

64. 3. The crimes done among you. It was usual to list all kinds of horrors as the work of heretics. But even without specific atrocities like cannibalism and incest, the sects were held to have committed the crime of traducing the imperial Catholic Church, which was to them erroneous and diabolic. Their personal virtues would only aggravate the offence by making their ideas seem plausible.

65. The ban on meetings and confiscation of buildings, including private houses used for meetings, are typical repressive measures like those of the persecutors which Constantine tries to correct. Since all the sects (except perhaps the Paulians) continued active, they cannot have been thoroughly enforced.

66. Eusebius concludes bk. III with his own comments on the letter and its effects, and presumably writes from personal experience of the difficulty of enforcing a genuine change of heart in compulsory converts.

66. 1. the books of these persons. The books of these groups were also to be 'hunted out' (66. 1), though this is not mentioned in the text as he has just given it, or in the law of 1 September 326; it may have been done on the initiative of zealous bishops. Constantine later ordered the burning of books by Arius and the anti-Christian Porphyry (Socrates, *HE* 1. 9. 30-1), and the practice has a long history among Christians (cf. Acts 19: 18-19).

Despite his intemperate language ('wild beasts', 'wolves'), Eusebius admits that many did join the Church, though some may have done so for the wrong reasons (see Ando, 'Pagan Apologetics and Christian Intolerance', 201); those not separated by doctrine were treated more generously (66. 3).

The book ends with a flourish: unity is restored, thanks to Constantine. Barnes, 'Panegyric', 115, sees in the praise of Constantine's offer of readmission a veiled allusion to the restoration of Arius and Euzoius.

BOOK IV

1-14. *The Prosperous Empire*

As the chronological progression draws nearer to Constantine's last years and the time of writing, bk. IV returns at first to a more

conventionally panegyric treatment (for the arrangement of the book as a whole see Drake, 'Genesis', esp. 25-6). Eusebius wishes to demonstrate first that the Christian monarchy established by Constantine has brought all the benefits to the Empire that pagan panegyrists claimed for pious pagan emperors, and which are made for Constantine by the Latin panegyrists, e.g. *Pan. Lat.* 4 (10) 35-6, AD 321. The claims are conventional, as are the accusations levelled against him in the contrasting account in Zos. 2. 38, based on Eunapius (see Barnes, *CE* 255-6).

1-4. *Philanthropy*

Despite his expressed intentions (I. 11. 1), Eusebius turns briefly first to secular matters, which also feature in the anecdotal material later in bk. IV. The order of topics (generosity; senatorial order; Goths and Sarmatians) is the same as in *Origo*, 30-2, which may raise the possibility of a common source, containing also the text of the letter to Shapur.

1. 1-2. he would honour each one of those known to him with special promotions. Eusebius wishes to illustrate Constantine's generosity (*liberalitas, philanthropia*: see Kloft, *Liberalitas Principis*, 172), but also points, though without explaining it explicitly, to a much more significant development, the enlargement of the senatorial order. The opposite view, according to which Constantine is blamed for greed, extravagance, and prodigality, is to be found in the pagan tradition: Aur. Vict. 40. 15 (but for his clemency cf. 41. 4), Julian, *Or.* 1. 6. 8b, with *Caes.* 335b, *Or.* 7. 22, 228a, Anon. *De Rebus Bellicis* 2. 1, Amm. Marc. 16. 8. 12, *Epit. de Caes.* 41. 16, Zos. 2. 38. 1 (see on 2-4). Constantine needed to win supporters and conciliate by promotions or other means those who had backed Licinius (see Peter Heather, 'New Men for New Constantines', in P. Magdalino, ed., *New Constantines* (Aldershot, 1994), 11-33, at 15, on this passage, and see on IV. 29-33 below). Eusebius describes the normal working of the imperial patronage system, but even he admits that Constantine's excessive benevolence or favouritism towards his friends earned him criticism (IV. 31, 54).

1. 2. some were appointed comites . . . Constantine formalized the order of imperial *comites* and divided them into three

grades; these and other innovations in rank and titlature laid the foundations for the development of a highly structured late Roman bureaucracy (Jones, *LRE*, 103–6; C. Kelly, in *CAH* 13, 138–83; Heather, *ibid.* 184–210).

many thousands more shared honours as *clarissimi*. Eusebius makes sweeping claims for the scale of Constantine's bestowal of senatorial rank. But even if exaggerated, this extension of senatorial status (for which see also *Pan. Lat.* 4 (10). 35, AD 321), which allowed the re-entry of the Roman senatorial families into the government, besides admitting easterners and provincials to the order, laid the foundation for a major development during the late Empire (Heather, 'New Men'; Jones, *LRE* 106–7, 523–62; Barnes, *CE* 257). Eusebius does not state (as implied by Heather, 'New Men', 16) that Constantine founded a senate at Constantinople; according to *Origo*, 30, Constantine did so, though he called its members only *clari*, not *clarissimi*; see also Soz., *HE* 2. 3. 6. But Zos. 3. 11. 3 attributes it to Julian; Dagron, *Naissance*, 120–4, esp. 122, argues that the senate of Constantinople in Constantine's day was less a separate creation than the group of those who followed him or whom he established there, and to whom he gave senatorial status if they did not already have it (cf. also Zos. 2. 31. 3 on Constantine's establishment of houses for senators who accompanied him). The numbers were still small in Themistius' day, but rose dramatically by the end of the century (Jones, *LRE* 527). Like the senate itself, the Senate House at Constantinople was inevitably also attributed to Constantine, the founder (see Mango, *Le Développement*, 29, 33, 35; 'The Development of Constantinople as an Urban Centre', *Studies on Constantinople* (Aldershot, 1993), 1, at 124), though it is not mentioned in the *VC* and does not feature in Zosimus' list of Constantinian monumental buildings at 2. 30–1.

in order to promote more persons the Emperor contrived different distinctions. See Heather, 'New Men', for this increase in the size of the administration, the growth of which was to be one of the main features of the late Roman state. Nazarius, *Pan. Lat.* 4 (10). 35. 2, AD 321, praises Constantine for admitting the flower of the provincials to the Roman senate, but

Ammianus later thought that the reform went against ancient tradition and established order (21. 10. 8).

2. He removed a fourth part of the annual tax charged on land. For this and for the rest of the passage see Barnes, *CE* 255, 257–8; Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 40–1, confirms Constantine's granting of tax privileges, whereas Zos. 2. 38 paints a black picture of his new taxes, the *chrysargyron* and the *follis senatorius*, and of the oppressiveness of his regime in financial matters (cf. Lib., *Or.* 2. 38. 1). In financial as in administrative matters, it is difficult to put together a consistent picture from the tendentious and very incomplete literary accounts (Barnes, *CE* 255–8; Eusebius does not mention the *collatio lustralis*, a new tax much criticized in the pagan sources, Zos. 2. 38. 1); nevertheless, though partial, Eusebius' comments offer important contemporary evidence. Constantine's extravagance ('generosity', according to favourable accounts) is a constant theme in pagan critique: Julian, *Caes.* 335b; *Epitome de Caes.* 41. 6; Ammianus 16. 8. 12; it is contrasted with Licinius' *parsimonia* at *Epit.* 41. 3; see Wiemer, 'Libanius on Constantine', 520.

3. adjustment officers (*peraequatores*). These were officials appointed to deal with census adjustments or reassessments.

4. anyone who had stood before such an Emperor . . . As Drake has pointed out ('Genesis'), several details included in bk. IV suggest personal observation or information, quite possibly when Eusebius was in Constantinople for Constantine's Tricennalia in 336; see further below on IV. 7.

5–6. Foreign relations I: Pacification of Goths and Sarmatians Despite his intention expressed at I. 11 to exclude military affairs, Eusebius now turns to the conventional panegyric theme of the Emperor as bringer of peace, if need be by military victory; Constantine brings the lawless tribes to civilized order, so that their individual members pass from bestiality to Roman freedom. Eusebius' claims about these dealings with former enemies and Constantine's mission to demonstrate the faith (cf. Rufinus, *HE* 10. 8), are confirmed by Constantine's letter to the Council of Tyre (Athanasius, *Apol. contra Arianos*, 86. 10–11; Gelasius, *HE* 3. 18. 1–13), and cf. Lib., *Or.* 59. 29, 39. For Constantine's treaty with the Goths (332), their federate status and his relations with them see Peter Heather, *Goths and Romans*

332–489 (Oxford, 1991), 107–15; *contra* Eusebius, both Julian and Themistius state that payments were still made (Heather, 'New Men', 109, 114, and on the evidence of Jordanes, 108–9). Constantine claimed victory and in 335–6 took the title Dacicus Maximus (Heather, 'New Men', 108–9; Barnes, 'Victories', 151).

7. *Foreign relations II: Foreign tributes*

constant diplomatic visitors . . . we ourselves were once present. Constantine receives embassies and gifts from the Blemmyes, India, and Ethiopia (see also IV. 50, ambassadors from India). The scene replicates a triumphal motif from imperial art, yet Eusebius claims that he was there and saw it himself; see Drake, 'Genesis', 26; B. H. Warmington, 'Virgil, Eusebius of Caesarea and an Imperial Ceremony', in C. Deroux, ed., *Studies in Latin Literature and History*, iv (Brussels, 1986), 451–60. Barnes, *CE* 253, suggests that this occasion was the culmination of Constantine's Tricennalia and that Eusebius probably saw the scene in the Hippodrome. Other indications of autopsy in bk. IV are at 33, 45, 46 (speeches made by Eusebius himself); possibly 49 (wedding of Constantius II, see Drake, 'Genesis'), 48 (the reaction of Constantine to excessive praise), 30 (his rebuke to an official for greed). Drake argues that Eusebius was already planning the work and collecting material in Constantinople in summer 336, and that he may have stayed in the capital until after Easter 337, bk. IV (of which Easter is 'an important sub-theme', Drake, 'Genesis', 29; see also the details of observation at IV. 22, 55, 56) being completed in draft by the end of the year (Drake, 'Genesis', 30–1); in Drake's view, Eusebius asked permission to write the *VC* late in 335 when he repeated for the Emperor the speech he had delivered on the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem (IV. 33)—the reaction was cool but he received encouragement for the project after his speech on the Emperor's Tricennalia delivered before him in 336 (Drake, 'Genesis', 30).

