

CONSTANTINE AND HIS REVOLUTION

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Introduction

Among the most striking reactions to the news that Rome had been sacked by Alaric and his Visigothic hordes in 410 was that of Jerome (331-420), best remembered for his production of the Latin Vulgate Bible. At the time Jerome was living in a monastery in Bethlehem. “A terrible rumour,” he wrote to a correspondent,

has arrived from the West. Rome is besieged; the lives of the citizens have been redeemed by gold. Despoiled, they are again encircled, and are losing their lives after they have lost their riches. My voice cannot continue, sobs interrupt my dictation. The City is taken which took the whole world. ...“O God, the heathen have come into thy inheritance, they have defiled thy holy temple. They have made of Jerusalem a shed for an orchard keeper. They have given the bodies of thy servants as food for the birds of the air, the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the earth; they have poured out their blood as water round about Jerusalem, and there was no man to bury them” [Psalm 79:1-3].¹

What is especially noteworthy about this text is not so much Jerome’s personal reaction to one of the most important events in the history of the West, but the biblical passage that he cites in relation to it. Jerome compares the fall of Rome to the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylonian troops in the sixth century B.C. Just as Jerusalem was marked out as the holy city of God’s people, so, Jerome implies, Rome has a like status.

Two centuries earlier, though, the city to which Christians were most likely to have compared Rome was not Jerusalem, but Jerusalem’s mortal enemy, Babylon. In the second- and third-century Christian mind Rome was best likened to Babylon, because both were notorious centres of immorality and godlessness, and, in the words of Tertullian (fl.190-215), Rome “like Babylon is great, and proud of empire, and at war against the saints of God.”² Why the change in perception? In a word: Constantine (c.285-337). His acclamation at York as emperor in 306 and his subsequent reign of thirty-one years was one of the most decisive moments in the history of Christianity. It radically altered the entire context and community in which Christians lived out their faith.

Now, Evangelical authors vary in their view of Constantine and his “revolution.” Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), in *A History of the Work of Redemption*, was convinced that Constantine’s “great revolution” was “like Christ’s appearing in the clouds of heaven to save his people and judge the world.” It was, in Edwards’ fulsome words, “the greatest revolution and change in the face of things on the face of the earth that ever came to pass in the world since the flood. Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the heathen world, was cast out; the roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God in the strongest dominion that ever he had, even the Roman empire.”³

More typical, though, of mainstream Evangelical historiography are the following

remarks of John Wesley (1703-1791). In a sermon he first preached in 1756 entitled “The Mystery of Iniquity,” Wesley averred that the greatest blow ever struck at the root of genuine Christianity

was struck in the fourth century by Constantine the Great, when he called himself a Christian, and poured in a flood of riches, honours, and power upon the Christians, more especially upon the clergy. ...Then the mystery of iniquity was no more hid, but stalked abroad in the face of the sun. Then, not the golden, but the iron age of the church commenced.⁴

For Wesley, as for many other Evangelical authors, Constantine was merely an astute politician, an opportunist who used the Church to help save classical culture and the Roman way of life. As a result an alliance between Church and state ensued which ultimately wrought spiritual havoc in the church.⁵

How then is Constantine to be viewed, as a friend of the Church or its foe? To answer this question we must first look at Constantine himself, his achievements and his convictions about himself. Only then is it appropriate to look at the long-term results of his reign. The latter, though, should never be used as the criterion by which we determine the sincerity of Constantine’s motives.

