ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been writing these acknowledgments in my head for seven years. Now that it is time to put them down on paper I feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of individuals and institutions stored away in the notes of my mind. In the end, it is impossible to write a dissertation or complete a graduate program without the help of lots of people. They will not all be thanked here; there is not enough time and space to mention them all and some, sadly, have been forgotten. Nevertheless, as I reflect on the years of my graduate career I find that the most important gift and value I obtained from the entire experience was the people; the people who were a witness to my life during this time and whom it was a joy to get to know.

First, I would like to thank those who helped me succeed in graduate school from afar. I will never forget the lessons I learned in academic rigor from the departments of History, Classics, and English at Hillsdale College. In particular, I will always be grateful to professors Harold Siegel, Lorna Holmes, Lucy Moye, Mark Kalthoff, Joseph Garnjobst, and Gavin Weaire for supporting me and giving me a head start in my graduate career with their excellent teaching.

My family remained far away all around the world during my pursuit of the PhD. I am grateful to my entire family for their various kinds of support, without which I would not have been able to attend or complete this program. My ever-faithful mother, Natasha Lankina unfailingly cheered me on and made numerous sacrifices to ensure my academic success. During the writing stage of my project, my father, Vladimir Lankin encouraged me with stories of writing his own dissertation on a typewriter in a smoke-filled Soviet kitchen. My sister, Rada Lankina consistently provided all kinds of support, in particular a welcoming place to stay during a research trip to D.C. My sister Tomila
Lankina’s success in academia long served as a source of inspiration and healthy competition. Olga Dimchevskaya’s friendship over skype and rare but much cherished visits got me through the difficult times and reminded me about life outside graduate school. I would also like to thank Marilee Harris and her family for their unceasing support and for being a home away from home.

My research and writing have been generously supported by various institutions at the University of Florida: the Department of History, The Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere, the Graduate School, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Graduate Student Council, and the Office of Research. I also had the opportunity to complete my research as a Reader at Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, and I am thankful to the community of scholars there. In particular, my dissertation greatly benefited from insights gained through conversations with Scott Fitzgerald Johnson. I would also like to thank everyone involved in all the conferences I have had the pleasure of attending over the years. I am thankful to all those who offered constructive criticism, intellectual stimulation, and spirited conversation. I would especially like to thank my conference friend and colleague Joseph Reidy for his shared interest in fragmentary “heretical” early Byzantine historiography and willingness to collaborate.

I would like to extend my wholehearted gratitude to the entire community of the University of Florida Department of History, its faculty, graduate students, staff, and undergraduate students. This place is truly special and I have been blessed to be a part of a department which fosters a collegial, encouraging, and scholarly environment. Over the years, numerous friends and colleagues have offered their support and commented
on my research and writing. Specifically, Alana Lord, Chris Bonura, Robert McEachnie, and Diana Reigelsperger have been with me throughout my graduate journey. I could not have written the dissertation without our countless conversations about graduate school, academia, and life in general. I would also like to thank the “Dissertation Support Group” which met during my final year of writing. The entire group provided a necessary setting for accountability, encouragement, and feedback, but I would like to especially thank Rebecca Devlin, Reid Weber, Andrew Welton, Tim Fritz, Rob Taber, and Chris Woolley.

Penultimately, I would like to express enormous gratitude to the faculty who were involved in my project. My committee members Dr. Andrea Sterk, Dr. Nina Caputo, Dr. Bonnie Effros, Dr. Stuart Finkel, Dr. Kostas Kapparis all offered excellent critiques and suggestions throughout my graduate career. I would also like to thank them for an excellent dissertation defense conversation. I would like to especially thank Dr. Caputo for her revisions and thoughtful comments on the dissertation. I am grateful to Dr. Florin Curta who has helped me throughout my time in the program; his revisions were especially valuable at a crucial stage of the project.

Finally, I would like to thank three people who helped me the most. Each individual’s type of support was completely different but all were indispensable. I will always be extremely thankful for Gizem Toska’s role in my life. Her insight, support, and understanding were exactly what I needed as a graduate student and as a person. My husband Conway Carter witnessed perhaps some of the worst moments of my graduate career and created some of the best moments. He was there for me throughout my dissertation journey—from late night writing sessions to conference presentations
around the country. Through it all, his encouragement, support, enduring patience, and humor continuously revealed him to be the amazing man that he is. Finally, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to my advisor Dr. Andrea Sterk. In every way she is everything an advisor ought to be. She has spent countless hours editing and revising this dissertation, improving significantly both the style and the content. She has always been supportive, even when I faced seemingly unconquerable challenges as a graduate student. She was always available for guidance, conversation, and advice on my graduate studies and my academic career. She has worked tirelessly and faithfully to improve this project and to help me become a better writer and scholar. I would dedicate this dissertation to her if I didn’t believe that she deserves much better.
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Rarely do historians have access to the voices of religious minorities. In the later Roman Empire sources pertaining to such groups were targeted for systematic destruction. The fifth-century *Ecclesiastical History* of Philostorgius, the subject of my dissertation, is an unusual example of a surviving minority source, a perspective from one of the “losers” in the political and religious controversies of his day. Although scholars have mined his work for raw data on events between 320 and 425, in contrast to contemporary historians, the “heretical” Christian Philostorgius has received little attention. This relative neglect is partially due to the fact that his *History* survives only in the form of an epitome by the ninth-century scholar and patriarch, Photius, who simultaneously preserved the work yet derided it as heresy and fabrication. While the secondhand nature of the text complicates its interpretation, the *Ecclesiastical History* enables us to access the beliefs and activities of a minority religious community which was largely erased from the historical record. Unfortunately, few scholars have shown interest in this suppressed community, and even fewer have taken into account
Philostorgius’s view of history. Until now there has been no major study of Philostorgius in English.

In contrast to much modern scholarship, which treats his *History* as little more than heretical polemic, my dissertation examines Philostorgius as a historian in his own right. Eschewing the facile heresy/orthodoxy dichotomy as a model for the history of Christianity, I show how Philostorgius presented religion and empire as interconnected categories throughout his *History*. His treatment of heresy, mission, natural history, emperors and bishops, pagans, Jews, and barbarians—which I analyze in different chapters of the dissertation—displays a distinctive theology of history that informs his entire work. I argue that his interpretation of events deserves a place in our understanding of intellectual and cultural developments in early Byzantium as a whole and in the history of history writing in particular. I argue further that Philostorgius presented an account of Christianization that was distinct from the narrative of other church historians. Unlike his contemporaries he emphasized the trans-regional connections between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean including historical details that we know from his account alone. Thus, his history forms a crucial part of the narrative as well as the process of Christianization in late antiquity, as he participated in an intellectual contest with other fifth-century writers over the nature of the Roman Empire, its past, and its future.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Philostorgius and His Ecclesiastical History

This hist’ry have I finished with the help of God’s wise grace;
Diverse yet true the things of which it tells.

—Philostorgius
Ecclesiastical History

With this epigram, Philostorgius, the educated Eunomian layman from
Cappadocia, introduced his Ecclesiastical History signaling to the reader both his
connection with the classical tradition and the centrality of the Christian faith to his
narrative. The epigram’s archaic Ionic dialect and the opening word ἱστορίην (history)
allude to Herodotus, whose excursus into geography and natural history clearly
influenced Philostorgius’s history. While the epigram and title of the history—The
History of Philostorgius, the Eunomian from Cappadocia—were designed to introduce
the reader to the historian and the nature of his history, few readers have approached it
from Philostorgius’s point of view. History writing in the ancient world was never meant

1 Philip R. Amidon, translation, introduction, and notes, Philostorgius: Church History (Leiden: Brill, 2007),
1. And in the critical edition, Joseph Bidez, Philostorgius, Kirchengeschichte: Mit dem Leben des Lucian
von Antiochien und den Fragmenten eines arianischen Historiographen (3rd ed.; rev. by Friedhelm
Winkelmann; GCS; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), xcix-ci. And in the new translation, Philostorge.
Histoire Ecclésiastique. Greek text revised by Jospeh Bidez (GCS); translated by Édouard Des Places;
introduction, revision, notes and index by Bruno Bleckmann, Doris Meyer, and Jean-Marc Prieur, Sources

2 No other information about Philostorgius’s occupation and place in society has survived; but see the
intriguing suggestion in Warren Treadgold, The Early Byzantine Historians (New York: Palgrave
MacMillan, 2007), 127, that Philostorgius was a physician.

3 Amidon, Philostorgius, 2, n. 1; Philostorgius, 3.7. On the influence of Herodotus on the ethnographic
digressions of Philostorgius see Anthony Kaldellis, Ethnography after Antiquity: Foreign Land and

4 See below for examples of the typical approach. For an argument that Philostorgius was behind the
epigrams and the title see Amidon, Philostorgius, 1, n. 1; Bidez, xcix-ci; Philostorge, Des Places,
Bleckmann, Meyer, Prieur, 130-131, n. 1-3. In this title cited in the Palatine Anthology, 9.193-194, the
work is referred to as just a history, not an ecclesastical history. Photius, however, refers to it as an
to be the straightforward recording of facts, just as many modern historians recognize
the limitations of the academic discipline due to the selective perspective that
accompanies any interpretive framework. But just as modern historians view history as
the meaningful interpretation of events, so ancient historians perceived history as
explaining the world around them, both as it was and as it should be. Philostorgius
chose to contribute to an ancient genre by building on established precedents and
conventions.

Yet he was also writing in a post-Constantinian world during the development of
what scholars refer to as the new genre of ecclesiastical history. Classicists and
historians agree that Eusebius of Caesarea not only wrote the first church history but
also had the greatest impact on subsequent history writing in Late Antiquity.⁵ The
everestial historians of the fifth century, writing between 400 and 450, are viewed as
the most faithful and effective followers of Eusebius’s model. These include Rufinus in
the Latin West and Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret in the Greek east.
In the last several decades, these church historians have received increased attention
from scholars and been the subjects of several excellent studies.⁶

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assessments of the goals and perspectives of these ecclesiastical historians, such studies are essential starting points for any study of these crucial and frequently cited sources for late antiquity. Our better understanding of the goals and methods of ecclesiastical historians allows us not only to use them more effectively as sources, but also to discover new aspects of late antique perspectives on empire and religion. This study of Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History* will show that his particular view of empire and religion as intertwined entities and as a revelation of the divine will stemmed from his Eunomian theology and contrasted with the perspectives of other ecclesiastical historians of his era.

Until now, scholars have not accorded Philostorgius the same attention as the other fifth-century continuators of Eusebius, even though the publication of his history predates those of his Greek counterparts, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. This relative neglect is partially due to the fact that his work survives only in the form of an epitome by the ninth-century scholar and patriarch of Constantinople, Photius, and in other fragments. The purposeful and systematic eradication of any works associated with the Eunomian “heresy” by the rulers of the East Roman Empire exacerbated the typical problem of limited survival of sources from antiquity. For example, the theological treatises of Eunomius, one of the founding figures of this Christian community with which Philostorgius identified, were ordered to be burned. Thus, while the secondhand nature of Philostorgius’s text poses distinctive interpretive challenges, the *Ecclesiastical History* also offers exciting possibilities. Specifically, Philostorgius gives us access to

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the beliefs and activities of a minority religious community that was largely erased from
the historical record.

Ironically, his relative neglect among scholars also stems from his allegiance to
the Eunomian form of Christianity, which is viewed in opposition to the “orthodox”
tradition of ecclesiastical historiography. Similar to the views associated with the early
fourth-century heretic Arius, Eunomian Christianity emphasized God’s oneness and
immutability as well as the Son’s difference from the Father; yet it differed in
simultaneously insisting that God’s essence and will is knowable and comprehensible.  

While modern historians have frequently used Philostorgius’s narrative of ecclesiastical
and political events between 320 and 425 as a source for this period, especially for the
history of the Goths and for the Arian controversy, few take into account his view of
history and Christianity. In order to use his narrative most effectively as a source and to
gain access to his Eunomian point of view, one must understand the context in which
the work was written and the underlying goals of his history.

Almost all of the scholarship on Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History* begins with
reference to his heretical religious affiliation. As central as Philostorgius’s Eunomian
faith was to his identity, scholars have unfairly overemphasized and misrepresented his
“Arianism” in their interpretations of his historical work. This is problematic for several
reasons. In the first place, Philostorgius would not have identified himself as an Arian
and would have even found such a categorization offensive. He explicitly identifies
himself as a Eunomian in the title of his history, as Josef Bidez already made perfectly

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7 Philostorgius, 2.3. On Eunomian theology, especially the knowability of God’s will, see Richard
clear in his definitive edition of the *Ecclesiastical History* in 1913.\(^8\) Secondly, characterizations of his Christian community as a “most radical form of Arianism” only serve to perpetuate the polemical labels that the victorious “orthodox” majority readily employed and inevitably project this interpretive framework onto an assessment of Philostorgius’s history.\(^9\) In modern scholarship Philostorgius is viewed as a source comparable to the other ecclesiastical historians of the fifth century, but mainly in opposition to their orthodox perspective, and thus as more polemical and partisan. Scholars also commonly portray Philostorgius as writing primarily from a losing point of view, relegating him to an enfeebled voice amid the ruins of his world, one of the marginal authors whose works have been described as “dead ends” in late antiquity.\(^10\) These representations of Philostorgius appear to ignore the vast scholarship over the last several decades that has seriously challenged the heresy/orthodoxy dichotomy as a model for the study of Christianity in late antiquity. In other words, to imply that Philostorgius’s “radical Arianism” rendered his history more polemical than that of his Nicene counterparts is to perpetuate the views and propaganda of rulers like Theodosius II and—most of all—Philostorgius’s epitomizer, Photius. Simply put, by modern standards of historiography, Philostorgius was no more polemical or partisan than the other ecclesiastical historians of the fifth century.

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\(^8\) Bidez, xcix.


\(^10\) Kaldellis, 70.
Clearly, neat categories of orthodox and heretical historiography are misleading. Furthermore, if we are going to judge ecclesiastical historians by notions of heresy and orthodoxy, let us bear in mind that Rufinus was accused of Origenism, Socrates was a Novatian, some of Theodoret’s work was condemned as Nestorian, and the founding historian Eusebius was himself reputed to be an Arian sympathizer.\(^\text{11}\) Also, any comparisons of Philostorgius to other ecclesiastical historians must acknowledge that he wrote before Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. These historians, who supported Nicaea, purposefully wrote their ecclesiastical histories, at least in part, to counter the narratives written from an anti-Nicene perspective, including that of Philostorgius.\(^\text{12}\) Thus, Philostorgius’s work was part of the proliferation of ecclesiastical histories in late antiquity. Just like other church historians, Philostorgius was influenced by the work of Eusebius. His work constitutes an integral part of ecclesiastical history writing and was not merely a response to the Nicene mainstream.

By viewing Philostorgius within the development of late antique historiography as a whole, one can better appreciate his approaches to questions of religion and empire as distinct from those of the other ecclesiastical historians. His divergences were due not only to his ecclesiastical allegiance but also to his own view of history. What did Philostorgius desire that his readers take away from his *Ecclesiastical History*? How did he want his fellow Eunomian Christians and other educated readers of the Roman


Empire to view the Christian past? These are some of the questions guiding this inquiry into Philostorgius’s vision of history and the Eunomian memory of the past. While recent scholarship has challenged the overly simple dichotomy of heresy versus orthodoxy and acknowledged the flourishing of diverse “Christianities” in Late Antiquity, these advances have had a limited effect on treatments of ecclesiastical history. Specifically, numerous fine works on Arianism in the past generation have added nuance to our understanding of the religious disputes of the fourth and fifth centuries and to Arian theology in particular, but these newer perspectives have not been integrated into ecclesiastical historiography. Although Philostorgius’s views of the interconnectedness of religion and empire were in many ways representative of historians in late antiquity, his goal to reclaim the memory of Christian history for his faith community reflected his distinctive Eunomian perspective.

This dissertation assesses Philostorgius’s vision of religion and empire through an examination of central themes in his ecclesiastical history. It concludes that Philostorgius viewed religion and empire as intertwined in the tradition of classical


thought. Yet he also embraced Christian conceptions of the central role of the Christian emperor. In addition to this Eusebian view of Christian empire, Philostorgius’s theology of history was distinct from the other ecclesiastical historians as it incorporated apocalyptic literature and Eunomian theology which emphasized the knowability of God’s will. Furthermore, by viewing Philostorgius’s history as an effort to reclaim the memory of the Christian past for his faith community, a perspective distinct from the Nicene narrative, this study will bring fresh insights to the study of ecclesiastical and late antique historiography as a whole. I will show that Philostorgius’s view of religion and empire deserves a place in our overall understanding of intellectual and cultural developments in late antiquity, as the development of the genre of ecclesiastical history comes into better focus when viewed as an exchange between the various participants rather than a repetitive continuation of Eusebius.

Historiographic Overview

To be sure, assessments of Philostorgius have much deeper roots than modern scholarship going back to the historian’s ninth-century epitomizer, Patriarch Photius of Constantinople. In his entry on Philostorgius in the Bibliotheca, a massive work briefly summarizing and reviewing over two hundred works from antiquity to his own day, the patriarch writes, “The history runs counter to nearly all the church historians. It exalts all those of Arian sympathies, and heaps scorn on the orthodox, so that his history is not so much a history as it is a eulogy of the heretics, and undisguised criticism and condemnation of the orthodox.” Photius’s characterization of Philostorgius’s history set the tone for its interpretation for centuries. This has made hearing Philostorgius’s voice

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challenging as Photius regularly inserted his own editorial remarks into the text, but thankfully they are rather easy to discern. While it is important to acknowledge that Philostorgius’s Eunomianism forms part of the history of the religious controversies of the fourth and fifth centuries, he was also writing history and expressing his view of the world. Thus, as the deconstruction of the heresy/orthodoxy dichotomy has contributed to a better understanding of power relations in the political and religious struggles of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, it should also inform our assessment of ecclesiastical history.

As the study of late antiquity has flourished in recent decades, scholarly attention to the writing of history in antiquity has significantly increased as well. At first, reading the histories to reconstruct the events of late antiquity was sufficient, but subsequently, understanding the perspectives of the historians became an essential starting point. Thus, for example, in the past generation at least six important studies have examined the historian Ammianus Marcellinus. The notion of the importance of texts as part of the processes that they describe has also contributed to the rise in studies of history writing in late antiquity. The church historians of the fifth century have perhaps not garnered as much attention from scholars as authors considered to be writing in the classical tradition because they have been perceived simply as continuators of Eusebius and as monolithic in their style and aims. Nevertheless, with the foundation

laid by Arnaldo Momigliano in his important essay, “Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A.D.,” several important collections of essays on historiography in late antiquity have appeared.\(^\text{17}\) On the one hand, this more recent scholarship on the writing of history in antiquity makes a very stark distinction between the genres of classical and ecclesiastical historiography, yet on the other hand it strives to break down this simplistic categorization.\(^\text{18}\) While focusing on the church history of Philostorgius, this study will help demonstrate that distinctions between genres were not as rigidly fixed as once thought.\(^\text{19}\)

The early fifth-century ecclesiastical history of the Latin writer Rufinus and the mid fifth-century Greek ecclesiastical histories of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret all embraced the theological formulations of Nicaea and thus their histories have enjoyed long-lasting popularity. These historians frequently have been lumped together as versions of the same historical narrative as they provided accounts of a similar time period and events and followed the model of Eusebius of Caesarea.\(^\text{20}\) This tendency to amalgamate their histories dates back to the sixth-century Latin translation and compilation of their works by Epiphanius Scholasticus under the direction of the Roman


\(^{18}\) See especially the discussion in Urbainczyk, *Socrates of Constantinople*, 89-105.


statesman and writer Cassiodorus. Known as the Tripartite History, this conflation became the standard work of ecclesiastical history for centuries in the Latin Middle Ages. Although this tendency to conflate the three works persists, more recent reevaluations of the historians have emphasized the differences between them and assessed the individual contributions of each one to late antique historiography. Theresa Urbainczyk’s work on Sozomen, Socrates, and Theodoret is particularly important in this regard. Moreover, in Socrates of Constantinople Urbainczyk emphasizes the individuality of Socrates and provides a model for my own study of Philostorgius. Her book is not a biography or an attempt to reconstruct the events in the church history, but an examination of what Socrates’ history reveals about his understanding of the appropriate relationship between church and state. Through comparison with these other fifth-century historians, this study of Philostorgius will also contribute to this new emphasis on treating these writers as authors in their own right. Moreover, it will argue for a reevaluation of these histories as individual voices competing for definitions of the past.


22 Urbainczyk, Socrates of Constantinople, 1.

23 Some promising work has been done toward a more critical reading of ecclesiastical historians. As a starting point see, David Rohrbacher, The Historians of Late Antiquity (London: Routledge, 2002); Treadgold, The Early Byzantine Historians. For extensive studies see note six above and for an analysis of the ecclesiastical historians’ construction of reality in terms of “retributive justice,” see Trompf, Early Christian Historiography: Narratives of Retributive Justice. Also, Hartmut Leppin, Von Konstantin dem Grossen zu Theodosius II: das christliche Kaisertum bei den Kirchenhistorikern Socrates, Sozomenus und Theodoret (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: 1996).


25 See below for specific aspects of her approach that are applicable to the study of Philostorgius.
In assessing Philostorgius’s history it is important to keep in mind how much more successful the narratives of his competitors were, both those whose histories he was continuing and those who were responding to him, whether the earlier work of Rufinus or the later histories of his Greek counterparts. Philostorgius’s history has suffered derision as nothing more than “Arian” polemic while the accounts of historians who supported the decisions of the Council of Nicaea have long supplanted any dissenting voices. Their theological allegiance to Nicaea ensured that their version of events would not only serve as the dominant narrative during their own time period but also for subsequent generations, down to the present day. Approaching these histories as part of the same context in which a number of ecclesiastical histories appeared in the fifth century, I will compare the pro-Nicene representations of the past with the History of Philostorgius. Such a comparative analysis provides both a more nuanced treatment of the history of the period covered by all these historians and a more accurate picture of post-Eusebian historiography as a sphere of competitive exchange rather than a linear progression.

The extensive literature on the Arian controversy and subsequent ecclesiopolitical disputes leading up to the Council of Chalcedon has contributed greatly to our understanding of that complex time period. It has also added much needed nuance to our view of the nature of the debate between the “heretics” and the “orthodox”. Richard Vaggione’s excellent book *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* is essential for understanding the Eunomian part of this story. Although Vaggione uses Philostorgius extensively as a source, his main focus is Eunomius himself, and he
therefore he offers few interpretations of the historian’s thought.\textsuperscript{26} Heresiological labels developed during the heat of controversy and served to characterize opponents as inherently negative; they drew clear lines between groups that in reality were still trying to understand how Christianity and the new Christian empire fit into history. Although these labels obscured much more than clarified the actual complexity and diversity of religious life in Late Antiquity, they have proven popular and persist in modern scholarship.\textsuperscript{27}

Philostorgius’s close connection with Arianism in modern historiography has been pervasive enough to warrant a thorough reconsideration of the assumptions that pervade our understanding of the late antique ecclesiastical historians as a whole. While Eunomianism was certainly central to Philostorgius’s history, there is no need to translate this appreciation into a study of the historian based almost exclusively on such heresiological categories as “Arianism.”\textsuperscript{28} Indeed, as already mentioned, the extensive scholarship on “heresy” in late antiquity and the middle ages has decisively moved away from an uncritical acceptance of these categories. In light of this recent scholarship, then, one does not expect such statements as appear in Gabriele Marasco’s work when he continuously refers to Philostorgius’s “radical Arianism” and

\textsuperscript{26} Vaggione, \textit{Eunomius of Cyzicus}, 286, 360-362.

\textsuperscript{27} Some modern attempts to solve this problem may contribute to the problem, terms such as neo-Arian or semi-Arian.

\textsuperscript{28} While Marasco, “The Church Historians (II): Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus,” claims to approach Philostorgius’s work in opposition to heresiological categories, the article in fact serves to perpetuate them. Many other works that use Philostorgius as a source regularly refer to the historian as an “Arian” and present him as more problematic than other church historians, or as responding to the “orthodox” church historians. See, for example, Argov, 514-515.
“polemic against the orthodox.” The implication is that the work of the other ecclesiastical historians was somehow free of polemic or promotion of a particular cause.

Josef Bidez produced the sole critical edition of the history, with extensive introduction and notes. This excellent edition went through three revised editions (the final one by Winkelmann) and is the essential foundation for any study of Philostorgius. Moreover, the introduction and notes in Philip Amidon’s long overdue and very welcome English translation of the History provide valuable information and insight. There has until now been no major study of Philostorgius in English. The recent Italian monograph by Gabriele Marasco is the only study published in a modern European language.

Unfortunately, the problematic assumptions that serve as the foundation for this study undermine an otherwise admirable undertaking.

The secondary literature on Philostorgius is predominantly characterized by short treatments in chapters and articles, reinforcing the view that he is peripheral to the narrative of late antique history writing. For example, while Philostorgius is included in Warren Treadgold’s The Early Byzantine Historians, he does not appear as a separate historian in Rohrbacher’s Historians of Late Antiquity, and is in fact only mentioned once. These compilations reveal the accumulation of small assumptions about Philostorgius and his history that contribute to a picture of a radical heretic, partisan

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29 Marasco, “The Church Historians (II): Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus,” 257-284. Also, Marasco, Filostorgio: cultura, fede e politica in uno storico ecclesiastico del V secolo, passim. See more on this issue in Chapter 3.


31 Treadgold, The Early Byzantine Historians, 126-134; Rohrbacher, Historians of Late Antiquity, 76.
polemicist, and a man on the losing side of history.\textsuperscript{32} But there are also several very
good articles, which are unfortunately very limited in scope.\textsuperscript{33} In addition to providing an
introduction to Philostorgius and an overview of his work, Alanna Nobbs rightly
highlights the importance of assessing the historian within the context of the other
ecclesiastical historians of the fifth century while keeping in mind that he preceded most
of them. She also briefly argues that Philostorgius stands out among the other
ecclesiastical historians as he gives more attention to events in the West and to secular
history. Hartmut Leppin makes a very important contribution by briefly examining
Philostorgius’s view of Roman emperors and Christian Empire. He points out that
Philostorgius’s view of the political structure and political ideology of the Empire, as a
member of the persecuted Eunomian group, serves as an interesting counterbalance to
the views of Nicene historians. Finally, the scholarship on Philostorgius has recently
benefited from an important collection of articles based on a 2006 conference devoted
exclusively to the Eunomian historian, which explores new directions and possibilities
for study.\textsuperscript{34}

Philostorgius has also received attention in several larger studies incorporating
the ecclesiastical historian into broader arguments on late antique history writing. Thus,

\begin{footnotes}
\item[32] See examples above at n. 9, n. 28. Also, see Michael Whitby, review of Filostorgio: cultura, fede e

\item[33] Alanna Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ Place in the Tradition of Ecclesiastical Historiography”; “Philostorgius’
View of the Past,” in Reading the Past in Late Antiquity, ed. G. Clarke (Rushcutters Bay: Australian
National University Press, 1990). See below in the section on Photius and the text for a discussion of

\item[34] Doris Meyer, ed., Philostorge et l'historiographie de l'antiquité tardive / Philostorg im Kontext der
spätantiken Geschichtsschreibung (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011). See also my review in Bryn
Mawr Classical Review 2012.12.34.
\end{footnotes}
he appears in G. W. Trompf’s *Narratives of Retributive Justice*, which examines the logic of retribution in Christian narratives of the past.\(^{35}\) Trompf also provides a valuable discussion of Sozomen’s response to Philostorgius’s narrative. In *The Past is Prologue: The Revolution of Nicene Historiography*, Thomas Ferguson includes a significant discussion of Philostorgius and also serves as an important source of inspiration for this project.\(^{36}\) While my analysis of Philostorgius does not always follow Ferguson’s conclusions, it builds on his commitment to view late antique history not through our own modern standards of history writing, but rather to examine the goals and perspectives of late antique historians and writers themselves. I also find his concept of “faith community” useful at times. Ferguson argues that while it is necessary to avoid heresiological terminology our sources preserve evidence of distinctive theological traditions centered on particular texts and ecclesial leaders that were sustained by communities of believers.\(^{37}\) He maintains that Philostorgius’s *History* reveals that one of the main purposes of the work was to contribute to the preservation of his faith community as the text includes numerous discussions of the martyr Lucian, whom he viewed as the original theological teacher of his coreligionists, including Eunomius himself.\(^{38}\) While Ferguson may at times overemphasize the evidence for the coherence of faith communities, the concept serves as a better alternative to heresiological


\(^{37}\) Ferguson, 7-9.

\(^{38}\) Ferguson, 130-131; 132-138.
categories of analysis, particularly as it better reflects Philostorgius’s own approach in his *Ecclesiastical History*.

While Raymond Van Dam’s *Becoming Christian: The Conversion of Roman Cappadocia* includes a brief chapter on Philostorgius and also moves away from viewing the historian through the lens of heresy, his rather superficial treatment of the historian leaves the reader dissatisfied with Philostorgius’s appearance in the book. Philostorgius almost seems to play the role of another heretical figure from Cappadocia to accompany Eunomius as the counterbalance to the famous orthodox bishops of the same province.

The preceding review of scholarship on Philostorgius and late antique history-writing highlights the need for a study that approaches him as a historian in his own right and his history as an equal player in the development of the genre of ecclesiastical history. Previous scholarship on Philostorgius has often perpetuated Photius’s view of the Arian historian as a liar, frequently treated him on a rudimentary level, and has not considered his ecclesiastical history within the broader context of this rising new genre.

**Photius and the Text of Philostorgius’s History**

Photius (c.810-c.893) the patriarch of Constantinople is famous for his prolific literary output and revival of learning in ninth-century Constantinople. Apparently, in the library at Constantinople he discovered Philostorgius’s history in two sets of twelve books each, totaling the twelve books of the history. Photius preserved the text twice—first briefly in his *Bibliotheca* and then extensively in an epitome of the *History*. The

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Bibliotheca is an enormous compilation of a variety of ancient sources that Photius had read. Each entry in the Bibliotheca provides some basic information on the author and nature of the work, with some entries going into more detail and a summary of the text. This fascinating and extremely valuable work preserves information about numerous texts from antiquity that are otherwise lost. Photius’s entry on Philostorgius is brief in comparison to the epitome mentioning only the general characteristics and themes of the work. Nobbs conjectures that Photius may have read Philostorgius’s history as part of his preparation for a series of sermons on the Arian controversy. She also rightly points out that the detailed portions of the epitome reveal as much about Photius’s interests as they do about the content of Philostorgius’s history. On the other hand, the selections with more detail seem to quote Philostorgius more directly. One can easily discern Photius’s editorial remarks expressing his opinion on the lack of orthodox doctrine and truthfulness in the history. Thus, a critical reading of the source has to account for any potential distortion or censorship on the part of Photius; thankfully, the patriarch appears to have been a “careful, if hostile, epitomizer.” Photius’s actual preservation of the History is somewhat uncharacteristic of the patriarch because as far as we know he did not make any similar extensive summaries

41 For more see Treadgold, The Nature of the Bibliotheca of Photius.


43 Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 253. Nobbs argues this in contrast to the idea that Photius read the history to include an entry on Philostorgius in his Bibliotheca—a collection of descriptions and excerpts of works that Photius had read. The epitome of the Ecclesiastical History is separate from this work.


45 Amidon, Philostorgius, xxiii.
of any other works. This may not mean anything, but this fact along with other considerations have led to some doubts about Photius’s authorship of the epitome. Eran Argov concludes that it is possible to argue that Photius was not the author of the epitome but only of the entry in the Bibliotheca. Additionally, he argues for a later date for the text of the epitome. More recently, however, Antonio Baldini has refuted Argov’s argument and concluded that the author of the Bibliotheca entry and of the epitome are the same—Photius.

The survival of Philostorgius’s work primarily through the epitome of Photius leads to certain limitations of analysis, but the existence of other fragments helps to redress this problem. The author of the pre-ninth-century Artemii Passio borrowed extensively from Philostorgius. Scholars believe that the author of the Artemii Passio was either John of Rhodes or John the Monk. Nothing is known about either of them, but scholars argue that the text itself should be dated to the eighth or ninth century. More recently Bonifatius Kotter has argued in favor of John of Damascus (ca. 655-ca.750).

A text of uncertain authorship, the Artemii Passio is a hagiography of the martyr Artemius during the reign of Emperor Julian the Apostate (360s). The author of the passion used an earlier account of the martyrdom of Artemius and added

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46 Argov, 497-524.


49 Kotter, 185-245.
Philostorgius’s narrative to it to provide a historical narrative and context. By the writing of the later martyrdom, Artemius had acquired the reputation of a Christian martyr defying the pagan emperor Julian. The Nicene author of the text apparently noticed Philostorgius’s elevation of the martyr as a member of his heteroousian Christian community but decided to use the history anyway, with very feeble attempts at glossing over unorthodoxy. The *Artemii Passio* is potentially the earliest extant source to have made extensive use of Philostorgius’s *History*. The martyrdom account is the second most extensive source for the reconstruction of the *History* after the epitome.

The remainder of the sources that contain fragments of Philostorgius did not borrow as extensively but are still crucial for access to the text. First, an anonymous ninth-to-eleventh-century *Life of Constantine* made liberal use of Philostorgius’s text.\(^50\) The primary purpose of this text was to provide a hagiographical depiction of the emperor Constantine from the perspective of a Byzantine readership. But apparently the author was interested in incorporating late ancient sources, and the text shows extensive reliance on numerous church historians and even pagan ones. The tenth-century *Suda* (author unknown) also frequently cited Philostorgius as a source.\(^51\) This text is a Byzantine encyclopedia and dictionary of sorts with around 30,000 entries describing the meaning and origin of terms. It preserves or mentions countless literary and historical works from antiquity and the early Byzantine period, with many references to texts and authors that are not attested anywhere else. Additionally, the tenth-century *Palatine Anthology*, an extensive collection of ancient and Byzantine epigrams, draws


from some of the epigrams in Philostorgius’s history.\textsuperscript{52} Finally, the twelfth-century work on theology and orthodoxy by Niketas Choniates contains fragments as part of its discussion of the history and nature of earlier heresies. This work refers to Philostorgius as a heretic and explicitly cites him.\textsuperscript{53} Fortunately, Josef Bidez has compiled all of the relevant fragments together with the material preserved by Photius in a single narrative by placing the fragments thought to be from the same part of Philostorgius in the same section.\textsuperscript{54} Some of these fragments provide additional information not contained in Photius. But the ones that are the same as Photius’s epitome are more significant as they confirm that Photius is summarizing the text accurately.

\textbf{Methodology and Approach}

Though not neglecting Philostorgius’s life and world, this dissertation serves primarily as a study of his \textit{Ecclesiastical History}. In particular I examine the thought of Philostorgius on the interconnectedness of religion and empire, focusing on the themes of heresy, Christianization, emperors and bishops, pagans and barbarians, and theology of history. Additionally, I study how his perspective on religion and empire fits into the broader late antique context. Such works as Urbainczyk’s \textit{Socrates of

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\textsuperscript{53} Niketas Choniates, \textit{Dogmatike Panoplia}. See Alicia Simpson, \textit{Niketas Choniates: A Historiographical Study} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 36-50, for a brief discussion of the \textit{Dogmatike Panoplia}. It does not have a critical edition and is only ever used to discuss Niketas’ discussion of the heresies of his own time.

\textsuperscript{54} I have discussed the most extensive fragments. There are also a few shorter ones, such as in Simeon Metaphrastes, \textit{Martyrium Arethae}. See Bidez, xii-cv, for a comprehensive analysis of the fragments and manuscript tradition and discussion on how the fragments in all these texts relate to Philostorgius’s lost text and Photius’s epitome.
Constantinople and Jan Van Ginkel’s John of Ephesus serve in part as models. Urbainczyk places Socrates in his historical context to illuminate his concerns and purposes for writing the ecclesiastical history. She also analyzes the content of the history to reveal Socrates’ understanding of the role of history and his view of church and state in particular. Van Ginkel similarly explores John of Ephesus’s perception of time and history to explicate why he recorded events in the ways he did. He persuasively argues that while John of Ephesus wrote from the “heretical Monophysite” point of view, he nevertheless remained pro-Byzantine. Both Urbainczyk and Van Ginkel rightly emphasize the importance of understanding the purpose and view of the ecclesiastical historians before using them as sources for the narrative of events they cover. Similarly, my approach to Philostorgius shows how his Eunomian worldview shaped his perception of religion and empire as inherently interconnected categories that revealed the will of God in human history. My study also brings to light this unique theology of history while emphasizing that it was one of many voices vying for the Christian past during the fifth century.

Comparison to other fifth-century ecclesiastical historians is an important aspect of my approach, but studying Philostorgius on his own terms is the starting point and main focus. Juxtaposing various elements of Philostorgius’s history with those of Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret will enable readers to see more clearly both Philostorgius’s common participation in the development of the genre of ecclesiastical history and his distinctive contributions. In order to place Philostorgius back into his historical context it is necessary to look at other sources for the fifth

century. To understand better the Eunomian community to which Philostorgius belonged, the works of Eunomius and his detractors are valuable. Additionally, the draconian anti-heretical legislation of the Theodosian Code is essential to understanding the political and religious climate during which Philostorgius wrote.

Two main threads run through the dissertation as a whole. First, the theme of religion and empire is woven into each of the chapters bringing cohesion to the study as a whole. Second, I show throughout how Philostorgius’s conviction that God reveals himself through historical events was central to his *Ecclesiastical History*. I also show how Philostorgius’s project of reclaiming the memory of his faith community was one of his primary concerns in the work. Chapter 2 discusses the historiography on ecclesiastical history in late antiquity and how Philostorgius fits in to it, emphasizing his place as one of the first, if often neglected, continuators of Eusebius. Additionally, this chapter provides an overview of the other church historians in question—Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret—and introduces comparisons with Philostorgius that will be developed more fully in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3 covers the Trinitarian disputes of the fourth century, including the ecclesio-political strife following Nicaea for so many years. Philostorgius’s alternative representation of the actors and events of these theological and ecclesiastical controversies reflects his particular vision of Christian history. His representation of the heroes and enemies of Christianity is central both to his own project on behalf of his


faith community and to his problematic legacy as the more polemical historian. This chapter will assess Philostorgius’s evidence for the events surrounding the “Arian controversy,” especially in relation to Rufinus’s version of the same or closely related events.

As missionaries play a major role in Philostorgius’s non-Nicene reconstruction of true Christian history, Chapter 4 examines his representation of mission, specifically the missions of Theophilus the Indian and Ulfila the Goth. Philostorgius’s narrative reveals a Christian past in which divinely inspired bishops and wonder-working missionaries actively participated in the ecclesio-political events of the Roman Empire that served as the arena for God’s activity on earth. Philostorgius viewed history in accordance with his Eunomian theology and had a distinctive understanding of Christianization as needing the sponsorship of the emperor yet not succeeding without divinely inspired bishops. His perspective will contribute to a broader understanding of the processes of Christianization in late antiquity.

Chapter 5, “Emperors and Bishops: Leadership for the Christian Empire,” shows Philostorgius’s view of the appropriate relationship between bishops and emperors. Writing after Eusebius’s church history, Philostorgius was working within a similar framework that brought Christianity and the Roman Empire together. Philostorgius emphasized the central role of bishops and emperors in the history of the one true faith. The Eunomian bishops valued celibacy, wonder-working, as well as an active engagement in and recognition of imperial affairs. For Philostorgius, bishops played such a significant role in imperial and ecclesiastical events because they were representatives of God on earth working within the arena in which God acts out His will.
and displeasure—the imperial court and the elite of the East Roman Empire. Similarly, emperors figure prominently in the *Ecclesiastical History*. Philostorgius does not minimize the role of emperors in church affairs, but rather shows that imperial action on behalf of the orthodox—Eunomians—leads to the establishment of God’s good will for the Empire.