Eusebius' presentation of Constantine receiving gifts from eastern envoys, a theme taken up again in IV. 50, is seen as part of a sense of universal mission by G. Fowden ('The Last Days of Constantine: Oppositional Versions and their Influence', *JRS* 84 (1994), 146–70; cf. his *Empire to Commonwealth: Con-*

sequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity (Cambridge, 1993), chs. 4 and 5), who also suspects ('Last Days of Constantine', 149) that IV. 50, referring to 'ambassadors from India' bearing gifts of jewels, may allude to a certain Metrodorus, referred to as a philosopher and traveller in several later sources. IV. 14. 1, with IV. 50, at least shows that Eusebius himself wanted to stress universal rule. But the theme is both a literary topos (cf. Warmington, 'Virgil', comparing it with the scene on the shield of Aeneas at *Aen.* 8. 720–31) and a regular theme in late antique imperial art, and Eusebius had himself already used similar ideas at *VC* I. 8; Eusebius thus drew on 'the most venerable clichés of military glory' (Warmington, 'Virgil', 458), though generally stressing the pacificatory more than the bellicose (*ibid.* 459).

8–14. 1. *Foreign relations III: Peace with Persia*

See Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 146–53; T. D. Barnes, 'Constantine and the Christians of Persia', *JRS* 75 (1985), 126–36. Again the subject is taken up later in bk. IV, with an account of Constantine's final expedition (56, cut off by a lacuna in the text; see Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 147). Here Eusebius places Constantine's dealings with Persia within the panegyric topos of universal peace and in an apologetic context of Christian universalism. The date of this letter, perhaps sent in response to an Iranian initiative, falls between 324 and 337 (Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 148 n. 11; Barnes, 'Constantine and Christians of Persia', 131–2 ('shortly after October, 324')).

8–13. Constantine's letter to Shapur: the genuineness of this, which differs in some ways from the other documents cited (see below), is still commonly doubted: see e.g. A. D. Lee, *Information and Frontiers: Roman Foreign Relations in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1993), 37; F. G. B. Millar, 'Emperors, Frontiers and Foreign Relations, 31 BC to AD 378', *Britannia*, 13 (1982), 1–25, at 2. For the tone ('deliberately aphoristic, allusive and indirect', see Barnes, *CE* 258–9; 'Constantine and Christians of Persia', 131. Constantine none the less makes clear his claim to patronage over Shapur's Christian subjects (13); furthermore, Armenia

had become Christian officially in 314, and Iberia became so about 330. In 324–5 the Latin poet Publilius Optatianus Porfyrius suggested that Constantine was already planning a Persian invasion (*Carm.* 18. 4). The politeness of this letter was a temporary diplomatic expedient: in 337 Constantine did plan the invasion, with a full panoply of religious propaganda to accompany it (for Eusebius' version, which differs from some later ones, see on IV. 56 and see Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth*, 93–7; Constantine as crusader: *ibid.* 96). For Constantine's sense of mission, see also II. 28, exemplified in his conquests from the Atlantic to the east.

8. This document also is in circulation among us, written by the Emperor personally in Latin . . . For Eusebius' claim to have a personal copy, cf. II. 23, 47. He may well have obtained it in Constantinople in 336 (so Drake, 'Genesis', 28); for Marianus the notary as a possible source see Warmington, 'Sources of Some Constantinian Documents', who takes *pheretai . . . par* to mean 'is cited (or described) to' rather than 'is in circulation among', which is the more natural understanding. Taken with the absence of a heading or introductory greeting such as we have with every other letter of Constantine in Eusebius' account, this may suggest that Eusebius has this document from a secondary history or source. It is difficult to believe that even Constantine could have begun his letter to Shapur without some other remarks, before embarking on his religious history and advice. Either Eusebius, or his source, has omitted the opening. This is the only letter included by Eusebius on a secular theme, though Constantine's wish to protect the Christians of Persia was sufficient reason for Eusebius to include it. According to Barnes, 'Panegyric', 100, 'Eusebius intended this letter to follow those quoted in II. 24–60'.

9. this cult. The abruptness of the description suggests that Christianity has already been mentioned in the letter.

whose sign my army . . . carries on its shoulders. This is the miraculous standard of I. 28–32. Eusebius uses the same phrase of its bearers in II. 8. 1; 9. 1.

from these men. Constantine attributes his success to the prayers of the Christians. The whole passage conveys a veiled

warning to Shapur that an anti-Christian policy will lead to conflict.

10. 1. abominable blood and foul hateful odours. i.e. animal sacrifice. One might suppose that here Constantine appeals to the common ground of Persian Zoroastrianism and Christian cult in rejecting such rites.

11. 2. that one, who was driven from these parts by divine wrath. Constantine clinches his familiar argument about the fate of the persecutors (see e.g. II. 54) with reference to Valerian, Emperor from 253. Valerian turned against the Christian Church (Eus., *HE* 7. 10. 1–4). He was defeated and captured by Shapur I in 260, an event recorded by Shapur in a great inscription and depicted on rock reliefs at Naqs-i-Rustam; Christian sources, e.g. Lact., *DMP* 5, recounted with satisfaction his ignominious treatment and his death after being flayed alive. For references see Dodgeon and Lieu, 57–65, with notes.

14. 2–39. *Constantine's Sanctity*

A variety of illustrations follow, designed to demonstrate the holiness and piety of the Emperor; to pagan critics, of course, Constantine was an example of impiety to the old gods (Jul., *Caes.*, 336b).

14. 2–16. *Personal piety*

15. 1. he had his own portrait so depicted on the gold coinage. A well-known gold medallion from Siscia dating from the Vicennalia (326–7) shows Constantine's head in this pose wearing a diadem, his head thrown back and his eyes raised as if to heaven (*RIC* vii, Siscia no. 206; cf. Fig. 9); in fact, though Eusebius does not say so, the type recalled depictions of Alexander the Great, also a deliberate choice from 325 onwards (see Smith, 'Public image of Licinius I', 187, and cf. Leeb, 57–62; H. P. L'Orange, *Likeness and Icon: Selected Studies in Classical and Early Mediaeval Art* (Odense, 1973), 85). For the idea expressed metaphorically, see *LC* 3. 5.

15. 2. he was portrayed standing up . . . in a posture of prayer. For the colossal statue of Constantine (Fig. 5) of which

the head and arm and leg pieces are in the Musei Capitolini (cortile) see K. Fittschen and P. Zanker, *Katalog der römischen Porträts in den Capitolinischen Museen und in . . . alteren Sammlungen* (Mainz am Rhein, 1993–5), 2 vols., i, Text, pp. 147–52; Tafeln Tf. 149, nos. 120–1 and Tf. 151–42; Smith, 'Public Image of Licinius I', 185–6, for extant full-length statues; it may have been a reused statue of Maxentius. Eusebius shows an unusual awareness of the importance of visual representation (cf. I. 40; III. 3; IV. 73), even if he puts it to apologetic uses.

16. Such was the way he would have himself depicted. See on 15. 1.

by law he forbade images of himself to be set up in idol-shrines. This seems to be contradicted by the Hispellum inscription from late in the reign (*ILS* 705= *ILCV* I.5, trans. Coleman-Norton and Bourne, no. 306; see on II. 45, and on statues, III. 48. 2), which permitted a temple to be erected in honour of the Flavian family, and games to be held. However, the decree explicitly requires that 'it should not be polluted by any contagion of the deceits of superstition'. This is taken by Dörries, *Constantine the Great*, 182–3; *Selbstzeugnis*, 209–11, 339, to imply secularization of the imperial cult, but the latter certainly continued (see Averil Cameron, 'Herrscherkult III. Altkirche ab Konstantin', *TRE* 15/1–2 (1986), 253–5). For the limited role of legislation in bringing about Christianization see David Hunt, 'Christianising the Roman Empire: The Evidence of the Code', in Jill Harries and Ian Wood, eds., *The Theodosian Code* (London, 1993), 143–60, at 157–60.



FIG. 9. Siscia, gold medallion of Constantine with uplifted head, AD 326. Trustees of the British Museum.

17–21. Staff and military personnel

Constantine's palace was like a church; he would read the Scriptures and pray with members of the imperial household. Constantine's scriptural study and inspiration: I. 32. 3; II. 12. 1. **in the manner of a church of God.** Eusebius' assumptions about the nature of a church are interesting: it spends its time in studying and interpreting the Bible, and in 'lawful' prayers (that is, orthodox and in conformity with the regular daily practice of the churches). Such study and devotion may well be generally true of Constantine, even if here exaggerated; cf. I. 32. 3; II. 12. 1.

divinely inspired oracles. cf. I. 3. 4; II. 12. 1; IV. 43. 3.

18. 2. He therefore decreed . . . rest on the days named after the Saviour. In March 321 Constantine banned legal and similar business on 'the venerable day of the Sun', while encouraging agricultural work to take advantage of the weather (*CJ* 3. 12. 2). Four months later, acts of emancipation of children and manumission of slaves, which could now be carried out in churches, were also exempted from the ban (*CTh* 2. 8. 1; cf. Stevenson, *NE* 319). Neither text uses the Christian term 'the Lord's Day', as Eusebius implies. This passage repeats *LC* 9. 10, and cf. also *SC* 17. 14, with a very similar presentation of Constantine's role as Christian monarch (see Barnes, *CE* 249–50).

. . . the days of the Sabbath. Winkelmann, following Valesius, adds a word and reads *<pro> tou sabbatou*, 'the days before the Sabbath', on the basis of the fact that Sozomen later adapts this passage and makes it refer to resting from legal transactions on Fridays as well as Sundays, in honour of the crucifixion of Jesus on that day (Soz., *HE* 1. 8. 11–12; note *ten pro tes hebdomes*). There is no other record, however, of rest prescribed on Friday, the Christian fast-day, though various exemptions down to Justinian in the sixth century relieved Jews of prosecution on the Sabbath. It is better to keep the unanimous manuscript reading and assume that Constantine repeated this exemption for Jews in some form, and that Eusebius gives it a Christian interpretation, just as he interprets the legislation about the pagan day of the Sun as explicitly Christian. In contemporary Christian exegesis the rest

of Jesus in the tomb on the Saturday between his crucifixion and his resurrection was taken as a fulfilment of the Sabbath law and God's own Sabbath rest (Exod. 20: 7); see further Hall, 'Some Constantinian Documents', 100–2.

18. 3. he taught all the military. Eusebius particularly stresses Constantine's measures on the army, though the surviving fragments of legislation are not so limited. Soldiers who are Christian are given time off to worship on Sundays; those who are not are required to join in prayer.

19–20. 2. he gave order in a second decree. Constantine legislates that non-Christian soldiers should be required to join in a common prayer every Sunday, for which the wording is here given (20. 1); Eusebius refers to this instruction in more general terms at *LC* 9. 10. The phrase 'just outside the city' suggests that Eusebius knows this only of the Constantinople garrison, and this fits the description of Constantine's sermonizing to the troops. Eusebius does not mind leaving the impression that it was universal in the army. The day (*dies solis*), the hands extended to heaven, and the address to God chiefly in terms of victories won indicate the cult of Sol Invictus, prominent both on Constantine's coinage and in features of the vision of I. 28. Eusebius tries to excuse this to his Christian readers by emphasizing that Constantine pointed the troops beyond heaven (and the sun), 'extending their mental vision yet higher to the heavenly King', who should be regarded as the true giver of victory. The prayer resembles that used by Licinius and his army in the campaign against Maximin Daia, said by Lactantius to have been dictated to him by an angel on the night before the battle, after which it was taken down and copies were distributed (*DMP* 46–7); it has been argued that both prayers had their origin in the meeting of Constantine and Licinius at Milan (A. Piganiol, *Mélanges Grégoire* (1950), 515). For Constantine's attempts to ensure the loyalty of the army in these ways see R. MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire AD 100–400* (New Haven, 1984), 44–6; a generation or more later, soldiers allegedly still remembered Constantine's harangues (*ibid.* 46, citing Theodoret, *HE* 4. 1. 4).