The Roman Empire, 211-305

Historians have long debated why the Roman Empire did not fall in the third century. From the 240s to the 270s there were massive assaults by Germanic tribes along the entire length of the frontier of the Empire in Europe. The Franks, Alemanni and Juthungi, Vandals and Sarmatians, and the Goths defeated and decimated numerous Roman legions and sent raiding parties deep within the Empire. In the east, there was a disastrous war with the resurgent Sassanid kingdom of Persia which culminated with the capture of the Roman Emperor Valerian (r.253-260) at Edessa in 260. More than a few Roman legions mutinied and for a number of years some of the provinces in the west and the east broke away from the empire to set up their own domains. Between the reigns of Caracalla (r.211-217) and Diocletian (r.284-305), who ascended to the imperial purple in 284, there were roughly twenty emperors and all but two died violently. Accompanying all of this military and political turmoil, there was rampant inflation and economic instability, famine and plague. The North African bishop Cyprian (c.200-258) captured the chaos of the times when he wrote to Donatus, a fellow believer: “Observe the roads blocked by robbers, the seas beset by pirates, wars spread everywhere with the bloody horrors of camps. The world is soaked with mutual blood...”⁶

The restoration of order was the largely the work of Diocletian, a brilliant Illyrian army officer. The army was beefed up and came to number perhaps as many as 400,000 men. Frontier defences were strengthened. Imperial security was tightened, making assassination of the emperor more difficult. A series of monetary reforms that stabilized the economy were pushed through. The most radical changes had to do with the position of the emperor. Recognizing that the Empire had grown far too unwieldy to govern, Diocletian first created a dual emperorship with two emperors, one in the west and one in the east, both of whom went by the title “Augustus.” And because the peaceful transfer of

power from one emperor to another had been a major problem in the third century, Diocletian later established an arrangement whereby the Augustus could hand over the reins of power to a “junior emperor,” denoted by the term “Caesar.” This division of power, called the Tetrarchy, had important consequences for the political future of the Empire. It formally divided the Empire into two, which eventually led to the point in the fifth century where there were really two separate regimes.⁷

Diocletian ruled as Augustus in the east, and appointed as the Augustus of the west the loyal Maximian (r.286-305). As Caesar of the east Diocletian chose Galerius (d.311), a fanatical pagan with an inveterate hatred of Christians and their faith. Maximian took Flavius Valerius Constantius (d.306), commonly called Chlorus (“Pale Face”), for his Caesar. Constantius, the father of Constantine, was assigned the responsibility of administering Gaul and Britain.

The nature of Constantius’ religious convictions is far from clear. There is numismatic evidence that proclaims a devotion to Mars, Jupiter, and Hercules. During the so-called Great Persecution, which commenced in 303, he refused to kill any Christians in his realm, though he does appear to have destroyed a number of buildings that were being used as churches.⁸ Yet, his youngest daughter’s name, born no later than 300, was named Anastasia, which seems to betray a sympathy for Christianity.⁹ And Eusebius of Caesarea (c.260-339) maintains in his Ecclesiastical History that Constantius never actually demolished any churches.¹⁰ Historians will continue to argue over Constantius’ precise religious predilections. There is, however, little doubt about those of his son. As soon as Constantine is made Caesar in 305 and comes into the limelight of history he has a marked favouritism for the Christian faith.

Two years before Constantine’s appointment to the imperial college, Galerius had pressured Diocletian into adding religious renewal to his long list of reforms. He convinced Diocletian that Christianity posed a significant threat to the official ideology underlying the government of the Tetrarchy.¹¹ A first edict against Christians was issued February 23, 303 that declared assembly for Christian worship illegal. To enforce the ruling Diocletian ordered the destruction of all churches as well as private homes where Christian worship took place. Intellectual support for this concerted attack on the Church was drawn from a number of articulate pagan voices, the most notable being the Neoplatonist philosopher Porphyry (c.233-c.303). In his fifteen-volume *Against the Christians* Porphyry maintained that the Christian faith was inimical to civilization. He thus denounced Christians “as barbarians, as apostates from ancestral religion, as atheists who deserved punishment.” And Porphyry had no doubts what that punishment should be: execution.¹²

Other edicts soon followed in the east: one in the spring or summer of 303 ordered the arrest of all involved in Christian leadership. If they refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods they were executed. Another in 304 required all inhabitants under the rule of Diocletian and Galerius to sacrifice and offer libations to the Roman gods. Again Christians who refused were martyred, many of them with their bodies mutilated and tortured beyond recognition. Eusebius of Caesarea, who was an eyewitness of the

persecution at its most savage in Palestine and Egypt, talks of ten, twenty, even sixty or a hundred believers being martyred every day for months on end.¹³

