



Palladas and the Age of Constantine

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The poet and grammarian Palladas of Alexandria, author of more than 150 epigrams in the Greek Anthology, has remained a somewhat elusive figure. Though no epigrammatist is better represented in our two major sources for the Anthology, scarcely a trace of his existence survives outside of his corpus of poems. His identity was so shadowy in the Byzantine period that he did not even warrant a mention in the *Suda*. By the tenth century, therefore, and presumably long before that time, ‘Palladas’ was merely the name of a man who had written some decent epigrams. Several clues remain, however, that allow us to locate him in a particular historical context. The history of scholarship on this problem is long and complex, but two rough timelines for his life have been proposed. The traditional estimate of his dates was c. A.D. 360–450. This was revised in the middle of the twentieth century to c. A.D. 319–400. It is my contention that the first of these is about a century too late and the second approximately sixty years too late. Such challenges to long-held opinion do not always enjoy a happy fate. Nevertheless, there are those cases in which the weight of scholarly tradition rests on surprisingly shaky foundations and in which a careful review of the evidence can result in significant improvements.¹ The following argument proceeds in six stages: summary of the foundations for the traditional dates (i) and the current consensus (ii); discussion of two external clues (iii); challenge to the prevailing views (iv); construction of a new timeline (v); conclusions (vi). There is also an appendix that addresses the one major obstacle to my hypothesis.

I

The first attempts in the modern era to fix Palladas’ dates relied heavily on three lemmata in our Byzantine manuscripts of the Greek Anthology.² One lemma in the tenth-century

^{*} I am grateful to the editor of this journal, the anonymous readers, and many colleagues and friends for their comments. Luis Arturo Guichard, whose promised edition of Palladas’ epigrams is eagerly anticipated, kindly provided a critical eye and some bibliography in the final stages. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Tim Barnes, who read these arguments in two formats and made many valuable suggestions for improvement. Throughout, I quote the most recent complete edition of the Greek Anthology (Beckby), except in one instance that is recorded in the notes. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated. I employ the following abbreviations when referring to editions of the Anthology or to comments contained therein:

Aubreton = R. Aubreton (ed.), *Anthologie Grecque*, vol. 10 (1972)

Beckby = H. Beckby (ed.), *Anthologia Graeca*, 4 vols (1965–1968)

Dübner = F. Dübner (ed.), *Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina cum Planudeis et appendice nova epigrammatum veterum ex libris et marmoribus ductorum*, vols 1–2 (1864–1872)

Jacobs = F. Jacobs (ed.), *Anthologia Graeca ad fidem codicis olim Palatini nunc Parisini ex apographo Gothano edita*, 3 vols (1813–1817)

Paton = W. R. Paton (ed.), *The Greek Anthology*, 5 vols (1916–1918)

Preisendanz = K. Preisendanz (ed.), *Anthologia Palatina: Codex Palatinus et Codex Parisinus phototypice editi*, 2 vols (1911)

Reiske = J. Reiske (ed.), *Anthologiae Graecae a Constantino Cephala conditae libri tres, duo nunc primum, tertius post lensium iterum editi, cum latina interpretatione, commentariis et notitia poetarum* (1754)

Stadtmüller = H. Stadtmüller (ed.), *Anthologia Graeca epigrammatum Palatina cum Planudea*, 3 vols (1894–1906)

¹ e.g. Alan Cameron’s important revision of Macrobius’ dates (‘The date and identity of Macrobius’, *JRS* 56 (1966), 25–38).

² The Palatine lemmata are best viewed in the facsimile edition of Preisendanz. Stadtmüller did an admirable job of reporting the marginalia, but he only got as far as Book 9. They are not reported as fully or clearly in the other standard editions.

Palatinus declares that an epigram ascribed to Palladas (AP 11.292) is about ‘a certain philosopher who became urban prefect during the reign (or perhaps consulship) of Valentinian and Valens’. When Maximus Planudes copied this epigram in the fourteenth century, he supplied more specific information: εἰς Θεμίστιον τὸν φιλόσοφον γενόμενον ὑπαρχὸν Κωνσταντινοπόλεως ἐπὶ Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ καὶ Οὐάλεντος. Like the Palatine lemmatist, he got the date wrong — Themistius was prefect of Constantinople under Theodosius I in A.D. 384 — but this notice has long been thought to provide the earliest chronological marker for Palladas’ life.³ A second lemma describes three hexameter lines (AP 9.528) as an epigram on the ‘house of Marina’. Without doubt the reference is to a known Constantinopolitan palace named for the youngest daughter of the emperor Arcadius. It was situated, according to the *Notitia Urbis Constantinopolitanae*, in the city’s first district.⁴ As Marina was born in A.D. 403, it is typically thought that her palace could not have been in existence before the 420s. Palladas, therefore, must have been active well into the fifth century. A third lemma suggests a date that fits comfortably between the other two; it describes AP 9.400 as an epigram in praise of the philosopher Hypatia, who was murdered in A.D. 415. On the basis of these three indicators, the first scholars to tackle the problem placed Palladas’ birth around A.D. 360 and his death at some point after the 420s.⁵

In the middle of the twentieth century, however, scholars began to lose confidence in the accuracy of the lemmata that accompany Palladas’ epigrams.⁶ Most of these occur in AP 9 (becoming suspiciously sparse after this point) and simply summarize the contents of the epigrams in the most general terms: ‘an invective against women’, ‘on his wife’, ‘on a murderer’, ‘on Heracles’, etc. Lemmata of this sort are always banal and occasionally wrong (i.e. betray an obvious misreading).⁷ It is quite clear that they do not preserve integral information that goes back to the original production of the epigrams. But what of the three that ostensibly give detailed information of a historical sort? It is scarcely credible that this trio of Palladan epigrams came through the manuscript tradition with original descriptions attached whereas the other 150 or so did not. The truth must be that these marginal notes, like the others, are late inventions. In these three cases the lemmatists attempted to supply historical context. Their notices are nothing more than guesswork, however, and no more weight should be attached to them than to any other piece of Byzantine speculation.

The first of these three lemmata to be challenged in a more direct fashion was the one that describes AP 9.400 as an epigram in praise of the philosopher Hypatia. The lemmatist’s guess is not unreasonable, for her name appears in the fourth trimeter of this

³ First noted by Reiske (p. 253), though he gives a date of A.D. 368. The old view that Themistius held the urban prefecture under Julian and Valens, as well as Theodosius I, has recently been resurrected by T. Brauch, ‘The Prefect of Constantinople for 362 AD: Themistius’, *Byzantion* 63 (1993), 37–78; idem, ‘Patristic and Byzantine witness to an urban prefectship of Themistius under Valens’, *Byzantion* 71 (2001), 325–82; idem, ‘Notes on the Prefects of Constantinople AD 366–369’, *Byzantion* 72 (2002), 42–104.

⁴ *Not. Const.* 2.12 (Seeck, 230). For a discussion of its precise location in the city, see C. Mango, ‘The Palace of Marina, the poet Palladas and the Bath of Leo VI’, in ΕΥΦΡΟΣΥΝΟΝ: ΑΦΙΕΡΩΜΑ ΣΤΟΝ ΜΑΝΟΛΗ ΧΑΤΖΗΔΑΚΗ vol. 1 (1991), 321–30. See also J. Irmscher, ‘Das “Haus der Marina”’, in L. Varcl and R. F. Willetts (eds), ΓΕΡΑΣ: *Studies Presented to George Thomson on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday* (1963), 129–33.

⁵ A similar timeline was already implied by Reiske’s comments. For c. A.D. 360–450, see A. Franke, *De Pallada Epigrammatographo* (1899), 38–9; W. Peek, *RE* 18.3 (1949), 158–68, at 159–60; L. A. Stella, *Cinque poeti dell’Antologia Palatina* (1949), 379–83; W. Zerwes, *Palladas von Alexandrien: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der griechischen Epigrammdichtung* (1956), 343–4; J. Irmscher, ‘Palladas’, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: gesellschafts- und sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe* 6 (1956–1957), 162–75, at 166–8.

⁶ A. S. F. Gow, *The Greek Anthology: Sources and Ascriptions*, The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies Supplementary Paper No. 9 (1958), 17–18; G. Luck, ‘Palladas: Christian or Pagan?’ *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 63 (1958), 455–71, at 464; C. M. Bowra, ‘Palladas and the converted Olympians’, *Byz. Zeit.* 53 (1960), 1–7, at 2; Alan Cameron, ‘Notes on Palladas’, *CQ* n.s. 15 (1965), 215–29, at 220.

⁷ e.g. the lemma to AP 9.395, which describes the poem’s ἔγχυτος as a draught (ποτός) when it is in fact a type of cake; or AP 10.93, bearing the lemma τὸ ἐπίγραμμα, which is based on a mistaken assumption about its relationship to the preceding poem.

pentastich: Ὑπατία σεμνή, τῶν λόγων εὐμορφία. As only one Hypatia would spring to the mind of an educated reader from the fifth century forward, and as she seems to be described here as learned, the lemmatist drew the conclusion that this was a poem about the famous daughter of Theon. Georg Luck, however, has argued that the epigram employs ecphrastic language for a church of the Holy Virgin.⁸ He concludes that the poem is neither about the philosopher Hypatia nor by Palladas.⁹ It is a Byzantine *ekphrasis* on a church of the Theotokos.¹⁰

The lemma to AP 9.528 — εἰς τὸν οἶκον Μαρίνης — has also fallen out of favour.¹¹ The poem that it introduces is as follows:

Χριστιανοὶ γεγαῶτες Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
ἐνθάδε ναιετάουσιν ἀπήμονες· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτοῦς
χώνη φύλλιν ἄγουσα φερέσβιον ἐν πυρὶ θήσει.

The owners of Olympian palaces, having become Christian, dwell here unharmed; for the pot that produces the life-giving *follis* will not put them in the fire.

The gist is easy enough to follow. Statues of the gods were being melted down to produce coins (*follis*), but some bronzes managed to avoid this fate by reinventing themselves in a Christian context.¹² The lemma implies that Marina's palace was the scene of their survival. This is not implausible. Though we have no specific information about the contents of this imperial complex, we know that other Constantinopolitan palaces housed pagan statues, which were displayed as works of art.¹³ It is believable or even probable that the house of Marina did too. But if the lemmata do not go back to Palladas, what is the origin of this plausible piece of information? It is almost certainly another guess. The lemmatist of some later period was familiar with an old Constantinopolitan foundation that still preserved its gallery of pagan statues — the house of Marina. Grasping the gist of the poem, he surmised that this was a plausible locale for the survival of the Olympian bronzes.¹⁴ It is a decent guess, but he knew nothing about the life of Palladas, and he was undoubtedly less anxious about anachronism than the modern historian. This marginal note should not be considered a reliable indicator of Palladas' dates.

The lemma introducing a supposed lampoon of Themistius (AP 11.292) is the only one of the three that has so far withstood scrutiny. The year 384 has therefore remained an unquestioned peg in the Palladan chronology. It is important to realize, however, that this

⁸ Luck, op. cit. (n. 6), 462–6.

⁹ The ascription to Palladas in AP is, in any event, shaky. See discussion at Luck, op. cit. (n. 6), 463.

¹⁰ Also, with some differences, Alan Cameron, *The Greek Anthology: From Meleager to Planudes* (1993), 323–4. It is only fair to point out that there have been attempts to defend the traditional interpretation against Luck by J. Irmscher, 'Palladas und Hypatia (zu Anthologia Palatina 9.400)', in *Acta Antiqua Philippopolitana: studia historica et philologica* (1963), 313–18, and against Cameron by E. Livrea, 'A.P. 9.400: iscrizione funeraria di Ipazia?' *ZPE* 117 (1997), 99–102. To my mind, no explanation yet offered has been entirely satisfactory. Both authorship and subject matter remain very uncertain.

¹¹ Bowra, op. cit. (n. 6), 1–4; and especially Cameron, op. cit. (n. 6), 223–5.

¹² Alan Cameron, 'The follis in fourth-century Egypt', *The Numismatic Chronicle* ser. 7, vol. 4 (1964), 135–8; M. Salamon, 'Coinage and money in the epigrams of Palladas: a few remarks', in S. Stabryla (ed.), *Everyday Life and Literature in Antiquity* (1995), 91–101, at 93–5. What precisely the *follis* was in the fourth century is somewhat mysterious: A. H. M. Jones, 'The origin and early history of the *follis*', *JRS* 49 (1959), 34–8; R. S. Bagnall, *Currency and Inflation in Fourth Century Egypt*, BASP Supplements No. 5 (1985), 17–18. A few have thought that the φύλλιν of line 3 refers to 'bellows' (as often in Latin but nowhere else in Greek) rather than currency: *LSJ*, s.v.; H. White, 'Notes on Palladas', *Myrtia* 13 (1998), 225–30, at 229–30. The issue is thoroughly treated by A. Pontani, 'Ancora su Pallada, AP IX 528, ovvero il bilinguismo alla prova', *Incontri triestini di filologia classica* 6 (2006–2007), 175–210, at 187–96. It is not impossible that Palladas may have known enough Latin to exploit multiple resonances of this loanword, but the primary meaning is surely 'bronze coinage'.