20. 2–21. Eusebius concludes his section on Constantine's Christian mission to his troops. The 'saving trophy' to be

marked on their shields and carried before the army must be some form of cross. It might however have been a version of the *chi-rho*, like that used on the shields at the Milvian Bridge in Lactantius's account: see I. 28–31, and for reliance on images of the gods by Constantine's enemies, II. 16. Grigg, 'Constantine the Great and the Cult without Images', 21, points out the looseness of Eusebius' term, 'sign', which might mean cross, christogram, or *chi-rho*.

22–3 Domestic religion

2. 21–2. On days of the Feast of the Saviour. Constantine kept enthusiastically the fast before and the feast of Easter. This culminates in the lighting of candles (22. 2) during the night of Easter Eve, and these are kept burning till dawn in honour of the resurrection. Eusebius may have seen this himself at Constantinople in 337 (Drake, 'Genesis', 29). The feast was of great importance to the Church and we may believe that Constantine turned it into a public holiday; his concern for its unanimous observance appears in the letter of III. 17–20; cf. also the exchange of IV. 34–5, and his death at Eastertide, IV. 60. 5; 64.

23–5. Christianity promoted and idolatry suppressed

For the order and construction of this ('messy') passage see Barnes, 'Panegyric', 100.

23. every form of sacrifice banned. Cf. notes to 25. 1 'in successive laws and ordinances he prohibited everyone from sacrificing to idols', and II. 45, also referring to a law forbidding sacrifice. Constantine's law forbidding sacrifice has not survived; see on II. 45. For the temple which he allowed to be erected to the Gens Flavia at Hispellum see on 16 above. Libanius, *Or.* 30, *Pro templis* (AD 388–91), claims that unlike Constantius II, Constantine had not disallowed pagan practices, cf. also Them., *Or.* 5. 70d–71a, calling Jovian a new Constantine for his religious toleration. But these sources are also tendentious: the extent to which Constantine did attempt to suppress pagan worship is therefore disputed (see, esp. on the interpretation of *VC* II. 48–60, T. D. Barnes, 'Constantine's Prohibition of Pagan

Sacrifice', *AJPh* 105 (1984), 69–72, with R. 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). For his legislation on magic and divination (25. 1) cf. *CTh* 9. 16. 3 (318); 16. 1 (320), with 16. 2 (319). As in the conclusion of *SC* (16. 13–14), Eusebius links Constantine's measures against pagan cult with his positive prescription of Christian study and observance (see Barnes, *CE* 249); the Emperor bans sacrifice, magic, and idolatry, and encourages Christian worship by ordaining that Christian festivals be celebrated and Sundays kept holy.

reverence the Lord's Day. Eusebius has already paraphrased this enactment at length (above, 18–19).

24. a bishop . . . over those outside. Constantine's alleged description of himself is one of the most famous and puzzling statements in the *VC*; see Winkelmann, 'Authentizitätsproblem', 236–38; D. de Decker and G. Dupuis-Masay, 'L' "Épiscopat" de l'empereur Constantin', *Byzantion*, 50 (1980), 118–57; J. Straub, *Regeneratio Imperii* (Darmstadt, 1972), 119–34, 134–59. The reference is surely to those outside the Church, though Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth*, 91 n., takes it as a statement about mission, i.e. as referring to other peoples; otherwise 'the laity': see G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le "césaropapisme" byzantin* (Paris, 1996), 146–7. IV. 24 and 44 ('like a universal Bishop') regarded as interpolations: W. Seston, 'Constantine as bishop', *JRS* 37 (1947), 128–9. Both passages have given rise to speculation about their supposed implications for church-state relations. But the sentiment in each case fits with the theory expressed in *LC*, and here the remark is made in the context of a dinner-party (for Constantine entertaining bishops cf. also III. 15. 1; IV. 46), and as a kind of aside; while it does express both the Emperor's sense of mission and his way of acting, perhaps it should none the less not be taken too seriously (so Barnes, *CE* 270).

25. 1. gladiatorial combat. Constantine's general policy towards pagan worship had been set out in 324: qualified toleration, combined with official disapproval (Barnes, *CE* 211–12; cf. *CTh* 15. 12. 1, AD 325). In practical terms, he proceeded more by pursuing well-chosen examples of deplorable pagan practice than by attempting universal suppression; and

though successive Christian emperors forbade gladiatorial games, neither they nor sacrifices could be legislated out of existence.

25. 2–3. With Constantine's measure against homosexual priests in Egypt compare II. 55. 3. Eusebius gloats over the sequel: the Nile rose even higher than before, as though a way had been prepared for it by the removal of pollution. See MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 50, on this passage: Eusebius wrote 'no doubt with the text of the decree before his eyes'; on the basis of this and similar measures, 'the Empire had never had on the throne a man given to such bloodthirsty violence as Constantine. He could hardly control the tone of his proclamations.' Pace MacMullen, Eusebius does not actually say that the priests were slaughtered; at III. 55 they are converted by the spectacle of the demolition of the temple. Admittedly the language is violent (cf. also on III. 65), but this is the style of all late Roman legislation from Diocletian on.

26–8. Legislation and public charity

26. 1. Eusebius has mentioned the 'countless' innovations in Constantine's legislation, and will now go on to his reforms of earlier laws. For a brief survey of his social legislation, emphasizing its piecemeal nature, see Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change*, 295–6.

2. 62–5. Ancient laws. Constantine's repeal of the Augustan marriage laws (*CTh* 8. 16. 1, AD 320), part of a general edict *ad populum* on the family and marriage, of which seven fragments survive, is presented by Eusebius solely in Christian terms (Barnes, *CE* 52); in fact it was more probably designed to please the wealthier classes and the senatorial aristocracy. Eusebius has selected this item from a much wider mass of legislation on marriage and family, which is not in total to be seen in Christianizing terms; other fragments from the law are listed by Barnes, *NE* 74 and in *Codex Theodosianus*, ed. T. Mommsen and P. Meyer (Berlin, 1905), i, pp. ccix–ccxiv, with a full list of the surviving fragments of Constantine's legislation on marriage and family in J. Evans-Grubbs, *Law and Family in Late Antiquity: The Emperor Constantine's Marriage*

Legislation (Oxford, 1995), app. I. See also ead., 'Constantine and Imperial Legislation on the Family', in Jill Harries and Ian Wood, eds., *The Theodosian Code* (London, 1993), 120–42, at 122–6. It is possible in this instance to compare what actually survives directly with how it is represented by Eusebius; see Evans-Grubbs, 'Abduction Marriage in Antiquity: A Law of Constantine (*CTh* IX. 24. 1) and its Social Context', *JRS* 79 (1989), 59–83, esp. 75–6; *Law and Family*, esp. 128–30. In 321 the Latin panegyrist Nazarius interpreted the legislation in terms of a restoration of morality (*Pan. Lat.* 4 (10). 38), with no special reference to Christianity, and Constantine's measures in connection with marriage were certainly much broader in their scope than that would suggest (see in general J. Beaucamp, *Le Statut de la femme à Byzance (4^e–7^e siècle)*, i (Paris, 1990), e.g. at 284–5). Severe legislation on adultery and divorce followed the events in Constantine's own family in 326 (Piganiol, *L'Empire chrétien*, 35–6 and for a list and discussion see Evans-Grubbs, *Law and the Family*, app. II; on *CTh* 3. 16. 1, AD 331, see 'Constantine and Imperial Legislation', 127–30).

Eusebius attributes the repeal of the Augustan legislation (apparently still in force in the early fourth century, cf. *Pan. Lat.* 6 (7). 2. 4, AD 307) to Constantine's desire for 'sacred justice', and suggests that the Emperor's prime motive was to remove penalties from those who had adopted a life of celibacy, 'through a passion for philosophy' (26. 3). Eusebius uses the Platonic terminology already current in Christian contexts; according to Piganiol, *L'Empereur Constantin*, 123–5, therefore, the law of 320 is to be explained in terms of Constantine's respect for philosophy, Christian or pagan. But the term seems to be an example of *philosophia* as specifically Christian 'asceticism', a common usage in the fourth century (Lampe, s.v., B5 and see below, 28. 1). Eusebius is a witness to the Christian ideal of virginity, and to developing monasticism; clerical celibacy was already an issue (cf. Canons of Elvira, 33; Ancyra, 10; Neocaesarea, 1, and for its discussion at Nicaea, not mentioned by Eusebius, Socr., *HE* 1. 11; Soz., *HE* 1. 23); the same concern is attributed to Constantine himself at 28. 1, 'he would all but worship God's choir of those sanctified in perpetual virginity'. But relatively few Christian celibates would have been affected by the Augustan laws, as they were mainly aimed at the socially

prominent upper classes. The passage offers a clear indication of Eusebius' general methods; the effect is certainly one-sided. Thus he cites the law of 320 (cf. also *CJ* 6. 23. 15, on inheritances, dated to 339 in the MSS but in fact also part of the law of 320) as exemplifying Constantine's fairness and clemency (for which see Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 41. 4, 17), and praises Constantine for rectifying the defects of the original laws and using reason to make them more righteous. Admittedly he is not trying to give a complete picture of Constantine's legislation as a whole, but as Corcoran points out, he had criticized Licinius in the *HE* for bringing in very similar legislation (*HE* 10. 8. 11–12, cf. Corcoran, 'Hidden from History', 102); in fact Constantine's law of 320 was strictly speaking issued in the names of both emperors, however much Constantine (and Eusebius) tried later to separate the Constantinian from the Licinian (see Corcoran, 'Hidden from History', 103). Sozomen, *HE* 1. 9. 3–4, seems to know more about the Augustan legislation than Eusebius, and is more explicit as to Constantine's motives in repealing it; writing a century later, however, he is not necessarily more reliable.

While it did coincide with the main growth of Christian asceticism, the real importance of the removal of the Augustan constraints on inheritance was probably more strictly economic, for, combined with Constantine's enactment relating to legacies to the Church (*CTh* 16. 2. 4, AD 321), it opened the way for people to remain unmarried and to leave their property to the Church.

26. 5. for those near death ancient laws prescribed. Constantine's change is described in the context of Christianizing measures (cf. also 27) and is to be read as intended to prevent the circumvention of donations to the Church (see above); *CTh* 16. 2. 4 places a strong emphasis on the sanctity of a man's dying wish.

