Social Sacrifice:

The Fracture of Antioch's Public Sphere Under Julian the Apostate

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Introduction

In June of 362 C.E., the Roman emperor Julian entered the city of Antioch to great acclaim. Less than a year later, in March of 363, Julian left Antioch to wage his war on Persia, vowing never to return to the city again. During Julian's stay in Antioch, he generally tried to play the part of the ideal ruler, reforming abuses, administering justice personally, attempting to relieve the suffering of the poor and oppressed, and restoring the decayed local senate.[1] In return, the citizens of Antioch undermined his economic policies, satirized him for his ascetic lifestyle, celebrated the news of his death, and presented him with a duck.[2] Tensions eventually rose to the point that Julian penned his great satirical work, *Misopogon* or "Beard Hater," in January or February of 363, lampooning the Antiochenes in a virulent manner that a later writer claimed "left an indelible stigma on the city and its inhabitants."[3]

The break between Julian and the Antiochenes was a truly remarkable occurrence for a society that functioned as the Late Antique Roman Empire did. Upon the accession of a new Roman emperor, it was standard for cities to send delegations to the emperor that, on one hand, reaffirmed their allegiance to the emperor and the Roman Empire and, on the other, would use this audience as an opportunity to redress assorted grievances. It was typical for the emperor to grant the delegates most of their requests. This custom was, at its heart, a symbolic representation of the patron-client relation that existed between the emperor and the cities under his rule. Indeed, despite the attention paid to the constitutional and ideological underpinnings of the Roman Empire, the emperor-city patronage ultimately served as the glue that held the Empire together. It provided a way for the cities and citizens to reaffirm their

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[1] Downey (1939) 307-8.
[2] Lib. *Ep.* 1186 W. = 1220 F. as cited by Downey (1961); Cf. Julian. *Mis.* 357D, 362B.
[3] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 17. For a more complete discussion of the dating of the *Misopogon*, see Gleason (1986) 106-119.

allegiance to the emperor as clients, while the emperor, as the ultimate patron, would pass on various benefits, such as military protection and benign governing officials, to the cities.

The breakdown of this patronage was a rare occurrence, which neither city nor emperor desired. The ramifications of a split were staggering for either party. The offending city would be vilified throughout the Empire, becoming notorious to the point that even trade would be affected.[4] The consequences were no less dire for the emperor. The 'office' of emperor was an informal and unofficial one, depending largely upon the consent and acceptance of the Roman citizens; alienating an entire city was one of the quickest methods of disrupting the fragile consensus vital to imperial rule.

The breakdown between Julian and the Antiochenes was even more remarkable due to the importance of Antioch in the Roman Empire. Antioch was not a little provincial town; a metropolis, it was second in importance only to Constantinople and Rome, and on par with Alexandria. Indeed, Antioch had often served as an imperial residence. Given the city's importance, Julian largely acted as an ideal emperor should. Following his death, even Christians praised his reign, though they deplored his religious policies. Augustine, author of the famous Christian tract *The City of God*, recognized and praised Julian's talents as an administrator.[5] In a similar vein, the poet Prudentius, although condemning Julian's religion, wrote "Yet of all the emperors there was one in my boyhood, I remember, a brave leader in arms, a lawgiver, famous for speech and action, one who cared for his country's weal."[6] Given the widespread admiration of Julian's talents and the dangers of a break between an emperor and a city, the breach in Antioch under Julian is even more remarkable. To

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[4] Lib. *Or.* XV, 57-59.
[5] August. *De civ. D.* V, 21.
[6] Prudent. *Apotheosis.*

understand the roots of this conflict requires a brief summary of the context of Julian's reign at Antioch.

Julian came to the city at a critical moment in the history of the Roman Empire, one filled with possibilities. The whole of Syria, especially Antioch, was suffering from a recurring economic crisis resulting largely from three inter-related factors. First, Syria had recently fallen victim to a drought that caused significant damage to the area's crops, especially wheat. Second, rampant speculation and profiteering existed, as unscrupulous senators and merchants held their grain back from the market to force prices higher. Finally, Julian's preparations for the forthcoming invasion of Persia exacerbated the situation, for he was accompanied by a sizeable invasion force that further strained scarce supplies in and around Antioch. A decade prior, Antioch had suffered another crisis, for very similar reasons, under Julian's brother Gallus.

This economic crisis provided Julian with an ideal opportunity to act the part of a 'good emperor.' Upon meeting with Antioch's embassy following his accession, Julian remitted the city's arrears and increased membership in the city senate by two hundred.[7] As the city's local senators, or *curiales*, were largely responsible for funding the majority of public spending, such an increase in the register spread a heavy burden further and was a generous gesture on the part of an emperor.[8] Additionally, Julian issued an edict of maximum prices and began to import his personal grain to the city, at considerable cost to himself.[9] Indeed, even Christians, who had more reason than most to loathe Julian, grudgingly admitted that Julian was handling the economic woes well.[10]

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[7] *Cod. Theod.* XII, 1, 50-53.
[8] See Liebeschutz (1972), Jones (1964) for more on the financial burden of the *curiales*.
[9] Amm. Marc. XXII, 14, 1.
[10] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 75.

Julian's reign also came at a unique point in the religious development of the Later Roman Empire. Sixty years before Julian became Emperor, the so-called 'Great Persecution' had subjected Christians to a reign of terror. Approximately fifty years prior to Julian's reign, the emperor Constantine ended this persecution and added Christianity to the official religions of the Roman Empire. From that time, Christians benefited increasingly from preferment of office and an increased access to the distribution of imperial patronage. One of Julian's major legislative programs as emperor was an attempt to reverse this conversion and reinstate a vibrant and dominant brand of monotheistic paganism.

Antioch was endowed with special meaning in both the early Christian and pagan traditions. It was the home of the famous oracular temple of Daphne; at the same time, it was also the city where the first significant Christian community was formed, as well as being the first location to use the term 'Christian.'[11] Indeed, by the fourth century, its bishopric was amongst the most important in the Roman Empire.

It was under these circumstances that Julian reigned in Antioch. Under him, strife between ruler and citizens burst into the open. Julian lampooned the Antiochenes in his famous *Misopogon* and swore that he would never venture into Antioch again. In return, the Antiochenes jeered Julian and largely undermined his economic policies. Public opinion of the emperor, whose initial entry into the city had been met with cheers, plummeted to the point where nearly the entire population rejoiced at news of his death.

Why was Antioch the only city that experienced such a breakdown? Again, the severance of the patronage relationship was a rare and last-ditch step, one which an emperor and a city would do much to avoid. Nevertheless, both the city and the emperor were willing to take such irreversible positions, and thought themselves the better off for it. Given the

[11] Acts II:26.

lengths to which both cities and emperors went to avoid such a breakdown, what set of circumstances could have mutually alienated emperor and people so thoroughly that they would decide to sever relations so completely?

In their attempts to understand this unusual break, many historians have turned to large, blanket explanations, such as a perceived mismanagement of the economic crisis and famine or opposition based on Julian's attempted pagan revival.[12] Although their explanations are seductive in their simplicity, they do not account for the enmity of virtually the entire population of Antioch. In this paper, I will argue that the breakdown between Julian and the Antiochenes was actually the result of a far more drastic issue: the rupture of Antioch's social fabric. The ability of Christians to control and shape the public sphere was challenged and rejected by Julian's intrusion upon the public holy space of Daphne. With the reinvigoration of public blood sacrifice and similar confrontational rituals, Julian denied Christians the ability even to appear in public. Finally, Julian excluded Christians from the benefits of *paideia*, the set of cultural norms that defined the Hellenistic base of the Roman Empire and constituted a 'good upbringing.'[13] Through these divisive, confrontational, and generally distasteful policies, Julian attempted to deny Christians access to the public sphere and, hence, Roman citizenship in any meaningful sense. Julian's program was also distasteful to the pagan population of Antioch on religious, economic, and social grounds. The hatred of the Antiochenes represented a rejection of Julian's attempt to polarize and segment their society.

This paper has four overarching sections. The first demonstrates the inability of either the religious or the economic arguments to explain fully the nearly universal antipathy

[12] For more on the economic crisis and Julian, see Downey (1961). For more on the religious conflicts, see Alonso-Nùñez (1979). A more detailed explanation of both will appear below.
[13] See Brown (1992), Smith (1995), Kaster (1988).

between the Antiochenes and the emperor Julian. The second establishes the context of the conflict, demonstrating its public nature and the threat the Antiochene response truly presented for Julian. The third section lays out the coercive and confrontational measures Julian employed in Antioch, the ramifications of these methods, and their effect on Antiochene society. The fourth and final section illustrates the responses of Julian and the Christian Antiochenes to the manner in which the conflict unfolded.

Previous Scholarship

Given the state of Antioch in the early-to-mid fourth century, it seems that nearly any emperor would have encountered trouble. The recurring economic crisis is perhaps the most frequently cited cause of tensions between Julian and the Antiochenes. Faced with the combination of a poor growing season and basic human greed, Julian worked to alleviate the suffering of the city through his edicts and other relief measures. As time passed, however, and his milder measures failed to produce results, the shortage of grain and rising prices became critical. In response, Julian issued his edict of maximum prices, which, although noble in spirit, was fatally flawed: it set prices only in Antioch itself, not the surrounding countryside. Senators, merchants, and speculators bought much of the grain at this lower price and either held it away from the market in anticipation of higher prices or sold it in the countryside, where the edict did not extend.[14]

It is at this point that the economic tension argument usually places the final breakdown of relations between the Antiochenes and Julian. This conviction does seem to be borne out by documented evidence. Julian devotes a great deal of time in the *Misopogon* to criticizing the profiteering of those who took advantage of the economic crisis. Among his

[14] Downey (1961) 318.

more pointed remarks, Julian, addressing himself, said, "But you are hated by the shopkeepers because you do not allow them to sell provisions to the common people… at a price as high as they please. The shopkeepers blame the landowners for the high prices; but you make these men also your enemies by compelling them to do what is just."[15] This criticism of the profiteers is at the crux of the economic disagreement. As his harsh and frequent castigation of the profiteers within the *Misopogon* shows, Julian was furious with them for failing to conform to his vision of economic harmony; in return, as Libanius subsequently allowed, the profiteers and most of the elite of Antioch were puzzled by and resentful of Julian's criticism of a standard human weakness.[16] In his appeal to the emperor to forgive the Antiochenes, written shortly after Julian's departure from Antioch, Libanius specifically begs Julian to forgive the city for this transgression.[17] Indeed, the preoccupation of many of the sources with Julian's attempts to restore Antioch's shaky economy seems to suggest that it was economic tensions that drove the emperor and the people apart.[18]

The argument for economic tension thus appears to be well grounded in the writings of contemporary authors, but it is flawed in several regards. One of its principal weaknesses is that it fails to explain why Antioch under Julian was unique; in short, why did Antioch alone break with the emperor when all of Syria was suffering in the same way? Antioch was no stranger to economic crises and famines. In the half century before Julian's reign, Antioch suffered several occurrences of severe economic difficulties.[19] Although it is possible to argue that Julian's presence with a large army overstrained the city's resources, it is important

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[15] Julian, *Mis.* 350ff.
[16] Julian, *Mis.* 350ff, 365D, 368C-371B; Lib. *Or.* XV, 23.
[17] Lib. *Or.* XV, 23.
[18] For a more complete discussion of this argument, see Downey (1961) 312-321; Jonge (1948) 238-245; or Alonso-Nùñez (1969).
[19] Downey (1961) *passim*, Liebeschutz (1972) *passim*.

to remember that Antioch had a long history of serving as an imperial residence, especially prior to campaigns against Persia.[20] Indeed, as Libanius smugly noted, Antioch was well equipped and accustomed to meeting the demands of the imperial army during its residence.[21] The argument of economic tension fails to provide a strong historical base or to explain how Antioch's situation was unique.

An even more basic objection to this argument is that, although a number of Antiochenes were undoubtedly displeased with Julian's handling of the crisis, the avarice of many and recognition of Julian's good intentions should have alleviated the complaints of others. The wealthy and the landowners may have been opposed to his measures, even though they were able to exploit loopholes in Julian's price controls to make enormous profits, as his attacks on their character violated the code of *paedeia*. However, the common Antiochenes should have recognized that Julian's measures, although unsuccessful, were at least signs of extraordinary effort on his part. Even if the commoners were unimpressed by Julian's price controls, conflict with the wealthy and influential would have balanced the lack of enthusiasm. Finally, and perhaps most telling, even Christian detractors like Gregory Nazianzen grudgingly admitted that Julian ruled well; if Julian's economic policies truly were divisive enough to make the Antiochenes celebrate the news of his death, Gregory, as well as others like John Chrysostom, surely would have utilized this fact.[22]

Although economic tension is typically the primary culprit, many historians have also examined Julian's failed pagan revival as a potential area of conflict. Following the Enlightenment, many scholars began to delve into Julian's attempted pagan revival. As Julian

[20] For more on the strain the army placed on Antioch's resources, see Jonge (1948) 238-245. For more on the history of Antioch in general, see Downey (1961).
[21] Lib. *Or.* XI, 177-180.
[22] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 75.

spent a large portion of his aborted career as emperor in Antioch, it is no surprise that general religious strife has been proposed as the underlying reason for his tense relationship with the Antiochenes. This argument presupposes an existing tension between Christians and pagans in Antioch, with roots potentially stretching back hundreds of years to the first Christian communities within the city. Indeed, a certain amount of friction is evident in the writings of pagan intellectuals like Libanius. Throughout his *Antiochikos,* Libanius firmly establishes the history of Antioch within the confines of traditional paganism, drawing specific attention to the temples of Apollo and Zeus as highlights of "the golden final perfection" of the city and its surroundings.[23] Ultimately, Libanius and other pagans saw Christianity as a threat to the traditional life of the *polis*.[24] Evidence of this strife abounds in ancient sources. Ammianus describes a riot at Alexandria, in which the people "fell upon [the bishop] George, howling and yelling, beat him about, trampled on him, and finally spread-eagled him and *finished him off*."[25] Nor was the aggression unique to the pagan elements of the Empire. Christians tore down altars, demolished temples, and stripped them of their treasuries and statues.[26] Indeed, one case in which a pagan temple was preserved completely intact was noteworthy and unusual enough that Julian devoted an entire letter to it.[27]