¹³ Most famously the Palace of Lausus. C. Mango, M. Vickers, and E. D. Francis, 'The Palace of Lausus at Constantinople and its collection of ancient statues', *Journal of the History of Collections* 4 (1992), 89–98; S. Bassett, '“Excellent offerings”: the Lausus Collection in Constantinople', *The Art Bulletin* 82 (2000), 6–25.

¹⁴ This is the argument of Cameron, op. cit. (n. 6), 224. Cyril Mango (op. cit. (n. 4), 328–30) concurs but suggests that this lemma may have been added in the sixth century rather than (as Cameron assumed) the tenth.

lemma, like the others, does not preserve information that goes back to Palladas. Rather, Planudes made a deduction in the fourteenth century that everyone since has adjudged to be correct. And in fact, there is very good reason to believe that this lemma is as misleading as the rest (see the appendix to this article for a full discussion). In the end, there is no reliable information to be gleaned from these Byzantine marginalia. Palladas' dates must therefore be established primarily on the basis of his poems.

II

Scholars have expended considerable effort in the search for historical allusions in Palladas' oeuvre but with very little profit.¹⁵ In fact, there is really only one example of consensus in this endeavour: a group of epigrams that everyone has situated in the early 390s. These are poems that appear to reflect dire days for paganism. 'We Hellenes [i.e. pagans] are men reduced to ashes', Palladas writes, 'holding to our buried hopes in the dead; for everything has now been turned on its head' (AP 10.90.5–7). Elsewhere he laments the lot of pagans who have fallen into misfortune; they are, he says, like the living dead (AP 10.82). In a few other epigrams, Palladas writes of pagan cult statues that have been cast down or melted down or that have converted to Christianity in order to avoid destruction (AP 9.441; 9.773; 9.528; AP1 194). It was Johannes Reiske who first proposed that Palladas composed this important group of poems around the time of the anti-pagan legislation issued by Theodosius I.¹⁶ This is an era that was notable for its Christian intolerance, especially in Alexandria where Palladas apparently lived and worked, and it is also an era that fits comfortably within the parameters of the traditional timeline.

Around the middle of the twentieth century, Reiske's hypothesis was further refined. Two of Palladas' epigrams dealing with the reversal suffered by pagans (AP 10.90 and 91) refer to a fortunate man whom God loves: εὐτυχῇ ... ὃν θεὸς φιλεῖ. This is apparently a reference to a particular individual. Two scholars in the 1950s independently proposed that the expression was a pun on the personal name of Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria from A.D. 385 to 412 and a notorious persecutor of pagans in his day.¹⁷ This man's most brazen activities can be dated to the year 391, when he incited a band of Christians to storm some of Alexandria's leading temples and steal their cult statues, thereby setting off a bitter and bloody dispute. These events, it is claimed, supply the precise context for Palladas' reflections on the plight of the pagans.

Though this theory has met with no resistance, it did become the cornerstone of the only challenge yet offered to the traditional timeline of Palladas' life. In 1959, C. M. Bowra made two simple observations to devastating effect.¹⁸ He noted the existence of a few epigrams in which Palladas writes about the end of his career as a grammarian. In one of these, after complaining that the loss of his salary has plunged him into financial ruin, Palladas calls on a man who is dear to God for assistance.¹⁹

¹⁵ Those familiar with the literature on Palladas will acknowledge the disappointing results of attempts to identify individuals named in his poems. These are often little more than bare assertions based on homonymity, though occasionally the conjectures are quite ingenious. In the latter category, see especially the competing reconstructions of C. M. Bowra, 'The fate of Gessius', *CR* n.s. 10 (1960), 91–5 and Alan Cameron, 'Palladas and the fate of Gessius', *Byz. Zeit.* 57 (1964), 274–92. In no case, however, do the biographical hints given by Palladas match what we know of homonymous persons from the late fourth century.

¹⁶ Reiske, 255.

¹⁷ C. Lacombrade, 'Palladas d'Alexandrie ou les vicissitudes d'un professeur-poète à la fin du IV^{ème} siècle', *Pallas* 1 (1953), 17–26; R. Keydell, 'Palladas und das Christentum', *Byz. Zeit.* 50 (1957), 1–3.

¹⁸ C. M. Bowra, 'Palladas and Christianity', *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 45 (1959), 255–67.

¹⁹ In line 5, Beckby prints Θέων φίλε, a reference to Hypatia's father Theon. For this reading, see also Stadtmüller and Paton, as well as Zerwes, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 22–5; Irmscher, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 167; B. Baldwin, 'Palladas of Alexandria: a poet between two worlds', *L'Antiquité Classique* 54 (1985), 267–73, at 272–3. But not only is it now out of vogue to suppose that Palladas had any relationship with Hypatia and her father, there is also no difficulty with the manuscripts. The *Palatinus* reads Θεῶι and Planudes ΘΩ — a *nomen sacrum*.

Καλλίμαχον πωλῶ καὶ Πίνδαρον ἥδ' ἐκαὶ αὐτὰς
 πτώσεις γραμματικῆς πτώσιν ἔχων πενίης.
 Δωρόθεος γὰρ ἐμὴν τροφίμην σύνταξιν ἔλυσε
 πρεσβεῖην κατ' ἐμοῦ τὴν ἀσεβῆ τέλεσας.
 ἀλλὰ σύ μου πρόστηθι, θεῶ φίλε, μηδέ μ' ἐάσης
 συνδέσσω πενίης τὸν βίον ἐξάνύσαι. (AP 9.175)

I am selling Callimachus and Pindar, as well as the very declensions of grammar, as I am suffering my own decline into poverty. For Dorotheus put an end to the salary (σύνταξις) that nourished me, having carried out the impious embassy against me. O Friend of God, come to my aid, and do not permit that I should finish my life in conjunction with poverty.

This Friend of God, Bowra argued, is almost certainly identical to the God-beloved man of AP 10.90 and 91 — that is, by consensus, Theophilus of Alexandria.²⁰ In fact, θεῶ φίλε is as close as one can come in elegiac metre to the bishop's name. Bowra proposed that Palladas may have lost his job as public grammarian in Alexandria during an anti-pagan purge of the early 390s and that this epigram was an appeal to the patriarch for assistance.

It is Bowra's second observation that upended the traditional chronology. The final couplet of AP 9.175, he noted, seems to suggest that Palladas was already an old man when he made his appeal. In fact, another epigram dealing with the end of Palladas' career as a grammarian indicates that he was seventy-two years old at the time:

Λίτραν ἐτῶν ζήσας μετὰ γραμματικῆς βαρυμόχθου,
 βουλευτῆς νεκύων πέμπομαι εἰς Αἴδην. (AP 10.97)

Having lived a pound of years with toilsome grammar, as a councillor of the dead I am being sent to Hades.

The first line's λίτραν ἐτῶν is universally recognized to be a reference to the number of *solidi* contained in the gold pound.²¹ From the time of Constantine, who introduced the coin, the *solidus* was struck at a value of seventy-two to the λίτρα. Palladas was seventy-two years of age, therefore, when he ceased to be a grammarian. If this event can be located in the early 390s, then the approximate year of Palladas' birth can be established. He was born, according to Bowra, around A.D. 319 and survived at least until the final decade of the fourth century, but probably not much beyond that point.

Since 1959, this hypothesis has become the new consensus for Palladas' dates.²² In a series of influential articles, Alan Cameron defended Bowra's revised timeline, providing in sum what is still the fullest treatment of the issue.²³ The contributions of both of these men then achieved canonical status in *PLRE*, which strays from its usual policy by referring readers to the several journal articles in which this chronology is argued.²⁴ Since the 1960s, no new work has been done on the topic. Palladas, however, continues to make occasional (if very brief) cameo appearances in the history books as an elderly witness to the twilight of paganism under Theodosius I.

²⁰ This identification was proposed already by Keydell, op. cit. (n. 17), 2.

²¹ Dübner, vol. 2, 282 (citing Salmasius, who was apparently the first to understand the reference); *LSJ*, s.v. λίτρα; Franke, op. cit. (n. 5), 39; Peek, op. cit. (n. 5), 164; Zerwes, op. cit. (n. 5), 27; Bowra, op. cit. (n. 18), 266; T. A. Bonanno, 'Pallada', *Orpheus* 5 (1958), 119–50, at 129; J. Irmscher, 'Palladas-Probleme', *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Universität Rostock* 12 (1963), 235–9, at 235; Alan Cameron, 'Palladas and Christian polemic', *JRS* 55 (1965), 17–30, at 27–8; Salamon, op. cit. (n. 12), 93.

²² A few have ignored Bowra's revision. Only Johannes Irmscher, to my knowledge, has attempted to defend the traditional timeline against it: Irmscher, op. cit. (n. 5); idem, op. cit. (n. 21).

²³ See especially his 'Palladas and the Nikai', *JHS* 84 (1964), 54–62; idem, op. cit. (n. 6); idem, op. cit. (n. 21).

²⁴ *PLRE*, vol. 1, 657–8. Also adopted by (among others) Baldwin, op. cit. (n. 19); C. Castellano Boyer, 'Palladas de Alejandria: Semblanza de un poeta a través de su obra', in J. G. González and A. P. Pérez (eds), *Studia Graecolatina Carmen Sanmillan in Memoriam Dicata* (1988), 161–71; R. A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (1988), 327–9.

III

Bowra's revised timeline represents a significant advance over its predecessor. In fact, the estimate of A.D. 360–450 is rendered all but impossible by an important external clue to Palladas' dates. By the conclusion of the fourth century, Ausonius and the authors of the *Epigrammata Bobiensia* had produced Latin versions of a number of epigrams known from the Greek Anthology, including several by Palladas. The Bobbio collection seems to have been assembled c. A.D. 400, by which time its chief poet (Naucellius) was apparently in his nineties.²⁵ Ausonius, whose literary career began in the 330s, died a few years before the close of the fourth century. Even if we date all of these Latin translations as late as possible, therefore, the old timeline necessitates an obvious absurdity: that Palladas, while still in his youth, was translated by men in their eighties and nineties.

Bowra's revision reduces the absurdity. If he is right, then Palladas was only a slightly younger contemporary of Ausonius and Naucellius. But this still entails some rather surprising corollaries. Here it is necessary to consider Alan Cameron's important contribution to the study of the fourth-century Latin imitations.²⁶ He posed the question of sources. How did Ausonius and the Bobbio poets gain access to the Greek epigrams that served as their models? They show a rather remarkable range, translating poems that derive ultimately from the *Garland* of Meleager (first century B.C.), the *Garland* of Philip (first century A.D.), the *Sylloge* of Rufinus (first century A.D.?), and the *Anthologion* of Diogenian (second century A.D.), as well as at least one other source containing epigrams by Palladas. That a Gallic rhetor and a group of Roman senators would have had all of these Greek collections at their fingertips strains credulity. Furthermore, as Cameron points out, both Ausonius and the Bobbio poets selected models on the same themes and by the same authors, and on several occasions they translated the very same epigrams. This can hardly be attributed to coincidence. And when one considers Cameron's analysis of the arrangement of epigrams in the Greek Anthology and its correlation to the selections made by the Latin imitators, it is very difficult to escape his conclusion: that the sole source for Ausonius and the Bobbio poets was an anthology containing excerpts from earlier collections, perhaps some other *miscellanea*, and a selection of epigrams by Palladas, who is by far the latest poet included. Cameron proposes a very narrow window for the compilation of this anthology.²⁷ Clearly it was in existence before Ausonius' death in the mid-390s. And since the *Epigrammata Bobiensia* contain a version of Palladas' 'Themistius' poem (AP 11.292), which is dated by consensus to A.D. 384, it must have been compiled after the middle of the 380s.²⁸ It is therefore a product of c. A.D. 390.

Cameron's brilliant reconstruction of this fourth-century source is almost certainly correct. And yet, the supposed timing of its production lacks plausibility. Ausonius composed a number of his original epigrams — those pertaining to his wife — before A.D. 350.²⁹ Roger Green has detected an allusion in one of these to the practice of imitating Greek models and therefore suggested that the translations (or some of them at any rate) were also products of his early career.³⁰ I find this rather compelling, though it is not perhaps definitive. Even if Green's suggestion is rejected, however, there is still the question of when Ausonius' epigram collection was first assembled and published in its entirety. It

²⁵ See the introduction to F. Munari's edition (1955), 21–7. W. Speyer (*Naucellius und sein Kreis: Studien zu den Epigrammata Bobiensia*, Zetemata: Monographien zur klassischen Wissenschaft 21 (1959), 1–10 and *passim*) has a much more elaborate theory of authorial and editorial hands. Whenever the collection was finally assembled, however, the bulk of the epigrams must be products of the late fourth or very early fifth century.

²⁶ Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 78–96. His analysis is much more compelling than I can convey in this brief summary; it deserves a careful reading.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 90–1.

²⁸ On AP 11.292, see the appendix to this article.

²⁹ Ausonius, *Epigr.* 19–20, 27–9 (Green).

³⁰ R. P. H. Green, *The Works of Ausonius* (1991), 376. The epigram in question is Ausonius, *Epigr.* 19.

contains nothing that obviously postdates the 370s;³¹ and many believe that it had already appeared in an edition of Ausonius' works assembled in A.D. 383 at the very latest.³² Clearly, if either one of these proposals is correct, then Cameron's hypothesis is in jeopardy. Moreover, even if one grants what seems most unlikely — that the Greek source for Ausonius' imitations was not compiled until about A.D. 390 — the required sequence of events is more than a little unsettling. One would be compelled to hold that Palladas, while still alive, indeed before composing what is widely believed to be his only datable group of epigrams, was anthologized in the East and then translated almost immediately by an octogenarian retiree in Gaul. In other words, even with special pleading for the timing of Ausonius' imitations, the necessary corollaries are highly improbable.

