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THE SUMMER OF BLOOD

The “Great Massacre” of 337 and the Promotion of the Sons of Constantine

R. W. BURGESS

To Tim Barnes, in the first year of his retirement from teaching: a giant’s shoulders, indeed.

I. Introduction

Although Constantine was the first Christian emperor, his reign was marred by more familial bloodshed than that of any other Roman emperor: he himself was involved to one degree or another in the deaths of his wife’s father, his wife’s brother, his half sister’s husband, his eldest son, his wife, and another half sister’s husband and son (Maximian, Maxentius, Bassianus, Crispus, Fausta, Licinius, and Licinius II, respectively; see stemma, p. 6). Moreover, soon after his death most of the male descendants of Constantius I, his father, and Theodora, Constantius’s second wife and Constantine’s stepmother and half sister-in-law, were assassinated in a plot that involved at least one of his sons. The late-fourth-century author of the *Historia Augusta* had this bloody record in mind when he eulogized Claudius II, supposed ancestor of Constantine: “[Claudius] amavit propinquos; res nostris temporibus comparanda miraculo” (“Claudius loved his relatives, a

fact that these days would be considered a miracle,” *HA Claud.* 2.6).¹ This massacre of the male descendants of Theodora, the half brothers and most of the half nephews of Constantine, is one of the most intriguing personal episodes in the history of the Roman emperors. The problem is that no surviving ancient source directly describes this event; we have hints, rumors, accusations, tendentious coverups, vague statements that readers were obviously meant to understand, and accounts doctored for political or religious purposes. Such source material has created numerous problems for modern scholars, with the result that virtually every aspect of the massacre is contested: the names of those who met their end, the dates of their deaths, whether there was one massacre or two, who prompted the assassinations, and the reason(s) behind them. Indeed, there are almost as many scenarios as there are scholars who have theorized them, usually because the episode is treated merely as an interlude between more important military, political, and religious narratives.²

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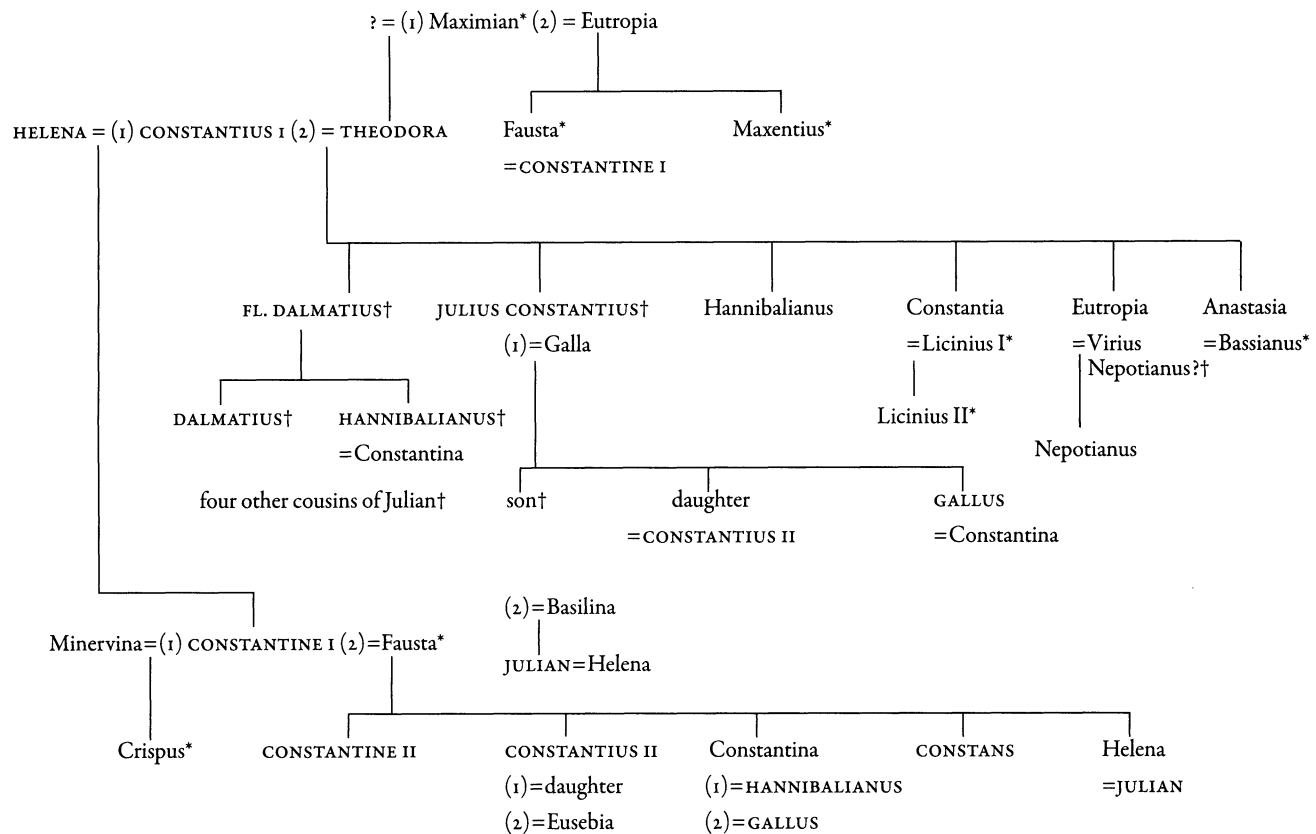
I should like to thank the following for permission to reproduce the photographs: Classical Numismatic Group (nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 14), Harlan J. Berk Ltd (no. 5), Dr. Paul Ryneerson (Vcoins) (no. 11), Lanz Numismatik = LHS Numismatik (nos. 12, 16, 18), Dr. Busso Peus Nachfolger (nos. 9, 15, 17), H. D. Rauch GmbH (nos. 6, 19, 21, 23), Tkalec AG (no. 7), Fritz Rudolf Künker Münzenhandlung (no. 10), Marc Breitsprecher of Ancient Imports Inc. (Vcoins) (no. 26), Imperial Coins & Artifacts (Vcoins) (no. 20), Roman Lode (Vcoins) (nos. 22, 24), and Münzen & Medaillen GmbH (no. 25). I should also like to thank Mariana Reynolds for all her help with the intricacies involved in preparing these photos for publication.

Conventions for dates: 337–38 = 337 to 338, 337 / 38 = 337 or 338.

1 Of course, since “Pollio” was supposed to have been writing between 293 and 305, when Constantius I was still caesar (*HA Claud.* 1.1, 3.1, 9.9, 10.7, 13.2), he could not have known about events as late as 337, but this is just another of the many subtle and not so subtle chronological slips made by the anonymous late-fourth-century author. For a short but excellent general introduction to this problem, see A. Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste: Les empereurs romains des IIe et IIIe siècles* (Paris, 1994), IX–XXXIV, C–CXXXI.

2 The major studies are A. Olivetti, “Sulle stragi di Costantinopoli succedute alla morte di Costantino il grande,” *RFIC* 43 (1915): 67–79; X. Lucien-Brun, “Constance II et le massacre des princes,” *BullBudé*, 4th series, Lettres d’humanité 32 (1973): 585–602; R. Klein, “Die Kämpfe um die Nachfolge nach dem Tode Constantins des Großen,” *ByzF* 6 (1979): 101–50 (reprinted in idem, *Roma versa per aevum: Ausgewählte Schriften zur heidnischen und christlichen Spätantike*, ed. R. von

Stemma The Descendants of Constantius



*executed by Constantine

†assassinated in 337

SOURCES: Barnes, *New Empire*, 265–66, and *PLRE* 1:1129.

Haehling and K. Scherberich [Hildesheim, 1999], 1–49); and M. Di Maio, Jr., and D. W.-H. Arnold, “*Per Vim, Per Caedem, Per Bellum*: A Study of Murder and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Year 337 A.D.,” *Byzantion* 62 (1992): 158–211 (on which, see I. Tantillo, “Filostorgio e la tradizione sul testamento di Costantino,” *Athenaeum* 88 [2000]: 559–63). A selection of recent important interpretations can be found (in chronological order) in E. Stein, *Histoire du bas-empire*, vol. 1, trans. and aug. J.-R. Palanque (Paris, 1959), 131–32 and 484–85; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey* (Oxford, 1964), 112; R. MacMullen, *Constantine* (New York, 1969), 224–25; A. Piganiol, *L’empire chrétien* (Paris, 1972), 82–83; R. Browning, *The Emperor Julian* (London, 1975), 34–35; J. W. Leedom, “Constantius II: Three Revisions,” *Byzantion* 48 (1978): 132–36; *RIC* 8:4–7; G. W. Bowersock, *Julian the Apostate* (Cambridge, MA, 1978), 22–23; T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 261–62; E. G. Gonzalez, “Observaciones sobre un emperador cristiano: Fl. Jul. Constante,” *Lucentum* 3 (1984): 268–70; C. Pietri, “La politique de Constance II: Un premier ‘Césaropapisme’ ou l’imitatio Constantini?” in *L’Eglise et l’empire au IVe siècle*:

Sept exposés suivis de discussions, ed. A. Dihle (Geneva, 1989), 120–25; T. Grünewald, *Constantinus Maximus Augustus: Herrschaftspropaganda in der zeitgenössischen Überlieferung* (Stuttgart, 1990), 153; P. Cara, “Aspetti politici e religiosi del conflitto per la successione di Costantino,” *RSCI* 47 (1993): 39–50; I. Tantillo, *La prima orazione di Giuliano a Costanzo: Introduzione, traduzione e commento* (Rome, 1997), 228–39; D. Hunt, “The Successors of Constantine,” in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 13, *The Late Empire, A.D. 337–425*, ed. Av. Cameron and P. Garnsey (Cambridge, 1998), 3–4; B. Bleckmann, “Der Bürgerkrieg zwischen Constantinus II. und Constans (340 n. Chr.),” *Historia* 52 (2003): 225–26 n. 2, 241–43; D. S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay, AD 180–395* (New York, 2004), 460–63; and R. M. Frakes, “The Dynasty of Constantine down to 363,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. N. Lenski (Cambridge, 2006), 98–99. For lists of earlier accounts and discussions, see Olivetti (above), 76–77; Lucien-Brun (above), 595–99; Di Maio and Arnold (above), 161–62 n. 24; H. Chantaine, *Die Nachfolgeordnung Constantins des Großen* (Mainz–Stuttgart, 1992), 5–9.

To make any headway in this matter is therefore not easy, and the complexities of the evidence necessitate a complex analysis. My approach is as follows.

After establishing the general historical context for the events of the summer of 337 (section II and Appendix 1), I begin with the problem of establishing “what happened,” in particular the sequence of events and the responsibility for them (section III). This begins with a lengthy and detailed analysis of the surviving literary sources, since they are abundant and complex, as well as the epigraphical sources (III.1). The next subsection presents the hints and clues offered by the coinage of the period immediately preceding the promotion of Constantine’s sons (III.2 and figures). This section concludes with a summary and synthesis that establishes the relative importance and reliability of the foregoing evidence (III.3). From this a number of general conclusions are drawn that focus very much on the question of instigation: was it the army alone or was it Constantius?

The next section is concerned for the most part with the chronology of the events of the summer of 337 from the death of Constantine to the return of Constantius to Constantinople after the meeting with his brothers. Since the date of the death of Constantine is well attested in the sources, I begin with the only other known date, that of the promotion of Constantine’s sons to augustus (IV.1). Then follow two short sections outlining the numerous suggestions of modern scholars for the chronology of the massacre (IV.2) and the statements of the surviving literary sources (IV.3). The legal, epigraphic, and papyrological evidence is considered next, but with few exact or specific conclusions (IV.4). I then pass on to other types of evidence that have not been considered before: a victory title (IV.5), the coins (IV.6, Appendix 2, and figures), and the itineraries (IV.7, Appendices 3 and 4, and the map). All the above description and analysis is then brought together in a hypothetical reconstruction (V) and a general conclusion of major points (VI).

II. PROLEGOMENA

By 332 Constantine had clearly decided that the empire and imperial power would be shared by both branches of his father’s family, the descendants of Constantius I’s

two wives, Helena and Theodora,³ by whom he had had one son (Constantine), and three sons and three daughters, respectively (see the stemma). The two eldest sons of Constantine himself, Crispus and Constantine II, had been proclaimed caesar on 1 March 317, the former perhaps around twenty years of age at the time, the latter less than a year.⁴ His next son, Constantius II, was proclaimed caesar on 8 November 324, when only seven years old.⁵ Shortly afterward, in the spring or summer of 326, Crispus was executed and suffered *damnatio memoriae*.⁶ Eight years later, on 25 December 333, his youngest son, Constans, then either ten or thirteen, was invested with the rank of caesar as well.⁷ By 332 Constantine had probably reached or was just about to reach his sixtieth birthday (i.e., his sixty-first year). He knew that his sons were very young and inexperienced and that he might not survive for many more years to provide them with the experience they needed before some of them were

3 PLRE 1:410–11, s.v. “Helena 3,” and 1:895, s.v. “Theodora 1”; T. D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge, MA, 1982), 33–34, 36, 37; D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle: Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt, 1996), 281–82.

4 PLRE 1:233, s.v. “Crispus 4,” and 1:223, s.v. “Constantinus 3”; Barnes, *New Empire*, 7, 44–45, 73; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 305–6, 310. Crispus was the son of Constantine’s first wife Minervina; his other sons were the offspring of Fausta, his second wife and half sister of Theodora. Constantine II was not born on 7 August (*pace* Barnes and Kienast). The sole source for this date, the mid-fifth-century calendar of Polemius Silvius (*CIL* 1²:271 and *Inscriptiones Italiae* 13.2, ed. A. Degraffi [Rome, 1963], 271), is the result of scribal error and hypercorrection: “Constantini” was written for “Constanti(i)” at some point in the tradition, and then “minoris” was added later to distinguish him from Constantine I, whose birthday was already listed. 7 August is the birthday of Constantius II, as can be seen from the mid-fourth-century calendar of Filocalus (*CIL* 1²:255 and 270 and *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2:253). See also *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2:492. The names “Constantinus” and “Constantius” are frequently confused in Greek and Latin texts. Indeed, one of the three manuscripts of Filocalus’s calendar (V) has a mistaken “Constantini” corrected to “Constantii” (see the photo in *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2:252) and both Polemius Silvius and Filocalus have “Constantini” for “Constanti” opposite 31 March, the birthday of Constantius I (*CIL* 1²:260–61 and *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2:243 and 266). The “Natales caesarum” section in Filocalus, though, has the correct “Constanti” (*CIL* 1²:255). Besides, the public celebration of Constantine II’s birthday would never have survived his *damnatio memoriae* (*CTh* 11.12.1) into the middle of the fifth century.

5 PLRE 1:226, s.v. “Constantius 8”; Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 3 above), 8, 45; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 314.

6 Barnes, *New Empire*, 8 n. 30, 84; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 306. In general, see P. Guthrie, “The Execution of Crispus,” *Phoenix* 20 (1966): 325–31; H. A. Pohlsander, “Crispus: Brilliant Career and Tragic End,” *Historia* 33 (1984): 79–106; and Frakes, “Dynasty” (n. 2 above), 94–95.

7 PLRE 1:220, s.v. “Constans 3”; Barnes, *New Empire*, 8, 45; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 312.

promoted to augustus and full imperial power. He needed a way of providing them with the proper guidance and the empire with strong leadership in case he died too soon.

For most of Constantine's reign the surviving sons of Theodora (his father's second wife) had been kept away from the center of power in virtual exile—Dalmatius in Tolosa (modern Toulouse) and Julius Constantius in Corinth.⁸ This distancing has been attributed to Helena, who could only have seen the children of her husband's second wife as rivals to her own son and grandsons.⁹ She left for Palestine in 326, after the deaths of Crispus and Fausta,¹⁰ and it was in that year, while Constantine himself was in Italy celebrating the end of his *vicennalia*, that Constantius Gallus was born to Julius Constantius and Galla in Etruria, not in Corinth. Helena died early in 329 and soon afterward Constantine began to bring his surviving two half brothers into power. They were honored with consulships in 333 and 335 and with ancient yet venerable titles, *censor* for Flavius Dalmatius (consul [cos.] 333)¹¹ in 333 or early 334,¹² and *patricius* and *nobilissimus* for Julius Constantius (cos. 335),¹³ the first by 335 and the latter in September 335, when his nephews Dalmatius and Hannibalianus were promoted to caesar and *rex* respectively (see below).¹⁴ These were swift and high honors. A daughter of Julius Constantius and his wife Galla was married to her half cousin Constantius II, the son of Constantine, in 335/36¹⁵ and that same year

Constantine's own daughter Constantina¹⁶ was married to her half cousin Hannibalianus,¹⁷ the son of Flavius Dalmatius, thus linking the two sides of the family even more closely (see stemma). On 18 September 335, not quite two years after the promotion of Constans, Hannibalianus and his elder brother, Dalmatius,¹⁸ were honored with imperial promotions, Dalmatius to the rank of caesar with the added title of *nobilissimus* and Hannibalianus to the nobilissimate.¹⁹ The latter was also given the unique title of "rex regum et gentium Ponticarum."²⁰

It seems almost certain that Constantine planned, at some future date, when they were old enough and mature enough, to promote the two eldest caesars, Constantine II and Constantius, to augusti, probably both at once. Thus, upon Constantine's retirement or death, two augusti and two caesars would succeed him in a recreated tetrarchy, intimately linked by blood and marriage. It would seem that Constantine believed that dynastic succession (hence the return of his half brothers and their families to favor and the appointment of Dalmatius) would solve the inherent problems that had doomed the Diocletianic system.²¹ In addition the return of Theodora's children

8 Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (n. 2 above), 251. The elder Hannibalianus (*PLRE* 1:407, s.v. "Hannibalianus 1"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 37), Constantine's third half brother, seems to have died before ca. 333–35.

9 An implicit connection between Helena and Julius Constantius's time in Corinth is made in a letter of Julian's to the Corinthians, quoted by Libanius (*Or.* 14.29–30), in which Julian described S. Helena as his father's "wicked stepmother" (πανούργος μητέρα).

10 Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 221.

11 *Consul prior*, ahead of Domitius Zenophilus, former *corrector Siciliae*, *consularis Numidia*, and *proconsul Achaeae, Asiae, and Africae* (*PLRE* 1:993, s.v. "Zenophilus," and Barnes, *New Empire*, 106–7): see Roger S. Bagnall et al., *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire* (Atlanta, 1987), 200–201.

12 *PLRE* 1:240–41, s.v. "Dalmatius 6"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 105.

13 Also *consul prior* ahead of one who outranked him, Ceionius Rufius Albinus, former *consularis Campaniae*, *proconsul Achaeae and Asiae*, and *praefectus urbi* from the very end of his consular year (*PLRE* 1:37, s.v. "Albinus 14," and Barnes, *New Empire*, 108): see Bagnall et al., *Consuls*, 204–5.

14 *PLRE* 1:226, s.v. "Constantius 7"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 108.

15 *PLRE* 1:1037, s.v. "Anonyma 1"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 45; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 317.

16 *PLRE* 1:222, s.v. "Constantina 2"; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 318.

17 *PLRE* 1:407, s.v. "Hannibalianus 2"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 43; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 308. His name is spelled "Hanniballianus" on the coinage.

18 *PLRE* 1:241, s.v. "Dalmatius 7"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 8, 45; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 307. His name is for the most part spelled "Delmatius" on the coinage (see Figs. 4, 24–25).

19 Barnes, *New Empire*, 8, n. 28; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 307 and 308.

20 *PLRE* 1:407, s.v. "Hannibalianus 2"; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 308. For the title, see *Anonymus Valesianus* 6.35 and Polemius Silvius, *Laterculus* 1.63 (MGH, *AA* 9, *Chron. min.* 1:522). He is simply called "rex" on the coinage, which was struck only in Constantinople (*RIC* 7:584 and 589–90, nos. 100 [silver] and 145–48 [bronze]).

21 For Constantine's tetrarchic plans, see Chantraine, *Nachfolgeordnung* (n. 2 above), 3–25. Most recently P. Cara ("La successione di Costantino," *Aevum* 67 [1993]: 173–80) has argued on the basis of Constantine's promotion of and apparent favoritism toward his eldest son that Constantine intended for only Constantine II to succeed him as augustus, while the other caesars would remain as they were, thus preserving the imperial college as it had existed between 333 and 335 with one augustus and three caesars (on this, see Bleckmann, "Bürgerkrieg" [n. 2 above]: 226 n. 3). Cara's hypothesis—first argued from the coinage as long ago as 1949 (see Cara [above], p. 173 n. 2), before the publication of *RIC* 7 in 1966—is obviated by two fundamental problems. First, Constantine II had been caesar longer than his next eldest colleague (Constantius) by more than seven years. As a result he outranked Constantius and it should therefore come as no surprise that he was able to take a victory title before any of his caesarean colleagues. He had after all resided in Trier from 328 (after eleven years as caesar) and won the title *Alamannicus* defending his territory in ca. 330, while his brothers remained with

into the fold would greatly reduce if not eliminate any problem of future attempts at usurpation on their part. Constantine's plans for Hannibalianus are unknown, but his title is clearly related to a Roman desire to control the territory of the Armenian kings.²² Constantine's half brothers were no doubt intended to play an important role in the *concilium* as senior statesmen, advisors, and perhaps even regents to the young emperors, since the eldest surviving son, Constantine II, was just shy of his twenty-first birthday when Constantine did eventually die in May 337, having been born in the summer of 316. In addition, Constantine's trusted praetorian prefect, Flavius Ablabius, was assigned to Constantius after Constantine's death (probably in Constantine's will), a relationship in which he was clearly intended to act as guardian and advisor; Ablabius's daughter, Olympias, had earlier been betrothed to Constans.²³

For Constantine, the stage was set: his legacy and policies would live on in an unassailable college of Christian emperors, all related by blood and by marriage, all ably looked after by elder and wiser counsel, and protected by a tetrarchic system of regional emperors and caesars. Even specific territories had been set aside as spheres of activity for the four caesars in 335.²⁴ From Constantine's point of view the plan was perfect. Unfortunately, Fate

stepped in before he was able to put the finishing touches on his preparations.

On 22 May 337, while preparing for a campaign against the Persians, Constantine died in an imperial villa near Charax, an *emporion* not far from Nicomedia in Bithynia.²⁵ A fifty-year tetrarchic precedent clearly prescribed that the proclamation of a new member of the imperial college or the promotion of a caesar required the presence of an augustus or the active approval of the senior augustus. Any situation in which either of these two rules had been violated had resulted in the offending caesar or augustus's being regarded as a usurper and often also resulted in open civil war. When Constantine died, the only reigning augustus died as well. This gave Constantine II and Constantius no constitutional means of becoming augustus, apart from the earlier precedent of proclamation by the army and acceptance by the senate and people of Rome.²⁶ No doubt each caesar worried about allowing this to happen unilaterally, because the other might regard it as attempted usurpation. In addition, there was no guarantee that the two young caesars would remain content, or that their armies would allow them to remain content, as caesars in the ensuing confusion. Even more problematic was the division of the empire. Although certain territorial arrangements had been made for the four caesars in 335, there was no reason to believe that these would necessarily continue after the death of Constantine.²⁷

their father until 335 (Constantius's eleventh year as caesar) and from 335, when they were not with him, they did not reside in areas that were witness to hostilities (see Barnes, *New Empire* [n. 3 above], 84–86). Nor should it come as any surprise that special silver coins were minted for Constantine II's vicennalia, a milestone that none of the others reached within Constantine's lifetime. Second, Cara has not considered all the available numismatic evidence. Even a brief study of the gold and silver coins minted between the end of 333 and mid-337 (Appendix 1 below) demonstrates conclusively that Constantine II and Constantius were closely linked on the coinage; were treated as equals, even as a pair, in spite of Constantine II's seniority; and were together promoted in that medium far more than their junior colleagues. This evidence, and that argued by Chantraine (which overlaps somewhat), indicate that Constantine was preparing the army and civil service, the major audience for the message of these coins, for the eventual succession of both sons as his successors, though Constantine II, as the longest serving member of the college, would nevertheless have been the senior augustus and have pre-eminence over his brother augustus, as was eventually the case among the three brothers (see Chantraine [above], 19 and 24, fig. 4 = *RIC* 8 Sisacia nos. 18–18A and below n. 121).

²² See G. Wirth, "Hannibalian: Anmerkungen zur Geschichte eines überflüssigen Königs," *BJ* 190 (1990): 201–32.

²³ *PLRE* 1:642, s.v. "Olympias 1"; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* [n. 2 above], 252; Barnes, *New Empire*, 45; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 313.

²⁴ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 251–52 and idem, *New Empire*, 198.

²⁵ *PLRE* 1:224, s.v. "Constantinus 4"; Barnes, *New Empire*, 8, 80; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 301. For Constantine's death, see R. W. Burgess, *Studies in Eusebian and Post-Eusebian Chronography*, Historia Einzelschrift 135 (Stuttgart, 1999), 221–32, and R. W. Burgess, "Ἀγυρὼν or Προάστειον? The Location and Circumstances of Constantine's Death," *JTS*, n.s., 50 (1999): 153–61.

²⁶ See J.-R. Palanque, "Collégialité et partages dans l'empire romain aux IV^e et V^e siècles," *REA* 46 (1944): 54–55. See also N. Lenski, "The Reign of Constantine," in Lenski, *Cambridge Companion* (n. 2 above), 62 and Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 28–29 (with respect to Constantine's accession).

