

Valens' Recall of the Nicene Exiles and Anti-Arian Propaganda

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JEROME HIMSELF admits the haste with which he translated and extended Eusebius' *Chronicle*, and caustically predicts the fate his work will suffer at the hands of critics: "They will quibble about the dates, change the order, question the accuracy of events, sift each syllable, and, as often happens, will ascribe to the authors the negligence of copyists."¹ Among many who fulfilled this prophecy, the eighteenth-century historian le Nain de Tillemont questioned Jerome's attribution to the Arian emperor Valens of a recall of Nicene exiles.² Jerome apparently dated this recall to the spring of 378, when Valens was forced to leave Antioch to meet the Goths in Thrace (*Chron.* A.D. 378 [GCS 47.249]): *Valens de Antiochia exire compulsus sera paenitentia nostros de exiliis revocat.*³

The *Ecclesiastical History* of Jerome's contemporary Rufinus also mentions (11.13) a recall of Nicene exiles by Valens. But in the next century the church historians Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret credit the recall to the western emperor Gratian (375–383), noting only that the Nicenes took heart after Valens' departure from Antioch and began to return after his death at Adrianople in August 378.⁴ Tillemont rejected the contemporary evidence of Jerome and Rufinus in favor of Gratian's recall on the argument that there is no proof that any of the bishops exiled by Valens returned before his death. The single exception, Peter of Alexandria (bp. 373–381), may have done so without express authorization, Tillemont suggested, because he was aware of Valens' military straits and was confident of a welcome reception in Alexandria. (Indeed, the Arian bishop Lucius was

¹ *Chron.* praef. (ed. Helm, GCS 47.2f, 5f).

² L. S. le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles* (Paris 1714) VI 610–13, 799f; cf., for his comments on Jerome's defects as an historian, XII 53, 142.

³ For the Gothic war (A.D. 376–378) see A. Nagl, *RE* 7.2 (1943) 2096–2137 s.v. "Valens (3)," esp. 2118–26, and in general, O. Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt* V (Stuttgart 1920) 84–134; cf. J. O. Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns* (Berkeley 1973) 18–52.

⁴ Soc. *HE* 4.35, 37, 5.2; Soz. *HE* 6.39.1f, 7.1.3; Theod. *HE* 5.2.

ousted by the populace on Peter's return.⁵) Tillemont found support for his argument in the story, recorded in Sozomen (6.40.1) and Theodoret (4.34), in which the Constantinopolitan monk Isaac warns Valens that he can expect to win the war against the Goths only if he restores to the Nicene bishops their churches and their congregations. On this telling, Valens' failure to recall the exiles resulted in the disaster at Adrianople. Tillemont concluded that Jerome and Rufinus reflect not an actual recall, but a rumor based on a verbal promise of Valens reinforced by the return of Peter to Alexandria.

In recent years most scholars have accepted both the recall by Valens and that by Gratian.⁶ Modern acceptance of Valens' recall is based not on rebuttal of Tillemont's arguments,⁷ but upon a Syriac witness unknown to Tillemont. The *Chronicon Edessenum* does, in fact, appear to answer one of Tillemont's major objections, that there is no clear evidence that the bishops returned to their sees in response to the recall attributed to Valens by Jerome and Rufinus. Item 33 of the *Chronicon* records the return of Nicene exiles to Edessa on 27 December 377, a date accepted without question by most scholars. If, however, the item should be dated to 378—as Hallier, an editor of the *Chronicon*, argues—it cannot be used to support a recall by Valens, and the historicity of that recall is by no means settled.⁸ Moreover, the curious discrepancy in our sources has nowhere received adequate treatment since Tillemont.⁹

The purpose of this study is to re-examine and re-evaluate the evidence for the recalls variously attributed to both emperors, in response to the arguments of Tillemont and Hallier and in light of the development of anti-Arian propaganda at Constantinople during the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Since Valens' reign has received little scholarly attention, our conclusions should contribute to an understanding of his religious policy.

⁵ Soc. *HE* 4.37f; Soz. *HE* 6.39.1, 7.5.6; F. Kettler, *RE* 19 (1938) 1292 s.v. "Petros (2)."

⁶ E.g. Seeck (*supra* n.3) 111, 122; E. CASPAR, *Geschichte des Papsttums von den Anfängen bis zur Höhe der Weltherrschaft* I (Tübingen 1930) 232; G. BARDY, *Histoire de l'église depuis les origines jusqu' à nos jours*, edd. A. Fliche and V. Martin, III (Paris 1947) 275, 281; E. STEIN, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* I (Paris 1959) 185, 197; A. PIGANIOL, *L'Empire chrétien (325–395)* (Paris 1972) 184, 229; M. SIMONETTI, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo* (Rome 1975) 434, 445 [hereafter cited by author only]. Some, however, still express uncertainty about Valens' recall, e.g. Gottlieb (n.91 *infra*) 77 n.164.

⁷ To my knowledge Tillemont is mentioned only by L. Cantarelli, "La persecuzione di Taziano contro gli ortodossi di Alessandria," *Studi romani e bizantini* (Rome 1915) 287 n.3.

⁸ On the *Chronicon Edessenum* see 397–401 *infra*.

⁹ Cf. Caspar 232 (briefly).

I. The Syriac Chronicles

Given the evidence at his disposal, Tillemont appears to have been correct in asserting that, with the exception of Peter of Alexandria, there is no record that exiled bishops returned until after the death of Valens.¹⁰ The fifth-century historians date Peter's return to the spring of 378 and attribute it, as we noted above, to Valens' preoccupation with the Gothic war (*supra* n.5); they place the return of all other Nicene exiles after the death of Valens and as a consequence of a recall by Gratian.¹¹ Although we have an abundance of contemporary evidence for many of the more important exiles (*e.g.* Eusebius of Samosata, Gregory of Nyssa, and Meletius of Antioch), in no instance do we have a clear indication that they returned before the death of Valens.¹²

One could reasonably argue that there was insufficient time between the issuance of Valens' recall in the spring of 378 (according to Jerome) and his death in August of the same year for the effect to be noticed by our sources. Nonetheless Tillemont was correct in pointing to the lack of contemporary substantiating evidence for Valens' recall, and only the *Chronicon Edessenum* has hitherto answered his objection effectively.

The *Chronicon*, which covers the period 133 B.C. to A.D. 540, was composed in its present form in the middle of the sixth century. Local in character, it draws on Edessan bishop-lists for its primary framework. It survives in one seventh-century manuscript (*Vat.syr.* 163).¹³

Item 33 of the *Chronicon* (quoted *infra*) records an Orthodox takeover of the Edessan church and probably marks the return of the

¹⁰ Of the known exiles under Valens (with the exception of the Edessans) only for Maximus the Cynic do we have evidence of a return prior to Aug. 378. Maximus' return to Alexandria in 377, however, can be seen simply in the context of Peter's successful reclamation of his see; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 25.13f (Migne, *PG* 35.1216f).

¹¹ Soc. 5.3, 5.5; Soz. 7.2f. On Theod. 5.2 see n.90 *infra*.

¹² Eusebius was exiled to Thrace in 374–378 (*Bas. Epp.* 181–83, 237, 239, 268; Greg. Naz. *Epp.* 64–66; Greg. Nyss. *Ep.* 19.10–18; Theod. *HE* 4.13–15). Gregory spent the years 376–378 in exile (Greg. Nyss. *Eun.* 1.12, *V.Macr.* 2.192, *Epp.* 3, 22; *Bas. Epp.* 225, 231f, 237, 239; Greg. Naz. *Epp.* 72–74). Meletius was exiled twice under Valens, once in 365–366/7, probably to Armenia, a second time in 371–378, to Getasa in Armenia. See W. Ensslin, *RE* 15 (1932) 500–02 s.v. "Meletius (3)," and n.131 *infra*.

¹³ For a brief history of the text see *Chronicon Edessenum*, ed. I. Guidi, in *CSCO, Script. Syr.: Chron. min.* Ser. 3.4 (Paris 1903) 1; cf. L. Hallier, *Untersuchungen über die edessenische Chronik* (= *TU* 9.1 [1892]) 1–83. For the date see A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn 1922) 99 and n.8. See also J. B. Segal, *Edessa 'The Blessed City'* (Oxford 1970).

Nicenes exiled from Edessa by Valens.¹⁴ The item is dated 27 December of the Seleucid year 689 (A.D. 377);¹⁵ it serves to confirm at least the statements of Jerome and Rufinus that Valens had issued an order for the recall of exiles, if not the precise date implied by Jerome. Hallier (102), however, argues for redating this return to 27 Dec. 378.¹⁶ If Hallier is correct, the Edessan Chronicle supports a recall by Gratian, and an important piece of evidence substantiating the recall by Valens evaporates. It will be necessary, therefore, to examine Hallier's argument in detail.

For the sake of clarifying the discussion that follows it will be useful to reproduce here the relevant passages of the *Chronicon*, noting that the Seleucid year began in October.¹⁷ Items 32–34 read:

32: Anno 689, mense ādār (martio), migravit ex hoc saeculo Mār Barsē Edessae episcopus.

33: Eodem anno, die 27 kânûn qēdēm (decembris) *postliminio reversi* Orthodoxi ingressi sunt et occupaverunt edessenam ecclesiam *recuperatam*.