The solution to this conundrum is not to reject Cameron's hypothesis in its entirety.³³ To my mind, he has proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the Latin translations are based on a single fourth-century Greek source. If we ignore for a moment the standard dates for Palladas (which are far from secure), it is tempting to place the compilation of this work before A.D. 350. At any rate, it was almost certainly in existence by the 370s. On the external evidence alone, therefore, there is a strong suspicion that Palladas' epigrams may have been anthologized already by the middle decades of the fourth century. This, in turn, casts doubt on Bowra's timeline of A.D. 319–400.

There is now a second external clue that tends to confirm the impression that the conventional dates for Palladas may require some adjustment. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University owns an unpublished Greek epigram codex. Though the manuscript in its current fragmentary state contains no indication of authorship, one of its poems also appears in the Greek Anthology, where it is attributed to Palladas.³⁴ By a stroke of good fortune, the scribal hand exhibits strong 'documentary' features, allowing for close comparison with thousands of dated papyri. Though palaeography is not an exact science, even in the case of documentary hands, analysis suggests the last quarter of the third century or first quarter of the fourth, with A.D. 350 as an extreme upper limit.³⁵ Even if we push the production of the Yale manuscript as late as possible, therefore, on Bowra's reckoning of Palladas' dates our poet could have been no more than thirty years of age at the time. This is perhaps just possible, but we find ourselves once again kicking against the goad. With the broader range of dates for the manuscript (A.D. 275–325, possibly up to 350), Bowra's revised timeline looks decidedly suspicious. Like the evidence adduced from Ausonius and the Bobbio collection, the evidence of the Yale epigram codex points to the possibility that Palladas may have lived somewhat earlier than anyone has thought.

³¹ The latest datable epigrams are *Epigr.* 2–6. See the discussion in N. M. Kay, *Ausonius: Epigrams* (2001), 23.

³² The editorial and textual history of Ausonius' oeuvre is a notorious problem. For recent overviews, see Green, *op. cit.* (n. 30), xli–xlix, and the introduction to his OCT edition (1999), vii–xxii. The theory that Ausonius himself published an edition of his works in or shortly before A.D. 383 — an edition reflected roughly in ms. family Z, which is our primary source for the epigrams — goes back to W. Brandes, 'Zur handschriftlichen Überlieferung des Ausonius', *Jahrbuch für classische Philologie* 27 (1881), 59–79, and O. Seeck, *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* 149 (1887), 497–520. This view was challenged in the middle of the twentieth century, but see the lengthy rebuttal of A. Pastorino, 'A proposito della tradizione del testo di Ausonio', *Maia* 14 (1962), 41–68, 212–43. Green does not favour the theory of an A.D. 383 edition, though he does think that Ausonius may have assembled the epigram collection during his time at the imperial court (thus before A.D. 380); Green, *op. cit.* (n. 30), 376.

³³ As in a recent treatment of Ausonius' epigram collection (Kay, *op. cit.* (n. 31), 13–14, 23).

³⁴ P.CtYBR inv. 4000, page 21, lines 5–8 = AP 9.379. The pagination used here is based on a preliminary codicological reconstruction carried out by Robert Babcock, who was also the first to identify the poem. An *editio princeps* is currently in preparation and should appear in the near future. The ascriptions in the Greek Anthology are a different matter from the lemmata, but they are not without their own difficulties. In the case of AP 9.379, only the Palatine corrector (C) attributes it to Palladas (καὶ τοῦτο Παλλὰδα). We know, however, that he was collating AP with an independent copy of Cephalas' anthology; Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 103–4, 108–20. There are other factors that point to Palladan authorship, but a full discussion must await the edition of the Yale papyrus.

³⁵ I rely here on the analysis of Ruth Duttonhöfer, who offers as *comparanda* i.a. *P.Lond.* 2.214 (A.D. 272–275); *P.Cair.Isid.* 1 (297); *SB* 8.9833 (299); *P.Wisc.* 1.32 (305); *CPR* 17A.16 (321); *P.Merton* 2.92 (324).

IV

Any challenge to Bowra's timeline must come to grips with its central tenet: that Palladas wrote epigrams both about and for the patriarch Theophilus of Alexandria. On the face of it, this is not perhaps a very likely scenario, but it has gone unquestioned now for a half-century. Here are the two epigrams that lie at the heart of the case:

ὦ τῆς μεγίστης τοῦ φθόνου πονηρίας·
τὸν εὐτυχὴ μισεῖ τις, ὃν θεὸς φιλεῖ.
οὕτως ἀνόητοι τῷ φθόνῳ πλανώμεθα,
οὕτως ἐτοιμῶς μωρία δουλεύομεν.
Ἕλληνές ἐσμεν ἄνδρες ἐσποδωμένοι
νεκρῶν ἔχοντες ἐλπίδας τεθαμμένους·
ἀνεστράφη γὰρ πάντα νῦν τὰ πράγματα. (AP 10.90)

O, the great wickedness of envy! A certain person hates the fortunate man whom God loves. Thus we are irrationally deceived by envy, and thus we are readily enslaved to folly. We Hellenes are men reduced to ashes, holding to our buried hopes in the dead; for everything has now been turned on its head.

Ὅταν στυγῇ τις ἄνδρα, τὸν θεὸς φιλεῖ,
οὗτος μεγίστην μωρίαν κατεισάγει·
φανερῶς γὰρ αὐτῷ τῷ θεῷ κορύσσεται
χόλον μέγιστον ἐκ φθόνου δεδεγμένος,
δεῖ γὰρ φιλεῖν ἐκεῖνον, ὃν θεὸς φιλεῖ. (AP 10.91)

When a certain person hates the man whom God loves, he exhibits the height of folly. For he clearly girds himself for battle against God himself, incurring supreme wrath for his envy; for one must love the man whom God loves.

According to the current consensus, the context for these two epigrams is to be found in events that took place in Alexandria during Theophilus' tenure.³⁶ In A.D. 391, a band of Alexandrian Christians plundered some of the city's temples.³⁷ This act of aggression led to rioting between pagans and Christians and ultimately to the famous confiscation of the Serapeum. Palladas, it is thought, was an eyewitness to these events and responded by composing AP 10.90 and 91, in which he refers in punning fashion to Theophilus as a God-beloved man, confesses that the one who opposes the patriarch is foolish and motivated by envy, admits that taking up arms against him is like fighting against God himself, and laments the fact that the pagans have been defeated and that everything has been turned upside down. Commentators have disagreed about the sincerity of these lines (see below), but the poet's ostensible conclusion is that one must love the bishop, since *he* is loved by God.

It is clear enough that these epigrams have something to do with a catastrophe for the Hellenes, but the standard interpretation depends almost entirely on the assumption of a punning reference to Theophilus. This is not impossible, but it is by no means obvious that the God-beloved man, who plays such an important role in these epigrams, should be identified as the patriarch of Alexandria. Others have defended this identification by pointing to Palladas' fondness for punning,³⁸ which is frequently on display in his poetry and may seem to bolster the argument. But the danger, of course, is that his predilection may encourage us to seek out puns where they do not in fact exist. Such is the case, I believe, with this God-beloved man.

³⁶ e.g. Keydell, *op. cit.* (n. 17); Bowra, *op. cit.* (n. 18), 263; Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 26–8; Castellano Boyer, *op. cit.* (n. 24), 163; Kaster, *op. cit.* (n. 24), 328.

³⁷ Rufinus, *HE* 11.22; Eunapius, *VS* 472; Socrates, *HE* 5.16–17; Sozomen, *HE* 7.15.

³⁸ Peek, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 67; Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 27; idem, *op. cit.* (n. 15), 287–91.

The adjective *θεοφιλής* (and cognate expressions) was already a loaded term by the time that Palladas wrote these two epigrams. In the first place, from very early on, Christians had appropriated it as something that applied uniquely to them. Celsus, the second-century pagan polemicist, was shocked that these credulous people would dare to say that they were especially dear to God.³⁹ In his opinion, even irrational beasts could stake a better claim to this title. By Celsus' day, therefore, the word was already acquiring distinctly Christian overtones, and it is precisely this association that would have recommended the personal name Theophilus to a pious family.

In addition to a vague Christian air about this adjective from at least the second century, it also had two very precise uses. Toward the end of the fourth century, the superlative *θεοφιλέστατος* became a title for Christian bishops, much like 'Your Eminence' or 'Most Reverend'.⁴⁰ Earlier than this, *θεοφιλής ἐπίσκοπος* can be found on occasion as a term of respect.⁴¹ But the use of the superlative became formulaic in the age of Basil of Caesarea, who addressed his episcopal colleagues as *θεοφιλέστατε πάτερ*.⁴² Once synodal acts begin to appear in the fifth century, one can see that this formula was ubiquitous at gatherings of bishops.⁴³ Even the Coptic monk Shenoute made use of it when writing to Timothy, patriarch of Alexandria.⁴⁴ Thus, when Synesius of Cyrene referred to Timothy's successor as *ὁ θεοφιλέστατος πατήρ Θεόφιλος*, he was not, as has sometimes been alleged, making the same pun as Palladas.⁴⁵ He was simply following standard protocol for episcopal titles during this period.

If Palladas did indeed live earlier than anyone has previously thought, then this titular formula probably emerged too late to be a part of his lexicon. But there is a second formulaic use of the adjective in question that took root somewhat earlier in the fourth century: *θεοφιλής/θεοφιλέστατος* was an epithet frequently applied to Christian emperors beginning with Constantine.⁴⁶ It was not, of course, a part of the official titulature, but it was a common sobriquet in correspondence, panegyrics, and historical accounts.⁴⁷ To pick out only a couple of examples from the many listed in the notes, the arch-heretic Arius, upon being recalled from exile, addressed his subsequent statement of orthodox faith *τῷ εὐλαβεστάτῳ καὶ θεοφιλεστάτῳ δεσπότη ἡμῶν βασιλεῖ Κωνσταντίνῳ*.⁴⁸ And Eusebius of Caesarea, in all of his later writings pertaining to this same emperor, regularly calls the man *θεοφιλής (θεοφιλέστατος) βασιλεύς*.⁴⁹ Occasionally, Constantine is simply *ὁ τῷ θεῷ φίλος*, without any accompanying names or titles.⁵⁰ As one might expect, this convention

³⁹ Origen, *Cels.* 4.58.

⁴⁰ L. Dinneen, *Titles of Address in Christian Greek Epistolography to 527 AD*, CUA Patristic Studies 18 (1929), 52–3.

⁴¹ e.g. Eusebius, *HE* 10.4.1.

⁴² Basil, *Epp.* 82.1; 98.2; 128.2.

⁴³ e.g. in documents pertaining to the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431); E. Schwartz (ed.), *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum* 1.1.1–7 (1927–1929), *passim*.

⁴⁴ J. Leipoldt (ed.), *Sinuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia*, vol. 3, CSCO 42 (1908), 13, lines 19–20, and 14, lines 16–18.

⁴⁵ Synesius, *Ep.* 105 (Garzya, 190, line 2); see Lacombrade, *op. cit.* (n. 17), 26, n. 40, and Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 21.

⁴⁶ Dinneen, *op. cit.* (n. 40), 51–3.

⁴⁷ e.g. Constantine I: H.-G. Opitz (ed.), *Athanasius Werke*, vol. 3.1: *Urkunden zur Geschichte des Arianischen Streites 318–328* (1934–1935), *Urkunden* 22.2, 7, 14, 16; 23.2; 30.pr; 31.5 etc.; Eusebius, *HE* 10.8–9 and *passim*; idem, *VC* 1.10, 31, 41, 49, 51; 3.43 and *passim*; idem, *LC* 1.6; 2.1; 3.3 and *passim*; Athanasius, *Apol. c. Arian.* 1.70, 2.84; idem, *Decr. Nic.* 33, 36; Theodoret, *HE* 1.1.4; G. C. Hansen (ed.), *Anonyme Kirchengeschichte*, GCS N.F. 9 (2002), pr. 1; 1.1.4; 1.3.3; 1.8.1; 1.10.6; 1.12.1 and *passim*. Constantius II: Athanasius, *De syn.* 55.4–7 = Socrates, *HE* 2.37.83–7; Athanasius, *Apol. ad Const.*, *passim*; idem, *Apol. c. Arian.* 1.1, 36, 51; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Ep. ad Const.*, *passim*; Themistius, *Or.* 1.9 (Schenkl, Downey and Norman). Jovian: Athanasius, *Ep. ad Jov.* = Theodoret, *HE* 4.3; Themistius, *Or.* 5.69; Sozomen, *HE* 6.4.7–10. Valens: Themistius, *Or.* 7.90. Theodosius I: Theodoret, *HE* 5.9.

⁴⁸ Opitz, *op. cit.* (n. 47), *Urkunde* 30.

⁴⁹ R. Farina, *L'Impero e l'Imperatore cristiano in Eusebio di Cesarea: La prima teologia politica del Cristianesimo*, Bibliotheca Theologica Salesiana, ser. 1 (Fontes), vol. 2 (1966), 195–6.