This argument holds that Antioch was a powder keg in the mid-to-late fourth century. According to this view, it was Julian's decision to remove the remains of the martyr Babylas from the temple of Apollo in Daphne that ignited the explosion. This action was galling enough that it prompted John Chrysostom, twenty years after the fact, to write a harsh

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[23] Lib. *Or.*XI, 236-237. *Antiochikos* is the Greek name for Libanius' 11th oration, *Oration in Praise of Antioch.*
[24] Downey (1961) 375.
[25] Amm. Marc. XXII, 11. Italics represent a lacuna in the text and the suggested emendation from Walter Hamilton's translation.
[26] Lib. *Or.* XVII, 7.
[27] Julian, *Ep.* 19. I will be using Wright's numbering for Julian's letters.

criticism of Julian in the guise of a discourse on Babylas, in which he assailed Julian as a maddened despot who consorted with demons.[28] Additionally, the temple of Apollo caught fire shortly following the removal of the body, a fact Julian cast as a vile deed perpetrated by Christians.[29] In response, Julian ordered "an unusually strict" investigation into the matter and closed the great Christian church at Antioch.[30] The religious strife argument holds that relations between Julian and the pagans on one hand and the Christians on the other spiraled down following this sequence of events, eventually reaching the depths in which Julian penned his *Misopogon* and the Antiochenes celebrated the news of his death.[31]

However, religious strife is insufficient to explain the extent of the split between Julian and the Antiochenes. The assumption that a great deal of religious tension between pagans and Christians existed prior to Julian's arrival is shown to be untrue by ancient sources. Libanius himself, no admirer of Christians, nonetheless smugly noted in 360 that Antioch was capable of having horse races free from sectional strife.[32] It is highly improbable that one year later, when Julian arrived in Antioch, this would have changed. Although Libanius was specifically referring to horse races, it is still an important point, as the races had largely helped replace the religious festivals of the traditional Roman state religion.[33] Moreover, as John Chrysostom's frequent criticism shows, Christians were prone to attend these races, providing some indication that cities did this deliberately to avoid the divisive effects of traditional festivals.[34] The prevalence of secularized festivals that once had possessed religious significance is thus evidence of the peaceful coexistence of Christians and

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[28] Joh. Chrys. *De S. Babylas* II.
[29] Julian, *Mis.* 361B; Amm. Marc. XXII, 13.
[30] Ibid.
[31] For a survey of literature advocating this position, see Alonso-Nùñez (1979).
[32] Lib. *Or.* XI, 268 Although Libanius is primarily referring to a lack of factional strife, his failure to qualify this statement indicates that such events were, by and large, free from dispute.
[33] Bradbury (1995) 331-356.
[34] Joh. Chrys. *PG* 48.954.

pagans. Given the likely date of creation for the *Misopogon*, it is probable that the timing of it was inspired by the Kalends festival, which during the fourth century had become quite popular amongst pagans and Christians alike.[35] For this festival to have had a large enough effect on Julian to determine the timing of the *Misopogon*, it would have had to span the population of Antioch regardless of religious distinction. That this festival did occur and was prominent enough to have prompted the *Misopogon* effectively proves the lack of religious polarization between Christian and pagan Antiochenes.

This argument also requires that Antioch be predominantly a Christian city. If we are to believe Libanius, this theorized majority did not exist; although strong amongst the lower class, Christianity had a doubtful hold on the middle class.[36] Surely, pagans would have supported a program of religious reform designed to restore them to their former preeminence. Instead, Julian faced nearly uniform disapproval; there was no sizeable pagan contingent that supported his reforms. Further, it must be remembered that Julian was not persecuting Christians; indeed, with few exceptions he promoted religious tolerance.[37] This tolerance greatly vexed Christian orators nearly as much as Julian's religious policies in general. In Gregory Nazianzen's words, Julian "begrudged them the credit of the conflict."[38] Indeed, Julian actually invited the bishops exiled under Constantine and Constantius to return to their homelands, although he did so specifically to sow seeds of dissent amongst the Christian community.[39] In reality, Christians were able to close ranks against the threat of pagan revival in many cities, with one glaring exception: Antioch. In Antioch, the return of

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[35] Gleason (1986) 108. The Kalends festival was the New Year's festival, celebrated in early January.
[36] Lib. *Or.* XXX *passim* indicates a considerable pagan hold on the middle classes.
[37] Amm. Marc. XXII, 5; Lib. *Or.* XVIII, 121-123.
[38] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 27; IV, 58.
[39] Amm. Marc. XXII, 5.

the dissenting bishops ultimately led to a localized schism which was to last for fifty years.[40] This inability to unite seems to indicate that the Christians of Antioch perceived less of a danger from Julian than from the dissenting bishops; Christian Antiochenes were unable to put aside sectarian squabbles even when faced with being supplanted by paganism. The failure of the Christian Antiochenes to present a united front against Julian's religious policies, along with the probability of support for his general programs from the pagans of the city, makes it unlikely that religious issues by themselves drove Julian and the Antiochenes apart.

Another possibility is that a sizeable and confident Christian community joined with a lower class alienated by Julian's religious policies and an upper class alienated by his economic policies to reject Julian and his policies. This seductive theory, however, cannot explain why Antioch's reaction under Julian was unique. During Gallus' reign in Antioch (351-354, with some small interruptions), similar factors had been present. Antioch was suffering from an economic crisis, which Gallus handled significantly worse than Julian did. For example, Gallus ordered the execution of the Antiochene senate when they unwisely rebelled against his economic policies.[41] Additionally, Gallus, a fervent Christian, did much to make himself odious to the sizeable and confident pagan population of Antioch, even converting the temple of Daphne to a Christian church. Given that Gallus' reign occurred during a time of similar tensions, why did a break not occur at that point? Clearly, other factors must have been in play to explain why the conflict between Julian and the Antiochenes occurred when it did.

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[40] Downey (1961) 397.
[41] Amm. Marc. XIV, 7.

It is therefore apparent that the standard arguments are incapable of fully explaining the break between Julian and the Antiochenes. To understand this conflict requires an investigation into how the Antiochenes were actually affected by Julian's policies and presence: not abstract principles of economics and religion, but the facts on the ground. The key to this conflict lies in how the Antiochenes engaged with the emperor in their public clashes and disputes; the public sphere must be studied in its relationship to the breakdown. To understand the public sphere in Antioch, it is first crucial to examine its social context.

Antioch and the *modus vivendi*

Modern scholars have often assumed that Late Antique societies were polarized along religious lines, into 'pagans' and 'Christians.' Indeed, persecutory programs like Diocletian's 'Great Persecution' and polemical writings like Julian's own *Against the Galilaeans* seem to reflect such a polarized society. Yet, this assumption is debatable: like modern society, ancient society was far too messy to fit into a tidy classification scheme involving two opposing elements. It is unlikely that the labels modern scholarship has imposed upon ancient society are as clear-cut as is assumed. Instead, ancient societies were amalgams of various social and religious demographics.

The city of Antioch shows this conception of a polarized society fails to represent the historical reality of the situation accurately. Antioch had long been an important location for both the traditional pagan cults, being the location of the famous temple of Daphne, and the newer Christian religion, being the location where the term 'Christian' was first used.[42] In short, the various faiths had lived side by side for quite some time; proximity forced the

[42] Acts II:26.

people to learn to coexist. In the words of Scott Bradbury, "The bonds of family, class, and culture mattered more to such people than religious controversy."[43]

Through their many centuries of coexistence, the people of Antioch had developed a *modus vivendi*, or way to live, comprised of two basic elements. The first was the formation of a fluid, loosely united religious community. It was not uncommon for Antiochenes to participate in the rituals of several different religions. Indeed, the participation of Christians in Jewish feasts provoked the ire of John Chrysostom, leading him to lash out at the Jewish community with eight vicious homilies.[44] It is striking and significant that this intermixing was prevalent enough that it Chrysostom felt it justified devoting so many homilies to the topic.[45]

However, this loose religious integration is of marginal importance compared to the second element of the Antiochene *modus vivendi*: the creation of a religiously neutral public sphere. Many of the traditional pagan practices, especially blood sacrifice and idolatry, had effectively barred Christians from full participation in the public sphere. Although Constantine attempted to remove these restraints *de jure*, the Antiochenes had already accomplished this goal *de facto*.[46] Julian's *Misopogon* provides an example of what was expected in such a festival, assuming the absence of a religiously neutral public sphere. Julian expected the Antiochenes to have arranged a massive sacrificial offering, complete with "beasts for sacrifice, libations, choruses in honor of the god [Helios-Mithras], incense, and the youths of your city there surrounding the shrine."[47] The traditional festival structure was clearly hostile to the Christian community, as their participation would bring with it ritual

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[43] Bradbury (1995) 347.
[44] Joh. Chrys. *Adv. Jud.* I,5.
[45] For more on John Chrysostom's attitudes toward and relationship with the Jewish faith, see Wilkins (1983).
[46] Drake (2000) 434.
[47] Julian, *Mis.* 361Dff.

impurity for Christian participants. The historical reality of the situation was quite different. Much to Julian's displeasure, the Antiochenes failed to provide for any religious trappings at the festival; the event had been secularized and stripped of any confrontational or hostile religious elements. The Antiochenes had successfully removed these impediments to Christianity, allowing Christians to participate freely in this public celebration, as well as others, fulfilling Constantine's program.

Through a religiously neutral public sphere and a fluid social structure, the Antiochenes established a *modus vivendi* that enabled the entire community to coexist. Julian's policies in Antioch struck at the former element, as he tried to push a coercive and confrontational program within the public sphere, leading the Antiochenes to respond in the same vein. Thus began the schism between the people and the emperor.

A Break in the Public Sphere

To a society that prizes 'alone time' and privacy as much as American society, it seems odd that the principal break between the Antiochenes and Julian was over the public sphere. Rome was, however, a very public society; even its initial designation as a republic proclaims this fact.[48] In the later Roman Empire, acclamations, or public and vocal expressions of wish or opinion expressed by united groups, had become increasingly more important, as seen in events such as the *adventus* ceremony. The use of acclamations was a well-established practice in Roman society long before the time of Julian, appearing in ancient wedding ceremonies (*Talasse*) and victories on the battlefield (*imperator*), to name

[48] The word 'republic' comes from the Latin *res publica*, or 'public thing.'

but two prominent Republican uses.[49] During the early Empire, acclamations took on a special function, providing an important avenue of interaction between the emperor and the people. They played a critical role in the creation, investment, and recognition of the emperor, as suggested by the use of the modern cognate of *imperator*, emperor, to refer to the ruler of Rome.[50] More importantly, acclamations allowed people to push structure onto the inherently unstructured position of emperor. They functioned as a public crystallization of the pact between the people who would be ruled and the man who would rule them.[51]

Acclamations had lost none of their potency by Julian's reign. Indeed, Julian's elevation to the position of Caesar provides dramatic proof of this continued power: the emperor Constantius presented Julian to a group of soldiers and asked them to ratify the elevation, which was done by their acclamations.[52] Julian's later accession to emperor is likewise contingent upon the vocal support and approval of the soldiers.[53] For a usurper like Julian, such displays of support were crucial to his continued ability to reign. While Ammianus chastised Julian for being inordinately pleased with the applause of the mob and desirous of praise for the most trivial reasons, Julian's yearning for public approval was actually a way of continually securing and legitimizing his reign.[54] Nor was Julian's preoccupation with acclamations an unprecedented imperial concern. In 331 C.E.,

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[49] For acclamations at weddings, see Livy I.9.12. For military salutations, see Caesar *B.C.*II.26, 1; Tac. *Ann.* III, 74. For a brief history of acclamations in the late Republic and early Empire, see Aldrete (1999) 101-127.
[50] For the best example of the creation of an emperor solely through acclamations, see Suet. *Claud.* 10.
[51] The tension of the ambiguity of the emperorship is best seen in Tac. *Ann.* 7-13. See also Aldrete (1999) 147-159.
[52] Amm. Marc. XV.8,8. Julian's ascension requires *etiam vestra consensione firmandis* (support through your [the soldiers'] assent).
[53] Amm. Marc. XXV.4,18. *quo viso iterata magnitudine sonus Augustum appellavere consensione firmissima* (when they [the soldiers] saw him, they renewed the intensity of the noise and acclaimed him Augustus with the strongest unanimity).
[54] Amm. Marc. XXV.4, 18. *Vulgi plausibus laetus, laudum etiam ex minimis rebus intemperans appetitor, popularitatis cupiditate, cum indignis loqui saepe affectans* (He was joyous because of the applause of the crowd, and furthermore, he was a licentious man who desired merit for the smallest things and, due to his desire for public approval, he often tried to speak with unworthy men).

Constantine not only encouraged provincial gatherings to acclaim governors, but also granted them use of the public post to bring copies of the acclamations to the emperor.[55] That an emperor was willing to strain further the already overburdened post system indicates that, if anything, the importance of acclamations had actually increased since the early Empire; they had joined the ranks of those few important state functions for which the public post was reserved.[56]

One ceremony of the late Empire illustrates the continued importance and function of acclamations: the imperial *adventus*. The *adventus* was a celebration held to welcome the emperor's arrival at or return to a city. For a fledgling emperor of questionable legality, which Julian as a usurper was, the extraordinarily public *adventus* provided a crucial opportunity for citizens to acclaim him, securing his position. Typically, it involved an official delegation meeting the emperor a short distance from the city walls. The delegation would then lead the emperor on what was essentially a festive parade to and through the city. As the emperor entered the city, the local urban plebs would shout acclamations, such as 'Benefactor,' 'Savior,' and 'only worthy emperor of Rome,' while throwing flowers in his path.[57]

It is surprisingly easy to overlook the significance of these ceremonies and accompanying acclamations, casting them as simply examples of the plebs fawning over the imperial presence. The *adventus*, as a type of invented tradition, served three important functions in the Roman social structure.[58] First, it established social cohesion, or a sense of

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[55] *Cod. Theod.* I, 16, 6.
[56] For more on the growing importance of acclamations in the late Roman Empire, see Rouche (1984) 181-99.
[57] Joseph. *BJ* 7.71 as cited by Aldrete (1999) 112.
[58] An invented tradition is "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and a ritual of symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past." Hobsbawm (1983) 1.

belonging to the imagined community that is Rome. This ceremonial declaration and acceptance of allegiance served to define and divide the Roman world from the non-Roman one, based on the imperial figure. Second, the *adventus* legitimized the status of the emperor as ruler of the Roman world. By participating in an *adventus*, Romans were tacitly accepting their domination by the emperor. As a consequence of this legitimization, Roman citizens were also defining their relationship to the emperor. In short, an *adventus* mapped out a network of social hierarchies and structures that mediated and governed any interactions between Roman citizens and the ruling apparatus of the Roman Empire, no matter how abstracted they might be through the onion-like layers of the Roman bureaucracy. Finally, the *adventus* ceremony was an exercise in socialization. Civic participation in the ritual reaffirmed the conventions and structure of Roman society. Overall, the *adventus* and its participants served as a means of confirming the status quo of the relationship between the Empire and its population.[59] It amounted to a virtual contract between the welcoming populace and the emperor, detailing the expectations and obligations of each party; it established the social bond of mutual acceptance between the imperial presence and the community.

