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## Melania and the Unknown Governor of Palestine<sup>1</sup>

*In his account of the banishment to Sepphoris (Diocaesarea) of the Egyptian bishops and monks during Valens' reign, Palladius of Helenopolis focuses on two rival authorities: Melania the Elder, an aristocrat who supports the exiles, and an unnamed governor of Palestine, the representative of state authority, who forbids this support and has her arrested. Hagiographic anecdotes such as the tale of her feeding the monks made Melania into an icon of divine intervention in the history of the church. Fresh excavations in Sepphoris are now yielding insight into the place of exile and the potential for religious conflict. But the key to a historical understanding lies first and foremost in the identity of the anonymous governor, who hitherto has received scant scholarly attention. The mysterious affair involving Melania and this governor of Palestine sheds light on emperor Valens' circle of political advisers and also—in the context of Valens' edict of 373 (CTh 12.1.63) concerning bands of hermit monks—reveals the coalition between pagan senators and the Arian clergy, in which Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus and his son were key figures.*

It has been said, “Memory is always present time, never the past. Memory is a creation, a construct.”<sup>2</sup> The hagiographic memory of the persecutions of Nicene Christians under the Arianizing emperor Valens (364–375) in Egypt, which rightly has been consigned to the realm of legend, is just such a construct.<sup>3</sup> An intriguing example is the confrontation between Melania the

<sup>1</sup> Based on a paper given at the 15th International Conference on Patristic Studies (2007) and on discussions during a Visiting Fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford, in 2012. Thanks to Jodi Magness, Ralph Mathisen, Fergus Millar, Bernhard Palme, and Chris Wickham for helpful comments, and to Ze'ev Weiss for the plan of the Sepphoris.

<sup>2</sup> Johannes Fried, *Der Schleier der Erinnerung. Grundzüge einer historischen Memorik* (Munich, 2004), 105: “Erinnerung ist stets Gegenwart, nie Vergangenheit. Sie ist Schöpfung, Konstrukt.”

<sup>3</sup> Hanns Christoph Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer. Der Osten bis zum Ende der homöischen Reichskirche* (Tübingen, 1988), 238; for the significance of the term “Arian,” see also, inter alios, Michel Meslin, *Les Ariens d'Occident 335–430* (Paris, 1967); R.P.C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy* (Edinburgh, 1988); M.R.

Elder (ca. 325–410), a wealthy aristocratic widow from Spain and Rome, on the one hand, and a governor of Palestine on the other.<sup>4</sup> Melania was well connected with religious luminaries of her time and is now remembered (as is her granddaughter Melania the Younger) as a Desert Mother of the church. Her antagonist was a representative of the empire's top political elite whose name was expunged from collective memory and consigned to oblivion by his detractors. This study investigates what lies behind the “veil of memory” in several carefully constructed contemporary accounts of this encounter. Despite its stylized rendering, historical and literary evidence of events may provide clues to the governor's identity and narrow the date of the encounter.

### *Antecedents*

A disputed letter from bishop Peter II of Alexandria sketches the historical background.<sup>5</sup> The episode occurred when the conflict between Arians and Nicenes escalated after the death of the patriarch Athanasius in Alexandria on 2 May 373.<sup>6</sup> The emperor Valens, based then in Antioch, launched an attack on the Nicene stronghold of Egypt. Peter, brother of Athanasius and consecrated as his successor in defiance of all *canones*, was arrested by order of Aelius Palladius, the prefect of Egypt (371–74), but succeeded in escaping by sea to seek refuge with the bishop of Rome Damasus (366–84).<sup>7</sup> On the emperor's orders, and accompanied by a military force and the Arian bishop Euzoius, the *comes sacrarum largitionum* Vindaonius Magnus entered Alexandria in force for the purpose of installing the Homoian Lucius, as the

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Barnes, D.H. Williams, eds., *Arianism after Arius: Essays in the Development of the Fourth-Century Trinitarian Conflicts* (Edinburgh, 1993); D.M. Gwynn, *The Eusebians: The Polemic of Athanasius of Alexandria and the Construction of the Arian Controversy* (Oxford, 2007); Mark Weedman, “Hilary and the Homoiousians: Using New Categories to Map the Trinitarian Controversy,” *Church History* 76.3 (2007), 491–510.

<sup>4</sup> For Melania, see, inter alios, Francis X. Murphy, “Melania the Elder: A Biographical Note,” *Traditio* 5 (1947), 59–77.

<sup>5</sup> Theodore, *Hist.eccl.* 4.22.1–35 (GCS n.f. 5.249–60), written almost a century later.

<sup>6</sup> Athanasius, *Epistulae festales* 45 (SC 317.277); Athanasius' feast falls on 2 May in the Coptic calendar (SC 317.304 n.108). The *Historia acephala* 5.14 (SC 317.168) has “VIII pachom mensis” (= 3 May). Timothy Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge, MA; London, 1993), 297 n. 1, suggests that “VIII” should be emended to “VII.”

<sup>7</sup> According to Socrates, *Hist.eccl.* 4.21.4 (PG 67.508) and Sozomen, *Hist.eccl.* 6.19.1–2 (FC 73/3.730–33), who were familiar with Peter's letter (see Socr. *HE* 4.22.2, 508). See also Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 180–82; C. Wilfried Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity from its Origins to 451 CE* (Leiden, 2000), 180–82; Noel Lenski, *Failure of Empire: Valens and the Roman State in the Fourth Century A.D.* (London; Berkeley, Los Angeles, 2002), 255 (contesting Brennecke, *Geschichte der Homöer*, 237); Idem, “Valens and the Monks: Cudgeling and Conscriptio as a Means of Social Control,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004), 93–117.

rightful incumbent, on the episcopal throne.<sup>8</sup> Magnus forced nineteen priests and deacons who refused to accept the Homoian creed into exile at Heliopolis (Baalbek), a predominantly Hellenistic and pagan city in the province of Phoenice.<sup>9</sup> Monks who demonstrated against this action were sentenced to serve in the mines of Phaeno or the quarries of Proconnesus, as was a deacon of Rome whom Damasus had sent to intervene.<sup>10</sup> Repression extended beyond Alexandria to the rest of Egypt. Bishops who refused to support Lucius in the city council were likewise banished from Egypt, as were monks who had supported Athanasius and his designated successor.<sup>11</sup>

Rufinus, a monk from Aquileia, was living in Egypt at this time, attending Didymus the Blind's lectures in Alexandria in about 372 and cultivating cordial relations with the desert ascetics and Melania the Elder. Both Rufinus and Melania were eyewitnesses to the first onslaught of the Arian persecution in May, 373.<sup>12</sup> Melania then followed a group of exiles to Palestine, whereas Rufinus remained in Egypt until 378 in order to continue his studies with Didymus. But Rufinus too had been affected by the spectacle, and in his *History of the Church* he created a horrific scene with his portrayal of Lucius' "bloodied hands, defiled and stained . . . by the blood of the saints" and of the consequences for "God's servants condemned to the mines . . . the bishops driven into exile, the presbyters and deacons banished to the dwellings beyond the pale of the Christian religion, and the others handed over some to beasts and some even to fire."<sup>13</sup> Subsequent Christian narratives followed this tradition.<sup>14</sup>

Contemporaries, including Palladius, a native of Galatia, who journeyed with her from Jerusalem to Egypt and later became bishop of Helenopolis, and Melania's cousin Paulinus of Nola, focused their attention particularly

<sup>8</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.9–10 (GCS n.f. 5.252): "ἡμέτερος δῆθεν ἀποστέλλεται διάδοχος, χρυσίω τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν ὡς ἀξίωμα κοσμικὸν ἠγῆσάμενος, Λούκιός τις . . . τῷ δὴ τοιοῦτῳ συνῆσαν . . . Εὐζώιος ἦν . . . καὶ ὁ τῶν κομητατησίων δὲ λαργιτιόνων κόμης, στρατιωτῶν ἐπαγόμενος ἄμετρον πλεθύν, ὁ . . . Μάγνος τοῦνομα." See Christopher Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict* (Baltimore, 1997), 86.

<sup>9</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.13–22 (GCS n.f. 5.253, 256). See *PLRE I*, 536, Vindaonius Magnus 12.

<sup>10</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.26 (GCS n.f. 5.257–58).