²⁷ Barnes, *New Empire*, 198. Julian (*Or.* 1.19A–20A and *Or.* 2.94B–C) makes it quite clear that the division of the empire was the most important matter when the sons did finally meet in Pannonia. He twice says that they concluded "treaties" (συνθήκαι; 19A, 20B). In the event, Constantine II, who would have controlled the entire West with a subordinate caesar under a tetrarchic system, lost the dioceses of Italia, Africa, and Pannonia to Constans, who also gained one of Dalmatius's two dioceses (Moesia) from what would have been Constantius's territory. Constantius, focused as he had been on the eastern frontier since 335, would have been happy to have surrendered the difficult Danubian frontier to Constans. Constantine II, on the other hand, was less happy to have lost Italy,

However, despite the obvious need for a quick end to the *interregnum* following Constantine's death, more than three months passed before Constantine's sons were finally able to meet in Pannonia, accept promotion to augustus together in one place, and establish their territorial divisions and seniority. This then completed on 9 September, two of the new augusti returned to their capitals, while Constans remained in the area to continue the military activities begun there by Constantius (see below, section IV.7). Unmentioned in any of the official proclamations of this happy event were Dalmatius, the fourth caesar, and his brother Hannibalianus, not because they had been passed over for promotion, but because they had been assassinated.

And these two were not the only ones to die. Constantine's two surviving half brothers, Flavius Dalmatius and Julius Constantius, also met their deaths, as did Julius Constantius's eldest son, whose name is unknown; four other cousins of Dalmatius, whose identities are also unknown;²⁸ Flavius Optatus, *patricius* and consul of 334;²⁹ Flavius Ablabius, praetorian prefect of the East and consul of 331;³⁰ and "many nobles," who probably included Aemilius Magnus Arborius³¹ and possibly Virius Nepotianus and Flavius Felicianus.³² Constantius Gallus and Julian, the two youngest sons of Julius Constantius,³³ were not killed but were spared and raised apart from the imperial family, Julian under the care of his maternal grandmother and the bishop Eusebius in Nicomedia, and Gallus in Ephesus; when they were older, both were sent further into exile for six years to an imperial villa called Macellum in Cappadocia.³⁴ With the exception of these

two, whose lives were saved (so it is said) because of youth (Julian) or expected death from illness (Gallus),³⁵ all the male descendants of Constantius I and Theodora had been assassinated in what Libanius later called ὁ πῶλον φόνος ("the great massacre," *Or.* 18.10). Such a slaughter within the family of the reigning imperial family is unique in the annals of Roman history.

III. The Circumstances and Responsibility

III.1. *The Literary and Epigraphic Evidence*

No source provides an account of the massacre and only a few say anything specific about it at all: we have no chronology, no context, no causes, no coherent narrative. No one even states where it took place. In some situations this is a result of certain authors' simply not knowing any details; in other cases, however, our sources did know the details and either assumed that their readers knew them as well or were unwilling (or unable) to provide them. Even Julian, the closest we have to an eyewitness, avoids describing the actual events by quoting a line from Euripides (*Orestes* 14): "Why should I now, as though from a tragedy, recount the unspeakable horrors?" (*Ad Ath.* 270D). We

as he later demonstrated (for the division of the empire and its results, see Bleckmann, "Bürgerkrieg" [n. 2 above], 225–50).

28 Julian, *To the Athenians* (*Ad Athenienses* [*Ad Ath.*]) 270D.

29 Zosimus, *New History* (*Historia nova* [*Hist. nov.*]) 2.40.2; *PLRE* 1:650, s.v. "Optatus 3."

30 Eunapius, *VS* 6.3.9–13; Zosimus, *Hist. nov.* 2.40.3; Jerome, *Chron. can.* 234^c; *PLRE* 1:3–4, s.v. "Ablabius 4."

31 Ausonius, *Professores* 16.9–16 with R. P. H. Green, *The Works of Ausonius* (Oxford, 1991), 352–53; *PLRE* 1:98–99, s.v. "Arborius 4."

32 *PLRE* 1:625 and 330–31, s.vv. "Nepotianus 7" and "Felicianus 5"; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 261–62, 398.

33 *PLRE* 1:224–25 and 477–78, s.vv. "Gallus 4" and "Iulianus 29"; and Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 318 and 323–24.

34 Nepotianus, the son of Virius Nepotianus (it seems) and Eutropia, sister of Julius Constantius and Flavius Dalmatius, is not mentioned by any source as having survived the massacre, not even by Julian, which would be most peculiar had he been alive. This strongly suggests that Eutropia was pregnant with him at the time of the massacre. However,

in 350 he was put up as emperor in Rome against Magnentius (for less than a month), but if he was born in 337 he could not have been more than twelve years old at the time, a fact that no source comments upon. He is depicted on his coinage as a bearded young man, but that means little in the context since it is the same portrait the mint used for Constantius. On Nepotianus, see *PLRE* 1:624, s.v. "Nepotianus 5"; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle* (n. 3 above), 321.

35 Libanius, *Or.* 18.10 (repeated by Socrates, *HE* 3.1.8). It may also be that the rescue of Julian (and Gallus, by extension) owed something to the involvement of Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia. Eusebius was related to Julian's mother (though not to Gallus's), who died shortly after Julian's birth, and Julian was under his supervision in Nicomedia (even after Eusebius was transferred to Constantinople). This could explain the statement that it was a bishop, Mark of Arethusa (southwest of Amphipolis in Chalcidice), who rescued Julian, though, as we shall see, Constantius later claimed the rescue for himself. Perhaps both Eusebius and Mark were in the capital for the funeral. See Ammianus 22.9.4; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 4.91 (the ultimate source for Theophanes AM 585 [de Boor 48.8–11] and Theophylact of Bulgaria, *Martyrium* 10 [see below, n. 45], PG 126:165C); Bowersock, *Julian* (n. 2 above), 23; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* [n. 2 above], 398 n. 14; and T. D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 1993), 105.

must begin by arranging the sources chronologically and looking for relationships among them.

A preliminary analysis of the sources shows that they fall roughly into three main chronological groups, each with its own *Tendenz*: early sources that either ignore the events altogether or provide what is clearly the officially sanctioned version, which lays the blame on an uncontrollable, mutinous army; later writers who baldly accuse Constantius of mass murder; and much later sources that merely report reflections or hints of the earlier accounts in sometimes fabricated and fanciful contexts aimed at supporting certain political or religious viewpoints. Since no modern scholar has submitted the evidence to a chronological analysis in order to chart its development, I shall do so here. This analysis is long and complicated, but the clarity it provides is fundamental to the final interpretation.

Our earliest source for the events surrounding the death of Constantine and the promotion of his sons is Eusebius's *Life of Constantine* (*Vita Constantini* [VC] 4.51.1, 65–71), written in the years immediately preceding Eusebius's death in May 339. Eusebius states that at some point after the end of his thirtieth year as emperor and before his death (4.49 and 4.52.4), Constantine “divided the government of the whole Empire among his three sons, as though disposing a patrimony to those he loved best” (51.1; τὴν σύμπασαν τῆς βασιλείας ἀρχὴν τρισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ διήρει παισίν, οἳά τινα πατρώαν οὐσίαν τοῖς αὐτοῦ κληροδοτῶν φιλάτοις). Then on his deathbed, before the assembled bishops and soldiers, “[o]n his sons he bestowed as a father's estate the inheritance of Empire, having arranged everything as he desired” (63.3: τοῖς αὐτοῦ παισίν ὥσπερ τινα πατρικὴν ὑπαρξιν τὸν τῆς βασιλείας παρεδίδου κλῆρον, πάνθ' ὅσα φίλα ἦν αὐτῷ διατυπωσάμενος).³⁶ Then, after Constantine's death and the lying in state, all the armies, throughout the empire, acting as one, “as if by supernatural inspiration” declared that they would recognize “no other than his [i.e., Constantine's] sons alone as emperors of the Romans” (68.2: μηδένα ἕτερον ἢ μόνους τοὺς αὐτοῦ παῖδας Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορας) and then “soon” (οὐκ εἰς μακρόν) promoted them from caesars to augusti (68.3). Now this must have taken some considerable time after Constantine's lying in state (66–67, esp.

οὕτω χρόνῳ μακρῷ, 67.2), since the armies first had to learn of Constantine's death through messengers (68.1) and they then had to communicate their decisions through letters (διὰ γραφῆς; 68.3). In spite of the supernatural elaboration, Eusebius is obviously trying to account for the gap of more than three months between May and September without actually admitting its existence. Nevertheless, Eusebius then glosses over the considerable time lag he has just described and calls Constantius βασιλεὺς νέος at the time of his father's funeral (70.2). But before this the senate and people of Rome have proclaimed “his sons alone and no others as emperors and augusti” (69.2: τοὺς αὐτοῦ παῖδας . . . μόνους καὶ οὐδ' ἄλλους αὐτοκράτορας καὶ σεβαστοὺς). Again we have the constitutional legitimacy of the three brothers stressed; not only had they twice inherited the empire from their father, but in case anyone found that insufficient or suspect, they had been fully accepted by the army and the Roman senate and people as well, these three groups being the traditional, and after Constantine's death the only legitimate, bestowers of imperial rights and powers. But, of course, their promotion of the three sons would not have been necessary had Constantine himself actually promoted them before his death. Eusebius has mistakenly allowed the reality of a proclamation by army, senate, and people to intrude into his fiction of a smooth, uncontentious handover of power. It is as if neither Dalmatius nor Hannibalianus had ever existed.

This absence is particularly clear in the portions of empire that Constantine assigned to his sons before his death (VC 4.51.1), since this is in fact the division of the empire as it was arranged after Constantine's death, not before. It is even more obvious when one compares VC 4.40.1–2 to a passage in his earlier oration on the occasion of Constantine's thirtieth anniversary, delivered on 25 July 336, soon after Dalmatius's accession (his *Tricennial Oration*). There Eusebius refers to Constantine's promotion of a caesar for each decade of his reign and the proclamation of the fourth caesar (Dalmatius) for the fourth decade. He then describes the four caesars as yoked before the emperor's quadriga (βασιλικὸς τεθρίππος; *Triac.* 3.2 and 4). This passage is repeated in the VC only a few years later, but now there are only three decades and the caesars have become “like a trinity, a triple offspring of sons.”

Furthermore, Eusebius's stress on the legitimacy of Constantine's sons alone rings hollow because in his version there is no one else to challenge the succession:

³⁶ All translations of Eusebius are from Av. Cameron and S. G. Hall: Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* (Oxford, 1999). For this passage, see the notes on pp. 333–34. For the idea of the empire as an hereditary possession, see I. Tantillo, “Come un bene ereditario: Costantino e la retorica dell'impero-patrimonio,” *L'antiquité tardive* 6 (1998): 251–64.

there is no importance or virtue in saying we'll take only three and these three alone, if only three are on offer. The μηδεὶς ἕτερος ἢ μόνοι οἱ αὐτοῦ παῖδες and μόνοι καὶ οὐδ' ἄλλοι in particular and the whole narrative in general therefore betray Eusebius's purpose. He knew that many if not most readers would know about the existence and removal of Dalmatius Caesar, and he is providing for them an implicit explanation for his disappearance: he did not become augustus because it was not the wish of Constantine, the army, or the senate and people of Rome. This entire narrative is therefore intended to explain the legitimacy of the promotion of Constantine's sons to augustus and the absence of Dalmatius, once a legitimate heir selected by Constantine, without admitting the difficulties involved in either. It is really quite ingenious in its deception.

The next earliest sources are two panegyrics delivered by Libanius and Julian in 344/45 and 355/56 respectively. It must be remembered throughout the following analysis that both panegyrics were delivered in the presence of Constantius himself, and this had consequences for what could and could not be said. In *Or.* 59.48–49 Libanius alludes to certain events that he implies immediately followed the death of Constantine and that he does not mention when he presents his account of the summer of 337 slightly later in the same oration (§§ 72–75), where he mentions nothing untoward at all. In §§ 48–49 he insists that in spite of the momentous change that followed the death of Constantine, “the government of the empire was not disturbed, nor did any of the events affect the heirs of imperial power. But while the government remained in an orderly disposition, it did so not without a degree of trouble nor without the successors' having to make use of violence to securely retain what had been granted to them” (ἔμεινε δὲ οὐ χωρὶς πραγματείας οὐδ' ἄνευ τοῦ χρῆσασθαι ταῖς χερσὶ τοὺς διαδεξαμένους εἰς τὸ κατασχεῖν βεβαίως τὰ δοθέντα, 48). He rejoiced with the sons because “they received imperial power from their father and they proved superior to the concomitant tumult” (τοῦ τῆς γενομένης παραχῆς φανῆναι κρείττονας, 49), a comment he repeats at the end of 49, substituting τὰ δεινά for παραχή. παραχή is a word that means political upheaval and can be applied to rebellion or civil war. He then mentions that they faced some sort of “difficulty” (δύσκολον). Like Eusebius, Libanius uses the imagery of the sons as the heirs to imperial power (οἱ κληρονόμοι τῆς ἀρχῆς, 48, and κληρονομοῦσιν, 13, where they are the third generation of heirs). Three times Libanius states that this crisis provided the sons

with an opportunity to demonstrate their bravery and courage (ἡ ἀνδρία or ἡ ἐσχάτη ἀνδρία).³⁷

Just over a decade later, during the winter of 355–56, Julian, in his first panegyric to Constantius, also mentions that Constantius was heir to the empire (τῆς ἀρχῆς . . . κληρονόμος, *Or.* 1.7D), and immediately mentions the circumstances involving the succession of Constantine I, who, after his father's death in 306, had succeeded to the throne by the choice of his father and the vote of all the armies.

Later Julian states that Constantius had acted δικαίως καὶ σωφρόνως (“justly and moderately”) toward his brothers, the citizens, his father's friends, and the army, “except, if ever forced by times of crisis, you unwillingly did not prevent others from doing wrong” (πλὴν εἴ που βιασθεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν καιρῶν ἄκων ἐτέρους ἐξαμαρτεῖν οὐ διεκώλυσας, *Or.* 1.16D–17A).

Julian also mentions, in the context of the beginning of the Persian war, that military affairs had been thrown into great confusion in consequence of the political change following the death of Constantine, and that the soldiers shouted that they longed for their previous commander and they wished to control (ἄρχειν) Constantius (18D). That Constantius's army mutinied upon his accession is a surprising admission for his panegyricist. It must be that this comment appears for a very particular ulterior purpose.

Julian notes that after his father's death Constantius was surrounded by “dangers and manifold problems: confusion, a serious war, many raids, a revolt of allies, a lack of discipline among the soldiers (στρατοπέδων ἀταξία), and other great difficulties at that time” (20B). The war and the raids refer to the Persian siege of Nisibis and Sarmatian incursions on the Danube in 337; the allies are the Armenians (see 18D and 20D); the rest must therefore describe Constantius's other problems with the army. The parallels with Libanius's account are

37 R. Förster, ed., *Libanii opera* 4 (Leipzig, 1908), 232.19 and 233.5, and 8. It has been suggested to me that Libanius is speaking of Constantine II's revolt in this passage, and I must say that I find this a particularly attractive interpretation, especially in connection with what follows in sections 51–52. The major problem is that I can imagine no reason why Libanius should imply (more than once) that the revolt (spring 340) immediately followed Constantine's death and the succession (337). Would not a listener at the time have assumed that he was speaking about events at the time of the succession? See also the comments in favor of 337 by P.-L. Malosse, *Libanios Discours* (Budé series; Paris, 2003), 4:192. As a result of this uncertainty, I have not placed great emphasis on Libanius's comments here.

obvious. In this case, however, Julian says that before Constantius returned to Syria the mutiny ended and order was restored (20D).

Although no explicit connection is made between the army revolt and a time of crisis when Constantius “unwillingly did not prevent others from doing wrong,” it is clear that Julian is referring to the army. Not only is the army the last in the list, closest to the exception, but Julian immediately goes on to give specific examples of Constantius’s good treatment of his enemies, Constanti-nople, his brothers, and his friends. No mention is made of the army. The only situation described by Julian as *οἱ καιροί* is this crisis at the beginning of his reign involving the soldiers. When the army is finally discussed in detail (18C–D, 21B–22A), Julian is highly critical with respect to its lack of preparedness for war in 337.

This panegyric account, delivered in person to Constantius, openly admits that the accession was marred by crisis, confusion, and direct threats from the army to the successors of Constantine. Libanius may be admitting the same thing, but if not, then he passes over the difficulties of the succession without any comment at all. And as in Eusebius’s account, Dalmatius Caesar is missing. One could understand that the panegyricists would have been unwilling to dwell on his removal, but that hardly accounts for his complete absence from both works. Constantine II is also missing from Libanius’s panegyric, wherein it is explicitly said that Constantius only ever had the one brother, Constans. It is as if Constantine II too had never existed. This is because he declared war on Constans in early spring 340, and after his death in battle he suffered *damnatio memoriae*.³⁸ We know that Eusebius was always keen to follow the officially sanctioned version of history, whatever that may have involved. Crispus, Constantine’s eldest son, who was executed in the spring or summer of 326, never appears in Eusebius’s *Tricennial Oration* or *Life of Constantine*, and Eusebius had earlier expunged him from his *Historia ecclesiastica* and *Chronici canones*, in which he had once appeared.³⁹ He too had suffered *damnatio memoriae*.⁴⁰ These instances strongly suggest that Dalmatius’s non-existence in Eusebius, Libanius, and Julian is also the result of *damnatio memoriae*, and this is indeed proved

by inscriptions from which his name has been erased.⁴¹ That Julius Constantius was condemned as well is implied by his omission from Gallus’s titles on two milestones from Gaul: he is described only as “*diui Constantii pii Augusti nepos*” with no hint of whose “*filius*” he was (*CIL* 17.2:147 and 171). As we shall see below, both Eunapius and Ammianus imply that Julius Constantius played a leading role in the causes of the massacre.

In his panegyric Julian states that Constantius alone hastened to Constantine’s side while he was still alive (*Or.* 1.16D). But later, during the summer of 358, he extended this claim (*Or.* 2.94A–B), saying that Constantius was Constantine’s favorite and that as he lay dying Constantine summoned him alone; his brothers neither were summoned nor came (*οἱ οὐτε κληθέντες οὐτε ἀφικόμενοι*). When he arrived Constantine then entrusted him with supreme power (*τὰ περὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ξύμπαντα*) and assigned him the appropriate portion of the empire to govern (his own). Only Zonaras (*Epitome Historiōn*, 13.4.28), writing after 1118, repeats the claim that Constantine was still alive when Constantius arrived, and he probably derives it from this panegyric.⁴² He later notes the contradiction in his sources: some stated that Constantine divided the empire among his sons and others that they had divided it amongst themselves after his death (13.15.1).

This insistence that Constantius was promoted by his father before his death was a falsehood that was maintained even beyond the panegyric sphere: Constantius celebrated an accession anniversary in May of 357 while he was in Rome, exactly twenty years after Constantine’s death, even though the anniversary was not due until 8 November 358.⁴³

In a later panegyric delivered in honor of Eusebia, Constantius’s new wife,⁴⁴ who had in 354 persuaded

38 *CTh* 11.12.1.

39 See T. D. Barnes, “The Editions of Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History*,” *GRBS* 21 (1980): 197–98, and Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 66–74.

40 Kienast, *Kaisertabelle* (n. 3 above), 306.

41 *Ibid.*, 307. See, e.g., *Tituli Asiae minoris* 3.1 (Vienna, 1941), no. 944; *AEpigr* 1934.158; 1948.50; and *CIL* 6.40776.

42 See Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 225 n. 132. For Julian as Zonaras’s source, see also Lucien-Brun, “Constance II” (n. 2 above): 595. Note that Malalas says that Constantine I made Constantine II (sic) emperor of Rome while he was still alive in the year 338 (*Chronographia* 13.15; Thurn, 249), a confused version of the same account.

43 See R. W. Burgess, “Quinquennial Vota and the Imperial Consulship, 337–511,” *NC* 148 (1988): 83–84. Note that the *Chronicon Paschale* takes the hint and calls the celebration his *vicennialia* (Bonn, 542.19–20), even though coins of the time and the *Descriptio consulum* (s.a. 357.2; R. W. Burgess, *The Chronicle of Hydatius and the Consularia Constantinopolitana* [Oxford, 1993], 238) correctly mark the anniversary as his thirty-fifth.

44 *PLRE* 1:300–301, s.v. “Eusebia”; Kienast, *Kaisertabelle*, 317.

Constantius to allow Julian to go to Athens to study, Julian praised Constantius for having saved him from dangers so great that no one without divine assistance could have escaped (*Or.* 3.117D). He also states that when his house had been seized by “one of the powerful” (παρά του τῶν δυναστῶν), Constantius recovered it and made it wealthy again (118A). Echoes of these two claims will be seen later.

The connection between the problems with the army described above and the disappearance of Dalmatius was made for the first time in the historical record (as far as it can be reconstructed) by the *Kaisergeschichte* (*KG*), a now-lost set of imperial biographies that formed the conclusion of a large epitome history of Rome from mythological times. Although the work was updated periodically, making the exact dates of composition uncertain, the narrative of the events of 337 was probably written in 358. Later witnesses show that the *KG* explicitly stated that it was the army that had assassinated Dalmatius Caesar in the midst of a mutiny.⁴⁵

45 For the *KG*, see A. Enmann, “Eine verlorene Geschichte der römischen Kaiser und das Buch *de viris illustribus urbis Romae*: Quellenstudien,” *Philologus*, suppl. 4 (1883): 335–501; *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike*, vol. 5, ed. R. Herzog and P. L. Schmidt (Munich, 1989), 196–98 = *Nouvelle histoire de la littérature latine* (Turnhout, 1993), 5:226–28; and R. W. Burgess, “Jerome and the *Kaisergeschichte*,” *Historia* 44 (1995): 349–69. For the date, see R. W. Burgess, “On the Date of the *Kaisergeschichte*,” *CPh* 90 (1995): 111–28, and idem, “A Common Source for Jerome, Eutropius, Festus, Ammianus, and the *Epitome de caesaribus* between 358 and 378, along with Further Thoughts on the Date and Nature of the *Kaisergeschichte*,” *CPh* 100 (2005): 187–90 (for pp. 185–87, see now G. Kelly, “Adrien de Valois and the Chapter Headings in Ammianus Marcellinus,” *CPh* 104 [2009]: 233–42). The *KG* = Eutropius 10.9.1 (“Dalmatius Caesar . . . oppressus est factione militari”), Aurelius Victor 4.1.22 (“Dalmatius . . . interficitur”), *Epitome de caesaribus* 4.1.18 (“Dalmatius militum ui necatur”), and Jerome 23.4^c (“Dalmatius Caesar . . . tumultu militari interimitur”). For the importance of Jerome as a witness to the *KG*, see Burgess, “Jerome” (above). Socrates, *HE* 2.25.3 (repeated in 3.1.8 with material from other sources, such as Libanius, *Or.* 18.10–11) derives from Eutropius; see F. Geppert, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Socrates Scholasticus* (Leipzig, 1898), 67–68 and 119–20, and Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius* (n. 35 above), 304 n. 4. Sozomen, *HE* 5.2.7; Theophanes AM 5829 (de Boor, 35.7–10 from *HE* 2.25.3) and AM 5830 (de Boor, 35.12–16, from *HE* 3.1.8, see also p. 48.11); and the late-eleventh-century *Martyrium ss. quindecim illustrium martyrum* of Theophylact, the archbishop of Bulgaria (7; PG 126:161B) all derive from Socrates, the latter also employing Gregory of Nazianzus *Or.* 4.21 (see below). C. Mango and R. Scott (*The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813* [Oxford, 1997], 56b) incorrectly attribute Theophanes’ account directly to Eutropius: his wording exactly matches Socrates’ and came via the ecclesiastical epitome of Theodorus Lector. Cedrenus (521.9) derives from Theophanes. Orosius 7.29.1 and Prosper 51051, s.a. 338, as well as many other later Latin accounts, derive from

But the *KG* also provided other important information. It said that Dalmatius was killed “factione militari [et]⁴⁶ Constantio, patrueli suo, sinente potius quam iubente” (Eutropius).⁴⁷ This claim that Constantius allowed or permitted an assassination instigated by the military clearly parallels comments made by Julian in *Or.* 1.16D–17A (see above) and *Ad Ath.* 271B and by Gregory of Nazianzus in *Or.* 4.22 (see below). As we shall see, by the mid- to late 340s this had become the official explanation, when outright denial (as in Eusebius and Libanius *Or.* 59.72–75) was no longer a viable or useful option.

This portion of the *KG* appears to have been written about twenty years after the event, when this new explanation was current and the force of the *damnatio* had begun to relax, thus allowing a greater freedom to mention these events (just as Julian was able to mention Constantine II in his panegyric, whereas Libanius had not). But this is not just mindless parroting of an official explanation. The author does not say, as Julian and Gregory do, that Constantius unwillingly was unable to prevent Dalmatius’s death; rather, he says Constantius allowed it to happen: viz. he wanted Dalmatius dead. The *KG*’s mention of an alternative explanation for Dalmatius’s death (i.e., that Constantius ordered it) shows clearly that this claim was being made at the time, and the author, not being able to write more while Constantius still lived, combines the official explanation and the private accusation to create a version halfway between the two. The framing of the statement in the form of an alternative (“potius quam iubente”), in the place of either a simple negative or rather no alternative at all, greatly weakens what at first appears to be a defense of

Jerome. Modern scholars fail to realize that all these works with their common account derive ultimately from a single common source, the *KG*.