The *adventus* was still a thriving tradition under Julian. In 357, Constantius' visit to Rome was grounds for an adventus, as was Julian's appearance at Sirmium.[60] As might be expected, Julian's arrival at Antioch occasioned an *adventus*; indeed, it would have been highly improper and unusual had the Antiochenes not staged one. From Ammianus' account, it is clear that Julian's *adventus* at Antioch followed the traditional form, complete with

[59] Aldrete (1999) 112-114; Hobsbawm (1983) 1-14.
[60] Amm. Marc. XVI, 10; XXI, 10.

legitimizing acclamations.[61] For a usurper such as Julian, such an arrival was an auspicious beginning to his residency in a city: he had been dutifully received by the populace and his reign had been confirmed by the plebs.

Nevertheless, any good will between Julian and the Antiochenes, created by their mutual participation in the *adventus*, had completely evaporated by the time Julian departed Antioch nine months later in March of 363, vowing never to return.[62] That Julian was extraordinarily angry and bitter with the Antiochenes, and that these ill feelings contributed to his decision to sever his ties with Antioch, is amply born out in the *Misopogon*. There is, however, a side to this story that is too often ignored. The *Misopogon* is typically dated to late January or February of 363.[63] This dating has led Gleason, in one of the more rational approaches to this work, to conclude that the *Misopogon* was a traditional "Edict of Chastisement" issued in response to the satirical and mocking jeers offered during the Kalends celebration in January; according to Gleason, the *Misopogon* was a written rebuke of the Antiochenes, designed purely to remind them of how they should behave.[64] Although a step in the correct direction in the interpretation of the *Misopogon*, Gleason's argument presupposes that the heckling of the Antiochenes was more aggravating to Julian than anything else he encountered at Antioch, including the refusal of the Antiochenes to accept his religious or economic policies. Given the strangeness of the breach, either Julian was overly sensitive and self-indulgent to the point of irrational irresponsibility, or there was a deeper social and symbolic significance to the mockery than Gleason assumed. Since Julian

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[61] Amm. Marc. XXII. 9, 14. *miratus voces multitudinis magnae, salutare sidus illuxisse eois partibus acclamantis*. (Julian marveled at the voices of the great mass, which were shouting that an auspicious star had risen over the Easter portion of the Empire).
[62] Julian, *Mis*. 370C.
[63] Gleason (1986) 106.
[64] Gleason (1986) 106-119; cf. Brown (1992) 59, 88.

was backed by the Roman army, which did not suffer fools or even failures on the battlefield, it is unlikely that he was mentally unbalanced.[65] Thus, the latter option must be correct: there was a deeper significance to the cries of the crowd.

The key to understanding this larger significance lies in the power of acclamations. As shown above, acclamations essentially had the power to create an emperor. The converse is also true; negative acclamations could represent a powerful threat to a reigning emperor, as seen in the condemnations of Commodus and Domitian.[66] In the words of John Chrysostom, "There are two types of royal power, the natural and the elected… But the rule of the emperor among us is an elective monarchy. For our emperor does not wield power over slaves by some intrinsic right; therefore, too, emperors among us often lose their power."[67] In plain terms, the consent of the people, expressed through their acclamations, divided the rightful and benevolent emperor from the tyrannical despot.[68] Indeed, the use of the term *tyrannus* was a standard way of questioning an emperor's legitimacy.[69] The threat such a label represented to an emperor cannot be understated, for the rule of an emperor was never entirely secure; as the reign of Julian himself demonstrated, all that a man needed to become emperor was support and some luck. With the very real possibility of usurpation omnipresent, an emperor could ill afford to be labeled a tyrant, granting pretenders and usurpers the chance to muster public support and claim the throne. Allowing oneself to be compared to Nero or Commodus would have disastrous consequences for even the most

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[65] The period of the barracks emperors (235-280), for example, saw many emperors killed by their 'loyal' troops. Examples include Florianus (276), Aurelian (270-275), and Probus (276-282), to name just a few.
[66] For Commodus, see SHA *Com.* 18.5, Dio 74.2.2; for Domitian, see Suet. *Dom.* 23. For a discussion of negative acclamations in general, see Aldrete (1999) 131-134.
[67] Joh. Chrys. *Statuis.* 7.2.
[68] Ando (2000) 200.
[69] For example, Lactantius' *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, the polemical Christian work designed to deny the legitimacy of the persecuting emperors, uses tyrant five times in the first three chapters.

benign of emperors. Negative acclamations could threaten not only an emperor's rule, but also his reputation and legacy.[70]

As might be expected, Emperors often responded dramatically to the threat or even hint of negative acclamations. Gaius commanded his soldiers to attack a crowd at the circus in order to quell their negative remarks.[71] Domitian ordered a spectator thrown to the dogs for making displeasing comments about him.[72] Under Commodus, spectators attended the circus with fear, for Commodus was an excellent archer with no qualms about shooting Roman citizens.[73] Even Julian's brother, Gallus, ordered the Antiochene senate put to death when they indirectly questioned his authority as Caesar by bluntly rejecting a proposed price freeze.[74] That emperors would respond so harshly even to hints of challenge indicates the power of negative acclamations.

Unfortunately, there is no record of exactly what the plebs were yelling at Julian at the Kalends festival. Evidence does exist, however, that suggests Julian was a likely target for negative acclamations in general. One instance that suggests the use of negative acclamations appears in Ammianus Marcellinus' *Res Gestae*. In discussing Julian's rationale for writing the *Misopogon*, Ammianus dutifully noted that Julian's superstition and excessive sacrifices had earned him the appellation *victimarius*.[75] For a usurping emperor of questionable legitimacy, a label of this type would be especially dangerous, as it would suggest the

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[70] The depiction in the SHA *Sev. Alex.* (7.4) provides an example of this destruction of identity. After the death of Elagabalus, the senate is portrayed as shouting "*Nec imperator, nec Antoninus, nec civis, nec senator, nec nobilis, nec Romanus.*" (Neither an emperor, nor an Antonine, nor a citizen, not a senator, nor a noble, nor a Roman).

[71] Dio Cass. 59.28.11.

[72] Suet. *Dom.* 10.

[73] Dio Cass. 73.20.2.

[74] Amm. Marc. XIV, 7.

[75] Amm. Marc. XXII, 14, 3. In its most literal sense, a *victimarius* was the attendant at sacrificial ceremonies responsible for killing the offering. By metonymy, therefore, *victimarius* can also be taken to mean axe-man, butcher, or slaughterer.

traditional derisive cry of *parracida*, or murderer.[76] That Ammianus mentions this remark in connection with the *Misopogon* is telling; it is possible that Ammianus was using one of the very terms the Antiochenes had chanted at the Kalends festival.

This theory is strengthened by a critical reading of the two orations Libanius wrote following Julian's departure from Antioch. The first, Oration 15, entitled *The Embassy to Julian*, was a plea to Julian, designed to win the emperor's forgiveness by detailing the repentant nature of the city and the possible effects of Julian's scorn; the second, Oration 16, entitled *On the Emperor's Anger*, chastised the Antiochenes for their role in driving Julian from the city. In his address to Julian, Libanius indicated that the Antiochene authorities were vigorously tracking down the individuals who mocked Julian in the Hippodrome, with the intent of arresting and punishing them.[77] At the very least, this passage indicates that there were culprits who had harassed Julian. It is possible that this assertion of effort was inserted purely as a conciliatory gesture, a rhetorical trope designed to win Julian's clemency for the provocations of the Antiochenes. Yet, there is also the possibility that the Antiochene *curiales* truly were determined to locate some of the culprits.

This possibility raises a question seldom asked in modern scholarship: what did these individuals do which would merit such an outpouring of effort and attention from Julian, Libanius, and the *curiales*? A potential solution can be found in the lines of Libanius' address to the city of Antioch itself. In it, Libanius berated the citizens of Antioch for not personally calling for the arrest, imprisonment, and execution of the responsible parties.[78] For the superficial mockery that Gleason suggests occurred during the Kalends festival, such a

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[76] One example appears after Commodus' death: "*Hostis deorum, parracida senatus, hostis deorum, hostis senatus.*" (Enemy of the gods, murderer of the senate, enemy of the gods, enemy of the senate) SHA *Com.* 18.5.
[77] Lib. *Or.* XV, 75.
[78] Lib. *Or.* XVI, 30.

punishment would have been unnaturally harsh and largely unprecedented. To become irate at petty abuse was the sign of a "petty-minded dunce" according to Libanius; more common was Constantius' decision to ignore that the citizens of Edessa had flogged his statue during a previous Kalends.[79] These crimes must therefore have represented a much graver offense, for which execution would have been an acceptable and expected punishment: treason, perhaps expressed as negative acclamations.[80] Negative acclamations would have represented a basic rejection of Julian's reign as emperor. On their own, such acclamations would be damning enough for any emperor. Coming from one of the most important cities in the Roman Empire, however, would only intensify the effect. Further, Julian was preparing to invade Persia and required a stable base of operations. While engaged in a conflict with Persia, Julian would not want to risk a challenge during his absence from a city that had already proven itself willing to defy his power when he was present. This solution provides an explanation for Julian's anger, as well as the response of the Antiochenes themselves.

At its heart, this argument is an argument *ex silentio*, or an argument that is based on a lack of evidence. As previously stated, there are no records of what the Antiochenes said to Julian. On the one hand, this gap creates the danger for my argument that absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Nonetheless, in the context of treason and threats to an emperor's legitimacy, it would seem that this absence of records is telling in and of itself. The *Theodosian Code* contains a number of laws pertaining to writings containing slanderous and treasonous statements, detailing the punishment of the author and the destruction of all copies of the writings.[81] Undeniably, Julian would have regarded any documents recording

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[79] Lib. *Or.* XX, 27; XIX, 48.
[80] For the punishment of treason at this time, see *Cod. Theod.* IX, 40, 1. To summarize, death or other severe punishments were prescribed; often, treasonous individuals were taken care of "unofficially."
[81] *Cod. Theod.* IX, 34, 1-6.

such negative acclamations as both treasonous and slanderous; if such records had existed, they would have been destroyed by Julian and his agents. It is highly unlikely that any Antiochenes would have been willing to risk associating their names with such dangerous records. Even after Julian's death, these laws would still have represented an effective deterrent. Were another pagan emperor to assume the throne, he would likely not look favorably on those who had challenged an emperor who had attempted to reinvigorate paganism; moreover, no emperor, whether Christian or pagan, could afford to ignore such a precedent. Further, Julian's supporters, like Ammianus and Libanius, would also be unlikely to record such acclamations. In his description of Julian's interaction with Christians in Antioch, Ammianus had already shown that he was willing to tweak history to present Julian in a better light; basically, Ammianus notes the existence of only one martyr, despite accounts detailing the deaths of several martyrs.[82] Further, Ammianus' text indicates that there was not a one-to-one correspondence between what the *Misopogon* says and what actually happened. In the *Misopogon*, Julian was, according to Ammianus, *probra civitatis infensa mente dinumerans, addensque veritati complura* (enumerating the faults of the city with an enraged mind and *adding many things to the truth*).[83] Two interpretations are possible: either Julian exaggerated the faults of the city, which none of the later sources claim, or Julian was discussing something in place of the truth. Since Ammianus was such a great admirer of Julian, the latter seems more probable than the former. Likewise, Libanius would not want to denigrate Julian, whose reign had profited him, both fiscally and in terms of social standing as

[82] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 19; Theoderet *Hist. Eccl.* III, 15. See Barnes (1998)51-53 for a discussion of this alteration.
[83] Amm. Marc. XXII, 14, 2.

an orator.[84] Simply put, there was little to gain by recording any negative acclamations against Julian, but there was much to lose by doing so.

Perhaps Julian's *Misopogon*, as well as Ammianus' *Res Gestae*, indicate that the calls in the Hippodrome truly were merely mocking digs at Julian.[85] Indeed, this assumption drives the common interpretation of the event: Julian simply became so frustrated with the jeering and obstinacy of the Antiochenes that he struck back in a literary manner.[86] Yet, why would Julian write such an apparently personal and bitter attack, and why would he be upset in the first place? Julian was well versed in the art of satire, as proven by his works *The Caesars* and the *Misopogon* itself. Further, Julian would have been aware that the Kalends festival implied a light-hearted mockery of those in charge.[87] Unless Julian possessed unnaturally delicate sensibilities and a very thin skin, his anger at such joking would be highly abnormal.

Instead of reading what Julian wrote about these criticisms literally, an interpretation which makes the writing of the *Misopogon* itself difficult to understand, the personal insults that Julian mentions may be heard as exercises in doublespeak. There was no reason why Julian would have recorded the jeers of the Antiochenes, for all would have remembered them and he would not have wanted to spread them to any who did not. Preserving the challenges to his legitimacy that the negative acclamations represented would have been an overt acknowledgement of their existence, a fact which he would not wish to advertise. Discussing lesser incidents allowed him the opportunity to talk around the issue in a manner that guaranteed the Antiochene populace, well versed as it was in the highly allusive tradition of Greco-Roman literature, would understand his true subject. Additionally, by indicating that

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[84] Lib. *Or.* XV, 6-9 details Libanius' close relationship with Julian, identifying it as the reason Libanius was chosen to write the oration itself.
[85] Julian, *Mis.* 338A-339D; cf. Amm. Marc. XXII, 14.
[86] Gleason (1986); Alonso- Nùñez (1979); Long (1993).
[87] Lib. *Or.* XX, 27-28. Libanius implies that the occurrence of such activities was public knowledge.

he was outraged by the simple mockery of his appearance, he would have left the full extent of his wrath over the challenge to his legitimacy to the imagination of the Antiochenes.