27. 1. no Christian was to be a slave to Jews. cf. *CTh* 16. 9. 1, Sirm. Const. 4 (AD 335), with a range of earlier laws, beginning in 315, regulating the condition of Jews (*CTh* 16. 8. 1–5); see Barnes, *CE* 252, 270, emphasizing the harshness of Constantine's attitude (as evinced in Eusebius' phraseology here), and on the dates of the legislation, 392 n. 74. Constantine's abolition of crucifixion and prohibition of branding on the face the image of the divine (see Barnes, *CE* 51) had a similar thrust. Cf. Aur. Vict.

41, with J. P. Callu, 'Du châtement dans la cité', *EFR* 79 (1984), 313–59, especially 358 ff.

27. 2. Synodical rulings are to be given the imperial seal, so as to place the judgements of bishops above the wishes of governors. No such law survives, but the sentiment is typical of Constantine's exaggerated respect for bishops, claimed already e.g. in his letter to the Council of Arles, Optatus, *App.* 5 (AD 314). Eusebius does not refer here to Constantine's measures on episcopal jurisdiction (cf. Barnes, *CE* 51), but cf. Sozomen, *HE* 1. 9. 5 and see Hunt, 'Christianising the Roman Empire', and in general J. Gaudemet, *L'Église dans l'empire romain* (Paris, 1958).

27. 3–28. 1. Constantine established a grain distribution for the citizens of Constantinople, on the model of Rome (Dagron, *Naissance*, 530–5; J. Durliat, *De la ville antique à la ville byzantine: Le Problème des subsistances* (Rome, 1990)), but Eusebius' theme here is rather that of Christian charity. He stresses Constantine's generosity, especially to Christian celibates; cf. 'godly philosophy', 28. 1 (see on 26. 2–5). 27. 3 is simply resumptive (cf. 26. 1), but in 28 Eusebius emphasizes Constantine's positive enthusiasm for Christian charity and Christian piety.

29–33. *Speaking and listening*

Eusebius provides a remarkable picture of Constantine as preacher, speaker, and listener (see Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth*, 87). The Emperor, he claims, spent much time and care on personally preparing his speeches, and thought it his duty to expound the Christian principles on which his rule was based. Eusebius describes this activity as *philosophia*, which might however move into the field of *theologia* (29. 2). By the 'multitudes' who flocked to hear him (29. 2), Eusebius seems to mean the members of the court (*gnorimoi*, 29. 4), some of whom are made to feel ashamed by the Emperor's castigation. The Emperor did not spare them from detailed rebuke (29. 4), and told them that he must give an account to God not only of his own, but also of their activities (for Constantine's sense of responsibility cf. Opt., *App.* 3. 314).

Eusebius is naturally most interested in Constantine's style as a preacher, starting with his extreme reverence when speaking of

God (29. 2), and moving to his attacks on polytheism and his advocacy of the Christian God and the divine plan of salvation (29. 3). He then proceeded to criticize the personal shortcomings of his hearers (29. 4), warning them that they would have to face divine judgement (cf. also IV. 55).

For once Eusebius ventures a more personal note: the audience claimed to support the Emperor's views, and applauded him, but made no changes in their own conduct (29. 5). In the anecdote that follows (30. 1), surely based on personal experience, Constantine noticed this too, and retaliated, though still without effect (30. 2). Finally, Eusebius claims that the Emperor's clemency was a matter of complaint (31, see on IV. 1. 1–2 above); this is claimed as a later interpolation by J. Seidl, 'Eine Kritik an Kaiser Konstantin in der *Vita Constantini* des Euseb', in E. Chr. von Suttner and C. Palock, eds., *Wegzeichen: Festgaben zum 60. Geburtstag von H. M. Biedermann* (Das ostliche Christentum, 25; Würzburg, 1971), 83–94, but cf. III. 66. Eusebius drops his accustomed panegyric mode and seemingly lets us see the awkwardnesses of life at the Constantinian court; writing from the standpoint of the rule of Constantine's sons, he allows for the possibility of a somewhat stricter regime.

29. 2. initiating the audience. For the language of initiation, above, 22. 1; below, 34. 35. 1, 61. 2–3.

32. Constantine's speeches: usually composed in Latin (cf. the letter to Shapur, II. 9) and professionally translated. The document at II. 48–60 is similarly translated by Eusebius (II. 47. 2). At Nicaea Constantine's speech was given in Latin and translated, though he conversed there in Greek too (III. 13). Eusebius promises to append to the *VC* a speech translated from Latin into Greek and entitled 'to the assembly of saints', usually identified with the surviving *Oration to the Saints* (see Introduction, p. 51), which includes all the features described in 29. 2–5.

33. 1–2. Eusebius' speech on the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which Constantine allowed him to deliver in his own presence; Eusebius describes the rapt attention with which the Emperor received it, insisting on standing, adding his own pertinent comments and approval of its theology and refusing to sit down, or to allow Eusebius to break off or shorten it. See on

IV. 46, where Eusebius seems to describe a speech significantly different in content from the present one. Drake, 'Genesis', 22–5, suggests that the descriptive material about the site there mentioned, but not in *SC*, was later removed by Eusebius and used instead for the appropriate part of *VC* III. 25–40; another possibility (Barnes, 'Two Speeches'; *CE* 266) is that *SC* (chs. 11–18 of the hybrid speech that is preserved with the *VC*) is in fact a further speech by Eusebius on the same subject, and indeed Eusebius says at **IV. 45** that he delivered several. The dedication of the church had taken place in September 335, and the recitation of the speech probably belongs to late autumn that year.

34–7. *Letters on Christian topics*

Letters between Eusebius and the Emperor; for the changes of subject, see Barnes, 'Panegyric', 100–1. Eusebius includes the text of two letters which he had himself received: at **35. 1–2**, the Emperor's reply to a treatise which Eusebius had addressed to him on the meaning of Pascha, and at **36. 1–3** a request from Constantine to Eusebius for fifty copies of the Scriptures for Constantinople. It is reasonable to suppose that they belong in the same chronological context, i.e. after Eusebius' return to Caesarea late in 335 (**33. 2**).

35. Eusebius' treatise on Pascha, translated from Greek into Latin for the Emperor (**35. 3**), and explaining the differences of opinion about the festival (**35. 1**), is lost; Constantine claims to have read it himself, and to have ordered copies to be made as Eusebius wished. He urges Eusebius to write more such works. We do not know which dispute about the Pascha is in mind. It could still be that explained in the notes to **III. 5** and **III. 35–6**, which the Nicene decisions did not wholly settle. The reference here to 'its beneficial and painful bringing to fulfilment' could have subtle reference to recent developments in Jerusalem. The claimed discovery of the True Cross, which Eusebius does not mention, went with the beginnings of the cult of the death of Christ on Good Friday. Eusebius continues to regard the Pascha as a single feast in which the suffering of Christ is subsumed in his resurrection. It is not impossible that rumblings of this

disagreement between Caesarea and Jerusalem underlay both this correspondence and the speeches about the Holy Sepulchre described in **33**.

36. In the second letter Constantine requests that Eusebius oversee the production of fifty copies of the Scriptures for Constantinople, with leather bindings, the materials to be provided by the governor, together with two vehicles for their safe transport in the care of one of Eusebius' deacons. For another letter (on the see of Antioch) addressed by Constantine to Eusebius personally see **III. 61**. According to Barnes, *CE* 267, the tone now is respectful, but not intimate; however, the letters included here do signify a closer relationship between the two, while the request for copies points to the known Biblical scholarship of Eusebius and to an active scriptorium at Caesarea (Barnes, *CE* 124–5). The number does not mean that there were fifty churches in Constantinople at this date (Mango, *Le Développement*, 34–6, cf. **III. 48** for exaggeration by Eusebius).

37. threes and fours. These words probably mean only that he sent them three or four volumes at a time (see Barnes, *CE* 345 n. 139), but could imply three- and four-volume sets. The whole Bible could not be bound in a single codex, if the writing were of a size to read in church.

37–9. *Conversion of cities*

37–8. Heikel spotted that there must be a lacuna in the text here, in the middle of **37**. An alternative would be to see the later part of **37** as belonging after **38**, stating the evidence for the information given in **38**. If so the dislocation could go back as far as hasty compilation by Eusebius himself.

37. Maiuma, the harbour-city of Gaza in Palestine, was given the status of a city and renamed Constantia after Constantine's sister, itself later becoming an episcopal see; *TIR Judaea and Palestina*, 175. However, Julian reversed this change (Soz., *HE* 5. 3), and paganism was by no means suppressed in the area. Gaza remained a cosmopolitan city even after the destruction of the temple of Zeus Marnas in the early fifth century, for which see the *Life of Porphyry of Gaza* by Mark the Deacon, ed. H. Grégoire and M. A. Kugener, *Marc le diacre: Vie de Porphyre*,

évêque de Gaza (Paris, 1930). Sozomen, *HE* 2. 5 places this and the case of Constantine in Phoenicia in the context of the general suppression of idolatry and destruction of shrines mentioned at *VC* III. 55–8, but without being able to add further named examples, Eusebius too having resorted to sweeping generalization at this point (39. 2). An inscription records that Orcistus in Phrygia similarly received city-status, at their request, in the light of the Christianity of its inhabitants (*MAMA* vii. 305).

39. 3. Eusebius signals the end of a section and moves on to an account of the last part of the reign.

40–52. *Final Achievements*

40–52. 3. *The Tricennalia and promotion of sons*

Only now in the body of the text does Eusebius come to the subject of Constantine's sons and successors, and he does so in an elaborate and forced conceit, likening them to the Trinity and linking their respective promotions to the dates of Constantine's anniversaries. In fact, though, Constantine II was born on 7 August 316 and proclaimed Caesar 1 March 317; Constantius was proclaimed Caesar 8 November 324 and Constans on 25 December 333 (see Barnes, *NE* 44–5, 8). Constantine's eldest son Crispus, Caesar in 317 and killed in 326, is not mentioned.

The year of Constantine's Tricennalia ended on 25 July 336. For Eusebius' own movements during 335–6, and his visits to Constantinople, see Drake, 'Genesis'.

41–2. *The Council at Tyre*

There is little in Eusebius' brief notice to explain why the Council was summoned, or what was the point under dispute; most of the space is given to the text of a letter from Constantine summoning the Council, and the name of Athanasius, condemned by the Council and exiled by Constantine on 7 November, is not mentioned. Much of the reason for this highly tendentious treatment lies in Eusebius' own involvement in the ecclesiastical politics of 335–6 (see below).