46 The “et” is difficult and does not seem to belong. I have followed F. Rühl (Teubner text [Leipzig, 1887], 73) and F. L. Müller (*Eutropii Breviarium ab Urbe condita. Eutropius, Kurze Geschichte Roms seit Gründung* (753 v. Chr.–364 n. Chr.), Palingenesia 56 [Stuttgart, 1995], 144) in bracketing it.

47 Eutropius is the only witness to the *KG* who states this in this manner. Aurelius Victor, who was writing just a few years earlier than Eutropius (finishing in 361/62), for the most part while Constantius was still alive, clearly felt it wiser to avoid the *KG*’s specifics and says that Dalmatius was killed, but “incertum quo suatore.” Jerome, writing many years later in 380–81, when the Arian Constantius’s direct involvement was accepted as fact by all, baldly says he was killed “factione Constantii patruelis et tumultu militari.”

Constantius against accusations that he was directly responsible. This, combined with the *KG*'s reference to the close kinship between the two caesars, points an accusing finger at Constantius: "while Constantius, his own cousin, did not so much order it as allow it to happen" offers quite a different picture from something like "and Constantius was unable to prevent it."

This accusation is made stronger by the context in which it is made. The author of the *KG* thought very highly of Dalmatius, and in spite of the circumstances surrounding his death and the *damnatio* he was not afraid to say so: "Dalmatius Caesar prosperrima indole neque patruo absimilis" ("Dalmatius Caesar, a man of exceptionally promising talent and very like his uncle [i.e., Constantine]"; Eutropius 10.9.1). He even went so far as to make a very clear statement, in direct opposition to the official version, that Dalmatius was indeed a legitimate and intended successor upon the death of Constantine: "[Dalmatium Caesarem] patruus Constantinus consortem regni filiis derelinquerat" ("His uncle Constantine left Dalmatius Caesar as co-ruler with his sons"; Jerome, 234^e) / "[Constantinus] successores filios tres reliquit atque unum fratris filium" ("Constantine left his three sons and the son of this brother as his successors"; Eutropius 10.9.1).

The text of the standard edition of Aurelius Victor (who we know relied upon the *KG*) adds, however, what no other source notes, that the army had vigorously objected to Dalmatius's accession in 335 (41.15, "obsistentibus ualide militaribus"), thus providing a clue to its revolt a year and a half later. Unfortunately, this reading is an emendation by Mommsen, undertaken not for any grammatical or palaeographical reason, but merely to make the text conform to the army's supposed later uprising against Dalmatius. The manuscripts in fact indicate that the soldiers strongly *supported* Dalmatius's accession ("assistentibus ualide militaribus").⁴⁸ This makes the possibility of a spontaneous mutiny against him in 337 even less likely and surreptitiously undermines the excuse for his death offered later, a result the author no doubt intended.

Gregory of Nazianzus, who finished writing his fourth oration just after the death of Jovian in 364,

having often praised Constantius in comparison to Julian, nevertheless criticizes him for having saved Julian ἡνίκα τὸ στρατιωτικὸν ἐξωπλίσθη κατὰ τῶν ἐν τέλει, καινοτομοῦν φόβῳ καινοτομίας, καὶ διὰ νέων προστατῶν καθίστατο τὰ βασιλεία ("when the army took up arms against those who held power, rebelling out of fear of rebellion, and imperial affairs were being managed by new rulers," *Or.* 4.21).⁴⁹ This was something that Constantius claimed was beyond his control: [Κωνσταντίου] ἀπολογίαν ἐπινοοῦντος τῶν νεωτερισθέντων ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς βασιλείας ὡς οὐ κατ' ἐκείνου γνώμην τετολμημένων ("Constantius defended himself against those who had rebelled at the beginning of his reign, claiming that they had undertaken their daring action against his will," 4.22). Here we can see quite clearly the new official version noted above—the rebellion of the army against the new rulers and Constantius's inability to control them—along with a claim known only from Julian's panegyric to Eusebia: Constantius was the one responsible for saving the only two survivors of the massacre (see also 4.3). As noted above (see n. 35), later in the same speech, at 4.91, Gregory includes Mark of Arethusa, bishop and later author of the so-called "Dated Creed" of 359, among those who rescued Julian "at the time when [Julian's] entire family was in danger" (ἡνίκα τὸ γένος αὐτῶ πᾶν ἐκινδύνευε), a claim later found in Theophanes and Theophylact, both no doubt from Gregory.

It is most surprising to see the official explanation resurfacing in Gregory so many years later, when, as we shall see, no one else was mincing words. But in his invective against Julian, Gregory tries to present Constantius in a positive light and so it suits his purpose to return to the Constantian version of events.

The *KG* and Gregory are the latest sources to reflect or present the official version of the massacre. The earliest surviving account of the events that does not follow an official version comes from the pen of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, in his *History of the Arians* (*Historia Arianorum* [*Hist. Ar.*]), "perhaps . . . the surviving part of a work which Athanasius never completed or intended to publish in its present form," written while he was in exile in late 357, around the time the relevant recension of the *KG* was being written and Constantius was celebrating

⁴⁸ The two manuscripts split at this point, o offering "absistentibus" and p, "assistentibus." "Absisto" makes no sense with "ualide" and since the initial "a-" is clearly part of the paradosis, p's "assistentibus" must be correct (the original was no doubt "adsistentibus").

⁴⁹ Theophylact of Bulgaria (see n. 45) says something very similar about the army, νεωτερισμοῦ τινας ἐμπροσθέντος τοῖς στρατιώταις (161B; "a kind of desire for revolution fell upon the soldiers"), derived no doubt from Gregory.

his anniversary in Rome. In it he “states outright much that [he] deemed it politic to suppress or veil when he was writing to defend or justify himself to a neutral or hostile audience.”⁵⁰ Here, he states that Constantius did not spare even his own kindred, but murdered his uncles and cousins and did not commiserate with the sufferings of his wife’s father (see n. 15, above) or his other kinsmen (69.1). He says nothing about a mutiny of the soldiers. Now, not only was Athanasius in Trier when the first news of Constantine’s death arrived, he was in close proximity to Constantine II and to any messengers heading to Trier at that time and then to Constantius shortly afterward (see section IV.7, below); moreover, only a few months after the massacre he himself passed through Constantinople, where he no doubt would have heard firsthand reports from those closest to the events. It must also be remembered that Athanasius was writing a private document—it was never intended for publication—and so he could say what others, even the author of the *KG*, could not say while Constantius still lived. Interestingly, he does not argue his point here; it is a simple accusation without introduction or context that he clearly expects all his readers to know and understand.

We now must turn to the only participant in these events, the newly proclaimed augustus Julian, who was writing to the Athenians in the summer or autumn of 361, justifying his current break with Constantius. Julian here has dropped his earlier panegyric pretense and, like Athanasius four years earlier, blames Constantius alone for the massacre, calling him ὁ φονεὺς πατρός, ἀδελφῶν, ἀνεψιῶν, ἀπάσης ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν τῆς κοινῆς ἡμῶν ἐστίας καὶ συγγενείας ὁ δῆμιος (“the murderer of my father, brothers, and cousins, the executioner of practically all our common family and kinsmen,” *Ad Ath.* 281B) and accusing him of having put six of their cousins to death, along with Julian’s father (Constantius’s uncle), another common uncle, and Julian’s eldest brother, all without trial (ἄκριτοι; 270D). He wished to put Julian and Gallus to death as well, but in the end just exiled them. In addition, Julian notes that Constantius had confiscated the property and wealth of his father, Julius Constantius (273B), leaving Julian only his mother’s house (probably the house he mentioned in *Or.* 3.118A that was taken and then returned). He also took the entire estate of

Gallus’s mother (Galla, the first wife of Julius Constantius). These complaints are later echoed by Eunapius (*VS* 7.1.6: ψιλωθέντος τοῦ γένους Ἰουλιανοῦ, “Julian’s family was stripped bare”), though the ultimate source for this may be Julian. We can thus see that as a result of these assassinations Constantius benefited financially from the estates of both Julius Constantius and Galla (and probably those of the rest of the family in addition). And since he obtained Thrace, the eastern half of Dalmatius’s territory, he benefited territorially as well.⁵¹

In the midst of these accusations Julian gives us an inside look at how these assassinations were justified to the two young survivors. Those in the imperial court and those around his brother repeatedly commented (ἐθρύλουν) that Constantius had repented (μετεμέλησε αὐτῷ) and was stung by great remorse (ἐδήχθη δεινῶς). They said he attributed his childlessness and his failures against the Persians to his part in the massacre (*Ad Ath.* 270D–271A). While Julian and his brother were in exile at Macellum, those who watched over them kept telling them and tried to persuade them (ἐλεγον, ἐπειθον) that Constantius had done what he had done partly because he had been deceived (ἀπατηθείς) and partly because he “had given way to the violence and confusion of an undisciplined and rebellious army” (βία καὶ παραχαῖς . . . ἀτάκτου καὶ παραχῶδους στρατεύματος, 271B).

It is important to note that two quite different excuses are provided here, each from a different time and source. In the second account that Julian narrates, attributed to the time that he and his brother were at Macellum (ca. 342–48), we see the official version of Libanius’s and Julian’s panegyrics, the *KG*, and Gregory: Constantius had not been able to control the mutinous army that had assassinated Dalmatius and the others. Even the vocabulary mirrors that of the panegyrics. He adds what we do not find in the earlier sources, that the army had somehow deceived Constantius before or during their rebellion. However in the first explanation, one that was offered by those at court when Gallus was caesar (351–54), Julian implies that Constantius was involved actively in some way in the deaths, since this explanation carries on directly from his earlier comment that Constantius had executed his family without a trial (270D, quoted above). What Constantius repented of and blamed

50 Both quotations from Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius* (n. 35 above), 126. For the context of this work, see pp. 126–32 and for the passage discussed below see pp. 127 and 131–32.

51 Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 3 above), 199. A general indictment against Constantine and his sons for shedding the blood of relatives is found at *Caesars* 336B and similar accusations are found in *Or.* 7.230A.

for his later failures was the murder just described. That the courtiers admitted this and then tried to explain his actions and describe his contrition suggest that by this time his guilt was an undeniable fact that no one even tried to conceal.⁵²

Clearly Julian, like Athanasius, was hostile toward Constantius, so we must be cautious when analyzing his evidence. However, a likely reason for Julian's emotion is that he honestly believed what he said: Constantius had massacred his family and kept him in a state of virtual and actual exile from the rest of his family for almost fifteen years. He describes his feelings about the massacre in *To Heraclius the Cynic* 230A: when he found out what had happened (the impression is that he was not told at first) he was so overwhelmed that he felt he had to throw himself into Tartarus (ἐδέγησε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον προέσθαι πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος τῶν κακῶν ἐκπλαγεῖς). These are feelings we can still detect in the letter to the Athenians. And, strangely enough, in spite of the enormity of these crimes, he writes about them just as he does about the other complaints he has against Constantius and his treatment by him. Julian's statements therefore cannot be dismissed as merely the invention of one out to blacken his opponent. He is trying to explain the reasons for his rebellion against Constantius (he also gives as causes Constantius's removal of his Gallic troops and the petty accusations Constantius kept making against him). But overall Julian stresses his loyalty and service, even in the face of everything that had happened to him. His attitude can be seen most clearly in his discussion of his brother's execution by Constantius. He makes no attempt to deny or mitigate his brother's cruelty as caesar, and indeed agrees that he deserved execution as punishment for his deeds. He does attribute Gallus's evil behavior to his early imprisonment by Constantius and blames Constantius in particular for not having given Gallus a chance to defend himself (271D–272D), but he does not exaggerate or try to twist the facts of the case to his advantage (and these are facts that we know). I see nothing in his discussion of the massacre that would suggest that he was dissembling or making false accusations to justify his revolt against Constantius. Indeed, his account of the different excuses given when he was younger strengthens greatly the trustworthiness of his account.

52 Theophanes also mentions Constantius's repentance (AM 5853, de Boor, 47.2–3), a section that derives ultimately from Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 21.26 (see below).

A final hint of the events may be drawn from Julian's parable in his *To Heraclius the Cynic* (227C–234C) of 362, which, at 228A–B, states that the brothers wished to possess the empire for themselves, and that after Constantine's death the relatives of Constantine's sons became involved in this squabble over the division of the empire and so were assassinated, as if in fulfillment of a tragic curse. The deliberately vague mythological context unfortunately makes it difficult to go beyond the basic facts of the passage, but it does look as though the murders were precipitated by some controversy over the division of empire in the immediate aftermath of Constantine's death. It is interesting to note that Julian's comments about his relatives here are decidedly negative: they shared the ἀνοία τε καὶ ἀμαθία ("stupidity and ignorance") of Constantine's sons concerning the governing of the empire. We see no attempt on Julian's part to whitewash or exonerate his relatives, in spite of their fate. He condemns them all.

After the death of Constantius, Libanius, freed of the necessity of following the official line, in Julian's funeral oration described the deaths as "the great massacre" (ὁ πολὺς φόνος), a sword that went through almost the entire family, fathers and sons alike (*Or.* 18.10). Constantius, he said, was the murderer of Julian's father and brothers, and as a result Julian suspected a plot when Constantius, the man who had wronged him the most, offered to make him caesar, a suspicion that was prompted by previously spilled blood (*Or.* 18.31–2).

A clearer view of the reality behind the official version is provided by the *History* of Eunapius, written in its first edition soon after 378, which (via the history of Zosimus) states that, following the death of Constantine, Julius Constantius and his two nephews acted as colleagues of Constantine's sons and that Julius Constantius was the first to be killed by the soldiers, then Dalmatius (the caesar), Optatus, and finally Hannibalianus (Zosimus, *Hist. nov.* 2.39.2 and 40.2).⁵³ He states that

53 Eunapius at least twice in his *Lives of the Sophists* (*VS*) states that he described these events ἀκριβέστερον ("in more detail") in his account of Julian, i.e., his history (6.3.8 and 7.1.5). For an overview of the *VS*, see D. F. Buck, "Lives of the Sophists: A Literary Study," *Byzantion* 62 (1992): 141–57. For a general introduction to his history, see R. C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, ARCA 6 (Liverpool, 1981), 1–26, and W. Liebeschuetz, "Pagan Historiography and the Decline of the Empire," in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.*, ed. G. Marasco (Leiden, 2003), 177–201.

[Κωνσταντίος] ὑποθέμενος ἐκβοᾷν τοῖς στρατιώταις ὡς οὐκ ἂν ἄρχοντος ἐτέρου πλὴν τῶν Κωνσταντίνου παίδων ἀνάσχοιντο (“[Constantius] commanded the soldiers to cry out that they would be content with no other ruler than the sons of Constantine,” 2.40.3). Eunapius names Ablabius as a victim as well, but he provides a more detailed account of his death in another, later work (the *Lives of the Sophists*, discussed below) and does not say that he was killed by the army. Eunapius (via Zosimus) thus provides the link between Constantius and the army, and thus the link between the two versions of the massacre. Eunapius, writing in favor of Julian, is not an unbiased source, but the clear links with the official version and that of Eusebius argue strongly in favor of his accuracy. In fact, Eunapius was confident enough of his sources that he was even able to cite the order in which the main victims had been killed.

Because it suits his own anti-Constantinian bias, Eunapius also unwittingly preserves an additional bit of propaganda, likely spread about at the same time as the official accounts of the massacre. He states that after the death of Constantius I in 306 the praetorian guard selected as his successor Constantine, whom he presents as a bastard,⁵⁴ because they thought that “none of [Constantius’s] legitimate children was worthy of the empire” (οἱ περὶ τὴν αὐλὴν στρατιῶται . . . τῶν ὄντων αὐτῷ γνησίων παίδων οὐδένα πρὸς βασιλείαν ἔκριναν ἀξίόχρεων, Zosimus 2.9.1). Constantius’s “legitimate children” are the sons of Theodora. This sounds very much like part of a secondary excuse to explain why they were again denied a share of the power in 337.

The wide currency of this excuse in the fourth century is demonstrated by its reappearance in an independent source of the ninth or tenth century, a hagiographic life of Constantine, usually referred to as the “Guidi Life,” after its only editor, or the “Bios di Costantino,” Guidi’s title.⁵⁵ Much of the *Life*’s account of Constantine is fanciful or derived from a few surviving sources like Theophanes, but information from other, earlier sources

is identifiable. After naming Constantius I’s children by his second wife, Theodora, the anonymous author adds, ὧν οὐδεὶς ἡξιώθη γενέσθαι διάδοχος τῆς πατρῶας βασιλείας (“none of whom was considered worthy to be a successor of their father’s rule,” p. 312.8–9). This is clearly a reflection of the same propaganda reported by Eunapius, though it derives from neither his work nor Zosimus’s. There is no mention in this *Life* of the deaths in 337 or of Dalmatius as caesar.

Let us return to Eunapius, even though the following analysis is out of chronological order. Because of the survival of Eunapius’s *Lives of the Sophists* (*VS*), written in 399, we know some details about the death of Ablabius, though Eunapius’s account is quite hostile, because he blamed Ablabius for engineering the downfall of the philosopher Sopater (*VS* 6.2.12, 3.7, 13; Zosimus 2.40.3). Eunapius states that Ablabius was dismissed by Constantius immediately after the death of Constantine, who had “bequeathed” Constantius to Ablabius, no doubt so the latter could act as praetorian prefect, guardian, and even, perhaps, regent. Ablabius then retired to his estates in Bithynia, having no wish to be emperor, a fact that amazed everyone (πάντων ἀνθρώπων θαυμάζοντων ὅτι βασιλεύειν οὐ βούλεται), the implication being that it was expected that he would attempt to retain his almost emperor-like position over Constantius. But Constantius wanted to be rid of him and that possibility for good and so sent a group of assassins (ξίφηφόροι) to dispatch him. Taking advantage of Ablabius’s natural arrogance, Constantius tricked him into declaring himself emperor, and Ablabius was cut down when he demanded the purple (*VS* 6.3.8–13). The other assassinations are only mentioned later at 7.1.5 (πάντων ἀνηρημένων ὑπὸ τοῦ Κωνσταντίου; “all those assassinated by Constantius”). Although Eunapius does not mention it, Constantius then confiscated Ablabius’s property, as he did that of the other victims (noted above).⁵⁶ Zosimus makes no mention of Ablabius’s supposed usurpation (2.40.3).

Although Gregory of Nazianzus had earlier utilized the official version of the massacre when it suited his purposes, in his oration in praise of Athanasius in 380 he stated that at the end of his life Constantius repented of three crimes that were unworthy of his reign. The first

For the date of the history, see T. D. Barnes, *The Sources of the Historia Augusta* (Brussels, 1978), 114–23; Blockley (above), 2–5; and Liebeschuetz (above), 179–91.

54 See W. Leadbetter, “The Illegitimacy of Constantine and the Birth of the Tetrarchy,” in *Constantine: History, Historiography and Legend*, ed. S. N. C. Lieu and D. Montserrat (London, 1998), 74–85.

55 M. Guidi, ed., “Un BIOΣ di Costantino,” *RendLinc*, 5th series, 16 (1907): 304–40, 637–62 = *BHG* 364. See also S. Lieu, “Constantine Byzantinus: The Anonymous *Life of Constantine* (*BHG* 364),” in Lieu and Montserrat, *Constantine*, 97–146, esp. 97–106.

56 Ablabius’s house in Constantinople was still in the possession of the state in the 390s and early 400s when Galla Placidia lived there (Synesius, *Ep.* 61; see R. Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine*, 2nd ed. [Paris, 1964], 304, and S. I. Oost, “Some Problems in the History of Galla Placidia,” *CPh* 60 [1965]: 3 and 9 n. 14).

was ὁ τοῦ γένους φόνος (“the murder of his family”; *Or.* 21.26).⁵⁷ This is a reflection of the later excuses made during the reign of Gallus that are reported by Julian in his letter to the Athenians.

Jerome, writing in 380–81, employed the *KG* for his description of the death of Dalmatius (see above nn. 45 and 47), but he also had a source that mentioned the death of Ablabius.⁵⁸ He states that Ablabius was killed along with “multi nobilium” (“many nobles”), and he places the entry right after the accession of Constantine’s three sons and before the murder of Dalmatius.

Ammianus Marcellinus, who was writing between ca. 385 and 390/91,⁵⁹ had no doubts about Constantius’s involvement in the murder of the rest of his family. Like so many others, Ammianus had no love for Constantius, but we do not know what details he provided or comments he made when he discussed the events of 337 in one of the earlier now-lost books of his history.⁶⁰ In what survives he states that Constantius’s cruelty surpassed even that of Caligula, Domitian, and Commodus, in imitation of whom “inter imperandi exordia cunctos sanguine et genere se contingentes stirpitur interemit” (“right at the beginning of his reign he eradicated everyone who was connected with him by blood and birth,” 21.16.8). The exaggeration is patent, since Julian and Gallus survived, as did Constantius’s brothers. Later at 25.3.23 he explicitly describes the cause of the assassinations: “[Iulium Constantium] post fratris Constantini excessum inter complures alios turba consumpsit imperii successorum” (“after the death of his brother Constantine [Julius Constantius] was killed along with many others in an upheaval involving the successors to imperial power”). “Turba imperii successorum”: it was a conflict that involved Constantine’s successors, particularly Julius Constantius (whom Eunapius notes as being the first to die), not simply his nephews Dalmatius and Hannibalianus. Ammianus says nothing about an attempted military coup.

57 This is the source of Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 5853 (de Boor 47.2–4), missed by Mango and Scott, *Chronicle* (n. 45 above), 80.

58 Jerome, *Chronici canones* 234^c. The source was a kind of *De uiris illustribus* of literary men of the reign of Constantine; see R. W. Burgess, “Jerome Explained: An Introduction to his *Chronicle* and a Guide to its Use,” *Ancient History Bulletin* 16 (2002): 28. For Ablabius’s literary talents, see *PLRE* 1:4, s.v. “Ablabius 4” (see also p. 2, s.v. “Ablabius 3”).

59 J. Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London, 1989), 20–27 and 31.

60 These books were more substantial than is usually supposed: see R. M. Frakes, “Some Thoughts on the Length of the Lost Books of Ammianus,” *The Ancient World* 31 (2000): 48–53 (with full bibliography).

In the fifth century, Socrates derived his description of Dalmatius’s death from Eutropius (*HE* 2.25.3 and 3.1.8; see n. 45, above), but in book three, in a passage that derives from a variety of sources, he states that when Constantius’s ἡ κατ’ αὐτῶν ὀργή (perhaps best translated in the context as “hostile attitude toward them,” i.e., his two half cousins) had abated, he allowed them to be educated (3.1.9), a comment that has no known source but is perhaps nothing more than an inference on Socrates’ part. And finally Theodoret, also relying on an unknown source, says that “Constantius . . . killed his relatives because he feared usurpations” (Κωνσταντίος . . . τοὺς γένει προσήκοντας ἀνήρει δειμαίνων τὰς τυραννίδας [*HE* 3.2]). This may be related to Gregory’s claim (*Or.* 4.21), but it seems not to be. Note that in the *VS* Eunapius also mentions usurpation, with respect to Ablabius. These hints will be discussed below.

After Theodoret there appears to be no further independent evidence. My analysis cannot stop here, however, for I have omitted two accounts that are often considered factual to one degree or another by modern scholars and that omission must be explained and defended. These accounts concern Constantine’s will and derive ultimately from the official claim that Constantine changed his mind about the succession on his deathbed. In Eusebius he proclaims his intentions orally to many witnesses. Constitutionally and pragmatically this change of mind was open to doubt or interpretation, so in later pro-Constantian accounts of his death, Constantine makes his wishes known through a written will. Two related versions of this story appeared in the first half of the fifth century, though they are in origin much earlier.

The earliest version appears in Rufinus, who wrote his translation and continuation of Eusebius’s *Ecclesiastical History* around 400 (10.12). His account is followed by Socrates, *HE* 1.25. 1–5, 39.3 and 2.2.2–3; Sozomen, *HE* 2.27.2–4, 34.2; 3.1.3; Theodoret, *HE* 2.3.1–7; Ps-Gelasius, *HE* 3.12; and many others. No doubt it was originally inspired by similar accounts made to bolster the legitimacy of the succession of Constantine in 306 following the death of his father, Constantius I.⁶¹ According to this account, just before he died Constantine composed his will, in which he left only his sons as his successors, though, again as in the earlier accounts, no mention is made of any other possible heirs. This will he entrusted

61 See Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (n. 2 above), 27. Cf. Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 2.4.8 and Julian *Or.* 1.7D.

to a priest, who had been recommended to him by his sister, the ex-wife of Licinius. This priest turned out to be an Arian who had wormed his way into Constantia's confidences. He kept the will safe and when Constantius arrived after Constantine's death he entrusted it to Constantius, who "in his desire for the realm was on account of this favour so bound to him . . . that he cheerfully allowed himself to be governed by him" (Rufinus, *HE* 10.12).⁶² It is this priest who was then solely responsible for Constantius's descent into heresy because of Constantius's debt to him.

In its origin this story was clearly designed to strengthen the legitimacy of the sons' promotion, a result of doubts that must have existed in the years following Constantine's death, especially as detailed news about the massacre spread. As it stands, though, it has been modified to absolve Constantine of the blame for having raised an Arian son: the earlier pro-Constantian version has been put to a later pro-Constantinian use.

Rufinus states that after the will had been entrusted to the Arian priest,

[Constantio] etiam quod eunuchi, qui erant in palatio, fauebant, arte indicio de imperatoris morte subpresso usque ad Constanti praesentiam, multis noua temptantibus obpressis res tutae integraeque mansere.

Since the palace eunuchs were also on [Constantius's] side, news of the emperor's death was skillfully suppressed until Constantius' arrival, many who tried to seize power were put down, and the state remained safe and undamaged.