Chapter 6, “Pagans and Barbarians: Differentiating ‘Others’ in the Context of Empire,” explores a series of questions about Philostorgius’s representation of “others” in the Christian Roman Empire. For example, does Philostorgius necessarily associate barbarians with polytheism? Does he differentiate between Arian and pagan barbarians? Clearly, Philostorgius did differentiate between pagans and barbarians as, for example he describes Fravitta as a “Goth by nationality and a pagan by religion.”58 How do barbarians and/or pagans fit into the Roman Empire and the working out of God’s plan on earth according to Philostorgius? Additionally, what does the historian’s language reveal about the view of “others” in the context of Empire during the fifth century? In order to evaluate his views of Jews and their role in a Christian Empire, I analyze in greater detail Philostorgius’s fascination with Maccabees and his account of Julian the Apostate’s attempt to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

Chapter 7 explores Philostorgius’s theology of history. Building on Urbainczyk’s discussion of Socrates’ “theory of history,” I examine how Philostorgius viewed knowing and seeing God through nature, history, war, and even the lives of emperors. According to the Eunomian historian, earthquakes and other natural disasters showed God’s anger and his will. His knowledge of apocalyptic literature and his apocalyptic view of the

58 Philostorgius, 11.8. The Greek is ‘genos’ for nationality and ‘Hellene’ for pagan and ‘doxa’ for religion.
world contributed to his increasing pessimism and the negative omens that appear in the second half of his history. Additionally, the digressions into geography and natural history reflect his views on how the empire fits into Christian history.

Chapter 8 provides more conclusive comparisons between Philostorgius and the Nicene historians, which is woven into my analysis throughout the study. It also provides a reassessment of Philostorgius’s place in late antique historiography as a whole. This chapter brings together and reiterates my arguments for Philostorgius’s equal place alongside the other church historians as he continued and built upon the innovations of Eusebius. Finally, this chapter also summarizes his perspective on history and discusses the wider implications of such a close study for the history of history writing in late antiquity.

This study will provide a much needed assessment of one of the most important sources for the fourth and fifth centuries, both for the history of Christianity and culture and for the history of late antiquity more broadly. Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History* not only preserves valuable information on specific events, places, and people not documented elsewhere, but more importantly gives us access to the perspective of members of the Eunomian faith community, which the “orthodox” worked diligently and in part successfully to extirpate from history. The Cappadocian was a historian in his own right, not merely a responder to the “orthodox narrative”—most of which he preceded anyway—and his discussions of events in the West, digressions into natural history and geography, and dynamic narrative secure his place in late antique historiography. To view Philostorgius’s history in its context, it is necessary to imagine what the world looked like *before* Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret had written their
histories and become authoritative; before the policies of staunchly Nicene emperors had contributed to the fading away of the Eunomian faith community; before Philostorgius and his history had been labeled by posterity as little more than Arian polemic. This approach will not only enable us to better understand his history and thereby more effectively interpret it as a source, but it will also provide fresh perspectives on late antique history and historiography as a whole.
CHAPTER 2
PHILOSTORGIUS AND HISTORY WRITING IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Prior to 1970 late antique history writing remained notably understudied, but since then a vast variety of studies has appeared.\(^1\) It is not the goal of this chapter to provide a definitive synthesis of this historiography but rather, in keeping with the focus of this study, to consider history writing from roughly the beginning of the fourth through the end of the fifth century. By exploring some specific problems and questions which have been most characteristic of the scholarship on this topic I hope to provide the relevant historiographical framework for my analysis of Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History*.

**In the Wake of Momigliano: Approaches to Late Antique Historiography**

A good place to begin this discussion is to identify the trends in scholarship that have had the most significant impact on subsequent historiography. The voice of Arnaldo Momigliano still dominates the conversation, even while historians have reassessed a number of his specific conclusions.\(^2\) Momigliano expressed his foundational arguments on late antique historiography in a series of essays during the ’60s and ’70s. These essays are not comprehensive studies of the subject, but rather a series of broad conclusions the historian’s extensive reading of the sources. In surveying Momigliano’s major contributions to the study of late antique historiography I

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will also note some potential pitfalls associated with the dominance of his interpretive framework for the field.

In his influential essay, “Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century A.D.,” Momigliano delineates the ways in which pagan and Christian history writing diverged, focusing on developments in the fourth century and the changes that occurred over time within the two traditions. According to his schema, Christian historiography offered a new perspective and paradigm as it emphasized the role of divine providence in history, beginning primarily with the works of Eusebius, although he acknowledges the precedent set by Julius Africanus. Momigliano also argues that Christians appropriated old classical pagan history for new Christian purposes. During this period, pagan historiography took the form of brief summaries. He concludes that church history was the most significant development in historiography for centuries. It did not really supplant the classical tradition of history writing, which continued but did not engage with Christianity. In sum, Momigliano posits a stark distinction between pagan and Christian as his foundational assumption in order to characterize historiography during the fourth century.

In an essay focusing exclusively on church history, Momigliano seeks to trace the development of ecclesiastical history as a genre, specifically in terms of its influence on modern historiography. He focuses on Eusebius as the founder of the genre while acknowledging that his work did have some important precedents. Here too Momigliano stresses the importance of Eusebius’s innovation of extensively quoting sources. He

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noted that his followers continued this practice, which served as a marker of difference from political historians. He describes how Eusebius viewed Christian history as universal and so related the success of the Christian church with the success of the Roman Empire and simultaneously separated traditional political history from church history; in so doing he created a narrative in which persecution and heresy replaced political events. Throughout his historiographical works Momigliano emphasizes Eusebius’s uniqueness and success affirming that “the immense authority which Eusebius gained was well deserved. He had continuators but no rivals.”

In his characterization of Eusebius’s continuators he argues that the legalization of Christianity made it difficult for them fully to follow Eusebius, since the merging of church and state made it difficult to write exclusively about church history. Momigliano implies that the fact that none of the successors became authoritative signifies that they were not as successful as Eusebius. Ultimately, the close joining of the Christian church and the Roman Empire led to the end of ecclesiastical history as a genre. “Indeed the notion of a Universal Church implies a paradox,” Momigliano concludes. “Being universal, Church history tended to embrace all the events of mankind and was therefore permanently in danger of losing its distinctive character.”

I would suggest that perhaps the fact that Eusebius’s history inspired such a variety of continuators signifies that the genre never really had a set distinctive character.

In his essay “Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians” Momigliano asserts that classical historians did not present religion as a driving force in

human events, but instead focused on politics and contemporary events. Religious developments in the later Roman Empire led to Eusebius’s model while also influencing the encroachment of religion into the pagan histories of the period, for example in the work of Ammianus Marcellinus. Additionally, he asserts that classical Roman historians—on the rare occasion when they did mention religion—expressed their approval by the use of the word religio and disapproval by the use of superstition. For example, they might use these categories to distinguish between the beliefs and practices of the upper and lower classes. This traditional distinction changed and became democratized in response to Christianity, as pagan authors found themselves confronted by Christianity and their appeals to miracles, the power of which pagans had to counter with what would normally have been considered superstition. In Momigliano’s view, “pagans needed miracles to neutralize Christian miracles.”

These three articles summarize the main ideas that Momigliano contributed to the study of late antique historiography, all of which have had a lasting impact. In many ways, Momigliano is himself a kind of Eusebius. For the next several decades, a series of his own continuators largely followed the general flow and main points of his characterizations of late antique historiography. Nevertheless, his essays necessarily lacked a significant amount of detail as they were designed to make broad claims and arguments in the form of reflections as much as essays, two of which were originally published.

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7 Momigliano, “Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians.”
8 Momigliano, “Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians,” 145.
9 Also, theosebeia and deisidaimonia in Greek. Momigliano, “Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians,” 144-145.
10 Momigliano, “Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians,” 150.
11 Momigliano, “Popular Religious Beliefs and the Late Roman Historians,” 150.
lectures. Additionally, the entire field of late antiquity has changed dramatically since he began to explore its historians in the early 1960s. Thus, many of his foundational assumptions and frameworks have since come to be challenged, modified, and expanded.

Soon after the publication of Momigliano’s essays and building on his work, a new interest in late antique historiography emerged resulting in a series of conferences and edited collections on the subject. Particularly important among these new studies was the publication of the volume *History and Historians in Late Antiquity*, edited by Brian Croke and Alanna Emmett. In their introductory essay, “Historiography in Late Antiquity,” Brian Croke and Alanna Emmett traced the development of history writing in late antiquity over time. They expressly based their brief summary on the work of Momigliano. Perhaps even more than Momigliano, they also maintained a division between historiography in the east and in the west Roman Empire. Similarly, they separated out works in the tradition of classical historiography, church history, and chronicles. At the time they commented on the lack of a major work synthesizing the topic; this still remains true today, three decades later. This volume’s introduction remains one of the few attempts at a survey of the subject as a whole. It marks the beginning of a proliferation of diverse works on late antique historiography from that point forward.

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13 Croke and Emmett, “Historiography in Late Antiquity: An Overview.”
The work of Hervé Inglebert was also foundational for understanding the nature of late antique conceptions of the past. In his *Les Romains Chrétiens face à l’Histoire de Rome*, Inglebert examines Christian attitudes toward the Roman Empire from the third through the late fifth century. Focusing on the west, Inglebert’s detailed and erudite study examines the question of how Christian writers understood and appropriated the Roman past, author by author. Inglebert sees the legalization of Christianity as a turning point in a contest between Christians and pagans. He seeks to explain how Christians integrated their culture into Roman culture while attempting to maintain an awareness of the fluid nature of both of these categories. Eusebius is at the heart and center of his study as the founder of the notion that Roman history, universal history, and salvation history are equivalent. Inglebert argues that “Eusebianism”—the notion that the empire and Christianity were providentially linked—was established as a reigning paradigm. Augustine, however, presented a challenge to this Eusebian perspective. As Inglebert claims, “In three days in 410 a century of Eusebianism collapsed.” Nevertheless, the influence of Eusebius on conceptions of the past had a lasting effect on the west.

More recently, diverse studies of history writing in late antiquity have proliferated, though they necessarily build on Momigliano and operate within some of the parameters he set. These studies have pushed the historiography of late antiquity into a narrative of its own considered as part of historiography more broadly conceived. For example, the

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essays collected in *Historiae Mundi: Studies in Universal History* (2010) deal with the concept of universal history from antiquity to the modern period. The volume includes three essays on late antique historiography demonstrating the new recognition of late antiquity’s importance to the history of modern history writing.\(^{16}\) One of the challenges of the study of history writing in late antiquity is the need for it to be included in the wider picture of ancient historiography, not as simply outside of it and trying to live up to it. For example, Brian Croke contributed a summary essay as the conclusion to a two-volume collection on classical historiography.\(^{17}\) In this essay, Croke used genre as an organizing principle, discussing in turn church history, chronicle, and secular history in the classical tradition. This classification is one of the major characteristics of any discussion of the topic; late antique historians are always held to the standard of classical historians and are divided up between the historians who did or did not follow in this tradition. But Croke admits that this model does not necessarily provide an accurate description of the reality of history writing in late antiquity: “However, the modern label of ‘classicizing’ which is regularly applied to historians writing in Greek can be misleading. The historiographical tradition had not become fossilized. Rather, it posed for each author the challenge of being creative within an authoritative tradition without appearing to be novel or original for its own sake.”\(^{18}\) Overall, Croke celebrates the development of a variety of forms of history writing during this period and comments

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\(^{17}\) Croke, “Late Antique Historiography, 250-650 CE.”

\(^{18}\) Croke, “Late Antique Historiography, 250-650 CE,” 568.
on the strange abrupt end of these genres all around the same time with the late sixth-century church historian Evagrius and the seventh-century classicizing historian Theophylact Simocatta and world chronicle *Chronicon Paschale.* Moreover, he asserts that scholars had come to view chronicles as equal participants in the story and not just as simplified records for the less educated. He concludes that late antiquity witnessed innovations in historiography, that genres were more flexible than scholars have previously believed, and that late antique writers were experimenting with the history writing conventions of the past.

As the entire field of late antiquity grew the topic of history writing became a prominent feature of scholarship on the period. These more recent assessments share many similar characteristics to the older studies discussed above—the focus on Eusebius, division between genres, division between east and west, and the comparison of diverse histories to the gold standard of the classics. One particular example demonstrates the problems associated with these assumptions. In an essay in Philip Rousseau’s *Companion to Late Antiquity,* David Woods surveys the developments and main features of history writing during this period. He employs rigid categories and begins with the assumption that classical historiography is superior to late antique, providing a fairly conventional narrative which focuses on Eusebius, the birth of church history, and the triumph of the genre of chronicle as a symptom of

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19 It remains a mystery why all these genres ended around the same time. Croke comments that they had “developed and been sustained side by side over the previous three centuries” and lists natural disasters, arab invasions, the deterioration of education, and the blending of secular and sacred spheres as possible explanations, 571-572.

20 Croke, “Late Antique Historiography, 250-650 CE,” 580.

decline. “As far as historiography was concerned,” Woods claims, “Late Antiquity was not a period of great innovation. Such innovations as did occur were forced by social and political change rather than by theoretical considerations.”22 This sentiment is problematic for several reasons. First, it is difficult to imagine any innovations that occur in history independently from “social and political change.” Furthermore, the essay assumes that late antique historiographers should have done a better job of following their classical models because, after all, they were clearly superior. Simultaneously he expects late Roman writers to innovate but characterizes the innovations of church history and chronicle as poor representatives of “complex historical narrative.”23

Interest in late antique historiography has also reached a new level resulting in a fresh batch of edited collections on the topic.24 The volume Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity. Fourth to Sixth Century A.D. had the potential to offer a much needed comprehensive overview.25 However, although the volume features several excellent contributions, overall there are too many problems for this volume to serve as a helpful reliable overview.26

Alongside edited collections, several single-authored monographs address the topic through chapters treating individual authors, for example, David Rohrbacher’s The

22 Woods, “Late Antique Historiography: A Brief History of Time,” 358.


24 Marasco, ed. Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity, Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.; Dariusz Brodka and Michal Stachura, eds. Continuity and Change: Studies in Late Antique Historiography (Kraków: Jagiellonian University Press, 2007).

25 Croke, “Late Antique Historiography, 250-650 CE,” 581.

26 See Chapter 3 for my comments on Marasco’s essay on Philostorgius in particular. Also see the informative review by R. W. Burgess, Review of Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity, Fourth to Sixth Century A.D. Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2004. 03. 49.
Historians of Late Antiquity and Warren Treadgold’s The Early Byzantine Historians. These studies partially fill the need for a reliable overview of the topic. Both of these studies show the diversity of late antique historiography as they cover a broad range of writers and serve as a good general introduction to the individual historians they cover. Despite such contributions to the study of late antique historiography, however, a comprehensive study of the topic is still lacking. Additionally, these works perpetuate the divide between Christian and pagan, east and west, and the three “main genres”—secular histories, church histories, and chronicles.

Fortunately, the past decade has also seen the appearance of a number of important specialized works devoted to specific questions in late antique historiography as well as studies of other kinds of texts dealing with the past such as hagiographies, inscriptions, and sermons. As they expand our knowledge of details and exceptions, these studies are integral to all efforts to move the study of late antique historiography past some of the pitfalls historians have encountered following in the footsteps of Momigliano. Some of these works study lesser known non-Christian and fragmentary historians, such as Olympiodorus and Eunapius. In many ways Thomas Ferguson’s valuable study The Past is Prologue: The Revolution of Nicene Historiography directly

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27 Rohrbacher, Historians of Late Antiquity (2002); Treadgold, The Early Byzantine Historians (2007).


engages with similar issues as my own study. Ferguson focuses on Christian historians and avoids the heresiological categories typical of the scholarship on history writing.

Most recently, Brian Croke has once again written an overview of the topic in an essay on historiography in the *Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* where he examines it by development over time emphasizing the idea that there was much diversity in the approaches to the past while still maintaining a large degree of cultural unity. He argues that as history writing changed over time it shifted from being a minor preoccupation of the elite to a major preoccupation of a larger segment of society due to the Christian vision of the importance of history as part of providence. Croke also suggests that previous scholarship has overemphasized the divisions between certain categories like Christian and pagan.

The above review of the scholarship on late antique historiography is not meant to be comprehensive but only to point to the main developments and the promise and problems in the field. Overall, the field owes an enormous debt to Momigliano, whose observations laid the foundation for future work and clearly expressed the importance of the topic. It has also come a long way as there are now numerous works on the topic, which marks a major change since the situation around 1970. The main interpretive issues and opportunities for further research concern the use of rigid divisions and categories, which in some cases are employed openly, and in other cases appear in the form of more subtle assumptions. These divisions include those between “pagan” and

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31 Croke, “Historiography,” 405-436.
Christian histories or secular and church histories, between histories and chronicles, and between east and west or Greek and Roman, with almost no attention to the important Syriac and Armenian historical writings of the same period. Many scholars, whether overtly or purposefully or not, assume that pagan/secular histories are somehow superior to Christian/church ones. Even if an assumption about the superiority of one over another is not present, the division remains and it always hinges on the role of Eusebius. While it is clear that Eusebius was creative and had an enormous influence, the narrative which overemphasizes the turning point of Eusebius sets up an impossible standard for his continuators. This narrative claims that Eusebius invented a genre and then measures all subsequent church histories to that standard, even though they were written within different contexts; they never measure up because Eusebius is so unique. Also, the pagan/secular histories are frequently measured against the standard of classical historiography. On the one hand, this presupposes a static and monolithic canon of classical historiography, which is not tenable; and on the other hand, of course, this raises the question of what it achieves to measure late antique authors against the standards of Herodotus, Thucydies, or Tacitus? Clearly, these writers had a significant influence on late antique historians, but the fact that their later counterparts wrote history differently does not mean they should be judged as lesser. In some cases, these divisions and assumptions do serve to push the discussion in illuminating or productive directions, but often they lead to absurd conclusions such as the notion that church history was not being creative because it was a product of its social context.
In light of these considerations I propose a different mode of inquiry based on a different set of questions. Why were people writing so much history at the same time in the same place? Why were they writing about the same events? Who was their audience? What did they think they were trying to achieve? How can we evaluate the impact of Christianity on historiography without perpetuating the stereotypes that classical was better and Eusebius is king? With these questions in mind and by analyzing in great depth the work of a particular historian, we can more clearly see its perspective and its distinctiveness while at the same time evaluate the nature of its contribution to history writing and the reading elite of late antiquity. This in turn allows for a different picture of late antique historiography and of history-writing as a dynamic process. We see historians struggling to define what they were writing about and arguing with each other as historians, not just as polemicists or pagans or Christians.

Accordingly, a close study of Philostorgius’s History, noting how his work has traditionally fit—or not—into the broader historiography of history-writing since the work of Momigliano can contribute to a reassessment of the traditional narrative of late antique historiography as a whole.

**Philostorgius and the Fifth-Century Church Historians**

To begin this reexamination of late antique history writing, it is necessary to bring Philostorgius back into dialogue with other ecclesiastical historians of the fifth century.\(^32\)

The Nicene writer Rufinus of Aquileia (345-410/411) translated and continued the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius.\(^33\) Rufinus’s Latin translation and continuation

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\(^32\) I completely believe, however, that there is a need for a study of the church historians in conversation with the “pagan” ones. It is beyond the scope of this study, but I plan to do this in my next project.

\(^33\) For Rufinus see Thelamon, *Paiens et Chrétiens au IVe Siècle: L’apport de l’Histoire Ecclésiastique* de Rufin d’Aquilée; C. P. Hammond, “The Last Ten Years of Rufinus’ Life and the Date of His Move
enjoyed immediate success and exerted a lasting influence in the medieval west as the definitive account of early Church history. Published in 402 or 403, the work not only extends Eusebius’s history to the time of Theodosius I’s death in 395, but also contains numerous free translations, paraphrases, and corrections of the original. Philostorgius viewed Rufinus’s representation of Christian history as decidedly pro-Nicene and responded to Rufinus accordingly in his own ecclesiastical history. Amidon even states, “…it becomes evident that he intends to counter wherever possible the pro-Nicene story told by Rufinus of Aquileia in his continuation of Eusebius’s church history. The differing treatments of mission in Rufinus’s and Philostorgius’s narratives have also been noted by scholars.

The three other ecclesiastical historians of the fifth century—Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret—are usually treated together and referred to as the synoptical church historians in the secondary literature. More recently, historians have begun to acknowledge these historians as individual scholars and to highlight and analyze their


More recently, Mark Humphries has argued for viewing the Latin version as a thematically unified whole to show Rufinus’s interpretation and vision of Christian history. This approach proves fruitful in its successful effort to draw out Rufinus’s representations of the Christian past. Humphries, “Rufinus’s Eusebius,” 143-164; For the controversy surrounding Rufinus’s alleged copying of Gelasius of Caesarea see, Humphries, 150-151; Amidon, Rufinus, xvi-xvii; Rohrbacher, 100-101; and Van Deun, 162.

Passages in which Philostorgius most clearly responds to Rufinus (though he does not mention him by name): 2.11, 3.4.

Amidon, Philostorgius, xxiii.

differences in approach. As Hartmut Leppin points out, “For all that they have in common, the three so-called ‘synoptical’ Church historians are individual authors with divergent views, whose works illustrate the intellectual richness of the Theodosian age.” Comparable to the ambiguity surrounding Philostorgius, the known facts concerning the life of Socrates [Scholasticus] of Constantinople (c. 380-after 439) are few, and all of them derive from his Ecclesiastical History, completed shortly after 439. There is some controversy concerning his religious affiliation, specifically whether or not he was a member of the Novatian sect. His history covers events between the reign of Constantine and 439 and, significantly for the purposes of this study, includes passages on Ulfila and shows evidence of possibly consulting Philostorgius’s Ecclesiastical History as a source.

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41 Hartmut Leppin at one time dissented from the majority opinion and argued that Socrates was not a Novatian, but later retracted his doubts. Whether or not Socrates was a Novatian, he certainly presented a highly favorable opinion of the Novatian church. Leppin, “The Church Historians (I): Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus,” 222; Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession in Constantinople (381-450 C.E.): The Local Dynamics of Power,” 428, n. 11; Urbainczyk, Socrates of Constantinople, 28. Unlike Philostorgius, Socrates’ schismatic sympathies did not result in the suppression and neglect of his history.

42 Trompf, 214, n. 4; 231-232; Trompf, focusing on the themes of his study, compares passages covering the same events in Philostorgius and Socrates to make this argument; for example, on the earthquake at Nicomedia (Philostorgius, 4.10; Socrates, 2.39). While Trompf does not argue that Socrates (unlike Sozomen) used Philostorgius extensively, he does provide enough examples to prove his point. See also Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ Ecclesiastical History: An ‘Alternative Ideology,’” 271-281, who suggests that Philostorgius’s version of the past and its implications for the present, served as a challenge to Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret as a narrative that needed to be responded to and superceded. She cites passages from the Nicene historians that appear to directly respond to Philostorgius’s non-Nicene vision of the past.
Socrates’ *Ecclesiastical History* served as a valuable source for the next church historian, Sozomen (c.380-c.446), who composed his work before 450. Going as far back as Photius, scholars have remarked on Sozomen’s writing style as more rhetorical than that of Socrates.\(^{43}\) But Sozomen’s history differed from his predecessor in other crucial ways. For example, “Sozomen, in contrast to Socrates, is less nervous about extracting useful materials from the Philostorgian narrative.”\(^{44}\) Sozomen also includes and modifies Socrates’ treatment of Ulfila and other accounts of mission. His significantly longer version of the events surrounding Ulfila not only reveals his views on mission, but also provides evidence on how Ulfila acquired his missionary reputation.

Much more is known about the final historian under consideration—Theodoret of Cyrrhus (c. 393-c.460)—since he wrote numerous other works in addition to his *Ecclesiastical History* and supported Nestorius during the Nestorian controversy.\(^{45}\) As a result, the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 posthumously condemned several of Theodoret’s writings as heretical.\(^{46}\) Theodoret’s *Ecclesiastical History* was composed sometime between 444 and 450 and covered events between 323 and 428.\(^{47}\)

While Theodoret also used and modified the work of Rufinus, Socrates, and Sozomen, his

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44 Trompf, 214; Also see 214, n. 4; 215, n. 8; 219, 235, for specific examples of Sozomen’s inversion of Philostorgius’s version of events. Amidon too cites Sozomen’s response (4.16) to Philostorgius’s description of the earthquake at Nicomedia, Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 70, n. 18. See Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ Ecclesiastical History,” for the general idea that Sozomen was responding to non-Nicene historiography.


46 Leppin, “The Church Historians (I): Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus,” 225. Similarly to Socrates, Theodoret’s heretical sympathies did not result in the suppression of his history.

47 Leppin, “The Church Historians (I): Socrates, Sozomenus and Theodoretus,” 226; or Chesnut, 201, for a composition date between 441/2-449.
representation of Ulfila and his role in the missionary narrative differ significantly from their portrayal of the Gothic bishop.\textsuperscript{48}

Even at a quick glance, the three “synoptical” historians appear significantly different from one another. Like Philostorgius, however, they all sought to continue the legacy of church history left by Eusebius, including his emphasis on the providential spread of the Christian faith. Additionally, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret included a wealth of evidence that reveals their view of the critical events of the Roman Empire and serves as a valuable source for examining the accounts of Philostorgius. The divergent ways in which all of these writers presented the same events in particular merits careful attention.\textsuperscript{49}

**Philostorgius and the Writing of His History**

Learning as much as possible about Philostorgius is essential to incorporating him into these wider historiographical conversations. The context of Philostorgius’s life is crucial because he has left scholars so little factual information about himself. From his own history we know that he was born in the village of Borissus in Cappadocia around 368 into the Eunomian family of Carterius and his wife, Eulampios. Eulampios’s father Anysius served as a presbyter for a Nicene congregation. Philostorgius relates that during the reign of Valens, Carterius, who “revered the teaching of Eunomius...persuaded his wife to change her allegiance to his doctrine,” ultimately leading to the conversion of her entire side of the family.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{48} Trompf, 215. See discussion in Chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{49} See McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 131-135.

\textsuperscript{50} Philostorgius, 9.9.
As a young man around the age of 20, Philostorgius traveled to Constantinople.\(^{51}\) While he does not relate the reasons for his travel to the city, Philostorgius emphasizes that he met Eunomius there and expresses his admiration and enthusiastic impressions of the man. He also marveled at the sights and sounds of Constantinople and satisfied his intellectual curiosity at the rich libraries of the capital city.\(^{52}\) In addition to the *Ecclesiastical History*, he also wrote the now lost works of polemic against Porphyry and a eulogy of Eunomius.\(^{53}\) Finally, Philostorgius shows a broader outlook on the world than do other ecclesiastical historians and provides more extensive coverage of events in the West Roman Empire. Unfortunately, this is the extent of the few facts one can confidently affirm about him. However, a quick overview of the world Philostorgius inhabited may provide some more insight into why and how he came to write his *Ecclesiastical History*.

As one living and writing in an empire that had embraced the Nicene vision of the past as well as the ecclesiastical policies of Theodosius the Great, Philostorgius must have had little hope that his views would find a wide readership. Nevertheless, he may have found encouragement in the founding of the new university in Constantinople by Theodosius II in 425 and the emperor’s general reputation for promoting scholarship.\(^{54}\)

\(^{51}\) Philostorgius, 10.6.

\(^{52}\) Philostorgius, 3.11; Nobbs, "Philostorgius' View of the Past," 256; Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xviii.

\(^{53}\) Philostorgius, 3.21, 10.10.

\(^{54}\) Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xix; Nobbs, "Philostorgius' View of the Past," 259. For a discussion of how Theodosius's educational reforms were actually about controlling education not promoting learning see Christopher Kelly, "Rethinking Theodosius," in *Theodosius II: Rethinking the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity*, ed. Christopher Kelly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 29-30. Even if Theodosius's imperial court had a variety of motives for appearing to promote scholarship, Philostorgius still should be viewed within the context of an environment in Constantinople claiming to promote learning, just as Socrates, Sozomen, Olympiodorus and others are.
Additionally, Alanna Nobbs argues that Philostorgius may have reasonably expected pagans to read his work because he used such sources as Olympiodorus and strayed from the Eusebian model of church history by including a significant number of geographical and ethnographic digressions as well as extensively narrating secular and political events.\(^{55}\) The reign of Theodosius II is typically associated with the Theodosian law code, the beginnings of the Christological controversies, and the threat of Huns sacking Constantinople. If he continued to live in the imperial capital, Philostorgius would have had firsthand knowledge of imperial policy and current affairs. He would have known that imperial legislation increasingly concerned itself with the eradication of heresy and the creation of a unified Christian Empire. As Fergus Millar shows, heterodox belief appeared as the most dangerous internal threat to the well being of the Empire, followed by paganism and Judaism. Millar states, “The hostile appellations given by outsiders to endless Christian subgroups alleged to be guilty of false belief haunt the pages of contemporary Christian writers, just as they do the pronouncements of the Emperor.”\(^{56}\)

One can gain access into Philostorgius’s perspective on this hostile climate within the empire through a closer reading of the *Ecclesiastical History*. He was indeed writing as a kind of lone warrior for his faith, paralleling his fascination with the Maccabees. In fact, he apparently began his history with the account of this faithful minority of Jews who stood in opposition to Hellenism and the threat of polytheism that

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\(^{55}\) Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 260.

\(^{56}\) Fergus Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408-450)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 130.
came with it.\textsuperscript{57} It seems clear how Philostorgius must have felt about imperial edicts that stripped various civil rights from the Eunomians.\textsuperscript{58} In his efforts to stem the tide of heresy, the emperor employed such rhetoric as this from a decree of 423:

\begin{quote}
We command to be enforced the provisions which were established by the sainted grandfather and father of Our Clemency concerning all heretics whose name and false doctrines We execrate, namely, the Eunomians, the Arians, the Macedonians, and all of the others whose sects it disgusts Us to insert in Our most pious sanction, all of whom have different names but the same perfidy. All of them shall know that if they persist in the aforesaid madness, they shall be subject to the penalty which has been threatened.\textsuperscript{59}
\end{quote}

Emotional rhetoric aside, it is striking how the imperial edict refers to a multitude of names for the sects, as Philostorgius has shown that using the appropriate designation ‘Eunomian’ is important to him. Millar suggests that those hostile to non-Nicene Christians continued to use the effective tool of grouping them all together and treating them as identical as part of a deliberate government strategy in the battle for doctrinal unity in the Empire.\textsuperscript{60}

It is less clear what Philostorgius thought about another theological controversy arising during his own lifetime—the Christological debates surrounding Nestorius. Amidon dates the publication of Philostorgius’s work between 425 and 433; Nestorius became Patriarch of Constantinople in 428, an event that rapidly led to the Council of

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{57} Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, xix; Philostorgius, 1.1.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Eunomians are mentioned seventeen times in laws dealing with heretics promulgated between 381-423. Richard Flower, “The Insanity of Heretics Must Be Restrained: Heresiology in the \textit{Theodosian Code},” in \textit{Theodosius II: Rethinking the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity}, ed. Christopher Kelly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 188, n. 55.
\item \textsuperscript{59} CTh 16.5.60. \textit{The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions}. Translated with commentary, glossary, and bibliography by Clyde Pharr (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), 462. See discussion in Millar, 150-151.
\item \textsuperscript{60} Millar, 150-152, 159. See Flower, 172-194, for an argument that a law of 428 (CTh 16.5.65) catalogues heretics as part of the rhetoric of the imposition of orthodoxy in a similar fashion to the heresiologies of Epiphanius and Augustine.
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\end{footnotesize}
Ephesus in 431.\textsuperscript{61} Therefore, Philostorgius may have witnessed these events while writing his history. But even if he had concluded and published the work before the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy, he would still have been aware of the imperial dedication to eradicating all non-Nicene forms of belief. Millar writes that the imperial rhetoric during Theodosius’s reign served as a means of obtaining the unity the emperor felt it was his duty to enforce. Even though Theodosius preferred to utilize the powers of rhetoric and persuasion to accomplish his goals, educated non-Nicene Christians such as Philostorgius would still be facing the negation of any legitimacy of their faith community.\textsuperscript{62} Theodosius’s imperial pronouncements attest to the idea of a multiplicity of heresies and schisms still threatening the Church. Yet simultaneously, the Theodosian Empire had already witnessed the triumph of Nicene Christianity and the subsequent strict imposition of orthodoxy. What perspective did Philostorgius have on these two seemingly incompatible realities? Did he look to a memory of a non-Nicene past in the context of fighting to reclaim something that was already irrevocably lost? Or did he write with hope precisely because he found himself amid a sea of Christianities? Whatever the case, the vitriolic anti-Eunomian rhetoric of the Theodosian court would certainly have led Philostorgius to reflect on the nature and therefore the history of his own faith community.

Additionally, during the reign of Theodosius II one not only finds an Ecclesiastical History written by Philostorgius but also by Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. On the one hand, it may only appear that this era witnessed a boom in the writing of

\textsuperscript{61} Amidon, xix; McLynn dates the Ecclesiastical History to “about 430,” “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 127.

\textsuperscript{62} Millar, 157.
ecclesiastical history because of a peculiarity in the survival of the sources. But, on the other hand, such a proliferation appears to be more than mere coincidence. Hartmut Leppin argues that it may well be a sign of “the consolidation of Christian faith in Roman state and society,” while simultaneously revealing the diversity of possible political and religious affinities even during the Theodosian age.63 Others see it as part of a wider development in the fifth century of being especially preoccupied with seeking to define and preserve the past.64 As Philostorgius wrote from a non-Nicene perspective, after Rufinus’s translation and continuation of Eusebius but before Socrates, Sozomen, or Theodoret composed their histories, his work stands in an interesting and unique position within this historiography.65

As one of the first to continue Eusebius’s ecclesiastical history, Philostorgius ought to be the first place historians would look both for developments in historiography and for shifts in the relation between religion and empire; but this has not been the case. Leppin argues that the main adversaries in the other three ecclesiastical histories are “heretics” and not pagans, while Amidon asserts that for Philostorgius the main enemy is the Gnostic with dangerous pagan messages and idolatry hiding behind the label of “orthodox.”66 While Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret had clearly accepted Eusebius’s model and consequently presented the triumph of Christianity against paganism—but not yet heresy—as an accomplished fact, Philostorgius perceived the

63 Hartmut Leppin, “Church Historians (I): Socrates, Sozomenus, and Theodoretus,” 220.
64 Kelly, 63.
65 Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 252.
world from a different perspective. By looking back to the past and the memory of his non-Nicene community, Philostorgius could represent his own present struggles as a continuing fight against the forces of Gnostics and pagans threatening the true monotheistic faith. The significance of Theodosius II’s reign as the context for Philostorgius’s history perhaps reflects both the rigid aspects of this age—an era of the official establishment of Nicene orthodoxy—as well as the continued diversity of religious belief during the same period. Perhaps Philostorgius thought that his faith had a chance if Christians still continued to debate the nature of true Christianity in his lifetime and to vie for the support of the emperor.
CHAPTER 3
IN THE WAKE OF NICAEA: REASSESSING HEROES AND VILLAINS

The Problem of “Arianism”

This chapter will only deal with events leading up to the Council of Nicaea through 361 as the end of the reign of Constantius marks a turning point in Philostorgius’s history. Relating the true origins and issues of the “Arian controversy” is a central concern throughout Philostorgius’s account of the conflict. An unfortunate use of imprecise terminology and, even more importantly, of interpretations clearly privileging the Nicene point of view persists in the secondary literature on both late antique histories and their historians. This phenomenon is surprising in light of all the scholarship that has problematized the histories of the past, which presented a teleological narrative of triumphant Nicene Christianity. These works have not only rightly pointed out that the “heretics” obviously did not view themselves as such, but have also shown that the conclusion to the Nicene controversy was not foregone and was actually riddled with tendentious moments until at least the end of the fourth century. For example, what reason would a Christian living during the reign of a non-Nicene emperor have to imagine the eventual establishment of Nicene Christianity as orthodox? A more objective stance would require a movement away from privileging Nicene sources as well as a commitment to an analysis that does not perpetuate the

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1 Also see Carlos R. Galvão-Sobrinho, *Doctrine and Power: Theological Controversy and Christian Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 9, for how this period was distinct in the Arian Controversy.

2 Throughout this and subsequent chapters, I focus on Philostorgius’s representation of events and only address the historical veracity of those events as part of my examination of how scholars have used his *History* in the past.

3 Also, Van Dam, *Becoming Christian*, provides a valuable discussion on the subject, 8-45. I do not, however, agree with his assertion that rather than belief, “External social and cultural factors were more influential in determining the road actually taken,” 45.
polemic of such figures as Athanasius of Alexandria and Theodosius II but instead strives to depict the perspective of those long branded simply as “Arians.” Such an approach also has the advantage of revealing the actual richness and diversity of religious life in Late Antiquity, which is otherwise obscured by the problematic dichotomy of “orthodox” Nicene Christians versus “heretical” Arians.

In light of recent scholarship, then, one does not expect such statements as appear in Gabriele Marasco’s work when he argues that Philostorgius “departed from [the other ecclesiastical historians] only because of his Arian faith.” Such an affirmation reveals the author’s assumptions about the primacy of Nicene ecclesiastical historians because it implies that Philostorgius followed Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, when in fact he wrote before them; indeed Marasco himself acknowledges this fact. Similarly, Marasco writes that Philostorgius’s “work was very polemical: it was composed to defend Arianism, particularly Aetius and Eunomius and their teachings and politics.” Again, the implication is that the work of the other ecclesiastical historians was somehow free of polemic and promotion of a particular cause. Also, Marasco uses the terms “Arianism” and “Arian” throughout the article to describe Philostorgius’s Christianity without any qualification or definition of terms. Philostorgius himself would

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4 Marasco, “The Church Historians (II): Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus,” 259. See also, Marasco, Filostorgio: cultura, fede e politica in uno storico ecclesiastico del V secolo, 23.

5 Marasco, “The Church Historians (II): Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus,” 259; Marasco, Filostorgio: cultura, fede e politica in uno storico ecclesiastico del V secolo, 96.

not have taken kindly to being referred to as an Arian, and as noted earlier, he explicitly expressed his preference for the term Eunomian at the beginning of his history.\textsuperscript{7}

Thomas Ferguson provides a much more useful and insightful analysis of Philostorgius by placing him back into his context as an ecclesiastical historian of the fifth century who sought to reclaim the past for his faith community, just as other Nicene historians such as Rufinus were reconstructing the past.\textsuperscript{8} Thus, Ferguson rightly emphasizes the importance of bishops’ roles as wonder-workers and ascetics within the Eunomian community. Ferguson’s approach is a step in the right direction of freeing non-Nicene figures as well as their interpreter, Philostorgius, from centuries of privileging Nicene historiography.

**Emperors, Empire, and Bishops**

Writing during the reign of Theodosius II (408-450), Philostorgius describes the reign of Constantius existing in a world very different from his own harsh reality since it was still full of opportunities for Eunomian Christianity. By his time, this world was already beginning to vanish into the past, Nicene Christianity had already been established for some time and “its opponents had long hardened into sects.”\textsuperscript{9}

As the ecclesio-political events described in Philostorgius occurred during the reigns of Constantine and Constantius, some context is in order. The imperial policy of Constantius II, his missions, and the distinctive features of his reign are particularly important for assessing the major developments of the Arian controversy in the middle

\textsuperscript{7} Philostorgius, Title, “The History of Philostorgius, the Eunomian from Cappadocia.” Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 1, n. 1.

\textsuperscript{8} Ferguson, 125-163.

\textsuperscript{9} McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 127.
decades of the fourth century. Following the death of Constantine in 337, the Roman Empire fell to three of his sons—Constantine II, Constantius II, and Constans. Predictably, the territorial division of the empire into arenas of power for each brother did not ensure a peaceful coexistence, and thus, through a combination of chance and military success, Constantius became sole ruler in 350. His reputation has been overshadowed to this day by the successful rhetoric of his opponents, such as Athanasius of Alexandria, who “damned him as an ‘Arian,’ a persecutor, a devil incarnate, or even an Antichrist.”¹⁰ Scholars have since acknowledged the daunting challenges the emperor faced and pointed out the approval of his rule among respected members of the Christian leadership such as Cyril of Jerusalem.¹¹ From the very beginning of his reign, Constantius engaged in political struggles with both his brothers and usurpers of the throne such as Magnentius. Constantius also waged continuous war with the Persian Empire for twelve years and dealt with military emergencies along the Rhine and Danube frontiers. And, finally, he actively sought a solution to the doctrinal controversy that had threatened the unity of the empire since the Council of Nicaea.