41. Eusebius places the Council of Tyre (the metropolis of Phoenicia, 41. 3–4) between the beginning of Constantine's

Tricennalia (25 July 335) and the dedication of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem (13–20 September); the bishops were to proceed there from the Council, having settled their disputes (41. 2). Constantine summons the Council after Envy has cast a shadow over the general happiness (41. 1; see on III. 1. 1, 59). As with the account of the Council of Nicaea, the true reason for calling it (Athanasius' quarrel with the Melitians) is left unstated, as is any suggestion that Athanasius was exiled for upholding the decisions taken at Nicaea or that Constantine had agreed to the reinstatement of Arius himself. Much had preceded the Council, including Constantine's dispatch of a vitriolic letter to Arius in 332 when the latter was showing impatience at Athanasius' continued intransigence (Barnes, *CE* 232–3); however, by 335 Arius was finally readmitted, with Constantine's agreement, by the Council of Jerusalem (see on 43. 3 below, and cf. Barnes, *CE* 233–9; Norderval, 'Emperor Constantine and Arius', 135–43).

Eusebius himself was deeply involved in these events. After Constantine's death Athanasius and the other exiled bishops were allowed to return, with the result that while Eusebius was writing the *VC* there was a real danger that Constantine's policy in his later years, which Eusebius strongly supported, might be undone; see Cameron, 'Construction'. He himself had gone on a delegation to Constantine in Constantinople to persuade him to accept the condemnation of Athanasius by the Council of Tyre (Athanasius, *Apol. sec.* 9, 87; Sozomen, *HE* 1. 35). Here, to include Constantine's letter summoning the council, while omitting altogether both the reasons behind it and the complicated manoeuvres which followed it, was a bold and disingenuous way of reminding his audience that Athanasius had indeed been exiled. Athanasius gave a highly tendentious account of these events in his *Apology against the Arians* (*Apol. sec.*) (Barnes, *Athanasius*, 25–33), on which Socr., *HE* 1. 27–35 and Soz., *HE* 2. 25–8 depend. The disputed chronology of the Council and the confrontation of Athanasius and Constantine in Constantinople, together with the meeting in Jerusalem and the arrival of the bishops in the capital, depends also on the Syriac Index to Athanasius' *Festal Letters* (ed. SC 317; Paris, 1985), 73 ff.); see Barnes, 'Emperors and Bishops'; H. A. Drake, 'Athanasius's First Exile', *GRBS* 27 (1986), 193–204; Hanson, *Search*, 259–65.

41. Envy. See I. 49. 2, and note on II. 60.

41. 2. Eusebius portrays the Council of Tyre as a mere preliminary to the Council of Jerusalem, which is the greatest to date (47). This is not supported by Constantine's letter to the bishops at Tyre (42), nor by the other evidence, but suits Eusebius' own preoccupations; see Hunt, 'Constantine and Jerusalem', 419.

mean demon Cf. I. 45. 2-3.

41. 3. the divine Law forbids. See Matt. 5: 23-4.

42. Constantine's letter to the Council cited by Eusebius merely summons the synod and is included to impress the audience with the idea of the Emperor's concern for the peace of the Church; it is almost as bland as Eusebius' narrative. Contrast the highly emotional letter of Constantine cited by Athanasius, *Apol. sec.* 36, and repeated by Socr. 1. 34 and Soz. 2. 28, where the Emperor describes how Athanasius had stopped him in the middle of the road and demanded a hearing; after this, Socrates says (1. 35), some bishops went to Constantinople and produced a further charge against Athanasius. These were sensational events, in which Eusebius played a prominent role himself, but he has simply glided over them.

42. 3. Dionysius He was a former governor of Phoenice, and now apparently *consularis Syriae* (*PLRE* i, 259). His mission includes summoning Athanasius, who says he was reluctant to attend until constrained by his letter (*Ap. Sec.* 71. 2).

with a particular eye to good order. From Athanasius' viewpoint his enemies were given an armed guard (*ibid.*).

43-8. *The assembly in Jerusalem*

The Council of Tyre was followed by the assembly in Jerusalem and dedication of the church, after which Eusebius went to Constantinople and was present when Constantine himself exiled Athanasius on 7 November. All the more reason, when Constantine's sons were pursuing a conciliatory policy towards the exiles, for Eusebius' deliberate care in presentation. He gives the dedication ceremony a full literary treatment, highlighting his own role and the speeches he wrote for the occasion (45-6).

43. 3. Eusebius struggles to justify his view of the meeting in Jerusalem as a significant world-wide gathering. His rhetorical convention forbids names, but even so he can indicate only one metropolitan, presumably Alexander of Thessalonica. The young Pannonians are probably Ursacius of Singidunum and Valens of Mursa, who had been present at Tyre. The others cannot be readily identified, even the solitary scholar from Persia, and must have been comparatively minor bishops. They were apparently supporters of the current imperial theology, and directed the Alexandrian and Egyptian churches to reinstate Arius and his associates (*Athan., Syn.* 21).

44. the one in charge of all these things, a man close to the Emperor. Named as Marianus the notary in the *kephalaia* to this passage and by Soz., *HE* 1. 26, who says he had delivered Constantine's letter to the Council of Tyre (see *PLRE* i, Marianus 2); Warmington, 'Some Constantinian Documents', 95, also compares the phraseology of *VC* II. 63 and 73 (on the letter to Alexander and Arius), and suggests that Marianus, who receives 'more fulsome praise than any other individual in the *Life* except members of the dynasty', was Eusebius' source for the letters to Shapur and to Alexander and Arius, and possibly for other documents in addition. Like the Council of Nicaea, the festival of the dedication is made the occasion for banquets and a high level of imperial display and largesse (defended by Eusebius at *SC* 11. 3); Hunt, 'Constantine and Jerusalem', 419-21.

45-6. It is clear that numerous orations (45. 1-2) were delivered, including several by Eusebius himself (45. 3), and that their content, including that of Eusebius' own addresses, varied considerably. Cf. Hunt, 'Constantine and Jerusalem', 420 'this was indisputably an occasion of state'; as Nicaea had coincided with Constantine's Vicennalia, so his Tricennalia was celebrated at Jerusalem. The content of the present *SC* (chs. 11-18 of what has been passed down in the MSS as the *Tricennalian Oration, LC*), cannot be reconciled with Eusebius' description of his speech in 46, which seems to suggest a far more precisely descriptive account; see also on **IV. 32** and see Drake, *In Praise of Constantine*, 35-45; Barnes, 'Panegyric', 101, suggesting that the wrong speech was appended by the editor of the *VC*. But the mention here of 'works of art' and 'offerings' does not fit

the passage on the church in *VC* III (see on *IV*. 33. 1-2), and he tells us clearly enough that there were several speeches, apparently differing from each other.

45. 2. disclosing hidden meanings This implies divining Christian truths in the Scriptures by allegorical and typological interpretation, in this case texts understood to refer to the buildings being dedicated (cf. *III*. 33. 2). The priests with less literary skill 'propitiated God with bloodless sacrifices' (a phrase regularly used to describe the eucharist or mass), as well as with other rites and prayers.

45. 3. symbolic rites. For the meaning of *symbolois* (rites, liturgy) and for the looseness of Eusebius' terminology, see Grigg, 'Constantine and the Cult without Images', 4-5.

46. the Emperor's works of art and large number of offerings. See Grigg, 'Constantine and the Cult without Images', for the question of whether Constantine's churches had figural decoration or statuary, as is claimed e.g. of the Lateran basilica in Rome in the later *Liber Pontificalis*.

he dined with the bishops present. cf. *III*. 15 (Nicaea, explicitly recalled at 47); *IV*. 24. Eusebius claims that Constantine enjoyed his performance, though he cannot quote actual words; cf. *IV*. 33 above. The chapter interrupts the context of the Council (Barnes, 'Panegyric', 101, also claiming that the opening of 47 refers back to 45).

47. Eusebius compares the meetings of bishops at Nicaea and at Jerusalem, one connected with the Vicennalia of Constantine, the other with his Tricennalia, and one with victory, the other with peace. His elevation of these two synods as symbols of Constantine's success in bringing peace to the Church is wholly artificial. Various other councils are ignored, and the continuing and growing controversies between Athanasius and most of the eastern Church made to seem insignificant. Moreover, the decision taken at Jerusalem about Arius was in complete reversal of the events which followed the Council of Nicaea, something which the disingenuous account of Eusebius does its best to obscure.

48. He was annoyed on hearing these words. Another personal touch (above, on *IV*. 7).

49-50. *The universal Empire*

The marriage of Constantius (his second son after Constantine II, Crispus being omitted) to a daughter of Julius Constantius, see Barnes, *NE* 45; the identity of Constantine II's wife is unknown. A glimpse is given of the domestic life of the imperial family, again accompanied by imperial largesse.

50. For the embassy from India see on *IV*. 7 of which this is a doublet. The incident illustrates Constantine's universal rule, from Britain to the far east; the domestic happiness of ch. 49 is extended to the whole world in ch. 50.

51-2. 3. *Sons prepared for succession*

Eusebius reports that Constantine 'divided the government of the whole Empire among his three sons' (51.1). Though the chronological indicator is vague ('now that he was in control of both ends of the entire inhabited world'), Eusebius refers to 335, when Constantine made a constitutional settlement, obviously with the succession in mind; see Grünwald, *Constantinus*, 150-3. The true picture was less clearcut than he presents it here: while *VC* IV. 51 speaks only of the three (*sic*) sons of Constantine, *Origo*, 35, makes it clear that they shared their power with Dalmatius, son of Flavius Dalmatius, consul 333, and grandson of Constantius Chlorus, declared Caesar on 18 September 335, and his brother Hannibalianus, who was made 'king of kings and of the Pontic peoples' and given Constantine's daughter Constantina in marriage. In addition to the areas designated for the sons of Constantine, Dalmatius was assigned the *ripa Gothica* (*Origo*, 35; for commentary see König, *ad loc.*); see also Eusebius himself at *LC* 3. 4, where he refers to Constantine metaphorically yoking the 'four Caesars' to his quadriga. It is unlikely that the three princes alone received the retinue mentioned at 51. 3, and indeed a praetorian prefect attached to Dalmatius may be indicated by a North African inscription (*AE* (1925), 72; see Barnes, *NE* 134-6; G. Dagron and D. Feissel, 'Inscriptions inédites du Musée d'Antioche', *Travaux et mémoires*, 9 (1985), 421-61). Hannibalianus and both Dalmatii were among those killed at Constantinople in 337 (*Zosimus*, 3. 40. 3; Julian, *Ep. ad*

Ath. 270c); thus Eusebius had good reason to do as he did earlier in the case of Crispus, and in this case to cover up both the extent to which they had been honoured by Constantine and the guilt attaching to Constantius II. The technique of omission is standard in political panegyric (in line with the official practice of *damnatio memoriae*); cf. Libanius, *Or.* 59 (344–5), where Constantine II is likewise unmentioned; see Wiemer, 'Libanius on Constantine', 513. Eusebius eulogizes Constantine's sons with an unctuous passage about their upbringing and the careful Christian training they had received from their father (cf. the similar treatment given at *VC* I. 13–18 to Constantius Chlorus, and cf. also Lib., *Or.* 59. 17–47, where Wiemer, 'Libanius on Constantine', sees the *VC* as a possible source, though the emphasis is secular). Eusebius takes care to say that the princes were receptive to this instruction (52. 2), and treats them as equal, although Constans was younger than his brothers (born in 320 or 323; Barnes, *NE* 45) and had been declared Caesar only on 25 December 333. The effect is to enhance the image of Constantine effectively ruling through his sons which opens and closes the work (I. 1. 3; IV. 71. 2; see also Grünewald, *Constantinus*, 160, and cf. *LC* 3. 4), and indirectly to promote Eusebius' view of how they should themselves rule. This passage at least must postdate summer 337, and antedate 340 when Constantine II was killed (*Zos.* 2. 41).

