names.³⁴ Finally, there was of course Eutropius himself, *κυριεύων Ἀρκαδίου καθάπερ βοσκήματος*.³⁵

The evidence for appointments outside the consistory suggests what might otherwise have been suspected, that Eutropius found no shortage of aristocrats who had once yielded in the quest for honors to their more illustrious peers, but who now actively sought and eagerly accepted palatine and provincial posts no longer entrusted to the suspect élite, not the least of which was *proconsul Asiae*.³⁶ It is impossible to tell whether the abbreviated tenures characteristic of this office were part of a broader strategy. In any case, they were a useful device, for rapid turnover helped satisfy the desires of the title-hungry, multiplied the numbers of Eutropius' faction, denied appointees the time to acquire their own power base, and, because titles were commonly bought, enriched the depleted fisc along with well-placed party members—especially the praetorian prefect—and ultimately Eutropius. Eunapius vividly describes the venality then rampant, and Claudian—not surprisingly, given his motive—lays the blame squarely on the eunuch-consul.³⁷ Stilicho's propagandist, in an otherwise enigmatic pas-

aristocrats and soldiers which provoked *Cod.Theod.* 9.14.3. Jones (*supra* n.8) I 333–41 treats the consistory.

³¹ *In Eutr.* 2.345–53. No other literary source names Hosius, on whom see *PLRE* I 445 s.v.

³² Fr.67.8 (Blockley II 104–07), our only reference to Subarmachius.

³³ Claud. *In Eutr.* 2.376–461, Eunap. fr.67.5–6 (Blockley II 104–05).

³⁴ See *PLRE* I 564 s.v. “Martinianus 7,” II 658 s.v. “Laurentius 1.”

³⁵ Zos. 5.12.1. Both Claudian (*In Eutr.* 2.553–62) and Eunapius (fr.65.2 [Blockley II 96–97]) recognized the importance of the consistory to Eutropius.

³⁶ This conclusion emerges from a consideration of the civilian appointments of 396–397. Besides the consuls and proconsuls discussed above, see *PLRE* I 27 “Africanus 6,” II 83 “Anatolius 1,” II 133 “Archelaus 2,” II 171 “Asterius 1,” II 298 “Claudianus 1,” II 300 “Claudius 1,” I 315 “Euthymius,” II 563 “Hilarius 3,” II 779 “Nestorius 1,” I 770–71 “Romulianus 1,” I 830–31 “Severinus 3,” II 1108 “Theophilus 1.” Whether he knew it or not, Claudian's *sed postquam pulsique bonis et faece retenta peiores legit socios* (*In Eutr.* 2.557–58) was correct.

³⁷ Eunap. fr.72 (Blockley II 116–18). Blockley, *Antichthon* 14 (1980) 170–76, argues for the correction of ἐπὶ Πουλχερίας to ἐπ' Εὐδοξίας, which would place the events de-

sage, even plays on the ambiguity of *provincia* (either a province or the magistracy which governed a province) to turn the increase of *provinciae* in the second sense into a doubling of *provinciae* in the first.³⁸ Thus, the overall policy of Eutropius justifies the two most distinctive features of *proconsules Asiae* of ca 396–399, their individual insubstantiality and their ephemeral tenures.³⁹ It also reveals the rationale behind the constitutional shift described in the *VS*.

Eutropius' security depended on the maintenance of the personal hold which he as grand chamberlain had developed over Arcadius. It was a function of the compromised consistory, especially the person of the praetorian prefect, to supply a legitimate front for the handling of affairs of state and to insulate the *roi fainéant* from any who might undermine the confidence he placed in the eunuch. The special prerogative of the proconsul of Asia to bypass the praetorian prefect, to whom appeals from provincial governors were usually directed, opened a potentially dangerous avenue of access to the throne. So long as Eutropius remained at Arcadius' elbow he might control such audiences, but they would always have entailed an element of risk; and any extended absence, such as that imposed by the campaign against the Huns in 397/8, would be particularly dangerous.⁴⁰ The solution apparently chosen was to induce an imperial mandate ordering proconsuls to direct any appeals to the praetorian prefect. This done, the prefect, who could always be watched for Eutropius by other members of the consistory, guaranteed that the proconsulate would never become a focus for aristocratic opposition or provincial

scribed ca 404 rather than 414, and suggests (*supra* n.1: II 149 n.176) Eutychianus as the unnamed prefect of the fragment. For Claudian's allegations see *In Eutr.* 1.190–228, and Cameron's modifications in Eutropius' favor (*supra* n.9: 130).

³⁸ *In Eutr.* 2.584–90. This interpretation of *provincia* does justice to Claudian's art and to the fact that the provinces themselves were not divided (nor were any lost), while allowing the other, not necessarily exclusive, explanations of motive proposed by S. Mazzarino, *Stilicone* (Rome 1942) 196–99, and Cameron (*supra* n.9) 131–32. T. D. Barnes, *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 81–82, thinks a division of Galatia inspired Claudian's verses.