Now, by this point in time, there were some six million believers in the Empire, around ten percent of total population.¹⁴ In some areas of the Empire, the percentage was much higher. For instance, Robert S. Bagnall conducted a study of Egyptian papyri that sought to identify persons with definite Christian names and so trace a curve of Christianization in Egypt. His research yielded a figure of eighteen percent of Egypt being professedly Christian around 313.¹⁵ Even before this time, there were villages in Palestine and Phrygia that were totally Christian. And in many of the towns in the eastern Roman Empire Christians formed a majority or influential minority of the population.¹⁶ The number of martyrs then was by no means insignificant.

At the height of the persecution in 305 Diocletian voluntarily abdicated, the only Roman Emperor ever to do so. Too old and too sick to carry on shouldering the heavy load of imperial duties he turned the government over to his Caesar, Galerius. He subsequently retired to a huge fortress villa at Split on the shores of the Adriatic, where he spent his final years in such domestic pursuits as growing turnips and cabbages. At the same time in Milan, Maximian also stepped down and Constantius became the senior Emperor of the West.

A brief sketch of Constantine's career

Just over a year after he became senior emperor in the Tetrarchy Constantius died at York on July 25, 306, with Constantine at his side. Although there was a Caesar, one Severus, in Milan, who according to the Diocletianic arrangement, should now have become Augustus, Constantius' legions saluted Constantine as Augustus in his father's stead. Galerius, the Augustus in the east, had absolutely no desire to have Constantine as a colleague. But he was not prepared to tangle with Constantine. In an astute move he declared his recognition of Constantine as Caesar, the junior of Severus. Long groomed for power and the possessor of political sagacity, Constantine accepted the appointment, thereby silencing any who would question the legitimacy of his reign.¹⁷

Constantine's first actions as emperor reveal both his religious sympathies as well as his political savvy. He totally halted the persecution of the Church—in the east it would rage on for another six years. Furthermore, he gave full restitution to those believers under his direct rule in Spain, Gaul, and Britain, who had suffered the loss of land and possessions. This strategic move not only marked him out as a champion of the Christian cause. It also asserted his right to legislate for those under his jurisdiction and was thus an open declaration that he was indeed a legitimate ruler in the west.¹⁸

Summing up Constantine's political character, Timothy D. Barnes has characterized him as "implacably ambitious," determined from the beginning of his reign to become the sole ruler of a unified Roman Empire.¹⁹ For the six years following Galerius' recognition of him in 306 Constantine strategized towards control of the west. The decisive moment to act came in 312 and Constantine marched on Rome. On October 28, just outside of Rome, at the Milvian Bridge, he confronted his last major opponent in the west, a pagan

by the name of Maxentius. His victory in the brief battle that ensued made him the undisputed master of the western Roman Empire. A dozen years later, in 324, he realized his dream of ruling over a united Empire when he defeated his co-ruler in the east, Licinus, in a couple of key battles. It is, however, the events surrounding the Battle of the Milvian Bridge that have captured the primary attention of historians down through the years.

“A disciple of the Holy God”

As his troops went into battle on that autumn day in 312 they bore on their standards not the usual pagan emblems, but a distinctively Christian sign, probably a variant of an ancient Christian symbol, the Chi-Rho (XP), produced by the intertwining of the first two letters of Christ’s name in Greek.²⁰ Many years later, according to an interview Eusebius of Caesarea had with Constantine, the emperor would tell the church historian that he placed this sign on the standards of his army in obedience to a direct command he received from Christ in a vision.²¹ Whatever one makes of the vision, there is no gainsaying the fact that Constantine’s army went into battle as identifiably on the side of Christianity.