34: Per idem tempus factus est Mār Eulogius episcopus, anno nimirum quo Theodosius magnus imperare coepit . . .¹⁸

Hallier (102) briefly noted that chronological order demands that item 33 should fall in the Seleucid year 690 (A.D. 378), *i.e.*, the sequence should be 32: March 689 (A.D. 378)—33: December 690 (A.D. 378)—34: post 19 January 690 (A.D. 379). He concluded that the words *eodem anno* in 33, which clearly refer back to 32 (*anno* 689), were either an interpolation or that the item that had originally followed them had been excised (“Ein Excerptor hat verkürzt”). Therefore Hallier concludes that “Die Bischöfe kehrten zurück auf das Edikt des orthodox Gratianus, nicht durch ein Edikt des Valens selbst.”¹⁹

¹⁴ Hallier (102) translates *Chronicon Edessenum* 33, “Am 27. Kânûn qēdēm desselben Jahres nahmen die Orthodoxen wieder Besitz von der Kirche von Orhâi.” Both Guidi (5f) and Hallier (149) appear to interpret rather than simply translate the Syriac text, which does not state explicitly that the Orthodox have *returned* to *reoccupy* the Edessan church.

¹⁵ O. SEECK, *Regesten der Kaiser und Päpste* (Stuttgart 1919 [hereafter ‘Seeck, *Regesten*’]) 249; see also V. Grumel, *La chronologie* (Paris 1958) 241.

¹⁶ He is followed only by Cavallera (n.37 *infra*) 211f n.2. Curiously, Rauschen, *Jahrbücher der christlichen Kirche unter dem Kaiser Theodosius dem Grossen* (Freiburg 1897) 35f, dates the return of the Edessans to 27 December 378, although earlier (29) he gives the year as 377; in both cases he cites the *Chronicon Edessenum*.

¹⁷ Grumel (*supra* n.15) 174.

¹⁸ Latin translation by Guidi 5f; italicized words are absent in the Syriac text. I am indebted to Elias Mallon for his assistance and advice on Syriac passages cited in this article.

¹⁹ Oddly, Hallier seems unaware that Jerome and Rufinus recorded Valens' recall. He cites, only to dismiss, the witness of the *Chronicon Miscellaneum*, on which see 401f *infra*.

This is the whole of Hallier's argument. Elsewhere (102 *s.num.* XXXIV) he appears to interpret Theodoret (*HE* 4.18.14) to mean that Barses died before the return of the exiles, and that on their return Eulogius, Barses' chief presbyter, was consecrated bishop. If this is indeed what Theodoret meant, then the sequence, death of Barses (March 378)—return of exiles (December 378)—consecration of Eulogius (post 19 January 379), has external confirmation. The chronology of the passage in Theodoret is not, however, explicit:

ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὴν ἐνεγκοῦσαν κατέλαβον, ὁ μὲν θεῖος Εὐλόγιος, Βάρσου τοῦ μεγάλου μεταστάντος εἰς τὸν ἄλυπον βίον, τῆς ὑπ' ἐκείνου κυβερνωμένης ἐκκλησίας ἐπιστεύθη τοὺς οἴακας·

After they had returned to their mother city, when (since?) the great Barses had departed to the life without pain, the divine Eulogius was entrusted with the helm of the church he had steered.

The genitive absolute, in fact, leaves the time of Barses' death ambiguous. An apparently more explicit reference (*Barses in exilio obiit*) is found in a Syriac chronicle (eighth–ninth century) not noted by Hallier.²⁰ It is likely, however, that this statement was simply an inference drawn from the order of the Edessan Chronicle, a known source of this Syriac chronicle, and the one it is demonstrably following here.²¹ It seems rash to emend the text of the *Chronicon Edesse-num* on the basis of a late, derivative chronicle and an ambiguous passage in Theodoret. Further, if we remove *eodem anno*, item 33 becomes the only statement not introduced by some form of connective (*cf.* 39–41, quoted *infra*). Considerations of form thus argue for its retention.

Hallier correctly noted that a sequence that reads March 378, December 377, post 19 January 379, is a chronological curiosity. But it can be shown that the Edessan chronicler elsewhere fails to adhere to strict chronological sequence. For example, items 39–41 read:

39: Anno 706, die 17 kânūn ḥērāy (ianuarii), migravit ex hoc saeculo Theodosius magnus imperator. Die vero 27 nīsān (aprilis) Arcadius Constantinopolim ingressus est. Die autem 8 tešrīn ḥērāy (novembris), cadaver Theodosii eamdem urbem intravit.

²⁰ *Chronicon ad annum Domini 846 pertinens*, ed. E.-W. Brooks, tr. I.-B. Chabot (*CSCO, Script. Syr. Ser.* 3.4) 156 line 17.

²¹ For a brief discussion of the chronicle's sources, see Brooks and Chabot (*supra* n.20) 121f. The chronicle (156 lines 12–21) reproduces the content of *Chron.Edess.* 30–35 and provides an explanatory expansion of items 32–34. Its author clearly did not, however, use the Edessan chronicle directly. The dating, for instance, is either lacking or incorrect.

40: Eodem anno, mense tammūz (iulio), Hunni in Romanorum ditionem trangressi sunt.

41: Anno 707, die 22 tammūz (iulii), migravit ex hoc saeculo Mār Cyrus Edessae episcopus.²²

Item 39 is dated to the year 706 (A.D. 395) and lists events occurring in January, April, and November. Since the Seleucid year began in October, the arrival of Theodosius' body in Constantinople—technically the last of the events recorded—occurred in the year 707. But item 40 is dated to July *eodem anno*, where the year referred to is undoubtedly the 706 of item 39.²³ Our chronicler has here broken a strict temporal sequence, recording occurrences in January and April 706, then November 707, then July 706, then July 707 (item 41). Clearly he had a subsidiary objective in mind. In 39 he has mentioned three related events: the death of Theodosius (17 January A.D. 395), the entrance of Arcadius into Constantinople (27 April), and the arrival of Theodosius' body in Constantinople (8 November). Even though the last occurred in the Seleucid year 707, it naturally follows the two earlier events and is mentioned in connection with them. With *eodem anno* of item 40 he then refers back to the last *named* date, *i.e.*, 706. Similarly in the case of items 32 and 33 we should not regard strict chronological sequence as an overriding principle. The *eodem anno* of 33 is not an interpolation. The chronicler apparently recorded first an event of March 689 (A.D. 378), then a related event in December 689 (A.D. 377).

The framework of the *Chronicon Edessenum* is based on Edessan bishop-lists drawn ultimately from the church archives.²⁴ When the death or succession of a bishop is mentioned, it is that event which is associated with a named year.²⁵ Subsequent items or entries on related or contemporaneous events take that date as their point of reference. The Council of Nicaea, for instance, is the third item under the succession of Bishop Aytallāhā (14). This procedure is also followed in cases other than Edessan bishops. The deaths of Theodosius I (39) and the Edessan holy man and savant Ephrem (30) are recorded after the precise pattern of item 32 describing the death of Bishop Barse. The record of Ephrem's death is followed by an item

²² Trans. Guidi 6.

²³ Hallier (104f) recognizes the chronological discrepancy and also must conclude that item 40 is dated by the Edessan chronicle to 706.

²⁴ Hallier 53–58. The bishop-list on which entries 22–59 are based was compiled in the mid-fifth century. The chronicler adheres to its format far more closely than he does to a second list, identified by Hallier as the basis of 68–94 and dated to the mid-sixth century.

²⁵ The only exception is from the second half of the Chronicle, items 74f (Guidi 8).

from local church history (*eiusdem anni*), the expulsion of the Nicenes from the Edessan church by the Arians (A.D. 373).²⁶ So, too, the record of Bishop Barses' death is followed by the corresponding item from local church history, the return of the exiles. That the exiles returned before Barses died offers no difficulty: our chronicler has once again subordinated actual chronology to compositional method. Bishop Barses' death in March of 689 (A.D. 378) takes pride of place over an earlier event of the same year, the return of the exiles in December 689 (A.D. 377). Hallier's argument for redating the return to Dec. 378—based as it is on a debatable question of chronology and requiring a stylistically questionable emendation of the text—should no longer be considered valid.

Further confirmation of the historicity of Valens' recall is offered by the *Chronicon Miscellaneum*, an eighth-century manuscript containing, as its title implies, four different chronicles. Pertinent here is that recording events to the year A.D. 641.²⁷ Under a very brief account of the reign of Valens, devoted almost solely to his persecution of the Nicenes, the chronicle states: eo tempore (the Gothic War) misit litteras de reditu, et in urbem suam unusquisque reversus est.²⁸ This passage, unlike the account in Jerome and Rufinus, mentions specific legislation (*litterae de reditu*) for implementing Valens' recall. Though the Syriac *'egratâ* is not a *terminus technicus*,²⁹ the chronicler does use the word elsewhere for an imperial communiqué, and it seems reasonable to conclude that it was meant to represent a rescript.³⁰ The testimony of the *Chronicon Miscellaneum* does not appear to stem from the tradition of Jerome and Rufinus but stands as an independent witness, confirming the fourth-century sources. When this account is coupled with the return of the Edessans in response to a recall by Valens, the historicity of that act has even greater support.

