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Redefining the Roman Imperial Élite in the Fourth Century AD

The Roman emperor Constantine's most famous innovations are certainly his public adoption of Christianity and the refoundation of the city of Byzantium as Constantinople. These changes had important implications for the character of the higher echelons of Roman society. The subsequent phenomena that flowed from these two innovations – the Christianisation of the élite and the development of a separate senate in the east – have both received considerable attention from scholars¹. I will argue that, simultaneously, a much quieter, and arguably more profound, revolution was taking place in the formal definition of the higher strata of Roman government and society. Through an examination of changing patterns in the conferral of the consulship, the senior and eponymous annual magistracy of the Roman state, this paper outlines the process by which the old imperial social order linked to the *cursus honorum* of the city of Rome was eclipsed by a new hierarchy of offices linked directly to the imperial court. In contrast to previous scholarship, the analysis is not focused on plotting changes in the social composition of the political élite or the advancement of adherents of one religion or another but rather on examining how, in the early fourth century, the priorities determining relative political status within the select group of those awarded the consulship changed. More importantly, it examines the implications of this transformation for our understanding of the structure of the late Roman state.

That profound changes took place between the social and political world of the early empire (up to approximately AD 260), which is familiar from the works of Tacitus and Cassius Dio and well-documented epigraphically,

¹ Lavan (2006) 10–11 (imperial court), 12–14 (the state) and Schachner (2006) 41–44 (imperial aristocracy) provide recent bibliographical surveys of these topics. Note now also Lizzi Testa (2006), Cecconi (2007), Smith (2007), Giuffrida Manmana (2008), Skinner (2008), Cameron (2011), Smith (2011), Porena (2012), Sguaitamatti (2012), and Skinner (2013).

and that of late antiquity (from approximately AD 360), as described by Ammianus Marcellinus and documented by the *Codex Theodosianus* and the *Notitia Dignitatum*, is undeniable². For example, the radical difference in the geographical, cultural, economic, and social origins of the dynasty of Septimius Severus and of Diocletian and his fellow Tetrarchs is obvious. In constitutional terms the change has traditionally been characterised as the dropping of the republican façade of the ‘principate’, which had veiled the underlying reality of its ‘court society’ (borrowing the term of the Silesian sociologist, Norbert Elias)³, to reveal the absolutist monarchy of the ‘dominate’, which can be considered the logical conclusion of the gradual manifestation of the imperial court at the expense of republican institutions⁴. However, in the absence of a surviving political narrative, the precise nature and chronology of the intervening stages remains a subject of debate. This period coincides, of course, with the rise of Christianity and its establishment as the dominant religion but, as Peter Brown, probably the most famous chronicler of this distinct late antique world, has advised ‘it would be misleading to claim that changes in this large area of social and cultural life reflected in any way a process of Christianization’⁵. In a tradition going back to Edward Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788), in many respects the reign of Diocletian (284–305) tends to be seen as the pivotal period and, the obvious reversal of religious policy aside, the reign of Constantine (306–337) as a period of further development along lines already laid down⁶.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine what changes observable in the socio-political hierarchisation of the élite, and specifically in the logic determining precedence, reveal about changes in the underlying value system and what that in turn reveals about the nature of the transformation of the Roman state over this obscure period. Before we may begin our analysis it is necessary to specify explicitly the nature of the élite class under examination. For ‘élite’ is a slippery term and may be applied by modern scholars to define a leading group according to any number of different criteria (for instance, economic, religious, intellectual, etc.)⁷. This tendency to proliferation is cer-

² Veyne (1976) 760 n. 263.

³ Elias (1969).

⁴ Winterling (1999).

⁵ Brown (1992) 98.

⁶ Barnes (1982), Van Dam (2007) 11, Smith (2011) 128–131.

⁷ Brown (2000).

tainly true of the study of late antiquity, as John Matthews has observed⁸. However, the intention here is to examine the socio-political (or ‘functional’) élite of the later Roman state, as defined not by some modern sociological theory but by a tangible measure, recognizable to contemporaries; that is, the élite group comprising the successive pairs of individuals to whom the emperors granted the honour of the annual eponymous office of consul.

The symbolic and practical significance of the consulship

As the system by which the Roman state continued to identify each passing year, the ordinary consuls (those who took office on 1 January) embodied the continuity of the imperial state with its republican forebear⁹. The formal structures of the city-state of Rome were unashamedly aristocratic, in the sense that they assumed a close congruence of the economic, intellectual, and socio-political hierarchies. The social and political are yoked together in this analysis consciously because, within that part of the economic élite that was engaged in public politics, the senators, it was the hierarchy of elected magistracies (quaestors, praetors, and consuls) that provided the framework of social gradation. Moreover, tenure of the most senior magistracy was recognized as conferring the quality of *nobilis* upon the holder and his descendants in the male line¹⁰; after all, having one’s name contribute to an official chronological reference point conferred genuine immortal fame of a kind that has no real modern parallel. Importantly for our analysis, the finer points of contemporary social etiquette, which in turn express the underlying system of values, may be observed in the ordering of the annual consular pairs. The relative chronology of previous tenure of elected office, which might be considerably accelerated for members of the special class of patrician families, and later special privileges granted to members of the imperial family, all contributed to determine which of the two should take precedence as consul prior over the consul posterior.

Although the republican magistracies were deprived of real political power by the establishment of an essentially monarchic régime by Augustus in the last quarter of the first century BC, a key part of the success of that political settlement lay in the requirement of tenure of these traditional magistracies as

⁸ Matthews (2000).

⁹ De Martino (1975) 368, Sguaitamatti (2012) 108–113.

¹⁰ Gelzer (1969) 27–40.

a necessary prerequisite for conferment of positions within the government of the empire. So, despite the real political importance of the *domus Augusta* (imperial household), the *familia Caesaris* (the corps of slaves and freedmen providing its clerical staff), and the members of the subordinate social order of *equites* ('knights'), who provided the backbone of military command and provincial administration, Rome remained ideologically a 'city state', whose magisterial class (the senators) remained at the pinnacle of the formal socio-political hierarchy of the empire as a whole. The importance of the chief magistracies to the system meant that Augustus and his successors retained control of the nominations to the consulship.