That the negative acclamations Julian faced were likely not spontaneous helps clarify Julian's ire. There is some evidence that, through a shared body of stock phrases, spontaneous acclamations could occur.[88] Yet, the *Theodosian Code* makes it clear that Constantine, as well as subsequent emperors, were aware that acclamations were often prepared in advance.[89] Further evidence of the need to prepare acclamations in advance can be seen in Pliny's description of an *adventus* for Trajan, in which he describes parents teaching their children the standard and traditional acclamations as they waited for Trajan to approach.[90] Especially for an unusual use of acclamations, such as negative ones, preparation would have likely been necessary.

Antioch was well equipped to organize negative acclamations for Julian, being the home of a notorious theater claque. From the early days of the Empire, and likely throughout the Republican era, claques had been utilized by entertainers to stir up support for theatrical performers.[91] Earlier emperors had likewise seen the importance of having organized and guaranteed public approval, even if expressed by paid professionals. For example, Nero had his own cheerleading claque, who would hail his genius after performances.[92] The ubiquity of individuals leading cheers was most apparent in Dio's surprise that there was no one leading the cheers during the circus demonstrations against the civil war in 196.[93]

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[88] Tac. *Hist.* IV, 49; See Aldrete (199) 129-147 for a discussion of how stock phrases could be used in acclamations.
[89] *Cod. Theod.* I, 16.6.
[90] Pliny, *Pan.* 26.
[91] Aldrete (1999, p 136) traces this phenomenon back to Plautus' *Amphitruo*, written in the early second century B.C.E.
[92] Tac. *Ann.* XIV, 15.
[93] Dio Cass. LXXV.4.4-6. Alan Cameron (1976) notes that "It must have been virtually impossible to rig a circus demonstration that would look (as this one did) entirely spontaneous." (p 236).

Antioch's native theater claque, however, truly rose to prominence some twenty years after Julian's death, during the so-called Riots of the Statues under Theodosius in 387 C.E. In their accounts of the riots, both Libanius and John Chrysostom emphasize the role of the theater claques in inciting the populace to riot.[94] Indeed, John Chrysostom goes so far as to say that the theater was the root of every disturbance in a city, with the claques rousing people to civil disturbances.[95] At this point, the claque was a prominent and important political power, with an influence that extended to nearly every public gathering.[96]

The relative importance of the claque during Julian's reign is a point of contention in modern scholarship. Liebeschutz concludes that the use of the claque for negative acclamations had probably not begun during Julian's reign, not appearing until just prior to the Riot of the Statues.[97] Indeed, Libanius, in an oration dated between 382 and 386, stated that the ability of the claques to organize such a demonstration was a recent development.[98] It is probable, however, that the claque had already demonstrated its political abilities prior to the Riots of the Statues.

There was an obvious point at which the theater claque could have staked its claim to political power in the late Empire. As Gleason tentatively suggests, it is possible that the theater claque led the jeers against Julian during the Festival of the Kalends.[99] Given that Julian says that he was abused "with the help of citizens who were capable of composing such pleasant witticisms as yours," it seems probable that the claque was involved to some

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[94] Lib. *Or.*XIX, 28; Joh. Chrys, *Statuis*. 17, 2.
[95] Joh. Chrys. *Hom. In Matt.* XXXVII, 6.
[96] Browning (1952) 17.
[97] Liebeschutz (1972) 280.
[98] Lib. *Or.* XLI, 15. The dating of this oration is based on the governorship of Timocrates, to whom it was addressed.
[99] Gleason (1986) 110-111.

extent.[100] The claque was undeniably capable of organizing and carrying out the negative acclamations. Indeed, it is necessary to postulate that some body laid the necessary groundwork; as previously mentioned, negative acclamations would have required some degree of preparation to be effective. A demonstration of this sort would have been a clear indicator to Late Antique society that the claque was a potent political force.

The presence of the claque would have instilled the negative acclamations with additional meaning for Julian, further explaining his response. The claque was later hailed as a powerful body for its ability to stimulate the masses to action, as seen during the Riot of the Statues. It provided a vehicle capable of uniting Antiochenes in opposition to Julian, regardless of their class or creed. Further, although the claque was a powerful motivator, its effectiveness depended on the appearance that it was working for a popular cause. Although capable of mobilizing sympathetic and neutral parties, the claque could not have effected negative acclamations in a population that supported Julian; a comparable modern situation would be an attempt to turn a home crowd against a winning soccer team.[101] While it may have been funded by a small dissenting element, the claque could not have been bought and still achieved such success. Thus, the participation of the claque would have signified to Julian that the majority of the population, or at least a noteworthy cross section, was opposed to his rule. Indeed, the participation of the claque in organizing the negative acclamations would help explain Julian's repeated claims that the entirety of the city had turned against him.[102]

Examining Julian's final rejection of Antioch in this light provides a significant insight into his motives in rejecting the city, as well as to the nature of the conflict. The break

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[100] Julian, *Mis.* 364.
[101] An example of neutrals taking part in acclamations can be seen in Tac. *Hist.* 4.49.
[102] Julian, *Mis.* 356, 357C, 370B.

between Julian and the Antiochenes fundamentally came as a result of the clash between the fragile façade of the emperorship and the fluid, conciliatory *modus vivendi* of the Antiochenes. Through negative acclamations, the Antiochenes had essentially rejected Julian; the logical response on his part was to threaten to cut off his patronage to Antioch completely.[103] More importantly, this transition indicates that the dispute had a profoundly public character. It was not a conflict that the individuals involved fought in their hearts and minds; the participants struggled with their shared symbolic vocabulary in the streets of the city. It is in this light that the breakdown between the Antiochenes and Julian must ultimately be examined, for other methods would ignore perhaps the single most important and drastic exchange in the break.

Hallowed Ground: Conflicting Claims to Public Holy Spaces

One of the major battles in the public sphere was fought over mutual public sacred spaces. The theoretical underpinnings of these battles are fairly straightforward. In a society in which places of worship occupied a central and crucial location in the layout of the city, the ability to claim such a site represented an undeniable triumph for the occupier.[104] This triumph in the physical world also represented one in the spiritual world, for the inability of a religion to preserve its sacred space was perceived as a failing of the gods. Ergo, public holy spaces became one of the major points of contention in the public sphere between Julian and the Antiochenes.

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[103] Julian's gesture appears to have succeeded, as the Antiochene sophist Libanius wrote two orations (*Or.* 15 and 16) in response, one begging Julian to reconsider and the other chastising the Antiochenes. Further, the city sent a delegation with Julian for his departure, pleading for forgiveness.

[104] Lib. *Or.* XXX, 4. According to Libanius, shrines and temples would be the first buildings erected after the walls of the city.

The confrontation between Julian and the Antiochenes at Daphne is perhaps the most well known incident to fall within this framework. Daphne had traditionally been an extremely important pagan holy site. It was believed to be the site where the nymph Daphne, fleeing from Apollo, had been turned into a laurel tree; in turn, Apollo was believed to have established frequent residence at the site of Daphne, marking it as dearer to him than any other site. A magnificent temple, housing a legendary oracular fount, was built on the site in the third century B.C.E. by Seleucus, father of the namesake of Antioch.[105] Contrary to what might be expected, Constantine's conversion to Christianity did not mark the first blow over Daphne; instead, the temple simply fell into disuse and disrepair during Constantine and Constantius' reigns.[106]

The first stage of the conflict was initiated by Gallus, Julian's brother who was raised to the rank of Caesar in 350 and made Antioch his headquarters. According to Sozomen, Gallus' zeal for the martyrs and passion for Christianity convinced him to purge the site of "pagan superstition and the outrages of profligates." In the interests of expedience, Gallus built a Christian church on the site and installed the remains of the famous Antiochene martyr, Babylas.[107] The oracle was silenced by the presence of the martyr, symbolically claiming the site for Christianity.

While at Constantinople, the newly elevated Julian learned of the disrepair of the original temple at Daphne and wrote a letter to his uncle and *comes Orientis*, another Julian, instructing him to repair the exterior of the temple.[108] It is possible that the "recently occupied houses" Julian orders to be cannibalized for repair materiels were actually portions

[105] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19.
[106] Julian, *Ep.* 29.
[107] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19. Cf. Joh. Chrys. *Bab.* 67-69.
[108] The *comes Orientis* was an important post in the Roman Empire, meaning count of the East. See Jones (1964) ch. 19 *passim*.

of the Christian church erected by Gallus.[109] Even if the Christian church was not cannibalized for the renovation, the restoration nevertheless signified the renewal of the conflict for the space. Julian had not been residing in Antioch long when he became determined to consult the oracle at Daphne. At this point, there is some variance amongst the sources as to what exactly happened; the one common thread between all the stories is that Julian learned, by a disputed means, that the remains of Babylas were blocking the divinatory powers of the oracle.[110] All of the surviving sources agree on the sequence of events following Julian's decision to remove the remains of Babylas. The Christians of Antioch, in mass and singing reproachful psalms, transported the remains of Babylas from Daphne to a location outside of Antioch.[111] Shortly thereafter, the temple of Apollo was burned to the ground in a fire of unknown cause.[112] This display, akin to a triumphal procession, and the subsequent conflagration infuriated Julian.[113] With Julian's anger and the destruction of the site, the conflict over the sacred space of Daphne came to an end.

The Antiochenes, as well as the later church historians, saw the incident at Daphne as possessing an incredible significance. The incident is unusually prominent in the ancient sources, appearing in documents from Julian's *Misopogon* to the works of the fifth century church historians Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomen.[114] Indeed, as shown above, the fixation

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[109] Julian, *Ep.* 29; Cf. Amm. Marc. XXII, 5.
[110] Amm. Marc. XXII, 12. Cf. Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 18; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19; Lib. *Or.*60, frag. 4; Julian, *Mis.* 361B-C.
[111] Sozomen (*Hist. Eccl.* V, 19) records the principal psalm as consisting of "Confounded are all they who worship graven images, who boast themselves in idols."
[112] Julian, *Mis.* 361C.
[113] The later church historians claim that Julian was angered to such an extent that he ordered a Christian, Theodore, tortured to obtain a confession (Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 19; Cf. Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19). Ammianus' account (Amm. Marc. XXII, 13), that Julian ordered a strict investigation seems more probable, especially in light of Chrysostom's unusual silence on the matter of Theodore in *Discourse on Blessed Babylas and Against the Greeks*.
[114] Julian, *Mis.* 362B-D.; Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 18-19; Cf. Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19-20. Perhaps more telling are the works of John Chrysostom. Chrysostom devoted two separate works to this incident, the *Discourse on Babylas and Against the Greeks* (*Bab*), as well as *On the Sacred Martyr Babylas* (De S. Bab.).

of the sources on this incident has led many modern historians to postulate that this incident was responsible for the break between the Antiochenes and Julian. Yet, the focus of the sources is seldom on the religious aspects of the conflict; indeed, the heart of the matter for the later synoptical church historians, who would be expected to be more concerned with religious issues than other chroniclers were, centers in the act of translating the remains of Babylas.[115]

The significance of the clash over Daphne lies not in its religious aspects, but in the space the sites attempted to occupy and the interaction with these sites. In short, the sources do not seem concerned with the clash as a religious or theological matter, but as a social and public one. Although the Antiochenes and the emperor likely did see a dimension of this clash in the traditional religious terms of whose god was stronger or better, they largely passed over this angle in their writings. Likewise, instead of treating this collision over the sacred space in terms of its religious implications, it must be examined in terms of its symbolic significance to and effect on the public sphere and social fabric of Antioch.

The significance of the loss of sacred spaces was most dramatically proved in an incident nearly four decades after Julian's death, during the reign of the emperor Arcadius. At this point, Christianity was firmly established as the dominant religion of the Roman Empire, with pagan practices largely banned by an edict issued by Theodosius in 392.[116] The bishop of Gaza, Porphyry, developed an unwavering desire to bring about the destruction of a famous pagan oracular temple in Gaza, the temple of Marnas. To summarize a lengthy tale of political maneuverings and intrigue, Porphyry managed to manipulate Arcadius into

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[115] Socrates Scholasticus is perhaps most notable in this regard. The succinct chapter (*Hist. Eccl.* III, 18) he devotes to the Daphne incident is dominated by the movement of the remains.
[116] *Cod. Theod.* XVI.10.2 banning any form of sacrifice and divination, as well reverencing even household idols.

sanctioning the demolition of the temple. A zealous Christian, Cynegius, was dispatched to Gaza, whereby the temple was pulled down. Following the devastation of the temple, many of the pagans in Gaza were stimulated to convert to Christianity.[117]

In the Roman society of Late Antiquity, the loss of a public sacred place could have disastrous consequences for the religion that suffered the loss. The wandering bands of rogue monks described in Libanius' oration *To the Emperor Theodosius, for the Temples* provide additional proof of the importance of places of worship. The monks are not depicted as attacking people, but instead ransacking temples throughout the countryside.[118] After successful assaults, Libanius would have his audience believe that the monks boasted that their deeds did more to advance the Christian cause than any other activities.[119] For both the wandering monks and the zealous destroyer, the temple and, therefore, the public worship space were the primary targets; striking at these locations would sound the death toll for paganism.

It is clear that the pagan temples and, by extrapolation, Christian churches represented high-priority targets for the opponents of the two religions. Yet what was it that endowed these structures with such an enormous symbolic significance? The answer can be discerned in parallels to earlier buildings, such as the temples Augustus founded in his own honor throughout the Empire. According to Ando, the majority of the ideological work and significance of these temples was not contained within their structure or functionality; instead, it was through their very existence that they spread their underlying ideology. Their significance lay not in the copies of Augustus' *Res Gestae* that would be attached to the

[117] Marcus Diaconus. *Vit. Por.* As summarized in Drake (2000) 428-429.
[118] Libanius 30th oration was devoted exclusively to this subject, giving some indication of how serious a matter it was.
[119] Lib. *Or.* XXX, 9.

temples, nor in their smoking altars and statues; it was their magnificence as tangible, physical monuments that instilled them with meaning for the Roman populace.[120] In the symbolic language shared by the Antiochenes, the temple and the Christian church at Daphne had represented conflicting claims to the potency of the respective religions and their ability to bend the sacred space to their will. As noted by Chrysostom, if the conflict had simply been about access to the site, Gallus could have chosen simply to block the road to Daphne and issue an imperial edict closing the sacred space.[121] Likewise, Julian was not only removing the remains of a martyr and destroying a church; his actions symbolized a complete rejection of the Christian claim to public space. The conflict at Daphne told Christians in no uncertain terms that they would be denied any ability to claim sacred spaces and shape the public sphere.