It is quite probable that Valens would have implemented a recall by sending rescripts (with the force of an edict) to provincial gover-

²⁶ *Chron. Edess.* 30f: Anno 684, mense ḥazīrān (junio), die nona, migravit ex hoc saeculo Mār Ephrem sapientissimus. Mense ēlūl (septembri) eiusdem anni, ecclesia Edessae populus excessit propter Arianorum insectationem (trans. Guidi 5). For the date: Seeck, *Regesten* 245.

²⁷ *Chronicon Miscellaneum ad annum Domini 724 pertinens* (also known as the *Liber Calipharum*), ed. E.-W. Brooks, Lat. trans. I.-B. Chabot (*CSCO, Script. Syr. Ser.* 3.4) 63–108.

²⁸ Trans. Chabot 105.

²⁹ R. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford 1903) 3. My thanks to Ralph Gehrke for helpful comments on the Syriac text.

³⁰ *Chron. Miscell.*: hoc tempore misit Theodosius litteras pacis Christianis (trans. Chabot 105; Syriac 135). Cf. the use of ἐπιστολή and γράμματα as non-technical terms for rescripts: H. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions* (Toronto 1974) 126.

nors;³¹ or he might simply have sent them to the respective cities of exiles, as Constantine II had done in 337.³² When, however, would these rescripts have been issued? Jerome says that Valens recalled the Nicene exiles at the time when the Gothic war compelled him to leave Antioch (*supra* 395). But undoubtedly Jerome did not mean to date the recall to the precise moment of Valens' departure in the spring of 378.³³ Preparations for Valens' move from Antioch to Constantinople had been going on throughout the second half of 377 (Amm. Marc. 31.7.1). In addition, the severity of the situation in Thrace had caused the emperor to deploy there a major force being readied for a war in Armenia.³⁴ It is in this general context of military crisis that we should envision the decision to recall the Nicenes.

The Edessans returned in late December of 377. Even if there was quite rapid communication of the recall, at the very least two months would have been needed to effect their return.³⁵ (Barses was in exile in Oxyrhynchus, his clergy and lay Edessans in the Thebaid and Arabia.)³⁶ September or October of 377 would be the latest date one can assume for Valens' issuance of the rescripts.

This date for the recall allows time for word to have reached Peter in Rome and for his return to Alexandria in early 378 in response to Valens' legislation.³⁷ The ease of Peter's resumption of his see (*supra* 395) thus finds ready explanation, as does his arrival armed with official letters from Pope Damasus confirming the Nicene faith and recognizing the legitimacy of Peter's consecration.³⁸

II. Jerome and Rufinus

Tillemont was compelled to dismiss the evidence of Jerome and Rufinus as mere repetition of rumor in order to maintain his thesis that the only genuine recall of exiles had been issued by Gratian. But

³¹ On the use of rescripts for religious legislation in the Late Empire see F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (New York 1977) 314, 319, 569.

³² K. Baus in *History of the Church* (n.65 *infra*) 34f.

³³ Seeck, *Regesten* 351.

³⁴ Stein 189.

³⁵ On speed of publication *cf.* Millar (*supra* n.31) 254, 569f.

³⁶ Theod. *HE* 4.16–18; *cf.* Soz. *HE* 6.34.1 and Soc. *HE* 4.18; Bas. *Epp.* 264, 267.

³⁷ Basil would appear to acknowledge the recall grudgingly in a letter written to Peter at Alexandria shortly after his return (*Ep.* 266.1). For the date: P. Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea* (Toronto 1981) 18. For Peter's location: F. Cavallera, *Le schisme d'Antioche* (Paris 1923) 207. *Cf.* Basil's cryptic references to a coming time of peace in a letter written in 377 to Barses of Edessa (*Ep.* 264; *cf.* 267).

³⁸ *Cf.* Athanasius' arrival in Alexandria with a letter from Pope Julius after his recall by Constantius II in 345 (Simonetti 199f).

the historicity of Valens' recall would, in the light of the foregoing arguments, appear assured. The general unreliability of Jerome and of Rufinus, however, has been acknowledged since antiquity, and it will be helpful at this point to assess their probable sources.³⁹ We should consider, in addition, the witness of Orosius (*Adv. pag.* 7.33.12).

Jacques Schwartz has argued that in the *Chronicle* for the period from the death of Jovian (364) to the death of Valens (378), Jerome followed a *breviarium* (no longer extant) that continued Eutropius.⁴⁰ It is, however, unlikely that events of partisan ecclesiastical strife figured in a traditional historical survey. It is more reasonable to assume that the record of Valens' recall was an item contributed from Jerome's own experience.

From 375 to 377 Jerome was living in the desert of Chalcis, some fifty miles east of Antioch (*Epp.* 2, 5, 17).⁴¹ Not only was he in the near vicinity of Valens' working capital, but his monastic life by no means cut him off entirely from the outside world (*Epp.* 5, 7). In 377 he became actively involved in the Nicene episcopal controversy at Antioch (*Epp.* 15–17)⁴² and later in the same year moved to that city. Jerome spent several years in Antioch studying before proceeding to Constantinople in 379 or 380. In a year's time there he translated Eusebius' *Chronicle*, bringing it down to the death of Valens.⁴³ Although Jerome's presence in Antioch, his active involvement in church politics, and the short time between the event and its recording do not guarantee the accuracy of his attribution of a recall of the Nicenes to Valens, they would appear to strengthen his credibility.

Both Orosius and Rufinus seem at first glance to have derived their knowledge of Valens' recall from Jerome. Rufinus, however, as will be argued below, constitutes an independent source. Orosius has simply expanded Jerome's terse entry (*Valens de Antiochia exire compulsus sera paenitentia nostros de exiliis revocat* [GCS 47.249]) to: *Valens egressus de Antiochia cum ultima infelicis belli sorte traheretur, sera peccati maximi paenitentia stimulatus episcopos ceterosque sanctos revocari de exiliis imperavit* (*Adv. pag.* 7.33.12).⁴⁴ Orosius' dependence on Jerome's *Chronicle* is well known and is particularly evident in his

³⁹ On Rufinus as an historian see *infra*. Most recently on Jerome, see J. Kelly, *Jerome: His Life, Writings and Controversies* (London 1975) 71–77.

⁴⁰ J. Schwartz, "A propos d'une notice de la chronologie de Jérôme," *Bonner Historia Augusta-Colloquium 1977–1978*, ed. J. Straub (*Antiquitas* Ser. 4.14 [1980]) 225–32.

⁴¹ Kelly (*supra* n.39) 46–56; G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria* (Princeton 1961) 412f; A. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne* (*BEFAR* 194 [1959]) 415–18.

⁴² For the Antiochene controversy see n.114 *infra* and 416f *infra*, with notes.

⁴³ Kelly (*supra* n.39) 57–68.

⁴⁴ Marianus Scotus *Chron.* 3.198 (Migne, *PL* 142.713) repeats Jerome verbatim.

discussion of the closing years of Valens' reign.⁴⁵ He is, however, selective in what he borrows from the *Chronicle*, and it is of interest to note that Valens' recall finds mention in the West in the early fifth century (see 406f *infra*).⁴⁶

Like Jerome, and unlike Orosius, Rufinus drew on his own experience for his record of Valens' reign.⁴⁷ Of the recall of the Nicenes he writes: *tum vero Valentis bella, quae Ecclesiis inferebat, in hostem coepta converti, seraque paenitentia episcopos et presbyteros relaxari exiliis, ac de metallis resolvi monachos iubet* (HE 11.13). With the exception of one obvious verbal allusion (*sera paenitentia*, a phrase too idiosyncratic to ignore), Rufinus' statement owes little or nothing to Jerome. Mention of the monks condemned to the mines is precisely what one would expect from an eyewitness of the Arian persecution of the Nicenes in Alexandria in 373.⁴⁸ Although Rufinus' own account of that persecution is not without flaw,⁴⁹ he was himself residing with the monks of Nitria (forty miles south of Alexandria) when they were attacked by imperial troops. We learn from a letter of the exiled Nicene bishop Peter (Theod. HE 4.22.1–36) that among the victims were twenty-three desert monks who were sent to the mines and eleven monastics who were exiled to Diocaesarea (Palestine). Rufinus maintained contact with the Diocaesarean exiles,⁵⁰ and it is undoubtedly the return of the Nitrian monks from the mines that he has in mind in the passage quoted above.

Jerome and Rufinus would thus appear to provide independent, contemporary, and virtually eyewitness testimony to the authenticity of Valens' recall of the Nicene exiles. Even without the corroborating evidence of the Edessan chronicles, and even considering the fre-

⁴⁵ In general on Orosius' sources see F. Wotke, *RE* 18.1 (1939) 1189–92. For examples of borrowing from Jerome cf. *GCS* 47.248f and *Adv.pag.* 7.33.11–15.

⁴⁶ Orosius fails to mention, for example, Jerome's friends Florentinus, Bonosus, and Rufinus (*GCS* 47.248). Conversely, he adds material germane to Africa (e.g. 7.33.5–7), where the *Adv.pag.* was written ca 415.