Indeed the expansion of the number of positions for which consular status was deemed necessary meant that the appointment of extra sets of consuls (known as suffecti), subsequent to those entering office on 1 January, became a regular feature. Although never much used for dating purposes outside the city of Rome itself, in formal terms the suffect consulship was deemed equivalent to the ordinary so that when an ordinary consul had previously held a suffect consulship he would be qualified as *consul iterum* (*cos. II*). In the consular formula such second-time consuls naturally preceded first-time consuls (e.g. AD 286: Iunius Maximus II, Vettius Aquilinus)¹¹. Major structural transformations in imperial government between the mid third and early fourth centuries progressively restricted the role of the senatorial aristocracy of the city of Rome in military command and central and provincial administration in favour of officers of the increasingly distinct military and civil services who belonged to the subordinate social order of *equites* ('knights')¹². Nevertheless, the continued symbolic importance of the city of Rome and its institutions is demonstrated by the superior status accorded its magistrates when paired in the consulship with such equestrian officials, as occurred in AD 273 (Caecina Tacitus, Iulius Placidianus). Both enjoyed the honour of an ordinary consulship as a their first consulship but, despite the fact that Placidianus was currently serving as one of the emperor's praetorian prefects (a position somewhat akin to a modern prime minister), the former *eques* ceded precedence to a noble senator of patrician family, who had exercised no position more significant than the governorship of the province of Baetica¹³. The

¹¹ *PLRE* 1 Maximus 38 and Aquilinus 8, Christol (1986) 119, Bagnall et al. (1987) 106–107.

¹² Christol (1997), Mennen (2011).

¹³ *PLRE* 1 Placidianus 2, Christol (1986) 111–113, 153–158. Cf. Degrassi (1952) 73, *PLRE* 1 Tacitus 2 and 3, where the consulship of 273 is attributed to the future emperor

geographical and social gulf between the imperial court(s) and the hereditary senatorial aristocracy arguably reached its greatest extent under Diocletian and the Tetrarchy (284–c. 306). Nevertheless the superior status of the traditional socio-political hierarchy of the city of Rome continued to be respected. Several senior equestrian officials at the height of their political power, once transferred to the senate by award of the consulship or individual adlection, clearly treated this as a promotion, taking on consular posts, such as the proconsulship of Africa or Asia, that were much less significant in terms of real political power¹⁴.

At the same time, the progressive rationing of the number of administrative posts open to senators, exacerbated by the political isolation of Italy from the rest of the empire under Maxentius (306–312), conspired to bring down the minimum age at which young senators held their first urban magistracy and accelerate the speed at which they progressed through them so that by AD 312 the (normally suffect) consulship was probably regularly reached well below the threshold of thirty-two years that had once been the privilege of patricians¹⁵. Accordingly the serious administrative posts available (e.g. governorships of the recently provincialized Italian *regiones*) were mostly postponed to the consular level. In addition, the greater proportion of consulships (invariably ordinary) being taken by emperors meant that the few ordinary consulships left to senators were increasingly iterated ones, enjoyed by those in the most senior stages of a career (e.g. prefects of the city)¹⁶.

Subsequent to Constantine's acquisition of supreme power over the entire empire and foundation of Constantinople (in late 324), the conversion of the senior offices of the equestrian career ladder (e.g. *praefectus annonae*, *praefectus praetorio*) to senatorial status was a first step in the merging of the traditional social élite with the real political élite and has even been heralded as a measure of reconciliation towards the senatorial aristocracy of Rome¹⁷. Certainly, as we shall see, the consular fasti of Constantine's reign as sole Augustus (325–337) seem, at first sight, to reflect a merging of the higher echelons, with praetorian prefects and imperial courtiers recognized in more

M. Claudius Tacitus.

¹⁴ Christol (1986) 119–120, Salway (2006) 128–131.

¹⁵ Christol (1986), Chastagnol (1992) 247, cf. Morris (1964) and idem (1965).

¹⁶ Christol (1986) 90–93.

¹⁷ Arnheim (1972); Veyne (1976) 760 n. 263; Chastagnol (1992) 257.

or less equal numbers to former proconsuls of Africa or Asia and prefects of the city of Rome.

It is against the background of these developments that André Chastagnol and others have diagnosed a reform of the suffect consulship c. AD 315, whereby it was reduced in status to an honour of purely local significance, as an occasion for the giving of games, if nothing else, which might by the 320s be legitimately omitted as a stage in a traditional senatorial career¹⁸. That a differentiation between the suffect and ordinary consulship took place is undoubtedly true. There is sufficient evidence to confirm that suffect consuls continued to be nominated into the fifth century but not necessarily any longer by the emperors¹⁹. However, it is also patently the case that there is no record of an ordinary consulship being celebrated in public documents as an iteration after that of T. Flavius Postumius Titianus, the consul prior of AD 301²⁰. In private, however, members of the senatorial nobility did still make a claim to the equivalence of the two consulships on occasion, as did the son of the consul ordinarius posterior of AD 345, M. Nummius Albinus, on the base of a statue set up in the family home²¹. As it happens, the divorce of the two honours can, I believe, be more precisely linked to decisions made before the proclamation of the ordinary consuls for 1 January 314.

Rufius Volusianus (cos. ord. 314) and the reform of the consulship

Volusianus, the incumbent prefect of the city of Rome (8 December 313 to 20 August 315), whom Constantine rewarded with the additional honour of an ordinary consulship for 314, had had a rather unusual career of late²². Although it had begun conventionally enough, with stints as a *corrector* of Italian regions and a proconsulship of Africa (which implies prior tenure of a suffect consulship), in the abnormal circumstances created by the isolation of Maxentius' regime in Italy, Volusianus had not only served Constantine's erstwhile

¹⁸ Chastagnol (1958) and idem (1992) 247; De Martino (1975) 369–371; Kuhoff (1983) Nos 54 and 59.

¹⁹ Sguaitamatti (2012) 95–98.

²⁰ *PLRE* 1 Titianus 9, Christol (1986) 125, Bagnall et al. (1987) 136–137.

²¹ *CIL* VI 1748 + pp. 3174, 3813, 4750 = *ILS* 1238, Alta Semita, Rome: Triturrii. / M(arco) Nummio Albino v(iro) c(larissimo) / quaestori candidato, / praetori urbano, comiti / domestico ordinis primi, et / consuli ordinario iterum / Nummius Secundus eius. See: cil.bbaw.de/dateien/cil_view.php?KO=KO0000297 (accessed 01/07/2014).

²² *PLRE* 1 Volusianus 4; Kuhoff (1983) No 14, *PIR*² R 161, Porena (2003) 250–272.

rival as prefect of the city (310–311) but also in the traditionally equestrian post of praetorian prefect, when he commanded the successful recovery of Africa from L. Domitius Alexander. For this Volusianus had been rewarded by Maxentius with a consulship in late 311, which was no doubt counted as an iteration. However, it is abundantly clear from the contemporary evidence of the Egyptian papyri that Volusianus was not credited as *cos. II* in 314²³. On the contrary, in the dating clause of an accounting list from Hermopolis from the last months of the year the consular pair are qualified, in a manner extraordinary for citizens rather than emperors, as consuls for the first time (τὸ α')²⁴. Given that the consular dating *formulae* used by the Egyptian scribes of the early fourth century are demonstrably sensitive to officially disseminated styles²⁵, it seems probable that this curiosity reflects some official statement to the effect that Volusianus should be considered as consul for the first time only. This receives some corroboration from the dedication at Rome of a statue to Volusianus by an unknown individual or corporation, most probably datable to the very year of his consulship²⁶. While celebrating the fact that he is now a *comes* of Constantine, the career summary certainly omits the praetorian prefecture and ignores the earlier urban prefecture, both held under Maxentius.