Given the sordid history of the site, one might ask why there was not an equivalent pagan protest when Gallus initially co-opted the site for Christianity. The answer is perhaps stunning in its simplicity, for one must remember that Gallus and Julian were two extraordinarily different men.[122] Gallus' time at Antioch was marked by excessive cruelty; perhaps the best-known example of his brutality lies in his attempt to address an economic crisis similar to the one Julian was confronted with. When the local senate unwisely and bluntly rejected the idea of a price freeze, Gallus was angered to such a degree that he issued a single edict calling for the execution of the leading members of the senate. Only through the

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[120] Ando (2000) 143.
[121] Joh. Chrys.. *Bab.* 69.
[122] Gregory Nazianzen presents an interesting sketch to illustrate this point. He claims that Julian and Gallus, during their time in Marcellus, competed to build a memorial to a local martyr. Gallus, the devout Christian, triumphed, as God read Julian's heart and saw the mark of Cain on it. (*Or.* 4.23-26) Although this tale is probably no more than mere rhetoric from the great Christian orator, it still provides a useful reminder of the degree of difference between the two brothers.

timely intercession of the *comes Orientis*, Honoratus, was the Antiochene senate spared.[123] At the other end of the spectrum of malice lies Julian, who Christian orators claimed was denying them the "credit of the conflict."[124] It therefore seems most appropriate to answer the aforementioned question with another question: could the pagan Antiochenes, having seen ample proof of Gallus' temper and his desire to promote Christianity at the expense of paganism, really be expected to stage a public protest?[125]

A City's Sacrifice: The Rite of Blood Sacrifice and other Confrontational Measures

Julian's overt pagan displays were by no means confined to the co-opting of public holy spaces from Christianity. Indeed, his reinvigoration of the rite of blood sacrifice is likely the best known and most remarked upon aspect of Julian's religious policies. One of Julian's first acts as emperor, shortly after the death of Constantius II, was to declare his intentions to reopen the pagan temples, restore worship of the old gods, and keep their altars wet with the blood of sacrifices.[126] His inordinate love of sacrifice was recorded by nearly every single writer of the times. Christian writers describe him as ridding himself of his baptism with unhallowed blood, worshipping demons with every mode, and mockingly called him "Bull burner."[127] Although it is tempting to read these as mere rhetorical devices of the Christians, pagan writers corroborate these descriptions. In his funeral oration for Julian, Libanius mentions that Julian set up a temple in the middle of the imperial palace. At this temple, corresponding with the rising and setting of Helios-Mithras, Julian would offer blood

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[123] Amm. Marc. XIV, 7.
[124] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 27; see also 58. In short, Christians understood the symbolic power of martyrs and confessors for their religion; their complaint essentially was that Julian *refused* to kill them!
[125] For example, during Julian's reign, the potential threat to a pagan temple in Alexandria led to the brutal slaying of the bishop George. Ammianus Marcellinus. *Res Gestae*. XXII, 11.
[126] Ammianus Marcellinus. *Res Gestae*. XXII, 5.
[127] Greg, Naz. *Or.* IV, 52-56; IV, 77; Joh. Chrys. *De S. Bab.* 1. Julian also is called "Idolianus" (Idolater), "Pisaeas," and "Adonaeus."

sacrifices daily.[128] In his *Oration to Julian as Consul*, Libanius attributes the Persians' fear of the Roman army to the frequent blood offerings and clouds of incense across the land.[129] Even Ammianus, perhaps one of Julian's greatest admirers, makes note of the frequency and scale of Julian's sacrifices, detailing the hundreds of animals that met their end under Julian's knife.[130] Even the coinage issued by Julian reflected the prominence of blood sacrifice, bearing images of bulls and altars; these images clearly proved a thorn in the Antiochenes' sides, leading them to lament that the bull was a symbol of the desolation of the world under Julian and that Julian upset the world in the same way that his priests threw down their victims.[131]

The most significant mention of the blood offering, however, comes from Julian himself. During the celebration of Festival of the Kalends in Antioch, Julian rushed to the temple of Zeus, imagining "beasts for sacrifice, libations, choruses in honor of the gods, incense, and the youths of your city there surrounding the shrine." Upon his arrival, however, Julian found only a lone priest, who presented him with a duck, which the priest himself had brought from his home; Julian was not amused.[132] The city's failure to provide what Julian considered the appropriate means for sacrifice is less important, however, than Julian's intentions. Julian intended to make a very public display of the sacrifice, entwining it with the local holiday and subsequent races. Herein lies the key: in Libanius' words, "He made a beginning with the worship of the gods of the state. He offered libation to them *in the full view of all and was pleased with those who followed his example and scorned those who did*

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[128] Lib. *Or.* XII, 80.
[129] Lib. *Or.* XVIII 127.
[130] Amm. Marc. XXII,12 and XXV,4.
[131] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 17; Sozomen, *Hist. Ecc.* V, 19.
[132] Julian, *Mis.* 361Dff.

not."[133] Even to gain access to the emperor, the Antiochenes had to approach him at smoking altars or in sanctuaries beside the cult images.[134] Julian's bloody offerings extended to every aspect of life and impacted every citizen of Antioch in some way.

The group most affected by such overt displays of paganism was the Christians of Antioch. As seen above, Christian orators frequently cast Julian's sacrifices in a negative light. Gregory Nazianzen's *First Invective against Julian the Emperor* contains a substantial section which deals specifically with sacrifice. Gregory describes the sacrifices as signifying not only the inauguration of Julian's reign, but also as unhallowed acts that defied the final sacrifice of Christ.[135] The recurrent mention of sacrifice indicates that Gregory and other Christian orators not only saw the sacrifice as an abomination, but that they could expect their audiences to feel the same. Based on this likelihood, it is safe to assume that men like Gregory and John Chrysostom fairly accurately represented the typical Christians of Antioch in terms of morality and concerns.

The anxiety Christians felt over the revival of state-sponsored blood sacrifice is only understandable in light of their past and the dislocation blood sacrifice caused to their public life. Blood sacrifice was a confrontational issue and the one element of the traditional pagan cult that Christians could not explain away or compromise on. Julian's sacrifices likely brought back thoughts of the Great Persecution Christians had suffered half a century earlier, reminding them of the tortures they had endured.[136] During this time, for example, Maximin Daia had ordered provincial and civic officials to insure that all citizens sacrificed and poured libations to the gods. He also ordered that the citizens be forced to "taste the polluted

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[133] Lib. *Or.* XVIII, 121. Italics are mine.
[134] Bradbury (1995) 347.
[135] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 52; 54-56.
[136] Bradbury (1995) 346.

sacrifices," as well as ensuring that everything at the market place would be polluted with libations from sacrifices or actually be sacrificial meat. Altars were set up at the baths, with smoking sacrifices prepared, so that any Christians who attempted to enter the bath to clean their corporeal self would be ritually polluted.[137] Even without resorting to such blatantly coercive and forced means, blood sacrifice could still be used to alienate Christians; Maximin also ordered that only sacrificial meat be served at his table, ensuring that Christians would not approach his table and, thus, hope for his patronage without becoming ritually impure.[138] Indeed, the Great Persecution saw blood sacrifice used as a tool of persecution and alienation.

It is worth noting that Julian disapproved of the blatant physical coercive methodology of the Great Persecution. Julian had seen that such cruel and repressive methods not only bound the population more closely together as pagans helped Christians, but also provided Christianity with symbolically powerful martyrs.[139] As Bradbury notes, he was not, however, above subtler forms of coercion.[140] Julian constantly associated himself with smoking altars. Even when holding audience, he would do so in a pagan sanctuary next to cult statues. Christians would therefore be unable to approach Julian without becoming ritually impure and therefore jeopardizing their immortal souls. The very threat of such impurity was enough that Christians would recoil, hiss, and cross themselves at such trappings of pagan worship.[141] Even if a Christian could overcome his fear of ritual impurity and approach the emperor, he could scarcely expect a productive audience with the emperor if he blanched at the sight of an

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[137] Euseb. *De martyr. Palest.* IX, 2.
[138] Lact. *De mort. Persec.* XXXVII.2.
[139] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 27; see also 58.
[140] Bradbury (1995) 347.
[141] Julian, *Ep.* 19. Julian himself notes the predilection of Christians toward such ritual displays in the face of the potential for spiritual corruption.

altar. Blood sacrifice provided a wholesale means by which Julian could deny Christians any access to his person and his patronage.

The rite of blood sacrifice also had an extraordinarily detrimental effect on the public sphere. As detailed above, the ritual from the start had been an impediment to Christian participation in public and in the state. Although Julian disapproved of the physically coercive methods of the Great Persecution, such as torture and execution, this distaste did not prevent him from wielding blood sacrifice in a similar manner. Julian's omnipresent altars guaranteed that any Christian sojourn into the public sphere brought with it great risk of ritual impurity.

One of the best examples of Julian's use of blood sacrifice to polarize the city lies in the above "duck incident." Again, Julian was hoping to offer a sacrifice at a massive, public festival. The lapse of sacrificial offerings in these festivals was an important component of the *modus vivendi* of Antioch, allowing all members of the society to participate in these civic festivals. The duck incident represents an attempt by Julian to re-institute blood sacrifice. The festival would open with a sacrifice and the meat would be feasted upon at the festival. The obvious ramification of this is that it would deny Christians the ability to join in these celebrations. The Christian contingent of Antioch would be denied access to the events that established solidarity in the community; it was celebrations like this one which bound the people together into a real community and established a sense of consensus amongst them. Julian's policy of blood sacrifice sought to shatter this community by barring Christians from participation. Indeed, blood sacrifice would have denied Christians access to the majority of the benefits and amenities of *polis* life, especially those which a city and its population were expected to accrue during an emperor's residence. Instead of profiting, the Christians of

Antioch found themselves cast adrift from the public sphere by Julian's insistence on public sacrifices.

One point of contention remains regarding the revival of the rite of blood sacrifice under Julian. Julian was a fairly unlikely candidate to be the pagan champion of blood sacrifice: he was a withdrawn individual, tending to shy away from large, raucous crowds and occasions, who loathed the horse races and other such spectacles in the Hippodrome.[142] Perhaps more tellingly, Julian did not even universally approve of the lavish brand of paganism he sought to reinvigorate. On his march east in 363, he was constantly confronted with numerous sacrificial victims and clouds of incense. This scene should have thrilled Julian, yet it left him strangely troubled. He later confessed to Libanius that the displays seemed overzealous and alien to a spirit of true piety; more appropriate was the worship of the gods in a quiet, secluded place.[143] It is within the realm of possibility that Julian could have promoted a bloodless pagan revival instead of the revival centered on sacrifice.[144]

Why then did Julian choose to emphasize blood sacrifice in his pagan revival? For Julian, this particular ritual was an ideal tool to help push Christians out of the public sphere and the life of the *polis*. It *was* a coercive measure; public life would be difficult for any who were unwilling to participate in the rite. The ritual of blood sacrifice ceased to be about religion or devotion; instead, it became a confrontational and politicized display. As shown above, blood sacrifice had an extremely detrimental effect on the social life of the Christian population of Antioch. To a large extent, they could not appear in public without risking ritual impurity. Festivals, baths, and access to the emperor were all denied to Christians through the use of public sacrifice. It denied them access to the amenities of the city and the

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[142] Julian, *Mis.* 340ff.
[143] Julian, *Ep.* 58, *Mis.* 344D.
[144] Bradbury (1995) 340.

benefits of being a member of a *polis*. Yet, it is important to note that there was no requirement to sacrifice. Although they undeniably proved as divisive and persecutory as the use of sacrifice in the Great Persecution, Julian's sacrifices could not be criticized in the same way, since they were not technically required of all citizens. Proximity and ritual impurity because of it, however, were *de facto* requirements for actually entering and participating in the sacrifice. Through his adroit application of blood sacrifice, Julian essentially disenfranchised the entire Christian population of Antioch.

Even Julian's coinage worked to hinder the ability of Christians to enter the public sphere. The most famous image to appear on a coin issued by Julian was a bull under two stars.[145] The Antiochenes were clearly aware of this coin. Socrates noted that the bull was said to be a symbol of his having desolated the world, while also connecting it with Julian's use of blood sacrifice.[146] An additional pagan element that Julian included on his coinage was his philosopher's beard. Both of these images, even appearing on the coin, constantly reminded the citizens of Antioch of their sovereign's religious program. Every time money was exchanged, it would be a reminder of the values that Julian sought to cultivate, as well as of the danger his policies presented to the Christians of Antioch. Indeed, it is likely that some Christians felt a slight sense of impurity each time they beheld these devices graven upon a coin.