⁴⁷ Ruf. HE 10.1, *decimum vero et undecimum librum nos conscripsimus partim ex maiorum traditionibus, partim ex his quae nostra iam memoria comprehenderat*. Rufinus' two books cover the years 325–395 and were written after 400; cf. F. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works* (Washington 1945) 158–76.

⁴⁸ *Quae praesens vidi loquor et eorum gesta refero, quorum in passionibus socius esse promerui* (HE 11.4); see Murphy (*supra* n.47) 28–52 for Rufinus' activities in the period 373–378.

⁴⁹ E.g. the prefect of Egypt in 373 was Palladius, not, as Rufinus says (HE 11.2), Tatian; cf. *PLRE* I 876f s.v. "Tatianus (5)."

⁵⁰ On the Diocaesareans: Theod. HE 4.22.35; cf. Bas. *Ep.* 265, Petr. I Alex. in Fac. *Ad iust.* 4.2.14, 11.2.3 (*Corp. Ch., Ser. Lat.* 90A.109f, 334); Apoll. in Leont. *Adv.fraud.* 146 (ed. H. Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea* [Tübingen 1904] 255f); Pall. *Laus.* 46.3; Soc. HE 4.36.

quently careless historiography demonstrated in Jerome and Rufinus, their joint witness should not have been so lightly dismissed by Tillemont.

It remains puzzling that the fifth-century ecclesiastical historians fail to record such a recall. Socrates, for example, used Rufinus' *Ecclesiastical History* and Jerome's *Chronicle* in writing his own history of the Church.⁵¹ Socrates (*HE* 2.1), it is true, had no high opinion of Rufinus as an historian, but he consulted him where he judged him reliable (e.g. for the persecution of 373 in Egypt, 4.24). Socrates undoubtedly read of Valens' recall in both Rufinus and Jerome. Why did he choose not to record it? He could not have verified it (even if he had wanted to) by consulting a central record of imperial legislation, for there was none before the Theodosian code in 438.⁵² But it is very likely that Socrates, and Sozomen and Theodoret as well, were in a position neither to believe nor to record Valens' recall, because anti-Arian propaganda in the capital had, as we shall see, effectively erased it from contemporary historical consciousness.

III. The Monk Isaac

Both Sozomen (*HE* 6.40.1) and Theodoret (*HE* 4.34) record the story of the monk Isaac, a Constantinopolitan hermit who, driven from the Syrian desert by an order from on high to combat Arianism, accosted Valens before his departure for the battle of Adrianople.⁵³ Isaac exhorted the emperor to recall the orthodox (Theod.) and to return their churches to them (Soz.). If he complied, said Isaac, victory would be his (Soz. and Theod.); but if he did not, he would never return (Soz. and Theod.) and his army would be destroyed (Theod.). Although there are two extant *Vitae Isaaci*,⁵⁴ the fifth-century historians are the earliest and most authoritative source for

⁵¹ See in general F. Geppert, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Socrates Scholasticus* (Leipzig 1898). Sozomen probably did not himself consult Jerome but did read Rufinus in Greek translation independently of Socrates; see G. Schoo, *Die Quellen des Kirchenhistorikers Sozomenos* (Berlin 1911). On the Greek version of Rufinus' *Ecclesiastical History* see Murphy (*supra* n.47) 175.

⁵² A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* I (Norman [Okla.] 1964) 473–76.

⁵³ For important comment on Isaac: G. Dagron, "Les moines et la ville: le monachisme à Constantinople jusqu'au concile de Chalcedoine (451)," *Trav. et mém.* 4 (1970) 229–76; on the Syrian monks' support of Nicaea, see 417f *infra*.

⁵⁴ *AA SS* 30 May VII 243–55. The shorter life (254f), published only in Latin translation, may be earlier in date than the longer (sixth–eighth cent.); see L. S. le Nain de Tillemont, *Histoire des empereurs* (Paris 1720) V 703f. Both *vitae* contain glaring errors.

the story of the confrontation between monk and emperor, and in all accounts Valens refuses to heed the advice of Isaac—he does not recall the exiles or hand over the churches to them—and consequently meets his doom.

The story of Isaac is clearly an *ex post facto* prophecy and a popular explanation of the disaster at Adrianople.⁵⁵ It was Valens' Arianism and his failure to repent his actions against the Nicenes that caused his defeat and death.⁵⁶ This story, even more than the silence of the ecclesiastical historians on Valens' recall, directly contradicts the evidence of Jerome and Rufinus. Hence Tillemont tried to use it to strengthen his case against them.⁵⁷ The bearing of the legend on the question of Valens' recall has in more recent times been dismissed as "assez suspect."⁵⁸ Hagiographical material need not, however, be rejected out of hand, and it is precisely the contradiction of history in the story of Isaac that is of interest here. If Valens' recall is genuine, how then to explain Isaac?

It would appear that local chronicles, such as those of Edessa, and western authors, such as Orosius, continued to record a Nicene recall by Valens;⁵⁹ its denial was a particularly Constantinopolitan tradition and one that, as will be argued below, probably figured in an imperial anti-Arian campaign in the capital.

The fifth-century Church historians Socrates and Sozomen wrote in Constantinople;⁶⁰ Theodoret, although a provincial, repeated and expanded on Constantinopolitan traditions found in the other two historians.⁶¹ The *Vitae Isaaci* are of Constantinopolitan origin.⁶² Forty years of Arian domination of the capital (Soz. *HE* 7.5.7) made it natural for Nicene propagandists to want to blacken the memory of the last Arian emperor. This was not a difficult task, of course, for Valens' defeat at Adrianople (378) spoke for itself, and the Gothic

⁵⁵ Cf. the sinister portent in Zosimus (4.21: Paschoud II.2, 282f); see W. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome* (Princeton 1968) 121.

⁵⁶ The prophecies of the monks accounted for imperial success as well as failure; on St Sabas and Justinian see Kaegi (*supra* n.55) 210–12.

⁵⁷ Tillemont (*supra* n.2) 800.

⁵⁸ Bardy 275 n.1.

⁵⁹ Interestingly the *Chronicon Iacobi Edesseni* (tenth cent.), ed. E.-W. Brooks (*CSCO, Script. Syr. Ser.* 3.4) 224, clearly knows from Theodoret of Isaac's confrontation with Valens but chooses not to mention his warning about the exiles. Epiphanius-Cassiodorus, *Historia Ecclesiastica Tripartita*, derivative as it is from the fifth-century historians, probably accounts for the absence of Valens' recall in many western sources.

⁶⁰ W. Eltester, *RE* 3A(1927) 894–901 s.v. "Sokrates Scholasticus"; 1240–48 s.v. "Sozomenos (2)."

⁶¹ On Theodoret's sources: Scheidweiler (n.77 *infra*) xxiiiif.

⁶² Tillemont, *supra* n.54.

raids that followed, right up to the walls of the city, did nothing to endear an already disliked emperor to the people of Constantinople.⁶³

In the West, Christian apologetic sought to exonerate the Christian God from responsibility for Adrianople and its more important aftermath, the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410. The barbarian invasions were depicted as a sign of God's displeasure with pagans and heretics.⁶⁴ It was Arianism, according to Orosius (*Adv. pag.* 7.33.18f), that was responsible for the defeat at Adrianople: the Arian emperor Valens was felled by divine wrath (*divina indignatio*), ironically through the instrument of the Arian Goths.⁶⁵

Similarly in the East, Valens' defeat and death at Adrianople were attributed to God's just judgment of heretics. The focus is different, however: the Gothic invasions were ultimately felt less in the East, which had suffered most from internal division in the Church. Eastern authors are more anxious to discredit Arianism *per se* than they are to use it as a scapegoat for responsibility for the barbarian invasions.⁶⁶

When Theodosius I arrived in Constantinople on 24 November 380, the capital was an Arian stronghold.⁶⁷ Though he expelled the Arian bishop Demophilus and supported the Nicenes through his legislation, his religious policy dealt with political reality and was generally ameliorative.⁶⁸ The Arian presence in the city continued to be felt for some time.⁶⁹ Well into the reign of Theodosius II (408–450) the Arians maintained at least house chapels inside Constantinople.⁷⁰

⁶³ On Valens' unpopularity *cf.* Amm. Marc. 31.11.1 and Soc. *HE* 4.8. Constantinople had supported the usurper Procopius in 365/6 (Amm. Marc. 26.4–27.5), and Valens avoided it; *cf.* G. Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale: Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris 1974) 82–84.

⁶⁴ On the reaction to Adrianople: J. Straub, "Die Wirkung der Niederlage bei Adrianople auf die Diskussion über das Germanenproblem in der spätrömischen Literatur," *Philologus* 95 (1943) 256–59; *cf.* Gottlieb (n.91 *infra*) 16–25.

⁶⁵ On Orosius see E. Corsini, *Introduzione alle "Storie" di Orosio* (Turin 1968) 132–34 and 116–26. For the conversion of the Goths: E. Ewig, *History of the Church*, edd. H. Jedin and J. Dolan, II (New York 1980) 226–28.

⁶⁶ In general on the Eastern reaction *cf.* Kaegi (*supra* n.55), esp. 224–28, and on Adrianople, 195–97. The most carefully wrought anti-Arian account of Valens and Adrianople is in Theodoret *HE* 4.31–35. On Theodoret's hostility to Arianism see G. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories* (*Théol.hist.* 46 [1977]) 202f.