52. 3. even of the highest officials. Eusebius still finds the adherence of such men to Christianity somewhat remarkable.

52. 4–73. *Baptism and Death*

52. 4–55. *Constantine's physical health and faith in immortality*

Eusebius praises in turn Constantine's physical, spiritual and mental qualities. He was physically fit up to the time of his death, which according to most of the narrative sources fell when he was 64 or 65 (53; discussion: Barnes, *NE* 39–42); at I. 8 Eusebius says the Emperor lived twice as long as Alexander, and began his reign at about the age when Alexander died. For Constantine's physical appearance at the Council of Nicaea see *VC* III. 10. 3–4. Eusebius goes on (54. 1–3) to remark on his generosity and kindness, for which he was sometimes criticized (cf. also IV. 31),

testifying directly to his personal observation (54. 2); Constantine's *clementia*: Lib., *Or.* 19. 19; 20. 24. Constantine had detractors: he was even held by Eusebius himself to be too tolerant of rapacity in his officials, and, interestingly, too trusting of people who deceitfully professed Christianity (54. 2–3; see Ando, 'Pagan Apologetics and Christian Intolerance', 201). Eusebius' assertion that such people were soon punished by God (55. 1) suggests that these were well-known figures. Dalmatius and Hannibalianus and their associates, who perished in the massacre of 337, might be meant, but we cannot tell. Pasquali, 'Die Composition', 383, followed by Barnes, 'Panegyric', 101, saw this as related to the restoration of Athanasius from exile by Constantine's sons; Barnes further suspects the first sentence of 55 as an editorial connection.

55. 1. **to the very end he continued to compose speeches.**

Constantine's enthusiasm for instructing his subjects is one of the strongest impressions left of him by the *VC* (see 28–32 and cf. III. 12). Before he died he even delivered a kind of funeral oration (55. 2) in which he discoursed on the immortality of the soul and on divine punishment. Again Eusebius suggests that there were particular targets—not just pagans, but some among his own inner circle; he does not draw any Platonic or other parallels. Constantine turned to a pagan philosopher present and directly asked for his opinion. According to Athanasius, Antony, too, felt his death coming and discoursed to his monks (*V. Ant.* 89–91); he had also debated at length with pagan philosophers.

56–7. *Preparations for war against Persia*

According to *Origo*, 35, Constantine died in *suburbano Constanti-nopolitano villa publica* near to Nicomedia while making ready an expedition against Persia. The text of *VC* breaks off at 56. 3 with a lacuna of half a page and resumes in the midst of Eusebius' description of Constantine's mausoleum (see below). The Geneva edition of 1612 has a supplement, printed in Winkelmann's *apparatus* and translated here, which may be no more than an expansion of the *kephalaion*, according to which Constantine took bishops with him on the expedition, and a tent

made like a church, received a Persian embassy, and took part with the rest in the Easter vigil.

For the sources, motives, and chronology of the Persian expedition see Barnes, 'Constantine and Christians of Persia', esp. 133-4; Constantine had already responded to Persian aggressive moves by 336 and was making the expedition ready in 337 when he died at Nicomedia on 22 May, whereupon Shapur invaded Mesopotamia. The *gloria exercitus* issues of the end of the reign no doubt relate to these plans (Fig. 10 and see Grünewald, *Constantinus*, 159). Fowden's version ('Last Days of Constantine', 146-53; cf. *Empire to Commonwealth*, 94-7) is more highly coloured: finding it a problem that Eusebius turned so quickly to another topic, he suspects that the text of Eusebius has been bowdlerized by later generations wishing to save Constantine's reputation against a possible charge of war-mongering; indeed, Gelasius of Cyzicus claims that Constantine abandoned the campaign out of concern for the Christians of Iran (*HE* 3. 10. 26-7). But this is to underestimate Eusebius' skill in dealing with awkward material, which is amply attested in this book and earlier in the *VC*; he was well enough practised, in particular, at disguising a war of aggression as a religious campaign. Libanius, *Or.* 59. 126 understandably gives different, i.e. non-religious, motives, and the later church historians (Ruf., *HE* 10. 12; Philost., *HE* 2. 16; Socr., *HE* 1. 39; Soz., *HE* 2. 34. 21; Theod., *HE* 1. 32) omit or play down the Iranian campaign for their own reasons, but Fowden's suggestion ('Last Days of Constantine', 152) that someone from this circle deliberately removed the offending passage from Eusebius' text is not convincing. It is true that the transition in the *VC* from Iranian



FIG. 10. (a) Nicomedia, AD 336-7, *gloria exercitus* type, obv. (b) Same, rev. Trustees of the British Museum.

campaign to mausoleum seems awkward, but Eusebius had to move on to the baptism, death, and funeral of Constantine, and a description of his mausoleum does not seem out of place.

The lacuna in the text of half a page recorded (as the chapter headings indicate) how Constantine took bishops with him, and his prayer-tent, and (57) how he received a Persian embassy and kept night vigil with others at Easter. Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 147, argues that Socrates, *HE* 1. 18 reflects part of the missing passage.

58-60. *The shrine of the Apostles*

The accustomed vagueness of Eusebius' language in this passage, combined with the fact that it follows immediately on from a lacuna in the text, makes it difficult to be sure what he is describing. Certainly there has been some earlier description; the first words of 58 do not at present read like the opening of a new section, and later in the fourth century, c.380, Gregory of Nazianzus refers in a poem to the building as cruciform (*PG* 37. 1258); does Eusebius describe a church as well as a mausoleum, or only the latter, in which case we would have to assume that the church was built later, probably under Constantius II? Scholars have put much weight on the use of the word 'shrine' (*neon*) at 58. 1 as indicating a church, and cf. 70. 2 below, but C. Mango has recently concluded, against, e.g. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 72-3, that the description as we have it is only of a mausoleum (*martyrion* according to the Greek chapter heading) ('Constantine's Mausoleum and the Translation of Relics', *BZ* 83 (1990), 51-61, with earlier bibliography, esp. 55-9, with translation of this passage at 55); *doma* and *domation* seem to mean simply 'building', 'room' (so Mango). Others, e.g. Leeb, 93-120, suppose that only a church is described; see further below, and see also Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 118, cited on 71-3.

The passage is characteristic of Eusebius' descriptions of churches (see on the Holy Sepulchre, III. 29-40, the church at Antioch, III. 50, and cf. his panegyric on the church at Tyre, *HE* 10. 4. 2-71, esp. 37-45, all of which which closely resemble the description here). The present building has a gilded coffered ceiling (58, cf. III. 32, and on 36) and is decorated with 'various

stones', probably marble; it is set in a porticoed quadrangular court with many rooms for practical purposes (59). This may seem indicative of a basilica; however, Leeb, 93–120, and cf. 'Zum Ursprung des Kaiserbildes im Kreuz', *JÖB* 41 (1991), 1–14, argues, against Mango, that the building described is a cruciform church (see also Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 72–3), and that *domation* refers to a construction round the tomb similar to the edicule over the tomb of Christ in the church of the Holy Sepulchre (see on III. 34).

For the argument of G. Downey, 'The Builder of the Original Church of the Apostles at Constantinople: A Contribution to the Criticism of the Vita Constantini Attributed to Eusebius', *DOP* 6 (1951), 53–80, that chs. 58–60 and 70–1 are interpolations, see Winkelmann, 'Authentizitätsproblem', 238–9.

60. 1. to perpetuate . . . the memory of our Saviour's Apostles. There is no suggestion here of two buildings. Eusebius goes on to reveal Constantine's intention—this was to be his own mausoleum, where prayers would be said on his behalf, and he might 'after death partake in the invocation' (*prosrhesis*, on which see Mango) 'of the Apostles', and *therefore* (60. 2, *sic*) he gave instructions for services also to be held there and set up a central altar. This sounds like a circular *martyrion* (memorial), although that term is applied by Eusebius equally to basilicas (above, on III. 33); only one construction is being described, see esp. Mango, 'Constantine's Mausoleum', 57; so also Leeb, though critical of Mango. It is typical of Eusebius to suggest, however implausibly, that no one knew Constantine's real intention; he likewise stresses the element of surprise in the discovery of the cave of the Holy Sepulchre (III. 28). Both are instances of a conventional panegyric device designed to cast more glory on Constantine.

60. 2. his own remains. *skenos*: earthly dwelling, tabernacle, i.e. the body.

60. 3. he erected twelve repositories. *thekas*: 'coffins' (Mango, 'Constantine's Mausoleum'). For the meaning and intention see further Mango, 59–60, with P. Grierson, 'The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine Emperors', *DOP* 16 (1962), 1–63, at 5. Constantine's sarcophagus (*larnax*) was in the middle, surrounded by those of the Apostles, perhaps with effigies and

inscriptions (so Mango, 'Constantine's Mausoleum', 55). In this tomb Constantine was later buried (IV. 70–1); his son Constantius II was buried beside him in 361. For the translation of the relics of SS. Timothy, Luke, and Andrew in 356 and 357, and for the later history of the mausoleum see Mango, 'Constantine's Mausoleum', 56. The arrangement whereby Constantine's tomb stood in the middle of those of the Apostles, thereby implying an identification of himself with Christ (so also Leeb, 103–10, 115; Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 'its connotation was that of the hero-martyrium of the Emperor himself; where he rested in the sign of the cross'), may seem to us to be in bad taste, but nothing suggests that Eusebius felt the same (*contra*, Mango, 'Constantine's Mausoleum', 59–60 and cf. IV. 71); the Apostles are treated as if they are the divine *comites* of the Emperor, while what survives of Eusebius' description of the mausoleum with its porticoed atrium indeed recalls the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Finally, the construction claims a status for Constantinople rival to that of Rome as being under apostolic protection, even if not an apostolic foundation (though in fact Timothy and Luke were only 'second-generation apostles', Mango, 'Constantine's Mausoleum', 59).

60. 5. Constantine's final illness comes upon him as he completes the Easter celebration.