No doubt the intention of Constantine's ruling was to cancel out honours conferred by the defeated tyrant. However, the effect seems to have been to discount also Volusianus' earlier suffect consulship as a factor in calculating his total. Even as an unintended consequence, this will have set the precedent that suffect consulships were not of the same quality as the ordinary variety. As we shall see, it also equated the ordinary consulship of this senior consular with that of his colleague, Annianus, who happened to hold his as his first introduction to the senate. Whether accidental or simply

²³ Bagnall et al. (1987) 163, Bagnall and Worp (2004) 177–178.

²⁴ CPR VIII 22, lines 3–5: ὑπα/τείας Ῥουφίου Οὐ[ο]λουσιανοῦ καὶ Πετρωνίου / Ἀννιαν[ο] ὃ τῶν λαμπροτάτων τὸ α'. Bagnall et al. (1987) 162.

²⁵ Salway (2008) 280–285.

²⁶ CIL VI 1707 + pp. 3173, 3813, 4740 = ILS 1213, S. Pudenziana, Rome: [---/sanctissimo?] / religiosissimo / C(aio) C(a)jeonio Rufio Volusiano v(iro) c(larissimo) / corr(ectori) Italiae per annos octo / proconsuli Africae / comiti domini nostri / Constantini invicti et / perpetui semper Augusti / praefecto urbi iudici sacrarum / cognitionum consuli / [?ordinario - - -]. Cf. AE 1984, 145 = CIL VI 41319, a similar fragmentary statue-base dedication from 315 that was originally understood to incorporate a claim to the iterated ordinary consulship but which has now been more plausibly revised by Porena (2003) 267 n. 174 = AE 2003, 207.

insensitive to tradition, this decision is plausible as the action of an emperor who approached Rome in 312 and the nomination of his first ever pair of non-imperial consuls in 313 as someone who had spent a great deal of time in the circles of the imperial court but who had little contact with the Roman senate²⁷.

The consuls of Constantine (AD 314–337)

To explore the consequences and wider implications of Constantine's innovation in 314, it will be instructive to conduct an unapologetically empirical examination of the policies observable in the award and ordering of the ordinary consuls in the subsequent decades of Constantine's reign. The seven years given over to imperial consuls will be left aside²⁸, as their interpretation is unproblematic. The aim is to consider the consuls of each year as a pair in their contemporary context. So, rather than full prosopographical profiles, each entry will focus on the known record of each consul up to and including the year of office, eschewing discussion of later achievements and also of religious affiliation, which has tended to dominate analyses of this kind²⁹. The principal evidence for identifying the consuls of this period comprises the manuscript *fasti* (including the *Codex Calendar* of AD 354), subscriptions to imperial laws in the Theodosian Code, inscriptions, and most valuably contemporary papyrus documents³⁰.

314: Rufius Volusianus et Petronius Annianus

In this consular pair a man of senatorial birth is paired with a serving imperial official. As discussed above, Volusianus was exercising concurrently the prefecture of the city, the highest office in the traditional senatorial career, and would have been at least *cos. II*, if not *cos. III* by a traditional reckoning. It is as *bis ordinarius consul* that he was remembered in a text honouring his son Albinus (*cos. 335*) put up on the Capitol c. 335/337 (*CIL VI 1708 + pp.*

²⁷ Barnes (2011), 35–38, 46–83.

²⁸ AD 315: Constantinus A. IIII et Licinius A. IIII; 318: Licinius A. V et Crispus C.; 319: Constantinus A. VI et Licinius C.; 320: Crispus C. II et Constantinus C. II; 324: Crispus C. III et Constantinus C. III; 326: Constantinus A. VII et Constantius C.; 329: Constantinus A. VIII et Constantinus C. IIII.

²⁹ von Haehling (1978), Barnes (1995), Salzman (2002). Cf. Cameron (2011) 177–178.

³⁰ Bagnall et al. (1987) 47–89.

3173, 3813, 3818 = *ILS* 1222 = *CIL* VI 31906 = 41318 = AE 2005, 186). If indeed he is the anonymous twice ordinary consul of Iulius Firmicus Maternus' *Mathesis*, as Theodor Mommsen proposed, then Volusianus was of senatorial birth but the first generation of his family to reach the consulship (i.e. not *nobilis*)³¹.

Petronius Annianus was currently Constantine's praetorian prefect³². Although some scholars, imagining a link with Probianus (*cos.* 322), have considered Annianus a senator by birth³³, he would constitute an improbably precocious example of the Constantinian reforms that were to produce praetorian prefects of senatorial origin only in the reigns of his sons³⁴. More probably he rose through the equestrian service and was a *novus homo* to the senate, enjoying this as a true first consulship.

316: Caecina Sabinus et Vettius Rufinus

There is little doubt that the consular pair are noble senators, and probably both patricians. Nothing beyond this consulship is known of the career of Sabinus³⁵, whose Etruscan gentilicium became garbled in transmission to some areas of Egypt³⁶, but he is likely to have been a member of the patrician family that produced the consul prior of AD 273 (A. Caecina Tacitus)³⁷. If he is the same as the Caecina Sabinus in an inscribed list of senatorial donors of c. AD 300 (*CIL* VI 37118 + p. 4819 = AE 1907, 208), then he would most probably be a relatively senior consular in 316, holding this ordinary consulship as an iteration by the traditional reckoning.

Vettius Rufinus, the consul posterior of 316, is usually identified with the noble and patrician senator³⁸, C. Vettius Cossinius Rufinus, a *comes* of the emperors and *praefectus urbi* in office from 20 August 315 to 4 August 316³⁹, and the homonymous consul of 323 (see below p. 210-211) as a close

³¹ Barnes (1975) 40–49 upholds Mommsen's thesis against its detractors.

³² *PLRE* 1 Annianus 2, Barnes (1982) 100, 127; Porena (2003) 291–296.

³³ Arnheim (1972) 67–68, 111–112, 135; Settiani (2000) 497.

³⁴ Jacques (1986) 204–206; Porena (2003) 295–296; Porena (2006).

³⁵ *PLRE* 1 Sabinus 12.

³⁶ Bagnall and Worp (2004) 178.

³⁷ Christol (1986) 159.

³⁸ Jacques (1986) 123, 177–178; Settiani (2000) 497.