⁵⁰ e.g. Eusebius, *HE* 10.9.2; idem, *LC* 1.6; 2.1; 5.4.

is more commonly found in Christian than in pagan sources. But even pagans adopted it in formal situations, as did Themistius in his orations delivered before an imperial audience.⁵¹ In short, 'Friend of God' or 'Beloved of God' could be nearly as obvious a reference to the sovereign in the fourth century as 'Her Majesty' is today.

This raises a host of new possibilities for Palladas' God-beloved man. Others have stated, and I agree, that this must refer to an individual who required no introduction.⁵² If the poems had been composed in Alexandria in A.D. 391, the thoughts of Palladas' fellow citizens may have turned to the patriarch Theophilus. This, however, is to beg the question. If we do not prejudge the context, it is far more likely that fourth-century readers would have thought that this God-beloved man, whose power was irresistible, and who had apparently won a victory, was the emperor. In theory this could be almost any emperor of the fourth century, but there is a very good case to be made for the one who was, above all others, God's favourite — Constantine the Great.⁵³

From very early on in his career, Constantine claimed special divine favour. In his letters pertaining to the Donatist dispute, he styles himself as the one chosen by God to govern earthly affairs and the one who has been especially blessed with heavenly gifts; he announces himself ready to attack those who attack God.⁵⁴ The image of Constantine as God's friend and champion in worldly affairs was picked up in Lactantius' *De mortibus persecutorum* and in Nazarius' panegyric of A.D. 321.⁵⁵ As Nazarius asks, 'Who in the world is there who does not believe that god (*deus*) assists you, since your life is worthy of it and the magnitude of your accomplishments attests to it?'⁵⁶ By the time of his final conflict with Licinius in A.D. 324, it was already a well-established cog in the Constantinian propaganda machine that he was God's ally and that his enemies were therefore also the enemies of God.⁵⁷ And so it is that the Greek sources after his victory in the civil war declared him θεοφιλής, while Licinius was θεομισής.⁵⁸

In all of this Constantine was not really so different from his predecessors and successors. Every emperor of the period claimed a divine ally — a god who would guarantee victory on the battlefield and peace and prosperity among his subjects.⁵⁹ But the precise connection with Constantine becomes evident through a comparison with contemporary descriptions of the civil war of A.D. 324. The account given by Eusebius, both in his *Ecclesiastical History* and in the *Vita Constantini*, exhibits a remarkable congruence with the language and drift of Palladas' two epigrams. He begins by saying that it was 'the envy that hates what is good' (τῷ μισοκάλῳ φθόνῳ) that drove Licinius to break the peace.⁶⁰ And then again, the eastern emperor, 'filled with envy' (διαφθονηθείς), waged an impious war against the benefactor of all.⁶¹ He was like a wild beast breathing anger and hatred.⁶² Eusebius repeatedly describes this man's enmity as irrational because Constantine was

⁵¹ See n. 47.

⁵² Keydell, op. cit. (n. 17), 2; Cameron, op. cit. (n. 21), 21.

⁵³ Even in the later sources Constantine is called 'Friend of God' more frequently than any other emperor of the period. The sobriquet is still quite common in reference to his sons. It appears somewhat less frequently, however, as an epithet for fourth-century emperors after the extinction of Constantine's house.

⁵⁴ Optatus, App. 3; 5; 8 (CSEL 26). Though much has been written about this dossier, on its witness to the emperor's affinity with his god, see still N. H. Baynes, *Constantine the Great and the Christian Church*² (1972; originally published 1931), 11–16.

⁵⁵ Lactantius, *Mort.* 24, 44; *Pan. Lat.* 4(10).13.5, 16.1–2, 18.4, 19.1, 26.1.

⁵⁶ *Pan. Lat.* 4(10).16.2; trans. C. E. V. Nixon and B. S. Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: The Panegyrici Latini* (1994).

⁵⁷ e.g. Constantine, *Oratio*, 22–6; Eusebius, VC 2.55 (Constantine's own words in his *Letter to the Eastern Provincials*). See R. H. Storch, 'The "Eusebian Constantine"', *Church History* 40 (1971), 145–55; T. D. Barnes, 'Lactantius and Constantine', *JRS* 63 (1973), 29–46, at 29.

⁵⁸ For Licinius as 'God-hater' or 'hated by God', see e.g. Eusebius, HE 10.8.11; idem, VC 1.51.2; 1.52; 2.18.

⁵⁹ R. MacMullen, 'Constantine and the miraculous', *GRBS* 9 (1968), 81–96; Storch, op. cit. (n. 57), 146.

⁶⁰ Eusebius, HE 10.8.2; idem, VC 1.49.

⁶¹ Eusebius, HE 10.8.3.

⁶² Eusebius, VC 1.56.2; 2.1.2; 2.3.1.

‘God’s Friend’ (τῷ ὁ θεὸς ἦν φίλος, ὁ τῷ θεῷ φίλος) and ‘the most God-beloved emperor’ (θεοφιλέστατος βασιλεὺς, θεοφιλῆς βασιλεὺς).⁶³ As a result, Licinius was taking up arms not so much against human forces as against God himself: ‘In his mindless folly [Licinius] finally began a campaign against the very God whom he knew the Emperor worshipped’.⁶⁴ When things began to go badly for the eastern armies, Licinius realized ‘that his hope in those he thought were gods (ὧν ᾤετο θεῶν ἐλπίς) had in the event proved worthless’.⁶⁵ And in defeat he suffered the wrath of Constantine and this man’s divine protector. Eusebius plays down this distasteful element, but he cannot ignore it altogether:⁶⁶

When [Constantine] saw his opponents persisting, already with sword in hand, the Emperor then became very angry and with one blow put to flight the whole opposing force, and won victories over enemies and demons alike. He then judged the Godhater himself, and afterwards his supporters, according to the law of war, and imposed on them appropriate punishment. With the tyrant those who conspired in the war against God paid the just penalty and died.

This is precisely the story that is told in verse by Palladas. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that both he and Eusebius were writing about the same events. There is no need to suppose any direct literary relationship between the two; both were undoubtedly conforming to the victor’s propaganda.

If this is right, then we can finally identify the unnamed individual in Palladas’ epigrams (τις, appearing in 10.90.2 and 91.1) who was envious of God’s Friend and harboured hatred towards him.⁶⁷ Surely this is Licinius. The indefiniteness of the reference is fitting for one who suffered ignominious defeat and *abolitio memoriae*.⁶⁸ In fact, Constantine himself in his *Oration to the Assembly of the Saints*, after describing several previous emperors by name, called the disgraced Licinius simply τις ἄχρηστος.⁶⁹ The official story declared that this ‘so-and-so’ was led astray by envy and hatred, that he was foolishly fighting against God himself, and that he justly suffered the wrath of the God-beloved Constantine. It is a judgement with which Palladas concurs. These two epigrams, I contend, belong to the period shortly after A.D. 324 and both explicitly endorse the victorious emperor’s civil-war propaganda.

This still leaves largely unexplained the final lines of AP 10.90, in which Palladas lists a series of insults and misfortunes suffered by the Hellenes. Those who have attempted to read this epigram against the backdrop of Theophilus’ anti-pagan activities have interpreted these in one of two ways. C. M. Bowra thought that the epigram was an earnest capitulation. On his reading, Palladas despaired of any future for traditional paganism in the late fourth century and decided to curry favour with the Alexandrian patriarch.⁷⁰ It is rather shocking, however, to think that Palladas would both repudiate his past so vigorously and embrace Theophilus so fully. Other pagan intellectuals reacted very differently. A grammarian who was involved in the rioting escaped to Constantinople, where he was still boasting years later that he had single-handedly killed nine Christians in Alexandria.⁷¹ Eunapius likens Theophilus to Eurymedon leading his cursed men.⁷² Zosimus calls him a

⁶³ Eusebius, *HE* 10.8.6, 7, 16; 10.9.2, 6, 9; idem, *VC* 1.49.1, 2; 1.51.2; 1.52 and *passim*.

⁶⁴ Eusebius, *VC* 1.50.2; trans. Averil Cameron and S. G. Hall, *Eusebius: Life of Constantine* (1999). Cf. Eusebius, *HE* 10.8.8; 10.8.9 (τὸν θεὸν αὐτὸν . . . πολεμεῖν ἐγνώκει); idem, *VC* 2.1.2; 2.18; 3.12.2 (put in Constantine’s mouth at the Council of Nicaea).

⁶⁵ Eusebius, *VC* 2.11.1; trans. Cameron and Hall.

⁶⁶ Eusebius, *VC* 2.17–18; trans. Cameron and Hall.

⁶⁷ Some have thought that the reference is to the poet himself; e.g. Keydell, *op. cit.* (n. 17), 2. But there is a clear distinction in the first of the two epigrams between this unnamed hostile man and the Hellenes with whom Palladas identifies in lines 3–6.

⁶⁸ Eusebius, *HE* 10.9.5.

⁶⁹ Constantine, *Oratio* 25.4.

⁷⁰ Bowra, *op. cit.* (n. 18), 262–5. See also Lacombrade, *op. cit.* (n. 17), 23.

⁷¹ Socrates, *HE* 5.16.14.

⁷² Eunapius, *VS* 472.

traitor against the ancestral rites.⁷³ It is not impossible that Palladas simply adopted a more irenic stance than most, but his obsequiousness and his self-flagellation under such circumstances would have been, at the very least, peculiar. The patriarch was not a man whom he needed to flatter in such gross terms.

The other alternative, and the one far more commonly adopted, is to claim that AP 10.90 is thoroughly sarcastic.⁷⁴ On this reading, Palladas' apparent praise of the God-beloved man and his admission of pagan error and irrationality are precisely the opposite of what he intends. The effect, therefore, is comedic, and the point is to savage the patriarch for his arrogance. This certainly would have been a more plausible reaction to the events of A.D. 391. The problem, however, is that the poem is neither funny nor savage. It contains no ironic particles to alert the reader to its supposed sarcasm; the God-beloved man does not come in for harsh treatment (not even obliquely so); and there is no comic reversal in which the truth of the matter is revealed. Compare this with Palladas' sarcastic two-line attack on a certain politician (AP 11.284). The first line seems to praise the man as a 'great leader' (μέγας ὄρχαμος), but the reader learns that this is said ironically when the poem's final word reveals him to be a sodomite (ἀντιοχευόμενος). Palladas knew how to eviscerate a target. He appears to be up to something quite different in AP 10.90.

The truth of the matter emerges from an examination of Constantine's late religious propaganda. By A.D. 324, the western emperor did not merely possess a vague allegiance to a new god; he was unmistakably Christian and his rhetoric must have had an ominous ring for contemporary pagans. His *Speech to the Assembly of the Saints*, probably delivered in Nicomedia in the spring of A.D. 325, reveals a mature grasp of the new faith.⁷⁵ And it is stridently anti-pagan in tone.⁷⁶ Constantine employs traditional apologetic language to rail against pagan philosophers and adherents of the old cults. He speaks of 'the error of illogical people' (πλάνη παρὰ τοῖς ἀλογίστοις) who manufacture and worship lifeless idols.⁷⁷ They are 'irrational' (ἀνόητοι) and impious.⁷⁸ God has to put up with their 'folly' (μωρία) and 'wickedness' (πονηρία).⁷⁹ In his *Letter to the Eastern Provincials*, disseminated shortly after his victory over Licinius, he takes up the same theme.⁸⁰ Though he will apply no compulsion to 'those who err' (οἱ πλανώμενοι), he admonishes them to adopt sound reasoning, that is, to come over to the worship of the living God.⁸¹

It is this very language that finds an echo in AP 10.90: we Hellenes are irrational (ἀνόητοι), Palladas says, we are enslaved to folly (μωρία δουλεύομεν), and we are in error (πλανώμεθα).⁸² Alan Cameron has already documented the occurrence of Christian apologetic language in this epigram, which he calls 'an ironic pastiche of phrases and words

⁷³ Zosimus 5.23.3.

⁷⁴ e.g. Keydell, op. cit. (n. 17), 2; Bonanno, op. cit. (n. 21), 123–5; Cameron, op. cit. (n. 21), 29; J. Irmscher, 'Alexandria: die christusliebende Stadt', *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 19 (1967–1968), 115–22, at 121; G. Agosti, 'Late antique iambics and the *iambikè idéa*', in A. Cavarzere, A. Aloni and A. Barchiesi (eds), *Iambic Ideas: Essays on a Poetic Tradition from Archaic Greece to the Late Roman Empire* (2001), 219–55, at 235.

⁷⁵ Virtually everyone now accepts the authenticity of the speech and most place it after A.D. 324. Bruno Bleckmann ('Ein Kaiser als Prediger: Zur Datierung der konstantinischen "Rede an die Versammlung der Heiligen"', *Hermes* 125 (1997), 183–202) argues persuasively for a setting in Nicomedia, though his attempt to date its delivery to A.D. 328 is not convincing. T. D. Barnes ('Constantine's *Speech to the Assembly of the Saints*: place and date of delivery', *JTS* 52 (2001), 26–36) accepts Bleckmann's arguments for setting but makes a better case for the year 325.

⁷⁶ See Constantine, *Oratio* 1, 10, 12 and *passim*.