<sup>11</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.13ff. (GCS n.f. 5.253ff.); also Socr. *HE* 4.22.236 (*PG* 67.508–9); Soz. *HE* 6.20.1–12 (*FC* 73/3.732–38). Imperial constitutions of Valens and Valentinian in 370/371 laid down that a *curialis* must on ordination as a Christian cleric transfer his entire possessions either to a relative representing him in the city council or to the council itself as a corporation; see *CTh* 12.1.59, 16.2.17 (364), 16.2.19 (370), 16.2.21 (371).

<sup>12</sup> Philip R. Amidon, tr., *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia, Books 10 and 11* (Oxford, 1997), Introduction, vii–viii. On Melania's six-month stay in Egypt in 373 see Kevin W. Wilkinson, "The Elder Melania's Missing Decade," *JLA* 5 (2012), 167–74, and the new chronology, 177.

<sup>13</sup> Rufin. *HE* 11.6 (GCS n.f. 6/2.1011.11–13), Amidon, tr.

<sup>14</sup> E.g., Soc. *HE* 4.36, *PG* 67.557; Theod. *HE* 4.23.2–3 (GCS n.f. 5.261.6–15); see also Soz. *HE* 6.38.6, 6.38. 8 (*FC* 73/3.824, 826): "Your hands soiled with the blood and scurf of holy men . . . this is attested by bishops, presbyters and deacons, languishing in distant exile and in the mines."

on Melania's commitment to those who had been banished.<sup>15</sup> Both state that after returning to Palestine Melania was arrested, because she had hidden those exiled under Valens and because she had accompanied and supported those arrested.<sup>16</sup> On both occasions, Melania appeared before an unnamed judge (*iudex*, δικαστής) who, awed by her presence ("confusus veneratione praesentis"), declined to take further action against her.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, there is a significant discrepancy between the ways in which Paulinus and Palladius describe the episode.

### *Melania's Almsgiving*

Paulinus composed an encomium for his relative, in which his central theme was the miracle of a new, living contemporary. He stylized Melania as a role model representing the *virtutes dei* and as the *princeps et particeps* of those banished under Valens. As an *amator pauperum* like Pammachius, he says, she used her wealth to feed the persecuted, performing Christ's miracle of the loaves and fishes in her own day.<sup>18</sup> Pammachius' distribution of food to the poor in St. Peter's, which likewise evoked the biblical feeding of the five thousand (Matt. 14:21), is recalled by the hyperbole of Paulinus' image of 5,000 monks fed on three successive days with Melania's loaves.<sup>19</sup> The faceless crowd of Melania's anonymous banished beneficiaries became the counterparts of the scriptural recipients of the 5,000 multiplied loaves. In line with his purpose of hagiographic characterization, he highlighted the Christ-influenced conduct of his primary actors, Pammachius and Melania. And small matter that Rufinus, whom Paulinus visited in the city palace of Melania the Younger in Rome and cited as his historical source, made do with a total count of only 3,000 arrested clergy.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Paul.Nol. *Ep.* 29.5 (CSEL 29.251), "Cuius [sc. Severi] fides illi [sc. Melaniae] magis quam noster sanguis propinquat." Pallad. *Hist.Laus.* 55.1 (Butler, 148.15), s.a. 399/400: "προπέμποντασ τὴν μακαρίαν Σιλβανίαν." See Sigrid Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus von Nola. Kommunikation und soziale Kontakte zwischen christlichen Intellektuellen* (Göttingen, 2002), 74–77 (Paulinus), 439 (Palladius); Demetrios S. Katos, *Palladius of Helenopolis: The Origenist Advocate* (Oxford, 2011), 10–12 ("The Peripatetic Monk").

<sup>16</sup> Paul. Nol. *Ep.* 29.11 (CSEL 29.257–58): "Haec (sc. Melania) fugatos recipiebat aut adprehensos comitabatur, sed cum eos recepisset in latebram, qui propter insignem fidem maiore et haereticorum odio infestabantur et occultantium tegebantur invidiam."

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., "Processit inpavide cupida passionis et iniuria publicationis exsultans, . . . tracturos antevolans ad iudicem, qui confusus veneratione praesentis non executus est infidelitatis iram, dum fidei miratur audaciam"; see also Pallad. *Hist.Laus.* 46, discussed below.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., "Eadem tempestate per triduum quinque milia monachorum latentium panibus suis pavit, ut per eius manum dominus Iesus pristinum numerum in deserto pasceret."

<sup>20</sup> Rufin. *HE* 11.3 (GCS n.f. 6/2.1004.8–10): "Tria milia simul aut eo amplius viros per totam heremum secreta et solitaria habitatione dispersos oppugnare pariter adgreditur." See also *Suda*

## *The Place of Exile*

A different perspective is given by Palladius regarding the victims and the place of exile. Whereas Paulinus was vague, Palladius discussed at length the identity and destination of the exiled individuals: famous ascetics such as Isidore of Pelusium, Pisimius, Aldelphius, Paphnutius, Pambo, Ammonius, and twelve bishops and presbyters are listed by name.<sup>21</sup> Where Rufinus and Paulinus rhetorically refer to thousands of victims, Palladius' provision of a specific number, eleven bishops at least, appears credible; the figure is confirmed by the aforementioned letter of Peter of Alexandria.<sup>22</sup> Palladius' reference to Diocaea-sarea (modern Tzipori, Sepphoris in Jewish and later Christian history) tells us that they were exiled to Galilee, near Nazareth. His knowledge came from the rehabilitated victims: he had been a monk in Egypt himself from 388 until 399 and belonged to a group of educated anchorites around Evagrius Ponticus and Ammonius in the Kellia before being ordained bishop of Helenopolis in Bithynia in 400.<sup>23</sup> Christian sources suggest that banishment to a predominantly Jewish and pagan city constituted part of the punishment.<sup>24</sup>

What, then, were conditions Sepphoris really like in the second half of the fourth century? The city did not suffer from earthquake damage of 363 in Palestine as much as might have been expected; in fact during the fourth and fifth centuries it increased in size and flourished, necessitating the extension of some of the streets and the water system.<sup>25</sup> Excavations at Sepphoris have unveiled

s.v. "Οὐάλης" 764; Paul. Nol. *Ep.* 46.1 (CSEL 26.387); discussion in Mratschek, *Der Briefwechsel des Paulinus*, 500–501.

<sup>21</sup> Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 46.3 (Butler, 134.16–135.3), "μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο τοῦ ἀγούσταλιου Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐξορίσαντος Ἰσίδωρον καὶ Πισίμιον καὶ Ἀδέλφιον καὶ Παφνούτιον καὶ Παμβῶ, ἐν οἷς καὶ Ἀμμώνιον τὸν παρώτην, καὶ δώδεκα ἐπισκόπους καὶ πρεσβυτέρους, εἰς τὴν Παλαιστίνην περὶ Διοκαισάρειαν. οἷς ἠκολούθησεν αὐτὴ ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων χρημάτων ὑπηρετουμένη." For the exiled bishops, see Hillel Newman, "The Bishops of Sepphoris: Christianity and Synagogue Iconography in the Late Fourth and Early Fifth Centuries," in Ze'ev Weiss, Oded Irshai, Jodi Magness, Seth Schwartz, eds., *Follow the Wise' (B Sanhedrin 32b): Studies in Jewish History and Culture in Honor of Lee I. Levine* (Winona Lake, 2010), 85–99, at 88.

<sup>22</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.35 (GCS n.f. 5.259.25–260.1), "ἕνδεκα τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς Αἰγύπτου τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἐπισκόπων."

<sup>23</sup> Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 35.5 (Butler, 102.9, 11) uses the terms συνοδίας and ἐτερείας Εὐαγρίου. See Katos, *Palladius of Helenopolis*, 12–16 (in Egypt and Palestine), 16–25 (bishop in Bithynia).

<sup>24</sup> See, e.g., Rufin. *HE* 11.6 (GCS n.f. 6/2, 1011.19–20): "Presbyteri, diaconi extra Christiani nominis habitacula relegati," Amidon, tr., as "presbyters and deacons banished to the dwellings beyond the pale of the Christian religion." Also Rufin. *HE* 11.4 (GCS n.f. 6/2, 1007.5–7): "patres ipsos . . . raptos in insulam quondam . . . in qua conpererat neminem prorsus esse Christianum": "those fathers . . . brought to an island . . . on which he [sc. Lucius] had found out that there was not a single Christian" (Amidon, tr.); and Newman, 'Bishops of Sepphoris', 94.