Fortunately, Constantius had inherited certain imperial policies and approaches from his father Constantine that governed his approach to all his challenges. According to Timothy Barnes, “He felt that he had a duty to spread true belief both inside and outside the borders of the Roman Empire.”¹² Thus, the emperor participated in numerous church councils and even introduced the concept of an empire-wide,

¹⁰ Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 106.
¹² Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 120.
enforceable definition of orthodoxy. The multiple councils of Sirmium (357-359) resulted in the Homoean creed, which affirmed the likeness of the Son to the Father instead of the *homoousios* (same substance) formulation of Nicaea and prohibited the use of *ousia* (substance) terminology. Although this attempted compromise failed to accomplish the goal of unification, the emperor’s degree of involvement in the disputes confirm Constantius’s dedication to the propagation of true belief. Constantius followed this principle just as energetically outside the Roman Empire, not only sending Theophilus the Indian with a mission to Himyar in South Arabia but also attempting to influence the consecration of a bishop in the Ethiopian Kingdom of Aksum.\(^\text{13}\)

Throughout his reign, Constantius’s guiding principles contributed to this kind of interconnection between ecclesiastical and imperial struggles for power within the Empire. A telling example occurred early in his reign, when his brother Constans threatened to begin a civil war if Constantius did not recall the bishop Athanasius from exile. While it is tempting to view this intertwined relationship as an expression of imperial domination over the church, one must take into account the limited success of Constantius’s goals. As Barnes asserts when describing the conflict between the Emperor Constantius and the bishop Athanasius, “It is thus clear that in the middle of the fourth century a Roman emperor did not enjoy complete control over Egypt, where a popular bishop of Alexandria could resist his will successfully and with impunity.”\(^\text{14}\) The reign of Theodosius I (379-395) along with the legally binding Nicene pronouncements

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\(^{14}\) Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 168.
of the Council of Constantinople in 381 brought this distinct Constantinian period of Christian history to a close.

**Nicaea and its Aftermath**

While Philostorgius does not explicitly state that he seeks to respond to the Nicene translation and continuation of Eusebius’s Ecclesiastical History by Rufinus of Aquileia (345-410/411), certain key passages strongly indicate that this is the case.¹⁵ Philostorgius begins the narrative of the Arian controversy with the story of the election of Alexander of Alexandria (d. 328) to show that no sudden preaching of unsound doctrine by Arius (c. 250-c. 336) caused the controversy, as Rufinus presented it.¹⁶ While Rufinus also mentions the election of Alexander, he emphasizes that the controversy broke out when “a presbyter of Alexandria named Arius, a man religious in appearance and aspect rather than in virtue, but shamefully desirous of glory, praise, and novelties, began to propose certain impious doctrines regarding the faith of Christ, things which had never before been talked about.”¹⁷ Philostorgius, however, uniquely out of the historians, reports that when the see of Alexandria became vacant following the death of Achillas of Alexandria in 313, the votes fell in favor of the Alexandrian presbyter Arius but that he “preferred Alexander to himself and managed to have them transferred to him.”¹⁸ By presenting Arius as the legitimate prelate of Alexandria who simultaneously favored Alexander, Philostorgius exonerates Arius by characterizing him as uncontentious and as a prominent member of the Alexandrian clergy. He shifts the

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¹⁵ For example, see Philostorgius, 3.4 and Rufinus, 10.9, 10.10.

¹⁶ Rufinus, 10.1.

¹⁷ Rufinus, 10.1.

¹⁸ Philostorgius, 1.3.
emphasis away from Arius as the main originator of the controversy and sets the stage for what he perceives as the true version of events. The beginning of the trouble occurred, according to Philostorgius, through a presbyter second in rank to Arius, who “was behind the quarrel between Bishop Alexander and Arius on account of which the consubstantialist doctrine was devised.”\(^{19}\) From a polemical point of view, Philostorgius could have countered Rufinus’s narrative by either placing the blame for the beginning of the conflict on Alexander or allowing Arius to take credit. Instead, he deemphasized the role of both Arius and Alexander by introducing this troublemaking presbyter. His emphasis is rather on the construction of the dangerous new term homoousios as the fundamental issue at stake. Both the story of the election of Alexander of Alexandria and of the origins of the controversy reveal Philostorgius’s concern not only to defend non-Nicene formulations of faith, but also to shift the focal point of the narrative away from Arius as the leading player. Subsequent passages demonstrate that the Cappadocian historian viewed the trajectory of events quite differently from Rufinus.\(^{20}\)

In his representation of the calling of the Nicene Council, Philostorgius continued to stress that this new consubstantial language lay at the heart of the matter and brought strife to the Church. His account shows that once the conflict had erupted, Alexander rigorously defended the righteousness of his position both theologically and in opposition to Arius’s insubordinate conduct as a presbyter. Philostorgius describes how Alexander traveled to Nicomedia and schemed with Ossius of Cordova (c.257-359) behind the scenes to ensure that the consubstantial terminology be adopted by a

\(^{19}\) Philostorgius, 1.4. For more on the presbyter see, Ferguson, 134; Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 8, n. 6.

\(^{20}\) Rufinus covers these events in 10.1-10.27.
council and that Arius face excommunication.\textsuperscript{21} Alexander was effective in persuading the bishops at Nicomedia in part because Arius’s party arrived later as they had taken a longer route to collect evidence of support from other bishops in the region.\textsuperscript{22} Thus, Philostorgius portrays Arius as representing a broad section of the clergy, while Alexander simply made every effort for his own position to succeed. Rufinus on the other hand explicitly states that the leading members of the Council approached it seriously and carefully, directing attention to its legality.\textsuperscript{23} Philostorgius shows that, in his view, the entire legitimacy of the Council of Nicaea was undermined by the private machinations of a few individuals. Clearly, from his anti-Nicene perspective, it was essential for his account to condemn the conciliar decrees of Nicaea and vindicate Arius and his sympathizers. But his account also contends that the trouble arose through the conspiracy of Alexander with Ossius. Additionally, Arius does not feature as prominently as one would expect in this history so frequently labeled “Arian”; in fact, in Philostorgius’s account—if Photius is epitomizing correctly—Arius is almost invisible at the Council and following his exile only appears twice more and not in the most favorable light.\textsuperscript{24} Philostorgius’s narrative rather highlights those supporters of Arius who belonged to the school of Lucian the Martyr (d. 312) and their role in the controversy.\textsuperscript{25} Therefore, Philostorgius did not only write to defend Arius and others who opposed Nicaea, but to express his view that the history of the Church followed a

\textsuperscript{21} Philostorgius, 1.7.

\textsuperscript{22} Philostorgius, 1.7a.

\textsuperscript{23} Rufinus, 10.5.

\textsuperscript{24} Discussed below.

\textsuperscript{25} Whether real or imaginary; what matters is that Philostorgius represents the continuity of his faith community from Lucian to Eunomius to himself. The constructed memory of this school of theology and holiness shapes his identity.
different plan from the one made popular by Rufinus, with different continuities, turning points, and moments of crisis.

While Philostorgius expressed his admiration for many of Arius’s supporters, he did not represent them simply as one-dimensional characters, as scholars imply in their assessments of his text. Rather, similarly to other late antique historians, he portrayed them as human beings whose actions were related to the will of God. The Council concluded with the subscription of the creed by all the delegates, except three—Arius, Secundus of Ptolemais, and Theonas of Marmarica. Philostorgius provides two explanations for this embarrassing outcome for the anti-Nicene party. He contends that other prominent Arian leaders such as Eusebius of Nicomedia subscribed the creed deceitfully, by writing so carelessly that those in charge could not see the difference between homoousios and homoiousios.  

26 He then states that they subscribed without agreeing to the formulation in their heart because the emperor’s sister, Constantia, advised them to do so.  

27 While these passages attempted to explain, if not excuse, the fact that these Arian supporters had signed the Nicene creed, Philostorgius also communicated to his readers that God’s wrath followed such actions. As Secundus was departing for exile, Philostorgius relates, he proclaimed to Eusebius of Nicomedia: “Eusebius, you subscribed in order to avoid exile! As God is my witness, you will have to suffer banishment on my account.” And Secundus was right—Eusebius was exiled three months later.  

28 His inclusion of this prophecy expresses the ecclesiastical

26 Philostorgius, 1.9. homoiousios means ‘of similar substance.’

27 Philostorgius, 1.9.

28 Philostorgius, 1.10.
historian’s fascination with signs and his deep conviction that God’s will can be fully known and is revealed in nature as well as the lives of bishops and emperors.

Clearly, the fear of imperial authority did not only apply to the supporters of Arius, as Bishop Alexander acted in a similar way according to Philostorgius. He claims that Constantine had a change of heart when he learned of the bishops who subscribed dishonestly and so recalled Secundus and wrote letters in support of the terminology of “other in substance.” Alexander then agreed to the content of the letters and was reconciled with Arius, also recalled from exile. Subsequently, writes the historian, “When the fear of the emperor had waned, Alexander returned to his own doctrine,” and once again repudiated Arius. The historian recorded the details about Constantine’s realization that Eusebius and his associates were untruthful to demonstrate that divine anger followed such behaviour. Apparently, Eusebius and his fellow opponents to Nicaea were one day happily discussing theology and the next move for their party when a terrible earthquake and darkness overcame just the location of their meeting. Earthquakes and other natural phenomena are always a sign of God’s will in the *Ecclesiastical History*. This first one signaled God’s displeasure with Eusebius and company and led to their immediate repentance. They confessed to Constantine who angrily banished them for their deception, just as Secundus had prophesied. It is interesting that the emperor here serves as the instrument of divine wrath. This episode serves as an example of the need for honest cooperation between emperor and bishop in Philostorgius’s view of Christian Empire and for the fulfillment of God’s will on earth.

29 Philostorgius, 2.1.
30 Philostorgius, 2.1a.
31 Philostorgius, 2.1b.
Arius’s final appearance in Photius’s epitome of the Ecclesiastical History sums up Philostorgius’s view of the heresiarch. Following Alexander’s renewed commitment to Nicaea and Arius’s estrangement from the church, the presbyter “wrote songs for sailing, grinding, traveling, and so on, set them to the music he thought suitable to each, and through the pleasure given by the music stole away the simpler folk for his own heresy.” Following this description of Arius’s popular songs, Philostorgius proceeded to comment on Arius’s theology. He agreed with Arius’s emphasis on God’s oneness and impassability and the Son’s difference from the Father, but severely censured him for insisting that God is unknowable and incomprehensible. For Eunomians God’s essence and will could be known just as He is known as fundamentally ingenerate. Thus, despite the Arian label so frequently attached to Philostorgius, ultimately Arius does not belong to his understanding of his own faith community.

In contrast to his representation of Arius, Philostorgius reserves high praise for other opponents to Nicaea, specifically the disciples of the scholar and martyr Lucian. He relates that Arius led astray many of his supporters with the doctrine of God’s unknowability, and only Secundus of Ptolemais, Theonas of Marmarica, Eusebius of Nicomedia and other disciples of the martyr Lucian preserved their faith. Throughout the history Philostorgius continuously extols the merits of the members of this theological school. For example, he writes of Eusebius of Nicomedia as “surnamed ‘the Great’, a disciple of the martyr Lucian, conspicuous above all for his virtue, on account of which he received his surname.” He highlights Eusebius’s connection to the famous martyr

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32 Philostorgius, 2.2.
33 Philostorgius, 2.3.
34 Philostorgius, 1.8a; see also 2.14 for more of Lucian’s disciples.
and his virtuous character. Their involvement in the “Arian controversy” was part of their history, but it was not their defining characteristic. Philostorgius’s representation of the opponents of Nicaea contributes to his overall narrative of this faith community.

The entire structure of the first two books of the Ecclesiastical History further illumines Philostorgius’s theology of history and his understanding of Christian empire. He begins the history with a discussion of the book of Maccabees revealing his special interest in the story of a beleaguered minority fighting for the true faith. His explicit claim to be following the history of Eusebius of Caesarea signals to the reader that he is writing a history of the church and his immediate criticism of the founding church historian’s belief in God’s unknowability defines the nature of that church. His retelling of the story of Constantine’s vision of the cross points to his conviction that the divine will was evident in portents and the lives of emperors. Following Alexander’s renewed adherence to Nicaea and Arius’s excommunication, Philostorgius recounts the lurid story of Constantine’s execution of his son Crispus and his wife Fausta (step-mother to Crispus) not to leave the reader in any doubt about the error of Constantine’s ecclesiastical decisions. The historian then reports how Constantine showed favor to the homoean Arian Ulfila, an act in accordance with God’s will soon followed by the even greater act of allowing Eusebius of Nicomedia and company to return from exile. This section on Ulfila may more appropriately belong during the reign of Constantius, Philostorgius, 1.1, 1.1a.

Philostorgius, 1.2.

Philostorgius, 1.6, 1.6a.

Philostorgius, 2.4, 2.4a, 2.4b.

Philostorgius, 2.5. Recall of exiles: Philostorgius, 2.7, 2.7a.
but it seems that Philostorgius viewed any Roman emperor’s support of the Gothic bishop as in accordance with God’s will. Soon after, according to Philostorgius’s narrative, God showed his pleasure by granting Constantine the prosperity and divine guidance to found Constantinople itself. The emperor also founded another city, Helenopolis, for his mother Helena, who venerated the place “because it was there that the martyr Lucian had been borne to his burial by a dolphin after his death by martyrdom.” In the end, however, when Constantine approved the election of Athanasius of Alexandria he could not escape God’s anger for supporting the Nicene cause. Thus, in Philostorgius’s account of Constantine’s death, the emperor is poisoned by his own brothers. God gave Constantine great grace though the sign of the cross and every chance thereafter, but in the end his failure to see the threat posed by Nicaea led to his demise.

The Accession of Athanasius

One of the key events in the Arian controversy for Philostorgius as well as other historians was the accession of Athanasius to the see of Alexandria (328 AD). Additionally, Philostorgius directly links the disputed election to the subsequent Council of Tyre (335 AD), another famous and important moment in the controversy. The passage describing both of these events offers a useful comparison with Rufinus’s

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40 Philostorgius, 2.9, 2.9a.
41 Philostorgius, 2.12, 2.12a.
42 Philostorgius, 2.16, 2.16a.
43 Philostorgius, 2.11, 2.11a; Socrates, 1.23.3; Rufinus, 10.15.
44 It is possible that Photius omits something and that Philostorgius did not intend for one event to immediately follow the other (Amidon, Philostorgius, 27, n. 34), but I think he did intend to link them perhaps because Rufinus records both events as one following the other. For the council of Tyre, Philostorgius, 2.11; Rufinus, 10.17-18; Socrates, 1.28-32; Sozomen, 2.25; Theodoret, 1.29-31.
account. As is frequently mentioned, Philostorgius’s version differs significantly from other accounts and in some cases provides some details that do not occur in any others. Philostorgius’s representation of these events leads Photius to make one of his derogatory editorial remarks, which he inserts intermittently at certain points of the epitome. Photius begins the narrative of the election of Athanasius with the phrase “Our impious tool of falsehood says that...” in order to mark an especially contentious point of difference from the traditional Nicene narrative—the unflattering portrayal of Athanasius, known as the father of orthodoxy. But thankfully the patriarch was not so offended that he failed to record this alternate version.

Philostorgius relates that upon Alexander of Alexandria’s death there was a vote to elect his successor, but after some time went by the bishops had not yet come to a consensus. At that point, Athanasius forced his way into a church, sealed the doors so that two bishops inside could not leave, and demanded to be ordained. These bishops apparently “resisted vigorously,” and “when the violence offered them proved too much for their will and their strength, Athanasius got what he wanted.” The other bishops in the city obviously protested, but Athanasius had already obtained his position and then further secured it by forging a letter in his support, purportedly from representatives of the city, and then sending it to Emperor Constantine, who of course happily approved.

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45 Scholars have previously used this passage in two distinct ways, either as evidence to show that Athanasius was a problematic figure or to argue against that. In other words, Philostorgius’s account is treated as either especially wrong because it is biased or as having special access to the truth because it is from the opposing side. Again, I think it is more profitable to look at what Philostorgius was doing in this passage and the History as a whole. For an argument to prove the factual veracity of Philostorgius’s account see, Gonzalo Fernández Hernández, “La elección episcopal de Atanasio de Alejandría según Filostorgio,” Gerión 3 (1985): 211-229.

46 Philostorgius, 2.11.

47 Philostorgius, 2.11.
Philostorgius was responding to Rufinus’s account of Athanasius’s accession, which of course did not include any negative details about the bishop, but also hardly directly mentioned the event at all. Rufinus begins by simply asserting that Athanasius received the position after Bishop Alexander had died and then inserts a brief discussion of how all the heretical bishops were threatened by Athanasius’s proven ability to see through their perpetual deceit and therefore were always looking for lies to discredit him. Rufinus follows up this vague accusation with a flashback recounting Athanasius’s childhood which was meant to show that the man had always been destined for the episcopate. In the story, Bishop Alexander watched young boys playing church on the seashore and discovered that the young Athanasius was playing the role of bishop and was to Alexander’s relief performing all the ceremonies correctly. Athanasius then received an education and was brought up in the church, set apart like another Samuel. Rufinus concludes, “And so he was appointed by Alexander, as he was going to his fathers in a good old age, to wear the priestly ephod after him.”

Rufinus’s description of the his childhood was clearly intended to make an apologetic claim on behalf of Athanasius and against any detractors in the context of Athanasius’s appointment to the see of Alexandria, possibly indicating the writer’s awareness of and consequent silence regarding stories of impropriety in the bishop’s ordination. Yet this account of Philostorgius is often held up as the most obvious example of polemic as he is the only one to relate this particular version of events, although there are other sources suggesting irregularities with Athanasius’s election. Whatever actually

48 Rufinus, 10.15.

49 This account is also used to discredit Athanasius.
happened, Philostorgius presents Athanasius as an illegitimate bishop because of his improper ordination. Rufinus, on the other hand, does not seem to view proper episcopal procedure as an issue since he has no problem with stating that Athanasius was appointed by Alexander, even though this event occurred after the Council of Nicaea (a source of authority for Rufinus) which stipulated that all bishops had to be elected or approved by the other bishops in the province. It is important to note these details to illustrate how firmly the Nicene narrative is ingrained as foundational for what actually happened and as the account more or less free of polemic.

According to Philostorgius, the emperor eventually learned of Athanasius’s deceit and demanded that the bishop defend himself at the Council of Tyre. Athanasius of course did not wish to go, and when he finally showed up he did not present himself at the ecclesiastical court. Instead, the bishop “hire[d] a prostitute, whose bulging stomach betrayed her licentiousness, and loosed her upon Eusebius, who was supposed to be president of the synod there.” Philostorgius asserts that the bishop’s plan was to cause chaos so that he could escape. Rufinus’s version of the event certainly presents a more satisfying explanation in terms of the literary appeal for the presence of the prostitute at the synod. Rufinus relates that Athanasius’s enemies paid and coached a woman to testify that the bishop had raped her (interestingly, she is quoted as saying she lost her chastity while being described as “with the effrontery common to such women”). Athanasius is present but silent during her testimony to the council and when she is done another presbyter (at Athanasius’s request) confronts her asking if she

50 Canon 4.
51 Philostorgius, 2.11.
52 Amidon, Philostorgius, 28, n. 35.
really thinks it was he who assaulted her. Of course, because she has no idea which one of the bishops is Athanasius, she says that the presbyter was her attacker and the plot of malicious schismatics and heretics is foiled.\textsuperscript{53} Philostorgius’s response to Rufinus’s version of events apparently resolved the story in a similar way as Photius states that “the account given by our champion of falsehood of the way in which the plot was uncovered is the same as the one given by the orthodox of how the tart hired to attack the great Athanasius was convicted.”\textsuperscript{54} Philostorgius’s alternative to Rufinus’s version of events centers on the idea that Athanasius had no regard for proper ecclesiastical procedure; he was therefore trying to avoid the council examining the previous charges against him but ended up adding slander to the list of grievances.\textsuperscript{55}

The charges against Athanasius only continued to pile up. Photius records the detail that the bishop was accused of imprisoning and torturing to death the confessor Callinicus, Bishop of Pelusium.\textsuperscript{56} Photius summarizes the other charges in a way that would only make sense to people familiar with these events from other accounts: “Not only that, but the hand of Arsenius was produced at this time, and the business of the Mareotis and Ischyras and the sacred cup was brought up, and other matters of the sort...”\textsuperscript{57} Rufinus provides a fuller account of the famous Arsenius story. According to

\textsuperscript{53} Rufinus, 10.18.

\textsuperscript{54} Philostorgius, 2.11. Oddly, the prostitute in Philostorgius’s account seems to have a problem with admitting that the assembled bishops could be guilty of impropriety whereas Rufinus’s prostitute just names the wrong man. When asked by Eusebius of Caesarea whether or not her attacker was one of the men assembled she responded with “What are you saying, my lord! I am not so mad as to charge men such as these with addiction to lust!” This is an odd way to resolve the story, as it implies that Athanasius did not instruct the prostitute which man she was supposed to be accusing.

\textsuperscript{55} Philostorgius, 2.11.

\textsuperscript{56} Philostorgius or Photius report that Callinicus was dead when he was not in fact.

\textsuperscript{57} Philostorgius, 2.11.
Rufinus, Arsenius, who had been a lector in Athanasius’s church, was hiding out because he was afraid of getting in trouble for some minor offense. Athanasius’s enemies decided to use this situation to plot against him. They presented a severed human arm to the assembled clergy and claimed that the bishop had chopped off Arsenius’s arm to use it for magic. In the meantime, Arsenius had heard about what was transpiring, so Athanasius brought him out alive and well just at the moment when his accusers had presented the arm. Athanasius also held up Arsenius’s arms for all to see and so the entire assembly was in an uproar.\(^{58}\) Judging by Photius’s summary, Philostorgius must have recounted the accusations but it is not clear whether or not he even mentioned the stories exonerating Athanasius.

According to Philostorgius, Athanasius attempted to defend himself by claiming that all these accusations were in response to the bishops resentment that he had refused ordination from them.\(^{59}\) In the end, however, Athanasius’s defenses are not enough for in both Philostorgius’s and Rufinus’s version Athanasius is condemned by the council as having committed the deeds and is forced to flee. In order to explain that Athanasius’s excellent evidence in his favor failed to convince the assembly, Rufinus claims that people began to shout out that Athanasius was using sorcery at the meeting. In the end, both Philostorgius’s and Rufinus’s narratives of the election of Athanasius and the Council of Tyre show that the writers used literary construction to express competing views of the righteousness of the events and people involved. They also both reveal important assumptions and views of both authors on the nature of the church.

\(^{58}\) Rufinus, 10.16-10.18.

\(^{59}\) Philostorgius, 2.11. Amidon points out that this assertion and the account of Athanasius’s election may refer to the bishop in fact refusing to receive ordination from bishops whom he viewed as schismatics or heretics, *Philostorgius*, 26, n. 31.
Again, it is important to note that the view that Philostorgius’s account is exceptionally unreliable stems primarily from the epitomizer, who concluded this section with the statement, “Such are the fables that our deceitful Cacostorgius spins about Saint Athanasius.”

The Arian Controversy during the reign of Constantius

One of the main differences between Rufinus’s and Philostorgius’s accounts of the events of the Arian controversy is that even Photius’s abbreviation and summary of Philostorgius’s account it is still more detailed and substantial in many parts than Rufinus’s. In particular, Rufinus does not provide much detail about the Council of Ariminum (359 A.D.) and hardly any events between that council and the death of Constantius. Perhaps he did this on purpose as many of the events did in fact involve such heterousian figures as Aetius, Enunomis, and Constantius; perhaps Rufinus deliberately did not cover these in depth and therefore Philostorgius saw himself as correcting an imbalance and inaccuracy.

Constantius’s reign marks the beginning of a distinct period in the Arian controversy for Philostorgius. He sees this period as a time of potential for the Eunomian community and ultimately of turmoil and disappointment. The introduction of Athanasius serves as a transition point in the narrative as he features prominently in all his nefariousness during the reign of both Constantine and Constantius. Philostorgius claims that when Constantine had died and the bishops he had exiled were allowed to return, Athanasius went to Alexandria and “made his way just as he was straight from the ship to the church and resumed the throne, having no regard for those who had

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60 Philostorgius, 2.11.
excommunicated him." Philostorgius focuses on how Athanasius and other bad figures consistently ignore proper procedure and regard for association with the right people.

Philostorgius also suggests that only the worst people would associate with Athanasius thereby demonstrating the bishop's illegitimacy. After returning from yet another exile, Athanasius went on a campaign to garner support for his pro-Nicene position. Philostorgius hyperbolically claims that no one would agree with the bishop, then proceeds to describe the people who did in fact agree with him. He (or Photius) names two only people who chose to side with the bishop and concludes that Athanasius "seduced many others to his doctrine in a short time." Philostorgius's use of the language of seduction here suggests Athanasius's inability to actually convince people of the correctness of his doctrine in contrast to the abilities of Aetius and Eunomius which are described soon after. The two named men who sided with Athanasius are described as the worst kind of characters. First, Aetius, Bishop of Palestine (not the friend of Eunomius) apparently thought that siding with Athanasius would divert public attention away from allegations of sexual impropriety on his part. This Aetius, however, paid the price for his duplicity and allegiance "when his genitals putrefied and swarmed with worms, and thus he died." This is an example of the recurring cautionary deaths that play an important role in Philostorgius's narrative, but it is also meant to reveal what kind of people Athanasius associated with. It also illustrates a repeated theme throughout the narrative, namely that the people who supported the

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61 Philostorgius, 2.18.
62 Philostorgius, 3.12.
63 Philostorgius, 3.12.
cause of Nicaea rarely if ever supported it for doctrinal reasons, but rather for immoral or expedient reasons. Second, Maximus, Bishop of Jerusalem, also took the side of Athanasius even though he had suffered persecution earlier in his life, “one of his eyes having been gouged out for the faith.”\textsuperscript{64} In this case, Philostorgius seems to express shock that someone who was a confessor for the faith could support Athanasius. The implication is that Maximus must be defective in character in some way and that Athanasius’s seduction can break even those who were thought to be above reproach. Athanasius is not directly present in the extant narrative after this episode.

Philostorgius introduces Aetius (not the one who just died) at this point in the narrative as a hero of his faith community and provides evidence to contrast him with the lawless Athanasius. Throughout the narrative of the Arian controversy, Philostorgius contrasts the behavior and abilities of exceptional figures such as Aetius and Eunomius, with the incompetent, cowardly, and wicked actions of figures such as Athanasius, Basil of Ancyra, and Acacius. Thus, after demonstrating that Athanasius associates with questionable bishops, Aetius is shown to associate only with the right people who are on the side of the true faith. Philostorgius relates that when Aetius came to Antioch he witnessed that the divisions within the community between the various parties only went so far: “...even if those of Arius’s school differed in their views from those favoring the consubstantialist doctrine, still they shared with them in prayers, hymns, deliberations, and almost everything else except for the sacred sacrifice.”\textsuperscript{65} Aetius then insisted that this was unacceptable and that there should not be any association with anyone not

\textsuperscript{64} Philostorgius, 3.12.

\textsuperscript{65} Philostorgius, 3.14.
firmly against the Nicene party. Philostorgius presents Aetius as the one who is intelligent and brave enough to draw distinctions necessary to maintain doctrinal purity, unlike other bishops who make choices out of expedience and other motivations. From Philostorgius’s point of view, Aetius’s actions served as evidence of his integrity and credibility in contrast to those who made compromises. The church historian perceived compromise in such important matters as tantamount to succumbing to heresy and polytheism.

Philostorgius then describes Aetius’s origins from a humble background, his resourcefulness, and his intellectual abilities. But more importantly for the Arian controversy, Philostorgius mentions all of Aetius’s bishops and teachers in order to show that he had learned from those who had been part of the same faith community. Ultimately, all of Aetius’s connections and theological training go back to the esteemed martyr Lucian of Antioch and his disciples. Aetius accepted the ordination into the diaconate from his teacher, Leontius of Antioch (one of Lucian’s disciples), but later refused to be ordained bishop by others who associated with homoousians. This shows that Aetius only associated with people who were not potential heretics and that he was willing to stand up for his beliefs, even if it was not necessarily in his best interests to do so.

66 This seemed to have caused a split in the Arian party.
67 Philostorgius, 3.15-17. He also practiced goldsmithing and medicine.
68 Paulinus of Tyre, Athanasius of Anazarbus, Antony of Tarsus, Leontius of Antioch. For a detailed discussion of Philostorgius’s representation of a faith community focused on Lucian of Antioch see Ferguson, Past is Prologue.
69 Philostorgius, 3.15, 3.17, 3.19. Secundus and Serras are the bishops with questionable integrity. This also explains why Aetius was never bishop, at least from Philostorgius’s point of view. See Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession,” for an interpretation of how the Eunomian church might have viewed episcopal leadership.
Philostorgius claims that Aetius was so brilliant and skilled in rhetoric that the envy and jealousy of others pursued him wherever he went. Even though Aetius clearly had the intellectual abilities and all the right teachers, he still experienced a serious setback early on in his career:

And a Borborian engaged him in debate concerning his own doctrine and utterly defeated him, at which he sank so low in spirits that he thought life not worth living, since he had seen falsehood prevail over truth. But when Aetius was in this mood, a vision came to him...that dissipated his dejection and showed him in signs the invincibility of the wisdom that would now be his. From then on it was given to Aetius to be defeated by no one in debate.\(^{70}\)

This episode is meant to mark the moment when Aetius is given a sign of divine favor. Since a Borborian was a member of an antinomian Gnostic sect and the next person whom Aetius beats in debate was a Manichaean, the passage signifies that, for Philostorgius, the real focus of the Arian controversy and subsequent events was a battle between the forces of evil polytheism (whether Gnosticism or homoousianism) and the worship of the one true God.\(^{71}\)

When he first introduces Eunomius into the narrative, Philostorgius emphasizes the connection between Eunomius and Aetius and claims that Eunomius heard about Aetius's wisdom and sought him out.\(^{72}\) Eunomius was also the kind of man of faith who learned from the right teachers and refused to cooperate with those whose theology was questionable. For example, Eunomius refuses ordination to the diaconate until he is

\(^{70}\) Philostorgius, 3.15. He then goes on to defeat people in debate, 3.15, 3.16.

\(^{71}\) Amidon, Philostorgius, 54, n. 57.

\(^{72}\) Philostorgius, 3.20.
assured of the bishop’s doctrinal allegiance to heterousianism. Philostorgius also stresses that the fact that Aetius and Eunomius had obtained a high degree of education from the right teachers which allowed them to sort out all theological debates better than anyone else. The historian does not hide his admiration for Eunomius. But he also reveals that he viewed righteous bishops as possessing necessary qualities, such as erudition and integrity, to lead the church and the fight against the forces of polytheism.

Philostorgius seemingly interrupts the narrative about the Arian controversy to relate political events in the reign of Constantius, including events surrounding the caesar Gallus. While all of these events have relevance to Philostorgius’s understanding of church history as everything was interconnected, the focus here is on the direct events of the Arian controversy which resume around the time of the death of Leontius of Antioch. Philostorgius states that after the bishop’s death, Eudoxius was appointed bishop. Apparently this bishop was sympathetic to Arianism, then to homoiousianism, but was then convinced to join the heteroousians. Photius finds Philostorgius’s description of this bishop troubling: “Philostorgius, in describing Eudoxius as mild and decent in his manner and in every respect capable, shows himself quite out of order when he then accuses him of cowardice.” In other words, Photius does not appreciate that Philostorgius characterized this person both positively and

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73 Philostorgius, 4.5, Eudoxius. Eunomius does the same thing later when he was made bishop. Philostorgius claims Eunomius said he insisted that Aetius be released soon before accepting the episcopacy, 5.3.

74 Philostorgius, 3.20a. He claimed they “cleared the rubble of time from orthodox teaching;” it is unclear what this means precisely.

75 Philostorgius, 4.4.
negatively, as though it is somehow unfair. It is likely that Philostorgius referred to Eudoxius’s cowardice in light of his later actions. He then contrasted his description of Eudoxius with a portrait of his father, Caesarius. This man, who had the reputation for sexual impropriety, managed to overcome his weakness and face martyrdom with courage. In the end, he was redeemed from his moral failings because he stood up for his faith. It appears that Philostorgius inserted this story in contrast to the character of Eudoxius, who shows himself to be incapable of standing up for his beliefs. Philostorgius did not simply characterize people in one way and he also seemed to have little tolerance for Christian leaders who did not have the bravery to stand up for what they believed in.\textsuperscript{76}

In addition to all of the discussions about correct theology on the relationship between the Father and the Son, Philostorgius also includes discussions of other differences of doctrine and practice. He claims that Flavian of Antioch was the first to come up with this alternative Nicene doxology: “Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!” While previously it was common to say, “Glory be to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit,” or “Glory be to the Father and to the Son in the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{77} The historian presented this as evidence that the Nicene position was a deviation—just as the Nicene historians present Arianism as a deviation. Additionally, Eunomius taught his followers other doctrines he deemed important that Photius finds particularly repugnant. Eunomius denied the Virgin Mary’s perpetual virginity and referred to the Son as the servant of the Father and the Holy Spirit as the servant of the

\textsuperscript{76} Philostorgius, 4.4, 4.4a.

\textsuperscript{77} Philostorgius, 3.13.
Son. Philostorgius shows that the Arian controversy was not just about “Arianism” but about bishops like Eunomius who were taught by the right teachers to maintain adherence to a longlasting faith community. Photius, on the other hand, describes Eunomius as “hateful to God”, full of “heresy and godlessness”, and “accursed” for promoting these doctrines. Philostorgius may have quoted some sermons which described these teachings of Eunomius and his followers because Photius comments that “Their style as well in these discourse lacks all oratorical grace; their unclearness, verbosity, and impure language render them decidedly disagreeable, ridiculous, and untidy and give evidence of the darkness, perplexity, and madness of the soul [that composed them].” It is important to point out these instances of Photius’s vitriolic commentary in the *Ecclesiastical History*, as they have helped shape subsequent interpretations of the text.

**Interpreting the Arian Controversy in Philostorgius’s *History***

As the complexity of the narrative demonstrates, the Cappadocian historian did not write a simplistic account of the “Arian controversy” or any other events for that matter. Philostorgius was writing to present an accurate narrative of the true church in response to Rufinus’s version of the history which he saw as inadequate and false. The preservation of the correct memory of his faith community as always remained central to the purpose of his history, but he did not just provide “a eulogy of the heretics.” In fact, he used the memory of such heretics as Arius to express his views on the right relationship between church and state, and his particular theology of history. From the

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78 Philostorgius, 6.2.
79 Philostorgius, 6.2.
perspective of Philostorgius, such figures as Eusebius of Nicomedia, Lucian the Martyr, Aetius, and Eunomius deserved a prominent place in his history because they served to highlight moments of success for his own Eunomian faith community in comparison to his view of the world after the reign of Theodosius I. By exalting these bishops as men who visibly displayed God’s favor and were an integral part of God’s redemptive work in the Roman Empire, Philostorgius offered a non-Nicene interpretation of the events surrounding the dispute between Arius and Alexander. These events were part of the larger story of competing histories in late antiquity.
CHAPTER 4
SPREADING THE FAITH: PHILOSTORGIUS ON MISSION AND MISSIONARIES

Philostorgius is often cited by modern historians for his accounts of otherwise little-known missionary activity in late antiquity, namely the missions of Ulfila and Theophilus the Indian. This chapter will examine his representation of mission more broadly and assess how these Christianization narratives fit into his History and reveal his views on religion and empire. In addition to focusing on the important figures, Theophilus and Ulfila, I will also analyze other instances of conversion in the text. Finally, as the mission narratives occur as direct parallels in other ecclesiastical historians I will compare Philostorgius’s mission accounts to those of Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. This comparison will illuminate various perspectives on mission and offer some insight into the development of apostolic status for the bishop Ulfila.

The Missions of Theophilus and Ulfila in Non-Nicene Memory

For example, his account of Theophilus’s mission to the Kingdom of Himyar (modern day Yemen) offers one of the first references to Christianity in South Arabia. The historian begins the story with the assertion that Emperor Constantius II (337-361) sent an embassy to the Himyarites and continues with a brief ethno-geographic description of the people and location. He outlines Constantius’s goals for the embassy as well as the extent of the support that the emperor provided. Philostorgius then tells his readers that upon reaching the Himyarites, Theophilus, as one of the leaders of the

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80 See Irfan Shahid, Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1984), 87-93, for a discussion of the uncertain nature of the other sources describing Christianity in South Arabia, including the stories of Bartholomew and Pantaenus. His contention that Theophilus’s mission “reveals the origin of South Arabian Christianity in the fourth century” is, characteristically, too strong.
mission, “tried to persuade their ruler to worship Christ and renounce pagan error.”

The missionary's entreaties were at first thwarted by the Jews, but Theophilus performed numerous miracles, the king converted, and the “embassy was successful.”

The ruler of Himyar then built three churches, using his own resources instead of the funds that Constantius had supplied for the embassy and Theophilus consecrated and decorated the churches to the best of his ability.

Philostorgius also includes Ulfila's mission to the Goths in his History. He begins the account in the fourth century with the story of a persecution of Gothic Christians for their faith and the exodus of a large number of them under the leadership of Ulfila into Roman territory. The historian then jumps back in time to explain how the Goths had turned to Christianity in the first place through the agency of Roman captives from Cappadocia (including Ulfila's ancestors) in the middle of the third century. These Christians had converted their Gothic captors upon arrival in Gothic territory somewhere beyond the Danube. Philostorgius then moves forward in time and explains that Ulfila had been consecrated the first bishop of the Goths by Eusebius of Nicomedia (d. 341) during an embassy to the Roman Empire on which he had been sent by a Gothic ruler. Ulfila then “looked after their [the Goths'] various interests, invented an alphabet

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81 Philostorgius, 3.4.

82 Philostorgius, 3.4.

83 Philostorgius, 2.5. The sources for Ulfila's mission are Philostorgius, Auxentius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Jordanes. Philostorgius places these events during the reign of Constantine I. This causes a variety of chronological problems, but makes sense within Philostorgius’s construction of the Ecclesiastical History. See McLynn's, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” for an astute analysis of the problems and suggestions for resolving them.

84 The immediate cause for this embassy is a source of some contention among scholars. See full discussion below. For Eusebius of Nicomedia see, Colm Luibheid, "The Arianism of Eusebius of Nicomedia," Irish Theological Quarterly 43 (1976): 3-23.
just for them, and translated all of the Scriptures into their language, except for the books of Kings, since these contain the history of the wars and the nation was warlike and needed its aggressiveness curbed rather than kindled." Philostorgius then resumes his initial narrative and states that the Roman emperor allowed the Christian Goths to settle in Moesia.

**Interpreting The Non-Nicene Narrative: History and Memory**

In interpreting the sources for these non-Nicene missions one encounters three perplexing and unsatisfying scholarly tendencies. To begin with, scholars drawing from the dominant Nicene accounts have missed an entire aspect of the Christianization of the East. Since Theophilus’s missionary exploits are described only in the non-Nicene account of Philostorgius, historians have for the most part overlooked him completely, yet the connection between Theophilus and Ulfila form the core of the major missionary policy of Constantius’s reign. There have, however, been some nods in the right direction. For instance, Frend writes that Constantius’s appointment of Ulfila “must be seen against the background of his interest in the mission of Theophilus ‘the Indian’ to various eastern countries.” Yet even recent scholarly treatments of these missions have overlooked this important connection.