In the years immediately following his victory over Maxentius, Constantine followed up this open avowal of Christianity with legislation and actions that left no doubt as to his convictions.²² The so-called Edict of Milan, issued in 313 in both Constantine’s name and that of his pagan co-emperor Licinus, recognized Christianity as a legal religion throughout the Empire. Constantine proceeded to donate funds to erect a splendid basilica in Rome that would accommodate up to 4,000 worshippers and would serve as the principal place of worship for believers in the city. He also gave monetary aid to support the poverty-stricken, orphans and widows. Christian bishops and pastors became exempt from taxation, a remarkable innovation in the history of the Empire. Courts in which bishops presided as judges were legally established. This meant that where the litigants in a law-suit were both Christians, they could have their case tried in a court presided over by a bishop instead of in a civil court where the judge might well be a pagan.

Roman law and culture also began to be remoulded. Crucifixion was abolished as a legal punishment. The gladiatorial games, a staple of Roman entertainment for more than four centuries, were totally forbidden in 325, though it took some years for this cruel blood sport to be totally replaced with chariot racing. The observance of Sunday as a holy day was made mandatory for all.²³ In accordance with Constantine’s reading of Christian moral standards, divorce and re-marriage were made far more difficult: a woman could divorce her husband only if he were a murderer, poisoner, or tomb violator, while a man could divorce his spouse only if she were guilty of adultery, poisoning, or running a brothel. And in one key area he junked a long-standing Roman tradition, the imposition of legal disabilities on the unmarried. Some Christians chose to be celibate for the sake of the Kingdom of God, and Constantine felt that such should be admired, not penalized.

Places where some historians have seen evidence of what they regard as Constantine’s religious syncretism—for instance, the continued usage of the pagan Sol Invictus image

on his coins for a number of years after his victory at the Milvian Bridge—actually reveal a shrewd politician. In the years between the Battle of the Milvian Bridge and his defeat of the pagan Licinus, Constantine well knew that a direct attack on the public aspects of pagan religion was not feasible. After his conquest of the entire Empire, however, the erection of idols, the consultation of pagan oracles, the use of divination, and sacrificing to the gods, central aspects of traditional Roman religion, were all proscribed and made illegal.²⁴

Documentary evidence confirms the convictions lying behind all of this legislation which sought to remould Roman society and culture along the lines of Christianity. In a public decree that he issued in 324, after his victory over Licinus, Constantine declared:

To acknowledge...in solemn terms the beneficence of the Supreme Being is by no means boasting. He searched for and chose my service to carry out his purpose. Starting...at the faraway Britannic sea and the regions where the sun...sets, by the help of the Supreme Power, I drove out and scattered all the prevailing evil things, in order that the human race, reared with my assistance, might call upon the service of the holy law...²⁵

Constantine here recalls his march of triumph from his elevation to the purple at York in 306 to his then-recent defeat of Licinus. He is conscious of being an instrument in the hand of the One he calls the “Supreme Being,” to whom he gives full credit for his victorious career. He is the one whom God entrusted with a divine mission to educate the Romans to acknowledge the true God and instil in them reverence.²⁶ In the same public document, he was quite prepared to acknowledge all that he owed to God: “I am firmly convinced that I owe my life and every breath...to the Supreme God.”²⁷

In a second text, issued by Constantine in 325, Constantine stated his abhorrence of the memory of those emperors who “persecuted the true doctrine during the whole period of their reign.” But these persecutors had met their rightful end in an eternal hell. The only recent emperor who meant anything to Constantine was his father, Constantius, because he was not a persecutor like the others. Constantine was willing to extend freedom of conscience to the devotees of Roman paganism, those who “delight in error” at “their shrines of falsehood,” but they had to realize that Christianity was now the emperor’s religion. “Your name,” he said to God, “I truly love, while I regard with reverence that power of which you have given abundant proofs to the confirmation and increase of my faith.”²⁸

One final document that reveals the depth of his religious convictions and his belief in God’s providential ordering of his life is a letter that he sent to King Sapor of Persia. The Persians were Rome’s traditional enemy and there were numerous Christians in the Persian kingdom. Constantine told the Persian king that if he harmed these Christians he would have to answer to Constantine. To give added weight to this threat he told Sapor that God had given him victory in all of his campaigns.