<sup>25</sup> Jodi Magness, "Did Galilee Experience a Settlement Crisis in the Mid-Fourth Century?," in Lee I. Levine, Daniel R. Schwartz, eds., *Jewish Identities in Antiquity: Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern* (Tübingen, 2009), 296–313, esp. 309. See also Ze'ev Weiss, Ehud Netzer,

an intriguing portrait of this multifaceted historic capital of Galilee, both as a Jewish administrative, religious, and cultural center and also as a Hellenized pagan city.<sup>26</sup> Although the Talmudic and Christian sources sometimes describe Sepphoris as Jewish,<sup>27</sup> its earlier history and the archaeological evidence, especially its mosaics, show that the population was mixed, first Jewish and pagan, and then increasingly Christian over the course of the Byzantine period.<sup>28</sup> For example, the House of Dionysos, abandoned in the fourth century, reflects the presence of a prominent pagan family,<sup>29</sup> whereas the so-called Nile Festival Building would suggest continued pagan presence and activity into the fifth century.<sup>30</sup> In the fifth century a synagogue decorated with a splendid mosaic floor was built northeast of the acropolis, not far from the town center.<sup>31</sup>

At least two late antique churches also have been discovered, close to the intersection of the *cardo* and *decumanus*; these have been attributed to the late fifth or early sixth century, in the time of bishop Eutropius, who was honored by the city in a nearby Greek inscription as “our most saintly father Eutropius, the *episcopus*.”<sup>32</sup> Eutropius also acted for the general welfare of

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“Sepphoris during the Byzantine Period,” in R.M. Nagy, et al., eds., *Sepphoris in Galilee: Cross-currents of Culture* (Raleigh, 1996), 81, and Ze’ev Weiss, “Sepphoris,” in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, 5, Suppl. vol. (2008), 2029–35, esp. 2031.

<sup>26</sup> Ze’ev Weiss, *The Sepphoris Synagogue: Deciphering an Ancient Message through Its Archaeological and Socio-Historical Contexts* (Jerusalem, 2005), 1–5, 315; Ze’ev Weiss, Ehud Netzer, *Promise and Redemption: A Synagogue Mosaic from Sepphoris* (Jerusalem, 1996), 10; Ze’ev Weiss, “Artistic Trends and Contact between Jews and the ‘Others’ in Late Antique Sepphoris,” in David M. Gwynn, Susanne Bangert, et al., eds., *Religious Diversity in Late Antiquity* (Leiden/Boston, 2010), 167–188.

<sup>27</sup> E.g., in the Jerusalem Talmud (Pe’a 20b, 27–31), Theod. HE 4.22.35 (GCS n.f. 5.260.7–8): “ὑπερορίους πεποιήκασιν ἐν οἰκουμένην παρὰ τῶν κυριοκτόνων Ἰουδαίων πόλει, τοῦνομα Διοκαιοσαρεΐα.” Note also Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion* (*Adv. haer.* 30.11.9–10. 30.4.1–2, GCS 25/1.347.9–17, 338.13–24), the story of Joseph of Tiberias, a Jewish convert to Christianity under Constantine, which indicates that at the beginning of the fourth century Sepphoris was a city with a largely Jewish population.

<sup>28</sup> Weiss, *Sepphoris Synagogue*, 218: “The use of both Greek and Aramaic in one mosaic is known in synagogues built in or near mixed settlements; therefore, the appearance of bilingual inscriptions of Sepphoris comes as no surprise.” See also Rina Talgam, Ze’ev Weiss, *The Mosaics of the House of Dionysos at Sepphoris, Excavated by E.M. Meyers, E. Netzer, and C.L. Meyers* (Jerusalem, 2004), 127; Hagith Sivan, *Palestine in Late Antiquity* (Oxford, 2008), 322–25.

<sup>29</sup> Magness, “Galilee,” 309, citing Talgam in Talgam, Weiss, *Mosaics of the House of Dionysos*, 47–106, esp. 47 (“Roman residence”), 48 (Greek inscriptions), 130–31 (“Dionysiac cult”); for a different view, see Weiss, *ibid.*, 128–30 (home of Judah the Prince), who claims that the owners or occupants were Jewish.

<sup>30</sup> Weiss, Netzer, “Sepphoris,” 82; Weiss s.v. Sepphoris, *New Encyclopedia* 5.2033.

<sup>31</sup> Weiss, *Sepphoris Synagogue*, passim; Idem, s.v. “Sepphoris,” *New Encyclopedia* 5.2033–34. He dates the synagogue to the first half of the fifth century; Magness (personal communication) prefers the late fifth century, on evidence from ceramic finds.

<sup>32</sup> See Weiss, Netzer, “Sepphoris,” 84–85. But another inscription hitherto believed to relate to the restoration of a church at the time of Marcellinus (518 CE), recently has been associated instead

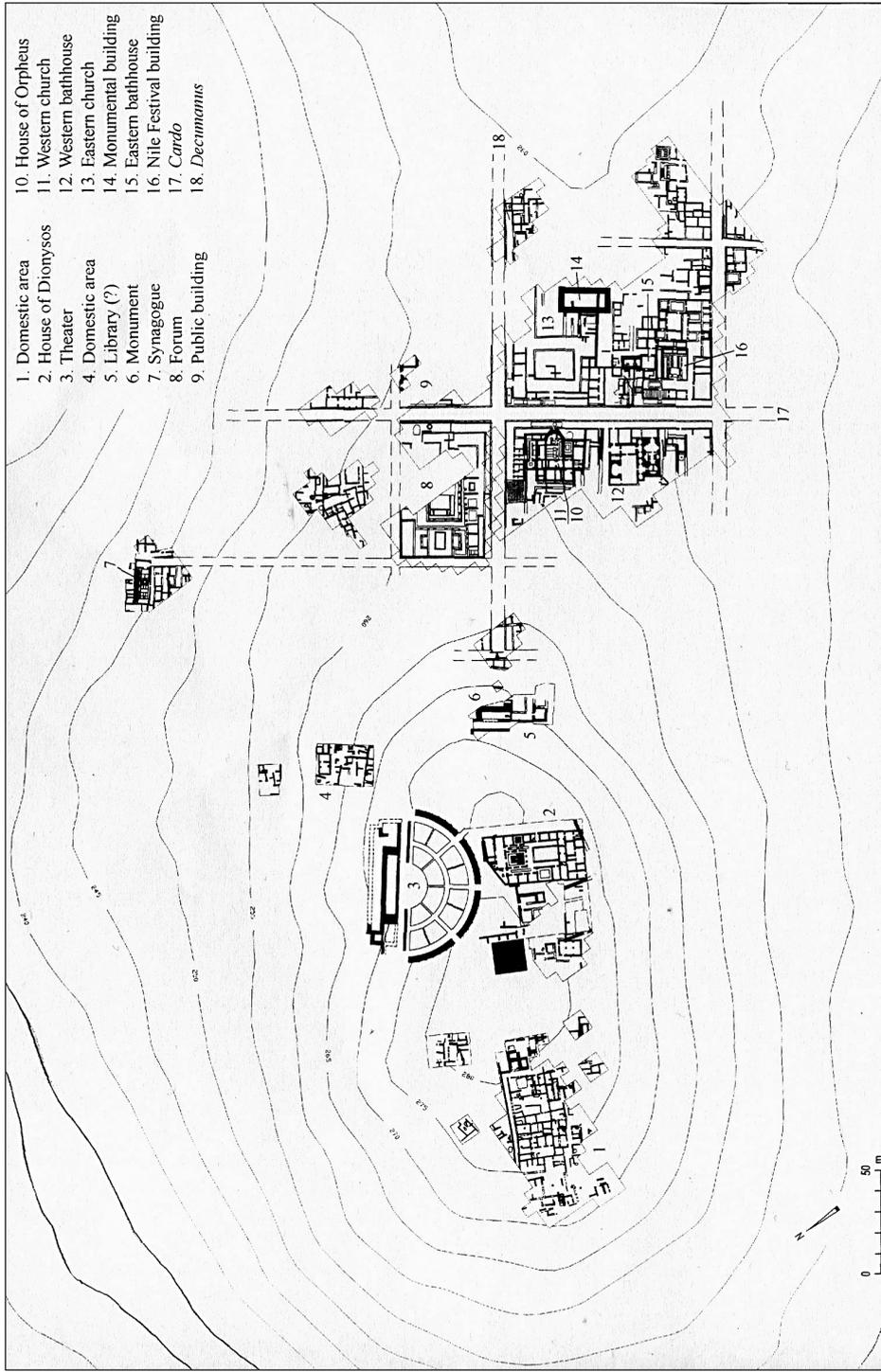


Fig. 1: Plan of ancient Sepphoris. (Source: Zeev Weiss, "Sepphoris," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land 5, Suppl. vol. [2008]*, col. 2030, by permission).