As in Gregory of Nazianzus (and Theophylact), Eunapius (in the *VS*), and Theodoret, we have a reference to usurpation ("multi noua temptantes"), but it is so vague, the source so late, and the story so patently fabricated that little can be made of it beyond the obvious attempt (left over from the original version) to shelter Constantius from any accusations by laying the blame with palace eunuchs who thus kept the state "tuta integraque."

The most interesting version of the story told above is that reported by the Arian writer Philostorgius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, which was probably written in the 440s. The remains of his history appear in two epitomes,

one made by the ninth-century Byzantine bibliophile Photius, the other appearing as excerpts within a ninth-century saint's life called the *Passio Artemii*.⁶³

According to Philostorgius, Constantine set out from Constantinople against the Persians but only got as far as Nicomedia, for while he was there he was poisoned by his brothers. Constantine realized too late what had happened, but before he died was able to write an account of his brothers' deeds and append to it a request that the first of his sons to obtain the document should avenge his death, lest all three sons suffer the same fate. This document was entrusted to Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia, who kept it out of the hands of Constantine's brothers until the return of Constantius, who read the account and fulfilled his dying father's last command.⁶⁴

This account again depicts Constantius alone as the murderer of his relatives, but it was cleverly designed to absolve him of the blame for his role in the murders through the employment of a version of the will story seen above. That blame is cleverly shifted to Constantine's half brothers, now revealed to be poisoners and traitors, and Constantius is presented simply as the dutiful and pious son following his father's orders to avenge his untimely death (and prevent his own and those of his brothers). This reworking is quite ingenious,⁶⁵ but it is fictitious and, in the context of the development of the various accounts described above, its purpose and origin are clear.

This version takes no cognizance of, and fails to rely upon, the official version of events. This indicates that it was not early, as was the original version of the story employed by Rufinus; it must then have arisen at a time when these excuses had been abandoned and everyone, secretly or openly, accepted Constantius's role in the massacre and so outright denial was no longer a plausible option. If we can judge from Julian, Athanasius, and the *KG*, the earlier excuses were being dropped by the mid to late 350s and so this story probably has its origins then or afterward.

In spite of this, too many modern scholars have been

⁶² The translations here and below are from P. R. Amidon, *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia* (Oxford, 1997), 24–25.

⁶³ Philostorgius 16 and 16a. For the *Passio Artemii*, see R. W. Burgess, "The *Passio Artemii*, Philostorgius, and the Dates of the Invention and Translations of the Relics of Sts Andrew and Luke," *AB* 121 (2003): 13–23.

⁶⁴ This story is repeated by Zonaras, the Guidi life, and Cedrenus: see Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 226 and n. 135.

⁶⁵ For instance, the Arians knew and made much of the fact that Eusebius baptized Constantine on his deathbed and so he has been substituted for the Arian priest that we saw in Rufinus's account.

swayed by this story to one extent or another, even to the extreme of believing it to be a wholly factual account. It is nothing more than Arian propaganda.⁶⁶

III.2. *The Numismatic Evidence*

The only exactly contemporary evidence we have for the events of 337 has, with one exception,⁶⁷ never been analyzed, and that is the coinage. This is unfortunate, because the coins struck between the beginning and the end of 337 are of great importance in helping to put certain aspects of the literary sources into a sharper focus and into a more accurate context.

During the period between Dalmatius's accession as caesar in September 335 and Constantine's death in May 337, six mints regularly struck gold coins and seven regularly struck silver in the names of the emperors.⁶⁸ Of these mints, only three did not strike precious metal coinage in the name of Dalmatius: Trier, the capital of Constantine II; Rome, the major mint of Constans;⁶⁹ and Antioch, the capital of Constantius. Siscia (a very rare gold solidus type only), Thessalonica, Heraclea (a rare silver siliqua type only), Constantinople, and Nicomedia (silver only) struck gold and silver in his name, including medallions at Constantinople (at that point directly controlled by Constantine).

The absence of coins struck in the name of Dalmatius is brought into sharper focus by a group of coins from Trier, Rome, and Antioch, part of a series that appeared from many mints in both gold and silver, with reverses depicting either four standards (representing the emperor and three caesars, a revived type from 324) or Victory advancing with a wreath and palm frond, often with anepigraphic obverses (see Figs. 1–4 for various examples).

⁶⁶ See, for example, Di Maio and Arnold, "Per Vim" (n. 2 above); Bowersock, *Julian*, 23; Browning, *Emperor*, 34–35; Lucien-Brun, "Constantine II," 600; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 262 (all n. 2 above); R. T. Ridley, *Zosimus: New History* (Sydney, 1982), 162 n. 103; and Hunt ("Successors" [n. 2 above], 4). More wisely, Olivetti ("Sulle strage" [n. 2 above]: 75) calls it "leggendaria," and F. Paschoud (*Zosime: Histoire Nouvelle*, vol. 1 [Paris, 1971], 244) "une fable (d'origine arienne?)." See especially Tantillo, "Filostorgio e la tradizione" (n. 2 above).

⁶⁷ Di Maio and Arnold, "Per Vim," 194–95.

⁶⁸ Aquileia produced only a single solidus type for Constantine's tricennialia. Lyons and Aquileia produced silver but with anepigraphic obverses. Arles produced only a single silver type with Constantine II's name on the reverse. These mints are therefore not considered here.

⁶⁹ Constans probably resided at Milan, but it had no mint. Rome was the major Italian mint at the time.



Fig. 1. Constantine II, 334. Silver miliarensis, 5.09 g (1:1) Siscia, unpublished (same date as *RIC* 7.231–32 and same type as *RIC* 7 Trier 581)

Obv.: CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C
Laureate and cuirassed bust right
Rev.: CONSTANTINVS CAESAR / SIS
Four standards



Fig. 2. Constantine II, 337. Silver miliarensis, 3.95 g (1:1) Constantinople, unpublished (cf. *RIC* 7.124 with CONSΘ)

Obv.: anepigraphic
Diademed head right, looking up
Rev.: CONSTANTINVS CAESAR / C • I
Four standards



Fig. 3. Constans, 335–36. Solidus, 4.51 g (1:1) Constantinople, *RIC* 7.97

Obv.: FL CONSTANS NOB CAES
Laureate, draped, and cuirassed bust right
Rev.: CONSTANS-NOB CAESAR / CONS
Victory advancing left with wreath and palm frond



Fig. 4. Dalmatius, 335–36. Solidus, 4.57 g (1:1) Constantinople, *RIC* 7.98

Obv.: FL DELMATIVS NOB CAES
Laureate, draped, and cuirassed bust right
Rev.: DELMATI-VS CAESAR / CONS
Victory advancing left with wreath and palm frond

At Trier, four silver *miliarensis* types were struck with obverse legends naming only Constantine and his three sons and reverse legends again naming only Constantine and his three sons around four standards (*RIC* 7 nos. 580–85). In Rome this series was produced on smaller silver *siliquae* with anepigraphic obverses and reverses with advancing Victory or with three palm branches (for a victorious augustus and two caesars, a revived type from 324) and legends naming Constantine and his two eldest sons (nos. 377–80). On the Antiochene *siliquae* the obverses are also anepigraphic and the advancing Victory reverses name Constantine, Constantine II, and Constans (nos. 105–7). No doubt coins were originally produced for Constans at Rome and Constantius at Antioch, since these were their home mints, after all. Even though these silver coins were produced after his accession, no similar type was struck in the name of Dalmatius at these mints.

Trier, Rome, and Antioch did, however, strike small bronze coins in Dalmatius's name; these will be discussed below (see Figs. 24–25 for the type). It was only on the prestige issues, those intended particularly for imperial payments to the army and the civil service, that the existence of Dalmatius as a caesar was implicitly denied in the period before May 337. Thus from the very beginning, Constantine's sons not only seem not to have fully accepted the legitimacy of Dalmatius and viewed him as an interloper, but also appear to have communicated with one another on this point and agreed on a common response. It would therefore appear that they did not accept the rehabilitation of Theodora's side of the family and the high honors their father had paid his half brothers and their families.

The suppression of a real or perceived threat against the brothers is implied by a reverse type on small bronze *nummi*⁷⁰ from the mint at Rome (controlled by Constans). Whereas all issues of *nummi* from the other mints retain the GLORIA EXERCITVS one-standard types issued since the end of 335 (described below, IV.6; see Figs. 20–25), at Rome the reverses of all *nummi* issued between the death of Constantine and the promotion of the three caesars change to SECVRITAS REI PVB(licae), with a figure of Securitas leaning on a column (see Fig. 5, a

slightly later issue).⁷¹ This indicates that a specific incident must have taken place in which Constans wanted his audience to believe that the empire's security had been maintained or protected.

Finally, and most important, there is the evidence of a twin issue of coins, extending from 337 to 340 and clearly linked to the aftermath of the massacre. Soon after the death of Constantine (the chronology will be established below in section IV.6) two new obverse and reverse types were issued on bronze *nummi* from the mints of the emperors' chief residences only: Trier (Constantine II), Rome (Constans), and Constantinople (Constantius II). On the obverse of one type is a portrait of Theodora with the legend FL MAX THEODORAE AVG; on the reverse, an image of Theodora as maternal Pietas, standing right and holding a baby on her left arm and her right breast with her right hand, with the legend PIETAS ROMANA (see Figs. 6–10).⁷² The dative of the legend marks this type as commemorative and posthumous. A parallel commemorative type was also produced for Helena, grandmother of the three sons of Constantine, with the obverse legend FL IVL HELENAE AVG. The reverse legend, however, was PAX PVBLICA, with Helena as Pax, holding an olive branch and a transverse spear (see Figs. 11–16).⁷³ These two types were essentially the same, obverse and reverse, no matter what the mint, with the exception of the crown type and minor differences in the legend break.⁷⁴ This indicates central design and dissemination.

71 *RIC* 7:346, nos. 402–4, issued only in the names of Constantine's sons. This reverse continued on the *nummi* into later 339 for only Constantius and Constans alongside the renewed GLORIA EXERCITVS type (*RIC* 8:250–51).

72 *RIC* 8 Trier nos. 43, 48, 56, 65, 79, 91 (pp. 143–44); Rome nos. 28, 54 (pp. 250–51); Constantinople nos. 36, 50, 51 (pp. 449–50); see also pp. 6–7, 79–80, 126, 234, 442. Theodora is otherwise unattested as augusta (she does not appear in the list of augustae in Barnes, *New Empire* [n. 3 above], 9). Kent suggests that she received the title posthumously (*RIC* 8:3), but there is no evidence that she was *not* augusta before mid-337 either, so I leave the matter to one side. However, it would be most revealing if the brothers promoted her posthumously to augusta at this time.

73 *RIC* 8 Trier nos. 42, 47, 55, 63, 64, 78, 90 (pp. 143–44); Rome nos. 27, 53 (pp. 250–51); Constantinople nos. 33–35, 38, 48, 49 (pp. 449–50).

74 Trier: Helena: diadem with pearls, Theodora: laurel or diadem; Rome: H: diadem with pearls, Th: diadem with pearls; Constantinople: H: diadem with and without pearls, Th: diadem with pearls. In addition, each has three minor variants regarding the break in the obverse legend (for Helena, the variants appear only at Constantinople, and all three variants appear for Theodora there as well [note that variant T2 was missed in *RIC* 8]).

70 The standard name of this coin, *foliis*, has no ancient authority. Here I use the generic later term, *nummus*, which just means a “bronze coin.” By this date these small *nummi* were probably worth 100 denarii and were therefore almost certainly the coins that are later referred to as *centenionales* (see R. S. Bagnall, *Currency and Inflation in Fourth Century Egypt*, *BASP* Supplement 5 [Atlanta, 1985], 34, 44).

At Trier these coins were produced in great numbers during the interregnum (see Appendix 2). After that there were six major changes of mintmark between September 337 and April 340.⁷⁵ The Helena and Theodora types were struck with all six of those marks, meaning that they were struck routinely throughout the two-and-one-half year period. Furthermore, they are, with one exception (*RIC* 8 no. 82), as common as or (usually) more common than the other types struck at the same time (the Roma and Constantinopolis commemoratives, and those in the names of the three brothers and their father; nos. 37–92).

On the other hand, mintmarks and hoards show that, unlike the Trier issues, the Theodora and Helena types from Rome and Constantinople were not struck until after the brothers had been proclaimed augusti. At Rome, which like Trier went through six changes of mintmark (*RIC* 8 nos. 2–55), the Helena and Theodora types were struck with only two of those marks, the second and the last, thus in 337/38 and early 340 (nos. 27–28, 53–54). In both cases they were struck in small numbers, less than or equal to the other obverse types with the same mark. At Constantinople the mintmarks changed much less frequently (*RIC* 8 nos. 23–54), but the two issues for Helena and Theodora, and the one for Helena alone, were much smaller than those with other obverses, and the numbers for the first Helena issue were much higher than those for Theodora (nos. 33–36, 38, 48–51). Thus, as at Rome, these types were produced much less frequently and in smaller numbers at Constantinople than at Trier.

These coins were produced until ca. April of 340, when Constantine II was killed in his civil war against Constans. This, combined with other facts—that the majority of these coins were produced at Trier, the capital of Constantine II; that the earliest issues appeared at Trier; that they were struck regularly at Trier; that there was an obvious reluctance to produce them at Rome and Constantinople; and that the types were centrally designed and disseminated—indicates that Constantine II was the one responsible for designing and producing them, as well as convincing his brothers to do likewise.

No coins had ever before been issued in the name

⁷⁵ *RIC* 8 Trier nos. 37–43 all carry the same mark, in spite of the differing placement of the + in the field. I do not include Kent's last-listed mintmark in this analysis. Since it appears only on issues for Constantius and Constans, it seems to have been employed after Constantine II's death (*RIC* 8 Trier nos. 93–95).



Fig. 5. Constantius II, 337. Æ 3, 1.66 g (1:5:1)
Rome, *RIC* 8.7
Obv.: D N FL CONST-ANTIVS AVG
Laureate and rosette diademed bust right, draped and cuirassed
SECVRI-TAS REI PVB / R S
Securitas standing facing, head right, legs crossed, holding long scepter in right hand, left elbow leaning on a column



Fig. 6. Theodora, 338/39–40. Æ 3, 1.68 g (2:1)
Constantinople, *RIC* 8.50
Obv.: FL MAX THEO-DORAE AVG
Bust with plain mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PIETAS-ROMANA / CONSE
Pietas facing, head right, carrying an infant at her breast



Fig. 7. Theodora, 338/39–40. Æ 3, 1.33 g (2:1)
Constantinople, *RIC* 8.50/51 (unpublished obverse legend break)
Obv.: FL MAX THE-ODORAE AVG
Bust with plain mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PIETAS-ROMANA / CONSE
Pietas facing, head right, carrying an infant at her breast



Fig. 8. Theodora, 338. Æ 3, 1.67 g (1:1)
Rome, *RIC* 8.28
Obv.: FL MAX THE-ODORAE AVG
Bust with plain mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PIETAS-ROMANA / R • E
Pietas facing, head right, carrying an infant at her breast



Fig. 9. Theodora, 338/39. Æ 3, 1.98 g (2:1)
Trier, *RIC* 8.79
Obv.: FL MAX THEO-DORAE AVG
Bust with plain mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PIETAS-ROMANA / TRP
Pietas facing, head right, carrying an infant at her breast



Fig. 10. Theodora, 337/38. Æ 3, 1.52 g (2:1)
Trier, *RIC* 8.65
Obv.: FL MAX THEO-DORAE AVG
Bust with plain mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PIETAS-ROMANA / •TRP•
Pietas facing, head right, carrying an infant at her breast



Fig. 11. Helena, 337-38. Æ 3, no weight (2:1).
Constantinople, *RIC* 8.33
Obv.: FL IVL HE-LENAE AVG
Bust with ornamental mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PAX PV-BLICA • / CONSE
Pax standing left, holding branch and transverse scepter



Fig. 12. Helena, 337-38. Æ 3, 1.50 g (2:1)
Constantinople, *RIC* 8.33
Obv.: FL IVL HE-LENAE AVG
Bust with ornamental mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PAX PV-BLICA • / CONSE
Pax standing left, holding branch and transverse scepter

of Theodora; also, since her death ten years earlier there had been no other coins in the name of Helena. The appearance of these types for Constantius I's two wives as a linked, parallel issue, at virtually the same time as the massacre, is clearly significant, and each type derives additional meaning from its partner. The depiction of Theodora as maternal Pietas cannot but refer to the extirpation of her sons and grandsons, since the type clearly mirrors the SALVS REI PVBLICAE and SPES REI PVBLICAE types issued by Constantine between late 324 and mid-326 in honor of the reproductive abilities of Fausta, who is depicted on the reverse holding her infant sons Constantine and Constantius (who at the time were actually between seven and ten years old; see Figs. 17-19).⁷⁶ The type must therefore be seen as an act of expiation to Theodora as the mother of Constantius I's children and grandchildren, nearly all of whom were dead when the type was first issued (see below). Their deaths were not intended to reflect poorly on her as a mother. The choice of PAX as a type for Helena also seems pertinent to the circumstances when seen in the context of what can only be described as a "civil war" within Constantine's family. If the Theodora type refers to her offspring, the Helena type must then refer to hers as well. It can only be intended as a promise of future "pax publica," "state/imperial peace," that is, peace among the leaders of the state (Helena's three grandsons) and their relatives (those on Theodora's side of the family).

It is easy to see then why the other two brothers objected to the production of these coins: they are subversive and in a very real way undermine the official versions of the events of 337 by highlighting the closeness of the events to the three brothers. It is no wonder that they were not produced on the more important gold and silver coinage.

III.3. *Synthesis and Summary*

The analysis above clearly demonstrates that Constantius's original impulse was to cover up everything with the *damnationes memoriae*, but the court was soon forced

⁷⁶ For a list of references to Fausta's many SALVS REI PVBLICAE and SPES REI PVBLICAE reverses, see *RIC* 7:749 and 753. Kent (followed by Di Maio and Arnold, "*Per Vim*" [n. 2 above], 195 n. 211) believes that the *nummi* for Theodora and Helena were issued from Trier before the massacre (*RIC* 8:7, 126). This raises obvious problems, which Di Maio and Arnold note, but like Kent they fail to realize that it is the coins that provide the best evidence for the date of the massacres.

(in stages, if we are to judge from Libanius and Julian) to disseminate an official position that the deaths were the result of a mutiny that was beyond Constantius's control. Eventually a decidedly unofficial version began to circulate widely that Constantius himself had prompted and promoted the soldiers' actions. As this version gained general acceptance, the court was forced, by the time of the reign of Gallus (351–54), to counter these charges, at least internally, not by continuing to deny them, but by admitting their truth with the claim that Constantius had genuinely repented of the deed, which he blamed for his many later failures (as indeed he may have done). This version eventually became public. Later writers, for whom these events were history rather than contemporary news, took the official and the many and varied unofficial versions in circulation and, for religious and political reasons, altered them or combined them in defense of either Constantine or Constantius, producing hybrids previously unknown. Attempts on the part of modern scholars to mix these distinct traditions, thereby themselves creating new versions, or to admit anything from the late narratives of Philostorgius or Rufinus are, to my mind, misguided, because they fail to consider the promulgation and chronological development of the various versions, official and otherwise.

In general, there have been two modern approaches to the above evidence: the first discounts as hostile propaganda the accounts that attribute the massacre directly to Constantius. After all, most sources that mention his involvement are manifestly hostile toward him. This leaves one to fashion a reconstruction from the official versions and private explanations found in Eusebius, Libanius, Julian, Gregory, and the *KG*: in response to Constantine's deathbed decision that only his sons should succeed him and out of fear of a possible usurpation of imperial power on the part of at least one of Theodora's descendants (as a result of that decision?), the army declared that they would have no emperors but Constantine's sons and set about murdering Theodora's descendants and their supporters; Constantius was somehow tricked into acquiescing in this at first and was anyway helpless to stop it in the face of the army's violence, but he was able to rescue Gallus and Julian (or have them rescued) and then finally to suppress the rebellion with great difficulty.

The alternative view is that Constantius, almost certainly as a result of conflicts concerning the succession with Julius Constantius and his relatives and without the immediate consent of his brothers, instigated the



Fig. 13. Helena, 337–38. Æ 3, 1.52 g (1:1)
Constantinople, *RIC* 8.33
Obv.: FL IVL HE–LENÆ AVG
Bust with ornamental mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PAX PV–BLICA • / CONSE



Fig. 14. Helena, 338. Æ 3, 1.87 g (2:1)
Rome, *RIC* 8.27 (unpublished mint mark)
Obv.: FL IVL HE–LENÆ AVG
Bust with ornamental mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PAX PV–BLICA / R • Q
Pax standing left, holding branch and transverse scepter



Fig. 15. Helena, 337. Æ 3, 1.59 g (2:1)
Trier, *RIC* 8.42
Obv.: FL IVL HE–LENÆ AVG
Bust with ornamental mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PAX PV–BLICA / $\frac{+}{TRB}$
Pax standing left, holding branch and transverse scepter



Fig. 16. Helena, 337–38. Æ 3, 1.49 g (2:1)
Trier, *RIC* 8.47 (unpublished mint mark)
Obv.: FL IVL HE–LENÆ AVG
Bust with ornamental mantle and necklace, hair elaborately dressed
Rev.: PAX PV–BLICA / • TRS
Pax standing left, holding branch and transverse scepter



Fig. 17. Fausta, 324–25. Æ 3, 3.70 g (1.5:1)
Trier, *RIC* 7.459
Obv.: FLAV MAX–FAVSTA AVG
Bust with bare head, waved hair, necklace, and ornamental mantle
Rev.: SALVS REI–PVBLICAE / STR
Salus standing facing, looking left, head veiled, two infants in her arms



Fig. 18. Fausta, 324–25. Solidus, 4.54 g (1.5:1)
Nicomedia, *RIC* 7.77
Obv.: FLAV MAX–FAVSTA AVG
Bust with bare head, waved hair, necklace, and ornamental mantle
Rev.: SALVS REI–PVBLICAE / SMN
Salus standing facing, looking left, head veiled, two infants in her arms



Fig. 19. Fausta, 326–28. Æ 3, 2.39 g (1:1)
Thessalonica, *RIC* 7.161
Obv.: FLAV MAX–FAVSTA AVG
Bust with bare head, waved hair, necklace, and ornamental mantle
Rev.: SPES REI P–VBLICAE / SMTSA
Spes standing facing, looking left, head veiled, two infants in her arms

massacre in order to accomplish two purposes: first, to abandon his father's plan—a return to a tetrarchic system in which the descendants of Constantius I and Theodora and their supporters wielded great power through official appointments, marriage connections, and behind-the-scenes advisory positions—and to allow the promotion of all three brothers to the rank of augustus; second, to remove any opportunity for future power, influence, or interference from current or future descendants of Theodora. Gallus and Julian survived either because they were perceived as being of no immediate threat and so were allowed to live, or because they were rescued (by Mark of Arethusa?). It was believed at the time that Constantine's sons would eventually have sons of their own, and so Gallus and Julian would live out their lives in exile and obscurity. The underlying problem was that Theodora's fecundity meant that there were simply too many legitimate claimants to the throne for any real security for Constantine's sons and their descendants—the threat of future civil war was quite real—especially in view of the attacks made by some against Constantine's legitimacy, both as a son of Constantius I and as emperor. No son of Constantine would have been unaware of the influence that Galerius had had over Diocletian in 305 in removing Maxentius and Constantine from the succession and appointing his own creatures, Severus and Maximinus, in their place as caesars. It would have been easy to see Julius Constantius, Flavius Dalmatius, or even Ablabius in the Galerius role. It was therefore a matter not just of removing Dalmatius and Hannibalianus from office, but of purging their fathers, all other possible contenders for the purple, and all those who supported them and Constantine's tetrarchic plans. In this context the “rescue” of the two youngest males, Julian and Gallus (rescued in the sense that they were not targeted by Constantius in the first place), would make sense.

Of the two views, only the latter is consistent with all the evidence. This is best demonstrated through a point-by-point summary analysis.

1. The weaknesses of the official explanation. The first problem is that a fundamental part of the official explanation must be immediately rejected as false: Constantine did not have a deathbed conversion regarding his succession, and he could not “bequeath” the empire to his sons. That his sons were not proclaimed augusti until 9 September disproves the official version on its most essential point. Second, once this patently false device has been removed it seems implausible in the extreme that

the army of its own accord—without a leader?—would have rejected Constantine's almost two-year-old settlement plan, rebelled against Constantius (a commander they knew and under whose command they were about to campaign against the Persians), and assassinated so many members of the imperial family and their supporters including a caesar. That was *maiestas*, plain and simple, on a scale unparalleled in Roman history. The result would have been the high-profile execution of large numbers of commanders and subordinates and the cashiering of entire units in the aftermath of such an outrage against the emperors' family. And yet there is no hint of such a response. No emperor could ever have allowed such an attack upon the imperial family to pass without severe reprisals, even if he had allowed the attack and did profit from its outcome: the precedent would have been far too dangerous. And even if one credits the possibility of such a revolt, one might expect the troops to have been content with the heads of Dalmatius and Hannibalianus, and perhaps Julius Constantius and his brother, Dalmatius, as well, since they were the only ones with imperial offices and powers and thus the only ones posing an immediate threat to Constantine's sons and their succession. The removal of all potential dynastic threats to the brothers and of their male supporters, but no women, not even the wives or daughters of those murdered, does not sound like the result of a spontaneous mutiny of ill-disciplined troops. Furthermore, without the emended passage from the *KG* (via Aurelius Victor) there is simply no evidence for any previous hostility on the part of the troops toward Dalmatius, his family, or their supporters.