³⁹ Chastagnol (1962) 63–68 (attributing both consulships to Cossinius Rufinus); *PLRE* 1 Rufinus 15; Barnes (1982) 100–101; Kuhoff (1983) No 15; Bagnall et al. (1987), 166;

relative, possibly a son⁴⁰. Although the dedicatory text of the statue erected to him by the town of Atina in Campania omits all mention of the urban public magistracies⁴¹, the urban prefect had most likely been consular for about twenty years⁴². So this too would have been a second consulship by traditional reckoning. However, it is not inconsistent with early fourth-century career patterns to ascribe the consulate of 316 to the son of the current urban prefect and that of 323 to Cossinius Rufinus as ex-urban prefect⁴³, in which case the ordinary consulship of 316 would be a true first consulship.

317: Ovinus Gallicanus et Caesonius Bassus

The disruption caused by the civil war between Constantine and Licinius meant that the consuls were not proclaimed until 17 February. Both consuls are in all likelihood nobles, members of the same patrician gens, the *Caesonii Ovinii*, which was represented in the previous two generations by L. Caesonius Ovinus Manlius Rufinianus Bassus (*cos. II* 284) and his son L. Caesonius Ovinus Rufinus Manlius Bassus (*cos. suff. c.* 280)⁴⁴. Gallicanus was currently *praefectus urbi* (from 4 August 316 till 15 May 317), the culmination of a senatorial career extending back at least two decades; he had erected a statue to the tetrarchic Caesar Constantius, when curator of Teanum Sidicinum, probably c. 293 and certainly before 300 (*CIL* X 4785). Hence Gallicanus' consulship is a second according to a classical reckoning. His colleague Caesonius Bassus remains a mystery apart from this consulship⁴⁵. If his is a true

Porena (2005).

⁴⁰ *PLRE* 1 Rufinus 24; Bagnall et al. (1987), 180.

⁴¹ *CIL* X 5061 = *ILS* 1217: *C(aio) Vettio Cossinio Rufino c(larissimo) v(iro) / praefecto urbi, comiti / Augg(ustorum) nn(ostrorum), corr(ectori) Camp(aniae), corr(ectori) / Tusciae et Umbriae, corr(ectori) / Venitiae (!) et Histriae, cur(ator) alvei / Tiberis et cloacarum sacrae urbis, / cur(ator) viae Flaminiae, proconsuli pro/vinciae Achaiae sortito, pontifici dei / Solis, auguri, salio Palatino, ordo po/pulusque Atinas, quod in correctura / eius quae s<a>evissimam tyran/nidem incurrerat nullam / iniuriam sustinuerit, / patrono dulcissimo*. See [db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=\\$Atina_00012.jpg](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=$Atina_00012.jpg) (accessed 01/07/2014).

⁴² Christol (1986) 123, 252–254; Porena (2005); Davenport (2013) 228–229.

⁴³ The solution adopted by Christol (1986) 204–206, concerning the uncomfortably close consulships (AD 281 and 291) of the two Iunii Tiberiani.

⁴⁴ Christol (1986) 159–176, Settapani (2000) 497.

⁴⁵ *PLRE* 1 Bassus 12.

first consulship, he may be a junior relative enjoying an ordinary consulship as his first thanks to the influence and prestige of Gallicanus.

322: **Petronius Probianus et Anicius Iulianus**

Onomastically the consul prior looks like a close relation of the consul posterior of 314 but the fact that, prior to this consulship, he had served as proconsul of Africa (from 315 to 317)⁴⁶ implies the sort of traditional senatorial career pursued by those born into the order, including an earlier suffect consulship. However, any relationship to earlier generations of senatorial *Petronii* is hard to establish so nobility should not be assumed⁴⁷. Anicius Iulianus is presumed to belong to the noble and patrician *Anicii*, most recently represented in the consular fasti by Faustus (*cos. II* 298), prefect of the city in 299–300⁴⁸, but knowledge of his own career is sketchy⁴⁹. He is known to have been proconsul of Africa when his son, Paulinus (*cos.* 334), was his *legatus Carthaginis* (*CIL* VI 1682 = *ILS* 1220, Rome) and at a date presumably subsequent to Probianus, to whom he cedes precedence here⁵⁰. Again the career pattern strongly suggest that his ordinary consulship had been preceded by a suffect one in his youth.

323: **[Acilius?] Severus et Vettius Rufinus**

The identity of the consul prior is uncertain. The continued political stand-off with Licinius means that Constantine's consuls do not appear in the Egyptian papyri. The one southern Italian inscription that certainly originally reported Severus' gentilicium is broken at this point⁵¹. Nevertheless, it is generally believed that the consul Severus is the same as the 'Acilius Severus' who was soon to be *praefectus urbi* for nearly three years (from 4 January 325 until 13 November 327), including the period of Constantine's *vicennalia*

⁴⁶ *PLRE* 1 Probianus 3; Barnes (1982) 101, 170; Kuhoff (1983) No 21.

⁴⁷ Jacques (1986) 105–106, 204–206. Cf. Settapani (2000) 497.

⁴⁸ *PLRE* 1 Faustus 6, Christol (1986) 124, Jacques (1986) 123.

⁴⁹ *PLRE* 1 Iulianus 23, Kuhoff (1983) No 19.

⁵⁰ Barnes (1982) 171 opts for 320–321; cf. *PLRE* 1 Iulianus 23, where identification with the proconsul Iulianus of 301–2 is suggested (!), whom Barnes (1982) 102, suggests might be his father.

⁵¹ *CIL* X 407 = *Inscr.It.* III. (i).17 = AE 1988, 412 + AE 2005, 90 Buccino (Volcei, Lucania et Bruttium); line 3: [*Acilio Se*]vero et *Ve[t]t[io] Rufino connss(ulibus) per Turci[um - -]*.

celebrations at Rome in 326⁵². While some consider this consul and prefect to belong to the senatorial *gens Acilia*, which had been noble and patrician since the first century AD⁵³, this is less likely if he is to be identified with the ‘Severus’ to whom, Jerome relates, Lactantius dedicated two books of letters and who was related to an Acilius Severus, a Christian writer in Spain, who died under Valentinian (i.e. 364/375)⁵⁴. Jerome’s testimony is consistent with imagining (Acilius) Severus to be a *parvenu* of Spanish provincial origin, who, as an early adherent of Constantine, even if not certainly a co-religionist, was rewarded for his loyalty with an ordinary consulship in 323 and subsequently entrusted with hosting the anniversary celebrations⁵⁵. For such a man, the ordinary consulship would have been a true first consulship by the classical reckoning. Plausible as the reconstruction may seem, it must remain speculative in almost every detail.