Secondly, scholars have frequently failed to distinguish between Philostorgius’s representations of these missions and the actual conversion of Goths and Himyarites (if any). Irfan Shahid, for example, clearly takes Philostorgius too much at his word when he states that Constantius’s “mission to the Southern Semites was crowned with

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85 Philostorgius, 2.5.

success, a bright spot in an otherwise cheerless reign.” While the mission may have been successful, there is simply not enough evidence, epigraphic or literary, to make such a bold claim. Shahid argues that the lack of epigraphic evidence does not prove that Christianity did not spread in South Arabia in the fourth century. A change in the phraseology of the inscriptions in South Arabia during the fourth century did occur, with a shift from references to multiple deities to appeals to a single divinity which has led some scholars to conclude the Christianization of this region began toward the middle of the fourth century. As these inscriptions indicate only the ruling elite’s preference for monotheism, one cannot safely state whether this reflected the spread of Judaism or Christianity. More soberly, Amidon points out the difficulty of discerning the degree to which Theophilus “changed the political and ecclesiastical situation on the Red Sea coast,” considering the fact that Sassanid influence was restored in South Arabia following Julian the Apostate’s death in 363—seven years after the mission. While acknowledging the shift from references to a multiplicity of gods in favor of monotheistic statements, Robert Hoyland and Garth Fowden also affirm that in South Arabia, Christianity did not acquire a visible presence until the mid-fifth century. Scholars have, however, pointed out the importance of the distinction between event and

87 Shahid, 96.
89 Shahid, 102-104.
90 Robert Hoyland, Arabia and the Arabs: From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam (London: Routledge, 2001), 146-147.
91 Amidon, Philostorgius, 41, n. 9.
92 Hoyland, 147; Fowden, 112.
narrative for other conversion accounts and the importance of the representation of mission within the sources. In particular, Peter Brown has observed that texts “can not be treated as neutral evidence for a process that happened, as it were, outside themselves. They were part of the process itself… They created a ‘representation’ of Christianization which gathered momentum over the generations.”93 Similarly, Philostorgius presents Ulfila and Theophilus as missionary figures to preserve a non-Nicene vision of the past.

Clearly, Philostorgius wants his readers to take into account the significance of a mission sent “with the purpose of converting them [the Himyarites] to the true faith.”94 He emphasizes the importance of good character, orthodoxy, gifts, miracles, and church building for the success of mission.95 Significantly, Philostorgius does not include any of these elements in his account of Ulfila. While Ulfila later acquired the reputation as the one who converted the Goths to an “Arian” form of Christianity, it is striking that this text, which has traditionally been read as a missionary account, does not once refer to Ulfila converting anyone. This reputation has led modern scholars to claim, for example, that Ulfila’s “most impressive achievements were his translation of the Bible into Gothic and his leadership in converting the Goths to Christianity.”96 We need not diminish Ulfila’s role in the Christianization of the later Roman Empire but should rather define that role better by paying closer attention to what the text actually says. In fact, Philostorgius


94 Philostorgius, 3.4.

95 Philostorgius, 3.4-6.

96 Van Dam, 15.
gives credit only to the Cappadocian captives, not to Ulfila, for the conversion of the Gothic people. He would naturally do so as this would ensure a conversion by members of his own Cappadocian non-Nicene coreligionists; at the same time, he may have had serious reservations about Ulfila’s association with the Council of Constantinople in 360 as it condemned Eunomius’s associate Aetius.\textsuperscript{97}

In addition to an overly enthusiastic assessment of the missionaries’ successes, a third disconcerting tendency in interpreting these non-Nicene sources brings us back to the problem of Arianism, which has cast its long shadow over Philostorgius’s \textit{History} as a whole. Both the modern narrative of these missionary events and the treatment of these accounts in Philostorgius have suffered from the persistence of the “orthodoxy” vs. “heresy” dichotomy.\textsuperscript{98} Fortunately, more recent historians of the Arian controversy have moved the scholarship forward in this regard emphasizing instead the extent to which the ecclesiastical historians of late antiquity constructed and represented the past while the doctrinal reality on the ground was much less clear-cut than they would have readers believe. Thus, in evaluating the role of mission in non-Nicene memory, and particularly its function in Philostorgius’s \textit{History}, one must challenge a consensus that fails to connect the two missions, overestimates their success, and perpetuates Arian stereotypes. In reassessing these accounts, I will attempt to redress this problematic consensus.

\textsuperscript{97} McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 130-131.

\textsuperscript{98} See Marasco, “The Church Historians (II): Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus,” for example.
Connecting the Missions of Theophilus and Ulfila

Scholars have rarely connected the missions of Theophilus and Ulfila because they have failed to recognize that such missions were integral to the ecclesio-political policy of Constantius II as well as to the non-Nicene reconstruction of the past. A description of the lives of the missionaries Theophilus and Ulfila will reveal the interconnected nature of their careers and missions.

While any certain reconstruction of the lives of Theophilus and Ulfila proves challenging, one may safely affirm that both these Christian leaders acquired and still possess the reputation of missionaries. The story of Theophilus’s adventure does not survive in any other sources, but Philostorgius presents a Eunomian leader with a prominent but undefined role in a non-Nicene community that enjoyed some degree of success within the church-court circle of Constantius II.99 Theophilus “had no church of his own separately but belonged to all in common and might freely visit all the churches as though they were his own, the emperor bestowing every mark of the highest honor and respect upon him.”100 At a young age, under circumstances that remain unknown, he was sent as a hostage to Constantinople from his native island of Diva.101 According to Philostorgius, Theophilus did not allow his time in Constantinople to go to waste and “formed his character to the highest degree of virtue and his beliefs in accordance with orthodoxy, choosing to live in celibacy.”102 Subsequently, he emerged as a monk-bishop

99 Philostorgius, 3.6, 3.6a, 4.1.
100 Philostorgius, 3.6a.
101 Philostorgius, 3.4. Shahid speculates that Theophilus’s status as a hostage indicates royal lineage. He goes so far as to claim that “His noble origin may also explain some personal traits he displayed throughout his career, a certain self-assurance, most likely derivative from his princely background,” 96-97.
102 Philostorgius, 3.4.
with enough credentials for Constantius II to include him “among the leaders of this embassy,” namely, to Himyar in South Arabia.\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.4. Scholars agree that the mission occurred in the 350s and give the tentative exact date of 356. Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 40; Shahid, 86; Gonzalo Fernández Hernández, “The Evangelizing Mission of Theophilus ‘the Indian’ and the Ecclesiastical Policy of Constantius II,” \textit{Klio} 71 (1989): 361.} Upon his return to Constantinople, Theophilus did not acquire an episcopal see, but around 362 he took up a Eunomian leadership position in Antioch “to respond to a specific theological and pastoral need pending a more general settlement” during a formative period for the Eunomian church.\footnote{Philostorgius, 8.2; Vaggione, \textit{Eunomius of Cyzicus}, 278-279.} He also suffered banishment twice in his life due to his close association with a contender for the throne, Julian the Apostate’s half-brother, Gallus.\footnote{Philostorgius, 4.1, 4.7-8.} The chronology of these events has yet to be determined definitively. It appears, however, that Constantius banished Theophilus for a variety of political reasons yet favored him in general and so recalled him twice. While the evidence is inconclusive, it seems that he remained in Antioch as a Eunomian bishop until his death.\footnote{Philostorgius, 9.18; Theophilus was still in Antioch around 380. Vaggione suggests that Theophilus was succeeded by Julian of Cilicia during this time, \textit{Eunomius of Cyzicus}, 318-319.}

Even fewer details can be related about the life of Ulfila despite the fact that the Goth gained more fame than Theophilus and his work is described in several sources besides Philostorgius.\footnote{Auxentius of Durostorum’s account is one of the most important sources, as Auxentius knew Ulfila and viewed him as his spiritual father.\footnote{Auxentius of Durostorum, \textit{Letter on the Life, Faith and Death of Ulfila}, trans. Peter Heather and John Matthews in \textit{The Goths in the Fourth Century} (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1991). Critical edition: Roger Gryson, \textit{Scolies Ariennes Sur Le Concile D'Aquilée}, Sources Chrétiennes 267 (Paris: Cerf, 1980).} On the other hand, the account also presents numerous problems as Auxentius wrote to}
present his mentor in a certain light. Ulfila was the descendant of Christians living in the Roman province of Cappadocia who were captured in their native village of Sadagolithina and taken beyond the Danube into Gothia during the infamous Gothic raids of the mid-third century. Although he does not attribute any conversions to Ulfila, Philostorgius emphasizes the continuity of Christian resolve between his Cappadocian ancestors and the Gothic bishop: “But the faithful throng of captives, in associating with the barbarians, converted not a few of them to the faith and brought them over from paganism to Christianity…Ulfila himself was leader of the faithful who had gone into exile, having become their first bishop.”

He was born in 311, raised in a Christian family, and reached the office of lector in the Church in Gothia. The question of whether or not Ulfila subscribed to a non-Nicene form of Christianity from the beginning of his adult life remains unsolvable and hopelessly misguided as it fails to address adequately the importance of the representation of Ulfila within both the Nicene and non-Nicene sources. Regardless, he subscribed to a non-Nicene homoean creed in 360 and, as far as the sources indicate, remained true to this confession for the remainder of his life.


110 Philostorgius, 2.5.

111 Auxentius, 35[56]; Thompson, The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila, xiv.


113 He died in 383 at the Conference of Sects that he was attending as a delegate of the homoean party. Auxentius, 39[61]; McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 126-127; Amidon, Philostorgius, 20, n. 15.
The dates of such critical events in Ulfila’s life like his consecration remain highly contentious and unresolved due to the chronological problems that the sources present.\textsuperscript{114} He may have been a part of the embassies which the Goths sent to Constantine following the emperor’s military victories in “Scythia” and consecrated as bishop in 336 during the Council of Constantinople.\textsuperscript{115} Moreover, he may have traveled to Constantinople upon Constantine’s death in 337 as part of a delegation to ensure the continuity of political relationships.\textsuperscript{116} For the purposes of this argument it is sufficient to state that Ulfila traveled to Constantinople as a member of an embassy and was ordained by Eusebius of Nicomedia as “bishop of the Christians in the lands of the Goths.”\textsuperscript{117} He apparently received imperial support for this mission beyond the Danube frontier, suffered persecution and banishment in Gothia, and found protection for himself and his followers within the boundaries of the Roman Empire in Moesia.\textsuperscript{118} Philostorgius enthusiastically relates that Constantius held Ulfila “in the highest esteem, going so far as to refer to him often as ‘the Moses of our time.’”\textsuperscript{119} It is most likely during this period

\textsuperscript{114} For the various reconstructions of Ulfila’s career see Timothy D. Barnes, “The Consecration of Ulfila,” in \textit{From Eusebius to Augustine: Selected Papers, 1982-1993} (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1994), for 336 as a consecration date; Sivan for 337; Amidon (20-21, n. 15) for 336; Heather and Matthews for a \textit{terminus ante quem} of 341; See also Peter Heather, “The Crossing of the Danube and the Gothic Conversion,” \textit{Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies} 27 (1986): 289-318, for an argument to reconcile all of the various sources for the conversion of the Goths. I favor the analysis (inconclusive as it is) of Thompson, \textit{The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila}, xiv-xvii and McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 125-135, as both focus less on reconstructing the exact chronology and more on the reasons why the sources represented Ulfila as they did.

\textsuperscript{115} Barnes, “The Consecration of Ulfila,” 541-45; Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 20, n. 15.

\textsuperscript{116} Sivan, 381.

\textsuperscript{117} Philostorgius, 2.5.

\textsuperscript{118} Auxentius, 36[58], 37[59]; Thompson, \textit{The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila}, 96-98.

\textsuperscript{119} Philostorgius, 2.5. It would be interesting to explore whether or not Philostorgius or Constantius connected this comparison to Moses with Eusebius’s comparison of Constantine to Moses in the \textit{Life of Constantine}. See Vaggione, \textit{Eunomius of Cyzicus}, 193, for the argument that this description by Philostorgius is an example of the wonder-working, virtuous bishop, who is well-connected at court, the
that he completed all of his translation work on the Gothic Bible.\textsuperscript{120} As a participant in the ecclesiastical politics of the time, Ulfila most certainly signed the homoean creed of Constantinople in 360.\textsuperscript{121} He died in Constantinople in 383 in the midst of the Conference of Sects, which had been convened by Theodosius to resolve the theological dissent following the Council of Constantinople in 381.\textsuperscript{122} Ulfila had become immediately ill after “the conduct of the council had been reconsidered by the impious ones for fear that they might be confuted.”\textsuperscript{123} Thus, the known activities of Ulfila the Goth reveal a man involved in ministry to Christian communities among the Gothic people as well as in the highly charged ecclesiastical disputes of his time. However, those writing about him chose to emphasize his role in the Christianization of the Goths. The Nicene historians sought to make sense of the stubborn Arianism of the Goths during their own lifetime, and the non-Nicene writers strived to claim Ulfila’s memory for a specific vision of Christian history.

Despite their differences, Ulfila and Theophilus are clearly linked together as part of Philostorgius’s representation of mission in his efforts to reclaim the past for his faith. For example, Philostorgius emphasizes the importance of appropriate and orthodox consecration prior to embarking on a mission. He relates that the non-Nicene bishop

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{120} Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 21.

\textsuperscript{121} McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 135.

\textsuperscript{122} Theodosius intended to do so through open debate, but instead decided that a leading member of each group would “submit a written creed for his prayerful consideration.” This did not turn out well for the homoean party of which Ulfila was a member. McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 126.

\textsuperscript{123} Auxentius, 39[61].
\end{footnotesize}
Eusebius of Nicomedia consecrated both Theophilus the Indian and Ulfila prior to their participation in mission. According to Philostorgius, Theophilus “entered the ranks of deacons, Eusebius laying upon him his priestly hands.”¹²⁴ This is significant as Photius, in one of his editorial remarks, dolefully relates that Philostorgius held Eusebius of Nicomedia in such high esteem that he referred to him as “the Great.”¹²⁵ It follows that Philostorgius chose to emphasize the relationship and continuity of faith between Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theophilus, and Ulfila, because it ensured the success of the mission and foreshadowed the occurrence of events that advanced God’s will on earth. Further evidence to suggest that Philostorgius represented the importance of the connection between these two men is found in Book II in which he mentions Theophilus’s mission directly following the account of Ulfila.¹²⁶ Moreover, as the non-Nicene missionaries are connected through their consecrator, they are similarly connected through their non-Nicene patron, Constantius II; for the emperor served as the impetus behind both of these missions.¹²⁷ Philostorgius relates that “Constantius sent an embassy to the people called of old Sabaeans and now known as

¹²⁴ Philostorgius, 3.4; Consecration of Ulfila, Philostorgius, 2.5.
¹²⁵ Philostorgius, 1.9b.
¹²⁶ Philostorgius, 2.6. The historian could have delayed mention of Theophilus until the fuller treatment he gives him in 3.4-6. McLynn states that “there are clear signs that their pairing is deliberate and contrived,” “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 128.
¹²⁷ It is not within the scope of this work to argue whether or not Philostorgius meant “Constantine” or “Constantius” when he described the sending out of Ulfila and the chronological questions involved (2.5). It suffices to mention that while this question is highly controversial, it was likely Constantius II who actively supported Ulfila and his followers upon their flight from Gothia and “settled this emigrant people in the region of Moesia, each individual where he liked” (2.5).
Himyarites." Thus, it is safe to state that all of these figures shared a common role in the missions beyond the Roman Empire which were central to Philostorgius’s narrative.

**Representation versus Reality**

In their assessment of the missions of both Theophilus the Indian and Ulfila, historians have frequently taken the sources at face value and simply restated the supposed course of events. A striking example of this rather widespread approach appears in the work of Gonzalo Fernandez. In his article on Theophilus’s mission, the author writes that the hero “achieved substantial evangelizing success.” W. H. C. Frend concludes his assessment of Theophilus’s mission with almost identical language. These prove to be examples of extremely strong and problematic assertions when one considers the fact that Christianity was not established among the Himyarites to any substantial degree during this period. Similarly, Fernandez claims, “With the ordinations of Ulfila and Theophilus, Eusebius wanted to give the Constantinople [sic] Church a role as the evangelist of barbarians.” It is not clear that the Church of Constantinople or Eusebius of Nicomedia ever had any such goals. Philostorgius certainly does not mention any desire on Eusebius’s part to evangelize barbarians. Furthermore, as E. A. Thompson has so lucidly shown, “Throughout the

128 Philostorgius continues to describe the Himyarites as descendants from Abraham through Keturah who “practice the custom of circumcision on the eighth day after birth” and “sacrifice to the sun, the moon, and the local demons,” 3.4.


131 Fowden, 110.

whole period of the Roman Empire not a single example is known of a man who was appointed bishop with the specific task of going beyond the frontier to a wholly pagan region in order to convert the barbarians living there. If there was no Christian community beyond the relevant frontier, then no bishop was sent there.\textsuperscript{133} And indeed, Auxentius does not attribute Ulfila’s consecration to an imperial or personal goal to convert Goths outside the frontier; rather he states, “He showed the Christians (among them) to be truly Christians, and multiplied their numbers.”\textsuperscript{134} Auxentius gives the impression that Ulfila’s task was to minister to existing Christians suffering from a lack of capable Christian leadership. In the same way, Philostorgius explains that in addition to a desire for the Himyarite king’s conversion, Constantius “also asked that it might be granted to build a church for the Romans who traveled there and for whoever of the local people might convert to the faith.”\textsuperscript{135}

While presenting an account of a mission, Philostorgius leaves other clues suggesting that Theophilus was needed more for his ministry among existing Christians than for a conversion effort among the people of Himyar. The missionary bishop succeeded in inspiring the Himyarite king to build three churches. In his concluding remarks on the success of the mission, Philostorgius writes

He put up one of the churches in the capital itself of the whole nation, called Tapharon. Another was located in what was the Roman market center, toward the outer ocean. The place is called Aden, and it is where voyagers from Roman territory were accustomed to put in. The third

\textsuperscript{133} Thompson, \textit{The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila}, xvii. See also, Ralph Mathisen, “Barbarian Bishops and the Churches ‘in Barbaricis Gentibus’ During Late Antiquity,” \textit{Speculum} 72 (1997): 667.

\textsuperscript{134} Auxentius, 35[57].

\textsuperscript{135} Philostorgius, 3.4.
church was in the other part of the country, where there is a well-known Persian market center at the mouth of the Persian Gulf there.¹³⁶

Clearly, in addition to the fact that all three churches were built in areas of commerce and thus point to the presence of resident aliens, Philostorgius himself points out the importance of these locations for visiting Roman merchants and other travelers. So, while subsequent readers have interpreted this text as a straightforward account of the conversion of an entire people, Philostorgius suggests that Theophilus had successfully completed his mission when he had built churches for resident alien Christians. Evidently, Christianization occurs in a more complex manner than the written narrative of the event of mission would seem to indicate.¹³⁷ Rather, the mission narratives which Philostorgius presented serve specific purposes in the work and present the author’s visions and conceptions of mission and the memory of Christian history.

It follows that the missions of Theophilus and Ulfila are connected through their non-Nicene consecrator and through the non-Nicene emperor who initiated their adventures. In addition, while Ulfila certainly very early on acquired the reputation of an apostle to the Goths, he was not sent by either Constantius or Eusebius on a mission to barbarians, but rather to minister to existing Christian communities beyond the Danube frontier. Furthermore, Philostorgius emphasizes Ulfila’s conversion powers only to a limited degree since other aspects of Ulfila’s career are central to him, in particular theological alignments in the politics of Constantinople. This is not to say that Ulfila did not play a role in conversion or act as a missionary, but it is to say that our sources tell

¹³⁶ Philostorgius, 3.4.

us next to nothing about what Ulfila actually did and more about what Philostorgius thought was important in his portrayal of him. Similarly, Constantius II did not send Theophilus the Indian on a religious mission but rather on a diplomatic one, a mission that also involved ministry towards Christians already living in South Arabia. Ironically, while Philostorgius emphasizes Theophilus’s missionary activity much more than he does Ulfila’s, Theophilus did not succeed in obtaining any substantial conversions in South Arabia while Ulfila had a lasting impact on the Goths, especially in light of the eventual adoption of non-Nicene Christianity by the Visigoths. And while Ulfila’s success as a missionary can be inferred, his reputation as “an Apostle to the Goths” proves somewhat misleading as, according to Ian Wood, the Goths had “come into contact with Christianity long before the mission of Ulfilas, or their entry into the Roman Empire in 376.” Additionally, in accordance with E. A. Thompson’s chronology, the Goths had not yet converted in any substantial way to Christianity at the time of Ulfila’s death. As Thompson aptly affirms, “The Apostle of the Goths did not convert the Goths to Christianity.”

It is important to keep in mind that Philostorgius chose to represent Ulfila and Theophilus in a particular manner and that his account can tell us much about what Philostorgius thought mission was and the purpose it served in his narrative. The historian included the mission accounts in part to illustrate the importance of the

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138 Wood, 8. Wood does not discount Ulfila’s contribution to the eventual evangelization of the Goths through the Gothic Bible, 7-8. Thompson argues that “However we may account for the conversion of the various Germanic peoples, we have no evidence for supposing that Roman missionaries played any substantial part in the process,” E. A. Thompson, “Christianity and the Northern Barbarians,” in The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century, ed. Arnaldo Momigliano (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 76.

139 Thompson, The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila, 93.
missionary figure in the Eunomian community. As a more lucid picture emerges of the ways in which mission played a central role in his understanding of the past, it is also possible to evaluate the broader implications of his narrative for the broader history of mission in late antiquity.

**Philostorgius’s Understanding of Mission in Christian History**

Philostorgius’s view of mission and the role it played within the greater drama of Christian history becomes evident if one looks closely at the context of the mission accounts in the entire *Ecclesiastical History*. The function of the mission/conversion stories within the narrative as a whole reveal not only what Philostorgius thought of mission, but even how he perceived the world around him. For Philostorgius, the age when missionary activity flourished and resulted in the conversion of countless pagans had by his own lifetime passed into the realm of memory. Certain common features appear within these mission stories and reveal what was important to Philostorgius.

There are only three missionary accounts in Philostorgius’s entire history. Three sections—on Constantine, Arius, and Philostorgius’s mother—deal with related issues of conversion or proselytism but do not quite fit within the category of mission narratives for this study. Constantine does indeed convert, but he is only one person and is so closely tied up with the Eusebian model to make it difficult to assess how Philostorgius viewed Constantine’s conversion in the context of the conversion of entire peoples. Philostorgius also records Arius convincing people to come over to his side through songs, but these people do not convert; rather they are “simple folk” who are “stolen away” into heresy. Finally, Philostorgius’s mother is convinced by her husband to “change allegiance” to Eunomian from Nicene Christianity. This, however, is not a “conversion” from paganism to Christian faith. The conversion of large numbers of
foreign pagans only occurs within the accounts of Ulfila, Theophilus, and Agapetus, a wonder-working confessor and bishop.¹⁴⁰ It is possible that Photius only recorded ones of particular interest, but the fact that all three accounts occur in books two and three of the history during the reigns of Constantine and Constantius suggests that Philostorgius’s silence about mission for the remainder of the text is not accidental.

These missionaries appear in the story somewhat out of chronological order, suggesting a deliberate construction of the stories into a single whole on the part of Philostorgius. He mentions Ulfila first, then gives a foreshadowing of Theophilus’s mission, and several sections later relates the story of the bishop Agapetus. Such movement back and forth in time is characteristic of Philostorgius’s work, especially in the first half of the *Ecclesiastical History*. The confessor Agapetus, an unwilling soldier during the reign of Licinius, became famous for his wonder-working and “caused many of the pagans to convert to Christianity;”¹⁴¹ he was eventually consecrated Bishop of Synnada. Within this shared context, the emperors perform other acts of piety right before or after the missions. Both Constantine and Constantius build magnificent churches as well as enable these three holy men to participate in missionary and evangelizing activity.

Besides the chronological disorder that characterizes these narratives, all three accounts share a focus on the theme of suffering. Examples abound: the trials of Ulfila’s ancestors as captives from Cappadocia; Ulfila’s suffering when compelled to flee into the Roman Empire to avoid persecution; Theophilus as a hostage and exile,

¹⁴⁰ Agapetus was a former soldier turned wonder-working presbyter during the reign of Constantine. Philostorgius, 2.5, 2.8, 2.6, 3.4.

¹⁴¹ Philostorgius, 2.8.
suffering at the hands of imperials authority; Agapetus’s suffering as an unwilling soldier under Licinius and a confessor (one who suffered persecution for the faith but not martyrdom). The trials of these individuals highlight their marginal status in society on the one hand, and the fortitude of their character on the other. This fortitude enabled them not only to overcome adverse circumstances but also to become pivotal figures within the story of the Christianization of the Roman world. Philostorgius emphasizes the trials of these men as well as the clear sign of distinction that they all obtained as all of them also obtain episcopal office. All three have lowly origins. Ulfila was a Goth and descendant of captives, Agapetus was a soldier on the verge of execution, and Theophilus was a hostage from a foreign land. Yet all of them, through their faith and service to God, were able to perform miracles, participate in the conversion of many people, and become bishops, close to the imperial court. From his point of view, God showed favor toward these men because they overcame their circumstances and contributed to the spread of right Christian worship. In particular Philostorgius frequently mentions the respect and high status that Theophilus possessed within the Eunomian community.

Miracles also feature prominently in Philostorgius’s account; positive ones reveal divine favor, while the negative ones such as earthquakes serve as signs of God’s warning and disapproval.\textsuperscript{142} While miracles only occur within the missions of Theophilus and Agapetus, Philostorgius still meant to link Ulfila’s mission with the two other missions. The miracles served as signs of divine approval for the missionaries’ enterprise as well as a vindication of the suffering of the missionary heroes. One brief

\textsuperscript{142} Trompf, 196-212.
passage on Agapetus deserves to be quoted in full as it reveals Photius’s own attitude as well as Philostorgius’s emphasis on the miracle-working ability of this hero of the faith:

He spouts a lot of nonsense about his fellow sectarian Agapetus, the former soldier who was ordained presbyter by those of like mind with him and later became bishop of Synnada. He says that he raised the dead and expelled and eliminated many other calamities, and worked other marvels as well, and caused many of the pagans to convert to Christianity.\textsuperscript{143}

Agapetus apparently was also known for moving mountains and rivers out of the way. Indeed, he was so holy that he was able to raise the dead. As Photius provides only an abridged version of Philostorgius’s account it is difficult to get at exactly what Philostorgius wanted to communicate through this story. But given that Photius mentions that Philostorgius spoke of Agapetus at length before the discussion of the high point of Constantine’s reign—between the reinstatement of the exiled Arian bishops and the building and beautification of Constantinople—he connects the well-being of the empire, and therefore divine favor, with the performance of miracles and the conversion of pagans.

Philostorgius emphasizes Theophilus’s miracle-working abilities in the section that fully describes the missionary’s journey to Himyar. This section directly follows a discussion of how Constantius took good care of his empire by building churches, transferring relics, and attempting permanently to oust the Nicene Athanasius from his see. Additionally, Constantius adhered to his father’s practice of caring for Christians beyond Roman borders by sending Theophilus as an ambassador to the Kingdom of the Himyarites. Philostorgius states that “Constantius, then, sent an embassy to them

\textsuperscript{143} Philostorgius, 2.8, 2.8a.
with the purpose of converting them to the true faith” as well as requesting the construction of churches for the Christians already resident there. He provided ample funds for this purpose. Because the emperor’s plan was to win over the king with amazing gifts, he outfitted the expedition accordingly with “all of two hundred of the finest breed of horses from Cappadocia conveyed on ships designed as cavalry transports, as well as many other gifts calculated to strike wonder at their sumptuousness and to enchant the beholder.” Thus, Constantius sought to bedazzle the people and the ruler of Himyar with Roman wealth and technological superiority.

According to Philostorgius, however, this seemingly foolproof plan did not work out. Theophilus and the embassy showed up with gifts and splendor, but the king did not at first respond positively because “the Jews in their usual way <tried to counter him?> [sic].” At this crucial point in the story, Theophilus steps in and with “his marvelous works showed on more than one occasion how invincible the Christian faith is” and, as a result, “the opposition was reduced, however unwillingly, to utter silence.” Only after Theophilus’s miraculous intervention does the king convert and agree to build the aforementioned churches for Christians living in Himyar. Moreover, the ruler was “so struck…by Theophilus’s works” that he personally funded the construction of the churches. Thus, Theophilus was able to convert the king through his God-given ability to perform miracles where Constantius’s opulent gift-giving ability had failed. It would be nice to know which miracles specifically Theophilus performed in

144 Philostorgius, 3.4.
145 Philostorgius, 3.4.
146 Philostorgius, 3.4.
147 Philostorgius, 3.4.
Himyar as compared with those of Agapetus, but the bishop’s miracles are more specifically described on different occasions. Theophilus cured Constantius’s wife from a fit of hysterics and also, like Agapetus, could raise the dead; specifically, he brought a dead Jewish woman back to life.\textsuperscript{148} Clearly, Theophilus stands out as playing a remarkable role in Christian history as a whole, but it is also clear that Philostorgius connected miracles with the conversion of pagans.

The account of Theophilus’s mission also reveals the role Philostorgius expected bishops to play within the unfolding of Christian history. While Roman emperors play a large part in the ecclesiastical history, time and time again Philostorgius emphasizes the agency of bishops to work for a better Christian world. In the story of Ulfila, Philostorgius stresses the role of Eusebius of Nicomedia and “the bishops with him” in the consecration of the Gothic bishop. Once Ulfila becomes a bishop he is able to minister to the Goths through his translation of scripture. Also, the emperor recognizes the bishop’s divine gifts as he held Ulfila “in the highest esteem” referring to him as “the Moses of our time.”\textsuperscript{149} The narratives concerning Theophilus and Ulfila do not elide the emperor’s substantial role in missions or in the political and diplomatic concerns at stake. Rather the two elements of the triumph of true Christianity and imperial goals complement each other. It is a mark of Theophilus’s distinction as a man of God that Constantius singled him out and honored him by appointing him to this mission. Simultaneously, Constantius, despite his sumptuous display of wealth and power, cannot achieve the conversion of the King of Himyar without the wonders worked by

\textsuperscript{148} Philostorgius, 4.7, 3.6.

\textsuperscript{149} Philostorgius, 2.5.
Theophilus. Philostorgius twice stresses how crucial the bishop’s miracles were to the success of the mission and even the subsequent construction of churches.\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.4, 3.4a, 3.4b.} Theophilus’s holiness empowered him to further Constantius’s imperial goals. Constantius was blessed through the activities of such holy bishops as Theophilus and Ulfila because he favored God’s true servants. In the end, in his narratives of non-Nicene mission Philostorgius emphasizes the role of suffering, miracles, and the agency of bishops connected to the imperial court in order to reveal the kind of men God favors and acts through in Christian history.

From the perspective of Philostorgius, such figures as Agapetus, Ulfila, and Theophilus deserved a prominent place in his history as missionaries because they served to highlight moments of success for his own Eunomian faith in comparison to his apocalyptic view of the world after the reign of Theodosius I. By exalting these missionary bishops as men who visibly displayed God’s favor and were an integral part of God’s redemptive work in and beyond the Roman Empire, Philostorgius offered his vision of mission as part of the larger story of Christianization in Late Antiquity.

While the reigning narratives of fourth-century missionary history are those recounted by the major fifth-century Greek and Latin Nicene ecclesiastical historians, only the three Greek Nicene histories of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret treat the mission of Ulfila. These histories were all composed subsequent to the work of the non-Nicene historian, Philostorgius. The other major Nicene historian, Rufinus of Aquileia, writing his Latin account prior to Philostorgius, does not mention Ulfila at all. Moreover,
none of the Nicene church histories includes any account of Theophilus, leaving Philostorgius as the only witness to his missionary activity.

**Nicene vs. Non-Nicene Accounts of Missionaries**

According to Philostorgius, Ulfila did not set out on a mission to evangelize the Goths, but rather served them as a bishop. How then did Ulfila acquire the persistent reputation of Apostle to the Goths and the main agent of Gothic conversion? Possibly, the answer lies in the portrayal of Ulfila in other Nicene sources that would have left a more lasting legacy than non-Nicene ones. A close analysis of the Nicene sources will demonstrate that Ulfila did not always possess this missionary reputation. Nonetheless, the Nicene sources will also reveal a possible reason for the persistence of Ulfila’s portrayal in modern day historiography as the missionary who converted the Goths to Arianism. The case of Ulfila serves as only one example of the need to reexamine the dominant mission narratives. A comparison with Rufinus’s representation of mission will reveal the ways in which Rufinus and Philostorgius valued different facets of Christianization and presented differing roles for bishops and emperors in the process. An analysis of mission in the Nicene sources challenges widely-held assumptions about the process of Christianization in Late Antiquity.

Apart from Philostorgius, none of the other ecclesiastical historians include the story of Theophilus’s mission to South Arabia. Most likely, they purposefully omit the story to revise the non-Nicene account, just as Philostorgius ignores Rufinus’s narrative of the Christianization of Aksum and Iberia (Georgia) and, possibly, gives Ulfila a larger role in his narrative because Rufinus leaves him out completely.¹⁵¹ Rufinus’s account of

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¹⁵¹ McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 129.
Frumentius’s adventures in Aksum from the Nicene perspective provides a valuable source of comparison with the account of Theophilus, as Philostorgius is clearly responding to Rufinus with his narrative of the mission to Himyar. In addition to Philostorgius’s evident response to Rufinus, both mission stories occur in the context of trade in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, and thus a comparison can provide valuable insight on this dimension of the Christianization process. Rufinus’s account also reflects his view of Constantius as the bad “Arian” emperor, as the evidence suggests that he deliberately skews his chronology to make the events take place during the reign of Constantine rather than Constantius. Nevertheless, his narrative still shows his idea of how conversion of foreign kingdoms occurred or ought to have occurred.

From the beginning, Rufinus’s missionary account stands out as strikingly different from that of Philostorgius. In Philostorgius’s narrative, as described earlier, Theophilus is chosen by the emperor himself to embark on the embassy for the purpose of converting the king. In Rufinus’s story, the beginning of Christianity in Aksum occurs when a Roman traveling on the Red Sea is shipwrecked, everybody on board is killed, and only two young boys are spared. These boys—now captives—grow into valuable members of the royal court at Aksum. As an adult, Frumentius takes the initiative to take care of Roman merchant Christians living in and traveling to Aksum. In this case, Philostorgius records a similar situation with Theophilus attending to the resident aliens in Himyar. Philostorgius may simply be following Rufinus or more likely reflecting the

152 Amidon, Philostorgius, 40, n. 8.
153 As suggested by Thelamon, Païens et Chrétiens au IVe Siècle, 62.
154 Rufinus, 10.9, 10.10.
155 Philostorgius, 3.4.
reality of the spread of Christianity in these areas through trade. But the representation of the initial impetus for the missions is certainly completely different. Philostorgius’s representation reflects not only his response to Rufinus, but also his view of what role mission played in the history of the Eunomian community. Similar to Philostorgius’s placement of the account of Ulfila and the first mention of Theophilus’s mission right next to one another, Rufinus moves from his account of the Christianization of Aksum straight into the account of the conversion of Iberia through another “accidental missionary,” a female captive. According to Rufinus, this mission also took place during the reign of Constantine, who is delighted at the end of the story to hear of the conversion of this foreign kingdom.\textsuperscript{156} As Philostorgius does not seem to be directly responding to Rufinus’s account of the conversion of Iberia, a closer comparison of just the narratives relating to Aksum and Himyar follows.\textsuperscript{157}

In Rufinus’s account of the conversion of Aksum, Frumentius is on the one hand an accidental missionary, as he finds himself in Aksum not by his own will and certainly not sent by an emperor as in Philostorgius’s account of Theophilus. On the other hand, Frumentius displays remarkable initiative as the one who begins attending to the needs of the Christian Roman merchants. Rufinus states, “God put it into his mind and heart to begin making careful inquiries if there were any Christians among the Roman merchants, and to give them extensive rights, which he urged them to use, to build places of assembly in each location, in which they might gather for prayer in the Roman

\textsuperscript{156} Rufinus, 10.11.

\textsuperscript{157} Parallels between the stories are possible, however, as the story of the female captive in Iberia and Ulfila’s captive ancestors both indicate the importance of captives in the spread of Christianity. For more on captives see Andrea Sterk, “Mission From Below: Captive Women and Conversion on the East Roman Frontiers,” \textit{Church History} 79 (2010): 1-39.
manner.” Again, this passage reveals the theme occurring in the work of both Rufinus and Philostorgius concerning the importance of trade in the spread of Christianity in this region. The passage also emphasizes the apostolic character of Frumentius, evident both from his own initiative and from God’s calling him to take care of Roman Christians. Additionally, upon being allowed to leave Aksum, Frumentius is the one to travel to Athanasius in Alexandria and report on the spread of Christianity in Aksum in contrast to his brother Aedesius, who travels home to Tyre. Rufinus clearly highlights Frumentius’s leadership abilities in contrast to his brother, but also attributes them to God’s intervention.

Philostorgius similarly presents Theophilus as taking the initiative in the mission narrative. Before he is even sent on the mission, Theophilus takes advantage of his status as a hostage at the Roman court to embrace a life of virtue, orthodoxy, and celibacy. Then, upon his arrival in Himyar, Theophilus—even though he is only one of the leaders of the embassy—attempts to persuade the king to convert to Christianity and succeeds through his performance of miracles. Philostorgius shows that Theophilus not only exhibited initiative similar to that of Frumentius, but also had full imperial support as well as miraculous powers. Philostorgius does not explicitly say that God inspired Theophilus to take initiative during his mission, as Rufinus relates about Frumentius. This is possibly due to the limitations of Photius’s epitome, but it also fits

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158 Rufinus, 10.9.


160 Philostorgius, 3.4.

161 Philostorgius, 3.4.
with the way Philostorgius constructed his history. God’s pleasure and displeasure, and therefore the lack or abundance of divine gifts, do not need to be explicitly stated because they are evident in the lives of such men as Theophilus. In keeping with his understanding of the Eunomian community, Philostorgius represents Theophilus as possessing Constantius’s support. This community included the type of men to whom God showed his divine favor by giving them eloquence and the ability to perform miracles. Divine favor was also evident inasmuch as these men were close to the imperial court and enjoyed the support and praise of the emperor himself. Philostorgius viewed this close connection to the imperial court as positive for members of the Eunomian community as it reflected their active engagement in the affairs of the world. Philostorgius further revises Rufinus by recounting that Theophilus not only established relations with one foreign kingdom, as did Frumentius, but after his mission in Himyar, Theophilus traveled further, “to the rest of the Indian country,” He corrected certain Christian practices and confirmed the orthodoxy of Christian teaching in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean arena of trade.¹⁶² This comparison of the representations of Rufinus and Philostorgius reveals not only how these historians perceived mission, but the nature of Christian history in general. Specifically, both emphasize God’s providential role in the Christianization of foreign peoples, but Philostorgius gives the emperor a greater role than does Rufinus because imperial favor confirms Theophilus’s godly characteristics.

Unlike Theophilus, Ulfila played a role in the representation of the past from the Nicene perspective. Scholars have frequently expressed surprise and commented on

¹⁶² Philostorgius, 3.5. Amidon, Philostorgius, 42, n. 13.
Ulfila’s appearance in the histories of Socrates and Sozomen at all, and, moreover in a favorable light.\textsuperscript{163} Neil McLynn’s article on the four main sources for Ulfila—Auxentius, Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen—clearly shows the limitations of these sources for any certain reconstruction of the life of Ulfila. Nevertheless, McLynn provides a valuable perspective on these sources and a refreshing analysis of why they represented Ulfila as they did as opposed to attempting to reconcile the sources or argue for the reliability of one over the other.\textsuperscript{164} Building on his analysis and adding nuance to his argument, I will attempt to elaborate on the reasons the historians represented Ulfila as they did and specifically consider how this relates to the legacy of Ulfila as a missionary/apostle.

As Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret all to varying degrees followed and used Rufinus, it is significant that they include any mention of Ulfila at all since Rufinus completely omits him from his narrative. By examining the context of the accounts of Ulfila in the their \textit{Ecclesiastical Histories}, we can better see the ways in which these Nicene historians viewed Ulfila and Christianization in general. Socrates and Sozomen both place the story of Ulfila right before the account of the Saracen Queen Mavia’s request for the consecration of the holy man Moses as bishop of her land in exchange for peace with the Romans. (By contrast, Theodoret places the story of Mavia a little earlier than the story of Ulfila.) Rufinus, as far as we know, is the first to record this story of Queen Mavia and Moses, but he does not place the account in the context of the other conversion narratives that appear in his \textit{History}.\textsuperscript{165} Why does Socrates include the

\textsuperscript{163} McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 131.