In fact, according to the *KG*, Dalmatius had been popular with the soldiers and seems to have possessed virtues and talents lacking in Constantine's sons. As a result, he and his many relatives, some of whom had been elevated by Constantine to positions of power and prestige, posed a serious threat to the brothers and their sole hold on power, especially if they held appeal in military and political circles, which is likely, since Dalmatius père had been a military commander himself in Oriens (Cyprus and Tyre). As Julian and Ammianus hint, the matter seems to have come to a head when Constantine's halfbrothers and nephews became involved in arguments with Constantius over the details of succession. The spark of a heated confrontation over the succession that was fanned by longstanding fears on Constantius's part of a dynastic threat from Julius Constantius, his brother, and their families is a more plausible hypothesis than a

sudden desire on the part of rampaging soldiers that only Constantine's sons should succeed him, in violation of Constantine's express and already implemented plans. Pragmatically and politically, Constantius's actions are completely understandable and explicable. The official version is neither. As Seneca said, "Cui prodest scelus, is fecit" ("The one who benefits from a crime is the one who committed it").⁷⁷

2. The precious metal coinage. The sons of Constantine did not name Dalmatius on any gold or silver struck at their home mints while Dalmatius was caesar and still alive. From the beginning we find evidence for hostility toward Dalmatius on the part of the other caesars and a coordinated response to his accession as caesar on the part of all three.

3. The *damnationes memoriae*. There is no place for any *damnatio memoriae* in the official version, since the descendants of Theodora were the innocent victims of a mutinous army. It must be remembered that there is no claim in any official explanation that there actually was a usurpation, only that the troops feared it. And the clear implication of all the official versions that survive imply that this fear was erroneous and unfounded.

The *damnationes* prove that the massacre was not an accident, as does the response of Constantine's sons to the deaths of their relatives. It is just as Pohlsander says with respect to the death of Fausta in 326 and whether it could have been accidental:

We must answer "no" . . . for then the bereaved emperor would have ordered a splendid funeral, orations, and monuments. Her name would not have been erased from inscriptions. Eusebius would have lauded her in his *Vita Constantini*, and her sons would have honored her memory.⁷⁸

77 *Medea* 500, quoted by Olivetti, "Sulle strage" (n. 2 above), 79. In this light we must consider Constans's possible role as well. We must also remember the example of the purges of members of previously imperial families and their supporters undertaken in the East by Licinius after his defeat of Maximinus in the summer of 313 that were intended to leave the newly linked families of Constantine and Licinius as the sole legitimate imperial dynasty. For this, see Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (n. 2 above), 64 and, more generally, M. Humphries, "From Usurper to Emperor: The Politics of Legitimation in the Age of Constantine," *JLA* 1 (2008): esp. 97–99: "Constantine was not only an accomplished master [at constructing legitimacy], but also an excellent teacher. His sons learned the lesson well, and put it into action repeatedly: first in 337 . . ." (p. 99).

78 Pohlsander, "Crispus" (n. 6 above), 103.

The same would have been true for Dalmatius and Hannibalianus, if not for the rest of the family, had they been the innocent victims of a mutiny. In clear contradiction to the various official versions that we know of, it is Theodora's descendants who were in 337 treated as being guilty of a state crime, not the army, which was later forced to shoulder the blame. This crime may lie behind the tendentious account of Eusebius, but it is not even hinted at anywhere else.

What we do not and cannot know is what this crime was. What could Julius Constantius and Theodora's relatives have been charged with that would justify a *damnatio*? There is nothing in the surviving sources, unless it was in fact usurpation, a charge that indirectly influenced Gregory, Eunapius (*VS*), Rufinus, Philostorgius, and Theodoret, but if so, it was quickly dropped officially. This is, however, just speculation.

4. The later treatment of Gallus and Julian. First of all, the exile of Gallus and Julian makes no sense in the context of the official explanation, which was not designed to explain the survival or later treatment of the two boys, since it was never expected that they would rise to positions of power or notoriety. The exile is nothing more than an extension of the hostility that gave rise to the massacre, and that hostility clearly emanated from Constantius, not from the army.

5. The involvement of Constantius in the assassination of Ablabius. This is described in detail by Eunapius in his *Lives of the Sophists*, though the accuracy of the specifics is open to doubt, such as Ablabius's propensity for usurpation. In his *History* Eunapius (via Zosimus) makes it clear that Ablabius's death was part of the general massacre; Jerome tells us that "multi nobilium" died along with Ablabius. His death had nothing to do with any mutiny, yet it was part of the massacre undertaken by the army. Furthermore, Constantius seized Ablabius's estates as he did the property of the other victims.

6. The testimony of Julian. There is no serious reason to doubt the evidence of Julian, the closest we have to an eyewitness. His hostility toward Constantius is insufficient to vitiate what he says, especially in the light of the support it receives from the other evidence. His account of the excuses given to him and his brother in particular seems completely trustworthy and matches the diachronic shifting of the justifications found in other sources. Moreover, when he touches upon events for which we do have other good evidence (such as the death of his brother), his accounts are trustworthy.

7. The *KG*'s account has often found the most favor with modern scholars, but its author clearly favored Dalmatius and, as was seen above, it was composed when written accounts of Constantius's involvement were first appearing, when the imperial court was beginning to admit Constantius's involvement in the face of these accusations, and while Constantius was still alive. As a result, it presents a transitional account between the official and the unofficial versions, not an unbiased view of reality.

8. The Helena and Theodora *nummi*. The appearance of these coins at this critical moment, issued only from the mints of the brothers' capitals and no others, indicates a very close and specific connection between the brothers and these coins, and therefore between the brothers and the massacre. It is hard not to conclude that these coins were an act of expiation, aimed directly at the memory of "pia" Theodora, the wife of their grandfather Constantius, presented on the reverse as the epitome of Roman maternal *pietas* at the very moment when her children and grandchildren had just been slaughtered and suffered *damnatio memoriae*. In this light, the facts—that these coins were begun and issued in the greatest numbers by, and came to an abrupt end with the death of, Constantine II (the only one who stood to gain nothing from the removal of Dalmatius, the only one who actually stood to lose territory with the promotion of Constans to augustus [see n. 27], and therefore the one least likely to have been involved in any plot)—take on a new meaning, especially in view of their subversive message. If the assassinations had been the spontaneous acts of a mutinous army in Constantinople (or somewhere in its vicinity), there would have been no need for such a personal statement, instigated by Constantine II, who was far away in Trier, and no need for a parallel issue for Helena, who had no connection with Theodora's descendants or the supposed uprising.

9. As a minor and subsidiary point, it is also possible that there was a precedent for the use of soldiers to remove imperial threats. The *Origo Constantini imperatoris* appears to say that in 325 Constantine ordered Licinius to be assassinated in a military revolt: "Sed [Constantinus] Herculi Maximi socii sui motus exemplo, ne iterum depositam purpuram in perniciem rei publicae sumeret, tumultu militari <cunctis> exigentibus"⁷⁹ in

79 The manuscript reads "tumultum militari exigentibus," which Mommsen emended to "tumultu militaribus exigentibus." His

Thessalonica [Licinium] iussit occidi" (5.29). Now there are different ways of translating this, but the natural way (it seems to me) is to take the ablative phrase "tumultu . . . exigentibus" not as coordinate with "motus exemplo" on the other side of the purpose clause ("influenced by the example of his father-in-law . . . and also because the soldiers mutinously demanded his death," as Rolfe puts it in the Loeb translation), but as part of the infinitive phrase, which immediately follows: "influenced by the example of his father-in-law Maximian Herculus⁸⁰ he ordered [Licinius] to be killed in Thessalonica in a military revolt with everyone demanding his death, so that he might not to the detriment of the state take up a second time the imperial power that he had laid aside."

In view of the above, the only internally consistent and plausible reconstruction follows the narratives of Julian and Eunapius. Only this version of events can take account most plausibly of *all* the literary, epigraphical, and numismatic evidence, the *damnationes*, the obvious political motivation, and the attempted cover-up. The official version relies on implausible and factually inaccurate details and is contradicted by other facts. Finally, it must be remembered that eventually even Constantius gave up on the official version.

Many different scenarios for the massacre and the events surrounding it that are consistent with the above evidence can be hypothesized, but we, unlike others, must resist the urge to create order and clarity where none exists.

IV. THE CHRONOLOGY

IV.1. *The Date of the Promotion of Constantine's Sons*

Part of the problem in evaluating the events of the summer of 337 is that every source but one assumes that Constantine's sons succeeded their father upon his death on 22 May. This is logical, since that was the normal practice in the empire, his sons were already caesars and thus already marked out as his successors, and that was how

the sons later presented the events. There is only one source for the actual date of the promotion, the *Descriptio consulum* (s.a. 337.2), and it gives 9 September 337, that is, three and a half months after the death of Constantine.⁸¹ Strange though this date may be, the source itself is very nearly contemporary, having been compiled in ca. 342, and it is the sole source for many other important Constantinian dates that are or appear to be accurate, so its testimony has authority.⁸²

This date is partially confirmed by a letter of Constantine II written on 17 June 337 and by a law of 2 August of the same year. The letter of Constantine II was written almost a month after Constantine's death, but Constantine II still refers to himself as caesar, not augustus, as he certainly would have done had he been augustus at the time.⁸³ In this letter Constantine II explicitly refers to the death of his father and is clearly exercising his new role as senior emperor by restoring Athanasius to his see in Alexandria. Although it does not provide a date for the promotion, it confirms the basic fact of the *Descriptio* that the brothers were not promoted by Constantine before his death, or by the armies, the senate, and the people immediately afterward.

Of two laws surviving from the summer of 337, one was almost certainly issued in Constantine's name after his death—*CTh* 13.4.2 (= *CIC CI* 10.66.1), dated ("data") 2 August 337—which indicates that the brothers still had not promoted themselves by 2 August. No location is given for the law, which is addressed to (Valerius) Maximus, a praetorian prefect whose posting at this date is unknown (see below, section IV.2). Another law, *Fragmenta Vaticana* (*Frag. Vat.*) 35,⁸⁴ issued by the augustus and the caesars (their actual names do not appear), bears the date of 29 August 337, but was originally written in Constantinople in the February before Constantine's death (= *CTh* 3.1.2, dated 4 February 337).⁸⁵

⁸¹ Even though Jerome had a version of the *Descriptio* in front of him when he calculated the length of Constantius's reign (twenty-four years, five months, and thirteen days, p. 234), he did so from Constantine's death.

⁸² See Burgess, *Chronicle of Hydatius* (n. 43 above), 191–97, with corrections in Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 270. The *Consularia Constantinopolitana* is Mommsen's name for the *Descriptio consulum*.

⁸³ Athanasius, *Defence against the Arians* (*Apologia contra Arianos* [*Apol. c. Ar.*]) 87.4–7 and *Hist. Ar.* 8.2.

⁸⁴ J. Baviera, *Fontes iuris Romani antejustiniani*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1940), 469–71.

⁸⁵ The conflicting dates of *Frag. Vat.* 35 and *CTh* 3.1.2 are easily explained. *Frag. Vat.* 35 is a complete copy of the law as it was sent from

emendation has been followed by Rolfe, Moreau/Velkov, and König, but the expression "tumultu militari" is so common (see, e.g., n. 45) that it must remain. Boissvain suggested "cunctis" as a supplement.

⁸⁰ Maximian had twice resumed power after having been forced to retire: Barnes, *New Empire*, 13 and Kienast, *Kaisertabelle* (both n. 3 above), 273.

Nevertheless, the delay makes clear the turmoil caused by the final preparations for the Persian war, by Constantine's illness, and then by his death.

Eusebius ever so subtly refers to this strange period when Constantine appeared to be still ruling after his death when he says ἐβασίλευε καὶ μετὰ θάνατον μόνος θνητῶν . . . ἐπράττετο τε τὰ συνήθη ὡσανεὶ καὶ ζώντος αὐτοῦ, τοῦτο μονωτάτῳ αὐτῷ ἀπ' αἰῶνος τοῦ θεοῦ δεδωρημένου (*VC* 4.67.3; "Alone of mortals . . . he reigned even after death, and the customs were maintained just as if he were alive, God having granted this to him and no other since time began").

As will be described below (section IV.6 and Appendix 2), the coinage of Arles, Rome, and Trier indicates a significant length of time between the death of Constantine and the promotion of his three sons during which coins continued to be struck in the names of the three sons as caesars alone.

All the above evidence serves to confirm the accuracy of the date in the *Descriptio consulum*.

IV.2. *Modern Scholarship*

Most scholars accept that the massacre took place at some date before 9 September 337 without stating why, though some suggest a date shortly afterward, and even a date as late as 338 is still espoused by some.⁸⁶ The most explicit and careful of all modern accounts of the massacre was that of T. D. Barnes, who dated it to the period between

2 August and 9 September on the basis of *CTh* 13.4.2 of 2 August 337 (noted above in section IV.1), which shows that Valerius Maximus—assumed to be Dalmatius's praetorian prefect on the basis of *AE* 1925.72, where his name is supplied for an erasure in an inscription dated to the summer of 337—was still praetorian prefect.⁸⁷ Since the erasure means that Maximus suffered *damnatio memoriae*, he must have died with Dalmatius, and since an imperial rescript was addressed to him on 2 August, he must have died after that date.

As it stands, Barnes's argument for the date of the massacre is cogent and was a great advance over the jumbled thinking of earlier and even later scholars. However, another, more complete Greek copy of *AE* 1925.72 shows that both these inscriptions must date to 335/36 and that the missing prefect's name is Valerius Felix, not Valerius Maximus.⁸⁸ Thus, although Valerius Maximus was prefect on 2 August 337, we do not know whose prefect he was. It may be that the erasure of Valerius Felix's name was related to the massacre in the summer of 337, but strictly local reasons alone may have governed his removal from the inscription.⁸⁹ The date of post-2 August must therefore be abandoned.

IV.3. *The Literary Sources*

The *KG* noted that the death of Dalmatius had happened "haud multo post" ("a little after") the death of Constantine (Eutropius 10.9.1) or "confestim" ("immediately") afterward (Victor 41.22). This indicates a date soon after 22 May 337. Victor notes that Constantine II, who was killed in early 340, fell three years after the death of Dalmatius (41.22), which is thus placed in 337. Jerome, also

Aquileia by the praetorian prefect to the corrector of Picenum and includes the *data* date at Aquileia as well as the *accepta* date at Alba (18 September). *CTh* 3.1.2 is an excerpt of sections 3–5 of this law and preserves the chronological details from the original issuance of the law in Constantinople seven months earlier. The difference in the dates is the result of a delay in the proclamation of the law to the praetorian prefects. *Frag. Vat.* has also mistakenly taken on the year of the previous law (313).

⁸⁶ Olivetti ("Sulle strage" [n. 2 above], 70) and Chantraine (*Nachfolgeordnung* [n. 2 above], 5–6 n. 10) give useful and extensive summaries of the various dates. Charles Pietri ("La politique" [n. 2 above], 122–23) tries to use Jerome to date the assassinations to 338, a common mistake (see below at n. 90). Klein ("Kämpfe" [n. 2 above], 115–18) dates the massacre to 338 and the meeting of the brothers to June 338. Browning (*Emperor* [n. 2 above], 34–35) dates it shortly after 9 September. Potter (*Roman Empire* [n. 2 above], 688 n. 89) still follows Seeck in using Julian's age to date the massacre to the very end of 337 or early 338. See O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, vol. 4, Anhang (Berlin, 1911), 391–92, and *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste für die Jahre 311 bis 476 n. Chr.* (Stuttgart, 1919), 186, which places the massacre between January and March 338 and the meeting in May to July. However, for Julian's age, see Bowersock, *Julian* (n. 2 above), 22.

⁸⁷ See Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (n. 2 above), 261–62; idem, *New Empire* (n. 3 above), 8 and n. 34, 134–35; and idem, *Athanasius and Constantius* (n. 35 above), 34–35, 218, 219, 224, with *New Empire*, 85–87. See also Klein, "Kämpfe" (n. 2 above), 115–16 and *PLRE* 1:591, s.v. "Maximus 49."

⁸⁸ D. Feissel, "Une dédicace en l'honneur de Constantin II César et les préfets du prétoire de 336," in G. Dagron and D. Feissel, "Inscriptions inédites du Musée d'Antioche," *TM* 9 (1985): 421–34; Di Maio and Arnold, "Per Vim" (n. 2 above), 195–98; T. D. Barnes, "Praetorian Prefects, 337–361," *ZPapEpig* 94 (1992): 249–51 (= *From Eusebius to Augustine* [Aldershot, Hampshire, 1994], paper XIII); P. Porena, *Le origini della prefettura del pretorio tardoantica*, *Saggi di storia antica* 20 (Rome, 2003), 466–87, and pull-out chart between pp. 582 and 583; and A. Coşkun, "Die Praefecti praesent(al)es und die Regionalisierung der Praetorianer praefecturen im vierten Jahrhundert," *Millennium* 1 (2004): 286–91, 302, 327.

⁸⁹ See Feissel, "Dédicace," 424–25.

relying on the *KG*, places the assassination of Dalmatius after that of Ablabius and between two entries relating to the siege of Nisibis (234^c); in spite of the claims of some scholars, this indicates 337 and not 338, since Shapur began the siege of Nisibis almost immediately after the death of Constantine (June to August 337).⁹⁰

The panegyric of Julian, and perhaps that of Libanius (discussed in section III), indicate that Constantius's problems with the army occurred immediately after his father's death and before the brothers' meeting in Pannonia to work out the division of the empire. Julian indicates the same in his *Oration to Heracleius the Cynic* (*Or.* 7.228A–B) when he says that the massacre took place as a result of quarrels over the division of the empire following Constantine's death.

Gregory states that the massacre happened Κωνσταντίου . . . ἄρτι παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς διαδεξαμένου τὸ κράτος and ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς βασιλείας ("when Constantius had just received power from his father" and "at the beginning of his reign"; *Or.* 4.21 and 22). Libanius says it was Κωνσταντίνος μὲν οὖν τετελευτήκει νόσῳ ("When Constantine had fallen ill and died"; *Or.* 18.10). Ammianus likewise says "inter imperandi exordia" ("right at the beginning of [Constantius's] reign," 21.16.8) and "post fratris Constantini excessum" ("after the death of [Julius Constantius's] brother, Constantine"; 25.3.23), all clear references to the summer of 337.

Ablabius's assassination has often been separated from that of the others on the basis of the narrative of his death given by Eunapius (*VS* 6.3.9), which seems to imply the passage of some time between Constantius's dismissal of Ablabius immediately after the death of his father and Ablabius's eventual assassination.⁹¹ However, Zosimus's detailed account of the massacre (2.40) also derives from Eunapius (his earlier *History*, though, which he refers to here: *VS* 6.3.8–9) and there Ablabius is explicitly included within the main massacre. Jerome (*Chron. can.* 234^c) places his entry concerning Ablabius's death right after the accession of Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans, and before the murder of Dalmatius, which he also describes (from the *KG*). Since Jerome had two different

sources for these events, we cannot tell whether he had a reason for placing the murder of Ablabius before that of Dalmatius or not. Furthermore, Jerome notes that many others died along with Ablabius ("multi nobilium"); if we were to accept that Ablabius was killed later, we must not only discount Jerome's chronology but also accept that there were two separate massacres, which is unmentioned by any other source and implicitly denied by Eunapius (via Zosimus).

Eunapius does claim that Constantius acted against Ablabius only after he had been allotted his portion of the empire, and since Constantius sent the assassins from Constantinople, the date would appear to be after Constantius's return from Pannonia, which was late September 337 (see section V, below). But it seems clear that Eunapius has fallen into the natural, but erroneous, assumption made by all ancient sources but the *Descriptio* that Constantine's sons succeeded their father immediately upon his death. Thus Eunapius is in fact dating the dismissal and assassination of Ablabius to the time during which Constantius resided in Constantinople between his arrival from Antioch and his departure for Pannonia (on which, see section IV.7, below). This is consistent with the other literary sources.

IV.4. *The Legal, Epigraphic, and Papyrological Evidence*

The laws are of no help for dating the massacre since, although Dalmatius's name would have appeared in the superscription to every law issued until his death, along with Constantine, Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans, all these names were removed by the later compilers of the *Theodosian Code* except that of Constantine, the sole augustus.⁹² After 9 September, the laws chiefly bear the name of Constantius, retroactively senior augustus for all laws between 337 and 340 after the *damnatio memoriae* of Constantine II in 340. This shows that even if the laws had preserved the names of the caesars, Dalmatius's name would have been removed by

⁹⁰ See Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 233–38.

⁹¹ E.g., Klein "Kämpfe" (n. 2 above), 114 n. 17; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 262; idem, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca, NY, 1998), 133 n. 17; Hunt, "Successors" (n. 2 above), 4 (citing Jerome; on whom, see below); and Frakes, "Dynasty" (n. 2 above), 99.

⁹² See Bagnall et al., *Consuls* (n. 11 above), 73 and S. Corcoran, "Hidden from History: The Legislation of Licinius," in *The Theodosian Code*, ed. J. Harries and I. Wood (Ithaca, NY, 1993), 107. For the editorial process involved in producing the laws of the *Code*, see J. F. Matthews, *Laying Down the Law: A Study of the Theodosian Code* (New Haven, 2000), 121–67, 200–253.

the compilers because of the *damnatio memoriae* against him.⁹³

Nor are inscriptions of much assistance, apart from the negative fact that there is no known inscription that refers to the three sons of Constantine without their father but with Dalmatius, and no inscription with Dalmatius's name is independently dated.⁹⁴

The papyri, however, are somewhat more forthcoming than the laws and inscriptions, though even so the results are disappointing. Oxyrhynchus and many other cities of Egypt used regnal years as a means of dating. The normal system treated each Egyptian civil year, beginning with New Year's Day, 1 Thoth (29 August), as a new regnal year, regardless of when the emperor actually came to power, with the fraction of a year between the date of accession and the end of that calendar year always being counted as year one, even if it was only a few months or weeks long. The regnal years of multiple augusti and caesars were added together to form strings, such as "year 31-21-13-4-2"—which is the Egyptian form of the year from 29 August 336 to 28 August 337—listing the regnal years of the emperors in order of seniority—in this case, of Constantine, Constantine II, Constantius, Constans, and Dalmatius, respectively. Unfortunately, this method of dating began to fall out of fashion in most cities between 309 and 316 as consular dates and indictions replaced the cumbersome regnal year formulae, but for some reason they continued in use in Oxyrhynchus.⁹⁵

We have no documents from 335-36, the first year of Dalmatius's rule, but from 336-37 (= 31-21-13-4-2) we have *POxy* I 92.4 (15 Oct. 336), *POxy* XLVIII 3385.4 (9 Nov. 336), *SB* VI 9191.9 = 9270 (undated, but with a reference ahead to 28 August, the last day of the year), and *SB* XIV 12057.4 (undated).⁹⁶ *PCollYoutie* II 82.11 = *POxy* XLV 3266, written on 20 Mesore (13 August) 337, makes a reference to the upcoming year (which started on 29 August 337) as "32-22-14-5-3," though no other papyrus of 337/38 actually refers to this year as such. Thus on

13 August 337 Oxyrhynchus knew nothing of Dalmatius's death or *damnatio memoriae*. However, the retention of Constantine's regnal year here does not necessarily mean that Oxyrhynchites were also unaware of Constantine's death. His regnal years continued to be used as a sort of "era" until 354/55 (*POxy* LX 4092.10).⁹⁷

The earliest fully dated papyrus after *POxy* XLV 3266 (13 August 337) is *POxy* XLVIII 3386, of 2 Pharmouthi (28 March) 338, dated year "32-22-14-5," thus retaining all regnal years except that of Dalmatius. No papyrus later than 13 August 337 includes the regnal year of Dalmatius.

This now raises the question of the speed of the dissemination and employment of news from Constantinople. In the fourth century the names of the new consuls normally appear on Egyptian documents within a month or two of proclamation, even though the seas were closed to shipping.⁹⁸ The change of regnal years in dating formulae following imperial accessions and deaths is a little harder to gauge because of the relative paucity of the evidence and the fact that news of an emperor's death or accession was acted upon at different times in different places (even within cities and nomes), with the result that while some scribes were using new dates or had discarded old ones, others had not done so.⁹⁹ But where there is sufficient evidence to make reasonable judgments, between the late third and late fourth centuries the average time lag is about four months for news of imperial accessions or deaths to be disseminated and appear in

93 A similar problem, but with regard to Licinius, who also issued laws and suffered later *damnatio*, is discussed by Corcoran, "Hidden from History," 97-119.

94 *CIL* 10:8015 (where Dalmatius is called AVG and NOBILISSIMO CAES) is obviously in error, as *CIL* 10:8021 shows.

95 In general, see A. Chastagnol, "La datation par années régnales Égyptiennes à l'époque constantinienne," in *Aïôn: Le temps chez les Romains*, ed. R. Chevallier, Caesarodunum 10bis (Paris, 1976), 221-38, and R. S. Bagnall and K. A. Worp, *Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 2004), 43-45.

96 Bagnall and Worp, *Chronological Systems*, 251.

97 And then, with the accession of Julian, Constantine's regnal year was dropped and the regnal years of Constantius and Julian became fossilized, creating an "Oxyrhynchite era" that began in 355-56 with year "32-31" and continued at least to 668/69 with year "345-14." For this, see *ibid.*, 56-62. Something similar had already happened earlier with the retention of Galerius's regnal years (alone, without his colleagues' years). He died in his nineteenth regnal year, but there are preserved instances of years twenty to twenty-six (Chastagnol, "Datation" [n. 95 above], 235-36, with Bagnall and Worp, *Chronological Systems*, 8-9, 246-49).