the city's inhabitants, as in the restoration of colonnades and a new mosaic paving.<sup>33</sup> The location of these churches in the heart of Sepphoris indicates the growth and strengthening of its Christian community in the Byzantine period, and there is no reason why there would not have been at least a few Christians in the town by the fourth century.<sup>34</sup>

What consequences might have followed on the deportation of the bishops and ascetics to Galilee? Exile to fourth-century Sepphoris was banishment to a city in which the Jewish-Hellenistic population predominated and Christians were still a minority. Yet the subsequent growing influence of Christians in the municipal affairs of Sepphoris prompts the question how the city had been affected by taking in the deported orthodox Christians. Had the presence of the banished bishops and ascetics in Sepphoris led to the rise of the growing Christian community there? Did it perhaps even spark a Jewish-Christian rivalry that energized the multicultural and vigorously thriving fifth-century city? One can only conjecture. The splendid mosaic of the Sepphoris synagogue focuses on the prominent themes of the Judaeo-Christian controversy and, according to Weiss, was a reply to the growing Christian dominance in Late Antiquity, claiming via its representation of selected biblical stories, that the Jews, not the Christians, were the Chosen People.<sup>35</sup>

### *Rival Authorities: Melania and the Governor*

Melania the Elder not only declared herself a confessor of the Nicene faith by voluntarily accompanying the other bishops and Ammonius the monk when they were expelled from Egypt,<sup>36</sup> but proved in exile to be a formidable leader and spiritual director in her own right. Palladius focuses not on Melania's miracle, as had Paulinus, but on her exercise of personal authority. Indeed, this is the underlying theme of the entire Lausiaca History. The introduction to the work had uses the words "it is their way of life we seek"<sup>37</sup> and featured

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with a municipal building: see Sean Freyne, in Weiss, Netzer, "Sepphoris," 81, and note the new readings of the inscriptions in James F. Strange, Thomas R.W. Longstaff, Dennis E. Groh, eds., *Excavations at Sepphoris* (Leiden, Boston, 2006), 1.28–29.

<sup>33</sup> A mosaic medallion with an inscription refers to the deeds of bishop Eutropius and of Marianus, the chief physician: see Weiss, Netzer, "Sepphoris," 84, 85, fig. 34; Sivan, *Palestine*, 325–26.

<sup>34</sup> According to Epiphanius (*Adv. haer.* 30.11.9–10: *GCS* 25/1.347.9–17), Joseph of Tiberias was deputed by the emperor Constantine (306–37) to build "churches of Christ in cities and villages of the Jews," including Diocaesarea/Sepphoris.

<sup>35</sup> Weiss, *Sepphoris Synagogue*, 4, 315, and the detailed interpretation of the artistic programme, 249–62; also Weiss, Netzer, *Promise and Redemption*, 43.

<sup>36</sup> Thus Katos, *Palladius of Helenopolis*, 119.

<sup>37</sup> Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* prol. 16 (Butler, 15.3–4), "οὐ γὰρ ὁ τόπος ἐστὶν ὁ ζητούμενος ἔνθα κατόκησαν οὔτοι, ἀλλ' ὁ τρόπος τῆς προαιρέσεως." See Katos, *Palladius of Helenopolis*, 100–101, on Lausus' position and the intention of the work.

portraits of the ascetics and a dedication to Lausus, the *praepositus sacri cubiculi* (“overseer of the sacred bedchamber.”) For this wealthy and powerful official, who could possibly offer a more fitting model of the ascetic life than the aristocrat Melania?<sup>38</sup> Palladius praises Lausus for understanding this message, and for following Melania’s example as he has done in two ways. Like her, he had “been diminishing his wealth on his own initiative by distributing to the needy”; and he also was a man “whom riches and honor and power did not make less God-fearing,”<sup>39</sup> an attitude that Melania had displayed in exemplary manner by her fearless support for the banished.

Thus, central to Palladius’ narrative is her direct confrontation with the governor of Palestine. An anecdote relates that she sought out the desert monks to bring them support from her personal wealth and, when the exiles were forbidden to receive assistance, disguised herself as a slave in order to continue caring for them.<sup>40</sup> But the governor of Palestine (“ὁ ὑπατικός τῆς Παλαιστίνης”), whose name Palladius declines to provide, “knew this [sc. that Melania was bringing them what they needed in the evening], and, desiring to fill his purse, supposed that he could disgrace her.”<sup>41</sup> He went so far as to have her arrested and incarcerated, making out that he did not know that she was a free woman.<sup>42</sup>

But the aristocratic Melania, a woman of unassailable social status and “female man of God,” put him in his place,

She disclosed to him, “My father’s name is this, my husband’s name is that, but I myself am now the slave of Christ. Pray do not look down upon my

<sup>38</sup> She is the protagonist of chapters 46, 54, and 55.

<sup>39</sup> Pallad. *Hist.Laus.* 71.6 (Butler, 169.8–9). Lausus had also extended his hospitality to Melania the Younger: see Katos, *Palladius of Helenopolis*, 104; Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Life of Melania the Younger* (New York, 1984), 137 and (for his patronage) 116.

<sup>40</sup> Pallad. *Hist.Laus.* 46.3 (Butler, 135.2–6), Melania as “οἷς . . . ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων χρημάτων ὑπηρετουμένη. . . αὕτη παιδαρίου καρακάλλιον λαβοῦσα ἐν ταῖς ἐσπέραις ἔφερεν αὐτοῖς τὰ πρὸς τὴν χρείαν”; cf. Paul.Nol. *Ep.* 29.11 (CSEL 29.257): “Sed haec nec timida deprehendi interdictum secreta praebat officium.” Also Peter Brown, *The Body and Society. Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London, Boston, 1991), 280–81.

<sup>41</sup> Pallad. *Hist.Laus.* 46.3 (Butler, 135.6–8): “γνοὺς δὲ ὁ ὑπατικός τῆς Παλαιστίνης, θελήσας τὸν κόλπον πληρῶσαι προσεδόκησεν αὐτὴν καπνίζειν.” Butler’s translation of “καπνίζειν”, “to blackmail” apparently is a play on word’s root meaning, “to blacken with smoke.” It seems that the governor may have thought that Melania would bribe him to avoid being exposed in slave’s clothing. On Melania’s wealth and clothing see Sigrid Mratschek, “‘Männliche’ Frauen. Aussenseiterinnen in Philosophenmantel und Melote,” in Elke Hartmann, Udo Hartmann, Kathrin Pietzner, eds., *Geschlechterdefinitionen und Geschlechtergrenzen in der Antike* (Stuttgart, 2007), 216–17.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*: “καὶ κατασχὼν αὐτὴν ἔβαλεν εἰς φυλακὴν ἀγνοῶν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν.” Butler’s literal translation, “not knowing that she was free,” directly contradicts the previous sentence, which explicitly states that the governor was well aware that it was Melania he had arrested and hoped to extort money from. One supposes that “not knowing she was free” was merely the pretext that he used to do this.

shabby clothes. For I am able to exalt myself if I like, and you cannot disgrace (καπνίσαι) me in this way or take any of my goods. I have made this clear to you so that you may not fall under legal charges without knowing the reason”—for in dealing with insensate folk one must be as audacious as a hawk! The judge (ὁ δικαστής), having understood this, both apologized and prostrated himself before her, and gave orders that she should succor the holy men without hindrance.<sup>43</sup>

Not only her *nobilitas*, founded both on her descent from the consul Antonius Marcellinus and her marriage to the urban prefect Valerius Maximus, but also her sanctity endowed Melania with the necessary authority to overawe the audacious governor.<sup>44</sup> Emphasizing the ritual act of proskynesis, of devotion to the divine, this hagiographical anecdote teaches how to engage with an icon and saintly presence.<sup>45</sup>