\textsuperscript{165} Rufinus, 11.6.
account of Ulfila at all, and why does he insert it right before the account of Mavia? How do Sozomen and Theodoret’s accounts of Ulfila compare?

Socrates first briefly mentions Ulfila at the end of a description of the Council of Constantinople in 360. He curiously states, “To this creed Ulfilas bishop of the Goths gave his assent, although he had previously adhered to that of Nicaea.”166 Although it may not be completely clear why Socrates chooses to mention Ulfila at this particular point, it is evident that he was concerned about the bishop’s orthodoxy. He emphasizes that Ulfila had been a Nicene Christian prior to signing the creed of this council. Why would Socrates be concerned with whether or not Ulfila was a non-Nicene Christian? The answer lies in the next passage in which Socrates includes Ulfila in the context of the Christianization of the Goths.167 Socrates differs from Philostorgius, placing the conversion of the Goths to “Arianism” during the conflict between Athanaric and Fritigern in the second half of the fourth century. He claims that the Goths converted to Christianity after Fritigern accepted the faith of Emperor Valens because the emperor had helped him defeat Athanaric. Socrates then states that this is the reason that the Goths are Arians down to his own day. Then, almost as if it had happened earlier or independently of the political deal between Fritigern and Valens, he introduces Ulfila as “their bishop at that time” who “invented the Gothic letters, and translated the Sacred Scriptures into their own language, [and] undertook to instruct these barbarians in the Divine oracles.”168 He then continues to describe how Ulfila labored not only with the

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166 Socrates, 2.41; McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 131, for a convincing theory on why Socrates inserted Ulfila at this point in his text.

167 Socrates, 4.33.

168 Socrates, 4.33.
Goths owing allegiance to Fritigern but also with the followers of Athanaric. This, of course, led to the persecution and martyrdom of the Arian Christians. He then concludes this account with the observation that the martyrdoms indicate that the Goths did not embrace Arius’s doctrine in full due to “simplicity of mind.” Like Philostorgius, Socrates does not explicitly attribute any conversions to Ulfila. Instead, he uses his earlier assertion of Ulfila’s actual orthodoxy to make sense of the Arian martyrs.

A comparison of this story of the Gothic conversion with a similar attempt to convert the Saracens will further reveal Socrates’ ambiguous representation of Ulfila. Valens’s involvement in the affairs of the Goths and his influence on their conversion to Arianism had the potential to offer him security on the Danube frontier, but according to Socrates it led to the opposite of his intentions—a war with the Goths resulting in his death in the battle of Adrianople. Right before he relates the story of Valens’s demise, Socrates narrates the story of the Saracen Queen Mavia. This account has also been interpreted as a Christianization account by scholars, although Rufinus and possibly even Socrates did not intend it in this way. The story tells of how Queen Mavia was willing to make peace with the Romans and cease raiding the frontier only on the condition that the holy man Moses be made bishop of her people. He was dragged against his will from the desert to be consecrated by the bishop of Alexandria. Moses refused because he would not accept consecration from the Arian bishop of Alexandria, Lucius, who had been persecuting monks and Nicene Christians. Moses was then consecrated by Nicene Christians in exile in the desert, and Mavia made peace with the

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169 Socrates, 4.33.
170 Socrates, 4.36.
171 Amidon, Rufinus, 68, n. 7.
Romans. Socrates concludes, “and so scrupulously did Mavia observe the peace thus entered into with the Romans that she gave her daughter in marriage to Victor the commander-in-chief of the Roman army.” Thus, Socrates presents the conversion of the Goths as leading to Valens’s downfall and much suffering for the people of the Roman Empire, but the consecration of a bishop for Mavia as bringing lasting success and leading to peace. Only the promotion of true Nicene Christianity could lead to any kind of political gain, while encouragement of non-Nicene Christianity caused the death of Valens. Ulfila does not fit into this simple dichotomy. On the one hand he is part of the story that ends with the ill-fated conversion of the Goths to Arianism. On the other hand, his translation of the Bible and Socrates’ insistence that Ulfila had not always been an Arian allowed the historian to present Ulfila, and by extension the Arian Gothic martyrs, as authentic soldiers for Christ. This tension in his account demonstrates that Socrates struggled with Ulfila’s place in his broader narrative of Christianization.

While retaining Socrates’ basic framework, Sozomen significantly expands his account of Ulfila and the conversion of the Goths. He also presents it much more explicitly as a narrative describing the conversion of the Goths to Arianism, despite the fact that his account also presents difficult chronological problems. He recounts that Ulfila, already a bishop, was appointed to go on an embassy on behalf of the Goths, who were fleeing from the Huns. He then follows the similar story of Athanaric and Fritigern and the subsequent conversion of the Goths to Arianism. Here Sozomen interjects with a comment: “It does not, however, appear to me that this is the only

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172 Socrates, 4.36.
reason that can be advanced to account for the Goths having retained, even to the present day, the tenets of Arianism."

He then outlines the role that he views Ulfila must have played in the conversion of the Goths to Arianism. He argues that Ulfila must not have abandoned Nicaea when he signed the creed at the council of Constantinople in 360 and that Ulfila only allied himself with the “Arian” bishops seriously when he needed to for the purposes of negotiating assistance from the Roman Empire. Then he suggests that the Goths listened to Ulfila because he had already been a good bishop for them by translating the Bible and leading a life of virtue. As Ulfila had stood by them even through the time of persecution, the Goths obviously followed wherever he led.

Although the historian’s explanation of Ulfila as the driving force and main reason for the Goth’s Arianism makes sense, it is less clear why he is so positive in his description of Ulfila. McLynn persuasively argues that Sozomen is trying to reconcile the conflicting evidence that he has in front of him. This is why on the one hand he argues that Ulfila was a virtuous bishop and diminishes his connection to Arianism, while simultaneously presenting him as the main reason the Goths converted to Arianism. While Socrates does not attribute any conversions to Ulfila, Sozomen rewrites Socrates’ account to give credit for the conversion of the followers of Athanaric to Ulfila. This expansion of Socrates’ narrative by Sozomen accounts for Ulfila’s subsequent reputation as the leading figure for the conversion of the Goths to Arian Christianity.

Theodoret’s version of the events offers a strikingly unflattering portrayal of Ulfila. McLynn asserts that just as Socrates and Sozomen use Ulfila for their own

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175 Sozomen, 6.37.
176 Sozomen, 6.37.
177 Theodoret, 4.33.
purposes, Theodoret does the same; yet in doing so, he presents a completely unrealistic portrait of Ulfila. Theodoret describes the familiar story of Valens and the Gothic leaders needing to come to an agreement and relates that when the emperor and the “Arian” bishop Eudoxius encountered some resistance they appealed to Ulfila. According to Theodoret, “Partly by the fascination of his eloquence and partly by bribes with which he baited his proposals Eudoxius succeeded in inducing him to persuade the barbarians to embrace communion with the emperor, so Ulphilas won them over on the plea that the quarrel between the different parties was really one of personal rivalry and involved no difference in doctrine.”

McLynn does not go any further in his analysis of Theodoret’s version than to argue that the historian’s presentation of Ulfila as motivated by bribery as unrealistic. While he rightly notes how negatively Theodoret portrays Ulfila, McLynn fails to notice the evident and surprising theme common to all three versions of this story, namely, that the Goths did not really convert to Arianism. Either they converted in simplicity of mind and thus remained true to Christ, or they did not embrace the full version of Arianism, and/or the bishop who had convinced them to embrace it was not a real Arian either.

These varying interpretations of Ulfila’s role in the conversion of the Goths to Arianism stand out as striking witnesses to the Nicene historians’ struggle to make sense of the Gothic bishop’s legacy. Following Rufinus, the historians had no need to present any account of Ulfila and the Christianization of the Goths. But they did. While all three authors adapted the story to fit the particular needs or goals of their ecclesiastical histories, all of the accounts share a common element. Namely, all three
are concerned with the question of how the Goths became Arians and likewise display evidence for prior acquaintance with Christianity on the part of the Goths, as confirmed by Philostorgius and Auxentius as well. McLynn argues that Socrates and Sozomen incorporated Ulfila into their accounts because the Gothic bishop had likely received an extravagant funeral when he happened to die in Constantinople and thus represented a figure worthy of note. This is possible, and McLynn presents a very compelling argument. Whether the answer to the puzzle lies in the funeral or not, Ulfila had clearly acquired a positive reputation in fifth-century Constantinople, and the historians were influenced by it. Due to the largely positive representation of the bishop by Nicene as well as non-Nicene authors, Ulfila later acquired the status of apostle to the Goths. Yet in their accounts of Ulfila, the Nicene ecclesiastical historians do not present an intentional mission or missionary with positive results, but rather a more gradual and uncertain process of Christianization. Their accounts present imperial politics, translation of scripture, and martyrdom as the essential features of this process, rather than the agency of one man.

Philostorgius presents Ulfila in a very similar way to his Nicene counterparts but also adds the story that the other historians are lacking because they do not want to include possible evidence for Ulfila’s non-Nicene background from the very beginning of his life. His unique account incorporates the story of Ulfila’s ancestors from Cappadocia and the initial contacts and individual conversions that led to the spread of Christianity among the Goths. Additionally, the Nicene writers paint a picture in which bishops and emperors do not necessarily act harmoniously in the process of Christianization, while Philostorgius’s account features much more collaboration between the two. It is to the
important relationship and collaboration between emperors and bishops that we now turn.
CHAPTER 5
EMPERORS AND BISHOPS: LEADERSHIP FOR THE CHRISTIAN EMPIRE

Assessing Philostorgius’s View of Empire

Although Philostorgius made few explicit statements about appropriate relations between bishops and emperors, imperial leadership is a major concern throughout his *Ecclesiastical History*. By including countless examples of the activities of bishops and emperors, he revealed his understanding of their respective roles. Of course, for Philostorgius the modern distinction between church and state would have been nonsensical; he condemned emperors favoring the Nicene Creed because he believed that an empire should explicitly foster the right approach to the divine in order to ensure God’s blessing. He shared this belief with Nicene Christians, pagans, and other elite Romans of his time. The categories of empire and religion were inextricably intertwined, but the exact nature and implications of that interconnectedness varied depending on the context and the perspectives of different writers. Philostorgius’s view on the subject is important for several reasons. First, he was writing at a critical juncture in the evolution of relations between imperial and ecclesiastical authority. The Theodosian establishment of 381 had officially declared the Roman Empire a Nicene Christian state, yet the consequences of that pronouncement for Christians, pagans, and Jews were still being worked out, with even more Christian strife on the horizon. Second,

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1 One occurs in Philostorgius, 7.6a, a fragment from the Suda drawing on Philostorgius, and the other in Philostorgius, 8.8a, a fragment from the *Artemii Passio*. Both advocate a separation of church and state. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not the statements on church and state relations are an accurate representation of the words of Philostorgius. Of course, Philostorgius may have included other statements that the epitomizer Photius did not preserve. See the concluding section in this chapter for a more detailed examination of the role of these statements in assessing Philostorgius’s views on church and state.

2 As his *History* was published between 425 and 433, Philostorgius may have witnessed the events of the Nestorian controversy while writing. But even if he had concluded and published the work before the
Philostorgius’s membership in a persecuted minority religious group raises the question of how he viewed imperial interference in religious affairs, particularly in light of specific anti-Eunomian legislation. A close study of Philostorgius’s representation of the relationship between bishops and emperors will show the kind of cooperative leadership he deemed proper for a Christian Roman Empire.

Hartmut Leppin has examined Philostorgius’s political ideology, focusing on the church historian’s view of each individual emperor. He concludes that Philostorgius did not question the necessity of the Roman Empire as the world order. Leppin rightly observes that Philostorgius in many ways agreed with other ecclesiastical historians in his characterization of emperors and bishops. The church historians tended to agree in their convictions that Roman emperors were legitimate, that good emperors were the “orthodox” Christian rulers, and that emperors should listen to bishops. Yet Leppin finds it odd for Philostorgius to have a similar understanding of the Empire to that of the Nicene historians. If one considers, however, that Philostorgius believed that his faith was legitimate, his support for the empire makes more sense. Should not the interests of true religion to go hand in hand with imperial ideology? Moreover, Philostorgius saw numerous signs that God revealed his will in history and the diverse effects the outbreak of the controversy, he would still have been aware of the imperial dedication to eradicating all non-Nicene forms of belief.

3 CTh 16.5.34.

4 Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 111-124. Unlike the focus of this chapter (the relationship between bishops and emperors), Leppin’s article only deals with Philostorgius’s view of emperors. Although I do not agree with Leppin on all counts, his analysis of Philostorgius’s view of each emperor is valuable and I will refer to his article frequently in this chapter.

5 Leppin bases his comparison on his study of the political thought of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, Leppin, Von Konstantin dem Grossen zu Theodosius II: das christliche Kaisertum bei den Kirchenhistorikern Socrates, Sozomenus und Theodoret.

6 Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 122-123.
decisions of emperors had on the Roman Empire. When righteous leaders cooperated with each other fortunate events occurred for the individual emperor and the empire as a whole, and when wicked leaders connived against each other the consequences were calamitous for both groups. Leppin sees Philostorgius’s emphasis on listening to bishops’ counsel as evidence of his Eunomianism. In this he compares him with the Nicene church historian Theodoret, who similarly rejected imperial church policy in his support of Nestorius. 7 Perhaps this is so. But it is also the case that Philostorgius viewed emperors as possessing legitimate spiritual authority in their own right, unlike Theodoret who viewed holy men as the main sources of spiritual authority. Leppin also rightly asserts that bishops are exceptionally strong and independent in Philostorgius’s account.

Gabriele Marasco has also noted the importance of the themes of “church and state” in Philostorgius’s history. 8 However, the assumptions that form the foundation of his analysis are problematic. “In this analysis,” Marasco writes, “we must not forget that the work of Philostorgius is not, in fact, a history of the Christian church; it is, however, in the beginning a history of the Arian church and then the Eunomian church, the story of which is the focus, so that in the last part of the book, following the decline of the Eunomians, the author focuses almost exclusively on political and military events.” 9

While Philostorgius clearly had a unique perspective on the events of the Roman Empire, this dichotomy between a history of the Christian church and of an

7 Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 123.


Arian/Eunomian church presents several problems. First, it assumes that all parties at the time knew that Eunomian or other non-Nicene forms of Christianity would not survive. This is not the case. Second, Marasco’s dichotomy begs the question, what is the Christian church and who writes its history? He completely ignores Philostorgius’s own claim to be writing ecclesiastical history. Moreover, he wrote about a variety of events and topics throughout his history, not just in the second half; for example, in the first half, he discusses the location of paradise at great length.\(^\text{10}\) Not only is Marasco’s approach unsupported by the evidence, but it is also not very helpful for assessing Philostorgius’s aims as a historian and for understanding the literary culture of the fifth century. His assumptions inevitably lead to the unimaginative conclusion that Philostorgius only supported imperial intervention in church affairs when it was to the Eunomian advantage:

In conclusion, Philostorgius’s attitude regarding the relationship between church and state confirms the essential characteristic of his work, which was a history of the Eunomian church, from its origins when it was linked to the Arian heresy to its decline after the time of Theodosius: this approach fully conditioned the thinking of Philostorgius, which on the one hand supported the idea of the absolute independence of the church from a state doctrine now hostile to Eunomianism, and on the other, approved unconditionally of the actions of Eunomian bishops who sought the support of the emperors by all means necessary.\(^\text{11}\)

Hartmut Leppin concludes his assessment of the historian’s view of imperial power with a similarly simplistic assertion that “religious dissent is not identical with political dissent.”\(^\text{12}\) First, the separation of these two categories is anachronistic, and second, to label Philostorgius’s commitment to a faith in which he had been brought up

\(^{10}\) Philostorgius, 3.10.


\(^{12}\) Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 124.
as “religious dissent” needs further clarification. Leppin describes Philostorgius’s history as a “work of resignation” because it employs the same categories of thought about the empire as do the other church historians. Additionally, Leppin acknowledges the existence of a “usual perspective of Theodosian church historians,” but suggests, without explanation, that it is a perspective that Philostorgius should not share.\footnote{Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 124. Was Socrates also resigned according to this reasoning because he did not despise the empire even though it persecuted Novatians?} This interpretation of the evidence is flawed on several levels. Philostorgius and the other ecclesiastical historians wrote during a similar enough time that they shared similar aims and the same elite readership.\footnote{Croke, “Historiography,” 407, 419.} Of course they viewed the empire similarly. Moreover, upon close examination of Philostorgius’s history one can see that he was far from resigned to the Nicene empire.\footnote{See Chapter 7 for a more detailed discussion of omens and portents.}

These kinds of conclusions are inevitable if one assumes that Philostorgius inhabited a separate cultural and literary space from that of the other historians, Christian or otherwise. This was not the case, however; they wrote during the same period, had similar education, lived in the same cities, and shared the same interests—history, Christianity, empire.\footnote{Croke, “Historiography,” 417.} Leppin states that he expected Philostorgius to view imperial rule differently from the Nicene historians since Philostorgius was a Eunomian, part of a minority religious group rejected by the empire. Since he discovered that Philostorgius’s view in many ways lines up with the perspective of the other historians, Leppin concluded that “his intellectual horizon is not wide enough to transcend the idea
of the Roman empire.” Rather than judge Philostorgius for inhabiting the same cultural space as the Nicene historians or assessing how he measures up to these historians (whom he precedes), it would be more profitable to consider that Philostorgius’s *History* reflects his own distinctive theology of history, which was at the same time part of a broader literary culture of history writing in late antiquity.

In this chapter, then, I will focus on Philostorgius’s view of the relationship between bishops and emperors. While Philostorgius clearly championed those emperors supporting his coreligionists and expressed hostility to their opponents, the details of numerous interactions between bishops and emperors reveal that he had a more complex view of this relationship than most scholars have suggested. On the contrary, Philostorgius stresses the importance of imperial intervention in church affairs, even though this often led to negative consequences for the Eunomian community and the Empire as a whole. Furthermore, Philostorgius never claims to separate the Eunomian or any other Christian community from the state. He approved of the bishops who sought imperial support because he believed in a cooperative relationship between bishop and emperor. Moreover, his categorization of rulers is not limited simply to “orthodox” or “heretical” emperor, but includes the exceptional cases of the Caesar Gallus, the pagan emperor Julian, and the role of imperial women.

To understand Philostorgius’s views on the relationship between bishops and emperors it is essential to recognize his use of signs of divine approval and disapproval;

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18 For example, see the story of the caesar Gallus trusting bishops (Philostorgius, 3.27). Leppin notes this as well, “Heretical Historiography,” 123.
19 Except for the two statements mentioned above and discussed at the end of this chapter (Philostorgius, 7.6a, 8.8a).
for in keeping with his Eunomian theology, Philostorgius emphasized that God’s will is knowable. Indeed, to Philostorgius, all the events and lives in the *Ecclesiastical History* are signs pointing to God’s will. Thus, I will focus on Philostorgius’s system of signs and omens as an indication of his view of church and state. I will first briefly examine Philostorgius’s view of positive emperors and bishops and will then focus on his representation of the positive intertwined relationship between bishop and emperor, both outside and within the empire. Next, I will focus on the more negative or problematic examples of this relationship, for bishops frequently deceive each other and trick emperors. I will conclude with Philostorgius’s assessment of the consequences of such actions and of wrong belief—the tragic demise of these emperors. Ultimately this inquiry into Philostorgius’s views on church and state will reveal his definition of the ideal relationship, his assumptions about the actual relationship, and his representation of events in terms of those expectations.

**Emperors and Divine Approval**

Philostorgius’s *History* presents divine favor for emperors differently from divine favor for bishops, highlighting their distinct roles in the leadership of the Christian Roman Empire. The first emperor to appear in the history, Constantine the Great, plays the role of a very good emperor who received exceptional divine favor. After all, God gives him the grace to see the error of paganism and personally guides him on at least two occasions. First, he shows him the famous sign in the sky. Philostorgius writes that, “the reason for the conversion of Constantine the Great from paganism to Christianity

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20 Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xvi, xviii. Omens are essential to access what Philostorgius thinks about almost any topic because they are clear signs of God’s approval and disapproval. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. I will limit my discussion of the relevant events in the Arian controversy, as they are the focus of Chapter 3.
was the victory over Maxentius, in which the sign of the cross appeared in the east extending to a great distance and formed of brilliant radiance. It was encircled by stars like a rainbow that were arranged as letters forming the Latin words: 'With this conquer!' In this instance, God both made his will known and gave special favor to the emperor. Philostorgius's representation of this event both highlights the greatness of divine intervention and raises the question of how the emperor will act in response. Finally, a divine force guides Constantine during the building of Constantinople. When someone asks Constantine how much longer he is going to be walking to outline the perimeter of the city, the emperor responds “Until the one who is in front of me stops.”

This account of the founding of Constantinople emphasizes both the great extent of divine favor which Constantine enjoyed and the emperor's pious following of divine will.

The historian stresses that Constantius received special grace from the very beginning of his reign by drawing parallels between the descriptions of the emperor’s success with descriptions from the preceding narrative of Constantine’s reign. Constantine embarked on an impressive building program; so did Constantius. Describing the emperor’s building accomplishments, Photius writes that Philostorgius “heaps praise upon Constantius and says that he built the church in Constantinople that is justly called 'the great.'” Philostorgius also relates that the church was built in conjunction with the erection of Constantine’s tomb right next to it and received divine

21 Philostorgius, 1.6. The words 'sign of the cross' and 'with this conquer' are Philostorgius’s words as they are marked in bold in the critical edition indicating that they are contained in more than one fragment. Note the emphasis on the supernatural nature of the event. See Chapter 7 for more on this sign.

22 Philostorgius, 1.9. This passage also includes numerous instances of Philostorgius’s probable word choice as suggested by overlap from several fragments.

23 Philostorgius, 3.2.
sanction through the successful translation of important relics: “Translating the apostle Andrew from Achaia... [Constantius] also brought over the evangelist Luke from Achaia and Timothy from Ephesus in Ionia.”

Thus, Philostorgius marks the auspiciousness of Constantius’s reign with these building endeavors and explicitly notes the parallel with the deeds of his father Constantine. And most significantly, just as Constantine received a sign in the sky on the occasion of his victory over a usurper, so did Constantius.

According to Philostorgius, the emperor won an initial battle against the usurper Magnentius and then experienced the following symbol of God’s grace:

Constantius, then, was victorious over the usurper, and at that very time the sign of the cross appeared; it was enormous, and its stunning rays outshone the daylight. It appeared in Jerusalem most visibly around the third hour of the day, on the Feast called Pentecost. That God-sent image was seen extending from the place called Calvary all the way to the Mount of Olives, with a great rainbow completely encircling it like a crown. The rainbow signified the goodwill of the one crucified and taken up, while the crown represented the emperor’s victory.

The usurper had regrouped following his initial defeat, but when his men saw such a display it struck fear into their hearts and emboldened Constantius’s troops, leading to a complete victory. Thus, not only did God communicate his favor of Constantius through this sign, but he also used it to ensure the emperor’s triumph.

Constantius receives the same sign as Constantine did including the detail of a rainbow encircling the sign. The example of Constantius highlights the kind of imagery Philostorgius uses to communicate signs of divine favor for emperors.

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*Philostorgius, 3.2a.*

*Constantine: Philostorgius, 1.6, 2.5, 2.9; Constantius: Philostorgius, 3.2, 3.4, 3.26.*

*Philostorgius, 3.26.*
Godly Bishops

Philostorgius clearly envisioned the role of bishops as leaders of the Christian Roman Empire differently from that of emperors.\(^{27}\) Whereas God commends emperors through external signs like celestial phenomena or military victories, divine approval of bishops is revealed in their internal character and corresponding behavior. Bishops act virtuously, display great learning, and perform miracles. Additionally, the qualities which show that bishops possess divine favor can be divided into two categories. First, there are the bishops who are primarily known for their wonder-working and exceptionally virtuous lifestyle. Then there are the bishops who are mainly known for their erudition and eloquence. Those who stand out for exemplifying these evidences of divine approbation in the history are, according to Photius, the bishops Aetius, Eunomius, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theophilus the Indian. Photius makes this distinction in the epitome and explains the distinction in his entry on Philostorgius in the *Bibliotheca*: “He exalts especially Aetius and Eunomius for their teaching...and likewise Eusebius of Nicomedia, whom he calls the ‘Great,’ Theophilus the Indian, and several others for their marvels and their lives.”\(^{28}\) Philostorgius’s depiction of Aetius focuses on his intellectual abilities showing how this divine gift allows him to fight against the forces of polytheism.\(^{29}\) In fact, the historian explicitly affirms that Aetius’s exceptional wisdom (beyond his natural intellectual capacity) was given to him by God in a vision.\(^{30}\)

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\(^{27}\) In this chapter, I treat Aetius and Eunomius solely as bishops because they were consecrated as bishops and because Philostorgius clearly represents them as church leaders who are part of the relationship between church and state. For the argument that Aetius and Eunomius were outside of the episcopacy see my discussion in Chapter 3 and Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession,” 425-451.

\(^{28}\) Photius, *Bibliotheca*, codex 40; Philostorgius, 1.9b, 3.20a, 3.4b, 8.2; Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 16-17, n. 8.

\(^{29}\) Philostorgius, 3.15.

\(^{30}\) Philostorgius, 3.15.
Philostorgius’s account of Eunomius also focuses on learning.\(^3\) Thus, the Eunomian community included Christian leaders with overlapping but distinct gifts.\(^2\) Both attributes served as signs of divine favor but fulfilled different functions in the religious life of the community.

The account of Theophilus the Indian contains numerous details that illustrate the complementary qualities of exceptional virtue and wonder-working that set these bishops apart as divinely approved.\(^3\) In Philostorgius’s account, Theophilus played a prominent role in the Eunomian community and enjoyed some degree of success within the church-court circle of Constantius.\(^4\) According to Philostorgius, Theophilus did not allow his time as a hostage in Constantinople to go to waste and “formed his character to the highest degree of virtue and his beliefs in accordance with orthodoxy, choosing to live in celibacy.”\(^5\) These virtues of asceticism and Eunomian “orthodoxy” set Theophilus apart and prepared him for the leadership role he would fulfill later in life. Philostorgius also emphasizes that Theophilus received consecration as a deacon from Eusebius of Nicomedia, whom the historian refers to as ‘the Great.’\(^6\) Eusebius of Nicomedia was...

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\(^3\) Philostorgius, 5.2.

\(^2\) The lines were not clearly drawn; there was clearly a distinction between rhetoricians and the wonder-workers, but Aetius, for example, performed miracles.

\(^3\) For much more on Theophilus see Chapter 4.

\(^4\) Passages on Theophilus in Philostorgius, 3.4-6, 3.15; 4.1, 4.7-8; 5.4; 8.2; 9.18. Gregory of Nyssa also mentions Theophilus as the one who introduced Aetius to Gallus. He also incorrectly refers to him as a member of the tribe of the Blemmyes. Gregory of Nyssa, Contra Eunomium, 1. 47. Also, Theodoret mentions a Theophilus who refused to condemn Aetius at the Council of Constantinople of 360, Theodoret, 2.28.3.

\(^5\) Philostorgius, 3.4.

\(^6\) Philostorgius, 1.8a, 1.9b.
also known for miracles and virtue in the history, and Theophilus’s consecration by him signals his orthodoxy and piety.

**On the Cooperation between Bishops and Emperors**

Beginning with the reign of Constantine, Philostorgius depicts emperors and bishops cooperating with each other. This does not mean that he always presents either the emperor or the bishops taking the lead in matters of the faith; this seems to vary with the circumstances. But he certainly assumes that both emperors and bishops will and ought to lead together in ecclesiastical affairs. Thus, when Emperor Constantine summons the bishops to Nicaea, he is acting in accordance with his role as a good Christian emperor.\(^{37}\) While Constantine exemplifies his divinely-approved role as a Christian leader in convoking this council, he also displays restraint as he waits for the bishops to come to an agreement, highlighting the necessity of god-approved bishops to lead the empire together with the emperor.\(^{38}\)

The missions of Theophilus and Ulfila represent the two most unequivocally positive representations of the cooperation between bishop and emperor.\(^{39}\) Philip Amidon states that in Philostorgius’s view the faith remained uncorrupted only outside the empire.\(^{40}\) Therefore, in a sense these missions do not pertain to the relationship between bishops and emperors within the empire. Nevertheless, these mission narratives reveal the ideal interaction between bishops and emperors. There are other

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\(^{37}\) Philostorgius, 1.7a.

\(^{38}\) Philostorgius, 1.9a. For more on this council and Constantine’s theological change of heart see Chapter 3.

\(^{39}\) I will only briefly address the role of mission for the purposes of this chapter as it is the focus of Chapter 4.

\(^{40}\) Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xx.
examples of cooperation within the empire, but perhaps the fact that perfect cooperation exists only beyond imperial borders reflects Philostorgius’s concern about the direction of the history of the Christian Roman Empire.

Ulfila plays an interesting role in Philostorgius’s narrative. One the one hand, evidence suggests that Ulfila was a homoean supporter, so he was not a direct hero of Philostorgius’s heteroousianism, but rather an opponent, as were other homoeans in the narrative. Yet Philostorgius included a very flattering and extensive portrayal of Ulfila in his work, while Rufinus does not even mention Ulfila in his history. Philostorgius represented the emperor as sending a mission with divine blessing. While Ulfila does not convert anyone, his relationship with the emperor and his willingness to go are prominent features of the account. For Philostorgius, Ulfila serves as the perfect example of a good bishop whose leadership qualities are valuable to the emperor. He serves as a leader of refugees, he takes care of them in the territory of the empire, he uses his skills as a scholar to civilize barbarians, and he provides a diplomatic service to the emperor. The narrative presents a positive relationship of mutual reliance between the bishop and the emperor. While the emperor clearly possesses the authority to dictate Ulfila’s actions, he simultaneously relies on the bishop’s virtue and leadership qualities to fulfill his own imperial objectives.

Philostorgius’s narrative of Theophilus’s mission to the Kingdom of Himyar further reveals the historian’s assumptions about the right relationship between bishops

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41 Philostorgius, 2.5; See Chapter 4 for a more extensive discussion of mission in Philostorgius and Rufinus.

42 Philostorgius, 2.5.
and emperors. He relates that Constantius appointed Theophilus to head an embassy to the Himyarites, the bishop performed numerous miracles, the king converted, and the “embassy was successful.” The narrative does not omit Constantius’s substantial role in this mission or the political and diplomatic concerns at stake. Rather the two elements of the triumph of true Christianity and the imperial goals complement each other. It is a mark of Theophilus’s distinction as a man of God that Constantius so singled him out and honored him by appointing him to this mission. On the other hand, Constantius, despite his sumptuous display of wealth and power, cannot achieve the conversion of the King of Himyar without the wonders worked by Theophilus. Philostorgius twice stresses how crucial the bishop’s miracles were to the success of the mission and even the subsequent construction of churches. Theophilus’s missionary activity reveals that the bishop’s authority stems from his virtue, wonder-working, and right belief. The imperial sponsorship of the mission only further defines Theophilus as a man of God because he has influence and recognition with the emperor himself. Simultaneously, the mission reflects the importance of Constantius’s promotion of the true faith and serves as a sign of God’s approval of the emperor. After all, Constantius initiated the mission, which converted a foreign ruler to Christianity and also allowed the emperor to protect Roman trade interests in the region. In Philostorgius’s narrative, Constantius is blessed with this successful mission directly following the emperor’s banishment of the champion of Nicaea, Athanasius, from Alexandria. Thus, the mission to Himyar presents

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43 See Shahid, 87-93, for a discussion of the uncertain nature of the other sources describing Christianity in South Arabia, including the stories of Bartholomew and Pantaenus.

44 Philostorgius, 3.4.

45 Philostorgius, 3.4, 3.4a, 3.4b.
Philostorgius’s ideal model of cooperation between bishops and emperors as well as his conviction that the events of history reveal God’s will.

Examples of cooperation within the Empire also feature in the *Ecclesiastical History*. Just as Theophilus collaborates with the emperor during his mission, the bishop also does so inside the empire. In addition to his virtues of holiness and wonder-working, Philostorgius stressed the importance of Theophilus’s relationship with the imperial court affirming that Theophilus was “shown great honor by the emperor upon his return.”46 In this passage, Philostorgius points to the recurring theme of imperial recognition of the virtue of bishops, which all the members of the religious community under Theophilus’s charge also recognized. Philostorgius highlights that imperial recognition signaled the bishop’s virtue, while at the same time contributing to the bishop’s authority. In fact, others could not but honor and admire him as “the man was greater than words can describe; he was like an image of the apostles.”47 Indeed his apostolic status is confirmed by his ability to bring a Jewish woman back to life in Antioch.48 Philostorgius connects the bishop’s virtuous lifestyle, wonder-working, and apostolic authority with imperial recognition. In Philostorgius’s view, bishops acted out their virtues in the public arena, especially on the stage of imperial politics. The righteousness of their involvement with the imperial court was evident every time God worked a miracle through such men as Theophilus. Again, Philostorgius presents the emperor’s favor of Theophilus as evidence of the bishop’s greatness and godliness, not

46 Philostorgius, 3.6.
47 Philostorgius, 3.6a.
48 Philostorgius, 3.6a.
a limitation of his authority. While the emperor clearly benefits from this relationship, the cooperation between the two does not last within the borders of the empire.

Another example of imperial cooperation with bishops is an odd one as it concerns the Nicene bishop Athanasius and the resumption of his see. The episode occurs at a time when Athanasius is exiled in the west. He obtains the help of Constans, who writes a letter to Constantius asking for Athanasius to be restored to his rightful see and noting the threat of civil war if Constantius does not oblige. Philostorgius then writes that the emperor, “when he had received the letter, called together the bishops to hear their advice and was told by them that it was better to avoid war with his brother than to deliver Alexandria from Athanasius’s tyranny.”

What does this episode mean? Philostorgius strongly dislikes Athanasius, yet in this episode he seems to imply that Constantius acted rightly in allowing him to return, given the advice of the bishops and the alternative. At the same time, this action led to Athanasius being even more arrogant and destructive than before. Clearly Constantius was trying to do the right thing but was no match for bishops like Athanasius. This episode reveals the ambiguity and complexity of the relationship between bishops and emperors in Philostorgius’s history.

The Challenge of Cooperation: The Case of Caesar Gallus

Similarly complex is the case of the Caesar Gallus, cousin of Constantius and Julian the Apostate’s half-brother. Gallus plays a prominent and positive role in Philostorgius’s history, in striking contrast with the caesar’s depiction by other pagan and Christian historians. Philostorgius presents Gallus in a favorable light, extolling

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49 Philostorgius, 3.12.

50 Although Gallus only achieved the status of caesar, Philostorgius presents him as an imperial figure in the History.
him for his consistency in matters of the faith and his support of Aetius.\textsuperscript{51} But, his large role in the history does not correspond to his actual minor role in imperial politics. Philostorgius’s depiction of Gallus reveals the complexity of his view on the relationship between emperors and bishops. The story of Gallus celebrates the caesar’s piety and cooperation with godly bishops, yet simultaneously laments his tragic death. The relationship between Gallus and Theophilus serves as an example of positive cooperation between bishop and emperor. In the end, however, Gallus’s anger and listening to bad advice lead to tragic events that cannot be stopped even by the intercession of godly bishops. Thus, the story of Gallus on the one hand points to the ideal relationship between bishop and emperor, yet also reveals the flaws in leadership of the Roman Empire.

Additionally, his death functions as an explanation for the reign of Constantius. This becomes evident as Constantius’s relationship with Theophilus features prominently in the story, and because the emperor’s treatment of Gallus becomes one of the reasons for his downfall.\textsuperscript{52} Helmut Leppin has rightly noted Philostorgius’s very positive characterization of Gallus in the history, astutely observing that Gallus is the only emperor in the history to remain true to his beliefs.\textsuperscript{53} He has also noticed how Philostorgius uses stories of emperors receiving bad advice to excuse the bad decisions of otherwise good emperors. However, these accounts not only throw light on Philostorgius’s assessment of the emperor as good but also highlight the dynamic of cooperation with godly leaders. Philostorgius showed that if emperors listened to advice

\textsuperscript{51} Philostorgius, 3.27-28; Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 111-124.

\textsuperscript{52} Philostorgius, 3.27, 3.28, 4.1.

\textsuperscript{53} Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 118-119.
from godly bishops God showed signs of his approval, but if they did not pay attention to
the divine will, negative consequences would follow even for such favorites as
Constantius and Gallus.

The actions of Constantius during the events surrounding the Caesar Gallus
demonstrate the risk of emperors rejecting the influence of divinely inspired bishops in
the sphere of the imperial court. Simultaneously, the story of Gallus illustrates
Philostorgius’s emphasis on imperial right belief and the perils of bad advice. Facing
war on two fronts, Constantius appointed his cousin Gallus as Caesar in 351 and gave
him his own sister Constantia as a wife.54 Gallus’s relationship with the founding leader
of the heteroousian faction, Aetius, features prominently in the account of the Caesar’s
rule. Philostorgius relates that initially Gallus was misinformed about Aetius by enemy
bishops and even ordered the man to be tortured. In the History, Gallus did so because
“he trusted bishops and was moved to anger.”55 This explanatory phrase shows that on
the one hand Philostorgius expects and celebrates Gallus’s piety of listening to bishops.
Yet on the other hand, even godly rulers such as Gallus can fall victim to anger and the
advice of bad bishops. This points to the importance of collaboration with godly bishops
who can be recognized by their virtue and wondrous works. Once Gallus was correctly
informed about Aetius he spared him and then even had a special meeting with him.
Theophilus the Indian introduced Aetius to Gallus and the Caesar was impressed with
the Christian leader. He was so impressed, in fact, that he appointed Aetius as a
teacher of “sacred sciences” and sent him to Julian in hopes of preventing his brother

54 Philostorgius, 3.25, 3.26a.
55 Philostorgius, 3.27.
from falling into apostasy.\textsuperscript{56} Thus, Gallus benefited from the counsel of both Theophilus and Aetius, and his piety in this regard benefited the whole empire: he was courageous and victorious against the Persians.\textsuperscript{57}

In Philostorgius’s version of subsequent events, Gallus approved of the killing of two imperial officials at the instigation of his wife Constantia. Constantius did not view this act as a legitimate use of the authority he had conferred upon Gallus and thus, first exiled him and then had him executed. Theophilus’s role in these events was crucial. Philostorgius relates that the bishop traveled with Gallus on a journey to placate the emperor and even successfully interceded on the caesar’s behalf when Constantius had sent a general to enact the banishment.\textsuperscript{58} Theophilus’s success was short-lived, however, as Constantius recognized that the bishop was hindering him from properly punishing Gallus. So, Constantius exiled Theophilus. Yet despite Theophilus’s erratic treatment at the hands of Emperor Constantius, his presence at the side of the caesar signals that the bishop participated in important events for the history of both the Empire and the Eunomian faith.

Philostorgius also indicates that Theophilus was instrumental in the development of Gallus’s positive qualities. Theophilus introduces Aetius to Gallus, as he witnesses and mediates the initial oaths between the Caesar and Constantius. The bishop had the power and ability to promote the virtues of friendship and good faith. Furthermore, he embodied those virtues, as he did not leave Gallus’s side and even interceded on his behalf, even though the situation clearly portended to end with an expression of

\textsuperscript{56} Philostorgius, 3.27.
\textsuperscript{57} Philostorgius, 3.28.
\textsuperscript{58} Philostorgius, 4.1.
Constantius’s wrath. In addition to being a force for peace and goodwill in the highly contentious politics of Constantius’s court, Theophilus possessed divine approval of his actions, for he survived his exile. Philostorgius places Theophilus right in the middle of the political and ecclesiastical events of Constantius’s reign and stresses his conciliatory and wonder-working virtues. But despite Theophilus’s positive intervention and influence on both Gallus and Constantius, the advice of wicked men leads to the execution of Gallus. Constantius even gave a last minute order for a stay of execution, but the caesar’s enemies at court prevented the order from reaching the executioner on time.

**Bishops and Emperors in Conflict**

Overall, tensions between bishops and emperors predominate in the epitome of the history over examples of mutual cooperation. Emperors and bishops live in a relationship of mutual distrust. While emperors hold a monopoly on power and frequently exile non-compliant bishops, bishops simultaneously act independently and accomplish this independent activity by regularly duping the emperor. Stories of such interaction leave the impression of a constant back-and-forth struggle, a dramatic inversion of the harmonious relationship described above.