⁶⁷ Greg. Naz. *Carm. de vita sua* 1273–1395; Soz. *HE* 7.6.1; for the date *cf.* Seeck, *Regesten* 255.

⁶⁸ Greg. Naz. *Carm. de vita sua* 1282–1304; Soc. *HE* 5.7, 5.20; Soz. *HE* 7.5–7; *Cod. Theod.* 16.1.2 (28 Feb. 380), 16.5.6 (10 Jan. 381), 16.1.3 (30 July 381). See A. Ritter, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel and sein Symbol* (Göttingen 1965) 225–28.

⁶⁹ Soc. *HE* 5.13. Chrysostom had a series of confrontations with the Goths—notably, the Arian Goths; see T. Gregory, *Vox Populi: Violence and Popular Involvement in the Religious Controversies of the Fifth Century A.D.* (Ohio 1979) 46, 51.

⁷⁰ *Cod. Theod.* 16.5.58 (415); Soc. *HE* 7.29.4f; see Gregory (*supra* n.69) 84.

Although Theodosius I was constrained to move slowly in the eradication of heretics—the capital harbored Macedonians, Apollinarians, Novatians, *et al.*, in addition to the dominant Arian party⁷¹—he was a confirmed Nicene, and imperial propaganda as well as official policy supported that party. In 382 the emperor had the body of Paul, an earlier Nicene bishop of Constantinople, brought from Ancyra. Paul had been banished in 351 by Macedonius (bp. 351–360), and now his remains were pointedly installed in a church confiscated from the Macedonian party and renamed in Paul's memory.⁷² Gregory Nazianzen's (bp. 380–381) Anastasia Church (so-named to commemorate the rebirth of Nicaea in the capital), originally a modest house chapel, was rebuilt under his successor Nectarius (bp. 381–397).⁷³ Under Arcadius (395–408) there were still Arian churches outside the walls of Constantinople⁷⁴ and nocturnal processions through the streets of the city. Chrysostom (bp. 398–404) received (rare for him) imperial support for counter-processions to draw the crowds from the elaborate Arian spectacles.⁷⁵

It is in a context of anti-Arian propagandizing that we should locate the development of the Isaac story.⁷⁶ Isaac's prophecy served to focus the defeat at Adrianople upon Valens' Arianism—more specifically, on his ejection of the Nicenes from the churches. The corollary is clear: the victory of the Nicene party was God's will.

We may be able to place the origin of the story of Isaac in an even more precise context. The story must have gained popularity before the period in which Sozomen and Theodoret were composing their histories, *i.e.*, before 440.⁷⁷ It also probably postdates the death of Isaac himself *ca* 405.⁷⁸ The reign of Theodosius II (408–450) thus provides an appropriate setting. Theodosius issued extensive legisla-

⁷¹ Dagron (*supra* n.63) 447f.

⁷² Soc. *HE* 5.9; Soz. *HE* 7.10.4. See W. Telfer, "Paul of Constantinople," *HThR* 43 (1950) 31–92, esp. 87.

⁷³ R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin* I.3 (Paris 1953) 26–29. Sozomen (*HE* 7.5.1–4) describes the church as an imposing edifice and indicates that in the fifth century it still could serve as a symbol for Nicene propagandists. The procession for the inauguration of Hagia Sophia (27 Dec. 537) began at the Anastasia.

⁷⁴ Dagron (*supra* n.63) 451.

⁷⁵ Gregory (*supra* n.69) 46.

⁷⁶ The story of Isaac as the founder of Constantinople's first monastery is similar Nicene propagandizing; see Dagron (*supra* n.53) esp. 231, 238.

⁷⁷ Sozomenus, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. J. Bidez and G. Hansen (Berlin 1970) lxx–lxxvii (date 443–450); Theodoret, *Kirchengeschichte*², edd. L. Parmentier and F. Scheidweiler (Berlin 1954) xxvf (date 449–450); cf. G. Chesnut, "The Date of Composition of Theodoret's Church History," *VigChr* 35 (1981) 245–52 (date 441–449).

⁷⁸ J. Pargoire, "Date de la mort de Saint Isaac," *ÉchO* 2 (1898–99) 138–45, and Dagron (*supra* n.53) 233 n.20 and 245.

tion directed against Arians, Macedonians, Manichaeans, *et al.* (*Cod. Theod.* 16.5.58–60, 16.5.65, 16.8.26),⁷⁹ and Nestorius (bp. 428–431) took a particularly strong stand against heretics in general and Arians in particular (Soc. *HE* 7.29.2).⁸⁰ In addition to the anti-heretical climate in these years, it is significant that the emperor's pious sister, Pulcheria—a formidable influence on imperial propaganda—had as her spiritual confidant the archimandrite Hypatius, in his youth a friend of Isaac.⁸¹ Thus the legend of Isaac and Valens may have taken at least final shape in roughly the period 420–440.

It is noteworthy that of the fifth-century ecclesiastical historians at Constantinople it is Sozomen, and not Socrates, who relates the story of Isaac. It is true that in general Socrates was less likely to record stories of ascetics, but, importantly, he did not take a staunch anti-heretical stance⁸² and was not known as a devotee of the princess Pulcheria. Sozomen, on the other hand, ardently supported Nicene orthodoxy, extolled the piety of both Pulcheria and Theodosius II (to whom he dedicated his *History*), and placed a high value on the rôle of monastics in the formation of the Christian state.⁸³ This does not make him a spokesman for imperial policy on this issue but certainly strengthens the view that the story of Isaac was consistent with official propaganda.⁸⁴

Sozomen's version of the story emphasizes the restoration of churches to the Nicenes rather than the recall of exiles, and virtually ignores the defeat of the army at the hands of the Goths (*cf. supra* 405f); instead, it focuses only on the death of Valens and apparently represents a more Constantinopolitan perspective than the story as told by Theodoret.⁸⁵ Propagandist justification for the disaster at Adrianople could not allow for Valens' repentance and recall of Nicene

⁷⁹ Sisinnius (bp. 426–427) completed a martyrion for the Holy Notaries begun by Chrysostom (Soz. *HE* 4.3). See Telfer (*supra* n.72) 32–34. The tomb of Alexander the Paphlagonian, another victim of Macedonius, was a landmark in Constantinople in Socrates' day (*HE* 2.38).

⁸⁰ For discussion and sources see K. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1982) 150f.

⁸¹ K. Holum, "Pulcheria's Crusade A.D. 421–22 and the Ideology of Imperial Victory," *GRBS* 18 (1977) 153–72, and *supra* n.80, 134–36; Dagron (*supra* n.53) 229; Call. *V.Hyp.* (ed. Bartelink).

⁸² Eltester (*supra* n.60) 899; Chesnut (*supra* n.66) 170–81.

⁸³ Soz. *HE* praef., 1.12, 9.1, 9.3. On Sozomen, Socrates, and Pulcheria see Holum (*supra* n.81) 158–62 and (*supra* n.80) 95f.

⁸⁴ On Sozomen and the Theodosian court *cf.* Kaegi (*supra* n.55) 176–79, 190, 204.

⁸⁵ Similarly, the *Vitae Isaaci* reflect a Constantinopolitan and probably imperial bias: Valens' Arian advisors are held responsible for the emperor's decision not to heed Isaac's warning to "open the orthodox churches" (*AA SS* 30 May VII 246c, 254b–c).

exiles. Precisely at Constantinople was it both most important and easiest to 'deny' Valens' recall. Constantinople itself would not have been affected by any such recall; the last attempt to install a Nicene bishop had failed in 370.⁸⁶ There was no one to recall: Arian bishops had prevailed in the capital for too long. Restoration of the churches to the Nicene party, for which Valens' recall made no provision, was the issue.

The later *Vitae Isaaci* reveal the perpetuation of the anti-Arian propagandist view of Valens' religious policy. In the shorter *Vita*, an expanded version of the confrontation between Valens and Isaac is the central episode. The story not only influenced the fifth-century historians in their decision not to record Valens' recall of Nicene exiles, but consequently affected later Byzantine historiography as well.⁸⁷

IV. Gratian's Recall

According to Socrates' account of the recall of Nicene exiles (*HE* 5.2), "Gratian being now in possession of the empire, together with Valentinian the younger, and condemning the cruel policy of his uncle Valens towards the Christians, recalled those whom he had sent into exile" (τοὺς μὲν ὑπ' ἐκείνου ἐξορισθέντας ἀνεκάλει).⁸⁸ The recall is thus placed after the death of Valens (9 August 378) and before the elevation of Theodosius I at Sirmium (16 January 379), hence sometime in the fall of 378. In the same breath he mentions the famous act of toleration: "He (Gratian) moreover enacted (νόμῳ τε ἐθέσπισε) that persons of all sects without distinction might securely assemble together in their churches; and that only the Eunomians, Photinians, and Manichaeans should be excluded from the churches."⁸⁹

⁸⁶ According to the historians (Soc. *HE* 4.14, Soz. *HE* 6.13) Eustathius, the exiled bishop of Antioch, had consecrated an otherwise unknown Evagrius. Their identification of Eustathius is doubtful, see W. Sinclair, *DCB* 2 (1880) 419 s.v. "Evagrius (4)"; H. Gwatkin, *Studies in Arianism* (Cambridge 1900) 77f n.2; Simonetti 403 n.6; cf. Dagron (*supra* n.63) 446 and n.3.