The historical kernel of this episode deserves careful scrutiny. It is clear, for example, not only from the narrative but also from standard judicial procedure that the governor (“ὁ ὑπατικός”) who had Melania arrested and the judge (“ὁ δικαστής”) who apologized and was allowed to kiss the hem of her cloak were the same person. In everyday usage, a governor often was referred to simply as a *rector*, *moderator*, or *iudex* in Latin or a δικαστής in Greek, terms that indicated their principal function, the office of judge.<sup>46</sup> A governor (*moderator*) certainly could appoint a subordinate judge, a *iudex pedaneus*,

<sup>43</sup> Pallad. 46.4–5 (Butler, 135.9–17): “Αὐτὴ δὲ δηλοῖ αὐτῷ· Ἐγὼ τοῦδε μὲν γέγονα θυγάτηρ, τοῦδε δὲ γυνή· τοῦ δὲ Χριστοῦ εἰμι δούλη. Καὶ μὴ τῆς εὐτελείας τοῦ σχήματός μου καταπτύσης· δύναμαι γὰρ ἑμαυτὴν ἐὰν θέλω ὑψῶσαι, καὶ οὐκ ἔχεις με ἐν τούτῳ καπνίσαι οὐδὲ τῶν ἐμῶν τι λαβεῖν. Ὡστε οὖν ἵνα μὴ ἀγνοήσας ἐγκλήμασι περιπέσης ἐδήλωσά σοι· δεῖ γὰρ κατὰ τῶν ἀναισθητῶν καθάπερ ἰέρακι τῷ τύφῳ κεκρῆσθαι. Τότε γνοῦς ὁ δικαστής καὶ προσαπελογήσατο καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῇ, καὶ ἐκέλευσεν αὐτὴν ἀκωλύτως συντυγχάνειν τοῖς ἀγίοις.” The repetition of the word καπνίζω here demonstrates that the issue is disgrace, not blackmail: Melania makes it clear that it is no disgrace at all for her to be dressed as a slave, which indicated to the governor that he had no hope of extorting money from her on that. Cf. Paulinus’ account of what one supposes was the same confrontation, although he only touched upon the episode in the context of the miracle, Paul.Nol. *Ep.* 29.11 (CSEL 29.257), “Tracturos antevolans ad iudicem, qui confusus veneratione praesentis non executus est infidelitatis iram, dum fidei miratur audaciam.”

<sup>44</sup> Her father or grandfather was consul in 341 and PPO Italiae in 340–41 (PLRE I, 548–49, Marcellinus 16); see Wilkinson, “The Elder Melania’s Missing Decade,” 177–78. Her husband, probably (Valerius) Maximus, was urban prefect of Rome in 361–62 (PLRE I, 582, Maximus 17); see also Paul.Nol. *Ep.* 29.8 (CSEL 29.253); Wilkinson, *ibid.*, 178–79.

<sup>45</sup> Patricia Cox Miller, “On the Edge of Self and Other: Holy Bodies in Late Antiquity,” *JCS* 17 (2009), 171–93.

<sup>46</sup> Jean-Michel Carrié, “Le gouverneur romain à l’époque tardive,” *Antiquité tardive* 6 (1998), 21–25, A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602. A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford, 1990), 399–400, 500; Alexander Demandt, *Geschichte der Spätantike. Das Römische Reich von Diokletian bis Justinian 284–565 n. Chr.*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Munich, 2008), 297.

to handle trivial cases (“negotia humiliora”),<sup>47</sup> but Melania’s case, involving a Roman aristocrat, was hardly trivial, and the governor could hardly expect to carry out his extortion if he handed the case over to a subordinate.<sup>48</sup>

The court sessions were public. With her blunt reminder of her social background and of her religious role as “slave of Christ,” Melania apprised the governor before a public forum of his formal legal error: although his jurisdiction covered all provincials, persons of military, spiritual, and senatorial rank were excepted. A remand into custody of *honestiores* was regarded as exceeding the magistrate’s powers or would be avoided by the use of guarantors; imprisonment would be illegal, except in the case of slaves and *humiliores*.<sup>49</sup> No wonder, therefore, the governor humbly implored Melania’s forgiveness once she had called her bluff. His pretense of failing to recognize her, supposedly incognita in her traditional dark monk’s cloak (καρακάλλιον, σχήματός μου καταπτύσης), which differed so much from the dress code of the *ordo senatorius*, would have fooled no one.<sup>50</sup> Had he attempted to extort money from her, he could expect to be prosecuted himself. In fact, the threatened corruption charge could be a topos, intended by the Christian author to heap additional discredit on the governor. Complaints about corruption among provincial governors are known from as far back in Roman history as the Republic, and the venality of judges was proverbial, as shown by Constantine’s edict of 331 prescribing the chopping off of hands.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> *CTh* 1.16.8 (362): “Quaedam sunt negotia, in quibus superfluum est moderatorem exspectari provinciae: ideoque pedaneos iudices, hoc est qui negotia humiliora disceptent, constituendi damus praesidibus potestatem.”

<sup>48</sup> Palladius specifies that the governor knew of the deception, and thus knew that the case involved an aristocratic woman. The case thus would not have been tracked into the court of a *iudex pedaneus* on the grounds that it involved a slave.

<sup>49</sup> Pallad. *Hist. Laus*. 46.4 (Butler, 135.8–9), “καὶ κατασχὼν αὐτὴν ἔβαλεν εἰς φυλακὴν ἀγνοῶν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν.” Contrast Ulpian, *Digest* 48.3.1, “De custodia reorum proconsul aestimare solet. . . . Hoc autem vel pro criminis . . . qualitate vel propter honorem aut propter amplissimas facultates vel pro innocentia personae vel pro dignitate eius qui accusatur facere solet”; see also *Dig.* 48.19.8.9, “Carcer enim ad continendos homines, non ad puniendos haberi debet.” The conditions of imprisonment had not been defined until 380 (*CTh* 9.2.3 = *CJ* 9.3.2). On *custodia* and *honestiores* see Peter Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1970), 147–52; Jens-Uwe Krause, *Gefängnisse im Römischen Reich* (Stuttgart, 1999), 8–9. O.F. Robinson, *Penal Practice and Penal Policy in Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 2007), 150 n. 124, 160, and Krause, *Gefängnisse*, 185–88, refer to house arrest and giving sureties for upper-class suspects, especially senators.

<sup>50</sup> For Melania’s dress (σχήμα), see Paul.Nol. *Ep.* 29.12 (*CSEL* 29.259): “Pannis veteribus et nigris”; see Mratschek, “‘Männliche’ Frauen,” 216.

<sup>51</sup> Constantine I demanded an end to corruption (*CTh* 1.16.6–7); see also Liban. *Or.* 26.23ff., 33.11, 41.1ff. (Foerster, 3.13ff., 171ff., 295ff.). For corruption among governors see Sallust’s *Catiline* and Cicero’s *Verrines*. See Jill Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 2001),

### *The Key Figures: Proculus and Tatianus*

A prosopographical analysis might shed additional light on the mysterious affair of the unnamed official and Melania the Elder. The anonymous governor of Palestine who ordered the arrest of Melania and then granted her release may have been none other than Proculus, son of the eminent pagan Flavius Eutolmius Tatianus, who held high imperial office in Egypt and in the east. Proculus' governorship of Palestine is attested in Libanius and has been dated vaguely as "before 382" or "ca. 380."<sup>52</sup> The *PLRE fasti* of the provincial governors of Palestine, which show a typical length of one-year governorships, cite:<sup>53</sup>

Aphobius, governor in Palestine [Prima or Salutaris] 365

Proculus 6, governor in Palestine before 382

Eucharius, *proconsul Palaestinae* 383, Nov. 22

If the unnamed governor in Palladius' account could be identified as this Proculus, a gap of almost twenty years of unknown governors of the province, from 365 to 383, could be filled more precisely: the Melania episode, which began with her arrival in Palestine in 374 and ended with the rescinding of the banishment order for orthodox clergy in 378, would date her judge's governorship most probably to 375/76 or 376/77.

At this time, Palestine also included the southern part of the province of Arabia, including Petra.<sup>54</sup> The governor resided in the provincial capital, Caesarea Maritima,<sup>55</sup> some 50–60 km from the place of exile at Diocaesarea, and is more likely to have been of senatorial rank (a *consularis* or *proconsul*) rather than a *praeses*, given that four *proconsules Palaestinae* (383–86) are

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chapter 8, "The Corrupt Judge," 153–71; Demandt, *Geschichte der Spätantike*, 298; Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 502, 399: "It was as a judge that the provincial governor amassed most of his income."