⁷⁷ Constantine, *Oratio* 9.5.

⁷⁸ Constantine, *Oratio* 11.4.

⁷⁹ Constantine, *Oratio* 11.7; 1.5; 11.4.

⁸⁰ Eusebius, *VC* 2.48–60.

⁸¹ Eusebius, *VC* 2.56.1. In general, see *ibid.*, 48–9, 56–7, 59–60.

⁸² Pagan intellectuals had begun to call themselves Ἕλληνες by the beginning of the fourth century. See e.g. Porphyry, *Ad Marc.* 4; [Julian], *Epp.* 181.449b; 184.419a. On the latter (epistles from the reign of Licinius), see T. D. Barnes, 'A correspondent of Iamblichus', *GRBS* 19 (1978), 99–106. On the emergence of the designation 'Hellenic', see also G. W. Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (1990), 9–13; Alan Cameron, 'Julian and Hellenism', *The Ancient World* 24 (1993), 25–9, who argues for the uniqueness of Julian's usage.

Palladas had heard applied to the pagans by Christians, phrases that seemed to him, as a pagan, particularly amusing or outrageous'.⁸³ I differ with him on the tone of this epigram — it is not, to my mind, a comic satire — but he is unquestionably correct to point out the density of Christian polemical language. It is language, moreover, that was heavily used by Constantine in his orations and in his open letters to the public. Nearly every word or phrase employed by Palladas in this poem finds a parallel in Constantine's religious propaganda after A.D. 324 or (as demonstrated above) in his civil-war propaganda of the same period.

So what, in the end, does it all mean? The key lies in the final verse: ἀνεστράφη γὰρ πάντα νῦν τὰ πράγματα. This was always a curious analysis of pagan-Christian relations in Alexandria at the end of the fourth century. Christians, under the patronage of the emperors, had held the political advantage there for decades (with one brief but notable interlude) by the time of Theophilus' patriarchate.⁸⁴ The year 391 did not represent a sudden shift in the balance of power; it was only another step (albeit an important one) in the decline of pagan influence that had begun much earlier and would not conclude until much later. Palladas' assessment is, however, an apt description of a regime change that immediately resulted in enormous social and legal advantages for the previously disenfranchised Christians of the East, as well as in certain social and legal disadvantages for the traditional cults. This epigram is in part a reflection on the reversal of fortunes brought about by Constantine's victory in the civil war. Previously, it was Christians who were scorned by the powerful for the folly and irrationality of their beliefs. They had to mourn their own miserable lot in life as a succession of emperors periodically inflicted penalties upon them. And they clung to their hope in a man, supposedly divine, who was crucified, dead and buried. Now, however, it is the pagans whose way of life is openly mocked. Now it is they who are called irrational and foolish (lines 3–4), even by the emperor himself. Now it is they who are reduced to a life of misery (line 5). And, in the ultimate irony, now it is they who possess nothing but a buried hope in their dead gods (line 6).⁸⁵ These lines exhibit neither self-hatred nor malicious sarcasm; they merely point out (though perhaps with some private bitterness) the inherent irony in the current state of affairs. It is a theme to which Palladas returns repeatedly in his poetry: the rich become poor and the poor become rich; this is the mysterious way of the world.⁸⁶

Finally, the poem does not lay any blame at the feet of Constantine. This would have been rash indeed for any man who valued his life. Rather, it is the envy and hatred that Licinius harboured against God's Friend that has turned the world upside down (lines 1–2). All of the inversions follow (see οὕτως in lines 3–4) from this man's ill-considered actions. The folly of Licinius' hatred and envy is picked up again in AP 10.91, which concludes with the rule that one must love the God-beloved emperor. Both of these epigrams explicitly endorse Constantinian political propaganda, even as AP 10.90 also acknowledges (using the language of Constantine's religious propaganda) the almost comical reversal of fortunes that had taken place under the new regime.

⁸³ Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 29.

⁸⁴ In A.D. 356, for example, pagans were forced by imperial authorities (under threat of persecution) to support the Arian cause in the city (Athanasius, *Hist. Arian.* 54–6; Socrates, *HE* 2.11; Sozomen, *HE* 3.6). A year later, pagans in Alexandria were prevented from sacrificing and celebrating their feasts, and some of their cult statues were confiscated and destroyed (Julian, *Ep.* 60 (Bidez); Ammianus 22.11.3–7; Socrates, *HE* 2.28, 45; 3.2–3; Sozomen, *HE* 4.4, 10, 30).

⁸⁵ Like charges of folly, irrationality, and other generic name-calling, the charge of worshipping the dead was made both by pagans against Christians and by Christians against pagans; see Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 23–4.

⁸⁶ e.g. AP 9.180–3; 10.80; 10.96.

C. M. Bowra's construction of Palladas' timeline rested solely on the assumption that AP 10.90 and 91 were penned in A.D. 391. With the realization that Palladas' God-beloved man is Constantine rather than Theophilus the current consensus collapses. In fact, one might be justified in simply adapting Bowra's basic chronological argument to the newly established setting for these two epigrams. The Friend of God (θεῷ φίλε) to whom our poet appeals in AP 9.175 (quoted in full above) is quite possibly the God-beloved emperor. If θεῷ φίλος strikes one as too close to the patriarch's name to be a coincidence, one would do well to remember that Eusebius several times calls Constantine ὁ τῷ θεῷ φίλος.⁸⁷ The emperor, moreover, was a much more likely source of assistance to a pagan grammarian than Theophilus, who was hardly known for his clemency or benevolence when dealing with monks and other bishops, much less with non-believers. I propose that AP 9.175 is an appeal in poetry (whether real or a literary conceit) to the first Christian emperor. If this is right, then Palladas evidently ceased to be a grammarian during the period of Constantine's sole rule (A.D. 324–337). And since we know that he was seventy-two years of age at the time when he gave up grammar (AP 10.97), his birth can be placed tentatively between A.D. 252 and 265.

Though it may be right, this hypothesis, like Bowra's before it, is vulnerable on two fronts: (i) it is likely but perhaps not entirely certain that the Friend of God apostrophized in AP 9.175 is identical with the God-beloved man of 10.90 and 91, and (ii) the loss of salary reported in 9.175 may not be identical with the retirement from grammar at age seventy-two mentioned in 10.97. The rough dates suggested above, however, receive independent confirmation from another epigram that alludes to Palladas' retirement:

Οὐ δύναμαι γαμετῆς καὶ γραμματικῆς ἀνέχεσθαι,
 γραμματικῆς ἀπόρου καὶ γαμετῆς ἀδίκου.
 ἀμφοτέρων τὰ πάθη θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα τέτυκται.
 τὴν οὖν γραμματικὴν νῦν μόλις ἐξέφυγον,
 οὐ δύναμαι δ' ἄλόχου τῆς ἀνδρομάχης ἀναχωρεῖν·
 εἴργει γὰρ χάρτης καὶ νόμος Αὐσονίου. (AP 11.378)

I am unable to bear both a wife and grammar too — grammar is unprofitable, and my wife is unjust (unmanageable?). From both I suffer death and fate. Thus, just now, I have barely escaped from grammar. But I am unable to flee from my man-hating wife, for a piece of paper and Roman law prevent it.

This epigram contains a chronological clue that has been hitherto overlooked. Whether or not the poet genuinely wanted to divorce his wife, his claim that a piece of paper (sc. his marriage contract) and Roman law prevented him from doing so is sensible only at certain points in the history of the Empire. In the first place, no one would be justified in saying such a thing before Constantine. Whatever the situation prior to the late Republic, unilateral divorce (as opposed to divorce by mutual consent, which remained unrestricted until the time of Justinian) had been very straightforward under Roman law between the first century and A.D. 331.⁸⁸ This is the year in which Constantine imposed penalties that made it all but impossible for women and extremely difficult for men.⁸⁹ Any woman who divorced her husband against his will without being able to prove that he was a murderer, a sorcerer, or a tomb-defiler forfeited all of her property and could be sent into exile. A man was permitted to repudiate his wife only if he could prove that she was an adulteress, a sorceress, or a procuress (*conciliatrix*). Should the wife be innocent of these crimes, the divorcing husband had to restore her dowry and he was forced to remain single for the

⁸⁷ e.g. Eusebius, *HE* 10.9.2; idem, *LC* 1.6; 2.1; 5.4.

⁸⁸ For the late republican and early imperial evidence, see S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (1991), 435–82.

⁸⁹ *CTh* 3.16.1.

duration of his life. Any future attempt on his part to remarry entitled the first wife to financial compensation. Constantine's legislation did much more than merely discourage unilateral divorce; it seems to have been an attempt to stamp out the practice in all but the most extreme cases.⁹⁰ This revolution in Roman divorce law supplies a *terminus post quem* of A.D. 331 for Palladas' epigram.⁹¹

One can only imagine that this Constantinian reform was an extremely unpopular measure. But our knowledge of its fate in subsequent years is hampered somewhat by the fact that no manuscript preserves the third book of the Theodosian Code. The contents of the title on divorce must therefore be reconstructed (and this can be done only partially) from the Breviary of Alaric.⁹² Nevertheless, there is very good evidence that Constantine's edict was overturned by Julian the Apostate (A.D. 361–363). The anonymous Ambrosiaster, writing during the 370s, has this to say on the subject: 'Before Julian's edict, women were not able to divorce their husbands. Once they were given the right, however, they began to do what they could not before; for they began to divorce their husbands freely and on a daily basis'.⁹³ Thus, by A.D. 363 at the very latest, Constantine's law had been rendered inert. And there is a considerable body of evidence from this period to support the conclusion that Constantine's restrictions were not reinstated after Julian's death.⁹⁴ Unilateral divorce, therefore, was once again legally permissible in the final third of the fourth century. In fact, it was not until A.D. 421, and then only in the western half of the Empire, that the moribund Constantinian restrictions were revived in an attenuated form by Honorius.⁹⁵ This legislation did not become effective in the Eastern Empire until the publication of the Code in A.D. 437. And almost immediately thereafter, Theodosius II issued an edict invalidating Honorius' law in his domain. He stipulates: 'The constitutions shall be abrogated which commanded now the husband, now the wife to be punished by the most severe penalties when a marriage was dissolved, and by this Our constitution We decree that the blame for divorce and the punishments for such blame shall be recalled to the ancient laws and the responses of the jurists'.⁹⁶ This was a return to the Eastern *status quo ante* A.D. 437. Thereafter, unilateral divorce remained more or less unrestricted in the Eastern Empire until the sixth century. Thus, it is only between Constantine's law of A.D. 331 and its repeal in A.D. 361–363 that Palladas could plausibly blame Roman law for preventing him from divorcing his wife.⁹⁷

⁹⁰ J. Evans Grubbs, *Law and Family in Late Antiquity: The Emperor Constantine's Marriage Legislation* (1995), 228–32. For surveys of divorce legislation during this period, see *ibid.*, 225–37; A. Arjava, 'Divorce in Later Roman Law', *Arctos* 22 (1988), 5–21; *idem*, *Women and Law in Late Antiquity* (1996), 177–83.

⁹¹ As realized by a few commentators but without pursuing the issue further. e.g. Dübner, vol. 2, 390; Zerwes, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 35–6; Irmscher, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 166; Bonanno, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 127.

⁹² On the sources and the reconstruction of our modern editions, see J. F. Matthews, *Laying Down the Law: A Study of the Theodosian Code* (2000), 85–120.

⁹³ Ambrosiaster, *Lib. Quaest.* 115.12 (Souter, CSEL 50, 322): 'Ante Juliani edictum mulieres viros suos dimittere nequibant, accepta autem potestate coeperunt facere quod prius facere non poterant; coeperunt enim cottidie licenter viros suos dimittere.'

⁹⁴ For references, see Arjava, *op. cit.* (n. 90, 1988), 9–13. He concludes: 'It seems quite certain that the Constantinian ban on unilateral divorce was not restored after Julian. ... For 60 years in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, under many Christian emperors, in the most productive period of Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine, there were no great obstacles to divorce in Rome' (12–13).

⁹⁵ *CTh* 3.16.2. We can be quite confident that no other restrictive legislation intervened. The compilers of the Breviary of Alaric, our source for this title, clearly excerpted the laws that were relevant to their own legal situation in the sixth century. Had the Code contained some other restrictive piece of legislation, it almost certainly would have been included.

⁹⁶ *Nov.Th.* 12 (issued in July 439); trans. C. Pharr *et al.*, *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions* (1952). Theodosius II issued another law (*CJ* 5.17.8) in A.D. 449 that specified the legitimate grounds for dissolving a marriage. These were so broad, however, that in practice it must have remained quite simple in the Eastern Empire to obtain a legal divorce against the spouse's will.

⁹⁷ This rules out a date of c. A.D. 391 for Palladas' epigram (as required by Bowra).

The window, however, is really much narrower than these three decades. The place of greatest emphasis in an epigram is typically the final position, here reserved for νόμος Αὔσονιος. This poem is precisely about a very restrictive piece of divorce legislation and is therefore almost certainly contemporary with it. Johannes Reiske, in the eighteenth century, is the only commentator to have recognized the chronological implications of this verse, but he was not willing to venture any guesses about the referent.⁹⁸ After much modern critical work on later Roman law, we can now say with confidence that the legislation in question is Constantine's reform of A.D. 331. As Palladas' epigram would have been gratuitous even several years after the fact, never mind several decades, it is probable that he wrote these lines in or shortly after the year of the revolutionary new law. A gap of a few years is perhaps possible, but the reference would have been out of date after this point. This is another epigram, therefore, that belongs during the latter years of Constantine's reign.