Julian also took a more subtle line of attack on the ability of Christians even to enter the public sphere. Sozomen records that Julian also hung paintings juxtaposing himself and traditional Roman gods throughout the Empire.[147] Paying homage to imperial portraiture was a long-established tradition within the Roman Empire. Imperial portraits were found in nearly

[145] *SR.* 4072. See Appendix for images of Julian's coins.
[146] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 17.
[147] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 17; Cf. Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 66, 80, 84; Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 16-17.

every imaginable public area in the Roman Empire.[148] More importantly, these portraits were essentially treated as extensions of the emperor himself, demanding the same displays of respect that were afforded the emperor. In short, the people of Antioch were required by law and custom to pay homage to the portraits of Julian, complete with their depictions of traditional pagan gods. Christians who wished to appear in public thus were confronted with a rather unsavory choice: either they could risk being punished as traitors or they could sully their immortal souls.[149]

Christians, Not Citizens: Loss of *Paideia*

In addition to denying Christians literal access to the public sphere, Julian also attempted to present and future participation in any aspect of public life. In perhaps his subtlest line of attack against Christianity, Julian issued an edict in June of 362 barring Christians from teaching the classical curriculum of literature, rhetoric, and philosophy.[150] Ammianus censured Julian for this edict in one of the most critical remarks of his *Res Gestae*, calling it an inhumane thing that deserved to be buried in eternal silence.[151] Julian justified the edict on the basis that the classical texts, containing their numerous references to the pagan scheme of divinity, were religious texts; therefore, an individual who did not believe in their contents could not teach them appropriately.[152]

To a modern reader, this edict does not seem to be an overly hostile measure to have taken against Christianity. From a superficial reading, it appears to target only a small group of Christian professionals. The true nature of this edict is apparent in light of the importance

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[148] Ando (2000) 232-234.
[149] For more on the use of imperial images as a means of expressing imperial ideology, see Zanker (1990).
[150] Julian, *Ep.* 36.
[151] Amm. Marc. XXII, 10, 7.
[152] Julian, *Ep.* 36.

of *paideia* to elite Romans. Although Tertullian may have asked why Athenian culture was of any import to Christianity, elite Greco-Roman society was a highly allusive one, based on widespread mastery of certain classic texts, such as the *Odyssey* and the *Illiad*.[153] Indeed, despite the protests of some Christians, many still staunchly supported the continued use of such texts in a Christian education, both prior and subsequent to Julian's death.[154] Further, a classical education was essential for any individual contemplating undertaking the *cursus honorum*, or taking any sort of political role in the public sphere. Without the shared body of codes and signals embedded in language, behavior, and miscellaneous public activities, an individual would have been incapable of participating in the public elite culture and, by extension, any meaningful political role.[155]

The coercive nature of Julian's ban on Christian teachers was most clearly revealed by his closing statements in his letter justifying the measure. In Julian's words, "Any youth who wishes to attend the schools is not excluded; nor indeed would it be reasonable to shut out from the best way boys who are still too ignorant to know which way to turn, and to overawe them into being led against their will to the beliefs of their ancestors."[156] As noted by Robert Markus, prior to Julian's reign, few Christians would have declined to send their children to learn the same curriculum as their pagan neighbors, despite abstract protests.[157] The cost of denying Christians the ability to engage in the elite culture would have been far too high: *paideia* was simply too important in allowing individuals to function in public for the Christians to ignore. Julian, however, managed to politicize the issue of education.

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[153] Tertullian, *De prae. Haer.* VII.
[154] Basil of Caeserea's *Address to Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature* is an example of such a defense following Julian's death.
[155] Drake (2000) 435; Smith (1995) 214; Markus (1974) *passim*.
[156] Julian, *Ep.* 36.
[157] Markus (1974).

Christians suddenly found themselves faced with a stark choice. Either they could choose to permanently bar their children from participating in the elite public culture or they could allow their children to be tutored by fervent pagans.

Julian's edict imposed what Hal Drake has called a "litmus test" on the classical education, politicizing a previously neutral area.[158] Its effect, however, went far beyond a simple imposition of ideology into education. Julian's provision that Christian children could and should be allowed to attend pagan-taught schools marked the edict as an actively coercive measure against Christians. In addition to forcing a difficult decision on Christian parents, it also subtly attempted to undermine the conviction of Christian students. Being taught by pagan teachers and exposed to the benefits of paganism under Julian's envisioned pagan empire, the message sent to Christian children would be clear. Pagans would profit in the public sphere, being able to participate and pursue the *cursus honorum*; Christians, on the other hand, would be categorically disenfranchised from the public sphere and ultimately even from elite culture. To children, who would not have been likely to have formed firm religious convictions, this temptation would have proved a strong inducement to future conversion. Christian attitudes towards a classical education following Julian's death clearly illustrated the danger Christians saw in this edict. That Basil of Caesarea felt the need to write his treatise defending the continued use of the classics indicates the threat this edict and its ideological underpinnings represented. Even tolerant pagans like Ammianus disapproved of this edict, declaring it to be an unforgivable action.[159] Julian's ban of Christian teachers was perhaps his most subtle and devious attack on Christianity.

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[158] Drake (2000) 435.
[159] Amm. Marc. XXII, 10, 7.

A Public Breakup: Julian's Rationale

Why did Julian choose to attack the Christian church in the public sphere, rather than attempting to destroy its physical structures, like his predecessors? Imperial persecution of Christians was by no means unprecedented; only half a century earlier, Christians had been subjected to an overtly hostile and coercive program, the Great Persecution. Yet, as shown above, Julian undertook a radically different program, with a more sophisticated goal: not to suppress Christianity, but to remove Christians from the ranks of the elite. The rationale behind this difference should be obvious from the fact that Julian even had to engage in any sort of action against the Christians. Had the persecutory program set forth by Diocletian succeeded, Christianity would not have been a prominent force in Julian's time. Insanity can be defined as making the same mistake repeatedly, but hoping for different results each time. As Julian was not mentally unbalanced, he had to break with Diocletian's methodology to have any hope of success.

The Great Persecution had been perhaps *too* great for the Roman Empire, making the mistake of attempting to destroy the physical structure of the Christian religion, through torture of adherents and destruction of churches. Unfortunately, Diocletian did not consider the consequences of his methodology. Although a terrifying time for Christians, the Great Persecution ultimately and ironically aided Christianity, providing a surplus of one of its most powerful weapons in the battle for converts: martyrs. Further, the Great Persecution caused an important swing in public perception of the Christians. The brutality of the persecution shocked and horrified many who observed them. The aversion that the public felt on account of these horrors manifested itself in the protection and shelter that people, including pagans,

offered to the persecuted Christians.[160] Diocletian's attempt to destroy the religion largely backfired for these two reasons. Pagans became more sensitive and open to the Christian religion, and the Christians were provided with scores of the symbolically powerful martyrs.

Clearly, Julian could not have confronted the Christians in the same manner as Diocletian had, for he would have been well aware of the failure and the reasons for that failure. However, Julian also understood that the paganism he sought to restore could not hope to combat Christianity in the spiritual arena. From his *Letter to a Priest*, it is clear that Julian saw that Christianity had seized the moral high ground in many instances, especially in terms of philanthropy: according to Julian, "when it came about that the poor were neglected and overlooked by the priests, then I think the impious Galilaeans observed this fact and devoted themselves to philanthropy. And they have gained ascendancy in the worst of their deeds through the credit they win for such practices."[161] His insistence on philanthropy towards the poor was directly inspired by the Christian outreach efforts. Indeed, the clear connection Julian drew between encouraging philanthropy in the new pagan church and the practices of the Christians makes it probable that the majority of his reforms that brought his church closer to Christianity were simply a response to the near monopoly Christians had established on physical purity and benevolence. Indeed, Gregory Nazianzen struck out at Julian for establishing these parallels, claiming that Julian was copying and parodying the Christian church.[162] While it is possible that Julian pushed for these changes due to heartfelt piety, he also clearly had a pragmatic rationale: combating the influence and appeal of the Christian church. Yet, all of the like changes that Julian sought to make to paganism were, by

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[160] Drake (2000) 149-153.
[161] Julian, *Fragmentum Epistolae*. 305Bff.
[162] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 112-113.

their very nature, reactionary. In effect, they were tacit acknowledgements of the superiority of Christianity in terms of spiritual purity.[163]

Thus, Julian was confronted with something of a conundrum. He could not afford to attack Christianity physically, as that methodology had historically failed. He also accepted that paganism, by adopting strategies similar to Christian ones, inherently made itself a Johnny-come-lately, lagging behind Christianity. Thus, Julian chose a third path. In the words of Smith, "Julian sought the obliteration of Christianity as a social and cultural force, not the physical destruction of Christians... on the terms the Apostate set, the fight against the Church was a fight to the death."[164] Julian chose to utilize oblique coercive persuasion, rather than the physical terror of the persecution. The best method to do so was to remove the ability of Christians to function as members of the Roman Empire. As the capability to participate in the public sphere represented the primary prerequisite and benefit of being a Roman citizen, Julian chose to make public participation synonymous with paganism. The genius of his plan was that he did so without legislation or necessitating any formal enforcement. Instead, Christians in Antioch were presented with an unofficial choice: they could embrace the life of the polis and discard their Christian identity, or they could forfeit the benefits of being a Roman citizen. This plan circumvented the problem of a 'forced' conversion; as Libanius said in his funeral oration for Julian, Julian's efforts had relied upon the voluntary conversion of Christians due to persuasion, not coercion.[165]

The public sphere was an ideal arena in which Julian could confront the Christian religion with a reasonable chance of success and, perhaps, was the only way Julian could hope to engage Christianity in battle. Therefore, Julian put his program into effect with his

[163] See also Nicholson (1994).
[164] Smith (1995) 216.
[165] Lib. *Or.* XVIII, 121-122.

customary vigor. He did not, however, ponder the effects his program would have on the non-Christian citizens of Antioch.

Collateral Damage: The Effect on the Pagans of Antioch

The Christians were not alone in their opposition to Julian and his policies. The pagan portion of the population also found fault with Julian's actions. The policy that would likely have caused the greatest ire in the pagan population, unexpected as it might seem, was Julian's policy of overt blood sacrifice. Due especially to the influence of Neo-Platonism, blood sacrifice had largely fallen out of favor with elites in the many disparate pagan religions. Libanius and Ammianus, both Antiochene pagans and undeniably admirers of Julian, recorded the newfound emphasis on blood sacrifice in a decidedly negative light. The imagery utilized by Ammianus can hardly be termed complimentary or improving. He describes altars as drenched with blood, the victims as being too numerous, and the rites as being performed with "increased and excessive frequency, at a heavy cost hitherto unheard of."[166] Ammianus even records the mocking assertion that "if he had returned from Parthia there would have been a shortage of cattle."[167] Although Libanius is slyer in his disapproval, it is nonetheless apparent in passages such as "he has excelled priests in his performance of services to the gods."[168] Libanius' distaste for sacrifice is clearest in his funerary oration for Julian, wherein he describes the welcoming orations offered to Julian by various governors as gifts more acceptable than the boars, birds, and bucks that had been offered to emperors in the past.[169] If two of Julian's greatest admirers were also amongst the more outspoken critics of

[166] Amm. Marc. XXII, 12.
[167] Amm. Marc. XXV, 4.
[168] Lib. *Or.* XII, 80.
[169] Libanius *Or* XVIII, 159

his policy of blood sacrifice, no leap of faith is needed to assume that this disapproval was characteristic amongst moderate pagans under Julian.

The opposition of moderate pagans had roots stretching back nearly two centuries. As early as Marcus Aurelius' reign, pagans had been dissatisfied with blood sacrifice, making it known through couplets and other publicly expressed forms of disapproval.[170] Indeed, paganism had a well-established tradition of disapproval of the ritual of blood sacrifice, with philosophers disparaging those who would attempt to buy the favor of the gods with material offerings.[171] As evidenced by Marcus Aurelius' sacrifices, this opposition had never seriously threatened the custom of blood sacrifice. In the late third and early fourth centuries, however, there was an explosion of intellectual debate over the merits of blood sacrifice.

One of the clearest proponents of this so-called bloodless paganism was the philosopher Porphyry.[172] The second book of his *On Abstinence*, a work devoted to persuading a friend to turn to vegetarianism, is devoted to the problem of sacrifice, acknowledging how closely entwined eating and sacrifice were in Greek culture. Porphyry's argument is largely based in an idea shared by all pagan religious groups pursuing a higher spirituality: spiritual sacrifice is innately superior to material sacrifices, including blood offerings. Propounding a common argument, Porphyry creates a hierarchal ranking for types of sacrifices. At the top of this hierarchy, Porphyry places pure thoughts offered in silence and deems this the only appropriate offering to the High God; at the base, blood sacrifices are seen as only appropriate for daemons.[173] Although Porphyry did make an exception for civic

[170] Amm. Marc. XXV, 4. The couplet preserved by Ammianus is "Greetings to Marcus from the oxen white / We're done for if you win another fight."
[171] Bradbury (1995) 332.
[172] Henceforth, the terms "bloodless pagans" and "bloody pagans" will be used to refer to the opponents and supporters of blood sacrifice, respectively
[173] Porph. *De Abst.* II, 34.

offerings, material offerings in general were often perceived as blatant attempts to buy divinity's favor, a fact frequently utilized by Christian orators. Neo-Platonists, Neo-Pythagoreans, and Hermetists all conformed to this hierarchal structure, often eschewing blood sacrifice completely. Indeed, if bloodless pagans took Porphyry seriously and to his logical extreme, they could not afford to be neutral on the issue of blood sacrifice, for it would involve the worshippers and surroundings with malevolent daemons.[174]

As blood sacrifice is inherently a religious ritual, it is to be expected that it would raise religiously based opposition. Yet, this ritual also generated dissent on a far more practical level within Antioch. It must be remembered that Antioch was in the grips of a famine and general economic crisis at the time. To fully understand how the relationship between the economic troubles of the city and Julian's policy of blood offerings spawned the generalized antipathy seen in Antioch, it is necessary to examine two factors: how the sacrifices were provided for and what happened to the sacrificial meat.

From Julian's high opinion of the blood offering, one might expect him or the emperor in general, to have been the primary backer of these ceremonies. Indeed, it is easy to assume that Julian was footing the bill. However, due to factors such as the impending war with Persia, it seems unlikely that Julian would have provided all of the funds for these sacrifices. But if the emperor was not paying for the sacrifices, how were they funded? The answer is perhaps startling in its simplicity and illogic. Julian clearly did not fund his own sacrifices, as illustrated by his anger when the city failed to offer a sacrifice, presenting him with a single duck.[175] It was the city that largely funded sacrifices, paid for out of public funds.[176] This obligation may help explain the reluctance of the Antiochenes to enroll in the local senate;

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[174] Bradbury (1995) 332-337.
[175] Julian, *Mis.* 361D-363.
[176] Jones (1940) 227-235; Cf. Liebeschutz (1972) 101-105, Bradbury (1995) 347-355, Lib. *Or.* XI, 133-138.

failure to meet the heavy obligations imposed upon them could result in beatings and even death.[177] Julian's expectation that the Antiochenes would fund his sacrifices in the midst of an economic crisis could be politely termed naïve.