While the events in the lives of Constantius and Theophilus communicate to the reader that both enjoyed divine favor, the tumultuous nature of ecclesiastical politics show the respective strengths and weaknesses of bishops and emperors as well as their need to rely on each other. They also demonstrate the tragic consequences of abandoning right belief and injuring those whom God has clearly marked as special representatives of His will. In the history, Constantius frequently calls councils and
repeatedly exiles, recalls, approves, and appoints bishops. These instances establish his strength and independence in the relationship between bishops and emperors. Yet Philostorgius also reveals his assumption about the weakness of the emperor in these interactions between imperial and ecclesiastical authority by showing how bishops manipulate emperors on a regular basis. Either the emperor was convinced by bishops to act in a certain way or was blatantly tricked into it.

There are numerous passages in Philostorgius where bishops or other ecclesiastical figures seem to act completely independently because there is no mention of the empire or the imperial court. However, there does not appear to be one type of activity in which they regularly engage by themselves and another type of activity in which they cooperate with the emperor. All of the seemingly independent actions of the bishops have parallels in situations when the bishops act cooperatively with the emperor—deposing other bishops, arguing with each other, and ordaining bishops. So, it is safe to assume that all of these passages recounting episcopal activity independent of the emperor can be read in the context of possible imperial intervention.

Philostorgius’s *History* includes an extensive section on Eunomian ordinations and division of responsibilities. It has been interpreted as the description of the actual creation of a separate Eunomian episcopal hierarchy. This can be seen as a statement of the separation of the Eunomian church not only from the existing church

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59 For example, Constantius exiles Athanasius and appoints a non-Nicene bishop to replace him, Philostorgius, 3.3, 4.3.

60 See, for example, Philostorgius, 3.16, 3.17, 3.18.

hierarchy but from the state. If one reads the history as a whole, however, it is clear that Philostorgius did not see bishops and emperors succeeding without each other’s support. These Eunomian bishops who were ordaining bishops outside of the imperially supported ecclesial hierarchy, according to Philostorgius, were anticipating a time of greater imperial support. Moreover, this passage highlights the separation of the Eunomian bishops from other homoean bishops, rather than from the imperial court. Philostorgius’s account of these ordinations also communicates the righteousness of the Eunomian bishops’ independence and shows how they were providing good Christian leadership for the empire. Based on this passage, Peter Van Nuffelen has argued that the bishops wanted institutional purity to be rid of members with suspect theology. Nevertheless, Philostorgius’s representation of them focuses on the connection to the imperial court. Additionally, Van Nuffelen rightly focuses on the fact that Eunomius and Aetius exercise a high degree of centralized authority in their ordination and appointment of bishops pointing to the Eunomian community’s desire to maintain orthodox purity. This passage also highlights the two types of Christian leaders that were part of the Empire, as it mentions the distinction between eloquence and virtuous lives. It is difficult to separate out which bishops were known primarily for their learning and which ones for their miracle-working virtue, but Photius clearly places

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62 It is difficult to characterize the existing church hierarchy given the existence of Nicene, homoean, and Eunomian factions. Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession,” 437-438.

63 Van Nuffelen, “Episcopal Succession,” 438-439. He also argues that neither Aetius nor Eunomius perceived themselves to be part of the episcopacy at this point and therefore the community had elected to place ecclesiastical authority outside of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. As both Aetius and Eunomius had received ordination as bishops, this argument relies on assessing Aetius’s and Eunomius’s views of themselves. While Van Nuffelen makes a compelling argument, Philostorgius’s History presents Aetius and Eunomius as perfect Christian leaders alongside other bishops, such as Theophilus the Indian.

64 Philostorgius, 8.2.
Eunomius and Aetius into the former category. Photius writes that “Philostorgius never tires of heaping praise upon all of these, proclaiming their eloquence and extolling their lives.” Presumably, the extensive praise that Photius writes about reveals the historian’s perspective on the qualities of these bishops and what made them worthy of imperial attention.

Considering that these bishops were supposed to be men of exceptional virtue, Philostorgius recounts a surprising number of instances of episcopal deception. Seemingly one of the favorite tactics of bishops was to subscribe to what they did not believe in order to manipulate the emperor. Philostorgius recounts that God displayed his displeasure through an earthquake for the anti-Nicene bishops who falsely subscribed the Creed of Nicaea. While divine wrath seems like a logical consequence of lying about one’s faith, the subsequent bizarre details of this account reveal much about the relationship between bishops and emperors. After the earthquake, the bishops repent and then confess their deception to the pro-Nicene emperor. Emperor Constantine exiles them for their initial dishonesty. The fact that Philostorgius chose to relate a story wherein the bishops felt like they needed to make a public admission of their guilt to the emperor while risking punishment shows that good Christian leadership in accordance with God’s will is associated with public cooperation between bishops and emperors. Moreover, it reveals Philostorgius’s view that the emperor's

65 Philostorgius, 8.2.

66 For example, see the signers of deposition against Aetius, (Philostorgius, 4.11) who “reluctantly dissembled in the name of expediency” and the subscribers to the creed at the end of 4.11. Also, many of the subscribers to the creed of Ariminum soon repudiated it (Philostorgius, 5.1). And finally, note the famous subscribers with careless handwriting at the Council of Nicaea (Philostorgius, 1.9c).

67 Philostorgius, 1.9, 2.1, 2.1a, 2.1b. For more on the Arian controversy, see Chapter 3.
involvement—even if it results in the exile of such good bishops as Eusebius of Nicomedia—was an appropriate outcome to a story that is really about the triumph of “true” Christian faith.

Other narratives of bishops tricking each other and emperors highlight the role of unorthodox bishops and the negative consequences of emperors listening to bad bishops. Oddly, Philostorgius’s narrative of bishops constantly duping Constantius presents the emperor in a positive light, as the historian approved of emperors who listened to episcopal counsel. The story also functions to remove some of the blame from the emperor; his guilt is at least partly diminished because he is prey to bad counsel. However, these numerous episodes inevitably raise questions about the emperor’s leadership since he is repeatedly tricked on numerous occasions. For example, anti-Eunomian bishops bring false but damning accusations against Eunomian leaders, and Constantius falls for the deception. Specifically, the homoiousian bishop Basil of Ancyra convinces Constantius that Aetius, Eudoxius, and Theophilus participated in Gallus’s alleged revolt. Not only does Philostorgius state that the emperor was duped, but that Basil was able to deceive him “especially because of the women.” As a result, the emperor banished several bishops and others “he handed over to the authority of those who had accused them.” This suggests that bishops had the authority to deal with their opponents as they saw fit, which they

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68 As discussed above, sometimes the lying is a tragic matter of life and death as in the example of Gallus (Philostorgius, 4.1).

69 Philostorgius, 4.8. See additional section below on the special category of the influence of women.

70 Philostorgius, 4.8.
exercised in this case by exiling opposing bishops.\textsuperscript{71} Other bishops attempt to petition Constantius and tell him the truth, but Basil intercepts Eunomius while he is on his way to see the emperor and exiles him. Thus, there are very serious consequences when bishops lie and the emperor believes them.

Frequently, the machinations of bishops were even more elaborate. For example, after their success in eliminating the Eunomian bishops from the scene, Basil of Ancyra and his fellow bishops held a disputation in front of the emperor in which they presented a theological pronouncement that described the relationship between the father and son as similar, but avoided any mention of substance.\textsuperscript{72} Thus they promulgated a creed acceptable to Emperor Constantius, but phrased it in such a way that it concealed their true purpose of reaffirming the consubstantialist doctrine. The creed originally promulgated at this conference had the force of conciliar decree and imperial approval and hence bolstered their authority. Once they had accomplished this feat of deception, Philostorgius claims, they traveled around with this authority to promote the consubstantialist doctrine.\textsuperscript{73} Thus, their deceitful intervention fooled the emperor, other bishops, and lay people. In fact, in addition to the emperor, Philostorgius frequently presents bishops as lying to and coercing other bishops and believers. In this case, Basil and company traveled around persuading other bishops to join their side “applying a combination of force and persuasion,” simultaneously exiling any intractable bishops.\textsuperscript{74} Thus, bishops appear to be acting independently, but their dependence on

\textsuperscript{71} Philostorgius, 4.8.
\textsuperscript{72} Philostorgius, 4.8.
\textsuperscript{73} Philostorgius, 4.9.
\textsuperscript{74} Philostorgius, 4.9.
the emperor is evident in their need to trick him. This is a distorted version of the appropriate cooperation between bishop and emperor which Philostorgius elsewhere presents as an ideal. Thus, even the ostensibly independent activity of bishops exists within the context of imperial cooperation.

The consequences of Basil’s deceitful activities reveal once again Philostorgius’s assumption about the necessity of the emperor’s involvement in church affairs while bringing into question the quality of Constantius’s leadership. Ultimately, such episodes point to the importance of recognizing godly bishops and paying attention to divine signs. Eventually, other bishops traveled to Constantius and informed him that Basil and his party had been promoting the consubstantialist doctrine when they had just led him to believe that they upheld the opposite. Some time had already passed before the emperor heard of Basil’s deception, and he was “astonished and deeply grieved.” To be sure, Constantius comes across in this episode as easily manipulated and woefully ignorant of affairs in his own empire. Yet the passage also presents Constantius as piously and justifiably concerned about such matters. Philostorgius believes that it is right for the emperor to stay involved in matters of the church, even though he may make bad decisions based on bad advice. In fact, once he had learned of the deception, the emperor’s response to the crisis was to return the exiles and call another two councils, one in the west and one in the east.

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75 As seen in the preceding section on cooperation, especially in the mission accounts, Philostorgius, 2.5, 3.4.

76 Philostorgius, 4.9.

77 Philostorgius, 4.10.
Events surrounding these two councils emphasize that God makes his will perfectly clear. An earthquake prevents the first council in Nicomedia, Philostorgius maintains, because almost everyone connected with it was a consubstantialist, and therefore it was not representative.\textsuperscript{78} Of course the council reconvened in another location, but Basil again managed to manipulate the proceedings and divide the council.\textsuperscript{79} Philostorgius shows that God does send signs and distinguishes between orthodox men of God and legitimate and illegitimate council proceedings. Thus, he notes that Basil and company “met by themselves” and that, in contrast, Eunomius and his party “ratified the doctrine of ‘other in substance’ in writing and sent their document to every place.”\textsuperscript{80} Philostorgius is clearly making a distinction between proper and improper proceedings. Basil contrived the meeting, he focused on deposing his opponents, met separately with his own party and ordained a bishop. Eunomius and his followers, by contrast, did not behave in such an irregular manner.\textsuperscript{81} Once again, the emperor’s reaction to these events reveals poor leadership on Constantius’s part. “When the emperor learned what had happened...,” Philostorgius writes, suggesting that the emperor does not know what is happening in his own empire.\textsuperscript{82} The emperor was ill informed, but his response to the problem is the same.

\textsuperscript{78} Philostorgius, 4.10, 4.11.  
\textsuperscript{79} Philostorgius, 4.11.  
\textsuperscript{80} Philostorgius, 4.11.  
\textsuperscript{81} Philostorgius, 4.10. Philostorgius also represents the second council that met in the west in Ariminum as less representative (300, rather than 400) as it professed the son to be like the father and outlawed the use of the term ousia to describe the relationship. He also states that the pressure of the lying bishop Acacius pushed heteroousian bishops to subscribe to it (Philostorgius, 4.12). Both of these examples reinforce Philostorgius’s emphasis on proper conciliar proceedings.  
\textsuperscript{82} Philostorgius, 4.12.
He calls another gathering of bishops, this time in Constantinople, to discuss and debate the matter. Once again the historian assumes that it is appropriate for emperors to be deeply involved in church affairs and for bishops to come when the emperor calls. But Philostorgius also affirms that the gatherings of bishops need to show legitimacy.

Several examples of lying and conniving bishops suggest a fear of the emperor. Perhaps they serve as a statement about imperial power and responsibility, but they also argue for the need for upright bishops who would not bend to imperial pressure. Philostorgius relates that certain bishops “yielded to the currents of the times and put the emperor’s will before what they considered to be the truth.”83 In this instance he is not just ranting against his opponents but decrying former supporters of Aetius who could not see the truth or display good leadership. Given that the emperor so readily exiled opponents and dissenters, it makes sense that bishops would fear taking a stand against the theological fashion of the day; but Philostorgius laments their weakness and untruthfulness. Oftentimes, the emperor exiled bishops for being untruthful.84 We have already seen how Constantine exiled the anti-Nicene bishops who had pretended to subscribe to Nicaea. The emperor then (according to Philostorgius) adopted an anti-Nicene position.85 This leads to the remarkable situation wherein Alexander of Alexandria subscribes to an anti-Nicene creed to avoid exile while the other anti-Nicenes are still in exile for lying, and then “when fear of the emperor had waned” Alexander recants his subscription.86 Thus, Philostorgius paints a picture of bishops on

83 Philostorgius, 5.1.
84 Philostorgius, 5.1, 2.1. Also for contradicting themselves, as happened to Aetius, 5.1.
85 Philostorgius, 2.1.
86 Philostorgius, 2.1.
both sides of the debate subscribing to statements they do not believe because of fear of the emperor. By their behavior they risked either imperial wrath for their lying later or immediate repercussions for wrong belief. Once again, these accounts of fear of the emperor are an inversion of the appropriate relationship between bishop and emperor. Emperors and bishops may both err, but it is the duty of both to pay attention to divine signs. Unfortunately, instead, bishops and emperors are constantly duping and exiling each other.\textsuperscript{87}

Despite all of the setbacks associated with conniving bishops, Eunomian bishops maintained their church structure over a period of time and Eunomius still single-handedly appointed bishops.\textsuperscript{88} Matters changed for the worse for the Eunomians when Theodosius became emperor. He exiled all Eunomian Christians from Constantinople. Philostorgius does not hide his opinion of Theodosius as an emperor.\textsuperscript{89} His account teems with descriptions of ominous signs and portents following Theodosius’s exile of Eunomius. It hardly reads as an account of “resignation” as Leppin has suggested. Theodosius failed to pay attention to these divine signs, failed to see the signs of righteousness in Eunomius, and therefore failed in his role as a Christian emperor.\textsuperscript{90} His failure is tragic, according to Philostorgius, not only for the emperor as an individual, but also for the empire as a whole. The historian does largely end his account of ecclesiastical affairs after this point in the history, but he never stops describing the

\textsuperscript{87} There are many more examples of this kind of activity of bishops tricking each other or emperors (Philostorgius, 5.1, 6.4, 9.8, 9.11).

\textsuperscript{88} Philostorgius, 9.18.

\textsuperscript{89} Philostorgius, 9.19.

\textsuperscript{90} Philostorgius, 10.9.
cosmic battle between good and evil that is at the heart of his history. The numerous
divine omens and imperial secular affairs function to reveal the story of the Christian
Roman Empire, just as much as did the stories of the bishops. Thus, Philostorgius does
not switch focus because he is resigned or interested only in his own sect, as Marasco
argues, but rather because the location of the battles of the war that had always been
there had shifted.

The Role of Women

Women play a distinctive role in this relationship between bishops and emperors
and in the history as a whole. While it is clear that women frequently appear during
crucial negotiations between bishops and emperors, their precise function in the
narrative remains unclear. Constantius wrongly exiles bishops, Philostorgius explains,
because he believed their detractors “especially because of the women...”91 On the one
hand, this is clearly a negative statement about women being easily misguided by the
bishops, ultimately resulting in the emperor being led astray. But it is also a statement
revealing that women had a great deal of influence over the emperor. An examination of
other instances of women involved in imperial and ecclesiastical affairs does not provide
one simple answer.92

The incredibly multi-layered story of the bishops who secretly subscribed the
wrong statement at the Council of Nicaea also includes the influence of women. The
bishops allegedly behaved in this way because Constantina, the emperor Constantine’s
sister, convinced them to do so. She was sympathetic to Arianism and apparently did

91 Philostorgius, 4.8.

92 There are other women in Philostorgius’s History. For example, Constantine’s second wife, Fausta, or
his mother, Helena. But these examples are outside the scope of the relationship between emperors and
bishops.
not want them exiled, so she counseled them to lie.\textsuperscript{93} Is Philostorgius using the woman’s advice to excuse the actions of the dishonest bishops? Or is he implying that one should not listen to women? After all, the empress’s advice turns out to be incorrect, as the bishops suffer a supernatural earthquake as a result. Finally, the example again points to the close connection between bishops and the imperial court.

Another imperial woman, Constantia, was the sister of Constantius and Constans, a widow of Hannibalianus, and had been crowned Augusta by Constantine. She was later married to Gallus. Apparently she acted on her own authority, as she appointed the general Vetranio as Caesar during the usurpation of Magnentius, and Constantius approved her action and confirmed it.\textsuperscript{94} Her role in the story of Gallus is twofold. She is presented as the source and instigator of Gallus’s violent repression of imperial officials. Yet she also travels ahead of Gallus to intercede on his behalf before Constantius, but she is unable to accomplish this task as she dies on the way. Listening to her does not end well for Gallus, and perhaps signals that both the Augusta and the caesar should have instead listened to good bishops.

Constantius’s own wife Eusebia seems to play a completely different role. She is presumably one of the women mentioned in the earlier story about “the women” contributing to Constantius being led astray by Basil and his followers. She apparently suffered from “hysteria,” and Constantius “was so deeply devoted to her” that he had the exiled Theophilus recalled because he was the only one who could miraculously

\textsuperscript{93} Philostorgius, 1.9. The text reads “Constantina”, but “Constantia” is more correct, Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 12, n. 20.

\textsuperscript{94} Philostorgius, 3.22.
heal her. The emperor apologized to Theophilus, and the bishop cured Eusebia. The relationship between Constantius and Theophilus was restored. Excepting this example, the women in Philostorgius’s history do not generally promote good relations between bishops and emperors.

**Julian the Apostate**

Julian is a problematic figure for the assessment of Philostorgius’s understanding of church and state, because he is a pagan emperor. He does, however, function in the narrative similarly to the other bad emperors, like Theodosius. Yet Philostorgius clearly presents Julian in a negative light, whereas even Theodosius possesses divine blessings. Also, his ascension functions as a punishment for Constantius’s bad behavior. On the other hand, Julian had a positive relationship with Aetius and recalled him from exile, which was important and beneficial for the Eunomian community’s ability to thrive as a whole. Julian recalled other bishops who had been exiled for ecclesiastical reasons, but he also had a personal relationship with Aetius. Moreover, Julian hated Athanasius. Together, all of these contradictory aspects of Julian’s personality and reign must have been problematic for Philostorgius. There is

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95 Philostorgius, 4.7. Eusebia appears again much later in the History in an entry in the Suda on Leontius of Tripoli. The story concludes with a statement from Leontius to Constantius which is as close to a programmatic statement on church and state relation as any in the history (Philostorgius, 7.6a). See discussion in section below.

96 The focus here is on Philostorgius’s representation of Julian as the Apostate.

97 The omens that really reveal Julian’s reign are discussed in Chapter 7.

98 See section below.

99 Philostorgius, 7.5; Amidon, Philostorgius, 95, n. 28.

100 Philostorgius, 6.7; Amidon, Philostorgius, xxii; 83, n. 16; 95, n. 28.

101 Amidon, Philostorgius, 83-84, n. 16.
not much more information from Photius’s epitome. But the state of the text is not as bad as Amidon suggests when he affirms that there is no indication what Philostorgius thought of Julian. Amidon states that “It is clear at least that he explained Julian’s accession as punishment for Constantius’s banishment of his hero..., but how he then dealt with the paradoxical policies of this new Alexander is something that Photius’s epitome does not reveal.” In fact, Philostorgius’s use of divine images and signs gives numerous indications of what he thought of Julian and his relationship with bishops.

Julian himself definitely did not see any contradiction in being heavily involved in the religious matters of his empire. Philostorgius presents Julian’s reign almost like a pre-Constantinian era for Christians. He depicts Julian’s religious policies not as imperial religious policies that are misguided like the “heretical” ones but as forms of persecution that lead to widespread distress. Julian persecutes Christians mercilessly, and miracles reveal the error of his promotion of paganism. The battle is fought through contests over sacred spaces and other physical manifestations such as shrines, relics, and statues. In the meantime, the Eunomian community continues much in the same way that it has been operating before. Philostorgius shows that his co-religionists continued to contend with unrighteous bishops, but now had no emperor with whom to cooperate. Philostorgius demonstrates that even Julian received great grace from God in the form of his relationship with Aetius. Oddly, Philostorgius also seems to imply that Julian’s positive assessment of the bishop is a credit to Aetius, because it shows his greatness that even a pagan emperor could recognize. Amidon suggests that

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102 Amidon, Philostorgius, 83-84, n. 16.
103 Amidon, Philostorgius, 84, n. 16.
104 See Chapter 7 for more on these omens and the reign of Julian.
Philostorgius would have interpreted Julian’s recall of Aetius and other bishops from exile as a sign, potentially in favor of Julian. It seems unlikely, however, that Philostorgius perceived this recall as a special event for the Eunomian community as they had witnessed both the exiling and recalling of bishops under every other emperor.

**The Deaths of Emperors**

God shows his will through cautionary deaths on numerous occasions in Philostorgius’s history. In a way, they function much like natural disasters in the narrative, but differ as they do not inflict public but rather individual harm. Philostorgius relates that George of Alexandria was killed by an angry mob at the exact moment when he was trying to force other bishops to sign a condemnation of Aetius. These kinds of cautionary deaths occur throughout Philostorgius’s history and can signal divine disapproval and provide clues to the historian’s understanding of church and state. The very lives and deaths of emperors are signs from God.

In the end, even though God gives Constantine a lot of grace, the emperor fails to make the right choices. Falling for the machinations of Alexander of Alexandria, he supports the creed of Nicaea and banishes Arius. Consequently, his family life follows a tragic trajectory. The account of the emperor’s relationship with his wife Fausta and his son Crispus is a retelling of the tale of Phaedra, Theseus, and Hippolytus, complete with lurid details. And finally Constantine himself meets a tragic end, when he is

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106 Philostorgius, 7.2.

107 Philostorgius, 1.9a. See Chapter 3 for details on the Arian controversy.

108 Philostorgius, 2.4, 2.4a.
poisoned by his own brothers. Philostorgius makes his sentiment on the ultimate meaning of the legacy of Constantine’s reign clear by ending the account with the worship of a statue of Constantine after his death. He claims that the Christians were “worshipping with sacrifices the image of Constantine set up upon the porphyry column, ... paying homage to it with lamp-lighting and incense or praying to it as to a god, and ... offering it supplications to avert calamities.” He lists the offerings to emphasize the parallel with pagan polytheism. The emperor received numerous positive divine signs, but chose to ignore them and incurred the full measure of divine displeasure.

Philostorgius similarly assesses the fate of Constans, whom he describes as sexually immoral and who died as a result of Magnentius’s usurpation. Philostorgius explicitly states the reasons for Constans’ demise, writing that he “lost his life in the usurpation of Magnentius because of his zeal for Athanasius.” From Philostorgius’s perspective, there could be no doubt of a direct correlation between Constans’ earlier support for the fervently pro-Nicene Athanasius and the emperor’s violent death at the hand of assassins.

And again, even though God showed Constantius much grace by providing him with guidance from such virtuous bishops as Theophilus, the emperor turned away from God and met his ruin. Basil and his fellow conniving bishops convinced the emperor to

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109 Philostorgius, 2.16, 2.16a.
110 Philostorgius, 2.17.
111 Philostorgius, 2.17.
112 Philostorgius, 3.22a-26a.
113 Philostorgius, 3.22.
exile Aetius and depose him from the diaconate.\textsuperscript{114} This event sealed Constantius’s doom. Philostorgius clearly makes the connection between Constantius’s lack of imperial success and his bad ecclesiastical policy. He claims that, “while Constantius usually was victorious in war, he suffered defeat in battle with the Persians because he had defiled his right hand with the blood of his own kin and had let himself be persuaded by Basil’s accusations to banish Theophilus, Aetius, and their party.”\textsuperscript{115} Constantius then died on his way to suppress the usurpation of Julian, whose rise to power serves as a punishment for Constantius’s abandonment of the Eunomian party.\textsuperscript{116} Describing the emperor’s death, Philostorgius intertwines the imperial issue of Julian’s revolt with matters of ecclesiastical orthodoxy:

While Constantius was weighing these matters [the most recent false accusations against Eunomius], he got wind of Julian’s revolt. He made his way at once to Constantinople, at the same time calling a council to meet in Nicaea to look into the doctrine of “other in substance.” But when he reached the place called Mopsucrenae, he fell ill, and then, having received baptism from Euzoius, he departed from life and realm together, and from the councils that had promoted heresy.

It is not surprising that Philostorgius believed that emperors who abandon Eunomians fall into apostasy and ruin. But his striking emphasis on events and the lives of individuals as portentous and revelatory of God’s will, linked with his assumptions about the appropriate interconnected relationship between bishops and emperors, stands out in ecclesiastical historiography. In Philostorgius’s history, Constantius’s reign demonstrates most clearly the potential of emperors to effectively support the church, while also pointing to the dangers of failing to cooperate with godly bishops.

\textsuperscript{114} Philostorgius, 4.12.

\textsuperscript{115} Philostorgius, 5.4. The family reference is to Gallus.

\textsuperscript{116} Philostorgius, 6.5.
Philostorgius demonstrates that God clearly expressed his will and granted Constantius numerous chances. For example, when Constantius received a report that the local bishop was treating the exiled Aetius too kindly he “ordered him to be banished to Amblada, where he could end his life in misery because of its barbarous and unfriendly inhabitants.” Philostorgius then relates that, “when Aetius, by his intercession with God, broke the intolerable drought and plague gripping the region, as our heretic falsely claims [Photius’s comment], the goodwill and reverence shown him by its inhabitants knew no bounds.”117 Clearly, Constantius should have paid better attention to the signs.

And finally, of course, the famous death of Julian shows that Philostorgius unequivocally links his death to the emperor's poor religious choices. Even though God grants Julian the remarkable grace of a personal relationship with the great Aetius himself, it does not save Julian from the consequences of following the pagan gods. In the story his death is a culmination of miraculous signs, deaths, and portents. God made his will perfectly clear when it came to the reign of Julian. The ensuing disaster was localized to Julian and his supporters unlike the negative consequences of the reign of Theodosius. The historian recounts that during an ambush in a Persian campaign a Saracen spear pierced Julian. He mentions the version of the story that claimed his own men were responsible, but discounts it.118 Philostorgius clearly states that the reason Julian went on this disastrous campaign in the first place was because he was “persuaded by the pagan oracles everywhere that his power would be

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117 Philostorgius, 5.2.
118 Philostorgius, 7.15.
invincible.” Thus, it makes sense that he would rail at the gods in his final hour. Having put so much faith in the gods, after he received the mortal wound Julian “took the blood from his wound in his hands and flung it toward the sun, saying clearly to it, ‘Take your fill!’ Indeed, he called the other gods evil and murderous as well.” Julian’s death revealed the false nature of the gods and the dangers of trusting the polytheistic pantheon. Photius records that Philostorgius believed that Julian cursed the gods, while other sources recount that Julian cursed Jesus Christ. Judging from Photius’s choice of words, it seems that Philostorgius was aware of these other versions as well, for the passage describing the versions of other historians are marked in the critical edition as appearing in several fragments of the ecclesiastical history. According to Philostorgius, then, Julian knew he had put his trust in gods who had failed him, so his curse revealed their powerlessness rather than his anger at the Christian God.

### Theories of Church and State

No discussion of Philostorgius’s view of Christian leadership would be complete without consideration of two explicit programmatic statements on church and state in his History. Neither of the relevant passages appears in the epitome of Photius, but rather in separate fragments— one from the tenth century Byzantine encyclopedia Suda and one from the pre-ninth-century Artemii Passio (an account of the legendary martyrdom of Artemius under the emperor Julian). Both statements occur in the form of stories,

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119 Philostorgius, 7.15.
120 Philostorgius, 7.15.
121 Philostorgius, 7.15; Amidon, Philostorgius, xxv.
122 Suda, 254, Leontius; Artemii Passio, in From Constantine to Julian, 224-256.
which must be set in their context both within these fragments and within the narrative of Philostorgius’s *History* in order to assess their possible significance.

The first passage occurs in an entry from the Suda describing the interactions of Bishop Leontius of Tripolis with Emperor Constantius and his wife Eusebia.\(^{123}\) The writer of the entry remarks that Philostorgius associated the bishop with other heteroousians; thus, the editor of the *Ecclesiastical History*, Bidez, placed this fragment in the context of the epitome’s description of Eunomian ordinations, which includes a mention of Leontius.\(^{124}\) The writer of the Suda asserts, “That ill-minded Philostorgius associates himself in his book with this Leontius as a sharer in his Arian perversity.”\(^{125}\) This is the only sentence in the fragment that one can be certain contains content from Philostorgius’s *History*. It is possible that the writer continued to quote from Philostorgius after that sentence, though he more likely moved on to another source.\(^{126}\) Nevertheless, it is worth examining. Before relating the events concerning Eusebia and Constantius, the narrative begins with a story about Leontius’s son. The writer claims that the bishop had one son who from a young age did not show any promise of having a good character. Leontius prayerfully decided to have him killed while he was still young, “since he thought it best to bring his life to an end and to remove him from life’s treacherous pitfalls before he committed some act of immorality.”\(^{127}\) This account sets

\(^{123}\) Philostorgius, 7.6a.

\(^{124}\) Philostorgius, 7.6.

\(^{125}\) Philostorgius, 7.6a.

\(^{126}\) A number of factors point to the remainder of the entry on Leontius not following Philostorgius. It varies in tone from the epitome. It is chronologically out of place—Philostorgius mentions Leontius during the reign of Julian, but the Suda story is about the reign of Constantius.

\(^{127}\) Philostorgius, 7.6a.
the context for describing Leontius’s character and conflict with the imperial court.

According to the narrative, Bishop Leontius was the only one who stayed at home from a council where Eusebia (Constantius’s wife) was “putting on airs and receiving the reverence of the bishops.” Eusebia did not take kindly to such treatment, complained to the bishop and attempted to compel him to visit her with the promise of building him a great church. Leontius responded that if the empress wanted to build a church it would benefit her soul, but if she wanted a visit from him she would have to meet certain conditions. The bishop instructed her as follows:

But if you wished to receive a visit in a way that would maintain the respect due to bishops, then when I entered, you would come down at once from your lofty throne, advance to meet me respectfully, bow your head to my hands, and request my blessings. Then I myself would again be seated while you remained standing out of respect; you would be seated when I bade you by giving the signal. If you agreed to this, I would pay you a visit. Otherwise, you could not give gifts so many or so great that we would transgress the sacred law of the priesthood by surrendering the honor due to bishops.

Eusebia was predictably angered by such a reply and complained to her husband. Perhaps unexpectedly, Constantius commended Leontius’s “freedom of attitude” and calmed down Eusebia. This episode does not so much argue for a separation of imperial and ecclesiastical matters, but for the subordination of earthly authority to holy authority. Additionally, the story on the one hand reinforces the stereotype of Eusebia as prone to hysteria, yet does not coincide with Philostorgius’s previous statements about the inability of anyone (except Theophilus) to cure her or about Constantius’s willingness to go to any lengths out of devotion to her. Immediately

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128 Philostorgius, 7.6a.
129 Philostorgius, 7.6a.
after the conclusion to this story, the text launches into an account of a direct conflict between Constantius and Leontius which should be read in the context of the preceding passage about Eusebia.

Continuing the entry on Leontius, the writer of the Suda relates that Constantius was presiding at another council where he “was seated before the bishops with the intention of governing the churches too.”\textsuperscript{130} All the other bishops supported and applauded the emperor’s statements, but Leontius alone said nothing. Upon being asked by the emperor the reason for his silence, the bishop replied: “I am surprised to find you taking charge of matters other than those for which you were appointed; you are to manage military and civil affairs, and here you are issuing orders to bishops about what pertains to bishops alone.”\textsuperscript{131} Constantius immediately ceased trying to “impose his will in these matters.” The narrative concludes with “This is how frank Leontius was.” This story advocating the separation of ecclesiastical and imperial authority stands out as uncharacteristic of the overall picture Philostorgius presents of the relationship between bishops and emperors. As we have seen in other passages of the \textit{History}, Philostorgius presents Constantius’s active involvement in ecclesiastical affairs, both in the appointments or depositions of bishops and in the calling of councils and promotion of orthodoxy.

Another explicit statement on the separation of church and state is found in the narrative about the church policy of Valentinian.\textsuperscript{132} It does not occur in the epitome by

\begin{footnotes}
\item \textsuperscript{130} Philostorgius, 7.6a.
\item \textsuperscript{131} Philostorgius, 7.6a.
\item \textsuperscript{132} Philostorgius, 8.8a. The text is corrupt after the imperial quote, which makes it very difficult to make conclusions about this passage. But the quote itself is likely to come from Philostorgius as Sozomen includes a very similar one (Sozomen, 6.7.1-10).
\end{footnotes}
Photius, but only in a fragment from the *Artemii Passio*. The writer relates that soon after Valentinian’s accession to the throne bishops “of the pure and orthodox faith” asked the emperor to call a council. It is unclear who the orthodox bishops are; if the passage is quoting Philostorgius, then they are Eunomians, but the text may be from a Nicene point of view. Valentinian responded, “To me God has subjected the things of the world, while to you the churches. I therefore have nothing to do with the latter. Hold a council, then, wherever you wish.”\(^{133}\) This account is really about the ecclesiastical policy of Valentinian, who was known to prefer to let church matters sort themselves out, and is not necessarily a reflection of Philostorgius’s view.\(^{134}\) Additionally, the text is corrupt so it is unclear whether or not Valentinian is dealing with Nicene or non-Nicene bishops and which parts come from Philostorgius.\(^{135}\)

Consequently, these two statements advocating the separation of episcopal and imperial authority—one from a bishop, the other from an emperor—stand out from Philostorgius’s narrative as a whole. It is difficult to interpret such passages in the context of the numerous other accounts depicting cooperation between bishops and emperors. Perhaps Philostorgius did not see a contradiction. But it is interesting to note that the only two such statements in the history occur in fragments that are not in the epitome. Although the emphasis on separate realms for church and state in these two passages are peculiar in the *History*, the interactions between Bishop Leontius and Emperor Constantius and between Emperor Valentinian and the bishops both accord

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\(^{133}\) Philostorgius, 8.8a.

\(^{134}\) Amidon, 116, n. 23; Ambrose, *Ep.* 75[21] 2, 5; Sozomen, 6.7.1-10.

\(^{135}\) Philostorgius, 8.8a; Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 116-117 n. 23; Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 119.
with Philostorgius’s belief that it was best for emperors to listen to good orthodox bishops.

Whether leaders are deemed good or bad, throughout the History Philostorgius consistently demonstrates that the signs of divine favor and displeasure are clearly visible. His conviction that God makes himself perfectly clear was central to his understanding of history. He not only included traditional omens such as celestial objects or earthquakes, but even the very lives of emperors and bishops were portentous. By pointing out that certain emperors received explicit signs of divine grace and blessing, the historian showed that these emperors were on the right track in their role as Christian rulers. Alternatively, numerous negative signs in the lives of bishops and emperors pointed to divine discontent. The accounts of emperors in Philostorgius’s history show that he believed they should be actively involved in affairs of the church, heeding the explicit signs of God’s will. This involvement, however, could have negative consequences if the emperor failed to follow the example and counsel of god-inspired bishops and instead followed the lies of heretics. In contrast to several modern interpretations, Philostorgius did not compose a history of “resignation” but was purposefully advocating for his particular memory of the past and interpretation of the present. Additionally, a careful study of his representation of emperors and bishops shows that he did not simply support imperial intervention when it was advantageous to Eunomians. Rather his History reveals a distinctive theology of history and a complex view of the interaction between religious and imperial authority.
CHAPTER 6
PAGANS, BARBARIANS, AND JEWS: DIFFERENTIATING “OTHERS” IN THE CONTEXT OF EMPIRE

Filled with accounts of pagans, barbarians, and Jews, Philostorgius’s *History* serves as an important opportunity to examine the view of “others” by a fifth-century writer in the Christian Roman Empire. I acknowledge that the use of the terms pagans and barbarians is problematic, but I am focused on Philostorgius’s use and representation. Also, these categories overlap in some cases.¹ This chapter will explore Philostorgius’s representation of “others,” focusing on his distinctions between barbarians and pagans and their roles in the narrative. Specifically, it will focus on how barbarians, pagans, and Jews fit into his understanding of the Roman Empire and the working out of God’s plan on earth. Overall, the *Ecclesiastical History* shows that Philostorgius’s theology of history included barbarians playing significant roles in the unfolding of a divine plan for the empire. These barbarians played key political roles, functioned as the rhetorical “other” beyond the boundaries of the empire, and served as instruments of war in the divine plan for the empire.

**Barbarians**

Philostorgius mentions barbarians regularly throughout the history, but the majority of references occur toward the end of the narrative. In particular Books 10-12 show a definite increase in attention to barbarians. This marks a shift in the focus of the *History* from the activities of ecclesiastical leaders to the political and military events of the empire as a whole. This shift also coincides with Philostorgius’s narrative of events

in the west, which stands out as other church historians do not pay much attention to
events in the west. Nobbs argues that the fact that he chose to include such events is a
sign of Philostorgius’s wide-ranging interests. Philostorgius preferred to archaize the
names of people and places, one of the several ways in which he chose to follow in the
tradition of Herodotus. He seemed to archaize the designation of barbarian peoples as
much as possible. Thus, for example, he described the barbarians who entered Roman
territory with Ulfila as “the Scythians beyond the Danube (of old the Scythians were
called Getae, but now they are called Goths).” And again, “The Huns are those whom
people of old called the Neuri.” Philostorgius frequently makes general statements
about all barbarians, but he also shows an interest in specific people groups, naming
the Scythians, Getae, Goths, Huns, Neuri, Isaurians, Himyarites, Sabaeans, Ethiopians,
Indians, Mazices, and Austuriani. Finally, Philostorgius does not necessarily associate
barbarians with paganism, as he can point out when the barbarian is a pagan. Other
barbarians are not identified with any religion in Photius’s summary, and some of them
are described as Arians in other sources. Several individual barbarians are identified as

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2 Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 257, 262; Ferguson, 126-127, n. 10; Momigliano, “The Origins
of Ecclesiastical Historiography,” 144.

3 She also suggests that the fact that he read Olympiodorus is part of the same tendency. Nobbs,
“Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 257-258, 260, 262.

4 Amidon, Philostorgius, 1-2, n. 1.

5 Philostorgius, 2.5. See Amidon, Philostorgius, 20 n. 13 on this tendency to use classical terms as a
typical feature of the age.

6 Philostorgius, 9.17. Other instances occur at 3.4, 9.17, 11.8. Numerous historians in late antiquity did
this. The archaizing signals Philostorgius’s allusion to Herodotus. Also, referring to one group of
barbarians with multiple names may have been part of the Roman tendency to list barbarian peoples for
maximum rhetorical effect. Ralph Mathisen, “Catalogues of Barbarians in Late Antiquity,” in Romans,
Barbarians, and the Transformation of the Roman World: Cultural Interaction and the Creation of Identity
in Late Antiquity, ed. Ralph Mathisen and Danuta Shanzer (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 17-32.
Philostorgius's coreligionists—Ulfila and Theophilus—and clearly possess a special status in the history and a complex identity as barbarian/Roman.