61–4. *Illness, baptism, and death*

There is no mention here of Constantine's being on campaign; the narrative implies that he went to the hot baths in Constantinople and then to Helenopolis, on the south of the Gulf of Izmit, as soon as he became ill on Easter Day, and from there had proceeded as far as the outskirts of Nicomedia when he 'called together the bishops' (61.3) and was baptized. Eusebius does not here connect the Emperor's movements with his Persian plans which had been interrupted by the festival of Easter (see above for the lacuna at ch. 57), but there seems no reason to suspect deliberate tampering with the text or to suppose that Eusebius himself is hiding something (Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 147–9; 150–1 'Eusebius was obliged to fudge the narrative at IV. 57'; 152 'this expurgation of Eusebius'; cf. also

Empire to Commonwealth, 97). Indeed, the chapter heading to the missing ch. 57 indicates that Persian envoys had arrived shortly before Easter, and Socr., *HE* 1. 18. 12, probably drawing on Eusebius, suggests that agreement was reached on the strength of the 'fear' they felt before the Emperor. See Richard Burgess, 'ΑΧΥΡΩΝ or ΠΡΟΑΣΤΕΙΟΝ. The location and circumstances of Constantine's death', *JThS*, NS 50 (1999), 153–61.

61. 1. hot water baths of his city. Eusebius makes Constantine fall ill on Easter Day; he then visits the baths in Constantinople, from where he proceeds to Helenopolis and thence to Nicomedia, near which city he is baptized. *Pace* Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 147. Eusebius does not say that Constantine went to the Pythia Therma, hot baths at Helenopolis.

61. 1. the city named after his mother. Helenopolis in Bithynia, formerly Drepanum, said to be Helena's birth-place by Procopius, *Aed.* 5. 2. 1–5 and much developed by Justinian. Drepanum was associated with the martyr Lucian (cf. 'chapel of the martyrs') and renamed after Helena by Constantine: Jerome, *Chron.*, *Chron. Min.* 1. 450; see Drijvers, *Helena Augusta*, 10–11. For its importance as a cult-centre under Constantine and Constantius II, see H. C. Brennecke, *Lucian von Antiochien*, *TRE* 21 (1991), 474–9.

61. 2–3. Constantine becomes a catechumen and seeks baptism. The language throughout cc. 61–4 is that of initiation: cf. the references to purification, secrets, seals, rebirth, brightness, and ascent (see on **III. 25–8**, **26. 2**); for the baptismal ceremonies and the fourth-century texts see E. Yarnold, *The Awe-Inspiring Rites of Initiation*, 2nd edn. (Edinburgh, 1991). The Emperor died at Pentecost (64), the last day of the Easter festival, 22 May 337, after his baptism. It was usual to be baptized at the Easter vigil, after intensive preparation during Lent, preceded by a catechumenate often of three years in duration. Constantine's decision was by these standards precipitate, but for Eusebius it was sufficiently remarkable that he should have made it (62. 4); the instruction in doctrine and scripture reported in I. 32 might be thought to have covered the ground whether that account is historical or not. In fact, infant baptism was not yet the norm, and a decision to be baptized was taken very seriously and involved much solemn preparation, so that despite what has

often been imagined, Constantine's late baptism carries no implication that the Emperor was unsure of his faith. Nor is it surprising (*pace* Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 153) either that he was baptized by Eusebius of Nicomedia or that Eusebius is not named here; Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, became bishop of Constantinople soon after Constantine's death and was already the highly influential leader of the pro-Arian group to which Eusebius of Caesarea also belonged (see above, on **IV. 41–2**), while it is standard practice for Eusebius of Caesarea as for other panegyrists to leave even major figures unnamed (see above on **IV. 43. 3**; Eusebius of Nicomedia is also unnamed in the account of the Council of Nicaea at **III. 11. 1**, and cf. **7. 2**). On the other hand, it is interesting (Burgess, 'Date and circumstances'), that the army and various military commanders are present (63.2; 65. 2; 66. 1).

The baptism of Constantine became the subject of legends and apocryphal accounts, and was soon relocated in Rome and ascribed to Pope Sylvester, eventually becoming the basis of the medieval 'Donation of Constantine'; the *Actus Sylvestri* version was known to John Malalas (sixth century.) and can be traced to the late fourth or early fifth century, see Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre*, 156–8; Lieu and Montserrat, *From Constantine to Julian*, 27–8, Fowden, 'Last Days of Constantine', 153–70 (although the early stages of the transmission are likely to be more complex than the stemma at 166 implies).

61. 3. making confession. It was usual for a baptismal candidate to confess sins, either generally or with particulars (Yarnold, *Awe-Inspiring Rites*, 15–16). The 'laying-on of hands' at this stage in proceedings is not otherwise paralleled; it could signify remission of sins, or a welcome into the fellowship of those awaiting imminent baptism. When 'he called together the bishops' it may be that those assembled for his campaign are in mind (see 57).

61. 3. the suburbs of Nicomedia. According to *Origo*, 35, Constantine died 'in a suburban villa of Constantinople'; the rest of the tradition, including Orosius, 7. 28, 31 (and cf. e.g. Eutrop. 10. 8. 2; Jerome, *Chron.*, AD 337) refer to a *villa publica* near Nicomedia. The term *proasteion* used by Eusebius might perhaps be translated 'suburban villa'. The place is named as

Acyron or Achyron (e.g. Aurel. Vict., 41. 16, Jerome, *Chron.*, AD 337); see further Burgess, 'Date and circumstances'.

62. 1. Constantine announces to the bishops his desire for baptism ('the seal that brings immortality'), which he says he had once hoped to receive in the River Jordan (an ambition whose presumption attracts no criticism from Eusebius); it is now likely to be a deathbed baptism, but if the Emperor lives, he is ready to change his way of life (62. 3). This change involves attaching himself to the intimacy of the worship he is now allowed to join, and accepting moral standards, which certainly for many Christians, and perhaps even for Eusebius, were not thought compatible with the military and civil duties and worldly commitments of an emperor. But Constantine did not survive and we cannot rely on the historicity of his reported words.

62. 4. they in their turn performing the customary rites . . . These would include anointings, exorcism, triple immersion in water, and laying-on of hands. Eusebius does not go into detail; he is more interested in making the comment which follows about Constantine's extraordinary innovation in being the first emperor to seek baptism. There is no precise detail there either; rather, as so often elsewhere, Eusebius projects onto Constantine his own interpretation. Similarly Corippus (see on chs. 65-7 below) devotes his rhetorical art to Justinian's funeral procession and mourners rather than to the actual burial.

62. 5. he put on bright imperial clothes which shone like the light. Constantine dresses in white as was usual for a Christian initiate in the days following baptism, and rests on a white couch; he has given up the imperial purple as a sign of his new status, and says that those who do not share it are to be pitied. Eusebius does not claim a direct source for Constantine's final words, but he does have circumstantial detail. The Emperor receives the soldiers and officers (63. 2), who are bewailing their imminent loss in formal acclamations ('wished him extension of life'), and urges them to take the same step. Constantine and acclamations: see C. M. Roueché, 'Acclamations in the Later Roman Empire: New Evidence from Aphrodisias', *JRS* 74 (1984), 181-99, at 186.

63. 3. he made disposition of his property. The 'Romans living in the imperial city' (Rome, rather than Constantinople, seems to be meant; cf. 69. 1) are singled out for special grants,

while Constantine hands over the Empire to his sons like an inheritance. The account of Constantine's death in Socrates, *HE* 1. 39-40 was influential on later writers; it is partly, but not completely, dependent on the *VC*, and Socrates' version of Constantine's will (*HE* 1. 39. 3) comes from Rufinus, *HE* 10. 12; see Burgess, 'Date and circumstances', for full discussion of this and later variant traditions about Constantine's death.

64. 1. Each of these events. Constantine's illness, preparation and baptism fall in the seven weeks between Easter and Pentecost, and his death on the day of Pentecost itself (64. 2); for Eusebius, 'Pentecost' is the whole of this period. Constantine is 'taken up to his God' as Christ also ascended to heaven (64. 1); at the same time, however, his ascent is a traditional theme in the funerary rites for pagan emperors (see on 73 below).

about the time of the midday sun. The same portentous circumlocution is used of Constantine's vision of the cross (*I.* 28. 2). Eusebius himself seems to respect the symbolism which enables Constantine to reconcile the cult of the sun with the Christian faith (cf. also *IV.* 19-20 and Introduction, p. 45).

he bequeathed to mortals . . . Constantine's mortal remains are left behind, while he unites his soul to God. Eusebius then concludes the section with dignified brevity, marking a transition to the necessary description of the mourning, funeral, and succession.

65-7. Mourning and lying-in-state

Eusebius describes the mourning of the soldiers and people in conventionally panegyric terms; in a scene that is the antithesis of rejoicing and *adventus*, all orders and all ages weep and lament for the Emperor, invoking him in traditional terminology as saviour and benefactor, while in addition the soldiers mourn him as their good shepherd. For similar terminology applied to the worship of the soldiers to God, inspired by Constantine, cf. *LC* 8. 10; the terms themselves, including the motif of the good shepherd, are found in Hellenistic kingship theory (Baynes, 'Eusebius' Christian Empire', 171), but the extravagance of the scene and the choice of detail are typical of imperial panegyric (e.g. Corippus, *In laudem Iustini* 3. 41-61, the funeral of

Justinian, an account with many similar elements). As befits an emperor, it is the military who mourn first, and who escort his body (66. 1), and the description of what follows (66–72) preserves traditional motifs from imperial funerals even while attempting to give them a Christian significance (see the analysis in MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 117–21); for Constantine, see P. Franchi dei Cavalieri, 'I funerali e il sepolcro di Costantino Magno', *MEFR* 29 (1916–17), 205–61.

Constantine's body, laid in a golden coffin and wrapped in the imperial purple he had ostentatiously renounced (62. 5), is taken under escort to Constantinople to lie in state in the imperial palace (66. 1), adorned with the diadem and honoured by perpetual vigil, receiving the same formal and official homage from the soldiers as when he was alive (67. 1); first the army, then the senate and the people pay their respects in turn. It is however the soldiers who take the decisions (67. 2); the lying-in-state 'went on for a long time', while everyone waited, no doubt with some trepidation, to see what Constantine's sons would do (Constantius had in fact already arrived; see Barnes, *CE* 261). Eusebius improbably claims that no previous emperor had received such honours (67. 3, cf. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 118).

68–73. *Succession and funeral*

The immediate aftermath of Constantine's death was politically highly sensitive, and Eusebius' main objective, especially writing with hindsight, was to make the succession seem smooth and inevitable (see on 71–3, and cf. I. 1–11; IV. 51–2). He therefore tries to emphasize the uniqueness of the transition and of Constantine's continued influence (67. 3; 68. 2; for the latter point see MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 118–19), and presents the succession as a matter of natural inheritance (IV. 51. 1, 63. 3, and by implication also 67. 2; 68. 2). He further glosses over any tension between Roman (pagan) *consecratio* and Christian burial at Constantinople (see on 69. 1). The account here should be compared with the similar treatment of that of Constantine's own succession on the death of his father Constantius Chlorus at I. 20–2, on which see MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 116.