<sup>52</sup> Liban. *Or.* 42.41 (Foerster, 3.327), "τίνας δὲ οὐ λομποῦ δεινότερος τῆ Παλαιστίνῃ κατέστη;" See also *PLRE I*, 746, Proculus 6. On Proculus, son of Tatianus and a daughter of the *praeses Pisidiae* Fl. Proculus Macedo, see Ralph Scharf, "Die Familie des Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus," *ZPE* 85 (1991), 223–31, esp. 224 and 231 (Stemma): "c. 380."

<sup>53</sup> *PLRE I*, 1108.

<sup>54</sup> The southern part of the province Arabia, including Petra, had been attached to Palestine in the Tetrarchic period, but then was made into a separate province ca. 391–93, shortly before Jerome wrote his "Hebrew Questions on Genesis" (21.31).

<sup>55</sup> On the second palace (*praetorium*), which later became the residence and *officium* of the Byzantine governor, see Joseph Patrich, *Studies in the Archaeology and History of Caesarea Maritima: Caput Judaeae, Metropolis Palaestinae* (Leiden, Boston, 2011), 211–23, "The Palace of the Roman Financial Procurator, and of the Byzantine Governor" (Fig. 110). Note also a coin of 251 specifically naming Caesarea as the metropolis of Syria Palaestina: <http://www.coinarchives.com/a/lotviewer.php?LotID=459159&AucID=836&Lot=20593&Val=0c8119daacc4503d9af4af1f9e2a75b3>.

attested following Proculus.<sup>56</sup> A further division, producing three provinces, Prima (Caesarea), Secunda (Scythopolis) and Tertia or Salutaris (Petra) took place by 409.<sup>57</sup>

Although the break in chronology is too long for Proculus to be identified conclusively as the governor in question, it nonetheless is tempting to make the suggestion, given his religious stance and his links to the like-minded leadership elite under Valens. It may be no coincidence that in 367 his father, Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus, while prefect of Egypt, rescued the Homoian bishop Lucius from a mob in Alexandria and instigated the persecution of Nicene Christians.<sup>58</sup> This apparently occurred after the death of Athanasius on 2 May 373, presumably when Tatianus replaced Vindaonius Magnus as *comes sacrarum largitionum* with special imperial powers in Alexandria.<sup>59</sup> Photius and the *Suda* record Tatianus as having played an active role at this time in a persecution ordered by the emperor Valens.<sup>60</sup>

Was Tatianus himself, then, identical with the unnamed *praefectus Augustalis* in Palladius' account who had exiled the Egyptian bishops and ascetics to Palestine?<sup>61</sup> On the more recent evidence of the papyri documenting Tatianus as prefect (most recently Oxy. 63.4376 (25 March 368) and Oxy. 63. 4377 (27 March–25 April 369), credence can no longer be given to the assertion

<sup>56</sup> Eucharius, Agrestius, Florentius, and an unnamed fourth; see Jones, *LRE* 161, 1100 n. 60; also *PLRE I*, 1108. The new proconsulates seem to have been created so that the proconsuls, who ranked as *spectabiles*, would rank above *consulares*, who, like *praesides*, were merely *clarissimi*.

<sup>57</sup> *CTh* 7.4.30, reference kindly supplied by Fergus Millar. See also Patrich, *Caesarea Maritima*, 92.

<sup>58</sup> *Hist. Aceph.* 5.12 (SC 314.166), 25 September 367: "Advenientes itaque principales ad Lucium et considerantes omnem populum iratum et valde tumentem adversus illum . . . dux Traianus et prefectus [sic] Tatianus ad locum cum multis militibus ingressi domum, prodixerunt per semetipsums Lucium"; Athan. *Ep. fest.* 39 (SC 317.270–71). See Edward J. Watts, *Riot in Alexandria: Tradition and Group Dynamics in Late Antique Pagan and Christian Communities* (Berkeley, 2010), 169; Haas, *Alexandria*, 85, 333; Johannes Hahn, *Gewalt und religiöser Konflikt* (Berlin, 2004), 76 n.301.

<sup>59</sup> Claude Vandersleyen, *Chronologie des préfets d'Égypte de 284 à 395* (Brussels, 1962), 153–55; Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 181 and 297f. n. 7, citing Rufin. *HE* 11.2 (GCS n.f. 6/2.1003.8–9), "post Athanasi obitum": for the date of the persecution and rightly arguing in favor of Tatianus' having had a second tour of duty in Egypt: this removes the need to re-date the persecution to 368/9, as in *PLRE I*, 876–77, Tatianus 5. Note also *Suda* s.v. Οὐάλης (persecution of the Homoiousians, dated after Athanasius' death) and *Hist.aceph.* 5.14 (SC 314.168) (support for Lucius, as above).

<sup>60</sup> Phot. *Cod.* 484b (*Bibliotheca* 8.39), Tatianus as "ὁ ταύτης Αἰγύπτου ἐπάρχων"; *Suda*, s.v. Οὐάλης, Tatianus as "ἄρχων Ἀλεξανδρείας," where the persecution occurs after the death of Athanasius. Luigi Cantarelli, "La persecuzione di Taziano contre gli ortodossi di Alessandria," *BSAA* 12 (1910), 35ff = *Studi romani e bizantini* (Rome, 1915), 285ff., hypothesizes that the length and severity of the persecution resulted in the name of Tatianus supplanting the names of his magistrates in the sources.

<sup>61</sup> Pallad. *Hist.Laus.* 46.3 (Butler, 134.16–17).

in *Excerpta Latina Barbari* that Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus was the first attested *Augustalis*, implying administrative oversight of all the Egyptian provinces.<sup>62</sup> To the contrary, it has been shown that Tatianus was in fact the first *praefectus Aegypti* of the enlarged province of Aegyptus.<sup>63</sup> The eastern sector of the Nile delta and the Heptonomia had been added while Aelius Palladius (371–74) held office. Several transformations culminated in the creation of Egypt as a diocese in its own right, requiring a diocesan governor (*praefectus Augustalis*) of superior rank to the *praesides*. A constitution of 8 March 383 in the Theodosian Code (12.1.97) is the first explicit documentation of the existence of the diocese of Aegyptus, created by separation from the diocese of the Orient.

But that still leaves the problem that we still do not know the exact date of the creation of the diocese.<sup>64</sup> The canons of the Council of Constantinople, promulgated 11 July 381, suggest that this date may be the *terminus ante quem* for the inauguration of the diocese,<sup>65</sup> the resultant conclusion thus being that the transformation must have taken place between 17 March 380 (*CTh* 12.1.80) and 11 July 381.<sup>66</sup> Palladius, the earliest *Augustalis* attested in the Theodosian Code (8. 5.37), is mentioned on 14 May 382; and Fl. Quintilius Hypatius is the earliest *Augustalis* attested in Oxy. 63. 4382.6–7, on 23 July 383. The early eighth-century *Excerpta Latina Barbari*, in which Tatianus is referred to as *Augustalis*, is a Latin translation of a Greek world chronicle completed shortly after the death of the patriarch Theophilus in the year 412

<sup>62</sup> John R. Rea, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* 63 (London, 1996), nos. 4352–4400, commentary on 4376.6–7, which also cites Oxy. 8.1101 and 17.2110. However, R. Malcolm Errington, “A Note on the Augustal Prefect of Egypt,” *Tyche* 17 (2002), 69–78, on grounds of the ascending order of the *cursum honorum*, advocates a return to the earlier De Salvo thesis that Tatianus already had been *Augustalis* in the 370s. The *Barbarus Scaglieri* has Tatianus as *praef. Augustalis* in 368–70 and 375–6: see *Chron.min.* 1.295, s.a. 368, “Tatianus in Alexandria primus Augustalium”; s.a. 370, “sub eodem Tatiano Augustalio”; 1.296, s.a. 374, “sub Tatiano praeside”; s.a. 375, “sub eodem Tatiano Augustalio secundo.”

<sup>63</sup> Bernhard Palme, “Praesides and Correctores der Augustamnica,” *AntTard* 6 (1998), 123–35, with Fig. 2 (126), based on Amm. Marc. 22.16.6.