Because Palladas declares in this poem that he has just recently (νῦν) escaped from grammar, we now have an independent verification of the dates suggested above. One should not seek more precision from this temporal adverb than it can bear in such a context, but it seems sufficiently circumspect to locate his retirement in the late 320s or early 330s. It is worth reprinting at this point the epigram that fixes Palladas' age when he left grammar to pursue something else:

Λίτραν ἐτῶν ζήσας μετὰ γραμματικῆς βαρυμόχθου,
βουλευτῆς νεκύων πέμπομαι εἰς Αἴδην. (AP 10.97)

Having lived a pound of years with toilsome grammar, as a councillor of the dead I am being sent to Hades.

This circuitous manner of stating his age (by reference to the number of *solidi* in the gold pound) is potentially another link to the Constantinian era. Palladas may have thought the expression clever if the currency reform was still a recent event; the farther we get from the novelty of a new gold standard, the less interesting the phrase becomes.⁹⁹ In any event, however, Palladas says that he was seventy-two years of age when he gave up 'toilsome grammar'. If, as the divorce epigram suggests, we place this event in or around A.D. 331, then Palladas was born roughly in the year 259 — let us say 259 plus or minus five years (which accords almost exactly with the estimate of 252–265, argued above on independent grounds). It is clear that Palladas survived until the early 330s at least. How much longer he lived beyond this point is impossible to say, but he was probably dead by the middle of the fourth century.

VI

The external evidence for Palladas' dates — supplied by the Latin imitations of Ausonius and the *Epigrammata Bobiensia* and now by the Yale papyrus — strongly suggests that his *floruit* could not have been as late as the second half of the fourth century, much less the first half of the fifth. And an analysis of his most topical epigrams confirms an approximate timeline that is much earlier than anyone has suspected (c. A.D. 259–340).

Quite apart from the difference that this adjustment makes in the assessment of Palladas' life and literary output, our earlier dating generates at least two other significant consequences. First, it answers the one serious objection to Alan Cameron's important

⁹⁸ Reiske, 255: 'quae lex quando et a quo imperatore lata fuerit, juris consultis permitto ut edicant.'

⁹⁹ Constantine began to strike the *solidus* quite early in his reign, but it probably did not become a staple of the currency until he inherited Licinius' treasury and began to despoil the eastern temples of their precious metals; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602* (1964), vol. 1, 107–9, 439. In any case, Licinius' territories continued to use the old *aureus* until Constantine assumed control in A.D. 324.

hypothesis, viz. that Ausonius and the Bobbio poets made use of a fourth-century anthology of Greek epigrams.¹⁰⁰ As I have already said, I have no doubt that his hypothesis is correct. On the old timeline for Palladas, however, this anthology could not have been assembled until about A.D. 390, just a few years before Ausonius died at a very advanced age. Not many have found this plausible. If, however, Palladas was already seventy-two years of age in the early 330s, then Ausonius' imitations could belong to any period of his career. There is now a window of fifty or more years for the compilation of the anthology, its circulation in the West, and the appearance of the Latin imitations. I think it likely that the Greek source was in existence already by the middle of the century. Cameron's hypothesis, with this one minor adjustment, should now be accepted without hesitation.¹⁰¹

The second important consequence of the corrected timeline for Palladas is something rather extraordinary: we have managed to recover a contemporary pagan witness to the final period of Constantine's reign. More precisely, we have recovered a witness to the religious climate of those years. Until now, we have had to rely almost exclusively on the testimony of Eusebius for a contemporary perspective. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, the prevailing attitude toward the bishop's triumphal narrative was one of scepticism. Those who did not reject outright the authenticity of Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* and its historical documents tended, at least, to doubt the reliability of its portrait of the emperor. As a result, historians have often denied any significant shift in the religious landscape of the Empire during Constantine's reign. In clear contradiction of Eusebius, they have expressed doubts about the emperor's commitment to Christianity, and they have maintained that the pagan cults in both East and West continued to operate without any social or legal obstacles.¹⁰² Though regnant for several generations, this scepticism did not go unchallenged in the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁰³ In more recent years, T. D. Barnes has argued very forcefully that Eusebius was a scholar, not a courtier, and that he provides a reliable account (with some exaggerations and omissions, of course) of Constantine's attempts after A.D. 324 to install Christianity as the religion of the Empire.¹⁰⁴ Though Barnes's work on the topic met initially with some incredulity and is still viewed with suspicion in certain quarters, the last three decades have seen a gradual shift away from radical scepticism of the Eusebian account.¹⁰⁵ If there was need of any further proof that this is movement in the right direction, then Palladas surely supplies it.

¹⁰⁰ Cameron, op. cit. (n. 10), 78–96.

¹⁰¹ On the 'Themistius' epigram (AP 11.292), which influenced Cameron's dating, see the appendix to this article. I do not have the space to address here the objections of M. Lauxtermann, 'The Palladas Sylloge', *Mnemosyne* 50 (1997), 329–37. I intend to treat the issue more fully in a future publication.

¹⁰² This orientation is associated especially with the influential work of J. Burckhardt, *Die Zeit Constantins des Grossen*² (1880; originally published 1853). Less some of Burckhardt's excesses, this perspective persists up to the present. Recently, see e.g. M. Clauss, 'Die alten Kulte in konstantinischer Zeit', in A. Demandt and J. Engemann (eds), *Konstantin der Grosse: Geschichte, Archäologie, Rezeption, Internationales Kolloquium vom 10.–15. Oktober 2005 an der Universität Trier zur Landesausstellung Rheinland-Pfalz 2007 'Konstantin der Grosse'* (2006), 39–48.

¹⁰³ Baynes, op. cit. (n. 54), with Henry Chadwick's introduction; A. H. M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*² (1962; originally published 1948); A. Alföldi, *The Conversion of Constantine and Pagan Rome*, trans. H. Mattingly (1948).

¹⁰⁴ See especially T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (1981), but this perspective is evident in nearly everything that he has written about Constantine over the last three or four decades. For summary statements, see idem, 'The Constantinian Reformation', in *The Crake Lectures 1984* (1986), 39–57; idem, 'The Constantinian Settlement', in H. W. Attridge and G. Hata (eds), *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* (1992), 635–57; idem, 'From toleration to repression: the evolution of Constantine's religious policies', *Scripta Classica Israelica* 21 (2002), 189–207. The first two are reprinted in idem, *From Eusebius to Augustine: Selected Papers 1982–1993* (1994). Also in the early 1980s but independently of Barnes, Charles Pietri offered his own challenge to prevailing views: 'Constantin en 324: propagande et théologie impériales d'après les documents de la *Vita Constantini*', in E. Frézouls (ed.), *Crise et redressement dans les provinces européennes de l'Empire* (1983), 63–90.

¹⁰⁵ Recently Barnes has offered partial surveys of the *status quaestionis* (by way of two long review articles) in his 'Constantine and Christianity: ancient evidence and modern interpretations', *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 2 (1998), 274–94, and 'Constantine after seventeen hundred years: The Cambridge Companion, the York exhibition and a recent biography', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 14 (2007), 185–220.

His two important epigrams on the fortunate man whom God loves confirm that the civil war of A.D. 324 was (on the level of imperial ideology) a religious war.¹⁰⁶ They explicitly take up Constantine's position that Licinius was fighting against the Christian god and that the pagan deities proved ineffective. Palladas' assessment, moreover, is that Constantine's victory resulted in a complete reversal of fortunes for Christians and pagans in the East. The latter were reduced to the ashes of mourning, with nothing but the shattered hopes that they had placed in their defeated gods. This is expressed in similarly doleful terms in another epigram that belongs to this period:¹⁰⁷

Ἄρα μὴ θανόντες τῷ δοκεῖν ζῶμεν μόνον,
 Ἑλλήνες ἄνδρες, συμφορᾷ πεπτωκότες,
 ὄνειρον εἰκάζοντες εἶναι τὸν βίον;
 ἢ ζῶμεν ἡμεῖς τοῦ βίου τεθνηκότος; (AP 10.82)

Surely we are dead and only seem to live, we Hellenes, having fallen into misfortune, pretending that a dream is in fact a way of life. Or are we alive while our way of life is dead?

What were these misfortunes? And why does he say that the pagan way of life was dead? Though he provides no specifics, Palladas may be alluding here to some or all of the several disadvantages for the traditional cults reported for this period by Eusebius. The bishop claims that Constantine prohibited pagan worship, as well as the erection of cult statues, divination, and all sacrifices.¹⁰⁸ This is not the place to revisit the long debate over Eusebius' reliability on this point, but it would be rash to discount his testimony altogether.¹⁰⁹ Indeed, unless we are willing to contend that Palladas also misrepresents the character of the age, it appears quite certain that (whatever the precise circumstances) this was a difficult period for adherents of the traditional cults in the Greek East.

Palladas wrote one other epigram that mentions the Hellenes and that seems to refer to their misfortunes under the new regime:

Εἰ θεὸς ἡ Φήμη, κεχολωμένη ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτὴ
 Ἑλλήσι, σφαλεροῖς ἐξαπατῶσα λόγοις.
 Φήμη δ', ἂν τι πάθῃς, ἀναφαίνεται εὐθὺς ἀληθής·
 πολλάκι καὶ Φήμην ἔφθασεν ἡ ταχυτής. (AP 10.89)

If Rumour is a goddess, she too is angry with the Hellenes, leading them astray with uncertain reports. Rumour, should you suffer anything at all, is at once manifestly true; and the swiftness of events often anticipates even Rumour.

The allusions are not entirely clear to us, but there is no reason to follow those who situate these lines in A.D. 394, after Theodosius' victory over the usurper Eugenius.¹¹⁰ On the contrary, the references to a catastrophe for the Hellenes, who have been led astray and are the objects of wrath, create a very close link with AP 10.82, 90, and 91. AP 10.89 should be restored to its proper place alongside these three, thus in the aftermath of the civil war of A.D. 324.

¹⁰⁶ See Barnes, op. cit. (n. 104, 1981), 70–6.

¹⁰⁷ The beginning of the fourth line in modern editions (and reprinted here) is emended from the manuscript's εἰ ζῶμεν ἡμεῖς. The latter is defended, no doubt rightly, by Alan Cameron, op. cit. (n. 6), 218–19. There is, however, no appreciable difference in sense.

¹⁰⁸ Eusebius, VC 4.23, 25. The claim is repeated by Sozomen, HE 1.8.5; Theodoret, HE 1.2.3.

¹⁰⁹ That Constantine did issue some sort of legislation along these lines is quite probable. For three different approaches to the problem, see T. D. Barnes, 'Constantine's prohibition of pagan sacrifice', *AJP* 105 (1984), 69–72; R. M. Errington, 'Constantine and the pagans', *GRBS* 29 (1988), 309–18; S. Bradbury, 'Constantine and the problem of anti-pagan legislation in the fourth century', *CP* 89 (1994), 120–39. Others, however, maintain that there was no such Constantinian legislation; e.g. J. Gaudemet, 'La législation anti-païenne de Constantin à Justinien', *Cristianesimo nella storia* 11 (1990), 449–68, especially 451–5.

¹¹⁰ e.g. Keydell, op. cit. (n. 17), 2–3; Bowra, op. cit. (n. 18), 265; Cameron, op. cit. (n. 21), 25.

Any attempt to identify a context that is more specific than this will inevitably be conjectural, but it is possible that the epigram has something to do with rumours of a full-scale campaign against the pagan temples. Our evidence that rumours of this sort were circulating after the civil war comes from Constantine himself in his *Letter to the Eastern Provincials*. It is worth quoting this famous edict at some length:¹¹¹

Let no one use what he has received by inner conviction as a means to harm his neighbour. What each has seen and understood, he must use, if possible, to help the other; but if that is impossible, the matter should be dropped. It is one thing to take on willingly the contest for immortality, quite another to enforce it with sanctions. I have said these things and explained them at greater length than the purpose of my clemency requires, because I did not wish to conceal my belief in the truth; *especially since (so I hear) some persons are saying that the customs of the temples and the agency of darkness have been removed altogether*. I would indeed have recommended that to all mankind, were it not that the violent rebelliousness of injurious error is so obstinately fixed in the minds of some, to the detriment of the common weal.

Apparently, some residents of the East were initially under the impression that the long arm of the state was going to wield a hammer against the pagan temples as it formerly had against the churches. Constantine's edict seems designed in part to quash these rumours and to prevent private acts of vandalism and violence. Might these be the circumstances that occasioned Palladas' epigram? Rumours were swirling after the war that the new emperor would initiate a complete demolition of the pagan temples; meanwhile, in some locales, *ad hoc* acts of Christian vigilantism may have already been rocking the traditional cults. Whether or not this is exactly the right context for Palladas' epigram, the poet's verdict is clear enough: Rumour, like all the other gods (including especially Constantine's), must be angry with the Hellenes.