68. 2. all the troops everywhere . . . By a fiction of election, albeit military, the three sons of Constantine, already Caesars, are designated as successors; while no mention is made of other claimants (see on IV. 51–52. 3), the fact that there is need for a decision at all, even a fictional one, conveys a sense of uncertainty. There was an obvious danger that civil war between them would break out immediately.

68. 3. Soon they saw fit . . . Eusebius telescopes the chronology. Constantine's three sons were not declared Augusti until 9 September 337 (*Chron. Min.* 1. 235), after the removal of their rivals (Zosimus 2. 40); the three met in Pannonia and arrived at a (temporary) settlement and division of the Empire (Julian, *Orat.* 1. 19a; for the chronology see T. D. Barnes, 'Imperial Chronology, AD 337–350', *Phoenix*, 34 (1980), 160–6). The first to be eliminated was Constantine II (340; Zosimus 2. 41). See R. Klein, 'Die Kämpfe um die Nachfolge nach dem Tod Constantinus des Großen', *BF* 6 (1979), 101–50. The reference to Augusti is not necessarily a sign of different redactions (so Winkelmann, pp. lv–lvi, reporting Pasquali).

announcing their individual votes and voices to each other in writing. While military support was essential for imperial succession, it seems unlikely that it happened on this occasion in the way that Eusebius claims.

69. 1. the inhabitants of the imperial city. Eusebius describes the reception of the news in Rome ('the imperial city', distinguished from Constantinople, 'the city named after the Emperor', e.g. 66. 1), whose citizens hoped that Constantine would be buried there; according to Aur. Vict., *Caes.* 41. 18, they were seriously upset by the slight; cf. *Epit.* 41. 17, *Origo*, 6. 35. Senate and people mourned and praised Constantine, honouring him with portraits and expressing hopes that his sons would become emperors. Constantine depicted in heaven: see on 15. 2 above and 73 below; similarly, *Pan. Lat.* 6 (7). 7. 3, AD 310, imagines his father Constantius being received among the gods and with the hand of Jupiter extended to him (discussion, MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 119–21).

Rome would have been the normal setting for the ceremony of *consecratio* of a dead emperor, conferred by the Roman Senate (see G. Bonamente, 'Apoteosi e imperatori cristiani', in

G. Bonamente and A. Nestori, eds., *I cristiani e l'impero nel IV secolo* (Macerata, 1988), 107–42, at 108; see below on 71–3, with earlier bibliography); the pictures Eusebius describes are the *imagines* commemorating such an event. But on this occasion there was no body and no pyre, and the Emperor was laid to rest in his Christian mausoleum at Constantinople. Constantine's funeral marks a major departure from tradition (so also Grünewald, *Constantinus*, 162 and see on 71–3). Eusebius' smooth phraseology makes it hard to know how much if any of the traditional Roman ceremonial took place (Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 110–11); he may be discreetly passing over an actual pagan ceremony or suggesting that the traditional forms were on this occasion refused. The usual *consecratio* coins were none the less issued (see P. Bruun, 'The Consecration Coins of Constantine the Great', *Arctos*, NS I (1954), 19–31; Fig. 11) and Constantine was granted the traditional title *divus* (see on 73).

Baths and markets were closed. i.e. a *iustitium* was declared.

70. But those here . . . Eusebius moves swiftly from Rome to Constantinople and writes as if he was there himself. Constantius II (without his brothers) conducts the funeral procession, again under close military escort; the body of Constantine is taken to his mausoleum and laid there.

70.2. the new Emperor Constantius. Eusebius pre-empts his status; he was not Augustus for several months (above, on



FIG. 11. (a) *Consecratio* coin of Constantine, obv., Constantine with veiled head. (b) Rev., with chariot ascending to heaven and hand of God descending. Byzantine Collection, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC.

68. 2). Constantius had seized the initiative, honouring his father 'with his presence', while his brothers were still dangerously absent.

71–3. Constantine's funeral (for which Eusebius is our only source) and its relation to earlier imperial funerals have often been discussed: see MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 119–21; A. Kaniuth, *Die Beisetzung Konstantins des Grossen: Untersuchungen zur religiösen Haltung des Kaisers* (Breslau, 1941); S. Calderone, 'Teologia, successione dinastica e consecratio in età constantiniana', *Le Culte des souverains dans l'Empire romain* (Entretiens Hardt, 19; Geneva, 1973), 215–61; J. Arce, *Funus Imperatorum: Los funerales de los emperadores romanos* (Madrid, 1988), 159–68, with bibliography; Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre*, 148–54.

The ceremonial in Constantinople falls into two stages: a lying-in-state in the palace (66–7; this may have lasted for some time), and then a procession from the palace to the mausoleum (70) followed by a Christian service (71; see Simon Price, 'From Noble Funerals to Divine Cult: The Consecration of Roman Emperors', in David Cannadine and Simon Price, eds., *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1987), 56–105, at 100–1 and see on 69. 1). Constantine was inhumed, probably the first emperor to be treated in this way after death; accordingly there was no place for the funeral pyre, which had been accorded primary importance in the ceremonial until the tetrarchic period (see Price, 'Noble Funerals', 98). Constantius and the soldiers withdraw before the Christian funeral service begins, with the Emperor's body placed on a high dais. As he desired (71. 2), he is accorded burial together with the memorials to the Apostles, in what became known as a *depositio ad sanctos*, so that his remains can be seen being included in their invocation (*prosrhema*, cf. on 60. 1; for the nature of the worship offered in connection with Constantine's tomb see Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 130–1). He is gathered in to the people of God and shares in worship and prayers, holding on to the Empire even after his death and directing it, still with his imperial titles, as if he has been brought back to life. This is Eusebius' strongest claim for Constantine's continued influence after his death. In the preface the Emperor is depicted as looking down from his place with God in heaven

(I. 1. 2), yet influencing his sons in every part of the world (I. 1. 1). The traditionally Roman military funeral has given way to a Christian one, and the dead Emperor's apotheosis comes near to becoming a Christian resurrection. The service itself is not described (see on Constantine's baptism, 62. 4), though the terminology ('obsequies', 70. 2; 'ministers of God', 'divine worship', 71. 1) is fully Christian; Eusebius wants to point a lesson to those surviving, namely that Constantine was not really dead, but continued to live and reign. However, even though he was called *divus* on coins and elsewhere (Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 111 and see below), Constantine has received a Christian funeral and his apotheosis is a spiritual one (Arce, *Funus Imperatorum*, 163-4, 128; Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 113-16). Eusebius goes further in ch. 72, explicitly likening Constantine to Christ, without quite saying that he rose again (see on 64. 1 above); the phoenix, included only to be rejected by Eusebius as a true comparison, and taking the place played by the eagle of Jupiter on traditional *consecratio* issues, was taken by Christians as a symbol of resurrection (first in 1 Clement 26: 1) as well as signifying the rising of the sun and the continuity of imperial power through the succession (so in Corippus, *In laudem Iustini* 1. 349-55 with refs. at Cameron *ad loc.*).

71. 2. his end bestowed the Empire. Eusebius continues to bend the true chronology.

73. Constantine was shown posthumously on coins with head veiled and with the legend *divus* or *divo*, and on the reverse as rising in a four-horse chariot, with a hand being extended from heaven (Fig. 11). There is much discussion of the religious significance of these issues: see Grünewald, *Constantinus*, 159-62; L. Koep, 'Die Konsekrationsmünzen Kaiser Konstantins und ihre religionspolitische bedeutung', *JbAC* 1 (1958), 94-104; MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 122-4; Calderone, 'Teologia, successione dinastica e consecratio'; Arce, *Funus Imperatorum*, 166-7; L. Schumacher, *Gnomon*, 61 (1989), 527-8; F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy* (Washington, DC, 1966), ii. 649-50; L. Cracco Ruggini, 'Apoteosi e politica senatoria nel IV s. d. C.: Il dittico dei Symmachi al British Museum', *Rivista storica italiana*, 89 (1977), 425-89; Bonamente, 'Apoteosi'. They may date only from the

period after September 337 (see Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 126-7, but see Grünewald, *Constantinus*, 161). But Constantine was called *divus* on inscriptions both before and after 9 September 337, and laws continued to be issued in his name, e.g. *CTh* 13. 4. 2, 2 August 337); an official interregnum was politically undesirable. The iconography of the coins belongs in the repertoire of (pagan) imperial *consecratio* issues; the veiled emperor recalls his special status with the gods, while the quadriga and the hand extended from above convey the idea of apotheosis (earlier parallels: MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 122-4; Constantius Chlorus: see above on 69. 1, with *Pan. Lat.* 7 (6). 14. 3, AD 307, Constantius ascending in a chariot led by the sun). Eastern issues of Constantine: Bruun, 'Consecration coins', Koep, 'Die Konsekrationsmünzen'; Bonamente, 'Apoteosi', 123-7. Both the quadriga and the hand of God motifs lent themselves easily to Christian use, the former also being associated with the ascent of Elijah and succession of Elisha (2 Kgs. 2: 9-14; see MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 124-6) and the hand of God being transferred to scenes of the ascension of Christ. Eusebius does not here point out the meaning of the iconography in his characteristically heavy-fisted way; nor is it necessary to believe that he had in mind an actual *consecratio* (so Grünewald, *Constantinus*, against Arce and others), though Constantine was the last emperor for whom *consecratio* coins were to be issued. The representation of Constantine in heaven attributed to Rome by Eusebius (69. 1) can be paralleled, though not so clearly, in earlier imperial art, and the same motif was used of Christ (MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 127-30). Eusebius has fused and adapted pagan and Christian funeral imagery in the particular context of imperial apotheosis and succession. However, while it is tempting to suppose that he has consciously and carefully adapted traditional elements to a new Christian use ('a dividing line, a watershed', MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 131; later Christianized imperial funerals: *ibid.* 132-4; cf. also Calderone, 'Teologia politica', Christian innovation rather than the deliberate ambiguity seen by Seck and others), his main purpose in the *VC* is to smooth everything into a harmonious religious and political message. He may be recording in ch. 73 what seemed to him a somewhat awkward fact, and for that reason to be presenting it unadorned. On the

other hand his account does point, unsurprisingly, to a mixture of traditional, i.e. pagan, elements and Christian ones.

74-5. *Conclusion: The Unique Emperor*

The final paragraph returns to Eusebius' general themes: Constantine ended persecution, and was the first Christian Emperor, the destroyer of idolatry, the undaunted herald of Christ and champion of the Church. No other, whether Greek, barbarian, or Roman, has been his equal.

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