Rufinus, the consul of 323, is identified as another Vettius Rufinus on the basis of the same Lucanian inscription discussed above, although the surface of the stone is now damaged in the relevant area⁵⁶. The proposal of Otto Seeck that this consulship be linked with a Rufinus, supposedly attested by constitutions in the Theodosian Code as a praetorian prefect of Constantine from c. 318–320, has been convincingly dismissed⁵⁷. As discussed in relation to the consulship of 316 above, identification with C. Vettius Cossinius Rufinus, the *comes Augustorum* (i.e. of Constantine and Licinius) and *praefectus urbi* of 315–316, is a distinct possibility. If so, this ordinary consulship will certainly have been preceded by a suffect consulship earlier in his well-documented career⁵⁸. If on the other hand the consul of 323 was his son, then he may have enjoyed the ordinary consulship as his first, thanks to the influence and prestige of his father, who was perhaps already the most senior senator on 5 September 318, when Constantine’s letter to the magistrates and senate on inheritance of maternal property was read out before him (*CTh*

⁵² *PLRE* 1 Severus 16, Kuhoff (1983) No 17.

⁵³ Jacques (1986) 152–155.

⁵⁴ Hieronymus, *De viris illustribus* 111 (cf. 80): *Acilius Severus, in Hispania, de genere illius Severi, ad quem Lactantii duo epistolarum scribuntur libri, ...*; Settapani (2000) 497, Porena (2005) 237.

⁵⁵ Barnes (1995) 144. Cf. Cameron (2011) 178–179, who doubts that the dedication by Lactantius can be taken as an indication of religious affiliation.

⁵⁶ See [db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=\\$CIL_10_00407.jpg](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=$CIL_10_00407.jpg) (accessed 01/07/2014).

⁵⁷ Seeck (1919) 143. Cf. Barnes (1982) 102, 130; Porena (2003) 356–363.

⁵⁸ *CIL* X 5061 = *ILS* 1217 (Atina, Campania), discussed above under AD 316.

8.18.1: *recitata apud Vettium Rufinum <ex> p(raefecto) u(rbi) in senatu*⁵⁹. Whether the consul of 323 is Rufinus *père* or *filis*, it is notable that a noble patrician may have ceded precedence to a *novus homo*.

325 (until c. May): V[alerius?] Proculus et Anicius Paulinus

The evidence of an Egyptian papyrus and one uncorrected dating in the Theodosian Code combine to demonstrate that Proculus and Paulinus were the original consular pairing in January 325. Proculus' incomplete nomen, preserved in *P.Oxy.* VI 889, is convincingly restored as Valerius and the consul prior has been identified with Proculus, proconsul of Africa in 319–320⁶⁰. If so, then this ordinary consulship is likely to have been a second, following an earlier suffect consulship. Alternatively, if the Valerius was borne by Proculus as the dynastic nomen of the Tetrarchs, then the consul may have been a former military commander or imperial official of Constantine's sometime ally and rival Licinius and his designation as consul prior for 325 part of the peace and abdication settlement of September 324 (cf. Diocletian's retention of Aristobulus, praetorian prefect of Carinus and *cos.* 285)⁶¹. In either case, Proculus' removal and replacement as consul suggests that he was caught up in the political manoeuvrings that led to the execution of Licinius⁶². On present evidence it is not possible to decide definitively between these two possibilities.

Anicius Paulinus the consul posterior is generally presumed another member of the noble and patrician *Anicii*, probably a brother of Iulianus (*cos.* 322), and identified with Sex. Anicius Paulinus⁶³, whose public career up to his prefecture of the city in 331–333 is presented in abbreviated form on a dedication from Rome (*CIL* VI 1680 + pp. 3173, 4732), which reads: *Sex(-to) Anicio Paulino procons(uli) / Africae, bis co(n)s(uli), praef(ecto) urb(i)*⁶⁴. Regard to parallels in the epigraphic Latin of Rome demonstrates that, as in the inscription honouring Rufius Albinus (discussed above) and in contrast to first-century usage, in texts of the second century and later *bis* almost

⁵⁹ Porena (2005).

⁶⁰ Barnes (1982) 171, 236–237; Bagnall et al. (1987) 184–185.

⁶¹ Salway (2008) 296–299.

⁶² Barnes (1982) 102.

⁶³ *PLRE* 1 Paulinus 15, Kuhoff (1983) No 24, Cameron (2012) 141.

⁶⁴ See [db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=\\$CIL_06_01680.jpg](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=$CIL_06_01680.jpg) (accessed on 01/07/2014).

invariably modifies the noun or phrase following it (i.e., here, *consul*), not that preceding it (*proconsul Africae*)⁶⁵. Given that Paulinus did not enjoy a second ordinary consulship, this inscription is explicit evidence that his ordinary consulship of 325 was a second term by classical reckoning, having been preceded by a suffect consulship⁶⁶.

325 (from c. May): Anicius Paulinus et Iulianus

The peculiar nomen of Iulianus, the substitute consul posterior, as it is transmitted in the papyrus documents has aroused suspicion but little consensus as to its interpretation⁶⁷. It has generally been considered corrupt. The once fashionable identification with M. Ceionius Iulianus *signo* Kamenius, a future proconsul of Africa and *praefectus urbi* of 333⁶⁸, has been superseded by strong support for identifying the consul with Iulius Iulianus, grandfather of the emperor Julian, an equestrian official who rose to become praetorian prefect of Licinius⁶⁹. Identification with an otherwise unknown Iunius Iulianus has also been advocated⁷⁰. If we accept the testimony of the papyri, it is not impossible that Iulianus belongs to an otherwise unknown senatorial *gens Ionia* but a more elegant solution is to understand Ionium as a *signum* used in the papyrological *formulae* in place of several nomina, as attested for Populonium Proculus (= L. Aradius Valerius Proculus *signo* Populonium) for his consulship in 340⁷¹. If Ionium Iulianus was of senatorial background, it is not possible to decide whether his ordinary consulship came as a second tenure, as with his colleague Paulinus, or as a genuine first consulship at an early stage in his career. If Iulianus was promoted from the ranks of those designated as suffects, the latter is more likely.

⁶⁵ Cf. *PLRE* 1 Paulinus 15, where the editors hesitate; Barnes (1982) 171, who takes it as a reference to a biennium served as proconsul of Africa.

⁶⁶ Kuhoff (1983) 35, 288.

⁶⁷ On the papyri see Bagnall et al. (1987) 185, 629–630; Bagnall and Worp (2004) 181.

⁶⁸ Seeck in *RE* 3.2 (1899) 1860, Degraffi (1952) 59, J. R. Rea in commentary on *P.Oxy.* XLII (1975) No 3125.

⁶⁹ *PLRE* 1 Iulianus 35; Barnes (1982) 102, 128; Kuhoff (1983) No 16; Chastagnol (1992) 247, 427 n. 15; Settapani (2000) 497; Van Dam (2007) 173.

⁷⁰ Porena (2003) 299.

⁷¹ Salway (2008) 286–291.