A comparison with Rufinus's contrasting as well as similar representations of "others" in their histories will show that although Philostorgius's theology of history shared characteristics with that of Rufinus, the two historians had distinct interpretations of others in relation to religion and empire. I will focus on people Philostorgius refers to as barbarians and those who seem to be in that category from the context of the history and who might be identified as such by others in the Roman Empire in the fifth century.\(^7\)

The use of barbarians in the text can be broken down into three categories. First, the historian mentions individuals (as opposed to groups) of barbarian descent within the empire. Philostorgius shows a wide range of differentiation between various individual barbarians while Rufinus seems less concerned with them in general. Second, Philostorgius and Rufinus relate stories of barbarian peoples outside the Roman Empire. These narratives are frequently labeled mission accounts and include both statements about the projection of Roman power and concerns about orthodoxy. I argue that these narratives of barbarians beyond the frontiers function as focal points for statements about the nature of orthodoxy and imperial power. Rufinus and Philostorgius both used imagined landscapes beyond the Roman Empire as appropriate spaces for contests over competing claims to true Christianity. And finally, both Philostorgius and

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Rufinus present barbarians as marauding hordes that function as key players in human history governed by providence. Overall, the use of barbarians in these texts not only reveals the similarities in Rufinus’s and Philostorgius’s view of history, but also points to the differences in their specific understanding of the interconnectedness of religion and empire.

Two barbarians feature especially prominently in Philostorgius’s history as positive figures. The stories of Ulfila the Goth and Theophilus the Indian simultaneously demonstrate the process of individual barbarians becoming Romans and the function of mission accounts in histories of religion and empire. On the one hand, their stories show that the writer did not view their origins as a barrier to the crucial role they would play in the divine plan for the empire. On the other hand, these individuals had to go through a process of Romanization in order to play these critical leadership roles.

While Philostorgius devotes an extensive section of his history to Ulfila, the Goth famous for converting the Goths and translating the Bible into their language, Rufinus does not even mention him. Does Philostorgius explicitly refer to Ulfila as a barbarian or as a Goth? Photius’s summary makes it impossible to tell. According to Philostorgius’s account, Ulfila was a descendant of Cappadocians from the Roman Empire who were captured during the Gothic raids of the third century. In this story, the captives are the individuals who actually convert their Gothic captors outside the territory of the Roman Empire. As their descendant, Ulfila is not only Roman, but a Cappadocian like Philostorgius himself. Additionally, the Goth clearly possesses access to Roman education as his learning and translation work are emphasized. Also, Philostorgius

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8 Philostorgius, 2.5.
stresses that Ulfila derived his episcopal authority from his consecration by Eusebius of Nicomedia—one of the heroes of the historian’s heteroousian expression of Christianity. Moreover, the Gothic bishop enjoyed the blessing of the emperor himself as the historian relates that “he held [Ulfila] in the highest esteem, going so far as to refer to him often as the ‘Moses of our time.’” Not only does Philostorgius connect Ulfila to orthodoxy through the bishop Eusebius and the mark of imperial approval, but he explicitly states that the Gothic bishop espoused heteroousian beliefs, which was not the case.\(^9\) Philostorgius uses the story of Ulfila to make a statement about the purity of the true faith outside of the Roman Empire, but also the importance of imperial power in the promotion of this true faith. The identity of the barbarians whom Ulfila serves as bishop is also ambiguous. They are described as refugees suffering persecution for their faith and as settling in the empire. These signs of right faith and Roman-ness are followed by the explanation that Ulfila “translated all of the Scriptures into their language, except for the books of Kings, since these contain the history of the wars and the nation was warlike and needed its aggressiveness curbed rather than kindled.”\(^10\) Thus, although the Goths unquestionably possess right belief (while many people in the empire do not), they remain barbarous.

The second prominent figure of barbarian descent in the *Ecclesiastical History* is Theophilus the Indian. Philostorgius relates that Theophilus came to the Roman Empire as a young man as a hostage from the island of Diva. He deliberately places Theophilus’s story in conjunction with Ulfila’s. Like Ulfila Theophilus is on the one hand

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\(^9\) Philostorgius, 2.5, even though Ulfila was a homoean.

\(^10\) Philostorgius, 2.5.
an outsider, yet on the other hand he brings other outsiders into the community of the Christian Empire. Again like Ulfila he is transformed from barbarian to Roman within the narrative. Philostorgius claims that the bishop, “during the considerable time he spent living among the Romans, formed his character to the highest degree of virtue and his beliefs in accordance with orthodoxy, choosing to live in celibacy.” Theophilus acquires Roman-ness through his prolonged stay in the empire, his acceptance of the correct faith, and his virtuous lifestyle. And just like Ulfila, he possesses the consecration of Eusebius of Nicomedia and the full imperial support of Constantius who sends him on a mission to Himyar in South Arabia. Philostorgius’s account of Theophilus’s mission includes the role of barbarian peoples who act as collaborators with the bishop in the flourishing of heterousian Christianity outside the empire. Theophilus not only converts the Himyarites but journeys on to witness the flourishing of Christianity on his native island of Diva and in India. Philostorgius’s representation of Ulfila and Theophilus communicates that barbarians could acquire Roman-ness and that true faith existed among barbarian peoples outside the borders of the Roman Empire.

No other ecclesiastical historians include the story of Theophilus’s mission to South Arabia. Most likely, they purposefully omit the story to revise the non-Nicene account, just as Philostorgius ignores Rufinus’s side-by-side narratives of the Christianization of Aksum and Iberia (Georgia). Rufinus’s account of the conversion of

11 Philostorgius, 3.4.
12 Philostorgius, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6. Philostorgius refers to the Himyarites with the archaic term Sabaeans, the Indians on his home island and “the rest of the Indian country,” and the Ethiopians or Aksumites.
13 McLynn, “Little Wolf in the Big City,” 129.
Aksum through the agency of Frumentius provides a valuable source of comparison, as Philostorgius is clearly responding to it with his narrative of the mission to Himyar.\textsuperscript{14} From the beginning, Rufinus’s missionary account stands out as strikingly different from that of Philostorgius. In Philostorgius’s narrative, Theophilus is chosen by the emperor himself to embark on the embassy for the purpose of converting the king. In Rufinus’s story the beginning of Christianity in Aksum occurs when a Roman is traveling on the Red Sea, is shipwrecked, everybody on board is killed, and only two young boys are spared. These boys—now captives—grow into valuable members of the royal court at Aksum. As an adult, Frumentius takes the initiative to take care of Roman merchant Christians living in and traveling to Aksum.\textsuperscript{15} Frumentius is an accidental missionary, as he finds himself in Aksum not by his own will, and certainly not sent by an emperor as in Philostorgius’s account of Theophilus. Additionally, upon being allowed to leave Aksum, Frumentius travels to Athanasius in Alexandria and reports on the spread of Christianity in Aksum. He does not go to see the emperor. Athanasius appears in the narrative to consecrate Frumentius and thereby ensure his orthodoxy. Both Philostorgius and Rufinus use mission stories to comment on imperial orthodoxy or lack thereof. Thus, the stories of Frumentius and Theophilus display many of the same characteristics, but express different sentiments about the role of emperors beyond the borders of the Christian Empire. Rufinus’s mission account relates the spreading of Nicene Christianity

\textsuperscript{14} Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 40, n. 8.

\textsuperscript{15} Rufinus, 10.9, 10.10.
without any imperial involvement, while Philostorgius’s describes the success of non-
Nicene Christianity outside the empire through an imperially-sponsored mission.¹-six
Philostorgius’s history frequently discusses the origins of individuals in general and barbarians in particular. His inclusion of these descriptions illustrates that the perceived identities of these individuals were not fixed in the mind of the author and potentially the reader. For example, he mentions two military commanders explaining that they were of Gothic origin and implying that it is no surprise that they turned on the Romans.¹-seventeen In another instance his explanation suggests that barbarian identity can change over generations. He describes the general Arboğast’s inability to lay claims to the throne and explains that this was because “his father had been a barbarian,” implying that Arboğast himself was not.¹-eight Similarly, barbarians could acquire enough Roman-ness to integrate themselves into the imperial ruling elite as in the case of Bauto who “was of barbarian stock but had distinguished himself as a military commander in the west” and married his daughter off to the emperor Arcadius.¹-nine

Bauto’s daughter, Eudoxia, is the only female of stated barbarian ancestry in the epitome of the History. She also represents the only explicit description of barbarian nature as an asset. Philostorgius alleges that, “The woman did not share her husband’s [the emperor’s] sluggishness but was quite forward in the barbarian manner.”²-zero Apparently Eudoxia inherited barbarian manners from her father but was at the same


¹-seventeen Tribigild and Gainas. Philostorgius, 11.8.

¹-eight Philostorgius, 11.2.

¹-nine Philostorgius, 11.6.

²-zero Philostorgius, 11.6.
time an empress. Moreover, her barbarian manner had a direct impact on the reign of her husband. When she was treated badly by a powerful imperial eunuch, Eudoxia immediately appealed to her husband while holding their two infants in her arms. The historian claims that, “Wailing loudly and holding out the babies, she shed a torrent of tears and behaved in general as a woman seething with passion does with her feminine arts to make her husband feel sorry for her.” Arcadius felt sorry for her and the children and then became angry at the eunuch. Philostorgius presents this as a turning point in the emperor’s character, asserting that “at last, in his anger and in the severity of the language to which it prompted him, Arcadius was an emperor.” Thus, Eudoxia benefited the empire through a combination of her barbaric and feminine nature.

While Philostorgius’s History displays an interest in the origins of barbarian individuals, Rufinus does not explicitly discuss the ancestry of any individual barbarian. Rather, he either mentions them with no indication of their origin, as in his mention of Arbogast or, more commonly, he simply does not narrate their activities at all. Rufinus’s History does include the rather exceptional story of Bacurius, from whom Rufinus claims to have learned about the conversion of Georgia. Rufinus states that the man was the king of the Iberians (Georgians), but does not explicitly mention his barbarian nature at any point. He does, however, include him in the group of barbarians who served as Theodosius’s auxiliary unit during the campaign against the usurper Eugenius. Rufinus describes Bacurius as “a man so outstanding in faith, piety, and strength of mind and body that he merited to serve on Theodosius’s staff,” implying that this was the case.

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21 Philostorgius, 11.6. The eunuch is Eutropius.
22 Philostorgius, 11.6.
23 Rufinus, 11.33.
despite the fact that he was not a Roman. Thus, Rufinus presents Bacurius both as a barbarian and as a Roman. Philostorgius mentions barbarians more frequently and explicitly than does Rufinus, but his narrative includes similar examples of uncertainty about the extent of Roman-ness of certain individuals. In these cases, it appears that Philostorgius describes the way in which these barbarians become Romans. For example, he introduces the General Fravitta as “a Goth by nationality and a pagan by religion but loyal to the Romans and most able in warfare.”24 In other words, Philostorgius anticipated the doubts about this individual’s capacity to successfully fight on behalf of the Romans and implied that through his military success he became closer to being Roman.

Ultimately a barbarian background always seemed to imply the potential for treachery and violence. It is not clear whether Philostorgius viewed barbarians as more or less likely than Roman military leaders to engage in usurping and bloodthirsty behavior, but it does seem that he correlated such behavior with barbarian background when it did occur. For example, the interconnected stories of Tribigild and Gainas function as examples of the barbarian misfortunes that befall the empire. Philostorgius describes Tribigild as “a Scythian by birth who was of those now surnamed ‘Goths.’” Tribigild was in command of a “barbarian force” in the service of the Roman Empire, but betrayed it and began capturing and raiding territory. The emperor sent out General Gainas who was “himself a barbarian” against the forces of Tribigild. Gainas, however, yielded victory to Tribigild’s army since he was planning on also betraying the Romans. Tribigild then pretended to flee from Gainas and continued to devastate Roman

24 Philostorgius, 11.8. It is significant that Philostorgius adds pagan to this description. The Greek is ‘genos’ for nationality and ‘Hellene’ for pagan and ‘doxa’ for religion.
territories. Philostorgius inserts this account in the middle of a longer list of other barbarian armies pillaging and slaughtering in the Roman Empire. Thus, the historian linked Tribigild’s and Gainas’s barbarian descent with their duplicity and belligerence.

Barbarians are, of course, presented as generally prone to war and violence. The History includes a number of passing references to barbarians and their warlike nature. Their tendency for war is described as natural, constant, and random. For example, Constantius returns from a routine campaign against the barbarians when they “had settled down.” Moreover, barbarian desire for war is frequently the cause of a conflict, even when other factors are attested in other sources. For example, Philostorgius describes the origin of the battle of Adrianople as the fault of the Goths: “The Scythians, when they had moved over, behaved reasonably at first toward the Romans but then turned to robbery and finally went to undeclared war.” Similarly, he explains that the emperor Valens died while hiding in a building because the barbarians burned it down as “they did to everything else in their path.” The barbarians, headed by Fritigern, then proceeded to plunder Thrace. This unflattering portrayal of barbarians appears to be an example of the barbarians functioning in the narrative in the role of disasters sent as an expression of divine wrath. Philostorgius generally attributes such misfortunes to the bad religious policies of an emperor. But as he has a more positive view of Valens compared with other historians, it is unclear how this defeat fits into his

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25 As in the Ulfila story discussed above, Philostorgius, 2.5.

26 Philostorgius, 4.3a.


28 Philostorgius, 9.17.
view.\textsuperscript{29} It is clear that he did not make an attempt to diminish the seriousness of the defeat.

Both Philostorgius and Rufinus frequently associate barbarians with natural disasters.\textsuperscript{30} Philostorgius presents barbarians in this way more frequently than Rufinus. In the preface to his translation of Eusebius’s History, Rufinus writes that he undertook the work as the bishop of Aquileia, Chromatius, asked him to provide a source of comfort for the people of the city who were facing Gothic raids. He describes how “the Goths have burst through the barriers into Italy with Alaric at their head, and a lethal plague is spreading far and wide, to the ruin of fields, herds, and men.”\textsuperscript{31} The Goths here are represented as a natural disaster that can be overcome only with divine assistance.

In Book 11 as a whole Philostorgius focuses on the ongoing struggle with barbarian forces, which intensified under the reign of the pro-Nicene emperor Theodosius. Philostorgius demonstrates that the reign of Theodosius led to disastrous events plaguing the empire. The historian laments the fall of Roman military might and emphasizes that the defeat was more pervasive than before. He also claims that “the loss of human life was so great that never did any age know the like since time began.”\textsuperscript{32} This account presents war with barbarians only from the side of an ugly loss of life and devastation to the land. He places the barbarian onslaught right in the middle

\textsuperscript{29} Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 120.

\textsuperscript{30} Philostorgius, 9.19. Theodosius defeats barbarians, and this is presented as an example of imperial military might. Rufinus, 10.8, on Constantine. Barbarians serve as an opportunity for the individual military success or failure of an emperor.

\textsuperscript{31} Rufinus, Preface.

\textsuperscript{32} Philostorgius, 11.7.
of a long list of natural disasters that create suffering for the people of the Roman Empire. “It was the barbarian sword that worked most of the ruin, but famine, plague, and hordes of savage beasts did their part, as well as horrible earthquakes...”33 Here, barbarians and war function as the instruments of God’s wrath against the empire, as signs of divine displeasure at the wrong done to heteroou...33

Philostorgius then continues to list a host of other devastations wrought by barbarian armies, involving two kinds of Huns, Goths, Libyans, and Isaurians.34 He singles out the Isaurians as more barbaric than the other barbarians remarking that they “treated their captives the worst.”35 This rejection of the triumphant Nicene representation of the reign of Theodosius, affirming instead that it led to widespread death and destruction, is of course in direct response to Rufinus.

Rufinus concludes his History with the glorious victory of Theodosius over the usurper Eugenius. He relates that the outcome of the battle did not initially seem good for Theodosius as his barbarian troops were “being routed and put to flight before the enemy.”36 He then explains that “this took place not so that Theodosius might be conquered, but so that he might not appear to have conquered with the help of barbarians.”37 Theodosius then prays and the battle ends in a miraculous victory. Thus, the barbarians are not an appropriate instrument of divine blessing for the emperor. In contrast to Rufinus’s barbarians, Philostorgius’s barbarians are the direct expression of

33 Philostorgius, 11.7.
34 Philostorgius, 11.8.
35 Philostorgius, 11.8. He may have had some personal knowledge in this case as the Isaurians are described as raiding Cappadocia and forcing people out of their homes.
36 Rufinus, 11.33.
37 Rufinus, 11.33.
divine will—even if a wrathful one. Philostorgius and Rufinus reveal many of the same Roman Christian assumptions perspectives on barbarians both within and beyond the empire’s borders. Both writers are integral to the history of history writing in late antiquity. The differences in their histories not only point to their separate theological beliefs, but also to their different understandings of the role of the divine in history and the nature of the intertwined relationship between religion and empire.

**Pagans**

Throughout the *History*, paganism looms as the ever-present evil force threatening the well-being of the Christian Roman Empire and its inhabitants.\(^{38}\) Philostorgius also describes paganism as demon worship or in terms of the multiplicity of gods failing their pagan worshippers. Given the fact that Philostorgius’s work clearly shows a high level of education in classical Greek learning including rhetoric, philosophy, and medicine one wonders how he defined paganism. There is evidence to suggest that he made a distinction between pagan religion and pagan learning.\(^ {39}\) Regardless, Pagan polytheism is the real issue at stake in the debates between heteroousians and everyone else whom Philostorgius identifies as Nicene and homoousian. He also recognizes and denounces Gnostic polytheism, but he views homoousianism as especially powerful because it is more hidden and disguised.\(^ {40}\) He frequently tried to make the connections between the Nicene creed and polytheism apparent to his readers. For example, according to Amidon, Philostorgius relates that Caesarea, the see of Basil (one of the main opponents of Eunomius), had pagan

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39 Philostorgius, 7.4b.

origins. He relates the etymology of the city’s name stating “Caesarea was originally called Mazaca, a name derived from Mosoch, the ancestor of the Cappadocians. As time went on, the name was slightly altered to Mazaca.”

In a sense, Philostorgius’s History is an account of the battle between God’s followers and the forces of paganism in world history. This is probably why Philostorgius began his History with the story of the Maccabees and the Jewish revolt against the imposition of pagan worship. Photius remarks that Philostorgius did not know the identity of the book of Maccabees but approves of the account in 1 Maccabees since “it relates with such care how the wickedness of men brought the affairs of the Jews to their worst state, and how the virtue of men restored them again, and then they took fresh strength against the enemy and the temple was purified of pagan defilements.” Interestingly, this is one of the relatively few explicit mentions of Jews in the epitome. But it is clear that the historian wanted to emphasize the story about a struggle against paganism against all odds.

Paganism frequently appears in the context of conversion in the narrative. One can safely state that Philostorgius did not view paganism as a benign leftover from the pre-Constantinian era on its way out of existence. On the contrary, he refers to the paganism of former times as a reminder of the seriousness of the threat. He relates numerous instances of conversion from paganism to Christianity outside of the context

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41 Philostorgius, 9.12. Also, Athanasius collaborates with pagans against George (Philostorgius, 7.2). On Caesarea see Amidon, Philostorgius, 128, n. 23-24. For a different view see, Van Dam, 93-94.

42 Philostorgius, 1.1. Photius begins the epitome with a reference to Maccabees.

43 Philostorgius, 1.1.

44 See section below.
of the Christian Roman Empire. For example, he details the mass conversion of pagans, the famous story of Constantine’s conversion, and the conversion of Ulfila’s ancestors.\textsuperscript{45} In addition to advocating their conversion, Philostorgius also supports defeating pagans militarily. When Constantius defeats a usurper in battle as a sign of divine favor, it is significant that the historian presents the usurper Magnentius as a pagan or worshipper of demons.\textsuperscript{46} This is why even Theodosius, who is responsible for anti-Eunomian policies and causes great harm to the empire in Philostorgius’s view, still deserves credit for his defeat of pagans.\textsuperscript{47}

Furthermore, Philostorgius continuously reminds his readers about the sacrifices others made in resistance to paganism. He also details the ways in which pagans were bloodthirsty and treacherous. Indeed accounts of martyrs and confessors regularly occur as flashbacks throughout the \textit{History}. The stories which Photius preserved include a number of martyrs and confessors who suffer as a result of their refusal to sacrifice.\textsuperscript{48} For example, during the reign of Licinius Bishop Auxentius of Mopsuestia was in the imperial service. One day as they were walking together the emperor Licinius asked Auxentius to cut down a bunch of grapes for him, and the bishop did. But when the emperor told him to place the grapes at the feet of a statue of Dionysus he refused, and so Licinius expelled him from the imperial service.\textsuperscript{49} Philostorgius also records instances of Christians who lapsed in the face of persecution. He even admits that

\textsuperscript{45} Philostorgius, 2.8, 1.6, 2.5.

\textsuperscript{46} Philostorgius, 3.26. Magnentius was not really a pagan.

\textsuperscript{47} Philostorgius, 11.9.

\textsuperscript{48} Lucian the Martyr, for example, Philostorgius, 2.13.

\textsuperscript{49} Philostorgius, 5.2a.
members of his own faith community lapsed. Two disciples of Lucian the Martyr “yielded
to the violence of the tyrants and went over to paganism but later made good their
lapse; their teacher contributed to their repentance.” It is surprising when Philostorgius
records the lapse of members of his own faith community, but once again he affirms
that he did not write a history simply extolling his coreligionists and also illustrates the
seriousness of the threat of paganism.

Of course the most famous case of paganism and apostasy in Philostorgius’s
narrative is that of the emperor Julian. Philostorgius claims that Julian went through a
process of becoming a pagan and that not even the teachings of the heterousian
leader Aetius saved him (presumably because it was too late). Gallus sent Aetius to
Julian when he learned “that he was defecting to paganism; he was sent in order to
save him from false worship if at all possible.” Even though Aetius failed to prevent the
apostasy of Julian, they still became friends and Julian maintained the positive
relationship after becoming emperor. This friendship between the pagan emperor and
the heterousian theologian may have been a problematic aspect of the history of his
church for Philostorgius, but he still recorded it. Nevertheless Philostorgius’s portrayal of
the reign of Julian unequivocally denounces paganism and its forces.

Philostorgius also took care to demonstrate that pagans were always either
foolish or in error. For example, he argues that pagans were so foolish that whenever

50 Philostorgius, 2.14.
51 Philostorgius, 3.27.
52 Philostorgius, 3.27.
53 For more detail see Chapter 5 on Julian as emperor, section below for story about the Jewish Temple,
and Chapter 7 for the battle between good and evil during Julian’s reign.
they saw a strange looking animal they immediately divinized it because they could not explain it. Philostorgius describes a creature known as the pan which appeared to be something in between a goat and an ape and claims to have seen a stuffed version of it. He then concludes that “the pagans of old saw this animal and, struck by how odd it looked, gave it the status of a god, accustomed as they were to divinize strange things.”

A similar logic about the pagans’ propensity for fables and myths applied to the sphinx (another kind of ape apparently). While in these instances Philostorgius refuted the pagans’ attribution of the supernatural to something natural, in other instances he points out how pagans are foolish for doing the opposite. This is the case with the his careful explanation that earthquakes are caused by divine wrath and not natural forces “as the pagans foolishly suppose.”

Finally, while denigrating the falseness of paganism and its proponents, it is possible that Philostorgius viewed demonic powers as a real source of concern. For example, he criticizes a physician who claimed that “it is not demonic attack that makes people mad but that their disease is due to an unhealthy mixture of certain humors.” Additionally, Philostorgius claims that pagan oracles always gave ambiguous answers. After describing an ambiguous oracle Philostorgius concludes that “the demons, as usual [gave] ambiguous responses for the destruction of those who believed in them

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54 Philostorgius, 3.11. He also mentions that the pagans did the same thing with the satyr, which apparently is actually “also an ape, with a red face, swift movements, and a tail.” Philostorgius, 3.11.

55 Philostorgius, 3.11.

56 Philostorgius, 12.9, 12.10.

57 Philostorgius, 8.10. See also discussion of the story about the martyr Babylas during the reign of Julian in Chapter 7.
and the avoidance of failure [in prediction].” Thus even though the demons were useless they still possessed some power, even if it was limited.

**Jews**

In comparison with barbarians and pagans, Jews feature infrequently in the epitome. Still, Philostorgius may have begun his *History* with an account of the Maccabean revolt. He had clearly read extensively on the topic, and Photius records his discussion of the reliability of the various sources. The epitome does not contain more than a brief description of the Maccabean sources which might shed light on how Philostorgius represented Jews in this context. But it is clear that Philostorgius represents these Jews from the distant past as righteous in their fight against paganism.

In the case of more recent or contemporary Jews, the situation is quite different. Jews appear in an unfavorable light in the context of the story of the mission to Himyar. Philostorgius records that a number of Jews lived among the Himyarites and seems to suggest that some religious practices of the pagan Himyarites were influenced by Judaism. After explaining that the Himyarites are descended from Abraham, the historian asserts that “The people practice the custom of circumcision on the eighth day [after birth]. They also sacrifice to the sun, the moon, and the local demons. There are quite a few Jews living there among them.” These Jews “in their usual way” tried to prevent Theophilus the Indian from converting the Himyarite royal house.

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58 Philostorgius, 9.15.

59 For more on Philostorgius’s references to the Old Testament see Chapter 7.

60 See also Chapter 4.

61 Philostorgius, 3.4.
Oddly, the only passing reference to Jews in the epitome also occurs in the life of Theophilus who brings a Jewish woman back to life in Antioch. There is no evidence to show whether or not the healing of a Jewish woman made the event especially miraculous and no other characteristics are ascribed to the woman.

The final appearance of Jews in the history is also unflattering. It seems that they function in the narrative mainly to illustrate Julian’s folly and the futility of his struggle against the Christian God. According to Philostorgius, Julian decided to disprove the New Testament prophecy that the Temple in Jerusalem would never be restored. So he provided funds for the Jews to rebuild the Temple. But a series of terrifying miracles in the process “reduced the Jews and him to utter helplessness and shame.” Some died during the construction efforts, and the supernatural events that prevented progress served as a caution not to go against divine will. Still, most of the misfortunes do not actually befall the Jews, but rather other associates of Julian. When describing the original exile of Jews from Jerusalem, Philostorgius explains that the Roman emperor Hadrian “feared their hotheadedness and recklessness, thinking that, once assembled in the city on the pretext of offering worship, they might cause the Romans trouble.” With regard to Jews then, Philostorgius identified them as part of Christian history when he identified them in the Old Testament, but more contemporary Jews played a more passive and negative role.

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62 Philostorgius, 3.6a.
63 Philostorgius, 7.9.
64 Philostorgius, 7.9, 7.9a.
65 Philostorgius, 7.11.
“Khromos kai Genos”

A final story points to the complexity of the portrayal of the other in Philostorgius’s history. During yet another conflict between competing bishops, one bishop, Euzoius—who had previously supported the Eunomian group—insulted Theophilus “by calling him an ‘Ethiopian.’ Thus the struggles were not about orthodoxy and faith but about discrimination in color and race [khromos kai genos]”, Philostorgius explains.66 This passage is especially interesting, because the rest of the text never mentions anything about Theophilus’s appearance only about his origins and character. Philostorgius never explicitly suggests that Theophilus’s ethnic background could be a serious detriment to his position in the empire, but this episode suggests that this might have been the case. It is not clear if Theophilus’s Romanization which Philostorgius mentions earlier would always be incomplete because of some innate deficiency or if it was possible to overcome his ethnic background in Philostorgius’s view. The only other passage that mentions skin color is when Philostorgius is describing the Syrians whom Alexander allegedly moved to the Persian Gulf as “all quite dark, burned as they are by the bright sun.”67 In this case, the Syrians acquire this characteristic over time. Nevertheless, even though Theophilus plays an exceptional role in Philostorgius’s narrative, he acknowledges that others would not have necessarily viewed him in such a positive light due to his origins.68

66 Philostorgius, 9.3. My emphasis. I am grateful to Kostas Kapparis for confirming my suspicions about how unusual this phrase is. I know of no comparable uses in this period.

67 Philostorgius, 3.6.

68 There is other evidence to suggest that this is not just Philostorgius’s representation. The only other confirmed source on Theophilus is Gregory of Nyssa’s description of him as a Blemmye, Contra Eunomium, 1. 47.
Philostorgius’s goal to reclaim the memory of Christian history for his Eunomian community reflected his particular approach to the writing of history. Similar to the views associated with the early fourth-century heretic Arius, Eunomian Christianity emphasized God’s oneness and immutability as well as the Son’s difference from the Father, as only the Father can be ingerenate. It differed in simultaneously insisting that God’s essence and will is knowable and comprehensible through the application of reason and reflection upon scripture.¹ Philostorgius’s theological conviction that God’s will and essence are fundamentally knowable corresponds with his approach to the events of the Roman Empire, as they pointed to divine will. In his view, the very lives and deaths of emperors were portentous, along with all omens and signs. This chapter will explore the function of geographic and ethnographic “digressions,” the role of shrines and relics, divine signs and omens as well as apocalyptic imagery in the History. I hope to show that Philostorgius used a complex set of images, symbols, and theological concepts to articulate his theory of history.

**Geography and Ethnography**

Throughout the history, Philostorgius presented Christian history as part of the same narrative of God’s work on earth that began with the Old Testament. References to Old Testament books and events are interspersed throughout the narrative, but a few stand out as particular points of meaning.² An examination of his geographic and ethnographic digressions in terms of their relationship to the Old Testament...
testament and other previous events of world history shows how he viewed Christian history as connected to ancient world history and that he presented divine power continually working in human history.

As might be expected, Philostorgius’s description of missionary activity beyond Roman borders is particularly rich in ethnographic details. In addition to revealing the historian’s view of the nature of uncorrupted Christianity, Philostorgius’s account of Theophilus’s mission also shows how he connected true Christianity to ancient history. He begins his account of the mission with a description of the Himyarites: “...the people called of old Sabaeans and now known as Himyarites. The people is descended from Abraham through Keturah. Their country is called Great Arabia and Fortunate Arabia by the Greeks. It borders on the outer ocean. Its capital is Saba’, from where the queen set out to journey to Solomon.”

In this passage, Philostorgius combined his knowledge of world history from the Old Testament and Greek sources to explain where Himyar fit into the narrative of Christian history. He links the Himyarites to two major Old Testament figures, Abraham and Solomon. Philostorgius, like other Christian writers, linked events from the Old Testament, Greek classical histories and more recent events together to show the integrated nature of the history of God working in human history.

After traveling to Himyar, Diva, and India, Theophilus then sailed to Aksum. As part of his account of the bishop’s visit to Aksum, Philostorgius included a description of

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3 Philostorgius, 3.4. Keturah was Abraham’s wife after the death of Sarah (Genesis 25:1-4; Queen of Sheba: 1 Kings 10: 1-10. Saba’ is Biblical Sheba, Amidon, Philostorgius, 22, n. 20). In this passage Philostorgius also mentions that they practice circumcision, and that they are pagans sacrificing to the stars, but they are not Jews.

4 He also refers to Ulfila as “Moses of our time,” 2.5.
the geography and ethnography of the Red Sea and the region.\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.6.} He mentions the location of the Israelites crossing of the Red Sea during their flight from the Egyptians, again connecting his narrative to the events of the Old Testament.\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.6.} His description of the Red Sea, the Arabian peninsula, and the Persian Gulf is difficult to follow because of the state of the text and the imprecise use of geographical terms.\footnote{Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 22, n. 18.} But it seems that Philostorgius first described the Aksumites then described people who lived on the coast of the Persian Gulf: “Nearer than these Aksumites, however, are the Syrians, who sojourn toward the east, by the outer ocean, and who are called ‘Syrians’ even by the local people. It was Alexander the Macedonian who removed them from Syria and settled them there next to them. They still speak their ancestral language.”\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.6.}

Philostorgius used his knowledge of Alexander the Great’s campaigns to describe this region.\footnote{He probably used Arrian’s \textit{Anabasis} 7.19.5. Arrian records that Alexander planned to settle the coast of the Persian Gulf. Philostorgius also included a description of the flora and fauna there.} After concluding his account of Theophilus’s mission and visit to Aksum, the historian continued with the geographic theme and described the Persian gulf, the Tigris, and the Euphrates.\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.7. 3.8.} He mentions that Armenians claim that the Euphrates begins in Mount Ararat, which is also the location of Noah’s arc.\footnote{Philostorgius, 3.8.} Thus, Philostorgius integrates and interweaves allusions to Old Testament and Greek sources in his ethnographic narrative.
Ultimately, however, Philostorgius views scriptural sources as definitive sources of authority on geography and history. He argues that despite what other writers claim, the Tigris and the Euphrates have their true origin in the location of paradise, as recorded in scripture.\textsuperscript{12} The rivers begin above ground in paradise and then flow hidden underground before reappearing again. Philostorgius describes this phenomenon in great detail, taking care to explain that not only is this possible in accordance with nature, but that it lines up with scripture, “For the ineffable wisdom of God has fashioned the course of streams, some of them invisible and some visible, to be like veins furnishing what is necessary. For thus sang the Prophet David: ‘He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.’”\textsuperscript{13} Philostorgius uses a similar approach to support his argument that paradise is located in the east, mixing appeals to natural phenomena and scripture.\textsuperscript{14}

Possibly as part of his explanation that Paradise must be in the east, Philostorgius argues that the region “even though excessively torrid, contains the mightiest and greatest things that earth and sea can nourish.”\textsuperscript{15} Photius summarizes this section in great detail so there is an extensive record of all the animals that Philostorgius included in his account of the wonders of the region. A number of these he claimed to have seen himself in Constantinople.\textsuperscript{16} A few of the animals which Philostorgius mentions or describes are more or less normal: whales, elephants, “bull-

\textsuperscript{12} Philostorgius, 3.9.
\textsuperscript{13} Philostorgius, 3.9; Psalm 23: 2.
\textsuperscript{14} Philostorgius, 3.10. Photius says “resorting to conjecture” he claims that the location of paradise is in the east. It is interesting that Photius records these passages in greater detail.
\textsuperscript{15} Philostorgius, 3.11.
\textsuperscript{16} Either live, stuffed, the skins of, and in one case “an image”.

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elephants,” giraffes, snakes, zebras, apes, and parrots. But a number of the animals are more bizarre. For example, according to Philostorgius, the unicorn “has a serpent's head but a crooked horn that is not very large. Its entire chin is covered with a beard. Its long throat, lifted on high, is most like a serpent's coil. The rest of the body resembles rather a deer, but with the feet of a lion.”\(^\text{17}\)

Philostorgius recorded that he had seen an image of this remarkable creature in Constantinople.

Additionally, the historian explains that the region contains a variety of apes, including bear-apes, lion-apes, dog-faced baboons, and the goat-ape. Philostorgius describes these animals to show the diversity and richness of the region in the east, in the spirit of geographic digressions in other historians in antiquity.\(^\text{18}\) He frequently claims direct knowledge to support his argument. For example, he states that the goat-ape was given to Constantius by the king of India and that “the animal lived for a while, shut up in a wicker-work cage because of its fierceness. When it died, its keepers stuffed it in order to give people something unusual to look at and brought it safe and sound all the way to Constantinople.”\(^\text{19}\) He also extensively discusses these creatures as part of his project to show the errors of paganism as he argues that pagans are foolish for divinizing any strange looking animals.\(^\text{20}\)

Finally, Philostorgius reported on the peoples of the east, the rivers, the location of paradise, the fruits and spices, and the animals in the east to demonstrate the connection between earth and heaven. Thus,

\(^{17}\) Philostorgius, 3.11. But appears to be unique to Philostorgius according to Amidon, 48, n. 34.


\(^{19}\) Philostorgius, 3.11. It may have been Constantine.

\(^{20}\) Including the Sphinx, which was also apparently an ape. See Philostorgius, 3.11 for this fascinating description of the sphinx-ape. See Chapter 6 for more on this issue.
describing another river that arises out of paradise, the historian declares that “there is another sign of the linkage of earth with Paradise: they say that someone taken with a violent fever recovers at once after bathing in the river.”

Therefore, Philostorgius showed that the natural world always maintained a connection to paradise and that places in the east bore the signs more due to their proximity. Finally he concludes his account of the east with the assertion that gold grows from the ground there,

And in general the whole land toward the rising sun is far superior to the others in every way, while Paradise, being the best and purest part of the entire east, having the freshest and fairest airs and being irrigated by the clearest waters, obviously is incomparably superior in every respect to every land under the sun, washed as it is by the outer sea toward the rising of the sun.

Before the geographic digression, describing the mission of Theophilus the Indian, Philostorgius claims that the bishop traveled from Himyar to India. Theophilus discovered Christians there and, moreover, did not need to correct their beliefs as “they had held to the doctrine of ‘other in substance’ unfailingly from the beginning.” It is possible, that one of the reasons Philostorgius relates that Theophilus did not have to correct anyone’s orthodoxy as he traveled further east is connected to this notion of the superiority of the east and its connection to paradise.

The Battle between Saints and Demons

Philostorgius’s history includes a wealth of images of relics, pagan statues, and Christian shrines as competing expressions of power of the divine. They also serve as a focal point of anxiety over appropriate and inappropriate miracles and use of physical

21 The Hyphasis is equated with Biblical Pishon (Philostorgius, 3.10).

22 Philostorgius, 3.11.

23 Philostorgius, 3.5.
objects in Christian worship.\textsuperscript{24} For Philostorgius paganism was the main enemy that threatened Christianity in the guise of Nicaea. Yet at the same time he recognized the power of Christian physical manifestations of faith such as relics and Christian shrines. These stories serve as descriptions of cosmic battles raging at the same time that bishops and emperors are working out their battle for the Christian empire on earth. Stories about relics and statues serve as an expression of the state of the Christian Roman Empire in that moment.

The reign of Julian provides some of the most important examples of this battle between saints and demons in the \textit{History}. Philostorgius began his chapter on the reign of Julian with what was from his point of view the defining feature of the emperor’s role in the history of the Christian Roman Empire. He claimed that

\begin{quote}
Julian seized power and through public proclamations proclaimed complete liberty to the pagans to carry out all of their projects, in that way handing over the Christians to indescribable and unspeakable sufferings, since in every place the proponents of paganism subjected them to every kind of injury, to new sorts of torture, and to the most painful modes of death.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

Right away, Philostorgius is emphasizing that Julian seized power unlawfully, as he had recounted his revolt in the preceding chapter.\textsuperscript{26} He also demonstrates that Julian’s policies in favor of the pagans allowed them to act as they wished, which was to actively persecute Christians. Thus, to Philostorgius pagans were not only in error due to their polytheism, but prone to cruelty as well. Julian apparently had hidden his paganism

\textsuperscript{24} See Giselle de Nie, \textit{Poetics of Wonder: Testimonies of the New Christian Miracles in the Late Antique Latin World} (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), for arguments that some early Christians associated miracles with pagan shrines.

\textsuperscript{25} Philostorgius, 7.1.

\textsuperscript{26} Philostorgius refers to it as “Julian’s revolt”, 6.5, 6.5a.
while still depending on Constantius, but now he was free to proclaim it and promote it as he desired. He therefore “sent letters to every place ordering that all haste and zeal should be applied to rebuilding the pagan temples and altars.”\(^27\)

Philostorgius’s account of the cruelty and inhumane behavior of pagans and of the battles which occur in their temples and altars reflect his understanding of Julian’s reign. Some scholars have argued that we know frustratingly little about Philostorgius’s assessment of Julian’s reign.\(^28\) Others even suggested that he gives Julian some kind of pass because of the emperor’s favorable treatment of Aetius.\(^29\) But I argue that the historian’s seeming digressions into the miraculous are at the heart of his account of the reign of Julian and the pagan demons he served. Philostorgius leaves no doubt that he viewed Julian and his reign as a sinister and dangerous reminder of the threat of pagan polytheism. But while describing the very real dangers, Philostorgius also argues that ultimately Julian and his cause are doomed to failure as their power is weak.

As part of his narrative of the supernatural battles which occurred during Julian’s reign, Philostorgius relates that in the city of Paneas there was an image of Jesus Christ at the feet of which grew an herb with healing properties. The image was thought to have been erected by the woman with a hemorrhage in the gospel accounts, after being healed by Christ.\(^30\) Philostorgius claims that with time people had forgotten the meaning of the statue, the explanatory inscription was covered with dirt, and the herb had

\(^{27}\) Philostorgius, 7.1b.

\(^{28}\) Amidon, xxii.


disappeared. But miracles still occurred at the location, so Christians decided to figure out why. When the bottom of the statue was dug up and the truth of the entire story was disclosed and remembered, the image was moved into the sacristy of a church and honored. Philostorgius is careful to emphasize that the statue was not worshipped in any way.\[31\] Once Julian had proclaimed that pagans were free to express themselves, they acted in accordance with their impiety and “tore the statue from its base, tied ropes to its feet, and dragged it down the main thoroughfare.”\[32\] They then proceeded to tear it apart and scatter the pieces while a few onlookers managed to rescue the head, which Philostorgius claims to have seem himself. This story attests to the inhuman and mad behavior that was characteristic of pagans. Philostorgius clearly intended to make some connection between this story and his description of the fact that Paneas derived its name from the erection of a statue of Pan in it.