<sup>64</sup> Rea’s commentary on Oxy. 63.4382.6–7; Jones, *LRE* 1.141, *PLRE I*, 876–77, Tatianus 5; and Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius*, 181, 297f. n. 7 all had placed the creation of the diocese within Tatianus’ period of office as prefect of Egypt, 367–71—“erroneously,” according to Ensslin, “Tatianus,” *RE* 4.2 (1932), col. 2464f. See also the comment about an improbable demotion of Tatianus to *consularis Syriae* 370–74 in Jacqueline Lallemand, *L’administration civile de l’Égypte de l’avènement de Dioclétien à la création du diocèse (284–382): Contribution à l’étude des rapports entre l’Égypte et l’Empire à la fin du III<sup>e</sup> et au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Brussels, 1964), 55–57; and Palme, “Praesides and Correctores,” 132, n. 39.

<sup>65</sup> Lallemand, *L’administration civile de l’Égypte*, 55–57.

<sup>66</sup> Jean-Michel Carrié, “Séparation ou cumul? Pouvoir civil et autorité militaire dans les provinces d’Égypte de Gallien à la conquête Arabe,” *AntTard* 6 (1998), 108–9, and Palme, “Praesides and Correctores,” 128–29.

in Alexandria or in one of the delta cities Thmuis or Athribis.<sup>67</sup> From this perspective, both the title used for Tatianus in the *Excerpta Barbari* and that used by the author Palladius of Helenopolis, “Αὐγουστάλιος Ἀλεξανδρείας,” must be ascribed to an anachronistic styling at a later period, by which time the office was widely familiar.<sup>68</sup>

Does this mean that Palladius’ anachronistic reference to an anonymous *praefectus Augustalis*<sup>69</sup> is a reference to Aelius Palladius, prefect of Egypt 371–74, who was responsible for the banishments, and that it was Tatianus who, in 374, as successor to Vindaonius Magnus, ensured through his military presence on the spot that the legal rulings were duly implemented? According to the Theodosian Code (12.1.63), yes: for Tatianus, in his office as *comes Orientis*, had in late January 373 received an order from the praetorian prefect Domitius Modestus to initiate criminal proceedings against these “worshippers of idleness,” “quidam ignaviae sectatores.”<sup>70</sup> It fits very well that Aelius Palladius, the prefect of Egypt responsible for the banishment, himself came from Palestine, the region to which he banished the monks;<sup>71</sup> he would have intimate knowledge of the local hardships they would experience. Tatianus then implemented the banishment of the Arians’ opponents as intended by Aelius Palladius, initially, in 374, as special emissary of the emperor Valens, and subsequently, in 375–76, during his second term of office, as successor to Aelius Palladius and prefect of Egypt.<sup>72</sup> The climax of the reprisals in 375 can be attributed to a military recruitment crisis in face of the threat to the empire resulting from the barbarian invasions.<sup>73</sup> It will not have been coincidence that the persecution that had reached its peak under Tatianus and his son Proculus diminished just a year after Tatianus ended his second prefecture in

<sup>67</sup> See the reconstruction by Benjamin Garstad, “Barbarian Interest in the *Excerpta Latina Barbari*,” *Early Medieval Europe* 19 (2011), 3–42, esp. 39–40 with the traditional thesis of Alexandria as the place of origin; it was the delta cities in Errington, “A Note on the Augustal Prefect of Egypt,” 76.

<sup>68</sup> Likewise Pallad. *Dial.* 7 (SC 341.142); Joh.Lyd. *De mag.* 2.3 (Schamp, 2.5); Joh. Malalas *Chron.* 9.18 (PG 97.348 = CHSB 35.170) on Cornelius Gallus the first prefect of Egypt under Augustus as αὐγουστάλιος. See also Palme’s arguments in “Praesides and Correctores,” 129 n. 17, with his reference to Vandersleyen, *Chronologie des préfets d’Égypte*, 146.

<sup>69</sup> Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* 46.3 (Butler, 134.16–17), quoted above. He also is styled *Augustalis* in the *Excerpta Barbari* (*Chron.min.* 1.296–97).

<sup>70</sup> On the law, see Lenski, “Valens and the Monks,” 99–100. A similarly polemical critique of contemporary monasticism found expression in 416 in the *De reditu suo* of Rutilius Namatianus, urban prefect in 414: 1.440, “lucifugi . . . viri”; 1.444, “sponte miser”; 1.452, “dicitur humanum displicuisse genus.”

<sup>71</sup> Athan. *Ep.fest.* 43, on “Aelius Palladius the Palestinianian.”

<sup>72</sup> Palme, “Praesides and Correctores,” 132.

<sup>73</sup> According to Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, 256–57 n. 265, the reprisals against curials who had turned to monasticism began in 373 and reached their peak at the time of a military recruitment crisis in the year 375.

Egypt and left the country, reverting to the post of finance minister (377).<sup>74</sup> In 378 the banishment of the bishops and ascetics was revoked.<sup>75</sup>

An aspect of the episode that deserves additional emphasis is the striking coincidence of the possible involvement of two members of the same family in a single major punitive action against the recalcitrant Nicene desert monks: Fl. Eutolmius Tatianus, who as praefect of the enlarged province of Egypt had instigated their exodus; and his son Proculus, governor of Palestine, who sought to prevent the alleviation of their exile. Shared interests were the cohesive factor in the political networks of the leading elites under Valens. Proculus was honored for celebrating pagan cult at Heliopolis (Baalbek) as *consularis* of Phoenice.<sup>76</sup> And his father Tatianus, who as praetorian praefect under Theodosius had conducted his own policies (in some respects anticlerical) in religious matters,<sup>77</sup> had links to committed pagans such as the *comes* Vindaonius Magnus, the praefect Aelius Palladius, and Domitius Modestus,<sup>78</sup> the current praetorian praefect for the Orient.

Vindaonius Magnus had already burnt a church in Berytus (Beirut) during the reign of Julian (361–63).<sup>79</sup> Bishop Lucius was thought to have arranged for miracle-working ascetics like Rufinus' friend Macarius to be smuggled to an island in the Egyptian swamps.<sup>80</sup> Egypt's praefect Aelius Palladius, who had also had Peter of Alexandria arrested, instigated a massacre in the Arian church of Theonas.<sup>81</sup> In 370, after a delegation of eighty anti-Arian priests perished in a shipboard fire at sea off Nicomedia on their voyage into exile, the praetorian praefect Domitius Modestus was alleged to have been responsible. Although the deaths were accidental, the event became enshrined as a *topos*

<sup>74</sup> On the sequence of offices *com.sacr.larg.*–*praef.Aeg.*–*com.sacr.larg.*, see Vandersleyen, *Chronologie des préfets d'Égypte*, 154–55, who conjectures that Tatianus was appointed to a second prefecture in Egypt because of the religio-political crisis, “probablement pour mieux exercer son rôle de persécuteur.”

<sup>75</sup> Jer. *Chron.* 14.331F (GCS 47/7.249.3–5): “Valens de Antiochia exire compulsus sera paenitentia nostros de exiliis revocat.” See Wilkinson, “The Elder Melania's Missing Decade,” 170 n.22: in 378; but see Rochelle Snee, ‘Valens Recall of the Nicene Exiles and Anti-Arian Propaganda’, *GRBS* 26 (1985), pp. 395–419, for 377.

<sup>76</sup> *SEG* 7.195.

<sup>77</sup> E.g., *CTh* 11.2.27–28, against the use of inducement by clergy to obtain bequests; see also *PLRE I*, 878, Tatianus 5.

<sup>78</sup> Described as a “key patron” in the religio-political networks under Valens by Raymond Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow: Roman Rule and Greek Culture in Cappadocia* (Philadelphia, 2002), 108.

<sup>79</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.10 (GCS n.f. 5.252.21–22), “ὄς (i.e. Μάγνος) ἐν τοῖς Ἰουλιανοῦ καιροῖς τὴν Βηρυτίων ἐκκλησίαν ἐμπρήσας.”

<sup>80</sup> Rufin. *HE* 11.4 (GCS n.f. 6/2.1007.5–7): “Quin immo iubet [sc. Lucius] patres ipsos ablatos a grege suo, immo clam raptos in insulam quandam Aegypti paludium deportari.”