⁸⁷ Byzantine chroniclers and historians do not mention Valens' recall but highlight the story of Isaac: Thphn. 5870 (65.9–24 de Boor); Cedrenus *Hist. Compend.* (Migne, *PG* 121.597); Zonaras 13.16 (Dindorf III 221–23); Georgius Monachus *Chron.* (Migne, *PG* 110.685); Niceph. Call. *HE* (Migne, *PG* 146.744f).

⁸⁸ Unless otherwise noted, translations of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret are taken, with modifications, from *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, edd. P. Schaff and H. Wace, Ser. 2.2 (New York 1890) and 3 (1892).

⁸⁹ According to Gwatkin (*supra* n.86) 266 only the Nicenes really benefited from the toleration act; but see Soc. *HE* 5.4, Soz. *HE* 7.2.3.

Socrates and Sozomen, our two more reliable sources for a recall by Gratian,⁹⁰ appear to consider the recall and the toleration act as two separate pieces of legislation (Soz. *HE* 7.1.3, *τὴν κάθοδον ἀπέδωκε, καὶ νόμον ἔθετο*). Only the decree of toleration is initially labeled a *νόμος*, although Sozomen (*HE* 7.2.5) shortly thereafter refers to the recall as a *νόμος* as well. *Νόμος* is of course a general term, but that Gratian's toleration act, at least, was an edict (and no longer to be identified with the 'rescript of Sirmium') has been reasonably argued by Günther Gottlieb.⁹¹ Was the recall simply a clause in this edict? The historians' texts do not seem to indicate this, but if Gratian's recall was a separate enactment we have no basis for assessing its form.

Despite the report (Theod. *HE* 5.2f) that Gratian commissioned Sapor to restore Nicene bishops to their sees, we hear only of his installation of Meletius at Antioch.⁹² It would appear that Gratian's legislation did little to return the churches of the East systematically to the Nicene party.⁹³ In Sozomen's account (*HE* 7.2.5f) of the effect of the recall/toleration act, the bishops banished by Valens and recalled by Gratian had no ambition to be restored to their bishoprics and in the interest of unity asked the Arians to retain their posts. Whatever truth there may be in the story of Eulalius' overtures to the Arian bishop of Amasia in Pontus, it clearly reflects the unsettled condition of the church in the transition from Arian to Nicene domination.⁹⁴ Certainly we should place in this context the murder of Eusebius of Samosata by a disaffected Arian while Eusebius was intent on ordaining a Nicene bishop for Doliche (Theod. *HE* 5.4.5–9). Gregory of Nazianzus found little welcome in Constantinople, despite recent imperial legislation favorable to Nicenes. He comments rhetorically in an oration delivered probably in 379: "Concerning what churches have we disputed with

⁹⁰ Theodoret (*HE* 5.2.1) ignores the law of toleration and has conflated a recall of exiles by Gratian with legislation of Theodosius I (*Cod. Theod.* 16.1.2 [28 Feb. 380], 16.5.6 [10 Jan. 381]); also noted by Cavallera (*supra* n.37) 211 n.1.

⁹¹ G. Gottlieb, *Ambrosius von Mailand und Kaiser Gratian* (= *Hypomnemata* 40 [1973]) 71–80.

⁹² *PLRE* I 803 s.v. "Sapores." Cf. Ritter (*supra* n.68) 35f n.4.

⁹³ Sozomen (*HE* 7.2.2), for example, states that on the accession of Theodosius (19 Jan. 379) all the churches of Oriens, with the exception of that of Jerusalem, were in the hands of the Arians. Sozomen's *ἀνὰ τὴν ἕω* must refer to the diocese of Oriens, not the entire eastern empire; cf. Tillemont (*supra* n.2) 613. Even so, his statement is probably exaggerated, see 418f and n.148 *infra*.

⁹⁴ Simonetti 445f n.36 misses the significance of this passage. Cf. the difficulty with which the bishops exiled by Constantine I resumed their sees (Simonetti 137–40).

you? . . . What imperial decree (*βασιλικὸν δόγμα*) have we rejected and resented?"⁹⁵

Gratian's recall appears to have served no further purpose than that of Valens; it did not provide for the restoration of the churches to the Nicenes. Was it merely a repetition? The general circumstances of the Nicenes in the East were certainly well known in the West (*Bas. Epp.* 92, 242f, 253, 255f, 265); it is possible, however, that Gratian was unaware of Valens' recall. Although his religious policy in 378 still clearly followed the position of neutrality avowed by his father, Valentinian I (364–375),⁹⁶ provision for a simple recall of his co-religionists was certainly in keeping with that policy. Even if Gratian knew of Valens' act, it is possible that he felt it necessary to reissue the order.⁹⁷ Few exiles may have returned by the fall of 378, and disturbed conditions in the East after Adrianople would easily have warranted a clear statement by the western emperor.⁹⁸ In addition, it is likely that not all had been specifically recalled; one can compare Jovian's repetition of Julian's recall (*Soc. HE* 3.24).

Although such arguments from probability can be marshalled, the historicity of Gratian's recall actually rests on the not entirely satisfactory testimony of two fifth-century historians.⁹⁹ The silence of fourth-century sources remains a problem. Jerome ended his *Chronicle* with the death of Valens, but Rufinus' continuation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* goes down to the death of Theodosius; it might be expected that Rufinus would have been more likely to mention Gratian's recall than that of Valens.¹⁰⁰ The fifth-century historians were aware that the situation improved for the Nicenes even before the death of Valens, though they attribute actual legislation only to

⁹⁵ *Greg. Naz. Or.* 33.13 (Migne, *PG* 36.229). J. Bernardi, *La prédication de pères cappadociens. La prédicateur et son auditoire* (Publications de la Fac. des lettres et des Sciences humaines de l'Université de Montpellier 30 [1968]) 165f, identified the *βασιλικὸν δόγμα* with *Cod.Theod.* 16.1.2 and dates *Or.* 33 to 380. T. Sinko, *De traditione orationum Gregorii Nazianzeni I (Meletemata Patristica* 2 [1917]) 39f, and P. Gallay, *La vie de Saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (Paris 1943) 145, place it in the summer of 379. The general context of the oration is best suited to the latter date. The imperial decree in question is most likely Gratian's toleration act.

⁹⁶ For an exception to Valentinian's policy of neutrality see 415 *infra*.

⁹⁷ *Cf.* Caspar 232.

⁹⁸ *Cf.* Stein 197.

⁹⁹ Only three exiles are explicitly mentioned by the historians as having returned in response to Gratian's recall: Meletius of Antioch (*Soc. HE* 5.3, 5.5; *Soz. HE* 7.3; *Theod. HE* 5.2f), Eulalius of Amasia in Pontus (*Soz.* 7.2.6), Eusebius of Samosata (*Theod.* 5.4.5–9).

¹⁰⁰ On Rufinus' sources see Murphy (*supra* n.47) 160–64 and, most recently, F. Thelamon, *Paiens et chrétiens au IV^e siècle: L'apport de l' "Histoire ecclésiastique" de Rufin d'Aquilée* (Paris 1981) 18–21.

Gratian. The circumstances seem to suggest that by the fifth century anti-Arian propaganda, seen most blatantly in the story of Isaac, may have effected the transfer of the recall of the exiles from the Arian Valens to the Nicene Gratian.

V. Valens' Recall

One final and important question remains: why was Valens induced to repeal in effect his own legislation and recall the opposition party? A traditional response proposed in antiquity and followed by modern scholarship is that the war with the Goths dictated his lenient religious policy.¹⁰¹ This view is strengthened by Valens' similar policy during the revolt of Procopius (365–366) and an earlier conflict with the Goths (367–369).¹⁰² Certainly the pressures of serious military campaigns provide a readily-acceptable explanation for a temporary disinclination to pursue active religious persecution;¹⁰³ they cannot, however, fully account for an apparent reversal of religious policy. The recall of the exiles must be understood within the context of Valens' general course of action in religious affairs. Although we cannot here attempt to review the whole of that history, we may examine more closely the background necessary for understanding the issuance of the recall.¹⁰⁴

We should begin by considering the circumstances of Valens' initial persecution of the Nicenes. His aim was a restoration of the eastern church on the course set by Constantius II (337–361).¹⁰⁵ On 5 May 365 he issued an edict exiling bishops recalled by Julian (361–363), *i.e.*, those who had opposed Constantius and the Homoian party.¹⁰⁶ It was the Homoian party—moderate Arians who professed the Creed of Rimini (359)—that Valens hoped to reestablish in an effort to promote church unity. Homoiousians, Anomoians, Novatians, and Pneumatomachi, as well as Nicenes came under attack, although the

¹⁰¹ See *supra* 402f on *e.g.* Jerome, Orosius, and Rufinus. *Cf.* Bardy 275 and Simonetti 434.

¹⁰² For Procopius: *PLRE* I 742f *s.v.* "Procopius (4)"; see also Soc. *HE* 4.3, Soz. *HE* 6.8. On the Gothic War: Stein 185f, and *supra* n.3. On Valens' religious policy during both crises: Simonetti 391, 395, 402.