I profess the most holy religion. I confess that as a disciple of the Holy God I observe this worship. With the power of this God on my side to help me, beginning at the boundaries of the Ocean, I had gathered every nation, one after another, throughout the world, to the certain hope of salvation... This God I worship and my army is dedicated to him and wears his sign on their shoulders,

marching directly wherever the cause of justice summons them. I confess that I honour this God with never-dying remembrance, this God in the height of his glory I delight to contemplate with a pure and simple heart.²⁹

These three texts, and more could be cited, reveal a man who was sincerely convinced that he had been given a divine mission to inculcate virtue in his subjects and persuade them to worship the true God proclaimed in the Christian faith. Yes, this conviction was wedded to an intense ambition for personal power. But that does not diminish its sincerity.

Constantine—friend or foe?

When Constantine died in 337 there was scarcely any facet of the public life of the Empire that had not been impacted by his policy of official Christianization. In acting thus, Constantine had sincerely perceived himself as a friend to the Church. Yet, his legacy was by no means all good.

The incredible turn of events that accompanied the reign of Constantine, the way in which almost overnight Christians went from being a persecuted minority to being the power-brokers in the new order, all but seduced some believers into thinking that the state and the church could work together to establish the kingdom of God. A major figure who articulated this view was Eusebius of Caesarea.

On July 25, 336, the year before Constantine's death, Eusebius was asked to preach at the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of Constantine's accession to power. The main theme of his sermon is that the empire of Constantine is a visible image of the heavenly kingdom, "the manifestation on earth of that ideal monarchy which exists in the heavenly realm." Eusebius went on to affirm that Constantine governs it in accordance with the divine archetype, ever keeping his eyes on heaven to find the pattern for his government. In other words, what Eusebius enunciated here is a sacralization of the state.³⁰

It was an idea that bore bitter fruit seventy-five years or so later when the western portion of this Christian Roman Empire fell before the onslaught of various Germanic tribes and the question was raised of why God would allow his "holy state" to suffer in this way. This sacralization of the state thus contributed in no small way to the tears of Jerome. It was left to Augustine to argue at length in his monumental *City of God* (413-426) that no earthly kingdom can be identified with the kingdom of God and that no earthly kingdom, even a Christian state, is essential to the outworking of God's purposes in history.

A related question is what happens if the Emperor or ruler happens to disagree with your theological views? If the state is vital to the advance of the kingdom of God, then religious nonconformity runs the risk of persecution. As Basil of Caesarea (c.330-379), later wrote:

When he [i.e. the Devil] saw that by the persecution of our enemies the Church was increasing and thriving the more, [he] changed his plan. He no longer makes war openly, but places hidden snares for us, concealing his treachery by the means of the name which his followers bear, in order that we may endure the same sufferings as our fathers, and yet not seem to suffer for Christ, since our

persecutors have the name of Christian.³¹

The stage is set for the Mediæval era when the church would regularly use the arm of the state to enforce “orthodoxy.”

Finally, as Christianity became the government’s preferred option, many were tempted to join the Church simply because it provided a way to get ahead in society. In other words, during the fourth and fifth centuries nominal believers entered the church in significantly large numbers to help bring about an identity crisis within the church. In essence that crisis can be boiled down to this question: “What does it mean to be a Christian in a ‘Christian’ society”? In the second and third centuries the lines between the Church and pagan society were fairly sharply drawn. But not so after Constantine. And the answer to this crisis that the Church came up with was the renewal movement that we call monasticism. In the long run this movement created as many problems as it set out to solve, but in the fourth century in the hands of such capable exponents as Athanasius (c.295-373) and Basil of Caesarea it did indeed function as a vehicle of renewal. Indeed, it played an essential role in the survival of Christianity after the fall of the western Roman Empire. It was in the monastic sodalities formed by this renewal movement, for instance, that the Christian Scriptures were preserved and handed on.