³⁹ So little is known of Ambrosius (*PLRE* I 52 s.v. 4), Aristus (I 107), Axiochus (I 143 s.v. 2), Constantinus (I 223 s.v. 2), and Messalinus (I 600 s.v. 1), that they have so far been ignored. If, however, any or all of them are properly placed in the *fasti* of *PLRE* I 1076, it would only strengthen the argument here advanced.

⁴⁰ Concerning Timasius' trial, Zosimus (5.9.2) remarks: *καὶ ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς προνοήθητο δικαστῆς, Εὐτρόπιος δὲ παρεστῶς, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὴν ἡγεμονίαν πάντων τῶν βασιλικῶν εἶκε κοιτώνων, τῆς πάσης ψήφου κύριος ἦν*. Claudian's similar comments convinced Birt (*supra* n.10: xxx with n.6) that Eutropius was actually praetorian prefect. Eutropius' rapid fall once circumstances dictated uncensored communication between Gainas and Arcadius reveals how the isolation of the emperor had benefited the chamberlain.

discontent. The *Codex Theodosianus* preserves a trace of the process by which the plan was carried out: a decree of Arcadius and Honorius, dated 27 July 398 and addressed to Eutychianus, stipulates that appeals from the decisions of judges of the first instance or with appellate jurisdiction, *sive pro consule, comes Orientis, praefectus Augustalis, vicarii*, be referred to the praetorian prefect rather than the emperor.⁴¹ This reveals that the move to relegate the *proconsul Asiae* to a position of legal equality—an equality which mirrors the social leveling effected through the selection of individual magistrates—was underway as early as the summer of 398; but it is the synchronism of the shift with the *θόρυβος* of 399 that alone yields the date of the *VS*.⁴²

In light of this, a reconsideration of *VS* 479 makes Eunapius' meaning even clearer. A fragment of the *History* concerning the march of Gainas and Tribigild from Phrygia to Chalcedon after the deposition of Eutropius speaks of τὰ δεύτερα τοῦ ὀλέθρου, an indication that Eunapius viewed Eutropius' fall as marking a new stage in the course of events.⁴³ Traces of the same attitude appear in Zosimus: ὁ δὲ Γαίνης ἤδη πᾶσιν ὦν πρόδηλος ὡς εἰς νεωτερισμὸν φέρεται (5.18.4). This distinction perfectly justifies the πάλιν and νεώτερον of the *VS*, while raising the intriguing possibility that Eunapius meant ἅπαντα συμπεφύραται καὶ ἀνατετάρακται and his praise of Asia as previously ὑγιαίνουσα to recall the official *damnatio memoriae* of Eutropius,⁴⁴ a document replete with the vocabulary of disease (*erepto splendore eius et consulatu a taetra inlucie et a commemoratione nominis eius et caenosis sordibus vindicato . . . lutulentum prodigium contagione foedavit . . . morum poluit scaevitate*) which closes with the declaration that Eutropius had been exiled to Cyprus *ut ibidem . . . nequeat suarum cogitationum rabie cuncta miscere*. That as he wrote the final issue was still in doubt—Gainas and Tribigild on the rampage, Aurelianus praetorian prefect, and Eutropius himself or, if he had already been executed, his faction yet capable of rehabilitation—was sufficient cause

⁴¹ *Cod.Theod.* 9.40.16. That this law specifically concerns appeals made by monks and clerics on behalf of convicts makes it no less significant for the matter at hand. See Jones (*supra* n.8) I 479–84, esp. 481, on the judicial system and the position of the proconsul of Asia within it.

⁴² *Cod.Theod.* 1.12.5 of 25 March 396, which makes the administrative staff of the province of the Hellespont responsible to the proconsul of Asia, states that the transfer was requested of and approved by Theodosius. It marks a rough *terminus post quem* for Eutropius' assault on the proconsulate.

⁴³ Fr.64.2, *cf.* 64.10 (Blockley II 104–07).

⁴⁴ *Cod.Theod.* 9.40.17, addressed to Aurelianus, would have been posted throughout the East. See Mommsen *ad loc.* on the corrupt date of 17 Jan. 399.

for Eunapius circumspectly to avoid more explicit comment on the events transpiring around him.⁴⁵

The composition of the *VS* may, on these grounds, be confidently placed in or slightly after the autumn or winter of 399. This date renders impossible Paschoud's reconstruction of Eunapius' literary activity, and removes a major theoretical objection to (but does not necessarily vindicate) Barnes' views about the *History* and its influence on Eunapius' contemporaries.

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⁴⁵ Contrast this silence with his vigorous denunciations in the historical fragments.