¹⁰³ Meletius, for example, returned to Antioch in 366/7; see Gwatkin (*supra* n.86) 243 and further n.114 *infra*.

¹⁰⁴ On Valens' religious policy see Nagl (*supra* n.3) 2132–35, Piganiol 180–84, and especially Simonetti 390–434.

¹⁰⁵ Simonetti 391; *cf.* 214–349.

¹⁰⁶ Seeck, *Regesten* 223; *cf.* Soz. *HE* 6.12.5–7. Julian's policy had benefited Anomoians and Novatians as well as Nicenes (Soz. 5.5.9f).

primary targets were the dominant parties: the Homoiousians and the Nicenes.¹⁰⁷

According to Ammianus Marcellinus, Valens' inexperience and timid, irresolute nature made him susceptible to the influence of strong advisors.¹⁰⁸ Although Ammianus' assessment should not be taken too literally, Valens was, of course, a Pannonian of peasant origin who spoke little Greek and whose career had been strictly military.¹⁰⁹ He therefore reasonably tended to appoint as high officials men with considerable experience in government service in the East and to maintain proven *amici* in office for extended periods.¹¹⁰ So, too, his religious policy and his choice of advisors were dictated by existing conditions in the East, and he relied heavily on such prelates as the Homoian Eudoxius (Soz. *HE* 6.10.3–12, 6.12.5).¹¹¹

In 371, preparatory to a Persian campaign, Valens moved his imperial headquarters to Antioch; that city became his permanent residence until his final departure in 378 for the Gothic war.¹¹² In Antioch he came under the influence of the powerful Arian bishop Euzoius.¹¹³ Under Valens, Euzoius' episcopal career was at its apex. Shortly after the emperor's arrival in Antioch, Meletius—Euzoius' most important Nicene rival—was sent into exile again.¹¹⁴ In 373, on the death of Athanasius, Euzoius convinced Valens to provide military backing for an Arian bishop for Alexandria (Soc. *HE* 4.21).¹¹⁵ Euzoius himself oversaw Lucius' installation and the exile of Athanasius' successor Peter.¹¹⁶ Efforts to drive Basil from Caesarea had been unsuccessful, but Euzoius supported Eustathius of Sebaste's ex-

¹⁰⁷ Simonetti 391–92, 395–403. The Homoiousians were concentrated in Thrace, Bithynia, and the Hellespont; the Nicenes in the other provinces (Soc. *HE* 4.4, Soz. *HE* 6.10.2). Under Valens the parties tended to ally; cf. Dagron (*supra* n.53) 247–50.

¹⁰⁸ Amm. Marc. 26.7.13, 27.4.8, 29.1.10f, 30.4.1f, 31.14.6.

¹⁰⁹ Nagl (*supra* n.3) 2097.

¹¹⁰ Cf. the careers of Modestus (*PLRE* I 605–08 s.v. “Modestus [2]”), Saturninus (807f s.v. “Saturninus [10]”), Tatianus (876–78 s.v. “Tatianus [5]”) and Victor (957–59 s.v. “Victor [4]”).

¹¹¹ Cf. Simonetti 390 n.31 and 398.

¹¹² Seeck, *Regesten* 239–51.

¹¹³ E. Venables, *DCB* 2 (1880) 418 s.v. “Euzoius (1).”

¹¹⁴ Meletius was exiled as a consequence of Valens' edict in 365. He returned to Antioch during the *de facto* amnesty of the Gothic war (367–369) and was re-exiled in 370/1. See further n.131 *infra*.

¹¹⁵ For Athanasius as an exception to Valens' 365 edict see Soz. *HE* 6.12.5–16, and E. Schwartz, *Zur Geschichte des Athanasius* (= *Gesammelte Schriften* III [Berlin 1959]) 13.

¹¹⁶ Euzoius was likely behind Lucius' unsuccessful attempt to unseat Athanasius in 367 (*Hist.aceph.* 14, 18 [ed. Fromen 80f, 84f]); under Jovian, Euzoius and Lucius had tried to install an Arian eunuch, Probatius, in the see of Alexandria. See A. Lippold, *RE* Suppl. 10 (1965) 380f s.v. “Lucius (5a).”

tended smear campaign against him (373–376).¹¹⁷ The Antiochene bishop's influence can probably be seen as well in the exile of the Edessans and of Eusebius of Samosata (374).¹¹⁸

It is therefore difficult to claim with Piganiol (181) that the death of Valentinian in 375 marked an increase in Valens' "persecution" of his religious opponents.¹¹⁹ Valens may—particularly, early in his reign—have deferred to his brother¹²⁰ but, as the evidence overwhelmingly indicates, certainly not on questions of religious policy. Valentinian's death appears instead to have prevented a confrontation between the western emperor and Valens, precisely over Valens' attempts to enforce Homoianism. A letter of Valentinian (Theod. *HE* 4.8), addressed to the bishops of the diocese of Asiana¹²¹ and dated to 375,¹²² proclaimed (at the instigation of a recent synod in Illyricum) the truth of Nicene doctrine and forbade the persecution and expulsion of Nicenes. There does not appear to have been any immediate response to this letter in the East. The year 376 in fact witnessed a few final exiles.¹²³ Valentinian's uncharacteristic interference in religious affairs may, however, have had a delayed effect: western opposition could have been a factor in Valens' decision to recall the exiles in 377.

After Valentinian's death in 375 there does not appear to have been continuing pressure applied by his young son Gratian. His first notable interference in eastern religious affairs was the edict of toleration in 378.¹²⁴ Although Stein (185) sees Valens' recall as a reasonable part of negotiations with Gratian for his assistance against the Goths,¹²⁵ there

¹¹⁷ Bas. *Epp.* 128, 223, 226, 237, 250f.

¹¹⁸ See *supra* 400f on the Edessans. For Eusebius, A. Jülicher *RE* 6 (1909) 1443 s.v. "Eusebius (28)"; H. Reynolds, *DCB* 2 (1880) 369–72 s.v. "Eusebius (77)."

¹¹⁹ Piganiol cites Orosius (*Adv. pag.* 7.32.6, 7.33.1), whose claim that Valens refrained from persecution until after Valentinian's death should hardly be used uncritically.

¹²⁰ Amm. Marc. 26.4f, 27.4.1; cf. Them. *Or.* 9.120c-d (I 182 ed. Downey), and J. W. E. Pearce, *The Roman Imperial Coinage* IX (London 1951) xviii.

¹²¹ The salutation actually reads *ἐπισκόποις διοικήσεως Ἀσιανῆς, Φρυγίας, Καροφρυγίας, Πακατιανῆς* (*GCS* 44, 220.6f). Only Asiana was, however, a diocese; the others were provinces within that diocese. *Καροφρυγίας* is curious; perhaps Valesius' emendation *Καρίας, Φρυγίας Πακατιανῆς* is correct. For a translation of the letter with notes see P. Coleman-Norton, *Roman State and Christian Church: A Collection of Legal Documents to A.D. 535 I* (London 1966) 336–41.

¹²² For the date see Gottlieb (*supra* n.91) 37f, with literature cited there; *contra* Simonetti 439–41.

¹²³ Gregory of Nyssa (Bas. *Epp.* 225, 231f, 237, 239); Hypsinus of Parnassus (Bas. *Ep.* 237, cf. 226, 239).

¹²⁴ Dagron (*supra* n.63) 71f overstates the case when he describes Valens' desire to win sole victory over the Goths before Gratian's arrival (Amm. Marc. 31.12) as an indication of the serious division between Orthodox West and Arian East.

¹²⁵ Cf. Caspar 232.

is no concrete evidence to support this hypothesis. The threat of the Goths alone warranted Gratian's sending military aid. Gratian's readiness and ability to assist his uncle were directly related to his own preoccupation with Alamannic incursions across the Rhine.¹²⁶ Reasons for Valens' recall should be sought primarily in the conditions of the East.¹²⁷

An important factor was undoubtedly the death of the Arian bishop Euzoius in 376.¹²⁸ As Sozomen correctly noted (*HE* 6.36.6), Valens' persecution of religious dissidents intensified when he took up residence in Antioch in 371. After 376 there were no more exiles.¹²⁹ The renewal of the Gothic war might account for that fact, but clearly the removal of the powerful influence of Euzoius must have cleared the air for the ameliorative gesture of a recall.

It also appears that the orator Themistius attempted to direct Valens toward a more liberal religious policy. In a speech attributed to him by the ecclesiastical historians (Soc. *HE* 4.32, Soz. *HE* 6.36f) and dated to 375/6, Themistius is said to have appealed to the example of pagan tolerance of diversity in religious beliefs as a model for Christianity.¹³⁰ According to the historians, the speech influenced Valens to discontinue putting clerics to death but did not keep him from exiling them. The scene of Themistius' *Appealing Oration* was Antioch, and certainly no city—save perhaps Constantinople itself—better exhibited the disunity of fourth-century Christianity. By 376 there were no fewer than four bishops with claims on and followers in Antioch.¹³¹ Valens' long stay in the city must have rendered him

¹²⁶ On Gratian and the Alamanni see Seeck (*supra* n.3) 111f, Stein 189; Amm. Marc. 31.7.3f, 31.10–11.6. Cf. Valentinian's campaign against the Alamanni during the Procopian revolt (Amm. Marc. 26.4.11–13). Further on Gratian's movements: Maenchen-Helfen (*supra* n.3) 30–32.