98 Bagnall et al., *Consuls* (n. 11 above), 29-30.

99 For instance, Galerius died in early May of 311, yet still appears twice in full dating formulae in the Arsinoite nome in August 311 and in Oxyrhynchus on 3 Sept. 311, even though in Oxyrhynchus at least his death was known by July 311 and acknowledged with the removal of his name from consular dates (though it still appears in other consular dates there in late August 311). It is not until 2 Dec. 311 that we have evidence for his removal from the regnal year formulae. See Bagnall and Worp, *Chronological Systems*, 177 and 246-47. Even in the years that concern us here there are strange delays: *POxy* XXXI 2571 is dated to 27 July 338 by consuls (line 22), yet still refers to τῶν πάντων ἀνικῆτων τῶν δεσποτῶν αὐτοκράτορ(ός) τε καὶ καيسάρων ("all the unconquered masters, the augustus and caesars," 15-17).

use on Egyptian papyri, with the delay increasing as the fourth century progressed and as regnal year formulae, rather than consular dates, indictions, and eras, became less commonly used.¹⁰⁰

As a result we can see that *POxy* XLV 3266, which shows Dalmatius's regnal year still in use on 13 August 337, tells us nothing about the date of Dalmatius's death. On the other hand, the fact that Dalmatius's regnal year is missing from *POxy* XLVIII 3386 of 28 March 338 strongly confirms that his death and *damnatio* cannot have occurred any later than the end of 337.

IV.5. *A Victory Title*

Constantius took the title of *Sarmaticus* at some point between 337 and 340. The only opportunity he had to confront the Sarmatians was the summer of 337.¹⁰¹ There was no time for such a campaign once his brothers had arrived, and while in Pannonia he discovered that he was needed on the frontier to respond to the Persian siege of Nisibis and the Armenian revolt and so would have been anxious to conclude his necessary business and depart as quickly as possible. Besides, as of 9 September the diocese of Moesia reverted officially to Constans, who was then responsible for undertaking any necessary campaigning himself, as he in fact did for the next three years.¹⁰² There is no record of Sarmatian activity on the frontier between 334 and 337, though Constantine did campaign in Dacia in 336, and Dalmatius's position in Naissus was clearly intended as a deterrent to further hostile activity. It seems highly unlikely that the Sarmatians would have started stirring up trouble while Dalmatius was there or later while any or all the brothers were present on the frontier. It seems most plausible then that they were acting in response to news of Constantine's death and to Dalmatius's departure (and that of important army commanders?) for the funeral in the capital.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ The evidence is presented by R. S. Bagnall and K. A. Worp, *Regnal Formulas in Byzantine Egypt*, BASP Suppl. 2 (Missoula, MT, 1979), 9–44 and Bagnall and Worp, *Chronological Systems*, 56–57, 224–51.

¹⁰¹ T. D. Barnes, "Two Victory Titles of Constantius," *ZPapEpig* 52 (1983): 229–35 (= *From Eusebius to Augustine*, paper XIV) and Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius* (n. 35 above), 219.

¹⁰² He, too, took the title *Sarmaticus* in 338 (though it is just possible that he and Constantius conducted a joint campaign in the summer of 337). See Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 3 above), 199; idem, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 224; idem, "Victory Titles" (n. 101 above), 230–31; and *RIC* 8:340.

Constantius's campaign thus belongs in the period June to August of 337.¹⁰⁴

Constantius's victory over the Sarmatians presents us with an important piece of chronological evidence. The army that Constantius would have used for this campaign was the Danubian army, which ought to have been under the command of Dalmatius, who had been based at Naissus and had controlled the central and eastern Balkan dioceses (the Moesias and Thrace).¹⁰⁵ If Constantius was commanding Dalmatius's army and taking a victory title in his territory in June–August of 337, Dalmatius was already dead and Constantius had already claimed his territory.

IV.6. *The Numismatic Evidence*

The date of the massacre can be pinned down very exactly through an analysis of the immediately contemporary bronze coinage, struck in the names of Constantine and his caesars as well as in the names of Helena and Theodora. The numismatic arguments are of a rather technical nature and so only the general conclusions are presented here. The details are presented in full below in Appendix 2 for those who wish to follow them up. Most footnotes relating to the material included both here and in the appendix will be found only in the appendix.

Since late 335 the mints in both East and West—Lyons, Trier, Arles, Rome, Aquileia, Siscia, Thessalonica,

¹⁰³ For this problem in general in the third and fourth centuries, see M. Kulikowski, "Constantine and the Northern Barbarians," in Lenski, *Cambridge Companion* (n. 2 above), 352–65.

¹⁰⁴ The calendar of Philocalus (written in 354) notes the celebration of a single day of circuses for a victory over the Sarmatians on 27 July (July, *CIL* 1¹:268 and *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2:251 with p. 488). This notice almost certainly refers to one of two victories: Constantine's in 323 (for which, see Kulikowski, "Constantine" [n. 103 above], 359) or Constantius's in 337. I believe that in 354 Constantius would have maintained a celebration for his own Sarmatian victory, rather than his father's, but there is no certainty. H. Stern (*Le Calendrier de 354: Étude sur son texte et ses illustrations* [Paris, 1953], 81, and cf. p. 82) believes that the form of the notice suggests that it is pre-Constantinian. But any tetrarchic commemoration (it can hardly be earlier) would have been in recognition of the great victory of 294 that was advertised so heavily on the silver coinage of the period (which victory was, in fact, the only victory specifically named on tetrarchic coinage: C. H. V. Sutherland, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. 6, *From Diocletian's Reform (A.D. 294) to the Death of Maximinus (A.D. 313)* [London, 1967], 705: from the mints of Trier, Ticinum, Rome, Siscia, Thessalonica, Heraclea, Cyzicus, Nicomedia, Antioch, and Alexandria) and that victory took place in the autumn (Barnes, *New Empire*, 53 n. 32).

¹⁰⁵ Barnes, *New Empire*, 199.



Fig. 20. Constantine I, 337. Æ 3, 1.18 g (2:1)
Siscia, *RIC* 7.261
Obv.: CONSTANTINVS MAX AVG
Laureate and rosette diademed bust right, draped and cuirassed
Rev.: GLOR-IA EXERC-ITVS / ASIS*
Two soldiers, helmeted, standing looking at one another, inner hands on shield resting on ground, reversed spear in outer hands; between them, one standard



Fig. 21. Constantine II, 337. Æ 3, 1.97 g (2:1)
Siscia, *RIC* 7.262
Obv.: CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C
Laureate and cuirassed bust right
Rev.: GLOR-IA EXERC-ITVS / BSIS*
As no. 20



Fig. 22. Constantius II, 336–37. Æ 3, 1.7 g (2:1)
Nicomedia, *RIC* 7.201
Obv.: FL IVL CONSTANTIVS NOB C
Laureate bust right, draped and cuirassed
Rev.: GLOR-IA EXERC-ITVS / SMNT
As no. 20



Fig. 23. Constans, 337. Æ 3, 1.54 g (2:1)
Siscia, *RIC* 7.264
Obv.: FL CONSTANTIS BEA C
Laureate bust right, draped and cuirassed
Rev.: GLOR-IA EXERC-ITVS / ASIS*
As no. 20

Heraclea, Constantinople, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, Antioch, and Alexandria—had issued only one reverse type on the small bronze *nummi* for Constantine and his caesars: two soldiers bearing a single standard or vexillum between them, with the legend GLORIA EXERCITVS (= GE (1); Figs. 20–25).¹⁰⁶ This reverse type continued until 341. A number of issues of the GE (1) type for Constantine and his four caesars from the mints in Arles, Rome, and Trier in addition to the Helena and Theodora series from Trier described above (III.2) provide the necessary evidence for dating the massacre.

That we can date very precisely the change of the obverse types of the *nummi* from Trier, Arles, and Rome is due to the very frequent changes of mintmark at these mints. No other mint provides us with this type of evidence. Throughout 336 and into 337 all five members of the imperial college were represented on the obverses of the standard GE (1) reverse type at Trier and Arles, right down to the very beginning of the final mintmark of each series, the same mark that introduces the following series in the names of the three brothers as augusti. At the point of the change to the final mintmark, coins minted for Constantine and for Dalmatius almost immediately disappear, and at about the same time. After the cessation of these two obverses, the same mintmark continues to appear on a large number of issues with the GE (1) reverse in the names of only Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans as caesar.

At Rome we have a similar situation. Into 337 all five members of the imperial college are represented by the standard GE (1) reverse, but with the change to the last mintmark of the series (the same mintmark that is used for the first issues of the three brothers as augusti), Dalmatius disappears from the obverses of the GE (1) type. At about the same time, the GE (1) reverse for Constantine is replaced with a new short-lived reverse, unique to Rome and very rare: VIRTVS AVGVSTI (Fig. 26). The GE (1) reverse for his three sons as caesar is then replaced by SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE, which was maintained for them throughout the interregnum (Fig. 5). A Dalmatius obverse never appears with a SECVRITAS reverse.

Thus at all three mints all five members of the imperial college are originally represented on the *nummi*. Then Constantine and Dalmatius disappear at virtually the

¹⁰⁶ In the following discussion I shall ignore the common *Vrbs Roma* and *Constantinopolis* types, which are irrelevant to my purposes here since they do not name or depict any member of the imperial family.

same time. Likewise, coins produced for Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans as caesar continue after the cessation of those produced for Constantine and Dalmatius, in large numbers at Arles and Trier.

Hoards allow us to establish very exactly the chronological stages of the bronze issues from Trier (see Appendix 2), and their evidence leads to four important conclusions. First, as noted above, the GE (1) reverse type was struck in the name of all five members of the imperial college and then minting in the name of Constantine and Dalmatius was stopped at virtually the same time, just after the change to the new mintmark. Second, minting of the Helena and Theodora types began while Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans were still caesar. Third, these first Helena and Theodora types were produced in very large numbers, which indicates that striking must have begun early and been continuous throughout the interregnum. And fourth, these two types became the dominant issues of the mint at Trier during the interregnum, accounting for between 30 and 60 percent of the total in the hoards studied.

On the basis of section III.2, above, and Appendix 2, below, it is reasonable to argue the following. As will be seen below (IV.7 and Appendix 3), news of Constantine's death arrived quite quickly in Trier, certainly by the end of the second week of June. Minting in the name of Constantine stopped immediately. The small numbers of coins struck in the name of Dalmatius with the contemporary mintmark shows that minting in his name cannot have continued long after the cessation of Constantine's issues. The same pattern can be seen at Arles and Rome, which would have received their striking orders somewhat later than Trier. The longer the period one posits between the death of Constantine and the death of Dalmatius, the more difficult it is, first, to account for the near simultaneity of the cessation of the minting of *nummi* in their names, and, second, to accommodate the large emission of Helena and Theodora types from Trier before the appearance of the issues of the three brothers as augusti (toward the end of September 337). Trier was routinely producing large numbers of the regular bronze issues at the time,¹⁰⁷ so there is no reason to assume that

production was stepped up to produce the Helena and Theodora issues once the Constantine and Dalmatius types had been abandoned. But there is no question that the balance of production shifted to the latter two types (see III.2, above).¹⁰⁸

Two conclusions must therefore be drawn from the above analysis: first, that Dalmatius was murdered very soon after Constantine's death, and probably earlier in June rather than later; second, that at Trier the Theodora and Helena types followed the cessation of coins in the name of Constantine and Dalmatius almost immediately, at the same time as the VIRTUS AVGVSTI and SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE types began to be produced at Rome.

IV.7. *The Evidence of the Itineraries*

At the time that Constantine first fell seriously ill at Pythia Therma (*BAtlas* 52 E3, around the bay and southwest of Nicomedia), Constantius was in the East, probably at Antioch, awaiting the arrival of his father and a contingent of the army in order to launch a campaign against the Persians.¹⁰⁹ Constantine II was in Trier, Constans was probably in Milan, or perhaps Rome (we do not know), and Dalmatius was in Naissus (*CIC CI* 5.17.7, with Barnes, *New Empire*, 87). Of the two eldest sons, Constantius was obviously the closest to his father. Eusebius states that Constantius and his brothers were not summoned until Constantine's body returned to Constantinople. That is unbelievable. Constantine and Constantius would have been in constant communication with each other in the lead up to the Persian war, and Constantius would have learned immediately of his father's illness, if only from their couriers. No one would have dared to keep back news of such an important event until the body had been embalmed and then returned to the capital.¹¹⁰ As noted above, Julian first states that Constantius hastened to his dying father's side while the

issues from 347, involving both officinae but only reverses, shows no links among 148 coins.

¹⁰⁸ It is possible, but less likely, that minting of all other types was stopped at a later date in the *interregnum* and that the majority of the mint output was then dedicated to the Theodora and Helena types.

¹⁰⁹ For the background to this, see n. 25. For Constantius in Antioch, see Zonaras 14.4.28 and Barnes, *New Empire*, 85.

¹¹⁰ See M. Di Maio, Jr., "Zonaras, Julian, and Philostorgius on the Death of the Emperor Constantine I," *GOTR* 26 (1981): 121–22, and n. 31, and Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 225–26 and n. 133.

¹⁰⁷ See R. A. G. Carson and A. M. Burnett et al., *Recent Coin Hoards from Roman Britain*, British Museum Occasional Paper 5 (London, 1979), 91. Of 79 coins analyzed from the Chorleywood hoard with the mintmark •TRP•, there was not a single reverse die link. Studies of earlier issues from both officinae and on both reverses and obverses produced one obverse link and one reverse link out of 373 coins, while a study of



Fig. 24. Dalmatius, 335–37. Æ 3, 1.4 g (2:1)
Antioch, *RIC* 7.112
Obv.: FL DELMA–TIVS NOB C
Laureate and cuirassed bust right
Rev.: GLOR–IA EXERC–ITVS / SMANI
As no. 20



Fig. 25. Dalmatius, 335–36. Æ 3, 1.75 g (2:1)
Siscia, *RIC* 7.256
Obv.: FL DELMATIVS NOB C
Laureate bust right, draped and cuirassed
Rev.: GLOR–IA EXERC–ITVS / BSIS
As no. 20



Fig. 26. Constantine II, 337. Æ 3, 1.5 g (2:1)
Rome, *RIC* 8.4 (unpublished bust type)
Obv.: VIC CONSTA–NTINVS AVG
Laureate and rosette diademed bust right, draped and cuirassed
Rev.: VIRTVS–AVGVSTI / R P
Emperor, bare-headed and in military dress standing facing, head turned right, holding reversed spear in right hand and resting left hand on shield

latter still lived, implying that he had been summoned (*Or.* 1.16D); later he states that Constantine actually did summon him (*Or.* 2.94B). This claim is perfectly reasonable. It was vital that at least one of the two eldest sons receive promotion before their father's death, and so it seems almost certain that he summoned Constantius, as physically the closest of his two eldest sons, almost as soon as he had fallen ill.

The shortest trip for a messenger from Nicomedia to Antioch is via the standard route through Nicaea, Ancyra, Parnassus, Archelais (Garsaura), Tarsus, and Issus (see Appendix 4 route 1 and the map).¹¹¹ There were approximately 740 Roman miles and thirty-four *mansiones* between these two cities.¹¹² In view of the

¹¹¹ Any such messenger, and those to be mentioned numerous times below, would have depended upon the *cursus publicus*. On which, see A. Kolb, "Transport and Communication in the Roman State: The *Cursus Publicus*," in *Travel and Geography in the Roman Empire*, ed. C. Adams and R. Laurence (London, 2001), 95–105.

¹¹² All the data for routes, distances, and *mansiones* in the following section are derived from the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, the *Imperatoris Antonini Augusti itineraria prouinciarum et maritimum*, and the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*: K. Miller, *Itineraria Romana: Römische Reisewege an der Hand der Tabula Peutingeriana* (Stuttgart, 1916 [Rome, 1964]), O. Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana* 1 (Leipzig, 1929), and P. Geyer and O. Cuntz, *Itinerarium Burdigalense*, in *Itineraria et alia geographica*, CCSL 175 (Turnhout, 1965). In addition, see in particular K. Brodersen, "The Presentation of Geographical Knowledge for Travel and Transport in the Roman World: *Itineraria non tantum adnotata sed etiam picta*," and B. Salway, "Travel, *Itineraria* and *Tabellaria*," both in Adams and Laurence, *Travel and Geography* (n. 111 above), 7–66. There is no doubt that these lists as they exist today contain inaccuracies, and their measurements, even if accurate textually, may not be accurate measurements of the actual distances (although Roman methods for measuring such distances were surprisingly sophisticated). However, these are exactly the sorts of documents that every traveler in the Roman world had and it was according to such documents that travelers would have planned their journeys. Thus it would not matter whether the distance between two *mansiones* was fifteen or eighteen miles, the fact is that a traveler knew he could cover such a distance in a day with little effort. Two *mansiones* twenty-five miles apart required a solid day's traveling. It should also be noted that for the most part travelers had to travel in units of a *mansio*. If a journey was 100 miles and there were four evenly spaced *mansiones*, one cannot simply postulate a speed of forty miles per day and conclude it only took two and half days to travel the 100 miles at that speed, since there would not have been any *mansiones* at the forty- and eighty-mile marks and thus there was nowhere to stop unless the area was well populated and the road had many towns or villages along the way. *Mutationes* were available along the way between *mansiones*, but these were for those using the *cursus publicus* mainly to change horses. For this reason, in the discussion below I try to deal in terms of *mansiones*, rather than simple averages. There are also discrepancies among the three itineraries regarding the actual number of *mansiones* in certain places and in some cases they also offer different routes (see the comparison table for the Egyptian routes of the three itineraries and a papyrus itinerary from Theophanes'



This map is based upon the relevant maps in *BAtlas*; Konrad Miller, *Itineraria Romana: Römische Reisewege an der Hand der Tabula Peutingeriana* (1916; reprinted Rome, 1966); and Otto Cuntz, *Itineraria Romana*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1929), as well as the maps of the Ancient World Mapping Center (<http://www.unc.edu/awmc/mapsforstudents.html>). Drawn by Karen Rasmussen (archeographics.com).

evidence presented in Appendix 3 for the speed of travel on foot and horseback, even with the mountainous terrain of the route between Ancyra and Tarsus, an emergency messenger bearing news of the emperor's serious illness and perhaps imminent death to Constantius, and thus traveling at top speed, should have been able to make it to Antioch within six days, covering six *mansiones* or between 125 and 145 miles per day, with only four *mansiones* and sixty-four miles on the last day. Constantius

dossier [see Appendix 3] in C. Adams, "There and Back Again: Getting Around in Roman Egypt," in Adams and Laurence, *Travel and Geography* [n. 111 above], 161). In addition, some roads were wide, straight, and well paved, others could be narrow, winding, unpaved, or in various states of disrepair, which would slow travelers down. As a result, all the figures I use for *mansio* numbers, distances, and times are by necessity inexact to a certain degree.

had a longer return journey, just over 800 Roman miles and thirty-eight *mansiones*, since he had to travel on to Constantinople, though the last leg of the journey from Nicomedia could have been traversed more quickly by ship (see Appendix 4 route 2 and the map). It is unlikely that he could have traveled as fast as the original messenger, since he would not have been traveling on his own, but two or three *mansiones* a day is too conservative an estimate, given the various examples noted in Appendix 3 and how important it was for Constantius to arrive at his father's side as soon as possible.¹¹³ If he traveled four *mansiones* per day (five on the first day to

¹¹³ No doubt along the way he met the messenger who was traveling to tell him of Constantine's death and the plans for the preparation of the body for the funeral.

Mopsuestia for ninety-five miles and five on the second to last day, putting him in Nicomedia, for 107 miles) he could average between eighty-two and ninety-five miles per day, with sixty-five on the last day. Unencumbered (εὐζωνος, Libanius, *Or.* 59.74), he could cover this distance in exactly nine days.

If we assume Constantius was summoned when Constantine first fell ill,¹¹⁴ he would have arrived in Constantinople at the very end of May or the very beginning of June. Even if we allow that he was not summoned until Constantine had in fact died, he still could easily have been in Constantinople by 6 June. The funeral would have followed immediately, since by then Constantine's body would have been embalmed, returned to Constantinople, and lain in state for seven days (see Eusebius, *VC* 4.66–67 and 70).

Athanasius states that he met Constantius at Viminacium (*Defense before Constantius* [*Apologia ad Constantium* (*Apol. ad Const.*)] 5.2). The only time that both Constantius and Athanasius could have been in Viminacium at the same time was either when Constantius was battling the Sarmatians on the Danube or when he was awaiting his brothers in Pannonia and Athanasius was returning from Trier to Alexandria.¹¹⁵ The date therefore must be the summer of 337.¹¹⁶

We know that Athanasius was in Trier on 17 June when he received the letter from Constantine II readmitting him to his see (see Appendix 3). He arrived in Alexandria on 23 November of the same year, 159 days later.¹¹⁷ According to the itineraries, the total length of Athanasius's journey from Trier to Alexandria was approximately 3,352 Roman miles (see Appendix 4 route 4 and the map). A journey of this distance averaged over 159 days gives a speed of twenty-one miles per day, which is exactly what one would expect for someone traveling normally on foot (see Appendix 3), assuming stops of more than a day in some places (as at Viminacium) and

other days with quicker travel. There are, in fact, about 154 *mansiones* along the way, so Athanasius did indeed travel an average of one *mansio* per day. Since there were about fifty *mansiones* between Trier and Viminacium, and probably no one for him to visit along the way, it thus took Athanasius a maximum of fifty days to travel from Trier to Viminacium, a total of about 1,161 Roman miles (by the longest route), at an average speed of twenty-three miles per day, arriving in Viminacium at the latest on 6 August, depending on when he left Trier (I have assumed 18 June). If he had no one to visit (and it seems most likely that he did not), he probably traveled somewhat faster than his average. Although Theophanes was able to travel two *mansiones* per day on about half the days of his journeys (see Appendix 3), the *mansiones* along Athanasius's route were spaced too far apart for this to have been practical as often. Constantius must therefore have been in Viminacium no later than the first week of August 337 or rather, more probably, the last week of July.

Although Constantius met Athanasius at Viminacium, it was hardly the type of city that would have suited a meeting of the imperial brothers. Sirmium was a more fitting location, being a centrally and strategically located military center (especially for campaigns against the Sarmatians), with an imperial residence, mint (at many and various times during the fourth century, starting in 324, though not in 337), and arms factory. It had been the imperial capital of Diocletian (285–296) and Licinius (308–316), and Constantine had spent much time there himself while on campaign between 317 and 329, especially June to August 317, October 318 to April 319, May to August 320, June to September 321, May to July 322, and March to April 329.¹¹⁸ Most important, it is in Pannonia, where Julian says that the brothers met (*Or.* 1.19A and 20C).

Barnes believes that Constans may have been in Aquileia on 29 August (the date of *Frag. Vat.* 35; see above, IV.1) with his praetorian prefect, just before heading to Pannonia to meet with his brothers and accept promotion to augustus on 9 September,¹¹⁹ but this cannot be the case. Aquileia is certainly much closer to Sirmium than either Trier or Constantinople, between 399 and 416 miles, and sixteen or seventeen *mansiones*,

114 Malalas's statement that he was ill for six days (*Chron.* 13.14; Thurn, 249) seems reliable but cannot be verified.

115 See Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius* (n. 35 above), 34–35, 41. Viminacium is just over the border from Pannonia in Moesia, but the discrepancy will be explained below.

116 Barnes (*ibid.*, 219) suggests July 337. A. Martin (*Athanase d'Alexandrie et l'église d'Égypte au IV^e siècle (328–373)* [Rome, 1996], 394–95) September. See also Di Maio and Arnold, "Per Vim" (n. 2 above), 198–207.

117 *Festal Index* 10 with Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 34–36.

118 See Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (n. 2 above), 8, 9, 32, 68, 72, and *idem*, *New Empire* (n. 3 above), 49 and n. 16, 51, 52–53, 69, 73–78, 80.

119 Barnes, *New Empire*, 86–87.

depending on the route taken (see Appendix 4 route 5 and the map). It would have been necessary for Constans to have traveled at forty miles per day to arrive in Sirmium on 8 September (assuming he left on 30 August), but that seems unlikely in the extreme. There is no reason why Constans would still have been in Aquileia at the end of August and then make a mad dash for Sirmium at the last minute. Furthermore, such a timetable would leave him no time to conduct the contentious and difficult negotiations that we know took place (see below). However, there is no reason why Constans and his praetorian prefect should necessarily have been in the same city at the same time. When Constans traveled to meet with his brothers, his prefect would simply have remained as close to him as practicable while still remaining within Italy to carry out his duties. Therefore, the presence of Constans's praetorian prefect in Aquileia in fact indicates that Constans was already in Sirmium on 29 August.

These dates then—17 June in Trier for Constantine II, the last week of July (or first week of August) in Viminacium for Constantius, and 29 August in (or close to) Sirmium for Constans—give us our parameters.