It is no surprise that Eusebius says nothing of Christian mobs in the weeks and months following the civil war, but one can hardly doubt that this period saw its share of unofficial anti-pagan activity in the cities of the East.¹¹² This is a very plausible context for Palladas' epigrams on the abuse of pagan statuary. The most interesting of these is AP 9.441, in which Palladas conjures a scene in the middle of town where a bronze statue of Heracles had been pulled off its pedestal. Palladas confesses his initial anger at the sacrilege and at the god's impotence. That night, however, Heracles came to the poet in a dream, declaring that in spite of his divinity he too had learned to serve the times.¹¹³ The times are obviously the *tempora Christiana*, and those responsible for pulling down the statue are perhaps Christian residents of the city, exultant in the victory of their imperial champion.

One final epigram on pagan statuary deserves comment in this context:

Χριστιανοὶ γεγαῶτες Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
ἐνθάδε ναιετάουσιν ἀπήμονες· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτοῦς
χώνη φόλλιν ἄγουσα φερέσβιον ἐν πυρὶ θήσει. (AP 9.528)

The owners of Olympian palaces, having become Christian, dwell here unharmed; for the pot that produces the life-giving *follis* will not put them in the fire.

As discussed above, the lemma to this poem — εἰς τὸν οἶκον Μαρίνης — was once mistakenly thought to prove that Palladas was alive and in Constantinople in the 420s or later. Freed from the artificial context supplied by the lemmatist, this epigram has come to be grouped quite naturally with Palladas' other poems on the abuse of pagan statuary; that is to say, it has come to be associated with the anti-pagan activities of Theophilus in Alexandria. No one, however, has been able to make sense of the Olympian gods' 'conversion'

¹¹¹ Eusebius, *HE* 2.60; trans. Cameron and Hall (emphasis added).

¹¹² By way of comparison, thirty years later when Julian became emperor, an anti-Christian mob in Alexandria immediately murdered the city's Arian bishop (Julian, *Ep.* 60 (Bidez); Socrates, *HE* 3.2; Ammianus 22.11.19).

¹¹³ νυκτὶ δὲ μειδιῶν με θεὸς προσέειπε παραστάς / 'Καὶρῷ δουλεύειν καὶ θεὸς ὧν ἔμαθον' (lines 5–6).

against this backdrop.¹¹⁴ Two hypotheses have been advanced: (i) the emperor Theodosius I intervened to preserve, on aesthetic grounds, some of the Alexandrian statues that were being melted down by the Christians, and (ii) the Christians themselves preserved some of the cult images that they had taken from the temples, adapted them to suit their purposes, and installed them in their churches.¹¹⁵ There is no corroborating evidence for either of these conjectures. In fact, we are told that all of the confiscated statues in Alexandria were destroyed except for one image of Serapis.¹¹⁶ This was set up in a public place as a mockery of traditional religion and as a guarantee that no pagan could later deny having worshipped such a monstrosity. This information does not square with Palladas' epigram. Moreover, no one has been able to explain the other fundamental element of the poem. Pagan statues were indeed thrown on the fire in Alexandria in A.D. 391, but the imperial mint was not involved.¹¹⁷ Socrates says that the city's Christians used the metals to fashion containers and other useful items.¹¹⁸ Palladas' epigram, on the other hand, presupposes a situation in which statues were being melted down to produce coins. Late fourth-century Alexandria is not the right setting.

There is only one documented context that supplies all of the conditions necessary to explain this epigram: Constantinople in the 320s or 330s.¹¹⁹ In the years following the civil war, Constantine was short of the funds required to carry out his ambitious plans. In order to restock the treasury, he commissioned some of his *comites* to tour the cities of the Empire (in all likelihood only the Eastern Empire) and confiscate the precious metals belonging to pagan temples — their doors, their roofs, and especially their statues.¹²⁰ These were melted down and shipped to the mints to produce coinage. But Constantine kept the bronze statues of especially fine craftsmanship and used them to adorn the public spaces of his new capital. As Eusebius says:¹²¹

The city named after the Emperor was filled throughout with objects of skilled artwork in bronze dedicated in various provinces. To these under the name of gods those sick with error had for long ages vainly offered innumerable hecatombs and whole burnt sacrifices, but now they at last learnt sense, as the Emperor used these very toys for the laughter and amusement of the spectators.

The bishop has misrepresented Constantine's motives — didacticism was surely not the point — but Eusebius correctly notes that the preserved bronzes had ceased to function as cult objects. Whatever people may have thought about the power inherent in these images,¹²² they were not tended by priests and they were not the recipients of sacrifice. Rather, they were installed in order to provide Constantinople with the grandeur that it

¹¹⁴ Similarly dissatisfied with all previous attempts to explain these lines is Cyril Mango, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 328; *idem*, 'ΠΑΛΛΑΔΑΣ Ο ΜΕΤΕΩΡΟΣ', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44 (1994), 291–6, at 292.

¹¹⁵ The first is suggested by Bowra, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 5–6; the second by Cameron, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 223.

¹¹⁶ Socrates, *HE* 5.16; Sozomen, *HE* 7.15.

¹¹⁷ Palladas' epigram, however, has sometimes been read as evidence that the mint *was* involved; see F. R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization c. 370–529*, vol. 1 (1993), 141, n. 182.

¹¹⁸ Socrates, *HE* 5.16.11.

¹¹⁹ There is a very old opinion that Palladas spent some time in the eastern capital; e.g. Franke, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 43; Peek, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 158; Bonanno, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 120–2; Irmscher, *op. cit.* (n. 21), 237. Of course, all of these believed that he was there in the late fourth century and early fifth rather than near the time of its foundation.

¹²⁰ Eusebius, *VC* 3.54; *idem*, *LC* 8.2–4; Sozomen, *HE* 2.5. See also Julian, *Or.* 7.22 (Bidez); Anonymus, *De rebus bellicis* 2.2; Libanius, *Or.* 30.6, 37; Jerome, *Chron.* a. 330; Socrates, *HE* 1.16; Zosimus 5.24.6. The Christian sources present this as an attack on pagan religion, but Constantine was no doubt motivated primarily by economic conditions and the desire to turn his new capital into a city rivalling Rome. That the construction of Constantinople was his primary goal is stated explicitly by Libanius, *Or.* 30.6. Cf. Jerome, *Chron.* a. 330; Anonymus, *Orig. Const.* 30. On spoliation as an aspect of his fiscal policy, see G. Bonamente, 'Sulla confisca dei beni mobili dei templi in epoca costantiniana', in G. Bonamente and F. Fusco (eds), *Costantino il Grande dall'antichità all'umanesimo, Colloquio sul Cristianesimo nel mondo antico, Macerata 18–20 Dicembre 1990*, vol. 1 (1992), 171–201.

¹²¹ Eusebius, *VC* 3.54.3; trans. Cameron and Hall.

¹²² C. Mango, 'Antique statuary and the Byzantine beholder', *DOP* 17 (1963), 53–75, especially 59–63.

should possess as a New Rome. This is the only context that fully explains Palladas' poem. The usual fate of pagan statues captured by Constantine was to be turned into coins, but some brazen gods managed to avoid this end by converting to Christianity — that is, by leaving their pagan cult behind and taking up residence in the new Christian capital of this very Christian emperor.¹²³ The epigram is a clever and surprisingly insouciant confirmation of the more pedestrian accounts in our prose sources.

It may seem incredible at first that the proper historical context for Palladas' poetry could have been overlooked for so long. On an analysis of the development of scholarship, however, it is perhaps not so surprising. Until the middle of the twentieth century, scholars relied almost exclusively on the lemmata in our manuscripts of the Anthology for chronological information. Once these were shown to possess no historical value, C. M. Bowra made an initial attempt to adjust Palladas' dates, but he could not get away from the accretion of opinion that placed the poet in the late fourth century. In the 1960s, Alan Cameron did much to discredit the traditional dates, and his analysis of the Greek source for Ausonius and the Bobbio poets is one of the cornerstones of my own re-evaluation. He did not, however, question the *communis opinio* that identified Palladas' 'God-beloved man' as Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria from A.D. 385 to 412. Of course, given the prevailing views of Constantine in the middle of the twentieth century, very few at the time would have entertained the possibility that a group of epigrams about the misfortunes of the pagan cults might have been composed in the 320s or 330s. The tide of opinion on the Constantinian period has shifted in the last three decades, due in no small part to the work of T. D. Barnes. Because Barnes accepted the consensus view of Palladas, however, he was not able to profit from evidence that would have virtually proved his central claims. In short, it seems in part to have been an accident of the order in which Cameron and Barnes undertook their important work on, respectively, Palladas and Constantine that prevented this piece of the puzzle from falling into place. It is a tribute to these two scholars, however, that a corrected timeline for Palladas proves them to be substantially correct on two controversial issues. There is no longer any reason to doubt either Cameron's unfairly discarded reconstruction of a fourth-century anthology or Barnes's rehabilitation of Eusebius' witness to the final phase of Constantine's reign.

APPENDIX

On account of its length and complexity, I have reserved for an appendix my discussion of AP 11.292 (the 'Themistius' epigram). These are two verses that have influenced the dating of Palladas since the very beginning of critical scholarship on the subject:

Ἄντυγος οὐρανίης ὑπερήμενος ἐς πόθον ἦλθες
 ἄντυγος ἀργυρέης· αἰσχος ἀπειρέσιον·
 ἦσθά ποτε κρείσσων, αὐθις δ' ἐγένου πολὺ χείρων.
 δεῦρ' ἀνάβηθι κάτω, νῦν γὰρ ἄνω κατέβης. (AP 11.292)

Seated above the heavenly vault (ἄντυξ), you have come to desire the silver chariot (ἄντυξ). This is an eternal shame. Once you were better, but then you became worse by far. Ascend down here, for now you have descended upwards.

These lines have traditionally been dated to A.D. 384.¹²⁴ On my timeline, Palladas would have been approximately 125 years old at the time. The unlikelihood of this scenario calls for some explanation.

¹²³ This, at least, is Eusebius' view on the religious character of Constantinople in the 330s (VC 3.48.2). In modern scholarship, he is followed for example by Jones, op. cit. (n. 99), vol. 1, 83; idem, op. cit. (n. 103), 191–2; Alföldi, op. cit. (n. 103), 110–23; Barnes, op. cit. (n. 104, 1981), 222–3; R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (1983), 41–67. Others, however, doubt whether the city had a strongly Christian character during these early years; e.g. C. Mango, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople, IVe–VIIe siècles* (1985), 34–6.

¹²⁴ The standard case is stated in full by Franke, op. cit. (n. 5), 24–37.

A date of A.D. 384 is suggested by the lemma that accompanies this poem in Planudes' Anthology: εἰς Θεμιστίον τὸν φιλόσοφον γενόμενον ὑπαρχὸν Κωνσταντινοπόλεως ἐπὶ Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ καὶ Οὐάλεντος. The epigram, according to Planudes, was written by Palladas on the occasion of Themistius' urban prefecture. But if the lemma is right at all, it is only half-right. Whether or not Themistius was prefect of Constantinople under Valens in A.D. 368,¹²⁵ the epigram must be associated with his prefecture under Theodosius I in A.D. 384 (for reasons set out below). This may seem a rather minor error, but the entire manuscript tradition for this epigram, which is much more widely attested than most, demonstrates just how much confusion and misinformation surrounds it. In the first place, as Alan Cameron notes, it is a curious happenstance that our best information as to historical context should derive from Planudes in the fourteenth century.¹²⁶ The comments in both of our primary sources for the Anthology are extremely unreliable and Planudes is perhaps the less trustworthy of the two. But the epigram also survives in several other places. These witnesses disagree as to attribution, subject matter, date of composition, and the very text itself. The basis for Planudes' guess is quite clearly something close to the Palatine lemma: εἰς τινὰ φιλόσοφον γενόμενον ὑπαρχὸν πόλεως ἐπὶ Βαλεντινιανοῦ καὶ Βάλεντος. The lemmata of two other manuscripts record that the poem was in fact written by Themistius about himself and give a different (but still incorrect) date: τοῦ αὐτοῦ Θεμιστίου στίχοι εἰς ἑαυτὸν, ὅτε ἑπαρχὸν ἐποίησεν αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰουλιανός.¹²⁷ The same ascription and date are given by the sixth- or seventh-century philosopher (or medical professor) Pseudo-Elias and the eleventh-century philosopher Joannes Italos, both of whom quote the epigram with a variant third line.¹²⁸ This same variant shows up in an acephalous version of the poem preserved in a volume containing Libanius' declamations.¹²⁹ Another Laurentian manuscript preserves the epigram without ascription.¹³⁰ The second couplet, but not the first, shows up with slight variants in the so-called *Sylloge Laurentiana* and in two other derivative collections.¹³¹ And finally, there exists an early Latin translation of the second couplet, which bears the explanatory title *in eum qui ex librario grammaticus erat*.¹³² The confusion exhibited among these various witnesses is reason enough to doubt that there is any reliable information here. In fact, one might be justified in assuming that the ascription to Palladas, which occurs only in the Anthology, is simply wrong. It is possible, however, to say a little more than this.