<sup>81</sup> Theod. *HE* 4.22.2–9 (GCS n.f. 5.249.22–252.9); Greg. Naz. *Or.* 25.12 (*SC* 284.184, 186); see also Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, 256.

among the Cappadocians.<sup>82</sup> All were part of a powerful coalition to which the bishops Lucius and Euzoius also belonged. Cooperation between a Christian emperor, surrounded as Valens was by a court circle of Homoian advisers,<sup>83</sup> with pagan civil officials implementing the advisers' ideas, was a frequently practiced political reality in the post-Constantine world of religious pluralism and competing interests.<sup>84</sup>

Should Proculus be identified as the anonymous governor of Palestine, there also would be an explanation as to why Palladius of Helenopolis, although naming all the other individuals he mentioned in his account of the persecution, discreetly suppressed the names of Proculus and his father. In 419–20, when (by then bishop of Helenopolis in Bithynia) he was writing his “history of the monks,”<sup>85</sup> the descendants of the praetorian prefect Tatianus were still a prominent family: one of their members, also a Tatianus, would become urban prefect of Constantinople in the mid-fifth century and be honored with the patriciate.<sup>86</sup> An epigram from Aphrodisias lists four generations, mentioning Proculus' nephews: this same Tatianus and a Iulius.<sup>87</sup> Around 420 they were paving the way for their future careers by nursing the future emperor Marcian, then a young officer, back to health in their house at Sidyma, in Lycia, and prophesying his accession to the imperial throne.<sup>88</sup> And in 450 Tatianus the urban prefect dedicated a statue of Marcian at Constantinople, and his brother Julius became governor of Lycia.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Socr. *HE* 4.16.1–6 (*PG* 67.500–501); Soz. *HE* 6.14.2–4 (*FC* 73/3.718.24–720.11); Greg. Naz. *Or.* 43.46 (*SC* 384.222), see also Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, 250–51.

<sup>83</sup> E.g., Greg. Naz. *Or.* 43.30; (*SC* 384.192, 194); 43.44 (*ibid.* 218, 220), an encomium to Basilios, dated shortly after Valens' death. On Valens' patronage as βασιλέως προστασία of the Arians in Alexandria, Nicomedia, Mesopotamia, and Palestine, see Epiphanius. *Adv. haer.* 69.13.3 (*GCS* 25/3.163.19–22), see also Lenski, *Failure of Empire*, 244–45.

<sup>84</sup> E.g., David Hunt, “Valentinian and the Bishops: Ammianus 30.9.5 in Context,” in Jan den Boeft, Daniel den Hengst, Jan Willem Drijvers, Hans Teitler, eds., *Ammianus after Julian: The Reign of Valentinian and Valens in Books 26–31 of the Res Gestae* (Leiden, Boston, 2007), 71–94.

<sup>85</sup> Pallad. *Hist. Laus.* prol. 2 (Butler, 1000.12–1001.2): “In the “thirty-third year of [his] being in the company of the brethren and of [his] own solitary life, [his] twentieth year as a bishop, and the fifty-sixth year of [his] life as a whole.” See Katos, *Palladius of Helenopolis*, 99.

<sup>86</sup> *PLRE II*, 1053–54, Tatianus 1; Scharf, “Tatianus,” 226.

<sup>87</sup> Charlotte Roueché, *Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity* (London, 1989), 63–66, 2<sup>nd</sup> (2004): <http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/> = Bryan Ward-Perkins, ed., *The Last Statues of Antiquity*, (Oxford, 2012), 193 (Julia Lanaghan); see also Reinhold Merkelbach, “Epigramm aus Aphrodisias,” *ZPE* 6 (1970), 132; Scharf, “Tatianus,” 226.

<sup>88</sup> Liban. *Ep.* 899 (Foerster, 10.49) to Tatianus; Louis Robert, *Hellenica IV* (1948), 47–50; Theoph. *AM* 5943.104 (Mango–Scott, tr., 160–61). See Scharf, “Tatianus,” 227.

<sup>89</sup> *PLRE II*, 642, Julius 4. On Marcian's statue, see *Last Statues of Antiquity*, 2461 (Ulrich Gehn); Raymond Janin, *Constantinople byzantine: développement urbain et répertoire topographique*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Paris, 1964), 84–85, no.10. For the inscription in Latin verse, see *ILS* 824: “Principis hanc statuam Marciani / cerne forumque, / praefectus vovit quod Tatianus / opus.”

## The Family of Proculus and Tatianus

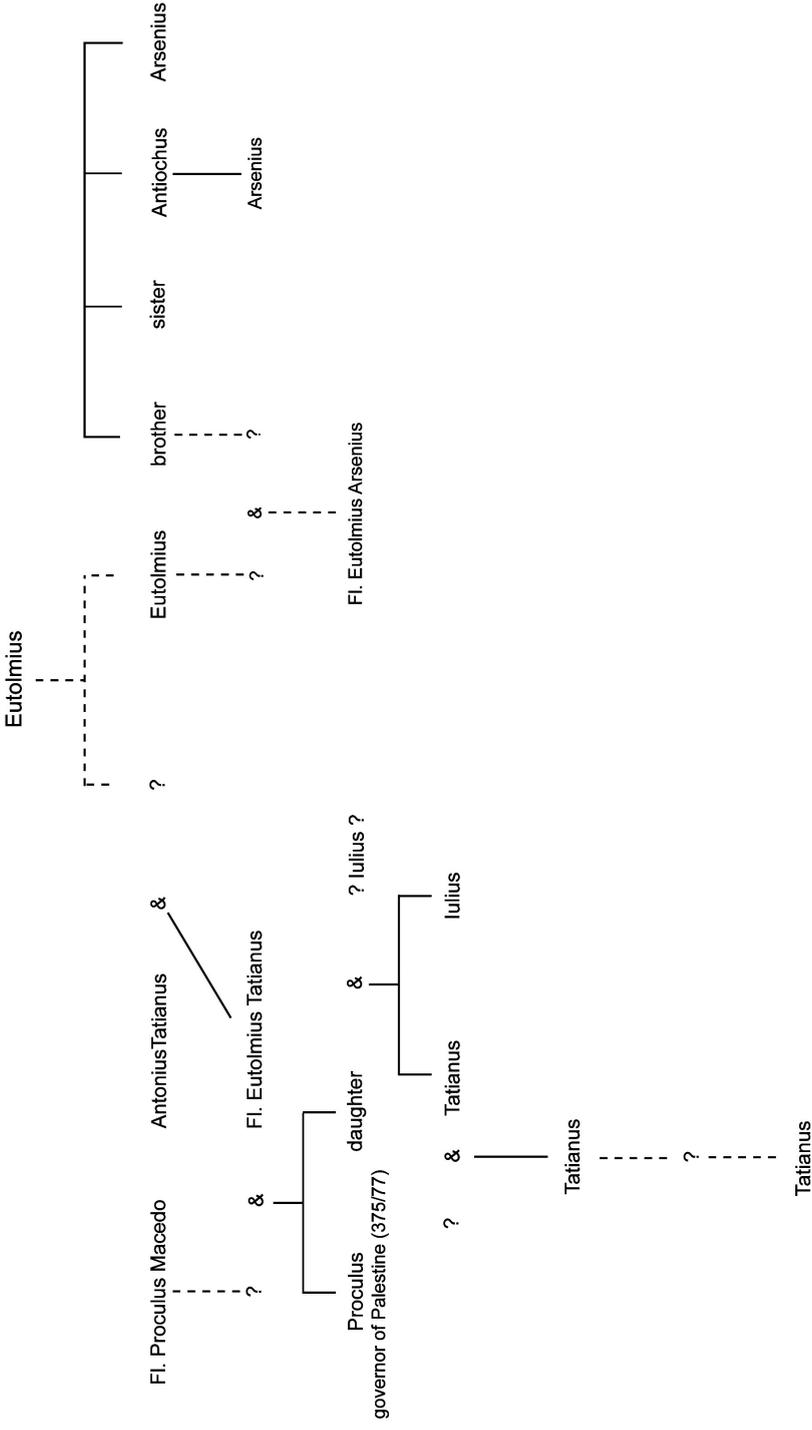


Fig. 2: Stemma of the family of Proculus and Tatianus; for the relationships, see R. Scharf, ZPE 85 (1991), 231.

This study of the relationship between Melania the Elder and a froward governor of Palestine (375/77), identified here as Proculus the son of Tatianus, thus sheds light on the interlocking aristocratic relationships on both sides of the Nicene and Homoian ecclesiastical controversy of the 370s CE, and demonstrates the way in which doctrinal affiliations provided a background against which social and political relations were played out.

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