There can be no doubt that the most important and pressing issue facing the brothers after their father's death was meeting together to be promoted to *augusti* by the army, then having this proclamation forwarded to Rome for acceptance by the senate and people, as Eusebius shows did in fact occur. It is clear from Constantine II's letter of 17 June that he was acting in his capacity as the senior emperor. It is possible that it was he who informed his brothers of the need to meet, and when and where. As we saw above, it was certainly he who devised the Helena and Theodora coins for all three. Although we do not know when he might have summoned his brothers, it must have been before the letter for Athanasius (17 June), since the promotion was of greater importance, and there was no reason (now obvious to us) why he would delay. It is also possible that it was, rather, Constantius who took the initiative and summoned his brothers soon after his arrival in Constantinople in early June. If so, the difference in the following timeframes is nevertheless minimal.

A message from Constantine II in Trier to Constantinople (the farthest of the two capitals) would probably have taken just about as long to arrive as the notification of Constantine's death, less a day (the distance between Nicomedia and Constantinople), given the urgency of the situation (see Appendix 4 route 3 and the map). This

would have been about nineteen days (see Appendix 3). If we assume that the summons was sent sometime between 11 and 17 June (see Appendix 3), the messenger would have arrived in Constantinople right at the end of June or during the first week of July. Sirmium is about 700 miles and thirty-four *mansiones* from Constantinople. Constantius could have completed a leisurely journey in seventeen days¹²⁰ and thus easily have been in Viminacium before the end of July (see Appendix 4 route 3 and the map).

It is about 1,063 miles from Trier to Sirmium and there were forty-five or forty-six *mansiones* (see Appendix 4 route 4 and the map). An easy march of two *mansiones* and about forty-five miles per day would have put Constantine II in Sirmium in a little over twenty-three days. He could thus very easily have been in Sirmium by the middle of July, having overtaken Athanasius. If, on the other hand, he had been summoned by Constantius, he still could have arrived there before the end of July (approximately forty-two days after the dispatch of Constantius's summons in early June).

We can say nothing about Constans, since we do not know where he was residing at this point, Milan or Rome, but the messenger sent to him would have arrived before the one sent to Constantius (or Constantine II) and he would have had a shorter distance to travel to Sirmium than his brothers (see Appendix 4 routes 3 and 5 and the map).

As noted above (at n. 103), I think it likely that Sarmatian activity on the Danube was prompted by knowledge of Constantine's death and Dalmatius's absence from the frontier. News of Constantine's death would have traveled quickly in the wake of the first messengers sent on 22 May, and the Sarmatians would have responded just as quickly. Messengers with news of hostilities could have reached Constantinople from the frontier within seven to ten days. In such a case, it could have been news of Sarmatian hostilities that prompted Constantius's departure from the capital, as early as the end of June—a departure made all the more imperative if the brothers had already decided to meet in Sirmium, a city close to Sarmatian territory. Conversely, it could have been the need to quell the Sarmatian uprising that determined the location of the brothers' meeting. Constantius could easily have covered three *mansiones* per day throughout

¹²⁰ At two *mansiones* per day he would have faced a journey of more than fifty miles a day only three times.

his journey, and he could have been in Sirmium in less than twelve days, and in Viminacium or Naissus in even less time.

As a result of the above analyses, it is clear, first, that Constantius was probably present in Constantinople for a month or a month and a half at most: from early June to late June or mid-July. This is consistent with all the other evidence presented above. Second, it is clear that the brothers should easily have been able to accept promotion together at the end of July. They did not. What happened? We cannot know. Like the events surrounding the massacre, any number of plausible scenarios can be suggested, such as problems that delayed departure for one or more of the brothers, slow travel, complications in Constantius's preparations for the Sarmatian campaign, difficulties in subduing the Sarmatians, or problems during negotiations once the brothers did arrive, but we have no facts. All we can say for certain is that the itineraries indicate that the gap in time between Constantine's death and the promotion of his sons was not a result of the distances the brothers and their messengers had to travel. But beyond that and the parameters established above, we cannot proceed.

Once all three were in Sirmium, from the end of August at least if not before, they began their difficult and protracted negotiations.¹²¹ When these had been completed they were proclaimed augusti together by the Danubian armies on 9 September and news was sent to Rome for acceptance by the senate and people.

¹²¹ Julian's excessive protestations and his repeated claims of the brothers' *ὁμόνοια* ("unity") and *ἀρίστη ὁμόνοια* ("perfect unity"), of Constantius's giving his brothers *μηδεμία ἀφορμή μέμψεως* ("no occasion for complaint"), of his treating his brothers *δικαίως ἅμα καὶ σωφρόνως* ("at the same time justly and moderately"), and of his *σωφροσύνη καὶ μεγαλοψυχία* ("moderation and magnanimity"), all for the *ὁμόνοια* and *εἰρήνη* ("unity" and "peace") of all Romans, indicate just the opposite (*Or* 1.18D, 19A–20B, 2.94B–C). In *Or* 2.94B–C he admits that Constantine II and Constans quarreled and fought with each other (though not with Constantius, of course) until the former's death. Constantine II certainly was not satisfied with the final arrangements, as he demonstrated less than three years later (see n. 27, above). See *RIC* 8:7–8; Potter, *Roman Empire* (n. 2 above), 462; and Frakes, "Dynasty" (n. 2 above), 99–100. See also *RIC* 8:32, 125, 170; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 200 n. 14; and idem, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 311 n. 5 for the possibility that Constantine II tried to exercise a primacy over his brothers that they had clearly not agreed to. This would also seem to include a quasi-regency over the young Constans: see Bleckmann, "Bürgerkrieg" (n. 2 above), 236–41, esp. "Constantin eine Vormundschaft über seinen jüngeren Bruder Constans ausübte" (p. 239).

V. A Hypothetical Reconstruction

When Constantine was struck by illness at Pythia Therma, he quickly realized that it was serious and that his two eldest sons would have no easy means of promoting themselves to augustus if he died. He quickly had Constantius summoned as the physically closest of his two eldest sons, in case he should take a turn for the worse. No doubt he or his advisors believed that even *in extremis* he could promote Constantius to augustus in the presence of the army, and Constantius could then promote Constantine II. When Constantine finally died at noon on 22 May, before Constantius could arrive, swift messengers were sent officially to the four caesars informing them of their father's (and uncle's) death.

Constantius arrived in Constantinople from Antioch during the first days of June and immediately began preparations for his father's funeral, which must have taken place soon after, absent his two brothers, who remained in their capitals. By the end of June a meeting of the brothers had been arranged, either by Constantine II or by Constantius, to take place at Sirmium, a location central for all three, in order for them to find a way out of their constitutional difficulty and to arrange their territorial divisions. This meeting in neutral territory, not in Constantinople following the funeral, does suggest some tension among the brothers, but the location may simply have been in response to the Sarmatian uprising.

Constantius, it must be remembered, was only nineteen at the time and, although he possessed none of the genius that characterized Octavian at that age, he was certainly cunning and ruthless, and he had before him his father's bloody examples of solving family and dynastic problems. Indeed, Constantine's sons were all young: twenty or twenty-one, nineteen, and thirteen or fourteen. Constantius was married to Julius Constantius's daughter, his sister was married to Hannibalianus, son of Flavius Dalmatius, and Constans was betrothed to Ablabius's daughter, Olympias. The potential for interference with the brothers at best or their overthrow at worst at the hands of the elder Dalmatius, Julius Constantius, or Ablabius must have been obvious to Constantius. After his arrival in Constantinople, he dealt first with Ablabius by firing him and no doubt dissolving the betrothal of his brother to Olympias. There are enough hints in the literary sources, especially Julian, Ammianus, and Eunapius (Zosimus), to show that some type of disagreement soon arose between Constantius and his relatives (especially

his uncle Julius Constantius) concerning the succession. Almost certainly this dispute centered on the exclusion of Dalmatius and Hannibalianus from power, in spite of Constantine's obvious wishes, and attempts to free the three sons from any interference from their elder relatives. This decision to exclude Dalmatius may well have been made by the sons at a much earlier date, since as early as 335 they had clearly all agreed not to strike precious metal coins for him.

Almost certainly the massacres took place in Constantinople or its environs. It would be only natural for all of Constantine's physically closest relatives to gather there for his funeral, and that so many were killed all at once with their supporters suggests that most were in one place. Constantinople, rather than, for instance, Naissus, is the most obvious location for such a gathering. It was only twenty-three *mansiones* and 486 miles from Naissus, where Dalmatius and his father were based, so it would have been easy for them to have arrived in time for the funeral. Constantius was certainly in Constantinople when he had Ablabius assassinated (though Ablabius himself was not). The army, too, would no doubt have been present in the capital in large numbers for the funeral, and the excuses mentioned by Julian make it almost certain that Constantius and the "mutinous" army were in close physical proximity at the time of the massacre,¹²² as does the rescue of Julian and his brother, either by Constantius himself or, more plausibly, by Mark of Arethusa (who must have been in Constantinople rather than anywhere else). The army was employed to assassinate Julius Constantius, Dalmatius Caesar, Optatus, and Hannibalianus, and no doubt others, and it was then made the scapegoat for their deaths. Those not in the city, like Ablabius, were hunted down and killed by assassins. Excuses were made for their deaths as well (such as we read in Eunapius's *VS*). Constantius condemned Dalmatius, probably Julius Constantius, and perhaps others, then sent messengers to his brothers informing them of what had happened. At some date between the very end of June and the middle of July he set off for Sirmium. Constantine's plans were now in ruins.

In Gaul and Italy, Constantine II and Constans

immediately put the *damnationes* into effect and stopped minting coins for Dalmatius. Constans produced *nummi* with the *SECVRITAS REI PVB* reverse, as if the state had just been saved from some danger (Dalmatius and Julius Constantius, or the mutinous army?). Constantine II immediately initiated the Helena and Theodora issues, and after his arrival in Sirmium he forced his brothers to follow suit.

After reaching the Danube, Constantius quelled the threats from the Sarmatians with Dalmatius's army and took the title *Sarmaticus* in recognition of the victory (perhaps on 27 July). At the end of July he met Athanasius at Viminacium, perhaps while still on campaign. At some unknown date before 29 August his brothers arrived and they all began their contentious deliberations concerning the new division of the empire, now that Dalmatius was dead.

Libanius (*Or.* 59.73–74) indicates that Constantius received news of the Persian siege of Nisibis before the meeting with his brothers (though he dates it to the time of Constantine's funeral) and Julian says he learned of the Armenian revolt while he was meeting with them (*Or.* 1.18D–19A). Since the siege started somewhere around the middle of June¹²³ (we know nothing about the revolt), news traveling at the standard fifty miles a day would have taken almost four weeks to reach Constantinople and another two weeks to reach Sirmium from Constantinople.¹²⁴ The news probably traveled much faster, but it could not have overtaken Constantius before he had reached Sirmium (even assuming a late departure from the capital). But no matter what the situation on the frontier or how early news arrived, Constantius could not return until his business in Pannonia was done and he was augustus.

Constantius no doubt set out for Constantinople immediately after his promotion on 9 September, eager to return to Antioch. Shapur abandoned the siege of Nisibis around mid-August, and so that news probably reached Constantinople in mid-September at the latest. Thus by the time Constantius was able to reach Constantinople, before the last week of the month, he had already received the news of Shapur's retreat (as Libanius

¹²² If the massacre had happened anywhere else, the obvious excuse would have been that Constantius was not physically present and therefore was unable to have prevented the army's actions: how could he have? The "deception" that Julian mentions also indicates close proximity between Constantius and the army.

¹²³ See Burgess, *Studies* (n. 25 above), 232–38.

¹²⁴ News would probably have traveled from Nisibis via Antioch. As we have seen, it was about 800 miles from Antioch to Constantinople and more than 700 miles to Sirmium from Constantinople. It was almost 450 miles from Nisibis to Antioch via Edessa (following the *Tab. Peut.*).

notes, *Or.* 59.75) and could therefore turn his attention to other matters, chiefly the deposition of Paul and the ordination of Eusebius of Nicomedia as bishop of Constantinople.¹²⁵ He then returned to Antioch to prepare his response to Shapur's invasion.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The major conclusions of this paper, then, can be summarized briefly:

1. Constantine's three sons showed a marked hostility toward Dalmatius from the very beginning of his reign, refusing to strike gold or silver coins in his name at their home mints.
2. Constantine used the gold and silver coinage to promote his two eldest sons equally above the other two caesars in spite of Constantine II's seniority over Constantius. This confirms other evidence that indicates that Constantine was planning for a return to a tetrarchic system headed by Constantine II and Constantius, but one based on blood ties of family rather than simply ties of marriage, as was the case with the first tetrarchy. His sons were young and he intended that Flavius Dalmatius, Julius Constantius, Ablabius, and perhaps others would act as advisors to and perhaps even as regents for his sons and nephew until they were old enough to assume power on their own.
3. There can be no serious doubt that Constantius was behind the assassinations and that it was he who rejected his father's succession and dynastic plans, not the soldiers. This does not necessarily mean that the assassinations were planned in advance; they could have been, but they could as well have been the result of a spur-of-the-moment reaction on Constantius's part to some real or perceived impasse, difficulty, or threat on the part of Dalmatius, his family, or their supporters. We cannot know. Nor can we know how much his brothers (especially Constans) may

have known about whatever plans he may have had beforehand. Assassination need not have been a part of any plan there may have been to remove Dalmatius and his family from the succession and the positions of influence that had been granted to them over the brothers. The intention was at the time to remove Theodora's male relatives from the dynastic succession and to ensure that neither they nor their supporters could influence or threaten the three sons of Constantine at a later date. Constantius did, no doubt, feel remorse later on for his actions.

4. The assassinations took place in Constantinople or its environs in early June of 337. The details are lost to history, though many plausible scenarios can be imagined.
5. There was only one set of assassinations, in which all of Constantius's opponents were removed within a short space of time. The army was employed to murder Dalmatius Caesar, Julius Constantius, Optatus, and Hannibalianus, but assassins were dispatched from Constantinople to execute those, like Ablabius, who were not within the soldiers' reach. *Damnationes memoriae* were proclaimed against Dalmatius Caesar and probably Julius Constantius, if not others. We do not know the basis for these condemnations.
6. Constantius left Constantinople between the end of June and the middle of July to campaign on the Danube against the Sarmatians. He may have celebrated victory over them on 27 July (thus implying an early departure).
7. Constantius met Athanasius at Viminacium at the very end of July or the beginning of August 337.
8. The three brothers met in Sirmium, and although all could have arrived during July, we do not know why it took until 9 September for them to be proclaimed augusti by the Danubian army.
9. Constantine II was responsible for designing and issuing the Helena and Theodora *nummi*. They appear to have been an act of atonement to their step-grandmother for the assassinations of her sons and grandsons. Just as Theodora represented her dead sons and grandsons, so Helena represented her three living grandsons. Furthermore, Theodora represents maternal piety, while Helena represents a promised imperial peace (i.e., within the imperial family). These coins first appeared from Trier in the immediate aftermath of the news of the assassinations and were struck there in great numbers throughout

¹²⁵ Socrates, *HE* 2.7, with T. D. Barnes, "Emperor and Bishops, A. D. 324–344: Some Problems," *AJAH* 3 (1978): 53–75 (reprinted in *Early Christianity and the Roman Empire* [London, 1984], paper XVIII), 66 and Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius* (n. 35 above), 213 and 219.

the interregnum and continued to be struck in large numbers for the rest of Constantine II's reign. At their meeting in Sirmium, Constantine II compelled his brothers to strike similar coins at Constantinople and Rome, though they did so only reluctantly, intermittently, and in smaller numbers than at Trier. With Constantine II's death their production was immediately shut down at all mints.

10. The official version of the events evolved over time. At first there were the *damnationes* and nothing was said about the murders. Then the army was blamed and Constantius was presented as a hero for resisting their uprising and restoring order. Later Constantius was presented as helpless in the face of military deception and overwhelming odds against the mutinous soldiers. Finally his involvement was no longer denied and he was said to have repented of his role in the murders and to have blamed all the

great failures of his personal and professional life on his actions in 337.

More could perhaps be teased from the sources, and many alternative scenarios and plausible theories could be presented, but many readers, I am sure, may feel that I have already gone too far on too little as it is. So be it. But it is my hope that the evidence presented here will set our understanding of these events on a new and more solid footing, whether the individual or overall conclusions of this paper are accepted or not.

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Appendix I. Constantine's Plans for Succession as Seen in the Coinage

The joint and equal superiority of the two eldest caesars, Constantine II and Constantius II, over their two colleagues, Constans and Dalmatius, in the period 333 to 337 is made clear by the contemporary coinage.

At the mint in Constantinople, Constantine's home mint, on silver produced between 333 and 337 the two junior caesars are named on only one tiny issue in 337 (*RIC* 7 nos. 136 and 136A [see p. 719]), while Constantine II and Constantius have rough parity in (for the most part) twinned obverse and reverse types throughout the period: 333–34 (see pp. 718–19), *RIC* nos. 55–57A (see p. 718); 335–37 (see pp. 718–19), nos. 123–25, 127, 127A–30, 131B, 133–34, 135A (see p. 719). Apart from one nine-solidus medallion from 333 (*RIC* no. 67, in the name of Constans; described below) neither junior caesar is named on the gold between 333 and the very end of 335 (nos. 64–72, 87–89). They are named on a special issue, both obverse and reverse, in early 336 (nos. 97–98; cf. nos. 90–96) but from then until September 337 they are named on only one sesquisolidus (no. 102: Dalmatius; 1.5 solidi), an aureus (no. 106: Constans), a solidus (no. 113: Dalmatius), and a fraction (no. 121: Constans). In the gold the two senior caesars continue to share their

various twinned obverse and reverse types with an overall though not exact parity (nos. 65–66, 69–72, 93–96, 105, 109–12, 115–16, 119–20). Constantius had more solidus types in 333, the year of his quinquennialia (nos. 70–72), and Constantine II has more types celebrating his vicennialia in 336–37 (nos. 116, 119–20). Constantine II and Dalmatius are missing from the obverses of a donative *Festaureus* series in which Constans appears (nos. 103–6), though all four types (two for Constantine I) are represented by only one surviving coin each, so one type was probably originally struck for Constantine II as well, and perhaps for Dalmatius. Constantius alone is named on the obverses of two unique medallions minted at the end of 335 or very beginning of 336 (nos. 88–89; for the date see nn. 88–89, p. 583), though others naming Constantine II may well have been minted. The first (no. 88) depicts a nimbate Constantine I enthroned between two equal caesars (SALVS ET SPES REIPUBLICAE, “The Safety and Hope of the State”), obviously his eldest sons, while the other contemporary issue (no. 89) depicts him enthroned among all four caesars (SECVRITAS PERPETVA, “Eternal Security”), the outer caesars of equal height, the inner caesars of a much shorter yet equal height. The medallion

of 333 struck in the name of Constans noted above (no. 67) offers the same reverse legend and shows a standing Constantine I holding a parazonium (a short, sheathed sword cradled in the left arm, a sign of valor) and vexillum, flanked by two equal caesars each with a long scepter and shield and a much shorter caesar on his right with what appears to be a short staff in his right hand. On the reverse of no. 89 (above) it is the outer, taller caesars who each hold a parazonium. In all these reverses the parity of the two elder caesars is obvious, yet according to strict seniority one would expect all caesars to be of a decreasing size. Only the two elder brothers share a special reverse series of solidi and tremisses with their father (nos. 107–8, 114–20: VICTORIA CONSTANTINIAVG, VICTORIA CONSTANTINI CAES(AR), VICTORIA CONSTANTI [*sic*] CAESAR). Though Constantius is missing from the tremissis series in *RIC*, a specimen has recently appeared at auction.¹²⁶ Only the sesquissolidus for Dalmatius and the fraction for Constans noted above celebrate the “VIRTVS CAESARVM NN,” that is, the “Valor of the Two Caesars,” who must be the two junior caesars.

At Trier Constantine II and Constantius likewise dominate the gold and silver types with rough parity (nos. 565–68, 570 [Constantius only], 572–74,¹²⁷ 581–84 [Constantius has three obverse variants]), whereas Constans does not appear on the gold until late 335 or 336 (nos. 575–76; cf. 564–70), or on the silver (no. 585) until 336–37.

At Rome Constans is missing from all gold issues between 333 and 337 (nos. 340–41, 374–75), namely the type with the reverse VICTORIA NOB CAESS, “Victory of the Two Noble Caesars,” struck only in the name of Constantine II (nos. 341, 374–75) and Constantius (no. 341). Likewise, only the two eldest caesars are named on the silver minted 336/37 (nos. 376, 378–80). Since Rome was under the jurisdiction of Constans himself, this lack of representation is puzzling.

Apart from a gold series of 334 (nos. 225–28), the gold and silver of Siscia (nos. 229–34, 242–51, 257–60) are incompletely preserved and there are many types that appear for only one or other of the caesars, though all four do appear on the obverses between 334 and 337

(Dalmatius only once: no. 247). Little specific can therefore be said about the representations of the caesars on these coins.¹²⁸

At Thessalonica, Constantius slightly surpasses his elder brother in the number of obverse and reverse types at the very end of 335 and during 336 (nos. 209–11, 215–16, 219–20A [see p. 718]) but is strangely absent from three earlier silver types of 335 that focus on Constantine II (nos. 194–96, plus one for Constantine I, no. 197). A nine-solidus medallion in the name of Constantine I mirrors the nine-solidus medallion described above from Constantinople (SALVS ET SPES REIPUBLICAE), but depicts Constans as slightly taller and Dalmatius (who is the only one without an inverted spear) as slightly smaller than they appear on the Constantinopolitan medallion, yet both remain smaller than the two equal figures of the elder caesars (no. 204).

At Heraclea, Constantius has one obverse type in a single silver reverse series while Constantine II has two (nos. 146, 148–49).

At Nicomedia there are two similar nine-solidus medallions in the names of Constantine and his eldest son (the reverse shows that a type was certainly minted for Constantius), which depicts a nimbate Constantine enthroned with one caesar to either side and the legend FELICITAS PERPETVA AVG ET CAESS NN (“Eternal good luck for our augustus and our two caesars”; nos. 173–74). This medallion was minted in 335, a year to two years after the proclamation of Constans as caesar (for the date, see *RIC* 7: 627, n. 160); it mirrors the similar contemporary medallion from Constantinople noted above (no. 88, SALVS ET SPES REIPUBLICAE). There was also a special issue of solidi in 335 only for the two eldest brothers with the reverse legend VIRTVS CONSTANTINI CAES and VIRTVS CONSTANTII CAES (nos. 181–82). There are single specimens of argentei of two different reverse types in the names of Constantine I,

¹²⁶ Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung auction 133 lot 529, 11 October 2004.

¹²⁷ *RIC* lists obverses for only Constantine II and Constans, but a specimen for Constantius has recently come to auction: Numismatik Lanz auction 128 lot 895, 22 May 2006.

¹²⁸ In *RIC* Constantine II is missing from the silver series of 334 (nos. 229–32) and Constantius is missing from the gold series of 335 (nos. 242–51) and the silver series of 336–37 (nos. 259–60), though the latter marks Constantine II’s vicennalia, so an obverse for Constantius would not be expected. However, an unpublished solidus and argenteus in the name of Constantius clearly date to the period 335–36, but parallels for the types appear only at other mints (Antioch no. 97 and Thessalonica no. 216, respectively [Heraclea no. 146 and Constantinople no. 127A (p. 719) are similar to the latter but have a different reverse legend break]). This implies parallel types at Siscia in the names of the other caesars that have not survived. For these unpublished coins, see Numismatica Ars Classica auction 25 lot 597, 25 June 2003, and H. D. Rauch auction 71 lot 1063, 28 April 2003.

Dalmatius, and Constantius (nos. 186A–187) but issues of the same types for the other members of the college no doubt existed. Constantine II and Constans share a reverse type for a semissis and a tremissis (nos. 183–84).

On the gold from Antioch between 335 and 337 there are solidi in the name of Constantine II and Constantius with the reverse legends *PRINCIPIVVENTVTIS*, “To the leader of the youth,” and *VICTORIA CAESAR NN*, “Victory of our two caesars” (nos. 94–95, 97, 102–3), the latter of which must refer to those two caesars even though there is an obverse in the name of Constans (no. 104). The latter is probably a mule, as is a solidus with an obverse of Constantine II and a reverse with the legend *VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG* (no. 101; cf. 98–100, all with obverses of Constantine I). As at other mints, Constans does not appear on the gold or silver until 336/37 (nos. 104, 107). Constantius is missing from two series (nos.

97 [gold] and 105–7 [silver]), but we would expect him to have appeared in both, since the reverse of the former refers to him (see above) and Constantine I, Constantine II, and Constans appear in the latter. Similarly, we would expect Constantine II to have appeared in the *VICTORIA solidus* series (nos. 102–4, above), which has obverses for Constantius and Constans.

In conclusion, while Constantius may not overall make an appearance on quite as many surviving obverse or reverse types or variants of types as Constantine II, there can be no question that the mints presented the two brothers as of equal rank, second only to Constantine I on both obverses and reverses. The purpose of such promotion, at the expense of the two youngest caesars, can only have been a result of Constantine’s intention to have both sons succeed to his position as augustus.

Appendix 2. Hoard Evidence for the Date of the Massacre

At Arles, the first *GLORIA EXERCITVS* one-standard (GE (1)) reverse type carried the mintmark $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ and was followed by a smaller issue with the mintmark, $\frac{X}{PCONST}$.¹²⁹ These issues were struck in the names of all five members of the imperial college: Constantine, Constantine II, Constantius, Constans, and Dalmatius (for examples of the types, though not the mint, see Figs. 20–25). In 337 a new mintmark appeared, $\frac{O}{PCONST}$, the first that would be employed on the new issues of the three brothers as augusti (*RIC* 8:205) and therefore the last of their issues as caesar. These coins were also issued in the names of all five members of the college. However, the coins minted for Constantine and Dalmatius are extremely rare—so rare, in fact, that the only known specimens were found in the Woodeaton hoard, four for Constantine and one for Dalmatius,¹³⁰ indicating that coins for these two emperors were struck in much smaller numbers than those for the three caesars.