Philostorgius records another occurrence of pagans desecrating physical relics in their battle against Christianity, declaring that “They took the bones of the prophet Elisha and of John the Baptist from their tombs (both were buried there), mixed them together with the bones of the dumb animals, burned them together to ashes, and scattered them into the air.”\[33\] In this passage, Philostorgius points out that the pagans’ persecution of Christians was directly linked to their futile rituals of worship. Also, it is possible that these pagan acts of desecration of physical objects indicate that they recognized and wanted to eliminate Christian sources of power from Philostorgius’s perspective. It is clear, however, that Philostorgius emphasized that when the pagans

\[31\] Philostorgius, 7.3.

\[32\] Philostorgius, 7.3.

\[33\] Philostorgius, 7.4.
returned to their temples and altars the result was only wickedness and depravity, not piety. Thus he alleges that pagans would arrest Christians and used them as the sacrifices on the altars. Moreover, the historian leaves no doubt that these outrageous acts were not an exception but were actually directly the result of Julian’s support of paganism, although others might argue that it was the work of especially deranged people. He maintains that the emperor Julian was pleased when he heard of such events, particularly because he could blame others for such offenses, “even though his was the will at work in their acts.”

There are numerous other examples of Philostorgius’s negative characterization of Julian, his reign, and the pagans who supported it. One complex story, however, best illustrates how Philostorgius viewed the battle between the followers of God and the demonic forces of paganism as well as the issues associated with interpreting the *Ecclesiastical History*. The story begins with a flashback to the martyrdom of three young brothers and of Babylas, Bishop of Antioch, at some point during the pre-Constantinian period. The Roman emperor was convinced by a demon to attempt to enter the full church of Babylas, who bravely blocked the ruler’s way. Even though the emperor abandoned the idea of entering the church, he ordered Babylas “to sacrifice to the demons,” which the bishop of course refused; as a result he was martyred and

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34 Philostorgius, 7.4.
35 Philostorgius, 7.4.
36 Philostorgius, 7.4; 7.4a; 7.4c; 7.7.
37 Philostorgius, 7.8, 7.8a. See Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 98, n. 40, on the lack of information on the bishop Babylas. Philostorgius places his martyrdom either under the emperor Numerian or Decius. The boys were in Babylas’s care.
buried in nearby Daphne.\textsuperscript{38} Significantly, Philostorgius not only mentions demons as the object of sacrifice, but as the instigators of the entire episode from the beginning.

Years later, the emperor Julian excitedly visited the shrine of Apollo at Daphne and sacrificed to the idol continuously, hoping for an oracle. When the image of Apollo remained silent Julian called in an expert to persuade the idol through the use of magic, according to Philostorgius. These attempts also failed, and the expert reported to Julian that all the gods had abandoned the shrine as they “abhorred [Babylas’s] corpse.”\textsuperscript{39} Note that there are multiple gods inhabiting a variety of statues at the location of this shrine. Therefore Julian ordered the transfer of Babylas’s remains and eagerly awaited the utterances of the oracle. What exactly happened next is the source of some debate. According to the fragments and narrative from the \textit{Artemii Passio}, the statue was destroyed by divine fire, the pagans were mortified and enraged and that was the end, but according to Photius’s epitome the pagan oracles started speaking after Babylas was removed. In other words, one version of Philostorgius’s text ends with the foiling of Julian’s plan because of divine fire, but in Photius’s summary Julian ends up hearing from the oracles. Amidon points out that this discrepancy is striking since it undermines the whole point of the story and it does not follow the version in the anonymous Arian historian that Philostorgius was following. Amidon concludes that Photius erred in his summary and expresses his amazement that the patriarch would make such a serious error:

\begin{quote}
He is here summarizing, not some minor notice in his source that he might have carelessly misread, nor some heterodoxical pronouncement that he
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{38} Philostorgius, 7.8a.

\textsuperscript{39} Philostorgius, 7.8a.
might have wanted to reduce to more orthodox proportions, but one of the most extended and dramatic narratives to meet his eyes: the divine fire falling upon the pagan emperor’s favorite shrine while the most exhaustive efforts were being vainly expended to make it speak and reducing to ashes this central symbol of the pagan restoration then under way. That Photius, after reading this, can claim that, according to Philostorgius, the martyr’s removal actually unstopped the oracle’s mouth, just as the pagan sorcerer had promised, is most remarkable.40

I agree with Amidon that these passages pose significant problems of interpretation, both in terms of accessing Philostorgius’s text and in understanding the relationship between the various sources involved. I disagree, however, that Photius incorrectly summarized this portion of the History. Instead, I would suggest that Philostorgius recorded that fire destroyed the Apollo temple and that Photius correctly recorded Philostorgius as claiming that other idols began to make utterances. These predictions then turned out to be false as all demon oracles were wrong according to Philostorgius. Proposing that the other oracles ended up speaking would also explain the section that elaborately explains that Julian was especially hoping to hear from Apollo as opposed to all the other idols.41 Moreover, as Amidon points out, Photius makes the claim that oracles spoke twice, which suggests that he intended to make the point he was making and Photius attests to both the destruction and the speaking happening: “...how Julian mistreated the martyr’s body, what the demons were forced to say, how Apollo’s shrine was struck by lightning and burned to ashes along with its statue...”42 Philostorgius, probably adding to or emending the account of the Arian historgiographer, presented this account to show that demons should be taken seriously

40 Amidon, Philostorgius, 104, n. 54.

41 Philostorgius, 7.8a [AP 56].

42 Philostorgius, 7.8.
as they do indeed exist but also that they are ineffectual and make wrong predictions. At critical points in the story God is the one making the decisions. Philostorgius claims that God was the one who stopped the mouth of the existing Apollo demon on purpose and that he was the one who allowed the later demons to speak so everyone could see how ineffectual they are.\footnote{Philostorgius, 7.8a [AP 53], 7.12.} The whole point is that Philostorgius shows how the battle with demons was evident in relics, shrines, and idols, how terrible pagans were, and how Julian thought that he was powerful enough to succeed against the Christians but ultimately all demonic power is limited.

**Apocalyptic Imagery**

Scholars have noted the use of apocalyptic themes and negative portents in Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History* which demonstrates his extensive knowledge of apocalyptic literature.\footnote{Bidez, cxiii-cxii; Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xx; xxii; 137, n. 7; Peter Van Nuffelen, “Isolement et apocalypse: Philostorge et les eunomiens sous Théodose II,” in *Philostorge et l'Historiographie de l'Antiquité tardive / Philostorg im Kontext der spätantiken Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Doris Meyer (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011), 307-326; Bruno Bleckmann, “Apokalypse und kosmische Katastrophen: Das Bild der theodosianischen Dynastie beim Kirchenhistoriker Philostorg,” in *Endzeiten – Eschatologie in den monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, ed. Wolfram Brandes and Felicitas Schmieder (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 13-40; Edward Watts, “Interpreting Catastrophe: Disasters in the Works of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, Socrates Scholasticus, Philostorgius, and Timothy Aelurus,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 2 (2009): 79-98; Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 258; Argov, 510-512.} Philip Amidon argues, however, that even though Philostorgius certainly recorded numerous disastrous portents, the historian did not apparently predict an impending end of the world.\footnote{Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xxii-xxiii.} Amidon also suggests that Philostorgius’s descriptions of the true faith beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire exemplify his apocalyptic worldview.\footnote{Amidon, *Philostorgius*, xx. Philostorgius, 2.5, 2.6, 3.5.} Argov has also suggested that the fact that Philostorgius’s work is an acrostic as in itself related to apocalyptic prophesy as the use of acrostics was rare
during this time period and associated with Sibylline oracles. Moreover, all of the scholarly interpretations of apocalyptic imagery focus on a turning point in Philostorgius’s History, after which he includes more and more calamitous events for the remainder of the narrative. From this point Philostorgius recorded numerous negative omens, predicting the flood of disasters that befall the empire toward the end of the History. Scholars have also identified this turning point with a thematic shift to secular (as opposed to ecclesiastical) affairs and as a form of apocalyptic narrative. The shift is variably identified as occurring with the reign of Emperor Gratian, or of Theodosius I, or with the exile of Eunomius. Interpreters have also frequently explained this turning point as an indication that Philostorgius has run out of relevant material to narrate as the heroes of his particular Christian community had lost much of their influence by this point in the history.

I would argue, however, that Philostorgius used apocalyptic imagery as part of a larger theory of history that incorporated the revelation of divine will into all aspects of the history of empire. Moreover, he incorporated similar disastrous images earlier in his History. The ecclesiastical historian used a variety of symbols to narrate the battle between the forces of true Christianity and pagan polytheism throughout the text, not just at the tragic culmination. From Philostorgius’s perspective, all of history—the lives of emperors, natural disasters, wars, the actions of bishops, barbarians within and beyond the borders, and the wonders of the natural world--points to God’s will and very essence. Thus, Philostorgius did not incorporate apocalyptic imagery into his narrative

47 Argov, 512.
48 Watts, 88-89.
49 Watts, 88-89; Amidon, Philostorgius, 137, n. 11; Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 262-263.
simply to express his disapproval of certain imperial policies or because he had nothing better to say about the Eunomian church. Rather he used apocalyptic images in conjunction with a rich variety of symbols to tell the story of God revealing himself throughout history.

Philostorgius’s *History* leaves no doubt that the historian viewed strange occurrences, both positive and negative, as legitimate signs from God without a natural explanation. For example, he felt the need to explain to his audience that earthquakes were signs of divine anger, and not natural occurrences. Photius reports that “He tries in various ways to show that earthquakes are caused neither by floods of water, nor by blasts of wind shut up within the hollows of the earth, nor even by any kind of shifting of the earth, but solely by the divine will for the correction and rebuke of sinners. He says that he maintains this because none of the elements just mentioned could cause such impressive phenomena by their natural power.” Clearly, Philostorgius viewed natural disasters as a revelation of God’s will and displeasure. This example also demonstrates that the historian was participating in a literary dialogue of sorts, as he was anticipating his readers’ objections.

The first earthquake in Philostorgius’s narrative presents a very curious situation. According to the *History*, the anti-Nicene bishops Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognis of Nicaea, and Maris of Chalcedon had subscribed to the Creed of Nicaea in 325 but had deliberately written the subscription so carelessly that it only appeared that they had written *homoousios* to describe the nature of God when, in fact, they had

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50 Philostorgius, 12.10. See Amidon, *Philostorgius*, 160, n. 24, on other sources for the natural causes such as Ammianus Marcellinus (17.7.11-12), listed in the same order.

51 Philostorgius, 2.1a.
actually written the more acceptable term *homoiousios*. So, the emperor did not exile these anti-Nicene bishops. Soon after, they met together and the following ensued: “The three of them were sitting together in a portico of the church discussing the issues at hand and babbling on about their sect [Photius’s editorial comment], finding themselves in disagreement, when suddenly there was a great earthquake at the place where they were, and there alone. And intense darkness fell at about the third hour of the day, causing sheer terror.”

Needless to say, the bishops repented and confessed to the emperor that they had only subscribed out of fear of him and were banished for their lies. It is important to note that the supernatural nature of the event is emphasized through the inclusion of the element of darkness and by the fact that it only occurred in the precise location where the three bishops had gathered and nowhere else. What makes this passage so striking is that throughout the *History*, Philostorgius admires Eusebius of Nicomedia and refers to him as “the Great”. The historian could have utilized a variety of simpler narratives to highlight Eusebius’s righteousness in denying Nicaea, rather than relating through the vehicle of an earthquake that the good bishop had angered God with his deceptive behavior. Yet through this episode Philostorgius communicated the importance of paying attention to signs of God’s will and of the need for moral leadership in the Christian Empire. Scholars at times accuse Philostorgius of simply championing the cause of his coreligionists while denigrating that of their opponents. This example clearly shows that the historian possessed a more complex

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52 Philostorgius, 2.1a.

53 Philostorgius, 2.1b.

54 For example, Marasco argues that Philostorgius “departed from [the other ecclesiastical historians] only because of his Arian faith,” in “The Church Historians (II): Philostorgius and Gelasius of Cyzicus,” 259. See discussion in Chapter 3.
theology of history. In this case, God was not just angry because of the Council of Nicaea but because the great men who were supposed to act as strong righteous leaders in the church failed to act appropriately.

The second earthquake in the History also occurs in the middle of the post-Nicaea “Arian” controversy. This example more clearly displays God’s wrath at the theological errors of the leadership of the Roman Empire. According to Philostorgius, the Council of Nicomedia of 358 caused the devastating earthquake in that city that summer. Photius explicitly states that the historian connected the orthodoxy of the council with the natural disaster: “But the [council] in Nicomedia, so our heretic slanderously asserts, was cancelled by an earthquake, since most of those connected with it favored the consubstantialist doctrine.” According to the historian, the earthquake caused the church where the bishops (including the bishop of the city) were meeting to fall on top of them. He stresses the high level of death and destruction, repeating himself a few lines later to emphasize the point: “Nicomedia having been overthrown by earthquake and fire and the flooding of the sea, as our author says, and many people having perished,” the council reconvened at another location. Photius is careful to add that these descriptions of destruction are according to Philostorgius’s account. Similarly, Sozomen also directly responds to Philostorgius’s version by stressing that the earthquake had nothing to do with the pro-Nicene gathering in

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55 Philostorgius, 4.10.

56 Philostorgius, 4.10. This narrative actually relates primarily to the activities of homoiousians and homoeans, but Philostorgius (like his opponents) labeled all those against heteroousians as homoousians.

57 Philostorgius, 4.11.
Nicomedia and that not that many bishops died.\textsuperscript{58} While Philostorgius was not alone in his belief that natural disasters could be signs of God's wrath or displeasure, the degree to which he uses such phenomena as part of his explanatory framework exceeds that of other historians. To show that it was not just a matter of taking ecclesiastical sides, the historian specifically demonstrates that the divine anger was directed at the unrepresentative nature of the council. He relates that there were only fifteen bishops at the council in Nicomedia and that when it reconvened in a different location heteroousian bishops attended it making it more representative; but unfortunately the homoousians found a way to split that council in two. Just like the first earthquake, then, this earthquake in Nicomedia shows that God's displeasure was directed at the unrighteous actions and beliefs of the leadership of the Christian empire, not simply at the Nicene bishops.

As discussed above, the reign of the emperor Julian occupies a special place in Philostorgius's understanding of the nature of the relationship between Christianity and empire.\textsuperscript{59} As part of the emperor's program to restore the temples and pagan worship, he particularly desired successfully to perform the rite of divination at the shrine of Apollo at Daphne. While the pagan priests were painstakingly laboring to entreat the idol to speak, fire fell from the sky and burned down the temple and the idol along with the offerings. The fire was clearly of divine origin as it only burned down the temple. But in case there was any doubt, Philostorgius explicitly described the charred remains of the building as "still show[ing] [during his time] rather clearly the mark of the fire sent by

\textsuperscript{58} Sozomen, 4.16.3-5.

\textsuperscript{59} See Chapter 5.
God. These are Philostorgius’s words because we have them from more than one source that preserved fragments of his *Ecclesiastical History*. Again, if the historian desired simply to describe the successes of his coreligionists, he would have perhaps gone easier on Julian.

The most famous example from Julian’s reign of God unmistakably revealing his will is the story of the attempted rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. According to Philostorgius, Julian desired to disprove the New Testament prophecy that not even a stone would be left of the temple in Jerusalem and therefore funded the rebuilding of the temple. Matters did not go according to plan. Philostorgius’s description deserves to be quoted in full:

[The Jews] flocked together therefore and set to work with great joy and were excavating the foundation trench with silver mattocks and shovels and making ready to lay the foundation, when a terrific storm arose that buried the excavation site. All during that night it lightened and thundered ceaselessly, until finally as day was approaching there was an earthquake in which many perished even of those who had stayed out of doors. And a fire that came out of the excavated foundations incinerated everyone who was there.\(^{61}\)

Additionally, other cities and areas suffered earthquakes, destruction, deaths, fire, and darkness.\(^{62}\) While Jews were the victims of these acts of wrath, Philostorgius shows that Julian and his pagan polytheism were the real causes of the natural disasters and signs of divine anger. He lists in great detail a series of gruesome deaths of supporters of Julian who had gone over to paganism, culminating in the death of

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\(^{60}\) Philostorgius, 7.8a.

\(^{61}\) Philostorgius, 7.9a. Fragments from the *Artemii Passio*.

\(^{62}\) For a discussion of the textual relationship between the attempt to rebuild the Temple and earthquakes in other cities, see David B. Levenson, “The Palestinian Earthquake of May 363 in Philostorgius, the Syriac *Chronicon miscellaneum*, and the Letter Attributed to Cyril on the Rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 6 (2013): 61-83.
Julian himself. In the historian’s narrative, Julian’s reign is marked by a higher number of natural calamities and miraculous signs than the preceding narrative. Philostorgius emphasized the perils of an empire openly espousing paganism. Given that both Nicene and anti-Nicene readers would concur with Philostorgius’s assessment of Julian’s reign and the negative signs that accompanied it, the historian’s portrayal of the later era is especially telling.

The following description of the reign of a Roman emperor consists of a brief reference potentially indicating apocalyptic themes. In a passage that concludes the account of the reign of Gratian, the epitomizer Photius records that the emperor was killed and comments that Philostorgius made up numerous slanders against him, “going so far as to liken him to Nero.” Amidon argues that Philostorgius’s likening of Gratian to Nero marks the beginning of an apocalyptic narrative since Nero featured in Christian apocalyptic texts and was associated with the beast in Chapter 13 of the book of Revelation. He explains that Philostorgius viewed the reign of Gratian as the beginning of all the ominous disasters that follow in the narrative because his imperial policies targeted heretics (including Eunomians). Thus, the linking of Gratian to Nero could potentially indicate an apocalyptic structure to Philostorgius’s narrative. I would argue, however, that Philostorgius did not associate Gratian with Nero to begin an apocalyptic narrative, but rather because Nero had the reputation of an infamous persecutor of Christians. That is not to say that Philostorgius was not drawing on apocalyptic literature, but his use of such allusions were not necessarily intended to correlate

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63 Philostorgius, 7.10, 7.13, 7.15.
64 Philostorgius, 10.5.
65 Amidon, Philostorgius, 137, n. 7. Also, Watts, 88, has a similar argument.
directly with specific apocalypses. It is difficult to imagine a direct association between Gratian and Nero as the beast in Revelation, as Philostorgius had just recorded the death of the emperor. Furthermore, Photius concludes the brief mention with the explanation that “[Gratian’s] orthodoxy did not please him, it seems.” This statement suggests that Philostorgius commented on Gratian’s ecclesiastical policies and beliefs. The brevity and lack of detail in this passage make it difficult to interpret definitively, but it is clear that Philostorgius associated Gratian with wrong belief and the persecution of “true” Christians. On the other hand, inferring that this reference to Nero constituted part of a larger apocalyptic narrative structure is difficult to maintain.

As bad as Julian’s reign was, the divine signs pointed to even worse trials to come. Philostorgius first describes the omens foretelling the horrors soon to befall the empire as a result of the Theodosian establishment and then reports on the events in great detail. Philostorgius’s account of the staunchly Nicene emperor Theodosius I’s victory over the usurper Maximus combines a variety of different elements of military narrative. On the one hand, his narrative is about Maximus’s defeat stressing how nothing good comes out of illegitimate rule. On the other hand, following Theodosius I’s victory over the usurper, a sign appeared unmistakably portending doom and gloom. On the victor’s way out of the city “a strange and unusual star appeared in the sky; it was to be the harbinger of great evils to afflict the world.” From Philostorgius’s perspective, there could be no doubt about the ominous meaning of this phenomenon. He carefully described the occurrence, emphasizing its strange and sinister nature:

66 Theodosius I is an ambiguous figure in the narrative, because he is hard on pagans, but hard on the heterodox as well.

67 Philostorgius, 10.9.
Then there was a gathering of stars from everywhere that clustered around it (one might liken the sight to a swarm of bees englobing [sic] their leader). Whereupon, as though from the force of their mutual compression, all of their light blazed forth combined into one flame. The sight was just like that of a great, fearsome double-edged sword shining with a startling brilliance, all of the other stars having migrated so as to assume this shape, while that one alone that had been the first to be seen appeared underneath in the situation of the root or hilt of the whole form, and as though generating all the brightness of the star revealed, like the flame leaping up from the wick of a lamp. That was how strange the object was that appeared.\textsuperscript{68}

This sword-star represents an inversion of the cross-stars that Constantine and Constantius had so propitiously received.\textsuperscript{69} If this description alone was not enough to convince his readers that God was not pleased with Theodosius, Philostorgius then proceeds to detail the path of the sword-star. The epitomizer Photius concludes this description of the trajectory of the star with the observation, “And that is not all, for our author describes many other strange things concerning this sword-shaped star.”\textsuperscript{70} The point remains that the Eunomian historian took great pains to counter Nicene representations of Theodosius as a good emperor. Specifically, the story of the sword-star is a direct refutation of both Rufinus’s version of the usurpation of Maximus and of his conclusion to the \textit{Ecclesiastical History}, which ends with Theodosius’s triumphant victory over the usurper Eugenius, establishing God’s favor for the emperor.\textsuperscript{71} In contrast, however, Philostorgius knew that Theodosius had exiled the heteroousian hero Eunomius, and hence God could not possibly be pleased with him.

\textsuperscript{68} Philostorgius, 10.9.

\textsuperscript{69} It also could be a specific kind of comet. Amidon, \textit{Philostorgius}, 139, n. 19.

\textsuperscript{70} Philostorgius, 10.9.

\textsuperscript{71} Rufinus, 11.16; 11.33-34.
The sword-star was not the only sign of trouble. Philostorgius also records the appearance of two strange human beings, one who was gigantic, and the other one very short. The giant was a Syrian named Antony and "was five cubits plus a span in size, although his feet did not correspond to the height of the rest of his body but were bent inward so as to make him bandy-legged." The other man was from Egypt and he "was so short that he made a pleasant sight mimicking the partridges in their cages, and the birds made a game of fighting with him." Adding to the strangeness of this occurrence, Philostorgius also maintains that the short man possessed intelligence, polished speech, and a noble mind. Some scholars have labeled this occurrence as apocalyptic. Regardless, it is clear that Philostorgius linked it to the signs associated with Theodosius. As Photius began his description, "During the time the sword-bearing star appeared..." Philostorgius emphasized the miraculousness and strangeness of these two men to anticipate any objections that these were not meaningful signs, but rather out of the ordinary occurrences. Whether or not Philostorgius viewed these and the other signs associated with Theodosius as foretelling the end of the world, he used such imagery to argue that divine signs everywhere were clearly showing that the reign of Theodosius and what followed would not be good for the Empire. Philostorgius clearly also maintained that he had direct knowledge of these men as Photius makes a point about saying that they flourished during Philostorgius’s lifetime. Philostorgius comments on another odd aspect of this portent asserting that the men “did not die

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72 Philostorgius, 10.11.
73 Philostorgius, 10.11.
74 Watts, 89.
young; the tall one departed this life after his twenty-fifth year, while the short one reached nearly the same age.\(^75\)

According to Alanna Nobbs, these ominous passages mark a shift to “secular” affairs in the \textit{History} because that is the arena for the expression of God’s wrath.\(^76\) While I agree that Philostorgius focuses more secular events in the second half of the history, he represented God’s anger in various arenas in other portions of the text. The apocalyptic imagery in the history serves to highlight the consequences of the ecclesiastical policies of Emperor Theodosius, to show the visibility of God’s will; a message he communicates throughout the history. Philostorgius’s narrative of all of the terrible events that befall the Empire in the final chapters of the history, as the sword-star portended, stresses a great loss of life and disasters which occur in droves. The historian laments the fall of Roman military might and emphasizes that the military defeat was more pervasive than before. He claims that during his lifetime, “the loss of human life was so great that never did any age know the like since time began.”\(^77\) This account presents war only from the side of an ugly loss of life and devastation to the land. He places war right in the middle of a long list of natural disasters that create suffering for the people of the Roman Empire. He acknowledges the role of barbarian invasions as mainly responsible for this loss of life, but he also emphasizes that the sheer number of such calamities as “famine, plague, and hordes of savage beasts” contributed to an unprecedented level of suffering. He then continues to list—again in

\(^{75}\) Philostorgius, 10.11.


\(^{77}\) Philostorgius, 11.7.
great detail—earthquakes, storms, lightning, fiery droughts, hail, snow, and cold. All of these “clearly proclaimed the divine wrath.” According to Philostorgius, God was expressing his anger at the leadership of the Empire for policies against Eunomians and, moreover, for exiling Eunomius. This section on all the disasters concludes that “to relate this in detail would be beyond all human ability.”

Although the reign of Theodosius I is more central to his History, Philostorgius also recorded signs of divine wrath that occurred during the reign of Theodosius II. Oddly, even though he lived and wrote under Theodosius, he still felt compelled to report on the signs associated with the emperor’s error. For example, when the emperor came of age there was an eclipse and a drought, followed by an “unusually high number of deaths of human beings and animals.” Not only did the historian take the risk of including these signs in his narrative, but he even explained that the strange comet which occurred at the same time was not a comet as others claimed but a divine portent. Following his extensive explication of why the comet was clearly of supernatural origin, Philostorgius proceeds to do the same for earthquakes. The Ecclesiastical History shows that Philostorgius represented natural disasters as revealing God’s anger at the failure of the leadership of the Christian Roman Empire as well as at the open espousal of a doctrine that amount to pagan polytheism in his view. His insistence on the divine origin of disasters stems from his conviction that God’s will is knowable and clearly revealed through such signs and omens.

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78 Philostorgius, 11.7.
79 Philostorgius, 11.7. Theodosius is against the Eunomians and exiles Eunomius, 10. 6.
80 Philostorgius, 12.8.
81 Philostorgius, 12.8-10. There is another list of calamities at this point.
Philostorgius’s narrative also includes examples of special divine intervention or rescue from disaster.\(^{82}\) The most striking incident of this kind involves the occupation of Constantinople by the Gothic military commander Gainas.\(^{83}\) This account occurs right in the middle of all the military disasters just described, so Philostorgius clearly represents the episode as part of a sequence of examples of war that serve as the scourge of God. At the same time, however, God intervenes to save the inhabitants of the city. “But a heavenly armed force, which appeared and frightened those about to execute his plan, saved the city from capture and handed over to human justice those found out. There ensued a great slaughter of them.” \(^{84}\) This narrative of divine intervention stands out in the history.\(^{85}\) Why would God send a heavenly armed force to assist the Theodosian dynasty? It appears that the main focus of divine assistance was the city of Constantinople, not the imperial regime. Philostorgius may have been in the city at the time, afraid for his life.\(^{86}\)

The empire’s misfortunes were not limited to natural disasters and wars. Describing events in the western empire, Philostorgius relates the story of the marriage of the Roman princess Galla Placidia to Ataulf (Alaric’s brother-in-law) shortly after the sack of Rome [another disaster].\(^{87}\) The text in this portion of the epitome is fragmentary,

\(^{82}\) The Seige of Nisibis; victory over Magnentius; Philostorgius, 3.23, 3.26.

\(^{83}\) Philostorgius, 11.8.

\(^{84}\) Philostorgius, 11.8. Socrates (6.6.18-22) and Sozomen (8.4.12-14) refer to giant angels.

\(^{85}\) In fact the origin of the story remains a mystery. In addition to Socrates and Sozomen, it also occurs in Synesius of Cyrene’s Egyptian Tale. For a discussion of might have actually happened, see Alan Cameron, and Jacqueline Long, \textit{Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 199-223.

\(^{86}\) Leppin, “Heretical Historiography,” 121.

\(^{87}\) Philostorgius, 12.3, 12.4. Galla Placidia was the sister of emperor Honorius.
which makes interpretation even more challenging than usual. But it is clear that Philostorgius associated the marriage of Galla Placidia to Ataulf with the prophecy and apocalyptic narrative in the biblical Book of Daniel about an empire half of iron and half of clay. Philostorgius describes the union as a joining of the races of iron and clay. It is possible that iron represents Rome, but the key element is that the combination of iron and clay create a fragile and brittle structure that ultimately leads to collapse. It is unclear whether or not Philostorgius intended this allusion to communicate his belief that the Roman Empire was destined to fall or if he saw any hope of reversing these negative signs. Ed Watts argues that this episode is part of Philostorgius’s account of contemporary events fulfilling the prophecies in Daniel as well as describing divine punishment. In particular, he maintains that Philostorgius directed his apocalyptic warnings at the Eunomian community which had divided into multiple factions. Largely in keeping with my own analysis in this chapter, Watts has argued that Philostorgius used apocalyptic images and notions of divine punishment to interpret catastrophic events in the empire. I would add, however, that Philostorgius was not just warning the Eunomian community through his representation of events but rather directing his view of history to the Roman Empire as a whole.

88 Philostorgius, 12.4. "Now his wife’s brother....they were of Sauromatian barbarian stock, and [he?] who had sprung from iron was then joined to the race of clay. And that is not all, but it [happened] also when again Ataulf was joined in marriage to Placidia, since the substance of clay...."

89 Amidon, Philostorgius, 158, n. 15; Nobbs, “Philostorgius’ View of the Past,” 258.

90 See Watts, 91, for the argument that Philostorgius was possibly hoping to change peoples’ behaviour.

91 Watts, 87-88.

92 Watts, 79-98. Watts argues that all Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, Socrates Scholasticus, Philostorgius, and Timothy Aelurus used Biblical tropes to explain natural disasters, and that Pseudo-Joshua and Timothy Aelurus used this rhetoric to call people to better behavior.
At the conclusion of this study, it makes sense to step back and take a look at where Philostorgius and his *History* stand as objects of scholarly inquiry in this moment. Given the fragmentary nature of the text and his historical reputation as an outlier, Philostorgius has fared well in many ways. Scholars continue to use his *Ecclesiastical History* extensively as a source for events and ideas in late antiquity. A recent conference dedicated entirely to Philostorgius subsequently led to the publication of a substantial collection of essays. Philostorgius could not have asked for a better editor than Joseph Bidez, and his work has also benefited from an excellent translation into English. Moreover, as this study was wrapping up a new edition and translation was published in *Source Chrétiennes*.1 By academic standards he has become quite mainstream. In the minds of scholars, however, Philostorgius remains in the same place as he was when Photius epitomized him, in many ways defined by heresy. Thus, as historians now more frequently incorporate Philostorgius into broader studies of late antiquity, it is all the more important to evaluate the historian’s goals and methods.

The analysis in the preceding chapters has demonstrated the importance of not using “Arianism” as a starting point in an assessment of the text. For example, looking closely at Philostorgius’s treatment of the Arian controversy and the relationship between church and state reveals that he did not simply write in favor of the heretics and to attack his opponents. The *History* not only reveals a complex treatment of Arianism, but also clearly demonstrates that Philostorgius did not self-identify as an

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Arian. Even though other scholars have made this point in the past, it still needs to be reiterated as the misidentification persists in contemporary works. Of course, inappropriate terminology is not the only issue, but the use of these heresiological categories can lead to erroneous conclusions such as that Philostorgius did not write the history of the Christian church or that his account, in contrast with the Nicene ecclesiastical histories, is exceptionally polemical. If we imagine that neither writer knew with certainty the eventual “triumph” of Nicene Christianity, it is difficult to sustain a characterization of Philostorgius’s *History* as somehow more polemical and partisan than that of Rufinus.

Integrating Philostorgius’s voice on an equal level with those of his contemporary historians also allows for a fuller understanding of other aspects of late antiquity such as Christianization. His particular presentation of mission in the *History* and his inclusion of accounts which serve as the sole witness to some events add detail and nuance to the story of Christianization in late antiquity. Philostorgius’s own role in writing an ecclesiastical history and contributing to the development of a Christian view of the past is in itself part of the Christianization process in the later Roman Empire. Moreover, his view of bishops and emperors is important for understanding how religious minorities may have viewed the Roman Empire and sheds light on the relationship between religion and empire more broadly. Similarly, Philostorgius’s *History* contributes to our knowledge of late Roman views of diverse pagans, barbarians, Jews, and others and can contribute to an understanding of how the categories of religion and ethnicity differed and intersected.

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In the end, Photius’s summary offers only a glimpse of what was undoubtedly a longer and even more fascinating text. Yet often descriptions of Philostorgius give no indication of that richness. This is just one example that seems apt to mention in the conclusion of this study. The esteemed Henry Chadwick wrote,

...within the empire Arianism died unloved and unlamented. The surviving fragments of the Arian historian Philostorgius, who wrote an apology for Arianism about 425, show how the movement which had begun as a bold endeavor to reformulate Christian doctrine in a way more palatable to the educated public of A.D. 320, sadly ended in the superstitious repetition of antiquated slogans.\(^3\)

Twenty years after Chadwick’s revised publication of *The Early Church* (1993), even so prominent a Byzantine scholar as Anthony Kaldellis could not overcome the longstanding custom to refer to “the Arian historian Philostorgius” and to categorize him among “the marginal and idiosyncratic authors” of late antiquity.\(^4\) It is remarkable that such characterizations could be applied to Philostorgius’s *Ecclesiastical History*. The text clearly displays evidence of an abundance of sources and erudition incorporated into a narrative with a theory of history. The fact that the *History* combines the influences and content of the Old Testament, Maccabees, other ecclesiastical histories (Eusebius, Rufinus, the anonymous fourth-century historian), Herodotus, and such contemporary sources as Olympiodorus of Thebes, to name only a few of his sources, point to the complexity of his narrative. Moreover, the epitome preserves Philostorgius’s allusive and nuanced use of images and symbols as part of his narrative. He wove all of these elements together to present a coherent vision not just of the Christian church and the Roman Empire, but of divine revelation to humanity. It is no wonder then that


\(^4\) Kaldellis, 70.
Photius chose to summarize this text extensively, all the while reminding the reader that Philostorgius was a nasty heretic as though to allay any doubts the reader may have had about the patriarch’s own orthodoxy in undertaking such an effort to epitomize a heretic.

Given all its different components, the *History* defies easy characterization as a work within the genre of church history. Rather it contributes to the argument that no such established genre ever existed. Even though Philostorgius did claim to write an ecclesiastical history, this does not mean that he necessarily had a clear set ideas about what that entailed. While it is important to ask what late antique writers meant by the term, the notion of a genre of church history has not been a particularly useful category of scholarly analysis. Church historians have frequently been evaluated by whether or not they measure up to Eusebius. Also, scholars in the past have lumped together the Nicene historians and overlooked their individuality, only recently paying more attention to their differences. As is the case with other historians and their histories, Philostorgius’s history constitutes much more than a narrative about the events of the church for he himself envisioned the history of the Christian church as having a broader timeline and timeframe. Thus, it is not so surprising that he focuses more on secular events in the second half as he viewed these events as part of Christian history as much as the activities of bishops.

One of the goals of this study was to approach Philostorgius as an historian as well as a man of faith. His allegiance to the Eunomian form of Christianity was undeniably a central aspect of his identity. This is evident in his *History*, as his theological conviction that God’s will is knowable was fundamental to his interpretations
of the past. But Philostorgius provides further evidence of the prominent role of Christianity in his life. He reveals that he wrote a treatise against Porphyry and a eulogy for Eunomius, and he provides details of his family and their faith.\(^5\) His history, however, also shows that he did not only see himself as a Christian. He clearly saw himself as a Cappadocian as well, as numerous passages attest to this aspect of his identity. He also saw himself as a participating member of the Roman imperial system. The fact that he moved to Constantinople as a young man suggests that he found employment in a position that was at least part of the wider system of the court and the imperial bureaucracy. Additionally, he expressed opinions of the imperial and ecclesiastical leadership of his day. He saw himself as an educated elite member of society participating in this culture along with others like him, both pagans and Christians. He joined them in the acquisition and production of knowledge as his passages on medicine, geography, and ethnography show.

In fact, the question of how radical he appeared to his contemporaries remains. Would Sozomen feel the need to respond to a man whose opinion was so marginal? It is also important to consider that Philostorgius personally interacted with people whose views he opposed, as may have been the case with the pagan historian Olympiodorus.\(^6\) Philostorgius lived in the same city in which numerous other authors wrote and shared the same educational background. It is interesting to imagine the atmosphere in this educational setting. Was it contentious, or secretive, and did students care about each other’s religious affiliation? Regardless, Philostorgius clearly received an education that

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\(^5\) Philostorgius, 3.21, 10.10, 9.9.  
\(^6\) Croke, "Historiography," 418.
included rhetoric, philosophy, and medicine. As a member of this educated elite culture he saw himself as drawing on a long heritage going all the way back to Herodotus that was as much a part of his cultural inheritance as it was of his Nicene contemporaries. In other words, even though over the course of his lifetime Philostorgius witnessed alarming reversals for the Eunomians, the impact of imperial proclamations did not happen overnight. Philostorgius lived during a time of change in the ecclesiastical, imperial, and social reality of the late Roman Empire. He was born before the establishment of Nicene Christianity as the official religion of the Empire and witnessed a continued battle for the definitions of Christian doctrine. Perhaps in the end this is what explains his decision to write. It was not that he had lived his entire life knowing that the end had come, but rather that at the age of 57 he saw the signs that the world that he inhabited had become more entrenched and was in peril if the leadership of the Roman Empire, especially bishops, emperors and the educated elite, did not change course.

Finally, this study of Philostorgius’s Ecclesiastical History has attempted to engage with the vast historiography of history writing in late antiquity. The History itself is a witness to the richness and diversity of ways in which people understood, interpreted, and constructed the past in late antiquity. The fact that so many historians wrote during this period and that they covered many of the same events does not show that there were unsuccessful, as Momigliano has suggested, but rather attests to the vibrancy of historiography in late antiquity—both in terms of the number of writers who chose to share their vision of history but also in terms of a sufficient audience to read these works. In fact, the variety in late antique historiography—the church histories, non-
Christian histories, chronicles, the works in Latin, Greek, and a range of new literary languages, the brevaria, hagiographies and other works that interpret or use the past—suggest that it might make sense to compartmentalize them and to give up the idea of producing an overarching synthesis of the topic. While it is certainly valuable to point out the differences between all these different historical works and to pay attention to the time period, language, and other contexts in which they were written, the case of Philostorgius provides just one example of how scholars have overused or confused these categories. In so doing they have obscured one of the defining features of late antique history writing—its diversity in communication, diversity not exclusively in the sense of division, but in the sense of dialogue, debate, overlap, and coexistence.

Thus, relegating Philostorgius to the category in which Photius placed him, that of an overly polemical heretic, has prevented us from seeing historiography in the fifth century as a competitive exchange about theories of history. By closely analyzing and interpreting Philostorgius’s history it is now possible to see that not only did the historian share in the polemical aspects of his history with his colleagues, but also in certain approaches to history. Simultaneously, his distinctive understanding of history elicited a response from other writers and thereby helped create the very works that later became authoritative while Philostorgius’s own role in this dynamic period of late antique history writing went forgotten. It makes sense that assessments of late Roman historiography have generally been so pessimistic and critical. Not only were scholars holding up late antique historians to the standards of classical antiquity but they were not fully acknowledging the diversity of authors and works that were part of this vibrant historiographical exchange.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Anna Lankina traveled from her native Moscow, Russia in the fall of 2001 to attend and complete high school in Woolwich, Maine. Her subsequent studies at Hillsdale College, Michigan confirmed her desire to study ancient history and inspired her to pursue the fields of Late Antiquity and Early Christianity in particular. She continued her studies at the Department of History at the University of Florida through a joint master’s and doctoral program. After adopting the enthusiasm of Dr. Andrea Sterk for the topic of Christianization, Anna combined this newfound interest with her prior fascination with heresy to focus on the distinctive features of non-Nicene mission and its representation. The master’s thesis led her to examine the understudied *Ecclesiastical History* of Philostorgius. In 2014 she completed a dissertation focusing on themes of Christian leadership and empire in the *History* and received her Ph.D. from the University of Florida.