327: Flavius Constantius et Valerius Maximus

Both consuls are attested in the consular dating *formulae* of contemporary papyri as currently praetorian prefects. Following Constantine's upgrading of senior equestrian civil offices to senatorial status c. AD 325⁷², both were probably already *virī clarissimi* by virtue of their appointments as praetorian prefect but in any case these would still constitute their first consulships⁷³. The non-senatorial origin is explicitly attested for Maximus⁷⁴, since he had filled the position of *vicarius Orientis* as an equestrian *vir perfectissimus* in 325–326, so suggestions that he should be linked with the noble, and probably patrician, Valerius Maximus *signo Basilius, praefectus urbi* 319–323⁷⁵, are to be firmly rejected⁷⁶. The order of seniority of Constantius and Maximus as consuls was probably dictated by their seniority of appointment as prefect⁷⁷.

328: Flavius Ianuarinus et Vettius Iustus

This would appear to be a pairing of ex-equestrian official with noble senator. Ianuarinus rose to prominence through the equestrian *cursus*, if he is rightly identified with the *vicarius Moesiarum* of 319 and *vicarius urbis Romae* of 320⁷⁸. This was certainly a first consulship.

Of Iustus nothing more is known for certain. His is plausibly another member of the patrician *gens Vettia*, perhaps a brother of the consul of 316 (or 323)⁷⁹. In the absence of any other evidence it is impossible to determine whether this would have been a first or second consulship by classical reckoning.

⁷² Chastagnol (1992) 238–239.

⁷³ Porena (2012) 306.

⁷⁴ *PLRE* 1 Maximus 49; Kuhoff (1983) No 33, 377–378.

⁷⁵ *PLRE* 1 Maximus 48. On the patrician family of the L. Valerii Maximi, prominent in the mid third century, see Christol (1986) 250–252.

⁷⁶ Cf. Chastagnol (1962) 72–74; Arnheim (1972) 69–70, 139, 141; Settapani (2000) 229–230, 497.

⁷⁷ Porena (2003) 382–397, 405–409; Porena (2006) 351–352.

⁷⁸ So *PLRE* 1 Ianuarinus 1 and 2, Barnes (1982) 103, Porena (2012) 306.

⁷⁹ Jacques (1986) 123, Settapani (2000) 497.

330: Flavius Gallicanus et Valerius Symmachus

Gallicanus is otherwise unknown but any connection with the noble consul prior of 317 is highly improbable⁸⁰. Although the papyri attribute to him no specific office, in the context of the 330s, the dynastic nomen Flavius is strongly suggestive of a non-senatorial origin and a career in imperial service⁸¹. If this assumption is correct, then this would certainly be a first consulship.

On the other hand Aurelius Valerius Symmachus Tullianus (the fullest form of his nomenclature that can be patched together from the divergent papyrus testimony) may not have been of noble birth but was plausibly born into the senatorial order and certainly pursued a tradition career, including the post of proconsul of Achaëa in 319⁸². Since Achaëa was a consular province after it fell into Constantine's orbit in 317, Symmachus' ordinary consulship over a decade later stands in the place of the second consulship of a traditional senatorial career.

331: Iunius Bassus et Flavius Ablabius

As in 327, both consuls are described in contemporary papyri as praetorian prefects and had risen to prominence via equestrian careers⁸³. If Porena's re-reading of a statue-base dedication from Paestum is correct, then Bassus is attested as *vir perfectissimus* corrector of Lucania and Bruttiorum under the Tetrarchy (*ILPaestum* 110 = AE 1975, 261)⁸⁴. Having started on the staff of the governor of Crete, Ablabius had more recently served as *vicarius* of Asiana. So these will have been first consulships for both men and, again as in 327, their order of precedence will have been determined by the dates of their appointment to the prefecture.

⁸⁰ Settipani (2000) 497.

⁸¹ Cameron (1988) 32.

⁸² *PLRE* 1 Symmachus 6; Cameron (1999) 480–485, 489–492, 503–504; Davenport (2013) 229–230.

⁸³ *PLRE* 1 Ablabius 4, Bassus 14; Kuhoff (1983) No 23; Porena (2003) 342–356, 409–415; Porena (2012) 306.

⁸⁴ Porena (2012) 298: [*L(ocus) d(atu)s*] *d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) // [Iu]nio Basso v(iro) p(erfectissimo) corr(ectori) / [re]gionum Lucaniae / [et] Brittiorum ob res[t/a]uratione(m) aqu(a)educ/[tus ordo populus(ue) / col(oniae) Paestanorum / patrono praestantissimo ?]*.

332: Papius Pacatianus et Mecilius Hilarianus

This is a pairing of an imperial official and a Roman senator. As certified by the papyri, L. Papius Pacatianus was currently a praetorian prefect, having come up through the equestrian *cursus*, including service as *praeses* of Sardinia (c. 308/9) and *vicarius* of Britain in 319⁸⁵. The ordinary consulship was certainly his first post in the traditional senatorial *cursus*.

By contrast, Mecilius Hilarianus, though without known consular forebears, had certainly followed a traditional senatorial career, having held the consular post of *corrector Lucaniae et Bruttiorum* as long ago as 316 and the proconsulship of Africa in 324 to 325⁸⁶. Hilarianus' ordinary consulship certainly stands in the place occupied by an iterated consulship traditionally.

333: Flavius Dalmatius et Domitius Zenophilus

A member of the imperial family is placed at the head of this year's consular pair, before a Roman senator. Dalmatius was the emperor Constantine's half-brother and, by spring 334, was ruling the East from Antioch with the title of *ensor*⁸⁷. Dalmatius had pursued no conventional career before 333, having spent his time first in forced retirement at Toulouse (Ausonius, *Professores* 17[16].11–13) and then at court; so this was a true first consulship.

Zenophilus has no known senatorial forebears but, even if he is not to be identified with the anonymous proconsul honoured at Bulla Regia in Africa between 324 and 337⁸⁸, patently pursued a traditional senatorial career, whose known elements comprise *corrector* of Sicily, *consularis* of Numidia (in 320), and recently proconsul of Africa (from at least 330 to 331)⁸⁹. Zenophilus' ordinary consulship stands in the position of an iterated consulship in a traditional career.

⁸⁵ PLRE 1 Pacatianus 2; Barnes (1982) 105, Kuhoff (1983) No 25, Porena (2003) 428–431, Porena (2012) 306.

⁸⁶ PLRE 1 Hilarianus 5; Barnes (1982) 105, Kuhoff (1983) No 57.

⁸⁷ PLRE 1 Dalmatius 6; Barnes (1982) 85, 105.

⁸⁸ AE 1917/18, 99 = ILAfr 456 = AE 1991, 1682: [[«*Eximiae potesta/tis et moderatio/nis et bonitatis*»]] / *ac praedicabili c(larissimo) v(iro) post cor/recturas et consularem dig/nitatem Ac<h>aiae Asiae iteru[m] / et Africae IIII proco(n)s(uli) sacro iudicio / domini et Augusti nostri / Constantini Maximi victo/ris ac triumfatoris semper Au[g(usti)] / et beatissimorum Caes[arum] / ENEAS[- - -] / TVS A[- - -]*. Arnheim (1972) 173–174; Barnes (1982) 106–107, Davenport (2013) 230–231.