129 In mintmarks the “P” indicates the officina (*prima*) and is used as a standard form for citation. The other officinae (Arles had two in total, Rome had five) used their own letters (S, T, Q, and E).

130 Woodeaton hoard (see n. 137), Constantine nos. 1314–17, and Dalmatius no. 1318 (misnumbered as 1319 in the text, but correctly labeled on Plate 12). They are so rare that neither appears in *RIC* 7 (pp. 278–79) and I have found no other reference to further specimens.

The most plausible explanation for this degree of rarity is that the issues for Constantine and Dalmatius ceased, simultaneously or nearly so, and almost as soon as the mintmark changed. There were more coins originally struck for Constantine because of the hierarchy of striking (on which, see below). After the cessation of the Constantine and Dalmatius types the $\frac{O}{PCONST}$ mintmark continued with GE (1) reverses for Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans as caesar. There can be little doubt, then, that the $\frac{O}{PCONST}$ *nummi* were produced almost entirely between the deaths of Constantine and Dalmatius and the first issues of the brothers as augusti.¹³¹ Interestingly, in spite of the short time frame available for it, the $\frac{O}{PCONST}$ series was large, since it outnumbers the $\frac{X}{PCONST}$ issue in hoards, though it was not nearly so large as the $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ issue.¹³²

In Rome we have a similar situation. Through 336

131 They are so dated in *RIC* 7:278–79 and *RIC* 8:197.

132 For instance, in the Woodeaton hoard there are 6 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ specimens and 6 $\frac{O}{PCONST}$ specimens; in the Freston hoard, 18 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$, two $\frac{X}{PCONST}$, and 2 $\frac{O}{PCONST}$; in the Appleford hoard 21 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$, 1 $\frac{X}{PCONST}$, and 2 $\frac{O}{PCONST}$; in the Ihnasyah hoard 5 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ and 1 $\frac{O}{PCONST}$; in the Bicester hoard 4 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ and 2 $\frac{O}{PCONST}$; in the Chorleywood 31 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ and 5 $\frac{O}{PCONST}$; in the Hamble hoard 4 $\frac{P}{PCONST}$; and in the Metternich hoard $\frac{P}{PCONST}$ is represented by all five emperors, O by two, and X by one. For these hoards, see below, n. 137.

and into 337 all five members of the imperial college are represented by the standard GE (i) reverse. This continues with the change of mintmark from R*P to R $\overline{\Phi}$ P, the same mintmark that is used for the first issues of the three brothers as augusti (*RIC* 8:249–50). Consequently, this mintmark indicates their last issues as caesar. The standard GE (i) reverse is maintained for Constantine I, Constantius, and Constans,¹³³ though they are very rare. Almost immediately after the mintmark change, the GE (i) reverse for Constantine I was replaced with a new reverse, unique to Rome: VIRTVS AVGVSTI (Fig. 26, a similar specimen struck at the end of 337 in the name of Constantine II as augustus).¹³⁴ But the GE (i) reverse for the caesars then quickly changes to SECVRITAS REI PVB(licae) (Fig. 5, a specimen struck at the end of 337 in the name of Constantius as augustus) for only the three brothers as caesar (*RIC* 7, nos. 402–4). At the same time the VIRTVS AVGVSTI type for Constantine I is dropped. The SECVRITAS REI PVB legend is unique in this form on the Constantinian coinage and this particular type is unique on the bronze, though a similar one had been used earlier at Trier between 317 and 336 chiefly for solidi.¹³⁵ There are no coins in the name of Dalmatius for this mintmark, though he was a part of the earlier GE (i) issues, down to R*P. As was the case with the $\frac{O}{PCONST}$ issue of Arles, there can be no doubt that the SECVRITAS REI PVB type was issued during the *interregnum* after Constantine and Dalmatius's deaths.¹³⁶

The pattern at Arles and Rome is clear: all five members of the imperial college were originally represented on the *nummi*. Then Constantine and Dalmatius disappear at about the same time. At both mints, coins produced for Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans as caesar continue after the cessation of those produced for Constantine and Dalmatius, and they occur in large numbers at Arles.

133 *RIC* 7 lists only the first two (nos. 400–401). Specimens struck in the name of Constans appear in the Ihnasyah hoard. There certainly must have been an issue for Constantine II as well.

134 *RIC* 7, no. 405, known from a unique specimen. Although *LRBC* records VIRTVS AVGVSTI with the R*P mintmark (P. V. Hill and J. P. C. Kent, *Late Roman Bronze Coinage, A.D. 324–498. Part I: The Bronze Coinage of the House of Constantine, A.D. 324–346* [London, 1978], 15, no. 566), the editor of *RIC* 7, Patrick Bruun, was unable to verify its existence (pp. 295 and 344 n. 391). As a result I do not take account of it here.

135 *RIC* 7:178, 185–86, 211, and 221. The same legend appeared on bronze reverses for Helena between 324 and 329, but the type was different (see *RIC* 7:750 for a list of the many issues and mints).

136 They are so dated in *RIC* 7:294–95 and *RIC* 8:234.

A number of western European hoards allow us to establish very exactly the chronology of the bronze issues from Trier.¹³⁷ The Ollmuth hoard was closed in the early autumn of 337: it contained only one coin struck after the brothers became augusti, a PIETAS ROMANA for Theodora with $\frac{+}{TRP}$, the first mintmark used by the brothers as augusti (*RIC* 8:143). Almost half the hoard, 74 out of 155 specimens, was minted in Trier, and the largest issue bears the mintmark •TRP• (28 of 74), the last mark used before the brothers became augusti. The distribution of the obverses of this issue is set out in column O of Table 1. Although having only one certain post–9 September coin, it contains three •TRP• pieces for Helena and five for Theodora. And in spite of having nineteen specimens in the names of the three brothers as caesar, it has only one for Dalmatius and none for Constantine.

More than half of the Weeze hoard is made up of issues from Trier (668 out of 1,198). It was closed a little earlier than the Ollmuth hoard, during the interregnum, since it has no issues of the three brothers as augusti, and of the 668 coins from Trier, 217 have the •TRP• mintmark, the last to appear under the three caesars. The distribution among the emperors is listed in Table 1, column W. As in the Ollmuth hoard, although there are many coins for the sons as caesar, there are very few for Constantine and Dalmatius. On the other hand, the number of Helena and Theodora specimens is extremely large.

The publication of the Cranfield hoard is not very

137 The hoards to be discussed are as follows: Ollmuth, *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst* 7 (1888): 123–24; Weeze, *Westdeutsche Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst* 7 (1888): 124–29; Chorleywood, in Carson and Burnett, *Recent Coin Hoards* (n. 107 above), 41–98; Hamble, in *ibid.*; Cranfield, *NC* ser. 6, vol. 6 (1946): 159–62; Wood Eaton, *NC* 138 (1978): 38–65; Freston, *NC* ser. 7, vol. 12 (1972): 145–57; Appleford, *RBN* 123 (1977): 41–100; Bruckneudorf, *NZ* 89 (1974): 5–17; Ihnasyah, *JLAN* 16 (1914): 1–27; Metternich, *BJ* 145 (1940): 80–125; Halifax, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 23 (1914–15): 444–51; and Bicester, *Coin Hoards from Roman Britain*, vol. 2, ed. A. M. Burnett, British Museum Occasional Paper 31 (London, 1981). These are all the contemporary and near-contemporary hoards that are well reported in the literature. The Bishop's Wood hoard (*NC* ser. 3, vol. 16 [1896]: 209–37) has been left out because the mintmarks and types are poorly recorded and include incorrect mintmarks (such as $\frac{P}{TRS}$ for 19 of the 30 issues for Dalmatius); see Carson and Burnett (above), 45. The breakdown of the hoard is very peculiar as well. Although it contains 2,455 specimens for Constantine, 3,679 for Constantine II as caesar, and 2,197 for Constantius as caesar, it contains none at all for Constans as caesar. For the brothers as augusti it has 4 for Constantine II, 4 for Constantius, and 450 for Constans. And in spite of its many •TRP• specimens for Constantine I, Constantine II, and Constantius, it apparently has no •TRP• specimens for Dalmatius, Helena, or Theodora, even though it contains 312 specimens for Helena and 271 for Theodora.

detailed, but there are no coins of the three brothers as augusti, so it must have been closed about the same time as the Weeze hoard. Of 1,700 coins, 517 were minted in Trier. There are no coins in the names of Constantine or Dalmatius, though there are six for the sons as caesar. The GE (1) and Helena and Theodora types (no mintmarks are given, though for the latter all must be •TRP•) are listed in Table 1, column C, below.

These three hoards show beyond a doubt a number of important facts. First, minting in the name of Constantine and Dalmatius stopped very soon after the change of mintmark and at almost the same time; second, minting of the Helena and Theodora types began with the •TRP• mintmark while Constantine II, Constantius, and Constans were still caesars; and third, the Helena and Theodora types were produced in large numbers: in the Ollmuth hoard they account for almost 30 percent of the surviving specimens, in the Weeze exactly 33 percent, and in the Cranfield over 60 percent.¹³⁸

These large ratios continued beyond the summer of 337 and can be verified from the frequency notations recorded in *RIC* 8 (pp. 143–44). Both Helena and Theodora types were struck with each of the next six mintmarks from Trier that include types for Constantine II from autumn 337 to early 340. In five of these six emissions, each Helena and Theodora type outnumbers every other obverse type, sometimes quite significantly, except for TRP♂, where they are equaled by one type and outnumbered by another.

Let us return to Table 1. A second interesting feature of this table is the fact that the numbers for Constantine are so low. This can be confirmed from other contemporary hoards as well, as can be seen in Tables 2 and 3.

The extremely low number of coins for Constantine I and Dalmatius observed in Table 1 is confirmed by these additional seven hoards. This pattern was also noted above in the context of their representation among the last mintmarks from Arles and Rome in 337. The best way to evaluate the significance of these numbers is to compare the output of these emissions to those of earlier Trier issues for all five members of the imperial college

Table 1: Distribution of •TRP• issues in three hoards of late 337

	<i>O</i>		<i>W</i>		<i>C</i>	
	<i>no.</i>	%	<i>no.</i>	%	<i>no.</i>	%
<i>CI</i>	0	0.0	17	7.8	0	0.0
<i>CII</i>	11	39.3	74	34.1	2	12.5
<i>Cs</i>	7	25.0	36	16.6	3	18.8
<i>Cn</i>	1	3.6	15	6.9	1	6.2
<i>D</i>	1	3.6	3	1.4	0	0.0
<i>H</i>	3	10.7	40	18.4	6	37.5
<i>T</i>	5	17.9	32	14.8	4	25.0

O: Ollmuth; W: Weeze; C: Cranfield

CI: Constantine; CII: Constantine II; Cs: Constantius; Cn: Constans;

D: Dalmatius; H: Helena; T: Theodora

produced from 335 to 337. Unfortunately these coins—with the mintmarks TRP, TRP•, and ∪TRP—rarely occur in the hoards under examination here, respectively only 65, 2, and 5 specimens (the latter two marks are so rare that they do not even appear in *RIC* 7). Comparable ratios based on the output from other mints are of value in a general way in evaluating the •TRP• issues, although it should be pointed out that exact comparisons cannot be made. In Table 4 below I have included GE (1) issues for all five emperors from well-represented mintmarks in Gaul (Lugdunum and Arles) found in contemporary hoards and from eastern and western issues from large contemporary hoards in both West and East.

Examination of the data makes it clear that there was a hierarchy of striking, with Constantine II's coins dominating the issues from western mints, except Arles. Constantine clearly dominates in the East, as would be expected. Constantius, Constans, and Dalmatius all have roughly the same proportion of coins in all columns, except for Constantius and Constans's issues in Lugdunum (lower) and Dalmatius's in Arles (higher).¹³⁹ Constantine II dominates in the West because of his position as senior caesar and senior emperor in the West. In the East he is only slightly ahead of Constantius, who

¹³⁸ It should be noted that in spite of the early publication dates for these three hoards no catalogue, including *RIC* 7 and *LRBC* (n. 134 above), lists these Helena and Theodora types before 9 September 337. Since the •TRP• mintmark was reused in 338/39, all publications of later hoards and *RIC* include the earlier •TRP• types with the later coinage—since there is at present no way to distinguish them—thus skewing the survival figures for those later issues (*RIC* 8, nos. 63 and 65).

¹³⁹ Lyons appears to be anomalous, but there are many possibilities to account for it, not least incomplete data. The frequency figures of *RIC* 7 mirror my totals (nos. 285–88; cf. also 271–72), but are of little value since it is clear that few hoards were consulted (e.g., I can cite 26 GE (1) PLG issues for Constantine from five hoards in Table 4, yet *RIC* 7 cites

Table 2: •TRP• GE (1) pre-9 September 337 issues from seven contemporary and later hoards.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	total	%
CI	0	17	9	2	4	12	5	49	6.6
CII	11	74	84	7	51	72	55	354	48.0
Cs	7	36	61	4	12	52	52	224	30.4
Cn	1	15	27	1	7	29	15	95	12.9
D	1	3	3	0	2	4	3	16	2.2

1: Ollmuth; 2: Weeze; 3: Chorleywood; 4: Hamble; 5: Woodeaton; 6: Freston; 7: Appleford

Table 3: TRP and •TRP• GE (1)¹⁴⁰

	Hal	Mett	%
CI	1	8	7.1
CII	20	31	40.5
Cs	12	27	31.0
Cn	6	18	19.0
D	0	3	2.4

Hal: Halifax; Mett: Metternich; %: percent of total

is only slightly ahead of Constans (2.6 percent and 1.9 percent respectively). Constantius and Constans have progressively fewer coins each because of their lower seniority, averaging 19 and 15 percent respectively overall, if we discount the unusually low survival rate of coins from Lyons in column 1. Since Dalmatius was proclaimed fewer than two years after Constans (seven years separate Constantine II and Constantius, and eleven separate Constantius and Constans), his representation in these issues should theoretically be about the same as Con-

stans's in number, but that is not the case. Arles seems to be anomalous in this context, because the other groups show that the coins of Dalmatius were normally present in amounts between 6 and 8 percent (average 6.7 percent), which is about half of the percentages for Constans. This higher figure for Dalmatius at Arles in the $\frac{\text{P}}{\text{PCONST}}$ issue highlights just how remarkable the drop to 0 percent in the succeeding $\frac{\text{O}}{\text{PCONST}}$ issue is (see above).

The differences between Table 4 (mostly pre-22 May 337) and Table 2 (mostly post-22 May 337) are quite striking. The hierarchy of striking noted above is still visible in Table 2 but percentages for Constantine have dropped to just over one quarter of his usual average output in the earlier period and Dalmatius to just under one third. This confirms the conclusion, stated above, that minting stopped at almost the same time for both Constantine and Dalmatius, very soon after Trier switched to the •TRP• mintmark, while coins in the name of the three caesars and Helena and Theodora were struck throughout the interregnum, the latter in large numbers.


only a single specimen in the BM: no. 285; of the hoards cited here only Appleford appears in the *RIC* bibliography, p. xxv). The same can be said for the Arles figures, but in addition they are anomalous in comparison with the figures given in *RIC* 7 (nos. 394–99), but again *RIC* is lacking the hoard data (again only Appleford).

140 These hoards are segregated from Table 2 because they are not distinguished by mintmark in the original publications. Thus the totals contain at least some non-•TRP• issues, except for CII and Cn in the Metternich hoard, which do not. As will be explained below, however, the pre-•TRP• GE (1) issues are not voluminous and, as can be seen, do not distort the percentages excessively.

Table 4: Distribution of obverse types with pre–9 Sept. 337 GE (1) reverses

	1		2		3		4		5	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
CI	26	21.9	25	26.9	61	25.0	74	25.2	308	42.1
CII	72	60.5	20	21.5	83	31.0	102	34.7	143	19.5
Cs	7	5.9	17	18.3	50	20.5	60	20.4	124	16.9
Cn	4	3.4	15	16.1	35	14.3	41	14.0	110	15.0
D	10	8.4	16	17.2	15	6.2	17	5.8	47	6.4
Totals	119		93		244		294		732	

1. #PLG (Lugdunum) (Woodeaton, Freston, Chorleywood, Appleford, Weeze)

2.  PCONST (Arles) (Woodeaton, Freston, Chorleywood, Hamble, Appleford, Bruckneudorf, Ihnasyah, Bicester)

3. Metternich hoard, western issues

4. Metternich hoard, all issues, including uncertain mints

5. Ihnasyah hoard, eastern issues, including Siscia

Appendix 3. The Speed of Travel on Foot and Horseback

Ordinary Romans were expected to cover the distance between two *mansiones* in one day on foot. In general this works out to between sixteen and twenty-five miles per day, which suggests an average of around twenty, a figure that is explicitly stated in a number of sources,¹⁴¹ though the actual distance between *mansiones* varied considerably depending on the terrain and local conditions.¹⁴² Couriers for the imperial post carrying dispatches along the *cursus publicus* on horseback are generally thought to have been able to travel about fifty miles, or between two and three *mansiones* per day, and up to eighty miles

per day in Italy, where the roads were much better than in the rest of the empire.¹⁴³

A number of close groupings of laws issued by Diocletian in 290, 293, and 294, and by Constantine in 318, 320, and 326 make it clear that Diocletian normally traveled either one or two *mansiones* per day, sometimes three, and could easily cover twenty to thirty miles in a day, if not more, and that Constantine could likewise easily cover over thirty miles per day with his *comitatus*.¹⁴⁴

Papyrus records and accounts of the trip of Theophanes, an imperial official who traveled from Pelusium in Egypt to Antioch and back using the *cursus publicus* between 317 and 323, show that ordinary people could easily cover the same distance as the emperors with their *comitatus*, since Theophanes averaged between thirty

¹⁴¹ See, for example, Gaius's prescription in *Digesta* 2.11.1 as well as 11.1.11, 38.15.2.3, and 50.16.3, and Vegetius's statement that an army should be able to cover twenty miles in five hours at a regular pace and twenty-four miles at a quick step (1.9). This is during the summer, when an hour was just over seventy-six minutes. However, thirty to thirty-five miles per day seems not to have been unusual for the army in the Republic. For this, see in particular the works cited in the next note. The Roman mile was 1480 meters or 1618.5 yards.

¹⁴² For the *mansiones* of Italy, Britain, Gaul, Spain, and Asia, see R. Laurence, *The Roads of Roman Italy: Mobility and Cultural Change* (London, 1999), 88–92, and idem, "The Creation of Geography: An Interpretation of Roman Britain," in Adams and Laurence, *Travel and Geography* (n. 111 above), 81–87.

¹⁴³ A. M. Ramsay, "The Speed of the Roman Imperial Post," *JRS* 15 (1925): 63, 68–69; C. W. J. Eliot, "New Evidence for the Speed of the Roman Imperial Post," *Phoenix* 9 (1955): 76–80; L. Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World* (Baltimore, 1994 [1974]), 188; O. Perler, *Les Voyages de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1969), 31; R. Chevallier, *Roman Roads* (Berkeley, 1976), 191–95 and Laurence, *Roads*, 81–82.

¹⁴⁴ The dates and locations of these laws can be seen most easily in Barnes, *New Empire* (n. 3 above), 51–54, 74, 77.

and forty miles, one and two *mansiones*, per day during two trips of eighteen days out and sixteen days back covering twenty-six *mansiones*. On his longer outward journey he covered one *mansio* per day over four days in the desert, then ten *mansiones* over six days, nine over the next eight, and then three on the last day, when he covered sixty-four miles into Antioch, no doubt leaving early and arriving late. On his shorter return journey he covered two *mansiones* per day over ten days and one per day over six days.¹⁴⁵

In addition, in special and emergency circumstances messengers and other individuals are known to have covered up to 150 miles a day.¹⁴⁶ On 29 June 431, Theodosius II sent a letter from Constantinople to Cyril of Alexandria in Ephesus, and Cyril was able to reply to it on 1 July.¹⁴⁷ There were approximately 478 miles and 28 *mansiones* between Constantinople and Ephesus, and so Theodosius's messenger, Palladius, must have covered approximately 160 miles and nine *mansiones* per day, with, no doubt, little time for rest. This seems excessive, but Palladius's speed was so remarkable and so well known that Socrates devoted an entire paragraph to him in his history (*HE* 7.19). These figures give us an absolute upper limit for emergency travel.

These data can be compared with the time taken for the news of Constantine's death to reach Trier, when speed was important but not Tiberius or Palladius's break-neck speed. From the itineraries we can calculate that Trier was between 1,785 miles and 89 *mansiones* and 1,831

miles and 84 *mansiones* from Nicomedia, depending on the route taken (the route through the Alps is shorter but involves more *mansiones*; see Appendix 4 route 4 and the map), and we know that Constantine II knew about his father's death and was already acting upon it on 17 June, twenty-six days later (Athanasius, *Apol. c. Ar.* 87 and *Hist. Ar.* 8). If we assume that news was sent to Constantine II from Nicomedia immediately on the afternoon of the twenty-second of May and that he received the news the day before his letter for Athanasius (which would hardly be the first item of business after hearing about the death of his father, but let that pass for the sake of argument), it would have been necessary for the news to have traveled to him at about sixty-nine miles and three *mansiones* per day, twice Theophanes' rate. This messenger would have to have traveled faster if news was not sent immediately after Constantine's death and if there was a gap of a number of days before Constantine II could write the letter for Athanasius, as would in fact be reasonable. Under these circumstances, which allow a traveling time of, say, twenty days and an arrival on 11 June, a messenger between Nicomedia and Trier would have covered between 86 and 113 miles and about five *mansiones* per day (with five days of four and one of three: the distance varies considerably between *mansiones* along this stretch of road). As a result, five *mansiones* per day seems a reasonable rate of progress for emergency travel in the summer of 337.

¹⁴⁵ *Catalogue of the Greek and Latin Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester* 4, ed. C. H. Roberts and E. G. Turner (Manchester, 1952), nos. 627–28 and 630–38. See also Roberts and Turner (above), 106–7 and Casson, *Travel* (n. 143 above), 190–93. J. Matthews, *The Journey of Theophanes: Travel, Business, and Daily Life in the Roman East* (New Haven, 2006) provides complete translations of and commentaries on these fascinating and valuable documents.

¹⁴⁶ Ramsay, "Speed," 62–65, 67; Casson, *Travel*, 188; and Laurence, *Roads*, 81. The most famous example is Tiberius, who in 9 BCE was able to travel 182 miles from Ticinum to the bedside of his dying brother, Drusus, at his camp on the Elbe within twenty-four hours (Pliny, *Natural History* 7.84).

¹⁴⁷ *Frag. Vat.* 83–84 = E. Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* 1.1.3 (Berlin, 1927), 10.

Appendix 4. Routes Across the Empire

Figure(s) in brackets indicates map number in *BAtlas*. Cities cited in *italics* are the main departure and arrival cities discussed in the text above.

1. *Nicomedia* (52), *Nicaea* (52), *Ancyra* (86), *Archelais* (63), *Tyana* (66), *Tarsus* (66), *Issus* (67), *Antiochia* (67).
2. *Antiochia* (67), *Issus* (67), *Tarsus* (66), *Tyana* (66), *Archelais* (63), *Ancyra* (86), *Nicaea* (52), *Nicomedia* (52), *Constantinopolis* (52).
3. *Nicomedia* (52), *Constantinopolis* (52), *Heraclea* (52), *Hadrianopolis* (51), *Philippopolis* (22), *Serdica* (21), *Naissus* (21), *Viminacium* (21), *Sirmium* (21), *Cibale* (20/21), *Mursa* (20/21), *Poetovio* (20), *Virunum* (20), *Iuvavum* (19) (or) *Mursa* (20/21), *Sopianae* (20), *Mestrianae* (20), *Savaria* (20), *Scarbantia* (20), *Vindobona* (13), *Ovilava* (12), *Iuvavum* (19), *Pons Aeni* (19), *Bratananium* (19), *Cambodunum* (19), *Brigantium* (19), *Vindonissa* (18), *Cambete* (18), *Argentovaria* (18/11), *Argentorate* (11), *Divodurum* (11), *Augusta Treverorum* (11).
4. *Augusta Treverorum* (11), *Divodurum* (11), *Argentorate* (11), *Argentovaria* (18/11), *Cambete* (18), *Vindonissa* (18), *Brigantium* (19), *Cambodunum* (19), *Pons Aeni* (19), *Iuvavum* (19), *Virunum* (20), *Poetovio* (20), *Mursa* (20/21), *Mursa* (20/21), *Sopianae* (20), *Mestrianae* (20), *Savaria* (20), *Scarbantia* (20), *Vindobona* (13), *Ovilava* (12), *Iuvavum* (19), *Pons Aeni* (19), *Bratananium* (19), *Cambodunum* (19), *Brigantium* (19), *Vindonissa* (18), *Cambete* (18), *Argentovaria* (18/11), *Argentorate* (11), *Divodurum* (11), *Augusta Treverorum* (11).
5. *Mediolanum* (19/39), *Cremona* (39), *Bedriacum* (39), *Verona* (19/39), *Iulia Concordia* (19/40), (or) *Roma* (44), *Fanum Fortunae* (42), *Ariminum* (40/42), *Ravenna* (40), *Spina* (40), *Hatria* (40), *Iulia Concordia* (19/40), *Aquileia* (19), *Emona* (20), *Siscia* (20), *Cibale* (20/21), *Sirmium* (21).