The Antiochenes indeed felt the pressure of this expectation keenly under the economic crisis. Seldom is sacrifice mentioned in the ancient sources without a subsequent complaint about the costs. Ammianus describes the rites as being performed with excessive frequency and at costs "hitherto quite unheard of."[178] In his description of the character of Julian, Ammianus even portrays Julian as an axe-man and unmoved by the expense of the sacrifices and the burden they would have placed on the city.[179] Libanius also acknowledges that "considerable sums" were spent on the objective of pleasing the gods. Although he then tries to justify this expense, the mere inclusion indicates that it was a bone of contention with the Antiochenes.[180] Even in an oration delivered to Julian, Libanius is forced to admit that Julian was not following the dictates of convention with his frequent and bloody sacrifices.[181] Julian himself even addresses the issue of funding the sacrifices, chastising the Antiochenes for financing races and banquets rather than his sacrifices.[182] Julian, in keeping with tradition, expected the Antiochenes to provide for his sacrifices. Further, it shows that there was vocal and widespread complaint about this issue of funding, prominent enough to take up a sizable chunk of the *Misopogon*. The fact that such vocal opposition existed is especially noteworthy in light of Libanius' description of Antiochenes' willingness, joy, and generosity in public spending.[183] Although Libanius is doubtless exaggerating the virtues of Antioch, the discord

[177] Liebeschutz (1972) 165.
[178] Amm. Marc. XXII, 12-14.
[179] Amm. Marc. XXV, 4.
[180] Lib. *Or.* XVIII, 170ff.
[181] Lib. *Or.* XII, 80.
[182] Julian, *Mis.* 362B-363C.
[183] Lib. *Or.* XI, 133-137.

between this description in 360 and the unwillingness of the Antiochenes to provide for sacrifices less than two years later is nonetheless remarkable. In the midst of an economic crisis, however, it is only to be expected that the Antiochenes would deeply resent being forced to fund sacrifices they saw as both extravagant and unnecessary.

Considering that the Antiochenes were expected to provide the funding and animals for Julian's sacrifices, one would expect that the meat from these endeavors would be theirs in return. Julian deviated from this expected pattern, however, giving the meat instead to his troops, especially the Petulantes and the Celts. Perhaps Julian gave the meat to these Gallic troops, who undoubtedly enjoyed a good roast, to keep them content. Ultimately, however, Julian's motivations for the slaughter are irrelevant in this context; the true importance lay with the reactions of the Antiochenes. Ammianus includes a description of a frequent occurrence in Antioch under Julian: namely, these troops, gorged on the sacrificial meat and drunk on ceremonial libations, would be carried through the streets back to their camp. He describes these incidents in general as intemperate and signs of a complete lack of discipline.[184] Effectively, this parading of the troops through the streets ensured that the Antiochenes could not ignore the fact that the meat was going to the troops rather than them.

How important was meat in the diet of the Antiochenes? After all, if beef and poultry were not important components of the Antiochene diet, there would be less ire at this distribution scheme than if beef were an important part of the diet. From the *Misopogon*, it would appear that the diet of Antioch consisted largely of grain, shellfish, and poultry.[185] This perspective is confirmed by Libanius, who describes the easy availability of fish and

[184] Amm. Marc. XXII, 12.
[185] Julian, *Mis.* 350B.

their role in guaranteeing an adequate food supply.[186] Since Julian was known primarily for his avian and bovine sacrifices, it would seem that the distribution of meat would cause little to no unrest amongst the Antiochenes. However, Libanius does make very prominent mention of beef in the Antiochene diet, saying, "The flocks and the herds of cattle contribute their nourishment to mankind."[187] Even if beef was not the primary component of their diet, it undeniably did figure into it in an important way. The true issue, however, lies in Julian's description of what a city needs to survive: "A well conducted city needs bread, wine and olive oil, but meat only when it is growing luxurious. For you [Julian is addressing himself] said that even to speak of fish and poultry is the extreme of luxury."[188] Thus, Julian answered the complaint that his troops gorged themselves on meat by portraying meat-eating in a negative light. The distribution of the meat only represented the insult Julian offered the Antiochenes with his extravagant blood offerings; the injury came from the fact that the Antiochenes were made to pay for the sacrifices with little hopes of sharing in the spoils. It is not difficult to imagine the anger the Antiochenes would have felt at the situation, anger which would be focused on the ritual causing it: the blood sacrifice.

The non-Christian elements of Antioch would also have suffered from the inability of Christians to enter the public sphere. Again, Antioch was a fairly close-knit community. The citizens had taken great pains to ensure that no members of their society would be excluded from the festivals and celebrations that promoted solidarity. Julian's program was an attack on this sense of community, one which sought the complete removal of Christians from society. It is highly unlikely that the non-Christian Antiochenes would have suffered this attack on their community; the fluid harmony of their community had been bought at a steep

[186] Lib. *Or.* XI, 258-259.
[187] Lib. *Or.* XI, 26.
[188] Julian, *Mis.* 350B-C.

price. With their *modus vivendi* at stake, the pagans of Antioch came to their last recourse: they denied Julian as their emperor through negative acclamations.

Re-imagining the Community: The Christian Response

The Christians of Antioch did not accept Julian's program of exclusion without a protest. Along with their participation in the negative acclamations that destroyed the last vestiges of the patron-client relationship between Julian and Antioch, the Christian community struggled to reassert its right to the public sphere. In a number of symbolic displays, Christians clearly demonstrated that, although being cut off from the benefits of the *polis*, they were still able to make an impact on the public sphere. One of the most famous symbolic conflicts between Julian and the Christians occurred in the context of the temple at Daphne. As mentioned above, when Julian ordered the Christians to transfer the remains of the martyr Babylas, they did so largely without complaint. Yet, it was the manner in which they complied with Julian's order that was truly significant.

Ammianus' account of the transference likely represents the manner in which Julian had hoped it would be carried out. According to Ammianus, a great admirer of Julian's, Julian ordered the remains to be removed, and it was done.[189] Ammianus' record, however, stands in stark contrast to the descriptions provided by Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomen. Socrates claimed that all of the Christians of Antioch, including the women and children, had joined together in a stately procession to move the remains to the city of Antioch itself. The procession included solemn rejoicings and psalms, which "were such as cast reproach on the gods of the heathen, and those who put confidence in them and their images."[190] Sozomen

[189] Amm. Marc. XXII, 12, 8.
[190] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 18.

largely mirrored Socrates' account of the incident, although he provided a more detailed description. In his account, the Christians were not singing psalms for the purpose of lightening the burden they carried; instead, the psalms were evidence of the fact that the Christians had been "transported by zeal and spirit for their kindred religious beliefs, which the emperor had opposed." Sozomen even included one of the psalms the Christians sang: "Confounded are all they who worship graven images, who boast themselves in idols."[191] A similar convergence between their accounts is evident in Julian's response to the procession. Both Socrates and Sozomen held that Julian was so enraged that he subsequently ordered the imprisonment and torture of the confessor Theodore.[192]

The incident at Daphne was by no means the only attempt the Christians of Antioch made to reclaim the public sphere. In Theoderet's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, a similar provocation was offered to Julian by the deaconess Publia and her company of virgins. Like the crowd moving Babylas' remains, Publia and her followers took up derisive hymns against Julian, saying, "The idols of the nations are of silver and gold, the work of men's hands… like them be they that make them and all those that trust in them."[193] Like the procession from Daphne, this display supposedly angered Julian to the point that he ordered some of his retinue to box Publia's ears; in response, she cried out "Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered."[194]

Thematically, both of these occurrences are remarkably similar. In both cases, Christian elements within Antioch made public displays designed specifically to criticize and discomfort the emperor. Vocalization was also an important element, with the Christians

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[191] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19.
[192] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 19; Sozomen, *HE* V, 19.
[193] Theoderet, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 14. Psalm cxv.
[194] Theoderet, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 14. Psalm lxvii.

reciting chiding psalms that targeted specific elements of Julian's agenda. The final shared element, however, is likely the most significant. Both incidents described above provoked Julian's great ire, allowing Socrates, Sozomen, and Theoderet to make a claim they were unable to make at any other point, namely that Julian went against his desire to avoid providing the Christians any martyrs or confessors and resorted to corporal punishment.

Julian's expression of anger was remarkable, for he was loathe to provide Christians with a base of complaint similar to the Great Persecution. In the context of his attempt to remove Christianity from the public sphere, however, his anger becomes far more understandable. With their demonstrations and cries, the Christians were reasserting their ability to impact the public sphere, with an ironic twist. Like Julian, the Christians of Antioch were attempting to turn the public space of Antioch into a zone of discomfort for Julian. It was a case of *quid pro quo*; if the Christians were unable to participate in the public sphere, they would attempt to bar Julian from the public sphere as well. Indeed, these incidents may have even been a build up to the negative acclamations that drove Julian from the city.

Julian's Final Response: The *Misopogon* as an *Apologia*[195]

Julian's response to the defamatory acclamations of the Antiochenes came in the form of the satirical *Misopogon*. Posted on the Tetrapylon of the Elephants, near the circus, the *Misopogon* clearly was a public address.[196] It was meant for the entire Antiochene populace. Modern scholars have long been confused by the content of the *Misopogon*, taking an approach that can be summarized in Browning's assertion that the *Misopogon* likely baffled

[195] Unlike the modern cognate, the ancient *apologia* was not an admission of guilt and repentance. To the contrary, it actually means "defense." Hence, Socrates' defense in the trial for his life is called the *Apologia*.
[196] Malalas, *Chron.* 328. 3-4.

any contemporary readers, spoiling whatever purpose it might have had.[197] Indeed, the majority of scholars assume either that Julian was mentally unbalanced or throw their hands up in despair, noting only that the *Misopogon* was an extremely odd document.[198]

Although it has confounded modern readers, the Antiochenes did not seem at all puzzled by the *Misopogon*. Ammianus claimed that Julian was writing while enraged (with *infensa mens*), but did not see anything unusual about the document or Julian's mood.[199] Although Libanius never directly addresses the *Misopogon*, he describes its probable effects on the city, saying that the seeds of perpetual imperial hatred sowed by Julian were worse for the city than any natural disaster could be.[200] At no point, however, in any of his orations that mention Julian does Libanius mention the *Misopogon* as being an odd or unprecedented document. The support of both Ammianus and Libanius was somewhat predictable and expected. It is the judgment of the latter synoptical Christian historians, Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomen, that is truly remarkable. Sozomen declared that the *Misopogon* was a most elegant work, while Socrates claimed that it left an indelible mark on the city of Antioch.[201] As Penella capably demonstrated, neither Sozomen nor Socrates was well disposed towards Julian and seldom spared him.[202] More typically, Socrates Scholasticus declares that Julian wished to incite a civil war against Constantius regardless of bloodshed and compared his chastisement of Christians to the Great Persecution of Diocletian.[203] In a similar, but more virulent vein, Sozomen labels Julian a traitor who seized every opportunity to ruin the church

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[197] Browning (1976) 158.
[198] Gleason (1986) 107-108, Downey (1939) 310.
[199] Amm. Marc. XXII, 14, 2.
[200] Lib. *Or.* XV, 54-66.
[201] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 19; Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 17.
[202] Penella (1993) 31-43.
[203] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 1; III, 19.

and cruelly torture Christians.[204] Had the *Misopogon* been a sign of mental infirmity on Julian's part, or even an unusual or improper response, both Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomen would be expected to have made gleeful note of it. That they both pass such benign judgment on the *Misopogon* indicates something modern scholarship has long overlooked. Although the Antiochenes considered the *Misopogon* as a threatening document, they did not see it as unusual.

There is a simple and obvious reason why the Antiochenes were not shocked by the appearance of the *Misopogon*. The *Misopogon* was the logical imperial response to their attacks on him. With their negative acclamations, the Antiochenes has directly challenged and undermined the fundamental base of Julian's reign, denying, in effect, that he was a rightful or legitimate king. The *Misopogon* was Julian's *apologia* against the Antiochenes, defending and drawing parallels between his reign and the standards of ideal kingship.

To understand Julian's *Misopogon* as an *apologia*, it is necessary to understand how Julian defined the ideal king. For much of Late Antiquity, the definition of a good king was fairly succinct. The good king was God's representative on earth, charged with upholding the laws in a manner befitting such a figure. As shown in Goodenough's still authoritative study, the idea of the ideal king drawing his inspiration from divinity was a long established tradition in the ancient world. Goodenough sees examples of this ideology in the writings of Diogenes and, more famously, in Platonic and Aristotelian theories.[205] Neoplatonic writings, such as those of Porphyry and Plotinus, repeatedly utilize this idea, hoping to show that a realm under such a ruler has the best chance of spawning citizens who will achieve assimilation with the

[204] Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 1; V, 5.
[205] Goodenough (1928): 55-102.

One.[206] Under Diocletian, this idea was formalized and made an overt part of the emperorship with his adoption of the cognomen Iovius and the adoption of Herculius by Maximian.[207] Julian clearly bought into this theory of kingship, as shown by his satire *The Caesars*. In this document, Julian envisioned the gods judging all previous emperors, along with Alexander, and each god choosing a companion. The winner of the competition and Jupiter's companion was Marcus Aurelius, who said that his noblest ambition was to imitate the gods.[208]

At the time when Julian gained the throne and was writing the *Misopogon*, imitation of the gods had come to be defined by a model set forth by Diocletian. Diocletian, as mentioned above, formalized the identification of the emperor with a god. More important, however, was how Diocletian defined this identification. Diocletian and subsequent emperors, including Christian ones like Constantine and Constantius II, cultivated an aura of otherworldliness as a means of demonstrating their godly right to rule, as well as a means of distancing the emperor from the army and firming his tenuous hold on the emperorship.[209] This detached form of godliness is most evident in Constantius' *adventus* to Rome, in which he rode motionless and expressionless, with one exception: when his carriage went under a high arch, he stooped his head slightly.[210]

Although a model of kingship existed when Julian assumed the imperial purple, he could ill afford to utilize it for the *Misopogon* for one basic reason: Julian could not risk associating his reign with that of Diocletian, the Great Persecutor. Julian's religious policies bore many similarities to those practiced by Diocletian, including the divisive use of sacrifice

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[206] Plot. *Enn.* VI.9.7.22-26; Porp. *VPyth.* 12, 17.
[207] Aur. Vict. *Caes.* XXXIX, 18.
[208] Julian, *Caes.* 333B.; Cf. Julian *Or.* VII, 235A-D.
[209] Eutrop. 9.26 claims that Diocletian "was the first to introduce the form of monarchical ritual instead of Roman liberty, and to order that he be adored, when all before him were greeted."
[210] Amm. Marc. XVI, 10.

and his edict banning Christians from classical education. Indeed, both Socrates Scholasticus and Sozomen noted such similarities in their discussions of Julian.[211] Having been raised by Eusebius, the bishop of Nicomedia, Julian could not have been ignorant of the failure of the Great Persecution, nor the reasons for it. As such, Julian did much to distance his policies and actions from those of his predecessors. Julian's reluctance to kill Christian was both an example of this distancing and a source of annoyance to orators like Gregory Nazianzen; his complaint that Julian denied Christians the glory of the conflict was indicative of how well Julian understood Christianity and the failure of the Great Persecution.[212]

Clearly, Julian could not depict himself as an ideal monarch in the *Misopogon* using the model established by Diocletian. He could not afford to identify his reign with Diocletian's any more than it already was, nor would he want to adopt the model of kingship established by his Christian predecessors. Considering the relative fragility of the emperor's position that had originally caused the development of the pomp and ceremony cultivated by Diocletian and subsequent emperors, Julian also could not afford to attempt to introduce any major innovations into the ideology of emperorship. Fortunately for Julian and his *Misopogon*, the model of an ideal emperor had been under negotiation since the reign of Diocletian.