⁸⁹ PLRE 1 Zenophilus, Kuhoff (1983) No 27.

334: Flavius Optatus et Anicius Paulinus

This year's consuls are a pairing of an imperial favourite and a noble patrician. Optatus pursued no conventional equestrian or public career; having tutored Licinius iunior as *grammaticus*, he remained in imperial favour under Constantine, becoming the first person on whom Constantine bestowed the new personal non-hereditary honour of *patricius*, as reported in the dating formula of the Egyptian papyri⁹⁰. This was undoubtedly a first consulship.

Amnius Man(l)ius Caesonius Nicomachus Anicius Paulinus *signo* Honorius, as he is known in full from a statue-base dedication to him from Rome (*CIL* VI 1682 + pp. 3813, 4733 = *ILS* 1220), is another member of the patrician *gens Anicia*, son of Iulianus (*cos.* 322)⁹¹. His own ordinary consulship complemented his tenure of the prefecture of the city (from 27 April 334 until 30 December 335) and came after service as *legatus* of the district of Carthage during his father's proconsulship of Africa (before 322) and a term as proconsul of Asia and the Hellespont some time after 324. Coming after his Asian proconsulship, this ordinary consulship certainly takes the position occupied by a second one traditionally.

335: Iulius Constantius et Rufius Albinus

As in 333, this consular pair unites a member of the imperial family with a Roman senator, this time of noble status. Iulius Constantius was the younger brother of Dalmatius and similarly followed no public career⁹². As witnessed by the papyri, Constantius also received the new personal title *patricius* and was even honoured as *nobilissimus vir*, a title that was usually reserved for those in the position of Caesar.

The certain facts of Ceionius Rufius Albinus' career are few⁹³. His father was Volusianus, the ordinary consul of 314, and Albinus just managed to repeat the achievement of his father in simultaneous tenure of the ordinary

⁹⁰ *PLRE* 1 Optatus 3, Barnes (1982) 107, Kuhoff (1983) No 29.

⁹¹ *PLRE* 1 Paulinus 14, Barnes (1982) 107, Kuhoff (1983) No 30. He was also related to the Caesonii-Ovinii: Christol (1986) 158–176, Settiani (2000) 498.

⁹² *PLRE* 1 Constantius 7, Barnes (1982) 107, Bagnall et al. (1987) 205.

⁹³ *PLRE* 1 Albinus 14, Barnes (1982) 108, following Mommsen, offers a fuller *cursum* (*consularis Campaniae, proconsul Achaiae, proconsul Asiae*) based on identification with the man whose horoscope is described in the *Mathesis* of Iulius Firmicus Maternus. Cf. *PLRE* 1 Anonymus 12, Kuhoff (1983) 320 n. 78.

consulship and the post of *praefectus urbi*, which he held from 30 December 335 until 10 March 337. Albinus' ordinary consulship of 335 certainly occupied the position of a traditional iteration, whether or not he had actually held an earlier suffect consulship in his teenage years.

336: Virius Nepotianus et Tettius Facundus

Virius Nepotianus is undoubtedly a descendant of the homonym, consul in 301, and, therefore, certainly a noble senator and possibly of the patrician branch of the *gens Viria*⁹⁴. No known career is on record but it has been suggested that he was the husband of Constantine's half-sister Eutropia, and so father of Iulius Nepotianus, who was briefly elevated at Rome in 350 as a rival emperor to the usurper Magnentius⁹⁵. Nepotianus may thus have owed precedence over his colleague to his status as Constantine's brother-in-law rather than in consideration of any public career.

No other information exists concerning Facundus apart from his consulship⁹⁶. The central Italian nomen Tettius cannot be said to weigh in favour of a senatorial over an equestrian background in the light of the cases of the contemporary equestrian officers Iunius Bassus and Papius Pacatianus⁹⁷. Without further information it is impossible to decide whether this was a true first consulship or a second consulship by traditional reckoning.

337: Flavius Felicianus et Fabius Titianus

As in 328, this pair of consuls juxtaposes an imperial official and a Roman senator. Felicianus is recorded in 335 as the first *comes Orientis*, a civil administrative post⁹⁸. Felicianus' earlier career is unknown but that he sports the dynastic nomen suggests he was of humble origins and that he worked his way up through the equestrian offices⁹⁹. This ordinary consulship was thus, no doubt, his first traditional senatorial magistracy.

⁹⁴ *PLRE* 1 Nepotianus 6 and 7, Christol (1986) 125, Jacques (1986) 122, Settipani (2000) 498.

⁹⁵ *PLRE* 1 Nepotianus 5 and stemma 2 p. 1129, Barnes (1982) 108.

⁹⁶ *PLRE* 1 Facundus 2.

⁹⁷ Porena (2012) 306.

⁹⁸ *PLRE* 1 Felicianus 5, Kuhoff (1983) No 34.

⁹⁹ Cameron (1988) 32.

Fabius Titianus, on the other hand, belonged to a family whose senatorial status went back to the Antonine age¹⁰⁰. A statue-base dedication erected by one his slaves (*CIL* VI 1717 = *ILS* 1227)¹⁰¹ documents the consular stages of a what was a standard senatorial career up to his ordinary consulship, from *corrector* of Flaminia and Picenum (soon after 325) to proconsul of Asia, though most recently he had also been admitted into the first rank of the imperial *comites*¹⁰². Coming after a proconsulship of Asia, this ordinary consulship would traditionally have been an iteration.

Observations

There is a high degree of uncertainty surrounding the background or career of at least a third of the consuls surveyed. Restricting ourselves to those that can be classified reliably, and excluding those cases involving members of the imperial family, it is those years in which an ex-equestrian official or imperial courtier is paired with a senator pursuing a traditional career that are most revealing of changing priorities: 314, 332, 334, and 337. That such ‘mixed’ pairings occurred at all is notable in itself; Diocletian and the Tetrarchs had managed (or preferred) to avoid such combinations altogether.

As noted already, in the first case Rufius Volusianus may have suffered the indignity of having his second (or third) tenure of the consulship equated to the first-time honour of Petronius Annianus but the senior senator still pulls rank over the praetorian prefect, perhaps because he was also simultaneously prefect of the city. In the second case, however, the situation of AD 273 (see above p. 202) is reversed; the chronologically senior praetorian prefect, Papius Pacatianus, does take precedence over his more junior but senatorial colleague, Mecilius Hilarianus. The reversal of fortunes is even starker in the case of Flavius Optatus and Anicius Paulinus. Here a man, who had performed no public office but had been ennobled by the new personal, non-hereditary honour of *patricius*, pushes a noble patrician senator, who was also about to take up the prefecture of the city, into second place. In 337 Flavius Felicianus, the probable *parvenu* who was administering the diocese of

¹⁰⁰ Q. Fabius Caesilius Modius Titianus, *vir clarissimus* c. 160: *PIR*² M 74, Settapani (2000) 498.