The testimony of Planudes has gone unchallenged for two reasons. First, the tortuous ἄνω-κάτω language of the second distich seems to find a parallel in Themistius' famous thirty-fourth oration, delivered in A.D. 384 or 385, shortly after the conclusion of his term as urban prefect. In response to one particular critic of his involvement in politics, Themistius says: 'Do you claim that I descended as a result of my ambition? ... I did not descend, my friend, but rather with my feet planted firmly on the ground I ascended'.¹³³ And he concludes his speech: 'Realize that "up" and "down" are not straightforward ... My "down" is not in all respects down; rather it has been suspended and directed from above'.¹³⁴ It is widely believed that this is a response to Palladas' epigram, in which political ascent is treated as moral and intellectual

¹²⁵ Rejected by most, but defended recently by Brauch, op. cit. (n. 3, 2001).

¹²⁶ Cameron, op. cit. (n. 6), 222.

¹²⁷ Cod. Laur. 87.25 (A. M. Bandini, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae*, 3 vols (1769–1770), vol. 3, 409) and with a slight variation in wording Cod. Monac. gr. 330, fol. 165 (I. Hardt, *Beyträge zur Geschichte und Literatur vorzüglich aus den Schätzen der Pfalzbaierischen Centralbibliothek zu München*, 9 vols (1803–1807), vol. 6, 12).

¹²⁸ Pseudo-Elias (Pseudo-David), *In Porphyrii isagogen commentarium* 22.23; L. G. Westerink (ed.), *Lectures on Porphyry's Isagoge* (1967), 46. Pseudo-Elias specifies the political post as praetorian (rather than urban) prefect. Joannes Italos, *Quaestiones quodlibetales* 29; P. Joannou (ed.), *Studia Patristica et Byzantina* 4 (1956), 39.

¹²⁹ Cod. Laur. 57.22, pg. 94 (Bandini, vol. 2, 366).

¹³⁰ Cod. Laur. 59.54, pg. 311 (Bandini, vol. 2, 575–6).

¹³¹ Cod. Laur. 32.16; Cod. Vat. Urb. gr. 125; Cod. Vat. Barb. gr. 4. See Cameron, op. cit. (n. 10), 202–16; F. Maltomini, *Tradizione antologica dell'epigramma greco: le sillogi minori di età bizantina e umanistica* (2008), 49–60.

¹³² *Ep. Bob.* 50.

¹³³ Themistius, *Or.* 34.9 (Schenkl, Downey and Norman): λέγεις ὅτι κατέβην ἐκ φιλονεικίας; ... οὐ κατέβην, ὦ φίλος, ἀλλὰ κατὰ χώραν ἀναβέβηκα.

¹³⁴ Themistius, *Or.* 34.30: ἐννόει τὸ ἄνω καὶ κάτω ὡς οὐχ ἄπλοῦν ... τὸ κάτω δὲ ἡμῶν οὐ παντάπασσι κάτω ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἄνωθεν ἐξήπται καὶ ἀπευθύνεται.

decline. And it does indeed seem that Themistius is defending himself against something very much like AP 11.292.¹³⁵ The association is made even more compelling by the first couplet, which contains a clear reference to the urban prefect's silver chariot. It is this detail that cements the connection with Themistius, for the sumptuous public chariot was an innovation of A.D. 383 or 384 and caused a bit of a stir among those who thought it too extravagant.¹³⁶ It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Planudes, even if he was confused about the date, correctly identified the occasion for this epigram.

There is, however, very good reason to doubt that Palladas was responsible for the tetrastich as it stands in the Anthology. Our earliest witness to the original form of the epigram is the Latin translation (from the late fourth century) contained in the *Epigrammata Bobiensia*.¹³⁷

Sursum peior eras, escendens sed mage peior.
scande deorsum iterum, descendisti qui <a> sursum.

This is a literal rendering of the second Greek couplet and not merely a paraphrase or an independent composition on a similar theme. It is not, however, a translation of the second couplet as recorded by Planudes and the *Palatinus*, but rather of the version preserved in the Laurentian manuscript of Libanius' declamations:¹³⁸

ἦσθα κάτω κρείσσων, ἀναβὰς δ' ἐγένου μέγα χείρων.
δεῦρ' ἀνάβηθι κάτω· νῦν γὰρ ἄνω κατέβης.

It was Alan Cameron who first noticed this and suggested that this Greek version and the Bobbio translation provide our best evidence for what Palladas really wrote.¹³⁹ There is further support for this version of the second couplet in Pseudo-Elias and Joannes Italos (see above).

This immediately raises some questions, however, about the Latin witness to the epigram. The title that appears in the Bobbio collection — *in eum qui ex librario grammaticus erat* — is by far our earliest commentary and it does not square with the information presented by later sources. Unlike the Byzantine lemmata in our manuscripts of the Anthology, the Bobbio titles appear to be integral to the poems that they accompany. The unusually informative note accompanying *Ep. Bob.* 50, therefore, should not be too hastily dismissed. On its own, this couplet contains nothing to indicate that it is about a grammarian. Would the translator really have ventured such a guess if he possessed no information about the subject matter? If so, this is the only example of wild and unfounded speculation among the Bobbio titles. It is much more likely that the translator found this notice in the fourth-century Greek anthology that supplied his model. If this is right, then the compiler who commented on the Greek original shortly after it was written (six centuries before the *Palatinus* and more than nine centuries before Planudes) did not believe that it was addressed to Themistius, who was no grammarian.¹⁴⁰

There may be some who doubt the value of the Bobbio title, but there is another cause for suspicion that no one can deny: the first couplet of the Greek poem is absent from the Latin translation. Typically, when they set out to provide a faithful rendition of a Greek exemplar, the Bobbio poets rendered the entire original into Latin in the same number of verses.¹⁴¹ Occasionally, they were a little more prolix or supplied additional material, but they never, to

¹³⁵ Cameron (op. cit. (n. 6), 222) thinks that the epigram is subsequent to the speech and picks up elements of Themistius' language; so too J. Stenger, 'Themistios und Palladas', *Byzantion* 77 (2007), 399–415. If so, then Themistius must have been responding to an earlier critic who issued the same challenge.

¹³⁶ A. Chastagnol, *La préfecture urbaine à Rome sous le Bas-Empire* (1960), 203–4 (citing the evidence of Symmachus, *Rel.* 4, 20, and 23). Cf. Themistius, *Or.* 31.353c: ἐπαργύρων ὀχημάτων.

¹³⁷ *Ep. Bob.* 50 (Speyer).

¹³⁸ Cod. Laur. 57.23, pg. 94.

¹³⁹ Cameron, op. cit. (n. 6), 225–6.

¹⁴⁰ Brauch, op. cit. (n. 3, 2001), 347–52, accepts that the Bobbio title derives from the fourth-century Greek anthology but suggests, incredibly, that the compiler of this work, a contemporary of Themistius, somehow managed to confuse the target's identity with that of the author of the epigram — a mistake rectified centuries later by Byzantine lemmatists.

¹⁴¹ e.g. *Ep. Bob.* 10–15, 18–19, 29–32, 34, 44, 53, 63, 71.

my knowledge, translated only a portion of the model.¹⁴² If this particular poet read four Greek lines and translated only the last two, then his *modus operandi* was unique in this collection.¹⁴³ What is more, the Greek version found in the thirteenth-century *Sylloge Laurentiana* (attested in three manuscripts) also exhibits only the second couplet.¹⁴⁴ I strongly suspect, therefore, that the tradition preserves two distinct epigrams: one comprising only lines 3–4 (let us call this 11.292a) and the other lines 1–4 (292b). In fact, it is only the final pentameter that was certainly identical in both of these.

It is not possible to reconstruct the textual history of these two closely related epigrams with any great confidence, but I propose the following as a plausible scenario. Palladas wrote a single couplet (292a), perhaps in the early fourth century, which contained a very dense nexus of ὄνω-κῆτω language. This may or may not have been about a *grammaticus*, as the Latin title declares, but it was certainly anthologized in a collection that formed the basis for the Bobbio translation. Then, in A.D. 384, long after Palladas' death, someone in the East found his epigram useful for a critique of Themistius. This critic of the philosopher composed two lines of his own that contain a clear allusion to the prefecture and appended Palladas' more generic couplet, possibly making alterations to the hexameter.¹⁴⁵ (This sort of borrowing from earlier poets of line fragments, complete lines, distichs, or even longer stretches of verse, is extremely common in the epigrammatic genre.)¹⁴⁶ The resulting four-line lampoon of Themistius (292b), which provoked a public response from the philosopher (*Or.* 34), enjoyed lasting fame even if the precise circumstances, date, and authorship were only imperfectly remembered. At some point, then, in the transmission of the sources that make up the Greek Anthology, someone replaced 292a with the more celebrated 292b. Indeed, since the compiler or scribe who made the substitution was no doubt well acquainted with the longer epigram, he may have simply considered the two-line poem in his source to be defective.

The reconstruction offered here is conjectural, of course, but it does have the virtue of accounting for all of the manuscript evidence. This cannot be claimed by those who assume a single epigram penned by Palladas in A.D. 384 — a theory that leaves far too much unexplained. In particular, it cannot explain how it is that the 'abbreviated' 11.292a shows up both in the *Epigrammata Bobiensia* (and thus also in the fourth-century anthology) and in the *Sylloge Laurentiana* (L), which was compiled by Planudes in the early 1280s. The only link between these two collections is the lost anthology of Constantine Cephalas (A.D. 900), which employed the fourth-century anthology as a source and in turn (via an early tenth-century redaction) was the source for L.¹⁴⁷ If 292a appeared in the first and last anthologies in this chain, the natural inference is that it also appeared in the intervening ones. The substitution of the longer 292b, therefore, which had its own history in manuscripts of Themistius and elsewhere, probably occurred for the first time after Cephalas' anthology, presumably in the early tenth-century redaction of this work that was used by the Palatine scribes. Finally, when Planudes set about compiling APl (1301) he is known to have possessed two versions of Cephalas' anthology that were different from the source that he had used twenty years earlier for L. Since APl (unlike L) contains 292b with a lemma similar to the one that appears in AP, Planudes' later sources must have been related to (or at least influenced by) the redaction of Cephalas that was the exemplar for the Palatine scribes. Though analyses of the sources for the Greek Anthology tend to be conjectural and, quite frankly, recondite, I believe this to be the best explanation of our conflicting evidence for AP 11.292. At the very least, however, there is no secure footing here for determining the dates of Palladas.

The true authorship of the famous four-line poem against Themistius is uncertain. It seems unlikely that it was the philosopher himself who composed it, as a majority of witnesses

¹⁴² *Ep. Bob.* 28 expresses the same thought as AP 9.44 and 9.45 in four lines rather than two. *Ep. Bob.* 20, 25, and 45 contain additional material that does not appear in their Greek models.

¹⁴³ The only potential analogues would appear to be *Ep. Bob.* 46 and 64, which seem to take their cue from the first couplet of AP 11.400. They are not, however, literal translations.

¹⁴⁴ Maltomini, op. cit. (n. 130), 53, no. 27.

¹⁴⁵ Though Cameron's argument for corruption (op. cit. (n. 6), 226) may be preferable.

¹⁴⁶ There are many examples of this phenomenon, but see e.g. AP 9.49 and 9.134; AP 9.359 and 360; AP 9.746 and 747; AP 10.73 and Julian, *Poem.* 170 (Bidez); AP 11.174 and APl 178; AP 11.204 and APl 20.

¹⁴⁷ On the relationship of L to Cephalas, see Cameron, op. cit. (n. 10), 202–16; Maltomini, op. cit. (n. 131), 58.

declare, and the epigram survives elsewhere without any ascription. Apparently, however, there was no shortage of critics who could have been responsible. Themistius was hounded throughout his career by people who thought that he was a sham philosopher or that he had abandoned his proper vocation by involving himself in politics.¹⁴⁸ Unfortunately, he does not identify his detractors by name, though he did take up his grievances against them in a speech delivered before his fellow senators in Constantinople (*Or.* 31). If the taunt came from a source outside the senate — from another intellectual, for example — one might think of someone like Libanius. It may simply be a coincidence that the epigram is preserved in a manuscript containing Libanius' declamations (Cod. Laur. 57.22). On the other hand, in spite of their similar backgrounds and close interaction, these two men had very different ideas about the role of the public intellectual. And their differences led sometimes to conflict. Already in A.D. 362, Themistius had accused Libanius of questioning his claim to be a true philosopher.¹⁴⁹ Twenty years had elapsed since that uncomfortable exchange, but it is not a great leap to think that the Antiochene rhetor might have poked fun at his sometime friend in A.D. 384 for accepting the extravagant silver chariot and the duties of the prefect's office. We know that Libanius composed at least one other epigram about a contemporary figure (AP 7.747) — a distich somewhat predictably in praise of Julian. And surely when Themistius calls his critic 'friend' (*Or.* 34.9), one should expect that the reference is to someone who was well known both to him and to his audience. But in any event, whether the longer version of the epigram was composed by Libanius or by some other contemporary critic, it should not be ascribed to Palladas, who had no known connection with these eastern élites and who was almost certainly long since dead in A.D. 384.

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¹⁴⁸ See Themistius, *Or.* 21, 23, 26, 29, 31, 34.

¹⁴⁹ Libanius, *Ep.* 793 (Foerster) is his attempt to deflect Themistius' annoyance. On their rivalry, see G. Dagron, 'L'empire romain d'orient au IV^e siècle et les traditions politiques de l'hellénisme: le témoignage de Thémistios', *Travaux et Mémoires* 3 (1963), 1–242, at 36–42.