A previous model of kingship was offered by Trajan's reign, as defined by Pliny and Dio, which was well suited for Julian's use in the *Misopogon*. Like Julian, both Pliny and Dio felt that the ideal king was one who aligned himself most closely with the gods. Dio felt that the relationship between the emperor and his subjects should mirror the one between the gods and the emperor, saying "And he [the ideal king] believes that his own oversight is

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[211] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 12; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* V, 5.
[212] Greg. Naz. *Or.* IV, 27; 58.

advantageous to others just as the rule of the gods is to himself."[213] Indeed, Dio claims that the good king is the most precious gift that the gods can give to humans and that the king derives his power purely from the gods.[214] The same theme appears in Pliny's panegyric to Trajan, albeit far more overtly than in Dio's orations. Pliny's ideal king, or Trajan, was the equal of the gods in purity and virtue.[215] Pliny even equates the ideal emperor with Jupiter himself, saying that Jupiter's worries are alleviated by delegating some of his duties to the figure of the emperor.[216]

The model of kingship offered by Trajan, as defined by Pliny and Dio, was capable of fitting into Julian's own political theory, for it held that the ideal king should imitate the gods. Yet, more importantly for Julian's purposes in writing the *Misopogon*, it provided a new characterization of what it meant to imitate the gods. Writing in response to Domitian's reign, Dio characterized a bad king as insatiable, suspicious, deaf to reason, and too stupid for an education.[217] He would act licentiously, pander to the base appetites of the citizens, and generally engage in folly and lawlessness.[218] In contrast, a good king was one who was concerned only with the welfare of his subjects.[219] He would largely live the life of an ascetic, for "he who loves to toil and exercises self-control is not only better qualified to be king but is able to live a much more pleasant life than those in the opposite case."[220] He should dispense blessings with a free hand, but still attempt to force the unrighteous to mend their ways.[221] The good king would also be greatly concerned that his citizens attend to the

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[213] Dio Chrys. *Or.* III, 51-52.
[214] Dio Chrys. *Or.* II, 72;. I, 12; III, 8.
[215] Pliny. *Pan.* 1.3-4.
[216] Pliny. *Pan.* 80.
[217] Dio Chrys. *Or.* II.75-76.
[218] Dio Chrys. *Or.* I.12ff.
[219] Dio Chrys. *Or.*I.12, 23-24, 73.
[220] Dio Chrys. *Or.*III.84-85; c.f. *Or.* I.61.
[221] Dio Chrys. *Or.* 1.21; I.71.

worship of the gods appropriately, including sacrifices and festivals.[222] Interestingly, Dio Chrysostom included purifying the city of ribald jests, licentious dancing, and foul language as part of the king's duties in chastising the wicked.[223] In short, the ideal king was a benevolent, hardworking individual who scorned the pleasures of the world so that his subjects might live better.

Pliny's panegyric painted a very similar picture of the ideal ruler, although, as a panegyric, his work focused less on the theoretical basis of a good emperor and more on the tangible accomplishments. Pliny praised Trajan for his lack of ostentation and simplicity, including his suppression of the fawning and insincere adulation of the senate that Domitian had cultivated through fear.[224] Another point of Trajan's merit was his willingness and tendency to administer justice personally, showing his great virtue through his strict adherence to the letter of the law.[225] In a point echoing Dio's admonishment that the ideal prince should ensure that the citizens worship the gods appropriately, Pliny commends Trajan for refusing to allow the people to thank him for his benevolence, insisting that they instead address their gratitude to Jupiter.[226]

The themes of the *Misopogon* betray the debt it owes to the definition of a good king established by Pliny and Dio. Julian boasts at length of his personal austerity and asceticism, going so far as to haughtily note that he had only vomited once in his entire life.[227] Julian further mentions his celibacy following his wife's death as an example of his disavowal of worldly temptations.[228] He also references his rejection of court ceremony as further evidence

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[222] Dio Chrys. *Or.* III.51ff, 97.
[223] Dio Chrys. *Or.* II.56ff.
[224] Pliny. *Pan.* 52-55.
[225] Pliny. *Pan.* 77.3-4.
[226] Pliny. *Pan.* 52.6-7.
[227] Julian, *Mis.* 340B-342D, 350C.
[228] Julian, *Mis.* 345D.

of his ascetic lifestyle.[229] Although Julian recognized that the ascetic lifestyle he led and sought to encourage in the Antiochenes would not be popular, noting that they were more accustomed to the pleasures of the festival and bedchamber, he nonetheless aligned himself with the tradition established by Pliny and Dio.[230] Indeed, Julian's attempts to purify the city of its, in his view, licentious festivals was clearly a point of contention between the emperor and the city, with Julian mentioning and defending his refusal to attend the theater and pander to the mimes and other performers nearly a dozen times.[231] Nevertheless, the Neo-Platonist in Julian believed that his ascetic lifestyle made him a more suitable monarch by adorning his soul with temperance.[232] Like Pliny and Dio, Julian sought to show that his self-control made him the ideal emperor for the Antiochenes.

The *Misopogon* also contains several sizable segments detailing the extraordinary lengths to which Julian went to address the economic woes of Antioch. He reminds them that, upon hearing of the famine and discerning its roots, he immediately took action to remedy the situation. Julian's solutions included importing grain to Antioch from his own personal supply; as he later reminds the Antiochenes, his willingness to feed them from his private purse was unprecedented.[233] In addition to importing grain, Julian also increased the register of the Antiochene senate in an attempt to spread the burden of the *curiales* further.[234] Julian's concurrence with the king described by Dio, who would work to ensure that his subjects were provided with a better life, was further enhanced in his explanation of why the Antiochenes even had the time to organize and enact the negative acclamations against him,

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[229] Julian, *Mis*. 359C.
[230] Julian, *Mis*. 350B-D, 342.
[231] Julian, *Mis*. 339C, 340, 342B, 343C, 344B, 345D-346D, 350B, 351ff, 354D, 356ff, to name just the most prominent occurrences.
[232] Julian, *Mis*. 342D.
[233] Julian, *Mis*. 368C- 369D; 370C-D.
[234] *Cod. Theod*. XXII, 1, 51-43; Julian, *Mis*. 370D.

saying, "nay rather we have procured for them such luxurious ease that, since they have respite from want, they have had the leisure to compose their anapests against the very author of their well-being."[235] Indeed, one of Julian's closing remarks drove this point home: "For I thought it was my duty to assist the mass of the people who were being wronged, and the strangers who kept arriving in the city both on my account and on account of the high officials who were with me."[236]

One of the other main thematic thrusts of the *Misopogon* can be seen as a defense of Julian's attempt, echoing points made by Pliny and Dio, to ensure that the citizens of Antioch worshipped the gods appropriately. Like Trajan in Pliny's panegyric, Julian chastises the citizens of Antioch for appearing at the temple to applaud him rather than to engage in the adoration of the gods.[237] Further into the *Misopogon*, Julian criticizes the Antiochenes for refusing to 'enslave' themselves to the laws, which were transmitted to them by the gods through Julian.[238] Indeed, Julian's anger over the failure of the Antiochenes to provide an appropriate sacrifice at the Kalends festival can be understood in this context; like a parent, or like the ideal king of Dio and Pliny, Julian was expected to ensure that the Antiochenes were appropriately reverent towards the gods, forcing him to punish and criticize them for lapses.[239]

It is unlikely that such a clear connection between Julian's *Misopogon* and the works of Dio Chrysostom and Pliny the Younger would be a coincidence. Julian's complaints and protestations within the *Misopogon* categorically demonstrated his possession of each trait cited as evident in an ideal king. The *Misopogon* was a practical, functional document that

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[235] Julian, *Mis.* 365.
[236] Julian, *Mis.* 370B.
[237] Julian, *Mis.* 344Bff; Cf. Pliny *Pan.* 52.6-7.
[238] Julian, *Mis.* 357.
[239] Julian, *Mis.* 361D-362C, 365D; Cf. Dio Chrys. *Or.* III.51ff; III, 97: "What sacrifice is acceptable to the gods without the participants in the feast?" ; Lib. *Or.* XV, 29.

operated on several levels. First, it allowed him to distance himself from the reigns of some of his immediate pagan predecessors, instead drawing parallels between his reign and that of one of the most respected rulers in the history of the Roman Empire.[240] Second, in the face of the negative acclamations that threatened the very basis of his reign, Julian was able to put forth a highly public defense of himself that, by establishing himself as an ideal king, further distanced himself from his questionable legitimacy as a usurper. Finally, as a document that remained on site in Antioch, it allowed him to castigate the Antiochenes in a manner that never actually revealed their transgressions, decreasing the likelihood that news of the negative acclamations would spread throughout the Empire. It is clear that the Antiochenes and their descendents understood it in this manner; hence, there is no record of the *Misopogon* being seen as anything other than a harsh rebuke of a city. The *Misopogon* is not an indication of any mental instability. If anything, it is evidence of just how well Julian understood the stakes and the rules of the game of emperorship.

Conclusion

The acclamations that heralded Julian's entry into and departure from the city of Antioch were, as suggested previously, 'invented traditions' of great symbolic potency. First, these acclamations helped bind the citizens of Antioch to the larger virtual community of Roman citizens. Second, they legitimized the emperor as an emperor, as well as creating a network of social hierarchies that would govern how the emperor and the people were supposed to interact. Finally, the *adventus* and acclamations functioned as a socializing ritual, establishing a sense of continuity with the social make-up of the past.

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[240] Indeed, one of the most favorable acclamations of an emperor recorded was "*Melior Traiano.*" Europius 8, 5, 3. See also Rodgers' "The Importance of Being Trajan."

Analyzing Julian's struggle against Christianity in this light is revealing and informative. In his attempt to cleave the social fabric of Antioch and cut the Christian populace off from the benefits of both the *polis* life and of being a Roman citizen, Julian clearly broke with the first function of any invented tradition; it would be absurd to suggest that individuals denied the benefits of a society would identify with that society in a positive manner. Further, Julian's efforts disrupted the *modus vivendi* that the disparate demographics of Antioch had obtained. As argued above, Julian's efforts attempted to polarize a community that had achieved a remarkable degree of integration; he sought to segregate a real community into artificial communities, shaped by religious principles. He attempted to deny and redefine the social norms that the Antiochenes had managed to establish prior to Julian's appearance on the scene. In so doing, Julian failed to fulfill the expectations of both the Antiochenes and the Roman populace.

The appropriateness of the Antiochene response is now unmistakable. Since Julian had established a break with the obligations that devolved on him by virtue of his rank and participation in the *adventus*, the virtual contract between him and the Antiochenes was rendered void and null. In response, the Antiochenes chose to break with the second function of the *adventus* and its acclamations. Through their use of negative acclamations, they denied the legitimacy of the emperor and redefined their position vis-à-vis Julian. The entirety of the Christian response to Julian can be understood in this light. With acclamations, processions, and other displays, the Christian community of Antioch reasserted its own claim to the public sphere of Antioch and the public life of the Roman Empire. However, in rejecting Julian's power to shape the public sphere, the Antiochenes also rejected Julian as an emperor. The public sphere, previously a uniting device, had served to establish an irreparable breach

between the Antiochenes and Julian. Ultimately, the schism between Julian and the Antiochenes came down to a question of who had the right to control the public sphere: Julian and his penchant for confrontation, or the Antiochenes and their conciliatory *modus vivendi*. Although the shocks of this battle extended to all facets of life in Antioch, it was primarily fought in the public sphere, and the best evidence of a break lies in the public sphere.

For the Roman Empire and Christianity, Julian's reign was a turning point. Upon Julian's departure from Antioch, the Antiochenes attempted to reestablish their *modus vivendi*, holding a rally to promote success in the war against Persia. Libanius' description indicates that this celebration was publicly religiously neutral; private religious rites may have followed, but the bulk of the rally allowed the entire community to participate.[241] Despite the noble effort of the Antiochenes to recreate the harmony that had graced their city, something basic had changed and the Roman Empire had changed with it. Following Julian's death, a pagan emperor never again ruled the Roman Empire; Rome truly became a Christian empire. Yet, the response to the disruptive and coercive effects did not end merely with the end of pagan emperors. Following Julian's reign, Christianity steadily became a coercive and intolerant religion, culminating in Theodosius' ban of pagan practices. Although Julian was not the sole impetus for this change, his reign provided a strong incentive for Christians to begin maneuvering to ensure that a zealous pagan could not rise to a position of authority. After all, Julian's brief reign had largely stripped Christians of the benefits conferred on them by Constantine; the possibility of a true successor to Julian's policies would have been disastrous for Christianity.[242] The clash between Julian and the Antiochenes forced the Christians to redefine their position within society, as well as in relation to the emperor. With

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[241] Lib. *Or.* XV, 76.
[242] Drake (2000) 434-437.

the negative acclamations of Antioch, the fundamental instability of the emperor was clearly revealed; Christians realized that, by virtue of their numbers, they possessed a large degree of control over the emperor. This power and realization was demonstrated most famously when the bishop Ambrose barred Theodosius from entering a church in 390.[243] Julian's program thus backfired in the end. Rather than removing Christianity from the Roman Empire, Julian provided the religion with the will to dominate it, forcing paganism from both the public and the private spheres. The fracture of Antioch's public sphere under Julian was one that would never be fully repaired.

[243] Ambrose, *Ep.* 51 (3) as cited by Drake (2000) 444.

Reference: Sear 4072.

Reference: Sear 4074. This coin also shows Julian with his philosopher's beard.

Reference: RIC VIII 219; RSC 163c.

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