¹⁰¹ See [db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=\\$CIL_06_01717.jpg](http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/bilder.php?bild=$CIL_06_01717.jpg) (accessed 01/07/2014).

¹⁰² *PLRE* 1 Titianus 6, Kuhoff (1983) No 51.

Oriens, displaces Fabius Titianus, a senator of venerable heritage, despite the fact that Titianus displayed signs of imperial favour as a *comes ordinis primi*.

It is clear that by 332, at the latest, service at the imperial court counted for more than traditional claims to priority based on progress up the career ladder tied to the magistracies of the city of Rome. This is a logical development from the decision taken in 313, which had the effect not so much of reforming the suffect consulship but of uncoupling the ordinary consulship from the *cursus honorum* of the city of Rome. Thereafter the consulship ceased to occupy its double role of urban magistracy and imperial honour. The suffect consulship persisted as the chief magistracy of the city of Rome, while the ordinary consulship became a purely imperial honour. This might seem like a natural development of existing trends. However, it entailed an abrupt break with tradition, reflecting a mentality that was not afraid of innovation. For it also severed the umbilical cord that had continued to link the government of the city of Rome to that of the empire. It symbolised the abandonment of the pretence that the Roman state was formally an empire of the city of Rome rather than a monarchy with a separate administration to which the city of Rome was subject. This marks the moment at which Rome became simply another city, albeit a very privileged one, constituting part of the empire rather than its sovereign. This helps to explain and clarify the chronology of the phenomenon that Paul Veyne has described as the ‘municipalisation’ of the city of Rome in late antiquity, whereby the prefects of the city encroach into areas of activity that had for long been imperial monopolies¹⁰³.

This new political framework informed a new value system determining precedence between consuls. Roman senatorial aristocrats continued to enjoy success in attaining the ordinary consulship under Constantine but, after 325, they secured less than half the spots available and when they did so found that nobility, patrician lineage, and decades of office-holding at consular level no longer gained them advantage, as had been the case before 314. In fact the last Roman senator known to attain an ordinary consulship having previously exercised only urban magistracies (including the suffect consulship) is the noble and patrician consul of 345, Nummius Albinus, mentioned earlier¹⁰⁴. and then it may have been his ability to lobby the emperor Constans as one of his *comites ordinis primi* that was key. In the event, despite all Albinus’

¹⁰³ Veyne (1976) 687, 779 n. 404.

¹⁰⁴ *PLRE* 1 Albinus 13, Kuhoff (1983) No 40, Christol (1986) 214–218, Jacques (1986) 122, Settiani (2000) 498. See note 617 above.

traditional advantages, in the pairing he had to be content with the second spot, ceding precedence to a certain Flavius Amantius, a probable palatine official of obscure origin¹⁰⁵. There could hardly be a more eloquent demonstration of the new order, in which it was one's standing in the hierarchy of offices and honours centred on the imperial court and not the city of Rome that determined precedence¹⁰⁶. The pattern of the pairings for 323 and 325 (in its original version), suggests that new order of priorities was already in place before, and therefore independent of the foundation of Constantinople. Naturally ambitious members of the traditional senatorial aristocracy quickly learnt to compete for positions in the newly important imperial hierarchy (e.g. diocesan vicarius, praetorian prefect) that would once have been beneath their dignity.

Conclusions

A careful examination of the principles informing the pairing of consuls between 314 and 337 permits us to perceive phenomena that have generally been overlooked in discussions of the definition of the late Roman élite¹⁰⁷. Setting aside consideration of religious affiliation has highlighted the importance of other factors. The policy introduced from 314 was an entirely comprehensible and long overdue adjustment to restore congruity between political power and social status. It marked a break from the prevailing ideology of the Roman state as still an empire of the city of Rome. Whether or not part of a consciously worked out policy, the change confirms Constantine as someone unafraid of innovation beyond the realm of religion.

¹⁰⁵ *PLRE* 1 Amantius 4, Bagnall et al. (1987) 224–225.

¹⁰⁶ Sguaitamatti (2012) 59–70.

¹⁰⁷ E.g. Löhken (1982), Näf (1995), Schlinkert (1996).

Abbreviations

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
ACTA IFR	Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae
AE	L'Année épigraphique
AJAH	American Journal of Ancient History
ANET	Ancient Near Eastern Texts
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
BaM	Bagdadener Mitteilungen
BICS suppl.	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies supplements
BSAF	Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France
CÉFR	Collection de l'École française de Rome
CIG	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
CQ	Classical Quarterly
EHEES	Editions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales
FO	Fasti Ostienses
G&R	Greece and Rome
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift
IES	Israel Exploration Journal
IGLS	<i>Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie</i>
IGR	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes</i>
ILAfr	R. Cagnat, A. Merlin, L. Chatelain, <i>Inscriptions latines d'Afrique</i>
ILLRP	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae liberae rei publicae</i>
ILPaestum	<i>Le iscrizioni latine di Paestum</i>
ILS	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>
Inscr.It.	<i>Inscriptiones Italiae</i>
IvMilet	<i>Die Inschriften von Milet</i>
IvOlympia	W. Dittenberger, K. Purgold (ed), <i>Die Inschriften von Olympia</i>
JANES	Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society

JBASR	Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research
JCS	Journal of Cuneiform Studies
JLA	Journal of Late Antiquity
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
MD	Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici
MDAI	Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts. Abteilung Istanbul
MGR	Miscellanea Greca e Romana
NPi	Narseh from Pāikūlī
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
<i>PAT</i>	<i>Palmyrene Aramaic Texts</i>
PBA	Proceedings of the British Academy
PBSR	Papers of the British School at Rome
<i>PIR</i> ²	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani</i> (ed. 2)
<i>PNAE</i>	<i>The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire</i>
<i>PLRE</i>	<i>Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i>
PP	La Parola del passato
<i>RE</i>	<i>Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
REG	Revue des études grecques
<i>RIMA</i>	<i>Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Assyrian Period</i>
<i>RIMB</i>	<i>Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia Babylonian Period</i>
<i>RLA</i>	<i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie</i>
<i>RRC</i>	<i>Roman Republican Coinage</i>
<i>SAA</i>	<i>State Archives Of Assyria</i>
<i>SAAB</i>	<i>State Archives Of Assyria Bulletin</i>
<i>SAAS</i>	<i>State Archives Of Assyria Studies</i>
SCO	Studi Classici ed Orientali
ŠKZ	Šāpur I from Naqš-e Rostam
TAPA	Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association
ZA	Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

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