¹²⁷ There is, for instance, no parallel to Constantius' recall of Athanasius under pressure from Constans; see Simonetti 198–200.

¹²⁸ Socrates (*HE* 4.35) places Euzoius' death in the fifth consulate of Valens, *i.e.*, A.D. 376 (Seeck, *Regesten* 247).

¹²⁹ With the possible exception of Eulalius of Amasia (Soz. *HE* 7.2.6), whose date of exile is unknown.

¹³⁰ Themistius' oration is no longer extant. The alleged Latin translation (*Or.* 12, ed. Downey and Norman III 137–44) is a sixteenth-century forgery. It is not, however, unlikely that Themistius actually delivered such an oration. Apparently, he had also advised Julian against persecuting Christians: see Downey (*supra* n.41) 411 n.87 and 390 n.59, with the literature cited there.

¹³¹ The Arian bishop Euzoius held the official position. The New Nicene Meletius directed his community from exile through the priests Flavian and Diodorus (Theod. *HE* 4.22). Paulinus and the Old Nicenes were allowed to stay in Antioch. In addition the Apollinarian bishop Vitalis had a flourishing community. On the situation in Antioch, see Cavallera (*supra* n.37) and R. Devreesse, *Le Patriarcat d'Antioche depuis la paix de l'église jusqu'à la conquête arabe* (Paris 1945) 17–38.

susceptible to Themistius' plea for peace through plurality.¹³² The historians, disinclined as they were to believe in Valens' recall, probably do not credit Themistius' speech with sufficient influence.

Valens may also have felt the pressure of popular disapproval. One Nicene reaction against Valens in Antioch was the probable protest against the intrusion of the Arian bishop Lucius at Alexandria in 373. As a result, Antiochene clerics and monks were banished to Neocæsarea in Pontus (Theod. *HE* 4.22.36). Although some accounts of Antiochene opposition to Valens are clearly *ex post facto* elaborations, they nonetheless indicate the general climate of the city. In a description of omens portending Valens' death by fire, Ammianus (31.1.2) tells how "at Antioch, in quarrels and riots of the common people, it became usual that whoever thought he was suffering wrong shouted without restraint: 'Let Valens be burned alive!' and the words of public criers were continually heard, directing people to gather firewood, to set fire to the baths of Valens, in the building of which the emperor himself had taken such interest."¹³³ The disturbances that these omens represent may well have been caused by religious fervor.¹³⁴ There is no evidence for a famine at Antioch during Valens' reign (a common source of popular disturbance), and in general his legislation tended to favor the class from which he had risen, that of the peasant and the enlisted man.¹³⁵

The religious nature of opposition to Valens in Antioch is also illustrated by the story of the confrontation between the emperor and the Edessan monk Aphraates.¹³⁶ If the story reflects an historical incident it would date to the spring of 377¹³⁷ and provide one immediate impetus for the recall of the exiles. Aphraates had left the desert and was assisting Flavian and Diodorus in ministering to the Meletian Nicene community in Antioch.¹³⁸ When cautioned by Valens to resume his monastic life, so the story goes, Aphraates replied that he had come to Antioch to put out the fires of Arianism. Aphraates aside, the large concentration of monastics in the Syrian desert were

¹³² Cf. Simonetti 434 n.107.

¹³³ Trans. J. Rolfe, *Ammianus Marcellinus* III (Cambridge [Mass.] 1952) 379.

¹³⁴ J. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1972) 128 and n.10, 210. In addition to the well-known popular support for Athanasius and Basil (n.144 *infra*), cf. the religious riots against Valens and Arianism at Tomi, on which see V. Velkov, *Cities in Thrace and Dacia in Late Antiquity* (Amsterdam 1977) 237.

¹³⁵ Jones (*supra* n.52) 147-49.

¹³⁶ Theod. *HE* 4.26; *H.Rel.* 8 (Migne, *PG* 82.1372-76).

¹³⁷ Festugière (*supra* n.41) 270f, 274, and in general on Aphraates, 267-76.

¹³⁸ See *supra* n.131.

an influential pressure group in religious politics.¹³⁹ Apamea, Chalcis, Cyrrhus, Edessa, and Zeugma, as well as Antioch, all had solitary monks living in their environs.¹⁴⁰ Although various religious parties vied for their allegiance, the Syrian monks seem most frequently to have supported the Nicenes. The Meletians made a particular effort to harness their power against Arianism in the final years of Valens' reign.¹⁴¹ With the example of the intransigence of the Nicene Egyptian monks fresh in his memory (Ruf. *HE* 11.4, Soc. *HE* 4.24),¹⁴² monastic incursions and popular unrest in Antioch may have been yet another reason for Valens to reassess the wisdom of his religious policy.

Even when he was not overwhelmed by pressing affairs of state, Valens' persecution of religious opposition can best be described as unsystematic.¹⁴³ Despite the influence and efforts of Eudoxius, Demophilus, and Euzoius, the eastern church was far from a position of unity under the Homoian banner. As his treatment of Basil and Athanasius clearly shows, Valens sought peace when confronted with serious Nicene opposition.¹⁴⁴ One cannot, therefore, characterize him as a religious fanatic. Court appointees were predominantly drawn from the ranks of the Nicenes.¹⁴⁵ Through the agency of the devout Nicene *comes* Terentius, Basil was even directed to appoint bishops for Lesser Armenia.¹⁴⁶ In that instance, considerations of Roman security outweighed religious affiliations.¹⁴⁷ In addition, Basil's success in keeping the Nicene party a viable force in the East¹⁴⁸ must have

¹³⁹ For the Syrian monks: Festugière (*supra* n.41) 245–401 and P. Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *JRS* 61 (1971) 82–85.

¹⁴⁰ Theod. *HE* 4.27–29; *H.Rel.*, *passim* (Migne, *PG* 82.1284–1496).

¹⁴¹ Arians burned the cell of the Nicene monk Zeugmatius (Theod. *HE* 4.28.2) and attacked Nicene monks at Beroea (Bas. *Epp.* 256f). They claimed the monk Julianus, but Flavian, Diodorus, and Aphraates had brought him to Antioch to prove his allegiance to Nicaea (Theod. *HE* 4.27, *H.Rel.* 2 [Migne, *PG* 82.1317–21]).

¹⁴² Cf. *Cod.Theod.* 12.1.63 (370 or 373).

¹⁴³ Simonetti 404.

¹⁴⁴ For Athanasius: *supra* n.115; for Basil, Greg. Naz. *Or.* 43.51–57 (Migne, *PG* 36.561–69).

¹⁴⁵ R. von Haehling, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amtsträger des römischen Reiches seit Constantins I. Alleinherrschaft bis zum Ende der theodosianischen Dynastie (324–450 bzw. 455 n. Chr.)* (Bonn 1978) 561. The notorious Modestus (*supra* n.110) and Demosthenes (*PLRE* I 249 s.v. "Demosthenes [2]") are notable exceptions.

¹⁴⁶ Bas. *Ep.* 99, cf. 129. For Terentius, *comes et dux Armeniae* (369–374), see *PLRE* I 881f s.v. "Terentius (2)."

¹⁴⁷ The Armenian king Papa had poisoned the catholicos Nerses and was persecuting Christians; see Stein 187. Control of Armenia, as always, was an important buffer against the Persians.

¹⁴⁸ Basil's influence and interference reached far beyond the borders of Cappadocia and Pontica into the dioceses of Asiana and Oriens: see, e.g., *Epp.* 90, 138, 161, 190, 200, 216, 218, and cf. Piganol 183.

played its part in Valens' decision to revoke the sentences of exile. Deposition and exile were primarily matters of politics under Valens, as was the case under Constantius, and were not true religious persecution.¹⁴⁹

If, however, Valens had lost faith in the Homoian party, what could he have expected to achieve by a recall? Though he was disappointed in the results, Julian had intended to create havoc among the Christians by his recall.¹⁵⁰ He was explicit about the fact that he had only recalled the bishops, not restored them.¹⁵¹ Clearly, on the eve of a Gothic war Valens could only have hoped that a recall of exiles would foster stability and support. But it is easier to point to circumstances that may have influenced Valens than to delineate precise motivations. The death of his mentor Euzoius, his experience in Antioch of Nicene strength and popular disapproval, the urging of the seasoned orator Themistius, and possibly the perception, if not the reality, of pressure from the West all must have contributed to Valens' *sera paenitentia* as he prepared for the Gothic campaign.

Valens' death at Adrianople precludes knowledge of what new religious policy he might have developed, but the historicity of Valens' recall is an important key for interpreting the history of his reign—a history that has yet to be written.¹⁵²

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¹⁴⁹ On Constantius' policy see Simonetti 347–49.

¹⁵⁰ R. Braun, "Julien et la Christianisme," in *L'Empereur Julien*, edd. R. Braun and J. Richer (Paris 1978) 166–69.

¹⁵¹ *Ep.* 26 (Bidez I.2 187f).

¹⁵² I am grateful to my colleagues J. Brown, D. Gilmour, and A. L. H. Robkin for their comments and encouragement.