Having described three ways in which Constantine’s revolution introduced elements of radical change into the life of the Church, it is important to recognize that there were also significant elements of continuity between the pre- and post-Constantinian Church. Post-Constantinian Nicene orthodoxy, for example, that is summed up in the Nicene and Niceno-Constantinopolitan creeds of 325 and 381 respectively and that affirms the full deity of Christ and his Spirit is by no means a drastic shift from the theological perspective of the Christianity of earlier centuries. If this is so, there must then have been significant forces of theological integrity and spirituality in the period after Constantine to produce such documents. In other words, there is positive value in the history of the Church in the period immediately after Constantine, and things are not as gloomy as Wesley and other Evangelicals of his persuasion have supposed.³²

Endnotes

- ¹ Letter 127.12 [in J. N. Hillgarth, ed., *The Conversion of Western Europe, 350-750* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), 67]. For other reactions, see R. P. C. Hanson, “The Reaction of the Church to the Collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the Fifth Century”, *Vigiliae Christianae*, 26 (1972), 272-287.
- ² *Against Marcion* 3.13 [trans. Ernest Evans, ed. and trans. Tertullian: *Adversus Marcionem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 211].
- ³ *A History of the Work of Redemption*, transcribed and ed. John F. Wilson (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1989), 394, 396.
- ⁴ *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 2:462-463.
- ⁵ For further discussion of this historiographical perspective, see Daniel H. Williams, “Constantine, Nicaea and the ‘Fall’ of the Church” in Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones, eds., *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community* (London/New York: Routledge, 1998), 117-136.
- ⁶ *To Donatus* 6 [trans. Roy J. Deferrari, *Saint Cyprian: Treatises* (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), ...].
- ⁷ Chris Scarre, *The Penguin Historical Atlas of Ancient Rome* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1995), 114-116.
- ⁸ Mark D. Smith, “Eusebius and the Religion of Constantius I” in Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., *Studia Patristica* (Louvain: Peeters Publishers, 1997), XXIX, 133-140.
- ⁹ Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Massachusetts/London: Harvard University Press, 1981), 3-4.
- ¹⁰ *Ecclesiastical History* 8.13.13. See also Smith, “Eusebius and the Religion of Constantius I”, 133-140.
- ¹¹ For Galerius’ key role in the Great Persecution, see Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 15-27.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 21-22.
- ¹³ *Ecclesiastical History* 8.9.3. His account of the persecution makes for sobering reading: see *ibid.* 8.2.1-13.8.
- ¹⁴ Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity. A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 4-13.
- ¹⁵ See *ibid.*, 12-13.
- ¹⁶ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 191.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28-29.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.
- ²⁰ For a picture of this symbol as it probably appeared that day, see Matthew Black, “The Chi-Rho Sign—Christogram and/or Staurogram” in W. Ward Gasque and Ralph P. Martin, eds., *Apostolic History and the Gospel. Biblical and Historical Essays presented to F. F. Bruce on his 60th Birthday* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1970), 322-323.
- ²¹ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine* 1.28-31.
- ²² For the following account of this legislation, I am indebted to Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 48-53.

²³ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine* 4.18.

²⁴ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 210.

²⁵ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine* 2.28 [trans. Paul Keresztes, "Constantine: Called by Divine Providence" in Elizabeth A. Livingstone, ed., *Studia Patristica* (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1985), XVIII/1, 47, altered]. For a commentary on this text, see Keresztes, "Constantine: Called by Divine Providence", 47, and Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 208-209.

²⁶ Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 43. See also Hermann Doerries, *Constantine the Great*, trans. Roland H. Bainton (New York: Harper Row Publications, 1972), 61-67.

²⁷ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine* 2.29 (trans. Keresztes, "Constantine: Called by Divine Providence", 47).

²⁸ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Life of Constantine* 2.49, 54-56.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 4.9 (trans. Keresztes, "Constantine: Called by Divine Providence", 51-52, altered).

³⁰ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Oration in Praise of Constantine* 3.5; Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 254.

³¹ Letter 139.1.

³² Williams, "Constantine, Nicaea and the 'Fall' of the Church", 130-131.